

Municipal Councils And Central Authority In Mauretania Caesariensis And Tingitana: A Study In The Mechanisms Of Self-Government And Roman Domination

المجالس البلدية والسلطة المركزية في موريطانيا القيصرية والطنجية:

دراسة في آليات الحكم الذاتي والهيمنة الرومانية

Mohamed SENOUCI

Dr. Tahri Mohamed University, Bechar, Algeria

mohamed.snouci@univ-be0char.dz

Date of Receipt: 12/04/2025

Date of Acceptance: 07/11/2025

Date of Publication: 20/12/2025

Corresponding Author: Mohamed SENOUCI, mohamed.snouci@univ-be0char.dz

ملخص:

يهدف هذا البحث إلى تحديد طبيعة العلاقة المعقدة بين المجالس البلدية (curiae) وحاكم المقاطعة في موريتانيا الرومانية (القيصرية والطنجية). كما يسعى بشكل خاص إلى تقييم توازن القوى بين الحكم الذاتي المحلي والسلطة الرومانية المركزية. تعتمد الدراسة على منهج تاريخي-تحليلي، يقوم على فحص نقدي للمصادر الأولية. تُستمد الأدلة الأساسية من المواد الإيبغرافية (النقوش الاهدائية والإدارية) والمعطيات الأثرية ذات الصلة، والتي يتم تفسيرها لإعادة بناء وظائف المجالس وآليات الرقابة التي مارسها الحاكم. تشير النتائج إلى أنه على الرغم من أن المجالس البلدية تمتعت باستقلالية فعلية (de facto) كبيرة في الشؤون الإدارية والمالية والقضائية اليومية - والتي كانت تُموَّل غالبًا عبر نظام الإيفرجيتية (التبرع العام) - إلا أن سلطتها كانت محدودة في نهاية المطاف بالدور الإشرافي للحاكم. وكان هذا التدخل يبرز بشكل خاص في المشاريع المالية الكبرى، والقضايا الجنائية الكبرى، والمسائل المتعلقة بالمصالح الإمبراطورية. يخلص البحث إلى أن العلاقة لم تكن علاقة هيمنة بسيطة، بل كانت توازنًا منظمًا يمثل نظامًا من "الاستقلالية الخاضعة للرقابة"، والذي كان يخدم كلاً من الفخر المدني المحلي والاستقرار الإمبراطوري الروماني.

الكلمات المفتاحية: موريطانيا القيصرية، موريطانيا الطنجية، الإدارة الرومانية، الرومنة، الاستيطان.

Abstract:

The objective of this study is to define the complex relationship between municipal councils (curiae) and the provincial governor in Roman Mauretania (Caesariensis and Tingitana). It specifically aims to assess the balance of power between local self-government and centralized Roman authority.

The study adopts a historical-analytical methodology, based on a critical examination of primary sources. The core evidence is drawn from epigraphic material (honorific and administrative inscriptions) and relevant archaeological findings, which are interpreted to reconstruct the councils' functions and the governor's oversight mechanisms.

*The findings indicate that while municipal councils possessed significant *de facto* autonomy in daily administrative, financial, and judicial matters—often funded through the system of Euergetism—their authority was ultimately circumscribed by the governor's supervisory role. This intervention was most prominent in major financial projects, capital judicial cases, and matters of imperial interest. The study concludes that the relationship was not one of simple domination but a structured balance, representing a system of controlled autonomy that served both local civic pride and Roman imperial stability.*

Keywords: Mauretania Caesariensis; Mauretania Tingitana; Roman Administration; Romanization; Settlement.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Autonomous Roman cities were fundamental pillars of the Empire, critical not just as urban/economic hubs but for disseminating Roman power/culture and managing local communities. Mauretania Caesariensis and Tingitana, integrated in the mid-first century AD, are particularly important for studying the interaction between local self-government and central imperial authority, owing to their Berber background and status as imperial provinces under equestrian procurators. Central to their self-administration was the municipal council (*ordo decurionum*), composed of local elites, managing daily affairs and representing the city to Rome.

This study addresses the need to better understand the complex interaction between these councils and central authority (the provincial governor). While sources (especially epigraphy) show council vitality and their active role via public financing (*Euergetism*), their subordination and the governor's extensive powers question their actual autonomy and authority limits. Understanding this balance in the Mauretanian context enriches knowledge of Roman administration in diverse territories.

The central research question is, to what extent did municipal councils in Mauretania Caesariensis and Tingitana exercise effective self-government, and what defined the nature, interaction mechanisms, and authority limits between them and the central Roman authority (governor)?

Sub-questions include:

1. What were the administrative, financial, and judicial powers of the municipal councils in Mauretania?
2. How did the provincial governor supervise and intervene in the councils' activities?
3. How did *Euergetism* influence the relationship between municipal councils and the central authority?
4. What distinguished the council-governor relationship in Mauretania from that in other Roman provinces?

This study employs the historical-analytical method, critically interpreting diverse primary sources. Primary reliance is on epigraphy (Latin inscriptions - e.g., *Cursus Honorum*, building/dedication, decrees), the richest source on council functions, members, and activities. Archaeology (buildings, planning) provides material/social context. Comparisons with other Roman provinces (esp. North Africa) and relevant classical/contemporary historical/legal writings are also considered.

2. Controlled Autonomy: Municipal Councils and Governors in Roman Mauretania.

2.1 -The Specificity of Roman Administration in the Two Mauretania:

Understanding the relationship between the municipal councils and the central authority in Mauretania Caesariensis and Tingitana begins with defining the administrative framework within which this relationship developed. Following the assassination of King Ptolemy of Mauretania by order of Caligula around 40 AD, and the annexation of his kingdom into the Empire, the region was divided into two separate imperial provinces (Desanges, 1992, pp. 309-311).

As imperial provinces, especially those requiring a military presence, even if limited, and considered not fully prepared for rule by the Senate (Senatus), their administration was entrusted to governors from the equestrian order bearing the title Procurator Augusti. This distinguished them from their major eastern neighbor, Africa Proconsularis, which was governed by a proconsul from the senatorial order. As the works of Hans-Georg Pflaum (H.-G. Pflaum) on the careers of the equestrians have shown, these procurators were directly responsible to the emperor. They often combined civil and military powers, commanding the auxiliary forces (auxilia) stationed in the province to protect the borders and monitor the interior tribes (Pflaum, 1960-1961, pp. 35-48).

This concentration of authority in the hands of the emperor's direct representative, who embodied the supreme Roman authority (Imperium) in the sense analyzed by Andrew Lintott (A. Lintott), formed the background against which local institutions, foremost among them the municipal councils, interacted. Consequently, the nature of the relationship between the local and the central here was directly influenced by the governor being an imperial equestrian, rather than a senator according to tradition (Lintott, 1993, pp. 51-54).

2-2 The Network of Cities as the Foundation of Roman Rule:

Rome did not govern its vast provinces through a massive, centralized bureaucratic administration in the modern sense. Instead, it primarily relied on a network of cities (civitates) enjoying varying degrees of self-government. In the two Mauretania, Rome inherited some ancient cities (such as Lixus and Tingis) and established new ones, especially colonies (coloniae) where it settled veterans or Roman citizens (such as the administrative capital Caesarea in Caesariensis, Volubilis in Tingitana, and coastal Tipasa). Additionally, it granted the status of municipalities (municipia) with Latin or Roman law to other cities. These cities, as

Jean-Marie Lassère (J.-M. Lassère) explains in his study of Roman North Africa, formed the cornerstones through which Rome extended its administrative, cultural, and economic influence (Lassère, 1977, p. 515).

Each city, with its public square (the forum), administrative buildings (the curia andria and the basilica), temples, and baths, represented a center of Roman-style urban life and, more importantly, a hub of local administration. By granting these cities autonomy in managing their daily affairs, within the framework of Roman law, Rome lessened the burden on its central administration and entrusted local elites with the responsibility of governing their own communities. This was the general principle of Roman municipal policy, as studied by Jacques Gascou (Gascou, 1972, p. 09)

3. Powers and Functions of the Municipal Council

3.1- Formation of the Municipal Elite and the Sources of its Power:

At the heart of every vibrant Roman city was the municipal council (*ordo decurionum* or *curia*), the body that comprised the most prominent notables and wealthiest men of the city. Membership in this council was not open to everyone but was linked to possessing a minimum level of wealth, the assessment of which varied from city to city and from period to period. However, it primarily depended, as was the case in most parts of the Empire (Jacques, 1987, pp. 25-28).

According to the analysis of Peter Garnsey & Richard Saller (P. Garnsey & R. Saller), on the ownership of agricultural land. Landed wealth (Saller, 2015, p. 115).

As Christopher Whittaker (C.R. Whittaker) emphasizes, was the most respected and most secure source of income and status qualifying [individuals] for membership in this class. In terms of origins, the councils of the Mauretanian cities included a mix of settlers of Italian origin, Roman veterans who received land after their discharge, and, most importantly, increasing numbers of sons of the local Amazigh elites who adopted Roman culture, obtained citizenship, and integrated into the municipal system (Whittaker, 1993, p. 35).

The "Tabula Banasitana" (IAM 2, 95) is considered a prime example of the granting of citizenship to a local elite (the family of Julianus of the Zegrenses tribe) while allowing them to retain their tribal law, which demonstrates the Roman policy of integration. These *decuriones* formed the upper class within the local society (*honestiores*), distinguished from the common people (*humiliores*) by legal and social privileges and significant influence in the administration of the city's affairs.

3.2-Administrative and Financial Powers of the Councils:

The municipal council was the effective engine of local administration. Its members were the ones who annually elected (or were later chosen) the local magistrates (magistratus) from among themselves, such as the duumviri who presided over the city's administration, the aediles (supervisors of buildings and markets), and the local quaestores (treasurers). The council was also responsible for managing the municipal budget, which consisted of revenues from city-owned properties, local taxes, and fines (Lepelley, "Vie et mort des institutions municipales dans l'Afrique romaine tardive", 1991).

Its responsibilities included supervising the maintenance of public buildings, organizing the markets, and ensuring the city's supply of essential goods.

But the most sensitive and important responsibility for the central authority was ensuring the collection of imperial taxes from the city's territory (territorium). Often, council members were collectively, and sometimes individually, responsible for ensuring the required amount reached the governor's treasury, which constituted an increasing financial burden (munus) upon them, especially in difficult times (Christol, 1991, pp. 217-219).

Although texts describing the budgets of Mauretanian cities in detail are scarce, the presence of luxurious administrative buildings such as the Curia (council headquarters) and the Basilica (the multi-functional administrative and judicial building) in cities like Cherchell, Tipasa, and Lixus indicates the existence of an organized and effective municipal administration (Saller, 2015, pp. 116-117).

3.3-The Actual Exercise of Power: Council Decisions and Judicial Activities

The municipal council was not merely an advisory body, but rather an entity that made executive decisions in the name of the city, known as 'decrees of the decurions' (decreta decurionum) (Johnson, 1926, p. 74).

Inscriptions offer us glimpses of these decisions, such as inscription ILAlg I, 279 / CIL VIII, 9371 from Cherchell, which honors Publius Aelius Primianus and explicitly mentions that he was admitted as a member of the municipal council (decurioni adlecto) 'by decree of the council' (d(ecreto) d(ecurionum)). Such decrees regulated various aspects of civic life, such as granting honors, allocating funds for specific projects, or sending delegations to the governor or the emperor. (Lassère, 1977)

Additionally, local magistrates elected from the council exercised primary judicial authority within the city, hearing less serious civil and criminal cases. Numerous inscriptions in the two Mauretaniae mention individuals who held the offices of Duumvir (IIVir) or Quinquennial Duumvir (IIVir quinquennalis, responsible for revising the council lists every five years), confirming the vitality of these local judicial institutions. (Johnson, 1926, pp. 198-201)

4. The Provincial Governor and Municipal Councils: Mechanisms of Oversight, Intervention, and Adjudication

The relationship between the municipal councils in Mauretania Caesariensis and Tingitana and the central authority was not one of equals or separation. Instead, it was governed by the logic of Roman hegemony, embodied by the provincial governor. Although cities were granted a wide scope of autonomy to manage their internal affairs, this scope was limited by the governor's supervisory, interventionist, and judicial powers.

4.1-Superior Oversight (Tutela) and Ensuring Rome's Interests

The concept of superior oversight (tutela) exercised by the governor was not limited to mere passive supervision; rather, it represented an effective mechanism to ensure cities remained within the Roman sphere – legally, financially, and politically. The governor, in his capacity as the representative of imperial authority (Imperium, in the sense analyzed by Lintott), was responsible for ensuring that local laws (leges municipales) and the decisions of the municipal councils (decreta decurionum) did not conflict with general Roman law or the higher interests of the Empire (Christol, 1994, pp. 15-18). This oversight encompassed multiple aspects:

Financial Oversight:

This was the most sensitive aspect. While cities had their own budgets managed by the municipal council and its magistrates (particularly the quaestores), the governor possessed the right to review and monitor the financial situation of important cities, especially to ensure their ability to meet their tax obligations towards Rome. The mechanisms for this monitoring might include requesting periodic financial reports or auditing the accounts of major projects funded by municipal finances. In cases of severe financial crises or clear mismanagement, the governor—or the emperor upon the governor's recommendation—could appoint a special financial supervisor (curator civitatis or curator rei publicae) to take direct charge of the city's finances for a specific period. (Christol, 1991, pp. 215-222)

Although direct evidence for the appointment of these supervisors specifically in Mauretanian cities during the early periods is scarce, the existence of this position in other provinces indicates that this was an available option for the central authority to intervene when necessary. This significantly limited the financial autonomy of the cities (Gascou, 1972).

The Diplomatic and Administrative Channel: The governor served as the obligatory intermediary between the cities and the central administration in Rome. Delegations (legationes) sent by the cities – whether to express loyalty to a new emperor, request an upgrade in the city's status (e.g., from municipium to colony) (Millar, 1977, pp. 68-71), obtain specific privileges, or even submit a complaint against the governor himself – had to pass through the governor and secure his approval or facilitation. This role gave the governor additional influence and the ability to control the cities' relationship with the higher authority (Christol, 1991, pp. 15-18).

Political Monitoring: This oversight extended indirectly to the internal political life of the city. The governor monitored the election process for local magistrates, ensuring that candidates met the legal and financial requirements and that the process occurred without major disturbances. In cases of disputes over election results or the eligibility of candidates, the governor could be requested to intervene to rule on the matter (Pliny, 1947, p. X.79).

4.2-Direct Intervention and the Limits of Autonomy

The governor's authority extended beyond oversight to direct intervention in the city's internal affairs in cases of extreme necessity, clearly marking the red line that local self-government could not cross. Rome did not favor continuous intervention, but it did not hesitate to employ it to guarantee order, stability, and its own interests:

Suppressing Disturbances:

In the event of riots, violent conflicts between societal groups (e.g., between city inhabitants and those of the surrounding rural areas, or between rival craft groups), or bloody feuds among local elite factions, the governor would intervene forcefully, using the auxiliary troops (auxilia) stationed in the province if necessary, to restore public order (Bohec, 1991, pp. 495-500).

Implementing Imperial Decisions:

Decisions emanating from the central authority, such as imposing extraordinary levies (indictiones), confiscating property, or enacting new laws affecting religious or social life, were implemented in the province under the governor's direct supervision and orders, irrespective of the desires or capabilities of the local municipal councils. This unequivocally demonstrates that the Emperor's will superseded any local autonomy. The concept of supreme authority (Imperium) vested in the governor signified his power to enforce obedience and override local bodies when their interests clashed with the paramount interests of Rome.

4.3-The Governor as Supreme Judge and Arbitrator

Roman hegemony is also clearly manifested in the judicial sphere, where the governor's authority represented the pinnacle of the judicial hierarchy in the province, thereby surpassing the local municipal courts:

Original and Appellate Judicial Authority:

The governor had the authority to directly adjudicate major criminal cases, especially those involving the death penalty or exile and concerning Roman citizens. He also served as the supreme court of appeal (appellatio) for judgments issued by the duumviri (the chief magistrates) in the cities. This right of appeal meant that local court decisions were not final, and citizens (particularly the wealthy and influential) could always resort to a higher authority. This diminished the prestige and independence of the local judiciary and reinforced the sense of submission to Roman authority. The governor exercised these powers periodically during his judicial circuits (conventus) held in designated judicial centers within the province, making Roman justice "visible" and accessible (albeit selectively) (Humbert, 2003, pp. 331-333).

In this regard, there is an inscription from Mauretania Caesariensis indicating the governor's authority to settle disputes between two tribes, which reads as follows:

[Ex auctoritate] /
 Imp(eratoris) Caes(aris) T(iti) Aeli Ha/[driani Antoni]/
 ni Aug(usti) Pii p(atris) p(atriciae) /
 fines inter Ca/
 putturenses et /
 Altaripenses con/
 stituti per T(itum) Ae/
 lium Decrianum /
 proc(uratorem) Aug(usti) / (VIII, p. 22628)

Text of the Inscription:

[By the authority of] the Emperor Caesar Titus Aelius Hadrianus Antoninus Augustus Pius, Father of the Fatherland, the boundaries between the Caputorenenses and the Altaripenses were defined by Titus Aelius Decrianus, Procurator Augusti."

Arbitration Role:

In a society rife with disputes, especially over land and water ownership, the governor played the role of the supreme arbitrator. He could settle boundary disputes between the territories (territoria) of neighboring cities, which might be reflected in boundary demarcation (terminatio) inscriptions erected by surveyors under his command. He could also intervene to arbitrate disputes between a city and powerful landowners (perhaps even involving imperial estates), between a city and neighboring tribal groups, or even in intractable internal conflicts within the municipal elite that threatened the city's stability. Although the 'Tabula Banasitana' (IAM 2, 95) is not a judicial ruling in the strict sense, it clearly shows how the governor was responsible for verifying facts and submitting recommendations to the Emperor on matters affecting the rights and status of the province's inhabitants, highlighting his central role as a mediator, investigator, and facilitator for decisions from higher authorities.

In Mauretania Tingitana, an inscription indicates the governor's intervention in settling a border dispute between the city of Volubilis and the Baquates tribe, its text is as follows:

[Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) M(arco) Aurelio An]tonino Aug(usto) Armeniac(o) Parthic(o) Medic(o) German[ic(o)] Sarmatic(o) p(atrici) p(atriciae), et

[Imp(eratori) Caes(ari) L(ucio) Aurelio Vero Aug(usto) A]rmeniac(o) Parthic(o) Medic(o), divi Antonini Pii fil(ius), divi Hadriani nepotib(us), divi Traiani Parth(ici) pronepotib(us), divi Nervae abnepotib(us).

[---]cius Severus leg(atus) Aug(ustorum) pr(o) pr(aetore) provinc(iae) M(auretaniae) T(ingitanae)

[fin]es constituit inter Volubilitanos et Baquates,

[iussu] suo, cura agente C(aio) Iulio (?) [---]ano (?) proc(uratore) Aug(ustorum). (IAM, pp. 2, 364).

5. The Dual Role of Euergetism

5.1-Manifestations of Euergetism and the Role of Municipal Elites

The contributions of the municipal elites in the two Mauretaniae were not limited to paying taxes and performing administrative duties but extended to financing, constructing, and maintaining a large part of the cities' infrastructure and public facilities. The evidence for this is abundant and varied:

Public Buildings:

Inscriptions and ruins attest to the construction or restoration of public baths (thermae/balnea), which were centers of social life, as seen in inscriptions IAM 2, 448 and IAM 2, 449 from Volubilis. Added to this is the construction of temples dedicated to Roman deities or the deified emperor (such as the Capitolium in Volubilis and other cities), public markets (macella) to regulate trade, theaters and amphitheaters (theatra/amphitheatra) for entertainment (like those found in Cherchel and Tipasa), triumphal arches to commemorate emperors or military victories (like the Arch of Caracalla in Volubilis, IAM 2, 367-369), colonnaded porticoes (porticus) to adorn public squares, the paving of streets and squares (the Forum), and even the construction or restoration of vital aqueducts (aquae) (like those serving Cherchel) or defensive city walls in later periods. Often, the inscriptions accompanying these buildings mention the name of the benefactor and their office (frequently *dumvir*, *flamen perpetuus*, or *decurio*) and use formulas such as "from his own money" (*De Sua Pecunia* or *S.P.*), "on account of holding office" (*Ob Honorem*), or "out of his generosity" (*Ex Liberalitate Sua*) (Duncan-Jones, 1990).

Entertainment and Distributions:

Euergetism was not limited to construction but also included financing public games (*ludi*) such as gladiatorial contests (*munera gladiatoria*), races, or theatrical performances, organizing public banquets (*epulae*) for the populace (Veyne, 1976, pp. 13-25), and distributing money or foodstuffs (*largitiones* or *sportulae*), especially on specific occasions like festivals or upon assuming a new office. Although the epigraphic evidence for this type of benefaction is less continuous than for building inscriptions, the very existence of entertainment venues (theaters and amphitheaters) indicates that these activities were practiced (Gros, 1996, pp. 275-382).

5.2-Functions of Euergetism in the Relationship between the Local and Central Authorities

Analyzing this phenomenon requires going beyond a superficial view of it as a mere act of generosity. Euergetism, as highlighted by Paul Veyne and others, was an integral part of the Roman social and political system, performing multiple interconnected functions, especially within the context of the relationship between local elites and the central authority:

Enhancing Local Status and Influence:

Generous spending on public projects and games was the most prominent means for municipal elites to compete amongst themselves (*aemulatio*), display their wealth and status, and assert their social and political dominance within the city. This was necessary to maintain respect (*dignitas*) and gain popularity (*popularitas*) among the general population (*plebs*), which ensured social stability and facilitated administration (Jean-Marie Lassère, 1985, pp. 185-195).

Serving the Interests of the Empire:

From Rome's perspective, euergetism was a highly effective mechanism. It allowed for the development of cities and equipping them with the facilities necessary for civilized life and to facilitate administration and trade, without the need for large, direct investment from the imperial treasury. The financing of a large part of local infrastructure was effectively "privatized," and its costs were borne by ambitious elites seeking social and political advancement. Furthermore, linking many of these benefactions to loyalty to the Emperor (by dedicating buildings to him or erecting them on the occasion of his visits or victories) contributed to entrenching imperial ideology at the local level (Patrick Le Roux, 1995, pp. 835-840).

Transformation from Generosity to Duty:

Over time, euergetism was no longer just a voluntary choice reflecting generosity (*liberalitas*), but increasingly transformed into a quasi-official duty (*munus*) associated with holding honorary offices (*honores*). The 'honorary contribution' (*summa honoraria*), a specific sum of money or the funding of a particular project, became an expected or even mandatory condition for anyone elected as a municipal magistrate. This transformation made euergetism part of the system of burdens (*munera*) imposed on the decurionate class. This would become increasingly burdensome with the deteriorating economic conditions in later centuries, as detailed by A.H.M. Jones in his analysis of the crisis of the curial class in the late empire (Jacques, 1986, pp. 152-158) .

Economic and Social Impact:

Euergetism can also be viewed from an economic and social angle. Major construction projects provided employment opportunities for local artisans and laborers and stimulated the local economy. On the other hand, the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a small few capable of practicing this munificence reinforced social inequalities and created a relationship of dependency between the common people and the elites. This excessive spending may also have contributed to depleting the wealth of some families in the long run (Andreau, 1983, pp. 140-145).

This connects us to the ideas of Whittaker regarding how wealth primarily derived from agricultural land was recycled within the urban economy through mechanisms such as euergetism (C.R. Whittaker, 1993, pp. 49-52).

Therefore, euergetism in the two Mauretaniae was not merely an expression of local influence, but also a tool cleverly integrated within the imperial system, initially serving the interests of both parties (the local elite and Rome), but carrying within it the seeds of a future crisis for the municipal system itself (Christol, *Les curateurs de cité dans la province de Numidie*, pp. 215-222).

6. CONCLUSION

This study examines the relationship between municipal councils and the central authority in Mauritania. *Caesariensis* and *Tingitana* reveals a complex system of controlled autonomy. The first key finding concerns the significant scope of powers held by the councils. Mauretanian municipal bodies (*ordo decurionum*) exercised tangible administrative, financial, and judicial authority, managing city affairs, electing magistrates, handling budgets, and crucially, collecting imperial taxes, as confirmed by epigraphic evidence.

However, this considerable local autonomy operated within the firm framework of Roman hegemony, embodied by the governor. The governor's oversight (*tutela**) was constant, particularly in monitoring finances and serving as the sole administrative channel to Rome. Direct intervention occurred in cases of mismanagement or to enforce imperial orders, while the governor's supreme judicial role in appeals and major cases effectively limited local judicial independence.

The financial and social dimensions of this dynamic were profoundly shaped by Euergetism, which played a complex dual role. While enhancing the status of local elites, it also served central interests by funding public works at no imperial cost, gradually becoming an integrated, quasi-official duty (*munus*). Finally, the Mauretanian context presented distinct characteristics, such as administration by

equestrian governors and the specific demographic challenges of integrating Amazigh populations, which likely shaped this relationship in unique ways, though a full comparative analysis is beyond this article's scope.

Ultimately, the relationship balanced genuine local self-government with pervasive imperial hegemony. Municipal councils and elites were vital administrative tools for Rome, yet remained firmly under the governor's supreme authority.

7- Bibliography List:

-Abbott, F. F., & Johnson, A. C. (1926). *Municipal administration in the Roman Empire*. Princeton University Press.

-Andreau, J. (1983). *La cité antique, économie et société : remarques et propositions*. Opus, 2

- Campbell, B. (1984). *The Emperor and the Roman Army, 31 BC - AD 235*. Clarendon Press.

- Christol, M. (1991). *Les curateurs de cité dans la province de Numidie*. *Zeitschrift für Papyrologie und Epigraphik*, 85

- Christol, M. (1996). *Permanences et changements : l'Afrique romaine au IIIe siècle*. In A. Mastino & P. Ruggeri (Eds.), *L'Africa Romana: Atti dell'XI Convegno internazionale di studio*. Il Torchietto.

- Desanges, J. (1992). *La fin du royaume de Maurétanie*. In A. Mastino (Ed.), *L'Africa Romana: Atti del IX Convegno di studio*. Edizioni Gallizzi

- Duncan-Jones, R. (1990). *Structure and scale in the Roman economy*. Cambridge University Press.

- Garnsey, P., & Saller, R. (2015). *The Roman Empire: Economy, society and culture (2nd ed.)*. University of California Press.

- Gasco, J. (1972). *La politique municipale de l'Empire romain en Afrique proconsulaire de Trajan à Septime-Sévère*. École française de Rome.

- Gros, P. (1996). **L'architecture romaine du début du IIIe siècle av. J.-C. à la fin du Haut-Empire, 1: Les monuments publics*. Picard.

- Humbert, M. (2003). *Institutions politiques et sociales de l'Antiquité** (8e éd.). Dalloz.

- Jacques, F. (1984). *Le cens et la fortune des notables municipaux dans l'Occident romain*. Ktema

- Jacques, F. (1986). *Propriété et communauté dans les cités de l'Occident romain*. *Mélanges de l'École française de Rome*. Antiquité, 98 (1).

- Jacques, F. (1988). *L'ordre décursional et les pouvoirs locaux d'après l'album de Tingad*. In A. Mastino (Ed.), *L'Africa Romana: Atti del V Convegno di studio*. Edizioni Gallizzi.
- Lassère, J.-M. (1977). *Ubique populus: Peuplement et mouvements de population dans l'Afrique romaine de la chute de Carthage à la fin de la dynastie des Sévères (146 a.C. - 235 p.C.)*. Éditions du CNRS.
- Lassère, J.-M. (1995). *Le rôle des notables dans la vie municipale en Afrique romaine*. In M. Cébeillac-Gervasoni (Ed.), *Les élites municipales de l'Italie et des provinces romaines*. Centre Jean Bérard.
- Le Bohec, Y. (1992). *La troisième légion Auguste et la Numidie sous le Haut-Empire*. In A. Mastino (Ed.), *L'Africa Romana: Atti del IX Convegno di studio*. Edizioni Gallizzi.
- Le Roux, P. (1995). *L'Afrique romaine, deux siècles après la conquête : lecture de Pline l'Ancien*. *Annales. Histoire, Sciences Sociales*, 50 (4).
- Lepelley, C. (1983). *Le patronat municipal dans l'Afrique romaine, de la mort d'Auguste au Bas-Empire*. *Ktema*, 8.
- Lepelley, C. (1991). *Vie et mort des institutions municipales dans l'Afrique romaine tardive*. *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres*, 135.2.
- Levick, B. (2000). *The government of the Roman Empire: A sourcebook (2nd ed.)*.
- Routledge. Lintott, A. (1993). *Imperium Romanum: Politics and administration*. Routledge.
- Millar, F. (1977). *The Emperor in the Roman world (31 BC - AD 337)*. Duckworth.
- Pflaum, H.-G. (1960-1961). *Les carrières procuratoriennes équestres sous le Haut-Empire romain (3 Vols.)*. P. Geuthner.
- Pliny the Younger. (1947). *Lettres (Vol. 10, M. Durry, Trans.)*. Les Belles Lettres.
- Veyne, P. (1976). *Le pain et le cirque : Sociologie historique d'un pluralisme politique*. Seuil.
- Whittaker, C. R. (1993a). *Landed wealth in North Africa and the Eastern Empire*. In *Land, city and trade in the Roman Empire*. Variorum.
- Whittaker, C. R. (1993b). *Trade and the aristocracy in the Roman Empire*. In *Land, city and trade in the Roman Empire*. Variorum.