

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

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

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The History of Christian Archaeology in the Maghreb

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

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

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

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

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

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

3 Février, *Approches du Maghreb*, 47.

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

5 Frend, *From Donatist opposition*.

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

7 *Petit manuel pour un pèlerinage*.

8 Lorcin, *Rome and France*, 313-323.

9 Hardy, *Antoine-Adolphe Dupuch*.

10 Frend *Archaeology of Early Christianity*, 55-56.

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

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

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

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

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

12 Altekamp, *Modelling Roman North Africa*, 19.

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

14 Sessions, "Unfortunate Necessities".

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

Dupuch's Ambitions for the Catholic Church in Colonial Maghreb

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

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

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

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

17 Soumille, *Les multiples activités*, 245-247.

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

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

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

21 Emerit, *La lutte*, 66-75.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

25 Effros, *Colliding empires*, 50-53.

26 Ghoche, *Erasing the Ketchaoua Mosque*, 96.

27 Fontaine, *Decolonizing Christianity*, 29.

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

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

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

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

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

From shortly after his arrival, Dupuch played a prominent role in the civilian life of the colony. Although a devout Christian, he was also a pragmatist and did not hesitate to reach out to Muslim authorities when he thought negotiations might help resolve political impasses. In 1839, the bishop made contact with the Emir Abd-el-Kader and helped facilitate a successful exchange of Christian prisoners for Muslim ones. Although this earned him some push-back from French military authorities for his intervention in wartime affairs, and Bugeaud blocked further proposed endeavors of this nature, the two men established a friendly connection that may be seen in Dupuch's sympathetic account of Abd-el-Kader during his imprisonment in France.³⁴ Their connection ended only with Dupuch's death in 1856.³⁵

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

38 Soumille, *Les multiples activités*, 237.

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

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

It seems evident that Dupuch viewed the sisters led by de Vialar with suspicion and distrust. Consequently, despite initial cooperation, the sisters, who were locally popular, refused to submit to the bishop. He, in turn, complained about their irregular existence to both the pope and the colonial government. Dupuch saw them as competition rather than comrades in a shared mission, and sought to force them into obedience by depriving them of access to the sacraments. When de Vialar sought remedy for these incidents, she received some support in Algiers from the vicar François Bourgade, who evidently saw the efficacy of her approach in working with the Muslim population.⁴² Although de Vialar argued her case against Dupuch in Rome before papal officials, she lost her request for independence from diocesan officials. She did, however, receive permission from the French consul to establish a house in Tunis in 1840.⁴³ She also gave her strong support as an ally to Bourgade, whose own relations with Dupuch had soured. Bourgade would soon begin serving as de Vialar's order's almoner in the Regency of Tunis. In 1841, with her backing, he was appointed as the chaplain of the newly constructed French church dedicated to Saint Louis on Carthage's Byrsa Hill.⁴⁴

Meanwhile in Algiers, Dupuch managed to make the best of stretched resources and benefitted directly from contemporary military maneuvers. He imitated, for instance, the precedent established by Adrien Berbrugger, founder of the Bibliothèque et Musée d'Alger (1835), who followed the *armée d'Afrique* confiscating Qu'rans from raided Islamic institutions to fill the shelves of his library.⁴⁵ As mentioned above, Dupuch received jurisdiction over mosques confiscated by French forces and promptly converted the structures for use as Christian churches. This approach helped support the rapid expansion of Christian presence in the region.⁴⁶ As mentioned above, however, all of these measures, from which the Church directly profited, violated the terms of the initial surrender agreements made in Algiers in July 1830.⁴⁷

40 Gallois, *History of Violence*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

47 Khodja, *Le Miroir*, 155.

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

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

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

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

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

48 Altekamp, *Crossing the sea*, 214-215.

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

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

51 Dupuch, *Lettre pastorale*, 1842.

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

53 Poujoulat, *Études africaines*, 128.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

58 Emerit, *La lutte*, 77-83.

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

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

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

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

Christian Archaeology in Algiers in the 1830s and 1840s

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

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

62 Colonna, *La compagnie de Jésus*.

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

64 Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity*.

65 Effros, *Incidental Archaeologists*.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

76 Dupuch, *Extrait d'une lettre*, 25.

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

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

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

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

Archaeological Collections in Carthage and Tunis

François Bourgade was born in 1806 in the department of Gers in southern France to a middle-class family in the small village of Gaujan. He pursued the priesthood, and was ordained in 1832. He was seen as pious but of ordinary talent, and took up the call for priests to serve in North Africa. As noted above, from March 1838, Bourgade served in Algiers as the vicar of the cathedral; it was probably at this time that he learned Arabic.⁸² In Algiers, Bourgade encountered Émilie de Vialar, with whom he worked closely at the hospitals and Catholic schools she had founded. When she and the bishop fell out, Bourgade's decision to side with the Sisters of Saint-Joseph de l'Apparition (SSJ) resulted in the loss of his post at the cathedral in July 1840.⁸³ After a brief sojourn in Lyon, Bourgade moved to the Regency of Tunis to become the almoner of the SSJ.⁸⁴

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

79 Dupuch, *Essai sur l'Algérie*, 67.

80 Dupuch, *Fastes sacrés*.

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

82 Soumille, *Les multiples activités*, 252.

83 Soumille, *Les multiples activités*, 233-238.

84 Soumille, *Les multiples activités*, 238-239.

85 Soumille, *Les multiples activités*, 240-243.

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

87 Gutron, *L'abbé Bourgade*, 177-187.

Bourgade's activities were not considered entirely orthodox by the standard of his time. In addition to his archaeological work, Bourgade wrote several works on the populations in the Regency of Tunis, focusing on a dialogue between Christian and Muslim religious authorities in his *Soirées de Carthage* (1847), *La clef du Coran* (1852), and *Passage du Coran à l'Évangile* (1858). In 1849, the first of these works of propaganda was translated into Arabic. In these volumes, Bourgade sought to persuade the Indigenous population of the error of their ways and convince them to convert to Christianity.⁸⁸ At the same time, his modest museums displayed material remains highlighting the rich and varied history of the region. In particular, these collections supported his views about the historic fusion of peoples whom he believed would ultimately be united under Christianity.⁸⁹ Although the pope praised his publications that highlighted his approach to proselytization, Bourgade's multi-confessional teaching finally tipped the scales against him. Pius IX removed him from office in 1858. After his return to France, he lived under much constrained circumstances in Paris until his death in May 1866.⁹⁰

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

Conclusion

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

88 Gutron, L'abbé Bourgade, 187-189.

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

90 Soumille, *Les multiples activités*, 251.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

96 Gallois, *History of Violence*.

97 Abi-Mershed, *Apostles of Modernity*.

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

99 Ceillier, *Histoire des Missionnaires*.

100 Effros, *Reviving Carthage's Martyrs*.

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