

Call for papers, Archaeological Institute of America 2023 Panel

Economy and Ecology in Late Antique North Africa

Climate and ecology are often posited as significant factors of change in the Late Antique and Medieval Mediterranean (e.g. Haldon et al. 2014), and the landscapes of North Africa during these periods are certainly no exception. Recent research suggests the post-Roman geography was one of unstable climatic conditions across much of the region, oscillating between periods of aridification and humidity and plagued by repeated flood events and rising sea levels. Yet there is also clearly a great deal of variability in the ways that communities and sites responded to the same environmental stresses, sometimes even within an otherwise coherent ecological zone. A number of archaeological projects are now using the latest scientific methods to better understand the parameters and specifics of environmental change. This, in turn, opens up new avenues for the interrogation of the demographic and cultural shifts that accompanied a period of ecological uncertainty and in many ways characterized social life from the Late Antique into the Early Medieval period.

This session invites papers that broadly tackle the intersection of local economies and environmental change in North Africa from the deliberately broad and diachronic perspective of a so-called 'long late antiquity'. Potential topics might include fluctuations in settlement patterns and urban practices, the agricultural challenges of a changing natural landscape, the impact of ecology on infrastructure and connectivity, or site-specific and local responses to a new environmental reality. Taken collectively, the colloquium aims to raise provocative and fundamental questions about demographic, social, technological, and economic developments that reintegrate the Late Antique and Early Medieval periods into the longer historical and environmental trajectory of North Africa as a whole.

Abstract submissions are due March 15, 2022. Please submit abstracts of 300 words (excluding title) via email; any queries about the session can also be sent to a.dufton@ucl.ac.uk.

It may be also helpful when preparing an abstract to consult the [AIA submission guidelines](#), particularly regarding length and those elements that must be clearly included for a submission to be successful. The session organisers are happy to provide feedback, translation, or editing help for any potential abstract submissions.