



The End of the Pagan City: Religion, Economy, and Urbanism in Late Antique North Africa

Anna Leone

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CHAPTER

1 Paganism and Christianity in Late Antique North Africa

Anna Leone

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Abstract

This chapter provides a definition of Paganism and Christianity as they are used in the book. It discusses the continuity of the Pagan symbols and traditions (including games and celebrations) as they evolved after the Edict of Milan by Constantine until the Byzantine conquest of North Africa. It offers an account of the different facets of Late Antique Christianity in North Africa, with a discussion on the Donatist movements and the Circumcelliones; the data are almost exclusively textual and this makes it impossible to address the issues related to these movements in depth in the book. It concludes with a summary of the contexts of the book.

Keywords: Paganism, Christianity, conflicts, calendars, Donatism, Circumcelliones

Subject: Greek and Roman Archaeology, Religion in the Ancient World, Late Antiquity

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Although we would like to know whether paganism went out with a bang, or died with a whimper, I doubt whether even the best archaeological work will ever be able to tell us.

(B. Ward-Perkins 2011, 191)

1. Introduction

The present book addresses two main issues. Firstly, it focuses on the change in religious traditions and practices and the consequent recycling and reuse of monuments and materials. Secondly, it aims to investigate (when possible) to what extent these physical processes were driven by religious and symbolic motivations and contrasts, or were stimulated purely by economic issues. Understanding this latter point is essential to clarify how urban communities in particular developed; why some traditions continued and some others were lost; and, finally, where traditions are proved to have continued, whether they carried the same value and meaning upon doing so.

Answering these questions through archaeology will shed new light on the historical and psychological attitude of, principally urban, societies. It will be useful to clarify whether a number of processes, linked primarily to the religious sphere, that developed all over the Roman empire (although not always simultaneously) resulted from a strong contrast between the pagan and the Christian communities, or if religious beliefs were actually a minor issue.

p. 2 In fact, other elements probably contributed to urban changes and to the practice of recycling that became common in Late Antiquity, such as the economy, trade (i.e. availability of statuary and building material), and a substantially poorer quality of life (i.e. lower budgets to be spent on monuments and statuary) from the 4th century onward. Contemporary sources from both sides may give us views often tinted by strong biases, deeply influenced by the need to represent and promote one religious belief or another. It is also possible that some specific phenomena have been over-emphasized, their importance exaggerated upon the basis of some common assumptions. Recently, Alan Cameron in his book *The Last Pagans of Rome* (2011) has questioned the continuity of certain pagan practices, such as sacrifices, even before the prohibition, and on the true nature of late antique paganism and its form. He commented: 'in the complete absence of evidence nothing can be proved, but I suspect that in the West and in the East by the 380s (if not earlier) public rituals no longer routinely included animal sacrifices....Laws forbidding sacrifice continued to be issued well down into the 5th century, and have always been assumed to prove that sacrifice continued. No doubt it did, here and there, especially in remote areas. But it would be unwise to infer that every such law was provoked by a documented report of sacrifice, especially in cities....Paganism lasted much longer for Christians than pagans. And for Christians, paganism always implied sacrifice.'¹

North Africa offers a unique set of data especially for the late antique period. Furthermore, there is a large amount of textual evidence available, particularly from Augustine, who provides us with a very detailed account of his views on the relationship between pagan and Christian communities.² The traditional interpretation of the idea of the 'end of Paganism' has been brilliantly summed up by Peter Brown: 'in the majority of modern narratives of the period from ↪ Gibbon to Burckhardt to the present day, it has been assumed that the end of paganism was inevitable, once confronted by the resolute intolerance of Christianity'.³ The reality is a complex patchwork of various religions that continued to characterize the sacred and ritual landscape of Late Antiquity, although the major focus has continued to be on the contrast between the two main groups: Pagans and Christians.⁴

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In periods of religious conflicts sources can be particularly difficult to evaluate and understand. Written texts can have different functions (pastoral, propagandistic, theological), which often influence the way in which information is provided. In order to give a different perspective, this book instead intends to address the analysis from the point of view of material culture and urban monumentality. I am aware of the impossibility of providing definitive answers, but since urban forms and appearance mirror society, their analysis (and in particular those elements which are linked directly to the religious sphere) can provide new aspects to our understanding of a complex subject. I believe, despite all the archaeological difficulties, that understanding religious monuments and their evolution, the fate of pagan statuary, and the conscious or unconscious reuse of symbols of the pagan world are essential tasks. The focus will be principally on religious monuments and on the aspects of society that characterized the life of the pagan urban community, although other elements of urban monumentality will be touched upon when necessary to the discussion.⁵ Archaeology can offer insights from the material life of these communities and draw a picture that is not biased by doctrinal approaches or by theological disputes. Although the published material comes mainly from old, non-stratigraphic excavations carried out in the colonial period, with little attention paid to the later ↪ occupation of these cities, the data will allow us to reconstruct pictures of late antique cities or to offer some suggestions that may be confirmed or denied (or may well remain unsolved) by future work.

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The major geographical focus of this book is Roman North Africa (Fig. 1) (i.e. the provinces of Numidia, Zeugitana or Africa Proconsularis, Byzacena, and Tripolitana, corresponding more or less to modern Algeria,

Tunisia, and north-western Libya), an area that was strongly Christianized.⁶ These regions have been extensively excavated and many cities are well preserved, most being inhabited until at least the 10th century prior to being abandoned.⁷ These provinces were also very diverse in terms of organization; for instance, Africa Proconsularis was highly urbanized, while Tripolitana contained only three coastal cities. For this reason, ideally this project would have taken a regional approach. In many instances the difficulties of interpreting the data prevented this, although some specific comments are offered when a regional pattern has been detected.



Fig. 1. Map of North Africa

Chronologically the book considers the period after the Constantinian edict of Milan in AD 313, up to the Byzantine conquest and the 6th century, when major reconstruction took place across the whole of North Africa.⁸ The overall aim of this research also determines its chronological scope: an examination of the relationship between pagans and Christians necessitates a study of the period immediately following the recognition of Christianity as a religion of the empire, a time when the final blow against paganism was landed, and the Byzantine conquest when hegemony of Catholic Christianity was restored in the region. It will be impossible to consider all of the different aspects at the same level of analysis across all periods. The information available is, unfortunately, not homogeneous. In particular, due to the paucity of data on the impact of Vandal Arianism in North Africa, it will be very difficult to discuss in detail the evidence pertaining to the Vandal period. ↵

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2. What Paganism and What Christianity?

At the outset of this book it is necessary to define what is intended here by the terms Paganism and Christianity.⁹ The description of these two categories and their relationship has long been debated.¹⁰ Still, the differentiations between these two worlds remain vague and somehow unclear.¹¹

A reconsideration and discussion of the meaning of the word *paganus* is outside the scope of this book; however, a few points need to be stressed. The meaning of ‘non-Christians’ (to include all those who were not heretics or Jews) becomes common, especially in the period between AD 360 and 420,¹² and it is also recorded in one of the chapters of the *Codex Theodosianus* (CTh).¹³ Essentially, ‘Paganism was not simply, or even primarily a matter of religious commitment but of conformity with a particular tradition.’¹⁴ Therefore, the term will be used here (when necessary) mainly to refer in a broader sense to the series of rituals and actions that characterized the religious life of the Roman empire and were key in crafting the monumental image of Roman urban towns. In other words, the definition of ‘pagan’ religion here refers principally to cult practices, specifically their traditions, symbols, and infrastructure.¹⁵

p. 7 Equally difficult to define clearly and unambiguously is the term 'Christian'. 'Pagans' did not consider themselves as such, and there is ↪ not a clear set of elements that can identify a person as 'pagan'; at the same time, similarly, Christianity cannot be considered as representative of only one point of view and one single community. There were different ways of being Christian, and different levels of faith and practice. Leaving aside the issue of the development of internal movements, especially in North Africa (which will be briefly addressed below), from an early period Christians have been categorized into different groups.¹⁶ At least two can be singled out: paganized Christians as well as semi-Christians.¹⁷ They were adherent to the new religion, but preserved some previous religious traditions and practices. Christianity, especially in the first phase of transition, acquired numerous characteristics and practices from the pagan world, such as commemorative banqueting at burials.¹⁸ This was particularly common in North Africa, where numerous Christian mausolea, similar to the pagan ones, were characterized by couches used for banqueting.¹⁹ Given the diverse nature of the two categories (Christians and pagans), it would be incorrect to examine the differentiations by separating rituals and beliefs, especially for the pagan world.²⁰ Since religiosity was a constituent part of the Roman empire, it is important to see what happened (from an archaeological point of view) to these traditions and their monuments,²¹ and how they interacted with each other.

3. Sacred and Secular: Augustine and his Contemporaries

p. 8 The understanding of the religiosity of late antique communities in North Africa inevitably requires a consideration of the relationship ↪ between the sacred and secular spheres that the same urban contexts shared. This relationship has long been debated and a lucid discussion on the different characteristics of this dichotomy is provided by Robert Markus.²²

The main aspects of interest here are: How deeply was urban life in 4th-century communities embedded in religious practice and belief? And how could different religious communities cohabit the same spaces?

Pagan practices must have been present in the region in some form, as in AD 399 Gaudentius and Iovius were sent to North Africa to apply the law against paganism; according to Augustine their aim was to demolish temples and statues.²³ The effective destruction carried out in connection with this episode still needs to be evaluated. From an historical and social point of view, it cannot be denied that these actions generated internal tensions which resulted in occasional revolts, murders, and additional destruction (as illustrated by Augustine and his contemporaries). However, overall it is very difficult to single out from these sources one specific form of official behaviour by the authorities. As outlined in the following chapters, it appears that generally the state and municipalities were interested in maintaining urban monumentality, even if achieved through the recycling of available materials and spaces, despite their original function.

Given the focus of the present research, it is necessary to provide an idea of the *status quaestionis* on the fate of Pagan practices (e.g. symbols and celebrations) as suggested by ancient sources.

Pagan practices and symbols

p. 9 Understanding the full extent of pagan customs is problematic. With the closure of temples, ritual practices (in whatever form they continued) may have either stopped or moved into private contexts. Tracing a line between Roman religion and cult practice is extremely difficult,²⁴ and understanding to what extent pagan communities (and their actions) were opposed by Christians in Late Antiquity is ↪ similarly complex.²⁵ In both cases the evidence may differ substantially between urban and rural areas, but the latter is almost impossible to investigate archaeologically, due to insufficient data.

The 'pagan survival',²⁶ particularly in material terms (e.g. religious complexes and statues) and concerning priesthood and traditions, requires investigation. Augustine and contemporary texts allow some general considerations that will need to be re-evaluated here from an archaeological perspective. Interpretations, especially of textual evidence, remain limited by the current ceiling of our understanding of pagan cults and rites. As mentioned above, Alan Cameron suggests that sacrifices ended in the 4th century, and a similar trend in some instances is also indicated by Frank Trombley.²⁷

p. 10 It cannot be denied that habits and traditions (maybe acquiring different forms) remained embedded in the pagan sphere for an extended period. Augustine makes reference to substantial continuity in pagan practices in rural areas, mentioning that food offerings in pagan rituals were still very common in AD 398.²⁸ Similarly, in a sermon probably given in AD 399 he points out that temples maintained attendance levels in rural areas despite anti-pagan laws.²⁹ ↵ At the same time, continuity could be found in urban contexts, as Augustine refers to the cult of Dionysus by mentioning a confraternity that was meeting at Madauros.³⁰

On the other side, there is also evidence of active material destruction and sharp division between the two communities, although these seem to be limited to specific isolated events. Augustine informs us that at Sufes in Byzacena the destruction of a statue of Hercules by the Christian community led to the murder of sixty people.³¹ A few years later a similar episode took place at Calama in which Christians tried forcefully to prevent pagan celebrations and the local authorities did not intervene to stop the violence.³²

p. 11 Augustine also provides information on the fate of some pagan monuments, especially statues. He refers to the destruction of statues and, at the same time, to the preservation of idols in private countryside estates (at Mappalia, near Calama between Cirta and Hippo).³³ He does not appear to instigate the demolition of statues, but he suggests instead that idols had to be removed from the heart of the pagans so that they would destroy their idols themselves. In Augustine's view the battle had to be carried out through the state and legislation (he very much welcomed the laws by Theodosius and his sons against the temples; see below, pp. 40–5), not by individuals.³⁴ In Carthage, Quodvultdeus refers to the possible destruction of the temple of Caelestis, although the full extent of what occurred in the building is controversial and difficult to interpret (see below, Chapter 2, pp. 32–3) and the evidence appears to point towards a ↵ demonstrative act, rather than an effective demolition of the pagan sanctuary.

Overall, the textual evidence indicates occasional destruction and violent confrontations, although generally it seems possible to identify substantial levels of tolerance and coexistence between the various religious communities. The general image emerging from Augustine's text seems to indicate the presence of a neutral area within the cities that allowed the peaceful cohabitation of the various religious communities and sects.³⁵

Games and celebrations

Festivals, celebrations, and *ludi* continued into the 4th century, as attested by the pagan Codex-Calendar of AD 354.³⁶ This document was probably written for a Christian aristocrat in Rome; pagan and Christian dates were displayed in parallel, although the former was illustrated and the latter was without any representation.³⁷ This was probably the last calendar of its kind, still characterized by pagan festivities and iconographies but already looking toward the interests of the Christian community. It spoke to both entities within an urban context.³⁸ The evidence emerging from this document seems to suggest that also the everyday life of cities was probably not timed by the Christian liturgical calendar but still for the most part by the pagan one.³⁹

p. 12 Some festivals still maintained a substantially pagan character, such as those at the end of December which did not honour the birth of Jesus but rather the *spectacula* and games which were ↵ held across the empire⁴⁰ and criticized by Augustine.⁴¹ At Bulla Regia, he makes reference to the high amount of activity in the theatre, despite the fact that the town had become Christian.⁴² Similarly, in AD 409 the Bishop of Carthage, Aurelius,

invited Augustine to give sermons in the city during the December celebrations, and these events were almost deserted as people preferred to attend theatres, amphitheatres, and circuses instead of the church.⁴³

The continuity as well as the end of the practice of organizing games and festivals are very difficult to define. It appears archaeologically that most of the theatres and the amphitheatres were abandoned in the Vandal period, while circuses remained in use for longer.⁴⁴ As highlighted by the *Codex-Calendar*, there was an emphasis on festivals that both pagans and Christians could share, like those of the imperial cult and those connected to civic and historical events.⁴⁵ As we shall see, the imperial cult, or at least its celebrations, survived in certain forms (see Chapter 3) for a long time.⁴⁶ The *Codex Theodosianus* attests that *ludi* and circus spectacles continued at least into the 5th century; in particular, legislation addressed to North Africa indicates *ludi* as amusements (*voluptates*), an attempt to detach these activities from religious festivities.⁴⁷ The process of secularization of these festivals was probably slow and it is very difficult if not impossible to identify exactly when the change became definitive and complete.⁴⁸ Augustine witnesses the transition for us, as he expressed several complaints about the continuity of pagan festivals.⁴⁹

Texts are occasionally contradictory, but as Peter Brown (2011) has pointed out, our search for evidence of paganism in Late Antiquity is biased and there was not such a strong sense of a pagan community, but rather in this period 'we are witnessing the vigorous flowering of a public culture that Christians and non-Christians alike could share'.⁵⁰ The late antique city was characterized by secular municipal life, and not specifically embedded in any distinctive religious traditions.⁵¹ Christianity was not to replace the offices and the customs that the Roman state had established in pagan religion.⁵² The recognition of Christianity and its diffusion gave a boost to the urban change and progressively determined the formation of a Christian topography.⁵³ This is in itself a complex issue. The development and the distribution of churches in urban areas appeared progressively from the end of the 4th century.⁵⁴ In this context 'secular' is intended as indicating all the aspects of the municipal life of North African communities, encompassing issues such as legislation, economy, and religious power. The 'secular city', as Markus proposes, progressively from the 4th to the 6th century saw the reduction of the neutral space, gradually taken over by the Christian presence.⁵⁵ At the same time, for instance, some pagan religious festivals continued into the Christian period; at first they acquired a more secular perspective so that a majority could participate in them, until they were replaced in the Byzantine period by the Christian calendar.⁵⁶ The sphere of secular that characterized Late Antiquity is recognizable principally in the city,⁵⁷ and in fact urban areas are the focus and centre of this book.

4. From Paganism to Christianity: Donatism, the Circumcelliones

North Africa was characterized from the 3rd century on by a variety of different religious traditions that did not fall into the category of 'pagan'. The presence of these entities to a certain extent complicates our understanding of the level of religiosity in late antique North Africa. Some of these religious communities present in the territory were at certain times (during Late Antiquity for instance) among the strongest groups in the region.

From the beginning of the diffusion of Christianity, the North African Church struggled to maintain unity and cohesion. This situation multiplied the number of churches as well as the number of clergy members present in the territory. A peak in the number of bishops is recorded in AD 411⁵⁸ in the council of Carthage that opposed the Caecilianists (connected to the Catholic Church of Rome) and Donatists. Donatism has been the subject of various studies and discussions,⁵⁹ and the movement is complex and difficult to understand. The origin of the division was in a disagreement over the nomination of the bishop of Carthage. Caecilian, formally elected Bishop in Carthage by the 'official' Church, was accused by the Donatists of being a *traditor* during the Diocletianic persecution, and they (especially Numidian bishops) put forth Donatus in opposition.⁶⁰ Donatists were considered heretics and were therefore ranged by the imperial state alongside such groups as the Arians.⁶¹

It is at the Council in Carthage in 411 that the movement's representatives were labelled 'Donatist Bishops'.⁶² Some scholars have pointed out that this definition is based on the Catholic Christian sources, and from a more 'local perspective' they would be better defined as 'African Christians', as at one point in the 4th century Donatism appeared to be the strongest Christian community in North Africa,⁶³ although more diffused in Numidia, principally among rural communities⁶⁴ where it had its roots. One of the highly debated aspects pertaining to the success of the movement, especially among peasants, is language.⁶⁵ In the countryside in particular Libyo-Phoenician continued to be the main spoken language, which might have been an obstacle to the diffusion of Latin-orientated Christianity.⁶⁶

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Despite the awareness of the importance of this movement in shaping and forming the Christian landscape of North Africa and its impact in this process of transition from one religion to another, Donatism will not be discussed in the present book. The view of this research is in fact primarily archaeological and, unfortunately, it is impossible to conduct an 'archaeology of Donatism'.⁶⁷ One illustrative reason for this is that it is impossible to distinguish Donatist buildings, as they were using the same churches as the Caecilianists.

Donatism is often paired in ancient sources with the Circumcelliones; these texts give us various details about this community, all considered and interpreted differently by scholars.⁶⁸ They were principally a rural phenomenon, therefore from the point of view of urban communities they probably had a limited impact on the urban landscape and its form, but they certainly constitute an active religious group in the region under consideration. They are described generally by ancient sources in two ways: the first is as a group of people who, living a life of chastity and poverty, used violence to provoke others with the intent of being killed and martyred. To achieve this martyrdom, some believers even resorted to suicide by jumping from cliffs.⁶⁹ The burial places of martyrs became centres of veneration. Other sources instead draw a picture of communities that fought against social divisions, especially against rich landowners who used slaves, and against members of the Catholic hierarchy. Seeking martyrdom, they often attended rural markets (that were usually taking place near temples), interrupting pagan ceremonies and even occasionally smashing statues.⁷⁰

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Recently, Circumcelliones have been labelled as 'bad boys' by Brent Shaw. He defines them as 'bands of armed men and women, who wandered through the North African countryside in the late 4th and early 5th centuries, known as Circumcelliones, engaged in sectarian assaults of their sectarian enemies'.⁷¹ The name of the Circumcelliones originates, as explained by the sources, in the fact that they were living around the *cellae*. From the Augustinian text it seems possible to suggest that these were places where they might find food: *Ab Agris vacans et victus sui causa cella circumiens rusticanas*.⁷² Brent Shaw points out that, like Donatists, this identification was constituted by the subjective, external viewpoint put forth by their opponents and was certainly not the way they identified themselves; they probably preferred to be called *Agonistici*.⁷³

Historiography has taken divergent paths on the identification/interpretation of the *cellae*. One group of scholars suggests that the *cellae* were rural houses where the Circumcelliones lived during seasonal work in the Numidian countryside. Augustinian texts appear to refer to a wine storage room possibly in a large villa, and occasional reference made to the *cellarius* suggests that someone was in charge of it. On this basis it has been proposed that these were seasonal workers lingering in and around their place of employment, probably in connection with the harvest.⁷⁴

Others instead suggest that the *cellae* were monastic cells. William Frend identified them with some African toponyms recorded principally in Numidia, such as *Cellenses* or *Cellae Vafari*, and argued that these names refer to shrines connected to martyr cults, with granaries where the Circumcelliones were fed.⁷⁵ This latter interpretation was based on an inscription dated to AD 361 and found at Koudiat Adjala in Mauretania; the inscription uses the word *cella* to describe a shrine dedicated to martyrs.⁷⁶ Working from the place names and the inscription, Frend argues that the *cellae* around which the Circumcelliones usually gathered can be identified as the cult places of martyrs. In light of his suggestion, a series of ecclesiastical monuments

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incorporating grain silos have been interpreted as possible martyr *cellae*, although the description of the monuments seems to indicate the presence of monasteries⁷⁷ located principally in Algeria and Morocco.

Both the Donatist and Circumcelliones communities have recently been reconsidered by Leslie Dossey. Although outside the scope of this book, it is worth mentioning the idea that rural communities acquired more importance in the 3rd and 4th centuries and became more independent, as well as becoming represented de facto by the bishops or members of the clergy. Villages that did not grow to be cities and did not acquire their own administrative structure became administratively dominated by the clergy and the Church. The stark contrast between the various religious groups could be seen in this new power as it emerged onto the social and political landscape.⁷⁸ ↵

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5. Vandal and Byzantine Conquests: An Overview

The Vandal conquest of North Africa took place in this already complex environment. Vandals reached North Africa from Spain in 430 when they conquered Hippo Regius.⁷⁹ They subsequently extended their control to the region of Constantine, and their conquest was concluded in AD 439 when they took over Carthage. The organization of the Vandal Kingdom and its relationship to Rome has been greatly debated.⁸⁰ The sources are very limited, are composed principally of texts, and provide an image of a Vandal community thoroughly Romanized, with the attendant customs and habits;⁸¹ archaeologically, however, they are almost invisible.⁸² As in the case of the Byzantine and then the Islamic phases, major destruction of later stratigraphic levels occurred during the colonial period between the end of the 19th and the beginning of the 20th centuries, limiting the possibility of understanding clearly the later occupation of settlements.⁸³ Christian life in Vandal North Africa is also very complex. In fact, Vandals were Arians, and their views differed from those of the Catholic North African Church; certainly Geiseric, after the conquest, was an adamant opponent of the local Church.⁸⁴ Sources refer to a substantial attack on the African Church (excluding only Carthage, Hippo Regius, and Calama), where, after the conquest, churches were left empty and it was difficult to carry on any cult practice.⁸⁵

p. 20 It has been suggested that the persecution of Catholics developed in two different periods: the first starting in AD 439 and ending with the great persecution in AD 483–4; the second, from AD 485 until the end of Vandal domination, was less aggressive towards Catholics.⁸⁶

The constant changes in attitude and the different phases of confiscation and church closures make it very difficult to evaluate and consider religious life in the Vandal period.

The Byzantine conquest of North Africa took place in AD 534, determining at the same time the establishment of the Christian empire.⁸⁷ Paganism has now a very limited diffusion and the process of Christianization was substantially concluded during this phase in the history of the North African region. In fact, Belisarius' expedition to North Africa aimed specifically to re-establish the supremacy of the Catholic Church over Vandal Arianism. He set up a new administrative organization, the diocese of Africa became independent,⁸⁸ and Justinian started a programme of rebuilding that was focused principally on churches as a symbol of the new empire and fortifications to provide security.⁸⁹ In particular there is a good range of Christian religious monuments from this period, as an intensive excavation programme in the French colonial period specifically targeted churches.⁹⁰ The problem lies in the fact that a lack of stratigraphic information often prevents us from fully reconstructing the various phases of a given complex.

p. 21 The Byzantine period continued to be characterized by the fight against the Berber kingdom. The first insurrection is recorded in 535 by groups located in Byzacena and Numidia, but tribes along the ↵ borders of the Sahara and Tripolitana also kept the provinces under threat.⁹¹

6. Urban Monumentality and Religiosity in Late Antique North Africa: A Summary

The transition from one religion to another impacted on the form of classical Roman cities. As already mentioned above, Roman cities maintained a distinction between public and private areas, but there was not a clear delineation of places for religious practices, political functions, or other specific activities. The pagan city had monumental temples, but sacrifices in fact took place in front of the temples and not physically inside them. The space in front of the temple was therefore considered as sacred as the temple itself. Christianization brought about a different approach to urban religious landscapes, with the sacred space moved inside the church. Furthermore, churches needed to provide room for a large number of people. The form and structure of the two types of religious architecture determined the development of a Christian topography. The pagan topography is more difficult to understand as temples were in the forum and in various other parts of the city; churches, conversely, had a specific distribution inside and outside the urban context, as they were used as cemeteries, for baptisms, and for other community functions. Churches distributed in towns were all connected and their distribution planned. The responsibility for this reorganization of urban areas, however, is not always clearly consequent to the process of Christianization. There is no single trend that is identifiable, but from the archaeological evidence it seems likely that by the second half of the 4th century many temples and forums were falling into a state of disrepair and baths often acquired the function of the centre of urban life.⁹² This process was often the first reason for the shifting of the ↪ urban centre away from temples. The importance of baths in late antique urban society is also attested by the sources. The *Historia Augusta* informs us that the Emperor Valerian was prone to sitting in bath complexes.⁹³ Baths also became centres for official meetings; the *thermae Gargilanae* in Carthage was the setting in AD 411 for the council between the Donatists and the Catholics. The increased importance of baths also saw the development of these centres as places for propaganda, acquiring more and more the function of venues for the dedication of statues and community celebrations. In the baths in Madauros and Tubernuc, for instance, a dedication to Caesar Constantine was made by four prefects. Likewise, a dedication to an unknown proconsul in the 4th century appeared on the portico façade of the Iulia Memmia baths in Bulla Regia.⁹⁴ Similarly, a series of bases of statues dedicated to Commodus, Valerianus, and Gallienus and his wife and two children were displayed inside the southern baths at Timgad. Here too it is possible to suggest that the baths complex was used to display statues, just as forums had been used in the high Imperial period.⁹⁵ The change in function of public spaces and the decay of forums is of fundamental importance to the present research, and is closely linked to the issue of the end of temples and their reuse, something that is particularly difficult to address and understand.⁹⁶ Equally, the relationship between temples and churches is another key aspect to take into consideration. The idea of a continuity of religious function for buildings (from temples to churches) also needs to be reconsidered (see Chapter 2).

The presence of derelict public areas in urban centres favoured the practice of recycling the available marble and decorative material present in towns. This process has to be seen in connection with the economy of late antique cities, an aspect that has often been underestimated and disregarded, due to the difficulty in identifying it. Therefore one point that needs to be discussed and clarified is to ↪ what extent the process of dismantling buildings was determined by ideology and change of religion, rather than driven purely by the availability of and need for material. Thus the background for the continuity, or lack thereof, of religious practices and their importance must be understood. The problem, already discussed and interpreted in various ways, of the continuity of some specific aspects of pagan religious life, such as the priesthood connected to the imperial cult, that are still found in North Africa in the Vandal period poses essential questions that require answering. Understanding (as far as possible) the meaning of this continuity and its importance is another piece of the puzzle in the reconstruction of the picture of religious life in late antique cities. Apart from the inscriptions attesting to this continuity, it is also important to consider the evidence from the cult centres and the images of the emperors.

Images, idols, and statuary are another element of the pagan life of these communities. Statues were displayed everywhere in Roman cities, and in some cases in very high numbers. They were symbols, media for propaganda, and indicators of cults; in all, they were essential in everyday Roman life. It is therefore extremely important to identify the point at which they ceased (if ever) to be a key element of urban monumentality and how their meaning and function changed (if they did) in the urban landscape. Understanding the fate of pagan statues after the Christianization of the empire, the closure of temples, and the prohibition of sacrifices is another key step toward identifying the religiosity of late antique cities.

7. The End of Paganism in Late Antique North Africa

p. 24 With the aim of discussing the end of Paganism in North Africa through the archaeological evidence, this work will focus on a series of specific aspects (for which there is available material) which have been identified as most significant. Starting from temples it then considers the materiality of religious practice, both the survival of its symbols and the continuation of its traditions. Aside from archaeological evidence, textual sources are also occasionally considered in the discussion, often to provide a socio-historical framework or in support of some specific elements of interest.⁹⁷ Also, inscriptions are mentioned and listed in the text, provided with a reference to the source from which the actual reading is taken.

Archaeological data considered come primarily from published material, and very often from old excavations carried out on sites. When specific findings are discussed, a deliberate choice has been made to reproduce the original text in the original language, in order to provide the reader with the elements necessary to judge the validity and reliability of the source. In the case of the study of Basilica I in Sabratha (Chapter 5) data presented have been collected during fieldwork on the site in June 2010.⁹⁸

Transcriptions of Arabic names have been made following the English conventions ('wadi' for 'river', etc.). Names of sites are usually indicated with the ancient name first and the modern name in round brackets, if necessary. Many buildings cited in the text bear French names. These have been deliberately left in their original form without translating them. The identification of buildings, which often have multiple names, is complex. In order not to create another element of confusion, the decision has been made to identify the most commonly used name for a complex and to not translate it. In the Index at the end of this book, a complete list of the sites mentioned in the text is provided with reference to the *Barrington Atlas*.

The evidence is organized progressively, starting from the issue of monuments and temples, then considering the priests, then moving on to statuary and decoration.

Chapter 2 includes a detailed analysis of the archaeological evidence related to the continuity of use and reuse of pagan religious buildings. Archaeological data are compared with the laws regulating the management of these buildings from the *Codex Theodosianus* and the *Codex Justinianus*. The chapter aims to investigate the fate of temples, their development in connection with Christian religious buildings, and the relationship between cultural spaces within North African cities.

p. 25 Chapter 3 reconsiders and analyses the inscriptions and documents related to pagan traditions in North Africa, looking specifically at religious officials (priesthoods) and rituals. The chapter includes a detailed collection of all the available evidence, texts, and inscriptions. It then discusses what type of religious traditions appears to have carried on into the late antique and Vandal periods. It considers the continuity of pagan traditions into the early Christian period, filling in the cultural and social picture with finer strokes of materiality.

The following chapter considers the evidence of statues: what do we know about the fate of the statues that decorated temples in Late Antiquity, or about the dedication of statues and their locations? Data collected have allowed the identification of a series of specific cases: statues that appear to have been intentionally buried or

simply stored in order to be preserved; statues moved intentionally from the forum into different public settings in Late Antiquity, suggesting a possible change in the function and meaning of these works; statues intentionally hammered or mutilated. The chapter re-addresses these issues, considering the archaeological evidence, data from the *Codex Theodosianus* and *Justinianus*, inscriptions, and contemporary authors.

Chapter 5 looks at the decoration of earlier Byzantine churches and the origin of their marble elements. The goal is to identify the processes of spoliation of pagan religious (and occasionally non-religious) buildings and the evidence for the reuse of the material for other religious purposes.⁹⁹ The chapter includes an analysis of the material and architectural decorations of churches and their various provenances (e.g. in discussing trade) and the development of local sculptural traditions (e.g. local styles vs. imports). It then considers the issue of the recycling of marbles and stones in churches and, if possible, their original locations. Certain places provide better-documented examples and serve as case studies, such as the church in the basilica in the forum of Sabratha. The chapter looks principally at architecture and discusses whether the praxis of material reuse took into account the original location and function of such material. It would also be important to address the presence of symbolic and intentional reuse of some specific decorative elements, but the lack of archaeological data for the earlier phase (at the end of the 4th – 5th century) of the churches has prevented this. In fact, if reuse was intentional (to provide specific messages rather than simply decorative programmes) this should have been mostly evident in the phase of transitions from a pagan city to a Christian one, in the 4th and 5th centuries. Unfortunately data only allow for discussion of early Byzantine religious architecture, when churches had already become the symbols of the Christian empire. The focus at this point was probably on monuments and their appearance.

Data are analysed comparatively and discussed in Chapter 6; the discussion will focus on the evidence collected and analysed throughout the book. In this chapter also future directions for research are identified.

The book also contains two appendices. The first one includes a list of the latest inscriptions referring to the priests of the imperial cult in North Africa. The second contains a detailed account of the fieldwork carried out in Basilica I in Sabratha. The data are important for understanding the chronology and the layout of the monument and they are complementary to the discussion in Chapter 5.

Notes

- 1 Cameron 2011, 67. A similar idea on the substantial decrease in importance of sacrifices is also found in Trombley (2011), where he suggests that the practice of the cult of the emperor was limited to burning incense in front of imperial statues and that progressively the veneration of emperors was entrusted to the panegyrics (on panegyrics see also Cameron 2011, 228–9 and see below, Ch. 3). Expressions of religiosity in the Classical world came through actions: doing was equal to believing.
- 2 See below for a discussion and Chadwick 1985 for some ideas and further bibliography. For a list of the 4th–5th-c. sources referring to the contrasts between the two religions see Lee 2000.
- 3 Brown 1998, 633.
- 4 The bibliography on the subject is large and would be impossible to cite in its entirety here. Some general accounts providing further ancient and modern sources are: Brown 1967, 1972, and 2003; Markus 1990; MacMullen 1984, 1997; Brown 2006; Bowes 2008; and Cameron 2011. For a general discussion on the development of Christian writers see A. Brown 2007, 266–78. On the historiography see Momigliano 1963.
- 5 Fortifications and city walls, although an integral part of the late antique cities, will be not considered here, as their functional aspect is not directly and uniquely connected to religious life. Private architecture will be considered only in the case of the evidence of private cults (Ch. 2) and private statuary collection (Ch. 4), but, as will be apparent, data are too scanty to provide elements of discussion.
- 6 North Africa saw an early appearance of conflicting movements within the Church. For a synthesis on the Donatist movement, see Frend 1952a and more recently Shaw 2011.
- 7 On the end of North African cities see Leone 2007a, 281–7.

- 8 From the end of the 6th c., cities show substantial urban decay, with the eventual complete dissolution of public spaces and the development of settlements characterized by nuclei of dwelling and production centres (Leone 2007a, 167–87).
- 9 For a recent discussion on the debate and the difficulty in comparing two substantially different elements see A. Brown 2007.
- 10 On this issue see MacMullen 198, Markus 1990, Brown 1995 and more recently Cameron 2011.
- 11 Markus 1990, 11–15; MacMullen 1984, 75–85; Brown 1995, 3–25.
- 12 Le Goff 1982, 92–4, Markus 1990, 8–15, Brown 1998, 639, and more recently Cameron 2011, 14–25. Some scholars prefer the use of ‘polytheism’ instead of ‘paganism’; however, using this definition opens up another full set of complex issues. For a discussion see Cameron (2011, 25–32).
- 13 On the *Codex Theodosianus* and chapter 10.16 see below, pp. 41–3. For further comments on the chronologically restricted use of ‘paganus’ see Cameron 2011, 16.
- 14 Bonner 1984, 342.
- 15 This emerges from the fact that in Roman religion, orthodoxy is orthopraxy, believing is doing (Clark 2010, 183); the same point is also addressed by Scheid (2007, 45–6). He stresses that the only certainty of the Roman religion is ritual obligation, e.g. the obligation to perform a specific rite, on a specific day, under the authority of specific collegia of priests or magistrates. On the transformation of religious practice and sacrifices see also Stroumsa 2005.
- 16 See Bonner 1984, 344.
- 17 Bonner 1984, 350. On the semi-Christians see in detail Guignebert 1923.
- 18 *Refrigeria* developed similarly to the pagan *parentalia*, although the former also included Eucharistic elements (see Rubio Navarro 2008, 4479). In North Africa the practice was particularly strong: see Augustine, *Epistula* 29.22 and *Sermo* 361.6.
- 19 Duval 1995, 197–8 and for further comments Rossignani 2011, 43.
- 20 Nuffelen 2011, 91.
- 21 For a discussion on the difficulty of defining a ‘Pagan Survival’ see Markus 1990, 8–15; for a definition of ‘survival’ see Filotas 2005, 18–20. For the discussion on the meaning of priesthood in Roman society (e.g. ‘priesthoods were civic offices held by politicians’) see Bowes 2008, 22.
- 22 Markus 1990, 1–16.
- 23 For a full reconsideration of the evidence see Ch. 4, pp. 136–7.
- 24 Markus 1990, 3. See also above n. 15.
- 25 Brown 1967, 305. Reference is made here in particular to aspects of late paganism, such as mystery cults, the Oriental religions, and Mithraism.
- 26 An attempt to define the ‘pagan survival’ is in Markus 1990, 9–15.
- 27 See n. 1 above and Ch. 3.
- 28 Augustine, *Epistula* 46, CCSL 34.2, 123–9. Publicola wrote to Augustine, expressing his worries about the fact that he might drink water from a fountain used for sacrifices, or eat oil from presses where goods for pagan gods had been processed. Augustine tries to reply to all the obsessions expressed by Publicola. This is described by Lepelley (2002b) as the process of demonization that characterized a certain part of Christian society in Late Antiquity. On the other side, it has been suggested that some rural temples continued to be maintained because they were seen as important monuments for their economic function (Caseau 2004, 126), especially since many of them were also used for market activities (for an analysis of the evidence see Shaw 1981, and more recently Zelener 2000 and Meloni 2008).
- 29 *Sermo* 62, in particular 17–18 (for a general introduction on the sermon and its content see: *Sermones in Matthaeum* I, ediderunt P. P. Verbraken, L. De Coninck, B. Coppeters, R. Demeulenere—CCSL 41A1, *Aurelii Augustini Opera pars* XI, 2, Turnhout 2008, 292–4). Riggs 2001, 295 in particular stresses that many Christians who attended the sacrifices defended themselves by saying that they took part in ceremonies dedicated to the *genius* of the city. However, in the religious tradition of North Africa the *genius* was usually associated with a particular deity. In the city of Sufetula, where 60 Christians were killed for desecrating a statue of Hercules, this god was also identified with the *genius* of the city (see below, n. 31). On the contrasting attitude of Augustine towards the destruction of pagan idols and temples see also Klein 1995, 135 and for some further comments on the episode of Sufetula 149–50 and n. 79. The continuity of pagan cults is also attested by Augustine, who refers to the fact that at a young age, when he was trying ambitiously to win a prize for dramatic poetry, he was invited by a haruspex to sacrifice (Augustine, *Confessiones* IV, 2, 3).
- 30 Leglay 1975, 133. Such continuity seems also to be reflected by iconography, for instance a Bacchus recorded in a 4th-c. mosaic at Thysdrus (Merlin and Poinssot 1934, 154).
- 31 Augustine, *Epistula* 50 (Sant’Agostino, *Le Lettere* vol. I (1–123), *testo latino dall’edizione maurina confrontato con il corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum*, traduzione di T. Alimenti and L. Carrozzi, Rome 1969, 411): *Nam si Vestrum Herculem dixeritis, collatis singulis nummis ab artifice vestro vobis emimus deum. Reddite igitur animas, quasa truculenta manus vestra contorsit, et sicuti a nobis vester Hercules redhibetur, sic etiam a vobis tantorum animae reddantur*. See also Ch. 4, p. 138.

- 32 Augustine, *Epistula* 91.8. See also Markus 1990, 115.
- 33 *Sermo* 62, 17 (Sant'Agostino, *Discorsi* II.1 (51–85) sul nuovo testamento, traduzione e note di Luigi Carrozzi, Rome 1982, 272–6).
- 34 Gaddis 2005, 115.
- 35 Lepelley 2002a, 283–5, also for a specific reconsideration of Augustine's texts. See also Lepelley 2010a and b.
- 36 Although this document refers to Rome, it provides a view of the continuity of pagan festivities in the transition from a Pagan empire into a Christian one. For a more detailed consideration see Ch. 3, and esp. n. 31.
- 37 Salzman 1990, 21. The text probably collated information from over a dozen texts (23). The calendar is organized into two sections. One focuses on the imperial, astrological, and pagan tradition and the second (without illustrations) considers imperial, civic, and Christian festivities (25).
- 38 Stern 1953, 358 points out that the front page in fact refers to the Christian God: *Valentine Floreas in deo*. On the reading of the evidence see more recently Salzman 1990, in particular 19–22 on the innovative approach in comparison with Stern's work.
- 39 For discussion on this aspect, see Lepelley 1979, 375.
- 40 See on this Lepelley 1979, 375.
- 41 See for instance the sermon given at Carthage in AD 409, where Augustine recalls the people pouring out of the vomitoria and compares the spectators to damned souls. *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 147, 8, 5–10 (Sancti Augustini Opera, *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 101–150, ed. Franco Gori, CSEL XCV/5, Vienna 2005, 206): *aliquando dimisso theatro aut amphiteatro, cum coeperit ex illa cavea evomi turba perditorum, aliquando tenentes in animo phantasias vanitatis suae, et memoriam suam pascentes rebus non solum inutilibus, sed et perniciosis, gaudentes in eis tamquam in dulcibus, sed pestiferis...*
- 42 *Sermo* 301A, 7 (Sant'Agostino, *Discorsi* V (273–340A) *su i Santi*, traduzione, note e indici di M. Recchia, Milan 1986, 484).
- 43 See on this La Bonnardièrre 1976. Again in this case there is a contrasting image between texts and archaeological evidence.
- 44 The latest evidence of restoration of theatres is recorded in the first half of the 4th c. at Bulla Regia (Leone 2007a, 90), Lepcis Magna (Leone 2007a, 92), and Carthage (Leone 2007a, 124).
- 45 Salzman 1990, 197.
- 46 It has been suggested that circus games became more strictly linked to celebrations of the imperial cult (Cameron 1976, 231). To explain the limited number of circuses available, commentators have also posited that theatres might have been used for the same function, as suggested by the recurrent mention of the Blues and the Greens and the Circus Factions (Cameron 1976, 234; for ceremonies in Late Antiquity see also MacCormack 1981).
- 47 For some further consideration see Salzman 1990, 237. Specifically for Africa see *CTh* 16.10.17 (AD 399) directed to Apollodorus, proconsul of Africa: 'we decree that, according to ancient custom, amusements shall be furnished to the people, but without any sacrifice or any accursed superstition' (237). For the full Latin text see Ch. 3, n. 36.
- 48 Salzman 1990, 240 and also Cameron 2011, 14–25.
- 49 *Epistula* 29.9 (Sant'Agostino, *Le Lettere* 1 (1–123), M. Pellegrino, T. Alimonti, L. Carrozzi (Rome, 1969), 190: Città Nuova Editrice; *De Catechizandis Rudibus* 25.48, 69–76 (CCL 46, 171–2):...*Multos ergo uisurus ed ebriosos, auaros, fraudatores, aleatores, adulteros, fornicatores, remedia sacrilega sibi alligantes, praecanatoribus et mathematicis nuel quarumlibet impiarum artium diuinatoribus deditos. Animaduersus etiam quod illae turbae impleant ecclesias per dies festos Christianorum, quae implent et theatra per dies solemnes paganorum; ut haec uidendo ad imitandum tentaberis*. In this panorama Donatists and Circumcelliones seem to have been principally responsible for violent actions resulting from opposing views held by religious communities (Chadwick 1985, 12–15).
- 50 Brown 1995, 12.
- 51 Lepelley 2002a.
- 52 See on this also Bowes 2008, 22–5. The concept of 'profane' has to be taken into consideration within this dichotomy (Markus 2010, 353). See also recently the conference organized on the idea of the profane Rebillard and Sotinel 2010a.
- 53 Di Berardino 2010, 136. Such a process resulted in some cases also in the reorganization of the city; Carthage for instance was divided into probably seven ecclesiastical regions (see for a synthesis Leone 2007a, 96–109).
- 54 For a detailed discussion see more recently Sotinel 2010, 340–2. The difficulty in studying the Christian topography of urban North Africa is complicated by the contemporary internal division of the Christian community that saw the development of different communities at a very early stage in the region's history.
- 55 Markus 1990, 15, and for a discussion of the changes in the calendar see Salzman 1990 and Haensch 2007, 176–82.
- 56 Rebillard and Sotinel 2010b, 5.
- 57 Sotinel 2010, 322–3.
- 58 On the acts of the council of Carthage, see Lancel 1972 and Lancel 1991.
- 59 It is an early movement in opposition to the Catholic Church (which was supporting Caecilianus–Caecilianists) that developed from the Diocletianic persecution. For a detailed discussion see Frend 1952a, MacMullen 1984, 92, and Shaw

- 1995*b*, and for a new reading of the evidence see Dossey 2010 and more recently see Shaw 2011, 561–4 and 630–50. Some African councils also attested to the existence of the Pelagian heresy (Löhr 2007, 41).
- 60 For a summary of the events that generated Donatism see Löhr 2007, 41–2.
- 61 Donatists were considered heretics: Shaw 2011, 276, and on the nature of Donatus (heresiarch) see 344–6. Donatists are called heretics by Augustine himself, as in the *Contra Gaudentios*, 1, 3, and 4 (CCSL 53, 202). In some instances it is indicated as a schism; see for instance Löhr 2007, 41.
- 62 In the texts of the Council, bishops were opposed and defined as *Episcopi Ecclesiae Catholicae* (S. Lancel, *Actes de la Conférence de Carthage en 411*, vol. III (Paris, 1975), Les Editions du Cerf, 932) against the Donatist bishops.
- 63 Shaw 1995*b*, 12 stresses the fact that even when supported by the state, the Caecilianists did not manage to impose their supremacy in the region, while Donatists were only labelled as such by their opponents. For some more detailed considerations see also Shaw 2011, 562–4.
- 64 On the necessity of reading the evidence in connection with the diffusion of the phenomenon among rural communities and its social implication see Dossey 2010, 101–44. Specifically on the recorded presence principally in Numidia see Lancel 1972, 155.
- 65 For some consideration of the variety of populations that characterized North Africa and the differing language components see Millar 1968.
- 66 The imposing presence of rural bishops, especially in Numidia, has been interpreted as due to the strong cult of Saturn and, as suggested by Marcel Le Glay, the replacement of the priests of Saturn with (Donatist) bishops (Leglay 1961, 490). This assumption is based on the suggestion by Frend (1952*a*, 101–4) of an existing connection between the cult of Saturn, Baal Hammon in its Roman personification, and Donatist religious practices.
- 67 An attempt at identification of some possible buildings has been made by Frend (1952*a*).
- 68 For a synthesis see Briand-Ponsart and Hugoniot 2006, 394–402.
- 69 See Achilli 2006.
- 70 For some comments and analysis see Dossey 2010, 175–6.
- 71 Shaw 2006, 636, see also Shaw 2004.
- 72 Augustine, *Contra Gaudentium* I, 27.32 (Sant'Agostino, *Polemica con i Donatisti*. XVI, 2, traduzione e note E. Cavallari, (Rome 2000), 478–9).
- 73 Shaw 2011, 636.
- 74 For a detailed reconsideration of the evidence see more recently Shaw 2011, 636–8. He points out that Augustine commonly uses *cella* to refer to wine storage rooms (*Enarrationes in Psalmos* 8.1–2—CCSL 38, 50; *Sermo* 32—CCSL 41, 482). *Horreum* was instead commonly used for grain storage: *Enarrationes in Psalmos* 8.1—CCSL 38, 49. For Circumcelliones' identification with seasonal workers for the harvest see Shaw 2011, 639–50.
- 75 Frend 1969; for a synthesis see more recently Shaw 2004, 2006, and 2011.
- 76 See Frend 1969, 546: *C(aius) J(ulius) Castus grado sacerdotali legis/sacrae secundus C(aius) Jul(ius) Honori filius/iam LXVIII annos agens hoc sibi in animu/deliberavit ut incolumis et in rebus huma/nis agens hanc suae memoriae sedem perpetuam constituere a(nno) p(rovinciae) CCCXXII cel(lam) martyrum vocavit Luciani Lucillae...*
- 77 Frend also made some attempts at the identification of these buildings (1952*b*). The structures he proposed appear to have some architectural connection with monastery buildings in the East in terms of layout. One proposed building is the chapel at Azrou Zouaia in Numidia, south-west of Constantina. Here, in one of the rooms to the north of the altar of a church, two silos for storing grain were found in the ground along with a number of other rooms whose function remains unclear. Equally, two silos were found in a room adjoining the south-west angle of a church at Mechta el Tein north of Batna (Berthier 1942). A similar suggestion can be made for the Ain Tamda in Mauretania. A similar layout, with the presence of silos and vessels for storage, especially of grain and olive oil, was found at Khirbet Bahrarou, north-west of Timgad, in Numidia. Here, excavators also found a courtyard with rooms opening around it and a church opening onto a corridor leading to this area.
- 78 The interpretation is based on a reconsideration of the pottery evidence from surveys. Dossey suggests that an increase in the recorded presence of fine ware (African red slip pottery) should not be seen as related to an increase in settlements. Instead this would have resulted from more widely diffused manufacturing that produced wares locally, and which were thus more readily available in the region (Dossey 2010).
- 79 The first complete study on the Vandals in Africa was written by Christian Courtois in 1955; for a recent reconsideration of the evidence and debates see Merrills and Miles 2010.
- 80 See Ch. 3 and for a recent synthesis Merrills and Miles 2010, 27–55. For a discussion on the territorial extent of the Vandal conquest see Modéran 2011, 241–70.
- 81 For a detailed consideration of Roman customs among the Vandals see Chalón *et al.* 1985, Miles 2005, Merrills and Miles 2010, and Rummel 2009.
- 82 For a recent synthesis of the difficulty in identifying the Vandals archaeologically see Rummel 2008 and 2009.

- 83 For some detailed considerations see Leone 2007a, 39–41.
- 84 See recently the synthesis in Merrills and Miles 2010, 177–203, in particular 177. For a detailed analysis see Modéran 2003a.
- 85 Possidius, *Vita Agostini* (Vita di Sant'Agostino, M. Pellegrino ed. 1955, 152), 28. 8–10: (8) *Hymnos Dei et laudes ex ecclesiis deperisse, aedificia ecclesiarum quamplurimis locis ignibus concremata, sollemnia quae Deo debentur de propriis locis desisse sacrificia, sacramenta divina vel non quaeri, vel quaerenti qui tradat non facile reperiri...* (10) *vix tres superstites ex innumerabilibus ecclesiis, hoc est Carthaginiensem, Hipponiensem et Cirtensem, quae Dei beneficio excisae non sunt, et earum permanent civitates, et divino et humano fultae praesidio (licet post eius obitum urbs Hipponiensis incolis destituta ab hostibus fuerit concremata).*
- 86 Modéran 1998, 254 and 2002, 107. He suggests also that persecutions were particularly harsh in Zeugitana/Proconsularis (e.g. Carthage and northern Tunisia) where confiscations were principally concentrated.
- 87 On the origins of Byzantine Orthodoxy see Louth 2008.
- 88 *Novellae* 7.2 and Diehl 1896, 98. For a discussion on the borders of Byzantine Africa and the transition to the Islamic period see Benabbès 2011.
- 89 For a synthesis on fortifications in North Africa and a full catalogue see Pringle 1981. For a discussion on Byzantine churches see below, Chs 2 and 5, and Leone 2007a, 167–85, for further bibliography.
- 90 Church excavations in North Africa were mainly carried out by priests, White Friars. For a synthesis of their activity see J. D. O'Donnell 1979.
- 91 The Byzantine general Solomon fought against the Berbers in southern Byzacena, a fight that sparked the revolt guided by Stozas. Between 546 and 548 the new Justinianic general John Troglita defeated the Maures several times along with other Numidian populations (Modéran 2003b, 668–73; Ostrogorsky 1993, 68; Mango 1991, 25–6).
- 92 For a discussion on this aspect see Leone 2007a, 82–96.
- 93 *SHA*, Aurelianus, X.3: *...apud Byzantium sedenti Valeriano in thermis* and XIII.1: *Cum consedisset Valerianus Augustus in thermis apud Byzantium...* See also Thébert 2003, 445.
- 94 For a detailed discussion on this aspect see Thébert 2003, 446–7. The dedication does not appear to have a clear link with the baths complex, and therefore was simply placed there as propaganda.
- 95 For a more detailed discussion on this aspect see Ch. 4.
- 96 For a detailed discussion on the limit of our understanding of the fate of temples see more recently B. Ward-Perkins 2011.
- 97 Latin texts have been deliberately presented mainly in their original language, although reference to existing translations is usually provided. In a few cases, when the text is essential to the discussion, the full translation is provided.
- 98 Thanks are due to my colleague Salah Al Alhasi, who allowed access to the sites and to Massimo Brizzi and Khaled Bashir who assisted me in the field.
- 99 In Rome, for instance, inscriptions found mention state officials who had charge of the dismantling of public buildings: Meneghini and Santangeli Valenzani 2004.