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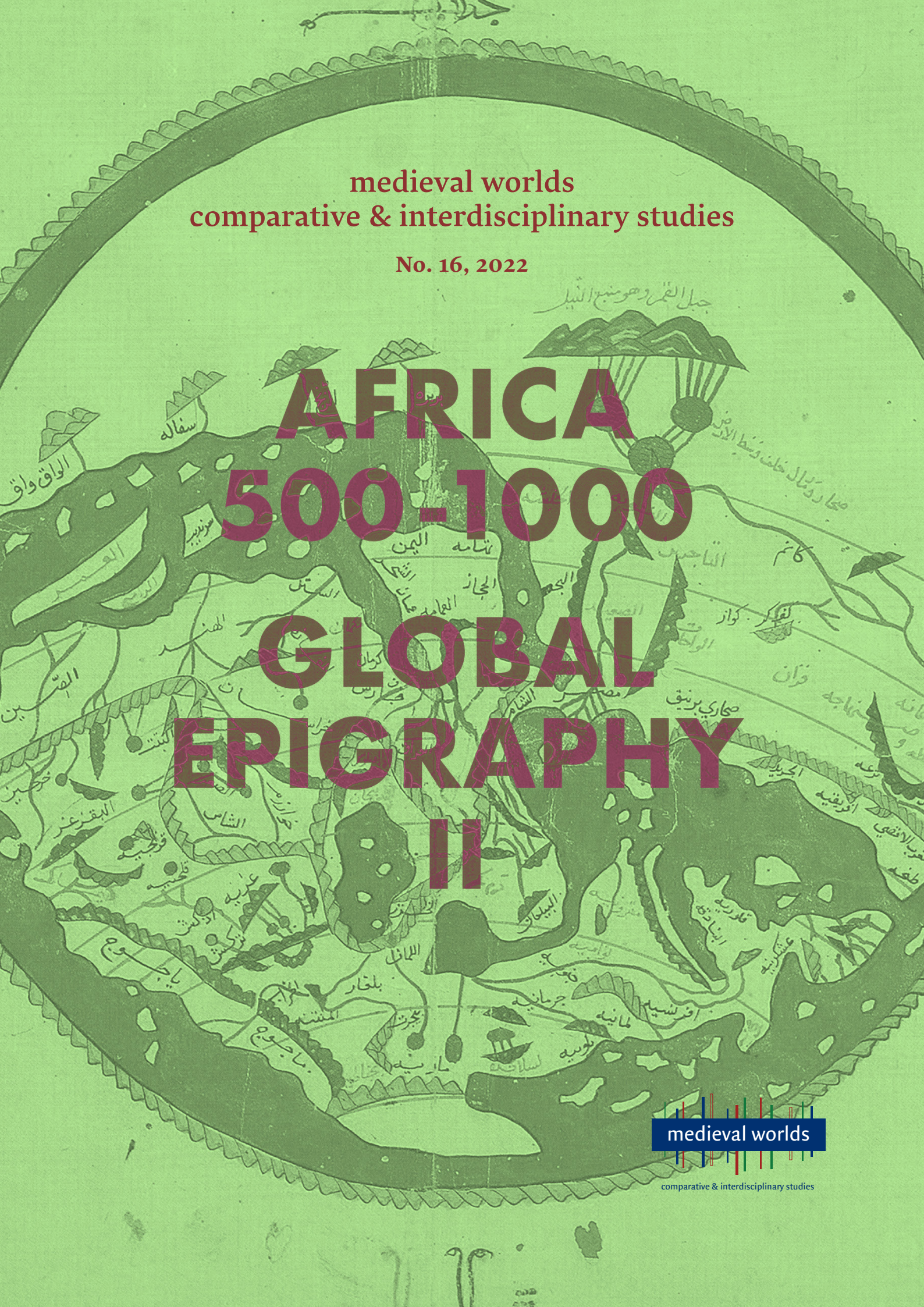

AFRICA 500-1000

GLOBAL EPIGRAPHY II

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Africa 500-1000. New Perspectives for Historical and Archaeological Research

Guest Editors:
Roland Steinacher, Paolo Tedesco
and Philipp Margreiter

&

Global Epigraphy, II. Perception and Representation of the Foreign

Guest Editor:
Andreas Rhoby

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Editorial

Ingrid Hartl and Walter Pohl

The medieval Mediterranean as a region of connectivity and transformation, and its cities as hubs of agency have been the focus of several Medieval Worlds volumes and articles.[1] Now we approach this region again – this time from the south, from Africa. The central area of interest is the former Roman province *Africa* and later Islamic region Ifrīqiya and its neighbouring regions. In the period from c. AD 500 to 1000, the inhabitants of Mediterranean Africa lived through the rulership of three different powers, the Vandals, Byzantines and Arabs, which shaped the politics, culture and society of this region. In order to trace these long-term developments, the contributions in our themed section *Africa 500-1000. New Perspectives for Historical and Archaeological Research* use a broad range of textual sources – literary, historiographical and functional texts such as legal compendia – and material evidence of changes in clothing, housing, settlement and dietary patterns. The combination of textual and material evidence sheds new light on the transformations of the region and on how they affected the ways of life of its inhabitants.

A different way in which the textual aspects of written sources and the materiality of archaeological evidence can be linked is in the study of inscriptions, as their texts are invariably connected with the objects on which they were inscribed. Handled carefully, they offer a wealth of information, as our second cluster of articles demonstrates. It continues our enquiries into *Global Epigraphy*, this time exploring the *Perception and Representation of the Foreign*.[2] Outsiders and markers of outside culture are always a useful foil for a group against which it can distinguish itself in order to strengthen its own cohesion. *Xenoi* and *barbari* and other terms for strangers can be found on tombstones, commemorative monuments, mosaics and painted ornaments in churches or private houses, or even on graffiti on house walls. Combined with the study of the context in which and the objects on which they were placed, where a variation in shape might be the foreign element, they offer insights into the perception of the foreign in the past. But more than that, they can also prompt methodological discussions and global narratives.

Methodological discussions are an important feature in our volumes, so we are happy to open the floor for a discussion of creolization in our individual article section. The author argues for creolization as a useful concept for studying the Latin Middle Ages and global comparison in pre-modern times and offers a theoretical framework and two short exemplary applications from the High Middle Ages. We invite further critical discussion and exemplary contributions to this topic.

1 *Movement and Mobility in the Medieval Mediterranean: Changing Perspectives from Late Antiquity to the Long-Twelfth Century,* guest editors: Christopher Heath, Clemens Gantner and Edoardo Manarini, part I in volume 13 and part II in volume 14, as well as *Urban Agencies: Reframing Anatolian and Caucasian Cities (13th-14th Centuries)*, guest editors: Bruno de Nicola and Matthew Kinloch.

2 For the opening collection of this strand, *Approaches to Global Epigraphy*, see Medieval Worlds volume 10.

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Africa 500-1000. Introduction

Roland Steinacher and Philipp Margreiter*

We tend to perceive and emphasize the transition from Late Antiquity to the Early Middle Ages, especially in North Africa, through ruptures and changes. This collection of papers highlights, alongside the major changes and transformations that affected the entire Mediterranean region, longer-term processes and developments in North Africa between AD 500 and 1000. In this time frame, the region is shaped by the Vandal, Byzantine and Arab conquests, religious tensions, urban, rural and economic changes, which finally resulted in the integration of the Maghreb into the Islamic world. This introduction will attempt to place the individual contributions in larger contexts and to identify current desiderata in research

Keywords: North Africa, Vandals, Byzantine Empire, Arabs, urban and rural life, economy, religions, war, Islamic World, Romanization, Arabization, Islamization

Late antique North Africa[1] has been the subject of a steadily increasing amount of research in recent decades.[2] The Vandal realm has now been relatively well covered, whereas the Byzantine and Early Arabian periods have only received comparably little attention in recent years and appear to be a "forgotten transition".[3] At the same time, research focused on the core regions of Africa Proconsularis and Byzacena. Whereas regions such as Cyrenaica and Tripolitania have been in the focus of research since the second half of the 20th century, other parts of the late antique Maghreb, especially the Mauritanian provinces, have been studied much less in recent decades. In the period between AD 500 and 1000, three phases

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This is the introduction to our themed section *Africa 500-1000. New Perspectives for historical and archaeological research*, guest editors: Roland Steinacher, Paolo Tedesco and Philipp Margreiter. To read all related articles, please access: dx.doi.org/10.1553/medievalworlds_no16_2022.

1 Ancient geographical terminology allotted what we nowadays define as North Africa or Mediterranean Africa in a Western and an Eastern part: *Libye (*Λιβύη)/Libya and Egypt. The roughly 1,000 kilometers of desert separating the tiny coastal belt of Tripolitania from the Cyrenaica marked a frontier line in between these zones. During the Punic Wars (264-146 BCE), the Latin term *Africa* appeared in Roman politics and literature, referring to the province established after 146 BCE. Africa Proconsularis roughly comprised the territory of present-day Tunisia, the northeast of Algeria, and the coast of western Libya (Tripolitania) along the Gulf of Sirte. Furthermore, the Roman organization west of the Proconsularis comprised Numidia and the Mauretanian provinces. The Arabs basically continued using these divisions. While the concept of the Maghreb (al-Maghrib al-Kabīr) embraced the Atlas Mountains and the coastal plains of modern Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya (continuing the ancient concept of separating Egypt from the western regions), Ifrīqiya referred to modern Tunisia and eastern Algeria as well as Tripolitania. Thus, Ifrīqiya basically comprised the territories of the former Roman province of Africa.

2 See now ed. Hitchner, *North Africa in Antiquity*.

3 Stevens and Conant, Introduction, 9.

of conquest took place that shaped the political, cultural, and social structures and societies in North Africa in different but lasting ways. Of the Vandal, Byzantine and Arab conquests, the latter probably had the most far-reaching influence with the spread of Islam and the integration of the region into the Arab world. In this collection, we would like to draw attention to what we believe are still desiderata for North African history and archaeology between AD 500 and 1000.

The essays in this collection were originally presented at the conference *Africa 500-1000. New Perspectives for historical and archaeological research*, 14-16 November 2018 in Tübingen. This interdisciplinary collection adapts a *longue durée* perspective on main transitions and transformations, such as external and internal characteristics and connections of North Africa to the Mediterranean and trans-Saharan world. This introduction is intended to set the individual contributions of the volume in their respective broader historical and archaeological frameworks. One focus of this publication is the period of transition from Byzantine Africa to early Islamic Ifrīqiya during the 7th and 8th centuries. Two recent conference publications dealt exclusively with this period.[4]

As Jonathan P. Conant demonstrated, late Roman and earliest medieval written sources reflect two perspectives: theological and military conflicts, religious changes and confessional controversy left their mark from the late Roman period to the Islamic age. Apart from the major conquests, continuous uprisings and conflicts between the Vandals, Byzantines, Berber tribal coalitions, the provincial population, and Arab ghazis shaped late antique North Africa. Archaeological data appears vital for writing a satisfactory history of late Byzantine and Early Islamic North Africa.[5] Recent research shows continuity concerning urban and social life. Not every urban or rural site was simply abandoned. What we see is a complex and multilayered process of transition.[6] The increasing need for security among urban and rural residents culminated in the construction of fortifications throughout North Africa beginning in the 6th century.[7] In addition to the Byzantine fortresses and later the Arab *ribāts*, fortified farms and homesteads, as well as fortified settlements, which are summarized under the umbrella term *qṣur*, were increasingly built in the hinterland. This process of fortification continued in some regions until the Arab period.[8]

Geographical Overview

North of the African deserts, three areas (apart from Egypt with the Nile), had a regular supply of water and therefore could support settled populations as well as produce enough crops, barley, oil, and other products for export: Cyrenaica, Tripolitania, and North-West Africa

4 One conference held at Dumbarton Oaks in 2012 had a specific historical approach. *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam* by Susan T. Stevens and Conathan P. Conant was published in 2016. The conference held in Rome in 2013, organized by Anna Leone, Ralf Bockmann and Philipp von Rummel, had a distinctive archaeological approach. *Africa – Ifriqiya. Continuity and Change in North Africa from the Byzantine to the Early Islamic Age* was published 2020.

5 Conant, Forgotten transition, 11; detailed in Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*.

6 Wickham, Africa – Ifrīqiya conclusions, 317.

7 Merrills, *Byzantine Period*, 400-401.

8 Mattingly *et al.*, Fortified Farms, 167-188; Stevens and Conant, Introduction, 9.

north of the Atlas Mountains.[9] Sallust and other authors provided the legend of the *Philaeni* brothers from Carthage, creating a border by literary means. According to Sallust, when Carthage and the Greek cities in the Pentapolis tried to agree on a border in Libya, two pairs of athletes set out from Carthage and Cyrene on the same day, each pair running towards the other city. When the runners met, the Carthaginian pair had covered more ground. Accused of cheating by the Greeks, the Carthaginians swore solemnly that they had followed all rules and eventually consented to be buried alive at the meeting point. This sacrifice was meant to underline their rightful claim. Thereafter, the territory between that spot and Carthage would become part of the Carthaginian domain. The border was marked by two pillars labeled the "Altars of the Philaeni", Φιλαίνων Βωμοί.[10]

The spot described by Sallust was approximately halfway between modern Ra's Lanuf and El Agheila. In 1937, the Italian colonial government erected a modern *Arae Philaenorum* some 30 kilometers from this place at the Libyan Coastal Highway (Via Balbia) to commemorate the Roman past of the new Libyan colony. In 1973, the revolutionary leader Muammar al Gaddafi, who considered the landmark a sign of the Italian domination of Libya, ordered the arch to be destroyed to stress the unity of modern Libya, which today again is separated into Western Tripolitania and Eastern Cyrenaica.[11]

The tiny coastal belt of Tripolitania is separated from Cyrenaica by about 1,000 kilometers of desert, but from its ancient centers Oea (Tripoli), Sabratha and Leptis Magna to the Gulf of Gabès, a traveler had to manage only 300 kilometers of waterless areas. A wide coastal plain, the Gefara, stretches just west of Leptis to the mainland opposite Meninx (Djerba). The frontier at the *Arae Philaenorum* described above marks off the areas we will deal with, the large region of northwestern Africa that includes Tripolitania, the Roman provinces of Africa Proconsularis, and the two kingdoms Mauretaniae and Numidia.

The Arab concept of the Maghreb (al-Maghrib al-Kabīr) embraces the Atlas Mountains and the coastal plains of modern Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, and Libya. The Atlas Mountain range comprises four general regions: the Middle Atlas, High Atlas and Anti-Atlas in modern-day Morocco; the Saharan Atlas in Algeria, marking the northern edge of the great desert; the Tell Atlas in Algeria and Tunisia; and finally, the Aurès Mountains.[12] From the Mediterranean Sea to the Sahara, the cultivated land in Roman times stretched on average 300 kilometers deep. The 2,600 kilometers of watered plains that ran from the Atlantic Ocean to the *Arae Philaenorum* became one of the most important agricultural landscapes of the Roman Empire. Modern Morocco (Mauretania Tingitana with its capital Tingis/Tanger), northern Algeria (Mauretania Caesariensis with its capital Caesarea; later, under Septimius Severus, Numidia became a province of its own) and Tunisia (Africa Proconsularis) share a Roman past with parts of Europe and the Middle East.[13]

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9 Polybius, *Histories* 3, 39, 2; 10, 40, 7, ed. and trans. Paton, vol. 2, 90-91; Sallust, *De bello Iugurthino* 19, 3, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 176; cf. Huß, Pentapolis, 523; cf. Steinacher, When not in Rome, 440-442.

10 Sallust, *De bello Iugurthino* 79, ed. and trans. Rolfe, 298-300: *Carthaginienses in eo loco Philaenis fratribus aras consecravere* [...]; cf. Lancel, *Carthage*, 92-94; Paul, *Historical Commentary*, 198-200.

11 Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity*, 54-58; the background of Italian colonial archaeology in Libya: Altekamp, Italian colonial archaeology, 55-72; Munzi, Italian archaeology; Abitino, Le are dei Fileni.

12 See Toral in this collection.

13 Hobson, *North African Boom*, 29-32; Shaw, *Environment and Society*; Lepelley and Lancel, Africa, 182-206, cf. the maps 189 and 191; Huß, Afrika 1. Begriffsgeschichte, 3. Römische Provinz; Alföldi, Geschichte, 43-44; Bouchenaki, Numidie, 75-79; Fentress, *Numidia and the Roman Army*, 6-17.

Figure 1: Map of North Africa between AD 500 and 1000 (© Philipp Margreiter)

Colonial and post-Colonial Research Fields and Problems

Research on the named areas is overshadowed by several problematic backgrounds: one of the complicating factors is the colonial past of Libya, Tunisia, and Algeria. In these countries, as well as in France, 19th- and 20th-century political issues were often projected back into antiquity by scholars. Anticolonial circles asserted a low level of "Romanization" and advocated a strong local Berber identity. French as well as Italian intellectuals, however, tended to create a master narrative using the Roman past of North Africa to claim it as a part of ancient Europe. Both French and Italians in North Africa presented themselves as the direct and natural successors of the Romans.[14]

The "otherness" of North Africa (in terms of the Arabs and Berbers, with their Islamic culture and tribal and nomadic societies) was countered by the conscious association of the colonizer with the Roman presence. It was comforting for the French and Italian armies on campaign in the remote desert and mountain margins to find traces of the earlier penetration of the Roman legions into the same spaces.[15]

Roughly speaking, the Arab history of the regions was pictured as a decline, while the Roman past appeared as a period of prosperous and rightful rule that had now been re-established by the French colonial masters.[16]

14 Fentress, Romanizing the Berbers; Mattingly, Being Roman; Mattingly, Africa: A landscape of opportunity; MacMullen, *Romanization*, 30-50; Keay and Terrenato, *Italy and the West*; overview on 'Romanization' in Africa: Lepelley, L'Afrique; discussion of research between 1975 and 1995: Mattingly and Hitchner, Roman Africa; Steinacher, When not in Rome, 442-445.

15 Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power, and Identity*, 55; cf. Fenwick, North Africa (history of archaeology), 512-513. After 1830 (French) archaeological research was part of an imperialist discourse justifying colonization by stressing the "otherness" of Africans. See the contribution of Bonnie Effros in this collection. Cf. Fenwick, Archaeology and the search; Lorcin, Rome and France in Africa.

16 Cf. Mattingly, Vulgar and weak "Romanization".

Another problematic issue is the certain tendency to study the macro-region of North Africa as a singular unity. Upcoming investigations should aim to create a regional perspective. In his recently-published study on Numidia in the early Roman period, Stefan Ardeleanu highlighted the heterogeneity of the evidence within the region. Previous research with its holistic approaches did not cover these nuances.[17]

The different regions are immensely varied in their set-ups. Africa Proconsularis was one of the most highly urbanized regions in the Imperium Romanum, while Numidia and Tripolitania had, in addition to urban agglomerations, large rural hinterland areas. Early intensive surveys and non-stratigraphic excavations in the French and Italian colonial era produced an enormous number of archaeological sites but also the loss of large amounts of information. In contrast to the focus on the pre-Roman to Byzantine periods, the archaeology of the early Islamic period has attracted more attention in the last fifteen years.[18]

The concept of a "Romanized" belt of cities at the sea and tough resistance by local Berber tribes (labeled *Mauri* by the Romans) had become generally accepted since René Cagnat's (1852-1937) study on the Roman occupation first published in 1892.[19] In 1976, the French scholar Marcel Bénabou published his book *La Résistance africaine à la romanisation* and provided a concept of indigenous cultural endurance. It became "the most sophisticated exponent of the resistance thesis".[20] In Bénabou's view, Africans had their own religious beliefs, and maintained their Punic or Libyan/African languages and personal names. Romano-Africans demonstrated their "Africanness". The controversies surrounding Bénabou's early post-colonial ideas have been intense.[21]

Bonnie Effros' contribution to this collection, *A New Age of Saint Augustine? Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch, François Bourgade, and the Christians of North Africa (1838-1858)*, illustrates the background of early archaeological activity at the beginning of the colonial age in North Africa. Antoine-Louis-Adolphe Dupuch (1800-1856) served as the first Bishop of Algiers in the newly conquered French colony. His contemporary François Bourgade (1806-1866), who served as a priest in both Algiers and Tunis, was a French missionary and philosopher. Both men were convinced that physical evidence of the late antique Christian past might lay a powerful historical foundation for religiosity in French North Africa. Arriving in the 1830s, Dupuch and Bourgade labored under significantly different circumstances in North Africa from those enjoyed by their successors Charles Martial Allemand Lavigerie

17 Ardeleanu, Numidia Romana?.

18 Leone *et al.*, Africa – Ifrīqiya Introduction, 1; Greenhalgh, *Colonial Destruction*; Effros, *Incidental Archaeologists.*

19 Cagnat, *L'armée romaine d'Afrique*.

20 Mattingly, From one Colonialism to another, 58-59.

21 Bénabou, *La résistance africaine*. Critical comments on Bénabou's thesis: Leveau, La situation coloniale de l'Afrique romaine; Fentress, *Numidia and the Roman Army* and Whittaker, Land and Labour in North Africa (variation of resistance comparable to other provinces of the Empire); responses: Bénabou, Les Romains ont-ils conquis l'Afrique? and Bénabou, L'Afrique et la culture romaine as well as Bénabou, Tacfarinas. Thébert, Romanisation et déromanisation en Afrique criticized Bénabou's focus on ethnic groups and pleaded for an analysis of social formation in North Africa. Fentress, Romanizing the Berbers, 4: "This strictly Marxist approach left culture out of the picture, thereby oversimplifying it." Elizabeth Fentress follows Thébert's recommendations and develops an outline of the social preconditions for the "Romanization", avoiding a simple opposition between the Numidian/Berber peoples and the Punic/later Roman settlers to provide a basis for an analysis including cultural patterns.

(1825-1892), the archbishop of Carthage and Algiers, and the White Father Paul-Albert Delattre (d. 1932). During military conflicts, these men were seeking to convert local Muslims, as well as mediating between Muslim and French military authorities. They also embarked on a quest for Christian remains, actions that transpired during brutal colonial repression of the indigenous population. These ancient monuments and artifacts became the mainstay of a colonialist narrative of the rebirth of Christianity in the lands made famous nearly one and a half millennia earlier by Saint Augustine of Hippo.

North Africa between Vandal and Arab Rule

As mentioned earlier, the Vandal period (AD 429-534) has been scrutinized in recent decades in several monographs, congress publications, essays, and exhibition catalogues.[22] The subsequent Byzantine conquests have also been extensively studied through numerous publications on the political, military, and cultural history of the Justinianic age, including Procopius of Caesarea as the most important author of the 6th century. Research on post-Justinianic North Africa is comparatively poor. Since Charles Diehl's *L'Afrique Byzantine* of 1896, no overall monographic study of Byzantine North Africa (AD 534-698/709) has been published, which thus represents one of the major desiderata of contemporary North African studies. The period of the exarchate of Africa has received little attention in recent years, due to the limited source base and the lack of basic archaeological research.

Andrew Merrills' *A Subaltern's view of Early Byzantine Africa? Reading Corippus as History* analyses a major source shedding light on the early Byzantine occupation of North Africa (c.533-551). Corippus' *Iohannis* is the last classical epic poem to be written in Latin. The poem has conventionally been viewed as an uncritical celebration of the imperial occupation, thanks to its classicizing imagery and the panegyric aspects of its celebration of recent military successes.[23] Andrew Merrills argues that this celebration was tempered with a more critical re-telling of the first fifteen years of the Byzantine occupation. This is presented in a metadiegetic flashback, in the voice of an African officer in the imperial army of occupation. Merrills suggests that the catalogue of disasters presented here – internecine warfare, social upheaval and plague – reflects the ambivalent attitude of contemporary Africans to the occupation itself.

Merrills' contribution touches on another desideratum, the post-Roman Berber regna in the 5th and 6th centuries, for which Procopius and Corippus are our only sources. Christian Courtois labeled them as "royaume berbères".[24] English scholars refer to them as "desert kingdoms".[25] These dominions were structurally heterogeneous entities that emerged at different times on the periphery of the Vandal Empire and were organized in post-Roman structures.[26] The study of the Berbers is also linked to the study of non-sedentary, nomadic or pastoralist population groups in North Africa. Nomads and pastoralists play a far greater

22 Steinacher, *Vandalen*; Merrills and Miles, *Vandals*; Modéran and Perrin, *Vandales*; Roberto, *Il secolo dei Vandali*; Castritius, *Die Vandalen*; Vössing, *Vandalen*; Conant, *Staying Roman*; cf. now the precise overview from Conant, Vandals, 75-90.

23 Merrills, *Byzantine Period*, 402.

24 Courtois, *Vandales*, 325-352.

25 Brett and Fentress, *Berbers*, 77-79.

26 Steinacher, *Vandalen*, 259-267; Faure, *The Army*, 168; Merrills, *Mauri*; Syrbe, Civitates Nordafrika, 61-62.

role in the North African political and economic system than previously assumed. Historical as well as ethnological studies showed that these economical systems often functioned only as a complement to a complex state and sedentary population, since a permanent exchange of trade goods between mobile and settled populations is necessary.[27] Also drift routes guaranteed by the state for seasonal migrations were in the interest of both parties. During the Roman imperial period, the empire established the *praefectus gentis*, who guaranteed drift paths and grazing grounds to nomads, but also levied taxes and recruited auxiliary troops on behalf of the state.[28] This complex interaction could be jeopardized by any change of rule, such as the Vandal or Byzantine conquest, and endanger the livelihood of the nomads and pastoralists. Against this background, the military conflicts with the Berbers in the 6th-8th centuries must be reconsidered in current and future research.[29]

In the 580s, the military and civilian administration of Africa finally merged, and Constantinople established the Exarchate of Carthage, which existed until the end of Byzantine rule. Under Emperor Maurice (582-602), the African exarchate encompassed nearly the territories that had formed Justinian's prefecture of the year 533.[30] After Egypt had been conquered by Arab armies in 641, they advanced into Cyrenaica a few years later and shortly afterwards into Byzacena. In 647, the Byzantine exarch Gregory tried to make himself emperor and moved his capital to Sufetula (Sbeïtla) fighting the Arabs. It was not until around 670 that the Arabs became active again. Their commanders had founded Kairouan as an Islamic military camp in the Sahel, as the coasts were successfully defended by the Byzantines and the mountainous regions by the Berbers, sometimes even together. Carthage fell to the Arabs in 695.[31] The charismatic Berber princess Kahena and her warriors from the Aurès put up fierce resistance but were defeated by the Umayyad Uqba ibn Nafi'. Even though the Arab conquest (AD 647-709) has been brought to the fore by the work of Walter Kaegi and has received focused attention in recent years, the transition from Byzantine to Arab rule remains an under-researched topic. The lack of Roman sources complicates the historical narrative of the late 6th and 7th centuries in many ways. Arabic sources that report on this period in turn date from much later centuries, which makes a closer critical examination of them no less important.

Cityscapes and Housing in Transition

North Africa's cityscapes have been a well-studied subject in recent decades and showed a long-term transformation from the classical Roman city to the early medieval Arab towns.[32] The classical urban elements and public spaces began to change in the late 4th and beginning of the 5th century.[33] The religious impact on urban organization began in this century and ended in the 6th/7th century AD. In this period, the fora already lost or were in the process

27 Barth, *Nomads*, 9-10.

28 Steinacher, *Vandalen*, 265; Weiß, praefectus gentis, 101-116.

29 Steinacher, *Vandalen*, 260-262; Syrbe, *Nomaden Nordafrika*; Faure, *The Army*, 162-163.

30 Merrills, *Byzantine Period*, 392-394.

31 Merrills, *Byzantine Period*, 399-402.

32 For a broad overview of the transformation of late antique and early medieval urbanism in the West, see Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 591-692, on Africa in particular 635-644.

33 Dufton, Fentress, *African Urbanism*, 177.

of losing their original function. In contrast to the urban change, North Africa shows extensive economic prosperity within these cities in the 5th century. Church building took on monumental proportions in the 5th and 6th centuries in the North African provinces.[34] Thus, the decline of "classical" urban elements did not necessarily affect the prosperity of cities and their inhabitants. Production areas moved into the former public buildings of the forum, baths or theatres, while the trend towards the growth of rural settlements can be observed in the surrounding areas of the cities.[35] The transformation of urban life started in North Africa even before the Vandals. Private architecture was continuously used as before and survived, while theaters and amphitheaters were gradually abandoned. Public baths were variously repaired, but some also vacated. Pagan temples were closed in 398-399 by imperial decree and became areas for new occupation or simply provided building material. A new feature during the Vandal era is urban burials in abandoned areas and buildings.[36]

The Byzantine conquest seems to have had a direct impact on urban architecture in the 6th century. City laws aimed at reorganizing public and private space. Public areas in particular were reclaimed by the state. Fortified complexes are recorded all over the North African provinces as a result of extensive building programs (e.g., Dougga, Haïdra, Timgad, Tébessa). The Byzantine fortifications were the most prominent features of the cityscapes and often built over former public buildings and areas, like fora, baths or theaters that had already lost their original function.[37]

Furthermore, the fortification of rural areas can also be observed. In addition to state or communal buildings, the rural population began to erect defensive and refuge buildings as well. The imitation of military *quadriburgi* and *centenaria* by the civilian population is documented in Tripolitania.[38] A regional study of Byzantine fortifications in the Dougga region, which examines military fortifications, city walls and rural defensive and refuge structures, as well as the subsequent use of these in the Arab period, is currently being conducted by Philipp Margreiter as part of his dissertation at the University of Erlangen and Mainz. Despite Denys Pringle's monograph on the Byzantine fortifications of North Africa, there is still no comprehensive study on the transformation of these buildings until the *ribāts* in Arab time.[39]

Since the late Roman period, the larger urban centers had begun to show signs of deurbanization and reduction. It is unclear whether the reduction of the towns by the Byzantine city walls also corresponds to the actually inhabited settlement area of the 6th century. Cities such as Leptis Magna or Sabratha diminished significantly and were finally abandoned in the late 7th or early 8th century.[40] From the mid-sixth century onwards, urban housing in general became simpler. The transformation of the Mediterranean from a zone of connection to

34 Merrills, *Byzantine Period*, 402-404.

35 Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 636-638.

36 Witschel, *Krise, Rezession, Stagnation*, 285-306; Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 635-638; Leone, *Changing Townscapes*, 281-284.

37 Pringle, *Defence of Byzantine Africa*; Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 638.

38 Mattingly *et al.*, Fortified farms, 187-188.

39 Most recently Anna Leone gave a brief overview of the development of Arab ribāts from Byzantine forts. She also emphasized that a systematic discussion was sometimes lacking (Leone, Land, forts, harbours, 288-289).

40 Leone, *Changing Townscapes*, 284-286; Fenwick, Africa to Ifrīqiya, 29-30; Fenwick, Classical cities Ifrīqiya, 139-140; Leone, Land, forts, harbours, 283-288.

a frontier is clearly seen in the great port cities of Islamic North Africa, such as Tripoli, Tunis and Sousse, which had large, fortified harbor facilities for warships. At this time the North African coast was probably subject to increased Byzantine attacks. This might explain the reduction in number and size of coastal cities. This phenomenon can, however, be observed in Syria and Palestine as well.[41]

Most of the former Roman city centers were used as industrial or agrarian production complexes in the early Middle Ages, a process that had already started in the late Byzantine period. Corisande Fenwick showed the urban diversity in Islamic North Africa. After the conquest of Carthage by the Arabs in 698, the city ceded its rank as provincial capital to Kairouan and Tunis. This loss of importance was accompanied by a radical reduction in the size of the city. Few rural communities settled in the former metropolis during the early Middle Ages and settlement probably ceased completely in the 9th or 10th century. In Sbeïtla (Sufetula), continuous urban settlement can be traced until the 9th century, but the town was divided into a series of fortified complexes around three fortlets in the south, the forum, an anonymous temple, and the amphitheater in the north of the urban area. The new Islamic urban centers were characterized by a mosque, central marketplaces, or the governor's residence.[42] Ancient towns like Hadrumetum (Sousse), Sicca Veneria (El Kef), Vaga (Béja) or Oea (Tripoli) have remained important urban centers in the region until today. Because of the continuous settlement and modern buildings, these sites are nearly unstudied archaeologically. Data concerning medieval urban developments mostly derives from less important and smaller sites.[43]

Religions in Transition

Christianity remained a major religion in North Africa, and churches dominated the urban landscape for centuries.[44] Over time some churches were transformed into production areas, markets, and some eventually into mosques. The new Arabic settlers were seemingly placed in separated quarters, as in Volubilis, Tlemcen and Tahert, where we can identify changes in housing, eating and consumption practices in the 8th century.[45] Architectural manifestations of Islamization are a main issue of archaeological research. In her contribution *Islamizing Berber Lifestyles*, Elizabeth Fentress demonstrates how Arabic house types in medieval North Africa can be traced back to settlers from the Arabian Peninsula. The spread of Islam in North Africa probably took place in several phases over centuries. Fentress attempts to capture a material aspect of Islamization among Berbers in residential architecture and dietary practices. Like "Romanization", "Islamization" came about by emulation, particularly among the

41 Fenwick, Classical cities Ifrīqiya, 142; Leone, Land, forts, harbours, 282-283; Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion,* 261-266.

42 Leone, *Changing Townscapes*, 286-287; Fenwick, Africa to Ifrīqiya, 15-16, 20-26; Conant, Forgotten transition, 15-16, Fenwick, Classical cities Ifrīqiya, 142-149.

43 Witschel, *Krise, Rezession, Stagnation*, 285-306; Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 639-644; von Rummel, Transformation, 107; Fenwick, Classical cities Ifrīqiya, 138-139; Fenwick, *Arab Conquest*, 426-430.

44 Cf. generally Shaw, *Sacred Violence*; Fenwick, *Arab Conquest*, 433-434.

45 Fenwick, Africa to Ifrīqiya, 27-28.

élites, by a slow change of the general habitus, with very different starting points for the Arabic and the Berber communities. Arab settlers and warriors conveyed Islam to newly-founded or organized cities such as Tunis, Kairouan, or Tripoli. During the 7th and 8th centuries, many Berber communities converted to Islam.

In the first centuries of Islamic rule, a considerable part of the population remained Christian and spoke Latin.[46] African saints such as Cyprian, Felicitas or Perpetua were worshiped in different places around Europe.[47] As late as the 10th century, forty-seven bishoprics existed in Ifrīqiya. The papal chancellery in Rome corresponded with African bishops up until the 11th century.[48] Christian communities in formerly Roman cities largely turned to Islam during the 9th and 10th centuries, as did the inhabitants of the steppe and desert zones. The process of Arabization was much faster than Islamization.[49] Archaeologically, we can comprehend this process partly through the construction of mosques and the decline of Christian ecclesiastical buildings.[50]

We can only partly describe Jewish life in North Africa. Archaeological and epigraphic remains at various sites provide evidence of Jewish communities during Late Antiquity and the Early Middle Ages. A cemetery containing several catacombs dating to the 3rd and 4th centuries at Gamarth near Carthage has been known since the 19th century, as well as the synagogue of Naro (Hammam-Lif) and roughly a dozen other Jewish houses of worship.[51] Augustine mentions Jewish communities at Utica, Simittra, Thusurus, and Oea.[52] Justinian's government started to restrict religious life and among other things forbade the construction of synagogues. In 632 the Prefect of Africa enforced the baptism of members of the Jewish community. We know of hostilities between Jewish communities, the Heraclian dynasty and local Catholic clergy.[53] Ibn Khaldun stated that the Jarawa and seven other Berber tribes were Judaized.[54] Al-Kahina, the religious and military leader of resistance to the Muslim conquest of the Maghreb, was repeatedly identified as a Jewish princess. Modern research questioned this, as well as the existence of Jewish Berber groups in general.[55] All in all, Jewish communities acted together with the Christian majority, maybe also in fighting the Arab invaders.

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46 Leisten, Afrika, 225-226; Lancel, *Tunisie*, 188-195 (Latin inscriptions after the 7th century); Lewicki, Une langue romane oubliée, 428-430; Seston, Sur les derniers temps; Talbi, Ifriqiya.

47 Conant, Europe and the African Cult of Saints; Wickham, *Framing the early Middle Ages*, 726-728.

48 Conant, *Staying Roman*, 362-370; Handley, End of African Christianity, 291-310; Courtois, Grégoire VII, 96-122, 193-226.; Hettinger, *Beziehungen des Papsttums*.

49 Leone *et al.*, Africa – Ifrīqiya Introduction, 3.

50 Comparative studies on the Arab conquest and Islamization of North Africa and its citizens have appeared in recent years: Aillet *et al.*, *Islamisation et arabisation*; Brett, Conversion Berbers; Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 130-140.

51 Hirschberg, *History of the Jews in North Africa,* vol. 1: 21, 23; cemetery at Gamarth: 50; Taieb-Carlen, *Jews of North Africa*, 4-22.

52 Harkins, Nuancing Augustine's Hermeneutical Jew.

53 Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion*, 84-91 and notes 54-55, 292-293; Chouraqui, Between east and west; Stillman, *Jews of Arab Lands*; Gubbay and Levy, The Sephardim; Rachmuth, Juden in Nordafrika.

54 Kitāb al-ʿIbar 6, 107, ed. Šabbūḥ 1, 208-209. Cf. Hirschberg, Problem of the Judaized Berbers, 317, note 8 translates the passage "wakadhalika rubbamd kdnd ba'du ha'ula'i al-Berber ddnubidin al-Yahuzdiya" as "and so it may be that some of those Berbers professed Judaism".

55 Hirschberg, Problem of the Judaized Berbers, 313-340, at 339: "Of all the known movements of conversion to Judaism and incidents of Judaizing, those connected with the Berbers and Sudanese in Africa are the least authenticated. Whatever has been written on them is extremely questionable."

The Rural Landscape in Transition

In contrast to the extensively excavated urban sites, only a handful of rural sites have been well studied.[56] Another major challenge is to distinguish between urban and rural sites in Late Antiquity and early medieval North Africa. In less urbanized regions of Tripolitania, southern Byzancena, Numidia or Mauretania, archaeologists can clearly differentiate between urban and rural landscapes, whereas in more densely urbanized regions (e. g. the hinterland of Africa Proconsularis), this distinction proves much more difficult. Furthermore, the territories of urban settlements bordered on private or imperial estates, tribal lands, or confederations of smaller settlements.[57]

The difference between a city and its surrounding territory was not dependent on size or production centers, but rather on legal status as well as a concentration of administrative, economic, cultural, and religious features. Cities provided markets and agricultural centers. Ancient and medieval North Africa has been studied through several important surveys that broadly examined both urban and rural regions. Beginning in the French colonial period, large-scale documentation by the military formed the basis of the *Atlas archéologique de l'Algérie* and the *Atlas archéologique de la Tunisie*, targeted regional surveys in the 20th and 21st centuries documenting the pre-Roman, Roman and Islamic sites. In Libya, the UNESCO Survey and its successor projects have investigated the coastal hinterland and the Saharan region. In Tunisia, surveys focused primarily on the northern half of the country, both in the coastal and inland regions.[58]

Surveys around Carthage,[59] in the Segermes Valley[60] and the region around Dougga[61] show that the inhabited space inside the urban settlements was reduced from the 4th century onwards, while the number of rural sites remained stable and peaked in the 5th and 6th centuries, followed by a fast decline in the 7th century. Philipp von Rummel suggests that while the cityscapes changed quickly, agricultural production remained stable, as shown by the large numbers of rural farm sites. Furthermore, von Rummel pointed out that this picture could be distorted by the dependence on fine ware for dating. Other regions like Byzancena, the coastal region of Tripolitania, or the region of Kasserine (Cillium) in North Africa were subject to different processes.[62] Some regions were abandoned in the 5th, 6th or 7th centuries; others were populated until the Arab conquest or beyond.[63]

56 For an overview on field surveys in North Africa, see Leone, Rural landscapes, 135-151.

57 von Rummel, Transformation, 108; de Vos Raaijmakers and Attoui, *Rus Africum I-IV*; De Vos Raaijmakers, *Rural Settlement*, 205.

58 For a summary of archaeological surveys in North Africa and their methodological challenges and possibilities, see Stone, Comparative Survey, 132-143.

59 Green, Atlas archéologique Tunisie; Green, Carthage Survey; Green, Canadian Carthage Survey; Green, *Carthaginian Countryside.*

60 Dietz *et al.*, *Africa Proconsularis*.

61 De Vos Raaijmakers and Attoui, *Rus Africum I*.

62 Von Rummel, Transformation; Hitchner, Kasserine Survey 1982-1986; Hitchner, Kasserine Survey 1987.

63 Leone, Rural landscapes, 151-154, 156; von Rummel, Transformation, 109-110; Fenwick, *Arab Conquest*, 431-432.

Fortified farms and villages have been perceived by researchers as a characteristic of rural settlement patterns in late antique North Africa that distinguishes these regions from others in the Roman Empire.[64] The emergence of fortified rural landscapes can be attributed to several causes: increasing insecurity in the provinces due to raids and depredations by nomadic tribal groups; troop reductions leading to the replacement of regular units by a militarized rural population; the display of status and influence within rural societies; as a symptom of an increase in violence (real or latent) within the Roman provinces; and as a general side effect of the decline of the state's monopoly on defense and violence along the southern frontiers.[65]

Looking at the longue durée perspective of these constructions, it is noticeable that fortified rural settlements are the norm rather than the exception in North Africa already between the 1st century BC and the 1st century AD. Only the Roman imperial period and the accompanying *Pax Romana* constitute a break in this practice.[66] Fortifications and intramural fortresses were again a defining feature in early medieval cities. The Byzantine fortresses were repurposed for Arab garrisons. Some fortified sites were newly erected. The Arabs based their defensive system on the Byzantine one, adapted it and built new forms. Early medieval Ifrīqiya was an intensely militarized landscape. Most major towns were garrisoned by Arab troops. By the end of the 8th century, *ribāts*, a new type of fortification, were constructed along the Tunisian coastline.[67]

Integration into the Islamic World

In the 7th century, the Byzantine Empire was gripped by a crisis in which it was no longer able to effectively control some of its provinces. To understand the Arab conquest, one has to consider these backgrounds.[68] This slow process of recurrent invasions and conquests over a period of 50 years can be observed at various levels: urban topography, buildings, economy and trade, and social structures.[69] Again, a new military elite had taken over – a common occurrence in North African history.[70]

However, the attempt at a fast integration of the former Roman provinces into the caliphate failed. In 739-743 Berber confederacies rebelled against taxation under the Umayyad dynasty. During the first decades of Abbāsid rule, regional dynasties such as the Rustamids in 761 or the Idrīsids in 789 established separate states. In the 9th century, the Aghlabids

64 Goodchild, Roman Tripolitantia, 161-178; Goodchild, Limes, 65-76; Chavarría and Lewit, Late antique countryside, 23-24; Christie, Landscapes of change, 15-20; Sarantis, Fortifications Africa, 303-310.

65 Mattingly *et al.*, Fortified farms, 168. For a detailed discussion of the Berbers on the southern frontier of Byzantine North Africa, see Fentress and Wilson, Saharan Berber diaspora.

66 Mattingly *et al.*, Fortified farms, 168-169; Hitchner, Kasserine Survey 1982-1986; Hitchner, Kasserine Survey 1987; Mattingly and Hitchner, Roman Africa, 189-196.

67 Fenwick, Africa to Ifrīqiya, 26, 32; von Rummel Transformation, 113-114.

68 Walter Kaegi's works represent the latest research on the Arab conquest of North Africa. See, among others, Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion* and Kaegi, Islamic conquest.

69 Leone *et al.*, Africa – Ifrīqiya Introduction, 2-3.

70 Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 21-22; Bosworth, *Islamic Dynasties*, 25-32; Savage, *Gateway*.

took control over Ifrīqiya and Tripolitania.[71] Religion was used to justify the rule of an Islamic elite over the multi-confessional and multi-ethnic communities. That changed in the 10th and 11th centuries when Islam became majoritarian.[72]

Isabel Toral's contribution *The Umayyad Dynasty and the Western Maghreb. A Transregional Perspective* deals with the integration of the Maghreb into the Umayyad Empire between AD 700 and 1000. In the process, North Africa moved from its initially peripheral position within the Islamic world under the Umayyads and Fatimids to a self-centered political landscape toward the end of the first millennium. Still, Islamic North Africa poses a variety of problems for modern historical and archaeological scholars. At the same time, the region is well suited to studying Arabic empire building, as well as Islamization. Finally, changes in urban, economic, and cultural structures in the Maghreb can be described in more detail than in Mesopotamia or Syria.

Economic Changes

Early on, archaeology revealed the economic links of North Africa within the ancient Mediterranean world. After a last economic boom in the region, exports slowly began to decline from the 5th century onwards. After the Byzantine conquest, African amphorae started to become rare in the Mediterranean. Exports of African red slip ware (ARS) to Constantinople and the Aegean remained strong until the 6th and 7th centuries. African red slip ware also continued to reach the major urban metropolises of the East, such as Alexandria, Antioch, Beirut, and Caesarea. In turn, eastern amphorae reached North Africa until the 7th century. In the Western Mediterranean, African red slip ware can be recorded in urban centers, as well as military posts, until the 6th and 7th, and in some cases even the 8th century. The widespread use of the ARS thus shows that North Africa was an important economic center in the Mediterranean region even after the Arab conquest, and that it continued to have connections to the most important cities. Written sources report on the trade of clothing and textiles in North Africa. A particularly long connection seems to have existed between North Africa, Sicily, and Italy, even at a time when all other trans-Mediterranean contacts broke off. However, the main methodological problem in the study of trade contacts lies in dating the ceramic evidence in medieval layers. The Dougga Survey of Mariette de Vos showed the end of classic fine ware dating methods and the gradual substitution by local production types.[73] Further regional and local pottery studies were able to shed more light on the extent and chronology of Africa's economic decline at the end of Antiquity.[74] The numismatic evidence presents a different picture with a supra-regional connection to various Mediterranean currencies. A sharp decline in the African economy cannot be detected in the Late Byzantine period. The 7th century clearly shows an increase in gold issues, a high level of internal monetization and a continued exchange with the West until at least 700.[75]

71 Fenwick, Africa to Ifrīqiya, 33.

72 Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 2.

73 Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 1-4; de Vos, *Terra, acqua, olio*, 38-46, 56, 71.

74 Reynolds, From Vandal Africa, 129-158, 168-170; Conant, Forgotten transition, 11-13; Leone, Cultural transitions, 265; Leone, Land, forts, harbours, 290; Bonifay, *Economy*.

75 Morrisson, African economy, 198; Merrills, *Byzantine Period*, 395-398; Morrisson, *Coinage in Africa*.

The economic and cultural integration of Ifrīqiya into the Abbāsid Empire, and the Islamic world has received increasing attention in recent decades. Between the Arab conquest and the end of Aghlabid rule, we observe a shift in trade patterns in Ifrīqiya. Trade routes, markets and agricultural areas developed in response to the changing political regimes and economic relations.[76]

The changing trade patterns between the 9th and the 11th century can be related to Ifrīqiya's more intensive connection to the rest of the Abbāsid Empire and the social and economic reorientation of North Africa away from a Roman north-south focus and towards a more east-west orientation. Antonia Bosanquet's article *Maritime Trade from 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya: Insights from Legal Sources* deals with literary sources, especially legal texts on maritime trade in North Africa from the 9th century onwards. In connection with trade, *ribāts* emerged along the coastline and significant coastal settlements emerged from these fortified complexes during the 10th century, which played a major role as a stopover between *al-Andalus* and the Middle East.

Sicily – A Look Over the Edge

In several contributions to this volume and to the original conference, Sicily, as the closest Mediterranean island, proved to be an important comparative example for many long-term processes of Late Antiquity and the early Middle Ages that took place in North Africa between AD 500 and 1000. Long before Sicily became part of the Islamic world, trade and exchange contacts existed between Byzantines and Muslims on the island. The urban, rural, economic, or social changes between AD 500 and 1000 were strongly influenced by North Africa.[77] First raids from Carthage started in 652, followed by a long series of conflicts from 827 to 902 in which the island was conquered step by step by Aghlabids and Fatimids. The exact circumstances of the 9th-century conquest and the extent of local Byzantine resistance are still largely unknown.[78] As in North Africa, new urban centers such as Balarm (Palermo) emerged under Islamic rule.[79]

Latin- and Greek-speaking Christians dispersed to the west and east of the island, as did a sizable Jewish population. Several waves of migration from North Africa brought Sunni and Shiite Arabs as well as Berbers to the island.[80] Under the Kalbids, who constituted the Emiral dynasty in 948, Sicily even experienced a period of stability and economic prosperity. Palermo developed as one of the largest and richest cities of the Mediterranean at the time.[81]

Research shows that even late antique inland Sicily was connected to a broader Mediterranean network and exchange system. African tableware (ARS) and amphorae were widely scattered in the hinterland. During the 8th and 9th centuries, these exchanges declined, and

76 Fenwick, *Arab Conquest*, 431-433.

77 Davis-Secord, *Sicily*, 6-11, 72-73.

78 Granara, *Muslim Sicily*, 4, 9-10; Molinari, Sicily, 335-336.

79 Granara, *Muslim Sicily*, 12.

80 Comparative studies on the transformation and Islamization of Sicily in the Middle Ages have appeared in the last years: Aillet *et al.*, *Islamisation et arabisation*; Arcifa *et al.*, *Dynamiques l'islamisation*; Cressier and Nef, *Fatimides*.

81 Granara, *Muslim Sicily*, 25-26, 34; Molinari, Sicily, 349-350. For a detailed overview of the history of the island between Constantinople and Rome in Late Antiquity, Byzantium, and the Islamic world in the early Middle Ages, see Davis-Secord, *Sicily*.

local production methods and ceramic forms emerged. Syracuse continued to be linked to the eastern Mediterranean. The ceramic repertoire of the 10th century resembles contemporary Tunisian tableware. Palermo, together with Fustat and Kairouan, formed one of the great centers of the Fatimid Empire's commercial networks.[82]

Rural settlement in the Byzantine and Islamic periods, on the other hand, is much better studied in Sicily. A series of surveys and a small number of systematic excavations allow insight into the transformation of the Sicilian rural landscape. Between the 3rd and the 5th centuries, we can trace a process of "monumentalization" of villas, a sign of the wealth of the owners, and of the reorganization of the agrarian system. From the 4th or 5th to the 8th century, some villas were still reoccupied. Other were reused in different ways for burials, as new housing estates, for technical or agricultural activities or as places of worship.[83] The Byzantine period is known in the eastern half of the island in the 8th and 9th centuries due to ceramic evidence. The Sicilian countryside was, compared to other Mediterranean regions, economically extremely vibrant until the 7th century. The settlement landscape was dominated by smaller villages. The 8th century, on the other hand, produced few material indicators. Following Arab attacks, Byzantine fortresses appeared. However, the rural population does not seem to have retreated to these fortified centers in this period.[84]

The two regions Africa and Sicily underwent similar transformation processes between AD 500 and 1000 under different conditions, which affected the landscape, the economy, and the multi-ethnic and multi-religious population. The highlighting of this transformation in Africa/Ifrīqiya and also in Sicily/Ṣiqilliya will have to be considered in future historical and archaeological research.

Summary

Most of the archaeological research in North Africa focuses on long-term processes and structural changes. The developments in urban and rural areas, such as the increasing reduction of urban area and the increase in rural settlement and economic goods, began as early as the 4th century and continued into the Arab era. The economic prosperity of the Vandal kingdom is evident in the export of important goods to the western, but also to the eastern Mediterranean, through the African amphorae and the African red slip ware. Similarly, trans-regional fine tableware remained widespread in North Africa until the beginning of the Early Byzantine period. During the late 6th and 7th centuries, the distribution within North Africa but also in the Mediterranean region diminished. The return to local and regional tableware makes it difficult to date it to the early Islamic period.[85]

While Vandal rule left few material traces, we see architectural restructuring in many cities in the Byzantine period, mainly in the fortification of the city centers and the construction of *castra* and city walls. During the 6th and 7th centuries, some urban centers, some of which had existed since pre-Roman times, were abandoned, while others still exist today as modern metropolises. Settlement centers disintegrated into smaller clusters or nuclei that made up only a fraction of the imperial city area. New Arab foundations such as Kairouan or

82 Molinari, Fortified settlements, 337; Molinari, Sicily, 349-350.

83 Castroraro Barba, Sicily before Muslims, 145, 170-177.

84 Molinari, Fortified settlements, 338-339; Molinari, Sicily, 342.

85 Witschel, *Krise, Rezession, Stagnation*, 285-306; Wickham, *Framing the Early Middle Ages*, 635-638; Leone, *Changing Townscapes*, 281-284.

Tunis set new accents in urban development for the Arab and Muslim population. In addition to these long-term developments in Late Antiquity, new processes in settlement, religious and consumption archaeology can be observed from the beginning of Arab rule on.[86]

Recent research shows that the Islamic conquest in the first centuries hardly interfered with urban life and Arab immigration was concentrated in the Kairouan area. Only a new military elite had come to power. Thus, today's Tunisia became the heartland of Arab Ifrīqiya, as it had previously been that of Vandal and Byzantine Africa. The *wali*, the Arab governor, succeeded the Byzantine exarch. This Arab office comprised similar competences in military and administrative matters. After 800, the economic potential of Ifrīqiya grew again, perhaps even exceeding that of Late Antiquity. The emergence of new cultural realities, now oriented towards Damascus, Baghdad and Cairo rather than Rome or Constantinople, was a long and gradual process.

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86 Fenwick, Africa to Ifrīqiya, 27-28.

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A New Age of Saint Augustine? Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch, François Bourgade, and the Christians of North Africa (1838-1858)

Bonnie Effros*

Antoine-Louis-Adolphe Dupuch (1800-1856) served as the first bishop of Algiers in the newly conquered French colony. His contemporary François Bourgade (1806-1866), who served as a priest in both Algiers and Tunis, was a French missionary and philosopher. Both men were convinced that physical evidence of the late antique Christian past might lay a powerful historical foundation for religiosity in French North Africa. Arriving in the 1830s, Dupuch and Bourgade labored under significantly different circumstances in North Africa than those of their successors Charles-Martial-Allemand Lavigerie (1825-1892), the archbishop of Carthage and Algiers, and the White Father Alfred-Louis Delattre (d. 1932). In the midst of military conflict, these men were seeking to convert local Muslims as well as mediating between Muslim authorities and French military authorities. They also embarked on a quest for Christian remains, actions that transpired in the midst of brutal colonial repression of the Indigenous population. These ancient monuments and artifacts became the mainstay of a colonialist narrative of the rebirth of Christianity in the lands made famous nearly one and a half millennia earlier by Saint Augustine of Hippo.

Keywords: Algeria, Colonialism, French armée d'Afrique, Christian archaeology, Hippo, Tunisia

The History of Christian Archaeology in the Maghreb

Since the 1980s, historians of European colonialism in the Maghreb have pointed to the manner in which the French repurposed Roman historical narratives to guide and legitimize the conquest that followed the invasion of Algiers in July 1830. French military officers alleged parallels between the Third Augustan Legion and the French *armée d'Afrique* to justify the first decades of French military activity and colonialism in the region. Framed in this manner, archaeological vestiges left by the Roman army became a practical road map of future ambitions and helped explain and legitimate the horrific violence wrought by the French army.[1] Due to the overwhelming legacy of these secular enterprises,

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1 Bénabou, L'impérialisme et l'Afrique du Nord; Dondin-Payre, *La Commission;* Lorcin, *Rome and France;* Oulebsir, *Les Usages;* Effros, *Incidental Archaeologists.*

Paul-Albert Février, writing in 1989, contended that Christian influence in the French-dominated Maghreb played only a minor role in the early decades of the French conquest. In his view, the arrival in Algiers of Charles Lavigerie (d. 1892), who took up his responsibilities as archbishop in 1867 and soon afterward founded the Société des missionnaires d'Afrique (known as the Pères blancs), was what first enabled successful investment in Christian missionary and archaeological activities in the Maghreb.[2] Février did acknowledge, however, that there were a few earlier examples of Christian proselytism and archaeology, the latter conducted, for example, in Orléansville.

Beyond Archbishop Lavigerie, the main figure whom scholars have identified as responsible for developing Christian archaeological research in the Maghreb was the White Father Alfred-Louis Delattre (d. 1932), whose career blended proselytism with archaeological exploration.[3] Working in Carthage and the surrounding region from the mid-1870s to his death in 1932, Delattre devoted his energies to a project of identifying the traces left by late antique Christians before the Vandal conquest.[4] Although his understanding of North Africa's ancient martyrs was less nuanced than what we know today,[5] it was a motivating factor in his exploration of the region and framed his interpretation of the region's Christian past. Encouraged expressly by Lavigerie, Delattre's archaeological endeavors went hand-in-hand with the White Fathers' and Soeurs Missionnaires' proselytization activities among local Arabs and Berbers (the latter referred to as Kabyles by the French), and later missionary efforts across sub-Saharan Africa.[6] By the 1880s, the sites excavated by Delattre in and near Carthage would become destinations for pilgrimage. Hymns were composed in honor of the martyrs who had died or were buried in these locations.[7] From the mid-1890s, the blending of ancient Roman and Christian elements of the French Maghreb was captured by Louis Bertrand's influential vision of Latin North Africa, one in which the Christian European settler population had largely replaced rather than assimilated the indigenous Muslim population. This influential perspective shaped both French attitudes and colonial policies in the region and prevailed until the 1960s.[8]

In looking more closely at early developments in Christian archaeology in French North Africa, however, the historian W. H. C. Frend correctly noted that Delattre's work was path-breaking but he was not the first in the colony to address the Christian past of the Maghreb. Frend pointed in particular to the impact of the contributions and uneven career of the first French bishop to be appointed in the region, Mgr. Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch (r. 1838-1846).[9] Frend characterized the metropolitan's exploration of Tipasa and his ambition to revive such vestiges of the ancient Church in North Africa as noteworthy.[10] In the 1840s and 1850s,

2 Dondin-Payre, De la Gaule romaine, 46.

3 Février, *Approches du Maghreb*, 47.

4 Freed, Le Père Alfred-Louis Delattre; McCarthy, French archaeology*;* Effros, Reviving Carthage's Martyrs.

5 Frend, From Donatist opposition.

6 Schmidt, Les archives des Soeurs Missionnaires; Ceillier, *Histoire des Missionnaires.*

7 *Petit manuel pour un pèlerinage.*

8 Lorcin, Rome and France, 313-323.

9 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch.*

10 Frend Archaeology of Early Christianity, 55-56.

moreover, ancient religious structures such as remains of churches and baptisteries played an important role in the emerging colonial Christian community. Some of these sites were reclaimed and employed as churches, and bolstered perceptions of a revival of the long history of Christian worship in the region.

In addition, Pierre Soumille and Clémentine Gutron have chronicled in detail the career of François Bourgade (1806-1866), who served under Dupuch as the vicar of the cathedral of Algiers from 1838 to 1840. From 1841 to 1858, Bourgade lived in the Regency of Tunis, where he was appointed the almoner of the French church dedicated to Saint Louis in Carthage, which had been designed just a year earlier by Charles Jourdain. While in this position, Bourgade created a small museum in the chapel dedicated to Punic and Christian archaeology, as well as establishing a second installation in a school he founded in Tunis, both of which displayed the modest collection of antiquities that he had accumulated in the region.[11]

As acknowledged by Stefan Altekamp and others, however, small numbers of Christian finds did not substantially challenge secular colonial narratives and continued to be overshadowed by Roman military finds.[12] Indeed, memory of the archaeological activities of Dupuch and Bourgade did not linger long after the time of their departure since both men left North Africa under less than ideal circumstances and their collections were thereafter quickly dispersed. Nonetheless, their experience as clerics in North Africa and their observations about the antiquities they had uncovered and collected provided the basis for a series of publications. The archaeologically-informed writings of Dupuch and Bourgade thus served as inspiration for later French Christian leaders in the region, since they made clear the potential benefit of exploring and collecting Christian remains in North Africa. Each recognized that physical evidence of the late antique Christian past might lay a powerful historical foundation for religiosity in the French colony. From the late 1860s, Lavigerie himself expressed this perspective in both the missionary and archaeological campaigns he initiated first in Algiers and then, from the mid-1870s, in Carthage.[13] Therefore, attention to the writings, collections, and missionary contributions of Dupuch and Bourgade not only allows us to push back by several decades the footprint of French Catholic authorities in the region, but it also makes clear that Lavigerie's understanding of the productive relationship between archaeology and missionary work was not entirely original.

Indeed, Dupuch and Bourgade, like their successors Lavigerie and Delattre, envisioned the French conquest as an opportunity to rebuild the North African Church as they imagined it had been in the time of Saint Augustine. As we will see, however, the approaches of the two generations of archaeologically-inspired clerics differed in important ways. First, a central distinction was the fact that Dupuch and Bourgade served in a period of active military intervention and expansion under the leadership of Governor-General Thomas-Robert Bugeaud,[14] which was no longer the case by the time of Lavigerie. The 1840s saw a period of intensification of the hold on territories that had been conquered in previous decades. Second, Lavigerie and his contemporaries gave credence to the Kabyle myth, which from the mid-nineteenth century circulated via the publications of Eugène Daumas and others. They believed that

11 Bourgade, *Soirées de Carthage*, 4; Soumille, Les multiples activités; Gutron, L'abbé Bourgade; Gutron, *L'archéologie en Tunisie*, 81-83; 110-114.

12 Altekamp, Modelling Roman North Africa, 19.

13 Renault, *Cardinal Lavigerie*; Ceillier, *Histoires des Missionnaires.*

14 Sessions, "Unfortunate Necessities".

the Berbers descended from the ancient Christians or Maures who had lived in this region longer than Arab arrivals in the region.[15] For this reason, Lavigerie and many of his clerical contemporaries assumed that the Berbers had not made a meaningful conversion to Islam and would more readily adopt Christianity than their Arab contemporaries.[16] By contrast, their predecessors Dupuch and Bourgade had a rather different approach to missionary work. This earlier generation was confident that that Muslims could be brought to the Christian faith through meaningful dialogue and displays of charitable acts such as hospitals and schooling. Rather than expecting an innate predisposition toward Christianity among the Berbers, they sought to win over converts through their devout example.[17]

Dupuch's Ambitions for the Catholic Church in Colonial Maghreb

One of the reasons it took some time for a Christian agenda to take root in the Maghreb following the French conquest is that the Catholic Church had no formal presence in the Ottoman Regency of Algiers for nearly a decade after the arrival of the French *armée d'Afrique*. When the invading forces conquered the Ottoman Regency of Algiers in 1830, Charles X celebrated the victory with a *Te Deum* at Notre-Dame cathedral in Paris. However, the king fell from power just six weeks later.[18] Under the reign of his successor Louis-Philippe, French forces in Algiers stormed the Ketchaoua Mosque at noon on 18 December 1832, despite the presence of 4,000 worshippers who had barricaded themselves inside to prevent its confiscation. This brazen violation of the surrender agreement of the Regency demonstrated French blatant disregard for an international treaty, and the colonial regime held the first Mass in the building at Christmas that year.[19] These events were a signal of the level of violence yet to come.[20]

Yet, even after French forces defeated the Bey of Constantine in 1837, governmental officials of the colonial regime remained reluctant to admit clerical authorities to the newly established colony. They were concerned that missionary activities might spark unrest among the indigenous Arab and Berber communities.[21] This hesitation to allow Catholic authorities to work in the region persisted despite the pressing need for military chaplains to administer last rites to the soldiers who died during their overseas service. If anything, the obstacles to the establishment of an ecclesiastical presence in the region grew larger over time. French officers of the *armée d'Afrique*, many of whom were Saint-Simonians, cited the potential for Catholic and Protestant proselytization efforts near Algiers to cause unrest among the Muslim population. For this reason, in July 1834, a royal ordinance was passed requiring authorization of the Governor-General before the establishment of Christian congregations in the region.[22]

15 Daumas, *Moeurs et coutumes*; Mesnage, *Étude sur l'Extension du Christianisme*.

16 Lorcin, *Imperial Identities*, 61-62.

17 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 245-247.

18 Sessions, *By Sword and Plow, 52-56.*

19 Ghoche, Erasing the Ketchaoua Mosque, 95-99.

20 Nora, *Les Français d'Algérie*, 87-92; Brower, *A Desert Named Peace*, 15-18.

21 Emerit, La lutte, 66-75.

22 Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity*, 58.

In the following years, French colonial authorities faced mounting pressure from Rome to send Catholic clergy to the region. There was general concern among church authorities with the lack of religious guidance for a steadily growing European civilian population which is estimated to have comprised 25,000 individuals in 1838 and nearly 27,000 by 1840. In addition, by this time, there were roughly 60,000 soldiers, most of whom may be assumed to have been at least nominally Christian as well.[23] In 1838, French officials finally relented and allowed demand for more priests in the colony to be met. Nonetheless, due to longstanding concerns with Muslim reactions to proselytism, they drew the line at Rome's suggestion that the remit of the clerics involve missionary work among Arabs and Berbers.[24]

On 9 August 1838, once the green light had been given, Gregory XVI issued a papal bull establishing the symbolically named diocese of Julia Caesarea (modern Cherchel) and Hippo Regius (modern Annaba, called Bône by the French).[25] For all practical purposes, however, the bishopric was based in the French capital of Algiers. The bishop's seat was established at the former Ketchaoua Mosque, now transformed into a cathedral.[26] Falling under the terms of Napoleon I's Concordat of 1801, the new diocese was financed by the French state (as was the case of all sees in metropolitan France). For the next several decades, the bishopric came under the direct control of the archdiocese of Aix-en-Provence.[27]

To fill the post of bishop, French authorities selected Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch, a priest and vicar-general of Bordeaux who was known for his charitable activism and piety. However, those responsible for the appointment were well aware that despite his earnest demeanor, the cleric's career was uneven. He had already fallen afoul of authorities for overspending his budget in Bordeaux and, with it, much of his family's fortune.[28] Dupuch nonetheless had the support of Gregory XVI. And, given the number of creditors who were in pursuit of the debts he still owed, Dupuch was in no position to refuse the prestigious yet distant and likely dangerous appointment to North Africa. He took solace in the fact that he would be the first bishop in the Regency of Algiers since the early Middle Ages.[29]

Departing from Rome with the pope's gift of a relic of St. Philip, to whom the cathedral of Algiers would be dedicated,[30] Dupuch's ambitions for his new role were thus great. As he observed to the bishop of Marseille, this momentous occasion would vindicate the Christian past of the region:

> Oh, Church of Africa, Church of Augustine, of Cyprian, of Tertulian, of Eugenius, of Fulgentius, of Perpetua, of Felicity, stop, stop finally your wailing and your tears, land of Vincent-de-Paul and of Saint Louis, the hour of your deliverance has rung! You have been intoxicated so long by cries and the blood of captives; long enough, oh warrior Algiers![31]

23 Ruedy, *Land Policy*, 30-31; Soumille, Les multiples activités, 236.

24 Curtis, *Civilizing Habits*, 113-115; Soumille, Les multiples activités, 234-236.

25 Effros, Colliding empires, 50-53.

26 Ghoche, Erasing the Ketchaoua Mosque, 96.

27 Fontaine, *Decolonizing Christianity*, 29.

28 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch,* 42-49.

29 The fact that there were still Christians active in the region until at least the eleventh century was not something known to Dupuch or any of his contemporaries in the nineteenth century. Handley, Disputing the end.

30 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch,* 62.

31 Dupuch, *Lettre pastorale*, 1838, 9.

In late December 1838, Dupuch's arrival in Algiers was celebrated with the fanfare of a cannon salute, artillery fire, and drums.[32] He noted that his presence signaled the first time in fourteen centuries that a bishop's voice would be heard in Hippo.[33]

From shortly after his arrival, Dupuch played a prominent role in the civilian life of the colony. Although a devout Christian, he was also a pragmatist and did not hesitate to reach out to Muslim authorities when he thought negotiations might help resolve political impasses. In 1839, the bishop made contact with the Emir Abd-el-Kader and helped facilitate a successful exchange of Christian prisoners for Muslim ones. Although this earned him some push-back from French military authorities for his intervention in wartime affairs, and Bugeaud blocked further proposed endeavors of this nature, the two men established a friendly connection that may be seen in Dupuch's sympathetic account of Abd-el-Kader during his imprisonment in France.[34] Their connection ended only with Dupuch's death in 1856.[35]

Upon his arrival in Algiers, Dupuch was dismayed to learn of the modest number of staff appointed to work with him in Algiers. This situation must have dampened any grand expectations that Dupuch might have originally entertained with regard to expanding Christian worship even amongst the European population. Overseeing just eleven priests, Dupuch's budget was likewise too meager to fulfill the requirements of his office. As he had done earlier in Bordeaux, Dupuch quickly went into debt as he worked to expand Catholic influence in the region.[36] In letters addressed to the pope but also published in the *Annales de la propagation de la foi*, Dupuch wrote with excitement that the church was rapidly growing. By 1841, there were already 12,000 Catholic civilians in Algiers; however, they were served by just two churches and four chapels, in addition to the mosques requisitioned for use as churches in the territory.[37] Some of the clerics under his command undertook educational initiatives, such as François Bourgade, who, as vicar of the cathedral from 1838, started a school for boys in the city.[38]

Despite having an uncomfortable relationship with military authorities and complaining of insufficient resources, Dupuch was jealous of anyone sharing the limelight in church operations. It appears that he was displeased that he was neither the first nor the only Catholic authority working in the French colony of Algeria. Most prominent among those in Algiers at the time of Dupuch's arrival were the Sisters of Saint-Joseph de l'Apparition (SSJ), an uncloistered religious community created in 1830 by the provincial noblewoman and heiress, Émilie de Vialar. De Vialar had been in the city since 1835, when she and three sisters had left their base in Gaillac, near Toulouse, to travel to the new colony. Her brother, who resided on a nearby estate, together with the municipal council, had invited the order to the territory to help meet the challenges of a devastating cholera epidemic and the growing number of ailing soldiers.[39]

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32 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch,* 61.

33 Dupuch, *Lettre pastorale*, 1838, 9.

34 Dupuch, *Abd el-Kader au château d'Amboise*.

35 Bouyerdene, *Emir Abd el-Kader*, 98-100; Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 107-113.

36 Emerit, La lutte, 75-76; Vautier, Le premier évêque, 414-420.

37 Dupuch, Lettre adressée à Sa Sainteté, 6-7.

38 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 237.

39 Curtis, *Civilizing Habits*, 101-113.

Finding enormous need, de Vialar helped minister to Christian inhabitants, and quickly extended the SSJ's services to both the Muslim and Jewish communities, as they were suffering badly from the devastation wrought by the French *armée d'Afrique*.[40] She and her growing number of female religious founded hospices, schools, and orphanages first in Algiers and Bône, and subsequently opened operations in Constantine and Oran. To higher-ups, the SSJ reported administering deathbed conversions to the children in their care, something that was likely not widely known among members of the Arab and Berber populations. Their services were similarly much in demand among Christian settlers. By the time Dupuch landed in Algiers, what was once a temporary operation had become a permanent mission furthered by the 40 or so women who by then represented the SSJ in Algeria.[41]

It seems evident that Dupuch viewed the sisters led by de Vialar with suspicion and distrust. Consequently, despite initial cooperation, the sisters, who were locally popular, refused to submit to the bishop. He, in turn, complained about their irregular existence to both the pope and the colonial government. Dupuch saw them as competition rather than comrades in a shared mission, and sought to force them into obedience by depriving them of access to the sacraments. When de Vialar sought remedy for these incidents, she received some support in Algiers from the vicar François Bourgade, who evidently saw the efficacy of her approach in working with the Muslim population.[42] Although de Vialar argued her case against Dupuch in Rome before papal officials, she lost her request for independence from diocesan officials. She did, however, receive permission from the French consul to establish a house in Tunis in 1840.[43] She also gave her strong support as an ally to Bourgade, whose own relations with Dupuch had soured. Bourgade would soon begin serving as de Vialar's order's almoner in the Regency of Tunis. In 1841, with her backing, he was appointed as the chaplain of the newly constructed French church dedicated to Saint Louis on Carthage's Byrsa Hill.[44]

Meanwhile in Algiers, Dupuch managed to make the best of stretched resources and benefitted directly from contemporary military maneuvers. He imitated, for instance, the precedent established by Adrien Berbrugger, founder of the Bibliothèque et Musée d'Alger (1835), who followed the *armée d'Afrique* confiscating Qu'rans from raided Islamic institutions to fill the shelves of his library.[45] As mentioned above, Dupuch received jurisdiction over mosques confiscated by French forces and promptly converted the structures for use as Christian churches. This approach helped support the rapid expansion of Christian presence in the region.[46] As mentioned above, however, all of these measures, from which the Church directly profited, violated the terms of the initial surrender agreements made in Algiers in July 1830.[47]

40 Gallois, *History of Violence.*

41 Curtis, *Civilizing Habits*, 123-126.

42 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 236-239; Gutron, L'abbé Bourgade, 179.

43 Curtis, *Civilizing Habits*, 115-130.

44 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 239-243; Gutron, L'abbé Bourgade, 178-179.

45 Effros, *Incidental Archaeologists*, 58-61, 64.

46 Curtis, *Civilizing Habits*, 115-116.

47 Khodja, *Le Miroir*, 155.

Symbolic religious gestures played an important role in Dupuch's bishopric, especially in light of the competition he believed he faced from de Vialar and her communities. Soon after arriving in Algiers, Dupuch went to Bône (modern day Annaba), the former see of the Church Father Augustine, to celebrate the saint.[48] In February 1842, Dupuch traveled to Marseille and Rome, prior to visiting Pavia in late March, where he paid respects to the relics of Saint Augustine (whose bodily remains had been housed there since the early Middle Ages).[49] Before returning to Algiers in October, Dupuch procured relics of Augustine's right forearm (*ulna*) from the archbishop of Pavia and celebrated the translation of such a symbolic part of the saint – his writing hand – to its rightful place in his former see of Hippo.[50] The relics were celebrated with a translation ceremony into a monument in Bône in Augustine's honor.[51] As Augustine's successor, Dupuch proclaimed, as a witness to Augustine's return to his homeland:

> And you, dear earth, sacred earth, tremble! Lift your head, your head over the humiliations about which we formerly cried with who knows what mixture of bitterness and sweetness; Hippo! His Hippo, ours, what days are those that have begun to shine, which will soon burst upon you![52]

Indeed, the memorial soon attracted Christian pilgrims.[53] Dupuch viewed these steps as necessary to achieve his larger ambition of restoring the late antique church as it had existed before the Vandal onslaught of 429. The restoration of the fifth-century saint to his see was a powerful step toward fulfilling Dupuch's vision of reviving Christian North Africa as he imagined it had been in Augustine of Hippo's lifetime.[54]

In the pronouncements of contemporary clerical officials, it is clear that they dreamt that missionary work would allow for the return of Christianity to the region as it had allegedly been in the fifth century. As noted by the bishop of Pavia, Aloysius Tosi:

> ...this land of Africa, for so long plunged in the deepest barbarism, will finally be returned one day to the Catholic Church, which will try to make up ceaselessly the losses with unexpected increases at the discretion of the Chief Shepherd who is in the heavens! She [Africa] will see exit from her bosom a new posterity, this Church from beyond the sea, where since the first days of its very ancient origins, arises among famous men who amongst every sort of exhaustions and perils plants there, cultivates the Christian faith in their sermons, their writings, their life and their death.[55]

48 Altekamp, Crossing the sea, 214-215.

49 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 128-139.

50 Archives de la Société des Missionaires d'Afrique A16 251: *Procès-verbal* 12 April 1842.

51 Dupuch, *Lettre pastorale*, 1842.

52 Dupuch, *Lettre pastorale*, 1842, 6.

53 Poujoulat, *Études africaines*, 128.

54 Effros, Colliding empires, 53. On perception of Bône's Christian past, see Prochaska, *Making Algeria French*, 214.

55 Archives de la Société des Missionnaires d'Afrique, 2me Casier A16 254: A l'Illustrissime et Révérendissime Seigneur.

Despite Dupuch's efforts in this direction, however, colonial officials were not supportive of an initiative to bring Catholicism to the Arabs and Berbers of the region. They repeatedly warned Dupuch (as they would later warn his immediate successor Louis-Antoine-Augustin Pavy) not to intervene with Muslim communities.[56] Dupuch nonetheless appears to have ignored most of these warnings, establishing contact to great effect, as mentioned above, with the Emir Abd-el-Kader.[57]

Facing the disobedient behavior of Dupuch and the constant turmoil between the bishop and the sisters of the SSJ, Governor-General Thomas-Robert Bugeaud decided that the friction between the two Christian factions was becoming an impediment to French governance of the region. Although he acknowledged the important contributions made by de Vialar's group in the French colony, in 1842, Bugeaud therefore asked the SSJ to depart from Algeria.[58] As a consequence, the SSJ suffered the loss of de Vialar's extensive financial investments in Algeria. They thereafter moved the base of their charitable operations to Tunis and successfully expanded their activities to Malta and the eastern Mediterranean. Following the departure of the SSJ, to help meet the needs of his see, Dupuch founded the Société des Dames de Charité. He likewise welcomed other religious orders to Algiers. In 1843, Trappist monks of the abbey of Aiguebelle (Drôme) started construction on an abbey in Staouëli, not far from Sidi Ferruch, on land granted to them by Governor-General Bugeaud. The Lazarists also came to Algeria to minister to the sick and offer schooling to local children, tasks that had previously been fulfilled in the diocese by the SSJ.[59]

During his brief tenure as bishop of Algiers, and despite his limited resources, Dupuch managed to expand the presence of the church significantly. By 1845, there were three ecclesiastical provinces: Algiers, Oran, and Bône, each having a vicar general. Across the colony, congregations met in about 60 chapels or churches, although some of them were very modest in size. Dupuch regretted lacking sufficient funding to do more.[60] However, Dupuch's efforts to make inroads with the Arabs and Berbers had been less than successful, and the majority of the faithful of his diocese were overwhelmingly French or European settlers. In December 1845, a combination of government resentment of his interference in secular affairs in addition to his continual shortfall of financial resources ultimately led Dupuch to tender his resignation to the Holy See and go into exile from his adopted home in Algiers.[61]

56 Service historique de l'armée de la terre (SHAT) 1 H 86-2: Letter dated 21 October 1842 from the Duc de Dalmatie, Minister of War, to the Governor-General of Algeria; SHAT 1 M 1317: Ardiet, *Mémoire militaire*.

57 Boyerdene, *Emir Abd el-Kader,* 98-100; Renault, *Cardinal Lavigerie*, 79-82.

58 Emerit, La lutte, 77-83.

59 Clancy-Smith, *Mediterraneans,* 247-255; Curtis, *Civilizing Habits*, 115-130; Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 143-150.

60 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 165.

61 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 171-173.

Dupuch's successor, Pavy, who was nominated bishop in May 1846, received more funds than his predecessor, and he used this financial support to expand the operations of the Church. With the objective of undertaking more effective missions to the Berber population in Kabylia, Pavy authorized the Jesuits in 1863 to begin working in the region.[62] In the space of twelve years, Pavy increased the size of the diocese of Algiers (which encompassed the entire French colony of Algeria) to 187 parishes served by 273 priests. Yet, although Pavy required that Arabic be taught in the seminary in Algiers, few priests under his jurisdiction mastered the language well enough to communicate with the Muslim population.[63] Pavy, too, failed to make substantial inroads with the Muslim population.

Christian Archaeology in Algiers in the 1830s and 1840s

When Dupuch and Bourgade arrived in Algiers in 1838, the officer class of the *armée d'Afrique* was composed of a substantial number of Saint-Simonians,[64] few of whom were enthusiastic about either ancient or modern Christian presence in the region. For this reason, it should not be all that surprising that the focus of the limited number of archaeological reports in the recently conquered region were the inscriptions and monumental remains of the Roman army.[65] The number of these would grow following the conquest of the city of Constantine in 1837, since the region was characterized by a large number of ancient monuments. In late 1839, the activities of the Commission d'exploration scientifique d'Algérie, which included architects and scholars cataloguing Roman remains, began. Yet, these studies came to an abrupt end just two years later by order of the Governor-General Bugeaud, who had launched military operations in the Sahara.[66] Christian archaeology, however, was not a part of the remit of either French officers in the region or the Commission. Exceptions to the rule occurred slightly later, and included exploration from 1847 of the remains of a church discovered at Henchir Guessaria in the Chemorra valley.[67] In 1856, French military officers also initiated research on the remains of the basilica of Tebessa, a project that would continue over the next several decades.[68]

Despite muted interest in Christian sites on the part of secular officials and French military officers, Dupuch emphasized the contemporary significance of the ancient remains he encountered in Algeria. As early as September 1843, Dupuch wrote to supporters (and presumably potential donors) in Lyon about his finds. In his letters, he noted that he had done some digging in the ruins of the ancient basilica of Saint Augustine in Bône, where the relics he had installed the previous year were already having marvelous effects on the 4,000 Christian residents. After just five days of digging, Dupuch reported having found a large quantity of sculpted marble that had once ornamented corniches and capitals of the structure.[69]

62 Colonna, La compagnie de Jésus.

63 Renault, *Cardinal Lavigerie*, 82, 87.

64 Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity*.

65 Effros, *Incidental Archaeologists*.

66 Dondin-Payre, *La Commission*; Nordman, Mission de savants.

67 Duval and Janon, Le dossier des églises; Frend, Archaeology of Early Christianity, 58-61.

68 Moll, Mémoire historique; Sériziat, La basilique; Clarinval, Rapport sur les fouilles.

69 Dupuch, Extrait d'une lettre, 14-15.

He likewise noted that he had distributed remains of mosaics found in Bône, perhaps from an early church, to adorn the basilicas of Algiers, Bordeaux, and Pavia.[70] Moreover, during travels through his diocese, Dupuch visited the church of Tipassa after its study by Adrien Berbrugger, founder of the library and museum of Algiers.[71]

In his writings, Dupuch celebrated the fact that the French colony contained so many remains of the region's ancient churches. He described, for instance, his discovery of three ancient churches still standing in Villa Serviliana, Guelma, and Announah, the last of which had been ornamented with a large and well preserved bronze cross. Such finds offered the opportunity for Christian worship, presumably the first that had been practiced at the sites for centuries.[72] In February 1846, shortly before his departure for metropolitan France, Dupuch personally conducted excavations on the peninsula of Sidi-Ferruch, the location of the French landing in July 1830; he corresponded with Gregory XVI to report on his success in unearthing an ancient chapel and mosaic with a martyrial inscription.[73]

Juxtaposing his religious endeavors with his pursuit of Christian remains, Dupuch often interwove his reports on archaeological finds with accounts of baptisms that he had recently performed. Many of these alleged conversions involved young Muslim and Jewish children who, by his own admission, had either been orphaned by the military campaigns of Governor-General Bugeaud or who were near death due to these terrible circumstances.[74] Despite the dire nature of these conditions, Dupuch cast these affairs as successes and maintained that they had joyful endings.[75] As bishop of the region, he was thus intimately connected to the affairs of the colonial regime while being focused on the alleged spiritual well-being of local inhabitants. He observed the effectiveness of being part of a team that worked together, "our hands united like his sword, their plow, and my cross".[76]

Ultimately the financial woes of his bishopric, and no doubt his uneven relationship with Bugeaud, forced Dupuch to abandon his ecclesiastical responsibilities in North Africa in 1846. After this time, he was able to focus more fully on the question of the ancient Christian past of Algeria. Upon retiring to Turin, where he sought the archbishop's protection from the demands of his French creditors, Dupuch began work on his *Essai sur l'Algérie chrétienne, romaine et française* (1847).[77] This work updated, expanded, and translated Stefano Antonio Morcelli's *Africa christiana in tres partes tributa* (1816-1817). Morcelli's work, having been published before the French conquest of the Regencies of Algiers and Constantine, had not benefitted from physical access to the region's inscriptions and archaeological remains.[78] Dupuch thus supplemented the original work of Morcelli, who himself had never been to North Africa, with personal observations; Dupuch was able to interject anecdotes about the landscape, contents of inscriptions, and descriptions of the remains of ancient churches.

70 Dupuch, *Essai sur l'Algérie*, 43-44.

71 Dupuch, Extrait d'une lettre, 32-33.

72 Dupuch, Extrait d'une lettre, 15-16.

73 Letter from Dupuch to Gregory XVI, dated 9 February 1846, preserved in the archives of the Lazarists (Paris) and cited in Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 138-139.

74 Dupuch, Extrait d'une lettre, 17-20.

75 Dupuch, Extrait d'une lettre, 23-24.

76 Dupuch, Extrait d'une lettre, 25.

77 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 183-186.

78 Dupuch, *Essai sur l'Algérie*, 5-6.

In his writings, he blurred the distinction between ancient Christian North Africa and modern colonial Algeria. For instance, he believed that he saw signs that the ancient Vandals had left their mark on the Berber population. In the Aurès mountains, he pointed to the tattooed crosses he had observed on the faces of Berber women living in the vicinity of Lambaesis, seeing that as proof of their Christian past.[79] In 1850, Dupuch followed this publication with another work based on Morcelli's contributions, this one an account of the bishoprics and martyrs of early Christian North Africa.[80]

In July 1856, Dupuch, lacking a regular income, died impoverished in Bordeaux. Eight years later, Pavy, as bishop of Algiers, was able to secure the transfer of his predecessor's mortal remains from Bordeaux to the crypt of the cathedral of Algiers. This act fulfilled Dupuch's wish that he be returned, like the relics of Saint Augustine, to North Africa, which he considered his adopted home and the site of his greatest legacy.[81]

Archaeological Collections in Carthage and Tunis

François Bourgade was born in 1806 in the department of Gers in southern France to a middle-class family in the small village of Gaujan. He pursued the priesthood, and was ordained in 1832. He was seen as pious but of ordinary talent, and took up the call for priests to serve in North Africa. As noted above, from March 1838, Bourgade served in Algiers as the vicar of the cathedral; it was probably at this time that he learned Arabic.[82] In Algiers, Bourgade encountered Émilie de Vialar, with whom he worked closely at the hospitals and Catholic schools she had founded. When she and the bishop fell out, Bourgade's decision to side with the Sisters of Saint-Joseph de l'Apparition (SSJ) resulted in the loss of his post at the cathedral in July 1840.[83] After a brief sojourn in Lyon, Bourgade moved to the Regency of Tunis to become the almoner of the SSJ.[84]

In Tunis, Bourgade collected a broad variety of antiquities found in the region. Once construction of the chapel of Saint-Louis in Carthage was completed in 1841, he assumed duties as the almoner of the chapel dedicated to the memory of the French king who had died near Tunis during the Eighth Crusade.[85] Bourgade soon created a small museum outside of the French chapel filled with local finds of Punic, Roman and Christian provenance. He advocated that such finds could educate visitors to the display about the ancient and biblical past, since he was interested in the Punic presence in the region. As in Algiers, Bourgade founded a school in Tunis (1842), this one a mix of Muslims, Jews, and Christians; the children helped him search for finds in the vicinity. In 1845, Bourgade organized a second display of finds at the school.[86] Bourgade's role quickly expanded beyond his religious duties, with his opening of a hospital (1843), foundation of a learned society, and establishment of a printing press in Tunis, among his many accomplishments.[87]

79 Dupuch, *Essai sur l'Algérie*, 67.

80 Dupuch, *Fastes sacrés.*

81 Dupuch, *Essai sur l'Algérie*, 46; Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*, 227-229.

82 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 252.

83 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 233-238.

84 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 238-239.

85 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 240-243.

86 Gutron, Une archéologie coloniale, 81; Bacha, *Patrimoine et monuments*, 36-38.

87 Gutron, L'abbé Bourgade, 177-187.

Bourgade's activities were not considered entirely orthodox by the standard of his time. In addition to his archaeological work, Bourgade wrote several works on the populations in the Regency of Tunis, focusing on a dialogue between Christian and Muslim religious authorities in his *Soirées de Carthage* (1847), *La clef du Coran* (1852), and *Passage du Coran à l'Évangile* (1858). In 1849, the first of these works of propaganda was translated into Arabic. In these volumes, Bourgade sought to persuade the Indigenous population of the error of their ways and convince them to convert to Christianity.[88] At the same time, his modest museums displayed material remains highlighting the rich and varied history of the region. In particular, these collections supported his views about the historic fusion of peoples whom he believed would ultimately be united under Christianity.[89] Although the pope praised his publications that highlighted his approach to proselytization, Bourgade's multi-confessional teaching finally tipped the scales against him. Pius IX removed him from office in 1858. After his return to France, he lived under much constrained circumstances in Paris until his death in May 1866.[90]

After Bourgade's ignominious departure from Tunisia in 1858, the guardians of the chapel of Saint-Louis sold many of the antiquities that remained and used the space around the church on Byrsa Hill to raise chickens and rabbits.[91] Although the French archaeologist Charles-Ernest Beulé had stored some of his finds from Carthage in a room at the chapel for a future museum,[92] these were also reduced to just a few remains in the garden after his departure for metropolitan France. By the time the White Fathers arrived in Carthage from Algiers in June, 1875, there was almost nothing left beyond the memory of this former collection. This vanished material nonetheless established a precedent that would be followed by Alfred-Louis Delattre, who soon afterward established the Musée Lavigerie, initially located at the same site.[93]

Conclusion

As we have seen in this analysis, Dupuch and Bourgade labored under significantly different circumstances in North Africa than those of their successors, the Archbishop Lavigerie and the White Father Delattre. Although Dupuch and Bourgade embarked on an exploration of Christian remains in the midst of military conflict, they nonetheless sought to engage in meaningful ways with their Muslim counterparts, seeking to convert them through example. As part of the first wave of civilian colonists during the worst of a violent military operation,[94] Dupuch and Bourgade saw their role as mediating between Muslim authorities and French military officers. However, despite doing so, they were recognizably complicit in the violence of the *armée de'Afrique*, working in spaces and with holy works confiscated illegally from the Muslim population. Their efforts to prove through pious example that Christianity

88 Gutron, L'abbé Bourgade, 187-189.

89 Gutron, L'abbé Bourgade; Gutron, *L'archéologie en Tunisie*, 81-83; 110-114.

90 Soumille, Les multiples activités, 251.

91 Archives de la Société des Missionaires d'Afrique B4 152: Le Musée Lavigerie.

92 Fantar, Pionniers de l'archéologie punique, 505-508.

93 Archives de la Société des Missionaires d'Afrique B4 152: Le Musée Lavigerie.

94 Gallois, *History of Violence;* Le Cour Grandmaison, Conquête de l'Algérie, 253-274.

was superior to Islam were thus contradicted by the massacres and *razzias* that were an essential part of Governor-General Bugeaud's military strategy.[95] Although their more empathetic approach made them a voice of relative moderation, their actions played out in the midst of brutal colonial repression of the Indigenous population.[96] Their missionary initiatives, undertaken despite being discouraged by secular authorities, resulted in a small number of conversions amongst the Muslim and Jewish inhabitants of the Maghreb.

With the passage of time, the relatively conciliatory stance of Dupuch and Bourgade, and their regular interaction with the Muslim and Jewish community, stood in stark contrast to an increasingly marked division between the Indigenous population and French and European colonists created by French military authorities.[97] When Dupuch reached out to the Emir Abd-al-Kader to negotiate an exchange of prisoners, this concession angered Bugeaud. A decade later, Bourgade's unorthodox multi-confessional approach to schooling and hospitals displeased Pius IX, and led to his dismissal from his post in Carthage. Having angered respective colonial and religious authorities, both men's stay in Algeria came to an abrupt end. Even if their publications continued to be read by contemporaries, their existing artifact collections were dispersed shortly after their departure.

When Archbishop Lavigerie arrived in Algiers in 1867 during a devastating famine, he sought to build upon the groundwork laid by his predecessors Dupuch, Bourgade, and Pavy. However, in the midst of a major crisis that had left hundreds of orphans in the hands of the Church, French authorities granted the new archbishop significantly more latitude in which to maneuver. Consequently, he successfully initiated an epoch of more overt proselytization through the creation of the Société des missionnaires d'Afrique as well as an archaeological program as led by Delattre.[98] Although the White Fathers' efforts ultimately yielded few converts in either Algeria or the Regency of Tunis, they had much greater success elsewhere in Africa.[99] And, Lavigerie and Delattre's lasting contribution to French rule in the Maghreb was the deployment of Christian archaeological remains to cultivate pious devotion amongst the growing European civilian population.[100] These ancient monuments and artifacts became the mainstay of a colonialist narrative of the rebirth of Christianity in the lands made famous nearly one and a half millennia earlier by Saint Augustine of Hippo.

95 Sessions, *By Sword and Plow*, 128.

96 Gallois, *History of Violence*.

97 Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity.*

98 Renault, *Cardinal Lavigerie*, 99-112.

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A Subaltern's View of Early Byzantine Africa?: Reading Corippus as History

Andy Merrills*

Corippus' *Iohannis* is both the last classical epic poem to be written in Latin, and a major historical source for the early Byzantine occupation of North Africa (c. 533-551). The poem has conventionally been viewed as an uncritical celebration of the imperial occupation, thanks to its classicizing imagery and the panegyric aspects of its narrative of recent military successes. The present paper argues that this was tempered with a more critical retelling of the first fifteen years of the Byzantine occupation. This is presented in a metadiegetic analepsis ("flashback"), in the voice of an African officer in the imperial army of occupation. It is suggested that the catalogue of disasters presented here – internecine warfare, social upheaval, and plague – reflect the ambivalent attitude of contemporary Africans to the occupation itself.

Keywords: Corippus, epic poetry, Byzantine Africa, narrative, Moors, Berbers.

In around 551, the North African poet Flavius Cresconius Corippus composed an epic poem of around 4700 lines to celebrate the victories of the Byzantine military commander John Troglita.[1] John had campaigned against "Moorish" groups in Africa, Byzacena and Tripolitania between 546 and 548, and had brought peace to a long-suffering region. The eight books of Corippus' *Iohannis* comprise the last Latin epic of the classical world, written in a critical period in the imperial occupation. At the time, the heartland of North Africa had been under the authority of the eastern empire for seventeen or eighteen years: in the late summer of 533, the imperial commander Belisarius had landed on the coast of Byzacena with an expeditionary force of around 18,000 troops which, within a matter of months, had overthrown the Vandal kingdom, and re-established imperial control over Carthage, Zeugitana (the regions around the capital), Byzacena, Numidia and coastal territories in Mauretania and Tripolitania.[2] Control over the rich African provinces was a significant victory for Justinian, but its consolidation proved difficult. Imperial forces encountered ongoing resistance from the local powerbrokers who had established themselves in the old frontier regions

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1 On his life, cf. Baldwin, The career of Corippus; Martindale, Fl. Cresconius Corippus. On his name, see Riedlberger *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar,* 28-33, and Riedlberger, Again on the name "Gorippus", who prefers "Gorippus". The familiar form of the name will be used here to avoid confusion.

2 For recent overviews of early Byzantine Africa, see Lassère, *Africa, quasi Roma,* 695f-733, and Merrills, The Byzantine period.

over the preceding century and these challenges were exacerbated by military mutinies extending to outright revolt within the army of occupation itself.[3] In 543 or 544, moreover, the plague reached North Africa, and in the years that followed, religious schism proved no less contagious. During the so-called Three Chapters controversy, African churchmen, especially in Carthage and Byzacena, were active in the resistance to new imperial directives on conciliar orthodoxy.[4] John Troglita's military victories in the frontier wars of 546-548 thus represented a rare bright spot in the history of the imperial occupation.

Corippus' *Iohannis* is a vital historical source for the understanding of this period in the history of early medieval North Africa, but it has rarely been accorded a central role in the scholarship. Conventionally, histories of the early years of Byzantine Africa have relied most heavily on the Greek prose narrative provided by the two books of Procopius' *Vandal Wars*, supplemented by passages from the same writer's panegyrical *Buildings* and his caustic *Secret History*. As a member of Belisarius' entourage, Procopius was an eye-witness to the earliest years of the imperial occupation, and the essential authority of his narrative has rarely been challenged, even if some of its details have been questioned.[5] Since the late nineteenth century, this historical framework has been supplemented by material evidence of the occupation, particularly in the form of the spectacular city walls and military defences which were erected in its earliest decades.[6] Ongoing archaeological work also casts new light upon economic activities in Byzantine Africa, and on social change in the towns and their hinterlands.[7] Other forms of evidence have also lately been subject to closer scrutiny, not least the extraordinary volume of theological writing which emerged in response to the Three Chapters controversy, the full implications of which are still being explored.[8]

Corippus' *Iohannis* has been studied since the publication of the first reliable editions of the epic in the mid-nineteenth century, but much work remains to be done, not least in interrogating its value as a historical source.[9] The present article suggests that it has a particular value as a reflection of contemporary African attitudes to the early years of the imperial occupation, and that these views were frequently more critical than has been assumed.

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3 Modéran, *Les Maures* provides a thorough overview; Pringle, *Defence of Byzantine Africa*, 9-40 for the narrative.

4 Modéran, L'Afrique reconquise.

5 Cameron, Byzantine Africa, 4 notes that both *Wars* and *Buildings* have "rightly been taken as basic since modern study of Byzantine Africa began." See also Cameron *Procopius*: 171-187. Kaldellis, Procopius' Vandal war, provides a typically provocative discussion of Procopius' African narrative.

6 Diehl, *L'Afrique Byzantine*, uses this material and remains the only book-length study of Byzantine Africa.

7 See the collected papers in Stevens and Conant, *North Africa under Byzantium and Early Islam*.

8 Modéran, L'Afrique reconquise; Blaudeau, Normalisation africaine?; Dossey, Exegesis and dissent.

9 Diggle and Goodyear, *Iohannidos Libri VIII* is the standard edition, and is used here, except where otherwise noted. All translations are my own. See now the editions, commentaries, and translations of Zarini, *Berbères ou barbares* (book II); Tommasi Moreschini, *Iohannidos Liber III* (book III); Goldlust, *Corippe. Johannide, Livre 4* (book IV) and Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar* (book VIII). Shea, *The Iohannis*, is a translation of the whole work into English, from Diggle and Goodyear. Didderen and Teurfs, *Corippe. La Johannide* provides a complete French translation and short commentary, and Ramírez Tirado, *Coripo. Juánide*, a fine Spanish translation working from the same edition. Important philological studies of the poem include Blänsdorf, Aeneadas rursus cupiunt; Costa, Discorsi ed esempi; Dorfbauer, Vergilium imitari; Ehlers, Epische Kunst; Galand-Hallyn, La Johannide; Lausberg, Parcere subiectis; Zarini, *Rhétorique, poétique, spiritualité*. The historical value of the *Iohannis* is interrogated more fully in Merrills, *Epic, War and Rebellion*, which further explores several of the arguments in the current article.

The poem, it is argued, represented an African "take" on the imperial presence, which combined a fervent celebration of the recent victories under John with a much less forgiving treatment of the missteps and catastrophes of the previous decade and a half. The overlapping narratives within the *Iohannis* were neither wholly beholden to contemporary chronicle accounts nor to the conventions of epic or panegyric poetry, and thus provide a valuable complement to the treatment of these episodes in our other sources. Existing studies of Corippus' historical value have tended to focus on particular episodes in his account, and especially those that can be compared directly to Procopius' treatment of the same events: the loss of Hadrumetum to rebel forces in 544 is the best known of these.[10] More generally, the *Iohannis* has been considered either as a repository of incidental information, most commonly concerning Byzantine military activity and Moorish ethnography, or as a simple manifestation of support for the imperial occupation within Carthage.[11] It has also been used extensively as a prosopographical resource.[12] The celebrations of John Troglita's victories and chauvinistic representations of Moorish barbarism have been widely cited as evidence for Corippus' essentially Philobyzantine perspective, and the panegyric dimensions of the poem are often identified as its most important feature.[13] While these approaches have produced rewarding results, they risk neglecting the peculiar value of the poem as a work of war literature, with all that this entails.[14] If we focus on the fact that the *Iohannis* was a response to an extended period of conflict written within – and on behalf of – a community which had been caught up in a decade of bloody struggle, new questions emerge. In this, it shares an ambivalence towards aspects of contemporary imperial power which several recent commentators have plausibly identified in the work of Procopius.[15]

Understanding the basic narrative structure of the *Iohannis* is crucial to its appreciation. As Corippus makes clear in his preface, the principal function of the poem was to render the recent campaigns of John Troglita in Virgilian or Homeric terms.[16] The structure of the epic reflects this. Book I describes the suffering of Africa at the hands of the Moors, the emperor Justinian's decision to despatch John to deal with these problems, and the general's own journey to North Africa. Book II is concerned with the initial stages of the campaign

10 Gärtner, *Untersuchungen zur Gestaltung*, 97-114; Modéran, Corippe et l'occupation byzantine.

11 On the Moors, see esp. Partsch, Die Berbern and Riedmüller, *Die Johannis des Corippus*, both fine introductions. See also Castronuovo, La visione dei Mauri; Cesa, La pacificazione; Dodi, Corippo poeta della «*Romanitas*»; Février, Le Maure ambigue; as well as Modéran, *Les Maures*, esp. 27-122. On the military, see Richardot, La pacification; Riedlberger, Recherches onomastiques; Shea, Justinian's North African strategy.

12 Corippus, *Iohannis IV*, ed. Goldlust, 43. Compare Riedlberger, Recherches onomastiques, and Conant, *Staying Roman*, 196-251.

13 Cameron, Corippus' *Iohannis*; Ehlers, Epische Kunst, 132; Conant, *Staying Roman,* 252-265; Dodi, La «*Iohannis*», 592; Corippus, *Iohannis III,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 21-25; Tommasi Moreschini, Realtà della storia, 161-169; Vössing, Africa zwischen Vandalen, Mauren und Byzantinern, 202; Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar*, 90-95 offers an important challenge to the assumption that the work was essentially "propaganda", but does not interrogate its bleaker passages closely.

14 Caramico, Corippo (o Gorippo) poeta della guerra, approaches this topic through a rewarding discussion of the horrific and hypertrophic violence of Corippus' account. This study and the wider reflections of Fussell, *Great War and Modern Memory* and especially Osgood, *Caesar's Legacy* have shaped my own reading of the poem considerably. Kern, Non ignota cano is an important interpretation of the *Iohannis* as a work of social memory, but reaches rather different conclusions on the function of the text from those proposed here.

15 See esp. Kaldellis, Procopius' Vandal War, with references.

16 Corippus, *Iohannis*, Praef. 7-16, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 1.

and includes the Moorish order of battle for the conflict (which eventually takes place in Book V). There is reason to think that the first two books of the *Iohannis* were originally performed in public, either as part of the triumph which commemorated John's eventual victory, or as part of the general celebrations that followed, and they certainly form a distinct unit of composition.[17] The remainder of the epic built upon these foundations and was probably also intended for an African audience, even if it was primarily circulated in written form. Book III and the first part of Book IV are then dominated by a substantial historical digression, in which the events leading up to the campaign of 546 are narrated in the voice of an African officer named Liberatus (who is also referred to as Caecilides).[18] This digression, ostensibly addressed to John himself, covers the birth, youth, and adulthood of his Moorish antagonist Antalas, the collapse of the Vandal kingdom, and the mixed fortunes of the early Byzantine occupation, and blends moments of idealized peace with some quite grim lamentations on the subjects of plague and war. It is followed by two short recapitulations of the same events, first in the voice of the Moorish leader Antalas, as reported by a Roman envoy, which laments the political infidelity of the imperial administration and the impossibility of peace, and then in the words of John Troglita himself, as he makes sense of what he has heard.[19] The epic then returns to the events of the later 540s. The second part of Book IV includes the Byzantine order of battle, followed in Book V by a long account of the first battle between the opposing forces near Antonia Castra, at which John is victorious.[20] Book VI deals first with the premature triumphal celebrations of the Romans, and then with the resumption of conflict under a new Moorish leader, Carcasan. John leads his troops south to Tripolitania, where, weakened by heat and thirst, they are eventually defeated. Books VII and VIII then recount the reorganization of the imperial army and its final conflict with the Moors on the so-called "Plains of Cato", probably in the south of Byzacena.[21] In its present form, Book VIII (and hence the epic as a whole) is unfinished, but the successful resolution of this climactic battle is not in doubt.[22]

Corippus deploys three basic narratological modes in his treatment of this material, and an understanding of the differences between these is crucial to our understanding of the work's historiographical resonances.[23] In each of the three, the poet expresses a different sentiment towards the imperial occupation, and the shifts between them allow him to offer a more rounded reflection on contemporary attitudes. The first appears in the preface in

17 Blänsdorf, Aeneadas rursus cupiunt; Burck, *Das Römische Epos*, 384-385.

18 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.54-IV.246, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 49-76. Corippus, *Iohannis III*, ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 111.

19 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.358-392, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 80-82; IV.407-456, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 82-84.

20 Corippus, *Iohannis*, I.462, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 21 (*Antonia castra*). The identification is unclear.

21 Corippus, *Iohannis*, VIII.166, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 171 (*Campi Catonis*). The precise location of this battle is not known. Cf. Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar*, 213-214 for a survey of interpretations, and discussion of the possible allusion to Lucan, *Bellum Civile*, IX.371-949 ed. and trans. Duff, 532-574.

22 Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar*; Mantke, Über den verlorenen Schluß, on the ending of the poem.

23 On the narrative structures, see Hajdú, Corippus' attempt, and esp. Zarini, *Rhétorique, poétique, spiritualité*.

his direct address to the *proceres* (noblemen) of Carthage, where the voice of the narrator/poet is heard directly, often in apostrophe to God, Justinian, or the Muses.[24] This authorial voice recurs occasionally throughout the poem, most commonly to express lamentation at the failure of imperial forces, dismay at the pagan folly of the Moors, or frustration at the difficulty of rendering the narrative (and its awkward barbarian names) in verse.[25]

The second mode that dominates the bulk of the narrative is an impersonal, omniscient voice directed to the audience of the poem (at least nominally the same *proceres* who are introduced at the outset). This is a conventional form of epic narrative, and its presentation of material is shaped accordingly: battles are presented as a succession of individual combats or *aristeiae*, landscapes are rendered in Virgilian language, Moorish soothsayers are painted in the indelible colours of demonic oracles, and so on.[26] For the most part, the poet paints his protagonists in stark terms, emphasizing the piety of the Byzantines and the barbaric paganism of the Moors, although the prominence in the narrative of the allied Moorish federates under their leader Cusina complicate these oppositions significantly.[27] Yet the implications of this rendering of historical events in epic language are noteworthy. Few late antique poets before Corippus had attempted to interpret very recent events in a purely epic mode, and even in earlier periods, such a combination of epic and history was unusual: the *Iohannis* thus broke some new literary ground.[28] Its closest late Latin analogues are the panegyric epyllia written by Claudian at the end of the fourth century, and similar elements feature in these sections of the *Iohannis*, but these works are much shorter and more focused than Corippus' grand project.[29] The immediate audience of this epic would certainly have been familiar with the basic outline of the episodes that he described, whether from official channels of communication or otherwise: as the poet himself declares, "I sing of things that are not unknown".[30] But the epic itself would still have represented a very early "drafting" of history. In the absence of a single authoritative version of that "history" – and in conjunction with other forms of representation – Corippus' poem may thus have helped to shape contemporary understanding of the very recent past. Even if its generic conventions make the sifting of historical "facts" out of Corippus' account an immensely difficult business, as generations of modern historians have discovered, the poet's own historiographical processes are vital to understanding the structure and purpose of his work.[31]

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24 Corippus, *Iohannis*, *Praef* ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 1–2. On the prefatory voice in late antique poetry, see esp. Pelttari, *Space that Remains*, 45-72.

25 Cf. for example Corippus, *Iohannis*, I.23-26; II.23-27; VIII.507-509, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 4, 26-27, 184. Zarini, *Rhétorique, poétique, spiritualité*, 76-77 for discussion and further examples.

26 Blänsdorf, Aeneadas rursus cupiunt; Zarini, *Rhétorique, poétique, spiritualité*, 82-91.

27 Merrills, *Epic, War and Rebellion*, chapter 4 interrogates Corippus' ethnography (which is more subtle than is often assumed).

28 Eusebius' lost epic on Gainas alluded to by Socrates Scholasticus (Agathias, *Historia Ecclesiastica* VI.6, ed. Keydell) may be one exception, but there is no reason to think that Corippus knew of this work. I am grateful to Robin Whelan for this reference. George of Pisidia provides a further Greek comparandum, from the early seventh century. On which, see Howard-Johnstone, *Witnesses to a World Crisis*, 16-35. On earlier epics on recent events, see Leigh, Epic and historiography at Rome, 995.

29 Schindler, Spätantike Geschichtsschreibung, 227-273 and cf. her full exploration of the genre in Schindler, *Per carmina laudes,* esp. 1-57.

30 Corippus, *Iohannis,* VII.397, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 159: *non ignota cano*. Cf. Zarini, *Rhétorique, poétique, spiritualité*, 63.

31 Cf. Burck, *Das Römische Epos* 394-397 and Charlet, Aesthetic trends, on the same problem with Claudian.

It is, however, the third narrative mode deployed in the *Iohannis* that is perhaps the most significant for our purposes, and as such demands particularly careful scrutiny. The long historical analepsis that occupies much of books III-IV, and which considers the events that had taken place in North Africa from around 500 to John's arrival in 546, is presented as the direct speech of the subaltern Liberatus, rather than in the impersonal voice affected in the main body of the epic. This digression is addressed to John Troglita and his immediate entourage, and Corippus briefly outlines the responses of this audience at the close of the section.[32] Liberatus is explicitly identified as an African in origin, and it is this background which gives his account its authority: he speaks of the sufferings of "our" region over the previous years, and he is subsequently accorded a role in the fighting that follows.[33] In the narratological terminology of Genette, this digression is intradiegetic and homodiegetic: that is, it is a narrative contained within the wider story, and is recounted by a character who is himself a participant in the events that he describes.[34] Yet while Liberatus' digression was nominally addressed to John Troglita and his officers, who were unfamiliar with the events narrated, the digression was of course functionally part of the epic as a whole; that is to say, the historical audience of the *Iohannis* would have been all too familiar with the trials and tribulations that are recounted here. Liberatus' allusion to the particular sufferings of the *Sidonios patres* ("Carthaginian fathers") within his digression is perhaps an acknowledgement of this very audience.[35] If the bulk of the *Iohannis* rendered very recent (and perhaps unfamiliar) history in the stylized language of epic, therefore, the "flashback" of books III-IV recounted events that the poem's audience knew well and had lived through themselves. This distinction – and the contrast in tone between the two modes – is crucial.[36]

Liberatus' digression had important literary functions within the structure of the epic. Its clear antecedent is Aeneas' long narrative of the final destruction of Troy in *Aeneid* II-III; indeed, Virgil's account is the only analepsis in Latin epic that is longer than Corippus' digression.[37] Each passage occurs at a similar point in its epic, and each succinctly provides the narrative context for the events to follow. Like Aeneas, Liberatus is an affecting narrator, who frequently interjects to lament the suffering that he has witnessed. Although Liberatus' long description of the Moorish oracle does not find a direct parallel in Aeneas' digression, its other Virgilian and Lucanian antecedents are clear enough.[38] As several important studies have shown, moreover, individual elements in Liberatus' account also anticipate the

32 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.1-51; IV.247-255, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 47-49; 76.

33 His African identity is repeatedly stressed: Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.50, 65, and *passim*, VII.398, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 49, 159. Martindale, 'Liberatus' assumes without comment that Liberatus was a historical figure.

34 Genette, *Narrative Discourse*; De Jong, *Narratology and Classics*, is an invaluable introduction. On Corippus, cf. *Iohannis III*, ed. Tommasi Moreschini 113.

35 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.280, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 58. Cf. Zarini, *Berbères ou barbares?,* 10, and *Iohannis*, VI.63, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 115. Kern, Non ignota cano, 98-99.

36 *Pace* Gärtner, *Untersuchungen zur Gestaltung*, 100 who argues for a slippage between "Liberatus" and "Corippus" as narratorial voices.

37 Virgil, *Aeneid*, II.3-III.715, ed. and trans. Fairclough and Goold, I.294-394. Corippus, *Iohannis III*, ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 113-114; Corippus, *Iohannis IV*, ed. Goldlust, 33. The echo is obvious. Cf. Blänsdorf, Aeneadas rursus cupiunt, 535; Ehlers, Epische Kunst, 118-119; Dorfbauer, Vergilium imitari, 206-212.

38 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.107-140, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 51-52. Most obviously the prophecy of Erictho in Lucan, *Bellum Civile*, VI.588-820 ed. and trans. Duff, 346-364. For discussion, see Corippus, *Iohannis*, *III,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 127-129; Galand-Hallyn, La Johannide, 81-82.

narrative ambitions of the *Iohannis* as a whole. The account of Antalas' upbringing which opens the digression may be read as a counterpoint to the description of John's earlier career in Book I.[39] The battles within the digression, first between Antalas and an ill-fated Vandal army, and then between the rebel Stutias and the imperial forces under John, son of Sisiniolus, both anticipate the battle sequences of the latter part of the *Iohannis*. In many ways, this John stands in for his namesake in this section, and his heroic death in battle associates John Troglita with the epic glories of self-sacrifice, which he could not otherwise achieve.[40] It is certainly possible, therefore, to read (and appreciate) Liberatus' digression for its purely literary function, as an integral component of a wider epic narrative.

Yet the structural connections between Liberatus' digression and the epic of which it forms part should not disguise the striking shift in content and tone between this section of the poem and the rest. While other parts of the *Iohannis* blend epic and panegyric elements through the celebration of Justinian and his general John, this is not the case in the flashback of books III and IV. Neither the emperor nor John Troglita features prominently within this digression, and Liberatus' position as narrator further liberates the poet from the tone of celebration apparent elsewhere. While aspects of the early Byzantine occupation – including the decade of imperial peace which followed Belisarius' invasion – are certainly praised within this section, these are scarcely an uncritical *laus Africae*, as is sometimes asserted, and indeed, for much of the passage the tone is much bleaker.[41] Whereas elsewhere in the *Iohannis* Corippus is content to present Byzantine military leadership as essentially faultless, the same is emphatically not true of the cavalcade of incompetence presented by Liberatus.[42] For most of the epic, moreover, it is the pagan Moors who act as antagonists, but this is much less obvious in the digression of books III–IV. Although Liberatus' account begins with the birth of the Moorish leader Antalas and the demonic prophecies associated with him, his role as the principal agent of African suffering is soon usurped by the Roman mutineer Stutias, while the latter stages of the digression recount the sufferings caused by political and military convulsions within the administration itself. While this contrast may be partially explained as a literary conceit in its own right – a succession of inept commanders paving the way for future salvation under John – it is as well to remember that the audience of the *Iohannis* had themselves lived through the difficult years being described.[43] The bleak digression, in other words, represents an important reflection on the recent past written by a North African, for a North African audience, and presented in the voice of an African narrator. Elsewhere in the epic, Corippus may have been concerned to inflect his treatment of the recent past with panegyric elements; in the digression of books III and IV, however, the deployment of a lachrymose spokesman freed him of some of these concerns, enabling him to present an alternative experience of empire.

39 Corippus, *Iohannis*, I.48-109, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 5-7.

40 Thus Ehlers, Epische Kunst, 117-132; Dorfbauer, Vergilium imitari, 210-212; Corippus, *Iohannis IV*, ed. Goldlust,15.

41 Cameron, Byzantine Africa, 16: "In all of this Corippus … tailors the story even more to the Byzantine side. He was consciously writing not only to please the Byzantine rulers, but to persuade the local population of the Byzantine case[.]"

42 Cf. Cameron, Byzantine Africa, 16: "No blame is attached to Byzantine policy, of course, and the mismanagement of the army is totally ignored…" "The Byzantine cause is presented in unambiguous terms of virtue and piety…"; Cameron, *Procopius*, 178. "[Procopius and Corippus] do their best to pass over the more deep-seated problem and suggest that all was well in the best possible world, even if there were a few small military difficulties."

43 Thus Dorfbauer, Vergilium imitari, 208-209 and Corippus, *Iohannis IV*, ed. Goldlust,45. Cf. Zarini, *Rhétorique, poétique, spiritualité*, 23-24.

Ultimately, our reading of Liberatus' digression, and our understanding of its immediate reception, must be informed by the succession of military and political catastrophes that had hit North Africa over the previous two decades.[44] The impact of the Three Chapters schism on the region is well known, and it has been suggested that Corippus' poem was intended to distract from this gathering crisis, but this was scarcely the only problem that Africans had faced.[45] The audience of Corippus' poem had lived through three major mutinies in a decade and a half, and had witnessed more than half of the African garrison rise in revolt against the imperial throne.[46] The latest of these sorry episodes had taken place as recently as Winter 545/546 – mere months before John Troglita's arrival, and probably less than five years before the composition and performance of the *Iohannis* itself. The details of the uprising are known from Procopius' *Wars*, and it was one of the few African episodes to be included in the accounts of several contemporary chroniclers.[47] Corippus, too, deals with the episode directly, albeit in terms which disguise the culpability of several key figures, as shall be discussed below. In the course of that uprising, the *dux Numidiae* Guntharith, one of the highest-ranking officers in the army of occupation, had murdered the magister militum Areobindus and had won the support – however temporarily – of the inner circle of imperial administrators. At different stages, this tyranny seems to have been supported by the praetorian prefect Athanasius; Artabanes, an Armenian commander who was later to take supreme command of the African army; Cusina, the most important Moorish ally of the Romans in the period after 546; and the archbishop of Carthage, Reparatus. Guntharith's unhappy supremacy proved short-lived, and the Carthaginian establishment swiftly returned to the imperial fold, but the aftershocks of this upheaval and the bloodshed it brought to the streets of the city can hardly have been quickly forgotten. Yet this was merely the latest in several cycles of intestine conflict across the region, and there is good reason to think that the citizens of Africa viewed imperial troops as agents of instability as much as guardians of the peace. Forced requisitioning seems to have been widespread and resented, and images of a rapacious soldiery can be detected in moralizing treatises of the period and perhaps even poetic satire, as well as in legislation designed to stop it.[48] Pressure from Moorish "barbarians" created further problems on top of this but was probably as much a product as a cause of this internecine fighting. As if this were not enough, 536-537 also saw the start of an epochal cold snap across the Mediterranean, and even if this may not have affected North Africa directly, the onset of plague from 543 certainly did, as we shall see.[49] Corippus does not ignore this background, but has Liberatus treat all of this sad history in varying degrees of detail with his digression; in doing so he provides an invaluable original narrative of the early occupation, albeit one which has to be read with some care.

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44 Cameron, Byzantine Africa, 16 notes this grim context, but regards Liberatus' treatment as a positive "spin".

45 Cameron, Byzantine Africa, 17-20; Cameron, Corippus' *Iohannis*, 171; Tommasi Moreschini, Between dissent and praise.

46 Kaegi, *Byzantine Military Unrest*, 47-49.

47 Procopius, *Vandal War*, II.25.1-II.28.41, ed. and trans. Dewing, II.420-456; Marcellinus Comes *Chronicon*, Add. a.547.6, ed. Croke, 51; Victor Tunnunensis, *Chronica*, a.546, ed. Placanica, 48; Jordanes, *Romana*, a.384, ed. Mommsen, 51.

48 On this, see Merrills, The Byzantine period; Merrills, Contested identities.

49 See Newfield, Mysterious and mortiferous clouds, and the discussion below.

Historical Aspects of Liberatus' Digression

The historical complexities of Liberatus' digression are made clear from the outset. In introducing the narrator's task, a Roman officer called Gentius describes the origins of the war as "concealed from us, buried away in hidden obscurity".[50] The complexity of unearthing this context explains the length of the digression: this is not simply to be the recounting of the rise of a barbarian antagonist, but a tangled sequence of events and circumstances, whose connections are not always clear. The digression itself opens with the statement that "Africa first suffered twinned plagues, and now, wretched once more, it suffers twinned ruin again".[51] From the context, it is likely that the narrator is referring in the first case to the coincidence of the emergence of the Moorish leader Antalas and the coup and subsequent tyranny of the Vandal king Gelimer after 530, although this is never stated explicitly. [52] Instead, the ambiguity of this statement is probably deliberate; the poet (or narrator) intended its implications to change over the course of the digression as a whole.[53] By IV.99, the *geminas … pestes* of the opening address has given way to the *geminas … partes* of an imperial administration divided against itself. Here, the narrative is concerned with "the division of the *res publica* into twinned parts" rather than with the machinations of external barbarians, and Corippus tellingly alludes to Romulus' murder of Remus.[54] Equally, of course, the use of *pestes* (plagues) in the opening metaphor inevitably recalls the literal plague which had struck Africa in 543 and which Liberatus goes on to describe in some detail. From the outset then, Liberatus' is a subtle historical treatment and one which does not present a consistent message about the nature of the threat facing Africa, or the causes of its decline, but rather entangles these together. Some brief discussion of particular episodes discussed within the digression may help to demonstrate this point.

1. Golden Age

Liberatus' digression does include some celebration of the imperial presence, as almost all modern commentators have noted, but this is perhaps less emphatic than has commonly been asserted. The narrator seems to recall a golden age for African society, which had been lost in the face of Moorish attacks. Indeed, it is this which serves as the prompt for the digression in the first place. John Troglita wonders at the contrast between the present state of the region and the territories that he left following his first period of service in the country in the mid-530s:

> When I left, Libya was fruitful and cultivated; on my parting it remained in the condition proper to it; if not even better, as I recall: fertile, overflowing in crops, producing the fruit of the light-giving olive, and the juice of happy Bacchus. A profound peace was in that place. But what madness of war, what fury set these unhappy fields ablaze?[55]

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50 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.46, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 48: *nos latet, abstrusis penitus contecta latebris*.

51 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.63-64, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 49: *principio geminas iam senserat Africa pestes: | nunc iterum geminas sentit miseranda ruinas*. Cf. Virgil, *Aeneid*, XII.845, ed. and trans. Fairclough and Goold, 358.

52 Corippus, *Iohannis III,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 116-117.

53 Corippus, *IohannisIII,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 116-117.

54 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.99, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 69: *diuiditur geminas inter res publica partes* (my translation).

55 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.29-34, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 48.

This is more or less the line taken by contemporary imperial media, and the one we might expect to be voiced by a Roman commander. In the Spring of 535, Justinian's Edicts for the administration of Africa had exulted in the liberation of the province after a century of Vandal captivity, and assertions of peace and bounty across the region were commonplace in imperial legislation over the following decade.[56] Although John says nothing of the Arianism of the Vandals, the suppression of which was a dominant theme of the ideology of "re"conquest, this silence is probably to be explained by Corippus' own reticence on sectarian issues, and perhaps to the indifference of an African audience in the 550s to a religious dispute that was less relevant to them than it had been to their parents two decades earlier.[57] Nevertheless, the poet's account of restored fertility, and the themes of Vandal tyranny, and the century of suffering are familiar enough.

Corippus has Liberatus echo this language in a much-quoted passage of his digression:

> Everything was prosperous, and there was a secure peace through the whole of Libya. In those days Ceres was fruitful, the vine blessed with grapes, and the colourful tree sparkled with jewelled olives. The farmer had begun to plant his new crops everywhere, led out his yoked oxen and rejoicing ploughed his fields as he sang a peaceful song from the hillside. And every happy traveller dared to sing to the moon.[58]

While this ostensible *laus Africae* has an important function within Liberatus' account, the straightforward celebration of the imperial presence is scarcely the dominant theme of his speech. In total, this topic occupies only around 60 lines of the digression, approximately the same amount of space that is given over to the description of the plague of 543 and its chaotic aftermath.[59] This contrasts with the 120 lines devoted to the rise of Antalas, and the 90 lines concerned with the collapse of the Vandal kingdom.[60] But most strikingly of all, Liberatus spends five times as many lines – over 300 – on the military conflicts of the early 540s compared with the glories of imperial renewal, and he presents these struggles as the result of mutiny and imperial incompetence as much as Moorish pressure.[61]

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56 *Codex Justinianus*, I.27.1, 2 ed. Frier, I. 314-340; cf. *Novellae Justinianae,* 8.10.2; 30.11.2; 36; 37; App 2. trans. Miller and Sarris, 138, 331, 349-351, 353-357, 1107-1108. This ideology was manifested most directly in the triumphal celebrations of 534, on which, see Procopius, *Vandal War*, II.9.1-15, ed. and trans. Dewing, II.278-83 with the comments of Börm, Justinians Triumph und Belisars Erniedrigung and Meier, *Das andere Zeitalter Justinians*, 150-60. On the commemoration in the visual art of the capital, see also Procopius, *Buildings*, I.10.16, ed. and trans. Dewing, VII.82-5.

57 I am grateful to Robin Whelan for this point.

58 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.323-330, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 59-60 [following their line ordering].

59 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.277-339, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 57-60 (*laus*) (and note the comments below about the implicit themes even of this *laus*); Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.343-400, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 60-62 (plague and aftermath).

60 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.63-182, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 49-54 (Antalas) and 184-277 ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 54-57 (Vandal decline).

61 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.401-IV.242, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 62-75.

Equally importantly, Liberatus' praise of this lost idyll was neither limited to the aftermath of the imperial occupation of 533, nor wholly unambiguous in its celebration of peace; both of these factors complicate the superficially coherent relationship between the account of the early occupation within the digression and contemporary imperial ideology. Strikingly, Liberatus' valediction looks back not just beyond Belisarius' invasion, but as far as the later Vandal period that preceded the military upheaval of 530:

> In earlier times a peace was secure through all of the lands of Libya. Wretched Africa rejoiced in new crowns. Farmers bound their haystacks with golden grain, Bacchus reddened as ever on the young vine, and shining peace ornamented her land with olive trees.[62]

Liberatus narrates how this idyll was then shattered by the rise of Antalas and the internal collapse of the Vandal kingdom:

> The fierce brigand raged: nowhere was life safe. We were oppressed, at the mercy of unjust fates. And as the Vandal kingdom perished, so too did our own happiness.[63]

As Peter Riedlberger has noted, if Liberatus' digression reflected contemporary propaganda, then an important theme within it would have been that the later Vandal period was not so bad after all, which is hardly reflected in any of our other sources.[64] Admittedly, the narrative offered by the *Iohannis* of the chaotic period from c.529-535 is frequently confusing: Vandal names are garbled, and battle sequences seem to owe more to literary convention than to historical memory.[65] Yet its broad outlines contrast sharply with the consistent message from the imperial administration that treated the occupation of 533 as a moment of salvation for the region, and the Vandals as abject heretics.[66] Whereas other writers of the imperial period were keen to distance themselves from the Vandal past, especially in the first years of the occupation, Corippus (or Liberatus) reveals no such compulsion.[67] While imperial power does offer a brief respite, the moment of "liberation" itself is not accorded any particular significance, which might seem a noteworthy omission in the light of the nominal audience of the digression.[68] There is nothing here of the rhetoric of "Roman" restoration implied

62 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.67-72, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 49.

63 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.194-196, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 54.

64 Riedlberger, *Philologischer, historischer und liturgischer Kommentar*, 94.

65 Onesti, *I Vandali*, 163; Corippus, *Iohannis III,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 186-196; Gärtner, *Untersuchungen zur Gestaltung*, 66-78; Merrills, Gelimer's slaughter.

66 Corippus, *Iohannis III,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 186-188 argues that Corippus' treatment of the later Vandal period may reflect Justinian's political sympathy for the deposed Hilderic, and thus follow an imperial line. The confusion over the prosopography in the poem and the absence of any reference to the imperial *casus belli* complicate this argument. On other responses to the Vandal past, see esp. Merrills and Miles, *The Vandals,* 228-255; Steinacher, *Die Vandalen*, 310-313.

67 Merrills, Contested identities for further discussion.

68 *Pace* Cameron, Corippus' *Iohannis,* 40: "Naturally he praises to the skies the effects of the reconquest".

in Belisarius' ceremonies, in Justinian's legislation, or indeed in the thanksgiving of the African church council of 535.[69] When Liberatus looked back to a past golden age, in other words, this included the happy years of the 520s, and was not the specific creation of a benevolent imperial state. One suspects this may betray a widespread sentiment among his audience.[70]

Equally important, Liberatus implies the peace won by Byzantine arms was only ever provisional, and that it contained within it the seeds of its own destruction. Thus, the "ten years of peace" that are lauded in III.283-313, and which presumably refer to the decade between the invasion of 533 and the plague of 543, include several references to rebellion and civil war.[71] All of these were, admittedly, suppressed relatively swiftly in Liberatus' telling, but they still carry an ominous note for the future (this in the sixty lines supposedly devoted to "peaceful" Africa):

> Stutias, who had been one of ours, started the conflict. What fury was his, what wrath, and what a repugnant duty fell to our otherwise loyal command! And so the civil war was revived, and Carthage with her treaty broken, suffered cruel plundering and abominable danger in a one-sided war.[72]

Liberatus' later celebration of the restoration of order is also couched in terms of the suppression of violence, as much as the outright return of peace:

> Neither war, nor rapacious brigand, nor greedy soldier threatened our rustic homes; their furnishings tempted no-one, and the innocent soldier was content with his own lot.[73]

In this telling, African peace is manifested not simply in the placidity of the barbarians, but in the restriction of all soldiers to their proper place. This will recur as an important theme in the second half of Liberatus' digression, as we shall see.

2. Plague

The treatment of the Justinianic plague at III. 343-400 is also noteworthy. The plague itself emerged in the Mediterranean during the early 540s, spread relatively rapidly, and lingered for at least a generation, sporadically flaring up into the seventh century.[74] While scholars remain divided on the demographic and economic impact of the plague, there can be little doubt that where it did strike, it struck hard.[75] Outside the *Iohannis*, even so, our evidence for its initial impact in Africa is slight: the chronicler Victor of Tunnuna, himself a native

69 *Collectio Avellana* 85, ed. Günther, 328-330.

70 Cf. Cesa, La pacificazione, 85-86.

71 Cameron, Corippus' *Iohannis,* 40 notes this, while arguing that Liberatus emphasizes the speed with which the revolts were crushed. This is true, but the material remains conspicuous in a celebration of Roman peace.

72 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.305-309, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 59.

73 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.320-326, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 59. On the line ordering here, compare Corippus, *Iohannis III,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 252-253.

74 Harper, *The Fate of Rome*, 199-245; Meier, The 'Justinianic plague'; Mordechai and Eisenberg, Rejecting catastrophe.

75 Sessa, The new environmental fall of Rome, is a measured discussion which highlights many of the methodological weaknesses of current scholarship.

of the region, states that "all of the regions of the world" were beset by afflictions of the groin in 542, which presumably included his homeland, and Zachariah Rhetor lists Africa among the regions affected.[76] Jean Durliat has also suggested that a small cluster of funerary inscriptions in Sufetula dated to early 543 might be evidence of an outbreak there, but none of this epigraphy mentions the plague directly, and the evidence remains circumstantial.[77] Nor is there any clear evidence for economic dislocation in the aftermath of the plague in Africa.[78]

The account in the *Iohannis* nevertheless shows that the plague was vividly remembered in Carthage a decade later. In the first part of Liberatus' account, the suffering and lamentation are emphasized: "There was no terror now of bitter death."[79] But the emphasis in the latter part of the digression on the social upheaval that came with it is equally striking. Here, the poet refers to suppressed mourning, and the abandonment of legal patterns of inheritance:

> All forums were thrown open, and painful disputes came forward. Discord raged throughout the world, stirring up savage quarrels. Piety withdrew completely. No-one was compelled by his conscience to pursue justice.[80]

Corippus' account of the plague draws variously on the famous plague passage of Lucretius' *De rerum natura*, as well as sections of Virgil, Ovid, and Lucan, as Chiara Tommasi Moreschini has shown.[81] But what is most remarkable in Corippus' treatment is less his deference to these familiar sources than his willingness to deviate from them. While the poet was perfectly happy to underscore his classical inspirations with a heavy hand in the main narrative of his poem – at one point, for example, John Troglita compares himself directly to Lucan's Cato when journeying into the desert of Tripolitania – the same is not the case here.[82] Indeed, Corippus' account of the plague is much less dependent on literary antecedents than is Procopius' reworking of Thucydides, for example.[83] While the pathology of plague had become a poetic *topos* after Lucretius, Corippus ignores that macabre aspect, dwelling at far greater length on the upheaval that followed the disease rather than the pestilence itself.[84] What he has Liberatus recount is not the resurfacing of a familiar poetic nemesis, therefore, but the messy, confusing, and dispiriting social collapse which followed in its wake. This is not to imply that the resulting passage is without literary affectation, but the refusal to invoke straightforward poetic models may betray the poet's overriding concern to reflect contemporary sentiment. Epidemic diseases, regardless of their mortality rate, might have lingering social effects long after the first wave of the pestilence had passed.[85] Viewed in these terms, Corippus did not include the plague merely as a device to set the stage for Antalas' later mobilization, but as a sincere reflection on a shared and protracted experience of collective anxiety across Africa.

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76 Victor Tunnunensis, *Chronica*, a.542.2, ed. Placanica, 46; Ps. Zachariah Rhetor, *Chronicle* X.9a, ed. Greatrex *et al.*, 414-415.

77 Durliat, La peste, 108 and cf. Stathakopoulos, *Famine and Pestilence*, 292-293.

78 Reynolds, From Vandal Africa, surveys the territory.

79 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.351-352, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 61.

80 Corippus, *Iohannis*, III.376-379, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 62.

81 Corippus, *Iohannis III,* ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 255-256.

82 Corippus, *Iohannis*, VI.339-341, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 126.

83 Procopius, *Persian War*, II.22-23, ed and trans. Dewing, I.450-472; cf. Thucydides, *Historia*, II.47-54, ed and trans. Smith, II.340-356.

84 Lucretius, *De rerum natura*, VI.1138-1286 ed. and trans. Rouse and Smith, 578-590.

85 For a very recent point of comparison, see Vulliamy, Will Covid change Italy?

3. Wars Worse than Civil

Liberatus' account is equally remarkable for its unforgiving account of the continued bungling of Byzantine soldiers and administrators in the aftermath of the occupation, particularly in the difficult years of the 540s. There are heroic moments in this part of the digression, to be sure, and there are certainly passages where the poet was evidently concerned to present the actions of certain individuals in a positive light, but the overall tone is hardly the imperialistic whitewash that is sometimes implied in modern scholarship. Although the succession of military catastrophes in the aftermath of the plague is initially ascribed to Antalas, for example, the Roman rebel Stutias rapidly assumed a central role in the narrative, and the Moorish leader is almost entirely eclipsed in the latter parts of the digression. Significantly, Guntharith's uprising in the winter of 545/546 is also recounted at some length and is the last significant episode within the analepsis.

> Behold once more, Guntharith, with twisted intentions – that evil, deceitful, cursed, dreadful, ill-fated adulterer, bandit, murderer, rapist and foulest agent of war – attacked our unsuspecting commander with his cruel arms, taking him captive with trickery and falsely swearing oaths. He was not moved by any reverence for the emperor, nor was he afraid to wage war or assume the name of tyrant.[86]

The means by which Guntharith was overthrown was a contested issue in the period that followed. Liberatus' narrative accords a central role to the prefect Athanasius in the usurper's defeat and suggests that the magister militum Artabanes (named here only as "the Armenian") was merely an agent of that official.[87] He includes nothing on the complicity of either figure in the tyranny itself and is similarly silent on the similar role of the Carthaginian bishop Reparatus. By contrast, Procopius gives Artabanes a much more prominent position in the counter-coup, but it is clear from his narrative that all of these figures had been complicit in the unfolding tyranny, and this can hardly have been forgotten in Carthage only months later.[88] While Liberatus' analepsis thus represents a rather sanitized account of the recent past, the episode is scarcely swept under the carpet within the *Iohannis* as a whole. As we shall see, the poet twice returns to the aftermath of Guntharith's coup within the epic, first from the perspective of the Moorish leader Antalas (who could claim an agency of his own in the imperial victory), and then in the synthetic overview of John Troglita himself.[89] While Corippus shaped Liberatus' account to maintain a tactful silence on some details of the recent past, then, this should not be read as a ringing endorsement of imperial government.

86 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.222-228, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 75.

87 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.232-242, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 75. *Armenius* at IV.236. Gärtner, *Untersuchungen zur Gestaltung*, 65 and 89. Corippus, *Iohannis IV*, ed. Goldlust, 44.

88 Procopius, *Vandal War*, II.25.1-28.34, ed and trans. Dewing, II.420-455,

89 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.358-392, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 80-82; IV.407-456, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 82-84 with the discussion below.

This point is made still clearer by the themes of internecine war elsewhere in the digression. Most contemporary historical accounts agree that the military chaos in North Africa was caused primarily by mutiny and rebellion within the Byzantine army, rather than the external threat of the Moors, but Liberatus' recognition of these failings is all the more interesting for being placed in the mouth of a North African.[90] In the aftermath of Solomon's death, the condemnation of imperial administrative incompetence is blistering. After hailing the false hope generated by the arrival of Areobindus' relief fleet in 545 – "the sea glittered with Areobindus' prows" – Liberatus is caustic about the clumsy power-sharing arrangement with the commander Sergius that ensued.[91] He states explicitly that Areobindus' arrival created still greater problems for Africa and turns to the foundational myth of Rome to make his point:

> When the world was still uncivilized, and producing only meagre crops, it could not support two leaders, and nor could Rome, the greatest of realms, which consecrated its first walls with its own blood.[92]

These tropes of civil war recur throughout the second half of Liberatus' digression. The defeated Stutias explicitly compares himself to Catiline, and widespread use is made of the unsettling imagery of a world divided against itself. [93] Corippus refers to "Kindred breasts … attacked and guts spilled by kindred hands", in a passage which directly recalls the grotesque language of the Moorish oracle earlier in his digression.[94] If the digression as a whole followed Virgilian precedent, the bloody, brutal tone of his successor Lucan seems much clearer here.

In particular, the internal collapse of imperial society in Africa is emphasized by the voice of Liberatus himself in his account of the fall of Hadrumetum to the rebels in 544 or 545. This is one of the few specific episodes in the narrative, which is directly paralleled in Procopius' account, and one at which Liberatus himself claimed to have been present.[95] What is particularly noteworthy here, however, is how this allows the third-person perspective adopted elsewhere in the digression to give way to a first-person account of the officer's own surrender, having been trapped by the rebels' skulduggery:

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90 Procopius' account in *Wars* IV is largely concerned with internal conflict, a point demonstrated by the brief summary in Agathias, *Historia Ecclesiastica*, Poem 25, ed. Keydell; trans. Frendo, 7. Cf. also Victor Tunnunensis, *Chronica*, a.541.2, 543, 545, 546.2, ed. Placanica, 44, 46, 48; Marcellinus Comes *Chronicon*, Add. a.537.3; a.539.5; a.541.3; a.543.3, a.545.2, 546.3, ed. Croke, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51; Jordanes, *Romana*, 384, ed. Mommsen, 51.

91 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.83, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 69. Areobindus' fleet may have been very small: cf. Procopius, *Vandal War*, II.24.1, ed. and trans. Dewing, II.416; Marcellinus Comes *Chronicon*, Add a.546.3, ed. Croke, 51; Victor Tunnunensis, *Chronica* a.546, ed. Placanica, 48; and Martindale, Areobindus 2.

92 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.94-96, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 69.

93 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.205-218, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 74.

94 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.106-107, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 70; cf. *Iohannis* III.92, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 50 and Lucan, *Bellum Civile*, V.175 ed. and trans. Duff, 250. On this, see Corippus, *Iohannis IV*, ed. Goldlust, 148.

95 Cf. Procopius, *Vandal War*, II.23.10-25, ed. and trans. Dewing, II.408-414; Gärtner, *Untersuchungen zur Gestaltung*, 97-112; Modéran, Corippe et l'occupation byzantine.

> Overcome by fear, the men threw down their spears, flung themselves at the tyrant's knees and hailed him with friendly words. There was no salvation from their officers. What else can I say? We asked for mercy; it was given at once. We asked the enemy to swear on their lives; they did so. Compelled, we pretended that we would follow the infamous tyrants. Thus, the city of Justinian was handed over to the savage Moors, and left to an uncertain fate.[96]

Liberatus himself was blameless in this episode: in due course he effected his escape from the captured city, and he subsequently describes its recovery by loyal troops. But the personal voice assumed in the retelling of this episode underscores the collective breakdown that was afflicting the Byzantine army of the 540s. The same approach lends additional drama to the account of the subsequent battle at which Stutias and Solomon are killed, in a conflict unambiguously presented as a civil war:

> A Roman troop – not our own – followed these rebels. Then once more the same wretched weapons clashed together in a civil war.[97]

Corippus' ventriloquizing of this lament through the voice of a Roman soldier adds significantly to its impact, and in many ways Liberatus' tears for his own complicity in Africa's downfall are the emotional climax of his digression. As a spokesman for both North Africa and the imperial army, Liberatus' confession of his own surrender at Hadrumetum and his own wretched involvement in the civil struggle that followed is important. This is far from a chauvinistic celebration of imperial courage in the face of barbarian attacks. Instead, it surely places moral responsibility for the troubles facing the region with the Africans themselves.[98]

The underlying themes of Liberatus' digression are therefore corruption, suffering, incompetence, and civil war, and this remains important. To reiterate, this was an account of the recent past written by an African poet, placed in the mouth of an African character who was himself implicated in these events, and intended, at least in part, for an African audience who had lived through them. If this section was intended to set out the challenges that faced John at the assumption of his campaign, these would also need to have been credible to the audience of the poem. Yet the greatest lament here is not for the destruction wrought by Antalas, or by the Moors more generally, whose defeat will occupy the remainder of the poem. Instead, it is for the succession of crises which had disrupted the lives of North Africa's inhabitants since the later Vandal period. Justinianic ideology insisted that the occupation had brought peace and orthodoxy to Africa, but Liberatus' account hints that this view may not have been widely shared by the locals, or at least that such a happy resolution had to wait for the victories of John Troglita in 548. In his telling, the earlier imperial occupation may have offered brief moments of peace, which, ironically, recalled the happy days of the Vandal past,

96 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.64-69, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 68.

97 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.164-166, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 72.

98 *Pace* Corippus, *Iohannis III*, ed. Tommasi Moreschini, 242, who argues that using Liberatus as a spokesman implies that Corippus was following a straightforwardly "imperial" line in the treatment of these events.

but these were soon undermined by rebellion and mutiny, plague, and social collapse, in which all Africans were implicated. Meanwhile, Corippus says nothing about contemporary religious life, and this omission may well have been tactful, as has long been recognized; the Three Chapters controversy was approaching its height at the time when his poem was written and performed, and the poet may have thought it best to steer clear of such contentious issues.[99] But even without any acknowledgement of the religious tensions that had come with the conquest, his image of imperial rule is far from celebratory. When Corippus and his contemporaries looked back over the history of the previous fifteen years, it seems reasonable to suppose that they remembered civil war, suffering, plague and upheaval quite as vividly as Moorish attacks or Byzantine plenty.

Reflections: Corippus as Historian

Corippus' *Iohannis* is almost always presented as a work of imperialistic propaganda, in which the Byzantine military presence was idealized, and the loyalty of the African provincials was asserted. In this understanding, the poet is either presented as a thoughtless regurgitator of imperial talking points, or as a canny operative in his own right, who sought to cloak simmering religious tensions in the bold garb of Virgilian piety and heroism. But while there can be little doubt that the *Iohannis* was intended in some ways as a political statement, and that Corippus was an emphatic but not uncritical supporter of the Byzantine presence in Carthage, the importance of the poem – and indeed its purpose – can only be appreciated when the difficulties of the earliest imperial occupation are understood. The long analepsis in books III-IV directly articulates some of the anxieties that had beset imperial North Africa in the difficult early years of the occupation, and which the victories of John Troglita had supposedly resolved. If Corippus' poem was intended to encourage his contemporaries to believe that these recent military successes marked a new chapter in the imperial occupation – and there is every reason to assume that it was – the poet and his audience must still have recalled the troubles of the recent past with anguish. John's command was to stand as the resumption – assertion, even – of coherent imperial power, putting to an end civil strife, mutiny, and military incompetence, which had so stained the previous two decades, but it could not erase these memories entirely.

Corippus' deployment of Liberatus as a mouthpiece for this difficult history is important and reflects both the ambivalence of Africans towards the recent past, and the poet's own care in reconciling this with his wider message. Long analeptic digressions had obvious literary precedent, of course, and both linguistic and thematic echoes bind Liberatus' digression into the wider narrative of the poem, but the social implications of the use of this device in an epic concerned with the very recent past are worthy of comment. On the one hand, Corippus' use of an African subaltern as a spokesman for suffering within the region allowed him to include this difficult material within his poem, without disrupting the almost panegyrical tone employed in the remainder of the narrative. On the other, the identity of this narrator and particularly his turn to the first person at especially troubling moments, connects the narrative laid out here with the lived experience of the audience of the *Iohannis* as a whole. Ostensibly addressed to John Troglita, the digression of books III and IV acknowledges the grim reality of war, plague, and betrayal for Africans who surely remembered them all too well.

99 Cameron, Byzantine Africa, 21-22.

This need not imply that Liberatus' digression should be read as a reflection of Corippus' "true" feelings about the imperial occupation, simply that the adoption of a different narrative voice enabled the poet to navigate potentially treacherous political terrain. The complexity of this point is illustrated by the recapitulation of some of the key episodes in Liberatus' account – most notably the bloody aftermath of Guntharith's coup – in two further analepses placed in the mouths of Antalas and John Troglita.[100] There are some important discrepancies between these perspectives: Antalas emphasizes his own role in the overthrow of the usurper, for example, while John credits Artabanes with the deed. The general also glosses Liberatus' account in concluding that the majority of the recent troubles across Africa had been caused by the betrayal of the basic Roman principles of fidelity and loyalty to the empire – shortcomings which his own command could reverse.[101] Corippus' polyvocal rendering of these confusing events can do little to clarify the exact circumstances of Guntharith's rise and subsequent overthrow, let alone the poet's own view of the role played by the main protagonists in the drama, but does hint at the continued resonance of this tragic episode – and its ongoing political sensitivity – even half a decade later.

John's victory drew a line under all this Byzantine in-fighting; in some senses, Corippus' poem helped with this process. The *Iohannis* is emphatically not an uncritical celebration of imperial power in Africa, as is often asserted, but rather it reflects different responses to the imperial presence in its different narrative modes. As such, it can be read as an example of historical negotiation, and the healing of trauma, accomplished through the complementary narrative voices adopted within the text. The *Iohannis*, and particularly the digression of books III-IV, clearly responds to the attitudes of the immediate audience of the poem (and its author) towards the ongoing imperial occupation of North Africa. We have here a view of the imperial occupation written by an inhabitant of the region and addressed to others like him that was responding to the very real anxieties of his time. Here, Corippus hints at a view of the recent past that was far from idealized: one in which plague, social upheaval and civil strife exacerbated the problems caused by the Moorish wars, and in which the North Africans themselves were often directly implicated. His account does not evoke a collective memory in which the Vandal period was denigrated or dismissed, nor yet a celebration of an imperial protection that was challenged only by the incursions of external barbarians, but rather a messy, confused, and ambivalent past. If the *Iohannis* was intended as a celebration of a new imperial dawn promised by the victories of John Troglita and his troops, the poem reflects an awareness of the darkness of the night that had preceded it.

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100 Corippus, *Iohannis*, IV.358-392, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 80-82; IV.407-456, ed. Diggle and Goodyear, 82-84. The relationship between these analepses is explored in detail in Merrills, *Epic, War, and Rebellion*.

101 Merrills, *Epic, War and Rebellion* chapter 1 discusses the political valence of the Virgilian *parcere subiectis* motif within the *Iohannis*.

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Abbreviations
LCL = Loeb Classical Library
CSEL = Corpus Scriptorum Ecclesiasticorum Latinorum

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Islamizing Berber Lifestyles

Elizabeth Fentress*

The article focuses on the "Islamization" of Berber lifestyles, rather than the effects of the conquest on the Romanized inhabitants of towns in the Africa Proconsularis, the medieval Ifriqiya. The examination follows aspects of material culture as a whole, particularly in the Western Maghreb, where urbanism was far less dense. The evidence comes largely from later texts, although new archaeological work, particularly at Rirha and Volubilis, has begun to flesh out the picture. How did Islamization actually affect the Berbers of the West? While we have little evidence for Algeria, where the excavated Islamic sites are no earlier than the tenth century, the excavations at Rirha and Volubilis – Islamic Walila – provide excellent new data as to the gradual shift in settlement types, diet, and pottery, as well as for the use of coinage. For the tenth century, Sétif and now Igīlīz add evidence for the *fait accompli* of the fully Islamized towns and villages of the Maghreb. Like Romanization, Islamization came about by emulation, particularly among the élites, and by a slow change to the general *habitus*, with far different starting points for the Arabic and Berber communities.

Keywords: Ancient history, classical studies, classical archaeology, archaeology, Trans-Saharan archaeology, Arabization, Islamization

Introduction: Transitions in the Maghreb

While the religious Islamization of North Africa has received a certain amount of attention, little has been written about the social consequences of this practice, and there is still little agreement as to its timing.[1] Religious conversion is judged, in general, to have been rapid but superficial, with frequent references to apostasy. The evidence used is wholly from the relatively few texts, which do not change, although their interpretation does. So far, however, no-one has used material culture to examine the process, the changes that the Arab invasions brought about, and the rhythms of change, although there are certainly elements of this in Corisande Fenwick's book on *Early Islamic North Africa*.[2] This paper examines the question from the point of view of the still-emerging discipline of medieval archaeology in the Maghreb, looking for any correlation with Islamization.

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1 Much has been written on the subject in the last 40 years, some of it very dogmatic. For balanced views, see El Fasi, *L'islamisation de l'Afrique du Nord*; Brett, Islamisation of Morocco; Amara, l'islamisation du maghreb central; Aillet, Islamisation et arabisation. Bulliet, *Conversion to Islam in the Medieval Period* provides useful quantitative information, although it is clear that his sources are much rarer in the Maghreb than they are elsewhere.

2 Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*.

Although it is easy to demonstrate that all Roman Africans did not die or go away with the Arab invasions (as a Tunisian archaeologist once told me, asserting that there were no Berbers in Tunisia) and easy, as well, to show, as Corisande Fenwick has done, that many urban centres remained occupied, it is impossible to argue that little or nothing had changed over the period that separates the Vandal rule from the Aghlabid period.[3] What I want to do in this paper is to discuss the material correlates of the changes we can observe: not just where people lived, but how they lived.

Several years ago Andrew Wilson and I argued that in around 425 CE, only a few years before the Vandal conquest, the southern frontier of North Africa was swamped by a new wave of Berber invaders, coming from somewhere in the Sahara and driven by a combination of ecological factors, opportunity, and perhaps a charismatic leader.[4] Our evidence for this was archaeological and linguistic (combined with two key letters from St. Augustine), and we equated this invasion with the subsequent dispersal of the tribes characterized by Ibn Khaldun as Zenatic. I do not want to return to this argument, but it helps to situate the Berber kingdoms of the late fifth century in a regional context, and, indeed, to separate the Romano-Berbers of Africa Proconsularis and eastern Numidia, the areas stably occupied by the Byzantines, from those areas occupied by relative newcomers, still in movement and in close touch with one another. Archaeological evidence, particularly that of the drum tombs of Saharan type, supports this view. Their ability to form relatively stable kingdoms is clear from the Djedar, whose construction speaks to the control of a massive amount of manpower, and whose numbers suggest a dynasty of several generations. Camps argued that the Berber kingdoms of this period were regional in scope, rather than the tiny, shifting principalities suggested by Courtois.[5] That the area these kingdoms – or this kingdom – occupied coincides with that of the Zenatic-speaking tribes at the time of Ibn Khaldun closely relates those tribes to this new wave. Although they seem to have used Latin as the language of government on the coast, and to have referred to their state as a "Provincia" on inscriptions, the heartland of the state lay south and west of the Roman province, near Tiaret, where the Djedar are found. We can see this state as formed by an alliance of tribal groups under a single dynasty, a structure that will recur with great regularity in the Maghreb. The dispersal of these tribes through the Western Maghreb is clear from the two tribes that were protagonists in the early seventh century: the Awraba, the tribe of Koceila, based in southern Numidia, and the Jawara, the tribe of the Kahena, from the Aurès.[6] Both tribal groups are also found in Morocco between the seventh and the ninth centuries; they may be sister branches, or simple displacements of the whole tribe, but they demonstrate the wide spread of these tribal entities, who spoke a group of dialects known as "Zenatic" which linguists agree was only distantly related to those of the Kabylie.[7] What we are dealing with here, then, is a set of

3 Fenwick, From Africa to Ifrīqiya; Fenwick, Early Islamic North Africa, 53-80.

4 Fentress and Wilson, Saharan Berber diaspora.

5 Camps, *Rex gentium*; Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*, 335. On the Djedar, see more recently Laporte, Les Djédars.

6 On the Awraba, cf. Siraj, *L'image de la Tingitane*, 510-519; Modéran, Koceila; Bennison, Walila-Volubilis dans la tradition textuelle arabe, 66-67.

7 On the Zenatic languages, see most recently Ehret, Berber peoples in the Sahara and North Africa; Kossman, Berber subclassification.

people who were only weakly Romanized, if at all. Although some may have been Christian, their treatment at the hands of the Arabs, who regularly enslaved Berber women, suggest that they were considered more pagan then otherwise.[8]

My title, then, relates to the Islamizing of these Berbers, rather than the Romanized inhabitants of Africa Proconsularis, the medieval Ifriqiya. I want to examine this not in terms of their religion, but in terms of their material culture as a whole. The story for Ifriqiya is better known, based on the relatively stable occupation of the old city centres, with movement and new settlement only in the cases of the capital at Kairouan, at Tunis, and in the various palaces – whose excavation, as Abdallah Fili has pointed out, has taken priority over every other form of settlement.[9] In the West, where urbanism was far less dense, the evidence comes largely from later texts, although new archaeological work, particularly at Rirha, Igīlīz and Volubilis, has begun to flesh out the picture.

There seems to be little doubt that, once the revolt of the Kahena had collapsed, the Berbers of the West joined the Arab cause with enthusiasm, producing troops of mounted warriors whose unity seems to have been one of their most striking characteristics. The ninth-century author Ibn ʻAbd al-Hakam recounts that after the Arab general Hasan's victory over the Kahena, significantly to the west of the Aurès and probably in the Hodna basin, the surrender of the Berbers was accepted on condition that they supplied him with 12,000 horsemen, divided into two bands and entrusted to the two sons of the Kahena.[10] Brett argues that the legend of the Kahena's prophecy functions *ex post facto* to sanctify this outcome: her sons, stand-ins for the Berber Tariq ibn Ziyād, client of Musa ibn Nusayr, and the conquest of Spain, came to symbolize this fusion of Berber and Arab interests.[11] Tariq's own troops in 710 consisted of seventeen thousand Arabs and, again, twelve thousand Berber horse. That the Berbers joined in for opportunistic reasons rather than for religious ones there is little doubt, but this was a fusion that would last as long as the plunder and new lands kept coming, and left in its wake a vast population that was, at least nominally, Islamized. The principal urban hub of this period in the West seems to have been Tlemcen, the Roman Pomaria, from which, at the same time as the conquest of Spain, the combined Arab and Berber troops moved to control the Sūs, an area well outside the Roman Empire, even in its heyday.

But what did this mean in terms of ordinary life: how did Islamization actually affect the Berbers of the West? While we have little evidence for Algeria, where the excavated Islamic sites are no earlier than the tenth century, the excavations at Rirha and Volubilis – Islamic Walila – provide excellent new data as to the gradual shift in settlement types, diet, and pottery, as well as for the use of coinage. For the tenth century, Sétif and now Igīlīz add evidence for the *fait accompli* of the fully Islamized towns of the Maghreb.

8 Brett, Islamisation of Morocco, 48.

9 On the transformation of the cities of Ifriqiya, see most recently Fenwick, Fate of the Classical Cities of North Africa.

10 Ibn ʻAbd al-Hakam, *Conquête de l'Afrique du Nord et de l'Espagne*, ed. Gateau, 78-79.

11 Brett, Islamisation of Morocco.

Housing

I will start with Volubilis, where we believe that the Roman town was destroyed by an earthquake no later than AD 425.[12] Up to three metres of building collapse cover the Roman walls, and though in some cases these were used as foundations, there is no evidence for any continuity between the two occupations. The evidence for the earliest reoccupation of the site comes from the well-known epitaphs of a group of people from Altava, dated by the provincial year to the end of the sixth century.[13] Now, this use of the provincial date – that of Mauretania Caesariensis, not that of Tingitana, is significant perhaps *not* because of the nostalgia it betrays for Roman imperial rule but because of its evidence for the adoption of the provincial year as the official year of the Moorish state. This is just what we find in Altava, where the Castrum was dedicated, by a *procurator* and a *praefectus*, to Masuna, king of the Moors and the Romans, in AD 508. Camps and others have plausibly argued that this state occupied most of the Mauretania Caesariensis, stretching down into the Saharan Atlas.[14] I would tend to see Walila as a western centre of this kingdom, settled by the Awraba tribe as part of the wave of new Berber settlements in the northwest.

The new settlers occupied the western area of the city, where the hill slopes down towards the Oued Khomane, and constructed a north-south wall to enclose it within the abbreviated set of Roman ramparts (Fig. 1).

12 Fentress, Walila au moyen-age, 57-59. The full publication of the excavations is found in Fentress and Limane (eds.), *Volubilis après Rome* from 2018.

13 Akkeraz, Volubilis, with previous bibliography.

14 Camps, *Rex gentium* and Camps, De Masuna à Koceila, with previous bibliography.

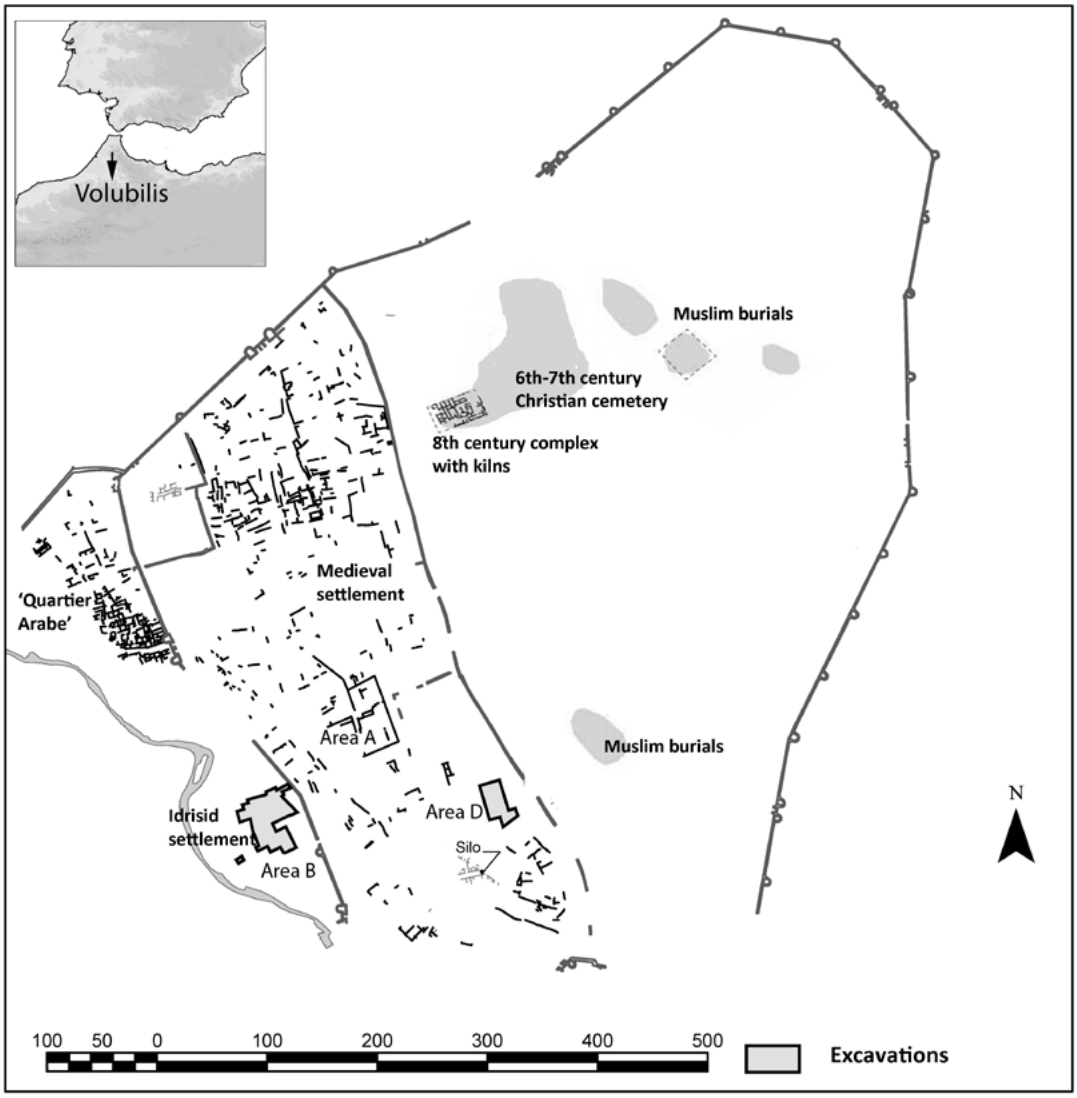

Fig. 1. The site of Volubilis, plan of the features of the medieval town.

The settlement covers 18 ha: significant, in terms of the early medieval Mediterranean, although its layout was not, apparently, particularly urban. Our excavations revealed simple, one-roomed houses, well built in a sort of pseudo- *opus africanum*, with a shed or outbuilding on the exterior, and several metres separating the individual buildings. The construction technique, with orthostats at intervals, recalls that of the Roman city. The remains of one of the houses bears a striking resemblance to Bourdieu's *maison élémentaire*, which he views as the essential type of housing in the Kabylie (Fig. 2).[15]

15 Bourdieu, La maison Kabyle; Fentress, Walila au moyen-age, 78-79.

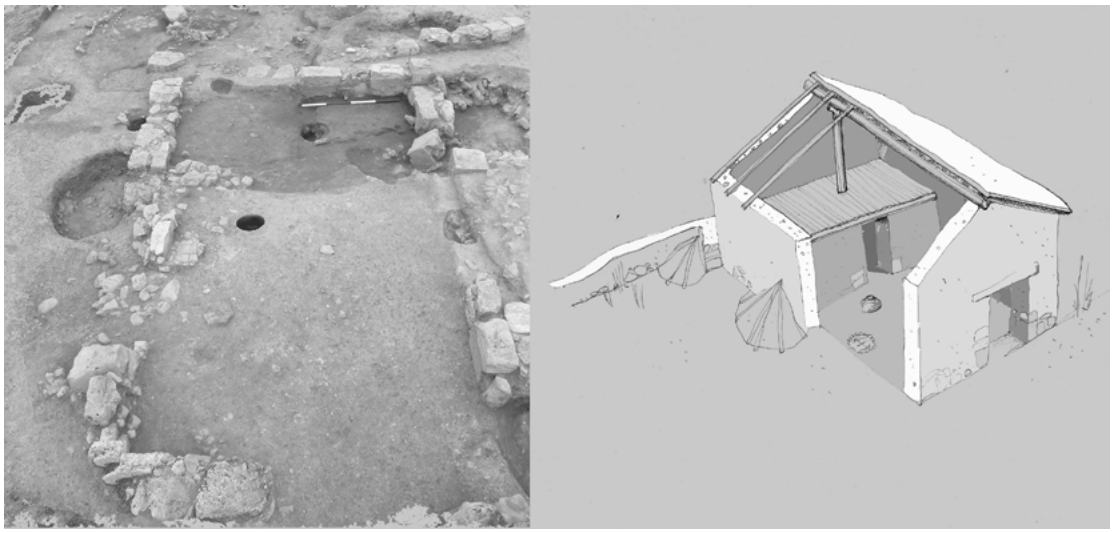

Fig. 2. A house within the Berber town, as excavated and as reconstructed (Fernanda Palmieri)

The rectangular structure is divided in two, the larger part with a smooth floor, a hearth, and a silo; the smaller part slightly lower, with a much rougher floor and a substantial posthole in the middle, which presumably supported a loft. This corresponds closely to the ideal type of the Kabylie house proposed by Bourdieu. In the new round of excavations in the centre of the settlement of Walila we have found a similar structure of the same date, a building divided in two (Fig. 3).

Fig. 3. A house at the centre of the Berber town at Volubilis, as excavated. The storage room in the foreground would have been covered by a loft.

At the west end was a large room with a hearth and postholes suggesting a loom in front of the south-facing door. To the east was a small room with a loft, indicated by a large posthole, and a door on one side (Fig. 2). Outside this storage or stabling space was an area with a large silo for grain storage. The stratigraphy of the destruction layers of this house showed the remains of a fire that had consumed the loft, dropping onto the floor below it the large jars that were presumably used to preserve foodstuffs.

We first see this division of domestic structures between living and storage areas in the Sahara, notably the Fezzan, where recent excavations have revealed substantial settlements.[16] At Fewet, excavated by Lucia Mori, and at Aghram Nadharif, excavated by Mario Liverani, the houses built against the external walls of the settlements show just this division of space, with the storage towards the rear of the building (Figs. 4 and 5).

Fig. 4. The Fezzan village of Fewet, Libya, plan; Mori (ed.) Life and Death of a Rural Village in Garamantian Times.

16 Liverani (ed.), *Aghram Nadharif*; Mori (ed.), *Life and Death of a Rural Village*.

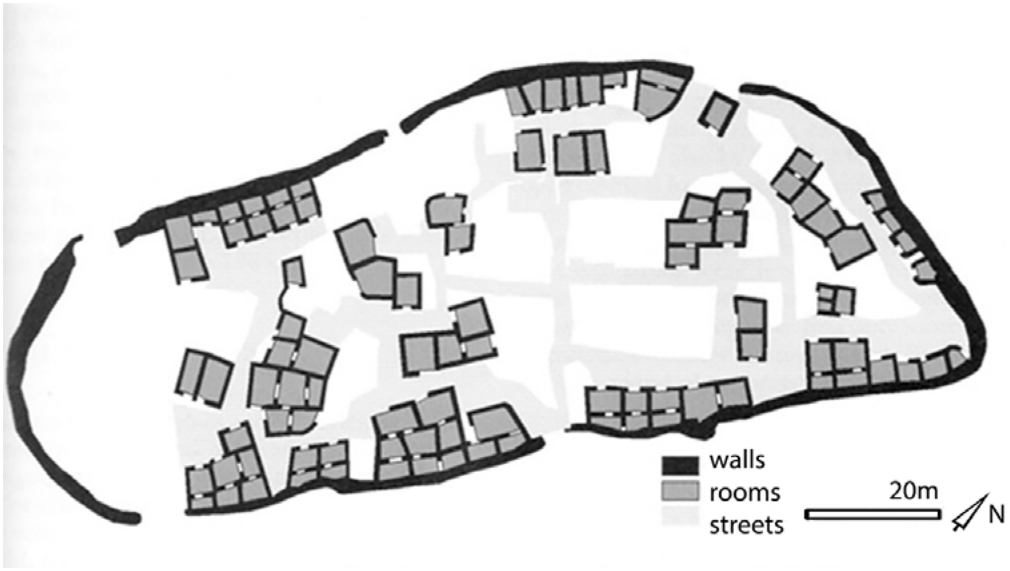

Fig. 5. The village of Aghram Nadharif in the Fezzan, plan; Liverani (ed.) Aghram Nadharif. The Barkat Oasis.

In the Kabylie house the space was used for animals, but we have no evidence for that at Volubilis, where storage seems to have been the primary use of these spaces. The use of pisé walling on a stone socle, too, seems to have been a constant in this architecture. If we can take this small sample as representative of Berber housing in the seventh and eighth centuries, we should note that it does *not* resemble the more complex houses that we find in surveys such as that of Kasserine in western Tunisia, where farms all had multiple rooms, and sometimes courtyards.[17] What we seem to be seeing here is, indeed, a very elementary form of housing, more similar to the housing deep in the Sahara in the Fezzan and the Draa Valley than to that of Roman North Africa.[18]

It is a standard observation that when Arabs encountered an existing town they tended to settle outside its walls, keeping themselves separate from the potentially pagan occupants of the town itself. This was the case at Ayla and Aqaba in the eastern Mediterranean,[19] and that example was followed at Pomaria/Tlemcen, where the new Friday Mosque bridged the gap between the two communities.[20] It was certainly the case at Walila, where the earliest, probably Arab, settlement occurred outside the northwest gate of the city. Here our current

17 Hitchner, Kasserine Archaeological Survey 1982-1986; The Kasserine Archaeological Survey 1987.

18 See now Fenwick *et al.*, A medieval boom, for the survey of the Draa valley for sites like LAR002, which dates to the 4th-8th c. CE and whose simple structures built against the enceinte are strikingly similar to those of the southern Fezzan. However, other North African Iron Age sites from the same survey show a clustered arrangement: Bokbot *et al.*, Horses and habitations, sites Tin 001 and Tin 015.

19 Whitcomb, Misr of Ayla.

20 On this, see Fentress, Walila au moyen-age, 94; Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 49. The same process is visible in the Eastern Maghreb, where we find Arab settlement outside the walls of the city of Zama Regia – modern Jāma: Touihri, Transition urbaine.

excavations have revealed substantial structures associated with pottery of the early eighth century.[21] There is also a possible mosque, which would be one of the first found in North Africa.[22] They seem to have been burned at some point in the middle of the eighth century. Then, after some decades of abandonment, this settlement was followed, in the late eighth century, by a new settlement some 200 m to the south, founded by the fleeing ʻAlid, Idrīs I. Although by the time of Idris the Berbers of the town were certainly converts to Islam – they are referred to as "Mutaizalites" – and this did not represent a threat of pagan contamination, it is clear that Idrīs, like the earlier Arab settlement outside the northwest gate, preferred to keep his distance. The two extra-mural settlements are our source for the earliest substantial set of data about early Arab settlement in the Maghreb. Conveniently, we can contrast the settlement of Idrīs with the earlier and contemporary Berber settlement within the remains of the Roman town.

The complex of buildings we interpret as the headquarters of Idris I, just outside the walls on the valley floor, looks very different from the houses inside the walls. It consists of three large courtyard structures, enclosing a *hammām* that, in stripped-down form, contains the classic elements of an Islamic bath building (Fig. 6).[23]

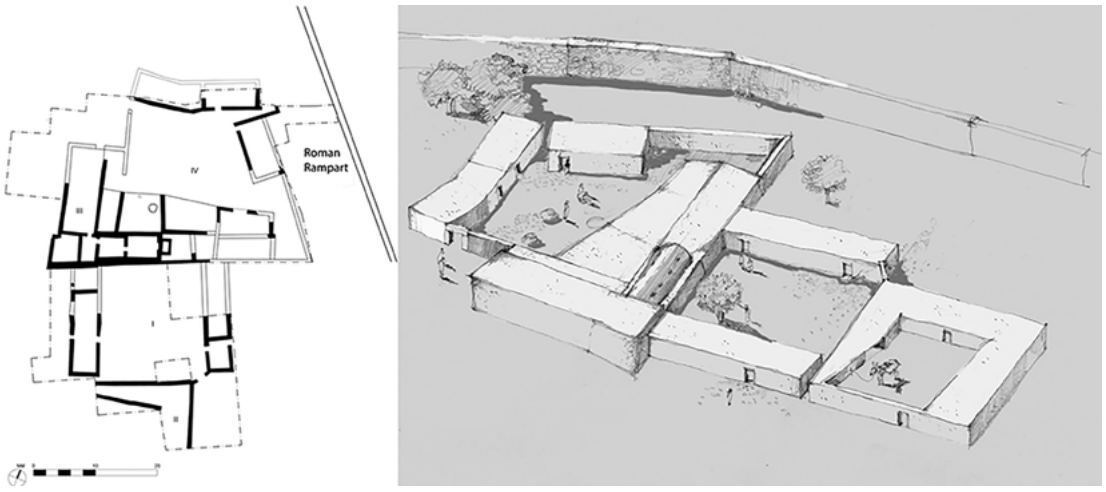

Fig. 6. The Idrissid headquarters at Volubilis, plan and reconstruction (Fernanda Palmieri)

The dating of this building to the brief period when Walila served as Idrīs' base is confirmed by both numismatics and radiocarbon dating.[24] While building techniques are not very different, except for the greater use of river pebbles, the plans of the structures, particularly their long, narrow rooms surrounding paved courtyards, have nothing to do with the houses within the town walls. The courtyard south of the baths is a vast open space, paved with river pebbles, without silos or other features. Against its walls on the east and west side are suites of rooms. In one of these, which we interpret as a reception space, opening onto the street, we find a low bench whose walls and floor are covered with ochre-tinted plaster (Fig. 7).

21 Fentress, Fenwick and Limane, Berbers and Arabs.

22 Fentress, Fenwick and Limane, Berbers and Arabs.

23 Fentress and Limane, *Volubilis après Rome,* 82-102.

24 Fuller, Chronométrie, 212-213.

This is the only trace of wall plaster found at the site, and clearly emphasizes the significant quality of the space, which we might interpret as a divan, spread with rugs and cushions, on which the host might receive guests and clients. Because of this, we interpret the structure as the *dar al-imara.*

Fig. 7. The reception space at the Idrissid headquarters. In the foreground, a low platform is visible to the right of the room.

Further south the space appears more domestic, and it is not by chance that the bulk of the food remains were found here. The northern courtyard contains at least seven large silos, subsequently used as middens: this appears to have been a collective space, aimed at storage to satisfy the needs of the household – their volume suggests the possibility of storage for enough grain to supply a household of around twenty people. At the centre of the complex is found a *hammām*, with an abbreviated circuit consisting of a cold room lined with benches and a pool at one end, a vestibule decorated with Roman spolia, a warm room and a hot room. To the north, on the site of the original extra-mural settlement, recent excavations have revealed a quarter given over to artisan activities, like smelting, which replaced the earlier extramural settlement, abandoned in the 740s or 750s.[25]

The site of Walila thus provides us with a unique opportunity to compare a Berber settlement that already existed – and indeed was Islamized – in the late eighth century, with that of a newly-arrived Arab aristocrat. Idrīs, in a fashion that would become a topos in subsequent history, was able to unite the Berber tribes – perhaps the remnants of the earlier Moorish kingdom – under his aegis and conquer all of northern Morocco, extending his reach into the Atlas Mountains, where silver mines allowed him to coin money and pay his troops. The interplay between the two sites shows emulation – but also some significant differences, in food ways and pottery.

25 Fentress, Fenwick and Limane, Berbers and Arabs,

We will start, however, with the diffusion of the style of building we find in Idrīs' headquarters: the large courtyard building with narrow rooms built against the walls. We also find this style in Tunisia, at the site of Belalis Maior, where Majoubi excavated a large structure with a similar plan, while Corisande Fenwick has observed further buildings on an aerial photograph.[26] In Iran, David Whitehouse excavated very similar houses at Siraf.[27] Although we lack data, except for Walila itself, for subsequent centuries it is clear that by the tenth century it was the dominant housing type in the Maghreb (Fig. 8).[28]

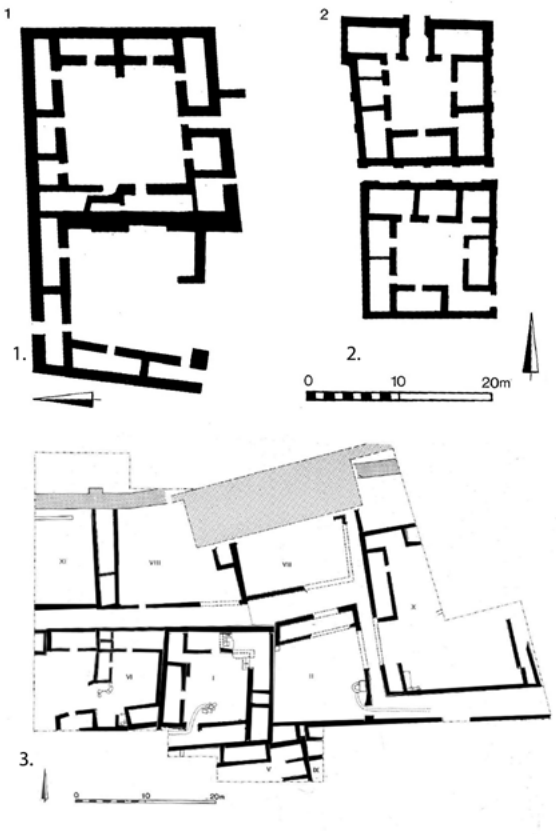

Fig. 8. 1. Henchir Faouar (after Mahjoubi, Recherches d'histoire et d'archéologie à Henchir El-Faouar); 2. Sīrāf (after Whitehouse, Excavations at Sīrāf); 3. Sétif (after Fentress (ed.), Fouilles de Sétif)

The change was not immediate, however. Although we lack evidence for later housing within the city walls, the site of Idris' headquarters was subsequently occupied with a group of houses with simpler plans, although they seem to have had individual courtyards, and a greater degree of separation from their neighbours than we found within the Berber town.

26 Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 59-60.

27 Whitehouse, Excavations at Sīrāf; Mahjoubi, *Recherches d'histoire et d'archéologie à Henchir El-Faouar*; Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 48.

28 Fentress, House of the Prophet; Fentress, Reconsidering Islamic houses in the Maghreb.

We suggest that the settlers who occupied the site were refugees from the revolt in Cordoba of the early ninth century, whose presence at the site was noted by al-Bakri later on. If we compare the housing at Saqunda, recently excavated, with that of the second phase of occupation of site B, it is clear that in neither case are the houses of the canonical "Arab" type.[29] Nor, indeed, are those in the original extra-mural settlement at Volubilis. However, by the tenth century, the courtyard format has become generalized: it is striking to find it high in the Atlas, at Igīlīz, the birthplace of Ibn Tumart, whose excavation, by Jean-Pierre van Staëvel and Abdallah Fili, has revealed what we must assume to be a fully Berber community whose inhabitants had by this point adopted the new style (Fig. 9).[30] In the Sahel, Essouk-Tadmakkat and Tagdaoust, new market towns of the ninth century, also adopt this form of building.[31]

Fig. 9. The site of Iglīlīz in the high Atlas; Van Staëvel et al., La montagne d'Igīlīz et le pays des Arghen.

29 Casal García, Características generales del urbanismo cordobés, 109-134; Casal García, *et al.*, Estudio de los vertederos domésticos, 143-182.

30 Van Staëvel, Ettahiri and Fili, *La montagne d'Igīlīz et le pays des Arghen*.

31 Nixon, Early Islamic trans-Saharan market towns.

It is not only the courtyard, but also the shape of the rooms that have changed. They are now long and thin, never more than 2 m wide, opening onto the courtyard only. It becomes standard to have a raised surface, or banquette, at one or both ends of the room. The first of these is that found in Building I on site B, above, which we interpret as the *dar al-imara*. The style was subsequently copied in one of the later houses on site D, within the walls, and again the banquette was coated with red plaster.[32] At Sétif, in Algeria, the room type was standardized by the early eleventh century, with plastered banquettes in the main rooms (Fig. 10).[33]

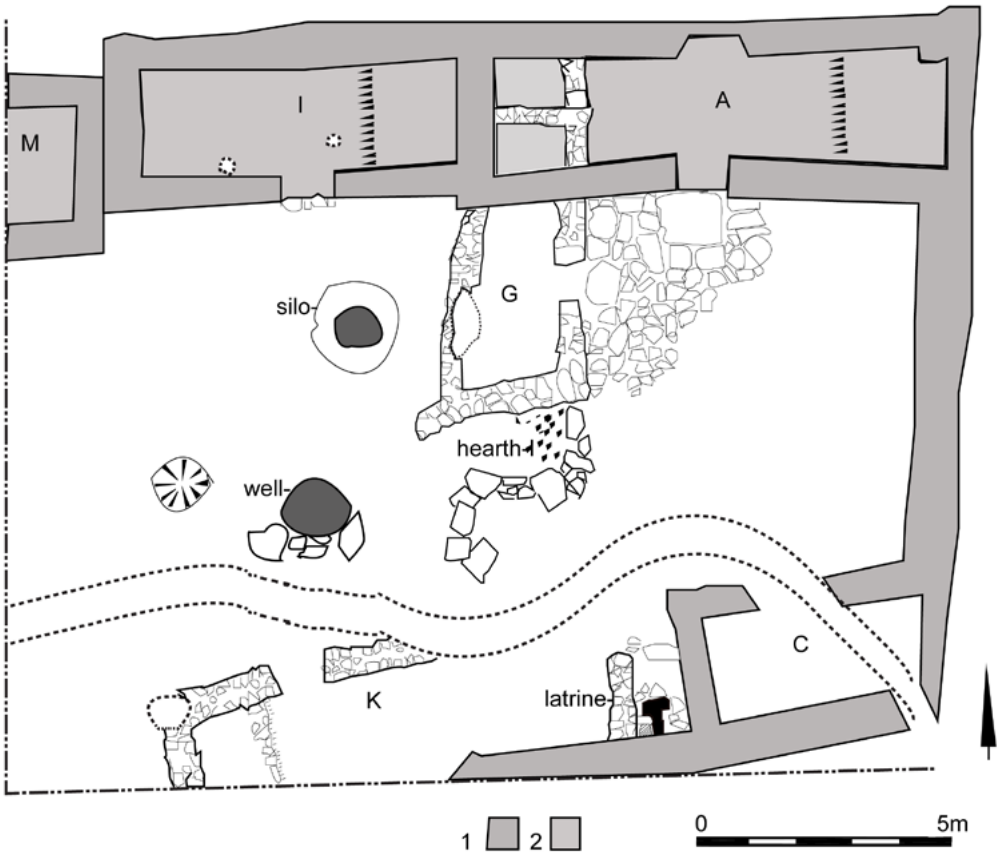

Fig. 10. An eleventh-century house from Sétif, showing a latrine and other service rooms; Fentress (ed.), Fouilles de Sétif.

By the thirteenth century, the banquette, at least, is sufficiently normal that it was found at Essouk/Tadmekkat.[34] Here, again, it was carefully coated with red plaster. We can perhaps see in the banquette a more humble form of the alcoves we find on grander, palatial sites. In a more functional vein, the latrine seems to have been a later introduction – latrines are found by the eleventh century at Igīlīz and Setif, but there is as yet no evidence for them at Walila.

32 Fentress and Limane (eds.), *Volubilis après Rome*, 80.

33 Fentress, *Fouilles de Sétif 1977-1984*, 152.

34 Nixon (ed.), *Essouk-Tadmekka.*

The diffusion of "Arab"-style houses can be seen as a largely urban phenomenon – at least until we have good examples of rural architecture: Igīlīz, a village high in the Atlas, is for the moment the only exception, although it appears to have been an élite settlement. Indeed, it is impossible to separate the threads of "being urban" from those of "being Islamic".

Grain Storage

Another cultural form which seems to have been introduced at this moment is that of the silo, whose first occurrence in the Maghreb (that I know of) is in the Idrissid complex at Walila, where large silos are found in the courtyard of the building devoted to workshops and storage (Figs. 11 and 12). although small versions quickly spread to the Berber settlement, where smaller domestic silos are found in the period we associate with Idrīs.

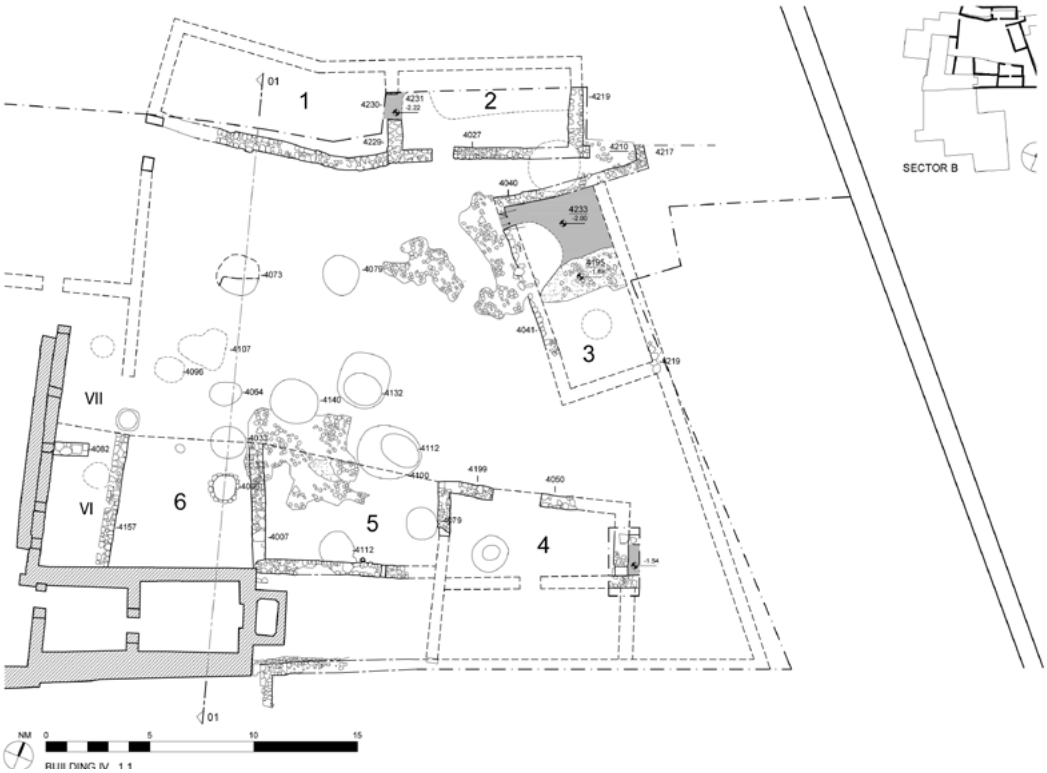

Fig. 11. Silos in the Idrissid headquarters at Volubilis (Fernanda Palmieri)

Fig. 12. One of the silos from the same building

The advantage of a silo over a built, Roman-style granary is that it entirely protects grain from the periodic attacks of locusts and grasshoppers that plague the Maghreb even today. Indeed, the French minister Jobert, writing of his childhood next to Volubilis, recalls such a plague, remarking that the villagers of Ferdassa fared better than the French *colons* because their grain was stored underground, and was thus protected.[35] The dangers that required this protection might also extend to tax collectors and other human and animal predators. Silos work because moisture only penetrates so far into the grain stored inside them: as the damp grains germinate, they consume all of the oxygen in the sealed space, preventing the rest of the grain from oxidizing. Thus the grain can remain within them for as much as ten years before rotting – if, of course, they remains sealed. Various groups of silos are known from the Maghreb – excavations at Sétif showed half a dozen large silos of the tenth century, isolated from other constructions but perhaps protected by a wall.[36] At Rirha, reoccupied in the ninth century after an abandonment of several centuries, the excavation recorded innumerable silos, concentrated in the area of a Roman house, and rarely overlapping.[37] Later texts record that there were more than 40,000 silos at Ceuta, between houses and warehouses.[38] They seem to have become the predominant form of grain storage in the north of Morocco, where the collective granaries of the Atlas mountains are absent. The word used for them, *al-matamura*, comes from the Arab verb "to bury" or "to hide", and it seems likely that they were introduced in this period. However, the question of how and where they came

35 Fentress, Walila au moyen-age, 91-93; Jobert, *La Rivière aux grenades*, 144.

36 Fentress, *Fouilles de Sétif 1977-1984*, 110-114.

37 Callegarin *et al* (eds.) *Rirha*, fig. 6. They were identified as "fosses dépotoirs", but this was clearly a secondary use after their abandonment.

38 Rosenberger, Les villes et l'arabisation, 46.

from remains open, as they are unknown east of Ifriqiya, and thus can hardly be attributed to Arabs. Indeed, in both Sicily (at Milocca) and in Spain (in the hinterland of Reccopolis) they are found in the sixth century.[39] Evidence from the tenth-eleventh-century sites at Sétif and Utica suggest that there may have been a communal place in settlements where larger silos were created, under some form of protection. We have textual evidence for this from a much later document from Milocca in Sicily, where a thirteenth-century text refers to a place in a village where the community was accustomed to "*facere fossa et victualia reponere*" (dig pits and put food in them).[40]

Grain Cultivation

Paleobotanical work has given us some idea of what was stored in the silos and consumed on the site. There are more cereal grains at site B overall, but if we combine the two wheat species, it is clear that they formed a significantly higher percentage with respect to barley at the Idrissid site than within the town.[41] This Berber preference for barley was already noted by both Procopius and Victor of Vita – the former accusing them of eating it raw, or in cakes cooked in the ashes,[42] and the latter being disgusted by their use of it to feed the captives in the Hodna region.[43] Even today, in the form of *bsisa* – roast, ground, spiced and mixed with water and olive oil – barley is a common breakfast cereal and plays an important role in Jewish ceremonial in Jerba, on the opening day of the month of Nissan.[44] Its use is related to risk management, in that the green barley becomes edible after roasting, enabling it to be eaten in the spring before the other grains come in. It is also convenient for use on caravans, in that, like date paste, it contains a concentrated amount of calories and requires little preparation. In fact, the use of *bsisa* might explain Procopius' taunt that the Berbers ate grain without boiling or baking it into bread. In the Islamic period at Walila, however, palaeobotanical evidence shows a progressive move away from barley. This shift is accompanied by a move towards hardier wheats like durum wheat, for which the first evidence north of the Fezzan is again found at Walila.[45] Known as *irden el-arbi* in the Atlas mountains, it is still perceived as an Arab introduction. A similar change is visible at a number of other sites, including Sétif, Althiburos, Jarma and Rirha (Fig.13). The progression from barley toward wheats is visible at all of these sites, although at Rirha it was apparently much slower.

At the same time as barley diminishes, olives begin to disappear: there were none in Islamic Sétif, while at Walila far more olives are found in the Berber settlement than in the headquarters of Idris I. Grapes, however, are constant at all Islamic sites.

39 On sixth-century silos in Sicily, cf. Arcifa, *Facere fossa et victualia reponere*; on those in the territories of Reccopolis, and Toledo, Jiménez, Rural hinterland of the Visigothic capitals, 105.

40 Arcifa, *Facere fossa et victualia reponere*.

41 Fuller and Pelling, Plant economy, 361-363.

42 Procopius, *Vandal War*, IV. VI.1 3, ed. and tr. Dewing, 2.345.

43 Victor of Vita. 2.26-37, ed. Lancel, 123.

44 Valensi and Udevitch, *Juifs en terre d'Islam*, 80. See, for *bsisa,* Fentress, Berbers, barley and bsisa.

45 It is, however, apparently found in Morocco in the early Neolithic: Morales *et al.*, Introduction of south-western Asian domesticated plants, 7 (this is based on a single rachis fragment). There is no Iron Age or Roman-period evidence for it from North Africa north of the Fezzan.

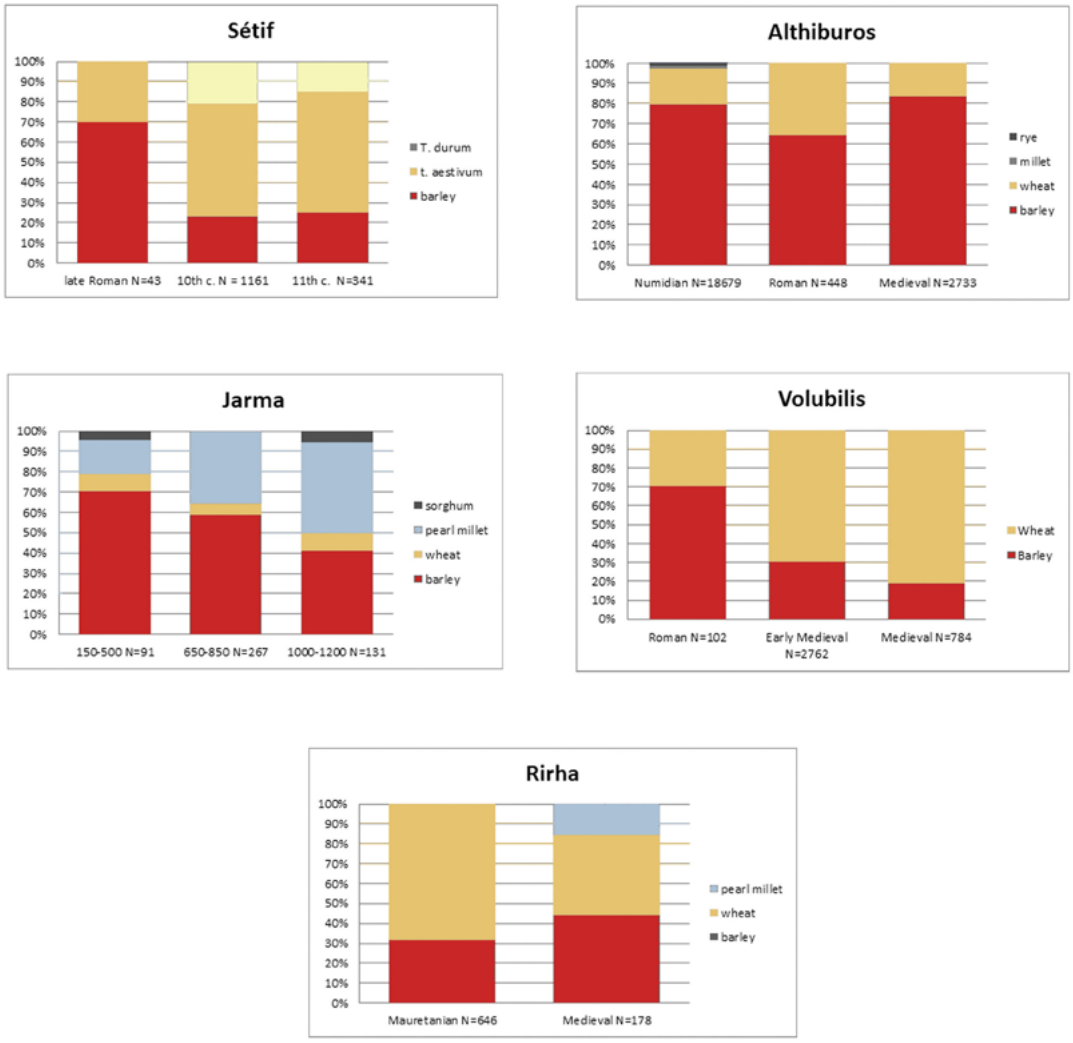

Fig. 13. Grain consumption at 5 inland sites: data from King, Les os d'animaux (Sétif); López-Reyes and Cantero, Agriculture et alimentation (Althiburos); Pelling, The archaeobotanical remains (Jarma); Fuller and Pelling, Plant economy – archaeobotanical studies (Volubilis); Muller et al. Environnement naturel et son exploitation (Rirha).

Meat Consumption

The situation with meat is more complicated: Fig 14 gives a breakdown by site and period of a selection of North African sites. In the early Iron Age at Althiburos, an important Numidian settlement, and in the Roman period at the Saharan oasis of Aghram Nadharif and in the Berber town at Volubilis, beef forms an important component of the diet, although in late Roman Carthage, Rirha and Sétif, pork, perhaps more typically Roman, is more important – we might see these three sites as more typical of Roman Africa in general. By the eighth century, however, pork virtually disappears, and there was a marked shift away from beef, although it was still consumed in greater quantities within the Berber community at site D than at the Idrissid site B, where ovicaprines contributed the vast majority of the meat consumed. It seems likely that this represents a specific dietary choice on the part of the inhabitants of site B, who were presumably buying in their meat, which seems to have been butchered on

the site. Rirha and the small Islamic village at Utica in Tunisia show some continuity in beef consumption, although we have no idea whether these sites were predominantly Berber or Arab in the Middle Ages.[46]

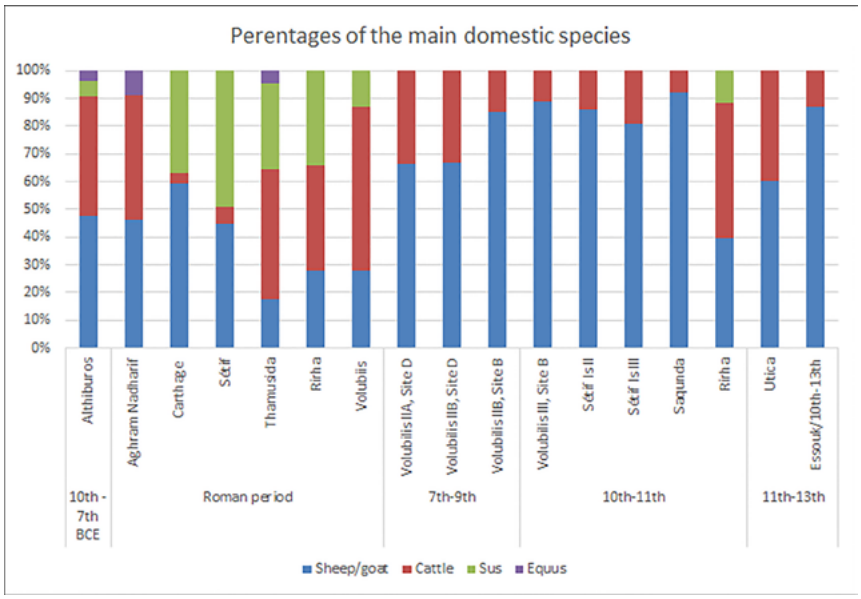

Fig. 14. Changes in meat consumption. Data from Portillo, Valenzuela and Albert, Domestic patterns in the Numidian site of Althiburos (Althiburos); Liverani. Aghram Nadharif. The Barkat Oasis (Aghram Nadharif); von den Driesch and Baumgartner, Die spätantiken Tierreste (Carthage); King, Les os d'animaux (Sétif); De Grossi Mazzorin and De Venuto, Ricerche archeozoologiche a Thamusida (Thamusida) King, The faunal remains (Volubilis); Casal García et al., Estudio de los vertederos domésticos del arrabal de Saqunda (Saqunda); Oueslati, Caractérisation de l'exploitation des ressources animales (Rirha); Oueslati, The faunal remains (Utica); Nixon, Essouk-Tadmekka (Essouk).

Cloth, Markets and Money

If we turn to clothing, the one clear difference is the introduction of cotton, several seeds of which were found in the large silos of site B.[47] This was apparently imported in bolls from the southern oases, as it could not be cultivated north of the Atlas, but it was apparently carded, spun and woven on the site – an idea that is confirmed by Ibn Hawkal's remark that cotton fabric from the Idrissid town of al-Basra was exported into Ifriqiya.[48] There is no trace of it at

46 On meat consumption in North and Sub-Saharan Africa, see now the important article of Fothergill *et al.*, Movement and management, which examines many more sites: the move towards sheep and goat is fairly constant, however. For the Mediterranean background, see now McKinnon, Consistency and change.

47 Fuller and Pelling, Plant economy, 364-365.

48 Siraj, *L'Image de la Tingitane*, 565, citing Ibn Hawkal, *Sûrat al-Ard*, 1, ed Kramers, 80.

site D, although technical change in fabric production is suggested by the remarkable find of a thimble, one of the earliest in the Western Mediterranean.[49] Thimbles apparently emerged from China, and their use was clearly spread through the channel of the Arab conquest – they are a common find at Qasr el Hayr, for example.

Cotton also shows an almost immediate integration into the trade networks reaching south towards the desert. This influx of goods and, presumably, merchants, seems to coincide with the arrival of new rulers, thus texts speak of the Rustumid foundation of Tihart, to which came merchants from the whole of the Arab world.[50] Indeed, links between Tihart and Walila clearly began earlier than Idris, for there are a significant number of coins from Tihart in the numismatic record, while a certain Rashid minted coins at both Walila and Tlemcen.[51] Coins as a whole are *far* more common within the area of the Idrissid headquarters, where 116 were recovered, compared to only 46 at site D. If we look only at the Idrissid coinage, the relationship becomes 20 to three (Fig. 15).[52] In general the vast majority of the Islamic coins were the tiny bronze *fulus*, which served above all for soldier's pay, as Corisande Fenwick has pointed out. Their very limited circulation within the Berber town certainly suggests that ordinary transactions were not monetary, a situation typical of the villages of the Kabylie in the beginning of the last century.[53] There, monetary transactions did not take place within the village, and periodic markets took place well away from its confines.

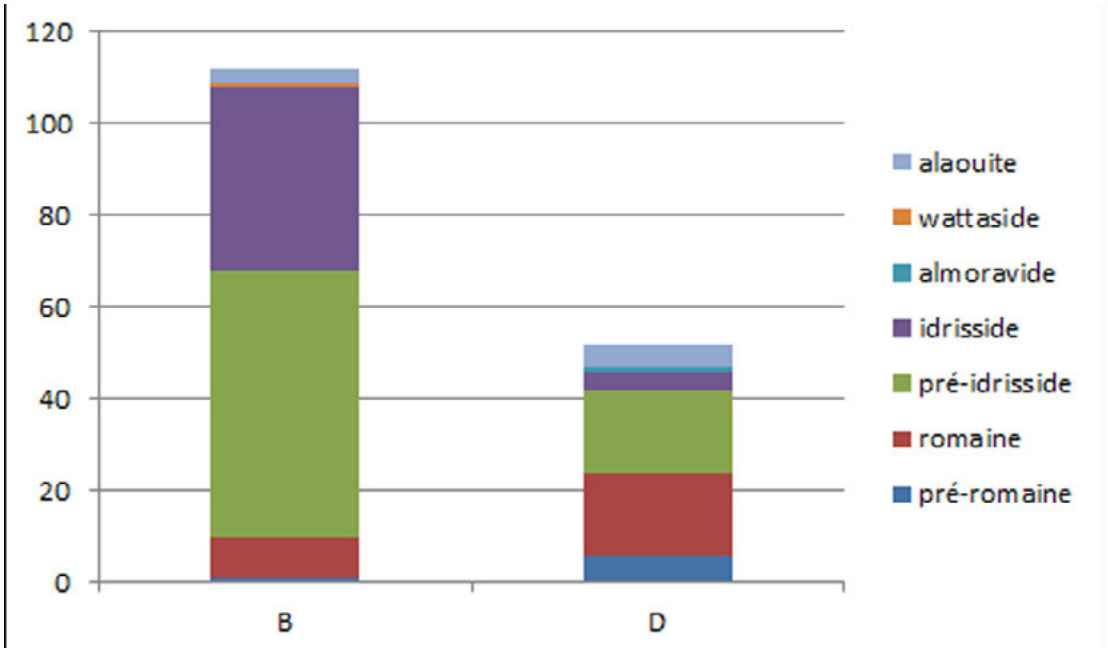

Fig. 15. Coin use at the Idrissid headquarters at Volubilis compared to that within the town; El Harrif, Les monnaies.

49 Fentress and Limane (eds.), *Volubilis après Rome*, 339 and fig. 4; 55, 14. This is the earliest find of cotton in North-west Africa, although it is present in Egypt and the Sudan from the early Roman period: Bouchaud *et al.*, Cottoning on to cotton.

50 Cadenat, Recherches à Tihert-Tagdempt.

51 El Harrif, Les monnaies, 321.

52 Fentress, Fenwick and Limane, Berbers and Arabs.

53 Hanoteau and Letourneux, *La Kabylie et les coutumes kabyles, 345.*

A closer relationship to the market at the Idrissid headquarters is also visible if we look at the pottery. While there is no difference between the proportion of wheel-made to hand-made pottery at the two sites, the Idrissid headquarters present a far greater number of forms for storage, while within the town, the range is generally limited to the small cooking pots called ollas. [54] Finally, pottery with engraved decoration is almost entirely limited to the Idrissid site: as this type of pottery appears to have been made elsewhere, it suggests contact with more distant markets.

A final aspect of Islamization is not material. What language did people speak in the Western Maghreb? Since Arabization is not the same as Islamization, as Brett and others have pointed out, it was (and is) entirely possible to become a Muslim without speaking Arabic.[55] Ibn Tumart, the Mahdi of the Almohads, both preached and wrote in Berber, while there are references to the creation of a Quran in Berber by the imam of the heretical Barghawata.[56] Markers of the passage towards generalized use of Arabic are few, however. The recent discovery of a glass-paste ring mount inscribed "bismilah" outside the northwest gate of Walila in an early eighth-century context seems to confirm Arab occupation there, rather than suggesting the use of Arabic by local Berbers.[57] Inside the town we find the graffito shown in Fig. 16, which seems to represent the Tifinagh letter G or GH. A study of early Islamic graffiti in the West remains to be done: in Iberia, however, graffiti from Tolmo di Minateda show that that settlement was already Arabized by the ninth century.[58]

Fig. 16. Ceramic bottle from the town of Volubilis with the Tifinagh letter ǧ (EF)

54 Amorós Ruiz and Fili, La céramique, 284.

55 Brett and Fentress, *The Berbers,* 120.

56 Talbi, Hérésie, acculturation et nationalisme; Iskander, Devout heretics.

57 For the ring, see Fentress, Fenwick and Limane, Berbers and Arabs.

58 Gutiérrez Lloret, Histoire et archéologie de la transition en al-Andalus, 232.

Conclusions

This brief spin around the range of material culture at Volubilis and elsewhere, and its change over time, obviously leaves out a lot – we have no idea how people dressed, apart from what can be gleaned from Procopius, who claims that Berbers wore the same hooded woollen garment year in and year out, presumably some form of burnus.[59] And, of course, it does not touch in any way on questions of belief. Like Romanization, Islamization came about by emulation, particularly among the élites, by a slow change to the general habitus, with far different starting points for the Arabic and Berber communities, and for the Berber communities in the West and the East. I have emphasized changes particularly in housing and diet, because I believe that these are the most conservative characteristics of a society, and the slowest to change. The gesture of the mixing of *bsisa*, rubbed against a bowl, will have been the same two thousand years ago as it is today. Can we measure "Islamization" by looking at houses and food? Is the 12th-century village at Utica, whose inhabitants seems to have lived by mining the ruins, less "Islamized" because it has three times more barley than wheat, and an anomalous dependence on beef? Do these same traits at Rirha, too, signify a more conservative Berber population? Or simply a more rural one? As usual, we need more data, from far more sites.[60]

59 Procopius, *Vandal War*, II. VI., ed. and tr. Dewing, 2.322; cf. El Briga, Burnous EB.

60 In particular, Algeria remains an almost blank page.

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The Umayyad Dynasty and the Western Maghreb. A Transregional Perspective

Isabel Toral*

The Islamic conquest of the seventh century marked the beginning of a process that pulled the Far and Central Maghreb into the emerging Islamic world. This process was, however, not straightforward. Step by step, commercial, political and intellectual bonds linked the Maghreb with the Middle Eastern centers, while religious missionaries and political dissidents arrived there and sought for adepts amongst the newly converted population. Umayyads and Fatimids used this territory to fight their battles. The conflicts between these rival regional macro-powers forced the Berber imamates to increase their dependence on the Western Umayyads in Al-Andalus. Economically the Maghreb had become part of a transregional commercial network (slave- trade) and eventually became part of the Islamicate world sharing legal practices, religious doctrines and globally connected scholarly elites. The growing influence of Maliki scholars and practices prepared the terrain for the adoption of the Maliki legal school and the marginalization of local forms of Islam. Finally, the Maghreb became part of a "Sunni" mainstream Islam throughout the tenth and eleventh centuries.

Keywords: Central and Far Maghreb (modern Algeria and Morocco); arḍ al-Barbar (land of the "Berbers"); "Islamization", "Arabization"; Umayyad caliphate; Khārijism, Idrisids, Ibāḍite communities; Kharijites; Shiites; Ismailites.

Introduction

The history of the Central and Far Maghreb (modern Algeria and Morocco)[1] between c. 700 and 1000 CE is a still rather neglected, "dark" period of Islamic history. The situation regarding sources is difficult: contemporaneous historiographical Arabic sources are mostly focused on what they perceived as metropolitan areas, namely Greater Syria, Iraq, Arabia, and Iran. Albeit to a lesser degree, they also consider Egypt, al-Andalus (Islamic Spain)

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1 These terms are used in this chapter together with "Western Maghreb", thereby encompassing both regions. The two terms reflect the division found in Arabic sources of pre-modern times, which roughly differentiate between "*al-Maghrib al-awsaṭ*" (= the middle/central west, roughly modern Algeria), "*al-Maghrib al-aqṣā*" (the far/distant west, roughly modern Morocco) and then *Ifrīqiya* (roughly modern Tunisia). In a way, it reflects the ancient division between the two Roman Mauretanias (*Mauretania Tingitana* and *Mauretania Caesariensis*) and Roman Africa. *Al-Maghrib* without specification usually encompasses the area between the Atlantic and Tripolitania, sometimes even Egypt. The terminology in the sources is not completely consistent. Cf. Yver, al-Maghrib.

and Ifrīqiya (modern Tunisia). For Arab historians, the Central and Far Maghreb was the *arḍ al-Barbar* or land of the "Berbers" (an unspecific umbrella term used by Arabic sources for the autochthonous population), located in the extreme western periphery of the known world, and, in a strategy of "othering", it was seen as populated by wild, rebellious, uncivilized, and heretical peoples.[2] It was barely perceived as part of the *Dār al-Islām* ("Domain of Islam") also because, since the 740s, the Umayyad caliphs in Damascus and their successors the Abbasids had lost their control over these territories. Another problem is that several of the independent "Berber" polities that surfaced then seem either not to have developed a significant historiography, or it is lost, so that we lack the insider's perspective.[3] Fortunately, the nuanced interpretation of later sources from new perspectives,[4] as well as the investigation of the material evidence (archeology, numismatics), for a long time neglected for various ideological reasons, has been gaining momentum in recent decades and is now helping to fill some of these gaps.[5]

Nevertheless, it must be said that this area was not on the periphery of the world. It rather entered into the first phase of a process that pulled the area into a global network of political, intellectual, and commercial stakeholders and interest groups, so that increasingly it functioned as an interface between Africa, Asia, and Europe. This was a consequence of the Islamic conquest at the end of the seventh century AD, an event that initiated the multifaceted integrative process that we call "Islamization",[6] understood as the gradual implementation of certain institutions, societal patterns and commercial connections that were shared with other countries governed by Muslim rulers. Even if this part of the Maghreb soon ceased to be part of the eastern caliphate(s), it was drawn into the macro-area of the Islamic world that had been emerging since the eighth century.

One of the most important vectors for this transformation was the commercial, intellectual, and political links to the Umayyad[7] regime in al-Andalus (756–1030).[8] The increasingly close interconnections between the Maghreb and the Iberian Peninsula would promote the Islamization and Arabization of the Maghreb on all levels. These transregional integrative processes will be the thematic focus of this chapter.

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2 For the problems of the ethnonym "Berber" (*Barbar*) in the Arabic sources and the complex ethnogenesis of the Berbers, see de Felipe, Leyendas árabes, 379-396; Rouighi, The Berbers of the Arabs, 49-76. Arabic sources usually distinguish between *Barbar* (autochthonous population of northwestern Africa) and *Afāriqa* (the Latin-speaking, Christian autochthonous population, Amara, L'islamisation, 113-14).

3 For the possible reasons, see the discussion below.

4 For instance, cf. Benchekroun, Les Idrissides, 171-188; Benchekroun, Rāšid et Les Idrissides, 7-37; Fenwick, Umayyads and North Africa, 303-312; Coghill, How the West was won, 539-570; Benchekroun and Liétard, Les Idrissides à la lumière de fulūs frappés, 727-740.

5 Cf. for a recent survey on the state of research and the problems of the marginalization of the Maghreb, Aillet, Islamisation et arabisation, 7-34, and the entire collected volume *Islamisation et arabisation de l'Occident musulman médiéval (viie-xiie siècle)* edited by Valérian with many contributions on the material remains. Cf. also Benchekroun, Le Maghreb médiéval et l'antiquité, 195-223; Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa: A New Perspective,* 12-15; 19-30; and Panzram, Entre Civitas y Madīna: El Mundo de Las Ciudades, passim.

6 For a discussion of both processes on all levels, cf. the collected volume Valérian (ed.), Islamisation et arabisation.

7 It is important to distinguish between the Umayyads in al Andalus (756-1030) and the Eastern Umayyads in Syria (661-750). To avoid confusion, since both played a distinct, but quite different role in the early history of the Maghreb, I am using "Eastern Umayyads" to specify when I am referring to the Umayyad caliphate of Damascus (661-750); "Umayyad" will be used as a shorthand for the Umayyad caliphate in Cordoba.

8 Ali-de-Unzaga and Gaiser, Facets of exchange, 1-6.

Beginnings of Islam in the Maghreb (8th–9th century)

In 706, the Islamic conquest of North Africa was almost completed with the seizure of Tangier, putting an end to the expansion towards the west which had started in around 646 with raids sent from Egypt towards Tripolitania. In contrast to the rapid conquest of the countries of the Middle East, it was a long and complicated campaign, characterized by several expansive waves interrupted by drawbacks and pauses.[9] The new caliphal province "(*wilāya*) *al-Maghrib*" was administered from Qayrawān in Ifrīqiya, a garrison city founded in around 670 as a strategic bridgehead, and which would evolve in the following centuries into a bustling city and a focus of Islamization and Arabization for the whole region.[10] Between 711 and 718, the almost complete conquest of the Iberian Peninsula added the new subprovince of al-Andalus to this vast province.

The following decades between 720 and 740 CE were a period of administrative and political consolidation, coinciding with a phase of stability in the Eastern Umayyad caliphate. However, it ended with a disaster – the great Berber rebellion between 739-743, a movement which encompassed broad parts of the Berber population on both sides of the Straits of Gibraltar. The upheaval contributed significantly to the downfall of the Eastern Umayyad caliphate and is seen to have anticipated the Abbasid revolution in 750.[11]

Probably, the upheaval was a reaction to the oppressive policy of the caliphal administration towards the autochthonous population. Despite their relatively rapid conversion to Islam and successful integration into the army as auxiliaries, the "Berbers" were still treated as conquered people, which meant that they were enslaved and taxed heavily. The abduction of booty and slaves towards the east seems to have been massive and responded to the great demand for manpower and riches to fulfil the needs of the expanding empire of the Eastern Umayyads.[12] Against this background, it is not surprising that, when the newly converted Berber population was exposed to the doctrines of the Ibāḍites and the Ṣufrites, both variants of the Kharijite spectrum, it willingly embraced this rather egalitarian and less Arabo-centric variant of Islam.[13]

9 For this, apart from Coghill, How the West was won, cf. Kaegi, *Muslim Expansion and Byzantine Collapse* and Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 31-46.

10 Talbi, Al-Kayrawān.

11 For these events, cf. Guichard, Une "Mediterranée berbere", 9-18; de Felipe, Leyendas *árabes*; Brett, *Fatimid Empire*, 26-31; de Felipe, The Butr and North African Ibāḍism, 88-110; Fenwick, Umayyads and North Africa.

12 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 61.

13 For a recent overview (with further bibliography) on the doctrines of the Kharijites, their subdivisions (Azraqites, Ibāḍites, Ṣufrites, and Najdites) and the problems with reconstructing these "heretical" doctrines, cf. Hagemann and Verkinderen, Kharijism in the Umayyad period, 497-500. Furthermore, Kharijites were associated with extreme, in some cases even militant piety, and a strong anti-Umayyad position. The (ethnic) egalitarian features have been related to the fact that, in contrast to the Sunni/Shia doctrine, legitimate rulership (imamate) should be restricted to the Prophet's tribe, the Quraysh (Sunna)/or his close family (Shia), the Kharijites argued that it was due to the most virtuous and pious man, Arab or not. Originally an anti-aristocratic tribal Arab movement, Ibaḍism finally became absorbed by the "Berbers" into a movement with a strong anti-Arab dynamic. Cf. Aillet, *Une étude des modèles politiques et sociaux de l'ibadisme médieval*, 10, and de Felipe, The Butr and North African Ibāḍism.

The beginnings of Khārijism in North Africa are difficult to reconstruct and complicated by the biased nature of the sources. The first groups of Kharijites (*al-khawārij*, "those who go out") were loosely connected groups of insurgents in Iraq, who, driven by a combination of piety and political grievances, waged guerrilla warfare against the Eastern Umayyad caliphate for several decades.[14]

By the end of the seventh century, and pressured by the oppressive policy of the caliphal authorities, many had left Iraq and sought refuge at the periphery of the Islamic world (Oman, Yemen, the Maghreb). In North Africa, they seem to have found first adepts in Tripolitania in the 730/740s, and then expanded westwards through missionaries who were in loose contact with their leaders in Iraq. Many autochthonous "Berber" groups seem to have first come into deeper contact with Islam through these Eastern missionaries, who thus functioned as important vectors of Islamization. Probably, members of the Kharijite spectrum also participated in some ways in the great Berber rebellion, though the information is scarce and could be partly a back-projection.[15] What can be said is that the Kharijite movement in North Africa gained momentum in the late 740s, coinciding with the crisis of the Eastern Umayyads and the Abbasid revolution, and led to the rise of several independent Kharijite principalities in Maghreb: the most important were the Ṣufrite Midrārids around Sijilmāsa in the Tāfilalt in southeastern Morocco (757-909), at the gateway to the desert, connected to the Berber tribe of the Miknāsa;[16] the Ibāḍite Rustamids around Tahert (the ancient Tingatia, in modern Algeria) (778-909), broadly connected with the Zanāta, Hawāra and Nafūsa;[17] and the idiosyncratic imamate of the Barghawāṭa along the Atlantic coast of Morocco (744-1058), that practiced a very peculiar, nativist form of Islam.[18]

Located in a wide area in the frontier zone to the desert that reached from the Mediterranean to the Atlantic, these "Berber" polities became wealthy thanks to the support from the Ibāḍite communities of the east for agricultural and urban development, but first and foremost through the impulse given by trans-Saharian commerce. Themselves previously captured and traded as "Berber" slaves by Muslim merchants, the rulers of these imamates now became merchant princes and for a while assumed almost a monopoly on the slave-trade, which thereafter concentrated on sub-Saharan black slaves.[19] Slaves were in great demand in the Islamic Empire as domestics, luxury concubines, dancers, and wet nurses, but also served as much-needed manpower in rural estates.[20] Other commercial goods in high demand were gold, silver, cereals, and animals. It should be mentioned that up until then, neither

14 For a nuanced update of the source problems encountered when studying the early Kharijites, cf. Hagemann and Verkinderen, Kharijism in the Umayyad period.

15 Ibāḍī sources claimed that the rebellion had been instigated by Kharijite and Ibāḍī missionaries from Basra 20 years earlier, but these remarks could be back-projections. Cf. Hagemann and Verkinderen, Kharijism in the Umayyad period, 497.

16 Pellat, *Midrār*; Capel and Fili, Sijilmasa au temps des Midradides, 37-68.

17 Sometimes also called Rustumids. Aillet, Tahart et l'imamat rustamide, 47-78; Bahaz, Réflexions, 127-136.

18 Le Tourneau, Barghawāṭa. The sources for this community are particularly poor and contradictory.

19 Savage, Berbers and Blacks, 351-368.

20 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 61.

the Romans nor the Byzantines had managed to establish sustainable, long-term trans-Saharian trade; however, the intensified use of the dromedary in Islamic times,[21] the introduction of new financial tools, and the increased demand for slaves and metals in the Arab Empire favored the establishment of stable commercial bonds, routes and entrepots.[22]

On the other hand, the princes of the originally Arab dynasty of the Idrisids dominated a broad zone that had extended from Fes/Volubilis to the far south of Morocco since the late eighth century. The founder of the dynasty, Idrīs b. ʿAbdallāh (r. 789-791), was a descendant of the Prophet's grandson Ḥasan b. ʿAlī, who had escaped to the Maghreb under obscure circumstances after a disastrous defeat near Mecca in 786, and was a representative of the moderate Zaydī branch of the Shia. He found allies among the local Berber groups surrounding Walīla (Volubilis) and established a Zaydī imamate in the newly founded city of Fes. After some decades of splendor under Idrīs II (r. 791-828), the Idrisid imamate collapsed in 828 and split into numerous Idrisid petty imamates that dominated a large zone from the Mediterranean coastline up to the far south of Fes.[23] Like the Kharijites, the Idrīsids stood in ideological opposition to the Umayyads and Abbasids since they were Zaydī Shiites.[24]

All these "Berber" states had in common that they were politically independent from the Abbasid caliphate in the east, ideologically dissident, idiosyncratic, probably mainly Berberophone, dominated by large tribal "Berber" confederations, sometimes led by a tiny elite that claimed an eastern background.

The Umayyad Emirate and the Maghreb (9th Century)

The connection between the Western Umayyads and these Berber states already begins with the arrival of the Umayyad prince Abd- al-Raḥmān b. Muʿāwiya in the Maghreb, where he found protection from his persecutors in the aftermath of the Abbasid revolution.[25] He stayed for some time in the region of Tahert; subsequently he sought hospitality first from the Berber tribe of the Miknāsa, and then from the Nafza tribe around Nakūr on the coast. For this, he took advantage of his family connections – his mother was a captive of Nafza origin – and stayed with them for a while, until he moved to the Iberian Peninsula, where he established the Umayyad emirate in Cordoba. This all happened in the context of collapsed caliphal authority, chaos, and the emergence of independent autochthonous Berber principalities between the Berber revolt and the Abbasid revolution (c. 740 and 756).

21 The exact date for the introduction and domestication of the dromedary in North Africa is controversial, but it is undisputed that the Islamic conquest gave its use in the desert routes a significant boost. Cf. Bulliet, *The Camel and the Wheel*, 198.

22 For the slave-trade in North Africa cf. the studies by Gaiser, Slaves and Silver; Botte, Les réseaux transsahariens, 27-59; Savage, Berbers and Blacks; Taher, Les rapports socio-*économiques*, 225-236. For the reconstruction of the Saharan trading networks with archeological evidence, Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa,* 98-101.

23 Benchekroun, Rāšid et les Idrissides; Benchekroun, Les Idrissides.

24 They also shared many other basic views, cf. the comparison by Madelung, Some reflexions on the origins, 42-47.

25 Molina, Abd al-Raḥmān b. Muʿāwiya.

To begin with, the Berber element was predominant among the Andalusi Muslim population – they had composed most of the invading Muslim forces – and the toponymics show that they settled widely in the countryside, where they soon merged with the local converted population. Berbers continued to be an important component in al-Andalus in the next centuries, particularly as mercenaries.[26]

After an initial period of hostility that culminated in the Berber revolts of the 740s, seventy years later the sources evidence the existence of regular diplomatic relations between the Umayyads and Berber imamates in North Africa. The Umayyad emirate, effectively independent from the Abbasid caliphate since 756, depended on its capacity to maintain friendly relations with the Berber states in the Western and Central Maghreb. This was for both security and economic reasons, as Adam Gaiser has argued, since, as previously stated, these imamates controlled the traffic of slaves, which was an essential pillar of the economy of the time.[27]

White Andalusi slaves and eunuchs (*ṣaqāliba*), captives from the Christian territories, were a precious export ware that was in high demand in the Islamic East, and there are many indications that the Umayyad regime collaborated with the Berber slave-traders in this regard and participated in the slave boom of the early centuries.[28] They also reexported black slaves previously bought from the North African slave-traders.[29] Another important good that attracted the Umayyads was African gold. When ʿAbd al-Raḥmān III died in 961, the coffers of the caliphal treasure were full of gold, so that al-Ḥakam had enough surplus to pay rich stipends to his Berber allies.[30] In a letter sent by al-Ḥakam to his general al-Ghālib in North Africa, the caliph explicitly refers to the "full treasure chests and granaries", which guarantee the continued supply of resources to finance the stipends to the Berber principalities.[31]

Driven by these concerns, the Umayyads chose to cooperate with the main political players in the Maghreb and maintain a network of alliances and clientele links with them. Ideologically, this posed problems, given the anti-Umayyad past of the Kharijite movement,

26 For a nuanced study of the Berber element in the conquest of al-Andalus, cf. Manzano Moreno, *Conquistadores, Emires y Califas,* 166-186; for the Berber element (particularly Berber mercenaries) in the later caliphate, cf. 493-499.

27 Other goods were also traded: horses from North Africa, gold from sub-Saharan Africa, as well as ivory, ostrich feathers and animal skins; in the other direction, it was wheat, sugar, and cotton, as well as silk and luxury items. However, slaves predominated, cf. Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 44; Taher, Les rapports socio-économiques. Numismatic evidence suggests an economic boom in North Africa as a result of the slave-trade, see Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 59, 62-65. For the Ibāḍī monopoly of the trade with black slaves, cf. Savage, Berbers and Blacks.

28 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 45, 63-65. The *ṣaqāliba* were slaves from diverse European backgrounds, brought from Galicia, Francia, Lombardia and Calabria. It seems that the castration of eunuchs was carried out in Pechina by Jews and gave Umayyad al-Andalus a monopoly on the eunuch trade in the Mediterranean.

29 Botte, Les réseaux transsahariens, 47.

30 Taher, Les rapports socio-*économiques*, 190. Botte, 84 and passim. For the effective tax system of the Umayyads under the caliphs ʿAbd al-Raḥmān , al-Ḥakam and how the resulting wealth was also used to finance the foreign policy, see Manzano Moreno, *La Corte*, 59-93. According to Manzano, under ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, the tax income had reached 5,480,000 dinars (from 1,000,000 in emiral times), to which one has to add the private income of the caliph (around 765,000 dinars), Manzano Moreno, *La Corte*, 61-63.

31 Ballestín Navarro, Jilʾa y monedas, 395-96, with reference to *the Muqtabis* by Ibn Ḥayyān.

and because the Western Umayyads followed a traditionalist, anti-Shiite orientation, and relied on the support of the "orthodox" Malikite scholars from the 820s on.[32] One of the arguments the Umayyads used was to emphasize that the Berbers of the Maghreb were their clients, because they had converted to Islam under the protection of the Eastern Umayyads at the time of the conquest.[33] The Umayyads also seem to have systematically used Berber personalities from al-Andalus as mediators when negotiating affairs and conflicts involving the Berber population on either side of the Straits.[34] Finally, they probably exerted indirect influence through the numerous Andalusi communities living along the North African coastline (seamen and traders), and in Fes.[35]

The policy was broadly successful. Almost all the new Berber principalities in the Maghreb became part of the Umayyad system of alliances. The first attested diplomatic mission to Cordoba in 822 from the Rustamids shows that this event was not the first of this type, but rather part of an already functioning relationship. The emir ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (r. 822-852) hosted them with exquisite hospitality.[36] There are indications that this exchange was regular and had already begun under emir al-Ḥakam (r. 796-822). One of the latter's close counsellors was the grandnephew of the Rustamid imam Muḥammad b. Saʿīd. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān II (r. 822-852) employed him as chamberlain (*ḥājib*), courtier and diplomat, and he married into the family of the famous Iraqi court singer Ziryāb.[37]

This policy of good understanding with the Rustamids was continued by the emir Muḥammad (852-886). The evidence for Umayyad-Midrārid relations is not as copious, but it seems that they were also intense and friendly.[38] The Ṣāliḥids of Nakūr, the Midrādids in Sijilmāsa, the Barghawāta in Tamasna and also the Idrisid petty rulers were all more or less pro-Umayyad.[39] Despite doctrinal differences, all these polities had in common their anti-Abbasid position, and they shared many interests based on the geopolitical situation.

The Umayyad Caliphate and the Maghreb (10th Century)

In the early tenth century, the Umayyads changed their strategy and started to intervene directly in the Maghreb, thereby reacting to the military and ideological pressure of a new player on the scene, namely that of the Ismaili caliphate of the Fatimids (established since 909 in Ifrīqiya), which actively pushed westwards, by attacking the Berber states and the North African Mediterranean coastline.[40] This turn of events surprised the Umayyad emirate in a dire moment of existential crisis, weakened as it was by many internal conflicts and rebellions. Its anxiety was aggravated by the Fatimid policy of sending secret agents to the peninsula to spread their propaganda.[41] The fact that the most important rival of the Umayyads,

32 Mones, Le rôle des hommes de religion, 47.

33 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver , 53.

34 Guichard, Une "Mediterranée berbère".

35 Taher, Les rapports socio-*économiques*, 183-184. He mentions i. a. Andalusi communities in Ceuta, Basra, Fes, Wazaqqur and Sijilmāsa.

36 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 54.

37 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 54-56.

38 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 57.

39 Gaiser, Slaves and Silver, 58; Benchekroun, Les Idrissides entre Fatimides et Omeyyades, 31-32.

40 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 55 et passim.

41 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 55-57.

the rebel ʿUmar b. Ḥafṣūn, sent a message of allegiance to the newly established caliphate of the Fatimids in 909, shows how menacing the situation was. On the other hand, in the Maghreb, violent internal conflicts among the many Idrisid rulers, as well as internal crises in many of the Berber states, destabilized the southern frontier zone.[42] The Fatimids managed to subjugate Tahert and Sijilmāsa in 909 and destroyed the Midrārid and Rustamid imamates; they also conquered Fes in 917 for a short while and pushed further westwards in 920-922.[43]

In 912, the young and dynamic ʿAbd al-Raḥmān (announced as caliph in 929) was proclaimed as the new Umayyad emir in Cordoba and successor to his grandfather.[44] He started his rule by waging numerous military campaigns to secure his control over the central territories in al-Andalus. From 916 onwards, he also started to take measures to stabilize his dominion over the frontier regions. Besides several campaigns against the Christian territories in the north, he took care of the southern frontline along the coast to defend the peninsula against potential Fatimid aggressions. Thus, in 914, he fortified Algeciras as a naval base for the Umayyad fleet and as a bridgehead for expeditions to the Maghreb, reinforced the watchtowers along the whole southern coastline of the peninsula, and secured Umayyad domination over the eastern coast of Spain. During the 920s and the 930s, he actively intervened in North African politics. The Ṣāliḥids of Nakūr, deposed by the Fatimid governor Masāla b. Ḥābūs in 917, were offered help by the Umayyads.[45] Soon Melilla (927) and the almost impregnable fort of Ceuta (931) came directly under the authority of the Umayyads. At the end of these campaigns, the northern coastline of the Western Maghreb had been transformed into an extension of the Western Umayyad territory, which gave them control over the commerce between the Iberian Peninsula and the North African hinterland. Umayyad policy contemplated allowing local Idrisid and Berber rulers to keep their position if they acknowledged the sovereignty of the Umayyad caliphs.[46]

As part of the ideological offensive, the regime financed the work on Sunni mosques in the Maghreb. For instance, ʿAbd al-Raḥmān al-Nāṣir sent money for the extension of the prayer hall of the Qarawiyyīn Mosque in Fes, a building of high symbolic value.[47] The mosque continued to be a site of conflict between both powers: when Buluqqīn b. Zīrī, a Fatimid ally, conquered Fes in 980, he commissioned a new minbar, from which the *khuṭba* was pronounced in the name of the Shiite imam, and added a commemorative inscription. Five years later, when Abū ʿĀmir Muḥammad al-Manṣūr's cousin ʿAṣqalaja reconquered Fes for the Umayyads, he removed the minbar's backrest with the Fatimid inscription, replacing it with an

42 Benchekroun, Les Idrissides entre Fatimides et Omeyyades, 36-38.

43 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 58-59.

44 For the ascension of ʿAbd al-Raḥmān, cf. Fierro, *ʿAbd Al-Rahman III,* 37-41. His father Muḥammad, the presumed heir, had been assassinated by his own brother under unclear circumstances in 891, cf. Fierro, *ʿAbd Al-Rahman III*, 34-35. ʿAbd al-Raḥmān's proclamation was undisputed, and it seems that his grandfather had shown his preference for him repeatedly. According to Ibn Ḥazm, he was chosen by the venerable system of the *shūrā (*council*)*, not by designation, as was usual by then, although Maribel Fierro questions the historicity of this information: cf. Fierro, Sobre la adopción del título califal, 38.

45 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 58.

46 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 59.

47 Cf. Deverdun, al-Karawiyyīn.

inscription naming the Umayyad caliph Hishām and the *ḥājib* al-Manṣūr.[48] Later, when in 388/998 al-Manṣūr's son al-ʿAbd al-Malik al-Muẓaffar conducted an expedition as far as Fes, he also attempted to embellish the Qarawiyyīn. A beautiful cupola was constructed at the entrance of the axial nave of the oratory. A new minbar was set up and a cistern was laid out, but neither have been rediscovered.[49]

The caliphs also used to send official robes (*khilʿa*) and precious clothes (*khazz*) produced in the *dār al-ṭirāz*, the official caliphal manufacture, as gifts to their allies, who could then exhibit these as symbols of caliphal favor.[50] Other presents were valuable horses from the caliphal stables (*makārib al-khilāfa*).[51] They also sent exquisite ebony boxes filled with perfumes: for instance, among the luxurious gifts sent to Mūsā b. Abī al-ʿĀfiya were "a pyxis of white ivory, containing sticks of frankincense seasoned with ambergris; another ivory pyxis, also with silver hinges, that had an Iraqi vase inside filled with an excellent *ghāliya*" .[52] They also sent vast amounts of coins, often golden caliphal dinars[53] as well as Umayyad banners, that would then manifest Umayyad allegiance.[54] ʿAbd al-Raḥmān also seems to have continued the Umayyad policy of employing Andalusi Berbers as ambassadors to deal with the North African allies.[55]

The direct confrontation of both regional superpowers on the soil of the Maghreb would put the local players under pressure from both sides and end up making them lose their political semi-independence. The details of the complicated and confusing ups and downs of this fierce fight for hegemony between the Umayyads and the Fatimids in the tenth century have been analyzed in several articles and will not be repeated here in detail.[56] Roughly speaking, the war was waged through intermediaries, and the tribal confederation of the Zanāta in Central Maghreb mostly sided with the Umayyads, the Sanhāja Zīrids rather with the Fatimids. However, many minor players changed sides in accordance with the course of events, and the great powers sought allies amongst whoever would help them to fight their enemy. For instance, the Umayyads supported (in vain) the upheaval of the Kharijite rebel Abū Yazīd ("the Man of the Donkey") against the Fatimids in the 940s.[57] Similarly, the governor of Fez under the Fatimids, Aḥmad ibn Abī Bakr al-Zanātī, changed sides in 955, acknowledged the Umayyad caliph and received vast sums of money from him.[58]

48 Rosser-Owen, *Articulating the Ḥijāba,* 43.

49 Cf. Deverdun, al-Karawiyyīn.

50 Manzano Moreno, *La Corte*, 67-77. For a detailed study of the many gifts sent to the North African rulers based on the letter sent by the caliph al-Hakam to al-Ghālib, cf. Ballestín Navarro, Jil'a y monedas, 398-410, and passim.

51 Ballestín Navarro, Jil'a y monedas, 400.

52 Ibn Ḥayyān, Muqtabis, quoted in Rosser-Owen, *Articulating the Ḥijāba, 238.*

53 Manzano, *La Corte*, 67-77.

54 Manzano, *La Corte*, 269-296.

55 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 59, 61-62; Fierro, *ʿAbd Al-Rahman III*, 76.

56 Guichard, *;* Benchekroun, Les Idrissides entre Fatimides et Omeyyades; Lévi-Provençal, La politica africana, 351-388.

57 Fierro, *ʿAbd Al-Rahman III*, 77; Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 62-63.

58 Fierro, *ʿAbd Al-Rahman III*, 78.

These changes complicated the political map of the Maghreb even more. For instance, the governor for the Fatimids installed in the newly conquered Meknès, Mūsa b. Abī al-ʿĀfiya, also switched to the pro-Umayyad faction in 928. He then persecuted the northern Idrisids in the name of the Umayyads, thereby pursuing a policy that ran counter to the traditional Umayyad policy. As a result, some Idrisids, formerly pro-Umayyads, switched sides and sought an alliance with the Fatimids. The Umayyads, in turn, reacted by fighting them and finally subjugating the Idrisids in the 950s.[59]

In 969, the Fatimids relocated their capital to Cairo; from then on, their center was transferred to Egypt, so that their political ambitions and strategic interests changed significantly, now more orientated to the east. Ifrīqiya was left in the hands of their allies, the Sanhāja Zīrids. The Umayyad caliph al-Ḥakam II (r. 961-976) continued the policy of indirect rule pursued until then, namely by sending stipends to the Umayyad's Berber allies in the Zanāta, bestowing them with robes of honor and other legitimizing insignia, and providing military support in their fights against the Sanhāja Zirīds, allies of the Fatimids.[60]

The Umayyads even welcomed the alliance with the "heretic" Barghawāṭa, who sent an embassy to Cordoba in 963.[61] Indirect rule in the Maghreb continued under the ʿĀmirids, de facto rulers in Umayyad Cordoba during the caliphate of Hishām II (r. 976-1009).[62] The conflict took place between adversaries who used their acknowledgement of either the Umayyad or Fatimid caliph rather symbolically, as a tool to legitimize their rule and reinforce their own status. Broadly speaking, the western part of the Maghreb, dominated by Zanāta groups, belonged to the sphere of the Umayyads until their collapse at the beginning of the eleventh century, whereas Ifrīqiya, dominated by the Sanhaja Zīrids, remained under Fatimid influence. In the end, the long-lasting conflict led to the reinforcement of the dominance of the tribal Marghāwa chiefs of the Zanāta confederation in Central and Far Maghreb.

The "Malikization" of the Maghreb

One of the main long-term outcomes of these events was that they prepared the terrain for the "Malikization"[63] of the Maghreb in the 11th-12th centuries, thereby meaning the gradual marginalization of Kharijite and Shia forms of Islam and the adoption of Malikism, a rather conservative and mainstream variant of Sunni Islam. The growing interconnectedness with Maliki Umayyad al-Andalus,[64] and the loss of the monopoly over the slave-trade significantly weakened the Kharijite communities in the tenth century. The Fatimid repression of the

59 Benchekroun, Les Idrissides entre Fatimides et Omeyyades.

60 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 64.

61 Guichard, Omeyyades et Fatimides, 63.

62 There was only a short interlude between 998-1004, when al-Manṣūr al-ʿĀmirī established his son ʿAbd al-Malik as governor of an Andalusi province of al-Maghrib al-Aqṣā in 998, a vast province that included almost the whole territory of modern Morocco. In 1004, ʿAbd al-Malik al-Muẓaffar had to reassume the policy of indirect rule, since he had to deal with the internal problems in al-Andalus and direct rule had proved to be too onerous. Taher, Les rapports socio-*économiques*, 188-189; Rosser-Owen, *Articulating the Ḥijāba* , 72-80.

63 Term used by Amara in the excellent analysis of this process: Amara, L'ibadisme et la malikisation, 329-347.

64 The expansion of Malikism among the Kharijite Berber principalities allied with the Umayyads, mainly as a result of Andalusi influence, seems to have been already very palpable in the 10th century. Benchekroun, Les Idrissides entre Fatimides et Omeyyades, 21.

Kharijites contributed further to their marginalization. The defeat of the Ibadite rebel Abū Yazīd in 946 (supported by the Umayyads against the Fatimids) was followed by brutal Fatimid punitive expeditions. On the other hand, the Sanhāja Zīrids, based in Ifrīqiya, a stronghold of Malikism, although they accepted the sovereignty of the Shiite Fatimids, actively supported the spread of Malikism in the regions they dominated.[65]

Looking back to the earliest phases of Islamization of the Far and Central Maghreb, one must consider its religious idiosyncrasy and plurality in the beginnings.[66] The presence of Kharijite, Shiite, and autochthonous, "Berber" variants of Islam has already been discussed. It is also noteworthy that for the first two centuries of Islam, there is no biographical information on Islamic religious scholars (*ʿulamāʾ*) from the Central and Far Maghreb recorded in the biographical dictionaries, in contrast to the rich information preserved for scholars in al-Andalus and Ifrīqiya. According to Fierro, this indicates the absence of a basic social constituent ofc Islam – the *ʿulamāʾ* – which further demonstrates that the Maghreb was not a part of "Sunni" mainstream Islam until the tenth and eleventh centuries, when it was gradually drawn into it through the adoption of Maliki Islam.[67] The majority of the population were Muslims (in fact, the Berbers converted remarkably early to Islam, in comparison to the autochthonous peoples in the Islamic East), albeit of a different sort, and their existence reflected the real diversity of early Islam, a societal and doctrinal model which was still in its formative phase and whose doctrinal and practical plurality later fell into oblivion.[68]

It cannot be excluded that the non-preservation of an autochthone, local history of the Shiite Idrisids, the Ṣufrī Midrārids and the idiosyncratic Barghawāṭa is the result of a filtering by later generations who were either not interested in preserving their memory, or deliberately obliterated it. The silence of the sources also suggests that these communities were not connected with other Muslims in the east. This contrasts with the case of the Ibāḍite Rustamids in Tahert, for which parts of their historiography are still preserved.[69] Ibāḍite communities have not only survived to this day and developed a theological and legal school doctrine of their own but they also maintained connections with the communities in the east through the circulation of scholars, pilgrims, merchants, knowledge, texts, and goods.[70]

Summary and Conclusions

As has been shown, the Islamic conquest in the seventh century marked the beginning of a process that pulled the Far and Central Maghreb into the transregional area of the emerging Islamicate world that spanned from Africa to Persia and India. Increasingly, commercial, political and intellectual bonds connected this area: events taking place in the Islamic East – for instance, the repression and marginalization of political parties in Iraq in the eight century –soon had effects on the Maghreb; religious missionaries and political dissidents from

65 Qayrawān was the center of Malikism from the late eight century, cf. Idris, L'aube du malikisme ifriqiyen, 19-40; Amara, L'ibadisme et la malikisation, 334-336.

66 Amara, L'islamisation du Maghreb central, 103-130; Aillet, Islamisation et arabisation.

67 Fierro, El proceso de islamización, 79-103.

68 For similar phenomena in the Islamic East, one should compare with Crone, *Nativist Prophets*167. Crone remarks that the Maghrebi nativist movements are the only ones documented (albeit poorly) besides the Iranian cases. My thanks to Maribel Fierro for pointing to this parallel.

69 Talbi, *Rustamids*, see the list of sources there.

70 Dridi, La communauté ibadite, 348-366.

the east migrated to the Maghreb and sought for adepts amongst the newly converted population (Kharijites, Shiites, Ismailites); political players from the east used this territory to fight their battles (Umayyads, Fatimids); the Maghreb became an integral part of a huge, transregional commercial network (slave-trade); and finally, by developing "Sunni" Islamic institutions of knowledge (Malikization), the Maghreb became part of the large network of interconnected *ʿulamāʾ*, which integrated it into a large Islamicate world that shared legal practices, religious doctrines and globally connected scholarly elites.

This long-term and complex integration and Islamization, however, was not straightforward, and the vicinity to the Umayyads in al-Andalus has been shown to be a very important factor. In the first phase (8th-9th centuries), after some decades under the control of the Eastern caliphate in Damascus, the Far and Central Maghreb became politically independent, it developed regional and idiosyncratic variants of Islam which did not follow the mainstream, metropolitan "Sunni" version, and was not perceived as an integral part of the Islamic world. However, the intensifying commercial and diplomatic connections with their neighbors in the north, Umayyad al-Andalus (much more Islamized by then), not only brought them into contact with mainstream Islam, but it also enriched this area and made it increasingly attractive for the political players of the region. This is also confirmed by the archeological evidence, which demonstrates a widespread economic revival and an expansion of commercial activity in North Africa from the mid- to the late ninth century.[71]

In the second phase (10th century), the fight for hegemony of the two regional macro-powers, the Umayyad caliphate and the Fatimid caliphate, transformed the Maghreb into their arena. The need to seek protection from the Fatimids forced the Berber imamates of the Far and Central Maghreb, already loosely allied with the Umayyads, to establish closer bonds with them. This opened the door to a growing influence of Maliki scholars and practices and prepared the terrain for the uniform adoption of the Maliki legal school and marginalization from nativist forms of Islam in the Maghreb which would take place in the next centuries and draw this region closer into the global Islamicate world.

71 Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 87-103.

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Maritime Trade from 3rd/9th-Century Ifrīqiya: Insights from Legal Sources

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Although maritime trade along the coast of 4th/10th-century Ifrīqiya has been studied in some detail, less is known about its development in the 3rd/9th century, when the province was under Aghlabid rule. This is partly due to the nature of the information contained in the Arabic historical and geographical sources on which many studies rely. This paper argues that legal texts are an additional source that can expand our knowledge of trade practices in 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya and assist our interpretation of the information contained in historical and geographical sources. Using the information given in the legal sources, it offers new findings about maritime trade in 3rd/9th–century Ifrīqiya and argues that the period of Aghlabid rule was key to the economic development of the province.

Keywords: Maritime trade, Ifrīqiya, Aghlabids, Islamic law, North Africa, trade networks, al-Andalus

Introduction

Literary and documentary evidence indicates that by the late 4th/10th century, the coastline of Ifrīqiya[1] was a busy landscape of ports, inlets and *ribāt*s, or small fortified structures,[2] serving a lively trade network around the western Islamic Mediterranean. Geographical texts from the 4th/10th and 5th/11th centuries, such as Ibn Ḥawqal's (d. after 367/978) *Ṣūrat al-arḍ*[3] or al-Bakrī's (d. 487/1094)[4] *Masālik wa-l-mamālik*, describe a fertile agricultural landscape, productive industry, and a sophisticated system of land and sea routes by which to transport people and goods. A similar impression is given by the documentary evidence retrieved from the Cairo Geniza and other archival sources.[5] Letters, contracts and lists of

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1 Ifrīqiya was the westernmost province of the ʿAbbāsid Empire, corresponding to what is today western Libya, Tunisia and eastern Algeria. Talbi, Ifrīḳiya.

2 On the definition of the *ribāt* and its function, see Khalilieh, Ribât system.

3 Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb Ṣūrat al-arḍ*, ed. de Goeje. Ibn Ḥawqal began his journeys in 331/943, but the date of his death is not clear. The last revision of a work attributed to him appeared around 378/988.

4 al-Bakrī wrote in the 5th/11th century, but most of his information was derived from the 4th/10th-century author al-Warrāq. On al-Bakrī's text, see Gilliot, *al-Bakri*.

5 On the Cairo Geniza, see Goldberg, *Trade and Institutions*; Goitein, *A Mediterranean Society.* On European documentary material, see Valérian, *Les Sources Italiennes*.

cargo and trade wares reflect a trade system that was particularly dense between the coasts of Ifrīqiya, Sicily and Egypt, but which also extended further east and north of this Mediterranean triangle.[6]

However, most written evidence for this activity derives from the period of Zirid rule over Ifrīqiya (362/972-543/1148), after the Fatimids had moved their capital to Cairo in 358/969. There is less evidence for trade by sea from the period of Aghlabid rule, which lasted from 184/800 to 296/909, when the Fatimids conquered Ifrīqiya. It seems likely, as Dominique Valérian and Christophe Picard have argued, that the foundations for the flourishing Islamic naval trade began in the 3rd/9th century, during the stability and prosperity that the region experienced under the Aghlabids.[7] But studies of this period contain little discussion of how this development took place, what ports were relevant for Ifrīqiyan traders, what goods were transported and what structures existed to support maritime trade from the coast of Ifrīqiya. Answers to these questions are important not only for understanding the continuity and development of trade in Ifrīqiya but also for contextualizing the development of coastal towns and *ribāṭ*s during this period and for relating the role of maritime trade to the integration of Arab Ifrīqiya into the Mediterranean region and the ʿAbbāsid Empire during the 3rd/9th century.

One of the reasons for the lack of detailed discussion of these questions is the relative paucity of references to maritime trade in the Arabic literary sources on which most historians of this period rely. Historical and geographical texts are a mine of information about the routes, political loyalties, and agricultural produce of the region in question, but they contain few detailed descriptions of how trade was conducted and rarely mention maritime trade. This study will show that Islamic legal texts can be used to supplement the information provided by other Arabic literary sources. It will show that this literary genre is an important and relatively reliable historical source, and that findings from legal texts indicate that maritime trade was a vibrant and systematized institution by the mid-3rd/9th century.

I will begin this paper by introducing the genre of legal texts and discussing their relevance as historical sources. Following an overview of which legal sources are relevant for studying trade in 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya, I will summarize how these texts can be used and describe the limitations of this category of texts. Then I will show how, despite these challenges, these texts can still be used to acquire insights about this historical period. I will then review texts from other Arabic literary genres, particularly historical and geographical works, that are relevant for understanding economic relations in 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya. I will refer to some of the shortcomings of these texts as sources for reconstructing the economic history of early Islamic North Africa and indicate how these can be balanced by reference to legal texts.

Following this discussion of the sources, I will present the information that legal sources offer about maritime trade from the coast of 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya. Based on this information, I will put forward five main findings. The first is that maritime trade from the Ifrīqiyan coast was a well-established commercial institution by the 3rd/9th century. The second is that Ifrīqiya's role as a passage province between al-Andalus and Baghdad was a key element

6 Friedman and Goitein, *India Traders*.

7 Valérian, *Ports et Réseaux d'échanges*, 53; Picard, *Sea of the Caliphs*, 237-238.

in the development of maritime trade along its coastline, and that local, non-elite, consumption of imported goods is not widely testified in the literary sources. The third is that most wares transported by ship were bulk wares such as grain and not the luxury goods mentioned in geographical texts. The fourth observation is that jurists tended not to distinguish between land and sea trade, and that this may be related to the nature of goods transported in both cases. The fifth finding is the nature of the risks associated with maritime trade and in particular, the different risks and benefits associated with the different categories of open-sea and coastline navigation.

My analysis of the information offered by legal sources will relate this to the impression given by historical and geographical texts. Although this impression is sometimes confirmed by the discussions in legal literature, the different functions of the various genres can lead to a different emphasis in their presentation of information. Therefore, it is helpful to draw on a wide range of literary sources to understand 3rd/9th-century maritime trade. In a further step, which cannot be undertaken in this paper, the findings from the literary sources should be related to the information provided by material evidence in order to gain a fuller and more accurate picture of this period.

Legal Sources Relating to Trade in 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya

The legal sources referred to in this study are the collections of questions about the permissibility of certain practices, or requests for solutions for interpersonal conflicts, that were put to religious scholars, along with the responses that the scholars gave to these questions.[8] In a student-teacher context these responses may be referred to as *ajwiba* (sing. *jawāb*), meaning answer. Beyond this context they are usually referred to as *fatāwā* (sing. *fatwā*), a term best translated as expert legal opinion.[9] A *fatwā* may include a hadith, Qur'anic verse or earlier legal opinion by which the scholar explains his opinion. Some legal compendia, such as the *Mudawwana* of Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd (d. 240/854), discussed below, were dedicated to the answers of a single jurist. Others contained opinions given by a variety of scholars. For example, some legal compendia contain chapters with a specific thematic focus, such as maritime trade, in which the *fatāwā* of numerous jurists are brought together, enabling an overview and comparison of the various opinions on specific questions.

The legal compendia played an important role in regulating interpersonal conflicts and social practice. They also played a key role in the education of new generations of religious scholars, who would study these texts in order to widen their own knowledge of legal theory and practice. Partly because of this educational and religious function, the legal compendia frequently contain *fatāwā* that appear disconnected from the social-historical context of the writer, or to which a degree of attention is dedicated that is incommensurate with the social relevance of the topic at hand. For example, some legal authors discuss questions relating to eunuchs and intersexed individuals at great length and in great detail.[10] Rather than interpreting their attention to mean that there was a large number of eunuchs and intersexed individuals in

8 An introduction to this genre is given by Hallaq, From *fatwā*s to *furūʿ*.

9 Fierro, Compiling *Fatāwā*, 45.

10 Ali, *Marriage and Slavery*, 23.

the society in which these jurists worked, it seems more plausible to conclude that these questions intersected with the wider theoretical framework with which the jurists worked, and that this was the reason why these questions were repeated and discussed in several legal compendia. For the same reason, it is also possible that questions put to a jurist may have no obvious social significance, but are relevant for an academic discussion. Although the term *ajwiba* is often used for answers given in this context, the boundaries between the genres are fluid and the question of social relevance is one of the challenges for historians working with this material, which are discussed in more detail below.[11]

Another category of juristic response is the *nawāzil* (sing. *nāzila*). For the premodern period, this legal genre is especially widespread in the Islamic West, and is sometimes seen as specific to this region.[12] A *nāzila* is comparable to a *fatwā* in that it consists of a question and an answer from a jurist. But the genre is associated specifically with actual situations and with questions that have not been put previously, so that the jurist is required to exercise his own reasoning, rather than refer to earlier teaching on the topic.[13] These specificities make *nawāzil* texts particularly relevant as a historical source, although, like *fatwā* texts, they cannot be uncritically seen as reflecting social reality.

Before reviewing the challenges associated with using legal texts as historical sources, the key texts for this study will be introduced. The largest and arguably earliest collection of questions and answers is the *Mudawwana* of Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd (d. 240/854), which is still known today as one of the foundational texts of the Māliki legal school. Saḥnūn was a highly esteemed religious scholar who lived for most of his life in Ifrīqiya, where he also served as chief judge, from 234/849 until his death in 240/854.[14] Although the *Mudawwana* is attributed to him, it is likely that Saḥnūn's students, rather than he himself, were responsible for the final form of the work.[15]

Another early collection of *fatāwā* is the compendium of legal queries relating to the administration of the market, answered by the jurist Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar (d. 289/901)[16] and compiled by his student Ibn Shibl al-Ifrīqī (d. 307/909),[17] entitled *Aḥkām al-sūq*.[18] The queries put to Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar make little reference to overseas trade, but the commercial and moral regulations in the book reveal much about economic infrastructures within the province of Ifrīqiya.

Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar's brother, Muḥammad b. ʿUmar, is also relevant for this study. Muḥammad b. ʿUmar taught and lived in Egypt, Ifrīqiya and al-Andalus and enjoyed a high reputation for his legal scholarship before dying in the early 4th/10th century. [19] A collection of answers attributed to him was compiled by Abū l-Qāsim Khalaf b. Abī Firās al-Qarawī, another legal

11 On the semantic interchangeability of terms for legal texts, see Fierro, Compiling *fatāwā*, 45.

12 On the *nawāzil* genre in contemporary Islamic law, see Abū Zayd, *Fiqh al-nawāzil.*

13 al-Jayzānī, *Fiqh al-nawāzil*, 24; Fierro, Compiling *fatāwā*, 45, fn. 5.

14 For a biography of Saḥnūn, see Brockopp, Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd.

15 On the formation of the *Mudawwana*, see Muranyi, *Rechtsbücher*.

16 For his biography, see Marin, Ifriqiya et al-Andalus, 23; García Gómez, "Ordenanzas del zoco".

17 On Ibn Shibl, see Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-mudhahhab*, 2, ed. al-Aḥmadī Abū l-Nūr, 312.

18 Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar, *Aḥkām al-sūq*, ed. ʿAlī Makkī.

19 Different death dates are cited for Muḥammad b. ʿUmar in different sources. The latest date of 310/923 given by al-Junaydī is usually accepted as the most accurate.

scholar of lower reputation who lived about 50 years later and who appended the collection with related rulings that he found in other legal texts. Al-Qarawī also added his own comments to some of the answers given by Muḥammad b. ʿUmar, in which he related Muḥammad's answer to the views of other jurists.[20] These views, like the rulings that al-Qarawī added to the end of the work, originate from jurists that lived between the 2nd/8th and the early 4th/10th centuries.[21] The title of the compilation is *Kitāb Akriyat al-sufun wa-l-nizāʿ bayn ahlihā* (Treatise concerning the leasing of ships and the claims between their passengers),[22] and most of the questions focus on maritime trade and contracts involving ships. The rulings in *Akriyat al-sufun* display similarities with other antique rulings relating to maritime adjudication, most notably the Rhodian Sea law, but the way that the rulings are formulated is typical for the procedures of Islamic law and shows intensive engagement with the topic on the part of the jurists who answered the questions.[23]

Other important texts for this study are the collections of *fatāwā* and *nawāzil* attributed to different jurists, although collected by a single compiler. This format, described by Maribel Fierro as the "collective format", was typical for the 9th/15th-century Islamic West.[24] The collective format was a relatively late development, but many of the rulings and discussions that the compilers preserved in their collections had a much earlier origin, although the source texts used by the compilers have now been lost. The largest collective compilation of *fatāwā* is al-Wansharīsī's (d. 914/1509)[25] *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib wa-l-jāmiʿ al-mughrib ʿan fatāwā ʿulamāʾ Ifrīqiyya wa-l-maghrib*. Al-Wansharīsī was a chief *muftī* and legal scholar in Fez and compiled his collection from the manuscripts that he accessed in a private library in this city. *Al-Miʿyār* contains *fatāwā* and *nawāzil* attributed to jurists from the entire Islamic West, from the 2nd/8th to the 9th/15th century. Many of these *fatāwā* and *nawāzil* are no longer extant as separate texts and have only survived in al-Wansharīsī's collection. For example, although Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar's *Aḥkām al-sūq* was published as a separate work, the book was compiled on the basis of quotations from *Aḥkām al-sūq* in *al-Miʿyār* and not from a separate manuscript.[26] Questions and answers relating to trade in 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya that are included in *al-Miʿyār* have been used as sources in this study, if the information provided about the jurist allows us to ascertain that the *fatwā* or *nāzila* originated from this context.

Another collective compilation is that of Abū l-Qāsim b. Aḥmad al-Burzulī (d. 841/1438), the *muftī* of the Zaytuna Mosque in Tunis and a renowned legal scholar.[27] His compilation, known as *al-Nawāzil* or *Nawāzil al-Burzulī* contains a wide range of legal questions and answers attributed to earlier jurists from the Islamic West.[28] Many of the questions and answers

20 al-Qarawī, *Akriyat al-sufun wa-l-nizāʿ bayn ahlihā*, ed. ʿAbd al-Salām Jamāṭī and Jaʿfar b. al-Ḥājj al-Sulamī.

21 Cahen, Douanes et commerce, 304.

22 Henceforth *Akriyat al-sufun*. The text was edited and published by Muṣṭafā Ṭāhir in *Cahiers de Tunisie* 31 (1983), 6-53 and by ʿAbd al-Salām Jamāṭī and Jaʿfar b. al-Ḥājj as a monograph in 2009. The latter edition has been used for this paper. On *Kitāb Akriyat al-sufun*, see Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, Udovitch, Eleventh century Islamic treatise, and the introduction of Muṣṭafā Ṭāhir in *Cahiers de Tunisie.*

23 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*.

24 Fierro, Compiling *fatāwā*, 67.

25 On al-Wansharīsī, see Powers, Aḥmad al-Wansharīsī and Vidal Castro, Aḥmad al-Wanšarīsī.

26 ʿAlī Makkī's introduction to Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar, *Aḥkām al-sūq*, ed. ʿAlī Makkī, 61.

27 Vidal Castro, al-Burzulī.

28 al-Burzulī, *Jāmiʿ masāʾil al-aḥkām*, ed. Muḥammad al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla.

that al-Burzulī includes are also included in al-Wansharīsī's collection, and are remarkably similar in form and content, despite the differing historical and geographical context. Al-Burzulī's collection contains a chapter dedicated to maritime trade and conflict relating to ships, the content of which will be referred to in this study.

Using Legal Texts as Historical Sources

Historians of the Islamicate world are increasingly aware of the value of legal texts for uncovering social history. This is no less the case for the Islamic West, where the unprecedented range and quantity of the rulings in al-Wansharīsī's collection has led to it being cited in most historical studies relating to this region.[29] Legal texts tend to be used less frequently for studies of economic history, but for this field too, both the questions and the answers in legal compendia can refer to circumstances and practices relevant to understanding commercial interaction. For example, a question recorded in *Aḥkām al-sūq* about a market seller who adulterates milk with water, and the jurist's answer that the diluted milk is confiscated from the seller and donated to the poor,[30] offers many details about economic interaction in this historical context. The reader can conclude that milk was bought and sold in at least one market in 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya, and that at least one seller either engaged in, or was suspected of engaging in, the practice of diluting milk in order to sell greater quantities. The reader can also infer from the question that the buyer was indignant about this practice and that he or she regarded the jurist as someone who could help to rectify the wrong done. The solution offered by the jurist, regardless of whether it was applied, is also revealing for what it reflects about his view of solving conflicts of this nature. Even this basic model of interpretation shows that a short question and answer can offer invaluable details about economic production and exchange.

An obvious limitation in working with this genre of literature is its prescriptive rather than descriptive nature. The *fatwā* or *nāzila* of a *muftī* was not legally binding and without further evidence, it is difficult to establish how far his recommendation corresponded to existing social practice or whether it was implemented by the person who asked the question.[31] This limitation is particularly relevant for the interpretation of answers to legal queries, but if a question is clearly being asked in the context of an academic discussion, it can also be relevant for this aspect too.

Another challenge is the difficulty of dating the question and the answer, or the different redactional levels within one answer. Most *fatāwā* or *nawāzil* are attributed to a specific *muftī*, enabling (if the biographical details of the *muftī* are known) the question to be situated in a specific social-historical context. However, as mentioned for Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar's work, later compilers had no compunction about adding material that seemed relevant to the discussion. Therefore, even if the jurist himself lived in the 4th/10th century, it is possible that later rulings have been integrated into the answer that he gave. In most cases the compiler notes the origin of the extra material, but this is not always the case, and sometimes the manner of

29 Shatzmiller, On *Fatwā*s, 21.

30 Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar, *Aḥkām al-sūq*, ed. ʿAlī Makkī, 109.

31 Tillier, *L'Invention du Cadi*, 204-215.

indicating the addition is so oblique that it is easily missed by a non-specialist reader.[32] This concern is also relevant for texts such as the *Mudawwana* that were compiled by students rather than the scholar himself: how far do these actually represent the teaching that the scholar gave on the subject?[33]

We know little about the processes that led to certain *fatāwā* being preserved while others were discarded, and we know almost nothing about the material that was preserved but is no longer extant.[34] Therefore we should be cautious about seeing the legal texts available now as a mirror of legal discussion in the time that it was collected, or from the time that the questions were presented. Rather, these offer historians a keyhole view into a highly variegated reality.

These limitations must be kept in mind by historians using legal texts as sources. In most cases, considerable understanding of the cultural-legal tradition within which the jurist was working is required,[35] not only to appreciate the significance of the ruling and recognize the distinction between descriptive and prescriptive discourse, but also to respond to the problem that the transmission of a ruling by a later author can present.

The reliability of the transmission of early legal teachings by later compilers is being increasingly recognized.[36] Particularly for Saḥnūn's *Mudawwana*, it is also relevant that recent research has emphasized an earlier compilation date for much of the text and a high degree of uniformity in the transmission process.[37] Even if the text was compiled by his students and not Saḥnūn himself, marginal notes on the earliest manuscripts indicate that parts of the written text were circulating a short time after his death and that these texts were checked by other students to ensure their accuracy. This has led to the text being used as a source in several recent studies of legal and social history.[38] Nonetheless, the possibility of additions, omissions and alterations to the rulings given in this text, as in other legal compilations, remains. Using the biographical information about the *muftī* to whom the question was addressed, historians must assess the credibility of each *fatwā* by relating it to the historical-social context and to the intellectual-legal discipline in which the *muftī* worked. Are the question and answer conceivable in the light of what we know about the legal tradition or school in which that particular jurist operated? This is an important method of excluding later interpolations.

The concerns about the dating of additional material are more relevant for understanding the *fatwā* and less for the *fatwā* request or question put to the jurist. It was common practice for answers to be expanded by students or later editors. It is hardly conceivable that an editor or student would falsely attribute a question and answer to a well-known legal authority without this being noticed by his peers or later scholars. Partly for this reason, this study will focus primarily on *fatwā* requests rather than the *fatwā* itself as a source of historical information, using the deductive method demonstrated in the example of the query about

32 For example, a switch in authorial voice is often only indicated by the phrase "he said" (*qāla*), leaving the reader to establish which of the earlier speakers is being referred to.

33 Calder, *Studies in Early Muslim Jurisprudence*, 9-17.

34 Fierro, Compiling *fatāwā*, 52.

35 Fadel, *Fatwā*s and social history, 32.

36 El Shamsy, The Ur-Muwaṭṭa.

37 Brockopp, Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd; Muranyi, *Rechtsbücher.*

38 Ali, *Marriage and Slavery.*

adulterated milk, discussed above. Although I will refer to the answer that the jurist gave, the bulk of my argument will rest on the details that the questions relating to trade, and maritime trade in particular, contain.

Other Genres of Arabic Literature as a Historical Source for Understanding Trade in 3rd/9th-Century Ifrīqiya

Very little written material survives from 3rd/9th-century North Africa. Some parchment and paper fragments are preserved in the collection of early Islamic manuscripts that was kept in the Kairouan Mosque,[39] but these are fragments from the Qur'an and literary texts, rather than documentary sources such as letters or contracts. They provide some insight into the movement of texts and ideas from the eastern Islamic Empire to Ifrīqiya but contain little social or economic information relevant to the question of maritime trade.[40] Therefore the texts on which a historian for this period must rely are the literary sources about 3rd/9th-century North Africa, written both within and outside the region. Other than the legal texts discussed above, the main literary sources that are relevant to the question of maritime trade are the historical and geographical texts relating to this region.

Of the historical texts, histories of the conquests and the early caliphate as a whole tend not to discuss Ifrīqiya in detail. The *Tarīkh* of al-Tabarī (d. 310/923) or Khalīfa b. Khayyāṭ (d. 240/854[41]) focus more on events relating to the caliphal centre in Baghdad,[42] and Ifrīqiya, which was already semi-independent by the time that they were writing, receives less attention.[43] The same can be said of most conquest histories. For example, al-Balādhurī's (d. 279/892-3) *Futūḥ al-buldān* includes less information about the Islamic West than about the Islamic East.[44] An exception is Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's *Futūḥ Miṣr wa l-Maghrib*, which covers the western region in more detail.[45] Although Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam's focus is on the political events of the 2nd/8th century, his presentation of the material reveals a lot about the cultural, social and even economic context of the Islamic West in which he was working.[46]

Histories of the Islamic West or Ifrīqiya specifically include *Kitāb Tārīkh Ifrīqiya wa-l-Maghrib* by Ibn Raqīq al-Qayrawānī (ca. 428/1028),[47] only part of which has survived;[48] *Bayān al-mughrib fī akhbār al-Andalus wa-l-Maghrib* by Ibn ʿIdhārī (d. after 712/1310); and

39 Schwartz, *Bibliothek der großen Moschee*.

40 However, the fact that this collection exists at all is in itself an indication of the flourishing economic conditions in Kairouan at the time that it was being created, given the cost of producing manuscripts. The titles of the texts that the collection contained and the names of the scholars who owned them are also important resources for understanding the social history of the scholarly community in 3rd/9th-century North Africa. Brockopp, *Muhammad's Heirs*, 165-193.

41 On alternative death dates for Ibn Khayyāṭ, see Andersson, *Early Sunnī Historiography*, 47.

42 Ibn Khayyāṭ, *Tārīkh*, ed. Ḍiyāʾ al-ʿUmarī, al-Ṭabarī, *Tārīkh al-rusul wa-l-mulūk*, ed. Abū Faḍl Ibrāhīm.

43 On the caliphal focus of the histories, see Hagemann, Muslim elites, 331.

44 al-Balādhurī, *Futūḥ al-Buldān*, ed. de Goeje.

45 Ibn ʿAbd al-Ḥakam, *Futūḥ Miṣr wa-l-Maghrib*, ed. ʿUmar.

46 Brunschvig, Ibn ʿAbd Al-Ḥakam et la conquête de l'Afrique du Nord par les Arabes, 136-140. Zychowicz-Coghill, How the West was won, 540-542.

47 al-Raqīq, *Tārīkh Ifrīqiya wa-l-maghrib*, eds. *ʿAbd* Allāh al-*ʿAlī* al-Zīdān and *ʿIzz* al-Dīn *ʿAmrūs*, 74.

48 On the recovered text and its attribution to Ibn Raqīq, see Idris, Note sur Ibn al-Raqīq; Talbi, A propos d'ibn Raqīq.

the *Tārīkh* of Ibn Khaldūn (d. 808/1406).[49] Biographical dictionaries, such as Abū l-ʿArab al-Tamīmī's (d. 333/944) biography of saints and martyrs (*Kitāb al-Miḥan*), are also relevant.[50] These texts provide more information about the political history of Ifrīqiya but only include details about the social or economic context when this is relevant to their narrative. This is exemplified by al-Tamīmī's account of a scholar's castigation of the Ifrīqiyan governor Muhammad al-ʿAkkī (r. 180/796-183/799) for trading with non-Muslims from overseas.[51] Al-Tamīmī only mentions the commercial contact between the Arab leader and the non-Muslims in order to explain the scholar's reproach of al-ʿAkkī, and does not contextualize it or offer any further details. Another challenge when working with these texts is that most of them were written considerably later than the period that they describe and incorporate contemporary concerns into their account of earlier events. To refer again to the incident described by al-Tamīmī, his presentation of an earlier scholar's criticism of the governor's actions is surely influenced by his own position, almost an entire century later, as a Mālikī scholar living under Fatimid rule.

Geographical descriptions of Ifrīqiya and North Africa also tend to be written later than the period under study here. Two 3rd/9th-century authors are Ibn Khurradādhbih (d. 299/912) and al-Yaʿqūbī (d. late 3rd/9th century),[52] who is said by the 4th/10th-century Egyptian historian Ibn al-Dāya to have held a position as land tax administrator in the neighbouring province of Barqa and is particularly informative.[53] Ibn Ḥawqal also gives a detailed account of the region in his *Ṣūrat al-arḍ*, but his text can be dated to the second half of the 4th/10th century and is not necessarily an accurate depiction of the 3rd/9th-century context.[54] Al-Bakrī's (d. 487/1094)[55] *Masālik wa-l-mamālik* was compiled using information derived from the 4th/10th-century author al-Warrāq (d. 362/973) ,but even dating the text to this earlier source puts it considerably later than the period under study.

Al-Yaʿqūbī's *Kitāb al-Buldān* contains detailed information about agricultural and industrial production, social practices and transport routes, all of which are valuable for understanding trade relations. Although the other texts were written later, the information that they contain is not irrelevant for our enquiry, as they allow comparison and indicate regions of growth or stagnation. Like the historical authors, the geographical authors were aware of their readership and tended to emphasize those aspects in which their readers would have been more interested. This aspect must be remembered when reading their representation of the region in question.

49 Ibn Khaldūn, *Tārīkh Ibn Khaldūn*, 2, ed. Shaḥāda and Zukkār, 156.

50 al-Tamīmī, *Kitāb al-Miḥan*, ed. Yaḥyā Wahīb al-Jabbūrī.

51 al-Tamīmī, *Kitāb al-Miḥan*, ed. Yaḥyā Wahīb al-Jabbūrī, 334-335. Ilisch, Arabische Kupfermünzen, 299; Wietrzichowski, *Untersuchungen zu den Anfängen des frühmittelalterlichen Seehandels.*

52 It is unlikely that the year of 283/897 that is sometimes given for al-Yaʿqūbī's death is correct. Anthony, Was Ibn Wāḍiḥ al-Yaʿqūbī a Shiʿite Historian?, 19.

53 al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. Juynboll.

54 Ibn Ḥawqal, *Kitāb Ṣūrat al-arḍ*, ed. de Goeje.

55 Al-Bakrī wrote in the 5th/11th century, but most of his information was derived from the 4th/10th-century author. al-Warrāq. On al-Bakrī's text, see Gilliot, *al-Bakrī*.

Information About 3rd/9th-Century Naval Trade Based on Information in Legal Texts

Like the geographical texts, the questions in legal texts indicate extensive agricultural production, a well-developed transport network[56] and a regularized administrative infrastructure for conveying and selling goods through the province of Ifrīqiya. For example, one of the queries in Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar's *Aḥkām al-sūq* refers to the inhabitants of the rural regions selling their goods from the lodging houses where they stayed in Kairouan, rather than in the market.[57] This indicates the means by which rural traders were able to stay in the city so that they could trade their goods. It also indicates the relevance of price standardizing in the market, making sale outside this space a source of irritation to some.

The administrative infrastructure was underpinned by a well-developed legal infrastructure for regulating trade, which also extended to maritime trade. This was sufficiently sophisticated and regularized by the early 3rd/9th century to indicate that it had been functioning for some time. This is reflected by both the expectations implicit in the questions and the institutions mentioned in the answers. For example, Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd's *Mudawwana* contains several references to the *amān*, a formal guarantee of protection given to non-Muslims entering Islamic territory for diplomatic or commercial purposes.[58] One of the questions mentions a merchant who does not have an *amān* and the question of whether his goods should be confiscated,[59] while most mention the *amān* almost incidentally, to clarify that the non-Muslim merchant is conducting his business within a legitimate framework.[60] Questions also refer to Muslim merchants travelling through non-Muslim territory with an *amān.* For these questions too, the focus is not the *amān* itself, but this is always mentioned to clarify the legality of the merchants' presence.[61] It is possible that the *amān* was associated with proof that the merchants had paid the taxes required upon their arrival in the port, although this connection is not made explicitly. The role that the institution of *amān* plays in the discussion shows that the presence of non-Muslim traders in Ifrīqiya and of Ifrīqiyan traders in non-Muslim territory was a regular phenomenon by the 3rd/9th century, and that merchants had a clear expectation of rules and the consequences of disrespecting these. This is also indicated by their manner of addressing other questions relating to trade conflict, which include details such as references to categories of goods, the proportion of investment held by each party or the terms of the initial agreement. These details, like the fact that they are mentioned to the jurist, indicate a regularized structure of interaction creating a shared field of expectations. For this to happen, overseas trade must have been ongoing on a significant scale for some time.

The fact that the legal framework regularizing trade in the 3rd/9th century also regularized commercial interactions with non-Muslims should not be understood to mean that there was no distinction between inter-Muslim and Muslim-non-Muslim trade during this

56 al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. Juynboll, 140.

57 Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar, *Aḥkām al-sūq*, ed. ʿAlī Makkī, 78.

58 On the institution of *amān*, see Schacht, Amān.

59 Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd, *al-Mudawwana*, 3, 10.

60 Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd, *al-Mudawwana*, 3, 24.

61 Saḥnūn b. Saʿīd, *al-Mudawwana*, 3, 23.

period. In this respect, it is noteworthy that the references to trade with Byzantines in the *Mudawwana* all refer to slaves and enslavement. By contrast, questions from a similar period put to the Andalusian jurist ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb (d. 238/853)[62] about trade between Muslim merchants mostly refer to foodstuffs. This comparison should not be generalized, but as yet, there is little textual evidence of regularized trade in food or industrial commodities between Ifrīqiyan ports and non-Muslim regions in the early decades of the 3rd/9th century.

The queries put to Saḥnūn make it clear that Byzantine merchants regularly sold slaves in Ifrīqiya. They do not refer to the marketplace as the place of sale and it is possible that the slaves were sold, either to Ifrīqiyan slave dealers or to consumers, at the ports where the merchants disembarked. This might have spared the merchant the need to acquire an *amān* to travel through Muslim territory. Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar's regulation of the marketplace does not refer to slaves or to other goods that had to be imported by ship. Some of the products mentioned, such as grain, honey and oil, are mentioned by Ibn Ḥabīb among the wares transported by ship, but they could equally have been sourced locally. Other products referred to by Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar, such as butter, meat and bread, would have been difficult to transport over long distances because they had a shorter shelf life.

Therefore, it is difficult to assess how far maritime trade impacted on local consumption in Ifrīqiya. None of the queries handled by Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar relate to the luxury products mentioned by the geographers as being imported via ship, such as the furs, leathers, perfumes and exotic slaves described by the geographer Ibn Khurradādhbih, as arriving from al-Andalus.[63] Their absence from legal queries probably reflects their rarity in the Ifrīqiyan marketplace. After arriving in the province, the goods and people described by Ibn Khurradādhbih would have been transported directly to the Aghlabid rulers' court or further east to Baghdad, where the markets had more purchasing power than those of Kairouan. This suggestion is supported by the fact that literary sources mention the eastward transport of slaves and luxury products by ship. For example, al-Tamīmī mentions an Ifrīqiyan slave-dealer who was deterred from sending off a shipment of slaves to the east by the weeping of one of the slave girls,[64] and al-Burzulī cites the opinion of the Andalusian jurist Ibn Bashīr (d. 198/813)[65] about the compensation due for slaves lost at sea, distinguishing here between slaves as private possession and those intended for sale.[66]

Although, or perhaps because, the economic infrastructure of the province was well developed in the 3rd/9th century, it is not clear that goods imported by ship were integral to the daily life of the Ifrīqiyan population. Literary sources, legal queries included, suggest that maritime transport of luxury goods to Ifrīqiya was related more to its role as a passage between Europe and the eastern Islamic Empire[67] than the purchasing power of the urban population. Slaves were imported both for local purchase and for resale further east.

62 Muranyi, ʿAbd al-Malik b. Ḥabīb.

63 Ibn Khurradādhbih, *Kitāb al-masālik wa l-mamālik,* ed. de Goeje, 92.

64 al-Tamīmī, *Kitāb Ṭabaqāt ʿulamāʾ Ifrīqiya*, ed. Abū Shanab, 25.

65 For his biography, see Ibn Makhlūf, *Shajarat al-nūr*, 1, ed. ʿAbd al-Majīd Khayyāṭ, 94.

66 al-Burzulī *Jāmiʿ masāʾil al-aḥkām*, 3, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, 643.

67 Jankowiak, What does the slave trade; McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, 244-254.

Geographical texts tend to focus on luxury products and slaves when describing sea trade. These goods were probably more interesting for readers but they did not constitute the bulk of the wares transported by ship, if the proportion of legal queries is used as an indicator. Most queries relate to more mundane wares, particularly comestibles. Ibn Ḥabīb refers to the variety of foodstuffs transported by ship, describing oil, dates, raisins, olives, vinegar, and honey as food staples and dried meat, nuts, fish, egg, fruit, rice, lupine beans and dairy products as luxury products. [68] It is relevant that the foods classed as luxury products are mostly those with a shorter shelf life, indicating that the necessity for quick transport and not their availability as such, was what determined their status as luxury.

Perhaps because of the lack of differentiation between goods transported by land or sea, jurists tended not to distinguish between land and sea trade as legal categories and the topic did not receive its own chapter in most legal compendia. Instead, questions involving ships were discussed in relation to the broader subject that they touched upon.[69] For example, a question about goods lost in a shipwreck could appear in a chapter on trade, while a conflict regarding the use of a ship may be assigned to the chapter on hiring and renting property. Although the compilation of maritime rulings in *Kitāb Akriyat al-sufun* indicates that one compiler was interested in this aspect specifically, it does not affect the general perception of maritime trade as indistinguishable from other trade activities. Similarly, rather than a separate court dedicated specifically to maritime affairs, such as the maritime courts of the Greeks, in the Islamic legal system cases relating to sea trade or travel were brought to ordinary courts,[70] or dealt with by the market superintendent (*muḥtasib*) responsible for the port city.[71]

The lack of distinction is also indicated by the jurists' discussion of piracy, which uses the same term (*luṣūṣ*, thieves or *luṣūṣ al-baḥr*, sea thieves) as that used for bandits who robbed overland trade caravans.[72] Their answers draw on rulings relating to land banditry, further reflecting the extent to which sea trade was understood as an aspect of trade more generally, rather than a separate category.[73]

Many of the questions put to 3rd/9th-century jurists refer to the risks associated with maritime trade. The most significant risk factor was weather conditions. Some queries relate to ships wrecked due to storms and to the loss of lives and goods as a result, while others mention storms delaying the beginning of a journey, forcing a ship to make an unscheduled stop, or altering the course taken by the ship.[74] For example, al-Wansharīsī records a *nāzila*

68 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 313.

69 Udovitch, Eleventh century Islamic treatise, 38.

70 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 255-266.

71 On the *muḥtasib*, see Buckley, Muhtasib; Darrāj, Al-Ḥisba wa-āthāruhā; Stilt, *Islamic Law in Action*.

72 al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, 8, ed. Ḥajjī, 300. Al-Burzulī, *Jāmiʿ masāʾil al-aḥkām*, 3, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, 650.

73 See the parallels between the destruction of a ship and the death of a camel in al-Burzulī, *Jāmiʿ masāʾil al-aḥkām*, 3, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, 651.

74 Ibn Abī Zayd, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt*, 7, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh, 110.

put to the Ifrīqiyan jurist Ibn ʿAbdūs[75] (d. 260/874) from a group of merchants who arranged ship transport from Alexandria to Tripoli, but who were blown off-course by a storm and forced to land in Sousse.[76] In addition to the inconvenience of extra travel, these unscheduled landings could be a problem because ports often imposed different docking fees. In theory, merchants from outside the Islamic Empire were required to pay a standard tax of one tenth of the value of their goods when entering a port.[77] However, the monies paid by merchants could vary significantly from one port to another, as the local governor or controller of the port could impose further tolls and fees for entry.[78] Some queries refer to disputes between the ship captain and the merchant as to which of them should pay the extra costs in these cases.[79] Other queries reflect disputes between the merchant and the captain about whether payment was due if weather conditions prevented the goods from reaching their agreed destination, or by an agreed date. Because of the danger of sailing outside the shipping season, the onset of a storm shortly before the end of this season could mean that a journey was delayed by several months. In general, jurists agreed that merchants were not entitled to a refund in these cases.[80]

Storms could also lead to the jettisoning of cargo to lighten the ship, provoking questions about how the costs incurred should be shared between passengers.[81] Both Ibn Ḥabīb and Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar discuss the compensation due for cargo jettisoned in the Mediterranean and a teaching from Saḥnūn on the topic is included in al-Qarāfī's (d. 684/1285) *al-Dhakhīra*.[82] In both cases the passengers became joint owners of all the goods on board, meaning that the losses were shared equally amongst them.[83]

Another risk was water damage caused to wares, whether through rain, washover, or a leak in the cargo storage area.[84] This was a particularly serious problem for the transport of foodstuffs, which could rot or decay if they became wet. As with jettisoned cargo, jurists tended to rule that financial loss due to water damage should be shared between all the merchants whose wares were being transported rather than limited to the individual whose goods had sustained the damage. Leaky containers for fluids such as oil, are also mentioned as causes for the loss of wares during the ship's passage. Some jurists mention procedures for ascertaining whether food wares were lost because of faulty packaging or whether they were stolen or consumed by the shippers, which suggests that theft was also a common cause of lost wares.[85]

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75 Muḥammad b. Ibrahim b. ʿAbd Allah b. ʿAbdūs b. Bashīr. On this jurist, see Ibn Farḥūn, *al-Dībāj al-mudhahhab,* 2, ed. al-Aḥmadī Abū l-Nūr, 174-175.

76 al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, 8, ed. Ḥajjī, 308.

77 Abū Yūsuf Yaʿqūb b. Ibrāhīm, *Kitāb al-Kharāj*, 132.

78 Khalilieh, Legal aspects from a Cairo Geniza, 201. Cahen, Douanes et commerce.

79 Idris, Commerce maritime, 237.

80 al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, 8, ed. Ḥajjī, 310.

81 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 159.

82 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 302. Al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, 8, ed. Ḥajjī, 311; al-Qarāfī, *al-Dhakhīra*, 5, ed. Muḥammad Bū Khubza, 487.

83 Ibn Abī Zayd transmits the same ruling from the ʿUtbiyya. Ibn Abī Zayd, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt*, 7, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh, 112.

84 Ibn Abī Zayd, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt*, 7, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh, 114; Al-Burzulī, *Jāmiʿ masāʾil*, 3, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, 657; Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 320.

85 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 315.

Theft or loss of food products deemed essential for survival were sanctioned more severely by jurists. For example, Saḥnūn is quoted in al-ʿUtbiyya as ruling that no freight costs are paid to the captain of a ship carrying foodstuffs which is wrecked either during the journey or after its arrival at the port.[86] In contrast to cases where other wares are damaged, the captain's statement exonerating himself from responsibility for damage to foodstuffs is not accepted unless accompanied by proof.[87] This is probably the basis for Ibn Ḥabīb's distinction between basic and luxury products, or products that spoil easily, mentioned above.

In addition to bad weather and theft by shippers, another factor for the unpredictability of sea travel was pirates, who patrolled both the shallow waters around ports and the routes usually taken by merchant ships. In the most extreme cases, pirates could tow the whole boat away, in which case the merchant was exempted from paying the freight costs.[88] More frequently the pirate attacks resulted in the theft or destruction of the cargo, which led to disputes about the division of losses and the question of responsibility for the attack. The queries make clear that pirate attacks and the measures to avoid these could incur considerable delay or change of destination.

It is not clear who the pirates attacking the Muslim merchant ships were. The jurists' distinction between pirates (*luṣūṣ al-baḥr*) and Byzantines (*rūm*) or Christian sailors suggests that they did not see these attackers as coming from Sicily or the other nearby Byzantine islands.[89] It is possible that the "sea thieves" arrived from along the coastline west of Ifrīqiya, where Aghlabid control was weak or absent. These people's experience of sailing and the proximity of their small ports to Ifrīqiyan waters would have enabled them to attack merchant ships around Ifrīqiya and to escape with ease. As Andy Merrills has shown, piracy was a possibility for many people living along the North African coast during the late Antique period before the Arab conquest and was generally unaffected by the change in rulers.[90] It is likely that recourse to piracy continued after the Arab conquest, especially in the regions at the edges of Arab control.

There is no evidence that the state undertook any measures to counteract the practice of piracy in Ifrīqiyan waters, but if Aghlabid forces had wished to pursue pirates based in this region, they may have been prevented by the inhabitants' alliance with the Rustamid rulers, who used some ports in today's Algeria, or even the Umayyads, who may have been associated with the Andalusian sailors settled in Tenes. Although it is unclear how strong the alliances between the inhabitants of the coast and the broader political networks in the region were, it is evident that the Aghlabids were not willing to force their authority over the people living along this coastline. The fact that jurists held the captain liable for goods lost to pirates if the captain knowingly sailed into pirate-infested waters may also indicate a suspicion of collusion between some captains and the pirates raiding the ships.[91]

86 Ibn Abī Zayd, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt*, 7, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh, 111. On the ruling that precious metals should never be jettisoned, see al-Burzulī, *Jāmiʿ masāʾil al-aḥkām*, 3, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, 643.

87 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 313.

88 al-Raṣṣāʿ, *Sharḥ ḥudūd Ibn ʿArafa*, 2, 525.

89 See also al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, 8, ed. Ḥajjī, 300.

90 Merrills, Rome and the Vandals, 498.

91 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 124, 129-131.

The risk of bad weather and piracy were more serious for ships travelling through the open sea than for ships travelling along the coast. This was partly because storms in the open sea could be more serious but also because proximity to land meant that it was more likely that ships, goods and sailors could be saved or salvaged. Salvaged cargo is referred to by Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar, who distinguishes between the freight costs that a lessee should pay for goods delivered in their original condition and after being salvaged from the sea.[92] Ibn Saḥnūn (d. 276/870) also refers to the difficulty of identifying cargo salvaged from a vessel wrecked near Barqa.[93] Although the risk of piracy seems to have been equally high for ships in shallow waters, there is some evidence that coast watches could warn ships of impending pirate attacks, or even send out assistance in some cases.[94]

In addition to security, another reason why merchants may have preferred coastline navigation is the opportunities for trade that resting in the smaller harbours or coastal inlets provided. Most ships would have docked for the night, given the difficulty of navigating in the dark, and some of the legal queries reflect the commercial activities undertaken during these additional stops. For example, when answering a question about a ship forced to return to its port of embarkment, Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar evaluates the amount of compensation that should be paid to the lessee according to whether the aborted journey was made across the open sea or along the coastline. In the case of an open-sea passage from Ifrīqiya to Sicily that had to be aborted, Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar specifies that the full freight costs should be returned to the lessee. By contrast, for routes following the coastline from Ifrīqiya to Egypt, the proportion of reimbursement is calculated in relation to the distance that the vessel covered before returning to the departure port.[95] The reason that Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar gives for the full reimbursement of freight costs – that no profit was made during the open-sea journey – indicates his assumption that trading can take place during coastline navigation, so that the lessee did make some profit on his goods even though the end port was not reached.[96] Another ruling refers to a person who loaded their vessel with wheat and then took on more cargo on stops made during the journey.[97]

Probably for similar reasons of safety and trade opportunities, a coastline route also seems to have been preferred for the passage from Ifrīqiya to al-Andalus. The main port associated with crossings to al-Andalus is Tunis, which faces directly into the Strait of Sicily. To cross from here to al-Andalus ships were obliged either to head north into the open sea and then turn westward through the open waters of the Mediterranean towards Spain, or to skirt along the north Tunisian and Algerian coastline until reaching a narrower crossing point. Al-Yaʿqūbī suggests that the latter option was preferred by sailors. He notes that after leaving Tunis, the ships would sail close to the coastline for ten days until reaching Tenes, from where they would cross over to Cordoba.[98] Al-Yaʿqūbī also refers to ports and harbours along the northern coast of Ifrīqiya, such as Jijel, Qalʿat Khaṭṭāb Iskida and Marsā Danhāja.

92 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 295.

93 Ibn Abī Zayd, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt*, 7, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh, 114.

94 al-Burzulī, *Jāmiʿ masāʾil al-aḥkām*, 3, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, 462; al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, 8, ed. Ḥajjī, 207.

95 Khalilieh, *Admiralty and Maritime Laws*, 289.

96 Udovitch, Eleventh century Islamic treatise, 44-45.

97 Ibn Abī Zayd, *al-Nawādir wa-l-ziyādāt*, 7, ed. ʿAbd al-ʿAzīz al-Dabbāgh, 113.

98 al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. Juynboll, 143.

It is likely that ships docked at these harbours along their way, allowing them to trade and stock up on supplies before crossing over to al-Andalus. Although the coastline along which these ports were located was less politically stable than the eastern stretches of Ifrīqiya, and Aghlabid control weakened the further west one proceeded along the coastline, there is no indication that this hindered trade activities.

The construction of fortress-like buildings, or *ribāṭ*s, for the purpose of prayer and defence is associated particularly strongly with Aghlabid rule over Ifrīqiya in the 3rd/9th century.[99] In addition to their religious and military relevance, it is likely that the *ribāṭ*s also played an important role in protecting the traders and their goods when they stayed in small harbours.[100] It is also likely that the commercial opportunities engendered by ships stopping en route between Ifrīqiya and the east served as an incentive for the *murābiṭūn*, or inhabitants of these *ribāṭ*s, to live in these buildings. The earliest reference to *murābiṭūn* participating in trade, and to *ribāṭ*s being used for storing trade wares, occurs in a question put to the jurist al-Māzirī (d. 536/1141), although he mentions that his teacher dealt with a similar query.[101] The teacher in this instance is likely to have been al-Lakhmī (d. 458/1085), but even dating the question to this individual cannot connect it with the 3rd/9th century on which this study focuses. However, the question is still relevant for this earlier context. The stone walls of the *ribāṭ* made it suitable for storing food products and wool and ensured protection against thieves, while the well-developed road infrastructure described by al-Yaʿqūbī would have enabled rural producers to take their products to these small harbours, from where they could be sold to maritime merchants.

Certainly, by the 4th/10th century, the level of maritime trade had increased sufficiently to bring considerable prosperity to the settlements along the coastline. Al-Bakrī's description from the late 4th/10th century refers to stone houses, mills, gardens and a saltwork in Monastir, reflecting the wealth that coastal trade brought to this *ribāṭ*, one of the closest port connections to Kairouan. It is noteworthy that the density of *ribāṭ* buildings was higher along the eastern Ifrīqiyan coast than along its western reaches, and the higher level of trade traffic may be one of the factors for this difference. Almost all journeys mentioned in the 3rd/9th-century sources are between Ifrīqiya and Sicily or Ifrīqiya and Egypt. For example, a ruling given by Ibn ʿAbdūs responds to the problem raised by a ship blown off course while travelling from Alexandria to Tripoli,[102] and Ibn Saḥnūn (d. 276/870) mentions a ruling from his father Saḥnūn regarding a ship sailing from Fustat to Tripoli. The same route is mentioned by Yaḥyā b. ʿUmar. Although it is possible that trade along the western coastline was equally high and that this is simply not reflected in the legal or literary sources, the current evidence suggests that the coastline between Tunis and Alexandria was more important for goods transport in the 3rd/9th century and it is likely that this is related to the proliferation of *ribāṭ* structures along this route.

99 El Bahi, Les *ribāṭ*s aghlabides.

100 Abidi, Le rôle des ribāts, 118; Jallūl, *al-Ribāṭāt al-baḥriyya*.

101 al-Burzulī, *Jāmiʿ masāʾil al-aḥkām*, 1, ed. al-Ḥabīb al-Hīla, 489.

102 al-Wansharīsī, *al-Miʿyār al-muʿrib*, 8, ed. Ḥajjī, 308.

Conclusion

The legal sources show that naval trade was well established between the Ifrīqiyan coastline and Egypt, Sicily, and Andalusia in the mid-3rd/9th century, despite the risks that bad weather and piracy posed to travellers and cargo. Naval trade was well integrated into legal discourse, and was structured by standardized procedures, which also provided solutions for recurring problems such as water damage. Ships docked in ports of major cities such as Sousse and Tunis but smaller inlets, which often contained a *ribāṭ* to defend the traders and their goods, were also essential for the development of naval commerce. Their role in naval trade enabled these *ribāṭ* settlements to develop into sizeable towns by the late 4th/10th century. These conclusions are more applicable to the coastline running eastward from Tunis towards the Syrtic Gulf. Naval trade with ports along the coastline west of Tunis is not mentioned in the legal sources, although it is likely that this took place on a smaller scale.

In general, the legal sources reflect the region's incorporation into a developing naval trade network that was largely driven by the trade with the eastern Islamic Empire. The integration of al-Andalus into the empire is also important for this aspect. Many of the goods that were transported to Ifrīqiya were not intended to be sold in this province and there is little evidence that they were transported to other markets in sub-Saharan Africa, despite the fact that land trade with this region was well established by the 3rd/9th century.[103] In many cases the Ifrīqiyan ports functioned as stopover or exchange points, where goods would be reloaded before continuing in their passage further east or west.

The questions put to jurists focus on the transport of foodstuffs by ship. The transport of slaves features only rarely, in contrast to its dominance in historical and geographical portrayals of maritime trade. This difference is attributable to the different functions of the texts in question and to the different perceptions of slaves and agricultural produce. Given the legal sources' treatment of sea trade as an extension of land trade, it is likely that any products that required transport for commercial purposes could also be carried by ship. However, most of the cargo seems to have been staple food products.

Rather than the distance covered, or the political relationship with the destination port, the main concern of the jurists when discussing trade journeys is the question of whether the ship crossed the open sea or kept close to the shore. References to the administration of ports occur quite often, and it is apparent that, at least in the large ports, arrivals and departures were carefully controlled by the period under study.

The questions put to 3rd/9th-century jurists surrounding maritime trade, and often the jurists' responses, are an invaluable insight into how trade by sea operated under Aghlabid rule. The legal sources must be treated carefully, to avoid merging the context of their compilation with the context of the various textual components. But if used with caution, they are an important historical resource because of the different viewpoint to other literary genres that they offer. The information that they contain is piecemeal, often disjointed, and it is not always clear from the text how the description of a specific incident relates to the broader historical context. These challenges notwithstanding, the *nawāzil* from 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya contribute significantly to understanding how the business of maritime trade developed under Aghlabid rule, and the extent to which its development was linked to commercial, political, and cultural developments further inland.

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103 al-Yaʿqūbī, *Kitāb al-Buldān*, ed. Juynboll, 135; Savage, Berbers and Blacks.

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Africa's Transitions to the Middle Ages

Paolo Tedesco*

In history writing, we need to have words, whether technical or not, to denote economic tendencies, changes in institutions, exchanged objects, or social practices. These words may remain the same, but behind their stability, they designate specific historical configurations. In this concluding note, I reflect on the possible meaning of the words we currently use to describe the social and economic histories of Africa in the long era stretching from 300 to 900 CE (or even 1000, as the title of this collection argues). I draw particular attention to the word "transition" which in the contemporary literature has become an umbrella term to describe any kind of transformation occurring across time. The result of this intellectual operation is that any implication about historical periodization and "structural changes" has vanished from the research agenda. In outlining the contents of this collection, my crucial task here is to restore the potent analytical meaning that a word such as transition implies and to reject the tendency to transform the descriptive into the explanatory.

Keywords: Africa, Late Antiquity, Islam, transition, transformation, economy, trade

If there is an overarching theme common to the essays collected in this volume, it is their inclination to think of the history of Mediterranean Africa from 300 to 900 CE in terms of transition.[1] They do so along the lines argued in the recent literature regarding Africa.[2] Transition is indeed a recurrent word throughout the entire collection, where African history is described (more or less explicitly) as a continuous process of transformation driven (or "punctuated") by a series of transitions within and beyond Late Antiquity. Changes are presented as the completion of the social system which had emerged from the transformation of the Roman institutions, and which became visible following the Islamic expansion.[3]

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1 In this essay I use the term Mediterranean Africa or simply Africa to refer to the lands stretching from western Libya to Morocco, which are conventionally labelled the Maghreb. For an overview of this ecological space, see Shaw, A Peculiar Island, 93-99.

2 Leone *et al.*, From Africa to Ifrīqiya. Introduction, 1-6; Conant, Forgotten transition, 11-21; Stevens, Carthage in transition, 89-103; Leone, Cultural transitions in archaeology, 265-277; Sjöstrom, *Tripolitania in Transition*, 1-3.

3 See the introduction to this themed section: Steinacher and Margreiter, Africa 500-1000: Introduction; for comparable analysis, see Stevens and Conant, Introduction: Reimagining Byzantine Africa, 1-12; Brown, Byzantine and early Islamic Africa, 295-301.

If this narrative is correct, then at the end of this volume one may legitimately ask what this process of transformation-cum-transition(s) was really about. The answer is anything but simple and requires some theoretical as well as empirical clarifications. There are two opposite characterizations and uses of the notion of transition in modern scholarship: transition as a decline, and transition as synonymous with transformation.

As a potent concept of political economy, the term "transition" is used to indicate the passage between two periods, during which the conditions are created for a change that is so significant that it affects overall periodization. As a concept describing change, transition is not neutral, but presupposes a rejection of the continuist hypothesis.

In a more generic and less theoretical sense, however, the term "transition" is useful for indicating slow and protracted changes. These changes lead to a different scenario, but in a linear way, without tensions or leaps forward, or sudden ruptures. This concept of transition has no specific implications as regards periodization. In essence, transition implies the antithesis of crisis, and is synonymous with transformation in its most continuist signification.[4]

In what follows, I will try to review these two uses of transition in the light of the new insights, approaches and understanding of late antique and medieval Africa presented in the recent literature, including the essays gathered in this collection. My own view, which I shall be setting out in more detail in the course of these pages, is that the concept of transition applied to Africa implies systemic discontinuities that directly affected the relationship between production and exchange across the whole African economy.

I begin with transition as decline. The legacy of French colonialism, and its political counterpart, has exerted, and still exerts, a powerful influence over how this meaning of transition applies to African history.[5] Treatments of Roman and post-Roman Africa in particular seem unable to evade the framework set by the French colonial agenda, in which conquest (either Roman, Vandal, Byzantine or Islamic) is both a moment of transition and an actual marker of historical periodization.[6] The essays of Bonny Effros and Andy Merrills can be said to be part of an outright attempt to cast off this colonial agenda.[7] They do so by emphasizing two opposing visions of conquest as they emerge in the writings of ancient and colonial authors. The crucial point of their analyses is that both colonial discourse and its historiographical inversion tend to present African history in a perennial status of binary partition between conquerors and conquered, colonizers and colonized, or rulers and subalterns, while Africa's past differs radically from such narratives. In the first case, these narratives produce anachronism, in the second case, ethnocentrism: in both cases, it is a matter of failing to question one's own system of knowledge.[8] Historians apply a concept born at a given moment, in a particular historical circumstance (such as the French colonial conquest or the Algerian revolution), to other realities (the Roman imperial restoration or the Islamic conquest).[9] They

4 Giardina, Perspectives in Roman history, 743-744; Giardina, Transition to Late Antiquity, 29-30. See also Liebeschuetz, Transformation and decline, 45-47; Pohl, Transformation, 45-61.

5 Courtois, *Les Vandales et l'Afrique*; Modéran, *Les Vandales et l'Empire Romain*; Lassère, *Africa, quasi Roma*.

6 Hitchner, Africa, quasi Roma, 757; Hitchner, De Africa Romaque: Some concluding thoughts, 259; Mattingly, *Imperialism, Power*, 43-72; Vermeren, *Misère de l'historiographie*, 11-17.

7 Effros, A new age of Saint Augustine?; Merrills, A subaltern's view of early Byzantine Africa?

8 Bourdieu and Chartier, *The Sociologist and the Historian*, 13.

9 Yacine, *Nedjma*, 135, quoted in Hannoum, *Violent Modernity*, 2.

do this in order to test that concept, but also to display this older reality in a more striking fashion. Yet what is clear from the study of imperial and ethnohistory is that the subjects of the two kinds of history are the same. The more history we know, the more clearly "their" history and "our" history emerge as part of the same history. Thus, there can be no "African history" apart from "Roman or Arab History", only a component of a common history suppressed or omitted from conventional study for economic, political or ideological reasons.[10]

Although transition can be applied to the narration and interpretation of a decline, we shall see in a moment that not all transitions imply decline. The best way of reframing the problem of decline and of avoiding the catastrophist implications of connecting transition with conquest is to think of history (and in particular ancient economic history) as marked by cycles, that is, as broad fluctuations across whole swathes of history.[11] We can distinguish between two great economic cycles in the Mediterranean and the lands around it in the first millennium. The first was that of the Roman Empire, which peaked in its density and scale in the fourth century in the West, the early sixth in the East, and which unified the whole Mediterranean on the level of the exchange of products, more fully in fact than it has ever been unified since.[12] The later seventh century appears to have been the start of a cyclical downturn, which was, however, peculiar to the Byzantine Empire and did not involve the territories under Islamic control.[13] Although a contraction of social and economic life took place on its shores as a consequence of the disintegration of the imperial fiscal network and due to the Islamic expansion, the Mediterranean did not become an under-developed area. From the end of the eighth century, beginnings of new political and commercial vitality appear, particularly in Africa and Sicily.[14] It is at this point – in the decades around 800 – that Mediterranean historians date the initial appearance of the second Mediterranean trade cycle, which slowly but steadily increased in scale over the next two centuries up to the notable levels of activity visible in the Geniza archive around 1000.[15]

If, on the one hand, this interpretation defies a catastrophist thesis, on the other hand, it opens the way to the second and opposite meaning of transition: the continuist version. Some scholars take the explanation based on the succession of cycles as consistent with the view of economic continuity, that is, that trade assured the continuity of the commercial economy despite changes in political regimes (or mere fiscal crises).[16] The picture that emerges for Africa from numerous recent publications is one in which persistent occupation of sites and the trade in commodities (whether these were agrarian surplus, slaves or textiles) are

10 Wolf, *Europe and the People without History*, 19. See also Mattingly, *Imperialism, power*, 26-30.

11 Banaji, *Exploring the Economy*, 19-22; Tedesco, Late Antiquity, early Islam, 127-128.

12 Whittow, *The Making of Orthodox Byzantium*, 89-95; Ward-Perkins, Specialization, trade and prosperity, 175; Wickham, Mediterranean around 800, 164.

13 Whittow, Decline and fall?, 407; Banaji, *Exploring the Economy*, 20; Zavagno, *Cyprus*, 175; Tedesco, Late Antiquity, early Islam, 127-128.

14 Delogu, Transformation of the Roman world, 256; Banaji, *Exploring the Economy*, 26.

15 McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, 434, 508-515; Wickham, Mediterranean around 800, 164; Wickham, *Framing*, 720-728.

16 Leone *et al.*, *Africa-Ifrīqiya*; the criticism is in Wickham, Africa-Ifrīqiya: Conclusions, 317; more generally, Wickham, Historical transitions, 1-6; Wickham, Problems of comparison, 221-231; Tedesco, Late Antiquity, early Islam, 142-143.

taken as manifestations not only of the continuity of the Mediterranean exchange but also of the infrastructures that sustained it. This reading defuses historical dynamics and does not really help us in thinking about state formation or political power as experienced concretely through fiscal structures or economic relationships. Production and exchange in themselves form too broad a conceptual framework to consider the gradual shifts and changes in the sub-structures of society, economy, and state.[17] In brief, this approach raises the problem of how socio-economic systems are compared.[18] For my part, I usually distrust comparisons of the before/after type, and a fortiori grand generalizations about economic trends. They lead us to fret over false problems of comparing economic indicators such as production and exchange, without seeing that we are dealing with two totally different structures, in which the rates of representation that are translated into figures (numbers of sites or exchanges of commodities, for example) do not have the same economic meaning in the two different historical contexts. Given these premises, I shall compare in the following paragraphs the structures that we think sustain the economic and social life of the African people from 300 to 900 CE.

The history of the African economy under the Late Empire is well known. Africa, with Tunisia at its center, was deeply and productively integrated on both Mediterranean-wide and regional levels into the imperial economy. African provinces exported their agrarian surplus (mainly grain, oil, wine and salsamenta) in the form of taxes, rents or trade all over the Mediterranean basin. The motor of this economic organization was above all the Roman tax system, which underwrote the transfer of rents and commercial sea traffic, particularly from the African producing regions to the centers of consumption. In the 440s, the Vandals severed African fiscal links to the rest of the Mediterranean. This collapse of the fiscal machinery in the fifth century led to the end of a system of extraction, distribution and investment of wealth that was the basis of the Western imperial economy.[19] Commercial export of Tunisian goods continued, however, owing to both the ability of the Afro-Roman landowners to reorient their production to new networks and to the economic boom of the Eastern Mediterranean that assured a stable demand for bulk commodities. While a substantial share of such commodities exported from Vandal Africa was bought by merchants in exchange for eastern foodstuffs or gold coins, a portion was paid for through the money collected via taxation in the territories under western and eastern imperial control.[20] This meant that the African

17 Haldon, Problems with periodization?, 39.

18 Wickham, *Land and Power*, 77-98; Whittow, Decline and fall?, 408-10; Liebeschuetz, Transformation and decline, 40-45.

19 McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, 103-111; Wickham, *Framing*, 87-92; Abulafia, *The Great Sea*, 226-238; Sarris, Integration and disintegration, 171-176.

20 Procopius, *BV* I,20,5: merchants at Carthage; Loseby, Mediterranean economy, 626; Reynolds, From Vandal Africa to Arab Ifrīqiya, 139; for the reorientation of imperial taxes, see Tedesco, The missing factor, 399-400.

productive infrastructures were still partially integrated into the Mediterranean system of exchange, despite the political fission from the empire.[21] After the Byzantine conquest in the 530s, the shift of the center of the empire towards Constantinople determined a slow reorganization of taxation and of the interconnected trade across the Mediterranean away from the west.[22] Between 620 and 650, the imperial authority reinforced those fiscal links with Africa and Sicily via the tax arrangements called *coemptiones* (compulsory purchases undertaken in exchange for monetary payments under the control of local officials) from estates concentrated primarily in northern and central Tunisia.[23] Although the relative quantities of traded commodities versus taxes increased, the overall system did not change between 450 and 650. What did actually change in this period was the number and scale of the African sites producing goods for Mediterranean export: these constantly decreased, and, as a consequence, African goods were steadily less and less available elsewhere in the Mediterranean.[24] Furthermore, the patterns of archaeological finds in Africa indicate that products went from the hinterland to the coasts along separate paths, while very little internal economic integration took place.[25]

Regional divergence is a key element of the process of transformation in Africa from the late seventh century onwards, as a result both of the waning of the unified political-economic system of the Eastern Roman Empire,[26] as well as the fragmentation of the caliphate that came with the Kharajite movements in the 750s and the coincidental decline of the Umayyad.[27] In this changing context, an apparently greater degree of fluidity or flexibility in social identities, status and power relationships allowed local elites to gain access to and control over the distribution and consumption of wealth.[28] If there were substantial Arab landowners in Tunisia, they are quite likely to have been occupying fiscal and absentee-owner land, much as the Vandal and Byzantine elites probably had.[29] This meant that regional capitals like Tunis, Kairouan, and later Fez, served as urban hubs of economic activity on a smaller scale than Carthage, but still large enough to be significant.[30] However, the weakening of systematic taxation (already evident during the end of Byzantine rule) and the localization of surplus extractive mechanisms meant that the true heart of the system lay at a lower level,

21 Fulford, Pottery and the economy, 9; Kingsley and Decker, New Rome, new theories, 13, 20 f. 91; Wickham, Studying long-term change, 388-390; Reynolds, From Vandal Africa to Arab Ifrīqiya, 132-137; Reynolds, The supply network, 387-388; Tedesco, Economia e moneta, 119-124; Tedesco, The missing factor, 398-404.

22 Loseby, Mediterranean economy, 615-617; Laiou and Morrisson, *Byzantine Economy*, 24-26, 35; Decker, *Byzantine Dark Ages*, 155-157.

23 Haldon, *The Empire That Would Not Die*, 201, 262; Prigent, Le rôle des provinces d'Occident, 290-293; Morrisson, African economy, 193-195; Conant, Forgotten transition, 15.

24 Wickham, Studying long-term change, 390; Conant, *Staying Roman*, 139-141; Leone, Topographies of production, 274-277; Leone, *Changing Townscapes*, 133, 142, 159-160.

25 Wickham, Africa-Ifrīqiya: conclusions, 318.

26 Haldon, Production, distribution and demand, 230-243; Haldon, *The Empire That Would Not Die*, 197-204.

27 Brett, Arab conquest, 513-522; Brett and Fentress, *Berbers*, 81-98; Manzano Moreno, Iberian Peninsula and North Africa, 590-593, 610-613.

28 Haldon, Framing the transformation, 333.

29 Talbi, Law and economy, 210-214; Wickham, Africa-Ifrīqiya: conclusions, 319.

30 Carthage: Bockmann, *Capital Continuous*, 125-129; Stevens, Carthage in transition, 89-103; Tunis and Kairouan: Bockmann, Late Byzantine and early Islamic Carthage, 77-89; Fez: Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 113.

in smaller, commercially active centers like Mahdia, Sijilmāsa, Tahert, and Sfax, and their vibrant networks. These centers were the true backbone of the economy, but each had its own separate economic story.[31] Tunis included among its products cotton, which was exported to Kairouan, apparently with good profits. Flax for linen production was also grown there.[32] Cotton was also cultivated in Tubna, Msila, and Biskra.[33] Mahdia in the Sahel manufactured finely worked textiles proclaiming "Made in Mahdia", which were widely exported since the workmanship was of a high standard. The port itself attracted merchant shipping from all parts of the Mediterranean.[34] Numerous other ports and inland towns in Ifrīqiya served as important hubs for the gathering and re-export to the Middle East of white slaves captured in Southern Europe and of black slaves taken in Sub-Saharan Africa.[35] Along the same southern routes, as Isabel Toral discusses, Berber and Arab merchants also imported gold.[36] Although we have little information about the prices paid for such ore and the amounts of gold that were then exported across the Sahara, Islamic *dinars* (gold coins) are an invaluable source for documenting the transregional demand for West African gold.[37] Islamic *dirhams* (silver coins), on the other hand, bear testimony to commercial (and, at times, tributary) relations between Ifrīqiya and the Middle East.[38] African coastal towns looked not only southward and eastward, they also reoriented their interests towards the central Mediterranean, where Sicily served as intermediary between a plurality of Tunisian ports and various commercial centers in Southern Europe and elsewhere in the Mediterranean.[39] On the local production side, Antonia Bosanquet argues on the basis of an analysis of the legal sources that agrarian production re-emerged from the ninth century onwards, and that agrarian surplus was widely traded across the Mediterranean.[40] Elisabeth Fentress seems to reinforce this point, showing how changes in housing and diet involved a shift in the storage system through the introduction of silos.[41] Fentress' essay also lends support to those who (like Chris Wickham in his essay on historical transitions and myself in this brief note) adopt changes in economy as the main interpretive parameter of the concept of "transition".[42] Her contribution shows

31 Von Rummel, Transformation of ancient land and cityscapes, 108; Fenwick, Fate of the classical cities of North Africa, 138-140; Stevens, Not just a tale of two cities, 248-253; Leone, Cultural transitions in archaeology, 273-275; Leone, Land, forts, and harbours, 280-282.

32 Baker, *Islamic Textiles*, 24.

33 Lamm, *Cotton in Mediaeval Textiles*, 244-246.

34 Banaji, *Brief History of Commercial Capitalism*, 131; Valérian, *Ports et Réseaux d'Échanges*, 53; Picard, *La Mer des Califes*, 161.

35 Savage, Berbers and Blacks, 353-357; Alexander, Islam, archaeology, and slavery, 45-47, 49.

36 Toral, Umayyad dynasty and the Western Maghreb, 97, 99 with nt. 27.

37 Messier, Dinars as historical texts, 204-205; Austen, Sources of gold, 67.

38 Heidemann, Circulation of North African dirhams, 462-463.

39 Morrisson, La Sicile byzantine, 307-317; Prigent, Mints, coin production and circulation, 340-342; Molinari, Sicily between the 5th and the 10th century, 104-107; Arcifa, Byzantine Sicily, 479-486; Decker, *Byzantine Dark Ages*, 138; Tedesco, Exploring the economy, 183, 185-186.

40 Status of question: Watson, *Agricultural Innovation*, 2-3, 123-128; Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 95-99. For a set of qualifications, see Decker, Plants and progress, 190-191, 203-206; Bosanquet, Maritime trade from 3rd/9th-century Ifrīqiya; for comparable archaeological examinations, see Fenwick, *Early Islamic North Africa*, 95; Leone, Cultural transitions in archaeology, 275.

41 Fentress, Islamizing Berber lifestyles.

42 Wickham, Historical transitions, 5-6.

that to contest this approach would be a mistake.[43] The economy is part of the social system, part of culture. One is always forced to take account of socio-cultural factors that are bound to impinge upon the economy as well as upon all economic operations, which are always subject to cultural considerations, since all are part of the same social system.[44]

African socio-economic histories as they emerge from the picture summarized above make it possible, I believe, to conceive of the notion of transition in terms of discontinuity. There is a tremendous break in Africa between 700 and 800. The late seventh- and eighth-century crisis in the region was systemic and deep.[45] It determined a transition from a Mediterranean world in which Africans produced within an exchange system based on trade supported by distribution, to a world where Africa's economy was turned upside down, with the people of its isolated regions producing at the local level in the absence of an integrated market. In order to exchange, they had to have enough capital, and a commercial network that would allow exports at regional and interregional levels, knowing that without these tools they would not sell a single product.

The investigative challenge for historians is not to identify the moment when the transition from one system to the next took place: 700, 750, or 780. One could characterize this as the search for origins, while always intriguing, is never satisfying because there is hardly ever a single monocausal answer. Instead one should focus on the structural outcomes of this process of change. The crucial point is to acquire sufficient knowledge to portray the structural situation that was typical for production and exchange, the role that merchants and commercial capital played in this new phase, and finally to explain why recovery required well over a century, and, even then, as Chris Wickham has reminded us, the region did not achieve the levels of economic integration found in 400 and perhaps even in 500.[46]

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43 Fentress, Islamizing Berber lifestyles, 67-93 and her early article, Romanizing the Berbers, 27-31.

44 Goody, *Capitalism and Modernity*, 48.

45 Wickham, Africa-Ifrīqiya: conclusions, 319.

46 Wickham, Africa-Ifrīqiya: conclusions, 319. For the role of merchants and commercial capital, see Goitein, *Mediterranean Society*, 149-161; McCormick, *Origins of the European Economy*, 693-695; Banaji, *Brief History of Commercial Capitalism*, 129-133.

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Global Epigraphy. Perception and Representation of the Foreign

Andreas Rhoby*

The public discourse on the "foreign" and "foreigners" is more topical today than ever before. In a globalized world, confrontation with the "other" and "others" is inevitable. Contact with the "foreign" and "foreigners" is commonplace, but at the same time, it is also complex and individual. Questions such as belonging to certain groups, the definition of foreign and non-foreign, are unsurprisingly as common in the past as today.

Already in the premodern era, contact with "others" was an everyday phenomenon,[1] since the then known world was in some respects as "globalized" as it is today.

Not only did objects migrate between continents, but people also often crossed distances to trade or to fight as mercenaries. Entire groups of peoples left their homelands due to climatic changes.[2] But also, the search for work and the hope of a better life in a new environment were motors of migration movements of whole groups or even individuals already in pre-modern times.[3] The encounter of natives and "foreigners" and their assimilation or non-assimilation is a multilayered, intergenerational process.

In order to grasp the perception of the "foreign" and "foreigners" in the course of history, it is necessary to analyze more than just written sources, such as historical works or legal documents. Material culture is also a treasure trove for tracing migratory movements and trade relations. Roman coins in China[4] and Byzantine jewelry found in Scandinavia,[5] for example, bear witness to this. Inscriptions stand between the two groups: they are text, but at the same time inseparable from the object or monument on which they are found.

The topic of the "foreign" and "foreigners" has been discussed in inscriptions since Antiquity.[6] A fundamental distinction must be made between two forms of the "foreign": 1) The inscription and the object may be "foreign" based on their external appearance, i.e. they are unusual compared to other inscriptions or objects. 2) The inscription mentions "foreigners" or something "foreign" and thus contributes to the analysis of the perception of "foreigners" or the "foreign".

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1 Schuster, *Begegnung mit dem Fremden*. On Antiquity, see, for example, Pülz and Trinkl, *Das Eigene und das Fremde*.

2 Preiser-Kapeller, *Die erste Ernte* and Preiser-Kapeller, *Der lange Sommer.*

3 Hoerder, *Cultures in Contact*.

4 Li, Roman coins discovered in China.

5 Ljungkvist, Influences from the empire.

6 E.g. Pope, *Foreigners in Attic Inscriptions*.

The sarcophagi from Lycia discussed in the article by Oliver Hülden (pp. 146-162) belong to the first group. These vary in their form, which is to be distinguished as either "local" or "foreign". An inscription on a stone block from the harbor of Patara, which was part of a tomb, refers to two individual graves, one of which is referred to as *angeion topikon* ("local receptacle"), and the other as *angeion Asianon* ("receptacle from Asia"). The "foreignness" of such a Lycian sarcophagus also touches the present: while this is basically true for all objects no longer located in their original space – this primarily concerns objects kept in museums – Hülden reports in particular on a sarcophagus originally from Lycia but now situated in the Istrian city of Pula which differs from the local sarcophagi created for the Roman *Colonia Iulia Pola Polensis Herculanea* and thus represents foreignness.

The Latin inscriptions and associated funerary monuments for members of a Genoese merchant family from the mid-14th century found in Yangzhou, central China, discussed in the article by Eva Caramello and Romedio Schmitz-Esser (pp. 210-228) are "foreign" in two respects. Christian Latin inscriptions are *per se* a "foreign body" in a Buddhist-Chinese dominated environment. But the monuments are also "foreign" from a Western perspective. First, the iconography on the tombstone is borrowed from Buddhist art. Second, the Latin script also shows a strong local influence, making it seem foreign in a purely Western context. This phenomenon is not without parallel: for example, in the Great Mosque in Xi'an, China, the letters of the Arabic inscriptions are influenced by the shape of Chinese characters, which is described as the "Sino-Arabic script".[7]

Tombstones of people who died in foreign countries are usually important sources that make mobility in pre-modern times comprehensible. We find them in all cultures and at all times. They range, for example, from tombstones of Roman soldiers who died far from home, to Germanic peoples in early Byzantine Constantinople and Asia Minor,[8] to English, French, Portuguese, etc., merchants, diplomats, and traders attested on 17th-century gravestones in Isfahan, Persia.[9]

As the inscription on the Patara stone block, which distinguishes between "local" and "non-local" in relation to the shape of the sarcophagus, shows, inscriptions deal with foreignness in a wide variety of pre-modern contexts. Peter Kruschwitz's contribution (pp. 163-194) focuses on the image of the foreign "barbarian" as encountered in Latin verse inscriptions. Greek and Latin verse inscriptions from Antiquity, the Middle Ages, and modern times are a special treasure for socio-historical questions, since, unlike simple prose inscriptions, they permit a broad range of linguistic expression. The Greek term *barbaros* (Latin *barbarus*) originally designated all non-Greek-speaking peoples, especially Persians.[10] At one point in his *opus magnum,* Herodotus relates that the Spartans would equate *xenoi* ("foreigners") and *barbaroi* ("barbarians") (see contribution Rhoby, p. 196). But this must have been unusual for the Greeks, otherwise the ancient writer would not have felt compelled to mention it.

7 Djamel, Sino-Arabic Script.

8 Huttner, Germanen.

9 Wright, Burials.

10 Cf. e.g., Sonnabend, *Fremde und Fremdsein in der Antike*, 35-47.

Herodotus (II 158) also mentions that the Egyptians would likewise use the same word for all non-Egyptian (= Demotic) speakers. The term *barbara-* is also used in Sanskrit as well as in other Eastern languages. In the great epic Mahabharata, it means "foreigner, sinful people, low", etc.[11] In the Latin verse inscriptions discussed by Kruschwitz, "foreigners" are referred to as barbarians either as individuals or as anonymous persons, and it is noticeable that this is a highly emotional term.

The above-mentioned term *xenos*, used by Herodotus, has a long tradition in Greek literature, whereby the word – as Andreas Rhoby shows in his contribution (pp. 195-209) – on the one hand can have negative connotations (albeit rather rarely), but on the other hand, is also used as an equivalent to "beholder", "wayfarer", etc., or generally denotes the "host". In adjectival use, it can also mean "extraordinary" (in the sense of "foreign to this world"). Just as Latin verse inscriptions play with the connotations of *barbarus*, so do Greek verse inscriptions of Late Antiquity and the Byzantine Middle Ages with *xenos*. There is also a certain relationship to the descriptions of the types of sarcophagi mentioned in the Patara inscription: a 7th-century verse inscription in the church of St. Demetrius in Thessalonica (p. 196) distinguishes between *politai* ("local citizens") and *xenoi* ("foreigners"), thus differentiating between the local population and pilgrims coming from outside, both being regarded as equals.

Western European Latin and German inscriptions of the Middle Ages and modern times have a somewhat different orientation. In the contribution of Andreas Zajic (pp. 229-262), it clearly appears that the distinction between "foreign" and "non-foreign" is based mainly on the distinction between Christians and pagans. There is a difference to the contemporary Byzantine inscriptions, in which the *xenoi* are mostly the non-locals, but nevertheless Christians. The purpose of mentioning 400 fallen and buried *pagani* on the "Kumanenstein" near Altenburg in Lower Austria is not to commemorate them, but to celebrate the victory of the Christians over the pagans. That strangers in the sense of members of another religion are not welcome – they are even threatened with the death penalty if they break the rules – is also shown by (Greek) inscriptions from the first century BC from Jerusalem, which were placed near the temple and divided between those areas accessible to all and the sanctified area into which only Jews were permitted: "No foreigner is to enter within the balustrade and forecourt around the sacred precinct. Whoever is caught will himself be responsible for (his) consequent death."[12] Warning inscriptions at temple entrances were also found elsewhere in Antiquity.[13]

Inscriptions themselves survive centuries and political changes. Inscriptions are sometimes torn from their place of origin: this is not a purely modern phenomenon but is encountered far earlier: in the Euro-Mediterranean Middle Ages, objects (primarily stones) with inscriptions were used as spolia for the construction of new monuments, whereby the text was placed in a new context, either no longer having any meaning or being seen as decoration or interpreted as being magical.[14]

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11 Sūryakānta, *Sanskrit-Hindi-English Dictionary*, 417.

12 Cotton, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, 42-45, no. 2; cf. Price, *Rose Guide to the Temple*, 78. The Greek term used for "foreigner" is not ξένος (*xenos*) but ἀλλογενής (*allogenes*), which was specifically employed for non-Jews as already in LXX *Ge.* 17.27, cf. Rodríguez Adrados, *Diccionario griego-español*, *s. v.* ἀλλογενής.

13 Cotton, *Corpus Inscriptionum Iudaeae/Palaestinae*, 44.

14 Cf., e.g., Jevtić and Yalman, *Spolia Reincarnated*.

As this introduction and the contributions of the cluster have been able to show, an inscription or its shaping, but also the inscription carrier itself, i.e. the monument or the object, can be "foreign". The contributions of this cluster cover not only a broad geographic but also a broad temporal frame. This inevitably leads to major challenges in interpretation and comparative analysis. But as the case studies show, there are nevertheless similar phenomena that can be viewed diachronically. It also becomes apparent that, regardless of which culture is the focus, there was already an intense preoccupation with the topic of "strangers" in the pre-modern era. "Foreigners" and the "foreign" are discussed in inscriptions throughout the Euro-Asian region, whether positively, negatively, or neutrally.

The present cluster can only be a beginning: an investigation of the phenomenon in other (script) cultures such as Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, Georgian, Persian, Sanskrit, etc. is also needed in order to be able to deepen the global approach in the analysis.

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Identification by Shape? Sarcophagi of Locals and Foreigners in Roman Imperial Lycia

Oliver Hülden*

Lycia is characterized by a sepulchral culture, which has found its expression in numerous tomb types that are typical for this region. They were created in Archaic and Classical times, probably as a result of the Persian conquest around 540 BC and the integration of Lycia into the Achaemenid Empire. A ruling elite, the so-called dynasts, was obviously looking for new forms of representation and found them in tombs in which local and foreign elements were combined to create something new and unique. It is noteworthy that these tomb types occur almost exclusively within the Lycian language area and can therefore be understood as an expression of a specific Lycian culture which, not only in this respect, differs from other regions in Asia Minor and beyond. One of these tomb types is the free-standing stone sarcophagus with its characteristic ogival lid, which first occurred in the 5th century BC and was initially based on an imitation of indigenous wooden architecture in stone. However, a combination with Greek elements, also derived from timber construction, followed very quickly. In contrast to the other typical Lycian types of tombs, the sarcophagus survived the Hellenistic era and began a veritable triumphant advance in the Roman imperial period. While individual elements were constantly changing, the shape of the lid remained the same for centuries. In the necropoleis of several Lycian settlements, however, sarcophagi from the Roman imperial period with gabled roof-shaped lids can also be found. This lid shape has been identified as foreign based on an inscription from Patara, whereas the ogival lid shape is said to have been the local one. In principle, this seems to be correct, and the sarcophagus with its ogival lid was undoubtedly of particular importance for the Lycian identity. However, the deceased, who reveal themselves as locals or foreigners in grave inscriptions, nevertheless made use of sarcophagi with both kind of lids.

Keywords: Greek and Roman antiquity, Asia Minor, Lycia, burial culture, sarcophagi, Roman imperial period, harbor settlements

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A Lycian Sarcophagus in Pula

In the center of the Croatian town of Pula, visitors find an ancient sarcophagus with a gabled roof-shaped lid in the Park grada Graza (Park of the City of Graz). Since there are other parts of sarcophagi and workpieces in the park, it appears that these and the sarcophagus may be remains of the Roman Colonia Iulia Pola Polensis Herculanea and come from its necropolis.[1]

Fig. 1: Sarcophagus from Andriake, set up in the Park grada Graza at Pula (photo: O. Hülden)

Amazingly, the sarcophagus has a completely different story of origin to tell, and in this respect is a foreign body among the grave types of the Roman period represented in Pula. At first glance, however, this is not noticeable, because comparatively simple sarcophagi made of limestone with a gabled roof-shaped lid appeared in many places in the Mediterranean region and in the inland provinces during that time. The *tabula ansata*, the simple lateral pilasters and rounded projected parts (used to lift the lid) on the narrow sides of the chest are too unspecific to reveal the true origin of the sarcophagus. However, some details of the lid are more revealing. While here the projecting elements can also be overlooked, the central and side acroters, which are of hemispherical and quarter-spherical shape and provided with a circumferential, pointed brim, point in a clear geographical direction. Lids with this type of acroter can be located on the south coast of Asia Minor and, more precisely, in Lycia and Pamphylia.[2] There they often appear in combination with chests decorated with *tabulae ansatae*, pilasters and projecting elements.

The sarcophagus in Pula thus shows features that point to an origin in southwestern Asia Minor. This is actually also evident from the 13-line Greek epitaph inscribed in the *tabula ansata*. It identifies an Aurelios Pardalas, son of Epaphrodeitus, citizen of Lycian Myra as the tomb owner, who erected the sarcophagus for himself and his family, probably in the 3rd century AD.[3] But how could the sarcophagus get from Myra to distant Istrian Pula?

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1 See, for example, Letzner, *Pula*, 76-77 fig. 109.

2 Koch and Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage*, 536-538 fig. 22, esp. 538 with note 16.

3 For the inscription, see Weisshäupl, Lykischer Sarkophag, 101-102. Cf. also Borchhardt, *Myra*, 75 pl. 47A. C.

In the years 1883 and 1884, the third and last Austrian expedition to Lycia took place under the direction of Gabriel Knaffl-Lenz Ritter von Fohnsdorf. In its course, the last reliefs of the Heroon of Trysa and the Dereimis and Aeschylus Sarcophagus were loaded on board the S. M. transport ship "Pola" and brought to Vienna.[4] On 20 April 1884, the Pardalas sarcophagus from the mouth of the Andriakos River was also loaded in the Bay of Myra.[5] Accordingly, it belonged to the necropolis of the port of Myra, Andriake, and it was to be brought not to Vienna, but to the k. u. k. Naval Park of the Austrian war port of Pola.

The journey to Pola was first interrupted in Constantinople, where on 30 April 1884 another, not yet mentioned sarcophagus from Trysa, the so-called Dolphin Sarcophagus, was brought ashore as a "gift" for Sultan Abdul Hamid II.[6] Then, on 11 May, the "Pola" arrived in Trieste to unload the sarcophagus and the reliefs of the Heroon intended for Vienna, and finally, also the Pardalas sarcophagus reached the port of Pola to find its new place in the local Seearsenal.[7]

The sarcophagus of Pardalas, which was brought from Lycia to Pula in this peculiar way that can only be understood with background knowledge, does not represent a burial of ancient people abroad. Nevertheless, examination thereof is a suitable introduction to a topic that deals with the representation and perception of the foreign in inscriptions. However, the following considerations will be less about the description of strangers in texts than the question of whether there is a connection between certain external forms or features of sarcophagi in Lycia and locals and foreigners who died there and who can be identified as such.

The World of Tombs and the Sarcophagi of Lycia

The parts of the Teke Peninsula in the southwest of Asia Minor known as Lycia are characterized by a burial culture that found expression in numerous characteristic grave types that were unique even for the whole ancient Mediterranean world. This uniqueness manifests itself in the fact that the tombs have such a high recognition value that they can be recognized immediately as Lycian despite the inclusion of foreign elements.

The same applies to other evidence of material culture, and the aforementioned parts of the peninsula also formed the almost exclusive distribution area of Lycian written documents, i.e. inscriptions. Research is therefore based on a more or less independent, relatively clearly demarcated "cultural area", the bearers of which referred to themselves as *Trmmili* and were designated as Lycians in their foreign appellation. This "cultural area" Lycia is located between the Gulf of Fethiye in the west and Cape Gelidonia in the east. In the south lies the Mediterranean Sea, and in the north the southern foothills of the Bey Dağlari form the border with the plain of Elmalı.[8]

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4 For the discovery of the Heroon of Trysa and the transport of its reliefs to Vienna, see in general Szemethy, *Erwerbungsgeschichte*. For the third expedition to Lycia, see there, pp. 215-264.

5 Szemethy, *Erwerbungsgeschichte*, 260-261; 696 (Dok. Nr. TB-2, 6 April 1884). 700 (Dok. Nr. TB-2, 20 April 1884).

6 Szemethy, *Erwerbungsgeschichte*, 262-263.

7 Szemethy, *Erwerbungsgeschichte*, 263. For the placing of the sarcophagus in the "k. u. k. Seearsenal", see Weisshäupl, Lykischer Sarkophag, 101.

8 Cf., for example, Kjeldsen and Zahle, Lykische Gräber, 314-319 figs. 2-3; Hülden, Überlegungen, 120-133; Kolb, Entstehung der Landschaft, 131-141; Kolb, *Lykien*, 19-25 esp. 23-24. The inference of ethnicity from material culture is a controversial area in contemporary archaeology. For historical and geographical reasons, the research assumes that written evidence, material culture and cultural space in Lycia are largely congruent, without this being discussed again in detail here. For the general problem of ethnicity in connection with material culture, cultural space and territoriality, see, e. g., Jones, *Archaeology of Ethnicity*; Krausse and Nakoinz, *Kulturraum und Territorialität*.

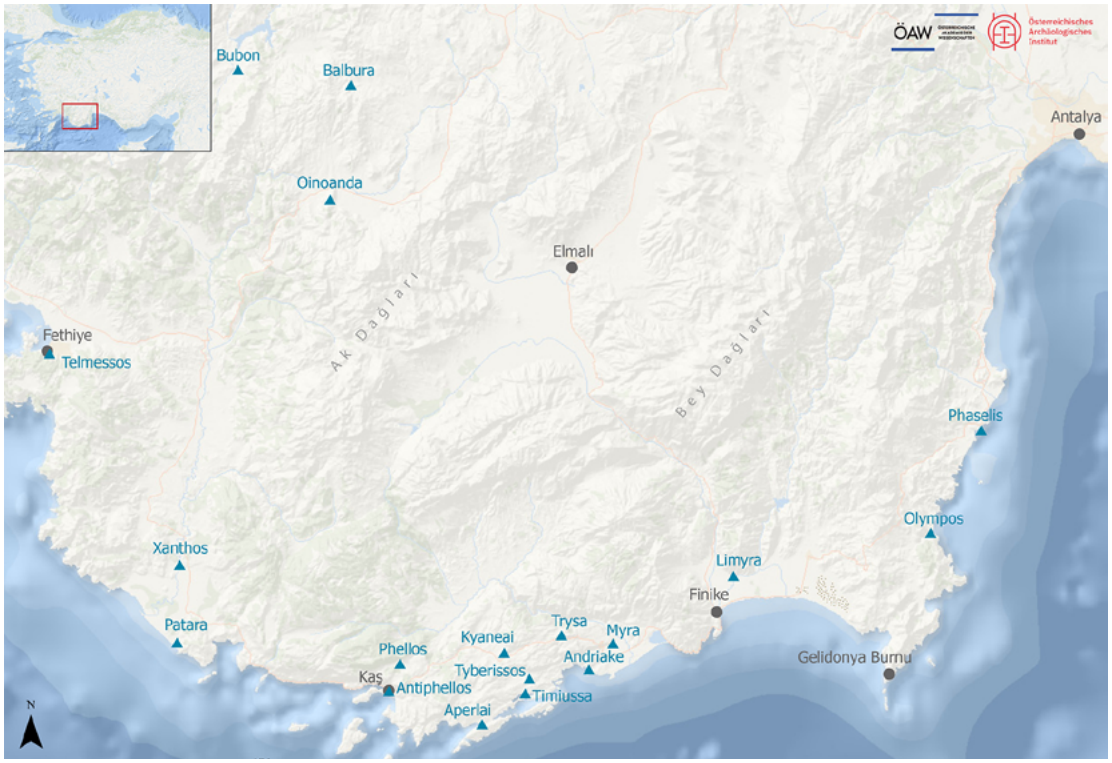

Fig. 2: Map of Lycia (© ÖAW-ÖAI/N. Math)

The specifically Lycian tomb types, which distinguish Lycia from other areas not only in Asia Minor but throughout the Mediterranean and the Near East, arose at the end of the Archaic period. The impetus for this creative act was presumably the Persian conquest of Lycia and the subsequent incorporation into the Achaemenid Empire.[9] An elite, the so-called dynasts,[10] who usually ruled over small regions within Lycia and were linked by family ties, obviously looked for new forms of representation and found them in tombs in which local and foreign elements were skillfully combined to create something new and unique. Previously, other types of graves, i.e. tumuli, terrace, podium and chamber tombs, were apparently in use. They were replaced by pillar and house tombs as well as rock-cut façade tombs and sarcophagi in the late Archaic and especially Classical periods. Apart from the sarcophagi, which will be the focus of the following, the genesis of these tomb types, which are related to local wooden architecture, is not of further interest here.[11]

The sarcophagi of Lycia were usually set up in the open air and made of local limestone. Sometimes the chests were cut into the bedrock. The peculiarity of the Lycian sarcophagi is that they initially imitated indigenous wooden architecture in stone as a scaled-down form of house tombs equipped with an ogival roof.[12]

9 Cf. Marksteiner, *Trysa*, 219-291, esp. 232-233. 289-291; Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, vol. 1, 28-31; Hülden, Überlegungen, 121-122; Hülden, Tumuli in Lykien, 485-486.

10 For the term, see Kolb, *Lykien*, 89-90.

11 For an overview, see esp. Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*.

12 For the genesis and development of the Lycian sarcophagi and their connection with wooden architecture, see Kjeldsen and Zahle, Lykische Gräber, 312-350 esp. 332-340; Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, vol. 1, 51-98; Hülden, *Nekropolen von Kyaneai*, 29-152; Kolb, *Lykien*, 629-657.

Fig. 3: Sarcophagus at Xanthos imitating wooden architecture (photo: O. Hülden)

Subsequently, these Lycian building elements merged with Greek ones, which were also borrowed from wood construction. These Greek elements, which are mainly found on the chests, are not rooted in house architecture, but in construction principles of wooden chests. This development probably started in the 2nd half of the 5th, to reach its peak in the 4th century BC. Sarcophagi of both types seem to have existed parallel to each other, whereby the elements that go back to one or the other wooden construction often degenerated into rudiments or were even left out.

Fig. 4: Sarcophagus of Ahqqadi at Xanthos with the chest imitating a wooden box (photo: O. Hülden)

The most striking feature, the ogival shape of the lid, was always retained, even if the decoration of the gable fields was often reduced to a single projecting element for lifting the lid.[13] Unlike the other pre-Hellenistic grave types, the sarcophagus can also be traced through the entire Hellenistic period.

13 The ogival lid is so distinctive and unique that the only example from the royal necropolis of Sidon that was found outside Lycia is known in archaeological research under the name "Lycian sarcophagus", see Schmidt-Dounas, *Sarkophag aus Sidon*; Langer-Karrenbrock, *Lykischer Sarkophag*.

The sarcophagi continued to gain popularity during the Roman imperial period and reached their heyday in the 2nd and 3rd centuries AD. Even after the arrival of Christianity, the ogival shape of the lid was retained, as an example from the 4th or 5th century AD in the vicinity of Kyaneai in Central Lycia shows.[14] Crosses are placed in the pediments of its fragmented ogival lid, and these are also to be found on its chest. In addition, depictions of peacocks complete the decor and, together with the epitaph, which cites verses 23, 42-42 from the Gospel of Luke, refer to paradise. Until the Late Antique/early Byzantine period and thus over a period of approx. 800 to 900 years with far-reaching social and political upheavals, the ogival lid was the defining element of Lycian sarcophagi. The execution may be clumsy at times and the details may have shriveled into rudiments, but the characteristic appearance was always retained.

Tombs of Locals and Strangers

Against the background of the development described, it makes sense to understand the majority of the tombs found in Lycia, at least in pre-Hellenistic times, as specific grave types created by Lycians for themselves. In fact, attempts to identify foreign grave forms or graves in general for strangers have only been made to a limited extent and with no clear result. In Limyra, for example, three rock-cut façade tombs have been linked to burials of Persians.[15] In the first case, this interpretation is based, on the one hand, on the fact that the grave owner has an Aramaic name. On the other hand, the epitaph was written in both Greek and Aramaic and contains the term "Astodan" which means an ossuary, in accordance with Zoroastrian burial practices. In fact, the buried person may have been a Persian, but whether he adhered to Zoroastrian beliefs remains unclear.

In the other two cases, reliefs attached to the façades showing men in Persian costumes are the argument for the interpretation as foreign burials. This is also quite conceivable. But much more significant is that the rock-cut tombs without the inscription or the reliefs do not differ from the others in the necropoleis of Limyra. So, if the buried people were Persians, they used a local grave type for their burial.

Cases like this are unlikely to have happened too often, since the overall Persian presence in Lycia is estimated to have been low.[16] This probably also applies to representatives of other ethnic groups, which means primarily Greeks. Greek names appear more frequently in grave inscriptions.[17] But it is likely that many of these people were Lycians who were given Greek names, as in the case of the dynast Perikle of Limyra. Another example is an Apollonios, son of Hellaphilos, who lived east of Limyra in the 4th century BC. A rock-cut façade tomb with reliefs and a Greek epigram was built for him at a place called Asartaş.[18] Was he an educated member of the Lycian elite or a Rhodian Greek, as F. Kolb recently argued?[19]

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14 Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, vol. 1, 75-76; vol. 2, 38-39 pls. 14, 4; 26, 1-4; 28, 4.

15 For the following discussion, see Kuban, Astodan, 133-143; Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, vol. 1, 347-348; Kuban, *Nekropolen von Limyra*, 83-87; Kolb, *Lykien*, 474-475.

16 See, for example, Kolb, *Lykien*, 119-120. For Persian names in Lycia and their distribution, see Schweyer, *Lyciens et la mort*, 135-141.

17 Cf. Schweyer, *Lyciens et la mort*, 141-170.

18 For the tomb and the discussion on it, see Hülden, Lykiens Dynasten, 83-85 (with the older literature). Furthermore, cf. Haake, patchwork-Repräsentation, 277-296.

19 Kolb, *Lykien*, 496.

It is also difficult to measure how many Greek craftsmen and artists worked on the Lycian grave monuments with reliefs of the 5th and 4th centuries BC and whether their presence in Lycia was permanent. The situation is similar to the Greek pedagogues attested in Xanthos, who apparently stayed there at court in Classical times (5th/4th century BC) to impart Greek upbringing.[20] The length of their stay is beyond our knowledge, as is the question of whether the presence of such educators in other places in Lycia can be expected. In the Hellenistic period (late 4th to 1st century BC), on the other hand, we occasionally encounter Ptolemaic mercenaries in inscriptions in Lycia, but we also learn next to nothing about their way of life in this place far away from their homes.[21]

Finally, a somewhat different case can be found in the necropolis of Limyra.[22] There, human bone fragments were recovered from a sarcophagus of the late Classical period, which was embedded in a strange kind of tumulus, and analyzed anthropologically. From the use of the tumulus as an allegedly non-Lycian grave form, its placement between older graves and certain features of the skeletal remains, it was subsequently concluded that the deceased was supposed to be a stranger who could most likely be identified as Karian. However, none of the arguments for this are convincing, and in particular, the tumulus, which was a widespread tomb type in Lycia already before the Persian conquest, can meanwhile hardly be described as foreign in this region.[23]

Conversely, however, the few Lycian tombs that have been found outside Lycia cannot be regarded only as foreign grave forms. Rather, the people buried in them are likely to have actually been Lycians who died abroad and who ostentatiously wanted to display their origins through the architectural shape of their tombs. The rock-cut façade tombs found in the regions of Kabalis/Kibyratis and Milyas, which border on Lycia to the north, have been interpreted in this way. Their erection can likely be connected with the conquest of these areas by Perikle of Limyra in the early 4th century BC and with Lycians who subsequently died there.[24] Here, too, of course, the opposite view exists, that it could only have been an adoption of a Lycian grave type by locals.[25]

If we summarize the above-mentioned attempts to identify foreigners in Lycia, which essentially relate to the pre-Hellenistic period, then they indicate a rather low presence of non-Lycians and an ethnically largely homogeneous Lycian population. This undoubtedly changed with Hellenism and its political, social and economic changes and was continued in Roman times. With regard to the graves, this also led to changes in Lycia, which mainly consisted in the fact that some of the grave types from the pre-Hellenistic period were still used for secondary burials, but were no longer built. Only the sarcophagus survived and, as in other areas of the Mediterranean world, experienced a real boom. And in this case, the Lycians actually seem to have made a distinction between a native and a foreign tomb type based on architectural form.

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20 See, at last, Hülden, *Lykiens Dynasten*, 84.

21 For these mercenaries, see, for example, Kolb, *Lykien*, 106.

22 For the following discussion, cf. Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, 113 (with the older literature); Seyer, Intraurbane Grabmäler, 218 note 61.

23 Cf. Hülden, Tumuli in Lykien, 475-490. Recently, F. Durmuş for West Lycia (Karapınar, Fethiye) published further, partially well-preserved tumuli, see Durmuş, Karapınar, 95-107.

24 For these tombs, see, so far, Gay and Corsten, Lycian Tombs, 47-60. They will be re-examined shortly by O. Hülden as part of the online publications of the Kibyratis project. For the reign of Perikle of Limyra, including a critical view on his conquests, see Wörrle, Geschichte Lykiens, 212-217 esp. 214-215. Cf. also Kolb, *Lykien*, 140. 497-504.

25 Kolb, *Lykien*, 503.

Towards the end of the 19th century, R. Heberdey and E. Kalinka published a block of inscriptions from the harbor of Patara, which was part of a tomb. Lines 3 to 5 read:[26]

(...)
. . ἑπ[ικει ?]μένοις ἀνγείοις δυσὶν, ἐ[τέρω μὲν
τοπ]ικῶ, ἑτέρω δὲ Ἀσιανῶ, κατεσσκεύασεν [καὶ
ἀν]έθηκεν Ζώσιμος οἰκονόμος Τιβερί[ου·
(...)

The text, of which only these three lines are relevant here, obviously speaks of a monument that consisted of two individual graves. The first is referred to as ἀνγεῖον τοπικόν (a local coffin or sarcophagus) and the other as ἀνγεῖον Ἀσιανόν (a coffin or sarcophagus from [wider] Asia [Minor])[27]. From this, Heberdey and Kalinka concluded that the local grave must have been a sarcophagus with a Lycian, i.e. ogival lid and the Asiatic one with a non-local, i.e. gabled roof-shaped lid. O. Benndorf followed this idea, and so it was established in research.[28] Further analysis, for example with regard to quantitative relationships, the geographical distribution of these two types of sarcophagus and a possible connection between the origin of the deceased and the choice of the lid shape, has only been carried out rudimentarily.[29]

Sarcophagus Lids as a Sign of Ethnic Origin?

The necropoleis of Lycian settlements have rarely been fully investigated. For knowledge of the sarcophagi, the necropoleis of Kyaneai in Central Lycia are of great importance, as around 380 specimens have been preserved there, which should largely correspond with the actual former number.[30] About 270 of these tombs have an ogival lid, compared to only 33 examples with a lid in the form of a gabled roof.[31] In the necropoleis of other inland settlements in Central Lycia such as Phellos or Tyberissos, however, only sarcophagi with ogival lids can be found,[32] and this also applies to Limyra in Eastern Lycia.[33] Likewise, in the necropoleis of the dependent larger villages within the territory of Kyaneai as well as among the 57 registered rural sarcophagi connected to farmsteads, there is only one with a gabled roof.[34] On the other hand, sarcophagi with gabled roof-shaped lids appear to be more common in Lycian harbor settlements, although the ogival lids always predominate there as well.

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26 Heberdey and Kalinka, *Bericht*, 27 no. 26. The block is 1.21 m long, 0.87 m high and 0.51 m deep.

27 The term ἀνγεῖον originally stands for a vessel for holding liquid or dry substances. In grave inscriptions it refers to a coffin or sarcophagus, cf. Kubińska, *Monuments funéraires*, 40-45.

28 Benndorf, Grabinschrift, 401-402 note 1. Cf., for example, Koch and Sichtermann, *Römische Sarkophage*, 536; Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, vol. 1, 80.

29 Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, vol. 1, 88-90; Hülden, Überlegungen, 123-125; Hülden, *Nekropolen von Kyaneai*, 130-134.

30 Hülden, *Nekropolen von Kyaneai*, 29-152.

31 Hülden, *Nekropolen von Kyaneai*, 100, 130.

32 For the necropolis of Phellos, see its upcoming publication: Hülden, Gräber von Phellos. The publication of the tombs of Tyberissos is in preparation by the same author.

33 Kuban, *Nekropolen von Limyra*, 57.

34 Hülden, *Gräber und Grabtypen*, vol. 1, 51-98; vol. 2, 57 pls. 29, 2; 31, 3 (S 47). For the necropoleis of the larger villages in the territory of Kyaneai, see Hülden, *Nekropolen von Kyaneai*, 29 note 141 (Trysa, Korba, Hoyran, Kapaklı Sarnıcı).

So far, the most precise information can be given for Andriake, the port of Myra and the place of origin of the sarcophagus of Pardalas in Pula discussed at the beginning of this article.[35] While only ogival lids can be observed in the so-called upper necropolis, the ratio of ogival to gabled roof-shaped lids in the southern necropolis is 2 to 9. For the northern necropolis, which comprises a total of 58 sarcophagi, only the number for the ogival lids is available with 16 examples. But the number of preserved gabled roof-shaped lids must be significantly higher and is probably between 20 and 30 specimens. Interestingly, there also seems to have been a spatial distribution: the ogival sarcophagus lids are mainly found in the western part of the northern necropolis, while the gabled roof-shaped lids dominate in its eastern part.

For other Lycian harbor settlements, information in this regard is so far considerably less accurate due to missing or not yet published studies. The Vienna manuscript of the Corpus of the *Tituli Asiae Minoris* from Central Lycia for the harbor of Antiphellos, which is connected to inland Phellos, contains 20 sarcophagus inscriptions.[36] Of these sarcophagi, a lid in the form of a gabled roof is noted for only two examples, whereas the rest had ogival lids. The reports of the European travelers of the 18th and 19th centuries, however, suggest a total of 150 to 200 sarcophagi in Antiphellos, of which very few have survived to this day.[37] At least one sarcophagus with a gabled roof-shaped lid is also recorded in a drawing by the traveler T. Hope,[38] which is why it can be assumed that other examples of this kind of lid existed in the necropolis of Antiphellos. Such vague statements are, however, of little further use, and the same can be said with regard to knowledge of the sarcophagi of other Lycian harbor settlements.[39]

In the port town of Timiussa, where M. Zimmermann carried out field research in the early 2000s, the situation is somewhat better. This is also because Timiussa was investigated in connection with Tyberissos and the focus was on determining the relationship between a harbor and an inland settlement against the background of acculturation phenomena.[40] Of the numerous results of this research, it is primarily relevant in our context that the port expanded from the early Hellenistic period. This expansion was still based on the intensive agricultural use of the hinterland, which is why the existing local settlement patterns were initially retained. Only in the Roman imperial period did a fundamental change take place with the emergence of the production of salt fish, which brought about a shift in the focus to the sea as well as to trade and commerce.

35 Uğurlu, *Sarcophagi Andriake*, 355-366.

36 On the current status of work on the publication of these inscriptions, see Samitz, Neue Grabinschriften, 135-150.

37 For an overview of the necropoleis and tombs of Antiphellos and the following information, see Hülden, Gräber von Phellos.

38 T. Hope's drawings are in the possession of the Benaki Museum in Athens.

39 Cf. Idil, *Lahitleri*, 49-50 pls. 38, 1; 39, 1-40, 1 (no. 2. 4; Olympos); 52 pl. 44, 1-3 (nos. 3-4; Patara); 54-55 pl. 47, 1-2 (no. 1; Phaselis).

40 Zimmermann, Teimiusa, 333-342; Zimmermann, Hafen und Hinterland, 265-312.

Something similar can be observed at the mountain settlement Phellos and its port Antiphellos, both of which were also examined by Zimmermann.[41] Here, too, from the Hellenistic period, the focus shifted towards the seaside, but Phellos behaved a little differently from Tyberissos and retained the time-honored appearance of a former dynastic settlement, presenting itself as a museum of its own glorious past. The latter aspect in particular is important, because it bears witness to a profound conservatism among large parts of the Lycian population continuing into the Roman imperial period, and in some cases, beyond that time.[42]

Tombs seem to have played a major role in displaying this conservatism. This suggests that both Phellos and Tyberissos only contain sarcophagi with ogival, i.e. local, lids, while in the "gates to the world", the port towns such as Timiussa, Antiphellos, Olympos and Andriake, sarcophagi with gabled roof-shaped, i.e. foreign, lids make up a certain proportion of the total number of these tombs.

In this context, it is noteworthy that grave inscriptions in these harbor settlements also tell us something about the very different origins of some of the deceased. The ethnic diversity is probably greatest in Timiussa because of its proximity to Myra and its large port, Andriake.[43] We not only find citizens of other Lycian poleis there, including other ports such as Aperlai, Patara and Telmessos, but the inscriptions point to a colorful mixture of traders and seamen for the High Imperial Period (2nd/3rd century AD).[44] These people came from Pisidian Selge, from Byzantion, Askalon and Caesarea Maritima in the Levant and from Puteoli in Campania. A ship owner or captain (ναύκληρος) from Nicomedia in Bithynia is also among them, and the same profession and origin apply to one of the buried in the southern necropolis of Andriake.[45]

This very shipowner or captain from Nicomedia, who died in Andriake, chose a sarcophagus with a gabled roof-shaped lid for his burial. That means that a non-Lycian, according to the inscription from Patara, chose a non-Lycian tomb type. It therefore might appear reasonable that the sarcophagi with gabled roof-shaped lids were increasingly chosen by strangers for their burial. In fact, this is also the case with at least one other sarcophagus in Timiussa, which is connected with a citizen from Askalon.

41 Zimmermann, Stadt und kulturelles Erbe, 215-250: Zimmermann, Phellos in Zentrallykien, 907-916; Hülden and Zimmermann, *Phellos*.

42 Cf. des Courtils, *Xanthos et la conservation*, 231-237; Hülden, Überlegungen, 125-129.

43 For an overview of the origin of the deceased in other Lycian harbor settlements and the reasons for the diversity, see Zimmermann, *Landeskunde Zentrallykiens*, 231-246, esp. 240-241 with note 250.

44 Cf. Zimmermann, Teimiusa, 338-339; Brandt and Kolb, *Lycia et Pamphylia*, 101-104. Furthermore: Zimmermann, *Landeskunde Zentrallykiens*, 239-244. The publication of the inscriptions is, in connection with the sarcophagi, in preparation by C. Schuler and the author. Until then, see Petersen and von Luschan, *Reisen*, 55-59.

45 Uğurlu, *Sarcophagi Andriake*, 356-357, fig. 2.

Fig. 5: Sarcophagus with gabled roof-shaped lid in the necropolis of Teimiussa (photo: Project "Hafen und Hinterland", LMU Munich)

Furthermore, at Olympos, the ναύκληρος Eudemos chose a sarcophagus with a non-ogival but flat lid with a triangular pediment for his sarcophagus, in which he was buried in the tomb of his nephew M. Aurelius Zosimas.[46] His epitaph provides an insight into the world of these people. Eudemos was engaged in the regular exchange of goods with the Black Sea region, and he himself crossed the Bosporus several times. Which goods he transported there and from there back to Lycia can at best be discovered indirectly, but it will primarily have been agricultural products.[47] In any case, Eudemos was extremely successful in his trade, which, in addition to high local offices, earned him citizenship of Bithynian Chalcedon, and which he proudly states as the primary source of his wealth.

46 Atvur and Adak, Grabhaus des Zosimas, 11-31; cf. Brandt and Kolb, *Lycia et Pamphylia*, 103-104.

47 For Lycian long-distance trade relations in general, especially with Egypt, see Zimmermann, Häfen und Handelswege, 201-217.

Fig. 6: Sarcophagus of the shipowner Eudemos at Olympos (photo: O. Hülden)

In spite of these individual examples, other foreigners who died in Lycia or local people associated with long-distance trade seem to have chosen sarcophagi with the local ogival lid for their burial. At least, that is shown by the sarcophagi of the foreigners from Selge, Byzantion, Caesarea Maritima and Puteoli in Timiusa with corresponding lids. A reverse example, however, is the sarcophagus of a Konon from Myra.[48] It is located in the necropolis of Andriake and has a lid in the form of a gabled roof. The same applies to the sarcophagus of Pardalas, which comes from the same necropolis, and the story of whose transfer to Pula was recounted at the beginning of this article.

Conclusion

The differentiation between a local and a foreign type of tomb, which Heberdey and Kalinka transferred from the inscription from Patara to the sarcophagi with ogival and gabled roof-shaped lids in the necropoleis of Lycia, certainly reflects ancient reality. There is also little doubt that the widespread adherence to the ogival lid shape conceals a strong conservatism and that this shape has a certain symbolic character in the sense of belonging to a Lycian identity. To what extent the sarcophagi with gabled roof-shaped lids that are characterized

48 Öztürk, Grabinschrift aus Andriake, 385-391.

as foreign in the Patara inscription were perceived as a kind of foreign object within the Lycian necropoleis is beyond our knowledge. In any case, it can be said that this lid shape is not found at all in the necropoleis of many settlements in the mountainous hinterland, whereas it occurs with increasing frequency in highly prosperous settlements such as Kyaneai or in the previously mentioned harbor settlements, without ever forming the majority there.

While it seems to be appropriate to assume conservatism behind the more frequent choice of an ogival lid for sarcophagus burials in Lycia, the motivation for choosing a gabled roof-shaped lid remains less clear. One reason may have been a greater open-mindedness towards foreigners or trends brought from abroad in Lycian harbor settlements. In any case, it is not easy to establish a connection between the origin of tomb owners and the shape of lid for their sarcophagi. However, further investigation of this phenomenon seems worthwhile. In addition to other Lycian locations not mentioned here, the spatial distribution of the sarcophagi within the necropoleis or their combination with other structural elements, such as altar-shaped door stones for the openings of the *hyposoria*, must also be considered.[49] This will surely result in new and more reliable insights into the relationship between Lycians and foreigners within Lycia.

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49 For this kind of door stone, see Hülden, *Nekropolen von Kyaneai*, 41-45.

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Notions of Barbarians and Barbarian Lands in the Latin Verse Inscriptions

Peter Kruschwitz*

Notions, as well as realities, of foreignness, alienness, and not-belonging in the Roman world have received ample treatment, from a broad range of perspectives, in recent scholarship. An important aspect that has not been covered thus far is the question of how these experiences inscribed themselves in the history of the mentality, especially (but not only) of those affected, and how these deeply subjective and personal experiences extended into poetic environments beyond the literary canon. The present paper addresses this matter through a full-scale discussion of the terminology directly related to the terms *barbarus* and *barbaricus* as they are found in the Latin verse inscriptions. The body of evidence is of especial importance in this regard, as it reflects a cultural practice that spans the geographical, chronological, and social dimensions of the Roman empire. Starting with the earliest evidence of the term in the verse inscriptions of Pompeii, the paper then examines the remaining evidence which can be grouped in three main clusters: (i) mentions of barbarians as worthy opponents, (ii) references to barbarians as those who lack civilisation and refinement, and (iii) instances in which the term *barbarus* has been used in self-representation and self-description.

Keywords: Latin verse inscriptions, Carmina Latina Epigraphica, barbarians, Barbaria, history of mentality, ancient discourse analysis

Introduction

Encounters with foreign people, foreign places, and foreignness in general, even if and when they happen altogether peacefully and with the best of intentions on both sides, can be unsettling, somewhat daunting experiences. One may find it difficult to connect, to relate, or to gain access – socially, culturally, linguistically, and otherwise. Throughout his exile poetry, the Augustan poet Ovid, Rome's expatriate extraordinaire, creates a vivid picture of his immersive experience in foreign lands.[1] A striking description of that experience is the following section from the third book of the *Tristia*:

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Translations of ancient literary sources are from the *Loeb Classical Library* series. All remaining translations of ancient texts are my own.

1 Further on the poetics of Ovid's exile, see, e.g., Nagle, *Poetics of Exile; Williams, Banished Voices; and Helzle, Ovid's Poetics of Exile.*

barbara me tellus et inhospita litora Ponti
cumque suo Borea Maenalis Vrsa uidet.
nulla mihi cum gente fera commercia linguae:
omnia solliciti sunt loca plena metus.
utque fugax auidis ceruus deprensus ab ursis,
cinctaue montanis ut pauet agna lupis,
sic ego belligeris a gentibus undique saeptus
terreor, hoste meum paene premente latus.

A barbarous land, the unfriendly shores of Pontus, and the Maenalian bear with her companion Boreas behold me. No interchange of speech have I with the wild people; all places are charged with anxiety and fear. As a timid stag caught by ravenous bears or a lamb surrounded by the mountain wolves is stricken with terror, so am I in dread, hedged about on all sides by warlike tribes, the enemy almost pressing against my side.

(Ovid, Tristia 3.11.7-14, transl. Wheeler and Goold)

In his description of isolation and angst,[2] Ovid resorts to powerful and relatable imagery which he draws from notions of a life in the wilderness.[3] Imagery of this type continues to be in use in narratives about foreign experiences, right down to the present day: similar notions and verbal images can be found employed by displaced people and tourists just as much as, curiously, by those who find migrants (and, increasingly, even tourists) in their midst. This is especially true when it comes to the sound of foreign languages: an eerie world, similar in many ways to what one is used to, and possibly even quite relatable, yet so incomprehensibly, unpredictably different and irrational, an ultimately primordial landscape in which unspecified dangers lurk everywhere, ready to pounce on the unsuspecting at any time.

Experiences of exclusion and not-belonging bring to the fore, with great immediacy, some basic tenets of one's own existence when what is normally regarded as a certainty, taken for granted, begins to disintegrate in the distorted mirror image presented through the confrontation with an "other". Even if such strangers are sympathetic, rather than hostile, to one's own predicament,[4] they can only do so much to accommodate a new arrival, whether they come as individuals or in rather more substantial numbers.

At the receiving end of the same scenario, experiences perceived as unsettling are also common, as the arrival of alien elements, even if, when, and where they come with the best of intentions and in a peaceful manner, may be deemed threatening, unwelcome, and, with a view to the element of foreignness, a profound disturbance of what may be regarded as elementary to one's own identity.

Most of all, perhaps, encounters with outsiders – aliens, foreigners, "others": whatever one may wish to call them – spark self-reflection. Encounters with lives and identities that are similar (we are all human, so we inevitably share a set of basic needs and emotions), but not altogether the same, make us behold something quite uncanny.[5] We witness the presence of something that – or rather, someone whom – we might have become, or been, ourselves (but have, or are, not), something that, in turn, and depending on one's nature and inclinations, either makes us reflect critically on our own identity, puts us on the defence about

2 On ancient fear narratives in the context of the discourse about foreigners, cf. Kapust, Ancient uses.

3 Further on this matter, see, e.g., Grebe, *Rom und Tomis*.

4 Further on this tension, see Dummer and Vielberg, *Der Fremde*.

5 For a focus on the aspect of encounters, cf. the (thematically broad) edited volume by Schuster, *Begegnung mit dem Fremden*.

what we regard as our true, unnegotiable self,[6] or triggers humour and abuse.[7]

There are a number of ways, of course, in which one may reasonably approach the subject of foreignness, alienness, and not-belonging when it comes to their nature in the Roman world. One such approach would be the study of their legal nature and the relevance of citizenship and legal and political integration.[8] Another one would be to consider aspects of ethnicity, ethnogenesis,[9] and ethnocentrism in the Roman period – a subject to which the concept of "barbarians" is of central importance.[10] A third one would be to investigate the impact of foreignness as a concept on geographic, ethnic, religious,[11] and political abstractions in the writings and discourse of Roman authors[12] (and beyond),[13] as well as the relevance of the archaeological record (broadly conceived).[14] A fourth option, significantly less commonly pursued in current scholarship, and perhaps deemed of lesser historical value, would be an investigation into the poetics and, related to that, the broader history of mentality that comes with such notions (beyond ideas of Roman identity formation in Vergil's *Aeneid*):[15] after all, as can be seen in present-day discourse, legal matters and "official discourse" are one thing; popular notions and frames of mind, however, are another, and they may prove to be rather powerful substrates to a more restrained, abstract conversation that occurs in certain societal quarters.

The concept of someone being alien or foreign to certain parts or aspects of their world was not unknown to the Romans, either, of course. Even a quick glance at a map of the Roman Empire reveals that, considering its vast territory and the number of diverse peoples that it incorporated (and bordered on), experiences of foreignness, of not-belonging, and of being dislocated were inevitably ubiquitous and virtually omnipresent, from those of "mere" travellers,[16] to those of economic migrants, soldiers, or individuals who entered the Roman Empire (or were forced to enter it).[17]

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6 On the dialogue between the "self" and "the other" in the context of foreignness, studied from a historical perspective, see the papers collected by Pülz and Trinkl, *Das Eigene und das Fremde.*

7 Cf. Halsall, Funny foreigners, as well as Halsall, Use and abuse of immigrants.

8 See, e.g., Mathisen, *Peregrini*; Coşkun and Raphael, *Fremd und rechtlos*; and Mercogliano, *Gli stranieri*.

9 This includes aspects of migration, mobility, and settlement, on which, see, e.g., Goffart, *Barbarians and Romans and, more recently (and importantly), Halsall, Barbarian Migrations.*

10 Much useful material in that regard has been assembled by the contributors to the volume of McInerny, *Companion to Ethnicity.*

11 See, e.g., Clark, Pilgrims and foreigners.

12 Important work in this regard was done e.g. by Woolf, *Tales*. Useful collections of papers, especially on the Late Antique period, can be found in Mathisen and Shanzer, *Romans* and Rubel, *Barbaren Roms*. For an encyclopaedic, cross-cultural approach, see, e.g., Opelt and Speyer, Barbar (replacing an outdated earlier contribution to the *Reallexikon für Antike und Christentum*).

13 See, e.g., the diachronical approach taken in the conference volume of Boletsi and Moser, *Barbarism Revisited. Cf. also Dumézil, Les barbares (with chapters on classical and late antique Rome, respectively).*

14 On the archaeological record, see esp. Eckardt, *Roman Diasporas.*

15 This, to a degree, was done e.g. by Thomas, *Lands and Peoples; cf. also Doblhofer, Exil und Emigration.*

16 On ancient travellers and the notion of foreignness (especially in the context of a death abroad), see, e.g., Handley, *Dying on Foreign Shores.*

17 Further on this, see, e.g., Dauge, *Les Barbares* and, more recently, Noy, *Foreigners at Rome* and Conti and Scardigli, *Stranieri a Roma*. On migration processes in the Roman world, see, e.g., Olshausen and Sonnabend, *Trojaner sind wir gewesen* and de Ligt and Tacoma, *Migration and Mobility*.

The Latin language provides a number of terms that describe degrees and configurations of foreignness.[18] Some of these terms are more or less purely descriptive, such as *peregrinus*. Others are significantly more emotive, most notably, of course, the term *barbarus*, borrowed from the Greek, as well as the adjective *barbaricus* that has been derived from it.[19] As a fragmentary inscription from the city of Rome, datable to the fourth century AD and apparently originally composed in a dactylic rhythm, puts it –

\- - - - - -
barbara[20] *[- - -]*
gens inf[anda - - -]
\- - - - - -

. . . barbarian . . . unspeakable folk . . .

(ICUR VII 17724)

The experience of, and the response to, those matters in the Roman world – the concept of "being barbarian" in particular – have, with some success, been approached, intellectually, from a number of different angles. This includes work carried out on cultural contacts (coerced and otherwise) and cultural transformations as a result of them, on mobility, on imperialism, on geographical conceptions,[21] on depiction of foreignness, minorities, and forms of "otherness", as well as on notions of, and attitudes towards, barbarians in surviving literature. Last, but certainly not least, there is important work on forms of (proto-)racism in the Roman world.

The poetics of being barbarian, however, have largely been excluded from this portfolio, and they have remained altogether unexplored for there is only one body of poetic texts that encompasses the Roman society as a whole: the so-called *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*, the Latin verse inscriptions, which document a shared cultural practice of the Roman Empire in its regional, ethnic, and social diversity beyond the discourse of an urban aristocratic elite.

Though ultimately entirely anecdotal in nature, the Latin verse inscriptions merit consideration if one wishes to gain a broader understanding of the popular experiences in which any upper-class discourse was embedded, and from which it was distilled. What is more, in addition to forms of aristocratic self-representation in several instances, these sources are unique in that they also provide an almost unobstructed view into the experiences of "the other", giving a voice to those who experienced the impact of being foreign, dislocated, and – potentially – marginalised. In that, they provide us with an important corrective to the more abstract, intellectual ruminations of Roman literature.

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18 For a lexical study, see Ndiaye, *L'étranger*; for semantic-conceptual issues in a diachronic perspective, cf. also Wiele, Aspektwandel and, more recently, Ohnacker, *Spätantike und frühmittelalterliche Entwicklung*.

19 For a re-evaluation of the scholarship on the concept of "the barbarian" on the Greek side, see now Harrison, Reinventing the barbarian.

20 The textual design of the text, spread out over two small fragments, makes it implausible that *Barbara was a female first name in this particular case; cf. ICUR ad loc.: "carmina esse uidentur, ita ut barbara sit potius appellatiuum quam feminae nomen."*

21 See, e.g., Klein, Das Eigene.

Pompeian Departures from the Literary Tradition

Like many Roman trading towns in the mid-to-late first century AD, Pompeii, prior to its destruction in AD 79, was a place that evidently provided a home, permanent or transitory, voluntary or coerced, to individuals from across the Roman Empire (and, presumably, beyond): the epigraphic evidence from Pompeii, in addition to the archaeological remains, leaves no room for reasonable doubt about the multicultural and multilingual composition of Pompeii's society. There is not much reliable evidence to gain an understanding of how the native population, or specific segments of it, responded to this experience on the broad spectrum from "not even aware of it", to "indifferent", to "appreciative and feeling enriched", to "accepting for the benefit of prosperity (however defined)", to "averse and resentful". It is not unreasonable to assume, of course, that all of these sentiments were represented somehow, somewhere, and at least to some extent. It is important to bear this in mind before approaching the evidence for statements about foreign elements at Pompeii – and evidence for the use of the term *barbarus* in particular: the evidence is scattered, random, of uncertain authorship, and representative of nothing but the fact that someone, at some point, in Pompeii chose to write these things, usually for unknown reasons. They may be representative of a certain attitude and frame of mind, but it is safer not to generalise.

Looking at the evidence with that in mind, one must acknowledge four graffiti from Pompeii that have come to light thus far that mention the term in question: *barbarus*. Two of these come in the guise of literary quotations or adaptations, and, intellectually, coming from the world of literature and immersing oneself into the lettered world, it may make sense to take them as a point of departure.

The more extensive of the two, discovered on wall plaster in Pompeii's basilica (VIII 1.1),[22] is a quotation of Propertius' distich 3.16.13-14:

> *Quisquis amator erit Scythiae licet ambulet oris*
> *nemo adeo ut feriat barbarus esse uolet.*
>
> Whoever will be a lover, let him walk Scythia's shores: no one will wish to be a barbarian of such kind as to inflict injuries (*sc.* on the *amator*).
>
> (*CIL* IV 1950 = *CLE* 1785)

Propertius is reasonably well attested in quotations on the walls of Pompeii of course, and this piece forms part of a larger corpus.[23] Propertius' elegy 3.16 is a peculiar item, however: it is a deliberation of Propertius' poetic "I", following the delivery of a letter of invitation from

22 The item is preserved on tab. XXX in the collection of the National Archaeological Museum of Naples; it was reproduced in Varone, *Titulorum … Imagines*, 391 (neg. D/110659).

23 Cf., e.g., Gigante, *Civiltà*, esp. 191.

his *domina*, as to whether he should go to Tibur for an encounter. He is torn between going or not: not going might result in future rejection (the *domina* has form on that); yet the journey is presented as dangerous – especially at night, with bandits waiting for their victims.[24] Yet, he opines, lovers will travel safely, protected by Venus and Amor themselves. It is in this context that Propertius has his elegiac lover say that –

> *quisquis amator erit, Scythicis licet ambulet oris,*
> *nemo <a>deo ut noceat barbarus esse uolet.*
>
> (Propertius 3.16.13-14, ed. Fedeli)

The Pompeian epigram differs in two places: it reads *Scythiae* rather than *Scythicis* in the first line, and it gives *feriat* rather than *noceat* in the second. While the first reading is not commonly considered as relevant to the editors (even though the Pompeian version is substantially older than any of the Propertian manuscripts), the second one was at least labelled "fortasse recte" by Paolo Fedeli (though still not adopted in the main text of his Teubner edition).[25] Textual considerations aside, the meaning of the lines in Propertius is perfectly clear: under the divine tutelage of Venus and Amor, a lover is protected even in the most adverse setting – with Scythia, in the remote north-east, serving as the paradigm for a dangerous, threatening environment: even there, it is implied, one would not find anyone who would wish to be such a *barbarus* as to inflict harm upon a travelling *amator*.

The frame of mind behind this piece, certainly behind Propertius and thus, most likely, also behind his Pompeian commemorator, is one that imagines threatening environments on the margins of the Roman world: Scythia is far away, wild and dangerous – usually –, a barbaric place in most regards.[26] But even there no one would be that outrageously barbaric

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24 Propertius' considerations on the way in which roadside tombs were desecrated by traffic, concluding the elegy, merit being brought to the attention of epigraphists in this context (Propertius 3.16.22-30, ed. Fedeli, trans. Goold): *quod si certa meos sequerentur funera casus / talis mors pretio uel sit emenda mihi. / afferet haec unguenta mihi sertisque sepulcrum / ornabit custos ad mea busta sedens. / di faciant, mea ne terra locet ossa frequenti, qua facit assiduo tramite uulgus iter! / post mortem tumuli sic infamantur amantum. / me tegat arborea deuia terra coma, / aut humer ignotae cumulis uallatus harenae: / non iuuat in media nomen habere uia ("but if my journey were to result in certain funeral, death would even be worth procuring at such a price. She will bring me unguents and deck my grave with garlands, seated as guardian o'er my tomb. God forbid that she should bury my bones in a busy spot, where the crowd travels along an unsleeping thoroughfare! Thus are the tombs of lovers desecrated after their death. Let secluded ground cover me with leafy trees, or let me be buried where I am enclosed in an unmarked mound of sand: I like it not to have my name recorded on a highway."*

25 A curious decision, considering that, unlike some (or in the latter case: all) of the manuscripts, the Pompeian piece faithfully preserves the subjunctive *ambulet (rather than ambulat) and reads adeo (rather than deo). The merit of feriat was discussed by Hubbard,* Propertiana, esp. 318-319. The reading of *Scythicis was maintained over Scythiae based on the observation that Propertius more frequently has hyperbata of the kind "geographical adjective … feature of landscape" in grammatical agreement; cf. Fedeli, Properzio, 503. The logic of adopting the lectio difficilior, however, would thus require an editor to follow the Pompeian epigram. Labelling it as a "banalizzazione", related to the psychology of writing errors (with reference to Timpanaro, Il lapsus freudiano, 20-21), is a classical petitio principii, suggesting, without good evidence, that a corruption "adjective in agreement" > "noun in the genitive" is more likely to occur than the opposite.*

26 Whether or not the reference is to be regarded as specific (to Scythia) rather than generic (to an ominous Barbaria), has been subject to debate, cf., in addition to Fedeli, *Properzio* ad loc., Dauge, *Les Barbares*, 163. Isidorus, *Origines*, 14.4.3 specifically links Scythia (inferior) and Barbarica.

(*adeo … barbarus*) as to inflict harm on someone who is visibly in love and travelling for that particular purpose. The Barbaria is thus imagined as a threatening, harmful place – but even barbarians are imagined to be capable, and perceptive, of some of the most basic and powerful expressions of the human condition: true love and passion.[27]

The horrors of Barbaria are also captured in a second item, discovered at IX 1.22, 29, the so-called house of M. Epidius Sabinus, on the west wall of room 21, leading to the dwelling's second (northern) peristyle:[28]

Barbarus aere cauo tubicen d[ed]it [horrida si]gna

The (*or*: a) barbarian trumpeter sounded terrifying signals with the hollow brass.

(*CIL* IV 1069a (cf. p. 199, 461, 1305-1306) = *CLE* 350 = *EDR* 160283).

The text, now lost, is reported to have been ascribed to a painting depicting Hercules and Telamon in an effort to rescue Hesione (with Cetus, the sea-monster, lying dead by Telamon's foot). The record does not make it possible to determine whether the text was once executed in a more casual manner or whether it was painted and thus potentially part of the imagery in whose context is was found:[29]

27 On this piece in the context of love-related inscriptions from Pompeii, see Varone, *Erotica Pompeiana, 59 (with n. 77).*

28 Further on this piece, see, e.g., Milnor, *Graffiti and the Literary Landscape,* 268.

29 Drawing: Nicola La Volpe (1866). The painting itself is now lost. La Volpe's drawing is kept in the National Archaeological Museum of Naples (inv. N. ADS 964).

Fig. 1: Telamon and Hercules rescuing Hesione. Drawing of the painting at house IX 1.22 Pompeii, room 21, as seen by Nicola La Volpe (1866), photo © ICCD

Prima facie, the piece would seem to interact with the painting, and it has certainly been argued that the line might come from a(n otherwise lost) literary work around the Hercules myth, for which there is no corroborating evidence.[30] The line has also been explained as having a certain Ovidian or Vergilian[31] ring to it (though these are, of course, very loose categories at best). The painting, however, leaves very little scope for the mention of a *tubicen*

30 Cf. Ehwald, Curae exegeticae, esp. 640-643.

31 See Hoogma, *Einfluß Vergils*, esp. 250 with n. 23; cf. also Milnor, *Graffiti and the Literary Landscape.*

as a meaningful reference to anything in the painting or the story itself, and whoever the mentioned *barbarus* might be in this context is anybody's guess: in short, it would seem much safer to assume that the line was written there without connection to the painting that it "embellished".

Whether or not it refers to the painting, and whether or not it originated in a work of a literary nature (or was at least inspired by one), the sentiment expressed in the Pompeian line is perfectly in keeping with the qualities and sensations invoked by the Propertian piece above: Barbaria is imagined as a threatening place, dangerous to peace and well-being, and as such it comes with a terrifying, violent soundscape, too.

There are two further items from Pompeii that must be considered, and intellectually, these belong to different categories of sentiments than both previous pieces. Nevertheless, they would seem to supplement and expand the picture that has been forming rather than to contradict it. Staying within the realm of sound, the first item has often been explained as the model line of a well-formed hexameter, albeit executed in complete gibberish, that was discovered at dwelling V 2.c:[32]

Barbara barbaribus barbabant barbara barbis.

(*CIL* IV 4235 = *CLE* 351 = *EDR* 071661)

The piece remains mysterious to an extent, but one may wish to note the (often made) connection between gibberish and unintelligible language on the one hand and barbarians on the other – an aspect that is thus etymologised by Strabo.[33]

More significant in terms of displayed attitude and frame of mind, however, is a piece that, like the initial piece with its Propertian quotation, was discovered in Pompeii's basilica (VIII 1.1), also still preserved in the Archaeological Museum of Naples:[34]

L(uci) Istacidi at quem non ceno barbarus ille mihi est

Lucius Istacidius: at whose I do not dine, that man I regard a barbarian.

(*CIL* IV 1880 = *CLE* 933)

There are a number of ways in which one might consider construing the syntax of this; the most commonly accepted and plausible one, however, is to take the beginning of the graffito as a vocative, referring to a member of one of Pompeii's ancient and renowned families (in

32 A fragment of what is evidently a version of the same text has recently come to light at Castellammare di Stabia: see *AE 2013.227.*

33 Strabon 14.2.28; cf. Fögen, *Patrii sermonis egestas*, 41-43.

34 For an image, see Varone, *Titulorum … Imagines*, 373 tab. XXII inv. n. 4706 (img. D/95788, D/95786, D/95790). – Texts such as this one, above, support the view that Christ, *Römer und Barbaren* might have been mistaken in his impression that the clear distinction between "Romans" (= us) and "barbarians" (= them) only emerged in the later empire: the relevant frame of mind would appear to have existed already at a significantly earlier stage, and it would seem to have been utilised for specific, even polemic, purposes.

fact, one of their freedmen, Lucius Istacidius Zosimus, appears to have been the last proprietor of the Villa of Mysteries), followed by a pentameter line that would appear to seek to guilt-trip the text's addressee into an invitation to a free meal. Refusing to do so, according to the logic of this, would make Istacidius a *barbarus* – a man who, one may infer, lacks civilisation and humanity, but treats potential visitors and guests with contempt and cruelty.

While the number of relevant texts is low overall, one cannot but note that the walls of Pompeii do not have many positive things to say about *barbari*. What is more, already rusticity itself, as opposed to urban lineage,[35] would appear to have provided a means to mock and insult individuals, even Roman citizens, as the following item, mocking an individual with an apparent fake name, proves:[36]

G(aius!) Hadius Ventrio
eques natus Romanus inter
beta(m) et brassica(m)

Gaius Hadius Ventrio, Roman knight, was born between a beetroot and a cabbage.

(*CIL* IV 4533 = *CLE* 41 adn. = *ILS* 1319)

At any rate, the informal writing on the walls of Pompeii, when it comes to the spectrum of meaning(s) and sentiments associated with the term *barbarus* and the Barbaria, bring a small, but distinctive number of aspects to the fore: barbarians are cast as "the other", scary, uncivilised, and only partly capable of civilised human interaction, to be encountered in battle or other altercations, lacking culture and refinement.

Moving away from the literary tradition and its literary reflexes on the walls of Pompeii even further, evidence for the use of the term *barbarus* can be encountered in three distinct (and distinctive) areas in the Latin verse inscriptions: (i) mentions of barbarians as worthy opponents, (ii) references to barbarians as those who lack, and urgently need, civilisation and refinement, and – remarkably – (iii) instances of individuals who fashion themselves as barbarians, or somehow related to the Barbaria, in the context of their monumental commemoration.

All three aspects warrant fuller documentation and analysis.

35 Thus the etymological understanding supplied by Cassiodorus, *Psalms 113.1 l. 28 A.: Barbarus a barba et rure dictus est, quod numquam in urbe uixerit, sed semper ut fera in agris habitasse noscatur ("the barbarian is named after his beard (barba) and the land (rus), as they never lived in towns, but, as is known, inhabited the countryside, like wild animals"), as noted by Maltby, Lexicon of Ancient Latin Etymologies, 75.*

36 The lack of context makes the piece difficult to appreciate, but cf., e.g., Milnor, *Graffiti and the Literary Landscape, 120, discussing the political tone and implication of this iambic graffito. For a comment on the piece's socio-economic context within the equestrian order, cf. Klingenberg, Sozialer Abstieg, 26, and Davenport, History of the Roman Equestrian Order*, 243.

Worthy Opponents in War and Otherwise

While the evidence for the use of the term *barbarus* from the walls of Pompeii is comparatively early vis-à-vis the remaining evidence in the Latin verse inscriptions, there is at least one instance that predates the destruction of Pompeii by well over half a century. The oldest surviving mention of *barbarus* in the *Carmina Latina Epigraphica* comes from an inscription safely datable to 20 BC, discovered at Eryx (Erice) in Sicily, a well-established centre of worship for Astarte-Aphrodite-Venus. The monument, commemorating Lucius Apronius' exploits in the war against Tacfarinas and the Gaetulians,[37] is now badly damaged, and not all of the text that was once recorded survives to the present day; both the supplements and substantial parts of the translation must therefore be regarded as speculative:[38]

[L(ucius) Apronius L(uci) f(ilius) Caesian]us VIIuir e[pulonu]m
[- - - Vene]ri Erucinae [d(onum)] d(edit). ||
- - - - - -
[a patre hic missus Libyae procon]sule bella
[prospera dum pugnat cecidit Maurus]ius hostis. ||
Felicem gladium [tibi qui patrisque dicauit]
Aproni effigiem [natus belli duce] duxque
hic idem fuit hic i[usto certamine ui]ctor
praetextae posita[e causa pariterque re]sumptae
septemuir puer han[c genitor quam rite r]ocarat (!)
Caesar quam dedera[t uestem tibi sancta rel]icui[t]. ||
Diuor[um - - -]
mut[ua - - -]
filius Aproni mai[or quam nomine factis]
Gaetulas gentes q[uod dedit ipse fugae]
effigiem cari genitor[is diua locauit]
Aeneadum alma paren[s praemia iusta tibi]
armaque quae gessit: scuto [per uolnera fracto]
quanta patet uirtus! ens[is ab hoste rubet]
caedibus attritus consummatque [hasta tropaeum]
qua cecidit ⌜f⌝os(s)u⌜s⌝ barbar[us ora ferus].
quo nihil est utrique magis uener[abile signum]
hoc tibi sacrarunt filius atqu[e pater]
Caesaris effigiem posuit p[ar cura duorum]
certauit pietas su[mma in utroque fuit] ||
[- - - curante] L(ucio) Apronio [- - -]

Lucius Apronius Caesianus, son of Lucius, VIIvir epulonum . . . gave (this) as a gift to Venus of Eryx.

. . . sent here by his father, the proconsul of Libya, while he fights successful wars: the Moorish enemy has fallen.

He who dedicates an auspicious sword to you, as well as an image of his father Apronius, himself a commander, born of a military commander, he was the very same who, victorious in fair fight, as a young septemvir leaves for you, saintly goddess, this garment of the praetexta that his father had prayed for on his behalf and which Caesar had given, for it was taken off and taken back simultaneously.

. . . of gods . . . mutual (?) . . . the son of Apronius, greater in deeds than in name, as he

37 Cf. Tacitus, *Annals, 3.21.*

38 For a recent discussion of the piece's editorial history and reading, see Muscolino, Mommsen (= *AE 2013.636 adn.); cf. also Manganaro Perrone,* Tacfarinas e la Sicilia.

made the Gaetulian tribes flee, erected an image of his dear father, o divine, life-giving parent of the Aeneads, as a rightful gift to you – also the arms that he carried: just how apparent becomes his brave achievement through the shield shattered by the blows it sustained! The enemy has made his sword glow red, and the spear, worn by slaughter, crowns the trophy – the spear by means of which the wild barbarian fell, stabbed in his very face.
There is no display more worthy of worship for both of them than this: both son and father have dedicated this to you. Their shared, equal regard had Caesar's image erected here: there was a contest of dutifulness, and they both came first.
. . . under the supervision of Lucius Apronius . . .

(*CIL* X 7257 = *CLE* 1525 = *ILS* 939 = *EDR* 092733)

There are many interesting aspects about this piece, from its wording and original layout down to content-related matters. One may also wish to note that this is a rare early instance for upper-class engagement with inscribed verse (though decidedly not in a funerary context, but in religious self-representation and ostentatious display in a choice location).

More strictly to the point, however, it is interesting to see where the term *barbarus* appears in the narrative (namely in l. 20): whereas previously in the text ethnographic labelling was precise (*Gaetulas gentes*, l. 14; perhaps also *Maurus]ius hostis*, l. 4, if restored correctly), the rather more blunt term *barbarus* appears, potentially linked to the quality of ferocity (*ferus*, l. 20, if restored correctly), when it comes to explaining the emotional significance of one of the items consecrated to Venus in relation to the dedicants. *Barbarus ferus* signifies the archetypical, primordial, wild barbarian on attack – the name does not even matter: this is not about an individual, but about a stereotype, cast in this very role for a single reason, namely, to be a veritable challenge for the Roman hero, yet ultimately inferior and not enough of a match. The only role the *barbarus* plays here is to elevate the *uirtus* of a Roman official through death or at least horrific mutilation in battle at the hand of the valiant Roman soldier.

The *barbarus* as "the other" and "the outsider" whose sole role it is to determine the *uirtus* of a Roman also features in the next item, datable to the first half of the second century, sometime during or just after the reign of Emperor Hadrian. The piece, commonly (though probably falsely)[39] believed to be from Aquincum (Budapest), is a commemoration of a soldier's dexterity and valour in activities that are distinctly unrelated to military achievements in battle:[40]

39 The manuscript tradition was carefully re-examined by Kovács, *Eques super ripam Danuvii. Kovács argues – convincingly – that the piece was most likely from Sora in Italy. The question of the stone's actual origin has no impact on the present argument, however.*

40 Further on this piece, see Courtney, *Musa lapidaria*, 124-125, 334-335 n. 126; Cugusi and Sblendorio Cugusi, *Carmina Latina Epigraphica Pannonica, 121-123 n. 59; and Cugusi, Per un nuovo corpus, 104-105 (each with further bibliography).*

Ille ego Pannoniis quondam notissimus oris
inter mille uiros primus fortisque Batauos
(H)adriano potui qui iudice uasta profundi
aequora Danuuii cunctis transnare sub armis
emissumque arcu dum pendet in aere telum
ac redit ex alia fixi fregique sagitta
quem neque Romanus potuit nec barbarus umquam
non iaculo miles non arcu uincere Parthus
hic situs hic memori saxo mea facta sacraui
uiderit an ne aliquis post me mea facta sequatur
exemplo mihi sum primus qui talia gessi.

Once very well known on Pannonian shores, I am he who was the first among a thousand Batavians, brave ones at that! I, who was able to swim across the deep Danube's vast waves in full armour, with Hadrian in attendance to judge,[41] and who pierced and broke a missile, shot off my bow, as it was mid-air and about to come down again, with another arrow and whom neither a Roman or a barbarian Parthian soldier was ever able to outperform with a javelin or an bow: buried here I have consecrated my deeds here on this unforgetting stone. We shall see whether someone after me will be able to follow my deeds; I had to be my own role-model, as I was the first to achieve such things.

(*CIL* III 3676 = *ILS* 2558 = *CLE* 427)

As in a number of previous instances, the term *barbarus* does not appear independently in this inscription: similar to earlier examples introducing specific peoples (Scythians, Gaetulians) which were identified as barbarian in nature, this piece mentions a range of geographical and ethnic names: Pannonians (indicating the environment to which the piece belongs), Batavians (stating the speaker's identity), Romans (fellow soldiers whom the dedicant would outperform) and – finally – the barbarian Parthian (*barbarus … / … miles … Parthus*, ll. 7-8, whom he would also outperform), the outsider who requires an additional adjective to stand out from everything that was mentioned before.

The Batavian braggart carefully designed a map of (relative) inferiority with himself as the sole positive elevation – a man who, surrounded by one-thousand Batavians in Pannonia, outperformed both Romans (setting himself apart from them, to an extent, as well) and any *barbarus … Parthus* – foreigners from the north-east (as previously seen in the case of the Scythians), whose assigned role it is to be both challenging opponents and losers whose defeat brings credibility and honour to those who succeed against them. The glorious achievements, the *facta* (and *uirtutes*), are thus validated by the barbarians' inability to achieve the same (and if they cannot do it, then presumably no one can).

41 Note, however, Courtney's objection: "It must not be assumed that "Soranus" actually performed the feat under the eyes of Hadrian, as if *iudice meant teste; surely the Latin can only mean I who, in Hadrian's judgement, could have swum across the Danube', a report of a compliment paid by Hadrian to the soldier at some time" (Courtney, Musa lapidaria*, 335). This remains doubtful, however, as *iudex is used precisely to denote a (judging) witness present at artistic and skilful performances: cf. ThLL s. v. iudex, 602.53-69.*

Two more items fall into the same category of texts exploiting the fearsome connotation of the term *barbarus* for the benefit and praise of the opponent.[42] The actual danger behind the barbarians' force in battle, threatening lives and civilisation as a whole from a Roman perspective, is described in a sixth-century inscription from the crypt of Hippolytus at Rome's via Tiburtina, reporting the restoration of the space (which had been turned into an underground basilica), under Pope Vigilius:[43]

(crux) *nec +[- - - i]terum summot[a plebe precantum]*
[priscum] perdiderant antra [sacrata decus],
n[ec tua iam ma]rtyr poterant u[enerande sepulcra]
[huic mund]o lucem mittere q[ua frueris].
[lux tamen ista t]ua est quae nescit [fu]ne[ra, sed quo]
[perpet]uo crescat nec m[i]nua[tur ha]bet.
[nam nigra nox t]rinum stupuit per s[ae]cula lumen
[admittunt]q(ue) nouum conc[au]a saxa diem.
[frustra ba]rbaricis [fremuerunt] ausib(us) hostes
[foedarunt]q(ue) sacrum [tela cr]uenta locum:
[inclyta] sed meli[us splendescit ma]rtyris aula
[au]ctoremque p[remunt imp]ia facta suum.
[pr]aesule Vigilio sump[serunt] antra decorem
praesbyteri Andreae cur[a pe]regit opus (crux)

Neither . . . anew, as the praying folk had been dispelled, the sacred grottoes had lost their old splendour, nor, venerable martyr, had your tomb been able to bestow upon the world that light that you enjoy. Yet it is that very light of yours that does not know death, but has the power to increase, not decrease, eternally. For, over centuries, dark night has stifled that threefold light,[44] and now the hollowed rocks admit new light! In their barbaric endeavours, the enemies have growled in vain, as have their bloodied missiles defaced this sacred place! Instead, the martyr's famous hall shines even more beautifully (*sc.* than before), and the wicked deeds haunt their perpetrators. Under the pontificate of Vigilius the grottoes obtained their splendour: the care of Andreas, the priest, completed the work.

(*ICUR* VII 19937 = *ILCV* 1994 = *IScM* II 115)

While it is unknown which precise fifth-century event (if any one in particular) resulted in the need for the restoration works, the way in which the incursions are described as hostile (*hostis*, l. 9), defacing (*foedarunt*, l. 10), and – vitally – as bold (*ausib(us)*, l. 9!), life-threatening and dangerous (*[tela cr]uenta*, l. 10) are remarkable. Moreover, a threatening soundscape (*[fremuerunt]*, l. 9, if restored correctly) has been added to the mix. Interestingly, it is not so much the group of perpetrators (*hostes*) or the havoc that they wreaked, but the undertaking (*ausus*) of it which attracts the label *barbaricus* in this context: the violation of sacred space,

42 One must exclude a potential third item, *AE 1978.716 = AE 1988.994, cf. Cugusi and Sblendorio Cugusi, Carmina Latina Epigraphica Moesica*, 119-120 n. 63, which, though epic in its language, is certainly not a verse inscription.

43 Images are available at http://www.edb.uniba.it/epigraph/21710 (last accessed April 2020).

44 This refers to the clerestory of the basilica.

the lack of respect for the dead in general, and the Christian saint in particular, were thus imagined as an act that lacked basic civilisation, a frenzied, wild attack with gory sounds and optics (*[tela cr]uenta*!). Importantly, however, as seen otherwise in this context, it is the resilience and civilisation's ability to overcome the attack of the uncivilised in particular that prevail in this message: as they necessitated the basilica's restoration (*[au]ctoremque p[remunt imp]ia facta suum*, "the wicked deeds haunt their perpetrators", l. 12), the hostile act was not only overcome, but resulted in an ability to demonstrate resilience and superiority in the long run.

The second piece for this category, dating slightly later still, namely to the sixth century AD, comes from Cartagena on the Iberian peninsula and commemorates extensive building works carried out by one Comenciolus, patrician and magister militum of Hispania, installed by the Byzantine emperor Mauricius to fight *contra hostes barbaros*:[45]

Quisquis ardua turrium miraris culmina
uestibulumq(ue) urbis duplici porta firmatum
dextra leuaq(ue) binos porticos arcos
quibus superum ponitur camera curia conuexaq(ue)
Comenciolus sic haec iussit patricius
missus a Mauricio Aug(usto) contra hostes barbaros
magnus uirtute magister mil(itum) Spaniae
sic semper Hispania tali rectore laetetur
dum poli rotantur dumq(ue) sol circuit orbem
ann(o) VIII Aug(usti) ind(ictione) VIII.

Whoever you are, beholding the towers' high rooftops and the city's entrance, fortified with a double gate and double porticoes and arches to the right and to the left, above which there is placed a vaulted assembly hall: these had thus commanded Comenciolus, the patrician, sent by orders of Mauricius Augustus against the barbarian enemies, the magister militum of Spania, great by his valiantness. May Hispania always be able to prosper under such a leader while the earth is spinning and while the sun is on its circuit.
In the eighth year, in the eighth Augustan *indictio*.

(*CIL* II 3420 = *CLE* 299 = *ILS* 835 = *ILCV* 792)

The main purpose of this text, at first glance, would appear to be the celebration of the completed building works, yet its author seizes the opportunity to celebrate both the emperor and his local dignitary in charge, Comenciolus. The need for, and effectiveness of, the defensive structure is all the more apparent with the mention of barbarian opponents – a reference to the Arian Goths in this particular context (another north-eastern threat, to be added to the mention of Scythia and Parthia in previous pieces).[46] Once again, the role of the threatening, strong, and dangerous "other" is thus to determine the worth of the self, and once again one must note the presence of the term *uirtus* in the immediate vicinity of the reference to the *barbari*: Comenciolus is a *magnus uirtute magister mil(itum) Spaniae*, of course, not just any *magister militum*.

45 See also *IHC 176, ICERV 362, and Hep 1997.444, and cf. AE 1998.694 adn. and AE 2012.16 adn.*

46 The same people are also referred to as *barbari in the epitaph of Sidonius Apollinaris, on which, see below, section Foreign Elements Devoid of Civilisation and Refinement (with n. 48).*

Foreign Elements Devoid of Civilisation and Refinement

The items assembled in the previous section share a concept of *barbarus* that implies a distinctive otherness that is characterised by its threatening, confrontational nature – antithetical to one's own existence, but in that also always a yardstick of one's own worth and *uirtus*. While the element of confrontation seems unavoidable, and even beneficial to an extent (from the viewpoint of the self-professed non-barbarian), the main focus is placed on respect and fear, not contempt and a desire to proselytise one's own way of life. The transition from respect to contempt, however, is quickly made, and there is sufficient evidence for a derogatory use of the term *barbarus* in the Latin verse inscriptions as well. The monumental material discussed in the previous section implied no fundamental lack of culture and refinement to render barbarians dark, ominous elements of danger, even though some of their bolder undertakings (such as in the case of the Hippolytus inscription) might imply them. This is taken to a different level in the subsequent texts, which paint the *barbarus* as a cause for debasement, causing the desire, if not the actual need, to impart improvement and spread one's own civilisation on an "other" that is conceived of as (to an extent) feral and not subject to basic rules of human interaction (not entirely dissimilar to the way in which *barbarus* was used in the Istacidius graffito from Pompeii, above).

The notion that *barbari* are the cause of corruption and debasement of what once was good about Romanness comes out very clearly in a funerary inscription from Aquileia, dated to the second half of the second century AD, commemorating a military man who was a proud member of a praetorian cohort, not of the (as is insinuated, now debased) "barbarian" legions:[47]

Hic situs est iusti iu[dex (?)]
laudator et aeq[ui]
Sassina quem genuit
nunc Aquileia tenet
septimae qui cohortis
centuriam reg{u}it
praetoriae fidus non
barbaricae legioni[s]
C(aius) Manlius hic Valeri-
anus nomine dictus
Sentilius fratri quia
meritus posuit.

Here lies the judge (?) of what is right and the bestower of praise upon what is fair, whom Sassina bore and whom Aquileia now holds in possession, who led a century of the cohors VII praetoria, not that of a barbarian legion: Gaius Manlius Valerianus he was called by name. Sentilius had (sc. this monument) erected for him, for he had earned it.

(*CIL* V 923 = *CLE* 1320 = *ILS* 2671 = *I. Aquileiae* II 2842)

47 For a detailed discussion of this piece, see now Masaro, *Iscrizioni metriche, 77-80 n. 13.*

While it is unclear as to whether *barbarus* is merely an expression of disrespect towards a specific legion, or more than one legion, stationed at Aquileia that had added Sarmates to its recruits or a more significant expression of disdain for all legions, it is obvious that the speaker perceived the praetorian cohort(s) as units that were still "pure", not disgraced and debased by the addition of *barbari*. To an extent, this is in direct opposition to notions of barbarians as exceptionally skilled warriors, the image that was seen in operation before, but the good thing about standards is, of course, that one may always have double (or even triple) standards, depending on the circumstance.

The obvious question that arises from this frame of mind is, of course, whether it is possible to address the lesser value of the *barbari* in any way if confrontation cannot be avoided: can barbarian nature be "fixed" or "cured"? This cynical, chauvinistic view is expressed at least thrice in the Latin verse inscriptions, and, remarkably, in all three instances this happens both late, in the context of individuals of elevated status, and with an expressly Christian background.

The first and possibly earliest of the three instances in question is the epitaph for Sidonius Apollinaris from Augustonemetum (Clermont-Ferrand), datable to the late fifth century:[48]

Sanctis contiguus sacroque patri
uiuit sic meritis Apollinaris
illustris titulis potens honore
rector militi(a)e forique iudex
mundi inter tumidas quietus undas
causarum moderans subinde motus
leges barbarico dedit furori.
discordantibus inter arma regnis
pacem consilio reduxit amplo.
haec inter tamen et philosophando
scripsit perpetuis habenda s(a)ec(u)lis,
et post talia dona Gratiarum
summi pontificis sedens cathedram
mundanos soboli refudit actus.
quisque hic cum lacrimis deum rogabis
dextrum funde preces super sepulchrum .
nulli incognitus et legendus orbi
illic Sidonius tibi inuocetur
XII K(a)l(endas) Septembris Zenone Imperatore.

In immediate proximity to the saints and the sacred father, thus lives Apollinaris in his merits. Noble through his titles, mighty in honour, a leader of the military and judge in the forum, calm amidst the billowing waves of the world, then controlling the turmoil of lawsuits, he gave law to barbarian fury. When the realms were at loggerheads in armed conflict he restored peace with his profound advice. In all this he still managed to write works, philosophising, to be held as a possession by centuries on end, and after such gifts of the Graces, occupying the highest pontiff's chair, he emanated worldly acts for his (*sc.* spiritual) offspring. Whoever you are, seeking god in tears, pour out your prayers over the propitious tomb. Unknown to no one, and to be read by the entire world, Sidonius shall be invoked here by yourself.
21st of August under the reign of Zeno.

(*ILCV* 1067 add. = *CLE* 1516 = *RICG* VIII 21)

48 Further on this piece, see Cugusi, *Aspetti letterari*, 95, 111-113, 323-324 (cf. Cugusi, *Per un nuovo corpus*, 130, 177); Wierschowski, *Fremde in Gallien*, 198-199 n. 254; and Montzamir, Nouvel essai.

The epitaph for Sidonius Apollinaris, holder of the bishopric of the Auvergne at Clermont from the early 470s, commemorates, among other things, Sidonius' engagement with the Arian Goths[49] who had captured Clermont in AD 474 and imprisoned Sidonius in that context. Originally an important organiser of late antique western Roman resistance to the Goths, Sidonius himself arranged with the Gothic ruler Euric to seek diplomatic solutions for mutual benefit in the context of the emerging and expanding Gothic rule in Gaul. It would appear to be this very element of arrangement in the interest of mutual benefit, allowing for the survival of traditional Roman[50] elements and structure in the newly forming and developing Gothic realm, that is described here as *leges barbarico dedit furori* (l. 7) – a bold statement, presenting Sidonius as "civiliser", in the tradition of Vergil's famous *pacique imponere morem* as the Romans' noble responsibility and evocative of Horace's *Graecia capta ferum uictorem cepit* ("captured Greece gained control of its wild capturer").

While the line of Sidonius' epitaph may have been more of a disgruntled poetic rectification of a historical injustice (thus perceived in certain quarters of the local society, at least) than a summary of historical goings-on, it is clear, however, how – talking to a Roman-oriented audience – the imagery of the feral, wild *barbarus* was employed to cast an image of the honorand: Sidonius thus advanced to be an unlikely tamer of the wild, a civilised, civilising winner against the factually victorious, war-like, uncivilised barbarians, a shepherd who not only protected his flock against the attack of wild quasi-animals, but even rendered said feral creatures tame.

Datable to a time around, or just after, the dedication of Sidonius' epitaph, another inscription from Gaul – namely from Lugdunum (Lyon) – introduces another motif, namely the ability to change one's inferior barbaric nature through baptism.[51] The text, which survives through its manuscript tradition, reads –

Hic gemini fratres iunctis dant membra sepulchris
quos iunxit meritum consociauit humus.
germine barbarico nati, sed fonte renati
dant animas celo dant sua membra solo.
aduenit Sagile patri cum coniuge luctus
defungi haud dubie qui uoluere prius
sed dolor est nimius Chr(ist)o moderante ferendus:
orbati non sunt, dona dedere deo.

Here twin brothers give their mortal remains a joint tomb: those whom merit joined, soil has made companions. Born of barbarian seed, but reborn from the baptismal font, they give their souls to heaven, they give their limbs to the ground. Sorrow has come for Sagila (?), their father, with his wife, both of whom, no doubt, wished to die before (*sc.* their offspring), but excessive pain one must bear guided by Christ: they have not been bereft, they gave gifts to God.

(*CIL* XIII 2402 = *ILCV* 1516 add. = *CLE* Engström 353)

49 The same people are also referred to as *barbari in the epitaph of Comenciolus, on which, see above, section Worthy Opponents in War and Otherwise (with n. 45).*

50 The appropriateness of the notion of "Romanness" in late antique Gaul has been challenged, cf. e.g. Drinkwater, Un-becoming Roman. While this captures an important aspect of local identity, it seems apparent from texts such as the above, that the old, traditional world view and its related narratives still served a purpose in documents intended for the public.

51 This is at odds with the romanticising view that the early Christian church was, in fact, more inclusive and more appreciative of barbarians than pagan Rome, considering barbarians equally Adam's children, as expressed by Maas, Barbarians, esp. 67-68.

With this text, a member of the local population, Sagila,[52] and his wife mourn the loss of their twin sons (whose names do not survive). Their ethnic belonging appears to be asserted through the phrase *germine* barbarico ("of barbarian seed", l. 3), and that, when taken on its own may not seem problematic as such. Remarkably, however, their barbarian birth (*nati*!) required rebirth (*renati*!) through baptism – purification and refinement designed to overcome what now, in retrospect, was a blemish, namely their being *germine barbarico*.

The same principle and imagery, though with a shift in perspective, persists in the epitaph for King Cædwalla of Wessex, datable to the 7th century, from the city of Rome, which partly survives and is also reported in the *Historia ecclesiastica* (5.7) of the Venerable Bede as well as in Paulus Diaconus' *Historia Langobardum* (6.15). Its text may be read as follows:[53]

Culmen opes subolem pollentia regna triumphos
exubias proceres moenia castra Lares
quasque patrum uirtus et quae congesserat ipse
Ceadual armipotens liquit amore dei
ut Petrum sedemq(ue) Petri rex cerneret hospes
cuius fonte meras sumeret almus aquas
splendificumque iubar radianti carperet haustu
ex quo uiuificus fulgor ubiq(ue) fluit.
percipiensq(ue) alacer rediuiuae praemia uitae
barbaricam rabiem nomen et inde suum
conuersus conuertit ouans Petrumq(ue) uocari
Sergius antistes iussit ut ipse pater
fonte renascentis quem Chr(ist)i gratia purgans
protinus albatum uexit in arce poli .
mira fides regis clementia maxima Chr(ist)i
cuius consilium nullus adire potest.
sospes enim ueniens supremo ex orbe Britann(us)
per uarias gentes per freta perque uias
urbem Romuleam uidit templumq(ue) uerendum
aspexit Petri mystica dona gerens.
candidus inter oues Chr(ist)i sociabilis ibit,
corpore nam tumulum, mente superna tenet.
commutasse magis sceptrorum insignia credas
quem regnum Chr(ist)i promeruisse uides.
hic depositus est Ceadul qui et Petrus rex Saxonum
sub die XII K(a)l(endarum) Maiarum indict(ione) II qui uixit annos pl(us) m(inus) XXX
imperante d(omi)n(o) Iustiniano piissimo Aug(usto) anno eius consulatus IIII
pontificante apostolico uiro domno Sergio p(a)p(a) anno II.

Highness, riches, lineage, thriving realms, triumphs, spoils, chieftains, city walls, fortifications, the homestead he had inherited by his forefathers' achievement and which he had accumulated himself: Cædwalla, mighty in war, abandoned all these for the love of God, so that he would behold, as a traveller, Peter and the seat of Peter, from whose font he would propitiously receive pure waters and catch the gleam-bestowing splendour with shining draughts whence life-bestowing brightness emanates everywhere.

52 Thus Holder, *Alt-celtischer Sprachschatz* II 1288 s. v. *Sagila*.

53 Cf. also *AE 2001.179 add.*

> As he eagerly gained sight of the prize of the new life, he put aside his barbarian rage, as the next step, his name, he also rejoiced to convert, and Pope Sergius commanded he be Peter, with (*sc.* Sergius) himself as his (*sc.* god)father, cleansing him over the font by the grace of reborn Christ, then elevated him, clad in white, to the heights of heaven.
> Wondrous to behold, the faith of a king; the greatest, however, is the mercy of Christ into whose counsel nobody may enter: for the Briton, arriving in safety from the margins of the world and travelling through many a people, over many a sea and many a road, saw Romulus' city and, bearing mystic gifts, gained sight of the awe-inspiring church of Peter.
> Dressed in white he will walk in fellowship among the sheep of Christ, for with his body he inhabits this tomb, with his soul the realms above. One might believe that he, whom you see having gained the realm of Christ, readily exchanged those insignia of (*sc.* worldly) sceptres.
> Here was buried Cædwalla, also known as Peter, king of the Saxons on the 20th of April in the second indiction, aged approximately thirty years, in the reign of the most pious emperor Justinian, in the year of his fourth consulship, in the second year during the pontificate of our apostolic lord, Pope Sergius.
>
> (*CLE* 1394 = *ILCV* 55; cf. *ICUR* II 288-289)

Cædwalla's epitaph presents an astonishing conversion narrative for a king who, as it is presented here, chose to reject all worldly power and all worldly goods that were available to him in his earlier life in exchange for a spiritual life in accordance with Christianity (and with submission to the Christian church and the pope). In doing so, he also granted to the church and its consolidating establishment the opportunity to narrativise his own spiritual and religious journey (alongside the actual one, coming from Britain to Rome).

The epitaph capitalises on classical narratives that saw Britain at the margins of the civilised world and Rome at its centre, and in that vein, the epitaph fashions Cædwalla's conversion not only as a journey through time and space, but also as a cultural one: with everything else, Cædwalla abandoned his *barbaricam rabiem* (l. 10), his barbarian rage, once he had arrived in the church's fold and seen the light of its blessings. His journey has thus become one from the feral margins of the world to the world's centre of civilisation – Cædwalla has been cultivated and domesticated by the teachings of Christ and its worldly assistants.

Intellectually and conceptually, even though the text falls just outside what one may reasonably regard as "Roman antiquity", Cædwalla's epitaph is fully within the continuum of thought that had presented itself as emerging in the ancient sources – it is a continuation and extension in a way that is entirely organic and consistent with the direction of travel that could be seen in the making in the texts from Apronius' Sicilian dedication to the epitaph of Sidonius Apollinaris.[54]

Barbarian Experiences, or: The Importance of Changing One's Perspective

As diverse as the range of the evidence considered so far may be, one must note two important aspects of it: (i) it is an unusual composition of Latin verse inscriptions to anyone familiar with the *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*, as it draws largely from (relatively) less frequent

54 The next logical step in this narrative was, of course, to take the initiative and spread "civilisation" among "barbarians" proactively – and to spread Christianity in the wake of it –, rather than to wait for them to come and better themselves.

text types (the vast majority of the Latin verse inscriptions are funerary in nature) as well as related to social strata below the elites, and (ii), unsurprisingly, they exclusively give a view from the inside out on those deemed *barbari* and the Barbaria. There are a small number of texts, however, that can provide some counterbalance to this picture – texts in which individuals refer to themselves as barbarians or of barbarian descent.[55] Already the inscription for the sons of Sagila, above, told one such story. There are more, however, and the stories that the relevant inscriptions have to tell are not cheerful ones. And in these instances it is particularly interesting to see the way(s) in which the notion of being a *barbarus* has been employed to create emotions in poems for consumption and digestion in a Roman, Latinate context.

The first item to be considered in this context is an inscription from first-century AD Narbo (Narbonne) in the province of Gallia Narbonensis:[56]

C(aius) Off[illi]us C(ai) l(ibertus)
Pal(atina) A[eimn]estus
uiuos [sibi] et
Mindiae M(arci) f(iliae) Primae
uxori et
C(aio) Ofillio C(ai) f(ilio) Proculo
filio et
*(*uac.*).*
Barbara quem genuit tellus
hunc tradidit urbi seruitio,
ingenium ut flec[t]eret
inmerit[o]. quaesitum ex pat[re]
ut potuit s[i]bi nomen adaux[it]
et pretio [obtin]uit quod prec[e]
non ualuit. officiis uicit
[d]ominum nec uerbera sens[it].
[p]raemia non habuit, pignor[a]
quae potuit. quid properas
[h]ospes, requies tibi nota parat[a]
[es]t. hospitium hoc populo
semper ubique patet horaru[m]
numerum quem suspr[- - -]V[- - -]
quoque senti summam [- - -?]
[- - -] securum [- - -]
- - - - - -
nec duro iam doleas obitu.
nec tibi nec nobis aeternum
uiuere cessit: quod pueri
occidimus, fata quaerenda
putas? dum sis in uita, dolor est
amittere uitam; dum simul
occidimus omnia despicias.
orbem sub leges si habeas [d]um
uiuis, ad Orchum quid ualet?
hic nulla est diuitis ambitio.
[H(oc) m(onumentum)] h(eredem) n(on) s(equitur).

55 This is evidence to the contrary of a view expressed by Maas, Barbarians, *61 that "no non-Roman group used those terms" (i.e. the term barbarian and its derivations).*

56 Belloc, Carrière d'affranchi noticed that the two fragments, *CIL XII 5026 and XII 1276, previously published independently, were, in fact, part of the same inscription. Cf. AE 2008.887 adn.*

Gaius Ofillius A[eimn]estus,[57] freedman of Gaius, of the tribus Palatina, while still alive, (*sc.* has erected this monument) for himself and his wife Mindia Prima, daughter of Marcus, and his son Gaius Ofillius Proculus, son of Gaius, and [*empty space follows*].
The barbarian land that had given birth to him handed him over to the city of Rome in slavery, so that he unduly changed his character. He made every effort to enhance the status of the name given[58] to him by his father on his own part, and at a price he obtained what he was denied at his request. He won over his master by his attentiveness, and he did not experience beatings. He did not receive any rewards, promises [*sc.* of rewards? *or*: privileges?][59] within his ability.
Why do you rush, stranger, see, there is a place prepared for you to relax. This resting area is open to the people always and everywhere for as many hours as . . . [*the remainder of the text here is too fragmentary for it to be rendered in a meaningful way; a gap follows*].
. . . nor feel pained by a dire death. Neither you nor we have been granted to live forever. You believe fate is to blame, because we die as young boys? While you are still alive, to lose one's life seems like pain; but as soon as we die, you spurn everything. If you have the entire world under control while you are alive, what difference does it make to Orcus? There is no rich people's canvassing for favours down here.
This monument does not go to the heir.

(*CIL* XII 5026 (cf. p. 853) = *CLE* 1276 + *CIL* XII 5272 = *CLE* 1202)

The text gives an astonishing, in many ways unique first-hand account of an individual who, purportedly born in *barbara … tellus* (l. 8), soon found himself in slavery in the city of Rome – a profoundly traumatic and transformative experience (*ingenium ut flec[t]eret | inmerit[o]*, ll. 10-11) – and eventually managed to escape this predicament. Many aspects of this text deserve further consideration. But the point that is of particular interest here is the way in which this individual, who had this inscription and the monument made while still alive, presented his own path of life.

The *barbara … tellus*, the "barbarian land", plays an ambiguous role in this piece. It quite literally stands at the beginning of everything. The poem's very first word, following the prose *praescriptum*, is *Barbara*. This *barbara … tellus* is the giver of life (*quem genuit*), but at the same time she is a cruel mother: the very same *tellus* that is introduced as the sentence's lifegiving subject is the one responsible for the man's being handed over (*quem genuit tellus | hunc tradidit*) into slavery – and that is the point of departure for the man's difficult journey.

There is little point in speculating which part of the Barbaria was Ofillius's native land. He clearly prides himself on his familial origins, drawing attention to the name that was forced upon him by his father, and at the same time seeks to promote the additional standing that came out of his status as a freedman with Roman nomenclature (though the main purpose of that is likely to have been his desire to gain acceptance in the context of the Roman Empire following his personality-altering experience of servitude). Thus in his narrative he draws on notions of Barbarian lands as cruel places that lack vital elements of a life-affirming culture

57 The supplement of this name was proposed to me by Georg Petzl, *pers. comm., The common restoration is A[rimn]estus; Belloc, Carrière d'affranchi preferred the reading A[phrod]isius, which, at least on the basis of the photo, seems out of the question.*

58 The meaning of this phrase is somewhat unclear. Arguably, the *quaesitum nomen is the name that the father "sought out" for his son by selling him into slavery.*

59 The Latin term *pignora is ambiguous and has sometimes been taken to mean "offspring" (cf., e.g., Eck and Heinrichs, Sklaven und Freigelassene, 25), which is possible, but seems less likely in the context of the present discourse.*

and civilisation. At the same time, however, he does not dissociate himself from his origins: the change to his *ingenium* that the experience of slavery caused remains a point of upset, it was something that was forced on him and something that remains an act of injustice (*flec[t]eret | inmerit[o]*, ll. 10-11). Thus the Barbarian origin was renarrativised productively in the context of a Roman(ised), Latinate public, presenting Ofillius as someone who, going through hardship, became a better person – someone who even invites his readership and offers hospitality; the undertones, however, are bitter and speak of trauma, barely concealing the culprits for what he had to endure.

Personal suffering and endurance of unspeakable, personality-changing hardship are also the themes of a second long inscription that introduces a *barbarus*. The monument that preserves the text belongs to the late second century (or early third century AD?), and it was discovered in Sulmo (Sulmona). The inscribed text comprises extensive iambic runs and occasional senarii:[60]

C[- - - M]urranus et Decri[a]
Se[- - - S]ecundae l(iberta) Melusa sibi et [suis].
sal[ue u]iator qui istac iter facis,
saluo tuo corpore consiste et lege:
iniquitate Orchi qui perperauit saecula
quod debuerant facere filii patri et
matri fecerunt miseri{s} pater et mater
fili(i)s dulcissimis suis, quoniam non
potuerunt exsorare deos ut [- - -]
suis, neque ipsi retinere potuerunt, neque
etiam restituere. hoc quod [p]o[t]u[erunt]
nomina suorum restituerunt ad superos
Primigeni Seueri Pudentis Casti Lucillae et
Potestatis et miseris derelictis [a fi]li(i)s
quoniam sperabant se citius [- - -] suos,
uiuis nomina eodem adiecerunt dum
malo fati nati et iniqua fortuna
qui non potuerunt antecedere suos
neque etiam persequi tam cito quam
ipsi cupiunt. at nunc miseris desertis
a natis nostris rogamus deos superos
atque inferos ut liceat nepotulum
nostrum Thiasum qui est nobis derelictus
ex Pudente filio inmaturus qua[lis] scintilla
quae de igne exierit, memoria nostrorum,
exsuperet nos: uiuat ualeat sint illi quae
ipse expetet. et nunc te rogamus nepotule
noster per tuorum maiorum misericor-
diam ut tu pietati seruias et hoc sephul-
crum tuorum tutaris et
si qui(s) te roga(ue)rit qui hoc comporta(ue)rit
dicito auus meus Murranus, nam ipsa
miseria docet etiam barbaros scribere
misericordias. et nunc rogo uos omn-
es natos nascentesque ut si quid la(p)sus
me praeterit hominem barbarum natu

60 The inscription was recently published as *CIL IX 7164 by Marco Buonocore (with images). For an earlier publication of the text, see Suppl. It. 4 (1988), Sulmo 58 = AE 1989.247.*

Pannunium multis ulceri(bu)s et malis
perturbatum ignoscatis. rogo at nu[nc]
inprecamus deos ut si quis hoc sephulcr[um]
aut hunc titulum laeserit in[tulerit illi?]
fortuna mala et quod mer[itu]m sit [hunc]
titulumque quicumque legerit aut lege[ntem]
ausculta(ue)rit alleuet illos for[tuna]
superior et ualeant semper [in aeterno?]
quicumque in hoc titulo scrip[ta legerit]
quietis sit uobis terra leuis et [- - -]
desperatum qui superant [- - -]
tempore obito sit [- - -].

Gaius (?) … Murranus and Decria Se … Melusa, freedwoman of Secunda, for themselves and theirs.
Greetings, wayfarer, making your way around here, free from physical afflictions, pause for a moment and read this: through the injustice of Orcus, who ruined generations, father and mother had to do for their wretched, sweetest children what had been the children's duty towards their father and mother,[61] for they could not persuade the gods to (save them for) them, nor could they retain them themselves, nor bring them back.
What they could do is to restore the names of theirs to those who inhabit the world above, the names of Primigenius, Severus, Pudens, Castus, Lucilla, and Potestas. Those wretched, abandoned by their offspring, since they had hoped to [die?] sooner [than?] their children, added their names in the same place, still alive, while, born under ill fate and unjust fortune, unable to leave before their offspring, now cannot even follow them themselves as quickly as they were hoping to.[62]
But now, we, wretched, abandoned by our children, ask the gods above and below to permit our little grandson, Thiasus, who is left to us, by our son Pudens, of immature age, like a spark that jumps from a fire, heir of our line, to outlive us: may he live, be strong, may he have whatever he himself desires. And now we ask you, our little grandson, to serve filial duty and to look after the tomb of your ancestors, and, if someone asks you who is contained in here, you shall tell: it is Murranus, my grandfather, for misery teaches even barbarians to express compassion in writing.
And now I ask you all, born in the past or more recently, if some mistake or other escaped me, a barbarian man, Pannonian by birth, hurt by many a wound and evil, to forgive me. I ask: let us implore the gods that, if anyone damages this tomb or this inscription, they may thrust ill fate on such a person and whatever else is deserved; but whoever reads this inscription or listens to someone reading it out,[63] may a more desirable fate comfort them and may they flourish forever and ever (?): whoever reads what is written in this inscription, may you find peace and may earth be light on you.

. . . . . .

(*CIL* IX 7164)

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61 The reversal of the natural order of death for parents and children is a common topic in the Latin verse inscriptions; cf., e.g., Hernández Pérez, *Poesía latina sepulchral,* 1-8 and cf. Antolini, *Le iscrizioni latine rupestri*, 102 with n. 246 (on this specific case).

62 A thinly veiled reference to Murranus' contemplation of suicide.

63 This is a vital clue as to how Latin verse inscriptions were (re-)enacted (re-enacted after an initial performance in the context of the actual burial, that is) and performed; further on this, see now Kruschwitz, How the Romans read funerary inscriptions. This passage thus provides an important clue as to how an audience in the ancient world may have accessed written poetry – an aspect not often included in considerations about literacy in the Roman world (but see Bodel, *Literacy).*

Similar to the previous piece, Murranus' inscription preserves an extraordinary tale of human suffering. Casting himself as an outsider of Pannonian descent, Murranus reports of his being repeatedly wounded (mentally and physically), his loss of all six of his children, his inability to end his own life, so as to be able to take care of his grandson (whom the piece not only addresses, but also presents as the family's sole hope in adversity, employing the remarkable poetic image of a spark shooting off a flame: detached from its origins it still holds the power to rekindle the original fire).

The text introduces the term *barbarus*, referring to Murranus' origins, on two occasions. It first occurs in l. 33, following an admonishment directed at Thiasus, the surviving grandson, to remind future generations of his own origins and the cause for the long epitaph: *nam ipsa | miseria docet etiam barbaros scribere | misericordias*, even a barbarian (!) will express his misery (*miseria*) in the shape of written expressions of suffering and anguish (*misericordiae*), if the pain is intense enough. Murranus had thus far, following the chronology of events of the text, only introduced himself as a freedman – his origins had remained unclear up to this point. In the backwaters of Sulmo in the second century AD, the displaced arrival from far-away Pannonia clearly felt compelled to justify his less than stoic text: there is only so much one can take, and – now drawing on the idea that barbarians are generally deficient in their range of human(e) emotions, as had already been seen in other contexts before – this applies even to *barbari* under such truly exceptional circumstances.

Once the b-word is used, Murranus immediately builds on it: he introduces a mention of his native Pannonia (l. 37), he presents himself as a hardened individual who sustained many, manifold injuries – and, extraordinarily, seeks forgiveness for any artistic shortcomings his text may display. He thus anticipates prejudice and belittlement at the hand of the local population, potentially blaming him for his linguistic barbarisms, and he seeks to mitigate that through the adoption of a subservient position: he may be a *barbarus*, the text seems to suggest, but at least he is aware of his failings and deficiencies, and thus merits a more lenient treatment. Unlike Ofillius in the previous piece, Murranus does not turn Barbaria into the culprit for his predicament when he presents his origins in a Roman, Latinate environment; instead, he is seeking to turn his (arguable) weakness and vulnerability into a strength, seeking particular understanding in a potentially hostile, certainly alien environment, accepting a position of social inferiority and exclusion to elicit understanding and compassion from his audiences – an obvious requirement for him with Thiasus surviving and needing to build a future for the family after catastrophic experiences for two generations of his family.

There is one more verse inscription that employs the term *barbarus*, and this item may be a third item to be adduced in this particular context. The item in question is a highly peculiar text, clearly in verse originally employed in a funerary setting, though not a funerary inscription in a traditional sense: much rather, it is a legal text, written by an individual of some influence and standing, boasting his legal training, who promotes his achievements in this sector, for the benefit of his family, in a poem that discusses the burial, inheritance, and a "perfect" testament. Reported for Nemausus – Nimes in the province of Gallia Narbonensis, probably datable to the second century AD, the text of the (now lost) monument has been constituted as follows on the basis of a manuscript tradition:[64]

64 For a detailed discussion of this piece, see Champlin, Miscellanea testamentaria, esp. 203-206 no. VII.

- - - - - - ?
[- - - p]atroni famam barbar[- - -]
cuius Roma libris adserit [ipsa fidem].
amissos ornat titulis, en (!), aspice iunctos.
quos habet incolumes fouit amore pari.
supremas error ne posset rumpere ceras
arte sua cauit, clausit operta fide.
excipiet Manes sua qui sine lite reliquit
laudabit studium cui sua cura cauet.

. . . the patron's . . . acclaim . . . barbarian . . ., to whose books Rome herself adds credence. The ones he has lost he adorns with inscriptions, lo!, behold them, united (*sc.* here). Those whom he retains safe and sound, he cherishes with equal love. Lest some error might break his final seals,[65] he took precaution by means of his skill, locked his secrets faithfully. He who left his matters behind without quarrel will await the Spirits of the Departed (*sc.* calmly), and he whom his care protects will praise his effort.

(*CIL* XII 4036 = X *357e = *CLE* 1112)

Regrettably, the opening line(s?) [66] of this inscription is (are) reported in damaged condition, and is thus partially lost, which makes it difficult to appreciate the exact wording of the piece. It would seem clear, however, even on the basis of what has been transmitted, that there was some kind of contrast created between *Roma* in l. 2 and whatever had originally been said about *barbar[- - -]* in l. 1. If the city of Rome is, as relatively plausibly restored, the entity that adds *fides*, credence and trustworthiness, to the *libri* of the dedicant of this inscription, then *barbar[- - -]* by contrast may either have reduced said *fides* or, more positively spun, laid the foundations for whatever Rome specifically amplified and aggrandised – the *fama*, perhaps, of the patron (of those buried and commemorated here), of a man of barbaric origin?

While the dedicant of this inscription ultimately remains unknown, E. J. Champlin argued – plausibly – that the person behind this was Q. Cervidius Scaevola, the influential *iuris consultus* of the latter half of the second century AD.[67] As strongly suggested by the so-called *tabula Banasitana*, Cervidius Scaevola was of African (Carthaginian?) descent. Even though unambiguously a Roman citizen (he is referred to, with *tria nomina* and filiation, as Q. Cervidius Q. f. Scaevola and noted as inscribed in the *tribus Arniensis*), Cervidius Scaevola may have presented himself in the context of this Gallic burial setting as someone who, coming from some "outside", Rome's long-term rival, infamous for its *fides* (sc. *Punica*), was even endorsed by the city of Rome herself, providing him not only the training, but with actual *fides*, trustworthiness, in his legal writings. If this chain of assumptions is correct (and the identification of Cervidius Scaevola as the person behind the text is by no means certain), then – though on a higher social level – Cervidius is effectively doing the same as Murranus: Cervidius deliberately casts himself as an outsider, at least initially, who through hard work and (to an extent) subservience seeks to establish an incontestable position within a (provincial!) setting – a setting in which even a Roman citizen, if originating from certain, far-away parts of the empire, will still be regarded as *barbari*.

65 *I.e. invalidate the intentions of his sealed testament.*

66 There may, in fact, not have been any text loss at the top of this inscription.

67 Thus Champlin, Miscellanea testamentaria.

It is certainly possible to restore the text of the first line, following Otto Hirschfeld's suggestion in *CIL* ad loc., as *[extollit p]atroni famam barbar[a tellus]*, "barbaric land extolled the patron's acclaim", though this is by no means the only way to restore the damaged line. But, in contrast to what E. J. Champlin suggested, this should not be mistaken for evidence that Cervidius was a patron in any official function:[68] he may very well merely have acted as the *patronus* for the *amissi* and the *incolumes* mentioned in this inscription – an acclaimed, and trustworthy, Punic patron and *iuris consultus* in a provincial setting who wished to promote, rather than to hinder, the case of his *clientes* in life and beyond in a province that was not his own.

Some Final Observations

While the evidence that emerges from the Latin verse inscriptions may, to an extent, be considered slim, anecdotal, and composed in isolation rather than in communication with one another, one must note two things: (i) ultimately, the same applies to literary sources (and the number of their authors), and (ii) even so, there are some peculiarities in the spread and overall spin they put on the matter at hand.

In all instances of *barbarus* being used in the Latin verse inscriptions, it is obvious that *barbarus* is not merely a descriptive term, but an emotionally charged one, designed and employed to raise certain expectations, fears, and dispositions. Invariably, *barbari* are outside threats, not merely an "other" but an opponent, to be met in confrontation.[69] Almost invariably, they are lacking vital characteristics of civilised, rational behaviour. And yet, they are needed – as an "other" to define and measure one's self and one's *uirtus*. Building on this basic outline, more complex depictions see barbarians as quasi-feral entities that are causes for deterioration and decline, as a lesser form of existence that needs improvement through confrontation with, and re-education and taming through exposure to, Roman and – in a couple of particularly noteworthy cases – Christian values and training.

When and where barbarians are mentioned in the Latin verse inscriptions, as far as they have come to light so far, this exclusively happens in Europe, not in Asia or Africa. Of the seventeen relevant texts that were assembled here, twelve come from Italy (Rome: 3; Latium et Campania: 6;[70] Samnium: 1; Venetia et Histria 1; Sicilia: 1), four from Gaul (Aquitani(c)a: 1; Gallia Narbonensis 2; Gallia Lugdunensis: 1), and one from Hispania. Where specified or implied, the "barbarians" to whom these texts allude typically come from the north and north-east (Scythians, Goths, Parthians, Britons, Gauls), less commonly from the (north African) south (Gaetulians; Carthaginians?), and – according to the evidence available thus far – never from the east (which is not altogether surprising, considering the overall low number of Latin verse inscriptions from that part of the Roman world).

68 Champlin, Miscellanea Testamentaria, 204.

69 It is worth noting that while this seems accurate within the context of the evidence discussed in the present paper, this distinction of *barbari = outsiders is not strictly accurate in more general terms. Note, e.g., Woolf, Tales, esp. 89-117 (on "enduring fictions") and also, on a somewhat more abstract level, Delogu, Transformations of the Roman World.*

70 This includes the four Pompeian examples, introduced above, the item from Castellammare di Stabia, noted in n. 32, and – assuming that Kovács, *Eques super ripam Danuvii was correct, CIL III 3676 = CLE 427.*

An aspect unique to the evidence assembled here is the use of the term *barbarus* to refer to oneself, or one's origins, in a small number of cases from those who, for a variety of reasons, felt it to be an advantage to draw attention to their own existences as (perceived or factual) outsiders of their respective local or spiritual / religious communities. This goes significantly beyond Ovid's imagination of himself as a barbarian in his exile life:[71]

> *exercent illi sociae commercia linguae:*
> *per gestum res est significanda mihi.*
> *barbarus hic ego sum, qui non intellegor ulli,*
> *et rident stolidi verba Latina Getae;*
> *meque palam de me tuto mala saepe loquuntur,*
> *forsitan obiciunt exiliumque mihi.*
> *utque fit, in se aliquid fingi, dicentibus illis*
> *abnuerim quotiens adnuerimque, putant.*
>
> They hold intercourse in the tongue they share; I must make myself understood by gestures. Here it is I that am a barbarian, understood by nobody; the Getae laugh stupidly at Latin words, and in my presence they often talk maliciously about me in perfect security, perchance reproaching me with my exile. Naturally they think that I am poking fun at them whenever I have nodded no or yes to their speech.
>
> (Ovid, *Tristia* 5.10.35-42, transl. Wheeler and Goold)

The individuals whom one gets to encounter in the inscriptions consistently draw on more widespread connotations of the term *barbarus.* They do so in keeping with the overall use and generally emotionally charged set of negative connotations of the term while aiming to derive a reputational advantage from it – either in terms of deflecting blame (psychologically or in factual terms) or to anticipate potential attacks, verbal or otherwise, directed at themselves and their offspring or clients in scenarios of displacement and isolation.

This strategy was not, however, a mode of "reclaiming" the term (as is seen nowadays with expressions that advance from derogatory terms to generally unusable terms to terms that may only blamelessly be used by members of certain social or ethnic groups): much rather, it gives the appearance of subservient survival strategies of those who were unable to rely on other group support.

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71 On this passage and the poetic "I" created in it, see Michalopoulos, *Barbarus hic ego sum*.

References

AE *L'Année Épigraphique* (Paris, 1888 ff.)
CIL *Corpus Inscriptionum Latinarum* (Berlin, 1863 ff.)
CLE *Carmina Latina Epigraphica*, ed. Franz Bücheler and Ernst Lommatzsch (Leipzig, 1895-1926).
EDR *Epigraphic Database Roma*: https://edr-edr.it/
HEp *Hispania Epigraphica*; http://eda-bea.es/
I. Aquileiae *Inscriptiones Aquileiae*, ed. Giovanni Battista Brusin (Udine, 1991-1993).
ICERV *Inscripciones cristianas de la España romana y visigoda*, ed. José Vives, (second edition), (Barcelona, 1969).
ICUR *Inscriptiones Christianae Urbis Romae*, ed. Giovanni Battista de Rossi (Rome, 1861-1888), nova series ed. Angelo Silvagni (Rome, 1922ff.)
IHC *Inscriptiones Hispaniae Christianae*, ed. Emil Hübner (second edition), (Berlin, 1900).
ILCV *Inscriptiones Latinae Christianae Veteres* ed. Ernst Diehl (Berlin, 1925-1931).
ILS *Inscriptiones Latinae Selectae*, ed. Heinrich Dessau (Berlin 1892-1916).
IScM *Inscriptiones Scythiae Minoris Graecae et Latinae*
RICG *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de la Gaule, antérieures à la Renaissance carolingienne* (Paris, 1975 ff.)
Suppl. It *Supplementa Italica* (Rome, 1981 ff.)
ThLL *Thesaurus Linguae Latinae* (Munich, 1900 ff.)

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Figure 1: Telamon and Hercules rescuing Hesione. Drawing of the painting at house IX 1.22 Pompeii, room 21, as seen by Nicola La Volpe (1866), photo © ICCD; accessed on 22 June 2022: https://www.catalogo.beniculturali.it/detail/HistoricOrArtisticProperty/1500573431.

"Foreign(er)", "Strange(r)" and "Extraordinary": *xenos* and its Meanings in Byzantine (Metrical) Inscriptions

Andreas Rhoby*

Dedicated to Prof. Johannes Koder on the occasion of his eightieth birthday on 26 July 2022

The use of the term *xenos* (ξένος) has a very long tradition in the Greek language. First used in Homer's epics, it can have various meanings. Basically, the word means "foreigner"/"stranger" but it also designates the "guest-friend". As early as in Aeschylus, the adjective denotes "foreign" in the sense of "extraordinary"/"unusual". The term *xenos* is also employed in inscriptions. The most famous ancient inscription using *xenos* is transmitted in Herodotus; it is the well-known address to the wandering stranger who is asked to tell the people in Sparta that he has seen the fallen Lacedaemonians at the Thermopylae. In late antique and Byzantine inscriptions (as well as in literary texts) the address *xene* is very often employed in (metrical) epitaphs. As in the famous Thermopylae epigram, the *xenos* is asked to stop, to have a look at the tomb and think of the deceased. Two further meanings of *xenos* are used very often in Byzantine metrical inscriptions: *xenos* (and its female form *xene*) is a very common term for monks (and nuns); they have escaped the worldly life and are *xenoi* on earth. In many cases *xenos* is employed in the sense of "extraordinary"/"unusual"; this is especially true for the description of buildings and various objects to which the inscriptions are attached but, e.g., also for inscriptions on reliquaries in order to describe a saint's qualities. In this contribution, I will describe the various meanings of *xenos* from Antiquity onward with a specific focus on Byzantine metrical inscriptions.

Keywords: Foreigner, Stranger, Epigraphy, Byzantium, Meter, Greek

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Introduction[1]

The use of the term *xenos* (ξένος) has a very long tradition in the Greek language. Its etymology is uncertain, but it could be Pre-Greek.[2] First used in Homer's epics (e.g. Il. 6.215, Od. 1.313, 9.720, 17.522 etc.), it can have various meanings: "guest-friend", "stranger" (especially "wanderer"/"refugee" under the protection of *Zeus xenios*), "foreigner", and in rare cases also "hireling";[3] used as an adjective it can mean "foreign", also in the sense of "unusual"/"extraordinary" as in Aeschylus, *Pr.* 688.

From very early, the word is also used in inscriptions. The most famous ancient inscription that uses *xenos* is transmitted in Herodotus (VII 228.2). The inscription, an elegiac distich, which is attributed to Simonides, is the well-known address to the wandering stranger (*xenos*), who is asked to tell the people in Sparta that he has seen the fallen Lacedaemonians at the Thermopylae: ὦ ξεῖν', ἀγγέλλειν Λακεδαιμονίοις ὅτι τῇδε / κείμεθα τοῖς κείνων ῥήμασι πειθόμενοι ("Foreigner, go tell the Spartans that we lie here obedient to their commands").[4] Elsewhere in his *Histories* (IX 11.2, 55.2) one learns that the Spartans equate *xenoi* and *barbaroi*. Since this statement might have been unusual for his Greek readers, Herodotus was apparently compelled to offer this explanation.

The entry *xenos* in the tenth-century *Suda* lexicon, which is a compilation of earlier lexica, employs several citations in order to present the various meanings of the word:

> *xenos*: a friend. "Embassies used to come from the cities because they considered him their guest-friend and an adviser on their manner of life and the establishment of temples and images. He set each of these things to rights." And elsewhere: "[men] create guest-friends in their own countries." A *xenos* is also someone who receives strangers. The Apostle [says]:[5] "my friend the *xenos* greets you".[6]

Xenoi are to be distinguished from the locals, as can be seen, for example, in Hesiod, *Opera et dies* 225, who differentiates between ξένοι and ἔνδημοι. This distinction is also made in a two-line mosaic epigram from the seventh century in the church of St Demetrius in Thessaloniki: Πανόλβιε Χριστοῦ μάρτυς φιλόπολις / φροντίδα τίθει καὶ πολιτῶν καὶ ξένων ("Most happy martyr of Christ, you who love the city, take care of both citizens and strangers").[7]

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1 Translations are mine, unless otherwise noted.

2 Beekes, *Etymological Dictionary of Greek*, *s.v.* ξένος.

3 Liddell *et al.*, *Greek-English Lexicon*, *s.v.* ξένος. See also Mentzou, *Bedeutungswandel*, 3-5.

4 Translated by Godley, *Herodotus*. At VII 228.1-3 Herodotus mentions two further inscriptions.

5 Rom. 16.23.

6 Adler, *Suidae Lexicon*, at ξ 45: Ξένος: ὁ φίλος. ἐφοίτων δὲ πρεσβεῖαι ἐκ τῶν πόλεων ξένον τε αὐτὸν ἡγούμενοι καὶ βίου σύμβουλον βωμῶν τε ἱδρύσεως καὶ ἀγαλμάτων. ὁ δὲ ἕκαστα τούτων διωρθοῦτο. καὶ αὖθις· ἐν ταῖς ἰδίαις πατρίσι ξένους ποιοῦνται. Ξένος καὶ ὁ ξενοδόχος. ὁ Ἀπόστολος· ἀσπάζεται ὑμᾶς ξένος ὁ φίλος μου. English translation provided by http://www.cs.uky.edu/~raphael/sol/sol-entries/xi/45 (accessed on 25 April 2022).

7 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken*, no. M3: Πανόλβιε Χριστοῦ μάρτυς φιλόπολις / φροντίδα τίθει καὶ πολιτῶν καὶ ξένων. English translation by Bakirtzis, Pilgrimage to Thessalonike, 175.

This inscription is an invocation to Saint Demetrius, the city's patron.[8] It distinguishes between the locals and non-locals coming from outside the city, but also between locals and non-locals (pilgrims) visiting the church, which was a famous place of pilgrimage.[9]

After this concise introduction, which highlights the diversity of *xenos* in the Greek literature, I will now describe the various meanings of the term in Greek inscriptions with a specific focus on inscriptions which date to the Byzantine millennium (fourth-fifteenth centuries). As will be demonstrated, *xenos* is very often employed in metrical inscriptions (epigrams). I will also discuss the different ways the term is used as both a noun and an adjective.

The Use of xenos in Greek Tomb Epigrams

The mode of address *xene* (ξένε) is often employed in metrical epitaphs. The famous Thermopylae epigram seems to be the first inscribed epigram, in which the *xenos* is asked to look at the tomb, to think of the deceased and to spread the glory of the deceased. The *xenos* is the "stranger", but not in a pejorative sense, for the term describes the passer-by and the wanderer respectively. As the evidence suggests, this meaning seems to be restricted to epigrams.[10] The following examples, which testify to epigrams addressing the *xenos* throughout the Greek hemisphere from Antiquity to Byzantium, will illustrate this:

The beginning of a tomb epigram from the second or first century BC from Kyme (north of Smyrna/İzmir) runs as follows: Μέντορα τὸν Χῖον λεύσσεις, ξένε, τόνθ ὑπὸ μητρὸς / Χίας εἰς Ἄϊδος δῶμα καθελκόμενον ("Stranger, you see here Mentor of Chios being dragged down by his mother, originating from Chios, to the House of Hades").[11]

A tomb epigram from Egyptian Alexandria dating to the late Hellenistic epoch, which was composed for a sixteen-year-old girl, starts with the following words: Παῖδα Ῥοδίππωι, ξεῖνε, Λεόντιον ἣν τέκε μήτηρ, / ἀστὴν Ἡδεῖαν τύμβος ὅδε ("This tomb took the child, the citizen[12] Hedeia, stranger, who Leontion, her mother, brought into the world for Rhodippos").[13]

In the funerary epigrams, the *xenos* is not just someone who passes by, but someone who explicitly looks at the grave or is invited, or rather urged, to do so. Two verses of the metrical part of a Roman tomb inscription from the Arcadian town of Tegea run as follows: σῆμ' ἐσορᾶς ὦ ξε<ῖν>ε, κατ' Ἄϊδος οἰχομένοιο / πρὶν γλυκεροῦ γήρως οὔνομ' Ὀνασικλέος ("You behold the tomb,[14] o stranger, of Onasikleus (by name), who departed to Hades before sweet old age").[15]

The address to the *xenos*, who passes by, stops, beholds the grave and contemplates the deceased, bears witness to the culture of remembrance (*memoria*), which was highly important in Antiquity and generally in premodern cultures such as Byzantium.[16] The *xenos* who perceives the grave is supposed to carry the memory of the dead out into the world.

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8 Bauer, *Eine Stadt und ihr Patron*.

9 Bakirtzis, Pilgrimage to Thessalonike.

10 On this concept, see Tueller, Passer-by, especially 51-52 and González González, *Funerary Epigrams*, 48.

11 Merkelbach and Stauber, *Steinepigramme*1, no. 05/03/05.

12 In Egypt, the term ἀστός denotes the "citizen of Alexandreia", cf. Liddell *et al.*, *Greek-English Lexicon*, *s.v.*

13 Bernand, *Inscriptions métriques*, no. 39.

14 For σῆμα with the meaning "tomb", see Liddell *et al.*, *Greek-English Lexicon*, *s.v.* 3.

15 Von Gaertringen, *Inscriptiones Arcadiae*, no. 179.

16 Van Bueren *et al.*, *Reformations and Their Impact*. For Byzantium, see, e.g., Grünbart, Zur Memorialkultur and Schreiner, Schreiben gegen das Vergessen.

The *xenos*, and the viewer of the tomb in general, is also occasionally asked to reflect on his own fate: in a funerary epigram from Cyprus dating to the second century AD, it is the deceased who asks the passing *xenos* to remember that the journey to death is the same for everyone (verses 9-10): … πάριθι, ξένε, „χαῖρε“ προσείπας, / κοινὸς ἐπεὶ θνατοῖς ὁ πλόος εἰς φθιμένους ("Go on, stranger, after you have said 'hail', since common is the journey to the decaying for the mortals").[17] This reminder of the unavoidability of death, known under the term *memento mori* ("Remember that you have to die"), is a topos which is often employed in funerary contexts.[18]

In the Christian context, the *xenos* is not just the mere stranger passing by, but also the pilgrim, who often comes from afar to visit the holy sites.[19]

As in Antiquity, the term *xenos* is used in tomb inscriptions which are metrical in shape. They use a higher language register than tomb inscriptions in prose, which, both in the Roman and the Byzantine era, traditionally start with Ἐνθάδε κεῖται ("Here lies") (equivalent to the Latin *Hic iacet*) and the name of the deceased in the nominative case.

A long epigram of 40 verses dating to the year 1198 is explicitly addressed to the visitor to the church San Domenico in Messina. Today it is no longer preserved, but we know that it was written on an aristocratic sarcophagus and an accompanying plate in the church. It starts with the following verses: Τὸν ναὸν ὅστις τοῦτον εἰσίῃς, ξένε, / δεῦρο πρόσελθε, τόνδε τὸν τάφον σκόπει· / ἄνδρα γὰρ ἔνδον οὗ κλέος μέγα φέρει ("Whoever you are, stranger, who enters this church, come here and look at this tomb! For it carries within it a man whose fame is great").[20] The visitor to the church and beholder of the tomb is again addressed in the verses 28-29: Σύ δ' ὅστις εἶ καὶ τόνδε τὸν τάφον βλέπεις / τὸ τοῦ βίου μάταιον ἔνθα μανθάνων ("You, whoever you are and look at the tomb / recognize here the vanity of life"). As in the second-century inscription from Cyprus mentioned above, the *xenos* is reminded of the inevitability of death.

In the Messina epigram, the *xenos* is explicitly invited to look at the tomb. Other tomb epigrams address the *xenos* literally as θεατής ("beholder"), as is the case in an only partially preserved inscription of the thirteenth/fourteenth century in the church of John the Forerunner in Portaria (near Volos): [Σ]ὺ δέ, θεατά, ὀρῶν τὸν τύμβον, ξένε / μάνθανε […] ("You, beholder, when you see the grave, stranger, recognize …").[21] Unfortunately, neither the text that precedes nor that which follows this passage is preserved. However, one can easily imagine that the text continued with a request to "recognize" (μάνθανε) the perishability of life, as is the case in the previously mentioned epigrams.

In the Portaria epigram, the terms ξένος and θεατής are used together, but there are many epigrams of similar content that use θεατής as the sole appellation – or alternative terms such as ἄνθρωπος ("man") or βροτός ("mortal") – to refer to the one who reflects on

17 Peek, *Griechische Vers-Inschriften*, 551 (no. 1833). On this passage, see Alexiou, *Ritual Lament*, 190; see also Franceschini, Nomi, 90-92.

18 Lattimore, *Themes*, 256-258. See also Rhoby, *Byzantinische Epigramme auf Stein*, no. GR12.

19 Cf. Mango, Pilgrim's motivation.

20 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. IT23, *vv.* 1-3; see also Rhoby, Interactive inscriptions 323-324 and Rhoby, Zur Überlieferung, 234. *Loci paralleli* at Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, 468.

21 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. GR104.

the transience of life. The *xenos* is occasionally also additionally called παροδίτης ("passer-by"/"traveler") or the latter term is used instead of *xenos*. This usage dates already from the archaic period; παροδίτης is also abundantly employed in the epigrams of the *Anthologia Graeca*.[22]

Xenoi are also addressed in funerary epigrams which are constructed in dialogue form. This is a tradition that was already cultivated in Antiquity.[23] In Byzantium, several authors who worked on commission for the imperial household and the aristocracy, including Nicholas Kallikles (twelfth century) and Manuel Holobolos (thirteenth century), composed funerary epigrams in the form of dialogues that provided a dramatic backdrop.[24] In a long epigram by Kallikles, the *xenos* converses with the tomb (τύμβος), which tells him who is buried there.[25] No such explicit dialogical funerary epigrams have survived as inscriptions from the Middle and Late Byzantine periods. However, there is a long tradition of tomb epigrams which start with an introductory address to the *xenos*. The verses which are inscribed on a third-/fourth-century *tabula ansata* found in Bulgaria may serve as an example: Εἴ με θέλεις, ὦ ξεῖνε, δαήμεναι τίς πόθεν εἰμί / Λαδικίης πάτρης εἰμί, τοὔνομα Κυρίλλα … ('If you want to learn from me, stranger, who and from where I am: my fatherland is Ladikia, my name is Kyrilla …").[26]

This section ends with the mention of the tomb epigram for the Byzantine emperor Manuel I Komnenos, who died on 24 September 1180.[27] The funeral verses, which are no longer preserved, were engraved on his sarcophagus, the lid of which consisted of seven domes that made the sarcophagus look like a model of a church or a *ciborium*.[28] The epigram's length is considerable: it once consisted of more than 40 dodecasyllables. The first verse is a traditional address to the *xenos*: Ὁρῶν τὰ καινὰ ταῦτα θαύμαζε, ξένε ("Admire these new things as you see them, stranger!").[29] While καινά is to be understood in the sense of "new, without precedent", i.e. exceptional, the stem *xen-* is used again in verse 11, but as a feminine proper name. The verses 9-11 deal with Manuel's (second) wife Maria from Antiocheia,[30] who was – like his first wife Bertha/Eirene – of Western origin: ἡ δ' αὖ βασιλὶς καὶ σύνευνος Μαρία, / τῇ δὲ στερήσει τοῦ φεραυγοῦς δεσπότου / αὐγοῦστα σεπτὴ βασιλὶς πάλιν Ξένη ("The empress and his wife Maria, despite the deprivation of the resplendent ruler, is a venerable *augusta* (and) empress again *Xene*").[31] The verses play on the double meaning of *Xene*: in Byzantium

22 See the entries in the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (*TLG*): http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/ (accessed on 25 April 2022).

23 Peek, *Griechische Grabgedichte*, 242-255.

24 See Hunger, *Hochsprachliche profane Literatur*, 146.

25 Kallikles, Poems, ed Romano, no. 9.

26 Beševliev, *Spätgriechische und spätlateinische Inschriften*, no. 220 (itacistic variants are corrected).

27 Magdalino, *Empire of Manuel I Komnenos*.

28 Cf. Patterson Ševčenko, Tomb of Manuel I Komnenos.

29 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. TR78; English translation by Mango, Notes, 372 (with adaptations).

30 Brand, Maria of Antioch. Maria (in one Western source also called Marguerite) was the daughter of Raymond of Poitiers and Constance of Tyre.

31 See n. 29.

it was customary for men and women of the imperial household and the aristocracy who entered a monastery at the end of their lives, especially if their wife or husband had died, to take the name *Xenos* or *Xene*, because it meant that they were dedicated to separation from the world.[32] In this verse, however, *Xene* refers not only to the fact that Maria became a nun but also to the fact that she was a "stranger", i.e. not of Byzantine/Greek origin, because she stemmed from a Western aristocratic family.[33] *Xenos*/*Xene* with the meaning "devoted to separation from the world", i.e. monk/nun, is already attested as early as in Late Antiquity.[34]

A similar pun to that in Manuel's tomb epigram is also employed in two verses that are taken from the iambic calendar of Christopher of Mitylene (eleventh century) for 24 January.[35] These verses, which were painted on a wall in the narthex of the catholicon of the monastery of Treskavac (near Prilep, Northern Macedonia),[36] dating to the middle of the fourteenth century, are dedicated to Saint Xene, who was originally called Eusebeia but became a nun to avoid marriage: Ἀποξενοῦται τοῦδε τοῦ βίου Ξένη, / οὗ ζῶσα καὶ πρὶν ὡς ἀληθῶς ἦ ξένη ("Xene is alienated from this life, to which she was in truth also alien before in life").[37] The epigram plays with the word stem ξεν- which is used thrice (ἀποξενοῦται, Ξένη, ξένη).

The Use of xenos in Non-Tomb Epigrams

The mosaic epigram from St Demetrios in Thessalonica mentioned above (p. 196) testifies to the use of the term *xenos* in non-funerary inscriptions. In many inscriptions where the *xenos* is also addressed, he is asked to stop and look at the inscriptions found on monuments other than tombs.

A hexameter epigram, which is transmitted in the *Greek Anthology* (IX, no. 686),[38] seems to have been attached to the Eastern gate of Thessalonica's city walls. The *xenos* is told to rejoice because he sees a statue of the prefect Basilius at the gate: Ἠνορέης ὁλετῆρα ὑπερφιάλου Βαβυλῶνος / καὶ σέλας ἀκτεάνοιο Δίκης Βασίλειον ὕπαρχον, / ξεῖνε, νόῳ σκίρτησον, ἰδὼν ἐφύπερθε πυλάων … ("Rejoice in your heart, o stranger, as you behold above the city gates the prefect Basil, him who destroyed the might of arrogant Babylon and who shines with the splendor of incorruptible Justice …").[39] The epigram seems to belong to the early Byzantine period, although it was recently dated as late as the tenth century.[40] Likewise from the early Byzantine period (c. 379) is a fragmentary epigram from the ancient city of Stobi (Northern Macedonia), which also addresses the *xenos* and invites him to look at the gate and a

32 Cf. Hörandner, Zur Beschreibung, 209-210.

33 See also Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, 671.

34 See Lampe, *Patristic Greek Lexicon*, *s.v.* ξένος D.

35 Follieri, *I Calendari*, 2, 151.

36 Cf. Rhoby, Andreas, On the inscriptional versions.

37 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken*, no. 37. Some parts of words of the second verse are not preserved but can easily be restored by referring to the manuscript tradition of the epigram.

38 Cf. Feissel, *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de Macédoine*, no. 87; Gkoutzioukostas, *Thessalonikeia epigraphika meletemata*, 95-141; Begass, Der Kaiser als Schutzwall.

39 English translation by Gkoutzioukostas *Thessalonikeia epigraphika meletemata*, 139.

40 Gkoutzioukostas *Thessalonikeia epigraphika meletemata*, 139.

golden image, probably a statue of the emperor Theodosius I: [...] εἰσορᾷς, ξεῖνος,[41] πύλῃ[σιν] ἀντιμέτωπον / εἰκόνα [μ]α[ρ]μέρουσαν χρυσῷ πᾶσαν ἡέλιον ὥς / ... ("... you see, stranger, in front of the doors the image all shining with gold like the sun ...").[42] This passage is reminiscent of the words of Hesychius of Miletus (ch. 45) in the sixth century about the statue of Constantine on the *Forum* in Constantinople: the emperor can be seen shining like the sun upon the citizens.[43] A case similar to the one in Stobi, but dating almost a millennium later, is the epigram once placed on the gate of Korinthos next to a statue of the despot Theodore I Palaiologos, who had reconquered the city from the Franks in 1395/1396.[44] As in tomb epigrams, the *xenos* is addressed right at the beginning of the twelve-verse epigram: Ἄστεως τήνδε πύλην ἄθρει μοι, ξένε ... ("Gaze for me at this city gate, stranger ...").[45]

The presence of gates, statues and accompanying inscriptions mentioning the "stranger", who is about to enter the city and is to be distinguished from the local citizen (πολίτης), seems to have been more widespread throughout the Byzantine millennium than the surviving evidence suggests; this is especially true for the early Byzantine period[46] but not exclusively so, as the inscription from Korinthos indicates.

The address to the *xenos* does not necessarily have to be at the beginning of the epigram, but can also occur in other positions or even at the end, as is the case with an inscription that no longer exists today, but was once placed on a tower belonging to the fortifications of Herakleia Pontike (today (Karadeniz) Ereğlisi, Turkey). The purpose of the epigram is to invite the *xenos* not only to look at the building and marvel at it but also to spread the news of its construction (in the year 1211 or thereafter) under the emperor Theodore I Laskaris, the ruler of Nikaia. The last three verses, which were already no longer fully preserved when the epigram was first copied from the tower in the nineteenth century, run as follows: κέλευσμα μικρὸν προσ[.....] / Κο<μν>ηνοφυοῦς Λασχάρ[ου] Θεοδώρου / αὐτοκρατοῦς τὸν πύργον ἤγε[ι]ρε, ξένε ("A small order ... of the Comnene-born Theodore Laskaris, ruling by himself, has erected the tower, stranger").[47] A similar epigram is attached to a bridge near Karytaina on the Peloponnese dating to the year 1439/1440. The *xenos* is vigorously exhorted to take note that Manuel Rhaul Melikes, a local magnate, recently erected the monument, which seems to have been damaged before: Νέον δομήτορα γεφύρας, ὦ ξένε, / Ῥαοὺλ γίνωσκε Μανουὴλ τὸν Μελίκην ("Take note, o stranger, of Manuel Rhaul Melikes, the new builder of the bridge").[48]

While, as mentioned above (p. 199), dialogues were widespread in ancient epitaphs, Byzantine funerary epigrams in dialogue form have only survived in manuscripts, but not as inscriptions. However, an eleventh-century inscriptional epigram in dialogue form is attached to a marble stone block which is broken in two pieces and now displayed in Istanbul's Archaeological Museum. The content of the fragmentarily preserved epigram proves that

41 ξῖνος inscr.

42 Feissel, *Recueil des inscriptions chrétiennes de Macédoine*, no. 273B.

43 Cf. Berger, Statues of Constantinople, 8.

44 Maltezou, Historikes peripeteies.

45 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. GR73.

46 On Constantinople, see Berger, Statues of Constantinople.

47 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. TR44. The term κέλευσμα (a variant of κέλευσις) indicates an official document issued by the emperor: cf. Dölger, *Byzantinische Diplomatik*, *s.v.* κέλευσις.

48 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. GR66.

the stone block was once part of the fortifications of Dyrrhachion (now Durrës, Albania), which was called Epidamnos in Antiquity. The inscription consists of two parts: the first part (verses 1-7) is a question by the *xenos* and the second part (verses 8-22) is the city's answer. Both parts are introduced by verses which indicate the content of the respective following verses. Verse 1 is almost completely lost but was reconstructed by Cyril Mango analogously to verse 8: (v. 1) [Ἐρώτησις τοῦ ξένου πρὸς Ἐ]πίδαμνον ("Question of the stranger to Epidamnos") and (v. 8) Ἀνταπόκρισις τῆς πόλεως πρὸς {τὸν} ξέ[νον] ("Answer of the city to the stranger").[49] Due to its fragmentary state, it is not possible to fully grasp the content of the dialogue epigram. In the first part, Epidamnos is called "(well) accessible",[50] and the *xenos*, the "stranger", who is about to enter the city, states that it "stands like an adorned" girl. In the second part, the city seems to report its fate.[51] The dialogue form is ideally suited for the public presentation of the text. If one assumes that inscribed epigrams were recited publicly on certain occasions (in the case of tomb epigrams at the funeral and on the commemoration days, and in the case of monuments at the inauguration ceremony and on the anniversary of dedication, etc.),[52] this is particularly conceivable with epigrams in dialogue form, as they make a lively rendition very likely.

Finally, mention is made of two late Byzantine dedicatory epigrams from Mystras. The first one, which is no longer preserved, was once displayed in the St Sophia church. It is an inscription of 46 verses, perhaps dating to the year 1360, which mentions the dedication of the church, but is primarily dedicated to praising the despot of the Morea Manuel Kantakuzenos and his imperial parents John VI Kantakuzenos and Eirene.[53] In the second half of the epigram, at the end of verse 32, the *xenos* is addressed (ξένε). This verse introduces the laudatory description of Manuel. When the epigram was recited in public, which is – as stated above – to be assumed, the appellation "stranger!" indicated to the audience that they should now listen attentively to the following lines. The second epigram from Mystras in which the form of address *xenos* is used comes from Taxiarchoi Chapel, dated to the year 1454/1455. Very similarly to the epigram from Karytaina mentioned above (p. 201) – but less vigorously – the *xenos* is asked to take note of the founder of the church and his deed (verses 1-2): ῞Ηγερται ναὸς οὗτος ἐκ βάθρων, ξένε, / παρά γε τοῦ εὐγενεστάτου Λουκάνη ("This church was erected, stranger, by the noblest Lukanes").[54] Nikephoros Lukanes served as *archon* of the Peloponnese from 1453-1459.[55]

It comes as no surprise that the appellation *xene* ('stranger!') is not only used in inscriptions but also in verses which are transmitted in manuscripts only. In many cases the latter verses were intended to be inscribed too, but the physical monument or object no longer

49 Mango, A Byzantine inscription; Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. TR57.

50 The same topos is used in Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*., no. AL1.

51 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*., 619.

52 See Dagron, Troisième, and Papalexandrou, Text in Context, 282.

53 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. GR88.

54 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. GR89.

55 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, 304.

exists. Many attestations of the term are found in the oeuvre of Manuel Philes (c. 1270 - after 1332/1334 ?),[56] a poet on commission for the court and the aristocracy in the first half of the fourteenth century. Of his many epigrams, unfortunately, only a few exist that are still preserved *in situ*,[57] among them the famous epigram on the outer cornice of the chapel of the St Mary Pammakaristos church in Constantinople.[58] According to the *Thesaurus Linguae Graecae* (*TLG*),[59] Philes uses the form of address ξένε 61 times; interestingly enough, the vocative is only used 17 times in his tomb epigrams;[60] the remaining usages occur in epigrams composed for fresco paintings, icons and other objects. As in inscriptional epigrams, its position is almost exclusively at the end of the dodecasyllabic verses.[61] This has prosodic reasons: ξένε consists of two short vowels which, according to prosodic rules, can only occur at the end of a twelve-syllable verse. This also applies *grosso modo* to hexameters and pentameters, but Philes did not write any poems in these verse meters. In addition, the use of the appellation ξένε at the end of the verse creates tension.

As has already been stated, ξένε is not the only form of address for the one looking at the tomb, a depiction or an object. Philes uses the form of address ἄνθρωπε ("man") even more often (76 times) than ξένε, as the search results in the *TLG* testify, without any significant difference to the latter. The form of address θεατά ("beholder") is used 35 times. There are no results for βροτέ ("mortal") or παροδῖτα ("wanderer"), which are used less in Byzantium than in Late Antiquity.

Xenos in its Meanings "Extraordinary", "Unusual" and Similar

As mentioned in the introduction, the adjective *xenos* can mean "strange" in the sense of "unusual", "extraordinary" and similar; this meaning is already attested in Aeschylus, Aristotle and other ancient authors.[62] Christian authors reinforce this meaning by also using *xenos* with the meanings of "wonderful" and "marvelous".[63] Of course, there are numerous passages from middle and late Byzantine literature that attest to the same meanings.

Byzantine inscriptions, again mainly metrical, often use the adjective *xenos* too. It appears in various contexts:

For example, it is employed in a thirteenth-century tomb epigram from a church in Makrinitisa (near Volos). It is used in a verse addressing the beholder; the wording is reminiscent of the epigram from Korinthos quoted above (p. 201). The viewer is invited to look at the grave and perceive the "extraordinary", i.e. the grave and the person buried in it: Ἀλλ', ὦ θεατά, ὄρα καὶ ἄθρει ξένα ("But beholder, look and see the extraordinary").[64] It is not only

56 On Manuel Philes, see Stickler, *Manuel Philes und seine Psalmenmetaphrase* and Kubina, *Enkomiastische Dichtung*; see also Rhoby, Wie lange lebte Manuel Philes?

57 Cf. Paul, Dichtung auf Objekten.

58 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. TR76 = Miller, *Manuelis Philae*, 1, no. E223 (pp. 117-118).

59 http://stephanus.tlg.uci.edu/ (accessed on 25 April 2022).

60 Papadogiannakis, *Studien zu den Epitaphien des Manuel Philes.*

61 With the exception of Miller, *Manuelis Philae carmina*, 2, no. P187, v. 7 (p. 202).

62 See Liddell *et al.*, *Greek-English Lexicon*, *s.v.* B.

63 See Lampe, *A Patristic Greek Lexicon*, *s.v.* C.1.

64 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. GR83, v. 12. Although ξένα at the end of the verse seems to be the correct reading (unfortunately, the available images of the inscription do not allow verification of the reading), one could also imagine the vocative ξένε when comparing it with the verse of the tomb epigram from nearby Portaria cited above (p. 198): [Σ]ὺ δέ, θεατά, ὀρῶν τὸν τύμβον, ξένε.

the appearance (of a monument) that can be extraordinary (θέα ξένη), as stressed in a ninth-century, not fully preserved epigram attached to the sea walls of Constantinople, but also the monument itself: [...] τὸ πρὶν ἡμαυρω[μένον / τανῦν] διαυγὲς καὶ θέαν ξένην ἔχον / ... ("... the previously turned black now radiant and with extraordinary appearance ...").[65]

A further epigram attached to a tower of the city walls of Dyrrhachion addresses the beholder in its verses 1-3 with the following words: Μαθών, θεατά, τίς ὁ πήξας ἐκ βάθρων / τὸν πύργον, ὅνπερ καθορᾷς, κτίσμα ξένον, / θαύμαζε τούτου τὴν ἀριστοβουλίαν ("By recognizing, beholder, who erected the tower from its foundations, which you see, this extraordinary building, admire its excellent planning").[66] The one who had the tower built in 1224/1225 was Theodore I Dukas Komnenos, who ruled Epirus from 1215 to 1230. While the second part of the epigram (verses 4-8) is devoted to praising Theodore, the concluding part (verses 9-13) is dedicated to mentioning the year.[67]

However, not only monuments are labeled *xenos* but also (religious) objects, for example reliquaries.

Verses on a now lost twelfth-century reliquary that came to France (Châteaudun) after the Fourth Crusade in 1204 state that the hand relic of St John the Forerunner, which appears to have been encased in gold, is something "extraordinary", i.e. something to be marveled at. The first three verses, which also interact with the beholder and the owner of the relic respectively, run as follows: Ὁ καρπὸς ὀστοῦν, ἡ δὲ χεὶρ χρυσῆ· πόθεν; / ἐκ τῆς ἐρήμου καρπός, ἐκ Παλαιστίνης, / χρυσῆ παλαιστὴ χρυσοδάκτυλος ξένον ("The wrist is bone, the hand is gold. From where? The wrist is from the desert, from Palestine, the golden palm with golden fingers is something extraordinary").[68] This epigram is cleverly designed from a rhetorical perspective because the term καρπός has two meanings, namely "wrist" and "fruit". While it means "wrist" in verses 1 and 2, it means "fruit" in verse 4: Ὀστοῦν ὁ καρπὸς ἐκ φυτοῦ Προδρόμου ("Bone is the fruit from the tree of the Forerunner").[69] Another object, kept in the Moscow Kremlin and dated to the twelfth or thirteenth century, seems to have served as silver-gilt sheathing for a hand relic of St Barbara. The attached inscription consists of two verses which employ the term *xenos* twice: Ξένη τις ἡ χεὶρ ὧδε παρθένου ξένης. / Χεὶρ Βαρβάρας λύουσα λοιμώδεις νόσους ("The exceptional hand of an exceptional virgin here. The hand of Barbara which cures diseases").[70] It is no coincidence that *xenos* is used as the first and last word in verse 1. This stylistic device, also called a *kyklos*, underlines the extraordinary material as well as the spiritual value of the relic.

The Ermitaž in St Petersburg houses a wooden object, probably dating to the fourteenth century, which may have served as the base of a cross. The epigram, which is placed under the carved depiction of the Dormition of the Mother of God, uses the term *xenos* in reference to two statements in the text. It is "extraordinary" that Mary remained a virgin despite

65 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. TR88.

66 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*., no. AL2; cf. Rhoby, Interactive inscriptions, 321-322.

67 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, 110-111.

68 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, no. Me13. Translation (with adaptations) by Pitarakis, Female piety in context, 160.

69 Pitarakis, Female piety in context, 160.

70 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. AddII15.

having given birth and it is "extraordinary" that she continues to live despite her death: Ὑπὲρ λόγον τεκοῦσα παρθένος μένεις. / Θανοῦσα δὲ ζῇς· ταῦτα γὰρ ἄμφω ξέν<α> ("Beyond all reason, you have given birth and yet remain a virgin. Having died you live. For both of these things are extraordinary").[71]

The attribute *xenos* does not only mean "strange" in the sense of "extraordinary", but also "strange" in the sense of "outlandish". In the monk's cell at St Neophytos' *Enkleistra* near Paphos (Cyprus) we find late-twelfth-century representations of two saints identified as Basil the Great and John Chrysostom. Both saints hold scrolls in their hand each containing one verse. As can be seen from the content, the verses correspond. While the verse on Basil's scroll reads Τί καθορῶν ἐξίστασαι σαφῶς φράσ[ον] ("What are you looking at that makes you lose your mind, say clearly!"), the verse on John Chrysostom's scroll reads Ξένον θέα[μα] Χριστὸν [έ]σταυ[ρωμένον] ("The outlandish sight of Christ crucified").[72] *Xenos* is not used here to express the beholder's excitement, but to describe his dismay at the crucifixion, which is a strange spectacle alien to mankind. The same topos is employed in an epigram which is attached to a fourteenth-century *epitaphios* (i.e. a cloth bearing an image of the dead body of Christ) now kept in the Monastery of Putna (Romania): Ξένον βλέπων θέαμα δῆμος ἀγγέλων / αἶνον ξένον κέκραγεν, ὦ Θεοῦ Λόγε ("When they saw the outlandish sight, the people of the angels sang extraordinary praises, O Logos of God").[73] The source of both epigrams, as well as of other attestation of ξένον θέαμα, is a *troparion* for the Holy Sunday.[74] In my view, in this epigram, ξένος is used with two meanings that differ slightly from each other: while the praise sung by the angels is "extraordinary", the sight of Christ crucified is outlandish because it is – as in the epigram from St Neophytos Enkleistra – alien to mankind.

In order to demonstrate the various connotations of the adjective *xenos*, a poem on the Seven Wonders of the World embedded in the historical work of George Cedrenus may serve as an example. While the latter's verses in his *History* start with Κενὸν φρύαγμα τῶν πάλαι πυραμίδων,[75] the version which is transmitted in the commentary on the verses in cod. Vat. gr. 573 reads as follows: Ξένον θέαμα τῶν πάλαι πυραμίδων / Αἴγυπτος ἄσπερ εἶχε κόμπον ἡ πλάνος ("The extraordinary spectacle of the ancient pyramids that elusive Egypt boasted with").[76] The commentary, which follows theses verses, discusses the meaning of both θέαμα and ξένος; on *xenos* it reads: ξένον δὲ τὸ οἷον εἰπεῖν ἀλλότριον καὶ ἐκτὸς τῶν ἐν συνηθείᾳ ἡμῖν πραγμάτων δηλονότι τὸ παράδοξον ("*xenos*, on the other hand, is synonymous with alien and is foreign to what is familiar to us, i.e. extraordinary").[77] As indicated in this phrase, the verses play with the two meanings of *xenos*: on the one hand, the term describes the amazement at the sight of the pyramids, on the other hand, however, it means "foreign" in the sense of "pagan" and "non-Christian" respectively. The latter meaning is stressed to an even greater extent by the use of κενὸν φρύαγμα ("empty pride") in the manuscripts of Cedrenus' *History*.

It goes without saying that this list could easily be expanded by examples of inscriptional and non-inscriptional Byzantine poetry.

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71 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, no. Ho8.

72 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Fresken und Mosaiken*, nos. 245-246.

73 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Ikonen*, no. Te11.

74 Follieri, *Initia*, 2, 563; see also Johnstone, *Byzantine Traditiony*, 119.

75 Tartaglia, *Georgii Cedreni historiarum compendium*, 1, 326 (ch. 196.20).

76 Barbero, Un commento bizantino inedito 8.

77 Barbero, Un commento bizantino inedito 8.

The adjective *xenos* in the meaning of "extraordinary", "unusual" and similar belonged to standardized vocabulary employed in Byzantine poetry. However, it was also interchangeable with other terms with a similar meaning since the use of specific terms was also due to metrical and prosodical requirements. This may, for example, be testified to by a fragmentary epigram, perhaps dating to the twelfth century, which was once attached to the medieval walls of the fortress of Skopje: Νέαν πόλιν, ἄνθρωπε, θαυμάζεις βλέπων / καὶ τερπνὸν ὡράϊσμα … ("Full of admiration you are seeing a new town and the lovely adornment …").[78] Not only τερπνός could have been replaced by ξένος but also ἄνθρωπος by θεατής or ξένος, but the current wording was intentionally employed to accommodate the metrical and prosodical demands of the dodecasyllables.

Conclusion

The term *xenos* is used in Greek literature from Antiquity to modern times. This is likewise true for inscriptions. As the discussion has shown, the form of address ξένε is almost exclusively attested in metrical inscriptions, and the same is true for the adjective ξένος/-η/-ον.[79] In tomb epigrams, the *xenos* is the "stranger" and the "guest"[80] respectively, who comes from outside (the city and therefore differs from the local inhabitant), stops and looks at the tomb. The address is meant not only to make him/her aware of the evanescence of life but he is also addressed in order to spread the deceased's fame beyond the place where he is buried. However, as has been demonstrated, other forms of address were also used instead of ξένε. This is especially true for other epigrams in which the beholder of the monument/object or the listener to the text is addressed. Whatever the case, the form of address ξένε (or similar vocatives) attracts the attention of the listener, assuming that these texts were read aloud on certain occasions.

The adjective *xenos* with the meaning "unusual", "extraordinary", "exceptional" or similar is also very popular in all kinds of epigrams. It is likewise used in order to elicit specific attention from the beholders, readers and listeners at the epigram's performance.

78 Rhoby, *Epigramme auf Stein*, no. FY2; cf. Rhoby, Interactive inscriptions 322.

79 The study of the usage of ξένος and the form of address ξένε in so-called Byzantine book epigrams was beyond the scope of this paper. A search in the Database of Byzantine Book Epigrams (DBBE) offers many impressive examples: https://www.dbbe.ugent.be/ (accessed on 25 April 2025)

80 Cf., e.g., Speck, *Theodoros Studites. Jamben*, 270 (no. CVa): Ἐπίγραμμα εἰς ξένους. Χριστὸν ξενίζει πᾶς διατρέφων ξένους· / δι᾽ ὃ προθύμως τῇδε τοὺς ξενουμένους / μάλα τρέφοιτε, καὶ τραφήσεσθε ξένως ("Epigrams on Strangers. Everyone who hosts guests hosts Christ. Therefore, willingly entertain the strangers here, and you will be entertained in a wonderful way"). Like other examples in this essay, the author employed the various meanings of the stem *xen-*. For further examples in Greek literature, ibid.

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From Genoa to Yangzhou? Funerary Monuments for Europeans in Yuan China and their Paleographic Analysis

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This article scrutinizes two extraordinary funerary monuments to members of the Ilioni family from Genoa through paleographical methods. Erected in 1342 and 1344 respectively, they commemorate Caterina and Antonio, two children of an Italian merchant that died as members of the small Catholic community in the central Chinese trade hub of Yangzhou. Although well known in recent debates on the history of medieval travel and occasionally discussed in an art-historical context, they have not yet received an in-depth epigraphic analysis. In doing so for the first time, the article argues for the importance of such material, as processes of acculturation can be traced in the development of the scripts themselves. The epigraphy of these monuments is both in line with contemporary letter styles from northern Italy and, at the same time, epigraphic observations show how the influences of Chinese characters were slowly included in the Latin text. In sum, the authors argue that it is most likely that a Franciscan missionary gifted with some craftmanship as a stonemason generated this part of the two funerary slabs, and that this in turn forces us to think about late medieval practices of epigraphic production in Europe at the time, too. What seemed at first an exotic case of "global epigraphy" reveals itself on second glance as an example that teaches a valuable lesson about the role of friars in the epigraphy of Latin Europe more widely.

Keywords: China, Genoa, Yuan dynasty, medieval trade, palaeography, Franciscans, Yangzhou

By analyzing the script of funerary monuments created for Europeans in Yuan China (mid-13th to mid-14th century), this article deals with a niche of the epigraphy of Latin Europe in the later Middle Ages. The number of such monuments is small, the material difficult to access, and their layout might seem exotic to the classical epigraphist most familiar with material from Latin Europe. Indeed, their alterity can largely account for why these monuments have not garnered much attention from specialists in medieval Latin epigraphy, although

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they are well known to art historians and historians interested in cultural and economic exchanges between Asia and Europe in the Middle Ages. Two monuments to the children of the Genoese merchant Domenico de Ilioni in Yangzhou have been studied in detail, albeit with a clear focus on their iconography, but their script has still not been adequately addressed.[1] This article takes up this desideratum and offers a deeper insight into the Catholic mission in Yuan China as well as fresh perspectives on the production of tomb inscriptions since the early 14th century in Europe more generally.

After introducing the material sources, we analyze the script of the two Yangzhou tombstones and highlight their place within the Latin epigraphy of the Italian peninsula in the early 14th century. Focusing our attention on these two inscriptions alone (and leaving aside the much better discussed iconography of the two pieces), we argue that these stone slabs were not simply the product of a local Chinese stonemason who followed a script provided by the Latin Christians in Yuan Yangzhou, but that one of the Franciscan friars must have been a talented artisan and stonecutter, too, who produced the script that accompanied the more collaborative work by a Chinese stonecutter in regard to the complex pictures incised in these monuments. Whereas the iconography used local forms, especially ones taken from Buddhist art, to narrate a basically Christian story, the script is Latin European, but shows a need to adapt to the style of Chinese characters. The monuments reveal the efforts towards transcultural interaction on both sides, a local artisan elite and the Franciscan missionaries, difficult to grasp in our other sources from the period.

From this, new basic insights arise on both the nature of the Franciscan mission to Yuan China and European epigraphy as a whole. As it turns out, the missionary work in Asia went hand in hand with the faculty of the Franciscan friars to conceptualize tomb markers, an essential tool for memorializing the deceased of their newly found flock and necessary for ensuring the prayer for the dead so central to late-medieval Catholic piety. This in turn allows us to rethink the importance of Franciscan communities in Europe in the making of funerary inscriptions, often overlooked or underestimated by medieval epigraphy. Here, too, the concept and execution of the script might have come from the Franciscans' own hands, changing our idea of inflexible boundaries between artisans (the stonecutter) and clerics (the mendicants) in producing such funerary monuments. After all, they are both pieces of art and liturgical remembrance, and their production mirrors such a dual functionality – not just in Yuan China, but in the multifaceted world of Latin Christians in the 14th century as a whole.

1 The first discussions on these tombstones were published by Rouleau, Tombstone; Rudolph, Tombstone. Rubbings of both tombstones are reproduced in: Enoki, Nestorian Christianism, 65 (plate V); Reichert, *Erfahrung der Welt*, 191-192. See also Purtle, The far side, 178-182; Arnold, *Princely Gifts*, 138-141; Clarke, *Catholic Identities,* 21-24; Petech, Yangzhou and Lopez, Nouveaux documents, 455-456. It is noteworthy that the epigraphy of the two monuments has been scrutinized in more detail by one of the earlier Chinese researchers, cf. Xia, Guangzhou. See also Geng, Yangzhou. We thank Aaron Vanides (Heidelberg University) for the in-depth discussion of the arguments of this article and his help in improving the English style.

Funerary Monuments of Europeans in Yuan China

Since the second half of the 20th century, research by historians (and, to a lesser degree, art historians) has established the interconnectedness of the Eurasian world in the roughly one hundred years between the Mongol invasion into Eastern Europe in around 1240 and the mid-14th century, after which the Black Death, political instability in the Mongol Empire, and the replacement of the Mongol Yuan dynasty by the Han-Chinese Ming resulted in the end of easy economic and cultural exchange between Eastern Asia and Latin Europe.[2] After the terrors of the first devastation by the Mongol army in Eastern Europe ceased, the expansion of the Mongol empire opened up roads for merchants and missionaries from Latin Europe, and especially from Italy into Central Asia, India and China. The relative religious pluralism at the court of the khans and the greater trust that the Mongol emperors of China placed in foreigners than in the Han Chinese meant that travel, trade, and proselytization could flourish. This was the time in which Marco Polo and Odorico da Pordenone travelled to China, and the first archbishopric in Dadu/Beijing was established by John of Montecorvino, to name but a few major figures who left important records that gives us glimpses into their voyages.[3]

In establishing a Catholic Church structure in Yuan China, the Franciscans started to build churches, baptize locals, tried to get an influential position at the emperor's court, and cared for the souls of those merchants from Latin Europe who were active in China. Thus, it is no coincidence that they erected major churches not only in Dadu/Beijing, at the heart of the imperial administration, but in the most active trading hubs like the port of Quanzhou or the cities of Hangzhou and Yangzhou as well. We know that European merchants were crucial for the survival of the Franciscan mission in China, and as a major market town for the trade within the empire, Yangzhou, on the Grand Canal, became particularly attractive for these European merchants.[4]

The missionaries not only built churches, but they cared for the souls of the growing flock that they had under their spiritual guidance, too. This meant that burials were as important as baptisms, and helping the deceased members of the community end their suffering in purgatory was as important in China as it was back home in Europe. Cemeteries were built, and tombstones erected, mentioning the date of death and assisting a proper "memoria", ensuring the liturgical prayers to help the dead in their suffering in purgatory; this was simply part of the normal Western Christian way of life in both worlds at the outer fringes of the Eurasian land mass. Sources on the actual fulfillment of these duties by the Franciscans are scarce; they do, however, exist.

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2 This is a field that has been well researched in the last decades. For an overview, cf. Waterson, *Defending Heaven*; Bernardini and Guida, *I Mongoli*; Jackson, *Mongols*; Schmieder, *Europa*.

3 Here, too, a rich bibliography is available. Cf. amongst others: Philipps, *Before Orientalism*; Khanmohamadi, *Anothers's Word*; O'Doherty, *Indies*; Vogel, *Marco Polo*; Münkler, *Erfahrung des Fremden*; Larner, *Marco Polo*; Reichert, *Begegnungen* and De Rachewiltz, *Papal Envoys*.

4 On this, see the remarks in Finnane, Yangzhou, 43-68 (who mentions the tombstones briefly *ibid.* 44, but highlights the important position of Yangzhou in trade); Arnold, *Princely Gifts;* Purtle, The far side; Reichert, *Asien*, 293-318; Lopez, Nouveaux documents; Lopez, Nuove luci and Lopez, European merchants.

The surviving funerary monuments from late medieval Franciscan China are not at all numerous. There are many reasons for this, but the complete collapse of the Catholic Church structure in China after 1350 or so plays a central role: already struggling after the death of John of Montecorvino and drained by the dysfluent influx of Franciscans from Europe, the rise of the Ming brought an end to the Franciscan missions in the Middle Kingdom. Churches and cemeteries were then either destroyed or repurposed, the building material – like tombstones – recycled for public structures. It seems that there are only three extant monuments associated with Western Christianity from the Yuan period, one in Quanzhou and two in Yangzhou. In the case of the Yangzhou tombstones, one of the two was recently exhibited in the China Maritime Museum in Shanghai in the course of the exhibition "The Sea is Right There", and both monuments are part of the collection of the Yangzhou Museum. Although the tombstone of Caterina was accessible to us in the form of the photograph published in this article (Figs. 1, 2), the tombstone of Antonio is for the moment only accessible via the rubbings and pictures taken from the tombstones shortly after they were unearthed in 1952 (Figs. 3, 4).[5]

5 On the Shanghai exhibition "The Sea is right there", cf. its website (including a picture of Caterina's tombstone amongst its showpieces): https://exhibit.artron.net/exhibition-71301.html (accessed on 9 January 2021). We thank Cai Tingting, Shanghai Maritime Museum, and Zhuang Zhijun, Yangzhou Museum, for their kind assistance in our research. Unfortunately, only Caterina's tombstone is currently available for research, whilst Antonio's tombstone seems to be lost for the moment, but might resurface in the future in the museum's depot. Although Clarke, *Catholic Identities*, 22, after 82 (Image 1), and 209 (n. 40) mentioned difficulties in accessibility in 2009, Caterina's tombstone at least has been publicly shown since then. A picture in this publication shows Francis Rouleau in front of one of the rubbings that after him were used by nearly all publications on the stones. Clarke quotes Finnane, Yangzhou, 341, n. 8, where the author remarks dryly: "The gravestones can be viewed in the Yangzhou museum." We thank Folker Reichert for making us aware of this discussion of the Yangzhou tombstones, Felix Martin for pointing us towards the exhibition of Caterina's piece in Shanghai, and Yen-Hsi Beyer for getting in touch with the museums in Shanghai and Yangzhou. The catalogue of the Shanghai exhibition was not yet available to us, but probably will be in early 2022.

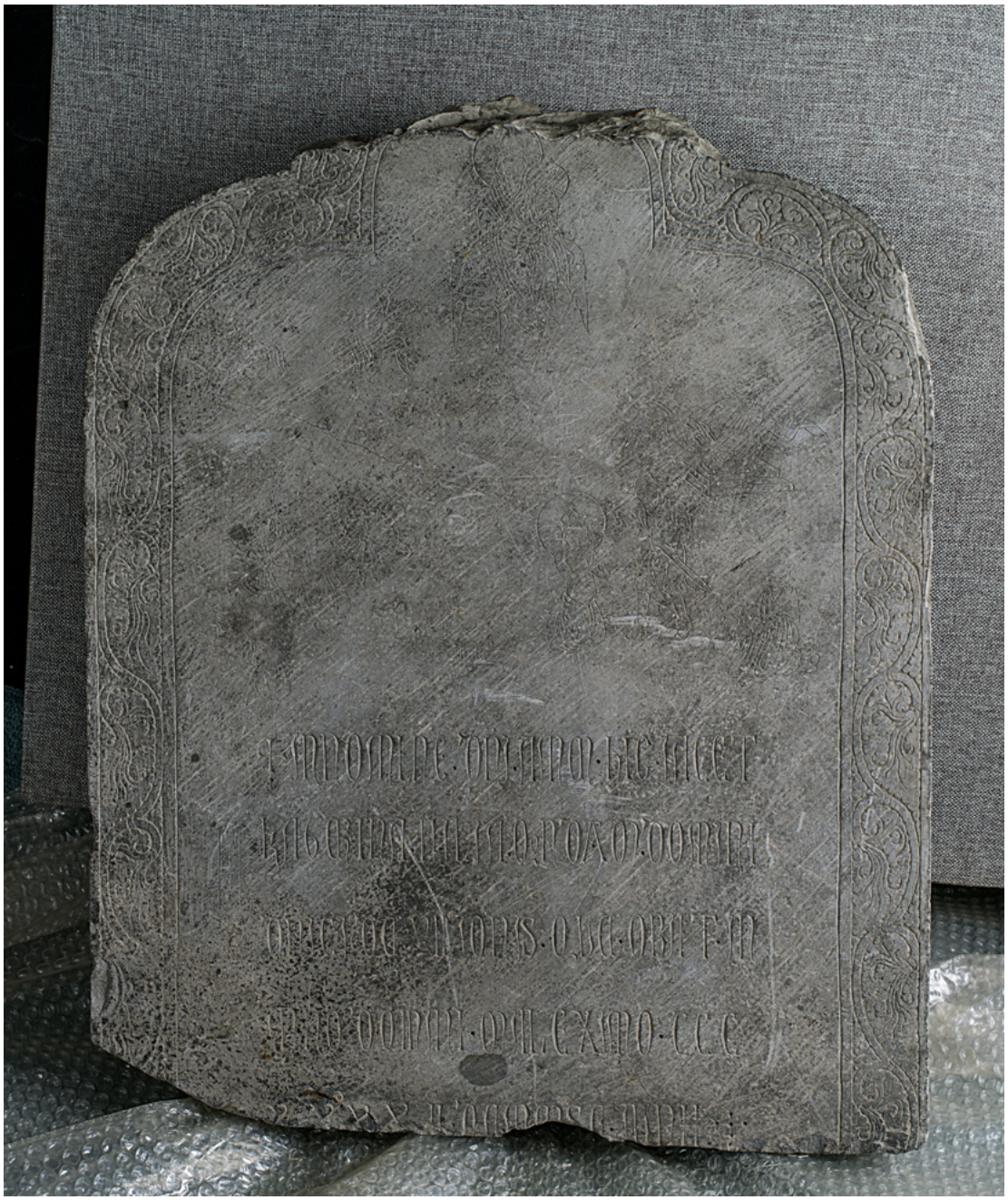

Fig. 1: The tombstone of Caterina de Ilioni at the Yangzhou Museum in 2021 (picture by courtesy of the Yangzhou Museum)

Fig. 2: Photograph of the original rubbing of Caterina's tombstone, today in the Yangzhou Museum (picture by courtesy of the Yangzhou Museum)

Fig. 3: The rubbing of Antonio de Ilioni's tombstone, as published in: Geng, Yangzhou, 449.

Fig. 4: The tombstone of Antonio de Ilioni, as published in: Xia, Guangzhou, 534.

The Quanzhou monument is the tombstone of Andrew of Perugia, a Franciscan friar and bishop of Quanzhou, who died in 1332. It was found in 1946, and its original is said to be in a Beijing museum, with a copy of the monument still housed at the Maritime museum of Quanzhou. Photographic reproductions of the tombstone available to us reveal a Latin inscription, beginning with a cross and "hic" ("Here"), but it is nearly impossible to say more about the paleography of the monument on the basis of this material alone.[6] From the images, it seems as if the inscription was already both worn down at the time of rediscovery in the mid-20th century and of a rather mediocre quality in the first place: this is highlighted by the slightly irregular setting of the rows, their placement in the center of a stone which is only partially carved, and a final row that ends after only half its possible length in the text block, pointing to a lack of conceptualization for the script, even though there was no need to save space in this case. The script appears to be a kind of Rotunda, or at the very least, a different script from the one used in the two examples from Yangzhou, and the inscription shows a closeness to Latin book hands, which, even if poorly executed, may have relevance for the material in Yangzhou as well. The monument to Andrew of Perugia has already been analyzed in detail by the art historian Jennifer Purtle, and this article cannot add much to her work on the iconography of the piece.[7]

On the other hand, the situation of the tombstones in Yangzhou is different, since there are good pictures of the rubbings made at the time of their excavation only a couple of years after the discovery of Bishop Andrew's monument, and one of them was recently exhibited in the already mentioned Shanghai exhibition. These funerary monuments were erected for two siblings, Caterina Ilioni, who died in 1342, and Antonio Ilioni, her brother, who died shortly afterwards in 1344. They were found in the foundations of a rampart of the city wall of Yangzhou in 1952, in a segment built in or around 1357.[8] Since they were relatively recent at the time, the story of their immediate fate emerges reasonably clearly: after taking the town from Mongol/Yuan rule, Ming forces reorganized the city's defenses and used the material from the Franciscan mission nearby. The change in attitude towards the foreign religion was made clear with this both symbolic and pragmatic act.

Since their discovery, there has been a minor controversy amongst researchers about the origins of the father of Caterina and Antonio. The idea that he might have been part of the Venetian family Vilioni has been dropped in favor of the more striking parallel with a Genoese merchant that Roberto Sabbatino Lopez found in documents of the time. Domenico de Ilioni is mentioned in the will of another Genoese merchant in 1348, and named as "in partibus Catagii", which testifies to his presence and activity in Cathay, i.e. Yuan China.[9]

6 The best photograph of the inscription is found in a publication that came out a decade after the discovery: Wu Wenliang, *Quanzhou*, 28, fig. 75.2. The monument was also included in the short catalogue: *Quanzhou zongjiao shi ke chen lie guan*, 7, fig. 9. Cf. also the remarks by Clarke, *Catholic Identities*, 18-20, who also hints at "a few other tombstones with Latin inscriptions" at Quanzhou (*ibid.* 19), which we couldn't find in the quoted literature (*ibid.* 207, n. 26).

7 Cf. Purtle, The far side, 180-181 and 184-186; Reichert, *Erfahrung der Welt*, 198; Arnold, *Princely Gifts*, 81 and 136; Enoki, Nestorian Christianism, 63; Foster, Crosses, 17-25; On Andrew, see Moule, *Christians in China*, 189-195.

8 Rouleau, Tombstone, 350-351; Geng, Yangzhou, 449; Xia, Guangzhou, 532.

9 Lopez, Nouveaux documents, 455-56. Cf. also Purtle, The far side, 178-182.

Although this identification is convincing, the insecurity lingered in later publications, although several authors insisted that it must have been this Domenico de Ilioni from Genoa.[10] Since Domenico is explicitly named in both inscriptions, this discussion could have included the paleography of the two monuments, but astoundingly this was not the case.[11] Once more, epigraphy is notably absent.[12]

This is true for the analysis by art historians, too.[13] Here, the transcultural aspects of the iconography have been studied in greater detail, so that we can take for granted that it was a Chinese artisan who engraved the pictures according to Western Christian iconography, probably described or shown to him by the commissioner of the tomb stones (or someone acting on the commissioner's behalf, i.e. a Franciscan friar). The framework for the style used was taken from local tradition, using the same basic elements common to Buddhist art of the time. The basic form of the tombstones with their curved and pointed upper parts and the prominent floral motive in the rim was common in contemporary Nestorian, Manichean, and Muslim funerary monuments in China, so here several influences were merged and formed a new style, blending traditions from Latin Europe with dominant Chinese and local Buddhist art, and funerary culture common in other minority groups in the region.[14]

In the case of Caterina's tomb marker, we can name several such elements of cultural hybridity: the angels without feet, resembling depictions of ghosts in the Chinese tradition; Saint Catherine with a Buddhist crown on her head whilst kneeling between two wheels that deviate from European wheels used in capital punishments at the time (probably the result of the Chinese master's imagination); Mary seated on a Chinese bench and with a prominent halo, making her resemble Guanjin; and a figure kneeling in front of the decapitation of

10 Xia, Guangzhou, 533. Cf. also Reichert, *Begegnungen*, 80 and 86; Reichert, Erfahrung der Welt, 192.

11 In fact, the analysis of the reading of Domenico's family name is a little tricky. In contrast to the only *V* in the inscription (the *QVI* in the fourth line of Antonio's inscription), the first letter of *VILIONIS* has – in both inscriptions – a small additional hook at the lower end, but since the writer(s) of these inscriptions love a certain variation in their embellishment of the letters, it is more likely that this is indeed a *V*, making it *VILIONIS*, not *YILIONIS* (with a superfluous *I* after *Y*), and certainly not *YLLIONIS*, as sometimes stated (e.g. Reichert, *Begegnungen*, 80, n. 90; Finnane, Yangzhou, 341, n. 8), since the second letter is undoubtedly an *I*. This said, the name of the Genoese family might well have been written with a number of variants, including Ilioni, Viglioni and Vilionis (and, therefore, Arnold's and our own earlier use of Vilionis as the family name is mistaken, although it might well match with the paleography of the stone; cf. Arnold, *Princely Gifts*, 138-141; Schmitz-Esser, Odorich von Pordenone, 149; Schmitz-Esser, Buddha, 329). We thank Tino Licht (Heidelberg University) for his help in analyzing this (and other) puzzling detail(s) of the inscription.

12 At least Purtle, The far side, 180-184, noticed the close resemblance of Genovese inscriptions from the Black Sea region with the script used here. For Rouleau, Tombstone, 347 and 359, the Franciscan friars were responsible for the execution of all aspects of the tombstones, but the discussion since then has made this highly improbable, leaving us with the need for a closer analysis. The only detailed analysis that even includes the slightly irregular use of the dots in between words is provided by Xia, Guangzhou, 532-535.

13 For the following, cf. esp. Purtle, The far side, 180-184; Arnold, *Princely Gifts*, 129-141. That the artist was Chinese is stated by Reichert, *Erfahrung der Welt*, 192, too.

14 Rudolph, Tombstone, 134, quotes corresponding examples from Quanzhou, and a collection of them is found in Wu Wenliang, *Quanzhou*. The rim has gained less attention, but was already classified as adorned with Chinese motives by Xia, Guangzhou, 535.

Catherine on the right-hand side, clad in the robe of a Buddhist monk, perhaps a Franciscan friar or, more probable in comparison with such artworks in Latin Europe, the father and commissioner of the work, holding the deceased child in his hand.[15]

In the case of Antonio's slab, the Chinese elements are less pronounced, but the principle of borrowing an essentially Buddhist style to depict Christian iconography remains the same: here, for example, Christ resides in heaven on a Chinese bench (instead of a rainbow), and the angels to his side again lack feet. Saint Anthony and the scene of the resurrection seem to have been less open to such a merging of traditions, but at least one figure in front of Saint Anthony resembles a person in Buddhist robes. But the script? Was it a Chinese workshop that engraved the Latin letters, or is this the work of another hand? Do we see the same merging of cultures manifested in the letterforms? It is time to turn to the paleography of the funerary monuments from Yangzhou.

Palaeography of the Yangzhou Tombstones

The two funerary monuments from Yangzhou are undoubtedly the work of a trained stone-worker who knew the Latin script and contemporary styles used in Latin Europe. That is, he must have not only been able to read and write; he also knew how to reproduce letters in a style fashionable at the time in Italy. The regularity of the letters, their articulate execution and the composition of the text are markers of his epigraphic expertise. This artisan plays with his letterforms, and uses decorative elements with an experienced hand.

But let's start with some basic observations. One can easily overlook the fact that the tombstones are relatively small in scale: Caterina's monument measures 58 by 48.8 cm,[16] similar to Antonio's stone at 59.7 by 37.5 cm. In Caterina's case, the text block was measured at 24 by 28 cm, and the letters with a height of circa 3 cm.[17] Caterina's inscription reads:

"+ INNOMINE · D(OMI)NI · AM<u>EN</u> · HIC · JACET / KAT<u>ER</u>INA · FILIA · QONDAM · DOMINI · / D(OMI)NICI · DE · VILIONIS · QUE · OBIIT · IN / ANNO · DOMINI · MILEXIMO · CCC^{O} · / XXXX^{O} · II^{O} · DE · M<u>EN</u>SE · JUNII +"

In Antonio's case, the text is similar:

"+ INNOMINE · D(OMI)NI · AM<u>EN</u> / HIC JACET · <u>AN</u>TONIUS · FILI(US) / QOND<u>AM</u> D(OMI)NI · DOMINICI · DE / VILIONIS · QVI · MIGRAUIT / <u>ANN</u>O · D(OMI)NI · M^{O} CCC^{O} XXXX^{O} IIII^{O} / DE · <u>ME</u>NSE · NOU<u>EM</u>BRIS +"[18]

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15 Xia, Guangzhou, 535, mentions the child in the hands of this figure, but identifies the main figure as a monk. In Western art of the time, the commissioners of such works of art often kneel besides the pictures of the saints, and it seems more likely that this is the reason why the figure of the father is kneeling here and holding the child at the same time. For a Franciscan monk, such a depiction seems highly unlikely and makes no iconographic sense.

16 The measurements were also taken in the recent Shanghai exhibition, and differ slightly: here, the tombstone of Caterina was measured at 62 by 50 cm, with a depth of 12.5 cm.

17 The measurements are provided by Xia, Guangzhou, 532 and 535.

18 This transcript does not note the special characteristics of the script, discussed in the following chapter in greater detail, but indicates ligatures by underlining such letters. The variations between *I* and *J* are – with the exception of *JACET* – omitted, because their distinction seems less than clear cut in the two inscriptions, whereas *V* and *U* were distinguishable and given here as they appear. To add but one detail: the first to note the consequent use of dots to distinguish the words in Caterina's inscription was Xia, Guangzhou, 532, who also included the remark that it was only absent at the very beginning of the text, leaving *INNOMINE* indistinct. The same is more or less true for Antonio's inscription (another omission here is the dot in between *QONDAM* and *D(OMI)NI* in the third line), although here the dots are set more carefully at the mid-height of the letters than in Caterina's case, where they sometime drop to the baseline.

Indeed, palaeographic analysis clearly confirms the quality of execution of the letters used, in particular by carefully observing variants in key letters such as *A*, *I* and *M*. The ability to alternate different but related forms within a well-defined canon of letters demonstrates a profound knowledge of the writing practices of the time, as well as familiarity with the particularities of epigraphic writing in a specific geographic area. Even the elements belonging to the decorative apparatus have epigraphic significance, despite being only seemingly unimportant simple "additions" to the letters that enhance the complexity of the inscription's graphic modes. In our case, this is evident, for example, in the systematic use of a type of pearl for the capital *I*, or in the ligatures and conjunctions of letters, some of which are more familiar (such as that between *A* and *N*) and some of a more novel nature (e.g. dividing the closing fillet of *E*, a decorative element, with the minuscule ascender of the letter *N,* a structural element). This use of letters and ornaments is inherent to the epigraphic system of that time, and only those who mastered it would have been able to create high-quality fonts like these.

The comparison of the two funerary monuments reveals remarkable aspects that are both common and yet specific for each individual. From a palaeographic point of view, the two objects share most of the graphic shapes of the letters, the ends widened in a wedge shape, as well as the punctuation in the form of a single point in the middle position, as well as the typology of letter connections, which we can call a *ligature*. Based on these elements, one could imagine the two grave slabs being constructed contemporaneously, perhaps even by the same stonecutter.[19]

The inscription for Antonius nevertheless shows some characteristics and also quite remarkable features. We refer specifically to the use of *H*-shaped spellings relating to the letter *N*,[20] and the digits of the date, where the four *X*s are also interlaced in a peculiar way in order to match a real Chinese decoration. These two details, which are used with stylistic and aesthetic intent, could be of primary importance for situating the stonecutter's background, and we will come back to these peculiarities in a moment. At the same time these details raise further questions: If it was the same stonecutter, why should such distinguishing features only be found in one plate? Are we seeing here a choice of style, for example to emphasize the importance of the son over the daughter, or is this a hint at the production processes and transcultural teamwork that might have been at play here?

The quality of the characters present in the two slabs can be attributed to a craftsman who has mastered the Latin writing system of stylistic models currently customary in Italy. In other words, he was therefore not only highly qualified to read and write, but also knew the stylistic models of his time. In particular, he was also an expert in epigraphic writing: the evenness, the execution of the letters and, in general, the entire text composition as well as

19 The hypothesis is supported by the assumption that there might not be many experts in epigraphic writing in this region of Asia in the mid-14th century.

20 At first we thought it was an alphabetic element from the Greek language. The letter eta has the same shape but corresponds to the letter H. Further research has shown that the letter N has the form H in the Cyrillic alphabet. However, an influence of this alphabetical system is currently difficult to justify in this production.

the ability to regularly create letter games and the decorative elements point to the work of an expert hand.[21]

This is attested by the use of elements that belong to an earlier writing style (such as the *A* with a broken crossbar) and of others that are typical of a later script (such as the *F* or the *E*, which is closed with a fillet), and this can also be seen in the shaping of the writing of the apparatus as well as in the technique of sculpting the stone itself. However, the artisan probably did not pursue this as his main activity and used manuscript texts for the shapes of the letters, knowing how to use them correctly when creating an epigraphic text.

The stylistic peculiarities of the epigraphic text point to an experienced stonecutter among the members of the Franciscan congregation in Yangzhou in the 14th century. This leaves us with the problem that there is no evidence for the existence of a professional European stonecutter in Yuan China, as already stated above. But maybe we do not have to take this leap if we assume that a member of the clergy in Yangzhou was also a specially trained craftsman. That such an Italian friar might have been the conceptualizer – if not realizer – of our two inscriptions is made more probable by a look at the formulae used, which do seem to fit nicely into models used in early 14th-century Italy.

In both grave tombstones, the religious text is preceded by the formula "*In nomine Domini, amen*", which is typical for notarial deeds. In one study, Lorenzo Tomasin points to a similar practice that can be found in an inscription in the Church of Sant'Andrea near Belluno (Italy).[22] Given the presence of the Franciscans in Belluno from the end of the 13th century, it makes sense to assume that the stonecutters in Yangzhou could have come from these places (or at least from Veneto). The use of *MILEXIMO* in Caterina's script might hint at this background, too, since the use of *X* for a voiceless S is still in use in the Venetian dialect and is proudly considered one of the things which differentiate it from standard Italian to this day.

A little unusual is the double reference to death in the formula used in both inscriptions: both siblings are lying here (*JACET*, a common word to mark death and burial in funerary inscriptions) *and* were once (*QONDAM*) the daughter or son of Dominicus, i.e. they are deceased.[23] It is not uncommon to find such double uses of "jacet" and "quondam" in Latin epigraphy of the time; the "quondam" is always used to refer to a status or office that ceased either before or because of death. A nice 14th-century example is the tomb marker for an other Catherina, the wife of Arnold Voet, mayor of Stralsund, in Northern Germany. Dated to 1355 and once placed in St Nicolas' Church in the Hanseatic city on the Baltic Sea, here we find a similar formula: "Hic Jacet Catherina quondam uxor D(omi)ni Arnoldi voet" etc., mirroring the wording on the Yangzhou stones.[24] A parallel example is provided by the in

21 The most frequently considered stylistic and decorative elements are the most obvious, such as the pearls often used in the capital letter I, the shape of the triangle tip, the alternation between the simple me and the me in a sinuous shape, the play of letters. The ends of the sections drawn with small curves or loops, as well as all the details in the realization of the sections that would end up in the decorative system, are more difficult to attribute to the executor of the panel or to the hand responsible for its discharge. As a concrete example, take a look at the upper part of the letter I in its sinuous variant: the fragmentation between the horizontal and vertical section can hardly be traced back to one or the other creation, although it is a characteristic feature in both grave inscriptions.

22 "In Chr(ist)i no(m)i(n)e am(en), anno / D(omi)ni Mcccl. Fata fo ques/sta glesia a onor de s(an)c(t)o / Andrea ap(osto)li, p(er) ord(e)nam(en)to d(e) / s(er) A(n)drea e Pero so fiol, de intro / glesia e fisla far dona /Bonavintura muier che fo / del dito Pero", Stussi 1980, 95, quoted in: Tomasin, Filologia romanza, 515.

23 This already puzzled Xia, Guangzhou, 533, as a peculiarity of these inscriptions.

24 Magin, *Stralsund*, No. 22.

scription on the tomb of a certain Hildegard von Waldeck in the monastery of Disibodenberg, dated to 1368 and today also lost.[25] In a roughly contemporaneous inscription from Worms, a certain knight is even named as "filius quondam" after the use of the verb "obiit".[26] To quote one more example, an epitaph in Hildesheim names a dean of the church he is buried in as "decanus quondam huius ecclesie".[27] So far, the exploration of the palaeography and formula used in the Yangzhou tombstones fits very well into the broader picture of Latin epigraphy of the time back in Europe.

But, as already mentioned, there are paleographic aspects that really stand out in the Yangzhou tombstones, or, to be more precise, in Antonio's case. The slightly younger inscription on his monument has a tendency to graphically bring letters together and to add them into a block by a slight rearrangement or addition. The most striking case is found in the date: here, the year is given with four *X*s (for four times ten, forty), which in itself is not at all unusual. But in contrast to Caterina's slightly earlier tombstone the *X* figures are bound together in pairs so that they resemble two (instead of four) characters.[28] This is a creative solution, not known to us from any other Latin inscription; an observation that was confirmed in our discussion after the paper was presented at the Vienna conference "Wahrnehmung und Darstellung von Fremdem in Inschriften" in January 2020 to an audience of epigraphists. The writer's desire to combine two Latin letters into a new, more square-like character could well be an influence of Chinese writing on this particular part of the inscription. Once this pattern is detected, it seems easy to draw parallels to other graphic elements within the same inscription: the following four *I*s that form the Latin equivalent for four are bound together by a horizontal line, like a strikethrough, which binds these letters together, too, so that they become one symbol for the number they represent. Although not foreign to European epigraphy, the ligatures used – like the *EM* in the next line (*NOUEMBRIS*) using the left line of the *M* as the back of the round *E* – are more frequently found in Antonio's inscription than in Caterina's, which fits well with the observations that such conglomerations of letters pleased the writer more now than two years earlier. A further detail is odd and needs some attention: the *FILI(US)* has an *L* with two vertical lines, a doubled or open back, so to speak. Again, this shapes the *L* into a square or block, and from a Latin epigraphist's perspective it is an unusual error to make in writing this letter. When we go back to Caterina's inscription with these observations in mind, at least one odd letter comes to the fore that might be a precursor to this development in script: in the fourth line, the *ANNO DOMINI* has an *M* which is different to all other M-forms used in either Yangzhou tombstone. It shows only half of the round M usually inserted in these inscriptions and uses a vertical shaft on the left to substitute half of the letter. Oddly, this shaft is not linked to the rest of the letter, and since the shaft is straight, it might not simply be the rest of a once well-preserved round form of an M, thus aligning this M with the L in Antonio's case. Although this is the only such letter in Caterina's inscription, the finding highlights that whatever was the reason for the development of script on Antonio's funerary slab was already at work here, too. There is little doubt

25 We will only quote the important passage here: "Obiit Hildegardi vxor quondam Wilhelmi armigeri de Waldecke"; Nikitsch, *Bad Kreuznach*, No. 53.

26 "ANNO DOMINI M CCC LXIII III NONAS MAII OBIIT JOANNES CAMERARIUS MILES FILIUS QUONDAM HENRICI CAMERARII"; Fuchs, *Worms*, No. 144.

27 The epitaph dates to the year 1395; Wulf, *Hildesheim*, No. 107.

28 Obviously, it was the Chinese researchers that first noted this particularity, which at first led to the misreading of the year (1324 instead of 1344) before it was corrected. See the discussion in Xia, Guangzhou, 532 and 535.

that our observations suggest a certain kind of transcultural phenomenon, but unfortunately, the letters themselves are taciturn on the exact nature of this mutual influence: do we have here a Chinese artist or writer who is learning to write Latin script (and adapting it to be a little more Chinese), or is it a versed writer of Latin who is interested in experimenting to make his script look more Chinese, maybe inspired to do so because he is in the process of acculturating himself in Yangzhou?

It is possible that the Latin inscription was first written down on another medium (like paper) and then handed to a Chinese stonemason who recognized the form, outer décor, and pictures on the two funerary monuments, but our findings seem to imply agency on the part of the sculptor, not simply blind copying of a script with which he was not personally familiar. The novel formation of the four *X*s is more likely the product of creative acculturation of only one element of the Latin script. In our view, this fits equally well with a person versed in Latin writing, but already living for a long time in a Chinese environment and absorbing the script used in daily life by the majority of the population. In this context, the Greek use of *H* for *N* (like within the word *D(OMI)NI* in Antonio's inscription, which is certainly not a casual error but a deliberate choice on behalf of the writer) seems another hint at somebody interested and versed in different alphabets. This could go a long way to explaining the peculiarities of Antonio's inscription, not found in any European parallel.

New Perspectives on Medieval Epigraphy in Latin Europe

From the paleographic analysis we can deduce at least some clues about the person responsible for the inscription, and it seems fruitful to us to at least attempt to piece together all the stray bits that we have extracted from the two funerary monuments at Yangzhou so far. The person who designed these inscriptions was obviously able to read and write in Latin, and he knew both the contemporary style of writing in Italy and the formulae used in funerary monuments of the time back in Latin Europe. Moreover, he must have been part of the Catholic community in Yangzhou, and, since his writing style evinces familiarity with the contemporary lettering styles from the first half of the 14th century, his arrival in China must have been relatively recent – he was not born and/or raised in China by European parents, as Caterina and Antonio de Ilioni may well have been. This leads us to the following scenarios and results of our study.

First hypothesis: The person whose work we analyzed was a stonemason from Italy. In fact, we know about a couple of European artisans that were active in the Mongol Empire, but their presence here was a result of the Mongol expansion in the 1240s and 1250s, when, for example, a Parisian goldsmith was captured by the Mongols whilst on a visit to Hungary.[29]

But although we do know about the constant influx of Italian merchants into Yuan China, the evidence for a later migration of European artisans is – to our knowledge – non-existent. The script is, however, contemporary to the first half of the 14th century, so that this hypothesis leaves us with substantial doubt in the light of our knowledge about the Europeans' presence in China at the time. If we were to believe this scenario and argue that the sources are simply ignoring the fact of artisan migration from Latin Europe in the later Yuan period, we would have to acknowledge that the Catholic community in Yangzhou (and in China more generally) was much larger in the early 14th century than so far thought, consisting of a substantial expatriate kernel of believers who were working and living in the cities of the Middle

29 Van den Wyngaert, *Sinica Franciscana*, 253, 276-285; Cf. Olschki, *Guillaume Boucher*; Purtle, The far side, 170-177; Reichert, *Begegnungen*, 70 and Schmieder, *Europa* 54.

Kingdom. Further research could – and should – concentrate not only on the merchants and their influence on the mutual exchange of goods, but on artisans and the search for their influence in Chinese art, too.

But, since we have serious reservations about this scenario, a second hypothesis seems more likely, though not any less interesting in its consequences: the writer might have been one of the Franciscan missionaries active in Yuan China, and he could even have been one of the friars that were sent by the pope to aid John of Montecorvino in the early 14th century, after the future archbishop of Beijing asked for more support in a letter addressed to the head of his church back in Latin Europe.[30] This would draw connections between our textual and artistic sources and everything would fit in nicely with what we know about the presence of Europeans in Yuan China from the time the tombstones were erected. But the consequence is that we have to assume that this friar was a stonemason and had more than rudimentary skills in this profession. The pope and the general of the order, then, had sent not only able men capable of preaching and versed in theology to the East: they definitely sought men that were capable artisans as well, especially since their artistic skills were thought to come in handy in their prospective proselytization of the East.

These two scenarios do not necessarily exclude the possibility that the inscription was only designed by an Italian, but then, in a second step, the design was transferred to a model or sheet that was faithfully followed and copied by a Chinese artisan. It seems unlikely to us that such a scenario fits well with the fact that on the one hand, the pictorial side was obviously outsourced to a local workshop without especially close guidance from someone familiar with Western art, whilst on the other hand, the inscription shows no individual errors or freedoms in the way the script is designed, apart from very conscious, intelligent inclusions of innovative elements applying a Chinese logic within the framework of the Latin script. In this light, we think it more likely that the Italian designer of the script also incised it and left only the pictorial part to the Chinese workshop. Nevertheless, since we cannot be sure of the repartition of tasks in the process of carving these tomb stones or of the language skills within the Chinese workshop (did they learn Latin?), we must admit that this is as close as we come with our reasoning on the basis of all available data.

This leads us to two results of our analysis, and both challenge and shift our way of thinking about the late medieval Franciscan mission in Asia and our understanding of how funerary art was created back in Latin Europe and by whom. Regarding the missionary work, we can see that this endeavor was not only thought of in terms of religion as an immaterial spiritual concept. As Caroline Walker Bynum has recently stressed, the materiality of devotional practices was at the core of religious life in late medieval Europe,[31] and this shaped the preparation of the missionary work, too. Already, in choosing able missionaries, Church authorities and the Franciscan order sought people who would be able to perform every aspect of Catholic life in the far-flung places they were sent to. Since it was obvious that they had to cover great distances and to work inside a Church network that was not tightly knit, neither on a personal level nor in geographic terms, they had to be all-rounders: able preachers, steadfast in their Franciscan lifestyle, and ideally craftsmen, too, who could perform their duties in regard to the proper memory of the deceased among their flock to secure

30 Van den Wyngaert, *Sinica Franciscana*, 349-350.

31 Bynum, *Dissimilar Similitudes*. Bynum, *Christian Materiality*.

their good fortune in the afterlife.[32] Late-medieval Catholic doctrine about the afterlife comprised the idea of purgatory and stressed the importance of prayer for the deceased fellow Christians, and the mission in China had to incorporate this belief system and everything that went along with that within the backdrop of a new cultural setting. Since this was a point of departure from the Eastern churches, the correct way of dealing with the "memoria" played no minor role in the proselytization work of the Franciscan mission in East Asia. As a consequence, to create tombstones in the Western style must have been part of the job description for the friars sent to disseminate their particular version of Christianity in China. That they put some effort into this aspect of their task, and that they even had greater success in this regard, is proven by the Yangzhou tombstones themselves: not only does their materiality attest to the capability of producing tombstones whose inscriptions would have hardly seemed out of the ordinary back in a church in Italy, but the Chinese remark on Caterina de Ilioni's tombstone shows that the community of Chinese Catholics thought of these slabs – and the role that the material aspects of devotion and prayer played for the deceased within their Christian practice – as an integral part of their new faith.[33]

A second result of our study relates to the consequences that these inscriptions have for our understanding of the production of funerary monuments back in Latin Europe. It might be that we, as epigraphists, have been all too quick to assume that stonemasons were the producers of most of our medieval stone inscriptions. But it could well be that we see in them not so much the relicts of the work of lay specialists within medieval society, but of friars and members of other religious institutions of the time. Furthermore, the case of the Yangzhou tombstones might highlight the ubiquity of specialization, of division of labor, between those who cut the stone and carve images and décor onto them, and those who conceptualize the inscription and actually produce the script. Seen from this perspective, the conceptual distance between writing on paper and writing on stone seems to vanish, and there are good reasons to doubt that late-medieval practice lacked a clear-cut line between writing on parchment or paper and epigraphy as suggested by the modern differentiation of disciplines within historic research. This article seeks to challenge this view once more, emphasizing the fluidity between different modes of writing in the late-medieval period and highlighting the frequent transgression of differences in materiality by contemporaries. For the Franciscans in Yuan China, this flexibility was both necessary and useful in their daily work in China, and the Yangzhou tombstones speak to the emphasis placed on the correct care for the dead even at the outer fringes of the Catholic Church structure in East Asia. Global epigraphy can therefore demonstrate the possibilities for seemingly marginal and – in the true sense of the word – eccentric relics of our past to become important triggers for both our methodological discussions in the narrow field of epigraphy and the broader master narrative of global history.

32 Cf. Schmitz-Esser, *Corpse*, 35-87, for an overview and more literature on this broad topic.

33 In the translation by Arnold, *Princely Gifts*, 138, the remark reads: "Yin-wei obtained [the pleasure] of seeing [this]."

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Alienness and (Religious) Otherness in Late Medieval Inscriptions. A Case Study on the Epigraphic Shaping of Christian Self-Representation

Andreas H. Zajic*

This article examines images of (primarily religious, but – at least implicitly – also ethnic) otherness as featured by late medieval inscriptions from Austria and its neighbours. As an introduction to the topic, the author first presents a 19th-century epitaph from South Tyrol (Italy) that is dedicated to the memory of a youth originating from (modern) Sudan who, following his baptism, was brought to Europe by his mentor, a Tyrolean missionary. The exemplary religious lifestyle of the Catholic young man honoured on stone seems to have been directed to the local Christians as an exhortation to develop more religious zeal. Second, the study assesses a memorial erected in 1304 by the Benedictines of Altenburg Abbey, commemorating (pagan) Cumans that were killed on the grounds of desertion (as military allies of the Austrian duke in his campaigns against the king of Bohemia) and assaults against the (Christian) civilian population in battle, of whom 104 were finally buried by the abbot and the monks in a mass grave close to the monastery. A younger inscription (dating from the second half of the 14th century) serves as an epigraphic admonition to Catholic believers entering (what is now) St Stephen's Cathedral in Vienna to refrain from pagan idolatry, an appeal that was staged by presenting (today lost) statuettes of either antique or Cumanic origin. Finally, the text investigates the lavish tomb slabs of two Gypsy leaders (from the early 16th century) in Pforzheim and Tulln, who were buried in the respective churches. Highlighting the sharp contrast between the predominantly negative image of alien pagans from the earlier monuments to the self-conception of the Gypsy chiefs as assimilated Christians in their ultimate media of remembrance, the author points out that the process of epigraphic othering served to foster common self-conceptions of the Christian majority society.

Keywords: Epigraphy, Late Middle Ages, self-representation, otherness, Cumans, Gypsies, religious orthodoxy, funerary monuments, battle memorials

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It is a truism that social groups and societies rely on a large and complex set of rules and practices in order to ensure integration.[1] Narratives and images in which the identity of the community was stabilised likewise helped to create a coherent self-consciousness. Since "processes of group formation [include] labelling, boundary-making and stereotyping"[2] of concurrent or opposing groups, the perception or rather construction of otherness[3] always had an important share in establishing and affirming the self-conception of communities. Or, in other words: the construction of identity requires a process of othering, which can be defined as:

> the simultaneous construction of the self or in-group and the other or out-group in mutual and unequal opposition through identification of some desirable characteristic that the self/in-group has and the other/out-group lacks and/or some undesirable characteristic that the other/out-group has and the self/in-group lacks. Othering thus sets up a superior self/in-group in contrast to an inferior other/out-group, but this superiority/inferiority is nearly always left implicit.[4]

Rather than opposing superior in-groups and inferior out-groups, some othering strategies "create distance between self/in-group and other/out-group by means of dehumanizing over-inflation of otherness. The other then, is not so much (implicitly) inferior, but *radically alien.*"[5] The arsenal of relevant text- (and image-) bearing media that helped to put this process of othering in place included, alongside the mobile manuscripts, acts and charters, immobile or loco-static writing: inscriptions. Placed in more or less openly accessible or restricted spaces,[6] they could – whether one wishes to attribute to them an inherent "agency"[7] or not – promote an "internal" communication aimed at the self-perception and self-justification

1 Literature on the topic is abundant; for a good introduction, see the summary of relevant strands of interpretation in Lutter, Conceiving of medieval identities.

2 Mayall, *Gypsy Identities*, 3.

3 Woolf, Knowledge, 55: "perception of others is part of the process of the construction of the self." German-speaking scholars seem to prefer the term "alterity" (Alterität) rather than "otherness" with a slightly shifted connotation and methodological impact, cf. an overview of the more specific theoretical concept and its history by Becker and Mohr, Alterität. On the concept of "otherness", its many facets, and its history, see Goetz and Wood, Introduction, esp. 23: "'Otherness' is not just there; it is a matter (and process) of mindset and construction."

4 Brons, Othering, 70; cf. also Ertl and Mayer, Acculturation 93.

5 Brons, Othering, 72 (emphasis in the original). Brons' notion "radically alien" seems to be closely related to the significance of "otherness" as "not simply the unlike; it is the very negation of the same", see Harland, Rethinking ethnicity, 113.

6 I have dealt extensively with strategies of placing inscriptions in public (urban) space in an earlier article: Zajic, Texts (with select bibliography on the spatial turn and its impact on [post-Roman] epigraphy).

7 Cf. the paradigmatic sketch of Karagianni *et al.*, Materialität, on the agency ("Handlungsmacht") of material "things" pp. 36-38; a round table discussion convened by my colleague Andreas Rhoby in the course of the 23rd International Congress of Byzantine Studies, Belgrade, 22-27 August 2016, applied the concept to inscriptions (The Agency of Inscriptions in Byzantium, in the West, and in the Slavonic World), see: https://www.academia.edu/27904640/THE_AGENCY_OF_INSCRIPTIONS_IN_BYZANTIUM_IN_THE_WEST_AND_IN_THE_SLAVONIC_WORLD (accessed on 1 December 2021).

of communities; on the other hand, they could also address a wide variety of beholders by communicating self-representation to non-group members, thus creating an external impact and maintaining external communication.[8] Both functions will be illustrated in the following article, which strives to explain strategies of framing alienness and otherness in (pre-) modern inscriptions, predominantly from a sepulchral context, by way of a closer examination of a few instructive epigraphic monuments from Austria and its neighbours. It will become evident, I hope, that images of Others and aliens frequently served to shape the self-consciousness and self-conception of Central European societies.[9] The sample I am drawing on is primarily focused on the topic of religious otherness,[10] but includes more or less explicit notions of ethnic otherness[11] and "deviant" lifestyles. Whereas the greater part of my examples will be from the later Middle Ages, I shall start with a memorial that goes back to the era of colonialism.

In Lieu of an Introduction: Admonition Through a "Christian Savage"

The hotel "Elephant" in the centre of Brixen (South Tyrol) is a remarkable place in many regards. Having lodged travellers from near and afar from 1551 and still being run by the same family since 1773, this "venerable institution"[12] is full of lovingly preserved souvenirs of the past. While most guests will indulge in reminiscences of prominent guests long passed, including European royalty of the 19th and 20th centuries, whose visits were frequently recorded on a wooden commemorative panel in the hall on the first floor, only those who are interested in the history of the long-standing house will, upon special request, receive a tour through the less prominent or rather remote parts of the building. Among the treasure trove of objects mirroring a number of centuries which the hotel and the city of Brixen have witnessed, one finds a collection of funerary monuments attached to the walls of the basement vaults of the historic building. When, sometime around 1930, the ever-expanding burial space in the arcades of Brixen cathedral was getting short, the pertinent authorities decided to dispose of older burial places and their related inscribed monuments. The then owner of the hotel, Wolfgang Heiss, had a keen interest in history and was eager to preserve those material remnants of the past. After some negotiation with the authorities, he was allowed to acquire the surplus stones, which he finally had attached to the basement walls of his hotel.

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8 The concept of "object links" between human beings and artefacts to which certain meanings were attributed by users/actors and which had their share in shaping practices of material objects, thus generating new significance, meanings and practices, as suggested recently (see the collective volume Institut für Realienkunde des Mittelalters und der Neuzeit, *Object Links*), seems worth further consideration.

9 In this regard, my study is also inspired by the underlying thinking of the classic account by Said, *Orientalism*, who pointed out that the paradigm of orientalism helped to create more coherent European self-images. On images (in the strict sense) in this context, see Patton, The other, and the articles in Eisenbeiß and Saurma-Jeltsch, *Images*.

10 Scholars seem to prefer the long-established dichotomy of orthodoxy/heterodoxy when discussing related problems, cf. Head and Christensen, *Orthodoxies*. Whereas these terms seem appropriate in investigations of diverse or concurrent doctrines, confessional heterogeneities, and deviant practices of cult within one (more or less) distinct religion, I will – in accordance with my topic – examine inscriptions that regard "infidels" and "pagans" as fundamentally Others and thus apply the term "religious otherness".

11 However, at least for the period under scrutiny, religion, not ethnicity, seems to have been the "decisive criterion for demarcation" between factions and groups among composite (multi-religious and multi-ethnic) societies, see Ertl and Mayer, Acculturation, 87.

12 Cole, Der Weg des Elephanten, 322. On the history of the hotel, see Heiss, *Weg des Elephanten*.

Among the large number of tablets, tomb slabs and epitaphs, the monument that immediately captures the attention of modern beholders is a large sandstone epitaph commemorating a most peculiar deceased (Fig. 1). The entire inscription, consisting of 33 centred lines in epigraphic Fractura reads as follows[13]:

> Hier ruht / Franz Xaver Logwit / aus den Stam(m)e der Bari=Neger, / geboren um das Jahr 1848 in der / Missionsstation Kopadiur bei Gondokoro in / Centralafrika und dort getauft am 1. Juli 1855, durch / besondere Fügung Gottes nach Europa geführt, / am 25. Sept(ember) 1863 in Brixen angekom(m)en, / am 27. Dez(ember) 1866 gestärkt mit den h(eiligsten) / Sterbsakramenten im Herrn gestorben. / Festes Vertrauen auf die göttliche Vorsehung, / rührende Andacht zum allerheiligsten Altarssakra=/ ment und Betrachtung des Leidens Jesu, kindliche / Liebe zu Maria, Verehrung der Heiligen, / besonders der h(eiligen) Martirer, hilfreiches Mitleid mit / den armen Seelen im Fegfeuer, Geduld im Leiden, / Zutraulichkeit und Dankbarkeit zeichneten / den from(m)en talentvollen Jüngling aus. / Andenken an seine / Großeltern / Basilius Lutweri, Häuptling von Kopadiur, / getauft am 14. Juni 1854, gestorben am 27. April / 1858, der erste christliche Bari=Neger, und dessen Gattin Luzia, getauft und gestorben 1857; / Geschwister / Lazarus Pithia, get(auft) 1. Juli 1855, gest. 1860; / Magdalena Kiden, get(auft) 1. Juli 1855, gest. 1862; / Gregor Utschon, get(auft) am 2. gest(orben) am 3. Nov(ember) 1855. // „Jch bitte, bete auch für meine Landsleute". // „Bitte, Him(m)elskönigin Maria für die unglücklichen / Neger, / Auf daß sie mit uns theilhaftig werden der / Verheisungen Christi". Pius IX.

Translation:[14] Here lies Franz Xaver Logwit from the tribe of the Bari Negroes [sic!], born c. 1846 in the missionary station of Kapadiur near Gondokoro in Central Africa, where he was also baptised on 1 July 1855, led to Europe by God's will, arrived at Brixen on 25 September 1863, passed away in the Lord, consoled with the last rites on 27 December 1866. The pious and gifted young man was noted for his firm trust in God's providence, his moving devotion to the sacred eucharistic sacrament and the contemplation of the passion of our Lord, his child-like love of Mary, veneration of the saints, notably of the saintly martyrs, beneficial sympathy with the poor souls in purgatory, patience in his suffering, trustfulness and gratitude. To the memory of his grandparents, Basilius Lutweri, chief of Kopadiur, baptised on 14 June 1854, deceased on 27 April 1858, the first Christian Bari negro, and his spouse Luzia, born and deceased in 1857, his siblings Lazarus Pithia, baptised on 1 July 1855, deceased 1860, Magdalena Kiden, baptised on 1 July 1855, deceased 1862, Gregor Utschon, baptised on 2, deceased on 3 November 1855. I beg you, pray for my countrymen! Pray, Mary Queen of Heaven, for the miserable negroes, so that they may with us partake of Christ's promises. Pius IX.

13 This article applies (with slight modifications) the transcription guidelines used within the world's most productive edition series of post-antique inscriptions, "Die Deutschen Inschriften", publishing inscriptions from Germany and Austria up until c. 1650. The series currently comprises more than 100 volumes in print, a good number of which are also available through the online database DIO (www.inschriften.net).

14 All translations in this article are by the author.

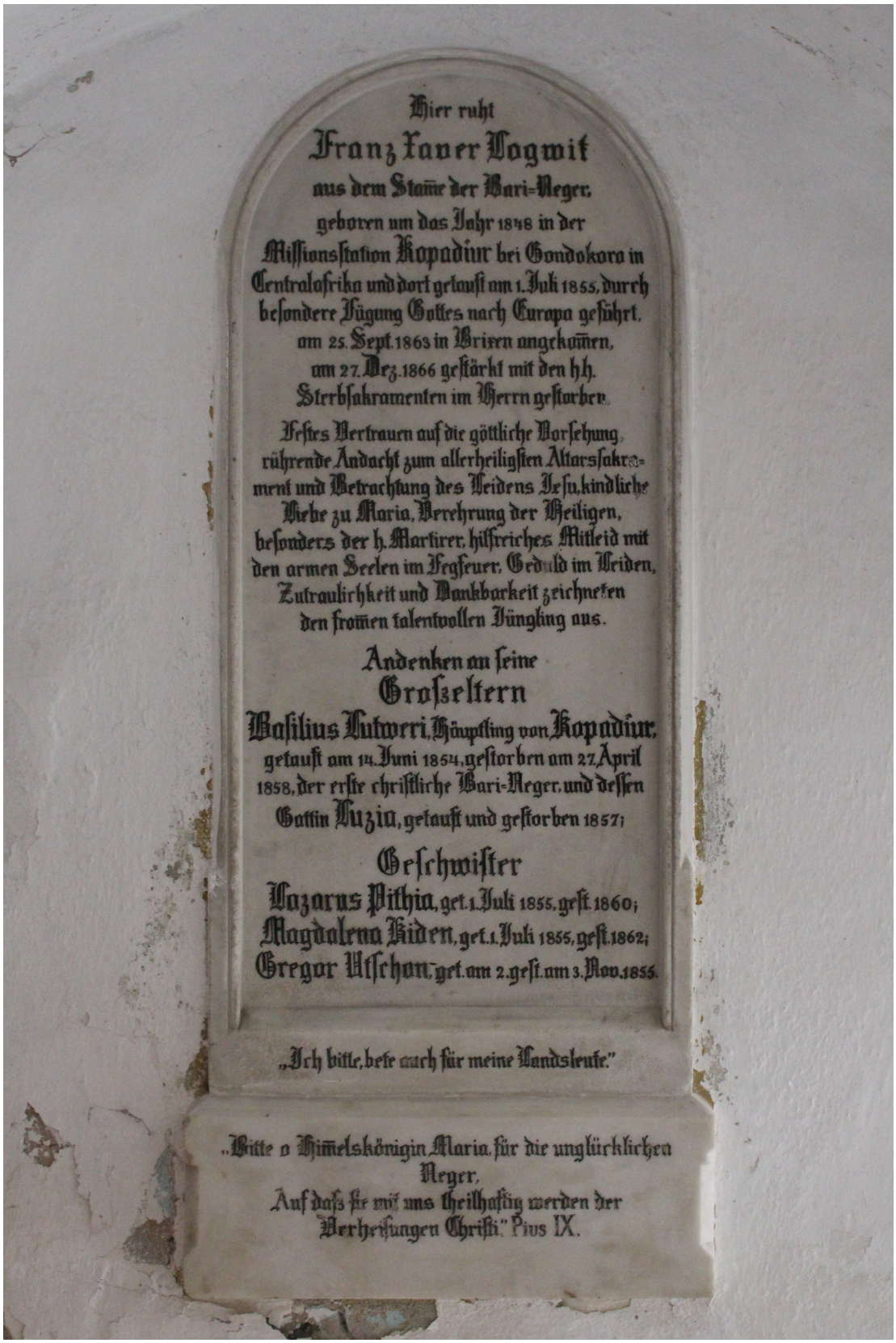

Figure 1: Epitaph of Logwit-lo-Ladú (d. 1866), Brixen (Italy, South Tyrol), Hotel "Zum Elephanten".

This is not the place to dwell on the baffling number of derogatory terms used in the text – composed at approximately the same time as the US army first called "buffalo soldiers" to arms – that modern readers must feel offended by. True to our topic, we have to restrict ourselves to an analysis of the textual strategies applied in order to evoke images of otherness around which the entire text seems – if not at first glance – to pivot. The attention paid to Logwit by the epitaph is justified not only by his notable Christian faith and religious devotion (far more than by his [intellectual] skills, which are only referred to superficially), but also by the fact that he was the offspring of an elite or ruling family, thus expressing the importance of hierarchy in "primitive" societies just as in European culture. Moreover, Logwit's family is depicted strictly according to the dominant modern European conception of a patrilinear family, leaving aside the more complex ties of kinship that probably seemed irrelevant to the commissioner of the inscription. Moreover, we are informed that Logwit's grandfather was the first baptised member of his tribe, which confers upon the family another attribute of historical legitimation.

In a certain sense, Logwit is presented as a special case of an older literary stock character, that of the "virtuous Indian"[15] or noble savage: in the Brixen inscription Logwit represents a "Christian savage", a figure that was not so much – given the public the monument could possibly address in the cemetery of Brixen – appealing to passers-by to imitate the example of the deceased by underlining the religious orthodoxy and great piety in spite of Logwit's being converted from a pagan and tribal African background. Rather, it seems quite clearly to act as a triumphal monument: by opposing Logwit's primitive tribal and pagan origins – he was, in fact, born to the family of the local political and religious leader (*matat*), who in 1853 had sold a piece of land in Kopájur close to Gondókoro to the Jesuite missionaries headed by the pro-vicar Ignaz Knoblecher (actually: Knoblehar)[16] – to the success that religious instruction by the missionaries had on him, the text cannot but be interpreted as a statement of the enormous impact that conversion had on "primitives". It is hardly by chance that the inscription introduces God's will as the fundamental reason for Logwit's "transfer" to South Tyrol and that after all, according to the inscription, Logwit was deeply grateful for his conversion and relocation, even though he died only three years after his arrival in Brixen. What is more, the plinth of the epitaph bears a double inscription relating to the efforts made for the salvation of the pagan primitives by the missionaries: taking up a locus classicus of funerary inscriptions, Logwit himself addresses the passers-by and begs them to pray for his countrymen. The meaning of this does not remain unclear for long: it is the concluding reference to Pope Pius IX's wish that Mary should help the miserable negroes partake of the well of grace and of Christ's promises, that points out that Logwit was hoping for a general conversion of his countrymen to Christianity.

Much could be said here on the sharp contrast between the very short reference to Logwit's skills and intellectual gifts ("talentvoll") in the epitaph and the actual role he played during the formative phase of Austrian African Studies in the mid-19th century as an important interpreter and authority on Central African languages and ethnography to his Tyrolean "promotor", Father Franz Morlang.[17] Whereas inscriptions apply strategies of communication with a more or less restricted audience, in view of the location of the inscriptions in different

15 See Onuma, Otherness.

16 Rohrbacher, Franz Xaver Logwit-lo-Ladú, 53.

17 See Rohrbacher, Franz Xaver Logwit-lo-Ladú.

spaces, and their texts are generally shorter than other textual media to which they refer, it is interesting to learn that contemporary newspaper articles did mention Logwit as a key figure for any research on historic languages of modern Sudan, since he enabled Johannes Chrysostomus Mitterrutzner, a Brixen clergyman and teacher who commanded 14 languages, to publish – shortly after Logwit's death – two internationally acclaimed monographs on the languages of the Dinka and the Bari – an opus that earned the author an Austrian order of merit and prizes and honours from several European scientific institutions.[18] Raised as a semi-orphan from the age of five in the missionaries' school in Gondókoro, Logwit's linguistic talent was only discovered in 1855, when Anton Überbacher met the boy at the mission's school. When the station in Gondókoro closed, the boy was meant to become an ordained priest and to take over the missionary work with his countrymen following studies in Rome and was thus – of his own free will and not forcibly – brought to South Tyrol. Due to the lack of a vacant scholarship for Logwit's Roman studies, he continued his secondary education at the Stiftsgymnasium of the Augustinian canons at Neustift Abbey close to Brixen, where Mitterrutzner became his teacher – and vice versa.

The Brixen monument seems to present a paradoxical case in terms of its internal textual argumentation. It commemorates a deceased who must have appeared as a natural alien to his Tyrolean contemporaries. Since Logwit was a foreigner in so many regards, the inscription does not have to go to great lengths to evoke the notion of otherness when introducing its protagonist.[19] What is striking is that the amount of text that refers to his faith in God and his pious lifestyle clearly prevails. The text is implicitly an admonition to an audience *born* into a Christian society and environment: if this remarkable alien who had gone a long way from his native pagan origins to the refined life (and premature death) as an exemplary model of religious zeal – a telling example of positive racism – managed to obtain God's grace by leading an honest life as a true believer, how much easier should it be for the native Christians to adopt a life according to God's commandments and to sip from the well of grace? In this sense, Logwit was introduced as an outstanding outsider who, notwithstanding his baptism and integration into a Christian society, remained an alien even in terms of his exemplary and extraordinary faith. On closer inspection, the actual biographical data on Logwit provided by the memorial did not exclusively serve to deliver information on the vicissitudes of his life, but rather to sketch an "exotic" or "other" backdrop to an implicit admonition addressed as a matter of fact to the local (white) Tyrolean reader.[20]

18 See Rohrbacher, Franz Xaver Logwit-lo-Ladú, 50-51. It seems that Mitterrutzner truly acknowledged Logwit's role as his teacher and source of the Bari language, calling him "Mein Schwarzer Lehrer in der Bari-Sprache" (my black teacher of the Bari language) in one of the books, printed in 1867; *ibid.*, 52.

19 The tension between two seemingly opposed identities that are sometimes simultaneously ascribed to people of colour in a largely homogeneous "white" society still remains crucial to the view of their work today. See Barratt-Peacock, *Concrete Horizons*, 177: "In these cases [two earlier poems composed by the Australian Indigenous poet Watson] 'Aboriginal' or 'Black' are depicted in binary opposition to the city or European cultural heritage." In contrast to this, more recent poems from the same author signal "a shift away from a strong binary between Aboriginal and White Australia, towards the assertion of highly specific heterogeneous identities" (*ibid.,* 178).

20 Cf. the analogous purpose of African scenery in motion pictures shot for a white European audience as described by hooks, *Black Looks*, 374: "Films like *Heart Condition* [emphasis in the original] make black culture and black life backdrop, scenery for narratives that essentially focus on white people."

A "Christian" Burial for the Killed Pagans

Several hundred kilometres northeast of Brixen, we find an older monument that addresses the burial of aliens from distant countries in a completely different manner.[21]

In 1892, during construction work in the village of Altenburg in Lower Austria, a stone stele with a badly damaged inscription and an incised cross was found.[22] The archivist of the eponymous Benedictine abbey, Friedrich Endl, a keen protector of material cultural heritage, was informed of the find and arranged for the stone to be transferred to the monastery.

The stone of greyish-yellow conglomerate rock (most probably Gföhler Gneis[23]) measures approximately 107 cm in height, 60 cm in width and between 11 and 20 cm in depth. It consists of a base section occupying about the lower third of the total height and a much less thick section making up the upper two thirds (Figs. 2a and 2b). One broadside of the monument (hereafter referred to as the front for differentiation) shows in its upper two thirds a Latin cross carved with a triangular notch into the relatively rough surface with straight-ending, approx. 7-8 cm-wide bars, growing directly from the shoulder of the base.

Figure 2a: Memorial of the "Battle of the Cumans" (front), 1304, Benedictine Abbey of Altenburg (Lower Austria).

21 I have dealt with the following in greater detail in an earlier German article: Zajic, Kumanenstein.

22 Endl, Notiz, and NN., Gedenkstein; Zajic, Kumanenstein.

23 The indication of the material is taken from the catalogue article in *Das Alte Kloster*, no. 29.

Above the crossbar and parallel to it at a distance of about 1.5 cm from the base line is an inscription carved in an almost round triangular notch, which continues in a second line within the crossbar. The upper end of the cross, the end of the first line of inscription and the right end of the horizontal crossbeam with the line of inscription are lost, as the upper right-hand edge of the surface split off in a curving line starting about 15 cm from the left edge at the top of the stone and leading to the right end of the crossbeam. The other broadside (hereafter referred to as the reverse side) features an eight-line inscription, also carved with an almost round triangular notch, on a clearly smoother surface compared to the front side.

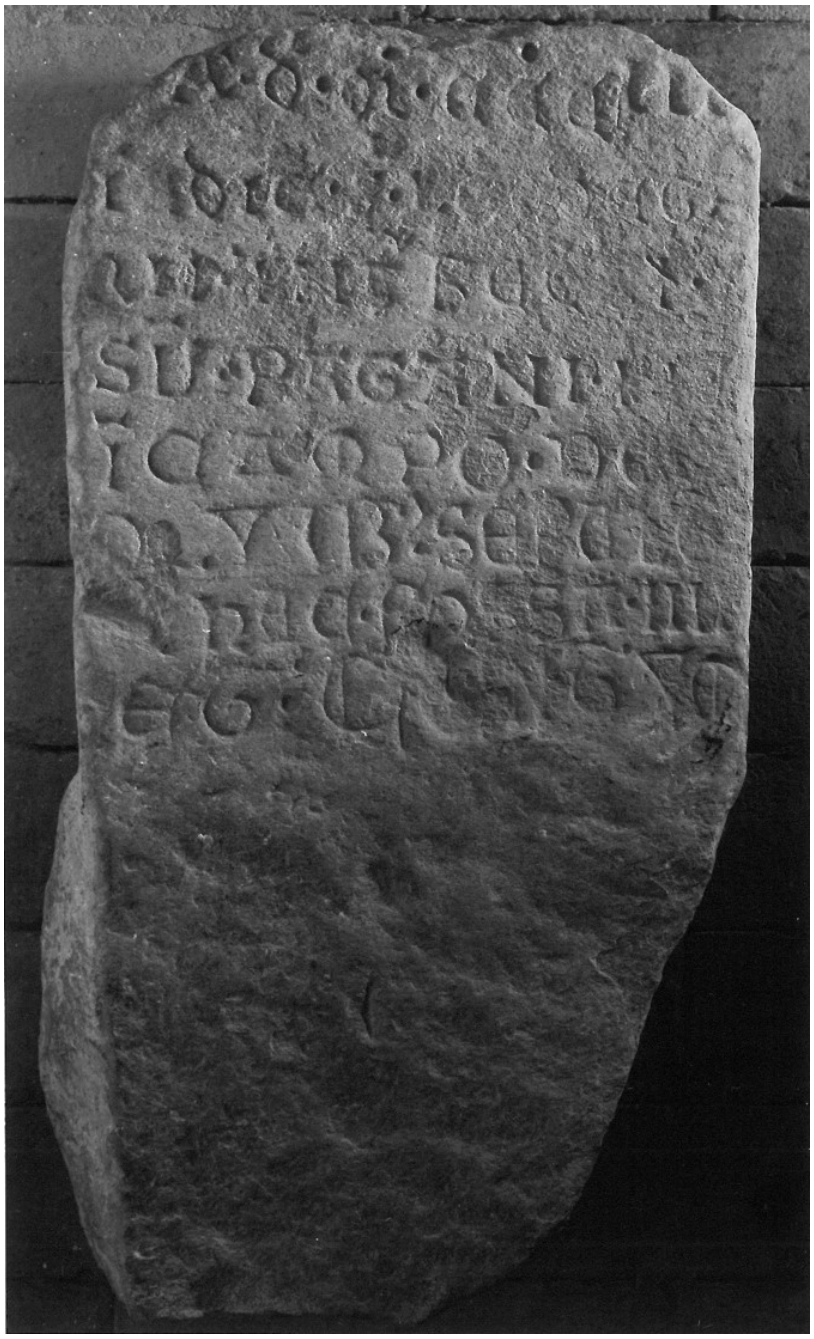

Figure 2b: Memorial of the "Battle of the Cumans" (reverse side), 1304, Benedictine Abbey of Altenburg (Lower Austria).

The reverse side bears stronger evidence of weathering, and the right half of the inscription is also heavily worn due to mechanical stress, with the right edge showing only extremely faint remnants of letters in places.

From what has been said (and because of the arrangement of the inscriptions) it is clear that the monument must have been standing upright in the open for a very long time, exposed to the effects of the weather, presumably with the uninscribed part, described above as the plinth area, sunk into the ground. Older literature, which will be discussed below, proves that the stone served as a doorstep for some time, i.e. it was placed horizontally, at a point in time towards the end of the 18th century that cannot be specified more precisely. This circumstance explains the fact that the reverse side is both more weathered and – in contrast to the front side – worn, whereby the right, more damaged edge probably functioned as the entrance side. It seems likely that the aforementioned break-off on the front had already occurred before the slab was used as a threshold, which is why it was decided to place the damaged side with its base forming a small step in a horizontal position, at the bottom, and the back side, which is smoother (even more so today due to wear), facing upwards.

The inscriptions are cut in Gothic majuscule with letters about 4-5.5 cm in size and read:

Front:
TEMPORI[BVS] / ABATI(S) SIFRI[DI]

Reverse side:
A(NNO) · D(OMINI) · M · CCC III[I] / I(N) DIE · S(ANCTI) · LE[O]DEGA/RII · INT(ER) FEC[T]I · / SU(NT) · PAGANI · [HIC] / I(N) CAMPO · DE / QVIB(US) · SEPULT[I] / I(N) HAC · FOSSA · IIII · / <ET · C[E]NTVM>

Translation: At the time of Abbot Seifried (front), In the year of our Lord 1304, on St Leodegar's day, the pagans were cut down here in the field. One hundred and four of them are buried in this grave (reverse side).

The inscriptions thus offer two (as we shall see, complementary) dates: on the one hand a period defined by the reign of Abbot Seifried, and on the other hand, an exact date specified by indicating the incarnation years and the day according to the Roman festival calendar. Furthermore, it is clear from the wording of the inscription on the back that this date refers to a military event (*campus* in the sense of a battlefield) in which unspecified "pagans" were killed and subsequently buried. According to the inscription, the place of the battle as well as the place of burial is marked by the stone itself.

The statement in the text thus confirms the conclusion reached above on the basis of its preservation that the stone was initially erected in the open air, i.e. *in campo*, in the broadest sense of the term. Even if the original location cannot be determined, the earliest credible source suggests that the stone was still on site towards the end of the 18th century, In 1823 Friedrich Reil wrote that this monument "had still been seen by the present Father Burkhard from Altenburg Abbey, and a farmer from the village of Altenburg had had it lying in front of his threshold for a long time".[24] Apparently, Reil refers to two successive sites the stone occupied: first the position at what is assumed to be the original unspecified location, then the

24 Reil, *Wanderer im Waldviertel*, 69.

secondary use as a threshold. However, in 1823 the stone seems not to have been there anymore, because Reil obviously did not see the monument himself. Schweickhardt's account, published in 1839, merely repeats Reil's second statement in which he states that the stone "had been lying in front of a farmer's doorstep from the village of Altenburg for a long time".[25] In his Stiftsgeschichte (History of the Abbey) from 1862, Honorius Burger writes with regard to the memorial stone:

> (...) and is to be found there [in the village of Altenburg]. (...) and there [i.e. near the "Heidenteich" in the vicinity of Altenburg; author's note] is said to have been a memorial pillar, which, however, was casually broken off 60 years ago, and is said to have been used by a farmer as a doorstep.[26]

It seems paradoxical that Burger, who obviously did not see the stone with his own eyes, was later named as the witness for its location during his reign: "Abbot Honorius Burger has seen the aforementioned memorial stone used as a step in front of a house in the village of Altenburg."[27] Eventually, according to Helmling, the stone was found as a "paving stone" in 1892.[28] In any case, it is undisputed that it has been kept in the museum at Altenburg Abbey since it was lifted in 1892.[29] Having clarified the preliminaries of the find history in detail, which seems justified by the contradictions presented, the content of the inscriptions will now be discussed.

On St Leodegar's Day (2 October) 1304, near Altenburg Abbey, 7,000 Cumans were allegedly put to flight by the troops of King Albrecht I. In the ensuing battle, between 400 and 500 Cumans were killed, the rest driven out. Since this military event has hardly found any major echo in the Lower Austrian regional historiography, let alone in the historiography of Austria as a whole, and the role of the Cumans in the second half of the 13th and at the beginning of the 14th centuries in Central European history is not generally known, a few introductory

25 Schweickhardt, *Darstellung*, 11.

26 Burger, *Geschichtliche Darstellung*, 32. The map of Austria below the Enns from the "Josephinische Landesaufnahme" (1773-1781) (see https://maps.arcanum.com/de/map/firstsurvey-lower-austria/?layers=151&bbox=1725229.1684572338%2C6211730.477822628%2C1743411.6265605702%2C6218571.591854151; accessed on 1 December 2021) shows a nameless small pond (north)west of the monastery, immediately south of the road leading to Fuglau, which is almost certainly the so-called "Heidenteich" (the "Pagans' Pond"), most probably close to the spot where the corpses were buried in 1304 and hence named accordingly. Immediately north of the road the map shows a stone cross that is not necessarily identical with the stone of 1304, since it is still included in the "Francisco-Josephinische Kataster". On the map of the "Franziszeischer Kataster" (1823), the pond seems to be registered as parcel 829 (see https://maps.arcanum.com/de/map/cadastral/?layers=3%2C4&bbox=1733517.7188340172%2C6214253.667088684%2C1738063.3333598513%2C6215963.945596565; accessed on 1 December 2021). The situation seems almost unchanged in the "Francisco-Josephinischer Kataster" (1869-1887), which still displays the pond and the cross, see https://maps.arcanum.com/de/map/thirdsurvey25000/?layers=129&bbox=1729834.714590587%2C6213788.395581668%2C1738925.9436422552%2C6217208.95259743; accessed on 1 December 2021).

27 NN., Gedenkstein.

28 Helmling, *Führer*, 45.

29 Mentioned by Strommer, *Stift Altenburg*, 15 (no. 1).

remarks may not seem inappropriate. In the late 11th and 12th centuries, the Cumans (Lat. *comani* and *cumani* from Gr. koumanoi or komanoi, Middle High German *Valwen*[30]), a nomadic Turkic people from the Eurasian steppe, dominated an area from the Lower Danube in the west to the Aral Sea or even the Talas River in Central Asia in the east. Living primarily from modest agriculture and periodic raids (for slaves and luxury goods), the Cumans also maintained trade relations with Byzantium and the Latin West. Initially followers of shamanic cults, Islam partially spread among them in the 11th century; from the 13th century onwards, orthodox and Catholic missionaries (esp. from the Dominican and Franciscan orders as well as the Teutonic Knights) began their attempts to convert them, but Christianisation was not completed until the 14th century.[31] Lacking political unity in terms of a proper central authority, but thanks to their remarkable military strength as equestrian warriors (and paid as mercenaries, by plunder and loot), they formed important allies of surrounding empires such as the Kievan Rus' or the Latin Kingdom of Constantinople, but continued to make frequent raids on neighbouring territories (such as Byzantium in the 11th and 12th centuries). In Hungary, as a result of the loss of their old habitats in the steppes north of the Black Sea due to the Mongol invasion or Tatar conquest between 1237/1241 and 1245, between 20,000 and 40,000 Cumans were resettled against the resistance of the Hungarian nobles under King Béla IV.[32] Since this settlement in Hungary and throughout the Balkans, Cumans are repeatedly found as lightly armed mounted auxiliaries in battles, where they are always mentioned in close connection with the Hungarians, as for example at the battle of Dürnkrut and Jedenspeigen in 1278 on the side of Rudolf of Habsburg's allies.[33]

In 1304, Cumans also formed part of the army of King Charles of Hungary, who, together with the Roman King Albert I and his son, Duke Rudolf of Austria, led an armed campaign into the lands of his opponent in the dispute over the Hungarian royal crown, King Wenceslas of Bohemia. A contemporary account of the events is given by the chronicle of the Cistercian abbey of Zbraslav/Königssaal (today a part of the city of Prague),[34] which (drawing on a number of common *topoi*) reports alleged acts of murder, homicide, torture and inhuman and immense cruelty ("*inhumana ac immanis crudelitas*"), including the abduction of

30 The term *valwen* (in English *fallows*, meaning people of a pale complexion) is unlikely to have been coined by "white" inhabitants of Central Europe, but appears to be a designation "imported" from other peoples from the steppe countries. On the common European stereotypes of Others with a dark complexion, cf. Hunt, Skin.

31 Spinei, Cuman bishopric.

32 For a succinct recent overview, see Kovács, Kumans; for more comprehensive accounts, see Vásáry, *Cumans*, who provides a valuable synthesis, esp. for the relations of the Cumans to the Golden Horde, in spite of severe criticism of his methodology. Among the most authoritative monographs, mention must be made of Kovács, *A Kunok története*; cf. also Kovács, Origins; Gurevich, *Image*; Uzelac, Cumans. Archaeological evidence is used extensively by Lyubyanovics, *Socio-Economic Integration*.

33 See ample information on the battle, including a precise assessment of the Cumans' role, in Kusternig, Probleme; *idem*, *Studien*.

34 *Petra žitavského kronika zbraslavská*, ed. Emler, 88-89: "*Interea dux Austrie cum Ungaris, Bulgaris et paganis crudelitate comitante ipsum per Morauiam fertur feritate ferina* [...] *virginum quoque et matronarum ac ceterarum mulierum greges misere extra terre terminos ab illo exercitu paganico terribili sunt educti*.".

women and the killing of children, committed by the Cumans as allies of King Albert against Moravian civilians. In the course of the campaign, the Austrians complained about the allied Cumans, who were accused of similar serious attacks on the civilian population of Lower Austria. There are primarily three approximately contemporary annalistic sources for these events, namely the *Continuatio Zwetlensis tertia*,[35] the so-called *Annales Zwetlenses*[36] and the so-called *Styrian Verse Chronicle* (*Steirische Reimchronik*).[37] According to the *Continuatio*, the Cumans had been allowed by Duke Rudolf to loot and abduct Christian people "*loco solarii*", i.e. in lieu of pay,[38] though it seems reasonable that this concession applied only when the troops remained in the enemy territories north of the Austrian borders. Apparently, however, the Cumans continued to plunder after they had entered the dukedom of Austria, although they had been warned to stop.[39] Towards the middle of September 1304, however, the complaints of the Austrians in the camp of the allies between Weitra and Gmünd increased, so that King Albert felt compelled to intervene and demanded the release of the human booty, which the Cumans were rumoured to be more eager to obtain than any other treasure.[40] After refusing the surrender, c. 7,000 of the Cumans and Hungarians allegedly decided to flee by night, as already stated above. After their desertion became known, Duke Rudolf ordered 4,000 well-armed horsemen commanded by Meinhard von Ortenburg to pursue the fugitives, about 400 of whom were stopped and killed "*in die beati Leodegarii una feria sexta*"[41] between Feinfeld and Altenburg. The rest of the former allies were driven out in the direction of Eggenburg and Kühnring, the liberated prisoners initially remained in Altenburg. The fallen, however, were treated in the following way:

> *ubi* [i.e. in Altenburg] *etiam cadavera occisorum hinc inde sparsa per agros per abbatem loci collecta, ac in foveam grandem, ne aerem corrumperent, sunt proiecta; inter quos quidam nobilissimus comes, qui dicebatur dux ante Silvam, est occisus*.[42]

The less detailed Annales Zwetlenses repeat the statements of the Continuatio and conclude with the dating *Facta est autem hec strages in die sancti Leodegarii martiris*.[43]

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35 *Continuatio Zwetlensis tertia*, ed. Pertz, 654-669.

36 *Annales Zwetlenses*, ed. Pertz, 677-684.

37 *Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik*, ed. Seemüller.

38 *Continuatio Zwetlensis tertia*, ed. Pertz, 660: "*spoliis et captivitate christianorum, que dux loco solarii ipsis* [sc. Cumanis] *indulsisse dicitur*".

39 According to the *Verse Chronicle*, the Cumans claimed that they were not acquainted with the exact borderline: "*dô jahen si für den munt, / in wæren unkunt / diu gemerke der lant*", *Ottokars* Österreichische *Reimchronik*, ed. Seemüller, vv. 84385-84388.

40 *Ottokars Österreichische Reimchronik*, ed. Seemüller, vv. 84393-84396: "*swâ si kæmen hin / durch roubes gewin, / dâ stüend in nâch liuten der muot / mêr danne nâch dem guot*."

41 On St Leodegar's day, a Friday, *Continuatio Zwetlensis tertia*, ed. Pertz, 661.

42 *Continuatio Zwetlensis tertia*, ed. Pertz, 661, translation: Here, the abbot of the village also had the bodies of those killed and scattered all over the fields collected and thrown into a large ditch so that they not pollute the air. Among them, there was a most noble prince by the name of Duke Before the Woods [apparently a commander/chieftain from Transylvania]..

43 *Annales Zwetlenses*, ed. Pertz, 680.

The *Styrian Verse Chronicle* estimates the number of killed Cumans even higher: "*die ze fliehen wâren laz, / der wurden an dem nâch jagen / wol funf hundert erslagen*"[44]. It also gives evidence about the days after the battle:

> *dô der* âbent *ane gie, / dô kômen alle die, / die mit nâch jagen / der Valben heten vil erslagen / und die niht verrer mohten komen. / herberge wart genomen / bî Horne vil nâhen. / ein klôsterlîn si da sâhen / in den selben kreizen, / was Altenburc geheizen. / darin legten sich die herren; / von einander niht verren / daz ander gesinde lac. / unz an den funften tac / heten si dâ bit*[45].

In the light of the sources,[46] it is not difficult to relate the inscription on the stone to the "Battle of the Cumans" in 1304, yet the reason for the creation of this curious monument remains open to assessment.

One of the most common motives for erecting monuments to the memory of the dead, the written supplementation of the liturgical memoria, can be ruled out here: after all, the inscription explicitly refers to those killed as "*pagani*", while the sources mentioned above usually speak of "Comani" or "Valwen", and only rarely of "heathens" instead. Rather, the monument is concerned with the depiction of the event, which is probably based on knowledge and personal experience: both the number of dead and the matter-of-fact reference to the Cumans only as "pagani" imply necessary background information on the part of the commissioner of the inscription and its contemporary reader. If, in addition to the function of historical remembrance in a public space, the monument marks the actual place of the event, it can be assumed that there must be a functional connection between the memorial stone and similar stone crosses which were erected to commemorate an accident or murder at the site of the event. Such a memorial stone is described by Adam of Bremen as early as the end of the 10th century: "(...) *Burwido fecit duellum contra campionem Sclavorum, interfecitque eum; et lapis in eodem loco positus est in memoriam*".[47] A monument in the form of an inscribed crucifix, dating from approximately the same time as our stone, was placed on the site of the battle of Hasenbühl near Göllheim (Palatinate) in 1289 for King Adolf of Nassau soon after the event.[48] That the Altenburg stone undoubtedly stands in a tradition of similar monuments, most of which, however, have not come down to us from so early a period, is

44 Of those who were too slow to escape, about 500 were slain in a chase, *Ottokars* Österreichische *Reimchronik*, ed. Seemüller, vv. 84772-84774.

45 *Ottokars* Österreichische *Reimchronik*, ed. Seemüller, vv. 84805-84819, translation: When the evening closed in, / all those who had chased / and slain a good number of the Fallows / and could not get any further, / came to be lodged / in the vicinity of Horn. / They saw a monastery nearby in the same region, that was called *Altenburc*, and the lords came to rest in it; the servants lay not far from them, and they stayed there until the fifth day.

46 I gratefully acknowledge the additions provided by Kren, Fußnoten, to the limited number of relevant sources I had drawn on in my prior article.

47 Burwido fought in a duel against the champion of the Slavs and killed him; then a stone was set in the same place in his memory, Adam von Bremen, *Hamburgische Kirchengeschichte*, II.18, ed. Schmeidler, 74; Possibly the stone was still there in Adam's time, so that he knew it from his own experience, see *ibid*.

48 Neumüllers-Klauser, Schlachten, 195-196.

shown by several memorial stones of the 15th century, which largely follow the model of our inscription. Both monuments of remembrance for individuals and collective remembrance of the fallen and victims of battles make use of the textual scheme we know with only slight deviations and in varying degrees of detail: Year / date / indication of the event or cause of death with the number of victims / indication of the place.[49]

Thus, the "Kumanenstein" appears as a monument dedicated to a memorable battle, its main message undoubtedly being not the commemoration of the fallen (pagans), but the celebration of (Christian) victory. In the final search for the patron of our monument, the question arises as to who was most interested in a public memorial of this specific act of war and who had the opportunity to execute it. The answer would undoubtedly lead us to Abbot Seifried I himself: in 1297, then prior, he was elected as the 11th abbot and successor to Abbot Walchun. He ruled the abbey for 23 years until his death on 5 May 1320. During his reign, he purchased extensive estates and received numerous endowments, including the dotation of the abbey hospital by Hadmar von Sunnberg zu Asparn in 1308.[50] Abbot Seifried undoubtedly had the best connections to leading ministerial families (Albero, the son of another Sunnberg and at least one other member of a noble family had entered the convent under Seifried)[51] and knew how to draw on their potential for donations to the monastery; in addition, the construction of St Veit's Chapel and other parts of the building of the monastery took place during his reign. What is more, Seifried's direct involvement in the military events around the abbey in 1304 is beyond doubt: both the events of the battle itself and the subsequent accommodation of Duke Rudolf's knights in the monastery (see above) must have caused no small commotion in the convent. Finally, it was also Abbot Seifried who arranged for the burial of the fallen Cumans in a mass grave. Since it is also clear from the text of the inscription that the author of the memorial stone is to be sought in the Altenburg monastery (both the dating of the event after the reigning abbot on the front of the monument as well as the explicit reference to the "fossa" – according to the chronicles, excavated by Abbot Seifried – give sufficient reason for this assumption), it can be concluded with some certainty – based on the dating approaches offered above – that Abbot Seifried I of Altenburg was the commissioner. When, more than twenty years ago, I arrived at this conclusion, I was not aware of the fact that somebody else had done so on the same grounds as early as in the 1450s: Thomas Ebendorfer, a learned cleric (parish priest of Perchtoldsdorf, south of Vienna), theologist, diplomat, and chronicler, who used the *Continuatio Zwetlensis tertia* as a source for his writings, but most probably also knew the Altenburg monument from autopsy, included a reference to Abbot Seifried as its author when describing the events of 1304 150 years later in his *Chronica Austrie*:

> *Abbas vero Altenburgensis, ne cadaverum putredo horum* [sc. of the killed Cumans] *aerem inficeret, facta ingenti fovea tradidit <ea> sepulture, ubi et lapidem erexit in titulum, qui usque permanet ibidem*.[52]

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49 Cf. the examples provided by Neumüllers-Klauser, Schlachten, 185, 187, 191 and 194.

50 Burger, *Geschichtliche Darstellung*, 26-30. Cf. also Zajic, Grabdenkmäler.

51 Burger, *Geschichtliche Darstellung*, 28-29.

52 But the abbot of Altenburg, in order to prevent the air from being polluted by the stench of their corpses, had a huge grave excavated and buried them there; on the spot he also placed a stone monument, which still remains here to date, Thomas Ebendorfer, *Chronica Austrie*, ed. Lhotsky, 188. I would like to thank my colleague Reinhard Kren for indicating this source to me, which had escaped my attention before.

This turns the "Kumanenstein" into a unique "monastic" battle memorial. As the space available for the inscription was very limited, the brevity of the text is not surprising. In fact, the inscription must have remained somewhat enigmatic to those who were not otherwise informed of the events to which it refers. Without a proper reference to the battle on whose site the stone was placed as a kind of landmark, the inscription leaves the reader puzzled about the circumstances that led to the killing of 104 heathens and their burial in a mass grave. It is remarkable, however, that the wording stays rather "neutral" or unbiased and refrains from any scornful or derisive references to the killed enemies. This might easily not have been the case, considering that Cumans (alongside Mongols and other "barbaric" aliens from the Eurasian steppes) were frequently enough portrayed by contemporary Western sources not only as cruel enemies but – due to their alleged cultural inferiority – as eaters of "unclean" meat or even as cannibals.[53] In contrast to other medieval inscriptions commemorating military victories, the Altenburg stone even forgoes any expression of thanks to God for bestowing triumph on the Christian army. Not even the cross carved into the front of the stone can unambiguously be interpreted as a symbol of Christian superiority over pagan troops or as a means of humiliation, since cross-shaped stone steles appear to have been the standard form of memorials erected on battlegrounds at the time.[54] That being said, it remains noteworthy that in the inscription the killed enemies were not addressed as such nor as Cumans, but simply labelled as heathens:[55] the core (and in fact single) element that defined their alienness was their paganism, an attitude perfectly in keeping with stereotype notions associated with Cumans in Russian medieval chronicles.[56] The fact that the monks did not expressly envisage the killed warriors as "barbarian neighbours, whom they viewed with varying degrees of disdain, suspicion and fear",[57] but rather stressed their religious otherness as the fundamental characteristic of these strangers[58] seems to match the distinction

53 Cf. Zemon Davies, Cannibalism; Schmieder, Menschenfresser; Kovács, Origins 127; Weinhold, Speisenmeidung. The stereotype of culturally inferior nomad barbarians being cannibals or at least eating "unclean" meat continued to flourish and found its way even into the learned humanistic poetry of the early 1500s, see Klecker, Politik, 447 (on Joachim Vadianus' report on the Tatars' alleged predilection for horse meat).

54 I have collected a number of corresponding monuments in Zajic, Kumanenstein. Years ago, Andreas Kusternig directed my attention to the fact that the battlefield of Dürnkrut – more exactly the spot on the Weidenbach brook where King Přemyl II Otakar had allegedly been killed – had also been marked with a cross-shaped stone memorial. Unfortunately, the stone was lost in the 20th century, but the only known depiction (a watercolour sketch by Adolf Albin Blamauer [1847-1923]; Niederösterreichische Landesbibliothek, Topographische Sammlung, Sign. 25.235: https://bibliothekskatalog.noel.gv.at/PSI/redirect.psi%26f_search=%26sessid=---%26strsearch=IDU=-14C4E8A8-1DD-06726-000008EC-14C433AE%26pool=GLBN%26fil_select=TIT%26; accessed on 1 December 2021) makes it very likely that the object was placed there some time later: the cruciform shape of the elaborate stone (the crossbeams feature broad lily-shaped ends and a crucifix relief appears on the front side) does not match the style of the late 13th century. The monument, however, was known by the name of "Ottokarkreuz".

55 This is not the place to argue whether the Cumans defeated at Altenburg were still heathens at all; as early as around 1227 a Cuman chieftain or duke/prince by the name of Borč/Bortz/Boricius/Burchi was reported to have been baptised together with 10,000 of his people on the initiative of Archbishop Robert of Esztergom and Dominican preachers, a report that was repeated in a number of chronicles in Austrian monasteries, cf. Vásáry, *Cumans* 63; Kovács, Bortz; Spinei, Cuman bishopric 425.

56 Gurevich, *Image* 20.

57 Kovács, Origins 125.

58 Cf. Steckel, Verging on the polemical.

between images of enemies and images of the "Other" suggested by recent authors.[59] The primary motif of the Altenburg Benedictines for disposing of the dead bodies may have been hygienic concerns, as some of the chronicles suggest. Yet, by laying the corpses of the godless to rest in a proper (if collective) grave, the monks also fulfilled an important Christian duty by performing the last of the seven works of mercy: to bury the dead, after having (according to the chroniclers mentioned above) received and entertained the Christian prisoners that had been freed from the Cumans, thus feeding the hungry, giving water to the thirsty, clothing the naked, sheltering the homeless, visiting the sick, and visiting the imprisoned/ransoming the captives. To the Altenburg Benedictines the monument not only guaranteed the public remembrance of a peculiar military event that had happened in the immediate vicinity of the monastery, but it also helped to underline the role of the monastic community in the aftermath of the event. Whereas these elements are expressed (if rather implicitly) in the inscription itself and would pertain to the self-representation of the convent addressing an external audience, the monument also targets – as an implicit admonition – the future members of the Altenburg community, thus adding to the epigraphic self-conception of the convent.

Idle Christians and Pagan Idols

The next inscription I would like to discuss seems to comprise, in its notion of alienness and paganism, elements of the two texts presented before, but pursues a textual strategy of a *genus appellativum* that more closely resembles the first example.

Inserted into the westernmost section of the outer north wall of the nave of St Stephen's Cathedral at Vienna, visitors entering the church through the Bischofstor (bishop's gate) pass a stone tablet with an inscription of seven lines placed immediately above a niche in the façade, secured by a massive iron grid (fig. 3).

The inscription, cut in a distinctive style of early Gothic Minuscule, most probably dating from the second half of the 14th century, reads:[60]

+ Ir + seligen + gelaubt + in got +/
vnt + wehalt + christi + gebot
+ des / + die + haiden + nicht + habent · ge/tan ·
si · paten · an · die · tat(er)man ·
wand /· die · sew · selb · habent · berait ·
da · von · / · w(er)dent · si · wol · geait ·
in d(er) · hell · fev(er) ·
alle · / vrewd · ist · in · tewr ·

Translation: You blessed ones, believe in God and obey Christ's commandments, which the pagans did not do. They worshipped tatermans (idols) which they created for themselves. For this they will certainly be punished in hell's fire, they are deprived of every joy.

59 Cf. Vuorinen, *Enemy Images*, 3: "The main difference between Other and Enemy lies specifically in their respective activeness – an enemy is perceived, or imagined, to be actually menacing."

60 I am very much indebted to my colleague Renate Kohn for providing me with the transcription and ample information on the monument. For a more detailed assessment, see the forthcoming volume dedicated to the medieval and early modern inscriptions of St Stephen's Cathedral which Renate Kohn is preparing for the edition series "Die Deutschen Inschriften".

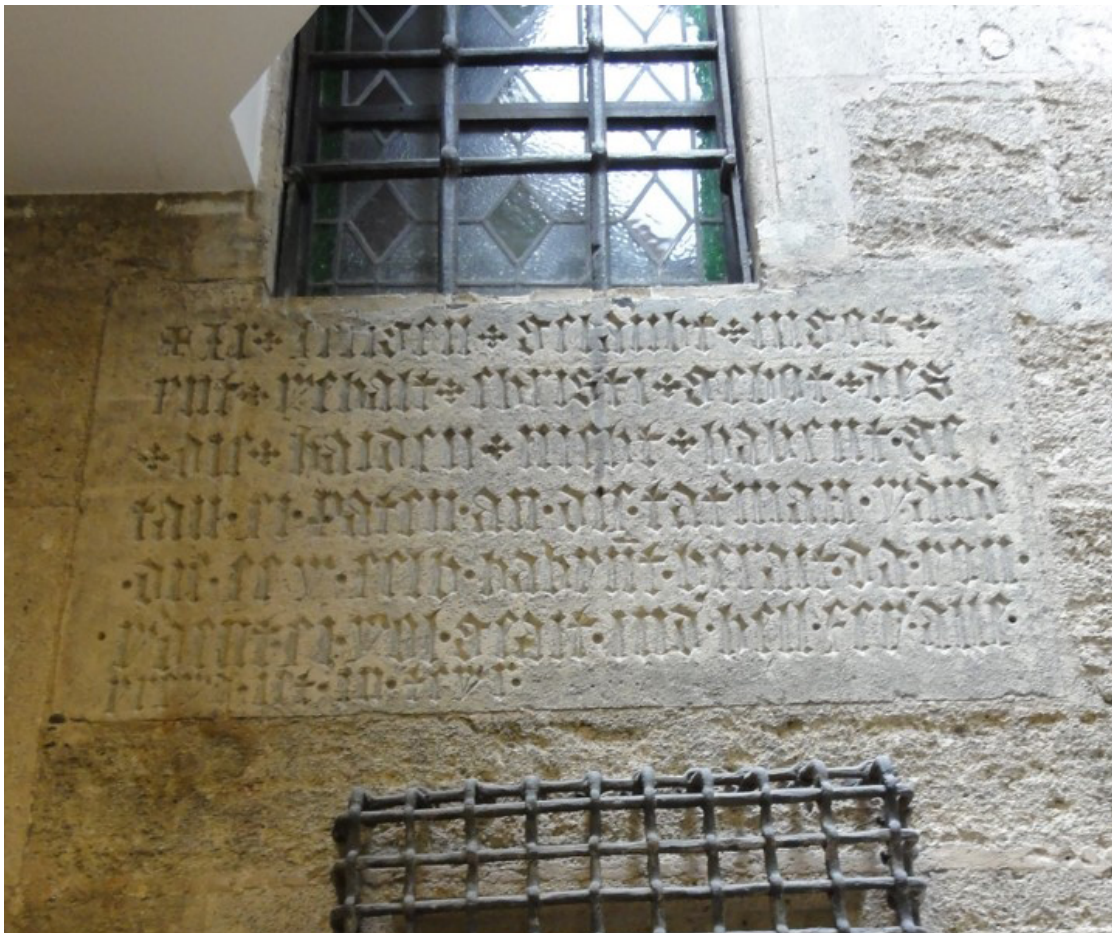

Figure 3: The so-called Taterman inscription, 2nd half of the 14th century, Vienna, St Stephen's cathedral.

The fact that the inscription was composed as an epigraphic comment on another artefact becomes better understandable when one learns that the now empty niche beneath the tablet originally contained some small statuettes which were attached to the back wall by means of iron hooks or clamps.[61] In the middle of the 15th century, the chronicler mentioned above, Thomas Ebendorfer, delivered the earliest and most reasonable assessment of the now lost figurines: according to him, they were pagan idols[62] or, more precisely, depictions of the

61 Traces of them – the leaden filling used to fix the iron parts – are still visible inside the drilled-in holes.

62 Thomas Ebendorfer, *Chronica Austrie*, ed. Lhotsky, 31: "*ecclesiam in Wienn, que ad Sanctum Stephanum* [...] *dicitur, que usque <hodie> figuras prophanorum ydolorum gerit*"; cf. Lhotsky, Thomas Ebendorfer, 107 (n. 25). Translation: [...] the church in Vienna, called St Stephen's, which until today displays the figures of pagan idols.

Roman gods Jupiter and Mars, allegedly transferred to the cathedral from some tower in the village of Guntramsdorf south of Vienna[63] in order to underline the religious admonition of passers-by provided by this epigraphic ensemble combining image and text.

Whether those responsible for the arrangement of the antique artefacts and the execution of the inscription were aware of the probable Roman origins of the statuettes,[64] we do not know. The fact however, that the "idols" were referred to in German as "*taterman*" is highly interesting. Apparently, the etymology of the term,[65] which in the late Middle Ages initially designated a pagan statuette, bears an implicit reference to the Tatars. Since the term "Tatars" was widely used (at least in the German-speaking regions of Central Europe) as an umbrella term for a wider range of diverse peoples and ethnic groups from the Eurasian east, we should take into consideration that another steppe people could be associated with the *tatermans* that was in fact known for producing little (stone) statuettes to commemorate their ancestors: the Cumans.[66] Thus, it seems not unlikely that the Viennese inscription – just like the older one from Altenburg – in fact referred to the Cuman pagans of a less distant past than that of Roman Antiquity. The evident difference between the two inscriptions is that the latter expressly warns the Christian reader not to follow in the footsteps of the godless heathens, unless they wish to face eternal punishment in hell. The hint at the detestable idolatry of the pagans, unambiguously manifested by the figurines "locked behind bars"[67] underneath the inscription, clearly turns the text into a drastic admonition to visitors to the church to

63 Thomas Ebendorfer, *Catalogus praesulum Laureacensium et Pataviensium,* ed. Zimmermann, 8: "*doctrinis abiectis spurciciis ydolorum cultibus, Martis precipue et Jouis, quibus huius provincie quondam delusa vesania incolarum dedita fuisse dignoscitur, prout in ipsorum statuis, que hodie Wienne pre foribus ecclesie sancti Stephnai cancello ferreo incluse servantur, a Gundramsdorff turri, ut fertur, allatis pro memoria*"; cf. also Lhotsky, Wiens spätmittelalterliches Landesmuseum, 69-71. Translation: [...] after they had abandoned their false cult of idols, of Mars and Jupiter in particular, to which the inhabitants of this province had been strongly attached in their insanity, as is apparent from the statues that are today kept close to the doors of St Stephen's behind an iron grid, but are said to have been brought here from a tower in Guntramsdorf as a souvenir.

64 In contrast to Ebendorfer's attribution, the figurines may (probably more likely) have been Roman domestic Lares or Penates (bronze) figures, if the statuettes were of Roman origin at all.

65 See Grimm, Deutsches Wörterbuch sub voce *dattermann* and *tattermann*: https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb/dattermann#GT01286 and https://www.dwds.de/wb/dwb/tatermann (accessed on 1 December 2021). The notion of "taterman" as a synonym of "idol" ([der heiden] *abgote unde taterman*) in Hugo von Trimberg's "Renner" (v. 10277) seems most pertinent in this regard. In the 15th century, the term seems to lose this connotation and adopts the more general meaning of goblin or the new specific designation of a (goblin-like) puppet, see the Frühneuhochdeutsches Wörterbuch s. v. tatterman, https://fwb-online.de/lemma/tatterman.s.0m; accessed on 1 December 2021); Klein and Wegera, Mittelhochdeutsche Grammatik, 174.

66 Cf. Lyubyanovics, *Socio-Economic Integration*.

67 Whether the grid simply served to protect the statuettes from theft, symbolised Christian triumph over paganism, or had an additional apotropaic connotation in a liminal situation close to a main entrance to the cathedral, cannot be decided.

follow the line of Christian orthodoxy. In a very plain way, the monument juxtaposes pagan cult and Christian belief and opposes the group of heathens, destined to condemnation, to the community of believers, to whom heaven is promised. This is achieved by simply contrasting[68] the collective religious "otherness" of the pagans ("they") as a negative example to the religious zeal of the Christians ("you") in order to create a strong feeling of group cohesion that called for and should be met by a pious individual lifestyle.

Appropriating the Others: Gypsy Memorials

From the epigraphic staging of (religious) otherness as a deliberate means of shaping self-conception in a Christian context we shall now turn to inscriptions that present notorious "others" or "aliens" rather conversely, namely in the appropriated and assimilated framework of Gypsy funerary monuments:

> Anno d(omi)ni M cccc xc viii · / vf mentag nach · vrbani · starb · der wolgebvrn · her Johan / · frigraf · vsz klein · / · egipten · dem · got gnad · des sel got barmherczig sy

Translation: In the year of the Lord 1498, on Monday past St Urban's, died the high-born lord John, free count from Little Egypt, on whom God may have mercy, on whose soul God be merciful.

68 The inscription clearly follows "othering strategies employed to reflect and support a popular, status quo distinction – the rendering of Us vs. Them groupings via common simplistic polar dichotomies", see Pandey, Constructing otherness, 155. In the terms of Brons, Othering, 70-71, the inscription applies the strategies of "crude othering" (as opposed to "sophisticated othering"), since "in crude othering, the distribution of the (un)desirable characteristic is more or less assumed or posited, while in sophisticated othering it follows from an argument that is partially based on a self-other-identifying assumption. More specifically, in both kinds of othering, there is a perceived difference between the self or in-group and the other or out-group, but while this difference is the (un)desirable characteristic in case of crude othering, it is a relatively neutral difference in case of sophisticated othering."

Figure 4: Tomb slab of John, Count of Little Egypt (d. 1498), St Michael's castle church in Pforzheim (Germany, Baden-Württemberg).

The tomb slab,[69] which bears this inscription, is made of red sandstone measuring roughly 200 x 100 cm, and has been located at the south-eastern wall of the north apse of the castle (and former collegiate) church of St Michael in Pforzheim since at least 1887. In 1862, it was still situated at the pillar between the nave and the left side chapel, close to the sacristy door. Its original place had obviously been in the paving of the middle axis of the nave, close to the pulpit. The modern situation displays the stone arranged between the huge epitaph of the chancellor to the margraves of Baden Martin Achtsynit von Niefernburg (d. 1592) and his wife, Elisabeth von Jestetten. The monument was first mentioned as early as 1595 in the *Annales Suevici* by Martin Crusius, who had been a student of the Pforzheim Lateinschule (attached to the church) and certainly knew the stone from autopsy. A baroque account ("Memoriale") of the stone, composed by Philipp Jacob Bürcklin in 1737, and a sketch of the local funerary monuments of 1747 contain evidence of a complementary painting on wood, probably attached to the pulpit's canopy, which featured the figure of the deceased holding a sword in his right hand and a banner in his left, and his coat of arms. This description of 1737 is highly valuable, as it attributes the artefact correctly to a Gypsy (*zigeuner*) and compares it to no less than three other (funerary) monuments in churches in the south-west of Germany (allegedly) relating to Gypsies.[70]

69 Studies on the stone are scarce; for a reliable edition and a basic contextualisation, see the edition by Anneliese Seeliger-Zeiss within the "Deutschen Inschriften" series, now accessible online: DI 57, Stadt Pforzheim, no. 81 (Anneliese Seeliger-Zeiss), in: www.inschriften.net, urn:nbn:de:0238-di057h015k0008104 (accessed on 1 December 2021); Beck, "her Johan frigraf uß klein egipten", largely depends on Brändle, Johann Freigraf aus Kleinägypten, and fails to meet scholarly standards in more than one regard, yet offers valuable information. In Bogdal, *Europa erfindet die Zigeuner* 73, the date is erroneously given as 1448.

70 Unfortunately, all of them are lost today; cf. the indications given in DI 25, Lkr. Ludwigsburg, no. 74† (Anneliese Seeliger-Zeiss und Hans Ulrich Schäfer), in: www.inschriften.net, urn:nbn:de:0238-di025h009k0007402 (accessed on 1 December 2021), Seeliger-Zeiss (as in n. 67) and *ibidem*, no. 147+, DI 63, Odenwaldkreis, nos. 138+ and 139† (Sebastian Scholz), in: www.inschriften.net, urn:nbn:de:0238-di063mz09k0013900 (accessed on 1 December 2021). At least, it is clear that in the monastery of Steinbach Crusius saw the tomb slab and the epitaph of a Pannuel (rectius probably Samuel), duke from Little Egypt, d. (probably) in 1545 and buried in the Abbey, featuring two almost identical German inscriptions: *In dem iar als man zalt von Christus vnsers seligmachers geburt [..]45 vff Sankt Sebastians abend ist gestorben der hochgeborn herr herr Pannuel herzog inn dem klain Aegypten* and *Als man zalt von Christi vnsers seligmachers geburt tausend [– – –] sankt sebastians tag starb der hochgeborn Fürst und herr herr Pannuel herzog inn klain Aegypten und herr zum hirschhorn desselben lands*; translation: In the year of Christ our saviour [..], the day before St Sebastian's died the noble lord, lord Pannuel, duke of Little Egypt viz. In the year of Christ our saviour thousand [...] St Sebastian's day died the noble prince and lord, lord Pannuel, duke of Littler Egypt and lord of Hirschhorn in that very same country) and the tomb slab of some noble count Peter of Little Egypt, d. in 1453 and buried in Großbottwar (according to Seeliger-Zeiss and Schäfer: *ANNO DOMINI M · CCCC · LIII · OBIJT NOBILIS COMES PETRUS DE MINORI CLYPEO* [an apparent misreading for *Egypto*, author's note] IN DIE PHILIPPI ET JACOBI APOSTOLORUM), and a third monument commemorating a free count Anthony of Little Egypt, d. in 1552 and buried in St Martin's in Pforzheim-Brötzingen (according to Seeliger-Zeiss [DI 57, Stadt Pforzheim, no. 147† [Anneliese Seeliger-Zeiss], in: www.inschriften.net, urn:nbn:de:0238-di057h015k0014707¸ accessed on 1 December 2021]: *Anno domini 1552 . den 28. April starb der Wohgebohrne Herr Antoni Frei-Graff aus Klein-Egypten Deß Seel Gott Gnädig und barmhertzig seye*).

All four of the deceased – as testified by their memorials – were armigers, and all four of them used epithets that were reserved for members of the aristocracy from the rank of lords and above – a usage that perfectly matches their description as dukes or at least counts of Little Egypt.[71] We have reason to believe that, in addition to the very fact that they were given precious memorials, their designation as counts or dukes hints at an accordingly eminent position within their communities.[72] It seems rather doubtful, however, that there was really any need for bearing arms for the leaders of the Gypsy clans in their everyday life, but in any case, they made use of these symbols that the emblematic arsenal we call heraldry offered to distinguished members of European societies.[73] The fact that they were Christians[74] requires no further discussion, given the place of their burials.

It has been claimed that the Pforzheim stone was the only extant Gypsy memorial worldwide that still remains in a church.[75] For the time being I can, however, present at least one other perfectly preserved tomb slab that was evidently created for the chief of a Gypsy community soon after the Pforzheim stone. Attached to the outer north wall of the parish church of St Stephen's in the Lower Austrian town of Tulln, close to the north gate, we find a tomb slab made of red marble featuring an inscription of five lines cut into the upper half and the outlines of a coat of arms carved into the lower half of the stone (fig. 5).[76]

The text in Gothic minuscule, reads as follows:

> Anno D(omi)ni 1524 Jar starb / Der Wollgebor(n) graff Jacob / Am xxi tag des kristmanet / Ain graff Jberall graffen Avs / klain Egipten dem got genad

Translation: In the year of the Lord 1524 died the high-born count Jacob on the 21st day of December, a count above all counts from Little Egypt, on whom God may be merciful.

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71 Egypt was commonly believed to be the homeland of the Gypsies, wherever travelling people were first recorded in written sources. Apparently, the Gypsies themselves readily accepted and used the designation, see Okely, *Traveller-Gypsies*, 3; Schubert, Mobilität, 131-132; cf. also Mayall, *Gypsy Identities*, 71-88.

72 Almost throughout Europe, most of the available late medieval sources introduce Gypsy leaders as dukes (*duces*) or counts (*comites*) of Little Egypt, cf. Schubert, Mobilität, 131; Kenrick, Origins, 81; Asséo, Visibilité. When today clan-leaders or chiefs of tribes from several Roma communities are called "kings" or "queens", it seems that the Gypsies have adopted a term that was first used by non-Gypsies to describe the influential position of these eminent figures, see Chohaney, Hidden in plain sight, 58 and 66-70.

73 To name but one of a vast number of handbook literature that cannot be recapitulated here, see: Hablot, Heraldic imagery.

74 The question of the religious affiliation of the Gypsies in Europe is answered very briefly by Kenrick, Historical Dictionary, 211: "Gypsies have tended to adopt the religion of the country where they live or travel […]". More detailed information is provided by Kenrick, Origins, 80-81.

75 Beck, "her Johan frigraf uß klein egipten", 16.

76 The monument appears to have been widely neglected by research; first mentioned by Kerschbaumer, *Geschichte*, 309, it was again introduced very briefly by Biack, *Geschichte*, 471 and more recently by Geyer, Grabsteine, 96-98. At least at the end of the 19th century, the stone was to be found in the north aisle at the westernmost pillar.

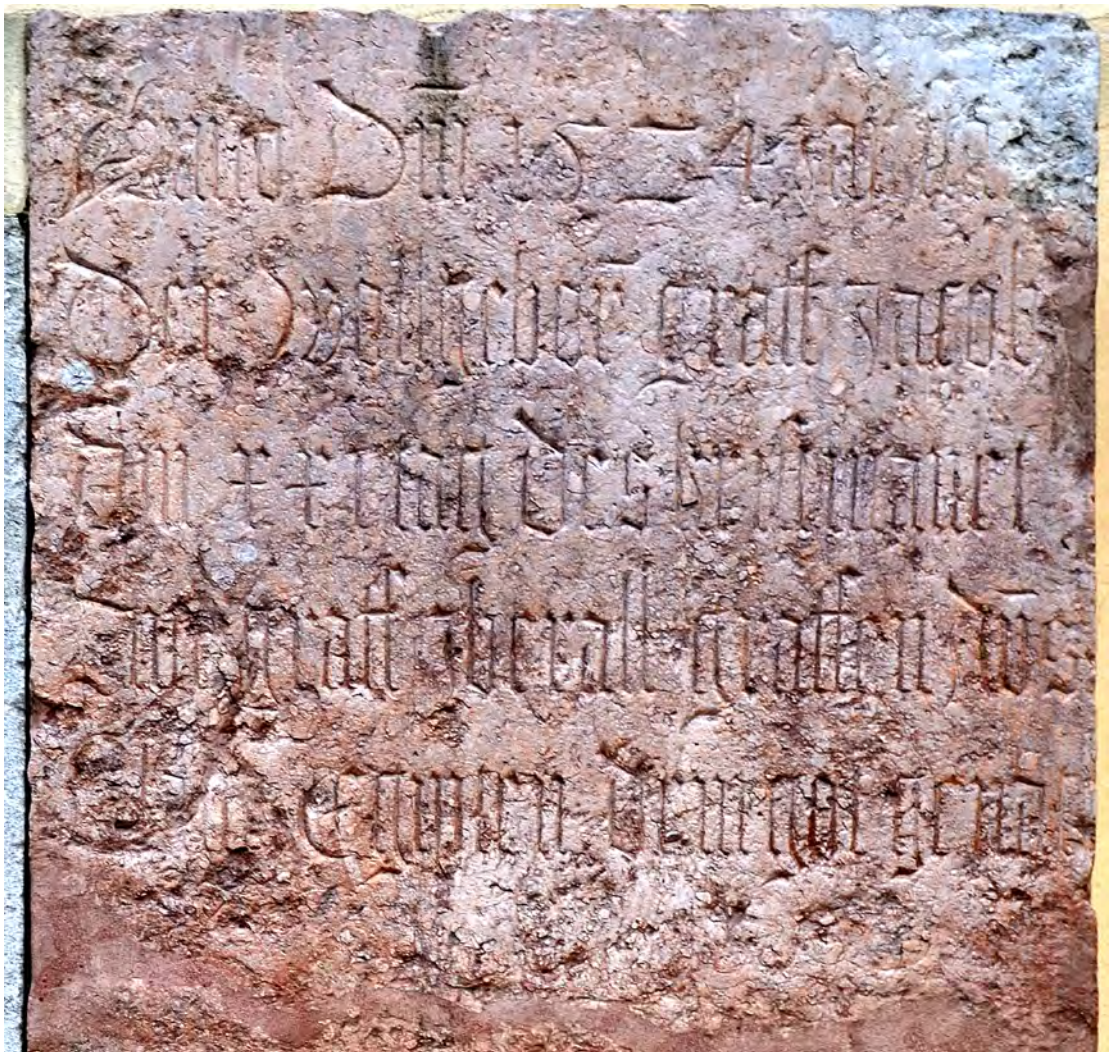

Figure 5: Tomb slab of Jacob, Count of Little Egypt (d. 1524), St Stephen's parish church in Tulln (Lower Austria).

The text bears a remarkable resemblance to the Pforzheim inscription with regard to the epithets and titles used for the deceased: according to the respective stones, both were equally high-born counts from Little Egypt, a designation that unambiguously hints at Gypsy chiefs or leaders, as we have seen.

The stones from Pforzheim and Tulln add substantially to the current state of research into travelling people, whether they be named Romanies or Gypsies (or in German: Roma and Sinti or Zigeuner),[77] on the one hand, and of studies into sepulchral culture on the other. The placing of impressive tombstones sculpted from precious stone material, bearing finely carved inscriptions and heraldic decoration, preceded by the purchase of a (costly) exclusive

77 The discourse on politically and/or academically correct labelling has not yet come to an end. A good survey of the problem is provided by Marushiakova and Popov, Roma labelling; cf. also (from the viewpoint of discourse analysis) Bartel, "Roma, Sinti und andere 'Zigeuner'".

burial place inside (!) a church building, by no means follows the average routine of burial customs in late medieval Central European society (whether town-dwellers or people living in the countryside). On the contrary, these monuments, prominently featuring the coats of arms of the deceased, perfectly resemble those for the economically successful patrician elites in towns or those of the nobility. At first glance, the two "Gypsy" stones cannot be distinguished from elaborate "ordinary" (in fact: elite) burghers' or noblemens' monuments of their time. Even the epithets attributed to the dead perfectly mirrored the usual hierarchy of titles applied in acts and charters as well as in inscriptions throughout the pre-modern Roman Empire, *wohlgeborn* and *hochgeborn* being reserved for higher-ranking nobles (lords and counts of the empire).[78] Moreover, since it took quite some time from the death of the leaders until the final placing of the carved stone over the grave, these travelling people must have stayed long enough to arrange the burial and make the concluding payments.

If one accepts my reading of the two "Gypsy" tomb slabs as media of self-representation[79] (which funerary monuments usually are), one encounters two men who were presented as powerful, but otherwise perfectly "ordinary" members of the hierarchically structured society in which they had lived and into which they had fitted in. Most evidently, the commissioners did not wish the deceased to be perceived as aliens by their fellow men (and thus avoided any verbal or pictorial elements that might have stressed their "otherness"),[80] but as respected residents of the societies and towns in which they (at least temporarily) dwelled.[81] Studies on the self-representation of Gypsies in modern Hungary equally emphasise that there are only "very few indicators that could be described as significantly or distinctively divided into 'Gypsy' or 'non-Gypsy' identifications, questioning the status of difference in discourses around such minorities".[82] It seems only reasonable to assume that this observation also holds true for the Gypsies in large parts of late medieval Europe at least in some respects. Hence, the above-mentioned framework of sepulchral "Gypsy" self-representation may partly be understood as the result of a process of appropriation and assimilation. On the other

78 See Zajic, *"Zu ewiger gedächtnis aufgericht"*, 314-315.

79 For strategies of self-representation in modern Gypsy-Traveller memorials see Parker and McVeigh, Do not cut the grass; Chohaney, Hidden in plain sight; Veit, Forgotten in life.

80 The contrary holds true for the markedly distinctive elements of sepulchral self-representation (including not least the use of the Etruscan language) deployed by Etruscans in Antique Rome, who were regularly – not unlike the Gypsies in the later Middle Ages – considered as Others by the Roman majority society: Strazzulla, *Etruscan Identity*, 166-188.

81 The absence of distinguishing features on modern (British) Gypsy memorials that would indicate the Gypsy identity of the buried was likewise noted by Okely, Deterritorialised and spatially unbounded cultures, 153. For a sceptical assessment of Okely's widely accepted findings, see Parker and McVeigh, Do not cut the grass, according to whom more explicit statements of "ethnicity" can be found on British Gypsy memorials since the 1990s.

82 Tremlett, 'Here are the Gypsies!', 1706.

hand, it is in keeping with the fact that the perception and imagery of Gypsies as a distinct group of travelling aliens[83] often supported a purposeful (mostly pejorative and stigmatising) othering that served the majority society to maintain cohesion and stabilise their self-conception:[84] "Alterität transformiert 'Mehrheitsgesellschaften' zur einen Entität, die ihre Identität auf Abstand zum 'singulären' Anders-Sein der lediglich de nomine als 'Bevölkerungsgruppen' quantifizierten Sinti und Roma generiert."[85] The necessary "counter-images"[86] of outsiders and aliens would regularly include negative imagery of Gypsies,[87] comprising a set of stereotypes that reciprocally had to be avoided in Gypsy self-representation. The itinerant way of life of Gypsies, being perceived as the negative and morally inferior counter-image to "properly" settled lifestyles of "ordinary" Europeans, fulfilled the same purpose of othering as the ostentatious staging of paganism and followed the same mechanism: "Among religious believers there is a rather common misconception that atheists are necessarily immoral [...] In most – if not all – cases, the underlying argument seems to be something like the following: (a) moral beliefs are religious beliefs; (b) the other has no religious beliefs; therefore (c) the other has no moral beliefs."[88]

Conclusion

This article portrays three examples of pre-modern inscriptions that in one way or another reflect phenomena that may best be addressed through the lens of the research concept of "otherness". In order to assess the potential of "otherness" as a hitherto largely neglected interpretative approach or tool for pre-modern epigraphy, our sample has deliberately focused on aspects of religious otherness featuring on inscribed monuments from a stretch of time between the early 14th and the early 16th (viz. 19th) century and a geographic area from modern South Tyrol to the East of Austria. Since there are as yet no comprehensive accounts on our topic (and consequently no larger corpus of corresponding sources that could have been exploited and drawn on for comparison), our little case study cannot claim to be more than a first sketch of problems that will have to be addressed more systematically and on a broader basis of sources. However, it appears that by pointing at ethic (and at least implicitly, also ethnic) and religious deficiencies of pagan "Others" from the distant past, inscriptions such as the one from St Stephen's in Vienna encourage its Christian audience to conceive

83 See Mayall, *Gypsy Identities*. This imagery also includes a lasting association of Gypsies with magic as an alluring "exotic" feature, cf. a forthcoming doctoral dissertation prepared at Mainz University: Novy, Magie.

84 Cf. Schubert, Mobilität; Saul and Tebbutt, *Role*. I also refer here, e.g., to Bogdal, *Europa erfindet die Zigeuner*, 15, who underlines that Gypsy studies are necessarily about "Redeweisen und mediale Repräsentationen [...] Sinti oder Roma werden geboren, 'Zigeuner' sind ein gesellschaftliches Konstrukt." Cf. Takezawa, Racialization, who suggests that the "racialization" of Gypsies, crucial to the discourse of modern Gypsy studies and British legislation, (cf. Mayall, *Gypsy Identities*, 4-6), started already in the Middle Ages. This assumption seems partly confirmed by the discussion on the "rasse d'égyptiens" relating to the interrogation of a delinquent military commander from Little Egypt, Jean de la Fleur, in Thionville in 1603, as reported by Asséo, Visibilité. On the parallel process of ethnicization of Gypsies see Parut, "Zigeuner" 289-299.

85 Bartel, "Roma, Sinti und andere 'Zigeuner'", 400.

86 Saurma-Jeltsch, Facets, 9, uses the term of "mirror-image" instead.

87 See Parut, "Zigeuner".

88 Brons, Othering 71.

themselves as members of an in-group to whom eternal life was promised by God. The same holds true for the Brixen epitaph, which stresses the admonition to pursue a decent and devout way of life addressed to the onlookers by hinting at the model of a zealous believer from Africa to whom baptism and immigration to Europe had opened the path to a Christian life and salvation. The staging of a godless life that these inscriptions – at least as a "counter-image" – are pivoting around more or less explicitly may best be called the result of an epigraphic "othering" in the sense of a "process of making someone an 'Other' or constructing someone as an 'Other' rather than being an 'Other' or recognizing the (existing) 'Other' as such"[89]. Their pointing at different facets of (alleged) religious "otherness" was meant as a warning to the Christian reader to stick to the doctrine of the church, thus fostering self-concepts of an imagined "we" as opposed to the "these" of alien Others. It is exactly this Christian "we" that the Altenburg Benedictines seem to refer to when they buried – as a work of mercy imposed on believers by God – their killed pagan enemies. Thus, the daunting reference to the detestable practices of the infidels, which some of the inscriptions more or less expressly put forward, rather served to shape the positive self-conception of the Christian readers as opposed to the religious deviance of their doomed heathen counterparts. Conversely, the crucial importance of ostentatious integration into the religious cult and habits of the majority population made it advisable to outsiders, such as the Gypsies in the first half of the sixteenth century, to adopt the epigraphic means of representation used by the local elites. In contrast to their evident "otherness" in terms of outer appearance and lifestyle, their funerary monuments helped to support their fitting into a framework of religion, belief, and religious customs that would alleviate their "alienness" at least in terms of their ultimate self-fashioning.

Whereas we have illustrated, through a handful of monuments, how inscriptions focusing on religious "otherness" added to the self-perception and construction of pre-modern societies in Central Europe, and how they might be analysed in future comparative studies, a much larger task still lies ahead for epigraphic research. For the few monuments that have been taken into account in this article and for the large number of similar sources that would deserve a more comprehensive investigation, the question of the concrete motive behind their being commissioned would have to be determined. It can only be assumed that their concern with the religious deviance of "others" was closely tied to general or specific phenomena of widespread crises of religious thoughts and practices that formed the context and background to the individual epigraphic text/image combinations. I shall try to summarise this in a few concluding remarks that hint at indispensable further study in the future: when the Altenburg inscription was cut in stone, Lower Austria was not only (from time to time) raided

89 Goetz and Wood, Introduction 23.

by pagan aggressors from the East, but (permanently) inhabited by domestic "heretics" that attracted considerable attention from contemporary ecclesiastic authorities, most notably groups of people referred to in written reports under the umbrella terms of "Adamites" or "Waldensians"[90]. One might easily imagine that this internal dissent and the troubled unity of Christian society bolstered the coincident attitude towards external pagan enemies that was expressed by the Altenburg battle memorial. As to the Viennese *taterman* inscription and its admonition of orthodoxy, there may be a more or less direct link to the installation of the collegiate chapter of All Saints at St Stephen's through Archduke Rudolf IV, his institution of the University of Vienna in 1365 and the secondary addition of its Faculty of Theology in 1384. And finally, and most strikingly, one can hardly believe that the Gypsies who presented themselves as "ordinary" Christians through their tomb slabs would not have wished to emphasise their "correct" religious belief in view of the reiterated persecution of Jews and cruel pogroms that Central Europe witnessed during the 15th and the first third of the 16th century.

These at least subliminal preconditions of politics and societal change and their impact on the epigraphic framing of (religious) "otherness" would have to be considered by a comparative account that is yet to be prepared. For the time being, a series of articles with a more restricted scope such as this one might help to assess the significance of "otherness" to the study of pre-modern inscriptions.

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90 Suffice it here to refer to the reports on "adamitic" heresy uncovered in Krems (some 50 kilometres south of Altenburg) between 1312/14, cf. https://www.geschichtsquellen.de/werk/4178 (accessed on 1 December 2021).

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Abbreviation
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Creolization and Medieval Latin Europe

Bernard Gowers*

This paper argues for the utility of the concept of creolization in relation to Latin Europe during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries. It further suggests that it offers possibilities for exploring other medieval societies, including making global comparisons. The paper draws on linguistics, early modern Atlantic history, and Roman archaeology, to offer an ideal type of medieval creolization. Creolization in this instance is understood to involve social and cultural processes, not merely linguistic phenomenon. In this sense, creolization mixes "superstrate" and "substrate" practices, acknowledging disparities of power and allowing for the dispersal of agency. This avoids problems inherent in notions of Europeanization, especially teleology, and a dichotomy between active core and passive periphery. Creolization offers a frame for asking why in specific circumstances some "superstrate" practices were adopted, but not others, and why we see such a variety of polities and cultures around Latin Europe in this period, with the self-conscious cultivation of distinctiveness, alongside the adaptation of common "superstrate" practices. These insights are applied to brief sketches from the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries of Scottish politics and Polish salt mining. Discussion is then extended to non-Latin European cases and possibilities for global comparisons.

Keywords: creolization, Europeanization

Medieval historians have paid little attention to creolization, so this paper argues that it can be a useful concept for medieval historians. It is thus a methodological suggestion, rather than presenting any new empirical material. My discussion begins with a review of the notion of Europeanization, familiar in the recent historiography of medieval Latin Europe. It then reviews various notions of creolization and offers an ideal type for medieval creolization. Two case studies for creolization in Latin Europe during the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries are then sketched, before some suggestions about possibilities for creolization beyond Latin Europe and in global comparisons.

Europeanization

Robert Bartlett was not the first scholar to use the term "Europeanization" with reference to the Middle Ages, as he acknowledges, but *The Making of Europe*, published in 1993, and in particular the chapter "The Europeanization of Europe", brought it fully-formed into me

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dievalists' thinking.[1] Numerous scholars have employed the term since then – including in Bartlett's 2016 *Festschrift*[2] – and plenty more have implicitly adopted the notion, without spelling it out. Since the publication of *The Making of Europe*, historians have provided further empirical grounding for Europeanization and more granular understanding of the trends which Bartlett identified with such scholarship and verve. In particular, it has informed the historiographies of medieval Scandinavia, central and eastern Europe.

In broad terms, Europeanization can be understood as a dual process, centred chronologically on the long twelfth century, entailing *homogenization* and *expansion*. Homogenization involved the formulation of a common repertoire of social and cultural practices across Latin Europe. This is especially notable among elites and their auxiliaries, but was not confined to them. Some of these practices were already well established by 1100, such as writing in Latin and issuing coins. Others were still developing during the twelfth century, or become more clearly attested in the surviving evidence: these include such familiar developments as urban communes, crusading, castle building, chivalric literature, and international religious orders. Thus homogenization encompasses a series of other themes in medieval historiography, such as chivalry, ecclesiastical reform, and commercialization.

Turning to expansion: this involved the transplantation of common practices outwards from a "core zone" – which Bartlett identifies as running "from, say, Rome to Maastricht" and as being Roman and French in inspiration.[3] Expansion advanced in every direction: to Iceland and the outer British Isles, around Scandinavia, down through central Europe, and then back along the Mediterranean from Outremer to Spain. This was often a result of conquest and migration from core to periphery, but the movement of people was not essential. It could also involve the adaptation of "core" practices by "native" elites from peripheral areas. Bartlett deploys case studies from Scotland and Mecklenburg; other scholars have explored examples from Wales, central Europe, and Scandinavia. In his contribution to Bartlett's *Festschrift*, Sverre Bagge has referred to "self-Europeanization" in relation to Scandinavian rulers adopting elements from the repertoire of the Latin European "core".[4]

The dual phenomena of homogenization and expansion were not always distinct. For instance, the military orders of the Templars and Hospitallars were first formed early in the twelfth century, in the kingdom of Jerusalem – a polity created by the First Crusade (1096-1099), the most potent example of Latin European expansion. The two orders, and others like them, then become ubiquitous across Latin Europe, as part of an increasingly homogeneous series of ecclesiastical institutions. However, it is worthwhile to keep homogenization and expansion separate in our thinking.

For the purposes of this argument, I emphasize two particular features of twelfth-century Europeanization. The first is that expansion resulted in a variety of polities, rather than the aggrandizement of a single state. From Iceland to Hungary to Sicily to Jerusalem, peripheral polities came to cultivate their distinctiveness, rather than being subsumed into broader

1 Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, esp. 310-334.

2 Hudson and Crumplin (eds.), *"The Making of Europe"*

3 Bartlett, Heartland and border, 26.

4 Bagge, Europeanization of Scandinavia, 74.

political structures and/or cultural identities. This is seen, for instance, in the flowering of twelfth-century history writing for specific "peripheral" peoples by Gallus Anonymous for the Poles, Cosmas of Prague for the Czechs, and Saxo Grammaticus for the Danes.[5] The polities that emerged in newly "Europeanized" Europe derived their legitimacy in part from celebrating the particular, the organic, and even the "barbaric" in their origin stories.

Potentially unifying identities for Latin Europe were entertained in the twelfth century, but did not ultimately gain favour. There was the learned myth of common descent from the Trojans.[6] More popularly, the term "Frank" came to be widely used, and not only as a catch-all for western Europeans in the eastern Mediterranean. Bartlett picks up on the striking observation that the O'Briens of Munster described themselves as the Franks of Ireland.[7] But neither Frankish nor Trojan identities prevailed, nor did terms such as Latin or Christian or European or anything else. The lack of a single polity, and a single identity, strengthens the sense that Europeanization resulted in a heterogenous homogenization.

The second element of Europeanization worth noting for this argument is that its effects in each region or locality were dictated by negotiation between the practices of core and periphery, rather than a straightforward expansion of the core into new areas. Bartlett himself notes this in his discussions of Mecklenburg and Scotland.[8] Other examples abound. For instance, in Wales, the military might of Anglo-Norman lords was in part dependent on their adaptation of local tactics, especially light cavalry, which was better suited to the difficult terrain than their heavy cavalry, developed in less hilly regions.[9] In twelfth-century northern Syria, relations between Latin rulers and their eastern Christian subjects have been characterized by the term "rough tolerance".[10] This involved Latin Frankish rulers and clerics recognizing a degree of diversity in Christian expression that never existed in the "core" of Latin Europe. These examples could be multiplied many times. In each case, the specific contours of Europeanization were created by interchange between periphery and centre, rather than by the former simply emulating the latter.

This sketch of Europeanization is intended to be fairly uncontroversial. I do not wish to challenge the broad picture here, nor to question the contribution made by *The Making of Europe*. But creolization can be useful in refining our understanding of these processes.

Creolization

Creolization has been addressed in a vast range of scholarship, in disciplines including linguistics, literature, anthropology, and archaeology, yet it remains "generally undertheorized".[11] What follows does not attempt to provide any sort of survey, but to review elements that might be useful for medieval creolization. This has four parts: first, creolization as a

5 See, for example, the studies in Garipzanov (ed.), *Historical Narratives and Christian Identity*.

6 Waswo, Our ancestors, the Trojans.

7 Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, 103-105.

8 Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, 97-102, 214-215, 316-319.

9 Suppe, *Military Institutions on the Welsh Marches*.

10 MacEvitt, *Crusades and the Christian World of the* East, 21-26. MacEvitt briefly considers the term "creole", at 2, 21. He does not employ it, because he understands it as characterized by benevolent tolerance. 'Creolization' does not have such connotations in this argument.

11 Palmié, Creolization and Its Discontents, 435. On the important distinctions between Anglophone and Francophone uses of the term, Price, *Créolisation*

strictly linguistic term; secondly, creolization in modern Caribbean and Atlantic history; thirdly, creolization as used by archaeologists of the western Roman Empire. This culminates, fourthly, in the outline of an ideal type of medieval creolization.

Caution has been expressed about deploying the terminology of creolization outside the Atlantic and Caribbean regions in which it was first deployed.[12] This stems from two concerns. First is that the creolization could be applied ubiquitously and thus lose its analytical potency. Second is frustration with the casual use of "creolization" to refer to cultural interchange in a sanitized and depoliticized manner, especially when this implicitly downplays the violence and forced displacement of plantation slavery.[13] The nature of the dehumanization entailed by Atlantic slavery's pursuit of economic rewards has even been presented as making creolization unique.[14] It is worth engaging with these points, but it does not follow that we should refrain in principle from seeking to "export" notions of creolization beyond the modern Atlantic and Caribbean. Analytical terms coined in one case are in principle available to be tested in different contexts, even if they prove inadequate. The analytical repertoire available to historians would be diminished if we could only deploy concepts generated from first principles (should any really exist), rather than from specific cases. Notions such as "apartheid", "feudal", and "diaspora" were first formulated in relation to particular instances, but have since been found useful elsewhere. The crucial question is whether a given conceptual export works in practice, rather than whether the principle of "exporting" is valid.

Linguistic Creolization

Creolization has a series of technical meanings in linguistics. What follows is a sketch of the basic elements, designed to inform the subsequent arguments,[15] although the field seems rather contested among specialists.[16] The term "creole" developed initially with reference to early modern South America, but has been "exported", and is now deployed by scholars working on a range of languages, chronologically and geographically. Linguists no longer entertain the initial scholarly notion of creoles as aberrant, inadequate attempts to mimic prestigious European literary languages.

In linguistics, a creole is a new language – a linguistic system that is related to, but distinct from, multiple source languages, in phonology, morphology, and syntax, as well as vocabulary. The new language is based on contact between two or more distinct languages. These source languages include a *superstrate* (spoken by speakers with more power), and one or more *substrates* (whose speakers are socially subordinate). It is the mixture of superstrate and substrate(s), together with innovations internal to the creole, that make it a distinct language. Thus a creole involves linguistic contact, but specifically in the context of social hierarchy.[17] The processes of creole formation are not clearly understood. This is in part because

12 Chivallon, Créolisation universelle ou singulière?; Palmié, Creolization and Its Discontents; Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean.*

13 Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 188-96. Palmié, Model in the Muddle, 194.

14 Chivallon, Créolisation universelle ou singulière?, 63.

15 Holm, *Introduction*; Baker and Mühlhäusler, Creole linguistics; Jourdan, Pidgins and creoles.

16 Thomason, Pidgins/Creoles, 43.

17 Note that linguistic forms based on contact without associated hierarchies of power are a different phenomenon, not relevant to this discussion. Holm, *Introduction*, 6.

it happens orally and usually among socially marginal people: by the time creoles enter the written record, they are long established, and many have not been adequately recorded. But it is also because agency in linguistic creolization is inherently dispersed.

Creoles can, in theory, be distinguished from pidgins.[18] A pidgin is no one's first language, but rather a system of communications with a limited practical utility in specific aspects of human activity. Pidgins draw on material from two or more languages to enable mutual understanding. Like a creole, one of the source languages (the superstrate) is associated with more power. Pidgins sometimes develop into creoles, and it may be that most or all creoles begin as pidgins, although there is no consensus on this point among linguists. It so happens that the earliest written evidence for a pidgin comes from our period: in 1068 the Spanish Muslim geographer al-Bakri retailed complaints that people from what is now central Mauritania had mutilated Arabic, and he reproduces a passage of the language use that he and his informant deplored.[19] Its modern editors judge that it displays Arabic and Berber features.

John Hines has argued that from the ninth century onwards, Scandinavian English developed as a creole.[20] Whether or not this is persuasive linguistically, his argument is suggestive for our purposes. He posits two stages for Norse linguistic impact on English. In the ninth century, with Scandinavians in the ascendant politically and militarily, practical terms entered the spoken language of Old English, especially in eastern England and in vocabulary concerned with land management and seafaring. Hines sees this as stemming from quotidian realities, in which subordinate Old English speakers needed to communicate with their new lords. In the second stage, from the tenth century onwards, the political situation was reversed with the rise of the Wessex dynasty, which gradually extended its political and military authority across England. In this period, Hines identifies a thoughtful and self-conscious inclusion of Scandinavian terms in Old English written texts as a sign of cultural distinctiveness, "a veritable indulgence in the use of a large and varied vocabulary".[21] He draws a parallel with material culture, such as the creation of Gosforth Cross in a Cumbrian churchyard: a Christian object decorated in Scandinavian style with scenes from Norse mythology. Hines concludes that Scandinavian English can be classified as a creole. I draw from his argument a general distinction between "pragmatic" creolization (as seen in his ninth-century material) and "programmatic" creolization (from the tenth century). The former involves adjustments in response to practical everyday demands, while the latter entails a cultural self-fashioning that self-consciously draws on multiple sources. Naturally, pragmatic and programmatic creolization are not mutually exclusive and are best thought of as two poles of a spectrum.

The pragmatic/programmatic distinction is not identical to that between low status and high status, or between oral and written, although it might look like that. Crucially for our argument, the distinction can be applied beyond the linguistic sphere, and I will return to it later. Here I will merely note a parallel between the "programmatic" tenth-century texts

18 This over-simplifies the linguistic debate, but serves the present purpose. Jourdan, Pidgins and creoles.

19 Holm, *Introduction*, 15; Thomason and Elgibali, Before the Lingua Franca.

20 Hines, Scandinavian English.

21 Hines, Scandinavian English, 414.

identified by Hines and the so-called "synthetic" creolization championed by certain twentieth-century Caribbean intellectuals as part of the political and cultural project of newly-independent Caribbean states.[22]

There may have been many pidgins on the peripheries of twelfth-century Latin Europe to which we have little or no access in surviving sources.[23] Whether there were any fully--fledged creoles is another matter. The term has been invoked in discussions of Yiddish and of the later medieval Mediterranean maritime *Lingua Franca*, but in both cases it seems not to be especially helpful.[24] There is a well-known argument that Middle English was a creole, with Old English as the substrate and French as the superstrate.[25] Specialists have not found this persuasive, on historical or linguistic grounds, although the debate has rumbled on.[26] But the argument of this paper does not depend on the existence of medieval creole languages. My discussion focuses on creolization as a process, rather than "creole" as a destination, and it is not exclusively (or even mainly) in relation to language. Beyond the specifics of linguistics, "creolization" can refer to processes in all parts of society and culture, including material culture.

The key features that I take from linguistic creolization are (1) that it involves mixing distinct languages; (2) that this happens in a hierarchical social context, with superstrate and substrate source languages; (3) agency is dispersed. Finally, (4) this can be nuanced by a distinction between "pragmatic" and "programmatic" creolization.

Atlantic Creolization

I now turn to the historical context of the Caribbean and Atlantic world, from the fifteenth to nineteenth centuries. The term "creole" comes from a Portuguese word, which originally referred to African slaves born in the New World, then extended to include Europeans born in the New World, too. From here the range of meanings multiplied in a profusion too bewildering to catalogue.[27] Creolization generated numerous different social and cultural practices, in the Americas, the Caribbean, and some areas of Africa's Atlantic coast.

Perhaps the most famous articulation of creolization comes from Simón Bolívar, when he declared, "We are not Europeans; we are not Indians; we are but a mixed species of aborigines and Spaniards. Americans by birth and Europeans by law [...] Thus our position is most extraordinary and complicated."[28] For Bolivar, creolization culminated in his own class of wealthy Spanish American creoles, well educated in the European tradition and able to establish enduring states. His was a project of "programmatic creolization". Equally, the product of creolization was the small-scale communities of escaped African slaves and their descendants, established across the Caribbean region from the sixteenth century onwards. These

22 This is critiqued in Bolland, Creolisation and Creole societies.

23 Cataloguing such possibilities is beyond the parameters of this paper, but a sense of the range of scenarios for linguistic contact is provided by several studies. Thomason and Elgibali, 'Before the Lingua Franca' suggest that pre-modern pidgins are likely to have been common; Broch and Jahr, Russenorsk, focuses on the modern period, but also considers evidence for earlier linguistic contacts in northern Scandinavia, drawing on Russian, Norwegian, Swedish, Finnish, and Lapp; Mostert, Linguistics of contact; Kowaleski, French of England.

24 Wexler, Jewish interlinguistics, 135-136; Whinnom, Context and Origins of Lingua Franca; Nolan, Lingua Franca.

25 Bailey and Maroldt, French lineage of English.

26 Watts, *Language* Myths, 83-113.

27 Allen, Creole: The problem of definition; Palmié, Creolization and its discontents

28 Simon Bolivar, quoted in Simon, Simón Bolívar's Republican Imperialism, 303.

Cimarrón or Maroon communities resisted slavery and colonial authority. They were informed by their own immediate experiences, as well as memories of African practices. They also adopted and adapted European superstrate practices such as Christianity and the use of firearms, and sometimes interacted with Native Americans.[29] Some were defeated militarily, while others were eventually incorporated into colonial structures, following negotiations which were themselves testament to the range of creolized political possibilities. While creolization had a distinct end point in the project of a figure such as Bolívar, process should be distinguished from destination. Kamau Brathwaite's rich and stimulating study *The Development of Creole Society in Jamaica, 1770-1820* argues that Jamaican creolization during this period was limited in the political sphere by local circumstances and the British colonial regime.[30] Jamaica did not take the route of Haiti, but creolization shaped both societies.

Alongside political developments, Atlantic creolization also entailed quotidian processes in social, cultural, and material life. Brathwaite discusses the varied practical and cultural impulses that shaped the domestic architecture of Jamaica's plantation elite.[31] The archaeologist Anne Yentsch has used material from eighteenth-century Annapolis (Maryland) to study *inter alia* how slave women were able to exercise agency in "food creolization".[32] The way in which slaves produced and prepared food, creating their own mélange of different ingredients and techniques, negotiated between African and European traditions, within the violent and all-pervasive political economy of slavery. Parallel to this, colonoware pottery was produced by non-Europeans in parts of the early modern Caribbean and North America. It has received extensive attention from archaeologists because of its combination of European forms with African and Native American techniques and decorative motifs.[33] David Wheat has used ecclesiastical records to trace how African slaves and their children in seventeenth-century Havana had some agency to reshape the long-established Catholic practice of godparenthood around their own social situation.[34] These studies all provide insights into questions of daily life which encapsulate a whole social experience. They also illustrate an important strength of the concept of creolization: an interest in the dispersal of agency. "By insisting on the fact that the common people – slaves, peasants, freedpeople and labourers – were active agents in the historical process, the creolisation thesis has made a major contribution to Caribbean historiography."[35]

Atlantic creolization led to multiple outcomes. In all cases creolization combined elements of superstrate and substrate, in the context of asymmetrical power. (There were often multiple substrates, drawing on the practices of different African and Native American societies: the terms substrate and superstrate are analytical tools that need not correspond to neat dichotomies in the evidence.[36] Atlantic creolization created a series of distinct social, cultural,

29 Campbell, *Maroons of Jamaica*; Landers, Cimarrón and citizen.

30 Brathwaite, *Development of Creole Society*, 306-309.

31 Brathwaite, *Development of Creole Society*, 122-126.

32 Yentsch, *Chesapeake Family*, 149-167, 196-215. Compare the creolization of Roman foodways: Hawkes, Beyond Romanisation.

33 Cobb and DePratter, Multisited research on colonowares.

34 Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, 237-244.

35 Bolland, Creolisation and Creole societies, 3.

36 Wheat, *Atlantic Africa*, 20-67.

and linguistic configurations, ranging from Louisiana to the Caribbean, Spanish and Portuguese America, and back across the Atlantic to polities such as the kingdom of Kongo and the Republic of Liberia. The range of creolization indicates that this is a concept that is useful for framing questions, rather than attempting to predict outcomes.

The effects of Atlantic creolization were also felt in metropolitan Europe. The most important argument for this comes in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities*.[37] In a chapter tellingly entitled "Creole pioneers", he argues that it was South American revolutionaries against Spain who first articulated the political and cultural impulses of modern nationalism that would be exported back to Europe and elsewhere with such effect. There is no need to rehearse this well-known thesis, beyond observing that here the process of mutual interaction which is central to creolization plays out on a larger scale: not merely *within* colonial societies, but *between* these societies and metropolitan centres. I will return to the general point that creolization can be felt in the core as well as the periphery.

Roman Creolization

Following linguistics and Atlantic history, the third element in this account of creolization comes from Roman archaeology. Several scholars of the Roman Empire have engaged with the concept of creolization in both case studies and synthetic analysis.[38] Jane Webster does so especially engagingly in her 2001 article "Creolizing the Roman Provinces". She argues that the material culture of the western provinces of the Roman Empire can usefully be understood as creolized.[39] She advances the notion of "creolization" in contrast to the term "Romanization". Romanization has been used since the nineteenth century to describe the impact of Roman social and cultural practices on the provinces of the empire, beyond the mere fact of military conquest. For Webster and other scholars, the notion of Romanization is problematic: it implicitly (or sometimes explicitly) valorizes Roman practices at the expense of non-Roman, and it assumes that *romanitas* was necessarily more effective and attractive.[40] This limits the agency of Roman provincials: they are cast by Romanization as passive recipients of a package created elsewhere. In Webster's words "Romanization [...] does not conceive of a two-way exchange of ideas: rather, it presupposes a linear transfer of ideas from the center to the province."[41] In practice, material culture in the western empire was usually a mixture of "Roman" and "native" elements. This need not be understood as "incomplete" or "failed" Romanization, by provincials who somehow lacked the knowledge or resources to become more fully Roman. Furthermore, the presence of "Roman" elements in provincial assemblages need not entail that identical items were used, or understood, in the same way in Britain or Gaul as they were in Italy.

So, for Webster, Romanization should be jettisoned in favour of "creolization". The creolization of material culture involves the blending of Roman and non-Roman elements, but in a starkly hierarchical political context. As she puts it: "while creole culture is an amalgam

37 Anderson, *Imagined Communities*, 49-58.

38 Witt, "Creolization" and agency; Hawkes, Beyond Romanisation; Carr, Creolising the body; Haeussler and Webster, Creolage; Le Roux, La romanisation en question.

39 Webster, Creolizing.

40 Webster, Creolizing; Barrett, Romanization; Haeussler and Webster, Creolage. In contrast, Le Roux, La romanisation en question, sees more utility for Romanization.

41 Webster, Creolizing, 210.

of different traits, creolization processes take place in the context of asymmetric power."[42] She uses as a case study some elements of religion in Roman Gaul, especially the cult of the horse-goddess Epona.[43] Objects depicting Epona draw on both "Roman" and "Gaulish" motifs, but they should be understood as encapsulating the distinct social situation of provincial culture and society, which was something different from its sources. Very similar conclusions have been drawn in a more recent discussion of stone altars dedicated to various gods in southern Gaul.[44]

One element of Webster's argument can be amplified. She focuses on creolization at the bottom of Roman provincial society and presents it as a way to approach non-elite experience.[45] Yet it seems to me that creolization could happen at all points in the social hierarchy. This included not only the mass of the population, but also (and perhaps especially) high status Britons and Gauls who successfully negotiated the demands of operating within Roman provincial elites.[46]

There are clear parallels between Webster's critique of "Romanization" and potential reservations about "Europeanization". Both assume a high status package, implicitly superior to alternatives on the peripheries, and both envisage this package being exported outwards, more or less comprehensively. Both concepts can limit our undertanding of agency and mutual interaction, due to the unhelpful contrast between active core and passive periphery. However, there are limits to these parallels. Unlike Webster's call to excise Romanization entirely, I do not think that "Europeanization" needs to be dropped from our analytical vocabulary. It does serve to characterize some processes of homogenization, although it is less useful in addressing interactions between the practices of "core" and "periphery".

An Ideal Type

Our account of creolization so far has focused on three elements in turn: linguistics, modern Atlantic history, and the western Roman Empire. This is inevitably an idiosyncratic selection, rather than a comprehensive overview, because it is directed towards a specific argument. In both the modern Atlantic region and the western Roman Empire, we can see a contrast between "core" and "periphery". "Core" or "superstrate" societies possessed significantly greater opportunities for capital accumulation, urbanization, exchange, division of labour, literacy, military capacity, and so on, and can be juxtaposed with societies where these features were much more limited, or even absent. In both cases, there is the danger that these contrasts can serve to draw distinctions that are too vivid, especially when societies come into contact over several generations. They can also be imbued with cultural and moral judgements: dichotomies of Romans against "barbarians" and Europeans against "natives" have often emphasized alterity. Tangible differences *were* present in these contexts, but are perhaps best thought of as differences in practices, rather than between essentialized populations. [47]

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42 Webster, Creolizing, 218

43 Webster, Creolizing, 219-223.

44 Haeussler and Webster, Creolage.

45 Webster, Creolizing, 210, 223.

46 Black, Villa-Owners; Goudineau, Gaul. See also Goscinny and Uderzo, *Le Combat des chefs*.

47 This is illustrated by the participation of black, Spanish-speaking Catholic soldiers among sixteenth-century conquistadores, as "agents of colonialism". Some were born in Iberia, and free: more had been enslaved in Africa, but became free due to their military activity. Restall, Black conquistadors, 171-196, 199.

I now present an ideal type of medieval creolization. Like all ideal types, this is a heuristic exercise, rather than an attempt to describe any specific circumstances. Using an ideal type avoids the dangers inherent in taking one particular case as typical.

The term "creolization" characterizes the development of social and cultural practices. Thus, creolization need not result in a particular end-point, such as the creation of a creole language, or a creole population, however defined. I adapt "practices" from W. G. Runciman's use of the term, as "functionally-defined units of reciprocal action".[48] He restricts this to "social" action, controlling access to social rewards, but I also include cultural activities. In cases of creolization, practices draw on a mixture between distinct superstrates and substrates. The precise nature of the mixture in any given case derives from dispersed agency, rather than unidirectional imposition. But this agency is not free-wheeling; it operates within the possibilities of asymmetrical power. By *distinct* superstrates and substrates, I mean that they are not on a finely gradated continuum. (If a marginally more astute – or luckier – ruler conquers the similar next-door polity ruled by his cousin, then the new political configuration in itself is unlikely to generate creolization.) Superstrate and substrate practices are classified as such by their practical implications in specific circumstances. It may be that particular superstrate practices are tangibly more potent in a specific environment (for instance a technique in transport or agriculture), but this need not be the case: they may be superstrate simply by virtue of their association with a dominant group (for instance the Spanish language in colonial Peru). The distinction between superstrate and substrate need not indicate a simple binary: the practices of multiple substrates and (more often) superstrates could contribute to specific instances of creolization. These processes can be characterized as more pragmatic, or more self-consciously programmatic.[49] Processes of creolization can occur on different scales, involving whole societies, or being restricted to particular groups within a wider society. They can also entail the impact of creolization on superstrate societies.

In medieval creolization, superstrate practices are associated with "agro-literate societies", to use Ernest Gellner's term.[50] These encompass a bundle of attributes such as literacy, sedentary agriculture, towns, commerce, and division of labour. In terms of their economies, agro-literate societies were feudal (or tributary) in their mode of production.[51] ("Agro-literate´" is a much less extensively theorized category than modes of production, but I prefer it in this instance, because it encompasses a wider range of practices and does not assume an analytical priority for economics.) Substrate practices in medieval creolization could also be agro-literate, but they might lack some or all of the agro-literate repertoire.

Latin Europe in the Long Twelfth Century

What might this discussion mean for Latin Europe in the twelfth and early thirteenth centuries? (Note that this period is used out of convenience: it is a clearly-demarcated chronological range, with a critical mass of useful sources, and matches the focus of Bartlett's "Europeanization". It is not my intention to argue that processes of creolization began in the twelfth century, or are unique to it. Indeed, part of this article's purpose is to argue that creolization offers possibilities for approaching and comparing different historical contexts.)

48 Runciman, *Treatise on Social Theory*, vol. 2, 40-42. See also Wickham, Systactic structures.

49 This borrows from John Hines' argument about Scandinavian English, above.

50 Gellner, *Nations and Nationalism*, 8-18; Hall, Varieties of state experience; Hann, Long live Eurasian civ!; Moore, Birth of Europe.

51 Wickham, How did the feudal economy work?;. Haldon, *State and the Tributary Mode*.

In the British Isles and some regions of Germany, "core" polities extended their authority more or less directly into new peripheral regions. But most creolization took place *within* polities with "native" rulers. (In this context, it is worth noting that, while Atlantic creolization began with the extension of European polities, it ultimately resulted in the creation of new states in the Caribbean, Central and South America, and West Africa.) I will sketch two instances of creolization, concerning Poland and Scotland.

My first sketch is of the Polish salt industry during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. I was alerted to this topic by Piotr Górecki*'s* contribution to Bartlett's *Festschrift*.[52] From the twelfth century, Germans (and Walloons and others from western European regions) migrated to work in the Polish salt industry. The control exercised by rulers over much of this production means that it is relatively well recorded in surviving documents. Górecki draws attention to highly suggestive linguistic elements in evidence from the cathedral community of Krakow and elsewhere.[53] These texts were written in Latin, but include technical vocabulary in Polish and German. He notes that the German relates specifically to mining, as opposed to other methods of salt production, which are described using Polish terms. The key evidence is the word *sacht* (modern German *Schacht*), for mineshaft.[54] Thus it seems that Germans brought a new set of salt mining skills to Poland, for which the necessary vocabulary did not exist in Polish.

This might appear to be a straightforward instance of "core" practices moving into a periphery: Germans introduced salt mining techniques previously unknown to "peripheral" Poles. This finds parallels in German miners moving into other areas of eastern Europe and the Balkans during the thirteenth century.[55] But the situation was more nuanced than this. Germans may have had greater skills in certain salt mining operations, but it was Polish rulers who benefitted financially from the salt trade. This seems due in part to distinctive elements of the Polish economy in this era, in which rulers organized and profited from non-agricultural economic resources, involving specialist sites and division of labour.[56] Górecki characterizes this as "entrepreneurial" rulership. Thomas Bisson judges that "the system of local production and supply [...] was a distinctive feature of the early Slavic polity".[57] These rulers were self-consciously Polish, sponsoring the Polish church and the beginnings of a Polish historiographical tradition.[58] They did not become German culturally, nor were they subordinate to German political authority. Yet at the same time, they increasingly adopted the repertoire of lordship and administration from the European "core". This included the pragmatic literacy that produced the written Latin documents which provide our evidence

52 Górecki, Duke as entrepreneur.

53 Górecki, Duke as entrepreneur, 114-116.

54 Górecki, Duke as entrepreneur, 115, citing *Kodeks dyplomatyczny katedry krakowskiej*n, o. 80 (1278), ed. Piekosinski, 106-107; *Kodeks dyplomatyczny Małopolski,* vol. 3, no. 786 (1365), ed. Piekosinski, 191-192.

55 Batizi, Mining; Fine, *Late Medieval Balkans*,199-200.

56 Górecki, Duke as entrepreneur, 101-109. Although the evidence for eastern European "service settlements" is problematized by Curta, The archaeology.

57 Bisson, Princely nobility, 107.

58 Dalewski, Chosen people; Żmudzki, Polans.

inter alia for the salt industry.[59] Polish rulers often assigned benefits from the salt trade to favoured ecclesiastical institutions.[60] Clerics in Poland included German monks, who were part of new international monastic orders:[61] the Cistercian house at Wągrowiec, for example, founded in 1142, continued to recruit from the Rhineland until the fifteenth century.[62] And "Gallus Anonymous", the founder of Poland's tradition of Latin history-writing, patronized by the Piast dynasty, originated somewhere in western Europe.[63] Thus, when we begin to unravel evidence for the salt industry, we see agency dispersed amongst rulers, clerics, and salt-workers, employing practices of diverse origin and communicating in Latin, Polish, and German. Creolization works more effectively than Europeanization to characterize this situation. (The mixture of Polish and German terms additionally suggests to me the possibility that a pidgin developed in the Polish salt industry, allowing Poles, Germans and others to work alongside each other, but it is difficult to see how this could be recovered from our evidence, and in any case we have already established that creolization does not require a linguistic component.) In the operations and records of the salt industry, we glimpse a pragmatic creolization, while the cultural policies of Polish rulers and their ecclesiastical auxiliaries include programmatic creolization.

My second sketch comes from Scotland. Twelfth and thirteenth-century Scotland has been variously described by recent historians as modernized, feudalized, Normanized, Anglicized, Anglo-Normanized, and Europeanized.[64] All of these terms imply a unidirectional process by which Scotland became more like the rest of Latin Europe. From the reign of King David I (1124-1153) onwards, Scotland did indeed see the introduction of features of the European "core", such as towns, coinage, international monastic orders, and knighthood.[65] This also involved a complex linguistic story, involving Gaelic, English, French, Latin, Norse, and perhaps even Welsh.[66] As one thirteenth-century chronicler famously put it, "more recent kings of Scots profess themselves to be rather Frenchmen, both in race and in manners, language and culture."[67]

Alongside this sense of top-down "Europeanization" in Scotland, more granular studies – especially those not focused on royal power – give the impression of much greater complexity, in which the very range of social and cultural options formed an arena for the exercise of agency, especially by regional elites.[68] There were indeed repeated military confrontations between Scottish kings based in the south-east and lords from the north and west. But there

59 On pragmatic literacy in Poland, see Adamska, Memory.

60 Górecki, Duke as entrepreneur, 117-118;

61 Lekai, Medieval Cistercian abbeys; Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, 255-60; Górecki, Duke as entrepreneur, 96-98.

62 Jamroziak, *Cistercian Order*, 272.

63 Dalewski, Chosen people, 146-148.

64 All these terms are used in the items cited in this section.

65 Barrow, David I; Barrow, *Kingship and Unity*; Bartlett, *Making of Europe*; Oram, *David I*; Oram, *Domination and Lordship*; Taylor, *Shape of the State*.

66 Barrow, Lost *Gàidhealtachd*; Edmonds and Taylor, Languages and names; Broun, Welsh identity.

67 Barnwell Chronicle, *s.a.* 1212, in: *Scottish Annals,* 330, n. 6, ed. Anderson. This is often referred to in modern scholarship, including Bartlett, *Making of Europe*, 127, and McDonald, Old and new, 23.

68 See, for instance, the case studies in Stringer (ed.), *Essays on the Nobility*; Boardman and Ross (eds.) *Exercise of* Power; Stringer, Periphery and core.

were also possibilities for more pacific and complex interactions, as seen, for instance, in the career of Ferchar Maccintsacairt, a "native" Gaelic lord in early thirteenth-century northern Scotland, who was also a useful royal ally.[69] It was the very ambiguities of his political and cultural environment that allowed him to establish an important regional lineage. Another example of seeking to benefit from ambiguity comes from the cathedral community of Glasgow. They made a creative attempt to style themselves as successors to the church of the British kingdom of Strathclyde – very consciously neither English nor Scottish (nor Irish or Norse or French, for that matter).[70] Although this particular project did not flourish in the long term, it was a learned attempt at programmatic creolization, for the benefit of a particular ecclesiastical community. These two examples demonstrate a range of possibilities for agency in Scotland during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. Alice Taylor's fine monograph on Scotland in this era demonstrates in detail how the growing intensity of Scottish royal power was based on a nuanced response to particular local circumstances and entailed considerable diversity between localities.[71] Kings adapted their practices to the contours of local societies, rather than flattening them out. We seem to be some way here from a simple image of "core" practices being actively imposed on a passive periphery. As Taylor comments, "a core–periphery explanatory framework can only take us so far in understanding changes in power structures."[72] Susan Reynolds seems to make a similar point in her article on landownership in Scotland. While considering both "native" and "feudal" practices, she observes, "Abandoning a simple contrast between feudal culture on the one hand and native or Celtic culture on the other might help to focus attention on the problem of identifying cultural differences and changes."[73] Thus creolization can be a way to approach the messy to-and-fro of developments in twelfth- and thirteenth-century Scotland, in a way that acknowledges the dispersal of agency, but also the potency of superstrate practices, associated in large part with kingship.

We now move south from Scotland to the Mediterranean. Creolization is probably not a useful way to approach interactions between Latin Europe and whole societies in the southern and eastern Mediterranean. Despite a vivid sense of religious and cultural distinctions between Muslims, Greeks, and Latins, differences in coercive capacity and material resources were not so great. Societies on all shores of the Mediterranean shared such fundamental practices as urban life, coinage, and the use of writing in law and administration. Muslim polities and the Byzantine Empire tended to be richer, more literate, and more urban, than Latin Europe, but these were differences of degree rather than kind, and Latin entities were at times more militarily potent. The Mediterranean was at the western end of a range of agro-literate polities that stretched across Eurasia all the way to China and Japan. In this sense, Latin, Greek, and Arabic polities had more in common with each other than with their less wealthy and powerful neighbours. Thus, at the level of whole societies, creolization works to the north and east of Latin Europe, but not the south. Twelfth-century phenomena such

69 McDonald, Old and new.

70 Broun, Welsh identity, 140-145.

71 Taylor, *Shape of the State.*

72 Taylor, *Shape of the State* 446-449, at 449.

73 Reynolds, Fiefs and vassals, 192.

as the cultivating of Greek and Arabic forms by Sicilian kings, or adopting Frankish chivalric tastes at the Byzantine court, need not be taken as instances of creolization. They did involve cultural negotiation, but not disparities of power and dispersal of agency. However, creolization could happen *within* specific societies in the Mediterranean. In particular, creolization seems to be a useful way to characterize Jewish and Muslim populations under Latin Christian rule. Both cases present stark contrasts in coercive power, and ongoing processes of social and cultural negotiation in which agency was dispersed.[74]

Beyond Latin Europe

Creolization offers possibilities for work on medieval societies beyond Latin Europe. Unlike Europeanization, creolization need not be tied to a specific geography, or a particular historical narrative, so may be useful in exploring a variety of contexts, including offering a frame for comparison.

I have already mentioned the evidence for an Arabic pidgin in the eleventh-century western Sahara. In this case, linguistic developments ran parallel to social and cultural change.[75] The literary language of Arabic spread to the western Sahara as part of a series of superstrate practices which also included Muslim religion and long-distance commerce.[76] These trends found political and military expression in the Almoravid regime, founded in the mid-eleventh century.[77] The Almoravids can be understood as both a product and an engine of creolization. They were Sanhaja Berbers, who from the mid-eleventh century extended their rule over sedentary and nomad populations, in north-western Africa and Iberia. Their initial military prowess derived from practices of pastoral nomadism and warfare, and Berber tribal formations, but their ideological justification was Islamic, originating among a group who had returned from the *hajj* pilgrimage to Mecca. The Almoravids came to use such familiar superstrate practices of Muslim polities as founding towns, literate administration, Islamic jurisprudence, and acknowledging the Abbasid caliph.

Some possibilities for creolization in understanding Almoravid society are encapsulated in the practice of men veiling their faces, including during prayers in mosques.[78] This appears to have inspired a certain disdain among sections of the urban population of twelfth-century Muslim Spain, who regarded male veiling as unsophisticated and even sinful. Yet it was the Berbers who were militarily and politically dominant in this society. Some Spanish Muslims emulated the custom, perhaps especially those who shared the Almoravids' Berber language and identity. In addition, certain Spanish scholars sought to justify veiling in Muslim terms, without adopting it themselves. This combination of cultural and social negotiation, dispersed agency, and political hierarchy seems a promising case to be explored in relation to creolization.

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74 Powell, *Muslims under Latin* Rule; Marcus, Jewish-Christian symbiosis; Sapir Abulafia, *Christian Jewish Relations*. Sapir Abulafia's concept of 'service' offers possible affinities with creolization. It is suggestive that one early meaning of "creole" in Portuguese related to domestic servants.

75 Thomason and Elgibali, Before the Lingua Franca, 322-323, 341.

76 Brett, Islam and trade; Brett, Islamisation of Morocco.

77 Bennison, *Almoravid and Almohad Empires*, 24-54.

78 Hopley, Nomadic populations, 234-239. This study does not refer to creolization.

The society of early medieval Rus' was shaped in part by its relationship with Byzantium.[79] Some scholars have characterized it with reference to a "Byzantine commonwealth" of polities around the Balkans and Black Sea, where Greek social and cultural practices made themselves felt, not least in the form of Orthodox Christianity. Yet the notion of a "Byzantine commonwealth" has been critiqued on various grounds.[80] For the Rus' (and others), Byzantine practices were not simply exported to passive recipients: they also allowed opportunity for dispersed agency. Creolization may be a useful way to approach many Rus' social and cultural practices. This relates not only to the Greek superstrate, but the complex interplay of Slavic, Scandinavian, and Finno-Uralic practices. To take just one example, Simon Franklin and Jonathan Shepard comment on Rus' princely and ecclesiastical culture that "By the end of the [eleventh] century *translatio* was increasingly giving way to *traditio*, as the Scandinavian, Byzantine and Slav strands fused into a less declamatory, more confident and self-sustaining synthesis."[81] This can be seen in the *Primary Chronicle*, compiled in the 1110s, which retells the history of the Rus' in the context of intellectual traditions (biblical, classical, imperial, chronological, and hagiographic) derived from Byzantium.[82] Tellingly, this is composed in Old Church Slavonic, rather than Greek (or indeed a Scandinavian or Finno-Uralic language). It seems to have been produced by authors who did not read Greek, in contrast to the burgeoning twelfth-century historiography on the peripheries of Latin Europe, written in Latin.[83] This was just one instance of developments that can be framed by creolization. And, yet again, we can also glimpse possibilities for creole influence on a metropolis. From the ninth century onwards, Rus' warriors were recruited to the Varangian unit of the Byzantine army, stationed in Constantinople.

I judge that the processes shaping Rus' and Almoravid societies offer useful comparators to (Latin) "Europeanizing" polities such as Scotland and Poland. Creolization offers a framework in which to compare these instances of superstrate agro-literate practices interacting with substrate practices. These examples could be multiplied over time and space across agro-literate Eurasia and Africa. They might include, for instance, the twelfth-century Qara Khitai in central Asia,[84] and the tenth-century Volga Bulgars – depicted so vividly by Ibn Fadlān.[85] The Kingdom of Kongo is also worthy of note in this context: it was part of the early modern Atlantic world of slavery and maritime commerce, but also offers parallels to polities on the periphery of medieval Latin Europe, especially after its rulers adopted Christianity from the Portuguese in the fifteenth century.[86] The sketches provided in this essay might indicate that medieval creolization was primarily an opportunity for local "native" elites to intensify their own power by adapting superstrate practices. Systematic empirical work would be required to test this possibility. But creolization need not be confined to political

79 Raffensperger, The place of Rus'.

80 Raffensperger, Revisiting the idea.

81 Franklin and Shepard, *Emergence of Rus*, 315.

82 Tolochko, Christian chronology.

83 Tolochko, Christian chronology, 213.

84 Biran, *Empire of the Qara Khitai.* For example 'The non-Islamicization of the Qara Khitai', at 196-201.

85 Ibn Fadlān, *Ibn Fadlān and the Land of Darkness*, trans. Lund and Stones.

86 Thornton, Kingdom of Kongo; Bostoen and Brinkman (eds.), *Kongo Kingdom*.

questions: Polish mining and Almoravid veiling suggests how other social and cultural practices could also be creolized, and scholarship on the Roman Empire and the modern Atlantic indicates further possible research questions.

Conclusions

In relation to Latin Europe during the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, creolization offers an alternative to the limitations of "Europeanization". In terms of the distinction between "homogenization" and "expansion" which I outlined above, "Europeanization" may be useful for the former, but "creolization" is much more promising for the latter. It moves beyond the dangers of a dichotomy between active core and passive periphery, by acknowledging possibilities for agency everywhere. Creolization also offers a frame for asking why in specific circumstances some "superstrate" practices were adopted, but not others, and why we see such a variety of polities and cultures around Latin Europe, alongside their commonalities. Creolization does not make any assumptions about what particular practices will prevail in any given historical context: it thus offers some protection against the teleology of "why Europe won" – to use Chris Wickham's formulation[87] – a danger that is not always avoided by Bartlett. As it is a process rather than a destination, creolization can also operate at the level of specific communities, rather than whole societies.

Readers may judge that creolization is so "deeply embedded in situations of coerced transport, racial terror, and subaltern survival",[88] that the term cannot usefully be exported beyond the modern Atlantic and Caribbean. Yet this paper argues that the notion of creolization offers a promising way to approach interactions between the practices of superstate and substrate in medieval Latin Europe, and in agro-literate polities and their neighbours further afield. Creolization leaves questions of agency and destination open. But this does not involve the free flow of creative impulses: crucially, it also acknowledges disparities of power. The notion of creolization cannot predict answers, but can frame questions and comparisons.[89] Only empirical work can demonstrate if this is helpful for our understanding of the medieval world, but creolization is worth exploring.

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87 Wickham, Jiangnan style, 121.

88 Sheller, *Consuming the Caribbean*, 189.

89 On the advantage of modest conceptual claims, see Rigby, Approaches.

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