A ROMAN TOWN IN AFRICA

It is no doubt a truism to say that the ancient civilizations of Greece and Rome were based on the idea of the city state. Everyone would probably agree that it is possible to define the Roman Empire as a complex of municipalities, each one with its own government which administered the municipal property, had the right of jurisdiction over the citizens, and served as the agent of the central government for the collection of taxes and for various other purposes. Above these local units was the government of Rome, itself a municipality that had surrendered many of its sovereign rights to one man, the Emperor, and whose duty it was to protect the peace of the whole empire.

It is this superstructure, the government of Rome, that has always engaged the special attention of students of ancient history. The lesser units, the municipalities, have never been studied as closely as they deserve to be. This is, indeed, a fact that is easily understood. Our chief sources of information, the writings of the Romans themselves, give heed only to what happened to the Roman state. The affairs of the provinces, when they did not directly affect the fortunes of Rome, were beneath notice.

Yet the life of the provinces, and even the life of individual municipalities, is certainly important for one who wishes to understand the social conditions of the Roman Empire. The affairs of these smaller units touched the lives of ordinary men infinitely more closely than did the affairs of Rome. If the central government saw to it that the inhabitants of the Empire were safe from the attacks of barbarians from without and of pirates and brigands from within, the life of the municipalities influenced all the more intimate relations of life, one's method of gaining a livelihood, one's social intercourse, one's pleasures. It was only an insignificant minority that was concerned even remotely with the larger aspects of the Empire's business—the Emperor himself, a few hundred senators, a few thousand knights, the personnel of the Imperial civil service—always

inadequate for its purpose—and the army—very small when one considers the stretch of frontier it had to defend. For the rest of the inhabitants of the Empire, the affairs of the municipalities were the boundaries of the horizon within which their interests lay.

Modern writers who have dealt with the question of the life of the municipalities of the Roman Empire may almost be counted on the fingers of one hand. The general manuals on Roman institutions devote some sections to them. Liebenam, *Städteverwaltung im römischen Reiche*, discusses exhaustively the institutional side. J. S. Reid's *Municipalities of the Roman Empire* is a semipopular work. Dill's *Roman Society from Nero to Marcus Aurelius* has some chapters on social life in the municipalities. The writers of histories of individual provinces, such as Haverfield for Britain, Camille Jullian for Gaul, Cumont for Belgium, devote some space to the municipalities in these places, since the subject they discuss, the Romanization of the provinces, necessarily involves the spread of municipal institutions. In this connection Mommsen's *The Provinces of the Roman Empire* must not be forgotten. Finally, one may mention J. Toutain's *Les cités romaines de la Tunisie*, which does for one part of Roman Africa exactly what should be done for all the provinces.

There is one thing, however, which has practically never been done, and that is to take an individual city and subject it to close scrutiny to see what can be discovered in regard to the make-up of one of these bricks in the structure of the Roman Empire. There is, indeed, one case in which this is done regularly, and that is when an archaeologist publishes the results of his excavation of a town. A regular feature of such a report of excavations is a history of the place involved, but this history is only an incident of the report and not its main feature. Nevertheless, it often happens that it is impossible to add anything further to these histories, some of which will be referred to below.

Now, how may a history of one of these municipalities be written? As stated above, the historians of Rome were not interested in the municipalities. All that may be expected from documentary evidence is a passing mention, when a town happened to be involved in the general history of the Empire.

There remain two other kinds of sources, archaeological and epigraphic, that is, material remains and inscriptions. The second of these is more important if one seeks information about persons rather than things. Fortunately for the historian the Romans had the habit of recording all sorts of events on stone, though the inscriptions most frequently met with are from funerary monuments and record nothing but the name and age of the person involved.

If a modern student of the Roman Empire be asked what part of the Roman world offers the most satisfactory material for the study of Roman municipalities, there is but one answer possible. The place that offers most remains, in the best state of preservation, is North Africa, where Algeria and Tunis are today, where were the Roman provinces of Africa and Numidia. In almost every other part of what was once the Roman Empire, human occupation has been constant, the old has been removed to make room for the new, or has been used again and again so that its original form has been entirely lost. But in North Africa, when Roman life died, all culture died. From the seventh century to modern times, the Arabs occupied only the coast, while the flourishing towns of the interior were deserted and were covered by the drifting sands and the natural accumulation of the dust of the centuries, so that they remained as they were at the moment of their desertion until such time as the spade of the excavator uncovered them. In one other place did this happen, and that was in Asia Minor, but Asia Minor's ruins remain largely unexplored, while in North Africa—and here is the second reason for its desirability as a subject for study—the unflagging zeal of French explorers has uncovered town after town. In Italy, Mt. Vesuvius did the archaeologist the service of covering Pompeii and Herculaneum as exhibits for future generations, but in North Africa have arisen from the sands many Pompeiis, not perhaps as interesting as the Italian one, since they were not caught unaware in the full flush of life, but certainly deserving of close study. Indeed, they have one advantage over Pompeii in the fact that their careers were not suddenly cut off but were entirely completed, so that in them one may observe the full cycle of development of Roman municipalities.

Now, the cities of Africa did not differ very much from the cities of other provinces, or even from the towns in Italy. They were governed by officials elected in the town, and bearing the same titles as similar officials elsewhere; they constructed the same sort of public buildings, set up the same sort of honorific inscriptions, and were adorned with the same sort of triumphal arches, statues, fountains, public baths, and theaters as were to be found everywhere in the Roman world. One may well ask, why this similarity? Were the people who accomplished all this in Africa immigrants from abroad? Was it Italians who built up the African towns, and made them images of Italian towns?

To answer these questions, it is necessary to understand something of the Roman methods of spreading their civilization in Africa. Rome gained her first possession on the southern shore of the Mediterranean at the conclusion of the Third Punic War, when she took over the former territory of her old enemy, Carthage. This territory became the province Africa. Julius Caesar added what was known as Africa Nova, and Augustus set up the province of Numidia. Finally, the two provinces of Mauretania were added at the beginning of the reign of Claudius. Thus, the acquisition of African territory was an accomplishment of the Roman Empire (counting Julius Caesar as the founder of the Empire), except for the land immediately surrounding Carthage.

Even in this small territory that was taken over in the Republican period, the government of the Republic did nothing to advance Roman civilization. The land-owning aristocracy that ruled Rome during the last one hundred years of its existence as a republic had too wholesome a respect for the competition that the rich African fields might offer to their products to encourage the growth of any extensive exploitation here. Although in the valley of the Bagradas River (modern Medjerda) there had existed under the Carthaginian domination some hundreds of towns, yet in the Roman republican period there was not one here. This does not mean, of course, that all these towns were destroyed or disappeared, but only that the Roman government did not recognize the legal existence of any of them. All their territory was *ager publicus* (public land), and had no legal standing in Roman law. To be sure, some of the

opponents of the Senatorial regime did attempt to revive city life in Africa, notably Gaius Gracchus, with his plan to found the colony Junonia on the old site of Carthage, but their attempts miscarried. It remained for the Imperial regime, which was interested in the welfare of the provincials as well as in that of the Italians, to bring about in Africa a revival of civilization, synonomous in the minds of the ancients with urban life. This policy was inaugurated by Julius Caesar, who planned to reëstablish Carthage as a Roman colony. His plan was carried out by Augustus, who also gave an urban status to a number of other African towns. From that time on the urbanization of Africa proceeded rapidly, and with it the assimilation of the country into the circle of civilized lands, until in the second century it was so far advanced that the greatest literary lights of the period of the Antonines, Fronto and Appuleius, were natives of Africa, and at the end of the same century Africa furnished an emperor, Septimius Severus.

This process of urbanization was not by any means carried on by force. One may distinguish some three or four ways in which city life was spread in Africa. In a few cases, actual colonization took place. The foundation of the colony of Carthage brought to Africa a large number of landless Romans. Several of the emperors founded colonies in which to settle soldiers who had served their terms of enlistment. As an example of this method, Timgad, in southern Numidia, may be cited. Timgad was established by Trajan in the year 100 A. D. for veterans. There is some evidence of a considerable influx of Italians in the period about the time of Christ, mostly men dispossessed in the course of the confiscations carried out by the Triumvirs and Augustus, but these seem to have settled largely as tenant farmers on the growing *latifundia*, or estates, and help to explain the rise of the colonate in Africa, but did not contribute much to the urbanization of the country.

Another way in which the Roman government influenced the growth of city life was by recognizing some of the old Punic and Libyan communities as cities in the Roman sense. This was done especially in the case of towns that had given aid to Rome at the time of the conquest, such as, for example, Utica. More indirectly, the government exercised its influence through the army. Without considering the fact that the provincials

who served in the army became thereby Roman citizens and went back home as apostles of Roman influence, the very existence of army camps and posts in the provinces helped to create cities. About every army camp there arose a settlement of traders, soldiers' wives, and others, and often such settlements arrived at the dignity of city status. The best example of such a city in Africa was Lambaesis, close to the camp of that name in southern Numidia. Also, the army's peaceful activities, above all, its work in roadbuilding, served to make communication easier and thus to promote the easy intercourse of civilized life.

Besides these towns that were created by direct or indirect government influence, however, other towns arose in Africa in the Roman period. All the natives of this country are not naturally nomadic, but tend to settle down and become peaceful agriculturists if they have the opportunity. The Roman peace offered such an opportunity and so communities of native origin arose, and when they were far enough advanced in self-government and in culture, were recognized by Rome as self-governing cities. Sometimes whole tribes settled in such centers, at other times individual agricultural exploitations became centers first of villages, later of cities. Furthermore, every new center became a nucleus from which others might grow, for citizens of such a center might have estates in the neighborhood which might develop into new communities.

It is one of these spontaneously developing native communities that is to be considered in the rest of this paper. Its ruins are to be found at a place in north central Algeria, called today Khamissa, and most easily accessible by motor car from Souk Arrhas (the ancient Thagaste, birthplace of St. Augustine), which is about twenty miles away, to the northeast. Its ancient name, Thubursicu Numidarum, served to distinguish it from another Thubursicu in Tunisia of today and to connect it with the Numidae, not the great nation which gave its name to the country, but probably a *gens*, or tribe, belonging to that nation.[1]

The materials for the study of the history of the city are very scanty. It is simply mentioned by a number of authors, and the only place where one may learn about some actual events that happened here is in two letters of St. Augustine. It is

possible also that Tacitus refers to the city in one place. In discussing the intermittent war that the Romans carried on against the Numidian leader, Tacfarinas (an ancient Abd-el-Krim), in the years 17-24 A. D., he tells how, in the last of these years, Tacfarinas collected a force of Numidians and besieged the *oppidum Thubuscum*[2]. The scene of this siege, which was raised as soon as the Roman troops appeared, can not be identified with absolute certainty, but it was certainly in the region of Thubursicu, and so the text of Tacitus has been very plausibly amended to read "Thubu[r]s[i]cum."

However that may be, the first absolutely certain knowledge of Thubursicu comes from the reign of Trajan, when the city was raised to the rank of a *municipium*, that is to say, a Roman town of the lowest grade. It seems plausible to suppose that a center of population had existed here through most of the first century.

Various hypotheses may be advanced in regard to the way in which the town grew up.[3] It is probable that a fraction of the nation of the Numidae, forming a tribe (*gens*), occupied this region and formed a fortified place (*castellum*), which would not have possessed any autonomous institutions. The tribe would be ruled by a chief (*princeps*), a title that lasted in Thubursicu even after it became a *municipium*. There exist inscriptions concerning two such chiefs; one, Florus, son of Chanar,[4] was, from his name, certainly a native, not a Roman citizen; the other, A. Larcius Macrinus,[5] bore the three names of a Roman citizen, and the inscription mentioning him was set up in the latter half of the second century so that he was a contemporary of the *municipium*. One may suppose, then, that the *castellum* of the tribe developed in such fashion that it received municipal institutions, while the tribe also went on existing for a time, ruled by its chiefs, of whom Larcius was one. Another supposition is possible, however; namely, that it was the tribe itself that was transformed into a city, in which case the chiefs would be succeeded by elected magistrates, though the title *princeps* was preserved, perhaps as an honorary qualification. The first explanation seems simpler and better suited to explain the continuance of the *principes*.

In any case, an inscription from the time of Trajan[6] (100 A. D.) records the dedication of a monument by the *civitas Thu-*

bursicitana. A *civitas*, in Roman Africa, was a commune, usually native, with municipal institutions. Thus, by 100 A. D., either the tribe or the *castellum* had become a sort of city. Another inscription, also from Trajan's reign but not to be dated more definitely, was set up by the *municipium Ulpium Trajanum Augustum Thubursicu.*[7] Here is the full name of the city, and proof that it was made a *municipium* by Trajan. This meant, if it was a Roman *municipium*, that all the free inhabitants of the place were granted the rights of Roman citizens, and if it was a Latin one, that such rights were given to all who became magistrates of the city and to their descendants. The large number of native names that occur in the epitaphs makes the second case much more likely.

It is extremely probable that, before Thubursicu was recognized by the Roman government as being worthy of promotion to the rank of a *municipium*, there was already a goodly number of people there who had, as individuals, received Roman citizenship for themselves and their families. Gsell has noted[8] the frequent occurrence of the name Julius in the inscriptions, and drawn the conclusion that this name came from natives who had served in the auxiliary forces of the Roman army under the early (Julian) emperors. It was customary for the Romans to grant citizenship to such soldiers when their enlistments expired, and the Roman names that such citizens assumed were usually those of the imperial family or of the general under whom they had served. And here another hypothesis may be advanced. Other names that frequently occur are Furius and Junius.[9] Now, in the war against Tacfarinas, which was referred to above, the two commanders who gained most glory were M. Furius Camillus and Q. Junius Blaesus.[10] If we connect with this the siege of "Thubuscum" by Tacfarinas, are we not justified in wondering if the Numidians of this place were not friends of the Roman rule, who fought under these generals and received citizenship from them when they were discharged? It is even possible that Camillus and Blaesus used these grants of Roman citizenship to gain friends among the Numidians, and to good purpose, since evidently "Thubuscum" was hostile to Tacfarinas.[11]

To return to the development of the city, it was noted above that the earliest inscription referring to the *municipium* could not be dated more closely than the reign of Trajan.

Another set of inscriptions, however, may be used in defining more closely the date of the establishment of the *municipium*.[12] The set consists of three inscriptions, one dedicated to the goddess Juno Regina, the second to Minerva, the third to an unknown divinity—unknown because the beginning of the inscription is lost—who was no doubt Jupiter. These three divinities formed the Capitoline triad of Rome, and were worshiped as the state gods of Rome in the Capitols of all Roman towns. The installation of a Capitol and of the cult of these gods in Thubursicu no doubt took place immediately after the town became a *municipium*. Since the inscriptions are dated 113 A. D., and the official named as the official dedicant was Pomponius Rufus, proconsul of Africa, the highest dignitary of the province, one may conclude that this year was the one in which the official conversion of the city into a Roman town took place.

One further step upward was possible for a Roman town in the Imperial period; it might become a colony. This meant, originally, that a group of Roman citizens was introduced into the place so honored, but often the designation of "colony" was purely honorary. The constitution of a city was in general quite unchanged after such a promotion, but naturally the inhabitants would be proud of such a designation. The honor of being called a colony came to Thubursicu some time in the third century. There exists an inscription from the time of the emperor Claudius Gothicus (270 A. D.),[13] which is the earliest in which the city is named *colonia*.

So much for what may be called the political development of Thubursicu. As for the political institutions of the city, they did not differ in any respect from the regular ones of Roman towns. That is to say, there was a series of magistracies, which cared for the administrative and judicial side of the government—the *duumvirs*, chief judges, the *aediles*, police officials, the *quaestors*, city treasurers. There was a municipal council, the *ordo decurionum*, members of which held office for life, and were drawn from the more well-to-do citizens. There was also an assembly, in which every citizen could take part. It is usually taken for granted that the assemblies of the people fell into decay during the third century, and that the council of decurions alone had political rights under the later Empire, but in Thubursicu, at least, there is evidence that the people in

general took some part in public affairs as late as the time of Julian the Apostate (361-362 A. D.). An inscription was set up at that time by action of the "*ordo et populus Thubursicensium*";[14] it is possible that this is an ancient formula carried over from former times, but if the expression be taken literally, it means that the people still had a share in passing ordinances.

Nevertheless, the government of the city was largely oligarchic. The men of the Roman Empire believed that office-holding should be restricted to those who were well-to-do (and so responsible citizens), and therefore demanded that everyone who was elected to a municipal office should pay a certain sum into the city treasury. In Thubursicu, the sum required for the aedileship was 4,000 sesterces, for the post of *flamen* (an elective priesthood in the cult of the Emperor, the apex of the municipal *cursus honorum*) 6,000, for a seat in the *ordo* 3,000.[15] A sesterce being worth approximately five cents, the cost of the highest office would be three hundred dollars, a respectable sum even if we do not take into consideration the higher purchasing power of money in that period. Even these sums were not all that were paid, however, as it was considered the right thing to add something to the required minimum. The sums thus gained by the city were used for erecting statues, public buildings, etc., and the donor received the honor of seeing his name in the inscriptions recording the dedications of such monuments.

Beside the honor of holding office in the cities of the provinces, the citizens of such cities might also strive for wider honors. Provincial towns sent delegates each year to the chief city of the province (in Africa to Carthage) to take part in the celebration of the ceremonies of the Imperial cult. These delegates chose one of their number to be the chief priest of the Imperial cult of the province for the following year. We possess an inscription set up by the *ordo* and people of Thubursicu in honor of one L. Calpurnius Augustalis, who was the first citizen of the town to receive this honor.[16] Incidentally, this inscription also throws light on the organization of the city. The *populus* is referred to as "*in curias contributus*," which may be translated "assigned to *curiae*." Now, there is still some discussion among scholars as to the character of the *curiae*, which were organizations that existed in probably all the African towns. There is a question as to whether they were official

categories into which the townsmen were placed, or private voluntary organizations for social and religious purposes. From this inscription, it is plain that they were official divisions, corresponding to the tribes or centuries in Rome, and of the same character as our city wards, though not necessarily based on residence.

After provincial honors might come admission to the nobility of the Empire. One man, in his epitaph, proudly proclaims himself the father of three Roman knights.[17] This meant that he had acquired a fortune during his lifetime, for admission to the equestrian nobility came in consequence of a certain financial rating. Another man, P. Postumius Romulus, in the inscription of a monument of unknown character, boasts that he was the first citizen of Thubursicu to receive the *latus clavus*, the insignia of a member of the Senatorial class.[18] Other examples of men from this small provincial town who received similar distinctions might be cited.

The state of the excavations do not permit one to reconstruct the history of the development of the material side of the city. The great monuments that exist, the *platea vetus* (old plaza), the *forum novum* (new plaza), the theater, the public baths, the buildings surrounding the pools called now Ain-el-Youdi, can not be dated with any degree of precision.[19] The Capitol referred to above was situated next to the *platea vetus* and so was no doubt constructed in the early part of the second century. The *forum novum* has yielded an inscription that shows it was in existence in the time of Constantine, and indeed in need of restoration at that time.[20] Some monuments appear to be from the time of Septimius Severus, whose reign was a period of the greatest prosperity for the African provinces. After his time, there was a slackening of the zeal of the citizens for beautifying their city, as is shown by the fact that several important buildings were never completed.[21]

As for the plan of the city, it is impossible to trace it. The nature of the country made impossible a checkerboard pattern of streets, such as is found, for example, in Timgad, for Thubursicu was built on a series of hills so steep that the modern visitor wonders how the ancient inhabitants managed to climb up and down to their public buildings. Probably the original *castellum* of the Numidae was on top of the principal hill, but

from this center the city spread down the hillsides and into the plain, till it covered an area greater than twenty-five square miles, not including the cemeteries that lay all about the city.[22]

Besides the city proper, the government of Thubursicu certainly had jurisdiction over a certain amount of the surrounding agricultural district. The extent of this territory can not be determined, but the location of other communes of the neighborhood gives us the extreme limits. Tipasa was a little more than four miles away to the southeast; to the northeast, Thagaste was less than twenty miles distant; while to the northwest, Zattara was about thirteen miles away.[23] Hence the territory of Thubursicu can not have been very huge.

To pass from the material side of Thubursicu's development to the spiritual side, it is possible to draw some conclusions in regard to religious conditions there. One advantage that the Romans had over modern colonizing powers in North Africa, was that they were polytheists. The chief obstacle to mutual understanding between the modern populations of this country and their European overlords is Islam. But the Romans were quite ready to allow all other peoples to worship all the native gods that they pleased, while the natives were quite ready to add the official Roman gods, the Capitoline triad and the deified emperors, to their pantheon. It has already been noted that the people of Thubursicu had a Capitol for the worship of Jupiter, Juno, and Minerva, and that they elected *flamens* to preside over the cult of the emperors. But at the same time they retained their old native gods, often under Latin names. Thus, there was at least one temple of Saturn, and the head of a statue of this god has been discovered. An inscription tells us that one M. Fabius Laetus with his family erected, in the time of Septimius Severus (more exactly between 202 and 205 B. C.), the arch and the ornamentation of Saturn's temple.[24] In Africa, Saturn usually represents the old Punic Baal. Another divinity that was probably of native origin was Tellus, the goddess of the fruitful earth. She was worshiped also, for example, at Thugga, which was an old Libyo-Punic town. At Thugga, the temple of Tellus was the gift of a woman. In Thubursicu, the priestesses of Tellus were elderly women, if we may judge from the epitaphs of two of them. One died at the age of eighty, the other at eighty-five.[25] Gsell believes[26] that

Tellus was identical with the Ceres worshiped widely in Africa, but very infrequently in the other Latin parts of the Empire, so that it is likely she was not a Roman importation, but either a native divinity or the Greek Demeter, imported from Sicily by the Carthaginians. Still another god who was probably of native origin was Liber Pater, a form of Dionysius, god of wine, and perhaps of vegetation in general. There exist inscriptions of a *sacerdos templi Liberi*, and of a *sacerdos Liberi.*[27] Thus, he possessed a temple and priests and priestesses.

But Roman gods other than the official ones were adopted by our city. Inscriptions might be cited to illustrate the worship of Fortuna, Felicitas, and others. And finally, Africa and also Thubursicu accepted Christianity. No Christian churches have been found in the city, except a chapel which seems to have been constructed during the epoch of the Byzantine domination, but several interesting remains of Christianity mingled with superstition remain. One is a statue of Apollo, which bears a cross of the form employed in the fifth or sixth century on its neck; the other is a graffito "*Dominus pascit me. F.*" (The Lord feeds me), scratched below a regular pagan epitaph on a tombstone. It is possible that there is here an attempt to Christianize, in the first case, a favorite idol, in the second, the tomb of a pagan ancestor.[28] There is also an interesting inscription in verse, preceded by a monogram of Christ, the form of which shows it to have been engraved in the sixth century. It reads:

Inbide, quid laceras illos quos crescere sentis?
Tu tibi tortor, tu tecum bulnera portas.

Freely translated, this means: "Envious one, why dost thou rail at those that thou feelest are growing? Thou art thine own tormentor, thou bearest thine own wounds with thee."

The form of this verse brings it into the category of charms against the envious and against the evil eye, but the fact that it is a Christian production gives it an added significance, for to the Christians the *Invidus* (envious) was the Devil. Also, other words of the charm, "laceras," "crescere," etc., are all to be found in one of the treatises of the African saint, Cyprian of Carthage. Evidently the versifier knew this treatise and used parts of it as a charm both against the evil eye and against

the Devil.[29] The verse is an eloquent testimony to the mixture of pagan superstitions with the Christianity of the period.

Another bit of testimony in regard to the Christianity of Thubursicu is afforded by two of the letters of St. Augustine (Nos. 43 and 44). It appears that the saint, in his battles against the heretical (or rather schismatic) Donatists, had a conference with some of the members of this sect in Thubursicu. Later, he passed through the city, in order to meet the aged Donatist bishop, Fortunius, who is described as an excellent man. The two bishops began a discussion of the schism, and Augustine wished minutes of the conference to be taken. The professional shorthand writers who were present refused to serve, however; evidently, their attachment to the heresy would not permit them to have anything to do with the orthodox bishop. Volunteer stenographers came forward from among the orthodox of the city, but had to give up the attempt to keep up with the discussion, because the crowd that had collected to hear the speakers was so noisy that no one could be heard clearly. The letter of St. Augustine was, therefore, to serve as a statement of what had taken place at the conference. While Fortunius was courteous, he evidently was distrustful of the orthodox bishop too, for he would not permit the latter to copy a document that he produced. The conference thus came to nothing, but the account shows that the Donatists were strong in Thubursicu, and that they were somewhat fanatical as well. The interest of the general population in theological questions is evident from the numbers that came to listen.

Now, to descend to more mundane affairs, can any conclusions be drawn in regard to the way in which the people of our city made a living, or in which they spent their leisure? Also, did the population remain a purely native one, or were there additions from without?

The last question may be approached first, and the reply made that, while there were some additions to the citizens from without, the Numidians remained dominant, and, for a long time, kept up the memories of their past. In the first place, a huge number of native names is found on the tombstones, and even where a part of the name is Roman, there are in many cases native surnames added. We find la Balis, son of Mutthumbal, where neither generation is Romanized; a Barisal, son

of Januarius, where the son has a native name, the father a Latin one; a Bazabullus, with a native name, married to an Aemilia Natalis, who has two Roman names; a C. Avillius Musulamus, who has the three names of a Roman citizen, but whose surname recalls the Numidian tribe, the Musulamii.[30]

That the Numidians kept up the memories of their past as an independent tribe is shown by the maintenance of the title *princeps*, which was discussed above, and also by other facts. Thus, there was set up on the city's forum an inscription addressed to the *Genius* of the tribe of Numidae, that is to the protective divinity of the tribe;[31] further, some sort of monument was erected to Hiempsal, one of the kings of the ancient independent kingdom of Numidia. We know from the writings of the African church fathers that the Numidians deified their kings,[32] and in other places temples were erected in their honor, notably in Thugga, whence comes a well-known bilingual inscription (Latin and Punic) that was part of such a temple.

The population of Thubursicu was augmented by some little immigration from without. No less than four men, whose epitaphs or honorary inscriptions were found in the city, had held office in the neighboring city of Sicca.[33] The relations between Thubursicu and Sicca must have been peculiarly close. Another person who was buried in Thubursicu is described in his epitaph as a citizen of Hippo,[34] which was the see of St. Augustine. These men, however, did not necessarily change the complexion of the city's population, for they were quite likely Africans like the Thubursicans.

Different is the case of the veteran soldiers whose inscriptions are found in the city. There is a number of these, but it is impossible to tell whether they were natives who returned here after their term of service (as seems most likely), or strangers who chose this place in which to spend their declining days. At any rate, these soldiers sometimes added an alien element by bringing home wives from the regions where they had served. Thus, G. Artorius Tertullus married Titiania Primula, who is said to be "*origine Norica.*" She came, therefore, from the province Noricum, which corresponds to parts of modern Switzerland and Austria. Evidently, this veteran accumulated some wealth, for his son, who died at fourteen, qualified as a Roman knight. Very likely the African climate did not agree with this northern woman and her son (who may have been born in his mother's old home), for she, too, died fairly early, at forty-three.[35] Another foreign woman was Julia Arbuscula, "*Syra,*"

a Syrian, who may or may not have been equally a veteran's wife. Used to a warm climate, she lived to the age of eighty.[36]

The second question asked above, in regard to the method of life of the people of the town, may be answered briefly. The only professional people who are mentioned in the sources are Irene, an *opsetrix* (*sic*), who set up a tombstone over her husband Faustus, a *medicus*.[37] No doubt there were some advantages in having a midwife and a doctor in the same family. The form of the names shows that this couple were not of high social standing; the woman may well have been a Greek.

There is no doubt that the majority of the population of the city were occupied in some way or other with the culture of the soil. The richer people would have estates in the neighborhood (ruins of such estates have in fact been found). The epitaph of one such landowner might well serve as an expression of the old Roman virtues, transferred to African soil. He composed the epitaph himself and says that he has held all the offices in his city, was the father of three Roman knights, was skilled in the law of the forum, and was a good farmer. We get the impression that here was an excellent man, who took a proper pride in his own modest accomplishments and in his sons. He belonged to a family that was numerous and influential in the city, the Vetidii. The name Vetidius is a good central Italian one, but there seems little doubt that this particular branch was of native origin. It is possible to trace it through four generations by means of inscriptions. The earliest known member was seemingly not a Roman citizen, since his name did not have the three necessary parts, while the later members attained to the highest municipal honors.[38]

The boast of this Vetidius that he was skilled in law illustrates the interest of the Thubursicans in culture. Even better illustrations are offered by the epitaphs of two of those Roman knights who were his sons. Of each it is said that they were "*utraque lingua eruditus*" (learned in both languages, Latin and Greek), and one of them died while a student at Carthage, his remains being brought home to Thubursicu by special permission of the provincial governor. It is possible that we have another example of a student dying at Carthage, in the case of Crescens, son of Successus, who died at twenty-seven and was buried in Carthage,[39] though the simple names of this father and son rather suggest persons from the lower ranks of society, who were not educated at Carthage or anywhere else.

Nevertheless, Thubursicu did not produce any very shining literary lights, as did some of its neighbors, such as Madaura, the home of Appuleius, or Thagaste, birthplace of St. Augustine. The only literary man who came from Thubursicu was a grammarian, Nonius Marcellus, whose work has preserved for our scholars a huge mass of references to earlier Roman writers, that would otherwise be unknown. If Marcellus actually possessed all the books from which he quoted, he had a library that would have caused envy to the most learned of the Romans. Modern scholars are inclined to depreciate his work, however, and to suppose that he drew his materials from anthologies and similar collections.[40] It is assumed that he lived at the beginning of the fourth century.

How the city of Thubursicu finally fell into decay it is impossible to say with any degree of exactitude. No monuments remain from the Vandal period, while from the time of the Byzantine domination of Africa there remains but one poor little chapel and one of those watch-towers, built from the debris of the decaying cities, that are to be found in so many of the African towns. We may conjecture that when the Arabs conquered the coast and left the interior to the mercy of the nomadic Libyans, the place was gradually deserted, though there seems always to have remained a small settlement which is perpetuated in the Arab (so-called) village of today.

Thus one may see here the rise and gradual decline of one of the Roman provincial towns; it will perhaps be a matter of surprise to those who have not kept abreast of modern research in this field that it is possible to know as much as this of a city which was not large enough or important enough to engage the attention of any of the writers of the general history of the Roman Empire, yet such reconstructions are possible for perhaps dozens of towns.

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[1]Practically all the information available on Thubursicu Numidarum is to be found in two works: (1) S. Gsell and Ch. A. Joly, *Khamissa, Mdaourouch, Announa* (Paris, 1914-1922), describes the archaeological remains. For the sake of brevity, this work will be referred to hereafter as *Khamissa*. (2) S. Gsell, *Inscriptions Latines del'Algerie*, Vol. 1 (Paris, 1921), to be referred to as *I. L. A.*, contains the epigraphical material. *Khamissa* contains a history of the city, and is one of those referred to above as practically complete. One may add only a few suggestions to the history produced by M. Gsell.

[2]Tacitus, *Annals* IV, 24.

[3]The subject is discussed in *Khamissa*, p. 15 ff.

[4]*I. L. A.*, no. 1341.

[5]*Ibid.*, no. 1297. For a discussion of the inscription, see R. Cagnat, "Inscription inedite de Khamissa," in *Comptes rendus de l'Academie des Inscriptions* (Paris), 1904, pp. 478-484.

[6]*I. L. A.*, no. 1244.
[7]*Ibid.*, no. 1240.
[8]*Khamissa*, p. 33.
[9]E. g., Furii in *I. L. A.*, nos. 1286, 1586-1589; Junii in *Ibid.*, nos. 1345, 1382.
[10]For Furius, Tacitus, *Annals* II, 52; for Junius, *Ibid.* IV, 73-74.
[11]It may be objected that it is not possible that these generals could have made grants of citizenship for political reasons, because this would have been an infringement on one of the prerogatives of the emperor. But in the time of Tiberius, the imperial prerogatives were not yet clearly defined. Thus, this same Junius Blaesus could still be allowed to receive the salutation "imperator" from his victorious troops (Tacitus, *Annals* IV, 74.6), the last occasion on which such an honor was permitted to one who was not actually emperor.
[12]*I. L. A.*, nos. 1230-1232.
[13]*Ibid.*, no. 1268.
[14]*Ibid.*, no. 1286.
[15]*Ibid.*, no. 1223, and 1236, cf. 1294.
[16]*Ibid.*, no. 1295.
[17]*Ibid.*, no. 1362.
[18]*Ibid.*, no. 1290.
[19]These structures are nearly all described in *Khamissa*, the *platea vetus*, p. 44 ff.; the *forum novum*, p. 28 and pp. 80-81; the theater, p. 98 ff.; the buildings of the Ain-el-Youdi, p. 85 ff. For the baths, see reports of Ballu in *Bulletin Archéologique* (Paris), 1908, p. 233 ff., and 1919, pp. 57-63.
[20]*I. L. A.*, no. 1273.
[21]A temple on the *platea vetus*, *Khamissa*, p. 65; the theater, *Ibid.*, p. 100.
[22]*Ibid.*, p. 26, "65 hectares." But cf. the report of M. Ballu, *Bull. Arch.*, 1903, p. 575, who gives 100 hectares.
[23]The figures are taken from *Khamissa*, p. 29. I have given approximate figures in miles, instead of in kilometers.
[24]*I. L. A.*, no. 1256.
[25]*Ibid.*, nos. 1373 and 1374.
[26]*Khamissa*, p. 39.
[27]*I. L. A.*, nos. 1368 and 1372.
[28]*Comptes Rendus de l'Academie des Inscriptions* (Paris), 1917, p. 344 ff.
[29]Discussion of the inscription by Monceaux, in *Ibid.*, no. 1916, p. 37 ff.
[30]All the above are from a group given under the numbers 1426-1444 in *I. L. A.*
[31]*Ibid.*, no. 1226.
[32]References under *Ibid.*, no. 1242.
[33]*Ibid.*, nos. 1294, 1347, 1348, 1352.
[34]*Ibid.*, no. 1378.
[35]*Ibid.*, no. 1336.
[36]*Ibid.*, no. 1380.
[37]*Ibid.*, no. 1377.
[38]The inscriptions of the Vetidii are in *Ibid.*, nos. 1355-1364, to which should be added no. 1236.
[39]*Ibid.*, no. 1379.
[40]For Nonius Marcellus, see, for example, W. S. Teuffel, *Geschichte der Römischen Literatur*, Vol. 3 (6th edition, Leipzig-Berlin, 1913), p. 221 ff.