Chapter I

CARTHAGE AND THE VANDALS*

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In 534 the Emperor Justinian I published an edict on the Praetorian Prefecture of Africa, which had recently come under Eastern Roman control. He looked back on the century which preceded his proclamation:

"Before all things [is] this, which now Almighty God has deigned to indicate through us on behalf of his praise and name; this has exceeded all miraculous works which occurred in the present age: that Africa should recover her freedom through us in so short a time, having been captured by the Vandals one hundred and five years ago—Vandals who were at once enemies of souls and bodies."

*I have used the following abbreviations:

AL

BMC Vand.
W. Wroth, Catalogue of the Coins of the Vandals, Ostrogoths and Lombards and of the Empire of Theusalonia, Nicaea and Trebizond in the British Museum (London 1911; repr. Chicago 1966)

CCL
Corpus Christianorum: Series latina. About 250 vols. envisaged (Turnhout, 1954-)

CIL
Corpus inscriptionum latinarum (Berlin 1862-)

CSEL
Corpus scriptorum ecclesiasticorum latinorum (Vienna, 1866-)

Drac. Rom.

Drac. Sat.

ELG

Ferrand. V. Fulg.

Hydnt. Chron.

I C Haldr

I C Sainte-Monique

Kal. Carrh.
H. Lietzmann (ed.), Die drei Bischofs Martyrologien. 2nd ed. Kleine Texte für theologische und philologische Vorlesungen und Übungen, Band 2 (Bonn 1911) "Das Martyrolog von Carthago," pp. 4-6

MGH: AA
Monumenta Germaniae historica: Auctores antiquissimi. 15 vols. (Berlin 1875-1919)

Phot. Bibl.

PL

PLRE

Procop. Anec., De aed., BV
J. Haury and G. Wirth (ed.), Procopii caesariensis Opera omnia (4 vols. repr. Leipzig 1963-64), III: Historia quae dictur urania (Anec.); IV: De edificiis libri VI (De aed.); and I, 305-552: De bellis libri III-IV = De bello vandalsico I-II (BV)

Prosp. Chron.

[Quod.] Lib. prom.

RBK
Justinian's view of the Vandal hegemony in Africa was tendentious. Yet Africa did suffer harm during the age of the Vandal hegemony.

Justinian measured one hundred and five years of Vandal rule in Africa. His figure was accurate—the Vandals crossed from Spain to Mauretania Tingitana in May of 429—yet the Vandals themselves marked the beginning of their hegemony from 19 October 439, the day on which they battered their way into Carthage. After they seized the metropolis of Roman Africa, two intermittently hostile forces, the Mauri and the Romans, shaped the kingdom which they constructed there. The Roman governments at Ravenna and Constantinople occasionally mounted diplomatic or military offensives against the Vandals, forcing them to construct a zone of defense in the seas of the western and central Mediterranean. Particularly between 440 and 480 an irregular fleet extended raids from the islands of the western Mediterranean to Cape Taenarum in the lower Balkans. Later the Vandal rulers concentrated on the dominion of the Balearic Islands, Sardinia, Corsica and western Sicily. As a result of this seaborne activity the Romans struck various treaties with the Vandals. Pacts concluded by the Western Emperor Valentinian III in 442 and the Eastern Emperor Zeno in 474 set the tone for the others. In general, these agreements recognized the Vandals as foederati, clients of the Romans but still quasi-independent occupants of especially eastern Numidia, Proconsular Africa, Byzacium and Tripolitania. The arrangement remained in effect despite occasional hostilities until Justinian and his general Belisarius terminated it in 533.

While the Vandals mixed hostility and negotiation in their effort to keep the Romans at bay, they faced other adversaries on African soil, the native Mauri. Roman Africa of the early Dominate had possessed both horizontal and vertical frontiers. The desert to the south and the mountain uplands were beyond the reach of Roman arms. Between the late third and early fifth century native pastoralists from both these regions had occasionally interrupted Roman life in the agricultural lowlands near or on the Mediterranean coast. After the Vandals captured Carthage, the Mauri remained quiescent for one generation. They even assisted the Vandals on some raids overseas. But between 480 and 533 they ignored or opposed the Vandals as they constructed small principalities from the Atlas Mountains to the Tunisian Dorsal and Tripolitania. Their hostile activities reduced the Vandal sway in Africa, took some Vandal attention away from the Romans overseas, and thus made easier the Eastern Roman conquest.

RJC H. Mattingly, E. A. Sydenham, et al., The Roman Imperial Coinage. 8 vols. to date (London 1923-67)


1Codex justiniianus 1.27.1.1.
4Prosop. Chron. 1347 (MGH: AA, IX, 479), s.a. 442. A. H. M. Jones, The Later Roman Empire, 284-602: A Social, Economic and Administrative Survey (3 vols.; Oxford 1964), I, 249-50 and III, 45, n. 26, notes that the idiom terram dividere, which Prosop uses to describe the pact of 442, was a standard means of designating the conditional occupation of Roman lands by foederati. For the limits of the Vandal hegemony after 439 and the treaty of 474, see Courtos, Vandales 171-205.
Before Belisarius put an end to their attempts to control the agricultural lowlands of Africa, the Vandals shared power there with the previous masters of the region, the Roman provincial aristocracy. Unity among the Vandals themselves and the good will of the Roman elite were the key to successful hegemony. The Vandals achieved neither; their government was at best an uneasy amalgamation of conflicting elements.

The newcomers to Roman Africa formed a polyglot group rather than a homogeneous entity. The official title of the Vandal kings, rex Wandalorum et Alanorum,6 tells much. In Spain two groups of East Germanic Vandals, the Hasdingi and Silingi, merged with some elements of the Iranian Alans to form a new coalition. Some Hispano-Romans, East Germanic Goths and West Germanic Suevi joined forces with them, and the numbers of this association swelled to perhaps eighty thousand.7 On African soil much of the power within this conglomerate rested with three elites, or perhaps three manifestations of one elite: the optimates ("nobles"); the Arian ecclesiastical hierarchy—before or after their arrival in Spain the Vandals became converts to Arian Christianity; and the warriors. Soon after the capture of Carthage the Vandal kings turned over some churches and their sources of revenue to the Arian clergy. In addition, they instituted the famous sortes Wandalorum, hereditary and tax-free allotments of land in Proconsular Africa for the warriors. Finally, they reserved for themselves and their clansmen similar allotments in Byzacium and eastern Numidia.8

At the top of this mixture of peoples stood the royal clan of the Hasdingi. On African soil six clan members held the title of rex Wandalorum et Alanorum: Geiseric (428-477); Huneric, his eldest son (477-484); his grandsons Gunthamund (484-496), Thrasamund (496-523), and Hilderic (523-530); and one great-grandson, Gelamir (530-533). The reign of these six men was marked by bloodshed at the top of Vandal society. Geiseric, Huneric and Gelamir all perpetuated dynastic murders in efforts to influence the succession of particular members of their clan. Those among the secular and ecclesiastical nobility who opposed them also risked the same fate. The originator of this tradition of blood-letting was the ambitious Geiseric, who claimed the title of king after the capture of Carthage, issued a regulation stipulating that royal authority must pass from him to his male descendants, and (in 456) effected a marriage alliance with the Roman House of Theodosius by joining his son Huneric to Eudocia, the elder daughter of Valentinian III. Dynastic violence was one of the immediate causes of the downfall of the Vandals. Gelamir, the last King of the Vandals and Alans, deposed and then ordered the murder of Hilderic, grandson of Geiseric and Valentinian III. The Emperor Justinian used Hilderic’s claim to the throne as a pretext for intervention in Africa.9

While the Hasdingi and other Vandal elites struggled over the inheritance of power, they brought occasional suffering on another element of the uneasy conglomerate, the estate owners and Christians of Roman Africa. Among Christians only those who subscribed to the Arian faith gathered strength. Under a Vandal Patriarch of Carthage the Arians instituted bilingual services in the churches which they seized, and sought converts by offering sustenance to the poor and needy.10

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10 In general see Courtois, *Vandales* 225-28.
Other groups of faithful did not fare as well. In 438 Donatist editors of the Liber genealogus, a book of genealogies from the Biblical and Classical past, offered a warning of persecution in the form of an equation making Geiseric the Antichrist. Subsequent editions made at Carthage in 455 and 463 attest the continued existence of the sect under Vandal rule. In these versions the characterization of Geiseric as the Antichrist is absent, probably because the Vandal sovereign, now residing at Carthage, took offense at such allusions. The Manichees still adhered to their beliefs, and even made a few converts. At the beginning of his reign Huniric visited death or exile on Manichees, especially those among his own people. The best attested of the sufferers, however, are the Catholics. Their persistence amidst persecution guaranteed the survival of many diatribes and treatises, notably those of Victor of Vita and Fulgentius of Ruspe. Their trials began especially after the Vandals seized Carthage and marked their victory with the expulsion of Bishop Quodvultdeus from the city. During the struggle which followed, both sides drew inspiration from persecutions of the past. In a law of 25 February 484, for instance, Huniric appealed to the Great Persecution of the Tetrarchs, and cited as additional authority the twin councils held in 359 at Ariminum and Seleucia-in-Isauria, at which the Emperor Constantius II had engineered a victory for the Arian faith. The work in which this law survives, Victor of Vita’s record of Vandal persecutions, draws some of its strident denunciations from Biblical accounts of the perseverance of the faithful under duress. Yet all was not persecution. There were intermittent periods of peace marked by brief reinstatements of bishops of Carthage: Deogratias (454-457), Eugenius (480/81-484, and again for a short time beginning 487), and Bonifatius (523-525). In addition, two major meetings of Catholics convened at Carthage, an Assembly or Comparison of Beliefs in 484 and a Council in 525. Such remissions of the persecutors’ fury contributed to the survival of Catholics under East Rome.

The other major discontent among the Romans of Africa was the provincial aristocracy. While the laborers on African estates scarcely noticed the substitution of one master for another, the wealthy Romans who owned most of the arable land and dominated the municipal governments felt keenly the arrival of the Vandals. Some Roman aristocrats chose or suffered exile from their lands, and sought refuge in nearby Western Numidia and Mauretania Sitifensis, or abroad in Italy and the East. Those who went overseas often urged the emperors to reconquer Africa. Their efforts bore fruit. The chronicler Zachariah of Mitylene asserts that distinguished exiles moved Justinian to war against the Vandals with glowing descriptions of Africa’s wealth.

Many prominent Romans, however, remained behind. In his law of 25 February 484 Huniric cited from the time of the Tetrarchs a gradation of penalties for various kinds of individuals, and
hinted that the same categories still obtained in his time. At the top of his list stood *industres, spectabiles, senatores* (i.e. *clarissimi*), *sacerdotales* and *principales*.\(^{19}\) Other evidence attests bearers of these titles living under Vandal rule.\(^{20}\) The old municipal organization which provincial aristocrats had dominated continued to exist.\(^{21}\) The famous Tablettes Albertini and ostraka discovered near Bir Trouch demonstrate the persistence of estates owned by African Romans.\(^{22}\) The distinguished elements at the head of Huneric’s roster, then, still enjoyed under Vandal rule a measure of their former status and wealth.

Yet despite the perseverance of Roman and Christian life, the introduction of a new polyglot elite at the pinnacle of society was a disruption. Vandals and Romans did not readily cooperate with one another. The uneasy character of the new conglomerate, the retraction of the Vandals’ overseas hegemony to the western Mediterranean after 480, the increasing boldness of the Mauri to the south and west, and Justinian’s decision to capitalize on the new strength of the Eastern Roman Empire all spelled doom for the Vandals. In 533 they still enjoyed a fearsome reputation, but Belisarius found it easy to bring their dominion to an end.\(^{23}\)

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The recent Paris dissertation of Claude Lepelley will set for the near future the tone of investigations of late Roman municipalities in Africa. Lepelley draws attention to the continuity of Roman institutions in African cities between the time of Diocletian and the Vandal capture of Carthage.\(^{24}\) His conclusions provoke an obvious question: did Roman life and institutions survive the intrusion of the Vandals?

A history of the Vandal hegemony in Africa differs from a history of Carthage under Vandal rule. For the latter one must study especially those sources which show the inhabitants of Carthage at work or play within or just outside the city’s walls. Five blocs of evidence are particularly important. Salvian of Marseilles included in his *De gubernatione Dei*, written between 439 and 451, a diatribe against the wicked ways of Romans in Africa and praise of the morality of their new masters, the Vandals.\(^{25}\) Victor of Vita, possibly a city in Byzacium, wrote his scathing *Historia persecutionis africanæ provinciæ* during the middle or late 480s. His polemic recounts persecutions during the reigns of Geiseric and Huneric, and contains many references to events in Carthage.\(^{26}\) A third source is a collection of Latin poems evidently gathered at Carthage between 523 and 535. This so-called Latin Anthology, preserved primarily in a manuscript of the seventh or early eighth century (the *Codex Salmasianus*), contains short poems by Classical Latin authors such as Martial, and verses by perhaps ten Roman men of letters flourishing in Carthage around the turn of the sixth century. Of the latter group Luxorius, *vir clarissimus et spectabilis*, is best represented. His colleagues included two *clarissimi*, Coronatus and Felix, two poets of uncertain rank.

\(^{19}\) Vic. Vit. *HP* 3. 3-14 (esp. 3. 10). On the equation of the titles *senator* and *clarissimus*, see A. Chastagnol, *L’Album municipal de Tingad* (Bonn 1978), passim.

\(^{20}\) *Industres* and *spectabiles*: cf. *AL* 18, 254, 287. *Sacerdotales, clarissimi* and *principales* (i.e. leading decurions): cf. *I C Haïdra* 401, 413, 424.

\(^{21}\) See below, nn. 96-98.


\(^{23}\) See Procop. *Bv* 1.11-23.


\(^{25}\) See the new edition of G. Lagarrigue cited in the list of abbreviations above.

Florentinus and Cato, and as many as five anonymous poets. The names and ranks assigned to some of these men suggest that the entire coterie belonged to the Roman municipal aristocracy.27 Luxorius and his friends viewed the bustle of Carthage with poets’ eyes. A different sort of eyewitness was Procopius of Caesarea, who accompanied Belisarius to Africa and recounted in his war commentaries the condition of the city when the general and his troops entered it.28 Finally, there are the physical remains, which are now receiving intensive scrutiny under the aegis of the International Campaign to Save Carthage.29

From none of the five units of evidence can information be taken at face value. Stratigraphic problems and the preliminary nature of the most recent excavation reports have caused one excavator to remark that the archaeological and literary evidence for Vandal and Eastern Roman Carthage “are running parallel but rarely overlap or complement each other with great clarity or precision.”30 Procopius wrote his war commentaries at a time when he held Justinian in high regard. He was accordingly ready to exaggerate the achievement of Belisarius and the ineptitude of the Vandals. Luxorius and his contemporaries are deceptive observers. They present a full portrait of Vandals and Romans at work and play in and around Carthage, but their taste for the humorous and the bizarre and their devotion to classical idioms cause them to disguise some aspects of the city’s life and overemphasize others. Victor of Vita is just as misleading in his own way. Anxious to demonstrate God’s anger against heretical persecutors, he pictured an Africa divided into two hostile camps. Fortunately, some of the details he provides do not support his thesis, and these details rather than his overall argument contribute significantly to a portrait of Carthage under Vandal rule. Finally, Salvian was a moral essayist rather than a dispassionate observer of city life. He shared with Tacitus (whose Germania was a distant ancestor of the De gubernatione Dei) a lack of interest in Germanic society as it really was, and for his depiction of Carthage he relied on other witnesses—possibly African exiles living in Campania.31 Some of the particulars he presents, however, find corroboration in the other sources. Such confluences of testimony will be the bases of the present, tentative sketch of life in the houses, public buildings, streets and outskirts of Vandal Carthage. When two or more sources speak in their own biased or limited way of the same thing, they offer at least a glimpse of the metropolis in an important phase of its existence.

The earliest portrait of life in Vandal Carthage is that of Salvian, who thundered his disapproval of Africans, especially those of the metropolis.32 Their appetite for circuses and other heathen spectacles was insatiable. Only the arrival of the Vandals in Africa, which was “almost the soul of the state,”33 brought some interruption to their preoccupation with public entertainment. Yet even as the Vandal besiegers encircled the walls of Cirta and Carthage, Christians in the latter city cheered in the circus and sat in sinful luxury in the theater. As battle raged outside the walls, the city dwellers scarcely interrupted their fornication inside. Carthage was the jewel of sin, “the


28A useful companion to the Haury-Wirth text of Procopius (see the list of abbreviations) is B. Rubin, “Prokopiot von Kastraio,” RE XXIII:1 (1957) 273-599.


rival of the city of Rome and, as it were, Rome in the world of Africa. She had so much civilization to her credit: schools of liberal arts, offices of philosophers, language schools, garrisons, the proconsul’s elaborate administration and a great abundance of agricultural and commercial wealth. But still Carthage sinned. Many of her men, for instance, were effeminate, and thought nothing of displaying feminine garb and gait in the city’s streets. Those who were heterosexual eagerly sought gratification in the houses of prostitution. The Vandals burst upon this den of iniquity and, relying on the Bible, applied God’s displeasure at these carnal aberrations by prohibiting prostitution, compelling all prostitutes to marry and forbidding lewdness in public. Salvian approved of their actions. Toward the end of the De gubernatione Dei he bristled at other sacrileges and blasphemies of Africans, especially those of Carthage, without indicating whether the Vandals took action against those as well. The continuing devotion of Africans to Juno Caelestis and other false gods was reprehensible. Even Christians still loved these demons. They thought nothing of rendering homage to them and then coming to church! Furthermore, the inhabitants of Carthage in particular had an abiding disdain for monks. These cloaked, pale and shaven servants of God had come to Carthage from monastic communities in Egypt and Palestine. When they walked in the city’s streets the onlookers jeered, hissed and cursed them.

Salvian portrays a Carthage whose attachment to Roman ways was strong, whose Christians frequently strayed from God’s will and whose new masters possessed moral purity. The last of his three convictions is the easiest to dismiss. Toward the end of the fifth century the historian Malchus of Philadelphia observed that after Huneric succeeded his capable father, the Vandals fell “into every moral weakness.” Procopius elaborated on the theme. As soon as the Vandals occupied Africa, he charged, they gave in to the luxurious life of the fertile lands around Carthage. Baths, fancy clothes, races, shows and hunts became the hallmarks of their existence. “They held banquets in the greatest number, and they practiced all kinds of love-making with considerable zeal.” The accusations of Procopius and Malchus are as sweeping as the commendations of Salvian. At the very least these contrasting portrayals of Vandal behavior serve to raise anew the basic question under consideration. Did the Vandals succumb to Roman civilization after they captured Carthage? Once again, details reported by two or more sources provide clues for an answer.

Carthage under the Vandals was an imposing city. Outside her walls stood an elaborate network of suburbs and supports. Nearby Missua (Sidli Daoud) contained the shipyards for the Vandal fleet. The famous aqueduct from Mount Zaghoulani to the metropolis continued to function. Stagnum, a harbor possibly identical with the Bay of Utica, had facilities sufficient for Belisarius’ fleet of five hundred ships. At nearby Anclae, a suburb of uncertain location, was a royal audience chamber which workmen had constructed at King Hilderic’s orders. His predecessor Thrasamund had commissioned elaborate baths at Aliaene, again a suburb whose location is unknown; according to the poets Felix and Florentinus, the Baths of Thrasamund were the rival of Baiarc. Furnis, another neighboring town, lay beyond Carthage’s Porta Fornitana. In the outlying village of Mappalia stood the Mensa Cypriani, a basilica marking the place where Saint
Cyprian was buried. Amidst this network of suburbs—and particularly along the shoreline north of the city through Sidi Bou Saïd and Gammarth—were the villas of wealthy Vandals and Romans. Luxorius mentions two of these resorts, one belonging to the Goth Fridamal, and another situated near the sea and equipped with a private amphitheater. Danish excavators have recently investigated a villa complex adjacent to the Plage d'Amilcar. Built in the first and second centuries A.D., it was still partly in use around the end of the fifth century.

While the Vandals ruled Africa, a visitor approaching Carthage from the landward side would have proceeded through a gate in the city's wall. This was of recent construction, having been erected in the 420s perhaps at the orders of Boniface, Count of Africa. Today the remains of the defensive network embrace the core of the ancient city, extending in an arc from the Salammbo Station to the Présidence Station of the T.G.M. Railway. Recently British, Italian and Polish excavators have investigated sections of the wall. Towers interrupted its expanse at intervals, and it was faced with stone and contained a core of rubble with grey, charcoal-flecked mortar. Procopius provides the most circumstantial picture of the wall's condition at the end of the Vandal century. By Geilamir's time "no small section" of it had fallen down owing to neglect. After he entered the city Belisarius ordered workmen to repair the damaged portions, and had them add a new element to the defenses—an encircling ditch. Recent excavations and the poet Felix offer confirmation and correction. Felix celebrates the restoration of public works under Thrasamund, including "public walls for the lofty dwellings." Possibly Thrasamund attempted without success to correct the deterioration of Carthage's defenses. British excavators have found in the wall's southern sector evidence of a defensive ditch which was dug at the time the wall was constructed and then filled in through dumping. The Canadian and Italian teams have discovered no indication of an outer ditch. Thus, when Procopius described Belisarius' trench as "not previously existing," he probably spoke the truth. The Roman builders of the wall had ditches dug beyond vulnerable sections, but the Vandals perhaps allowed these to fill up by Geilamir's time.

Inside the wall stood the harbor and an array of public and private structures. The city's center experienced both change and continuity under the Vandals. The rectangular and circular harbors continued in use. Iron chains protected their entrance in the Bay of Kram. Procopius noted merchants dwelling by the sea, perhaps in the commercial and domestic quarter north of the circular harbor, where British excavators have recently detected regularity of use and function during the fifth and early sixth century. The Roman public buildings, squares and main streets remained as they had been in late Roman times; some stayed in good condition, while others suffered deterioration or demolition. The main Forum continued to be a center of trade and supply, and there was a regular sequence of plazas and streets through which legates of the emperors passed from the harbor on their way to the king's palace on the Byrsa. The Roman poet Blossius Aemilius Dracontius proclaimed one of his controversiae in the downtown Baths of

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45AL 304, 305 and 346.
49Procop. BV 1.21. 11-13 and 1.23. 19-21, and De vict. 6.5.8.
50AL 213.1.
51See again Wells, New Light... (supra n. 29), 47-65.
52Procop. De vict. 6.5.8.
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Gargilian. The so-called Baths of Antoninus suffered gradual deterioration from the early fifth century onward. The Theater, Odeon, Aedes Memoriae and Via Caelistis fared even less well. Victor of Vita states that the Vandals destroyed the first two structures. The archaeological record offers partial confirmation in the form of a building constructed atop the Theater by the turn of the sixth century. The case of the Aedes Memoriae is more complicated. Victor states that this temple of uncertain location, the site of the execution of the dissident Count Hecarian on 7 March 413, suffered destruction during the reign of Geiseric or Huneric. Yet he notes that while the persecution of 484 raged, the locus of the temple served as a meeting place for Catholics. Possibly the site of the temple remained a hallowed place after the Vandals had the building demolished. Finally, the Via Caelistis—a grand avenue nearly two miles long, adorned with mosaic-inlaid pavement and lined with columns, walls and pagan temples—had already experienced neglect and demolition during the first quarter of the fifth century. After the Vandals captured Carthage, Geiseric ordered the street and its remaining adornments to be completely razed.

In other parts of the city public structures retained their Roman functions. In the palace atop the Byrsa the proconsuls no longer presided, but the Vandal kings evidently preserved the Roman tradition of elegance. Procopius describes a throne room, a dining hall where the king entertained the Vandal optimates with wine and choice morsels of food, a great shrine or sanctuary dedicated to the Theotokos, a windowless prison whose outer planking faced seaward, and valuables throughout the palace probably worth about fifty centenaria. Beyond the Byrsa lay the circus and amphitheater, both of which were in active use throughout the fifth and early sixth century.

Back in the city’s center private structures continued in use amidst some disruption. Belisarius had his troops quartered in houses near the Forum. Luxorius and his neighbor Marcus possessed stately townhouses separated from one another by a wall. Claudius Gordianus, grandfather of the famous Fulgentius of Ruspe, vacated his townhouse when the Vandals took Carthage and fled to Italy. When his sons returned to Africa a generation later they found that Arian priests had occupied their ancestral dwelling. The House of the Greek Charisteera in the city’s southeast sector has proved to be a spectacular example of continuity. Built in the early fifth century, this lovely peristyle house underwent repairs during the Vandal occupation and was again remodelled in Byzantine times.

Throughout the city and beyond the walls the basilicas and smaller churches of the Christians fared as well as the Roman public buildings under the new rulers. Victor of Vita is a trenchant and misleading witness. Beyond the walls Arian Christians replaced Catholics as occupants of the Basilica Maiorum, the Basilica Celerinae, the Basilica Scillitanorum, the Mensa Cypriani in nearby

59 (Quad. Lib. prom. 3.44 (CCL I.X, 185-86), and Vict. Vit. HP 1.8.
60 Procop. BV 1.20, 4-9 and 21, 1.21.1-6, 2.14.37, De sed. 6.5.9, and Anec. 1.33. Cf. A. Audollent, Carthage romaine, 146 avant Jésus-Christ—698 après Jésus-Christ (Paris 1901) 283-87.
62 Procop. BV 1.21.10.
65 See the summary of Humphrey, *New Light* (supra n. 29) 106-107.
Mappalia and the *Memoria Cypriani*, probably the basilica overlooking the plagae d'Amilcar, where Cyprian suffered execution. The *Basilica Fausti* and *Basilica Novarum*, however, enjoyed use by Catholics at least during the ecclesiastical peaces of 454-457 and 480/481-484. Within the walls the same pattern of seizure and continuity obtained. Victor proclaims that the Arians occupied all churches there, but only specifies the *Basilica Perpetua Restituta*, a tempting target because it was the Catholic Cathedral. Yet the Catholic Council of 525 convened in the *Basilica Sancti Agilii*, and a subterranean baptistery inside the defenses shows no interruption of use and function during the Vandals’ stay. In the southeast sector what appears to have been a parish church probably continued in use during the Vandal period. Victor’s portrait of massive disruption is a reflection of Catholic attitudes toward the arrival of the Arian Vandals. Any seizure of churches was cause for alarm. Nevertheless, some of the churches the Vandals took from the Catholics retained their function, if not their original faith.

The basilicas, the circus and amphitheater, the townhouses and suburban villas, the baths, the streets and plazas, the forum and the harbor were the stage on which the people of Vandal Carthage acted out an elaborate continuation of Roman private and public life. In the latter sphere of activity Roman municipal politics, Roman forms of public entertainment and the Roman system of education continued to flourish. A *grammaticus*, a professor of medicine, a philosopher and a lawyer appear in *Luxorius’* poems. In a *Satisfactio* honoring King Gunthamund, *Dracontius* mentions a celebrated legal case in which a defendant named Vincomalus secured acquittal from Geiseric. The foundation of the professions was the schools of Carthage, and *Luxorius’* contemporary *Florentinus* had a high opinion of them. In the realm of entertainment the destruction of the odeon and theater displaced but evidently did not diminish the Carthaginians’ appetite for diversions. In Victor of Vita’s time there lived one *Masculus* who was *archimimus*. *Luxorius* spoke of an ugly lutist named Gattula ("Kitty"), and a pantomimist called Macedonia who, despite her dwarfish size, often danced the story of Andromache and Helen. *Masculus*, Gattula and Macedonia may have performed in the Amphitheater, as did Olympius, an ebony-black arena hunter perhaps from Egypt who was so popular with the fans that (says *Luxorius*) the cheers from the crowd shook the nearby Byrsa. *Luxorius* also mentions a man who jumped over the balcony of the amphitheater twice, the second time under the watchful eyes of the fans and in response to the poet. In the circus the familiar pattern of Green, Blue, Red and White factions (players and fans) angrily competing with one another persisted. *Luxorius* talks of an aging charioteer who cursed back at opposing spectators when he lost. Another was a favorite of the Greens. Still another became known to some of the fans (but not the Blues, says *Luxorius*) as *Icarus*, *Phaethon* and *Agilis* ("Speedy") despite his indifferent showing in the races. The sponsorship of the races and indeed all public entertainment under the Vandals is a matter of uncertainty. The imperial support of the early *Dominatia* was now out of the question. Probably the inhabitants of Carthage owed their entertainment to the generousies of the Vandal and Roman elites. In any case the games and

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70 See the summary of Humphrey, *New Light* ... (supra n. 29) 91-93.
72 *Drac. Sat.* 299-302.
73 *AL* 376.32: "Carthago studiis, Carthago ornata magistris."
shows evidently enjoyed elaborate support. Luxorius mentions two adornments of circus stables:
a painting of the Goddess Victory and, a delight to the dominus, a marble fountain where the horses drank.\textsuperscript{76}

The literary and archaeological record tell much about the origins of the charioteers who
provoked the fans among the factions to rage and delight. Pale monks and arena hunters were not
the only easterners in Vandal Carthage. From the House of the Greek Charioteer has come the
celebrated circus mosaic of the early fifth century. The mosaic depicts and identifies in Greek
characters representatives of the Blue, White, Green and Red Factions: Euphemos, Dominos,
Euthemus and Kephalon.\textsuperscript{77} Their names raise the dual question of the extent to which eastern
charioteers and Greek learning flourished in fifth-century Carthage. Procopius and Luxorius provide
helpful answers. Among six charioteers mentioned by Luxorius, two—Cyriacus and Pascasius—bear
Greek names, and two are called by the adjective or substantive Aegyptius.\textsuperscript{78} In late Roman Africa
Greek names did not necessarily signify Greek origin.\textsuperscript{79} The circus mosaic’s four charioteers, how-
ever, probably did come from the East, for their names are sparingly attested outside the Greek
world.\textsuperscript{80} Procopius helps to set these easterners in a broader context. When Belisarius entered
Carthage there were many eastern merchants there. One, a boyhood friend of the historian,
operated a mercantile enterprise in Syracuse and sent his household slaves on trading ventures to
Africa’s metropolis. Geilamir, worried that eastern traders were urging Justinian to send an expeditions
to Africa, had imprisoned some of them in the palace just before Belisarius arrived.\textsuperscript{81} The
names for parts of Carthage in Geilamir’s time reflect the presence of Greek speakers in the city.
Procopius states that the Roman inhabitants of Carthage called the harbor Mandrakion, a Greek
term meaning “little enclosure,” and the windowless prison in the Palace was the Ankôn, “the
corner.”\textsuperscript{82} Finally, Procopius reports an old street chant shouted by the children of Carthage:
“Gamma shall pursue Beta, and then again Beta shall pursue Gamma.” The chant attained the
stature of an oracle when Belisarius defeated Geilamir, long after Geiseric defeated Boniface.\textsuperscript{83} All
in all, eastern monks, charioteers and merchants laid a foundation for the Eastern Roman conquest of
Africa long before the arrival of Belisarius.

It is not surprising that the Vandals did not interrupt Roman ways of education and entertain-
ment during their sojourn in Carthage. They were neither numerous nor sophisticated enough to
impose alternatives. In the realm of government they did introduce some new practices. Roman
Carthage had not been the preserve of kings. Beneath these unfamiliar rulers stood equally strange
praepostii regni, millenarii (evidently leaders of optimates grouped into units, each theoretically
one thousand strong) and comites.\textsuperscript{84} The poets of the Latin Anthology offer glimpses of this new
hierarchy. Luxorius, for instance, speaks of a royal minister named Eutychus who habitually

\textsuperscript{76} AL 306, 312, 320, 324, 328. Cf. Bruère, CP 57 (1962) 178, and Shackleton Bailey, ‘Anthologia Latina,’ (supra n. 27) 44,
46, 49. On the system of funding and the behavior of the Factions, see A. Cameron, Circus Factions: Blues and Greens at Rome and
Byzantium (Oxford 1976) passim.

\textsuperscript{77} See especially K. M. D. Dunbabin, “The Mosaics and Pavements,” vol. 1, 21-46, and the summary of Humphrey, New Light
(supra n. 29) 106-107.

\textsuperscript{78} AL 293, 306, 324, 327. Cf. Happ, Beiträge zur Namenforschung 14 (1963) 35, 37, 43.

\textsuperscript{79} See, for example, CIL VIII Supp. 5:1 (1942), 84, 105, s.vv. “Cyriacus” and “Pascasius”; Duval J C Histoire 401-433, and
Ennabli, J C Saints-Monique, 396-98.

\textsuperscript{80} Duval, J C Histoire 425, discusses the few occurrences of the name Dominus in Christian Africa. For other attestations of
these four names see W. Pape and G. Bessals, Wörterbuch der griechischen Eigennämen (2 vols.; 3rd ed.; repr. Graz 1959), I, 318,

\textsuperscript{81} Procop. BV 1.14.7-17; and 1.20.5-8, 16, 22.

\textsuperscript{82} Procop. BV 1.20.3-9, 14-16; 2.8.7; 2.26.10, and De aed. 6.5.11. Cf. R. Oehler, “Karthago,” RE X:2 (1919) 2150-2224, at
2189-90.

\textsuperscript{83} Procop. BV 1.21.14-16.

\textsuperscript{84} On the millenarist see Phot. Bibl. Cod. 80 [Olympiodorus] (ed. R. Henry, i, 168), and Vict. HP 1.30. In general, see Dierser,
JOBG 17 (1968) 1-15.
seized the riches of others in the king’s name. In a lighter vein the poet notes a royal eunuch who put on a turban but then took it off when he realized it was shaped like a phallus. An anonymous contemporary of Luxorius ridicules a pepper-shaped royal servant named Abgar. So small was this man that he scarcely topped a cumin plant. The most interesting details in these poetic flourishes are the names of the royal attendants. Eutychus may be so called in jest—the minister became the “Fortunate One” at the expense of others—but the name Abgar, which is well attested to Mesopotamia, is less susceptible to punning. Abgar was probably another of the many easterners who were present in Carthage at the turn of the sixth century.85

Vandal officials constituted a new presence in the metropolis of Africa. At the same time, however, Roman municipal institutions persisted in and around the city. The recent dissertation of Claude Lepelley has shown that Roman ways endured prior to 439. Proconsuls presided over a number of lesser civil magistrates, while the Count of Africa replaced early imperial legates as commander of the armed forces. Municipal and provincial councils complemented the central administration. A curia tended affairs in each municipality. Among their functions the curiales elected from their midst a flamen perpetuus who looked after the worship of the current emperor and those of his predecessors who had received divine honors. Emperor worship was a unifying force in all Roman provinces. Municipal delegates—invariably members of the landed gentry—met annually in the provincial capital to render homage to the emperor, and to communicate matters of local concern through decrees and even embassies to the imperial court. A sacerdos, chief delegate and priest, presided over the provincial council; upon completion of his duties he became sacerdotalis, one who had fulfilled his priestly duties. Even when the Roman government became Christian, the emperors found the network of communications developed by imperial cult officials too useful to abandon. From the late fourth century onward they repudiated their connections with traditional religion but continued to encourage the old cult ceremonies.86

Under the Vandals the illustres, spectabiles and clarissimi mentioned in Huneric’s law of 25 February 484 continued to maintain old prerogatives and discharge old functions. In the early 480s, for instance, one Victorianus of Hadrumetum was proconsul Carthaginis.87 Around the same time the poet Blossius Aemilius Dracontius distinguished himself both in poetry and politics. His declaration in the Baths of Gargiliain, already briefly noted, deserves closer attention. The subject of this controversia was the statue of a brave man. Dracontius entered probably a lecture hall in the Baths, and delivered his piece in the presence of the proconsul Pacideius. At that time Dracontius was himself vir clarissimum et togatus fori proconsulis almae Karthagini.88 At the turn of the sixth century prominent Roman families still held offices which had once been concerned with the worship of the emperors. Flavius Geminius Catullinus, the proprietor named in the Tablettes Albertini, was flamen perpetuus.89 Three such officials of the same family flourished at Ammaedara in Proconsular Africa. Two, Astius Vindicianus and Astius Mustelus, were flamines perpetui. A third, Astius Dinamius, was sacerdotalis provinciae Africae.90 The office Astius Dinamius held suggests that the provincial council was still meeting at Carthage in the last years of Vandal rule.

87 Vict. Vit. III 3.27.
88 Dracon. 5 passim (MGH:AA XIV, 140-48).
89 Courtois, Tablettes Albertini (supra n. 22) iii. 3b. 6-7 (p. 218), et passim.
90 I C Haidra 401, 413, 424.
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Did the council still render homage to the emperor? Recent critics have answered this question in the negative, but some evidence supports an affirmative answer. The Vandals were clients of the Roman Empire, the Hasdingi were members of the imperial house of Theodosius, and Roman provincials still venerated statues of the emperors in the fifth century. It is possible, then, that the Vandal kings followed Roman tradition by allowing provincial aristocrats to display customary loyalty to the Roman state.92

The mint of Carthage provides a final sign of municipal assertiveness under the Vandals. In the late fifth and early sixth century the city mint began to operate on a large scale for the first time since the early Tetrarchy. Gunthamund, Thrasamund, Hilderic and Geilamir all issued silver and bronze coins in their names.93 At the same time large bronzes bearing badges of the city of Carthage began to appear. On one bronze series the anepigraphic obverse showed Lady Carthage raising aloft shafts of grain, just as she had done on issues of the early Tetrarchs.94 Hilderic used the motif on reverses of his silver, adding the legend FELIX KARThAGo.95 Another bronze series bore on the obverse a standing warrior and the legend KARThAGo, while the reverse displayed monetary values (units of nummi) and a horse’s head.96 The last symbol had been a common badge of Carthage in Phoenician times. It survived the Roman conquest of Africa, appearing, for example, on late Roman lamps.97 Although the Vandal kings supervised this new activity of the mint of Carthage, they probably did not order the issue of the two series of anonymous bronzes. While these were appearing in the metropolis of Africa, the Senate at Rome, perhaps under the tutelage of the barbarian officer Odovacar or the Ostrogothic kings, minted similar large bronzes with badges of the City of Rome and the letters Senatus ContulTo on the reverse. It seems likely that their African counterparts were products of the curia of Carthage.98

While the curia, the provincial council and the proconsul continued to flourish, the private lives of Carthage’s inhabitants remained much the same as they had been during the early Dominate. Victor of Vita, Luxorius and the archaeological record combine to show Vandal nobles and Roman aristocrats living and dying ostentatiously in townhouses and suburban seaside villas.

Despite the protestations of Salvian, it was to be expected that the Vandals would adjust to local conditions. Malchus of Philadelphia and Procopius suggest as much,99 and the poems of Luxorius in particular show their leaders displaying their wealth and status. Hœhagæs, a member of the royal family, possessed stately gardens which contained a variety of medicinal herbs. The noble Blumarit invited many friends to dinner at his townhouse or villa, but developed the bad habit of asking them for gifts. The Goth Fridus put on an ostentatious wedding whose precise nature stands

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91See above, n. 86.
93Cf. BMC Vand. pp. 8-16.
96BMC Vand. pp. 3-4.
99See above, n. 37.
Fig. 1. Some coins of late fifth- and early sixth-century Carthage and their antecedents:

b. The reverse of an *aureus* of Maximian. Cf. *RIC*, VI, 430, no. 46 (photograph of Cabinet des Médailles no. 1600 courtesy of the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris)
c. The obverse of a bronze coin valued at 42 *nummi*. Cf. *BMC Vand.*, p. 6, nos. 3-7 (photograph courtesy of the Royal Collection of Coins and Medals, National Museum, Copenhagen)

disguised behind an elaborate *epitalamium* of Luxorius. The Goth Fridamal owned a seaside villa. In the midst of its pleasure garden stood a tower whose rooms were resplendent with varied art. Most noteworthy was a painting which showed Fridamal slaying a wild boar. The famous

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hunting mosaic found at Bordj Djedid in the nineteenth century offers a striking parallel to Luxorius' description of the painting in Fridamal's tower. Fragments of this mosaic, made at Carthage toward the end of the fifth century and possibly an adornment of a seaside villa, show a horseman galloping to the right and lassoing a stag; a bearded horseman in a tunic with clavi, anklets and top boots, galloping to the right over a rocky landscape; a dog pursuing a boar; a mustachioed horseman wearing a tunic, pants, leggings and boots and riding his horse in front of a villa; two gazelles, one wounded by an arrow; a dog pursuing a hare; and a bear.\textsuperscript{101} The costume of the horsemen—the tunic with centered clavus, pants, leggings, boots and side whiskers—is characteristic of northern frontiersmen in late antiquity. But since Romans sometimes adopted northern fashions at this time, the hunters depicted on the mosaic might be Roman aristocrats. Nevertheless, the painting in Fridamal's garden tower suggests that Vandal noblemen were not averse to advertising their prowess at the hunt.\textsuperscript{102}

The seaside villa near the Plage d'Amilcar and the House of the Greek Charioteers provide additional glimpses of private life during the Vandal century. The latter structure enjoyed two repavings with mosaics in the porticoes at the end of the fifth and beginning of the sixth century. Around the same time the house encroached upon the area of the former street. Not until the beginning of the Eastern Roman liegemony was there a break in continuity of occupation.\textsuperscript{103} Once again the literary evidence sets this fine peristyle structure in context. The chronicler Prosper and Procopius show that skilled housebuilders and unskilled labor stood ready to do repairs in Vandal Carthage.\textsuperscript{104} The house might have stood near that of Marcius, Luxorius' neighbor, who (says the poet) was jealous of the privacy afforded by his outer walls.\textsuperscript{105} The poems of Luxorius abound with descriptions of statues, paintings and flora which—on the analogy of the houses at Pompeii—might have adorned the House of the Greek Charioteers: a plate, for instance, showing a country girl taking a thorn from a satyr's foot, and a marble statue of Hector in a cold sweat as he beheld Achilles.\textsuperscript{106}

The seaside villa excavated by the Danish team as part of the International Campaign to Save Carthage presents a gloomy side of urban living under the Vandals. Excavations of the western complex have revealed two rooms cut away and used for the burial of over thirty adults and children. Grave goods and the fill layer on top suggest that the burials occurred around the end of the fifth century. None of the deceased suffered violent death. Most of them were under five or over twenty years of age. The excavators are still performing tests on the remains, but currently suspect epidemic or famine as the cause of death.\textsuperscript{107} In this connection one cannot ignore Victor of Vita's description of a famine which gripped Africa soon after Huniric ordered the persecution of Catholics on 25 February 484.\textsuperscript{108} Victor mixes Biblical quotations and actual events to present a lurid account of the famine.\textsuperscript{109} Drought gripped all of Africa, shrivelling all the crops and preventing replanting. With the resulting famine came disease. "Youths, old people, young men and women, boys and girls died in droves, and funerals, wherever and however possible, were scattered..."

\textsuperscript{101} Cf. R. P. Hinks, Catalogue of the Greek, Etruscan and Roman Paintings and Mosaics in the British Museum (London 1933), pp. 144-48, no. 57. Portions of this mosaic appear in Fig. 2. On the date of the mosaic see now K. M. D. Dunbabin, The Mosaics of Roman North Africa (Oxford 1978) 59, 62 and 250, and Dunbabin, "A Mosaic Workshop in Carthage around A.D. 400," New Light... (supra n. 29) 73-83.

\textsuperscript{102} Procop. BY 2.6.7: "... and most of all they (the Vandals) spent their leisure hours at the hunt." For the caution expressed here, see Hinks, (supra n. 101) 147-48.

\textsuperscript{103} See again the summary of Humphrey, New Light... (supra n. 29) 106-107.

\textsuperscript{104} Prosp. Chron. 1375 (MGH:AA, IX, 484), and Procop. BY 1.23.19-21.

\textsuperscript{105} AL 314. Cf. Shackleton Bailey, 'Anthologia Latina.' (supra n. 27) 46-47.


\textsuperscript{107} See above, n. 46.

\textsuperscript{108} See above, n. 46.

\textsuperscript{109} They have summarized here Vict. Vit. HP 3.55-60. On the date see HP 3.1-14 and 71.

far and wide, encompassing towns, villages and individual cities."\textsuperscript{110} Many sought sustenance in the fields and forests. Others, struggling to leave their houses, fell corpse upon corpse on the thresholds. Death became so frequent that the unburied clogged city streets. Some sought refuge in servitude to the well-fed rich, but these were in such dire straits that they refused to swell the numbers of their already starving households. Still others, half dead from disease and hunger, travelled to the greatest hoarder of foodstuffs in Africa, Carthage. Humiliac, however, wanting in particular to avoid the decimation of his army, ordered and enforced the expulsion of the incoming sick and dying to their own homes throughout the provinces. Victor concludes his account with a question: "But why do I tarry so long in this matter which I cannot explain?"\textsuperscript{111}

Have the Danish excavators uncovered a record of the famine of 484? The student of Vandal Carthage must be cautious for the present. Victor exaggerates, evidently deriving inspiration from the Bible’s record of plagues and famines which God visited upon persecutors of His Chosen People. Furthermore, the reports on the villa complex are still preliminary. Nevertheless, the famine of 484 was the kind of disaster which might have led to the mass burials in a villa so close to Carthage, the center of life and death in Vandal Africa.

While Christian apologists and the poets of the Latin Anthology sometimes spoke of the same aspects of life in Vandal Carthage, they never expressed themselves in the same way. Luxorius and Felix would not have used Biblical idioms to describe starvation and drought, and Victor of Vita was more concerned with persecution by Vandal optimates than with their displays of wealth. The Christians of Vandal Africa led lives much different from those of Luxorius and his friends. In the case of Carthage the activities of Catholics and Arians are best known.

\textsuperscript{110}Vit. Vit. HP 3.57.  
\textsuperscript{111}Vit. Vit. HP 3.61.
The most important feature of Christian life was not the triumph and tragedy of persecution, but the day-to-day ministration to the faithful. The best weapon in the Arian arsenal was the Vandal version of the Gothic Bible, complete with a Latin translation and exegeses. A Collatio cum Pascentio Ariano carries a precious glimpse of Arian worship. Frōja armēs sounded forth from Arian pulpits, but the Latin-speaking faithful quickly heard the same cry in translation: Domine miserere. Translation, exegesis, official pressure and monetary aid for the poor all bore fruit. The existing faithful and new converts came to worship in the basilicas of Carthage which the Vandals seized upon their arrival. The archaeological record may support Victor's chronicle of seizure. The magnificent basilica perched on a bluff overlooking the Plage d'Amilcar may be identified as the Memoria Cyprani. Excavations have produced a few epitaphs bearing Germanic names.

For Catholics too there was continuity of daily worship. The vituperations of Victor of Vita are less valuable than the glimpses he affords of worship in the Basilica of Faustus outside the walls. Catholics rendered homage to God there at least during the ecclesiastical peace of 454-457 and 480/481-484. In the latter period the faithful adored the basilica with wax candles, coverlets and lamps. On Epiphany Sunday (6 January) 484, worshippers beheld a miracle in the sanctuary. Before dawn a blind man named Felix followed his boy attendant to the basilica after being admonished

113 See above, nn. 10, 66-68.

Fig. 3. "... before the city beside the shore of the sea" (Procop. BV 1.21.18). A seaward view of the basilica which is probably the Memoria Cyprani (photograph taken by the author in 1970).
three times by God. There he beseeched the Deacon Peregrinus to announce him to Bishop Eugenius—evidently the Basilica of Faustus served as the Catholic Cathedral after the seizure of the Basilica Perpetua Restituta within the walls. Amidst hymns which even before dawn marked the beginning of Epiphany service, Eugenius heard the request and asked to have Felix ushered in. Felix conveyed God’s orders to himself to seek a cure for his affliction from the Bishop. Eugenius announced that he was a base sinner, but led Felix with an entourage of clerics to the baptismal font. The prelate blessed the font, again professed his own sin, and then made the sign of the Cross before Felix’s eyes. Immediately Felix was cured! Eugenius kept Felix close to him as he administered baptisms on this special day, and then revealed the miracle to the congregation. All of the faithful present sent up a rousing cheer.\textsuperscript{115}

The shout which shook the interior of the Basilica of Faustus on Epiphany Sunday of 484 little resembles the cheers which (according to Luxorius) rocked the Byrsa as the hunter Olympus performed his daring feats. The interests of Salvian and Victor of Vita kept them from observing in detail the lives of wealthy Romans who still cherished classical learning, and the poets of the Latin Anthology scarcely concerned themselves with Christian piety. Salvian’s shock at the double devotion of Romans in Carthage suggests that the two ways of life were not entirely separate.\textsuperscript{116} In his own way Luxorius may make the same point. Like the other great cities of the Roman world, Carthage had her share of heavy drinkers.\textsuperscript{117} One of these was a sacerdos who was more concerned with wine cups and tavern bars than with psalms and pulpits.\textsuperscript{118} Luxorius and Salvian were evidently in agreement. Under the Vandals Roman life still had its attractions, even for Christians.

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After decades of Vandal rule Carthage, the city of curiales devoted to the imperial cult, bishops who performed miracles, Vandal nobles who enjoyed the hunt, and Donatist clerics who compared Geiseric to the Antichrist, was still a Roman metropolis, battered but unbowed. The poet Florentinus concluded his homage to King Thrasamund with an elegium to Carthage which resembled Salvian’s back-handed compliments:\textsuperscript{119}

"Carthage retains her repute throughout her summits. Carthage is directress. Carthage the victress triumphs, Carthage is mother-city to the Hadingi, Carthage shines forth, this Carthage which surpasses throughout Libya’s lands. Carthage flourishes in peoples and in learning, this Carthage which is adorned with teachers. Carthage glitters, this Carthage which is well endowed with houses and with walls. Carthage is savory and nectar-sweet. She flourishes, ruling in the name of Thrasmund! So that her rule might remain fortunate throughout the ages we hope that Our Master will observe yearly festivals for many years, while he seeks anew the glittering celebrations of his rule."

One or two decades after Florentinus composed his glowing portrait of Thrasamund’s Carthage, the ambitious Justinian sent Belisarius to recover Africa. Procopius provides a precious view of the

\textsuperscript{115} Vict. Vit. \textit{HP} 2.47-51. Cf. \textit{HP} 1.24-28, 2.18 and 3.34.

\textsuperscript{116} See above, nn. 32-36.

\textsuperscript{117} See, for example, \textit{AL} 311 and 363; with Brébère, \textit{CP} 57 (1962) 178-79, and Shackleton Bailey, \textit{‘Anthologia Latina,’} (supra n. 27) 53-54.

\textsuperscript{118} \textit{AL} 303.

\textsuperscript{119} \textit{AL} 376. 28-39.
last three days of Vandal rule in Carthage. On 13 September 533, the eve of the Cyriana marking Saint Cyprian's martyrdom, two important events occurred. Ariaric Christians, still in control of the Memoria Cyriani, made preparations for the feast by cleansing the basilica, reading laments and bringing forth sacred vessels from storage.129 At the same time Belisarius' forces defeated Gelimer's Vandals at Ad Decimimum, a town possibly situated at the tenth milestone of the route from Carthage to Thereste.121 When they heard the news of the Roman victory, the Arians fled from Cyprian's basilica. On the next day not Ariaric but Catholic Christians celebrated the Cyriana in this famous church for the first time in two generations. "They burned all the lamps," states Procopius, "and took care of the sacred affairs in the manner that is customary for them.122 In the meantime Belisarius' fleet and army approached Carthage. Upon their arrival the inhabitants threw open the city gates and removed the iron chains drawn across the entrance to Mandraccum. The Vandals in the city took refuge in the basilicas and sanctuaries within the walls. The palace guard in charge of the Arkoń, where eastern merchants were awaiting execution, tore away the seaward planking of the enclosure, showed the prisoners the approaching fleet and then released them. The fleet commanders were uncertain whether their force would fit inside Mandraccum, and decided to anchor instead at nearby Stagnum. Belisarius delayed his entry into the city to prevent nocturnal looting. At this he was unsuccessful. Calyonymus, one of his subordinates, did plunder the merchants' quarters. Despite the incident the Carthaginians burned lamps throughout the city, awaiting the procession of the conqueror.123

On the next day, 15 September 533, Belisarius entered Carthage amidst a calm marred only by complaints of Calyonymus' looting. He ascended the Byrsa, entered the Palace and sat on Gelimer's throne.124 Belisarius' procession contrasted strongly with the bloody attack of the Vandals nearly a century before. The great metropolises of Roman Africa entered a new phase of her existence.

APPENDIX: THE VANDALIC COMPONENT OF THE LATIN ANTHOLOGY

An inscription from Tunis contains a brief elegiac salute to the Hading Gebamund, who eveyently sponsored the construction of some bath.125 This discovery is evidence enough that poets wrote short pieces while the Vandals ruled Africa. The Latin Anthology contains more examples of the same kind of versifying. But how many examples?

The second volume of The Prosopography of the Later Roman Empire contains an old and erroneous answer to this question: because some of the poets of the Latin Anthology did write during the Vandal hegemony, others of uncertain date probably did too.126 The proper approach is to study the poems themselves. Strictly speaking, one cannot trust the titles of the poems unless the information they provide finds confirmation elsewhere. The editor or editors of the collection, for instance, announced that Virgil was the author of an elegiac couplet whose real author was  

122Procop. B.P.1.21.25.
123Procop. B.P.1.20.16.
124Procop. B.P.1.20.17-22.
125Cf. VIII, 23582. For this and similar poems, see the excellent discussion of E. Courtois, "Observations on the Latin Anthology," Hermathena, CXXIX (1980), 37-59, at 38-40.
126Procop. II, Avorii 5, Boruercs 2, Calinucus, Usurianus, Octavianus 4, Petrus 23, Passianus, Regiatus, Simplicius, Tascianus, Vincentius 5. Of these only Petrus Reisendaritz (AL 380) merits more than passing attention. The editor or editors of the Latin Anthology called this short poem "versus in basilica palatii sanctar mariae." Courtois, Vanderel 253, n. 5, sug-gusted that the palace shrine of the Theodosios dated from the reign of King Thrasamund. But the parallel evidence of Procopius (BP. 2.14.37 and De urbd. 6.5.9) will only confirm the existence of the shrine during the reign of Justinian. Procopius' testimony raises the possibility that some of the editorial work on the Latin Anthology occurred after the Eastern Roman conquest. For a Byzantine view of the Latin Anthology, see Avrel Constantinou's "Byzantine Africa: The Literary Evidence," in Chapter 3 below.
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Ovid.127 The present assessment of the Vandalic section of the Latin Anthology rests primarily on the poems’ contents. On occasion I have let the titles be an additional guide when they are consistent.

AL 18, 203, 287-375 (Luxtorius, vir clarissimus et spectabilis)

A few of the verses attributed to Luxtorius carry references to the Vandal elite.128 Only the titles of the poems permit one to date all of them to the early sixth century. The title set between the end of Symphorien’s Avenergentia and the beginning of the next work indicates that Luxtorius’ book of epigrams consists of ninety-seven poems.129 The number of epigrams which follows is eighty-nine. The rough correspondence of actual and reported numbers lends some substance to the view that Luxtorius was prominent in literary circles during the last generation of Vandal rule.

AL 37 (Anonymus)

Luxtorius’ name appears in verse 1.

AL 82 (Anonymus)

Verse 5 contains the name Fridus. The root Frithu- was a common element of Germanic proper names, particularly among the Goths.130

AL 209 (Anonymus)

In verse 1 Abgor is a regius servus. The adjective fixes the time of this poem between the reigns of Geiseric and Gelimer.

AL 210-214 (Felix, vir clarissimus)

The poet names King Thrasamund in verses of the first four poems, and in the acrostic of the last.131

127 AL 262 = Ovid, Tristis 2.33-34.
128 Ibid., AL 18.49, 203.1, 304.14, 305.1 and 345.15.
129 Ibid., AL 287.
131 P.L.R.E. II, 462 (Felix 19) identifies Felix with the “Flavius Felix orb clarissimus” who wrote Poem 254. This piece is late Roman and Christian in tone, but nothing in its content can be definitely associated with the Vandal century. Courtesy, Hermeneia 129 (1980) 42-43, has argued on the basis of the title (Postulatus honoris ipsius Victorinianum vixit: in honorem et praesidium pietatis) that Flavius Felix addressed Victorinus, son of Victorinus of Hadrumetum, Provost of Carthage during Hunia’s reign (cf. Vict. Vit. HP 3.27). This argument depends too much on the title, and confidence in it wanes when one considers the announced office of Victorinus. Preciosorniari are not attested in late imperial administration. Cf. P.L.R.E. II, 1161 (Victoriniarum). Indeed, by P. Flury informes me (by a letter dated 21 September 1961) that this word does not otherwise appear in the files of the Thesaurus Linguae Latinae.
"Vandalicus" of verse 1 is the grandson (cf. verse 8) of Valentinian III. King Hilderic was therefore the patron of the man who wrote these hexameters.132

The contents of these poems bear no specific sign that they were written during the Vandal century. The title attached to the poet's name suggests only that Coronatus flourished some time in late antiquity. Other evidence, however, places Coronatus in Carthage round the turn of the sixth century. An eighth-century manuscript of "Sergius" (i.e. Servius') Explanaciones in aetem Donati bears at the end of the work the following:133 "explicat finiales sergi insipient coronati scholastici. Domino enuditissimo pestilisimorum atque incolatri filiis luxorior coronatus. Cum consideratatem temporis nostri lectores" etc. From this slender thread kangs the identification of Coronatus as one of Luxorius' contemporaries.

The Burgundian presence in the Rhone Basin once provoked Sidonius Apollinaris to mock despair. How can a gentleman write six-foot verses among seven-foot barbarians?134 One of the poets of Vandal Africa expressed the same sentiment more succinctly. The Gothic is evidently halis . . . skapi jah matjan jah dirigkan ("Heil! Schaff sowohl zu essen als auch zu trinken").135

From verse 2 one learns that King Thrasamund was the poet's sponsor.

These hexameters are a salute to King Huneric (cf. verse 1).

132RE II, Stemmata 3 and 41.
134Sidonius Apollinaris Carmen 12.