**Kingship and Kinship in Moorish North Africa**

**Report on a Research Trip to the Whitehouse Library, University of Sydney. October 17 – November 19 2017.**

Australia may seem like a peculiar destination for a researcher interested in the political and social world of post-Roman North Africa, but Sydney boasts exceptional resources for research in this field. Thanks to the generous benefaction of John Whitehouse, a private scholar and bibliophile, the University of Sydney houses an important collection of periodicals, secondary literature and archaeological reports. This comprises complete runs of journals from across the Maghreb and North Africa, including some which are difficult to access elsewhere, as well as a varied range of other publications on ancient and medieval history, social anthropology and archaeological theory. Sydney is also home to a number of scholars of international standing, whose work connects in important ways to the study of later Roman and Post-Roman Africa, including Richard Miles (University of Sydney, Carthage, Vandal and Byzantine Africa); Paul Roche (University of Sydney, the poet Dracontius); Meghan McEvoy (Macquarie University, Later Roman Politics); Peter Brennan (University of Sydney, emeritus, the *Notitia Dignitatum* and the late Roman military); Alan Dearn (Sydney Grammar School, Donatism and North African Christianity).

In October and November 2017, I undertook a research trip to Sydney with the generous support of the Society for Libyan Studies. This was to investigate ‘Kingship and Kinship in Moorish North Africa’, as part of an ongoing project provisionally entitled ‘Kings of Sand and Snow: North Africa in Late Antiquity’. This **project** seeks to provide a fundamental re-appraisal of a much-neglected part of the post-Roman world; it will integrate the interpretation of published archaeological materials from Algeria, Tunisia and Libya with new readings of the epigraphic and textual corpus both to provide a clear *status quaestionis* for future specialized study, and to render the region comprehensible to scholars in other fields who never felt able to engage with this material. Access to the Whitehouse Library was invaluable in laying the groundwork for this project. Thanks to the four weeks in the library, I made considerable progress with data collection related to archaeological sites and epigraphy in Mauretania and southern Numidia (now NE and NW Algeria respectively), principally using published material from the *Bulletin d'archéologie algérienne, Bulletin d'archéologie marocaine, Recueil de la Société archéologique du Constantine, Aouras* and the *Bulletin de la Société de géographie et d’árchéologie de la province d’Oran* as well as the *Année Epigraphique*. I also took the opportunity to deepen my understanding of current Social Anthropological thinking on kingship and kinship systems, using the excellent holdings in the Whitehouse Library and in the Fisher University Library. I was delighted to take the chance to discuss this work with scholars established in the city, and to attend a conference on Later Roman politics at Macquarie University.

Ultimately, this work will inform my monograph ‘Kings of Sand and Snow’, and particularly chapters 1 (‘kinship’) and 2 (‘kingship’) of that volume. I will, of course, fully acknowledge the important role of the Society in supporting that research. I also intend to produce a substantial article on ‘Approaches to Kinship in Late antique North Africa’, which will look at the different scholarly assumptions surrounding this important topic, and will propose possible new approaches by analogy with studies elsewhere in the early medieval world. This will be submitted to *Libyan Studies* in 2018 or 2019.

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