



GÖTEBORGS UNIVERSITET

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From Roman Proconsularis to Islamic Ifrīqiyah  
North Africa c. 400-800

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ABSTRACT

Pentz, Peter, 2002, *From Roman Proconsularis to Islamic Ifrīqiya*. 208 pp, 107 figs. Written in English.

Over the past two decades there has been a rapid growth of interest in the archaeology of the centuries of the transition between the Late Roman and the Early Medieval period in Europe. This thesis considers the archaeological evidence of North Africa c. 400-850. The overall purpose of the thesis is to pursue *change* and *continuity* of the culture in the former province.

An introductory chapter surveys the earlier and the currently standard version of the development from Roman to Islamic (over "Barbarian" - Vandal - and Byzantine). Common issues of geography, history and archeology with relevance for the study of change in the region are presented.

The following chapters examine changes and persistence within towns, land utilization, defensive strategies and trade patterns. It is argued that changes happened not as much subsequent to political shifts as to other factors. Also, it is suggested that changes in the town-scape and in the contents of towns and of the character of urban institutions owed much to a general development. Trade also followed general trends in the Mediterranean and in North Africa.

It is concluded that despite intermittent turbulence and destruction, much of the ex-Roman (whatever the extent of the Romanisation had been) came under Vandal, Byzantine and Islamic mastery in an orderly fashion, although not without some turmoil and overturning of landownership. The thesis proposes ways in which the standard versions of the concepts of the passage from the Late Roman province into the Islamic state should be modified.

*Keywords:*

Roman, Islamic, Vandal, Byzantine, archaeology, medieval, changes, cities, land use, defences, trade, North Africa, Mahgreb, Ifrīqiyah.

