

The relationship between the Nubel family and the Roman authority in the Caesarea Mauretania during the second half of the fourth century AD

أسرة نوبل وعلاقتها بالسلطة الرومانية بمقاطعة موريطانيا القيصرية خلال النصف الثاني من القرن الرابع الميلادي.

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Abstract

The present research paper aims to shed light on the Nubel family, which emerged on the scene of political and military events in the Caesarian Province of Mauritania during the second half of the 4th century AD and its relationship with the Roman authority. Furthermore, the Roman authority attempted to play the role of mediator between the various tribes in order to pass their political agendas in the region whose people expressed their rejection of the Roman presence and its policy by declaring repeated revolutions. Moreover, the Roman authority made alliances with some of its members and granted them positions and responsibilities in its various administrative and military agencies to absorb their personal ambitions indirectly. However, the circumstances and historical events that followed prevented the relationship from continuing as it oscillated between alliance and conflict, especially in light of Rome's policy of discrimination between Children of the same family.

Keywords: Nubel family; roman authority; Mauritania Caesarea; ancient Maghreb, Alliance and conflict.

ملخص:

نسعى من خلال هذه الورقة العلمية إلى محاولة التعريف بأسرة نوبل (Nubel) التي برزت على مسرح الأحداث السياسية والعسكرية بمقاطعة موريطانيا القيصرية خلال النصف الثاني من القرن 4 م، واستشفاف طبيعة العلاقة التي ربطتها بالسلطة الرومانية وأهميتها، حيث كان لنفوذ هذه الأخيرة ومكانتها لدى العنصر المحلي دورا كبيرا في سعي السلطة الرومانية إلى محاولة التقرب منها، حتى تلعب دور الوسيط بينها وبين مختلف القبائل، وتتخذها كوسيلة لتمرير مشاريعها السياسية في المنطقة، التي عبر أهلها عن رفضهم للوجود الروماني وسياسته بإعلان ثورات متكررة ضدهم، ومن أجل تهدئة الأوضاع وحفاظا على مصالحها عقدت السلطة الرومانية تحالفات مع بعض أفرادها ومنحتهم مناصب ومسؤوليات في مختلف أجهزتها الإدارية والعسكرية لتمتص بذلك طموحاتهم الشخصية بطريقة غير مباشرة، إلا أن الظروف والأحداث التاريخية التي تبعت ذلك حالت دون استمرار العلاقة على طبيعة واحدة، حيث تأرجحت بين التحالف والصراع خاصة في ظل تطبيق روما لسياسة التفرقة بين أبناء الأسرة الواحدة.

كلمات مفتاحية: أسرة نوبل؛ سلطة رومانية؛ موريطانيا قيصرية؛ مغرب قديم؛ تحالف وصراع.

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1. Introduction

In the pursuance of controlling the entire region of the ancient Maghreb, the Roman authority sought to adopt several ways and various methods in the management and administration of its African provinces, which differed according to their geographical nature alongside their social and economic conditions in which ruling fluctuated between direct and indirect, especially in areas that witnessed unstable political and military conditions like '*Maurétanie Césarienne*'. The latter witnessed difficulties in subjugating the local element with a tribal structure during the late period of the Roman presence, specifically during the fourth century AD, where many tribes had formed units that stood in the face of the Roman policies such as limiting movements and curtailing freedoms.

As a result, rebellions and revolutions continued on the part of these tribes, especially the mountainous ones, such as the Bavares '*Les Bavares*' and the Five-Year Alliance '*Les Quinquegentanie*', fearing the growing power of the local element and their ambitions of maintaining stability and their economic interests. This drove Rome to try and get close to some aristocratic families whose great status among the population enabled them to have a wide influence over the region by playing the role of mediator between these tribes and the Roman empire in return for granting them important privileges and functions in the Roman administrative and military apparatus. The most important of these families were those attributed to King Nubel, who first appeared on the scene of political and military events in the '*Maurétanie Césarienne*' in the second half of the fourth century AD, where it was linked to the Roman authority by various relations whose nature varied according to historical events.

Based on the aforementioned, the following question is asked: What is the nature of the relationship that brought together the Nubel family with the Roman authority in '*Maurétanie Césarienne*' during the second half of the fourth century AD?

2. Introduction to the family

The topic of the Nubel family is characterized by the lack of literary and archaeological sources that deal directly with this family, despite its historical importance in light of the political and military roles it played considering that it was one of the most powerful families in the ancient Maghreb in general, and the '*Maurétanie Césarienne*' in particular during the second part of the fourth century AD, as well the varying relationships that its members had with Roman authority. However, all of the information we gathered were primarily focused on events and facts surrounding the revolutions of two African princes, '*Firmus*' (372-375 AD) and '*Gildon*'. (393-398 AD), apart from that, there is little to no references regarding its structure, origins, and geographical area in which it thrived, as well as some aspects that indicated its social position in the

region due to the material and moral influence it possessed. The latter was based on various readings of a number of modern historians based on the availability of some archaeological texts, the most prominent of which is the text of 'Rusguniae' (currently Burj al-Bahri) (C.I.L, VIII, 10946), which is dated 429 AD, M'lakou, (Zucabar) (C.I.L, VIII, 9011).

As for classical literary texts, we found the historian Ammianus Marcellin's (330-400 AD) book "*The Vermus War*" in which he dedicated the twenty-ninth section to them, describing his travel to North Africa accompanied by the Roman leader 'Théodose' during his military attempt to put down the rising of Firmus (372-375 AD), in addition to some late writings compared to the period in which the family emerged, such as the historian Paul Orose, the author of a history book titled "*Histoire contre les pains*" and the poet Claudien Through his poem "*Guerre contre Gildon*" and the historian Zosimus in his book "*Nouvelle Histoire*", in which he tackled in the bad conditions in the Roman Empire during the fourth century AD in its fifth chapter.

2.1. Father Nubel

The name Nubel was mentioned in several archaeological and literary texts as the most powerful king in the entire Maurétanie Césarienne, and he was given the title 'Regulus', which means king or leader. These titles and descriptions show that the man held a high position among the people of the region, as well as with the Roman authority, where he was one of the most important elite figures who assumed pioneering roles in the region.

On the same line of thought, the sources do not provide information regarding when King Nubel was born, but we do know when he died, which was in the year 370 AD, according to historian Ammianus Marcellin's statement of the date, and according to what was accessible in Rusgunia's inscription, in 326 AD, for example, a church devoted to Christians was built (Gsell, Observation géographique sur la révolte du firmus, (n.d), p. 24). On this basis, we assume his birth date had occurred in the late third or early fourth century AD. In addition to that, 'Saturninus' is his father's name, and 'Clokia' was his mother's name, which means the honorable woman (bišāry, (n.d), p. 284). He is said to have married many women who all gave birth to seven of his sons: Firmus, Gildon, Sammac, Maczezel, Mazuca, Dius, and Cyria (Gsell, (n.d), p. 24).

Following this, there exist some archaeological records, the most notable of which is the text of Rusguniae, in which the name is mentioned as Flavius 'Nuvel' (bišāry, (n.d), p. 284), which gives valuable information on King Nubel's personality (C.I.L, VIII, 10946), while we find it in the historian Amiens Marcellin as 'Nubel'. This difference prompted many Modern historians to ask questions about whether the names 'Nuvel' and 'Nubel'

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represent one identity, namely, King “Nubel” (Nubel), Firmus’ father, or whether they are two names for different identities, as both modern historians assume Stephan Gsell and Gabriel Camps (bišāry, (n.d), p. 284), both agree that the historian Amiens Marcellin talked about the same person that the Rusguniae (Gsell, (n.d), p. 24) inscription spoke about, and their argument for this was based on the chronological convergence between the date of the church’s construction in 326 AD and the date of death determined by Amiens Marcellin in the year 370 AD (Camps, 1984, p. 185).

Another theory supporting this viewpoint is that of historian Gabriel Camps, who believes the term Nubel is an uncommon native African identification (Camps, 1984, p. 185), but his opinion contradicts what he discovered on many Libyan and Punic inscriptions with similar names on the root formula "NBL". This root is of Libyan origin, according to historian Jean-Pierre Laporte, but its meaning is uncertain, and the word "Nabal" was also found in two Punic inscriptions on the outskirts of Constantine (Laport, 2010, p. 981). As for the geographical aspect, the palace in which the king settled in the area of Bni-Aicha (the hermitage), which is not far, according to the historian Stephane Gsell, from the place where the inscription was found in Prosgonia, and it is an area very close to Blad El-Guitoun. All of these logical pieces of evidence point to the existence of a single identity for the two names (Nubel and Nuvel), who is Prince Firmus’ father (Camps, 1984, p. 185), and perhaps this difference between the two names is due to a mistake made by the inscription editor when writing, so he replaced the letter “B” with the letter “V” instead of writing “Nubel” wrote “Nuvel.”

2.2. The Nubel Children

The seven sons of King Nubel are referenced in archaeological and literary sources; four of them may be considered as Libyan (local) in origin, including Sammac, who is described in the M'lakou inscription dedicated to Sammacis in the following line: (Preadium ou praesidium sammacis), which is a Libyan name meaning black, and perhaps it is close to the local name ‘*Semmeg*’. It has the root “SMG” which means the negro or the slave. This indicates the social position that the latter occupied with the local population (Laport, 2010, pp. 982-983), as he owned vast lands in the Maurétanie Césarienne. Moreover, he married an aristocratic (Paul, 1990, VII, 36) Carthaginian lady, and aligned himself with Theodos the Roman leader against his brother Firmus during the uprising against the Roman authority (Ammien, 1862, 18.20.22.25.26). As a compensation, he placed him as commander of the whole province of Africa in the year 385 AD, and he was given the title of Count Africa ‘*Comt Africain*’ (Zosime, 2000, V, 11, 2), and his relationship with Rome reached the point of intermarriage, where his daughter Salvina married to Prince Neberdius, grandson of Empress Falasila (Paul, 1990, VII, 36).

On the same token, the two names '*Maczezel*' and '*Mazuca*', they begin with the prefix "MAS", which means strength and protection. According to the Latin pattern: (Masauchan and Mazauca) are the most used but it is most likely that the correct name is '*Mazauchan*' which has the root "MZK", as is the case for the Libyan name '*Masinisan*', which has the root "MSNSN". The latter was a leader of the two Masinis tribes: '*Masinises*' and '*Tindises*' (Laport, 2010, pp. 982-985). The Roman authority used him at the end of the fourth century to eliminate his brother Gildon and his revolution in 398 AD (Paul, 1990, VII, 36). Mazuka, on the other hand, was a prominent supporter of Firmus in his revolt against Roman authority, and his activities were centered on attempting to conquer the capital of the province "Caesarea" (Césarér) (Cherchell now), which prompted Emperor Theodos to imprison him then kill him, and send his head to Caesarea (Laport, 2010, p. 884).

The three remaining Latin names are: Firmus, who we know little about except for what is related to his three-year revolution (372-375 AD), in addition to the son '*Deus*', who was mentioned only once by historian Ammianus Marcellin, and the last name is related to the family's only sister, Cyria, who was referenced in the sources as having a great wealth through which she was able to play a major role in her brother's revolution by mobilizing many forces for him (Laport, 2010, pp. 883-385).

The issue of whether or not a family member is a true family member is difficult to decide due to the limited amount of data and evidence available in this regard, as many modern researchers have attempted to raise this issue, each according to his own opinion, some of them considered them to be religious (Christian), as they linked this to what is stated in the Rusguniae's inscription, which states that Father Nubel built a church for Christians (Camps, 1984, p. 185), and there are those who support this view also through the hypothesis of the name '*Flavius*' (Flavius), which was carried by Father Nubel. Trumen also appears in the names of individuals and their entry into the field of conscription, a name for an emperor with his grace (šārn, 2007, pp. 103-104), and this is what we find with King Nubel, who bore this name - Flavius - when it was attributed to Emperor Vespasiano Sotetio Sodomysian (69-96 AD), who led the Cavalry Corps (Gsell, (n.d), p. 18), while the historian Mesnage. J thinks that family members aren't important and his reasoning is that only Prince Firmus has a Latin name among his seven sons, while the rest of the names are all of Libyan origin (Camps, 1984, p. 185). Despite all of his ties with the Donatian bishops and the imperial court in Rome during the reign of Commander Theodos, he was buried in a Catholic church at the end of his life (ulmy, 2015-2016, p. 656).

2.3. Tribe

The local community structure of Mauritius Caesarea, like the rest of the ancient Maghreb regions during the Roman presence, was known as a tribal

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system in which the family formed the first core, as many tribes emerged and played a major role in the events of the fourth century AD, especially those outside Roman control, which settled. The Jubalenie tribe is the most important in the highland areas (bišāry, (n.d), p. 238), where Ammianus Marcellin mentions that it was the cradle of King Nubel (Ammien, 1862, XXIX, 5, 18.20.22.25.26), which is the view of some modern historians such as Gabriel Camps that the Nubel family belonged to this tribe and that its members had strong authority over it (Camps, 1998, pp. 1-2).

According to historian Desanges, information concerning the tribe's name's origin is inconsistent, and there is no clear proof. In honor of King "Nuble," Firmus' father, the residents of this tribe were called '*Nubaleni*' (Desange , 1962, p. 56). While few researchers believe it was derived from the name of the Numidian king '*Juba*', and that by adding the latter to the name of the clan Libalini (Lubalenie), the full name became '*Jubalenie*'. Others argue that it was derived from the name of the Roman god Jupiter, who represented the local deities and called for the unification of worship in the region (Hamdoune , 2001, p. 99).

The Jubalenie tribe was stationed in tough geographical regions and occupied the Al-Biban region's mountain range, with its inhabitants living in the valleys and sloping slopes (Desange , 1962, p. 56), as corroborated by historian Gabriel Camps, who identifies it as a mountain tribe and argues that it is located near the city of Auzia (currently Auzia). Either wadi Lisser upper or the Biban Mountains (Camps, 1998, pp. 01-02), as the researcher Khadija Mansouri indicated that the Roman historian Cania R. Cagnat believes the Jubalenie tribe was part of the Quinquegentanie formation, whose tribes were known for their strong antagonism to the Romans and battled them in several military campaigns between the third and fourth century AD (Mansouri, 1998, pp. 182-183).

3. Influence and geographical scope of the family

The events that occurred in the Caesar Province of Mauritania during the second half of the fourth century AD had a vital part in the creation of the prominent Nubel family, which in turn had an undeniable effect on the local people. The latter is concentrated in one geographical area, where it was extensive (Camps, 1984, p. 185), and this is evidenced by the distribution of the property of all its members and their residence in different places and distant regions, and we can limit its spatial framework between the western side of Wadi Chlef and the eastern side of Wadi Al-Somam (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34).

Tackling the Nubel family's spheres of influence demands the reference to a group of archaeological texts discovered in various locations in the Caesar Province of Mauritania, where historian Gabriel Camps claims that the palace in which Prince Firmus settled with his father, Nubel, was near an area called

"Bni Aisha" in the hermitage near Al-Thaniya (Ménerville) (Camps, 1984, p. 185), and The presence of a tomb at B'lad El Guitoun with a form that shows this family's outstanding position proves this. It is barely three kilometers distant from the castle (Camps, 1998, p. 02), and there is no inscription as to where it was hung on the side of one of the family's palaces in the site of the silo (east of the city of Algiers), but evidence that this site belonged to the geographical area in which the family members settled (šnyti, 1990, p. 355).

As per historian Ammianus Marcellinus one of Nubel's sons, Sammac, also held a property on the right bank of Wadi Somam (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34). Some contemporary historians, led by Stephen Gsell, claim that Sammac lived in the Tubusuctu city of M'lakou (tibikliat) (Gsell, (n.d), p. 23), and that he built in the same area a palace called Petra '*Fundus Petrensis*', around which construction was built until it became a large city (Gsell , 1901, p. 170). On the same token, the Nubel family's power is said to have extended to the eastern side of Icosium (modern-day Algiers), as indicated by the discovery of an inscription containing the name of Father Nubel at Rusguniae. Furthermore, the existence of the name Mazoka on an inscription discovered in Miliana might imply that their dominance extended to this region, and according to archaeological evidence, the city of Tipasa was also within the family's domain (Laport, 2010, p. 1001), an inscription was found in one of the churches attributed to a saint in the eastern cemetery of Tipasa called Salsa, which stipulated Firmus' quest and greed to seize the Emperor's throne (šnyti, 1990, p. 356).

The geographical dispersion of many archaeological writings including various passages linked to the Nubel family, which were discovered in numerous locations and remote parts of Mauretania Caesar's territory, surely provides us a clear view of the family's extensive impact, which was represented in the Roman government's grants such as advantages in exchange for the services rendered because of the magnitude of its high status. Perhaps this spread and distance between members of the same family was due to a set of factors, the most important of which is the need to preserve and protect property, in addition to their desire to be close to the people to ensure the loyalty of all the tribes in the region in anticipation of any circumstances that may arise in their relationship with the Roman authority (šnyti, 2019, p. 232).

4. The Family's Relationship with the Roman Authority

4.1. Alliance and Cooperation:

In contrast to the repeated revolts of the tribes of the Caesarea Mauretania province, who rejected the Roman presence and policy, the Roman authority sought to win over some individuals who belonged to strong aristocratic families who enjoyed the trust of the clans and tribes headed by their members and who had a wide family influence over them after the failure of its army to eliminate and calm those revolts; thus, ensuring the stability of

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the region. Nubel was one of the most powerful families with whom the Roman government hastened to form alliances under the guise of common interests (šnyti, 2019, pp. 217-218). Furthermore, the Nubel family obtained Roman citizenship about three generations ago, and this appears in the name of Nubel's father, Saturnius, of Roman origin. The family was assigned the task of supervising the tribes for fear that their members would resort to leaders working to incite them against Rome, especially after the latter were convinced of the failure of the direct military method in managing the Caesar Province of Mauritania, due to the inability of the emperor's agents to control the internal situation and calm the rebellious tribes against their policy that they described to be unfairly (šnyti, 2019, p. 339).

Members of the Nubel family were given administrative and other military roles within the Roman army in order to acquire new friends in the region and collaborate with them in order to manage the territory. According to sources, Father Flavius Nubel commanded a legion of cavalry (*Equitum Armigerorum Junoium*), and the Romans gave him command of some regular divisions that belonged to local princes and led units of tribesmen under their authority, and they were known as "*Les Flaveus*" in the fourth century AD (šnyti, 2019, p. 341).

The dedication inscription (Petra), which was discovered in Malaku, 105 meters from Wadi al-Somam, specifically in Tiklat, confirms the authenticity of the historical accounts regarding the alliance between the two parties. It refers to a kind of alliance that had taken place between the Roman administration and the son of Sammac. In order to make peace with the tribes of the region, and to provide the latter with all the support for the Roman authority by seeking to bring all the neighboring tribes in order for the heads of tribes to sign the treaty (Gsell, 1901, p. 172), after the tension that prevailed in the region, especially in light of the insistence of the semi-independent tribes to reject the Roman policy in all its forms and this is a clear indication that these tribes had greatly exhausted the Roman army with their frequent revolts and their inability to paralyze them. This apparent in the repeated campaigns against each of the Bavares tribes "*Les Bavares*" and the Five-Year Alliance (Charbonneau, 1869, p. 126), especially in light of their increasing influence and being able to impose their control over the cities located outside the receding Limes region, such as the highlands and the steppes, forming relatively independent political units, and this is what made them pose a real threat to the Roman presence in the region (Camps, 1984, p. 274).

Moreover, each side attempted to achieve its aims and initiatives through this connection, which was based on mutual interests between members of the Nubel family and the Roman administration. In order to manage the territory that escaped the Roman influence. Rome placed these kings as notables or leaders over the numerous tribes rising against it, while family members, they

were carrying personal ambitions behind that to control and lead the entire Caesarian province of Mauritania, and it can be said that this is what Rome became aware of, especially with the their increased desire to strengthen their influence and authority. This made Rome accelerate to limit their ambitions by applying the policy of segregation between members of the same family by pitting the brothers against each other until their strength diminished. As a result, the relationship between some of family members began to take a different turn into a clash and conflict.

4.2. Clash and conflict

4.2.1. The revolution of Firmus

The topic of Firmus' revolution undoubtedly leads us to attempt to search for the most important reasons and factors that led the latter to declare his rebellion against the Roman authority after he was an ally and a friend. If we follow the situation in the Caesarian province of Mauritania during the second half of the fourth century AD, we can say that there were multiple circumstances that led this African prince to exploit, after his goals had shifted from a position of carrying a lot of personal interests to an independent stand in which he refused to submit to Roman authority, so we could search the reasons for this transformation in relations.

4.2.2. Reasons of the revolution

Tackling the reasons and factors that led to Prince Firmus declaring his revolution against the Roman authority is not easy, especially in light of the shortage of historical sources on this issue and not diving into it, content with presenting the war events and facts not only, but given all the conditions that the region was experiencing during this period unstable political, economic, military and social We could discern from this some of the reasons that hastened the transformation of the relationship between the two parties.

According to historian Ammianus Marcelline, the main reason why African Prince Firmus declared war on the Romans was the Roman ruler Romanos' treatment of the Nubel family members immediately after the father's death, and the ensuing feud between the brothers Firmus and Sammac over succession to the throne and obtaining the legacy of a great legacy (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34), This situation aided Romanos greatly, so he tried to capitalize on it even more by enacting the divide and conquer strategy that the Romans had become famous for since their first involvement in the ancient Maghreb region, where he publicly declared his support for Sammac at the expense of Firmus and the rest of the family, and declared him the legitimate heir to his father. Romanos had broken the region's established succession custom by doing so, especially because we know that Firmus was more deserving of it because he was the eldest (Camps, 1998, p. 03).

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Moreover, the historian Ammianus Marcelline adds that Romanos' support for Sammac stems from their strong friendship, and that as a result of this bias, Firmus has lost all of his personal interests and ambitions, which drove him to assassinate his brother Sammac and declare his revolution against Roman authority; as a result, leading Romanos to avenge his ally Sammac by spreading rumors about Firmus' intentions in relation to ruling the Caesar Province of Mauritania without giving opportunity to justify his actions. This has forced Firmus to continue the revolution with the goal of independence with various segments of society against the Roman presence and policy in the region (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34). Nonetheless, we do not believe what this historian has provided as they the key cause of this revolution. Personal motives and ideological tendencies may have influenced his historical works, particularly when it comes to the local aspect. but it could also be an attempt to conceal historical facts in order to serve Rome's interests and improve the image of its policy in the region, and for this reason we cannot confine the causes of the rebellion to one corner and reduce it to a mere personal struggle. There were additional reasons and elements that had led to the ignition of the fight among the two brothers (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34).

Due to the Roman policies against the tribes of Caesarea Mauretania, which mainly consisted of seizing and expropriating most of their agricultural lands, then owning and exploiting them for their own benefit and exhausting them with taxes, these tribes became enraged, and they began to express their dissatisfaction with the region with repeated revolutions against them (Camps, 1998, p. 04). All of this was going on at the same time, precisely, in the beginning of the second half of the fourth century AD in which Rome was in a state of weakness that made it unable to effectively control the situation within its African provinces. This encouraged its allies to engage in looting and exploitation of the local population in order to further their own personal goals (šnyti, 2019, p. 360). The rise of corruption among the Roman army's leaders in Africa reflects this. Furthermore, the Roman governor Romanos, for example, demanded that the residents of Leptis (Leptis Magna) contribute four thousand heads of camels and a large sum of money in exchange for him moving against to the tribes that threatened the ports (Omran, 2016, pp. 126-127).

As a consequence of all of these factors, the region was in a state of instability, and the situation worsened inside the Caesarian Province of Mauritania as a result of frequent attacks by enraged tribes, making it impossible for Romanos to manage them while also trying to find acceptable answers to the problems facing the region. Faced with the tribes' determination to achieve their goals and lack of boredom in doing so, African Prince Firmus saw an opportunity to entice them (the tribes) to his side and try to unite their

efforts to confront Roman authority, reject its policy and presence in the region, and begin preparing for the declaration of the revolution (šnyti, 2019, p. 360).

4.2.3. The events of the revolution

As soon as the African prince Firmus and the Roman authorities fell out, the latter prepared to face the Roman army and was able to rally the support of the many furious and resentful tribes against Roman policies, amassing a force of roughly 20,000 combatants (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34). Two divisions of the Roman auxiliary battalions formed from the people were also joined him. His first attacks were on Caesarea (Cherchell), which he burned and looted (Paul, 1990,VII, 36; Ammien, 1862, XXIX, 5, 18.20.22.25.26) and then went to the city of Icosium, which he controlled (currently Algiers), and then was able to besiege Tipasa (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34), and then moved to the city of Cartennae (currently Tennis), which he was able to destroy, fear and panic spread within the region (ulmy, 2015-2016, p. 362), and thus he was able to take control of the eastern part of the Caesarea Mauretania. These victories that Firmus achieved at the beginning of the conflict rounds are only evidence of his great superiority over the Roman ruler Romanos, who was unable to paralyze his repeated attacks, and limit the rapid spread of his revolution in a very short period (Camps, 1998, p. 06).

After the great victory that Firmus achieved against the Roman army at the beginning of the revolution, the Roman authority rushed to send one of the prominent military leaders called Theodos, after he was appointed at the head of the Roman army, his first landing was in the Igilgili region (currently Jijel) in the year 372 AD with all his divisions (Ammien, 1862, XXIX, 5, 18.20.22.25.26). Because of the difficulty of the task, he issued a law by which members of the offices of the various civil and military governments were allowed to join the Roman army so that it could strengthen the ranks of his army in order to confront its enemies and eradicate the roots of the revolution (hārš, 1993, p. 12).

Firmus had chosen the city of Sitifce (currently Setif) as his military base, but as soon as he learned of Theodos' forces and realized the might of his army, he was terrified, which prompted him to ask for peace from the latter, who stipulated the return of all the hostages, except that Vermus intended to win time to reorganize the ranks of his army so that he could deceive his opponents, as the historian Ammianus Marcellinus refers to the occurrence of several military confrontations between the two parties - Firmus and Theodos - in which Prince Firmus relied on the method of surprise attacks without direct confrontation, during which Theodos was able to retrieve Caesarea (Cherchell now) and end the siege of the city of Icosium (present-day Algiers) and Tipaza. The reason for Firmus' defeat this time is attributed to the good

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organization of Theodos' army, in addition to his skill and military experience as an experienced commander in such confrontations (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34).

After Theodos went to Caesarea (Cherchell), he found it in ruins, so he wanted to protect it and rebuild it again, so he left two legions in it, and thus he would have regained the city again after Firmus had wreaked it with looting and vandalism. Then, he continued his offensive operations heading this time to Zokabar (Miliana), where he found which two legions, in addition to the fourth regiment of archers belonging to the Roman army, who had joined Firmus, where he tortured and executed them. When he advanced towards Castelum Tingitanum (currently Chlef), he attacked the tribes of Les Mazices in the mountains of Ancoarius, who resisted vehemently, but the strength of the organization in the ranks of Theodos' army made them collapse, and many of them were killed (Ammien, 1862, 18.20.22.25.26).

When he advanced to a town called Addenses (an unknown location), he collides with tribes that bear a great hatred for all that is Roman, that were supported by the sister of Prince Firmus known as Syria, which made him retreat to Tipasa and that was in February 374 AD. He remained there waiting for an opportunity to Attack his enemies. He then tried to implement the policy of promises, threats, and temptation with some tribes to get their help, such as the Bawar, Baiures, and Cantauriens, which yielded results when some of them retracted their loyalty to prince Firmus thus wining them over to his side. At this point, he felt his weakness and the inability to continue the war; so he sought refuge in the Caprienses Mountains in a difficult area, observing the situation from afar (Ammien , 1862, XXIX, 5, 28.29.33.34).

In light of the stubbornness of the tribes of the region and their continued support for prince Firmus, in their desire to achieve independence, the Roman leader Theodos was certain of the impossibility of defeating him and curbing his revolution without resorting to a policy of deception. Which is what actually happened when he was able to lure the leader of the Isafilens es tribe called Igmazen, conspiring with him to capture Firmus, but the latter's acumen and cleverness made him realize what was being plotted against him, so he preferred committing suicide in 375 AD and not fall into the hands of Theodos. Thus, the Firmus revolution ended after three full years (372 - 375 AD) during which he greatly confused and tired the Romans and their armies (Cagnat , 1913, pp. 89-90).

4.3. Gildon's Revolution

For the services rendered by the prince to the Romans and his fight with Theodos in order to eliminate his brother Firmus and his revolution, the Roman authority rewarded Gildon by giving him the position of Count of Africa, and that was around the 385 AD (Modéron , 1989, p. 841). He became the ally and the first supporter of Rome, as his good relationship with the Romans lasted

about twelve whole years (375 to 387 AD) (Cagnat , 1913, p. 92). However, there are multiple historical circumstances and factors that contributed to the change in the relationship between the two parties. It began to take a different turn, starting with the estrangement that Prince Gildon demonstrated in the year 393 AD until his elimination in 398 AD. Based on this, we can ask the following question: What are the real reasons behind Gildon's split from the Roman authority and the transformation of the relationship between the two parties from alliance and cooperation to clash and conflict?

4.3.1. The reasons for the revolution

The manifestations of the estrangement between the African prince Gildon and the Roman authority started in the spring of the year 386 AD when he refused to support the Roman army with soldiers to confront the rebellious Maxime during the period between (386 - 388 AD), and even more than that he supported the latter with grain and he stood by his side against Emperor Theodos. He acted again by aliening with the revolutionary Eugenius in 392 AD (Roques , 1983, p. 394). Despite all that, Theodos was always shrugging him and his actions off due to his and the Roman authority need for him because of his status among the people, in addition to what the region - Caesarea Mauretania - represent as an economic value for Rome. This is evidence of its constant need for African wheat, which for a long time quenched the hunger of the Roman people (Vannes , 2010, p. 101). Otherwise, the reason behind Rome keeping the position of prince Gildon in important military positions where, before the year 393 AD, it gave him the title of Count and Master of Milicians in Africa cannot be explained, thus reaching the hierarchy of the military position. Perhaps Rome's pursuit of this is to maintain its friendship with Prince Gildon, especially in light of the intransigence of the local tribes and their adherence to the idea of independence, as they continued to revolt from time to time, and this worried the Roman authority and made it cling to Prince Gildon, fearing for its interests in the region, taking advantage of his good relationship with them (Modéran , 1998, p. 02).

Immediately after Prince Gildon announced his intention to secede from the Roman authority, the Romans were shocked, especially by the actions related to the decision to stop shipments of wheat and not send it to Rome, which raised their fears and this is shown in Sammac's call for the Senate in order to speed up finding urgent solutions to this problem and compensation for wheat (bišāry, (n.d), p. 250). It is known that after the division of the empire, the African land became the main source of food for the Roman people belonging to the western side (ulmy, 2015-2016, p. 652), and here perhaps Gildon wanted, through this decision, to strike the Roman authority with its hungry people in order to reach his goals and realise his project.

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4.3.2. The events of the revolution

After all that was done by Gildon against the Roman authority, Stilicon, the ruler of the Western Empire, announced, in consultation with the Senate, that Gildon was an enemy of the Roman people (Modéran , 1998, p. 822). When Rome realized the seriousness of what this African prince had done, they wanted to put an end to it Where Stilicon hastened to that and ordered that the African Prince "Maczezel" Gildon's brother (Modéran , 1998, p. 02) be at the head of the military forces but Stilicon had a different opinion and ordered that the African prince "Maczezel", Gildon's brother, be at the head of the military forces. It seemed that Stilicon tried Exploiting the enmity that existed between the two brothers, in addition to the latter's knowledge of the geography of the region and its people, which is what actually happened, as he was appointed commander of an army of five thousand soldiers, which included units of Gallic and Germanic veterans and Augustan teams, that sailed from the port of Pisa to the to Africa in the year 398 AD (Cagnat , 1913, pp. 93-94).

On the other hand, we find that Prince Gildon also made many preparations in anticipation for the confrontation, taking advantage of his position as Count of the whole of Africa, where he was able to bring many members of the Roman army stationed in Numidia, and invited the various tribes of the ancient Maghreb through his manipulation of treaties. Linking him to the Roman Empire under the name Flavius Arcadius, claiming that he still represents him in Africa (Modéran , 1998, p. 02), Gildon also tried to take advantage of the Donatists who were in conflict with the official Catholic Church (bišāry, (n.d), p. 252), where he was able to recruit many of their members into the ranks of his army, through the support he received from some The Donatian bishops, most notably Optatus de Thamugadi (Eugène , 1939, p. 101) .Thus, Gildon was able to bring together the various segments of society with their different orientations, and make them believe in his project, which carries with it the ambition of independence and freedom (Cagnat , 1913, p. 94).

According to the historian Paul Oroz, Gildon had prepared an army of about seventy thousand soldiers, and in the spring of 398 AD the two armies met in a battle near the Ardalion valley between the city of Tifst (present-day Tebessa) and Ammaedara (Hidra), as the battle did not last long (Modéran , 1998, p. 2). Soon, it ended in favor of the army of "Maczezel", which was able to eliminate the various forces affiliated with Gildon, some of them were killed and others fled (bišāry, (n.d), p. 253). As for prince Gildon, he tried to flee to Thebraca through the sea, but the forces of his brother were able to apprehend him on July 31 st 398 AD Where either was killed or he committed suicide (Zosime, 2000, V, 11, 2) and thus Gildon's adventure ended without achieving what he intended to reach.

Who ever studies the Gildon revolution in historical sources deduces from this many details that must be reconsidered and scrutinized, especially if we know that the Roman poet Claudius, who is considered the most prominent chronicler of this revolution in his epic poem "*Gildon's War*" "*de bello goldenonico*", was the closest ally to the ruling family in Rome, especially to commander Stilicon, and for this reason we find him to be very biased, as he was calling for the unity of the Roman Empire and exaggerating the victories of the Roman army over Gildon, being the only victory that Stilicon achieved during that period, and on the other hand, he tries Underestimate Gildon without looking deep in search of the reasons for declaring his revolution, where we find him defining his character with the words: tyrant and Mori. However, we cannot find any text that refers to Gildon attempting to steal the throne in Rome. As for the word Mori, he used it to refer to the qualities of Barbarism and savagery outside the Roman civilization (Modéran, 1989, pp. 823-839).

Nonetheless, if we follow the personal biography of the African Prince Gildon, we find that his political and military history bears witness to the exact opposite; otherwise, how do we explain why the Roman Emperor Theodos relied on him in his campaigns against Prince Firmus? On the one hand, and on the other hand, why did the Roman authority give him several political and military positions until he reached the peak of its hierarchy and was able to occupy a position among the local Roman aristocracy by marrying an aristocratic Carthaginian lady and marrying his daughter Salvina to Prince Neberdius, grandson of Empress Falasila?

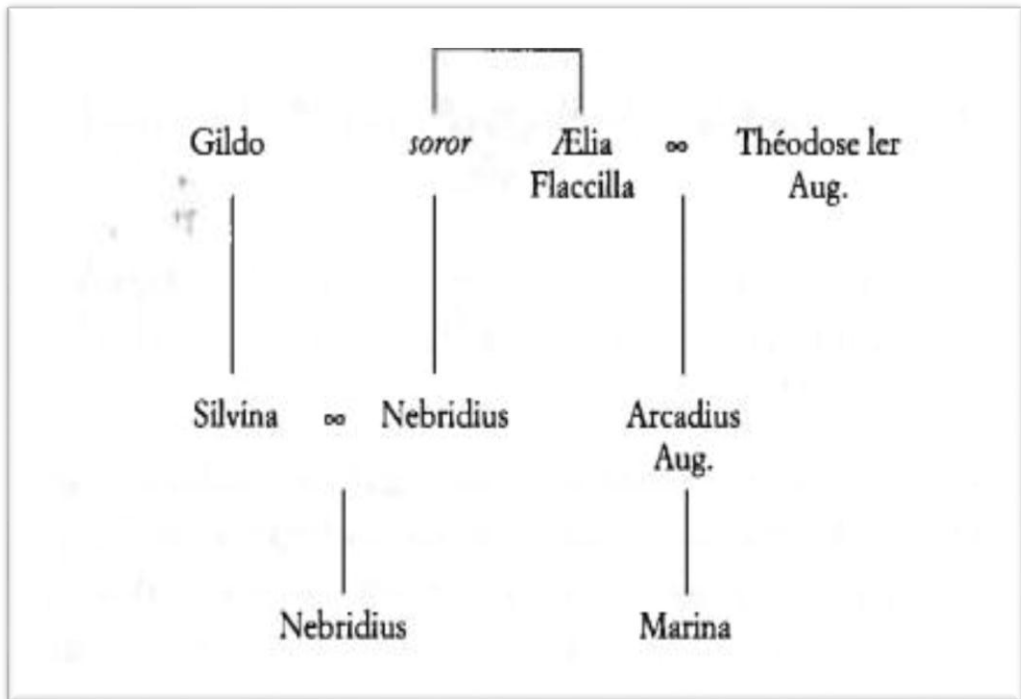
5- Conclusion

The alliance that brought the Nubel family and the Roman authority together was a product of the political, military, and social conditions that prevailed in the region throughout the fourth century AD, according to the information given in this article. Due to the significant prominence these families had among the local tribes, Rome's desire for these aristocratic families was the reason for getting close to them so they might play the function of a moderator in governing Caesarea Mauritania, which had evaded Rome for so long. In return, they were tempted with titles, administrative, and military positions for fear of forming a united front that is difficult to eradicate, especially in light of the intransigence of the tribes and their adherence to the idea of independence. On the same token, Rome dismantled the family unit and dispersed its members, taking advantage of the personal ambitions that they carried, and as a result, the relationship between the two parties was characterized by fluctuation and a lack of stability.

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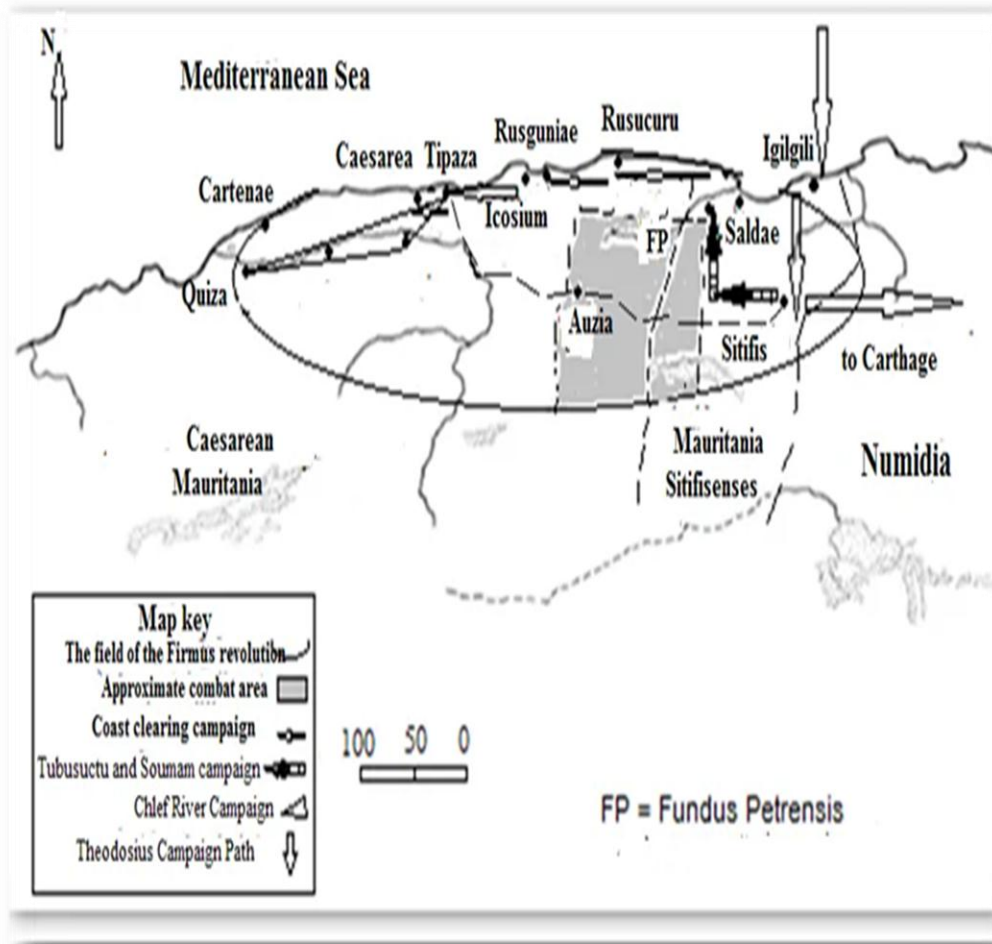
Appendices:

Appendix 01: Schematic diagram of Gildon's relationship with the royal family in Rome.



Source : (Laport, 2010, p. 911)

Appendix 02: Map showing the geographical area of the Firmus revolt and Theodos campaign in Caesarea Mauritania.



Source: (ulmy, 2015-2016, p. 636)

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