

THE INTEGRATION OF MAURETANIA TINGITANA IN THE DIOCESE OF HISPANIAE

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Introduction

When the crisis of the third century ended due to the ascension of emperor Diocletian (r. 284-305), it became evident that the Roman empire was too vast to rule by means of the traditional administrative structures. The creation of the diarchy in 286, which became the tetrarchy in 293, was one of Diocletian's numerous reforms to stabilise the Empire. His reform program, which was continued by his successor emperor Constantine the Great (r. 306-337), had to increase the absolute power of the emperor and reduce the chance of a coup d'état. In order to achieve this, Diocletian started to split the vast provinces into smaller ones, resulting in a considerable increase in number of provinces. However, the idea of splitting up provinces was not entirely new. Some of Diocletian's predecessors, such as Aurelian (r. 270-275), had already started to split up several provinces, although less extensively, in order to make them more manageable.¹ The creation of the dioceses was the next step to extend and improve not only the functioning of the administrative structure, but the hierarchy of the empire as well. The head of a diocese was a *vicarius* or the so-called vicar, who became the superior of the governor.² It is uncertain which emperor installed the dioceses but most scholars estimated that it occurred around the years 293-314.³

According to the *Laterculus Veronensis* or the so-called Verona List, which was probably written in the first quarter of the fourth century, the empire contained twelve dioceses: Oriens, Pontica, Asiana, Thracia, Moesiae, Pannoniae, Britanniae, Galliae, Viennensis, Italia, Africa and Hispaniae.⁴ The latter contained the provinces of Baetica, Carthaginiensis, Gallaecia, Lusitania, Mauretania Tingitana and Tarraconensis.⁵ The provinces of Hispaniae are all situated in present-day Spain and Portugal except for the province of Mauretania Tingitana, which was roughly situated in modern northern Morocco. This unique diocese did not geographically change until the conquest of the Vandals, Alans and Sueves in 409.⁶ The diocese of Hispaniae is unique due to the fact that it is not an interconnected geographical territory; the strait of Gibraltar divides it. The reason behind this

¹ Daniëlle Sloopjes, 'Late antique administrative structures: On the meaning of dioceses and their borders in the fourth century AD', in: Lee Brice and Daniëlle Sloopjes (ed.), *Aspects of ancient institutions and geography: Studies in honor of Richard J.A. Talbert* (Leiden 2014) 177-195, here 186.

² Daniëlle Sloopjes, *The governor and his subjects in the later Roman Empire* (Leiden, 2006), 17-18.

³ Karl L. Noethlichs, 'Zur Entstehung der Diözese als Mittelinstanz des spätrömischen Verwaltungssystems', *Historia* 31 (1982), 70-81, here 75; Joachim Migl, *Die Ordnung der Ämter. Prätorianerpräfektur und Vikariat in der Regionalverwaltung des Römischen Reiches von Konstantin bis zur Valentinianischen Dynastie* (Frankfurt am Main, 1994), 54; Constantin Zuckerman, 'Sur la liste de Vérone et la province de Grande Arménie, la division de l'empire et la date de création des diocèses', in: Gilbert Dragon (red.), *Travaux et Mémoires* 14 (Paris, 2002), 617-637, here 636. Cf. William Seston, *Dioclétien et la tétrarchie* (Paris, 1946), 334; Arnold H. M. Jones, John R. Martindale and John Morris, *The prosopography of the later Roman Empire*, 3 volumes (Cambridge, 1971; reprinted 1975), I: 31; Timothy D. Barnes, *The new Empire of Diocletian and Constantine* (Harvard, 1982), 224-225; Michael F. Hendy, *Studies in the Byzantine Monetary Economy c.300-1450* (Cambridge, 1985), 373-374; Michael Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain and Its Cities* (Baltimore, 2004), 72; Elio lo Cascio, 'The new state of Diocletian and Constantine: From the tetrarchy to the reunification of the empire', *The Cambridge Ancient History* 12 (2002), 170-183, here 181; Jill Harries, *Imperial Rome AD 284-363: The new empire* (Edinburgh, 2012), 53.

⁴ Barnes, *The new Empire*, 205-208.

⁵ *Ibidem*, 208.

⁶ Javier Acre, *El último siglo de la España Romana, 284- 409* (Madrid, 2009), 42.

decision is still not clear, since scholars have not found a satisfying explanation. There are some hypotheses, but there is no consensus between them.

This study aims to critically compare the current theses, analysing their individual strengths and weaknesses, in order to create a clear overview which will facilitate further research on this subject. In addition, this essay attempts to bridge the gap between the existing theses. The central question of this essay is: what were the reasons for integrating the province of Mauretania Tingitana in the newly created diocese of Hispaniae? The answer to this question will be a hypothesis that tries to eliminate the less plausible explanations and which will build upon the more plausible ones. This will hopefully renew the scholarly debate around Mauretania Tingitana and hence provide more insight in the reasoning behind the choices that were made concerning the creation of the Roman dioceses.

Status Quaestionis

Over the last decades, several studies were published on the creation of the dioceses. The traditional view is that they were created during the reign of emperor Diocletian after the installation of the tetrarchy. This view is still often heard and there are many modern scholars who agree that it was Diocletian who created the dioceses. However, the supporting evidence for this statement is scant and deviates greatly. Supporters of this view often refer to the *Acta Marcelli*, the hagiography of Saint Marcellus of Tangier, in which Aurelius Agriconlanus is referred to as *agentem vice praefectorum*, which they translate to vicar.⁷ Another propagator of this view is Elio lo Cascio, who argued that during the reign of Diocletian the creation of new mints became decentralised in various regions, which accorded with the new system of dioceses-based tax collection.⁸

There are also scholars who do not see strong evidence that it was Diocletian who created the dioceses. The first among them was Karl Leo Noethlichs, who concluded that there was no evidence in the ancient sources for the existence of dioceses during the reign of Diocletian.⁹ Therefore, the dioceses were a construction of the emperors Constantine and Licinius (r. 308-324). Joachim Migl agrees with Noethlichs and adds that the installation of the dioceses was a pragmatic solution for imperial control of tax collection.¹⁰ The most recent work written about the creation of the dioceses connects the Verona List to it. This list makes the first ancient notation of the dioceses. Constantin Zuckerman argued that it was written in the summer of 314 and that at the same time the dioceses were created; since this happened together with other extensive contemporary administrative reforms of emperors Constantine and Licinius.¹¹

⁷ Seston, *Dioclétien et la tétrarchie*, 334; Jones, Martindale and Morris, *The prosopography of the later Roman Empire*, I: 31; Barnes, *The new Empire*, 224-225; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 72. The idea that *agentem vice praefectorum* meant the same as vicar is the general consensus after the article of Michael Arnheim. See Michael T.W Arnheim, 'Vicars in the later Roman Empire', *Historia* 19 (1970), 593-606.

⁸ Cascio, 'The new state of Diocletian and Constantine', 181.

⁹ Noethlichs, 'Zur Entstehung der Diözese', 72.

¹⁰ Migl, *Die Ordnung der Ämter*, 54-69.

¹¹ Zuckerman, 'Sur la liste de Vérone et la province de Grande Arménie', 636.

Besides the questions when the dioceses were made and by whom, there is a problem to answer the question how the dioceses were made as well. Did the emperors make the decisions themselves or were there more people involved? In addition, what were the reasons to decide which provinces were to be included in a diocese? Noethlichs clarified that the provinces did not necessarily belong geographically to each other and that the size of a diocese was not a guiding principle as the dioceses differed in size.¹² For example, the dioceses of Africa, Oriens and Galliae were around ca. 400.000 km² each, while the dioceses of Thracia and Asiana were only ca. 200.000 km² respectively.¹³ At the same time we do not know the choices made concerning the demarcation of these dioceses. Despite these uncertainties, it is certain that the borders of the dioceses correspond with provincial borders and that the borders of the later prefectures correspond with those of the dioceses. Daniëlle Sloomjes adds the notion that the borders of the provinces were most likely based on local city borders.¹⁴ If this is correct, it gives an insight into the thought and decision making process of how the dioceses were composed.

The line of reasoning of these scholars seems logical, but they do not answer the question how the Romans determined the size of a diocese. Hispaniae is, as was said before, unique due to the strait of Gibraltar that separates the provinces. If Noethlichs was right with his latter thesis, then why was the province of Mauretania Tingitana integrated into the Diocese of Hispaniae? In 1954, Brian H. Warmington was among the first to answer this question. According to his reasoning, Mauretania Tingitana was included in the diocese of Hispaniae due to the difficulty of communication with the other provinces of the diocese of Africa and the fact that Mauretania Tingitana had a natural connection with Hispaniae.¹⁵ John Spaul does not mention the communication problems, though he agrees there is a natural connection between Mauretania Tingitana and the province of Baetica; it shared the same Phoenician roots, climate and industry.¹⁶ Another proposal is that of John S. Richardson, who examined the military relations between the Iberian Peninsula and Mauretania Tingitana, which were created after the Moorish invasions since the late second century.¹⁷ This relation was the basis for the later integration. Michael Kulikowski takes the Richardsons theories to the extreme. He posed the hypothesis that the Iberian Peninsula was the hinterland of Mauretania Tingitana, which was part of the *limes* and that this connection is the reason for the integration of Mauretania Tingitana in the diocese of Hispaniae.¹⁸ Although it is a fascinating theory which derives from the idea that Gaul was the hinterland of the Rhine *Limes*, it is impossible to find definitive evidence for this. Kulikowski, however, gave us a plausible answer to the question why there is almost no mention of Mauretania Tingitana in literature about the history of ancient Spain. Mauretania Tingitana's invisibility is a result of modern political geography. The reign of Francisco Franco (r. 1939-1975) has conditioned us

¹² Noethlichs, 'Zur Entstehung der Diözese', 73.

¹³ Ibidem, 74.

¹⁴ Sloomjes, 'Late antique administrative structures', 187.

¹⁵ Brian H. Warmington, *The North African provinces from Diocletian to the Vandal conquest* (Cambridge, 1954), 3.

¹⁶ John Spaul, 'Across the frontier in Tingitana', in: Willy Groenman-van Waateringe et al. (red.), *Roman Frontier studies 1995: proceedings of the XVIth International congress of Roman frontier studies* (Oxford, 1997), 253-258, here 253.

¹⁷ John S. Richardson, *The Romans in Spain* (Oxford 1996), 271.

¹⁸ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 74-75.

to think of the Pyrenees and the straits of Gibraltar as natural and inevitable frontiers. It is, therefore, hard for modern society to see northern Morocco as a part of Spanish history.¹⁹

Today several thoughts about the integration of Tingitania in the diocese of Hispaniae co-exist.²⁰ These theses came into existence after the Second World War and are all plausible. However, none of these scholars seem to refer to each other which led to the development of several solitary explanations, explaining the lack of debate on this particular subject. When examining the argumentation of the current explanations more closely, many of them fail to provide adequate reference or proper argumentation. The co-existence of several explanations, the apparent lack of debate, and the weak argumentation makes it evident why this subject deserves more scientific attention. Therefore, this essay will compare the current theses in attempt to create a more comprehensive answer to this question.

Part One

The situation of Mauretania Tingitana at the time of Diocletian and Maximian

If we want to know what the reasons were for the decision to integrate Tingitania in the diocese of Hispaniae, then we should also ask ourselves the question: what do we actually know about this particular province around the time the dioceses were introduced? This chapter will elaborate on the situation of Tingitania around the end of the third century and the beginning of the fourth century, since this is most likely the time that the dioceses appeared.

The only major event around this time that happened in Tingitania was the shifting of the Empire's borders. There remains a serious discussion concerning the exact location of the *limes* in Northern Africa.²¹ Jérôme Carcopino was the first who mentioned that the cities of Volubilis and Banasa were abandoned by the imperial government, probably in the years of 283-284, and this was in his view most likely caused by attacks of the Baquates.²² His idea of the Roman abandonment of the cities appears to be plausible, by virtue of several reasons. Firstly, there is almost no archaeological evidence of Roman settlement after 282-284.²³ Secondly, there is a lack of post-282 coin circulation in this territory, therefore, the taxation in this area seemed to have ceased.²⁴ Thirdly, the garrisons of southern Tingitania are no longer mentioned in the *Notitia Dignitatum*. This document, with information about the administrative civil and military hierarchy, was probably created at the end of the fourth

¹⁹ Ibidem, 72.

²⁰ The name *Tingitana* is used in compound with Mauretania, *Tingitania* when the word stands alone.

²¹ Brent D. Shaw, 'Autonomy and Tribute: Mountain and Plain in Mauretania Tingitana', *Revue de l'Occident musulman et de la Méditerranée* 41 (1986), 66-89, here 67-68.

²² Jérôme Carcopino, *Le Maroc antique* (Paris, 1943), 244-254, 267.

²³ Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 70; Michael Brett and Elizabeth Fentress, *The Berbers* (Oxford, 1996), 60; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 72. Kulikowski refers to the recent work of Villaverde, which is a collection of all the primary evidence for late antique Tingitania. See Noé Villaverde Vega, *Tingitana en la antigüedad tardía, siglos III-VII: autoctonía y Romanidad en el extremo occidente mediterráneo* (Madrid, 2001).

²⁴ Spaul, 'Across the frontier in Tingitana', 258. This is the conclusion of Spaul after analysing the contribution of: Jean Marion, 'Note sur la contribution de la numismatique à la connaissance de la Maurétanie Tingitane', *Antiquités Africaines* 6 (1967), 99-118.

century or the beginning of the fifth century.²⁵ The only garrisons, which consisted of *limitanei*, in Mauretania Tingitana were under command of the *comes Tingitanae* and were situated near the rivers Oued Laou and Oued Loukos.²⁶ Although Diocletian's military reforms did stabilise the Roman frontiers neither he, nor Maximian could, during his Africa campaign (297-298), retake the southern parts of Tingitania.

It is, however, unclear if these new borders were also the edge of the Empire. The city of Sala for instance, remained in Roman hands.²⁷ In addition, the cities of Volubilis and Banasa continued to exist, though with a smaller population and not under Roman control.²⁸ After having been romanised for almost 250 years, the people living in the southern region of Tingitania had made diplomatic relations with their semi-nomadic neighbours and it is unlikely that the diplomacy between the two stopped after the borders changed.²⁹ In addition, the only road between Sala and northern Tingitania was through the city of Banasa, and as a result this area remained part of the Roman frontier. The Roman army remained within one hundred kilometres of these former southern Roman cities as well.³⁰ Although the northern parts of Tingitania and Sala remained under full Roman control and could be taxed, the southern parts were not under the full Roman command, but remained the frontier of the late Roman Empire.

Modern maps such as the Barrington Atlas often exaggerate the size of Mauretania Tingitana after the appearance of the dioceses.³¹ Other maps describe Tingitania only as a small coastal strip around Tingi (modern Tangier).³² In addition, none of the maps provide extra information that supports the hypothetical borders on it. Determining the Roman frontier is almost impossible, by virtue of various reasons. In the first place, a frontier is not a sharply defined border and can change annually. In the second place, the rough frontier is uncertain and was probably only vaguely defined by the imperial government itself, since the various semi-nomadic tribes were constantly moving.³³ Lastly, the reason behind the border change in 282-284 is still not entirely certain, which makes it hard to determine its influence on the frontier. If it was as a result of the attacks of the Baquates, as Carcopino suggested, then the frontier could have changed more rapidly. But if Spaul states correctly that the borders changed, since the region's population could not deliver enough men for the army, it is more likely that the frontier did not change so drastically.³⁴ These two theses can also be combined. Marlene Sigman makes clear that repeated attacks by the indigenous tribes made it impossible

²⁵ Timothy D. Barnes, 'Claudian and the "Notitia Dignitatum"', *Phoenix* 32 (1978), 81-82; John. C. Mann, 'The Notitia Dignitatum: Dating and Survival', *Britannia* 22 (1991), 215-219; Michael Kulikowski, 'The "Notitia Dignitatum" as a Historical Source', *Historia* 49 (2000), 358-377, here 360.

²⁶ Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 16, 70; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 79.

²⁷ Otto Seeck, *Notitia dignitatum: accedunt notitia urbis Constantinopolitanae et latercula provinciarum* (Frankfurt am Main, 1960) 177.

²⁸ Spaul, 'Across the frontier in Tingitana', 258.

²⁹ Spaul, 'Across the frontier in Tingitana', 255-265; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 80.

³⁰ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 80.

³¹ Richard Talbert (ed.), *Barrington Atlas of the Greek and Roman World* (Princeton, 2000), map 101.

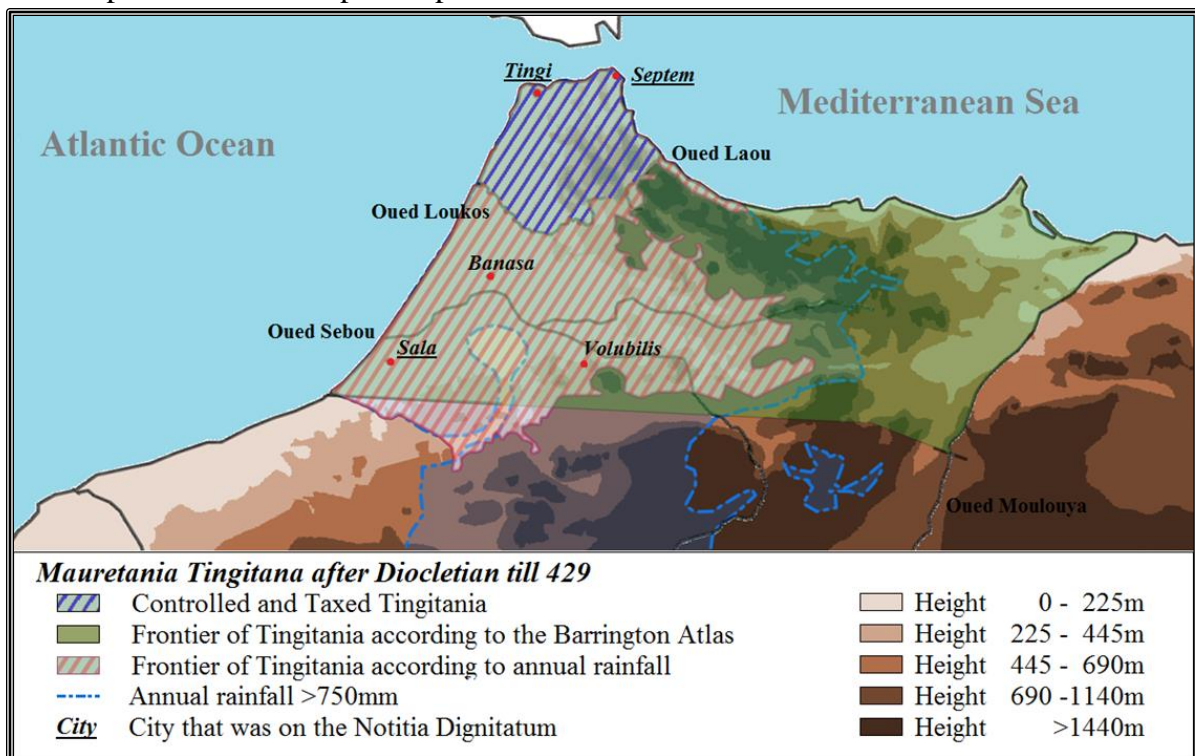
³² For example: Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 119, map 3. He also draws Volubilis on the wrong side of the Oued Sebou river.

³³ Shaw, 'Autonomy and Tribute', 67; David Cherry, *Frontier and Society in Roman North Africa* (Oxford, 1998), 27.

³⁴ Spaul, 'Across the frontier in Tingitana', 258.

for the Romans to expand the military effort needed to secure the entire province.³⁵ The reason can also be more pragmatic. Edmond Frézouls mentioned the fact that the troops in Tingitania might be needed at the more problematic Danube- and Eastern front, and that the changes of the border were only a marginal economic loss for the Romans.³⁶ Considering all these circumstances, it is simply impossible to pin-point the provinces shifting frontiers on a map.

The annual rainfall can help determining the regions in which agriculture was possible.³⁷ The indigenous people of Mauretania Tingitana are often described as semi-nomadic, which makes tracing them nearly impossible. Comparing the idea of a Roman controlled northern Tingitania and a southern frontier based on annual rainfall pattern, will probably produce a more correct representation of Mauretania Tingitana, than previous maps thus far provided. This map attempts to combine this information.³⁸



This map was produced with a geographical information system (GIS) and is based on several maps.³⁹ As can be seen, the blue italicized part represents the territory that was controlled by the Romans as described in the *Notitia Dignitatum*. The red italicized part of the map is the possible frontier of the Empire and is based on modern annual rainfall and on the height of the area. The decision to choose a modern rain pattern map was based on the fact that there are none available for antiquity. Although rainfall has changed during almost 1500 years, there is

³⁵ Marlene C. Sigman, 'The Romans and the Indigenous Tribes of Mauritania Tingitana', *Historia* 26 (1977), 415-439, here 419.

³⁶ Edmond Frézouls, 'Rome et la Maurétanie tingitane: un constat d'échec?', *Antiquités africaines* 16 (1980), 65-93, here 93.

³⁷ John C. Mann, 'The frontiers of the Principate', *Aufstieg und Niedergang der römischen Welt* 2.1 (1974), 508-533, here 528.

³⁸ This map was made by the author.

³⁹ I used Quantum GIS to make this map. Available for download at: www.qgis.org. See the appendix for the maps that I used.

an argument that defends this decision. The Atlas and Rif Mountains have not change between antiquity and modern time. The rainclouds that derive from the Atlantic Ocean cannot cross the mountains and stay at the windward side. Therefore, most of the precipitation remained between the Atlantic Ocean and the Atlas and Rif Mountains. This situation is not likely to have changed and for this reason a modern rainfall map is appropriate for defining the rainfall in Mauretania Tingitana.

Considering the area to the east lacks enough rain for agriculture, it could only be inhabited by mountainous semi-nomadic tribes, such as the Baquates.⁴⁰ It is possible that the eastern part of this region did not belong to Mauretania Tingitana, due to various Moorish tribes that lived in the Atlas and Rif Mountains which separated Tingitana from Mauretania Caesariensis.⁴¹ In addition, there is no evidence that there was a road connecting the Mauretaniae with each other.⁴² Although Pliny mention that the Mauretaniae were adjoined, with the Oued Moulouya as natural border, it is most likely that after Diocletian's reign this border was abandoned.⁴³

The shifting of borders appears to be the only major event in Tingitania around the end of the third century. However, the results for the territory were drastic. Firstly, agriculture was now only possible in the northern fully controlled area. The production of olives in southern Tingitania was halted, which meant that the olive trade in the area shrunk or even ceased to exist.⁴⁴ We do not know whether there was still enough agricultural land to sustain the northern part of Mauretania Tingitana's population. If there was not enough arable land, then it is very likely that imports were growing while exports of were definitely shrinking. Therefore, it is likely that the wealth of northern Tingitania was declining even if the import of products remained the same. The lack of post 282 coins also suggests that trade between northern and southern Mauretania Tingitana almost completely ceased or changed from a monetary into a barter economy, which reduced the wealth of the province. Another problem would be that the population of the province was reduced to only northern Tingitania. Still, the border of the province had to be defended and if there were already problems with gathering enough men to supply the garrisons as Spaul claimed, then there were now even less able recruits to be found in the owned territory.⁴⁵ So it is likely that the troops stationed near the Oued Laou and Oued Loukos were from a different origin.

Despite the profound geographic, demographic and economic changes that affected the entire province during the late third century, stability in the region had been achieved. There are no reports after 298 that there were any attacks or uprisings in Mauretania Tingitana till the invasion from the north in 429 by the Vandals. If the goal was to withdraw the Roman *limes* in order to stabilise the region after the many crises of the third century, then it was a very costly but effective decision. It is remarkable that such radical changes took place shortly before the appearance of the dioceses.

⁴⁰ Sigman, 'The Romans and the Indigenous Tribes', 429.

⁴¹ Sigman, 'The Romans and the Indigenous Tribes', 415; Maurice Euzennat, 'Les troubles de Maurétanie', *Comptes rendus des séances de l'Académie des Inscriptions et Belles-Lettres* 128 (1984), 372-393, here 380.

⁴² Talbert, *Barrington Atlas*, map 28-29.

⁴³ Pliny the Elder, *The natural history*, translated by John Bostock and Henry T. Riley vol I (London, 1855), V, 1.

⁴⁴ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 73.

⁴⁵ Spaul, 'Across the frontier in Tingitana', 258.

It is highly unlikely that his timing is merely a coincidence and would suggest a preconceived, multi-staged long term plan aimed to stabilise the Empire. In this plan the borders of the entire Empire had to be stabilised first. After that the power of the emperor(s) had to be increased in order to reduce the chance of a civil war. The installation of the dioceses and the later prefectures, were an expression of these politics.

It is unlikely that the Roman border in Tingitania was defined before 298. At this time most parts of the province were not under Roman control, which makes it impossible to define the borders. Emperor Maximian, however, went on an Africa campaign from March 297 till 298 and this was the only imperial military intervention in Mauretania Tingitana till 429.⁴⁶ Therefore, it is likely that under his command the new southern *limes* were defined. This makes it for the province of Tingitania almost impossible to be part of a diocese and therefore, the diocese of Hispaniae could not exist before 298. The same can be said about the diocese of Africa which territories were also reconquered during the African campaign.

In addition, there has to be a reason that Maximian did not retake the southern parts of Tingitania. If it was too hard to defend this area and he could therefore, not stabilise this territory, then it was a strategic reason to shift the *limes* in Mauretania Tingitana to the north. The northern part of Tingitania was far more important, since it secured the Iberian Peninsula. Considering the implication of the diocese was also intended as a stabilising measure. In addition, as Migl already mentioned, it was a way to gain imperial control of the tax collection.⁴⁷ A steady tax revenue was needed in order to maintain the Roman armies, which provided stability and security of the Empire.

Although the idea of a multi-staged long term plan in order to stabilise the Empire seems reasonable, it cannot be proven with substantial solid evidence which requiring further scientific validation.

Part Two

Reasoning behind the decision to merge Tingitania into the diocese of Hispaniae

The previous chapter gave an insight in the situation of Mauretania Tingitana just before or around the appearance of the dioceses. This framework will help to analyse the plausibility of the co-existing theses presented by various scholars. The lack of communication between scholars on this particular topic has already been noted. Therefore, there is not yet a satisfying answer to the questions on this subject. Theses of the following scholars will be analysed in chronological order: Warmington, Richardson and Kulikowski.

According to Warmington, the reasons for integrating Mauretania Tingitana in the diocese of Hispaniae were ambiguous. Firstly, he explained that Tingitania had various communication problems with the rest of Roman Africa.⁴⁸ This communication problem made it therefore, hard to integrate Mauretania Tingitana in the diocese of Africa. Secondly, Warmington implies that there was a 'natural' connection with the provinces of Spain across

⁴⁶ Barnes, *The new Empire*, 59.

⁴⁷ Migl, *Die Ordnung der Ämter*, 54-69.

⁴⁸ Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 3.

the straits of Gibraltar.⁴⁹ He does, however, not mention what this ‘natural’ connection actually consisted of.

With the ‘natural’ relation between Mauretania Tingitana and the Iberian Peninsula that Warmington mentioned, he probably refers to the Claudian period when the colonies of Tingi and Lixus (modern Larache) were administered directly from the province Baetica.⁵⁰ In addition, he also refers to the various similarities between the provinces, for instance: they shared its fishing industry, they had a common history considering both were colonised by the Phoenicians, they had the same climate which resulted in the same agricultural products and both regions have the same mosaic floors patterns.⁵¹ Though he does mention a relation, it is unknown what he actually meant.

Still he is right that there were major communication problems between Tingitania and the other African provinces, especially with the province of Mauretania Caesariensis. Warmington mentioned that there might not be a road between the two provinces and that Oued Moulouya was the border of Mauretania Caesariensis but not necessarily the border of Mauretania Tingitania.⁵² Warmington’s thesis can be reinforced with map 28 and 29 of the Barrington Atlas. On these maps there is a road between Rusaddir (modern Melilla) and Siga (modern Takembrit). However, there is no actual road between the Mauretania’s. The compiler of map 29, Timothy W. Potter, does mention that there could be some kind of road starting in Caesariensis towards the city of Volubilis, however, the existence is inferred rather than proven. Even if there were a road between the Mauretania’s then it would be a rather unsafe one, due to the fact that this territory could barely be controlled during the Roman occupation and that this part of Mauretania Tingitania was inhabited with several semi-nomadic barbarian tribes, such as the Baquates.⁵³ Since Tingitania was not adjacent to the province of Caesariensis at the time the dioceses appear, it is even more logical to integrate Tingitania in the diocese of Hispaniae than in the diocese of Africa.

Although the communication connection over land proved to be difficult, it does not mean that this was the decisive reason to merge Tingitania in the diocese of Hispaniae. The third century *Antonine Itinerary* mentioned that a common route from Tingi to Portus Divinus (modern Mers El Kébir) was by sea: *A Tingi litoribus navigatur usque Ad Portus Divinus*.⁵⁴ However, travelling to the fixed capital of the diocese of Hispaniae, Emerita Augusta (modern Mérida), was much closer to Tingi than the capital of the diocese of Africa: Carthage.⁵⁵ Therefore, merging Tingitania with the Iberian provinces seems more logical, since it improved the efficiency of the dioceses administrative duties.

Richardson presented after more than forty years his thesis which was completely different from Warmington’s efficiency thesis, which he did not mention at all. Richardson introduced the idea that in the 170s, a military link between the Iberian Peninsula and Mauretania Tingitana was established which ultimately resulted in the integration of

⁴⁹ Ibidem, 3.

⁵⁰ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 73.

⁵¹ Spaul, ‘Across the frontier in Tingitana’, 253.

⁵² Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 71.

⁵³ Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 71; Sigman, ‘The Romans and the Indigenous Tribes’, 415, 423; Shaw, ‘Autonomy and Tribute’, 78.

⁵⁴ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 178.

⁵⁵ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 71, 73; Richardson, *The Romans in Spain*, 272.

Tingitania into the diocese of Hispaniae.⁵⁶ In the early 170s A.D. the southern Iberian Peninsula was under attack from the Mauri tribes, which came most likely from the Riff or Atlas Mountains across the strait of Gibraltar. Though the attacks were repelled, they restarted again a few years later. The attacks became a serious threat, since the northern part of the peninsula was devastated by the attacks as well. According to Richardson it was a combination of the troops of Baetica and Mauretania Tingitana who defeated the Mauri. The northern part of the Peninsula was defended by Legio VII Gemina which was stationed near the rich goldmines of the province Gallaecia. There is no evidence that this legion came into action against the Mauri. There is, however, evidence that there were joined efforts from the garrisons of Baetica and Tingitania earlier against the Mauri during the reign of emperor Antoninus Pius (r.138-161).⁵⁷

Although it is likely that Mauretania Tingitania had a military link with the southern Iberian Peninsula, there is actually no evidence that suggest that such a link resulted into the merging of Tingitania into the diocese of Hispaniae. There are other reasons why Richardson's thesis is unlikely. Firstly, a diocese was an administrative civilian structure and not a military one. Diocletian separated the military power of the provincial governors and gave this military power to his military commanders in the regions, the *dux*.⁵⁸ The vicar probably did not have military power, since during a civil lawsuit, the accused had to justify to the vicar. During a military trial, the defendant had to justify to the *dux*.⁵⁹ Secondly, the legion in North Africa, the Legio III Augusta, was reformed by Diocletian and Constantine and Mauretania Tingitana received its own *comes Tingitaniae*. Although the Notitia Dignitatum only describes garrisons of *limitanei*, there were probably more garrisons in Tingitania, but they are not noted on the Notitia Dignitatum considering at the time it was written, the garrisons were already relocated.⁶⁰ The reformed army in Tingitania was bigger, had its own commander and can only in name be compared with the army of the 170s A.D. by its name, for it had other units and probably only the goal to secure the *limes*.

Since a diocese is not a military structure and the army in Mauretania Tingitana was completely different from the army of the 170s A.D., it is unlikely that this military link was the reason to merge Tingitania into the diocese of Hispaniae. In addition, there is a large time span of around 130 years between the Mauri attacks and the appearances of the dioceses.

The map of Mauretania Tingitania in the previous chapter shows us that during the appearance of the dioceses, the northern part remained Roman. The southern part of Tingitania was only of marginal economic importance and was not a strategic place of interest, therefore, it was not important enough to hold. The northern part was also economically not very interesting. It was, however, a strategic position, since it secured the straits of Gibraltar and with that the southern Iberian Peninsula.⁶¹ Kulikowski proposed that this position was one of the reasons that Mauretania Tingitania was integrated into the diocese of Hispaniae.

⁵⁶ Richardson, *The Romans in Spain*, 231-234, 271.

⁵⁷ *Ibidem*, 233.

⁵⁸ Sloopjes, *The governor and his subjects*, 18; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 71.

⁵⁹ *Codex Theodosianus*, [01-15-07], Translated by Clyde Pharr (Princeton, 1969).

⁶⁰ Ferdinand Lot, 'La "Notitia dignitatum utriusque imperii"', *Revue des études anciennes* XXXVIII 3 (1936), 285-338, 309-310; Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 16.

⁶¹ Warmington, *The North African provinces*, 18; Acre, *El último siglo*, 105; Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 73.

Kulikowski noticed that all emperors of the first tetrarchy: Diocletian, Maximian, Constantius Chlorus (r. 293-306) and Galerius (r. 293-311), were on campaign near the borders of the Empire, probably in order to secure their stability.⁶² Since Kulikowski is a supporter of the thesis that the dioceses were introduced around the time of Diocletian, he implies that after a campaign of an emperor, the dioceses of that area were installed in order to support the new deployed garrisons at the frontiers.⁶³ The Iberian Peninsula therefore, became the hinterland for the *limes* in Tingitania. This is possible, since after 282-284 the borders changed and it was unlikely that the garrisons at the Oued Laou and Oued Loukos could be reinforced and supplied with only men and resources from the province. Kulikowski also proposed that in order to distribute the garrisons effectively, the capital of a diocese was placed at a location that made it possible to reach every border of the diocese as fast as possible. Mérida therefore, became the capital of the diocese of Hispaniae. Although, Kulikowski does not refer to Warmington, he does mention that Mauretania Tingitania could be governed more efficiently from Mérida than from distant Carthage.⁶⁴ Mérida was centrally situated and from there it was easy to reach every part of the diocese, considering there were roads to every important part of the diocese.⁶⁵

Although, this seems plausible, it has some problems with the argumentation which is at times incorrect. Firstly, if every diocese had the function to supply the army, then the function of the dioceses of Asiana and Viennensis becomes unclear, due to the fact that they had no frontier. Secondly, Kulikowski assumed that Mauretania Tingitania was a frontier with many troubles, as is proposed by Carcopino and Sigman, which is still open to debate. Spaul made it clear that there were only a few the disturbances and conflicts in Tingitania during the entire Roman reign and that it was in comparison with the other borders of the Empire a very calm one.⁶⁶ Thirdly, Kulikowski made the notion that it was one of the vicar's main tasks to supply the army, which seems incorrect.⁶⁷ According to several laws in the *Codex Theodosianus*, which was a compilation of Roman laws of the fourth and fifth century, it was not the vicar who was in charge of the distribution of army resources, but his superior, the *praefectus praetorio* or the so-called praetorian prefect.⁶⁸ Kulikowski's thesis therefore loses credibility, since he misinterpreted the function of the vicar.

Nevertheless, Kulikowski appears to be on the right track about the idea that Mauretania Tingitana became part of Hispaniae to improve the administration of the area. If you change the part in which Kulikowski suggested that it was not the vicar but the praetorian prefect that had to supply the army, then the last counter argument on his thesis becomes invalid. It is hard to make a solid thesis, for the exact functions of the vicar remain, even today, largely unknown.

⁶² Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 74; To see the known locations of the emperors during their reign, see Barnes, *The new Empire*, 49-56 for Diocletian, 56-61 for Maximian, 60-61 for Constantius and 61-64 for Galerius.

⁶³ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 74.

⁶⁴ *Ibidem*, 73.

⁶⁵ Talbert, *Barrington Atlas*, map 24-27.

⁶⁶ Spaul, 'Across the frontier in Tingitana', 253-254.

⁶⁷ Kulikowski, *Late Roman Spain*, 75.

⁶⁸ Cf. *Codex Theodosianus*, [07-05-02 of 404, 07-06-01 of 365, 07-06-02 of 368 and 07-06-05 of 423], Translated by Clyde Pharr (Princeton, 1969).

In addition, it is also remarkable that all the emperors of the first tetrarchy went on campaign near the borders and that several years later the dioceses appear. Considering there were already two praetorian prefects during the reign of Diocletian, it would be possible that the vicar kept order and improved the administration of a diocese, to increase for instance the tax revenues, while the praetorian prefect was accountable for the distribution of army supplies. Following this argumentation Tingitania would be part of Hispaniae, since it was also part of the prefecture of Galliarum.

Still, the idea that there was a threefold hierarchical system, of prefectures, dioceses and provinces, as was proposed by Noethlichs, remains hard to defend for the first part of the fourth century.⁶⁹ Firstly, we know that until 324 there were only two prefects, which makes it hard to define the geographical size and of the prefectures. In addition, there were in 341 three prefects and it is not until the end of the fourth century that there were four prefects.⁷⁰ Therefore, the exact territory of a prefecture changed several times. Secondly, it is unknown if the function of prefect, as well as that of the vicar, remained permanent during the fourth century. The territorial authority of both the prefect and vicar changed several times, which makes it likely that also their function could have changed over time. Therefore, more research is needed about the prefect and the vicar in order to come to a conclusion and to test the plausibility of this new thesis.

Conclusion

This study has analysed the existing theses, about the reasoning behind the merging of Tingitania into the diocese of Hispaniae, which were proposed by Warmington, Richardson and Kulikowski. In addition, to answer the question what the reasons were for integrating the province of Mauretania Tingitana in the newly created diocese of Hispaniae, a study has been made about this province just before and around the appearance of the dioceses, which proved to be a valuable starting point.

The map of Tingitania that was specially created for this study aimed to eliminate the conflicts that occurred with the nowadays existing maps. These maps often exaggerate the vastness of the province and do not describe the nuance between the Roman borders and its frontiers. Although, it is almost impossible to describe the actual frontier of Mauretania Tingitana, there are methods to loosely reproduce the area that could be called the frontier. For the Romans only established themselves on arable lands, it is possible to define the regions that were fertile enough. The annual precipitation of the provinces gives a clear view on the areas that were fertile enough to cultivate. However, defining only the areas that were fertile is not enough. The Atlas and Riff Mountains render enormous parts of the province unsuitable for cultivation. Therefore, only a part of the province was suitable enough to cultivate the arable lands. After the border changes of 282-284, these lands remained populated, though not by the imperial government and thereby this area became the Roman

⁶⁹ Slootjes, *The governor and his subjects*, 18. vgl. Noethlichs, 'Zur Entstehung der Diözese', 72-73.

⁷⁰ Slootjes, *The governor and his subjects*, 18.

frontier. In addition, this map made clear that during the reign of the first tetrarchy, the Mauretania's were not adjacent anymore.

The consequences of the border changes were a major loss of territory and a decline of the region's economy and population. However, stability at the border was achieved and the choice of Maximian not to reconquer the lost territory could almost only be a strategically one. Considering it is unlikely that the diocese of Hispaniae was created before Maximian's Africa campaign (297-298), the strategic reasoning to only occupy the northern part of Mauretania Tingitana was likely one of the reasons to integrate the province in to the diocese of Hispaniae.

The thesis of Warmington that Tingitania could be administrated more efficiently from Mérida than from Carthage seems to be plausible and is supported by the fact that the Mauretaniae were no longer connected with each other. The existence of a land route between the provinces of Tingitania and Caesariensis is unlikely due to the fact that there is no evidence that there ever was one, and if there were, it was a dangerous and not under Roman control. Therefore, communication between these provinces occurred by sea. The distance therefore, becomes an obstacle that was too big to be efficient. Still Warmington does not mention anything about the strategic reason to occupy only the northern part of Tingitania. Therefore, his thesis is a plausible one, but seems to be incomplete.

Richardson, however, did mention military reasons why Mauretania Tingitana was merged into Hispaniae, though it was a different one than the one proposed in this study. The 170s A.D. were a time of unrest in the southern Iberian Peninsula, which was ended by military efforts which soldiers belonging to garrisons of both Baetica and Tingitania. Although, it can hardly be denied that there were joint force operations between the provinces' garrisons, it is a bit far-fetched as to conclude on the question why Mauretania Tingitana was part of Hispaniae.

The final thesis, which was proposed by Kulikowski, was a bold one that combined Warmington's thesis on efficiency and the military strategic importance of northern Tingitania. In his vision, the diocese of Hispaniae crossed the straits of Gibraltar, since the *limes* in Mauretania Tingitana needed a hinterland, which could provide the soldiers and supplies for the garrisons. This could be done more effectively by the provinces of the Iberian Peninsula, then by the provinces of Africa. In addition, a foothold in Tingitania secured the safety of the Iberian Peninsula. Although, this sounds plausible, there is a major problem with this thesis. Kulikowski believed that it was one of the vicar's main tasks to distribute the resources of the army. The Codex Theodosianus made it clear that it was not the vicar who arranged this but the praetorian prefect and therefore the diocese had another function.

Kulikowski's thesis is, however, still valuable, since its reasoning is plausible and only needs some minor adjustments. It is possible that the vicar kept order and improved the administration of the diocese, while the praetorian prefect managed the distribution of army supplies. Considering the diocese of Hispaniae as a part of the prefecture of Galliarum, Tingitania was therefore part of this prefecture as well. For this reason it is possible to see Mauretania Tingitania as part of Hispaniae, since it needed a hinterland and could be managed more efficiently. However, it makes it possible to see Tingitania as part of the authority of the prefect as well of whose task it was to provide the supplies and troops for the *limes*.

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Although, there are some problems with this hypothesis, it combines both the efficiency thesis and the military importance of the province. In order to test the plausibility of this hypothesis, more scholarly research is needed on the functions of both the vicar and the praetorian prefect, which will provide useful insights to answer the questions around Mauretania Tingitana.

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Appendix

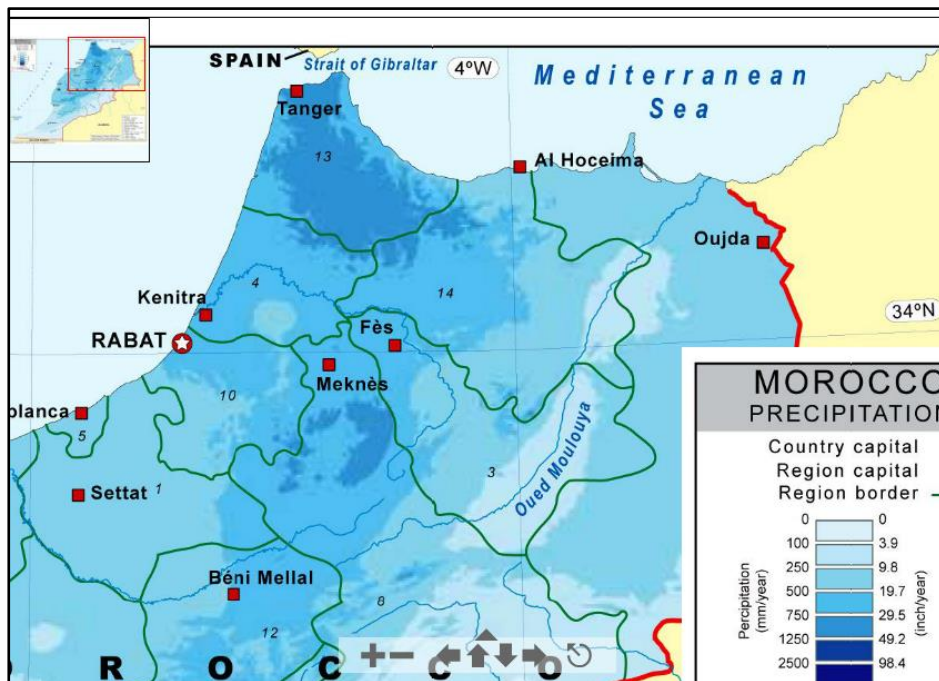
The map that has been made for this study was compiled by four different maps. The first was map 101 of the Barrington Atlas.⁷¹ (Figure A) The natural borders of this map are used as the basis of newly generated map.

Figure A



The second map was to determine the annual precipitation of Morocco. (Figure B) This map was made by the World Trade Press, Best Country Reports.⁷²

Figure B



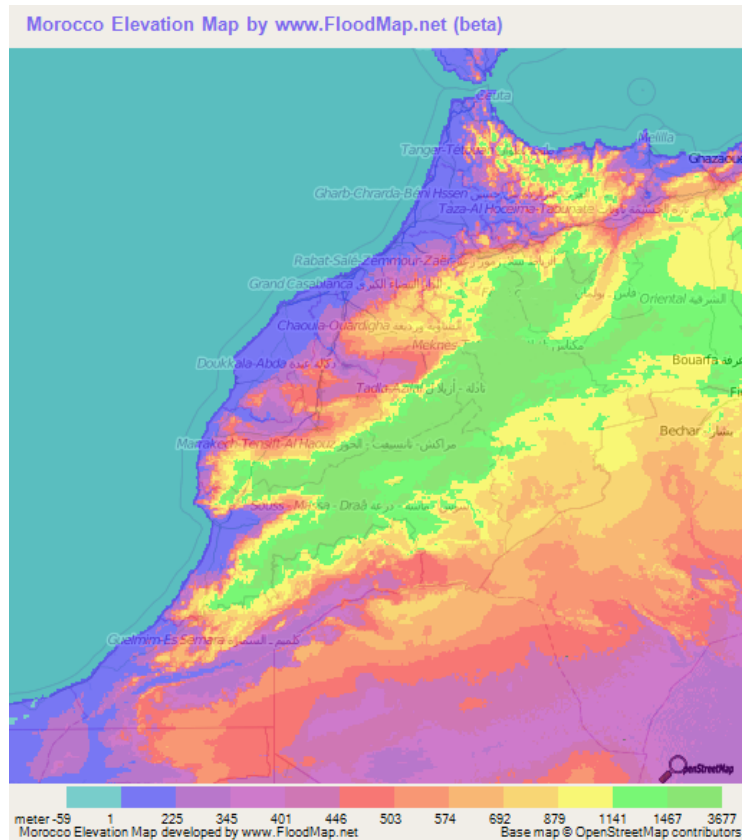
⁷¹ Talbert, *Barrington Atlas*, map 101.

⁷² World Trade Press, Best Country Reports, 'Precipitation map of Morocco', <http://www.bestcountryreports.com/Precipitation_Map_Morocco.php> [consulted on 15-5-2015].

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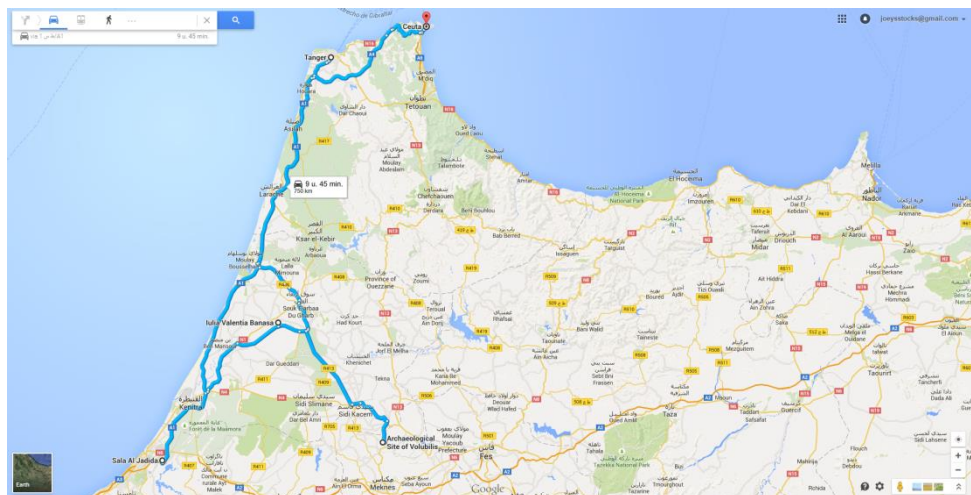
The third map made by Floodmap who used NASA's SRTM data in order to determine the height difference of modern Morocco.⁷³ (Figure C)

Figure C



The fourth and last map was generated by Google maps in order to find the exact locations of the cities that are on the new map.⁷⁴ (Figure D)

Figure D



⁷³ Floodmap, 'Morocco elevation map',
< <http://www.floodmap.net/Elevation/CountryElevationMap/?ct=MA> > [consulted on 15-5-2015].

⁷⁴ Google maps, 'Cities of Morocco',
< <https://www.google.nl/maps/dir/Tanger,+Marokko/Archaeological+Site+of+Volubilis,+Route+de+Volubilis,+Marokko/Iulia+Valentia+Banasa,+Marokko%2080%AD/Sala+Al+Jadida,+Marokko/Ceuta,+Spanje/> >
[consulted on 15-5-2015].