THE TUNISIA OF AHMAD BEY

1837-1855



PRINCETON STUDIES ON THE NEAR EAST

L. CARL BROWN

THE TUNISIA OF AHMAD BEY

1837-1855

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PREFACE

It is a pleasure to recall, at the end of the task, the several persons and institutions whose support and encouragement contributed to this work. I now record their names with deep appreciation.

Research support for the academic year 1967-1968 was provided by a U.S. Fulbright-Hays faculty research grant. Since 1968 the Department of Near Eastern Studies and the inter-departmental Program in Near Eastern Studies have made available an impressive pattern of research assistance, responding generously to each need as it arose. This sustained expression of confidence in the work by my own university is especially prized.

The staffs of the archival collections and libraries I consulted were uniformly helpful. I would like to single out for special attention the courteous, unflappable efficiency of the staff at the British Public Record Office and the almost familial reception and assistance provided at the Tunisian National Archives.

Father André Demeerseman, a friend and mentor since 1960, placed the resources of the Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes at my disposal just as he shared unstintingly with me his own research and ideas on this very subject.

My colleagues and co-workers in the Tunisian National Archives, M. H. Chérif and Lucette Valensi, graciously offered their own hard-earned insights into the best utilization of the rich archival collection and, in addition, helped me to refine my interpretation on many points, great and small.

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Special thanks are due two friends and former students, Edmund Burke, III, and William L. Cleveland, who read an earlier version of the work and presented detailed substantive and

stylistic criticism of a quality that would be the envy of any professional editor.

I also benefitted from the reading of all or part of the manuscript by Morroe Berger, Raphael Danziger, F. Robert Hunter, the late Roger Le Tourneau, Serif Mardin, Richard P. Mitchell, A. L. Udovitch and I. William Zartman.

Christine Leiggi Brennan has since 1968 played a major role in preparing this book. With rare efficiency and unflagging good cheer she has typed and organized the several different forms of this manuscript while suffering in silence the author's many false starts and second thoughts.

Janet Gemmell and Teresa Lang were both especially helpful during the last stages of preparing this work for publication.

Finally, I would like to thank my wife, Anne, and children, Liza, Win and Jeff, who have magnanimously accepted Ahmad Bey for all these years as a special, pampered member of the family.

NOTE ON TRANSLITERATION AND THE USE OF ARABIC AND TURKISH TECHNICAL TERMS

Arabic and Turkish words have been transliterated as completely as standard English orthography permits. Doubled consonants are shown (as in umma or Umayyad), but the long vowels and velarized consonants are not indicated with the exception of qaf which is represented by "q." The Arabic 'ayn is represented by ', and the hamza by '. The initial hamza of a word, however, is not shown (e.g., al-Amin and not al-'Amin), nor are the medial or terminal hamza and 'ayn represented in every case.

Uniformity in transliteration has been sacrificed when it was deemed necessary to avoid a spelling that would confuse or mislead the non-Arabist. For example, most geographical names follow the existing French spellings as they appear on standard maps (e.g., Kairouan and not Qayrawan). On the other hand, less well-known geographical names are given in accordance with the above simplified transliteration system (such as al-A'rad instead of Arad). Also, certain words that have become well known in English in a spelling that contradicts the above rules are given in their more familiar forms (e.g., dey and bey instead of day and bay).

Within these limits, the author has tried to do his part in moving Arabic transliteration toward standardization by rejecting such hoary favorites as Koran in favor of Quran. Admittedly, as the purist will recognize, this is only a modest step toward greater accuracy.

The result is a system only in the Bergsonian sense. In expiation, the author pleads that this is neither a linguistic nor a philological work. And if this excuse does not satisfy the reader, the author can only fall back on the cavalier dismissal of all transliteration systems offered by T. E. Lawrence in his *Seven Pillars of Wisdom.*

A glossary of Arabic and Turkish terms used in the text appears on pages 379-381.

ABBREVIATIONS USED

AE Tunis	*Affaires étrangères.* French Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Consular Correspondence, Tunisia.
AGT	*Archives generales tunisiennes* (Tunisian National Archives).
Archives Guerre	*Archives de Ministère de la Guerre.* French Ministry of War Archives (Vincennes).
EI[1]	*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (First Edition).
EI[2]	*Encyclopaedia of Islam* (Second Edition).
FO	(*British*) *Foreign Office*, British diplomatic and consular correspondence.
SEI	*Shorter Encyclopaedia of Islam.*

TABLE OF PRINCIPAL DATES

Reigning Bey

1705

1705 *Beginning Husaynid dynasty* — Husayn b. Ali

1735

Ali Pasha

1756

Muhammad b. Husayn

1759

Ali b. Husayn

1782

Hamuda b. Ali

September 1798 *Tunisian corsair raid on San Pietro*

September 1811 *Revolt of Turkish jund*

September 1814

Uthman b. Ali

November 1814

Mahmud b. Muhammad

January 1815 *Execution Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi'*

April 1816 *British fleet under Lord Exmouth demonstrates before Tunis*

May 1816 *Revolt of Turkish jund*

September 1819 *Anglo-French naval demonstration before Tunis*

October 1822 *Execution Larbi Zarruq*

Reigning Bey

———————————————March 1824

Husayn b. Mahmud

July 1830 *French conquest of Algiers. Beginning French control of Algeria*

January 1831 *Creation Nizami units*

February-Fall 1831 *Ill-fated Tunisian expedition to Oran*

November 1832-
May 1833 *Tunisian dispute with Sardinia*

———————————————May 1835

Mustafa b. Mahmud

May 1835 *Re-establishment direct Ottoman control in Tripoli*

February 1837 *Ill-fated scheme to impose military conscription in Tunis*

11 September 1837 *Execution of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'*

———————————————10 October 1837

Ahmad b. Mustafa

1837 *Organization Nizami cavalry and artillery regiments. Third Nizami regiment planned*

1838 *Project to create textile mill at Tebourba begun*

8 April 1838 *Arrival Colonel Considine*

24 August 1839 *Departure Colonel Considine*

March 1840 *Establishment Bardo Military School*

June-October 1840 *Inconclusive stay in Tunis of French military adviser, Colonel Belmont*

July 1840 *Farhat Jaluli and brother flee to Malta*

August 1840 *Ottoman government grants Ahmad Bey rank of mushir*

October 1840 *Franco-Tunisian agreement on official military mission*

Reigning Bey

Ahmad b. Mustafa

1841 *Work begun on frigate Ahmadiya*

August 1841 *Ahmad closes slave market in Tunis*

1842 *Creation three new Nizami infantry regiments*

December 1842 *Ahmad decrees all children born of slaves to be free*

December 1843-
June 1844 *The Xuereb case*

September 1843-
March 1844 *War scare between Tunis and Sardinia*

January 1846 *Liberation of all slaves*

1846 *Second artillery regiment formed*

November-December
1846 *Ahmad's state visit to France*

June 1847 *Muhammad bin 'Ayad and nephew seek consular protection*

July 1847 *Creation of Tunisian state bank under direction of Mahmud bin 'Ayad*

October 1847-
December 1849 *Installation of Chappe telegraph system*

1850 *Alleged secret application for French citizenship by Mustafa Khaznadar*

14 June 1852 *Mahmud bin 'Ayad flees Tunisia*

July 1852 *Ahmad Bey's first stroke, leaving him partially paralyzed*

January 1853 *Frigate Ahmadiya launched*

January 1853 *Ahmad radically reduces military to avoid bankruptcy*

May 1853 *State bank organized by Mahmud bin 'Ayad defaults*

October 1853 *Beginning Crimean War*

May 1854 *Ahmad announces plan to send Tunisian troops to Crimean War*

Reigning Bey

30 May 1855

Muhammad b. Husayn

July 1855 *Termination of French military mission*

September 1859

Muhammad al-Sadiq b. Husayn

October 1882

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INTRODUCTION

On September 2, 1798, corsairs from Tunis launched a surprise raid on San Pietro, a small island just off the southwest coast of Sardinia. The booty of some 900 prisoners, including 150 young girls and treasures from the parish church, was taken back to Tunis and distributed by the bey of Tunis among the notables of his government.

Forty-nine years later the son of one of those young girls was in Paris being lionized by the court of Louis Philippe as ruler of a state friendly to France and as the very symbol of modernity in North Africa and the Muslim world. Ahmad Bey of Tunis, who reigned from 1837 to 1855—the North African equivalent of Egypt's Muhammad Ali or Ottoman Sultan Mahmud, the ruler who attempted to Westernize his army, abolished Negro slavery and inaugurated ambitious plans for modern industry in Tunisia—was the son of a Christian-born slave captured in a corsair raid.

These two incidents offer a provocative prologue to the story of Ahmad Bey and the Tunisia of his times. The juxtaposition of languorous odalisques with dynamic, Westernizing rulers appears too contrived, too romantic, as if the spirit of Delacroix had managed to distract the historian from his task. Most of us have been conditioned to separate the two ages (medieval and modern) by a decent interval of more than a century to be called Renaissance. Most of us are accustomed to compartmentalizing the two presumably separate worlds of Islam and the West. Yet the life and times of Ahmad Bey can only be understood as a blend of medieval and modern, of Islam and the West. These years of Ahmad Bey's reign were critical for Tunisia. A centuries-old state system with all its attendant values and styles was dying while those directly involved in its fate initiated necessarily awkward, hesitant, and discordant efforts to create something new or patch up what could be saved of the old. To recapture this age as lived and perceived by Ahmad Bey and the political class over which he ruled is the principal task of this book.

Underlying this principal task is a concern to fit the Tunisian story of these years into a broader historical pattern of change

imposed by the West upon the rest of the world. Our study of Tunisia in the age of Ahmad Bey may be classified with the historical and social science literature treating what most have chosen to label modernization. Others prefer to speak of economic or political development, and earlier generations of scholars with less concern for theoretical constructs referred simply to Westernization.

The approach taken here is one that can use such terms almost interchangeably, not in disdain for the many impressive theoretical and "model-building" efforts in this field but rather to emphasize a different aspect of the subject. In Tunisia during this period certain developments began (to the extent that the historian ever feels justified in talking of beginnings in patterns of human organization and relations), the stimulus for these beginnings came from a precise place—Europe—and the response (in these years of Ahmad's reign at least) was the virtual monopoly of a small number of persons who will be designated (again, with happy interchangeability) government or the political class.

This political class was the first generation in Tunisia obliged to face a dilemma destined to haunt subsequent political generations in Tunisia, the Muslim Mediterranean and, for that matter, much of the Third World: how can those in power reform their own institutions and their relations with the society over which they rule in a way to assure both survival against a threatening foreign enemy and authority at home?

This book examines a governmental apparatus—and the political class manning that apparatus—during one of those decisive turning points in history. The period, itself, is fortunately given both dramatic and thematic unity in the person of a dynamic, innovative ruler. Ahmad Bey is the central figure, the protagonist, to use the dramatist's term. He was the individual within the Tunisian political class endowed as bey with the established authority to act. Equally important, his own personal predisposition made him a restless innovator.

Nevertheless, the story of Ahmad Bey is only an important piece to be fitted into a larger puzzle. The broader purpose of the book is to draw the portrait not of a single man but of an entire group—the Tunisian ruling class in an age of transition. Consistent with this approach, the political leadership is described and analyzed from various, interrelated viewpoints, such as functional

specialization, educational background, ethnic origins, stratification or "pecking order," and that fugitive factor—*esprit de corps.*

The beylik of Tunis in the early and middle years of the nineteenth century was a small country (about the size of Michigan) with, by standards of the Mediterranean Muslim world to which it belonged, a reasonably cohesive populace in language, religion, and way of life. Such factors as area, population (perhaps one to one and a half million), and accessibility facilitated the task of a pre-modern government seeking to maintain itself against the welter of centrifugal force.

And, to state the obverse of the above, Tunisia had a reasonably centralized, clearly delineated government manned by a political class whose personnel, policies, functional differentiation and value-system can be grasped and studied within the covers of a single book.

Tunisia thus offers a happy analytical manageability. The subject-matter of a single political entity in a time of traumatic transition from one epoch to another can be handled at the highest level—the central government—with at the same time adequate control of center-periphery relations and of both geographical and functional variations.

The Tunisian government of Ahmad Bey was clearly autonomous while being equally clearly a part of the greater Ottoman political world in ideas and practice of government as well as in bonds of religio-political loyalty.

The de facto autonomy vis-à-vis Istanbul which had been a daily reality since the early seventeenth century is described in chapter two. A dynastic system had been in existence since 1705, and Ahmad Bey was the tenth ruler of the Husaynid line. (The nineteenth and last was deposed in 1957 when Tunisia, one year after independence from France, opted for a republican form of government.)

The institutions of Husaynid Tunisian government, strongly marked with the Ottoman imprint, also had roots even farther back in time to the Hafsid regime that had given Tunisia roughly three centuries of political unity before the Ottoman period. The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey was a political entity possessing its own heritage and integrity.

For all of their de facto autonomy and indigenous political traditions, *most* of the Tunisian political class identified with the

Ottomans. Even when they resisted real or suspected encroachments coming from Istanbul (noted in chapter seven) most of this Tunisian political leadership evinced a certain psychological thralldom to the Ottoman Empire. The Ottoman Empire as seen from Tunisia was the last great political representation of the Islamic umma. And the Empire was just that—an empire, an imposing, extensive political order. Just as a fledgling United States boldly asserted its independence from the home country even while the first families of Massachusetts and Virginia agonized in ambivalent regard for things English so too did the first families of Ottoman Tunisia (with not dissimilar ethnic ties to the home country, as explained in chapter three) look eastward to Istanbul.

The Tunisian political autonomy in daily affairs of government coupled with the political leadership's sentimental ties to the Ottoman world is pertinent to the underlying task of this book—to tie the Tunisian story into the broader historical pattern of change the West imposed upon the rest of the world. Ahmad's Tunisia is most readily comparable to other countries where an existing governmental structure found itself, willy-nilly, placed in the vanguard to parry and react as best it could to incessant Western thrusts. The neatest fit of all for comparative study is within the same cultural area: Ahmad Bey's Tunisia offers a striking similarity—drawn only to small scale—to both the central Ottoman Empire and to Egypt.

Both Tunisia and Egypt were autonomous, but both also shared with the central Ottoman Empire a common politico-religious heritage.

All three represented political units in which that first great onslaught of men, methods and ideas coming from Europe was met and coped with, to the extent possible, by the existing political elite.

The reign of Ahmad Bey may, accordingly, be set alongside that of Ottoman Sultan Mahmud (1808-1839) and Egypt's Muhammad Ali (1805-1849). They ruled during roughly the same age, and all three had a sufficiently long time in office to leave their mark. All three were dynamic innovators, all three fought a two-front struggle against wary domestic conservatism and relentless foreign pressure.

The responses initiated by these three rulers and their followers were as if wrought at the same forge: a consuming passion for

military reform *à la européenne*; a willingness to risk letting European military advisers infiltrate the system if this might advance the above goal; the beginnings of state-directed, forced-draft industrialization geared to military needs; tentative and at times partially unwitting moves toward politicization of the masses, with a concomitant stimulation of proto-nationalist sentiments. All these proceeded from such mundane considerations as the desire to tap the most accessible manpower source for military conscription, clumsy but sustained efforts at state centralization and what the Marxists might label de-feudalization, and the creation of new state educational institutions to train the new civil and military officials deemed necessary.

Even the weaknesses in their three programs were identical—a dismal pattern of "haste makes waste" in the industrial enterprises, an inability to win over a sufficient number of the existing political elite to break definitively with passive resistance and the force of inertia at the top, and the overloading of a governmental machine developed to run at a much more leisurely pace.

Eventually, but well beyond the time of Sultan Mahmud, Muhammad Ali, and Ahmad Bey, all three political units suffered financial and psychological breakdown. All three states later went bankrupt and experienced a form of European quasi receivership (Tunisia in 1869, Egypt in 1876, and the central Ottoman Empire in 1881). In the first two cases the financial receivership inaugurated the last stage before outright Western control (French control of Tunisia in 1881 and the British occupation of Egypt in 1882). At roughly the same time the psychological breakdown occurred, as a previously self-confident political class developed an insecurity and morbidity that increasing numbers of them could not live with. They then attempted to exorcise the malady in a variety of ways ranging from cautious reformism-within-the-system to conspiratorial activities.

Linking the Tunisian experience during the age of Ahmad Bey with the similar plight of Egypt and the central Ottoman Empire thus helps to bring out more clearly how the beylik fits into the mainstream of nineteenth century history of Mediterranean Islam. The Tunisian case serves also as an independent check on existing theories of change in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire, as well as (with more caution to establish the necessary common denominator) other parts of the non-Western world. Somewhat in the way that turning on another strong light in the same room brings into

better clarity and perspective furnishings previously obscured, the Tunisian, Egyptian, and central Ottoman histories can be mutually illuminating. The common historical pattern of change in these three autonomous state units, all sharing the same governmental and religio-cultural heritage, is noted throughout this work. The concluding chapter tackles this phenomenon more directly, offering a discussion of Tunisia in a broader perspective of modernization theory and historical experience.

Ahmad Bey represents the political generation in Tunisia that grew up in the lengthening shadows of the new European threat and found themselves wrestling ceaselessly with problems of transition throughout their active careers. The story of Ahmad's mother stirs dim memories of notorious "Barbary corsairs." Yet, after legends and old prejudices are stripped away, one finds a venerable tradition of piracy (or privateering) in all the lands, Christian and Muslim, washed by the Mediterranean. Napoleon had freed Muslim slaves when he conquered Malta in 1798, just three months before the Tunisian raid on San Pietro. This was a harbinger of things to come. By the nineteenth century, privateering, a pre-modern form of naval warfare, had been rendered obsolete by technological advances, the commercial revolution, and nationalism—all coming from Europe. The Knights of St. John ruling Malta were an anachronism when Napoleon brushed them aside.

The Barbary corsairs were also living on borrowed time. The raid on San Pietro was virtually the last major engagement against a European interest.[1] And Europe's outraged indignation at this raid, which in earlier times would have been accepted with the same natural resignation to be granted drought or epidemic, was ominous.

The Sardinian origin of Ahmad's mother also highlights the theme of traumatic transition for Ahmad's generation. Tunisian rulers had been accustomed to view Sardinia as their military

[1] In October 1815, Tunisian ships launched a surprise raid at the Bay of Palma in Sardinia and against the island of San Antioco. They encountered much resistance and lost an estimated 150 men but made off with 158 captives. See Ernest Mercier, *Histoire de l'Afrique septentrionale*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1891), 3: 491. This, however, was only a few months after the battle of Waterloo and in the same month as Murat's abortive attempt to land at Calabria. Soon, post-Napoleonic Europe would settle the piracy question on its own terms.

inferior and legitimate prey. Yet, in Ahmad's own reign the kingdom of Sardinia would impose a humiliating diplomatic defeat upon the beylik of Tunis.

Raised according to values and customs of a political and social system still largely intact, Ahmad was to experience the full force of Europe's challenge to the Islamic world. In his own lifetime, European consuls discarded the old custom of kissing the bey's hand in formal audiences and instead made arrogant demands backed up by the threat of naval demonstrations.

A thorough activist and an autocrat as well, Ahmad was ideally cast to be an "enlightened despot" in the manner of Peter the Great or Frederick the Great. Unfortunately for him, the times in which he lived and the Tunisian power base from which he worked made this impossible. An overwhelmingly stronger and aggressive outside world deprived his regime of that margin of error needed by political innovators. Any mistake was immediately exploited by an outside power, and the new ground gained at Tunisia's expense became a prescriptive right in the eyes of Tunisia's European "allies." Like his contemporaries, Sultan Mahmud and Muhammad Ali, Ahmad Bey was fated to spend much of his time and energies in a sterile military-diplomatic game in which the European powers were always the silent partners controlling the outcome.

Thus, the polarity opposing traditional politics and modernizing forces is encased in still another polarity pitting the familiar and religiously sanctioned indigenous against the threatening but enticing, the efficient but alien and godless (as seen from within) exogenous. For the political leadership in any society to appreciate the need for change and then to find means to implement such change is difficult enough under the most favorable circumstances. How much more difficult is the task of a political leadership that finds itself caught in the pincers of two stronger forces—a constellation of foreign powers threatening at any moment to destroy it and a traditional society that does not yet perceive the new challenge and is unwilling to respond.

The dynamic new variable was clearly the Western challenge, but there remained during this period of transition that characterizes Ahmad Bey's reign an almost equally imposing countervailing force—the Tunisian ancien régime which was not yet ready to collapse under its own weight. Built on customs hammered out in other times and designed to carry out other tasks

(and not too inefficiently when judged by its own standards) the governmental apparatus was ill-adapted to the nineteenth century world "made in Europe."

The pressure to change originating from outside produced ambivalent results. In many cases it increased conservative resistance which the ruler would ignore at his peril. This explains the cautious, piecemeal nature of reformism in Tunisia (as well as other parts of the greater Ottoman world) during these years. Changes were grafted, often as unobtrusively as possible, to the existing plants. Outmoded institutions were seldom abolished with the stroke of a pen. They were usually allowed to remain alongside the new. Small wonder if certain strange and unanticipated mutations resulted in such a political garden.

Nor can the simplistic image of Ahmad Bey, the innovator moving in every way conceivable to jog a more conservative Tunisia into the nineteenth century be accepted. In many ways Ahmad Bey was a mirror of the society over which he ruled. He, too, remained largely a pre-modern man, unmindful of the organizational complexities which form the very bedrock of modern society, approaching new ideas and inventions as capriciously as a child who soon tires of his new toy.

Given this dual challenge of old against new and indigenous against foreign, how is the story of the political class during Ahmad Bey's reign best told? An approach has been chosen for this book that can avoid certain unconscious prejudices often found in the Western historical tradition and perhaps especially in modernization studies.

There is a deep-seated restlessness in the Western historiographical spirit that can be calmed only by giving inordinate attention to the intrusive new, to the innovators, to that which is in process of becoming. The result, especially in modernization studies, is a tendency to gloss over the complexity and diversity of the so-called traditional societies being challenged to change. It is as if the historian believes that all traditional societies—like Tolstoy's "all happy families"—must resemble each other. After a few broad brush strokes to set out what the old way was like, all attention is concentrated on the seemingly dynamic new.

There is also an unfortunate tendency to separate an ongoing process into sharply distinct categories. To use a grammatical figure, the new becomes "subject" and the old becomes "object."

There is posited, and then hardened into conventional wisdom, the notion of the actors and the acted upon.

Even the historiographical tradition of Western romanticism is often an exaggerated over-correction. The earlier age is idealized, abstracted from history and made into a paradise lost.

To avoid such fallacies the historian needs to grant the so-called traditional society equal time. Such is the justification for the detailed description and analysis of the Tunisian political class and its underlying political culture on the eve of modernization which is contained in Part One.

Attention to the structure and function of the Tunisian political class to be found in Part One (or, to adopt a metaphor from sports, concern with the rules of the game rather than the play-by-play account and the score) uses a well-established historical methodology. It is an effort to reconstruct for a precise age and a defined group what life was really like, how things worked and what those concerned thought about their world—how they interpreted reality.

A methodology developed by anthropologists has also inspired the approach taken (and may they be indulgent with the clumsy intrusion of a layman to their field). An anthropologist often chooses a very small social unit. He places himself in the midst of the chosen unit, attempts to become a part of it, using the techniques of the participant-observer. His first task is to make sense of what is going on and then to describe it in a coherent classificatory system. In his description and analysis he concerns himself with such things as structures, functions, roles, socialization and value-systems.

Having armed himself with a reference group, the workings of which he can see and interpret as an integral unit, the anthropologist feels free to move on and follow his group through its response to an outside challenge. At the same time, he can offer his work for comparative study, based on the carefully constructed hypothesis that the reference group may be demonstrated to belong to a societal species.

The Tunisian political class was a manageably small unit. Although not a social unit in the sense of a village, fraction of a tribe, or quarter of a town, it was a coherent entity. The over-all structure and how it worked can be described. The questions of who were selected for what positions and how they were trained

can be answered. There is nothing like the anthropologist's concern with lineage groups (often excessive in this outsider's opinion), but Part One does emphasize patterns of marriage alliances, degree of generational continuity in family class standings and occupational roles, and client-patron networks.

As for the sense of being a participant-observer to a bygone age and the ability to reconstruct the value-system of the Tunisian political class as it existed almost a century and a half ago, the author acknowledges an element of good luck in source material. This requires a short digression.

The author's earlier work on Tunisia under the French Protectorate and then his study of the Tunisian statesman Khayr al-Din (which familiarized him especially with the period of the 1860s and 1870s) offered a logical and chronological introduction to the age of Ahmad Bey. Then, also, some sense of the folk tradition emerged through talks with Tunisian scholars and "old-timers."

The foreign consular reports were helpful, especially as one found himself able to collate the divergent French, British and American accounts. The same can be said for the wealth of Western memoirs and travel literature. Yet this remains the view from outside.

The material in the Tunisian National Archives was indispensable for determining how things really worked. Nevertheless, the clerk does not express his innermost thoughts in official correspondence. What the historian seeks is that treasure trove of biographical detail. Here the historian of the Islamic world before quite recent times must envy his colleague working in Western history. Biographical dictionaries of saints, scholars and statesmen are as old as Islam itself, but with few exceptions they tend to be overly stylized and chary of divulging the intimate personal touches that make the subject come alive. And autobiography is—like the novel and the newspaper—a form of communication developed only in recent times under the impact of the West.

The stroke of good luck which makes it possible for the historian to place himself among the political class in the time of Ahmad Bey comes in the person of a Tunisian chronicler and biographer who, when his merit is properly recognized, will outstrip the Egyptian al-Jabarti as a great nineteenth-century historian in the traditional Arabo-Islamic style. He is Ahmad ibn Abi Diyaf (colloq. Bin Diyaf). His six-volume history of Tunisia since the Islamic conquest, supplemented by his two-volume bio-

graphical dictionary of leading Tunisians whose careers spanned the latter decades of the eighteenth century until the 1860s when Bin Diyaf's own work came to an end, is the quintessence of pre-Protectorate Tunisian history.

Bin Diyaf not only had a good historical sense, he was in an excellent position to know his subject, having served as private secretary to every Husaynid Bey from 1827 until his retirement in the 1860s. His father before him had also been a clerk. If ever there was a person born to record the lives and times of the Tunisian political class during these years it was Bin Diyaf. He became in his later years a partisan of reform and Westernization. This only enhanced his ability to see with greater perspicacity what was taking place. He had lived the traditional way. He learned to understand and appreciate the new ways. His great work attests to a happy synthesis of the two. Bin Diyaf is the author's alter ego in his role as participant-observer.

The Tunisian political class on the eve of modernization, as described and interpreted in Part One, must be neither romanticized as the political summum bonum in an archetypal age of innocence nor denigrated as formless and primitive. Husaynid government was an elaborate system, based on a high cultural tradition. A bureaucratic (albeit pre-modern) structure and a reasonably well-developed differentiation of functions assured a complex interlocking of relationships among a cluster of peoples and institutions. The resulting system worked with greater or lesser efficiency at this or that point, just as is the case with all political systems, ancient and modern. The task at hand is neither to belabor its alleged absurdities nor to bemoan its passing. It must be analyzed and understood on its own terms.

The next concern, if one is to avoid the fallacies of an overly activist or progressivist history, is to get around the problem of seeing the traditional structure depicted in Part One as a hitherto unchanging organism now suddenly faced with a total challenge. From another perspective the history of Ahmad Bey's reign—as taken up in Part Two—must avoid the teleological trap. It must not be assumed that Tunisian history, or even the history of its political class, was ineluctably moving toward some predetermined end. Even less can it be argued that the principal actors saw their daily problems in terms of, say, doggedly holding back the future or, on the contrary, working to achieve radical change as soon as possible.

At this point the continuation of the participant-observer technique into Part Two becomes especially attractive. We follow Ahmad Bey holding court, reviewing his troops, paying a state visit to Paris. We consider the Husaynid bureaucrat concerned about pay, promotion, and clearing out his in-box. We note the impression foreign military advisers conveyed of their Tunisian fellow-officers and soldiers and vice versa.

The task of Part Two is not just to make order out of what happened. The real challenge is to reconstruct what the principal protagonists thought was going on, why they thought so, and what were the results of this combination of perceptions and actions.

This requires a careful mixture of the significant and the banal. Seen from this perspective the seemingly minor murder case involving the Maltese Pablo Xuereb may loom large. Similarly, the effort to unveil how these people saw their situation, to place in appropriate context the psychological drive of Ahmad Bey and members of his entourage to be accepted by the dominant and domineering outsider, largely explains the importance of the chapter entitled "Marks of Modernity."

The Tunisian participation in the Crimean War becomes a matter to be judged not, in the image of war and diplomacy, as a chess game, but in the deeper reality of political leaders making decisions in response to frustrations or temptations emanating from other quarters, or even for no better reason than to solve the day's problem and get a good night's sleep.

With this combination of the banal and the significant, with this emphasis on the daily life as lived and perceived by Ahmad Bey and the political class he led, one can better realize that they were neither modernizers nor mossbacks; they were a bit of both. One can also better appreciate the many ironies in which at times the innovators frustrated the very progress (however defined) they sought, while the resisters set in motion processes undermining their own position. This was not a single cosmic clash between old and new, alien and native. There were countless and contradictory clashes, often within the same individual.

Nor were they especially benighted persons unable to ride the wave of the future safely to shore. The Tunisian political class was eminently typical of a ruling establishment caught up in the quandary of playing the game even while the rules are being changed. One need only recall the changing views of empire

(modern European colonial, Austro-Hungarian, Ottoman) within the last century, or contemplate the present ideological confusion pitting ecologists against partisans of economic growth, to appreciate the common human difficulty of reconciling perception of reality with what is actually going on.

* * *

The principal task of this book is to recapture the age as lived, perceived, and acted out by Ahmad Bey and the political class over which he ruled.

At a more background level this is a historical study of modernization, concentrating on a single political elite's early, stumbling efforts to adjust to new worlds and new ways. The significance of the period may be studied from two different perspectives: (a) the early beginnings of modernization when all was strange and new, permitting the acculturation process to be seen in its most rudimentary and pristine stage; and (b) an epoch to be regarded as the seed for what was later to grow into a new plant, or the age of Ahmad Bey as a natural historical starting point for understanding the broader modernization process still unfolding.

In both the principal task of presenting the portrait of a political class in an age of transition, and the underlying purpose of studying the beginnings of a process called "modernization," this book emphasizes Ahmad Bey's Tunisia as one clearly delineated example of a more general historical pattern, for the modern history of Tunisia and the history of modernization in Tunisia offers insights and examples not lacking in interest to a wider world.

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I

Tunisia: Mediterranean, Muslim and Ottoman

A. Tunisia in the Mediterranean and Muslim Worlds

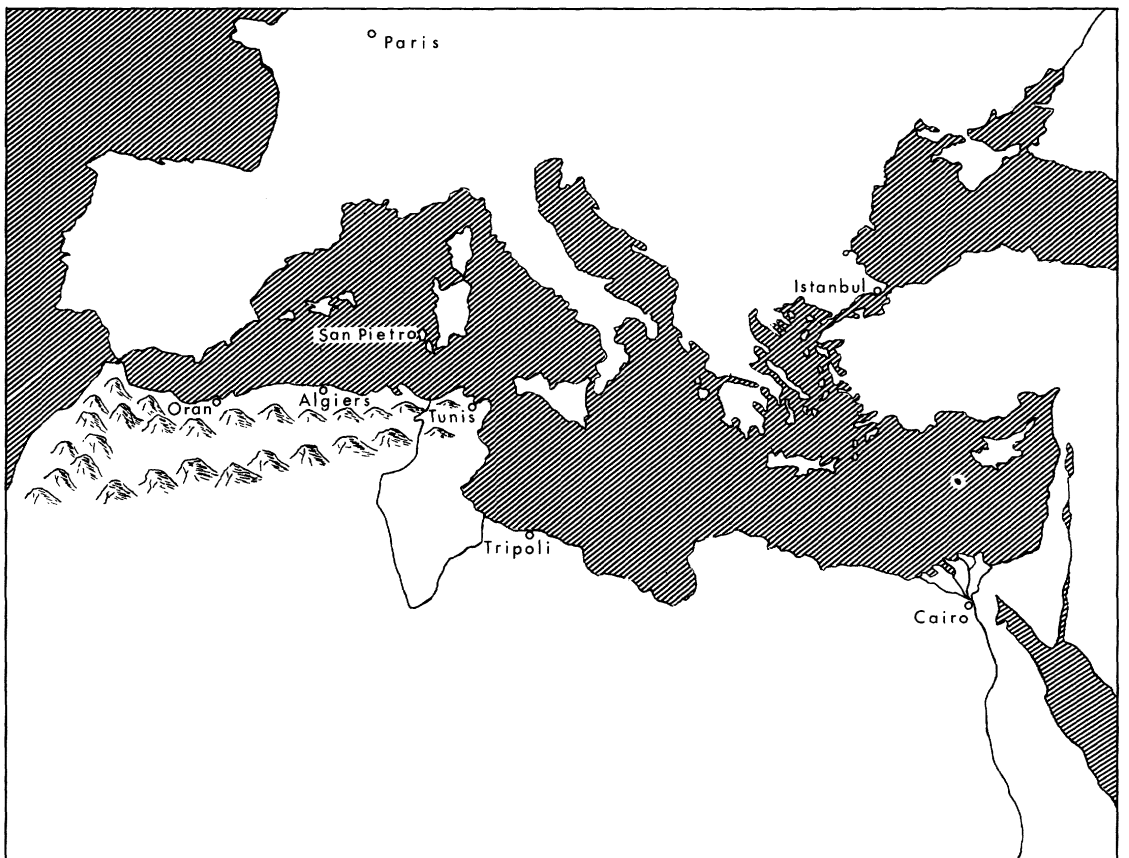
Some of the categorical conceptions acquired in early schooling can hamper understanding of Tunisia. We learn of the continents, and the implicit assumption is that they represent different entities. To this is overlaid the distinction between the Islamic world and the West (or in earlier days, Christendom). At an even higher level of abstraction there is the difference between East and West.

A few moments with a map of the lands bounding the Mediterranean correct these arbitrary distinctions. Overlooking political boundaries, one can follow the natural routes—the lines of least resistance—for the movement of men and ideas: plains, seas, rivers, mountain passes, and oases. They make comprehensible such events as a Roman Empire which extended to Egypt and the Fertile Crescent in the east and Spain and North Africa in the west, the Roman-Carthaginian rivalry, the spread of Christianity along both the northern and southern shores of the Mediterranean, the spread of Islam along the southern, the Crusades, and the Ottoman-Hapsburg rivalry of the sixteenth century.

There is a Mediterranean unity which ties together these portions of Europe, Africa, and Asia. Mediterranean Islam and the Mediterranean West, although living in hostility and mutual incomprehension during most of their long history, have never been out of contact. And as for East and West, it suffices to observe that Tunis is west of Rome and Tangier west of London.

Tunisia borders the Mediterranean, roughly 900 miles as the crow flies from the Straits of Gibraltar and somewhat more than 1,300 miles from the Suez Canal. Only eighty-five miles separate Tunisia from Sicily. Tunisia and Sicily cut the Mediterranean in two.[1] Located thus at the hub of this great inland sea, with both

[1] See Fernand Braudel, *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe, II*, 2nd ed., 2 vols. (Paris, 1966), 1: 104, 106-107.



1. Map showing Tunisia's location in Mediterranean.

an eastern and northern coastline, Tunisia has been a weathercock for Mediterranean history, revealing from which direction have come the stronger winds of politico-military power.

A center of power in its own right in the Carthaginian period, Tunisia later became the heartland of Roman Africa. The territory of present-day Tunisia and eastern Algeria was also the strongest bastion of North African Christianity. Following the rise of Islam and the beginning of the Arab penetration into North Africa in the seventh century, Tunisia embraced Arabo-Islamic culture. Thereafter, Muslim Tunisia, given its central Mediterranean location, fluctuated between eastern and western Islamic worlds, at times more identified with the one, at times more with the other.

In periods of maximum strength, Muslim dynasties from Tunisia (as in the ninth century) have conquered Sicily and established temporary bases in the Italian peninsula (reaching the gates of Rome in 846). When the wheel of political fortune turned against Mediterranean Islam, Tunisia suffered attacks including those by Normans from Sicily (twelfth century), Spanish Hapsburgs (sixteenth century) and modern colonization by France (1881-1956). The rising strength of the Ottoman Empire in the sixteenth century resulted in the Turkish period of Tunisian and North African history, which constitutes the more immediate point of departure for any study of the political system still prevailing on the eve of Ahmad Bey's reign.

Geography's legacy to Tunisia of an outside exposure served to create resilience in the face of foreign threats coupled with an openness toward receiving and absorbing outside influence. Tunisia has usually not presented the invader with protracted military resistance or a scorched-earth policy, and here geographical factors are important.

The nomad with his easy mobility can retreat before outside pressure and with the same ease return when the pressure is removed. The mountaineer can withdraw to his mountain peaks and, using his tactical advantage of higher terrain, make the invader pay so dearly for his conquest that he usually decides to seek a more attractive prey. Both nomads and mountaineers have always figured in Tunisia's history but have seldom played the important role they have assumed in so many other countries of the Near East and North Africa. Tunisia's mountains (forming the eastern end of the great Atlas chain which cuts across North

Africa from Morocco) are for the most part on the western boundary separating her from Algeria, and they are also not nearly so impenetrable as those portions of the Atlas chain lying in Algeria and Morocco. The true nomad is to be found only in the southern part of the country. Neither mountaineer nor nomad is easily brought to heel in Tunisia, any more than elsewhere in the world, and those parts of Tunisia where they live have always been most resistant to outside change and, in modern parlance, most backward. Yet, as geographical good luck would have it, the Tunisian areas of mountaineers and nomads are on the margins of what could be called the Tunisian core.

The Tunisia that would interest the conqueror—the seaports, the inland cities, and the fertile lands—forms a contiguous and exposed land mass from the northern and eastern littoral of the country and the hinterland behind for (in most places) no more than forty or fifty miles—roughly from Bizerte in the northwest to Sfax or slightly beyond in the south. It is this exposed Tunisia which had developed a tradition of openness and an ability to adjust to new circumstances as the best possible means of maintaining civilization against the pressures coming from the sea, the mountains, and the deserts. Since Phoenician times men and ideas have usually tended to filter into North Africa from this Tunisian vantage point.

These same geographical factors eased the burden of Tunisian government. Since the strongholds of mountaineers and nomads were in the outlying areas to the west and the south, weaker governments could survive simply by containing them there, or at worst by folding back toward the eastern coastal plain (the Sahil), the environs of Tunis, and the peninsula of Cap Bon. Even in these straitened circumstances a Tunisian government controlled a compact, contiguous territory with easy internal lines of communication.

Kairouan and Sousse were within ninety miles of the capital. Le Kef, the principal garrison guarding the mountainous region and the Algerian border to the west, was only 105 miles west of Tunis. Sfax, although farther to the south along the eastern coast (162 miles from Tunis), was nevertheless very close to the more northerly strong points of the Sahil such as Sousse and Monastir. Also, any of these centers in the Sahil could be reached and provisioned from the sea. Even before the days of telegraph or railroad one could travel from Tunis, Sousse or Monastir by coach

in two days with one night spent on the road, and a system of runners could carry news from Tunis to Sousse within twenty-four hours.[2]

The bey's armies moved more slowly but the two annual expeditionary forces (*mahalla*) to collect taxes from the tribes could reach the remotest limits of effective beylical control in less than two weeks.

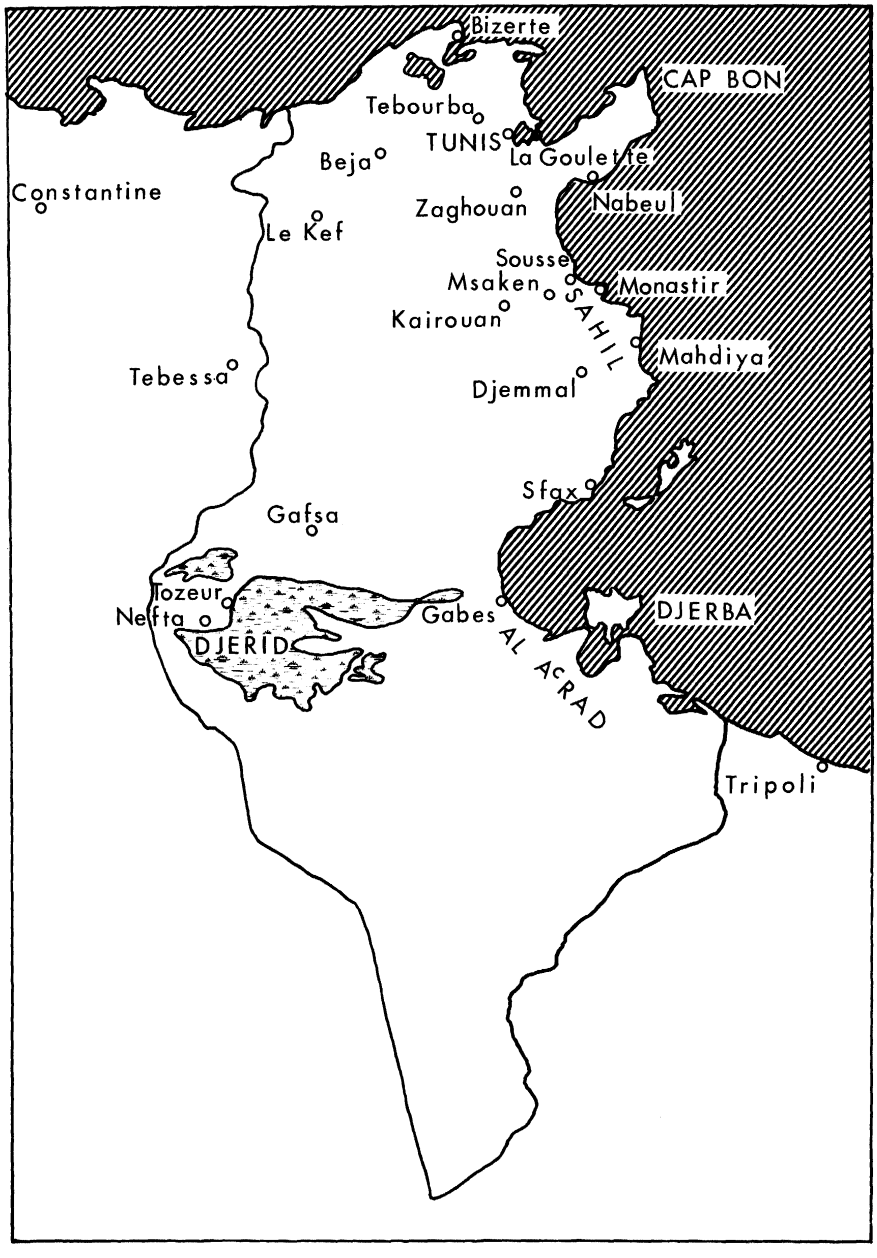
This compact territorial core for any Tunisian government embraced all of the cities and almost all of the towns (although it did exclude Gabes, the capital of the al-A'rad district to the south, which was 250 miles from Tunis, and the oasis capital of the Djerid region, Tozeur, 270 miles from Tunis), all of the sedentary agriculturalists, virtually all of the olive cultivators, and a large measure of the semi-sedentary sheep and goat herders. These were the groups whose wealth could fill government coffers. Their need for order and security predisposed them to accept even a high degree of governmental inefficiency and tyranny as preferable to the anarchy that would inevitably bring the outlanders into the zone of civilization.

Since the establishment of the Hafsids in the thirteenth century, no force of nomads or mountaineers from within has overthrown a dynasty and created another, or even played a crucial role in political changes. The brief period of Spanish rule in the sixteenth century, the imposition of the Turks later in that same century, and the subsequent wars between the Turks of Algeria and of Tunisia all found the majority of Tunisians as passive spectators or, at most, secondary actors in the determination of the outcome.

The size and configuration of Tunisia's heartland has also predisposed a single major urban center dominating the other cities and the rest of the countryside. Carthage gave way to Kairouan in the interior at the time of the Muslim conquest because the new occupants were a land-based power, but the development of Muslim sea power, plus the natural tendency to place the major capital in the center of the sedentary heartland, had by Hafsid times given Tunis a primacy it was never to lose thereafter.

The ethnic, religious, and linguistic pattern of an area is itself the interaction of geography and history. Tunisia being open and exposed, the basic Berber stock which is presumed to have been there, as in all of North Africa, since the dawn of history

[2] Raoul Darmon, "La Societé à Tunis sous le second empire," *Bulletin économique et social de la Tunisie* (November 1951), p. 75.



2. Map of Tunisia showing major cities and routes of the summer and winter mahalla.

has received many outside immigrations. Phoenicians, Romans, Vandals, Arabs, Turks, Spanish Muslims (Andalusians), Negroes, and Europeans have all come throughout the centuries, some to make their lasting mark on Tunisian civilization, others to be absorbed more unobtrusively.

Yet, in Tunisia the ultimate result by the turn of the nineteenth century was radically different from the mosaic of peoples, languages, and religions which characterized and, in large measure, continues to characterize the Near East and North Africa. Great communities of native Christians survived in Egypt and the Fertile Crescent, but in Tunisia (as in all of North Africa) the native Christian population had disappeared by the thirteenth century. In Morocco and Algeria large groups of Berber-speaking peoples remained, perhaps even a majority in Morocco, but Tunisia by the early nineteenth century had only a handful, mainly nomads in the region of the Tripolitan border.

In the Near East almost every great religious innovation has left behind a community of adherents. Some of these have survived, in part, as a result of the extra protection given by geography.

Tunisia (and North Africa as well) experienced nothing like the exuberance of religious variety known to the Near East, but there were a number of politico-religious movements that, by Near Eastern norms, should have survived as a minority religion tenaciously holding on. Interestingly, virtually none has left a trace. One of the earliest schisms in Islam—Kharijism—was actively represented in Tunisia by the eighth century, but except for a handful of Ibadites (descendants of the original Kharijites) on the island of Djerba, Tunisian Muslims had long since returned to the ranks of orthodoxy. Even the few who did remain were in Djerba and thus south of the Tunisian heartland.

The great Fatimid dynasty, which counts among its later achievements the founding of Cairo in 969, got its start as a state in Tunisia, where it overthrew the Aghlabid dynasty in the early years of the tenth century. For almost three-quarters of a century the Fatimids ruled Tunisia as a Shi'i dynasty before moving on to Egypt. Their designated successors, the Berber Zirids, maintained Shi'ism as official doctrine for almost as long again. Yet, Fatimid Shi'ism never succeeded in challenging Maliki Sunni orthodoxy for the loyalty of the masses. Within a relatively short time after

it lost political sponsorship, Shi'ism had vanished from Tunisia without apparent trace.

The Tunisia which in 1574 became part of the Ottoman Empire was, by Mediterranean Muslim standards, remarkably uniform. Only the few Ibadites in Djerba and the native Jewish community located mainly in Tunis and Djerba stood out as exceptions to the rule of Sunni Muslim uniformity of the Maliki juridical school (for there are four madhhabs, or schools of Muslim law, acceptable to the orthodox Sunni community). Tunisia was also well advanced in integrating the great folk-migration of Arabs (the Banu Hilal and Banu Sulaym) who had begun to infiltrate North Africa in the mid eleventh century. In the process these Arab nomads gave a great stimulus to the spread of Arabic in the hinterland while they in turn were slowly absorbed into Maliki Sunni Muslim orthodoxy and Tunisian social mores.

The Turks themselves came to Tunisia as Muslims in a *jihad* ("holy war") against the Christians and as representatives of the Ottoman Empire, the last great political representation of the *umma* ("the Islamic community"). They had no great trouble in gaining acceptance.

As Ottomans, they followed the Hanafi school of Sunni law, the official school of the Ottoman Empire. Even this occasioned no great problem. Adherents of the four different Sunni schools often lived together in tranquility (indeed, the uniform Malikism of North Africa stood out as something of an exception by comparison with the Near East).

The Hanafi school of law was easily superimposed upon the existing Maliki structure just as the "foreign" Turkish ruling class readily fell into place as the political elite governing the native Tunisian society. The Hanafi muftis and qadis had precedence in public functions and enjoyed certain emoluments denied their Maliki colleagues. The discerning traveler in the Turkish period could immediately recognize the Hanafi mosques by their distinctive octagonal minarets in contrast with the square minarets of the Maliki mosques. In the early years of Turkish rule the differences between Hanafi and Maliki passed unnoticed, or, more accurately, reflected the distinction between ruler and ruled which was accepted by both groups. Later, when the political class became more Tunisian in its outlook and when elements of Tunisian society began to assert themselves, changes in this balance began to take place. Signs of this change had begun to appear

as early as the eighteenth century. More would be manifest in the age of Ahmad Bey—one more example of the historical pattern in which Tunisia absorbs its conquerors while, at the same time, openly accepting many of the new ways brought by the outsider.

By the beginning of the nineteenth century the geographical constants had molded the historical variables in such fashion as to make Tunisia one of the most cohesive and uniform societies in the Muslim Mediterranean. With no great religious or linguistic differences to sunder the body politic, with the ruder elements of the society—the mountaineers and the nomads—a safe distance from the heartland, Tunisia was less likely to slip from the ruler's grasp at the first sign of weakness. Any Tunisian ruler who chose the path of innovation and reforms, with its unavoidable cycle of experimentation-failure-new experiments, would be blessed with a generous margin of error. Considering the challenge to be faced, every bit of that margin and more, was needed.

B. The Ottoman Connection and the Emergence of the Husaynid Dynasty

Tunisia's tie with the Ottoman Empire provides a variation on a familiar theme—that of Tunisia absorbed into a rising new imperial structure but later, when the new empire approaches maturity, moving into a position of virtual autonomy because the imperial power base is too remote to make a closer link practicable.

This happened following the original Arabo-Islamic conquest at the end of the seventh century. When the age of rapid Muslim conquests ended and the Abbasid defeat of the Umayyads transferred the center of political power from Syria to Iraq, Ifriqiya (the medieval Tunisia) proved too distant to be controlled from Baghdad. No sharp break with the caliphate ensued. The Aghlabid dynasty (800-909) in Tunisia was satisfied with the caliph's grant of a hereditary governorship, and this situation prevailed until the Aghlabids themselves were overthrown a century later.

Post-Fatimid Tunisia is another example. Once the Shi'i dynasty, which got its imperial start in Tunisia, had moved to Egypt with political ambitions directed even farther eastward against the decadent Abbasid caliphate in Baghdad, Tunisia became a remote backwater. The Fatimids were no longer willing to allocate the men and resources to keep Tunisia in the imperial orbit. Even before a later prince of the Zirid family, whom the Fatimids

left behind as vassals, openly renounced his allegiance, autonomy had been assured.

Likewise the most glorious and long-lived of medieval Tunisian dynasties, the Hafsids (1236-1574), traces its origins to a sundering of the great Moroccan-based Almohade (*al-Muwahhidun*) dynasty which for a brief period embraced all of the Maghrib and Muslim Spain. A bit too distant to be easily controlled by governments based either in the Near East or in the farthest Maghrib and possessing too small a heartland readily to assume the task of imperial center in its own right, Tunisia has always been absorbed into strong Mediterranean Muslim empires when they have existed but at the same time has remained on the periphery and loosely connected to such empires. Such was the pattern of Ottoman Tunisia.

Tunisia's attachment to the Ottoman Empire was one of the many territorial changes resulting from the sixteenth-century struggle between the Mediterranean imperial powers of the day—the Hapsburgs and the Ottomans. After changing hands several times earlier in the century, Tunisia began in 1574 its almost 350-year era as an Ottoman province.

From the beginning Tunisia, too far removed to be effectively administered from Istanbul, had a more tenuous link with the Ottoman imperial center than the contiguous territories of Anatolia, the Balkans, and the Fertile Crescent. Ottoman soldiers did not serve a tour of duty there and then move elsewhere in the empire. The expeditionary army that definitively wrested Tunisia from Hapsburg pretensions in 1574 stayed on as an essentially autonomous army corps. Later recruits from Anatolia and the eastern Mediterranean could also expect an unbroken period of military service in Tunisia. A similar pattern of recruitment and service characterized the navy.

The central Ottoman Empire had attempted to foster more direct control by sending the governor—or pasha—from Istanbul, but he was at the mercy of army officers in Tunisia. As early as 1591 a revolt of junior officers (the deys)[3] led to a system of effective power in the hands of one such officer known as *the* dey, and eventually the original usage of the word in Tunisia to mean commander of 100 men in the regular army was dropped.

A step toward the dynastic principle was taken in the seven-

[3] See "Dayi," EI².

teenth century with a line of deys descended from one Usta Murad, a corsair captain. The Muradids, however, failed to create a viable political system. At the beginning of the eighteenth century the political autonomy of Ottoman forces in Tunisia was threatened by military intervention—significantly, from neighboring Ottoman Algeria, not the central Ottoman Empire. In desperation the Turkish militia and the notables of Tunis turned to one Husayn bin Ali, who reluctantly agreed to lead the resistance. Thus began, in 1705, a dynasty destined to survive until 1957.

By this date the bey[4] had replaced the dey as the holder of real political power—thus the beylik of Tunis, usually referred to in European sources as the Regency of Tunis. The title of pasha survived as the legitimizing rank bestowed from Istanbul.

The Husaynids were a local but not a native dynasty under Ottoman suzerainty, and the distinction is important. This was part of the Ottoman tradition which assumed a clear division between rulers and ruled. A system that had long absorbed Christian youth of the Balkans and the Caucacus, training them to be good Muslims and good Ottomans, created expectations that a "renegade" (the emotion-laden term employed by Europe) might rise to high office. Absurd as it appears to the modern mind, what did seem unnatural to these imperial rulers was the idea that a political elite should be recruited directly from the local population.

The men who ruled Husaynid Tunisia thought of themselves as Ottomans. Actually, they and the political system over which they presided had been considerably "Tunisified." Nevertheless, the Husaynid self-image was that of a distinctive ruling class in the Ottoman manner, and they were so regarded by native Tunisia.

The genealogy of the Husaynid beys and the preferred marriage alliances for the daughters of the ruling family illustrate this sense of belonging to a class which was both socially and politically separate from people over whom they ruled. The ancestry of the dynasty's founder would seem, at first sight, to contradict this assertion. Husayn bin Ali was half-Greek and half-Tunisian. His father was born in Crete and came to Tunisia during the early years of the Muradid reign where he was en-

[4] "Bay," EI[2].

rolled in the army. Later while serving in Le Kef he married two Tunisian women. Each gave him a son. One was Husayn. The other was Muhammad, the father of Ali Pasha.

This could have been the start of a series of marriage alliances with leading Tunisian tribal families. Nothing of the sort occurred. Following the reigns of Husayn and his nephew Ali Pasha the next five Husaynids were sons of slave mothers. Then came the beys Husayn and Mustafa, who were the offspring of a marriage between cousins within the extended family. The next ruler was Ahmad Bey, also the son of a slave mother.

The two beys ruling after Ahmad, his cousins Muhammad and Muhammad al-Sadiq, represent a new departure. Their mother was neither of slave origin nor from within the ruling family, but she hardly represented an old Tunisian family. She was a descendant of the famous Uthman Dey, who ruled from 1598 to 1610. It was a marriage within the Ottoman-Tunisian ruling establishment rather than a marriage intended to increase Husaynid ties with native Tunisia. (See Chart 1.)

Ahmad Bey, himself, married into an old Ottoman-Tunisian family. His father-in-law was Shalabi bin Shalabi, descendant of a mamluk who in 1705 saved the life of Husayn bin Ali by warning him in time that the dey was plotting his assassination. This mamluk married a daughter of Husayn bin Ali, and from 1705 on, the Shalabi family was esteemed by the Husaynids. Ahmad's marriage to the daughter of Shalabi bin Shalabi appears to have been decided exclusively by these old ties of loyalty and kinship, for Ahmad's father-in-law was a man of no political importance.[5]

The marriages contracted for the beys' daughters were in the same pattern. To the Western mind the mamluk must appear as a parvenu and the marriages a mésalliance, but the mamluk who had made his way up the ladder of Ottoman-Tunisian bureaucracy was the preferred marriage partner for women of the beylical family. The four daughters of Husayn Bey (1824-1835) and the four daughters of Mustafa Bey (1835-1837) were all married to mamluks.[6]

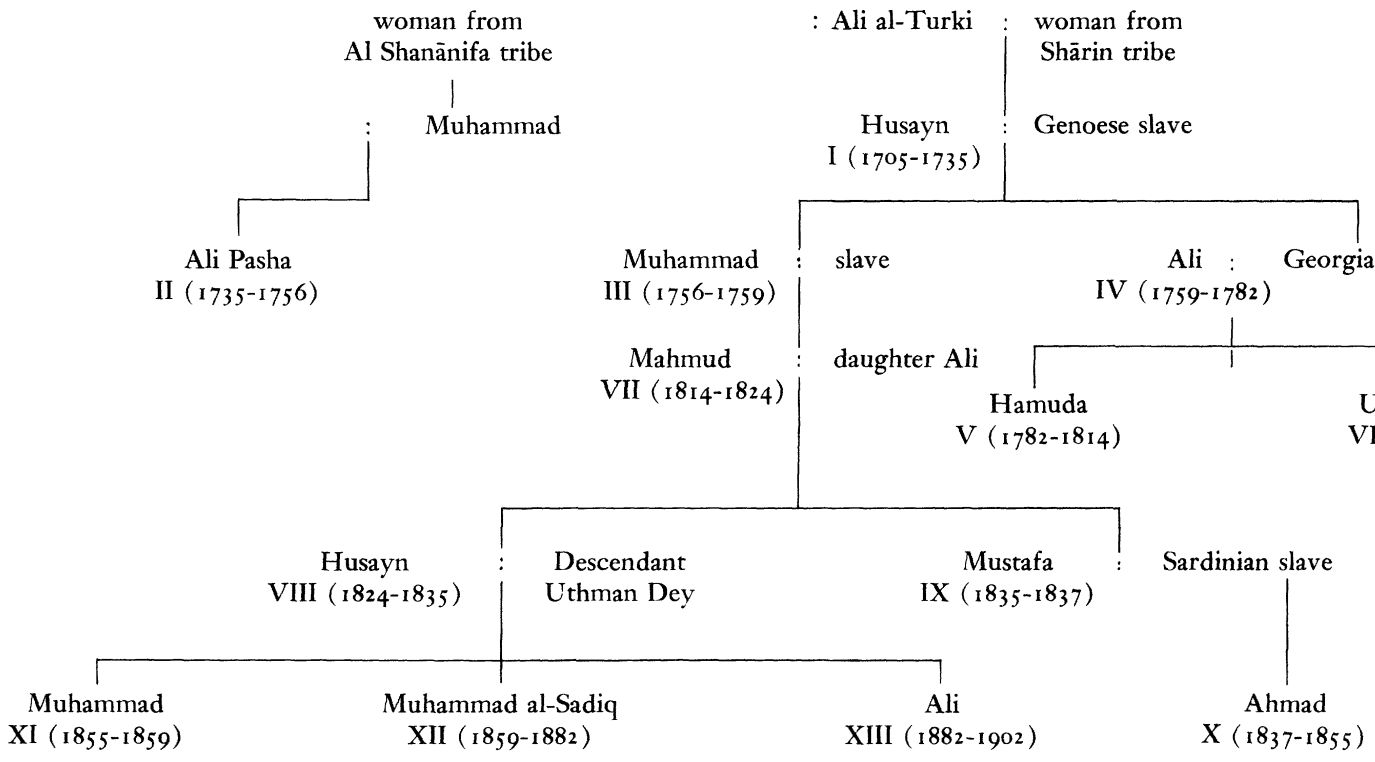
There were advantages to be derived from the Husaynid policy of marrying within the small Ottoman-Tunisian ruling elite. It

[5] Ahmad bin Abi Diyaf, *Ithaf Ahl al-Zaman bi Akhbar muluk Tunis wa 'ahd al-Aman*, 8 vols. (Tunis, 1963-1966), 2: 91, 8: 123, 164. (Hereafter cited as Bin Diyaf.)

[6] See Appendix 1.

Chart 1

THE HUSAYNID DYNASTY



served to underline the distinctiveness and political superiority of the ruling class. A native tribal leader, for example, would not expect to make a marriage alliance within the ruling family just as he would not expect to assume certain posts in the military or the court normally held by Turks or mamluks (although there were occasional exceptions). The beys might lose the intimate ties with powerful native Tunisian families that could have been gained through marriages, but at the same time they were not encumbered by overly demanding in-laws who—to make matters even more dangerous—had access to a basis of political power that the bey could not control.

It was much better—and this is merely a restatement of the classic Ottoman system—to keep a certain distance from native leadership and thus to keep the range of their political expectations within manageable limits. A recalcitrant mamluk could be deprived of all power and property at any time, and following his disgrace the mamluk could not go back to his tribe and foment revolt. He had no tribe, no local support, no power or authority save that attached to the office he happened to be holding.

In such an ordering of political power, a major problem the Husaynids faced on their way to becoming a firmly established dynasty was that of maintaining their superior status within this small Ottoman-Tunisian ruling class. The solution of having full executive power in the hands of beys drawn from a single family was by no means the only one possible. In neighboring Algeria, the dey emerged as chief executive officer, but in a system that left more power in the hands of the leading Turkish officers. Nor could the bey of Tunis rely on any strong religious legitimation of his office. In the Friday mosque services, prayers were not said in his name, but in the name of the Ottoman sultan. Coins struck in Tunisia also bore only the name of the Ottoman sultan.[7] For all his autonomy, the bey of Tunis remained legally only a provincial governor under the authority of the sultan.

Unless carefully managed, members of the small Ottoman-Tunisian ruling class might show signs of considering the bey merely first among equals. This explains the extreme jealousy with which the Husaynids guarded family prerogatives.

[7] Muhammad Bey, who ruled immediately after Ahmad Bey, added his own name to the coinage while maintaining that of the sultan. See Henri Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis* (Paris, 1913), p. 220.

Three striking examples of this hypersensitive jealousy in action were the executions of the chief ministers Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' (1815), Muhammed al-'Arabi[8] Zarruq (1822) and Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' (1837). All three incidents had in common the feeling, real or imagined, on the part of members of the beylical family, that these ministers were impinging on their authority.

Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' was a mamluk originally from Moldavia, presented to Hamuda Bey at the beginning of his reign by the wealthy Tunisian Bakkar al-Jaluli. He eventually became chief minister to Hamuda Bey and the wealthiest and most powerful man in the beylik after the bey himself. There was little of the courtier or sycophant in Yusuf. He was outspoken in his advice, a trait appreciated by Hamuda Bey, one of the most dynamic and intelligent of the Husaynid rulers. Even Hamuda must have realized that Yusuf's forthright character could be his downfall under another member of the Husaynid family, for he is alleged to have told his chief minister "Yusuf, you will not survive for six months after I have gone."[9] It was an ominous jest. Yusuf survived his master Hamuda just thirteen months. Several rivals at court drew up an elaborate plot designed to convince Mahmud Bey that Yusuf was planning his overthrow. Among those who wanted to get rid of Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' and who participated in the plot for his overthrow were the bey's two sons and successors Husayn Bey and Mustafa Bey. They disliked the extent to which he controlled their activities and dominated the affairs of state. They found it hard to bear that people were always before his door and following in his train.[10]

Larbi Zarruq, the chief instigator in the plot against Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi', was also the man who gained most by his death, for he took over his post as principal minister. An exception to the normal rule governing admission in the Ottoman-Tunisian ruling class, Larbi Zarruq was a native Tunisian and a *sharif* ("descendant of the Prophet Muhammad") as well. He had grown up in the beylical palace at Bardo where his father was in charge of the buildings.[11] He became a foster brother of Mahmud

[8] Hereafter written as "Larbi," as the name appears in Western sources.

[9] Bin Diyaf, 3: 106.

[10] The assassination is presented in a very elliptical fashion in Bin Diyaf, 3: 106-112, and Biography 84.

[11] As will be seen, it was a common practice for leading native Tunisians

Bey's wife (the daughter of Ali Bey). Having risen to high responsibility under Hamuda Bey, and his position with Mahmud made even closer by his cooperation in the assassination of Uthman Bey (to be noted later), Larbi saw the path to power clear for him after the removal of his rival, Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi'.

Ironically, he made all the mistakes that had caused the downfall of his predecessor. Overbearing with the sons of the bey, Husayn and Mustafa, inclined to take for granted his power over Mahmud himself through his ties with Mahmud's wife and his service in the assassination of Uthman Bey, Larbi Zarruq soon had all three prepared to be convinced that he was fomenting a plot with Turkish officers in the regular Tunisian army. "If he would enter into revolt with us in order to seize power," said Mahmud Bey, referring to his earlier support against Uthman Bey, "then he may enter into revolt with others [against us]."[12] He was arrested and executed. The bey's wife, Larbi Zarruq's foster sister, was not informed of the execution since she was already sick with an illness which was to cause her death two months later. The bey and his two sons were so grieved by her death that the beylik was in official mourning for a full year. Yet in spite of the strong possibility that she might inadvertently learn of his death while critically ill, they were not deterred from executing Larbi Zarruq.

Shakir's execution is described in Part Two, for Ahmad Bey was directly involved. It is sufficient to record here that the incident fits the same pattern. Granted virtually full powers in 1829 during a period of financial crisis, Shakir found it increasingly difficult in subsequent years to think of himself as a servant of the bey. When he became embroiled with the headstrong Ahmad Bey his fate was sealed.

In all three cases the beylical family reacted quickly and decisively against such challenges. Neither long and distinguished service nor marriage into the beylical family could save them. Nor was removal from office and perhaps a prison sentence deemed sufficient. They were ruthlessly killed, for they had forgotten that they were merely creatures of the bey.

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to serve as purveyors and contractors to the government. Larbi's first task with Hamuda Bey had been of a similar nature, "repairing and fortifying the fortress of Le Kef, building towers and walls, and the like . . ." Bin Diyaf, 3: 139.

[12] Bin Diyaf, 3: 139.

A leading mamluk official, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', attempted to reason with Shakir shortly before the latter's execution. His argument represents a classic statement of the mamluk ideal:

> These men [the beylical family] have rights over us. Their hands are on our necks, for they bought us when we were young and we were raised sharing their good fortune. They gave us their daughters in marriage and the highest posts in their service. And thus we have become a part of them. None of us is bestowing a favor on them by serving, for without the inviolability which accrues to them we would neither obtain prestige nor advance one step in service. There are notables in the country from among the scribes and the mukhazaniya who could take our places and even more. Why, if the Jewish qaid Yusuf, the tax collector, were given even half of the esteem you have been granted he would accomplish things we have not even thought of.[13]

A less violent example of the same tendency is seen in the case of 'Allalah, the son of Husayn Bey's wife by a previous marriage. He was brought to the bey's palace where his mother even gave him precedence over her sons by Husayn Bey, and Husayn—out of regard for his wife—overlooked this. 'Allalah later affected the title of bey until he was reprimanded by Husayn Bey. When Ahmad Bey assumed power, he ordered him out of the line of procession of his half-brothers. 'Allalah, now seeing the futility of his pretensions, retired to attend to his private affairs.[14]

In addition to having their hands on the levers of power (control over the army, the finances, and the prerogatives of appointments for leading military, civil, and religious functions) the

[13] The mukhazaniya means either the tribal cavalry forces who participated as irregulars in tax collecting expeditions and other security duties in return for certain benefits or, more broadly, those in political or military positions of government—roughly, the "men of the sword" as opposed to the "men of the pen." Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' was probably using the term in the latter sense. A few Jews did hold important posts in the government's accounting and financial operations. As members of a despised if useful minority community, Jews were hardly deemed likely candidates for posts of authority. Mustafa's reference was clearly intended to shock Shakir into an awareness that he was vulnerable and that he owed his authority in the final reckoning to the bey rather than to his own undisputed talents. Bin Diyaf, 3: 221.

[14] Bin Diyaf, Biography 317.

Husaynids, like most dynastic rulers, created around them an added aura of authority by an elaborate court etiquette and a zealous attention to public ceremonies.

Each morning the bey held court in his palace in a ceremony which included receiving foreign visitors, hearing reports from his ministers, and deciding the cases of plaintiffs and petitioners brought personally, at a respectable distance, before the ruler. The many officers present, richly dressed in the distinctive uniforms of their office (the less varied and bleaker Nizami uniforms began to appear from 1831 onward), presented a lively picture of "oriental" splendor.

The native Tunisian "man in the street" peering furtively through the gates of the Bardo palace might well have glimpsed something of what the English visitor Grenville Temple described: "Under the arch way, and forming a rich and animated foreground, are seen groups of splendidly caparisoned horses, awaiting the return of their masters from the audience chamber: on the opposite side of the court, rises a wild flight of steps, almost covered by seated Arabs, wrapped in the graceful and classic folds of their sefsars and burnooses, patiently awaiting their turn to be ushered into the hall of justice. These steps lead to a covered gallery, supported by columns, where are seen walking about or forming little groups, many Moors, soldiers, officers and attendants in their gay attire."[15]

Many of the ceremonies within the court reflected past traditions. For example, every day the bey was presented a loaf of bread by the *bash 'ayyashi* ("chief supplier of bread") which he tasted and then returned. This represented the bey's ration as first soldier of the realm.[16]

All visitors to the bey, foreign diplomats as well as Tunisian

[15] Grenville T. Temple, *Excursions in the Mediterranean: Algiers and Tunis*, 2 vols. (London, 1835), 1: 185-186. An excellent description of the ceremony at the bey's audiences can be found in R. Brunschvig, "Justice religieuse et justice laique dans la Tunisie des deys et des beys, jusqu'au milieu du XIX[e] siècle," *Studia Islamica*, 23 (1965). (Hereafter cited as Brunschvig, "Justice . . . Tunisie.")

[16] Count Filippi (Sardinian consul to Tunis) in Charles Monchicourt, *Documents historiques sur la Tunisie: Relations inédites de Nyssen, Filippi et Calligaris (1788, 1829, 1834)* (Paris, 1929), p. 126. (Hereafter cited as Filippi [Monchicourt].) Monchicourt's note relates that the custom survived into the Protectorate period.

subjects, were expected to kiss the bey's hand (except certain high religious dignitaries such as the bash mufti, for it would have been inappropriate for a Muslim religious leader to show such subservience to any human).

In the pattern of "bread and circuses" were the wrestling matches held each day in the month of Sha'ban just outside the Bab al-Bahr (Porte de France) between the "goorshejis"—strong, athletic Turks hired by the bey.[17] Noteworthy also were the two occasions in which Husayn Bey decorated the capital, once when he survived a carriage accident in 1235 (1819-1820) and again when he recovered temporarily from the sickness which later was to cause his death. In this fashion, the whole city was brought into the ceremony of thanksgiving for the good fortune of the bey.[18] And, as for carriages, it was then the rule that only the bey—or those whom he specifically authorized—was permitted to ride in a four-wheeled vehicle.[19] The beys also built tombs for favorite saints, schools, mosques, fountains, and other public edifices to serve as daily reminders of their munificence.

For a small state such as Tunisia, legally merely a province of the Ottoman Empire, all these trappings of political authority seem pretentious. Yet, when placed in context—a small state patterned on the Ottoman tradition and a dynasty that sought, as all dynasties do, to convert raw political power into a more durable legitimate authority—the etiquette, ceremony, and jealousy of beylical prerogatives are understandable.

Husayn Khoja was a great favorite of Hamuda Bey and as a mark of this favor, he was the only mamluk permitted to eat with him.[20] This was hardly the frontier tradition, but Tunisia was far from being a frontier society. Behind the already venerable Ottoman heritage lay roughly three centuries of Hafsid court life.[21]

[17] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 219. In the following month of Ramadan, these wrestlers gave private performances to entertain the bey.

[18] Al-Baji al-Mas'udi, *Al-Khulasa al-Naqiya fi umara Ifriqiya* (Tunis, 1283 [1866-1867]), p. 114. (Hereafter cited as al-Baji al-Mas'udi.)

[19] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 282.

[20] Filippi (Monchicourt), pp. 166-167. Husayn Khoja later married one of Husayn Bey's daughters.

[21] The classic study on the Hafsids by Robert Brunschvig reveals in masterly fashion both the highly developed political institutions and the urbanity of public life. See Robert Brunschvig, *La Berberie Orientale sous les Hafsides*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1940-1946), especially 2: 7-60. His article on "Jus-

One of the surest props to dynastic stability—an accepted rule of succession—was among the last to be firmly established by the Husaynids. The old Turkish rule which had been adopted by the Ottomans provided for succession by the oldest male in the patrilineal family rather than strict primogeniture from father to oldest son. In such a system, a brother, nephew or uncle might have precedence over the ruler's own children.

As Ottoman provincial rulers, the Husaynids were inclined to adopt the Ottoman rule of succession, and they eventually did, but not before civil war and assassination had marred the history of their reign.

The great split between the Husayniya and the Bashiya had been produced by Husayn bin Ali's decision to pass over his nephew Ali Pasha in favor of his own son, who was twenty-one years younger. After Ali Pasha's successful revolt and long rule (1735-1756), the succession was wrested from the Ali Pasha side of the family and remained henceforth with the direct descendants of Husayn bin Ali. Muhammad bin Husayn (1756-1759) was followed in the Turkish fashion by his brother Ali Bey (1759-1782).

In the latter years of Ali Bey's reign, another exception to the Turkish rule came with the selection of Ali's son Hamuda instead of his nephew Mahmud who was two years older. This, however, was carefully arranged. Mahmud, who suffered from gout as did his uncle Ali Bey,[22] was induced to accept the change, and thus Tunisia had the advantage of one of its most effective rulers.

When Hamuda died unexpectedly in 1814, another and more serious succession crisis occurred. Mahmud remained the eldest member of the family but Hamuda's brother, Uthman, was chosen instead. Uthman was not destined to reign for long. The dubious nature of his right to the throne, the inefficiency of his reign, and the several insults meted out to Mahmud's family (e.g., he obliged Mahmud and his family to move from their former palace to a more modest place) provoked his assassination. On the night of 21 December 1814 Mahmud Bey and his two sons personally participated in the coup that resulted in the assas-

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tice . . . Tunisie" also emphasizes the survival of many Hafsid traditions into the Ottoman period.

[22] Bin Diyaf, 2: 176.

sination of Uthman Bey.[23] The following day, Uthman's two grown sons, who had vainly sought to escape, were caught and killed as well.

The two younger sons of Uthman were confined to the prison in Bardo palace. They were still there in 1829.[24] The youngest is reported to have been born on the very night his father was assassinated.[25]

In this brutal fashion, the succession problem was finally resolved. The line of Husaynid descendants from Ali bin Husayn was now for all practical purposes extinct. Hamuda Bey had left no sons. The two younger sons of Uthman who survived the coup were as if dead, languishing forgotten in prison. All the remaining beys came from the line of Muhammad b. Husayn in order of age.

On the day of Mahmud's inauguration, his wife took aside her two sons and had them swear on the Quran each to respect the rights of the other.[26] Husayn and Mustafa had a deep affection for each other,[27] and during Husayn's reign (1824-1835), Mustafa stood loyally by his side in spite of bankruptcy (leading to the appointment of Shakir as chief minister) and other reverses that caused several consuls and other Europeans at the time to speculate whether the more able Mustafa might forcibly replace his brother.

[23] Bin Diyaf does not present an adequate account of what led to Uthman's accession. There was, apparently, a meeting of the leading officials with all members of the Husaynid family, and the latter were asked to select from among themselves who should rule. Mahmud inferred that the oldest (i.e., himself) should succeed, but then Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' said the late Hamuda Bey had wanted his brother to succeed and stepped forward to offer the bay'a to Uthman. The others present then followed suit. Bin Diyaf, 3: 91. Al-Baji al-Mas'udi adds the significant note that Uthman and his followers came to this meeting "armed as if for war" while Mahmud and his family came in peace (p. 139). The subsequent assassination of Uthman Bey suggests that the entire proceeding was a *coup de main* with the aggrieved party waiting for an appropriate time to settle accounts. On other incidents provoking the assassination, see Calligaris in Charles Monchicourt, *Documents historiques sur la Tunisie: Relations inédites de Nyssen, Filippi et Calligaris (1788, 1829, 1834)*, p. 342. (Hereafter cited as Calligaris [Monchicourt].) Also, Bin Diyaf, 3: 95.

[24] Filippi (Monchicourt), p. 95. [25] Al-Baji al-Mas'udi, p. 140.

[26] Bin Diyaf, 3: 105.

[27] "There was an unparalleled love, intimacy and bond between them." Bin Diyaf, 3: 153.

The successions of Mustafa and then his son Ahmad (who was older than Husayn's sons) were equally uncontested, and after the death of Ahmad (who left no sons) the throne returned to the three sons of Husayn who, strictly in order of age, ruled for the rest of the nineteenth century.

II

The Political Class

The earlier discussion of the Husaynids introduced the notion of a distinct governing class who thought of themselves as separate from the native Tunisians they ruled. The name "Ottoman-Tunisian" best describes this political class who looked to the Ottoman example but who after generations of virtual autonomy vis-à-vis Istanbul had absorbed a large body of Tunisian ideas, customs and personnel. More needs to be said, now, about the composition, values, and *modus operandi* of the political class in order to clarify how the Husaynid government actually operated in the early decades of the nineteenth century. This chapter treats in turn each of the three major component parts—mamluks, Turks, and native Tunisians.

A. The Mamluks

The mamluks were young boys of non-Muslim origin, sold or captured into slavery, who became the personal property of the bey, a male member of the beylical family, or a leading minister. Most came from the Greek Isles, the Caucasus, or Georgia, and they were usually acquired by agents of the bey (or other Tunisian principals) in the slave markets of Istanbul. A smaller number of mamluks were first brought to Tunisia as part of the booty captured by Tunisian corsairs. These tended to be from Italy or the islands of the central Mediterranean.

The young mamluk was a valuable property, and his master treated him accordingly. He was carefully trained, for when mature, he would be a loyal and useful servant, but a servant in a very special sense. He was not intended as a domestic. Negro slaves brought north to Tunis by caravans were available on the slave market of Tunis for this purpose. The young mamluk was trained to be a member of the ruling class.

Invariably, he received military training, for the mamluk was expected to be capable of serving in a military capacity even if he later moved to civil duties. Actually, the distinction between civil and military functions was blurred at the upper levels. A more useful distinction might be that between command and service positions. The mamluk was trained to assume command posts.

Training of the young mamluk included an introduction to the rudiments of Islam, and it was not long before the young mamluk, born outside of Islam, accepted freely the opportunity to become a Muslim.

There can be little doubt about the lack of compulsion in the conversion of young mamluks. Everything in the system made that the most natural choice. As a young boy, cut off from natural family ties, the mamluk sought to emulate his master, his teachers and his age-peers—fellow mamluks plus a sprinkling of younger sons of the beylical family. Conversion was simply an early step in the long training process which, if successfully completed, led the mamluk to power and prestige. A refusal to convert in such circumstances suggested to the master that the young boy was too recalcitrant to make a good mamluk. There are no known examples of such aberrant behavior.

An interesting if unusual story of a mamluk conversion concerns Husayn Khoja.[1] Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi', who raised him, took the boy, then so young that he "did not have his front teeth," along on a trip to Istanbul. When the ship reached the island of Chios, he decided to convert without warning. Husayn, kapidan pasha of the Ottoman Fleet, was in the harbor and asked that the young convert be given his name, and this was done.[2]

[1] The man who was permitted to eat with Hamuda Bey and who later married one of Husayn Bey's daughters.

[2] Bin Diyaf, Biography 332. The only other explicit reference to conversion of mamluks in Bin Diyaf also concerns Chios. Hasan 'Amil al-Monastir, a mamluk of Mustafa Bey, allegedly came from a family of Chios notables. A complaint by his people that he had been forced to convert to Islam provoked the visit of a British warship to Tunis. The ship captain and the British consul arranged to have a private conference with the young man, assuring him he had nothing to fear and could return to his family, but he insisted that he had freely embraced Islam. The ship left, and Hasan returned to his training in the palace. Bin Diyaf, Biography 311. Bin Diyaf does not give the date of this incident, and no other references, European or Tunisian, have been discovered.

The few mamluks who belonged to someone other than the bey were apparently trained directly by their masters in a manner similar to the training of pages in medieval Europe. The young mamluks of the bey were housed and trained in the palace compound at Bardo. There were probably no more than a few score in what might be called, somewhat anachronistically, the primary-school age group. (This estimate is extrapolated from the estimates of the total number of mamluks to be discussed below.) A group small enough to make possible a certain intimacy within the entire palace compound, the young mamluks experienced roughly the same training as the young Husaynids themselves. For example, a Georgian mamluk, Yusuf Amir 'Askar al-Zawawa, "was brought to Hamuda Bey while still very young and raised with the other mamluks just as if he were his son." When Hamuda Bey died, the young mamluk was given to Mustafa Bey and "raised with his son (i.e., Ahmad Bey), joining the corps of his mamluks."[3] The celebrated Mustafa Khaznadar was "treated like a grandson by Ahmad Bey's mother."[4]

The palace had its own "primary school teacher." The official register of expenses for the years 1255 to 1258 (1839-1842) lists as teacher (*mu'addib*) a certain Hasan al-Tatawani who was paid a modest salary of 3¾ piastres per month.[5]

There was also a madrasa (which in the Tunisian context of that time meant both school and dormitory for students and teachers) with its own shaykhs. Three shaykhs of the Bardo madrasa figure in Bin Diyaf's chronicle and biographies. The earliest reference is to Shaykh Muhammad Siyala, scion of the famous family from Sfax. Noted for his interest in medicine and natural science in addition to religious learning, he had taught at Zitouna mosque. Later, he accompanied Muhammad Khoja in his travels to Europe, "and he was educated by this travelling and made worldly-wise through these experiences. He often spoke of the Frankish countries." He later became a close confidant and companion of Husayn Bey (1824-1835) who appointed him shaykh of the Bardo madrasa. The young Ahmad Bey, we are told, profitably spent many of his evenings learning from Shaykh Muhammad Siyala.[6]

[3] Bin Diyaf, Biography 372.
[4] Bin Diyaf, Biography 291.
[5] AGT Registers 463 and 470 for the years 1255, 1257 and 1258.
[6] Bin Diyaf, Biography 189.

Another shaykh of the Bardo madrasa, Abd al-Rahman al-Kamil, from the Tunisian tribe of Awlad Sidi Hamada, had studied in Kairouan and at Zitouna in Tunis. Hamuda Bey had appointed him to his corps of scribes, but he was a failure in this work and soon returned to teaching. After teaching for some time at Zitouna, he was appointed shaykh at the Bardo madrasa. He moved into the madrasa at that time "and several of its inhabitants benefited from his presence." Apparently, he held this position until his death in 1833. Ahmad Bey had selected him to teach his own mamluks, including the young Mustafa Khaznadar.[7]

Yet another shaykh of the Bardo madrasa during this period was Mustafa bu Ghazzali who apparently came from a family of religious teachers. ("He grew up in the seeking of knowledge" is the standard phrase Bin Diyaf adopts in such cases.) He studied and then taught for a time at Zitouna before accepting a post at Bardo. Most of his studies had been in Hanafi *fiqh* ("jurisprudence"). He also, just as Shaykh al-Kamil, had the task of training Ahmad Bey's mamluk, Mustafa Khaznadar.[8]

A fleeting insight concerning what mamluk "book learning" must have been like is provided in the story of a Muhammed al-Jandubi who came to live in the Bardo madrasa during the reign of Hamuda Bey (1782-1814) after having studied the Quran in "some zawiya in Kef." Al-Jandubi attached himself to Mahmud Bey, serving as his scribe and teaching reading to his followers. He was a violent man, involved in the assassination of both Uthman Bey and Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi', and of limited formal education. Yet, presumably he lived out his years as scribe and teacher at the Bardo madrasa until his death in 1832-1833.[9]

These scattered references to the Bardo madrasa teachers uncover such diverse types as a very able 'alim and man of the world, a failed government clerk, a good but undistinguished 'alim from Zitouna and a violent semi-literate.[10] Formal academic

[7] Bin Diyaf, Biography 202, and 4: 179.

[8] Bin Diyaf, Biography 353, and 4: 179.

[9] Bin Diyaf, Biography 201, "His equipment as a scribe consisted of no more than copying the letters of the alphabet, badly and misspelled."

[10] Bin Diyaf mentions an earlier shaykh of Bardo madrasa in a way that suggests he possessed neither wealth nor social prominence: Hamuda Bey appeared for an official procession wearing a *taylasan* ("garment worn over the head and shoulders") made in Djerba. Queried by his retinue, he replied that he preferred the local product to cashmere since in that way money did not leave the country. Upon hearing this, Hamuda's chief katib, Muham-

training of mamluks (and, for that matter, princes of the ruling family) seems to have been neither intensive nor well planned. Each mamluk was expected to attain literacy and a basic knowledge of Islam, and a teaching staff was provided for this purpose. Some of the shaykhs were suitable choices for teaching mamluks, others less so; but their selection would seem to have been based on other considerations, e.g., whether the ruling bey (or one of the younger princes) liked them and found them compatible persons to have living in the Bardo palace compound.

Farhat al-Mamluk, one of Ahmad Bey's mamluks of Greek origin, might typify the product of this education. He "read the Quran and memorized a bit of it. Then, he, along with others of Ahmad's mamluks, learned to recite it properly, for it was Ahmad's custom to concern himself with their instruction before using them and advancing them. Then Ahmad caused him to learn the military profession which he did very well."[11]

The important training was not academic but military, plus what nineteenth century English headmasters would call character-building, learned as part of the daily life within the intimate circle which made up Bardo palace.

It was common practice for a young mamluk undergoing training to be attached to a young Husaynid prince. Rashid was thus attached to Hamuda b. Husayn and Ismail al-Sunni to Muhammad Bey b. Husayn. Ahmad Bey, some four years before his reign began, was concerning himself with the selection of an appropriate tutor for his own mamluks, including the young Mustafa Khaznadar.[12] Thus, the young Husaynid prince began to acquire his own mamluks at an early age, and by the time he came to the throne, he had not only mamluks he had grown up

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mad Lasram, hid for a moment until he was able to remove his own cashmere taylasan. Then, he proceeded to borrow the taylasan (also made in Djerba) of Ali al-Ghazawi, shaykh of the Bardo madrasa. Bin Diyaf, 3: 78. Presumably, the good shaykh al-Ghazawi was so far back in the procession that what he was wearing would pass unnoticed.

[11] Bin Diyaf, Biography 357. An occasional mamluk, such as Husayn Khoja, might become learned. He was interested in history and was a bibliophile. When late in his career he was obliged to sell his property in settlement for debts, Ahmad Bey purchased his book collection and presented them as a waqf to Zitouna. Bin Diyaf, Biography 332. These bookish and intellectual activities were hardly stimulated by Husayn Khoja's formal schooling, which was minimal.

[12] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 376, 377 and 202.

with, but also several a few years younger than he for whose training and maintenance he had assumed responsibility.

To complete the web binding mamluks and the ruling dynasty together at every generation, an older mamluk was usually assigned the major responsibility of supervising the training of each young Husaynid prince. Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' was given this task with the young Ahmad Bey.[13]

If the training of mamluks at Bardo palace appears to have lacked precise definition in terms of time served and skills learned, it could nevertheless be severe at times. In 1792, three young mamluks became so exasperated by the harsh treatment that they attempted to assassinate their master, Hamuda Bey. The plot failed. Two immediately killed themselves by each firing a gun directly at the other. The third was caught and executed.

In describing this incident, Bin Diyaf mentions also that Hamuda did not permit his young mamluks to speak Arabic "lest this became a means of their mingling" (i.e., with native Tunisians at Bardo and elsewhere). Further, Hamuda spoke only Turkish to them "fearing lest he might forget the language."[14] This raises the interesting question of the language used in instructing these mamluks, and for that matter the preferred language of communication employed by the mamluks and other members of the ruling class. One would not be surprised to learn that the native members of the ruling class knew little or no Turkish, but what about those mamluks, Turks and the Husaynids themselves who thought of themselves as Ottomans? Hamuda Bey's insistence on using Turkish with his mamluks "lest he forget the language" is revealing.

Ottoman Turkish was a prestigious language to these rulers, but by the turn of the nineteenth century there was little real need to use it in Tunisia. The bureaucracy was staffed almost entirely by native Tunisians. Most of the Turks had married locally. The beys were not in the habit of visiting Istanbul or other parts of the Empire where an inability to speak Turkish could cause a

[13] Bin Diyaf, Biography 342 (Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi'). Ramadan Bash Mamluk was charged with guarding the young Ahmad Bey. Bin Diyaf, Biography 261.

[14] Bin Diyaf, 3: 20. Louis Frank claims that Hamuda Bey was more circumspect and less severe with his retinue after this incident. Dr. Louis Frank, "Tunis," *L'Univers: Histoire et description de tous les peuples: Algérie états tripolitains Tunis* (Paris, 1850). (Hereafter cited as Frank, "Tunis.")

loss of face. Only one or two trusted members of the Ottoman-Tunisian class were needed for missions to Istanbul, and if these few persons could handle the language, appearances were saved. Hamuda Bey made the effort. He spoke and read Ottoman Turkish. He may well have been the last. It seems fair to assume that from the early nineteenth century onward the beys, mamluks, and the remainder of the Ottoman-Tunisian class, with only a handful of exceptions, had a shaky command of Turkish.

Ahmad Bey was the first to go so far as to send a communication to the Sublime Porte in Arabic, and his explanation for this behavior is revealing. He did not want to sign a document that he could not read.[15]

Of the thirty mamluks mentioned by Bin Diyaf who were trained in the time of Hamuda Bey or thereafter, only three are specifically cited as knowing both Arabic and Turkish.[16] All three were trained under Hamuda Bey. This does not mean that only those three knew Turkish. Others not specifically cited for their knowledge of Turkish made official trips to the Ottoman Empire, and it would have been provocative folly to send a non-Turkish speaker on such a diplomatic mission. Clearly, however, a good knowledge of written and spoken Turkish was rare enough to be noteworthy in the Tunisia of that time.[17]

Whether the mamluk was invariably manumitted at some point in his career is not clear. The custom of freeing most or all of a bey's slaves (usually Negroes in domestic service, as well as mamluks) upon his death seems to have been common.[18] Also, several mamluks received permission to leave the service. Three mamluks

[15] Bin Diyaf, 4: 19.

[16] Salim Khoja, Rashid Khoja and Farhat al-Mamluk. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 111, 140 and 351.

[17] On the other hand, in the Tunisian National Archives are two isolated documents in Turkish for an even later period—a letter in 1848 from Hasan Agha, bulukbashi at Tabarka, to the bey concerning provisions for his soldiers, and a letter dated 1845 from Ali Shawush, head of the mahalla, addressed to the bey. They indicate *at least* a competent Turkish scribe at each end of the correspondence. See the references in Robert Mantran, *Inventaire des documents d'archives turcs du Dar el-Bey (Tunis)* (Paris, 1961), p. 7, dossiers 900 and 939. (Hereafter cited as Mantran, *Inventaire.*) See also below, pp. 67-68.

[18] For example, Khayr al-Din Kahiya and other mamluks of the late Hamuda Bey were freed by Uthman Bey when he took office in 1814. Bin Diyaf, Biography 323. Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' was among those freed at this time. Bin Diyaf, Biography 342.

are known to have left upon the death of Hamuda (1814) only to return later and serve Mahmud Bey.[19] These were obviously the acts of men who had been freed. The legal act of manumission made little difference in the real relationship between mamluk and master. The former continued to owe obedience and service, and the latter maintained responsibility for his charge's upkeep and appropriate employment.

The small total number of mamluks and their elitist role within the state structure provide a key to understanding not only their relations with their masters but also their mutual relations and the modalities of promotion and disgrace in the mamluk world. There were probably at most a dozen age-peers at any time and an over-all total, to follow Filippi, of some 100 from "toothless" pre-adolescence to mature old age.[20] They had spent their early,

[19] Salim Khoja, Shakir al-Mamluk and Ismail Kahiya. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 111, 154 and 358. Another, Farhat al-Mamluk, left the palace during Husayn Bey's reign but returned to serve Ahmad Bey. Bin Diyaf, Biography 351.

[20] Filippi (Monchicourt), p. 134. Filippi is the only source making clear the distinction between the palace mamluks ("mamluks du serail") and the "mamluks de sekiffa" (correctly *saqifa*, "a roofed gallery"). The latter were actually a palace guard formed exclusively of renegades who came to Tunisia at a mature age. They, too, numbered about 100 in Filippi's time. Except for the identity of name and alien origin the mamluks of the saqifa had nothing in common with the palace mamluks.

There are unfortunately few other estimates of mamluk strength. The estimates given by Nyssen and Temple obviously refer to saqifa mamluks only. Nyssen states that most mamluks were in the *garde du bey*, divided into four companies of twenty-five each. C. Nyssen in Charles Monchicourt, *Documents historiques sur la Tunisie: Relations inedites de Nyssen, Filippi et Calligaris (1788, 1829, 1834)* (Paris, 1929), p. 22. (Hereafter cited as Nyssen [Monchicourt].) Temple lists 300 mamluks "or bodyguards" in his breakdown of the army in 1832. Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 233.

Dr. Frank offers no estimates at all and does not appear to have had a clear idea of the palace mamluks although as doctor to Hamuda Bey he should have been in an excellent position to observe. For example, he does not even use the word "mamluk" in describing the attempt on Hamuda Bey's life by the three young mamluks. They are called "gens de son service particulier." Frank, "Tunis," p. 69.

A careful examination of Bin Diyaf's biographies produces just thirty mamluks from the time of Hamuda Bey until 1872. Bin Diyaf listed only the most important persons in his biographies, but a very high proportion of these young mamluks was destined to play major roles. Also, he included biographies of several mamluks who were not especially important or successful (e.g., Biographies 230 and 245), which suggests that the

impressionable years living and studying together at Bardo palace, and most of them later were given positions which kept them there, at the heart of political power. Almost all of them had intimate daily contact with the ruling family—often strengthened by childhood friendships or later marriages. Even those who might take military command which obliged them to leave Bardo or Tunis itself remained "old boys" of Bardo, well known to the bey and his chief ministers.

In such an intimate grouping there was no need for competitive examinations or review boards to determine promotion. Seniority in service was accepted up to a point and used to fix the ceremonial order of precedence for mamluks.[21] There is some evidence that jumping a very junior mamluk over an older man was an exception and frowned upon.[22] What ultimately mattered, however, was the favor of the bey. In theory all the mamluks

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thirty biographies in his list might well represent a high percentage of the total number of palace mamluks in Tunisia during the first half of the nineteenth century. Bin Diyaf's biographies are given in the traditional manner, chronologically according to year of death. The figure of thirty mamluks is extracted from all his obituaries from 1814 to 1872. Birth dates are not given, but Bin Diyaf usually mentions in which reign they arrived in Tunis as young men to begin their training. None of the thirty arrived before the time of Hamuda Bey (1782-1814). The last in time appears to have been a mamluk of Mustafa Bey (1835-1837)—but almost certainly before he began his reign in 1835. Let us then assume, erring on the conservative side, that thirty is the number of mamluks worthy of biographical notice who began their training between the years 1782 and 1824. (This largely takes care of the objection that Bin Diyaf's list necessarily excludes those who lived beyond 1872, the last year of his biographies, for only a few who started their training during the time span given would still have been alive after 1872.) How many of the total number of palace mamluks might be expected to rise to distinction worthy of biographical notice? Granted what little is known of the system, as many as one in three is possible. One in five would be a more conservative guess, and surely one in ten offers an acceptable outer limit. This would result in a cumulative total of between ninety and three hundred palace mamluks who entered service during the entire period from 1782 to 1824.

The above estimate excludes the saqifa mamluks and most, but not all, mamluks of ministers and leading officials.

[21] Bin Diyaf, 7: 90.

[22] For example, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' and Muhammad Lasram urged Ahmad Bey not to include Mustafa Khaznadar in a delicate diplomatic mission to France in 1839 because he was too young (twenty-two), but Ahmad insisted. Bin Diyaf, 4: 29.

were the creatures of the bey, to be promoted or completely disgraced according to his whim. Sudden changes of political fortunes were accepted as natural. Several incompetents stayed in high office for years solely on the strength of being cronies of the reigning bey.

Even so, the more aggressive and talented mamluks usually rose to the top. The bey was influenced by his own mamluks in this close-knit system. If a mamluk achieved authority and leadership among his fellow mamluks, the bey was unlikely to overlook him. Beyond the formal chain of command, an informal pattern of mutual influences and accommodations was constantly at work.

The in-fighting among mamluks could be vicious. One young mamluk was imprisoned for years in the reign of Hamuda Bey because a jealous mamluk rival convinced the bey that he was plotting his assassination.[23] Another allegedly attempted to assassinate a fellow mamluk while on expedition, trusting that the incident would appear to have been caused by tribesmen resisting beylical authority.[24]

Indeed, the major political crises faced by the beylical regime in the thirty-seven years of the nineteenth century which preceded Ahmad's reign can be classified according to two distinct categories:

1. attempted *coups de main* by elements of the regular Turkish militia; and
2. bitter intramural palace coups, including assassination, in which mamluks were either the principal figures involved (e.g., Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' and Shakir Sahib al-Tabi') or formed the nucleus of the rival groups manipulating the actors behind the scenes.

The clearest exception was the assassination of Uthman Bey by Mahmud Bey and his sons with the collaboration of Muhammad Larbi Zarruq. Even in this case their concern to obtain Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi''s approval immediately after the assassination indicated the need to get the major party of mamluks committed to their side.

Factions within the corps of mamluks were often divided along lines of ethnic origin. The Georgians and Circassians disliked

[23] Khayr al-Din Kahiya. Bin Diyaf, Biography 323.
[24] Bin Diyaf, 7: 30.

those mamluks of Greek origin. The ostensible reason for this antipathy—that the Georgians and Circassians had deeper roots in Islam[25]—sounds very much like the justification seized upon by an established group to resist the encroachment of newcomers.

One mamluk was not very competent but he arrogantly assumed that his Georgian origin sufficed.[26] Another Georgian was "extremely attached to mamluks of his own tribe (i.e., Georgians), but in a way which did not detract from his other virtues."[27] To these Georgians and Circassians the mamluks of Rum (i.e., the Greeks, or by extension in this case all the mamluks from Christian areas of the Mediterranean) were no better than native Tunisians (*ahl al-balad*).[28]

A mamluk of Greek origin even brought his mother to live with him, and she brazenly wore her cross and ostentatiously received visits from priests. The embarrassed young mamluk moved his mother to another house, but it was still some time before he could get back in the good graces of his master, who, as bad luck would have it, was a Circassian, Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.[29] This was a rare but by no means unique case. Mamluks who had risen to posts of importance occasionally sought to re-establish contact with their families and help them in some way.[30]

There were at least two groups of brothers in the corps of mamluks at this time. Yusuf Kahiya Dar al-Pasha and Rashid, mamluks from Georgia, were brothers.[31] Mustafa Khaznadar and his older brother, Ahmad Amir al-Khiyala, were born at Kardamila on the island of Chios, sons of one Stephanis Stravelakis, who

[25] Bin Diyaf, 3: 184.

[26] Muhammad Shulaq. Bin Diyaf, Biography 230.

[27] Mustafa Agha. Bin Diyaf, Biography 373.

[28] Bin Diyaf, 7: 29. Rum, a corruption of Rome, was first used by the Arabs to designate the Byzantine Empire. It later came to mean Greek Christian (peoples or the area in which they lived) or, when referring to church affiliation, the Orthodox Church.

[29] The mamluk was Muhammad Khaznadar. Bin Diyaf, 8: 183-185. (No relation to Mustafa Khaznadar. The last name of the mamluks is simply a title of office, either the official position held at any given time or—more often—the name of a position by which he became identified at some earlier point in his career.)

[30] Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi, a Circassian mamluk and the great reformist leader in Tunisia in years after Ahmad Bey, later made an unsuccessful attempt to locate his family. See M. S. Mzali and J. Pignon, "Documents sur Khereddine," *Revue tunisienne* 18 (1934), p. 184.

[31] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 215 and 376.

died in the massacres of 1821. Of his three sons, these two were sent to Smyrna, then sold at Constantinople, and later resold to the bey of Tunis. Mustafa Khaznadar, born in 1817 and christened George, must have been four or at most five years old when he was taken from his native island to Istanbul.[32]

A successful mamluk might send later for a cadet member of the family. The story of how the young Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' got to Tunis suggests this was not uncommon. At the time Yusuf was to be taken to Tunis from Istanbul, the sultan had temporarily banned the export of all mamluks bound for Egypt. The port authorities, assuming this to be their destination, were prepared to forbid the Tunisian agent from taking him when Yusuf replied, "I am a free man. My master has freed me, and I have a brother who is sahib al-tabi' in Tunis. I am going there to join him."[33] This story, improvised by the quick-witted Yusuf, seemed plausible enough and he was released with no further ado.

Ethnic origin was merely the most natural line of demarcation for the all-too-human power struggle within a small elite group. Even if all mamluks had come from the same region, there would still have been cliques and factions. Such rivalries flourish when there is no effective *outside* challenger to claim the power and perquisites for which its members struggle among themselves. The mamluk corps in Ottoman Tunisia had risen to its dominant position because the bey needed a reliable counterweight to the Turkish militia. As the years of Ahmad Bey's reign began, the mamluks seemed in a strong position, apparently even more solidly entrenched as the Turkish militia declined and ultimately disappeared to be replaced by the new Nizami troops. Actually, the mamluk system ran counter to the new body of ideas being borrowed by or forced upon Tunisia and other parts of the Ottoman Empire. Eventually, recruitment would stop completely.

The reign of Ahmad Bey and of his two successors is sometimes depicted as one of mamluk dominance. The truth is not that simple. The corps of mamluks largely abandoned ethnic rivalries

[32] See P. Grandchamp and B. Mokaddem, "Une mission tunisienne à Paris," *Revue Africaine* (1946), p. 63. Also, Bin Diyaf, Biography 291. According to another source, Mustafa Khaznadar was brought to Tunis when he was less than ten years old. Shaykh Muhammad Bayram al-Khamis, *Safwat al-I'tibar bi Mustawda' al-Amsar wa al-Aqtar*, 2 vols. (Cairo 1302/1884), 2: 10.

[33] Bin Diyaf, 7: 90.

because new contenders for power caused them to close ranks. Mamluk dominance can be seen as the last stand of an old guard, many of whom were themselves attracted to the revolutionary new ideas of political organization that were undermining their position.

Such were the undercurrents of change in the period of Ahmad Bey. The older ideas and traditions of the mamluks as they existed, still largely unchallenged in the first years of the nineteenth century, provide the proper basis for understanding that change.

B. The Turks

One of the best ways to gauge the "Tunisification" of Ottoman Tunisia is to examine the diminishing role of Turks within the political system by the early years of the nineteenth century. To deal with the matter properly, it is necessary to have a clear idea of what was meant by Turk.[34]

First, the Turks were those who came with the original Ottoman occupation forces or who immigrated at some later time to join the regular army (*jund al-Turk* in Arabic sources) which they did by being inscribed on the regular army rolls (*diwan al-jund*).

Sons of these Turks by native Tunisian mothers were also permitted to inscribe their names on the diwan al-jund and become members of the regular army (unlike the situation in neighboring Algeria). These persons were often loosely described as Turks, although when one cared to be more precise, they were called by the Turkish word of *Kulughlis* (literally, "son of the slave," i.e., son of the Ottoman soldier, for all military and civil functionaries in the Ottoman system were deemed to be slaves of the sultan).

[34] European contemporaries had the disconcerting habit of equating "Turk" with Ottoman (a practice that has not died out), but even native Tunisians tended to confound the two. The native Tunisian historian al-Baji al-Mas'udi placed the period after the Ottoman conquest of Tunisia under the rubric "The Turkish Dynasty" (*dawlat al-Turk*). See al-Baji al-Mas'udi, p. 155. Other Tunisian sources are also filled with references to "Turks." Both Ibn Abi Dinar (Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Abi al-Qasim al-Ru'ayni al-Qayrawani, known as Ibn Abi Dinar), *Al-Mu'nis fi akhbar Ifriqiya wa Tunis*, ed. Muhammad Shammam (Tunis, 1967), and Bin Diyaf, however, refer more correctly to the Ottoman dynasty.

Likewise, those tracing their ancestry back to a Turk who had emigrated to Tunisia in an official capacity with, or following, the conquest might well be labeled "Turk" or at least known to be descended "from the Turks." This was especially the case for those who had maintained some of the marks of separate identity vis-à-vis the native Tunisians, e.g., marriage with other "Turkish" families, knowledge of Turkish (almost invariably in addition to Arabic by the eighteenth century), and adherence to Hanafi instead of Maliki school of law.

The number of such Turks in Tunisia can only be estimated. The Ottoman army that in 1574 conquered Tunis, drove out the Spanish and remained to rule the country appears to have numbered 4,000. From that time until the early years of the nineteenth century, this Turkish military establishment was considered the regular army of Ottoman Tunisia *par excellence*. Voluntary enlistment into this army, recruited by agents sent periodically to Istanbul and other points in the Ottoman Levant, was virtually the only channel bringing Turks to Tunisia. The Ottoman conquest seemingly stimulated no immigration of private individuals from the Levant to exploit the new political situation. In the terminology of modern European colonialism, Ottoman Tunisia was never a *colonie de peuplement*.

Two of Bin Diyaf's biographies reveal the implicit assumption that the army was the only proper career for a Turk in Tunisia. Ali Balhawan came to Tunisia as a wrestler (as the surname indicates) in order to challenge a Turkish wrestler in Tunis, but Mahmud Bey would not permit the match unless Ali signed the diwan al-jund (i.e., enlisted in the regular army). Ali demurred, "I have left my cattle and my farmlands in my own country." The bey insisted, however, and Ali fearing trouble unless he agreed, signed the diwan list. He defeated the wrestler he had come to fight. The bey installed Ali in his place (presumably as chief wrestler) and placed him in the Turkish cavalry (Hambas).[35]

The second example, Kashk Muhammad al-Dey, of Albanian origin, arrived in Tunisia with goods to sell. His maternal uncle who was serving in the Tunisian navy shamed him into abandoning trade in order to join the navy. "Where," his uncle demanded sarcastically, "are the merits of traders as compared with those

[35] Bin Diyaf, Biography 170.

of patience and steadfastness in the face of dangers [to be found in soldiers and sailors]?"[36]

The largest European estimate of Turks in the Tunisian army is 8,000 during the reign of Ali Bey (1759-1782), but this figure appears exaggerated by comparison with other estimates that follow only a few years later.[37] A better average might well be between 3,500 and 5,000 until the major Turkish revolt in 1811. From that date until 1831, the total strength appears to have been approximately 2,500 to 3,000. After 1831, when the new Western-inspired Nizami army relying on local recruitment came into existence, the Turkish army steadily declined. (See Table 1.) Later, Ahmad's zealous military reforms eliminated the old Turkish regular forces as a factor of any importance in the political or military structure of Ottoman Tunisia.

The small number of Turkish regulars does not, in itself, establish their relative importance within the Ottoman-Tunisian political class, for the genius of Ottoman imperial rule lay in the ability of so few to control so many. In Ottoman Algeria an equally small group of Turks, in proportion to the total population, maintained the monopoly of political and military power until the overthrow of the entire system by the French in 1830. The significant difference in Tunisia was that the beys were able to neutralize the Turkish forces with other native military units, and thereafter as long as the beys could maintain the balance they had effective control of government.

Moreover, political authority ultimately rests on more than sheer military prowess. The success of the beys in establishing ties of loyalty or mutual interest with leading elements in the

[36] Bin Diyaf, Biography 340.

[37] Only painstaking research using the many military registers available in the Tunisian archives, with perhaps additional insights (especially in the modalities of recruitment) gleaned from the Ottoman archives, will establish the strength of the Turkish forces in Tunisia from 1574 onward, but European and Tunisian Arabic sources make it clear that the Turkish forces in Tunisia were never large. See on this subject Robert Mantran, "Documents turcs relatifs à l'armée tunisienne," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 15 (1956), pp. 359-372. (Hereafter cited as Mantran, "Documents turcs.") Interesting material on the comparable situation in neighboring Algeria is to be found in M. Colombe, "Contribution à l'étude de récrutement de l'odjaq d'Alger dans les dernières années de l'histoire de la Régence," *Revue Africaine* (1943), pp. 166-183.

Table 1. Estimates of Turkish military forces in Ottoman Tunisia made at various times by European observers:

Date	*Number*	*Source*[38]
Time of Ali Bey (1759-1781)	c. 8,000	1
1788	5,000 (Turks, Mamluks and Kulughlis)	2
1811	c. 3,000-3,300	3
1811	6,000	4
1813	5,000 (Turks and Zouaves)	5
1814	c. 4,000	6
1829	2,700 (of which 200 cavalry)	7
1831	2,000	8
1832	3,000	9

native population frustrated attempts by Turkish military officers to adopt an Algerian pattern of political organization.[39]

The individual Turk thus sought power by playing the political game according to the existing rules. He could ingratiate himself with the bey or with a leading minister and in this manner be numbered among the small inner circle at court. There he would rub shoulders with mamluks, other Turks and a few native Tunisians, taking his chances as an individual within this select group. Examples of Turks who observed the rules and rose to high position figure among Bin Diyaf's biographies. One (Mustafa al-Turki) was a protégé of Larbi Zarruq. Another (Mustafa Balha-

[38] These estimates are found in the following:

1. A. Rousseau, *Annales tunisiennes*, pp. 269-270; 2. Nyssen (Monchicourt), p. 21; 3. Louis Frank, "Tunis," p. 73; 4. Thomas MacGill, *An Account of Tunis: Of its Government, Manners, Customs, and Antiquities; Especially of its Productions, Manufacturers, and Commerce* (Glasgow, 1811) (hereafter cited as MacGill, *Tunis*); 5. E. Plantet, *Correspondance des beys de Tunis et des consuls de France avec la cour (1577-1830)*, 3 vols. (Paris, 1893-1899), 3: 50 (citing French consul's report); 6. Mordecai M. Noah, *Travels in England, France, Spain and the Barbary States in the Years 1813-14 and 15* (New York, 1819) (hereafter cited as Noah, *Travels*); 7. Filippi (Monchicourt), *Documents inedites*, p. 133; 8. H. Hugon, "La Mission de Commandant Guy à Tunis (1831)," *Revue tunisienne* (1937), pp. 393-407; 9. Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 236.

[39] In Bin Diyaf's view the officers of the Turkish jund wanted to monopolize political power just as the Turks did in Algeria, but fortunately they were prevented from achieving this aim. Bin Diyaf, 2: 47 and 91.

wan) linked his fortunes with those of the mamluk Sulayman Kahiya. Ali Balhawan, as we have seen, caught the bey's eye as a leading wrestler. 'Allalah Qayiji married into the beylical family. Al-Dey Faydi established close ties of friendship with leading Tunisian families. Ahmad Agha played a leading role in crushing the 1816 revolt of the Turkish jund.[40]

If, instead, an ambitious Turk attempted a military *coup de main* by rallying the Turkish jund against the government, he faced the bey and all of his retinue quickly united against the common danger, the counter-force of the Zouaves and other native troops, and an indifferent if not hostile population.

Neutralization of the Turkish jund began early in Ottoman Tunisia, and the process was personified in the history of the struggle pitting the beys against the deys. By the beginning of the Husaynid dynasty the dey had been restricted to the role of chief spokesman for the interests of the Turkish jund whereas the beys had built up a broader political base. The dey's diminished power reflected the relative decline registered by the Turkish jund.

The Turkish jund and the dey represented the extreme in political and institutional conservatism whereas the beys and their followers adapted to the Tunisian scene. The Turkish jund thought of themselves as the heirs of the system created by Sinan Pasha after the conquest of 1574, the true and legitimate legatees of political authority in a properly constituted Ottoman province.

The beys, on the other hand, adopted a more flexible position. They maintained their Ottoman identity. As the earlier examination of their marriages reveals, they retained a sentiment of separation from and political superiority to the native population. At the same time, however, the beys even as early as the Muradid period, began to ingratiate themselves with the native population. The remarkable increase in new madrasas in Muradid times shows how early the beys began to court the native population.[41] These measures, going hand in hand with the judicious building up of non-Turkish military forces, effectively isolated the Turkish jund.

The impact of these events upon the attitudes and orientations of the Turks themselves was discernible by the early or mid-

[40] See, respectively, Bin Diyaf, Biographies 139, 170, 258, 299, 306 and 317.

[41] Robert Brunschvig, "Quelques remarques historiques sur les médersas de Tunisie," *Revue tunisienne* (1931), pp. 261-285.

eighteenth century. Small, elite military corps can maintain political and military power out of all proportion to their numbers only if there is both an intense *esprit de corps* from within and an unchallenged respect bordering on awe granted them by outsiders. A picture of this decline is presented in a striking, although oversimplified, fashion by the Tunisian historian Muhammad Seghir Ben Youssef (himself a Kulughli). The Turks, he wrote, had full power for the first hundred years after the conquest, but afterwards, their power was only nominal. The bey, instead of going himself on military expeditions to collect taxes, got into the habit of sending a kahiya as his delegate. In times of battle, the Turkish forces were kept to themselves and their officers not consulted by the beys. When the Turks saw this, they became less martial, married locally and their offspring were registered on the army rolls. The Turks and their offspring became simple bourgeois no longer "consulted in serious affairs." When the bey ordered them to fight, they obeyed only because they feared the loss of their salaries and other perquisites. No wonder, Seghir Ben Youssef concluded, the Tunisian jund did not fight as well as the Algerian.[42] Actually things were not quite that bad for the Turks. Turkish officers *were* consulted by the beys when military decisions had to be made,[43] and the belief that only a Turk could become a good regular soldier was shared by all members of the Tunisian population until well into the nineteenth century. Still, the feeling of relative deprivation was there and was made even more bitter by the belief (largely accurate) that the Turkish jund in neighboring Algeria was not subjected to the same debasement. The Turkish jund developed a jealous sensitivity about their shrunken authority, and when this malaise was exasperated by new encroachments, the revolts of 1811 and 1816 resulted.

Contemporary European sources usually trace the 1811 revolt to Hamuda Bey's allegedly deliberate policy to weaken Turkish

[42] Mohammed Seghir ben Youssef, *Mechra el Melki: Chronique tunisienne (1705-1771)*, trans. Victor Serres and Mohammed Lasram (Tunis, 1900), pp. 64-67. (Hereafter cited as *Mechra el Melki.*)

[43] For example, the same source, Seghir ben Youssef, later writes (*Mechra el Melki*, p. 151) that Husayn Bey, on learning of his nephew Ali Pasha's plan to attack with the support of Algerian forces, "called the officers of the Turkish troops to Bardo and consulted them on the situation."

influence.[44] The true reason was more indirect. Hamuda Bey had a genuine enthusiasm for military affairs, and "he was especially fond of the Turkish 'askar, thinking of them as forming his immediate retinue and support."[45] He even took a room in one of the Turkish barracks in Tunis and stayed there whenever he was in Tunis. Why would such a man arouse the ire of the Turkish jund? Bin Diyaf notes that Hamuda Bey's favoritism for the one barracks where he had taken a room created jealousy in the rest of the corps, but probably even more serious was his penchant for enrolling non-Turks into the jund.

Hamuda Bey "included with the [Turks] in military service a great number of their brothers born in this country [Kulughlis] and even other than their brothers [natives]. Whenever he saw a young man strong of body from the common people of the country, he would say to him, 'Your father was a Turk and died without having inscribed your name on the register. Why don't you come with your brothers and sign your names in order to escape the drudgery of your present work?' The boy would reply, 'Oh, sir, my father was So-and-so and my grandfather was So-and-so.' The chiefs of the Turkish Hambas would assert that this was not true and would swear that his father was Uzun Muhammad, or Dali Bash, or Kur Ali, or some other Turkish name. Their testimony would be accepted and the boy duly registered in the diwan al-jund. The Turkish jund scorned even the sons of their brothers [Kulughlis]. Their feelings about others were even stronger. They deemed this a weakening of their *esprit de corps*. For this and other reasons, they decided to assassinate [the bey]."[46]

Bin Diyaf's account has the ring of authenticity. The jund could cling to their sentiments of distinctiveness and superiority as long as their ranks were open only to Turks or Kulughlis. They could even, with a bit of self-deception, overlook the advance of other groups such as the mamluks, the Zouaves, or the Spahis.

[44] See Nyssen (Monchicourt), p. 13; A. Rousseau, *Annales tunisiennes*, p. 275; Marcel, "Tunis," p. 199.

[45] Bin Diyaf, 3: 53.

[46] Bin Diyaf, 3: 54. "Esprit de corps" is an inadequate translation of the Arabic *'asabiya*—the term made famous by Ibn Khaldun. In this context, the term joins together the intensity both of military *esprit de corps* and racial pride.

By enrolling outsiders in the jund, Hamuda Bey had breached this last barrier of Turkish self-esteem. If things continued in this fashion for long, Turkish military precedence would be destroyed. Compared with such a threat, Hamuda's attention to military requirements and his creation of a regime independent of Algeria and able occasionally to win victories from the old foe to the west, counted for little.

A few more points about the 1811 revolt are noteworthy. The Turks got no support from other military elements, and apparently sought none. The bey's senior officers quickly lined up the non-Turkish military units available in the capital, and—even more striking—the bey had arms and ammunition distributed to the people of Bab al-Suwayqa (one of the two suburbs of Tunis at that time).[47] Seeing their position in Tunis impossible, some 500 of the Turks who had revolted broke out of the Qasba and made for Algeria where they hoped to receive aid or at least refuge.

Hamuda Bey wisely let the Turks leave the city without resistance, and then after they were well en route sent the Spahis after them. The weary Turks, poorly provisioned, were no match for the Spahis in the open countryside and they were slaughtered in the region of Mateur. They were left on the field of battle, unburied, and years afterward their sun-bleached bones could still be observed.[48] After the revolt, Hamuda relied more heavily on non-Turkish military forces, especially the Zouaves—the only non-Turkish infantry.

The 1816 revolt of the Turkish jund presents interesting variations on the same pattern. The defeat and resulting decline after 1811 increased the bitterness of the jund, and when the bey felt obliged to accede to the demands of the British fleet under Lord Exmouth and release a number of Christian prisoners (April

[47] Larbi Zarruq suggested to the bey that he arm the people of Bab al-Suwayqa. Bin Diyaf, 3: 55. Perhaps the idea of arming native Tunisians—civilians and townsmen, at that—came a bit easier to a native Tunisian such as Larbi Zarruq. A. Rousseau, *Annales tunisiennes*, p. 272, and J. J. Marcel, "Tunis," p. 199, note that the population of Tunis was in arms against the Turks in 1811 but they appear to assume that this occurred spontaneously.

[48] Bin Diyaf, 3: 56. Marcel, "Tunis," pp. 200-201, gives a much larger number: approximately 2,200 Turks who revolted; 1,700 who broke out of the Qasba and marched westward, of whom about 900 were killed and 600 later surrendered.

1816) the Turks had the pretext they required. Again, the essentially conservative nature of their justification for revolt is striking—the old order had been changed, and decline had overtaken the country to such extent that the bey was a mere tool of the infidel powers.

The Turks, however, seemed to have learned something from the defeat in 1811. This time they revolted in the name of the Ottoman sultan and attempted to divide the beylical family by offering their loyalty to Ismail Bey, brother of Mahmud. They were careful to treat the townspeople with respect. No shops were pillaged, and any soldier harassing the inhabitants of Tunis was immediately punished.[49] The Turks even extorted a signed statement from the leading 'ulama deposing Mahmud Bey.

Neither the legal forms observed nor the more careful treatment of the local population was to any avail. All non-Turkish units of the military and even many of the senior Turkish officers themselves remained loyal to the bey. Ismail Bey was not for a moment tempted to betray his brother and join the revolt. The Husaynid family had purged itself of such dangerous intrafamily disputes after the assassination of Uthman Bey. The people of Bab al-Suwayqa were again armed, and this time the shaykh al-madina (always a native Tunisian) played a leading role in suppressing the uprising.[50]

When the rebels of 1816 found their cause hopeless, the two leaders fell out, and one of them led a group that managed to break out of the Qasba, march to La Goulette, seize five Tunisian ships and force the crews at gunpoint to take them to Istanbul. They were still bearing the paper signed, under duress, by the 'ulama deposing the bey. A few days later, the bey sent his own emissary to the Porte to explain the situation and to request the return of the ships. The Porte not only permitted the ships and their crews to return to Tunis, but was also prepared to hand over the rebellious soldiers. The bey's emissary expressed no desire to take them back.[51]

Two revolts by Turks within five years had threatened the existence of the Husaynid dynasty. What would be more natural than for Mahmud Bey to have dissolved the Turkish jund with the stroke of a pen? Nothing of the sort occurred. Deeply in-

[49] Bin Diyaf, 3: 117; Rousseau, *Annales tunisiennes*, p. 323.
[50] Bin Diyaf, 3: 115-121. [51] Ibid., p. 121.

grained habits die hard, and there was still considerable life in the prejudice that only a Turk could be a good regular soldier. A few weeks after the revolt had been crushed, the bey sent a mission including "notables from the Turkish jund" to Istanbul with gifts and thanks to the sultan. They returned "with a great number of Turkish volunteers for service in the jund as replacements for those who had fled."[52]

A decade later, in 1826, Ottoman Sultan Mahmud II gave the example of what to do with an old army corps that had become intractable and outlived its usefulness by massacring the Janissaries. This action in Istanbul made the idea of military reform more palatable in Ottoman Tunisia; but even so, the old prejudice remained. When Tunisia began to organize the new Nizami army in 1831, only Turks and mamluks were chosen as officers.[53]

If one is to believe Alphonse Rousseau (not always a reliable source) there was one more attempt by the Turkish jund to revolt, in 1829. The account he gives of the incident smacks of the typical "bazaar rumor" accepted all too readily by the European diplomat made apprehensive and gullible by the absence of genuine contact with the inner workings of domestic politics. A Christian in a tavern allegedly overheard Turks plotting to assassinate the bey and then massacre all Christians. He informed the French consul who informed the bey's brother, Mustafa Bey. A Moroccan shaykh planning to preach holy war apparently made the matter even more touch-and-go. Thanks to this tip, steps were taken in time, and the ringleaders were quietly taken off and executed.[54]

Even if this incident is discounted, there is little doubt that the late 1820s was a period when ideas of revolt would be in the air. Tunisian ships, sent to support the sultan, had shared in the crushing defeat at Navarino (1827). In the same year, the dey of Algiers struck the French consul with a flywhisk, sparking a chain reaction of diplomatic and military events culminating in the French conquest of Algiers three years later. During that period

[52] Ibid., p. 122.

[53] A. Daux, "Achmed-Pacha, bey du Tunis, et des reformes qu'il a faites dans l'administration de ses états," *Revue de l'orient de l'Algerie et des colonies* 4 (1848). (Hereafter cited as Daux, "Achmed-Pacha.")

[54] A. Rousseau, *Annales tunisiennes*, pp. 384-392. There is no mention of the alleged incident in Bin Diyaf, Baji al-Mas'udi nor in European sources other than Rousseau.

(1827-1830) the dey's representatives actively solicited support in neighboring Tunisia.

The Turkish jund still existed, they were a force to be reckoned with, and the venerable myth of their prowess caused them to be dreaded beyond their actual strength. One plot, as we have seen, was allegedly overheard by a Christian in a tavern. A year earlier, the French consul, De Lesseps (no neophyte to that part of the world), wrote his superiors in Paris that no Turks were to be found in the taverns and this was a sure sign that a plot was being hatched.[55]

Turks, taverns, revolts, and arrogance—this is a picture suggested in a number of European accounts of these times, and many native Tunisians agreed. In the days of Hamuda Bey, people suffered from the cruelty of the Turkish soldiers. It was, Bin Diyaf insisted, just like what the people of Istanbul used to endure from their Janissaries. Things got so bad in Tunis that attendance at morning and evening prayers almost ceased, for in the half-light one of those "killers" might steal the burnooses of those praying, and anyone trying to stop them was exposed to physical harm.[56]

Likewise, old timers in the Tunis of Bin Diyaf's days remembered the "Ramadan ghouls"—Turkish soldiers who went out during the nights of Ramadan for diversion and horseplay. They called at the houses of native notables in order to receive a certain sum of money, ostensibly as a gift, but they had come to consider it their due. They also called at Bardo palace where the gates remained open for them until they arrived. These practices stopped after the 1811 revolt, and the notables were no longer molested. The beys continued to grant them their Ramadan gift, but it was sent directly to their barracks. There are, Bin Diyaf tartly concluded, "other such stories which the shaykhs of the capital know."[57]

[55] Plantet, *Tunis*, 3 (May 1828), Document 1312, p. 661.

[56] Bin Diyaf, 3: 56. However, he added, things were even worse in Algeria.

[57] Bin Diyaf, 3: 57. Dr. Louis Frank, "Tunis," pp. 92-94, offers an interesting string of anecdotes about the petty harassments and occasional real violence which Europeans were likely to meet from these Turks. One of the few offering a touch of comic relief concerns the wrestlers who performed for the bey during the Ramadan feast. Afterwards they marched through the streets performing for the crowds. When they met a Christian

Even allowing for Bin Diyaf's strong prejudice in favor of the native Tunisian upper-class families and his concomitant antipathy to the idea that only Turks (or mamluks for that matter) were qualified to hold top political and military posts, his account about the incivility, boorishness, and cruelty of the Turks is convincing. Similar stories were related by others, European and native Tunisian.

Yet, such is the perversity of human behavior that after several generations of supremacy based on no more than brutish physical power, a group may well develop traits which *post facto* make their dominance appear more natural and legitimate. Descendants of the wild Normans became Europe's nobility. The slave-owning planter's grandson became a gentleman. And those Turks, recruited from humble and obscure origins all over the Levant, brawling and plotting in the taverns of Tunis, continued, long after the Turkish jund was only a distant memory, to provide much of Tunisia's political elite, not to mention a disproportionate share of the religious elite as well.

By the beginning of Ahmad Bey's reign Turkish military power in Tunisia, as a separate entity, was virtually destroyed. Even so, the small minority of Turks and their descendants who remained were still looked to as natural leaders in military and political affairs, and they assumed the role expected of them with nobility's air of authority.

An observer as late as the 1860s could write, "The Turks, in spite of the misfortunes of the times, still form the superior class. They are stronger, franker and more generous than the Moors or the Arabs. They have the best heads and the greatest dignity in their manner. Their dress, less gaudy, is in better taste. The Moors accuse them of being dull-witted, domineering in their

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or Jew they demanded a gift, and if refused, they embraced the unlucky infidel, thus completely covering him with the thick coat of oil they always applied to their bodies before their matches. Dr. Frank's stories relate to the period before 1811. By 1842, a European army officer arriving at La Goulette was saluted by the Tunisian guard, even though he was in mufti. He later learned that the guards made a practice of saluting all visitors in order to avoid trouble with their superiors, for they could not distinguish European uniforms. Capitaine X, *Une promenade à Tunis en 1842, 1844.* (Hereafter cited as Capitaine X, *Promenade.*) The difference between gratuitous insults to Europeans in the period before 1811 and the custom of saluting all Europeans just to play it safe in the 1840s reveals the change being forced upon the Tunisia of Ahmad Bey's time.

own homes, and inclined to cruelty. I do not know what occurs in a place which cannot be entered, but what I do know is that in their daily activities they show proof of an elevation of sentiments, straightforwardness, and an independence of character, which is rarely to be found among those who take it upon themselves to denigrate them."[58]

Turks, for all the vicissitudes that had diminished their strength, remained a major element in the political class, if only because neither they nor anyone else in Tunisia could conceive of the situation as being otherwise.

C. Native Tunisians in the Political Class

By the turn of the nineteenth century, the roster of native Tunisians participating in the government of Ottoman Tunisia was impressive, both in numbers and the importance of positions held. If they had been unified by sentiments of mutual interest and self-identity, these native Tunisians might have dominated governmental affairs. Such was not the case. Native Tunisian representation in the government presents nothing like the cohesion of class, and functional specialization to be found among mamluks or Turks. Not one but several groups of Tunisians participated in government—each having come into existence separately and in response to different needs.

The bureaucracy was manned almost completely by native Tunisians. The overwhelming majority of judges (*qadis*) and jurisconsults (*muftis*) were also natives, for Tunisia remained faithful to the Maliki legal school and it would have been an egregious political blunder to *impose* non-native Hanafi qadis and muftis upon the population.

Except for a tiny Turkish contingent all cavalry was native Tunisian, usually officered by native Tunisians. They lacked the prestige of the regular infantry, and they were not used for garrison duty in Tunis or the principal garrison towns of the beylik. Even so, they were by the nineteenth century as numerous as the regular Turkish infantry, and a very important counterweight to Turkish pretensions. Native Spahis, it will be recalled, had overtaken and massacred the Turks of the regular jund after their

[58] A. de Flaux, *La régence de Tunis au dix-neuvième siècle* (Paris, 1865), p. 94. Similar sentiments were earlier expressed by Dr. Frank, "Tunis," p. 104.

abortive revolt in 1811. In addition to these forces, the beys relied on native Tunisian tribal irregulars in times of military expeditions or war.[59]

The actual day-to-day exercise of political power as seen by the average native Tunisian was also often in the hands of natives—tribal shaykhs and their assistants, local government leaders (shaykhs of cities, towns and quarters), and tax farmers. Even many of the provincial governors (*qaids*) were natives, especially among the tribes.

Not all of these Tunisians belonged to the political class in the same sense as the Turks and the mamluks. What then, is the line of division between membership in the small political class and the great mass of the ruled (including, of course, its own leaders and spokesmen)? To define the political class as embracing all persons relying directly on the government for livelihood, either in the form of salaries or appointment to profitable office, would be generally accurate. Greater precision is achieved if the definition is narrowed to include only those who identified with government and were generally so regarded by others. This produces the following native Tunisian members of the political class: clerks; military and provincial officials (the same man often moving from the one to the other, Tunisian governmental practice lacking a hard-and-fast distinction between military and civil offices); and a small elite group who because of their great importance should be classified separately. The best designation might well simply be important old families.

This excludes the tribal, village, and town shaykhs who are best classified as spokesmen of native society to government. Excluded as well is the religious class which, although closely linked to government, was in a sense a separate estate. It will be considered later.

Clerks

Since Bin Diyaf was, himself, an important katib and the son of a katib, his biographical dictionary is especially rich in his coverage

[59] The Zwawa (Zouaves) infantry are not classified as native troops. They were not Turkish and, indeed, came increasingly to be used by the beys to neutralize the threat of the Turkish infantry, but neither were they native Tunisians. They came from the Kabylia mountain region of Algeria, and although many had settled in Tunisia for more than one generation, they largely maintained their ethnic and even linguistic (Berber) distinctiveness.

of the members of the clerkly class. For the time period covered in this study (those who died in 1814 or after until the end of Bin Diyaf's chronicle in 1872), Bin Diyaf's biographies list thirty-one official clerks—one more than the number of mamluks.

The clerkly class was an essential part of the governmental machinery. Upon them fell the tasks of recording receipts and expenditures, writing and preserving official correspondence, and maintaining the files that could give the governing class of Ottoman Tunisia some idea of what was going on around them. Like all bureaucracies, they were the custodians of governmental and administrative tradition. They were the authorities on the details and procedures of government.

The word "clerk," although the best possible *general* word for translating the Arabic *katib* (literally, "writer"), unfortunately connotes a lowly administrative position in modern usage. Many of the katibs were no more than clerks in this sense, but the leading katibs were important functionaries. It might help to think of the latter as chancellors rather than clerks. (Indeed, the politico-administrative history of these two words—katib and chancellor—reveals interesting parallels in the European and Islamic worlds.) The clerkly class was important, but more in service than command functions, and for that reason less discernible to outside observers. The European sources, of help in adding to our knowledge of mamluks and Turks, have almost nothing to offer concerning the clerks. Fortunately, Bin Diyaf is able to fill the breach with his unexcelled view from within.

By the beginning of Ahmad Bey's reign, the clerkly class was, for all practical purposes, completely native Tunisian and used Arabic as the language of correspondence and record. This had not always been the case. The bureaucratic tradition of the central Ottoman Empire was highly developed, and the language of court and record was Ottoman Turkish. Ottoman Tunisia started its administrative life under the influence of this system, and the office of *bash khoja* ("chief clerk," or more accurately, head of the entire bureaucracy) was considered as equal to that of dey.[60] This office, requiring mastery of Ottoman Turkish plus high standing in the Turkish jund, always went to a leading Turk in

[60] Bin Diyaf, Biography 204 (Muhammad Amin Bash Khoja), where he adds that only four officials were entitled to wear the *farwa*—the bash khoja, the Hanafi bash mufti, the pasha and the dey.

Ottoman Tunisia. Under him there was, in theory, a full battery of clerks competent in Ottoman Turkish.

Ottoman administration in Tunisia, however, had to adjust to practical realities. The native language was Arabic; there was less need for constant correspondence with Istanbul because of Ottoman Tunisia's virtual autonomy; and it may be (we are poorly informed on this matter) that few of the Turkish volunteers who arrived to man the jund desired, or were competent, to go into clerkly positions. Add to these factors the existence in Tunisia of an established clerkly class and a bureaucratic tradition using Arabic (the legacy of the Hafsids), and it is readily understandable how Arabic soon replaced Ottoman Turkish as the language of official records.

By the nineteenth century, tax registers, lists of expenditures and receipts, correspondence with qaids, and decrees of appointment to public office were in Arabic. Only correspondence with Istanbul and miscellaneous correspondence and records dealing with the Turkish jund were still in Ottoman Turkish. As we have seen, Ahmad Bey set a precedent by corresponding even with Istanbul in Arabic.

The office of bash khoja remained, but it suffered an even more severe decline in power than that of dey. By the nineteenth century, the bash khoja had virtually no bureaucracy competent in Ottoman-Turkish to administer. Nurallah Khoja, appointed bash khoja presumably in 1834 (he succeeded Muhammad Amin Bash Khoja who died that year) handled personally whatever the government needed to have written in Turkish.[61] Ahmad Hafiz Khoja (d. 1861) was later given the once-prestigious title of bash khoja but his responsibility was confined to the small Turkish section since he was unable to handle the work in Arabic.[62] An office no longer important was allowed to remain in existence out of sheer inertia. The handful of Turkish clerks remaining in the nineteenth century was an unimportant remnant. The bureaucracy had long been in the hands of the native Tunisian clerks.

[61] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 204 and 216. Four Turkish language dossiers from the Tunisian National Archives, cited by Mantran, suggest some use of Turkish in internal administration into the nineteenth century. Significantly, they all deal with military affairs, but these fragments seem minor compared to the several hundred registers in Arabic beginning as early as 1710—even for military affairs. See Mantran, *Inventaire*, pp. 6-7 and Mantran, "Documents turcs," pp. 359-372.

[62] Bin Diyaf, Biography 344.

Who were these native Tunisian clerks? A clerk was by definition a lettered man. He could read and write with fluency and ease, and in a society and time when even men in high position might be barely literate this was no mean accomplishment. Since there was only one type of formal education in Ottoman Tunisia—the religiously oriented training conducted exclusively by the 'ulama class—all the clerks were products of this system. Those destined to become clerks first learned to read and write in an Islamic elementary school (*kuttab*), but the ties of the clerkly class with the 'ulama and the system of education monopolized by the 'ulama class went well beyond this.

The close relationship between clerks and 'ulama deserves emphasis for it was not a necessary result of their several professional duties. A young aspirant to a clerical post in government could have apprenticed himself to another clerk after having learned the three R's in a kuttab. There was no practical reason why a clerk should spend years in higher religious studies.

Yet, interestingly, a very large number of clerks had studied long enough (usually at Zitouna) to qualify as 'ulama. Of the twenty-four biographies of clerks by Bin Diyaf in which educational background is given, six are specifically listed as having studied at Zitouna and seventeen others probably did or had equivalent training elsewhere (e.g., references to their having had an especially good education or "studied under . . ." followed by a list of the major shaykhs of the day, etc.). Only one obviously had a mediocre formal education. Ahmad al-'Uthmani Bu 'Attur (ironically, from an old clerkly family) reached a level of formal education only "sufficient to distinguish him from the masses."[63]

That so many clerks pursued formal education well beyond what was required for minimal technical competence in writing and keeping records illuminates the social standing of this class. More than mere technicians, they were learned men, trained in the law and theology of Islam, and Arabic belles lettres. Thus they evinced a sense of identity and common interest with the 'ulama. Indeed, some individuals moved back and forth between the two professions. Three of Bin Diyaf's clerks had previous teaching experience (two at Zitouna, one at Kairouan). Eight, including two of the teachers, had also worked in *shihada* or *tawthiq* (the notarial offices usually filled by the religiously trained). One had previously been a *khatib* ("mosque preacher").

[63] Bin Diyaf, Biography 315.

Another even became a mufti after having left his clerical position.[64]

The social origins of the clerks were also comparable to those of the 'ulama. Most were from old families long established in Tunis or other urban centers, who earned their living in the professions open to learned men. Even so, the clerkly class, like the 'ulama class, was open to the tribesman or the young man of modest origins who showed promise in formal Islamic education. The twenty-four biographies of clerks in which Bin Diyaf gives some identification of the father's profession or of family background reveal the following:

Eleven had fathers who were clerks.
Four were from 'ulama families.
Two were from "saintly families" possessing their own family zawiya.
Two had fathers with positions in state service. (The family of one of these was originally of 'ulama background.)
One had a father engaged in trade.
Two were of tribal origins.
Two were of noble or, in one case, sharifian origin with no further details given.

The urban background (predominantly Tunis) of the leading clerks is even more strongly marked. The thirty-one clerks in Bin Diyaf's biographies grew up in the following places:[65]

Tunis	21
Algiers[66]	1
Morocco (not further specified)	1
Kairouan	2
Sfax	1
Nabeul	1

[64] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 135, 179, 185, 194, 202, 275, 302, 346, 352 and 393.

[65] Bin Diyaf seldom mentions place of birth, and much of this evidence is circumstantial, e.g., reference to place of early education or father's occupation, etc. The results reached may well exaggerate the number listed as growing up in Tunis.

[66] This was Muhammad al-Habib Lasram, who was born in Algiers where his family had joined the sons of Husayn b. Ali in exile after the victory of Ali Pasha. The Lasram family returned to Tunis with the Husayniya branch of the ruling dynasty after the defeat of Ali Pasha. Bin Diyaf, Biography 100.

Testour	1
Countryside (two from rural regions where family zawiyas located—including the father of Bin Diyaf—and one from the Drid tribe)	3

Of the group only five spent even as much as a few years of childhood in non-urban environments (two in the old, established villages, Nabeul and Testour, and three in the countryside).[67] All spent the later years of their education and their entire clerkly careers in an urban setting.

Bin Diyaf writes of his own father, who had come to Tunis to study, "It was difficult for him to return to the countryside after the refinement of the capital."[68] Since his father was apparently a bright young man who had done well in his studies, a clerkly career offered the best opportunity for him to stay in the city and live well. Teaching or another religious post would have been an alternative, but for an outsider who had yet to make his reputation, the first few years would probably have offered meager income. A career in trade required expertise, connections, and capital—all lacking. The country boy bringing nothing but his own talent to the city probably found the career of government clerk both more accessible and economically more secure.

Like father, like son. It has already been seen that eleven of the twenty-four clerks who figure in Bin Diyaf's biographies came from clerkly families. The next generation was just as consistent. In eleven of his biographies, Bin Diyaf gives information about the careers followed by the sons. Ten of the clerks had sons (more than one son in two cases) who followed the same profession. One had sons deemed among the notables (Bin Diyaf's way of saying that the family at least held its own, socially, for the next generation). Moreover, two of the three clerks from rural backgrounds left sons who followed in this profession. One was Bin Diyaf himself. No information is available about the family of the third.

The government clerks were divided into two separate groups—the *diwan al-insha* (literally, "letter-writing" or "composition") and the *diwan al-hisban* ("accounts"), each diwan hav-

[67] Including one, Abd al-Rahman al-Kamil, listed as of tribal origin, but "his grandfather had moved from the tents to Kairouan" and al-Kamil grew up in that city. Bin Diyaf, Biography 202.

[68] Bin Diyaf, Biography 235.

ing its own chief. Over the entire corps of clerks presided the *ra'is al-kataba* ("chief of clerks") or bash katib.[69] This office was held from early in the nineteenth century until beyond the reign of Ahmad Bey by members of the famous Lasram family.

Except for the functional distinction between accountants and other clerks there seems to have been very little specialization. One clerk is mentioned as having had charge of the *daftars* ("registers") of the mukhazaniya as well as the Zouaves.[70] Others served as private secretary to the commander of the mahalla—the biannual military expeditions to collect taxes.[71] Such assignments indicated not specialization but simply stages in the general clerkly career. A clerk might have several different jobs during his career, and apparently although any clerk might have specific duties at a particular time, he was expected to be on call to fill in wherever needed. The different handwriting to be detected from time to time for the same type of documents (e.g., decrees, correspondences to qaids, etc.) proves a certain rotation in clerical duties according to exigencies of the moment.

In general, specialization was personal rather than functional. The leading officials, for understandable reasons, preferred to have their own private and confidential secretaries. From 1827 on Bin Diyaf served the successive beys in this capacity.[72] His father had held a similar position of trust with Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' and as a result was imprisoned and had his money confiscated following the latter's assassination. His later career, after release from prison, was first as secretary to Husayn Khoja and then to Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'. Many of the clerks gained entry into the diwan al-insha after having served as private secretaries for leading figures. (The diwan included only those serving in the capital.)

Apparently, provincial governors employed and paid for their

[69] Bin Diyaf does not use bash katib in his biographies, referring only to ra'is (chief, head, leader) or the abstract form ri'asa. This appears to be only a stylistic embellishment on Bin Diyaf's part. There is no doubt that bash katib was not only the official designation but also the term in common use. Bin Diyaf, himself, uses the term at times in the text of his chronicle (e.g., 3: 85).

[70] Bin Diyaf, Biography 315.

[71] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 346 and 329. As noted, the commander of the mahalla was usually the member of the Husaynid family next in line of succession.

[72] Bin Diyaf, 3: 159.

own clerks.[73] One such clerk was secretary to the minister Muhammad Khoja. He was then offered the job of chief clerk in accounts which he reluctantly accepted, preferring to stay with his patron. He was so miserable in his new job that he was soon given permission to return to Muhammad Khoja.[74]

Another clerk worked with the famous qaid Sulayman b. al-Haj who trusted him so much that he left him his seal (*khatm*) when he went on a trip to the Sahil. This clerk moved into the diwan al-insha and later became attached to Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.[75] One clerk got his start as private secretary to Larbi Zarruq and another as private secretary to Mahmud bin 'Ayad.[76] These close personal relations with the bey or with a leading minister provided the means to move from routine assignment to the most powerful posts available to the clerkly class.

These positions were more than simply political plums to be distributed according to a beylical spoils system. There was a sense of professional pride based both on educational and social position, and clerkly competence. Bin Diyaf, the successful clerk *par excellence*, described the varieties of clerkly proficiency. Several were only "middling" in their work.[77] Ahmad al-'Uthmani Bu 'Attur (the one who had received scant formal education) was limited in his clerkly qualifications but he worked hard, recognized his limitations, and "was not too proud to ask questions."[78] Another clerk was dropped later in his career because he was not applying himself to the work.[79] Abd al-Rahman al-Kamil, previously mentioned as a shaykh of the Bardo madrasa, was not successful as a clerk—he was well known as a poet—and soon resigned.[80] On the other hand, Sulayman Mahjub, who had been carefully trained by his father, a learned 'alim, was an excellent clerk.[81]

The clerks themselves possessed a strong sense of precedence and rank. When Muhammad Lasram was appointed chief clerk,

[73] Such is the inference to be drawn from Bin Diyaf's biographies and from what little is known about how the governors assumed charge of their districts on an essentially tax-farming basis.

[74] Bin Diyaf, Biography 368. [75] Bin Diyaf, Biography 336.

[76] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 402 and 352.

[77] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 264, 278, 305 and 393.

[78] Bin Diyaf, Biography 315. [79] Bin Diyaf, Biography 329.

[80] Bin Diyaf, Biography 202.

[81] Bin Diyaf, Biography 302. It was he who was later appointed mufti.

his two cousins resigned in protest against having been passed over.[82] Actually, he does not seem to have been a bad choice, for he was especially good in accounts. In spite of Lasram's having the title, the real work was accomplished by others "from among the brilliant, scholarly clerks."[83]

Ability to compose artfully and faultlessly was apparently more prestigious than accounting skill. For centuries Arab savants had jealously guarded the purity of their written language, and the clerks—obliged by their profession quickly to transform into an ornate prose the mundane ideas and commands of their masters—appear to have judged themselves by the versatility and perfection they could achieve in meeting these daily challenges.

The timeless "true clerk" in Arab civilization appears in the following anecdote. One day the clerk Ahmad Mazyu was taking dictation from the all-powerful Larbi Zarruq. An argument ensued about a certain usage, and Zarruq, exasperated, attempted to settle the matter by commanding, "Write it as I wish, you are my clerk." Mazyu retorted, "I will write as you wish except for mistakes which would discredit the clerk." With that he resigned his job and became—a rather surprising change—a cloth merchant. Several intercessions by Larbi Zarruq and Mazyu's family finally prevailed upon him to resume his clerkly position where he remained "honored and of recognized standing" until his death in 1842.[84]

An adequate time for proper apprenticeship was deemed important. Bin Diyaf's own father protested in vain against his son's early promotion to the diwan al-insha in 1827.[85] Also, a government clerk was expected to remain within the limits of his professional competence. Bin Diyaf writes scornfully of a clerk who, using his favor with Husayn Bey, moved into lucrative nonclerkly jobs. "He began to undertake the kind of work usually done by qaids."[86]

An essential part of the state apparatus, strategically located by the nature of their tasks within the inner circle of the powerful and the decision makers, the clerks as a class nevertheless discreetly remained a safe distance from the hurly-burly of beylical politics. As men of the pen they lacked access to and knowledge of that ultimate arbiter—a political power base, be it expressed in

[82] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 100 and 157.
[83] Bin Diyaf, Biography 171.
[84] Bin Diyaf, Biography 257.
[85] Bin Diyaf, 3: 159.
[86] Bin Diyaf, Biography 179.

the form of troops, tribes, financial resources, or moral authority over large elements of the subject population.

Also, like their compeers, the 'ulama, they had developed in the course of their formal education the ambivalent feelings toward political power (ranging from disdain to a hesitant loyalty offered existing government as the least evil) that had so strongly marked the learned class in classical Islamic civilization. They were satisfied to serve and to observe. It is not surprising that the two best-known historians of nineteenth century Tunisia—Bin Diyaf and al-Baji al-Mas'udi—were clerks and sons of clerks.[87]

Military and Provincial Officials

As has been seen, the highest offices (civil and military) in the Husaynid state were virtually monopolized by mamluks and Turks. Generally (with rare exceptions such as Larbi Zarruq) native Tunisian wielders of political power were not high government officials, but rather, natural leaders of important native groups (tribes, towns, and brotherhoods) whose interests they represented and defended before the beylik. Only a few native Tunisians held positions of command within the government. Yet, they were the leaven of "Tunisification" that helped make the Husaynid system work. The native Tunisian clerkly class, for all their importance as knowledgeable advisers behind the scenes, were men of the pen, occupationally segregated from commanding positions. The mamluks and Turks could tolerate their presence without feeling that the natural order of government was in any way disturbed. These native Tunisians who entered government service and worked up the ladder of promotion in military and administrative duties more or less as the mamluks or Turks did were a different breed. Their very presence within the political class bore witness to a healthy flexibility in Husaynid Tunisia's recruitment of political leadership. They were living proof that Husaynid Tunisia did not need to rely on an alien ruling class.

In a country whose inhabitants were overwhelmingly non-urban and bound together by tribal loyalties, this group was recruited largely from the nomadic or semi-nomadic tribes. Of the eleven listed by Bin Diyaf, seven grew up among their respective

[87] For biographical information on al-Baji al-Mas'udi see Bin Diyaf, Biography 275 (Muhammad al-Mas'udi, al-Baji's father) and the brief biography by Muhsin bin Hamida, *al-Baji al-Mas'udi* (Tunis, 1962).

tribes and later came to Tunis to join the government; three had fathers already in makhzan service (and it is likely that all of these families came originally from a nomadic tribe of Tunisia); and only one came from a notable family of Tunis. The man from Tunis was the only one to enter the artillery. All of the others, as horsemen born, entered the cavalry (usually the Spahis, sometimes the Arab Hambas).[88]

The Spahis lacked the prestige of the Turkish jund. The new recruit even had to bring his own horse,[89] service was irregular, and the actual amount of pay was slight.[90] Nevertheless, there were other benefits—tax exemption, fee-splitting for those lucky Spahis on official errands and, above all, the chance to advance to better things. This might look meager to the Turk or the mamluk, accustomed to more generous perquisites, but it was probably appealing to the average tribesman. As heirs of nineteenth-century European Romanticism we glamourize nomadic life. The Western traveller, breaking the monotony of his inns and hotels in the towns for a few days in the desert, is beguiled by the feast for guests, campfires at dusk, and the impassive dignity of the shaykh. Day by day, the tribesman sees a different picture—a scarcity of goods and even food, the discomfort of cold in winter and shadeless heat in summer, fear of disease or enemy tribes who at any moment might deprive him of life or, almost as bad, livelihood by raiding his flocks, and perhaps above all the sheer boredom of a crushingly monotonous life.

One can well appreciate how a certain Muhammad bin 'Amir

[88] Two in this list cannot be definitely labeled as native Tunisians. Neither their names—Yusuf b. Farhat al-Maymuni, and Salih Zayd—nor the other information given is sufficient to establish their origin beyond doubt. Both rose to be bash Hamba, but then there were always two—one for the Turkish Hambas and one for the Arabs. They could have been of mamluk or Turkish origin. However, since they started their careers in the Spahis, they have been assumed to have been native Tunisians. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 205 and 381.

[89] Paul de Dianous, *Notes de législation tunisienne* (Paris, 1894), pp. 18-19; R. Drevet, *l'Armée tunisienne* (Tunis, 1922), p. 19. These are later accounts reconstructing the pre-Protectorate situation, and this rule may have changed at some point in the nineteenth century. Filippi claims the Spahi was given a horse but had to provide his other equipment. Filippi (Monchicourt), p. 138. In either case, the government replaced a horse that died or was retired.

[90] Filippi lists fifty piastres per year for the Arab Hambas and thirty-eight piastres for the Spahis. Filippi (Monchicourt), p. 138.

"wearied of camp life and came to the capital."[91] Bin 'Amir was from a family of tribal notables—shaykhs of the Awlad 'Awn. If he, in his relatively privileged position, tired of tribal life, what then of the tribesman who had only a slight chance to become a shaykh among his own people?

From the same tribe came a certain Muhammad b. 'Umar earning his living as a highwayman and "wanted" by the government. Defiantly he presented himself before Hamuda Bey, who was so impressed by the gesture that he enrolled him in the Spahis.[92] Is it not possible that our highwayman was willing to risk turning himself in because he was heartily sick of his existing life?

All save one of these native Tunisians mentioned by Bin Diyaf who started their government careers in the cavalry later advanced to one or more provincial administrative posts.[93] Three of the four who ended their careers with the prestigious military office of bash Hamba had previously served as governors.[94]

From the bey's viewpoint, the justification of the Spahis was clear. They were inexpensive to maintain (compared to the Turkish jund), served to tie families of certain native tribes more closely to the regime, and acted as a counterweight to the other military units. Why, then, were some of the same people permitted to become provincial administrators? A more logical balancing of internal forces in order to prevent too great a concentration of power beyond the bey's easy control would seem to dictate the system of native shaykhs answerable to alien qaids, which was, in fact, the general rule.

Such power considerations do not seem to have figured in their appointments. These men, having proven their loyalty to the regime, advanced in provincial administration through their special knowledge of the tribal system. Abd al-Wahhab al-Sharini was "knowledgeable in the affairs of the tribes and the Arabs." Yusuf b. Farhat "knew the customs of the Arabs." Muhammad Bu Kaf had been selected by Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' to work "with the Arabs and their qaids."[95]

These men filled, in a sense, both intelligence and diplomatic

[91] Bin Diyaf, Biography 246. [92] Bin Diyaf, Biography 93.

[93] The exception was one Salih al-Zakrawi whose father had been in the Spahis. He rose in service to attain the important rank of bash Hamba. Bin Diyaf, Biography 319.

[94] Again, excluding Salih al-Zakrawi, who held only military office. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 205, 319 and 381.

[95] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 310, 205 and 206, respectively.

functions. Since the tribes were only loosely integrated into the over-all political structure, there was often a dearth of information about how best to deal with them, and the pattern of relations between the bey's representatives and the more recalcitrant tribes was more like diplomacy (including a form of war—the mahallas) than the normal local administration of thoroughly sedentary areas.

This small group of native Tunisians included in the political class are also distinguishable from the several native qaids who ruled over their own tribes, for these native qaids were unlikely to be transferred to another provincial assignment. In spite of the title "qaid," they acted more nearly as shaykhs, that is, representatives of their group before the government. The native Tunisian members of the political class, on the other hand, moving from earlier careers in the Spahis or Hambas into various provincial administrative assignments, represented the government to the tribes.

After a long career in government service such a man was usually too removed from the daily affairs of his own particular tribe to emerge as its natural leader, and a sense of loyalty to the government had blunted his attachment to the tribe. This identification with government could be achieved without trauma, for most of those entering the Spahis came from makhzan tribes—those tribes who served the government in exchange for certain privileges. There was small chance of a dispute between any of these tribes and the government. Thus, a conflict of loyalty between government and tribes was not likely to arise.

The lines of distinction must not, however, be drawn too sharply. Muhammad b. 'Umar, the ex-highwayman, was later appointed 'amil of his own tribe, the Awlad 'Awn. Salih al-Zakrawi, who rose to the rank of bash Hamba, hailed from a noble family of the same tribe. He later devoted most of his efforts to the well-being of his tribe. Keenly interested in agriculture, he bought grain for his tribesmen in time of need. He remained very much a tribal notable, and was well-regarded by the Awlad 'Awn.[96]

Even others who may have been somewhat "de-tribalized" were hardly "de-Arabized." Time after time Bin Diyaf refers to the Arab or bedouin simplicity which marked this class of men.[97]

[96] Bin Diyaf, Biography 319.

[97] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 93, 206, 319 and 387.

The few native Tunisians who rose from the ranks of the cavalry into provincial posts illustrate another aspect of Tunisification within the political class and, at the same time, represent one more element in that careful balancing of political forces which gave the beylical system its strength. As native Tunisian "men of the sword" their future should have brightened throughout the nineteenth century while Tunisia hesitatingly lunged toward the idea of the nation-state. Actually, the changes which assumed increasing importance during the reign of Ahmad Bey proved a mixed blessing for them. In their way, they were just as anachronistic as the Turkish jund or the mamluks. Their forte was knowledge of the tribal system and skill in an essentially tribal form of military power and administration, but henceforth the great change would be within the urban and sedentary areas. For a long time to come, the man who knew the tribes would be less likely to succeed than the man who knew Europe. Among the native Tunisians best in a position to know Europe, pride of place went to the important old families.

Important Old Families in the Political Class

There were a few old native Tunisian families in the political class whose members were, as if by hereditary right, in responsible positions close to the heart of political power. The family's political fortunes might well have begun in the clerkly profession, provincial administration, or business, but at some point they reached a magnitude of influence that defied the usual classifications. This small group of native Tunisians exerted a political influence rivalled only by leading mamluks.

Two names clearly belonging to this select group have already been mentioned—Larbi Zarruq and the Lasrams. Zarruq, it will be recalled, aroused beylical suspicions of treason and was executed in 1822.

Was a political dynasty ended because one member had recklessly gambled on excessively high political stakes? Not at all. His son, Muhammad Zarruq, was imprisoned and disgraced for a time after the execution of his father, but within a few years he returned to the good graces of Husayn Bey and lived the remainder of his life as a leading figure at court. He chose a somewhat effaced role, almost as if the shock of his father's execution had destroyed his interest in daily political intrigues. In his old age,

he withdrew into religious meditation and visited saints. He died in 1867.[98]

Muhammad's son, named Larbi Zarruq as was his grandfather, was more active politically. The Director of Sadiqi College and president of the municipality of Tunis, Larbi Zarruq played an important political role in Tunisia in the last years before the establishment of the French Protectorate in 1881.[99]

The Lasram family presented an even better example of sustained political power. They were an old family of Kairouan claiming an Arab genealogy going back to the time of the original Arab conquest in the seventh century.[100] Considerable prestige attached to being both of venerable Arab origin and long established in Kairouan. The author of Mechra el Melki commented somewhat acidly that Ahmad Lasram, the bash katib of Muhammad Bey (1756-1759), "enjoyed recalling often" that he was from Kairouan.[101]

The political fortunes of the family began when the two Lasram brothers, Muhammad and Ahmad, remained faithful to Husayn b. Ali and his sons, following them to exile in Algeria. When the sons of Husayn returned triumphantly to Tunis in 1756, the loyal Lasram brothers gained high positions. Ahmad became bash katib, a post he kept until his death. His brother served as governor of Sfax, and khoja 'askar Zwawa (chief clerk of the Zouaves). Both brothers left sons who obtained important government offices. A sketch of the family tree starting with the brothers, Ahmad and Muhammad, reveals the extent of their influence (Chart 1).

The Lasrams had what amounted to a hereditary right to the office of bash katib. From late in the eighteenth century (1796 or even before) until 1861 a Lasram was bash katib,[102] and this almost prescriptive right is manifest in the long tenure of Muhammad Lasram (d. 1861), who became a virtual recluse and clearly deserved to be dismissed. Instead, he was permitted to keep the title while others did the work.

Also, it was mentioned that the two sons of Ahmad, Muhammad al-Habib (d. 1818) and Muhammad (d. 1825-1826) resigned

[98] Bin Diyaf, Biography 379.

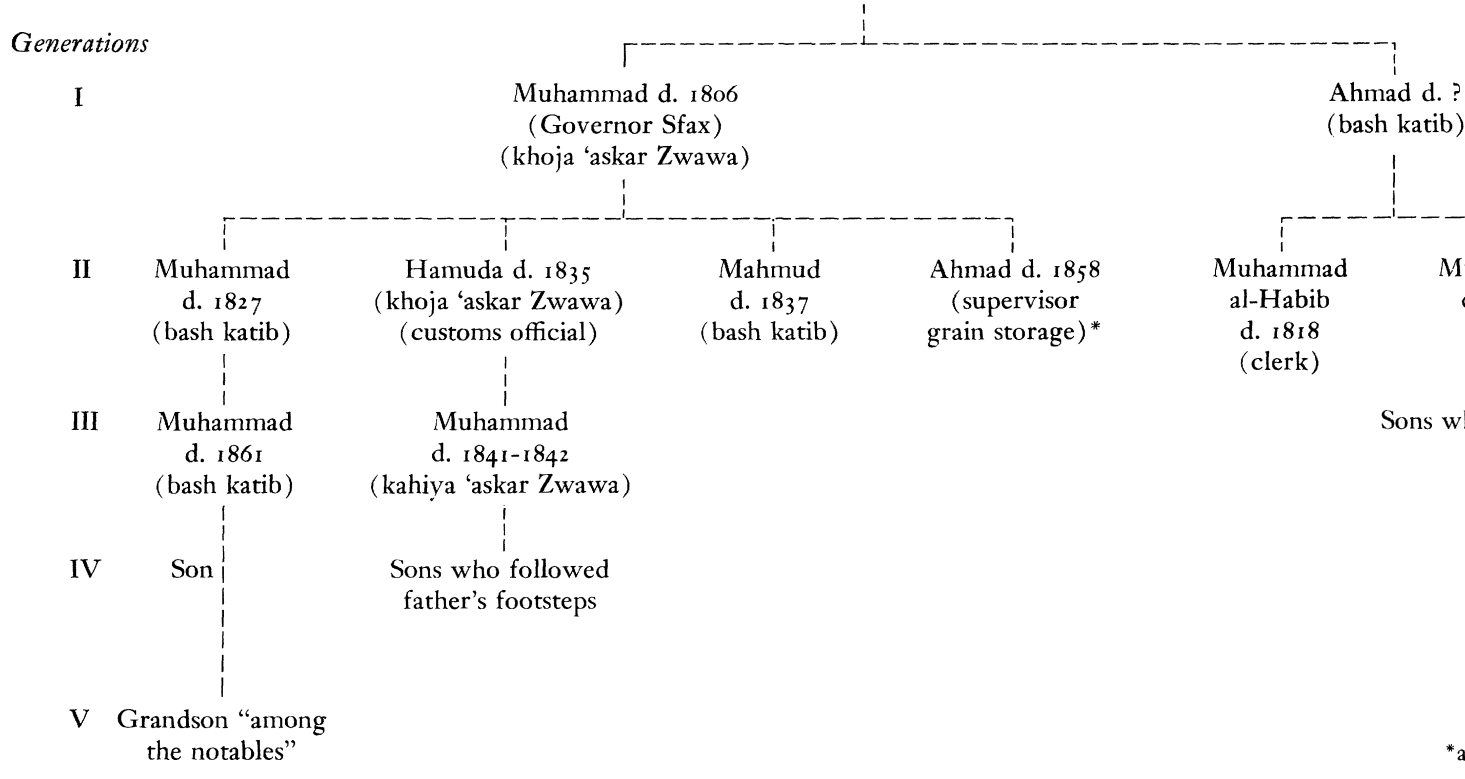
[99] Jean Ganiage, *Les Origines du Protectorat français en Tunisie (1861-1881)* (Paris, 1959), pp. 481-482.

[100] Bin Diyaf, Biography 58. [101] *Mechra el Melki*, p. 403.

[102] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 26 and 171.

Chart 1

THE LASRAM FAMILY



in protest when their cousin Muhammad (d. 1827) was appointed bash katib. Such defiant gestures were not the acts of modest government functionaries carefully working their way up the ladder of promotion.[103]

Although the Lasrams mainly left their mark on Tunisian history as chief clerks, some occupied posts outside the clerkly professions. Such maneuverability within the governmental structure was characteristic of these important old families. Muhammad (d. 1806) had been governor of Sfax, the largest and in many ways the most important provincial city. His grandson, Muhammad (d. 1841-1842) followed his father's career in the Zouaves, but instead of becoming chief clerk (*khoja*) he attained the position of second-in-command of the entire corps (*kahiya*). He played an important role in negotiation and collection of taxes during two different mahallas. Later he took the position of supervisor (*wakil*) of the habous properties whose revenues were devoted to the two holy cities, Mecca and Medina. Another son of Muhammad (d. 1806) had earlier entered into this line of financial administration, becoming supervisor of grain storage.[104]

The Murabits were another native Tunisian family numbered among the political elite. Both the family's origins and rise to power were similar to the Lasram experience. 'Umar al-Murabit, member of an old family of Kairouan tracing its origins to the conquering Arabs of the seventh century, was a saddler by trade. Loyal to Husayn bin Ali and his sons, he followed them into exile in Algeria and remained there with them during the years of Ali Pasha's reign. He helped support the Husaynids in exile with the profits of his saddler business.

When the sons of Husayn bin Ali returned to Tunis, 'Umar al-Murabit was appointed governor of Sousse, and later he became governor of his native Kairouan. The family remained in the good graces of the Husaynids in the years to come, and when

[103] Muhammad al-Habib Lasram apparently remained out of office, but the bey obliged Muhammad Lasram to return and serve as kahiya (second-in-command) under his cousin. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 100 and 157.

[104] A later member of the same family, Muhammad Lasram (1858-1925), played a leading role in the Jeunes Tunisiens movement which can properly be seen as the origin of modern Tunisian nationalism. He was also the translator, with V. Serres, of the *Mechra el Melki* and of other works. As appropriate for a member of the Lasram family, he held several important official posts in the Protectorate government. See the brief biography in Sadok Zmerli, *Figures tunisiennes: les successeurs* (Tunis, 1967), pp. 87-98.

'Umar wished to retire, Hamuda Bey appointed his young son, Uthman al-Murabit to succeed him as governor of Kairouan. Uthman al-Murabit held this important position—with which he combined the office of chief of the Spahis in Kairouan—until his death in 1847-1848. He left sons who also entered government service.[105]

Even more than the Zarruqs, the Lasrams, and the Murabits, the classic examples of important old Tunisian families at the center of political power were a small group who operated as concessionaires, merchant princes, bankers to the beys, and political brokers. At the turn of the nineteenth century, three such families dominated the scene—the Jalulis, the Bin 'Ayads, and the Bin al-Hajs. Two maintained their standing throughout the reign of Ahmad Bey and well beyond (with vicissitudes to be noted) while one, the Bin al-Haj, was squeezed out.

A history of Tunisia in the first part of the nineteenth century that ignored such families would be as incomplete as a history of nineteenth-century America without the capitalist "robber barons." Yet, if they are to be understood, modern preconceptions—and prejudices—must be abandoned. They reveal all the daring and all the unscrupulousness of early capitalists in Europe and America. A comparable bag of tricks was often employed—connivance with government officials, use of inside information, ruthless tactics against competitors, and less-than-candid bookkeeping.

They also had in abundance that extra portion of energy, intelligence, and adventurous spirit that distinguished successful capitalists in the West in the struggle for economic power. Their long-term impact upon their country was different from that of the Stanfords, Vanderbilts, Barings, or Krupps because they were operating in such a radically different environment. All were entrepreneurs, but the "market" of the Jalulis, the Bin 'Ayads, and the Bin al-Hajs was government itself. Their competition was

[105] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 51, 281, and 4: 63 where he refers to the appointment of Muhammad al-Murabit al-Ghariyani "from one of the most important families of Kairouan" as commander of the newly-established 5th Regiment during the reign of Ahmad Bey. The Murabit family was one of the few (along with such as the Jalulis and the Bin 'Ayads) that European visitors mentioned in their books. See, for example, Philippe Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis* (Algiers, 1857), pp. 91-97 (hereafter cited as Daumas, *Quatre ans*); J. Clark Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis in 1845*, 2 vols. (London, 1846), 2: 100 (hereafter cited as Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*); and Temple, *Excursions*, 2: 100.

for tax farm concessions, government monopolies, and government contracts to supply needed goods and services. Much earlier in time, a comparable system of administrative and fiscal devolution had existed in Europe, and there, too, private bankers, tax farmers and government contractors had assumed the functions later to be taken over by modern bureaucracies, but the old system had slowly changed in Europe under the impact of the commercial and then the industrial revolutions.

The politico-financial system exploited by the Jalulis, Bin 'Ayads and Bin al-Hajs looked absurd and even immoral to European contemporaries, and indeed, by comparison with the standard Europe was inexorably imposing upon the rest of the world, it was just that, for nothing attracts stronger criticism than anachronism. Thus, the worst looked bad indeed, and even the nobler spirits among them (these existed, too) are hardly seen in the most favorable light. Leaving moral judgments aside, however, they were a dynamic group who in another environment might have been creating railroads and factories.

In 1808 the Spanish chargé d'affaires in Tunis, Arnoldo Soler, described the "grand douanier" Mahmud Jaluli as "a distinguished subject always in touch with the Bey."[106] The French consul, Guys, writing his minister in 1825, included among the important political figures of Tunis "Mehemet Geluli, ancien grand douanier, fermier des huiles et autres produits du pays" and "Soliman Belhar (read Sulayman bin al-Haj) grand douanier de Tunis."[107] Grenville Temple, visiting Tunisia in the early 1830s, remarked that the cost of the largest new barracks being constructed in Tunis was to be defrayed entirely by three principal Moors, Bin 'Ayad, Jaluli and Sulayman bin al-Haj.[108]

Anyone wondering how they could afford such largess need only read Bin Diyaf's account of these three families advancing Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' money to avoid state bankruptcy in 1829 in return for which they were given a free hand to extort much more than the amount granted from the inhabitants of the Sahil.[109] Whenever important tax farms or concessions were at issue, whenever the financial aspects of Husaynid government came into prominence, these family names figured. Behind the scattered

[106] G. Loth, "Arnoldo Soler, chargé d'affaires d'Espagne à Tunis et sa correspondance, 1808-1810," *Revue tunisienne* (1905), pp. 315-317.

[107] Cited in E. Plantet, *Tunis*, Document 1221, p. 615.

[108] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 174. [109] Bin Diyaf, 3: 171-175.

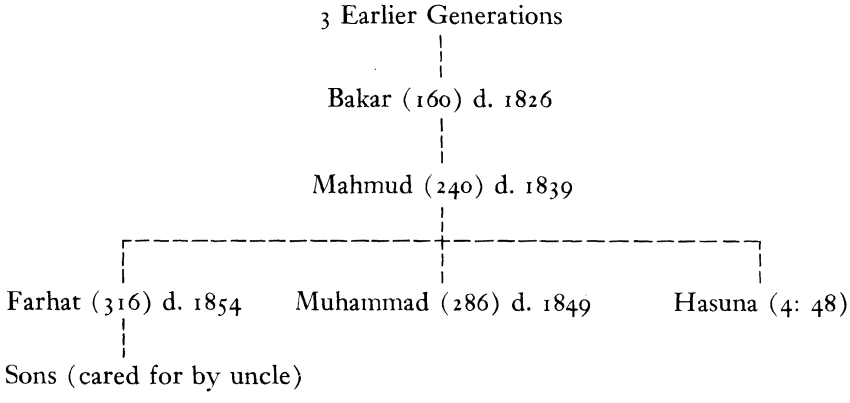
references to shadowy public figures lies a history of three important families who ranked close to the top of the Husaynid political class.

The Jalulis were an old family from Sfax with a tradition of state service since Hafsid times. The first member of the family to figure in Bin Diyaf's biographies, Bakkar al-Jaluli (d. 1826), was raised as the son of a family born to lead. After receiving a good Islamic education he embarked on a career of state service. At an early age he was appointed governor of Sfax, his grandfather having paved the way by writing to the elders and notables of the city, "This youth is your nephew and you are his uncles. Treat him as an uncle would."[110]

Bakkar al-Jaluli apparently lived up to what was expected of a leading family of the city. He always consulted, and showed a proper regard for, the city elders. He had soon established a reputation in his own right. This almost familial relationship between the Jalulis and Sfax was to continue throughout the century. Later members of the family might play for larger political stakes in Tunis and in the process suffer reverses at the hands of more aggressive rivals, but even in times of declining fortunes, the Jalulis could count on a certain standing in Sfax.

Chart 2

AL-JALULI FAMILY



(Numbers in parentheses refer to biography or volume in Bin Diyaf.)

[110] Bin Diyaf, Biography 160.

The grand role of merchant prince and politician was well-exemplified by Bakar's son, Mahmud. Temple described Mahmud Jaluli in 1832 as "one of the richest individuals in the Beylik, and the father of the present Kaeed of Sfakkus, [who] made the bulk of his fortune by his cruisers, of which he is said to have possessed no less than twenty-three at one time; and so successful were they that eight rich prizes have arrived in one day, to fill his coffers with the plunder of Christians."[111] Mahmud Jaluli, who died in 1839, was a leading figure at the court of Hamuda Bey. His tenure as grand douanier has already been noted. In the Husaynid system, this was an important government concession, granting its holder the right to collect for his own account all the customs duties. The office was sold, in theory at least, to the highest bidder; and in the first decade of the nineteenth century a successful bid was likely to be not less than 250,000 piastres per year.[112] All duties collected by the concessionaire over and above the amount paid for the office was clear profit, and in normal years, the profit was considerable. Competition for the job was limited to the small circle of wealthy men who could produce such large amounts of ready cash.

For the period under consideration, only the three great families—Jaluli, Bin 'Ayad and Bin al-Haj—seem to have been serious contenders. Mahmud Jaluli held the office from 1805 to 1808 and then resigned because he feared the continental blockade would reduce imports to the point where he could be ruined.[113] He remained active in other tax farms and concessions while at the same time continuing to serve as qaid of Sfax. Hamuda Bey later sent him on an embassy to Malta (in 1810 or 1811), where he stayed for approximately three years supervising the construction of a

[111] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 142. [112] Loth, "Arnoldo Soler," p. 315.

[113] Loth, "Arnoldo Soler." Soler's account suggests that the office was not farmed out on the basis of strictly open bidding, for presumably Jaluli was not permitted to submit a bid of, for example, one-half the amount paid the previous year. Nor did anyone else bid for the office that year, and the bey was forced into the unusual situation of collecting his own duties. It would appear that the practice of fixing a minimum price for such concessions had been established. One might bid higher and capture the office from its incumbent, but probably the government, through a combination of inertia and ignorance of the true market value, was most reluctant to accept the argument of changing times and permit a lower bid. We are poorly informed on the details of tax farming and other government concessions, but the few scattered references could plausibly be interpreted in the above sense.

warship and other military equipment purchased by the Tunisian government. His son, Muhammad, took over the office of qaid in Sfax. Muhammad Jaluli was still in that office at the time of Temple's visit over twenty years later.

Muhammad Jaluli apparently concentrated on his work as qaid of Sfax while his two brothers, Farhat and Hasuna, bore the brunt of the family's concern with trading and tax-farming. This risky and nerve-racking business always depended on support and favor at court. By the early years of Ahmad Bey's reign their old rival, Muhammad bin 'Ayad, had established an unshakable position with the new bey. Fearing confiscation of their wealth and imprisonment at the hands of Muhammad bin 'Ayad, the two brothers escaped to Malta.[114] They later returned through the good offices of the French consul. This ushered in a period of retrenchment for the Jaluli family but scarcely of hard times. The family continued to enjoy economic ease and high social prestige in Sfax even though they were less in evidence at court.

They would have their day again. In 1864, when the Husaynid dynasty was almost overthrown by a popular insurrection that swept the country, two members of the Jaluli family were appointed respectively qaids of Sfax and Mahdiya in an attempt to restore peace.[115] One of those appointed was the same Hasuna Jaluli who over a quarter-century earlier had fled with his brother to Malta.

The Bin 'Ayad family was from the island of Djerba, an area where local loyalties were even stronger than in Sfax, and for much of the period under consideration, a Bin 'Ayad was qaid of Djerba.[116] Also, in the 1864 revolt, when the two Jalulis were receiving their provincial posts, the bey nominated a Bin 'Ayad to govern Djerba. Just as the Jalulis had, the Bin 'Ayads had a strong regional base to build upon. And like the Jalulis, they did not stop with this advantage but moved on into the larger world of government and trade. A study of trade for the mid and late eighteenth century between Tunisia and Malta reveals as one of

[114] Bin Diyaf, 4: 48. Bin Diyaf observed that, under the circumstances, it was no dishonor for them to have fled.

[115] B. Slama, *L'Insurrection de 1864 en Tunisie* (Tunis, 1967), p. 102.

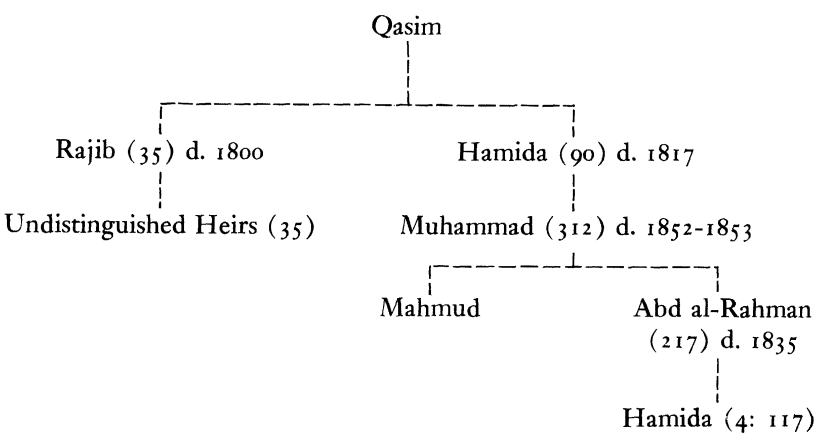
[116] According to Grandchamp and Mokaddem, "Une Mission tunisienne à Paris," *Revue africaine* (1946), p. 77, the Bin 'Ayad family was originally from Tripolitania. No source is cited. In any case, by the turn of the nineteenth century the Bin 'Ayads had deep roots in Djerba.

the most important Muslim traders a certain Ali bin 'Ayad from Djerba.[117]

In 1783, Rajib bin 'Ayad became grand douanier following the flight of the incumbent, one Sidi Ismail. He held this office for seventeen years until his death in 1800.[118] Bin Diyaf's biographies of the family begin with this Rajib and his brother, Hamida (d. 1817), the sons of a certain Qasim bin 'Ayad. Both were favorites of Hamuda Bey. Rajib, in addition to his other governmental assignments, had a major responsibility in improving the port of La Goulette.[119] Hamida held, among other offices, the important posts of qaid of Djerba and also al-A'rad—that nomadic and difficult-to-rule area in southern Tunisia extending to the borders of Tripolitania. The qaid of such a region needed, in addition to his local contacts and diplomatic skills with the tribes, military competence; Bin Diyaf apparently felt it worth mentioning in Hamida's biography that he "led troops."[120]

Chart 3

THE BIN 'AYAD FAMILY



(Numbers in parentheses refer to biography or volume in Bin Diyaf.)

[117] L. Valensi, "Les Relations commerciales entre la Regence de Tunis et Malte au XVIII siècle," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 11 (1963).

[118] Plantet, *Tunis*, Documents 279, 720 and 762.

[119] Bin Diyaf, Biography 35. For discussion of these improvements, with references, see Paul Sebag, "La Goulette et sa fortresse de la fin du XVI siècle à nos jours," *IBLA* 117, 1st trimester (1967), pp. 25-28.

[120] Bin Diyaf, Biography 90.

An insight into the mentality of successful government-entrepreneurs such as the Bin 'Ayads can be gleaned from the following story. Rajib wanted to obtain a certain house then in a bad state of repair, improve it, and then put it to use as his private residence. It happened to be habous property, which meant that he had to get the qaid's permission for the substitution of another property of equal value. The qaid approved but stipulated that no repairs could be undertaken until Rajib bin 'Ayad had paid the entire amount of the debt due to purchase the substitute property. Rajib, the hard-bitten old trader, apparently took no offense but paid tribute to the judge's integrity: "May God favor the shaykh for the manner in which he protects the habous properties. We government people can offer no security. I would hate for us to become the guarantors of our contractual obligations. We do not even trust ourselves."[121]

Shrewd, aggressive men who could ferret out the big opportunity while making themselves indispensable to rulers by being able to get the job done, the Bin 'Ayad brothers had the combination of talents needed to rise to the top, and the sons of Hamida inherited these traits. Bin Diyaf observes that Hamida "left sons deemed among the notables." One manuscript modifies the sentence to read "deemed among the notables in knowing how to amass wealth in a variety of unimaginable ways."[122]

Rajib's sons and grandsons made no name for themselves, but Muhammad, the son of Hamida, carried on the family tradition. He was qaid of Sousse, Djerba, and held many other important positions. When Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' assumed full powers in 1829, he relied heavily on Muhammad bin 'Ayad. Later, Shakir turned against Muhammad bin 'Ayad, but the latter had the agility to protect himself from the worst by fortifying his ties with Husayn Bey. Both Husayn Bey and Ahmad Bey used him for various sensitive diplomatic missions to Europe. Muhammad also was instrumental in breaking the economic power of the rival Bin al-Haj family, causing two members of that family to flee to Malta (just as the Jalulis had done a few years earlier).[123] A hard bargainer, he was one of those officials "who confine their interest to what will produce money without consideration of the circumstances or of the consquences."[124] Bin Diyaf described him as a

[121] Bin Diyaf, Biography 35. [122] Bin Diyaf, Biography 90.
[123] Bin Diyaf, Biography 312 and 4: 80-81.
[124] Bin Diyaf, 4: 80.

"man of the world"—an expression which seems apt both in the idiomatic sense of the English translation and in the classical Islamic connotation with the separation between *din* ("religion") and *dunya* ("the world"). Still, as Bin Diyaf added, "Every man should be judged according to his place and his times. . . . He set for himself certain goals and obtained them while seeking to outstrip the others. . . . For all that his good points outweighed the bad."[125]

His celebrated son, Mahmud bin 'Ayad, played such an important role in the reign of Ahmad Bey that a careful examination of his career and character is the subject of chapter ten.

The Bin al-Haj family history illustrates the vicissitudes of fortune likely to plague major families engaged in politics and high finance. They reached the peak of political and financial power in the first generation, passed on this standing to two not-incompetent sons who, bested by their rivals and the cumulative strain of misfortunes, left only a modest inheritance to the third generation. They might have become an important old Tunisian family, recognized as belonging to that small circle forming the political class. Instead, by their rapid rise and decline, the Bin al-Haj highlight the risks involved in the political game.

Sulayman bin al-Haj, the founder of the family fortunes, was born in Porto Farina. Nothing seems to be known about his family background, and apparently he was of modest origins.[126] Porto Farina was hardly a place where important families would be found at that period. The port, of some importance in the seventeenth century, later began to silt up so badly that it was virtually abandoned.

Sulayman bin al-Haj sought his fortune by attaching himself to the kahiya of nearby Bizerte, Mustafa b. Muhammad Khoja,[127] and later moved on to become a favorite of Hamuda Bey. He be-

[125] Bin Diyaf, Biography 312.

[126] Bin Diyaf does not even list the name of his father, which suggests that Sulayman was a self-made man. When a family had a certain reputation, Bin Diyaf usually began his biography with a qualfying epithet, e.g., "this shaykh (or noble person, excellent individual, etc.) was born . . ." Even when this was lacking, Bin Diyaf would usually have something to say about the family. For Sulayman bin al-Haj he begins laconically, "This man was born in Ghar al-Milh." Interestingly, the next generation fared better. His son, Hamuda, was referred to as "*wajih* ('distinguished')." Bin Diyaf, Biographies 199 and 294.

[127] See Bin Diyaf, Biography 262.

gan to profit from various government concessions, and later became grand douanier.

His two sons, Hamuda and Muhammad, both occupied important positions. Hamuda took over most of his father's major jobs including the customs and the leather monopolies. He and his father also worked closely with the chief minister, Shakir Sahib al-Tabi', later in rivalry against the Bin 'Ayad family.[128] Muhammad was qaid of Sfax and held other important government posts.

The rivalry with the Bin 'Ayad family proved their undoing. Hamuda and his son fled to Malta in 1845. They later returned, sought and obtained Ahmad Bey's pardon, but their economic decline continued. Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey (1859-1882) gave the sons of Muhammad minor posts in the government.[129] Apparently, this was no more than a gesture of *noblesse oblige* for the survivors of a makhzan family which for a brief time had seemed destined to achieve greatness.

Families such as the Bin 'Ayads and the Jalulis (plus a goodly number of mamluks and several Turks) were those best in a position to profit from the increasing power and influence of Europe in Tunisia. They knew Europe. They had visited there on business or diplomatic missions. Many of them spoke a European language, and it was they who met, entertained, and impressed the European visitors to Tunisia. Often formidable and unscrupulous in their business and political dealings, they presented—somewhat like Renaissance princes—a charming exterior of refinement.

Mahmud Jaluli was a bibliophile and his excellent collection of books was made available to all who wished to consult them. He was also a noted student of history.[130] His son, Muhammad, then serving as qaid in Sfax, entertained the Temple party when they visited Sfax, conversing easily with them in Italian.[131]

What then of the Bin 'Ayad family, surely the most unscrupulous of all? Two citations by Englishmen who visited Tunisia at two different times—separated by half a century—set the tone: "All Ben 'Ayad's family are the pleasantest and best informed Moors I ever met with . . ." and, "This gentleman (Hamida Bin 'Ayad) is justly regarded as being the finest specimen of the Moorish aristocracy now living in Tunis."[132]

[128] Bin Diyaf, Biography 294.
[129] Bin Diyaf, Biography 364.
[130] Bin Diyaf, Biography 240.
[131] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 143.
[132] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 205; T. Wemyss Reid, *The Land of the Bey*

The discussion of native Tunisians in the political class at the turn of the nineteenth century does not include the Tunisian Jews. Certain leading Jews held positions of great influence, especially in financial administration, but in the Ottoman-Tunisian system no non-Muslim could be a member of the political class as defined here. Working through a member of that class (as a mamluk or native Tunisian minister), a few Jews achieved real power, but their influence was always indirect. Indeed, it was important and durable in proportion to the extent it was dissimulated. Their status as Jews always governed the nature of their relations with the government.

Certain exceptions to this general rule of non-Muslims being excluded from the political class appeared later in the century—as the Christian Raffo or the Jewish Samama—but their rise is largely explained by the changing situation imposed by Europe, which is the major theme of Part Two.

* * *

Such was the Ottoman-Tunisian ruling class on the eve of Ahmad Bey's long reign—a well-established ruling family, an inner circle of all-important mamluks, a Turkish contingent in decline but still powerful, and many native Tunisians filling posts (administrative, military, and financial) from the lowest ranks to an important handful at the very top—but at the same time, a disparate group who did not yet identify with each other as native Tunisians.

With the Ottoman-Tunisian ruling class—its several component parts, the operative ideals of each, and their mutual relations—now broadly sketched, we turn to a description of the governmental structure.

(London, 1882), pp. 212-213. Temple was an excellent observer. Reid was less well-informed and more naïve.

IV

The Religious Establishment*

There was one group in Husaynid Tunisia, aside from the state, whose activities and influence transcended the smaller units of family, tribe, quarters, and guilds within which most of daily life was circumscribed. This group derived authority from the claim to understand and interpret the ultimate values that give meaning to life. The custodians of religious truth, they formed "the religious establishment."

Who were the members of the religious establishment and how did they fit into daily life? One can answer these questions by imagining the contacts the average sedentary Tunisian of at least modest means might have had with the men of religion in those days. As a young boy, he attended a *kuttab* ("primary school") where, forming with his fellow students a semi-circle around his shaykh, he wrote out Quranic verses on his slate, and by dint of endless repetition committed them to memory.

If he proved to be an apt pupil or his family had the means, he might go on to higher education, study under the 'ulama at Zitouna Mosque in Tunis, or perhaps in equivalent mosque-schools in such larger towns as Kairouan or Sfax. If he came from the provinces to study, he would probably live in a madrasa where students were housed and where often a certain number of courses were given, although the more important courses were usually held in the major mosque. (With resident directors and occasionally a few other members of the 'ulama class housed there as well, the madrasas were somewhat like the traditional colleges of Oxford and Cambridge.) If he continued his studies successfully for many years (eight to twelve, or even more in some cases), he could eventually become an 'alim (plural 'ulama) and

* A modified version of this chapter appears as chapter three in *Scholars, Saints, and Sufis: Muslim Religious Institutions since 1500*, ed., Nikki R. Keddie (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1972).

enter the ranks of the religious establishment. Or, as a literate Muslim, he would also have the opportunity to begin his apprenticeship as a government katib. Few got that far. For most, education did not go beyond the kuttab.

At some time in his life this typical Muslim might bring a legal matter—perhaps a problem of divorce, inheritance, guardianship of an orphan, property, contracts, a debt, or the desire to establish a trust fund (*waqf* or *habus*, gallicized *habous*)—before a qadi in a shari'a court. If a case was at all complex or difficult, the litigant might seek the services of a professional 'adl or shahid. Many of the 'adls or shahids were merely persons recognized by the court as meeting the Islamic requirements for giving testimony (for example, mature age and an honorable reputation).[1] These persons would not be members of the religious establishment as defined here. A smaller group, however, had received a higher education, was trained in Islamic law, and in some cases had attained the rank of 'ulama. This latter group, competent to serve as both lawyers and notaries, could even settle many legal matters outside of the courts. They earned their living in this work and may properly be included among the religious establishment.

A qadi deciding a case might refer a difficult problem to the *mufti* ("jurisconsult") for his opinion. Also, the private Muslim—confused by the applicable Islamic ruling covering some aspect of daily life—might well address himself to the mufti seeking his advisory opinion (*fatwa*).

On Friday, our Muslim attended the mosque service in his village or his quarter of the town to hear the weekly sermon given by the khatib. The khatib was usually also the *imam* ("prayer leader"), which is to say he was the principal religious official of the mosque. In larger mosques there might be several other religious officials as well, such as the *mu'adhdhan* ("muezzin") to give the call to prayer from the minaret, deputy imams,[2] and the chief of the Quranic reciters, shaykh al-qurra.[3] When there was

[1] SEI. A brief summary of the usual requirements is to be found in the article "shahid."

[2] Zitouna had three regular imams, plus imams for special services such as the imam al-tarawih, the prayers performed during the night of Ramadan.

[3] For example, one Muhammad al-Saffar (d. 1806) held this office while serving also as imam al-tarawih. Bin Diyaf, Biography 183. Muhammad al-

a death in the family the Muslim might also hire one of the professional Quranic readers to recite portions of the Quran during the period of mourning.

The average sedentary Muslim found much of his social life bound up with the religious establishment. Mosques were not only houses of prayer but places to come for quiet conversation with friends. Even more important as a social center were the many zawiyas of the brotherhoods. Brotherhoods were organized around the pious founder, always deemed a saint (*wali*).

Many of the more important brotherhoods had been in existence for centuries (as the Qadiriya and the Shadhiliya, founded in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries, respectively), but new brotherhoods organized around a new charismatic leader were always in process of formation. Two destined to play an important role in the history of Islamic Africa were springing up in the time of Ahmad Bey: the Tijaniya in Algeria and the Sanusiya in Libya. Both, especially the former, had some influence in Tunisia.

There were also many zawiyas having only a local influence. To develop into a proper brotherhood the founding zawiya needed to create its own ritual and establish affiliate zawiyas elsewhere, in which case the shaykh of the parent zawiya (whether the founder or a successor) would authorize a disciple to become the shaykh of the new branch. Many of the local zawiyas never expanded to create other branches, nor did they establish formal rituals and a system for initiating new members. These were not, strictly speaking, brotherhoods at all, but they played a similar social role.

In all instances, large or small, the founder directed the zawiya during his lifetime and then passed on the leadership to his designated heir, almost invariably, in the case of the smaller local zawiyas, a son or member of the family. Also, in all groups, whether new brotherhoods, single zawiyas, or those having a widespread network of branches, the current leaders were believed to possess *baraka* ("special powers of intervention with the divine").

In the zawiya a man could participate in the religious ceremonies (*dhikr*) special to each brotherhood. Out of this experi-

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Shatyawi (d. 1833) held jointly the office of chief Quranic reader and shahid of Zitouna Mosque's wafq funds. Bin Diyaf, Biography 200.

ence he could establish a sense of intimacy and common bond with fellow disciples. The zawiya was a mixture of many things—religious society, fraternity, mutual-aid association, and club. It was a place where a man buffeted by seemingly hostile fate, hounded by enemies, creditors, or tax collectors could achieve a feeling of security, both psychologically and physically—for many of the zawiyas were recognized by the government as asylums, and a fugitive or criminal who sought refuge there would not be molested so long as he stayed within its confines.

In addition to these formal functions, members of the Tunisian religious establishment, and especially the 'ulama, had great prestige and high social standing in informal ways. The 'ulama were counsellors to the people. Their advice was accepted with due respect or at least not openly flouted. The 'ulama, more than any other class, were deemed to be models of proper social behavior. Their habits of speech, dress, and behavior were accepted as the ideal, especially by the non-governmental urban classes.

The religious establishment was a large group. Precise numbers are unavailable, but the following figures convey a general idea. The city of Tunis had roughly 300 mosques, 200 zawiyas, and fifteen madrasas.[4] The judiciary in Tunis was composed of two qadis—one Hanafi and one Maliki—and as many as seven muftis—two Hanafi and up to five Maliki. This group plus the qadi of Bardo made up the Majlis al-Shar'i which met with the bey every Sunday to render justice.[5] There were also certain special judgeships such as the qadi al-farida (specializing in the Islamic law of inheritance),[6] and the qadi al-mahalla (who, as the name suggests, accompanied the mahalla). There were also nine areas outside the capital, usually major cities or towns, that had their own Majlis al-Shar'i, with a membership of at least two muftis and a qadi.[7] In addition, four places had both a qadi and a mufti.[8] The approximately forty-seven other qaidal districts each had a single qadi.

A recurring problem was the excessive number of shahids or

[4] Bayram V, 1: 122.

[5] Bayram V, 2: 3; Brunschvig, "Justice . . . Tunisie," pp. 47-48 (citing the Kitab al-Bashi).

[6] See Bin Diyaf, Biography 103.

[7] These were Kairouan, Sousse, Monastir, Sfax, al-A'rad, Tozeur, Nefta, Le Kef, and Beja. See Bayram V, 2: 124.

[8] Ibid. Nabeul, Mahdiya, Djerba and Gafsa.

'adls authorized to testify before the courts.[9] Early in the reign of Muhammad Bey (1855-1859) there were 600 shahids in Tunis alone, and the bey ordered the number reduced to 200 in Tunis and an appropriate number elsewhere.[10] The reduced number was probably in line with the actual need for shahids. It seems reasonable to assume that bona fide members of the religious establishment with appropriate legal training were the last to be cut. Probably not all of the remaining 200 were 'ulama or persons having at least a few years of higher religious studies. Even if only fifty of the 200 fit that category, this is still an impressive figure, and there would be a corresponding number to be found in the provinces.[11]

Estimates of the number engaged in education are even more impressive. Bayram V lists a total of 102 teachers at Zitouna, of whom forty-two might be considered regular staff. Bayram's information describes a period long after the reforms of Zitouna instituted by Ahmad Bey, but the total number of teachers probably had not changed appreciably. The student body was composed of approximately 800 students. There were, Bayram adds, about 111 kuttab with some 3,500 students.

Outside of Tunis, establishments of higher education existed in the venerable religious city of Kairouan as well as larger cities,

[9] The excess of shahids, and political action to reduce the authorized number, is a not unfamiliar theme in Islamic history. We are told that Baghdad in 300 A.H./913 A.D. had 1,800, but in 383 A.H./993 A.D. their number was cut to 303. See A. Mez, *Renaissance of Islam* (London, 1937), pp. 228-229. Also, in Mamluk Cairo the qadis were regularly ordered to cut down the roster of authorized witnesses. I. Lapidus, *Muslim Cities in the Late Middle Ages* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1967), p. 137. Other references and a brief discussion of this subject are to be found in Jeannette Wakin, *The Function of Documents in Islamic Law* (Albany: State University of New York) 1972.

[10] Bin Diyaf, 4: 193-194 and 8: 125. See also Brunschvig, "Justice . . . Tunisie," pp. 57-58.

[11] Out of the 143 members of the 'ulama class who figured in Bin Diyaf's biographies for the years 1814-1872, twenty-one worked at some time in their careers as shahids and thirty-two (including ten of the shahids) in *tawthiq* (other forms of notarial work and public letter writing). Since Bin Diyaf's biographies include only the most notable 'ulama and since notarial work was considered a *pis aller* for those 'ulama who lacked the means to earn their living otherwise, it seems reasonable to assume that at least fifty members of the religious establishment were earning their living as shahids in Tunis alone during the first half of the nineteenth century.

such as Sfax and Sousse. In addition, there might be found "a bit of reading, writing, and jurisprudence (*fiqh*)" taught in some of the zawiyas spread around the countryside.

As for Quranic schools in the provinces, Bayram insisted that no village was without its kuttab; perhaps 12,000 students attended primary schools outside of Tunis. This figure, even if exaggerated, would account for several hundred kuttab teachers throughout the entire country, many of whom, admittedly with scant education and scarcely able to read and recite the Quran, would not properly be numbered among the religious establishment.[12]

The personnel and practices of these many custodians of religious truth are presented under two separate rubrics: (1) the 'ulama, and (2) the brotherhoods. Separate treatment of 'ulama and brotherhoods does not imply rigid institutional separation or antipathy dividing the two groups. They were, in fact, closely linked, but this approach best delineates the overall dimensions of the religious establishment.

A. The 'Ulama

Similarity of class background, continuity from generation to generation, and a decided urban bias characterized the 'ulama. Such are among the facts to be gleaned from Bin Diyaf's obituaries of those 'ulama who died between the years 1814 and 1872.[13]

First, a few words about the sample and certain possible weaknesses: Bin Diyaf's biographies for these years include 143 'ulama, but six died too young to establish themselves in any career (they were included as sons of famous families), and they are excluded from some of the tables to avoid unnecessary distortion. Only 'ulama are included. Thus, members of saintly families who received a higher education are included. The other saints who did not receive the orthodox formal training of the 'ulama class are excluded.

[12] The statistics given in these three paragraphs are taken from Bayram V, 2: 126. This attempt to illustrate the size of the religious establishment is not concerned with that elusive factor, the *quality* of education. Bayram painted a bleak picture. The student, he observed, might remain ten years and still not know how to read and write well. Even the best students got no farther than memorization of the Quran.

[13] The years chosen accord with the analyses already given for the several component parts of the political class.

Bin Diyaf's biographies, like all such biographical collections, represent only the leadership; and as a man who spent all of his career in Tunis, Bin Diyaf knew the leading personalities of the capital much better than those of the provinces. If it were possible to include in the sample a representation of middle and lower level members of the 'ulama, the results would be different. There would probably be a greater percentage of 'ulama having provincial or non-urban origins, there might be appreciably greater social mobility, and quite likely at the bottom of the scale a number of part-time religious careers would be found (e.g., a kuttab teacher, imam, or Quranic teacher who earned part of his livelihood in business or agriculture). The findings based on Bin Diyaf's biographies may be considered to reflect accurately the situation of the *leadership* during these years; and, used cautiously, they contribute to an understanding of the 'ulama as a whole.

Where did the 'ulama come from? Where did they receive their higher education, and where did they spend most of their careers? An analysis of the 105 biographies in which all of this information is indicated reveals the following results:

Table 1. 'Ulama Origins, Education and Career Location

	Tunis	Kairouan	Sfax	Sousse	Monastir	Le Kef	Gabes	Beja	Testour	Teboursouk	Msaken	Menzel Temime	Fez	Tribal Origin	Total
Birthplace	54	12	11	5	3	4	1	1	1	1	2	3	2	5	105
Higher studies in Tunis	54	2	4	2	1	4	1	1	1	1	2	3	1	5	82
All or most of career in Tunis	54	1	2	0	0	3	1	1	1	1	2	2	2	4	74

The greatest concentration of 'ulama leadership was found in Tunis, the political capital, principal religious center, and only large city in the entire country. There was little incentive for a member of the 'ulama class born and educated in Tunis to seek employment elsewhere. One would expect the capital to be the lodestar of the aspiring young provincial.

This, however, was not the case. Several of the leading provincial 'ulama received higher education in their home towns. This was especially true in Kairouan, the only religious center in the country that could claim to rival Tunis itself, but even provincial cities with less claim to a tradition of higher religious studies—such as Sousse, Sfax or Monastir—educated many of their own religious notables.

Nor did these 'ulama leave their home towns, after being educated, to seek a career in Tunis. Of the thirty-one religious figures cited by Bin Diyaf who came from the more important provincial towns of Kairouan, Sfax, Sousse, and Monastir, only three made their careers in Tunis.

On the other hand, a high percentage of those born in the smaller towns or in a tribal environment were educated in Tunis and remained there for their later careers. The man from a small town or tribe who had shown the intellectual capacity and patience to complete his studies and join the ranks of the 'ulama must usually have felt that he could hardly give full scope to his new skills in his home region. The exception was rare enough to merit comment. Salih b. Abd al-Jabbar of the Farashish tribe had studied both in Tunis and at al-Azhar in Cairo, but he returned home, for "he enjoyed living among his own tribesmen, mixing with his brothers in the shadow of his own tent, more than being absorbed in the refinement of life in Cairo." As a result, "even the herdsman among his people began to read the Quran." He was clearly a model to be admired but seldom emulated by those having the opportunity to remain among the refinements of Tunis.[14] Usually, the tribes and small towns were served (if at all) by religious figures having more modest training and less exposure to a wider world.

Bin Diyaf's list includes almost 50 percent (51 of 105) who were born outside of Tunis. Given the distortion to be expected from Bin Diyaf's greater familiarity with the 'ulama of Tunis, this is an imposing provincial representation. Why did the leading 'ulama of Kairouan, Sfax, Sousse, and Monastir cited by Bin Diyaf choose to stay at home? The avenue of advancement in Tunis was not closed to them. The statistics from other small provincial towns and the tribes prove that the Tunis religious establishment was open to an infusion of new blood from outside. Indeed, it was possible to rise from modest provincial origins

[14] Bin Diyaf, Biography 115.

to a commanding position in the Tunis religious elite in one generation.[15]

They probably decided to stay at home for several reasons. Since they were known in their home towns advancement was easier than in Tunis. Ambition could be satisfied at home. These were urban agglomerations, in spite of their small populations, genuine towns and not villages. Kairouan was the oldest Muslim city in North Africa. Its religious leaders would have felt almost a sense of betrayal in leaving their home town for anywhere else. Sfax was the leading port and commercial center after Tunis. Also, Sfax, Sousse, and Monastir were all towns servicing the inhabitants of the Sahil, which had been for centuries the region with the most durable and cohesive social structure in all Tunisia.

In these towns an urban tradition and a deeply rooted local pride combined to induce ambitious local talent to stay at home. The traditional conservatism that characterized all elements of Tunisian society helped keep in existence these long-established local religious elites as sons followed fathers in the same profession.

This latter point raises other questions. How many of the persons in Bin Diyaf's list had fathers who had been 'ulama? How many had sons who followed them in the same careers? Is there any discernible pattern of previous family occupations for those who entered the 'ulama ranks? What careers were adopted by those who dropped out of the 'ulama class?

In ninety-six of his biographies of 'ulama, Bin Diyaf indicated the father's occupation (see Table 2). Seventy-one fathers were themselves members of the religious establishment, mostly 'ulama. Six of the seventy-one had fathers who were in charge of family zawiyas but who lacked the formal religious training of the 'ulama class.[16]

In fifty-two of Bin Diyaf's biographies information is given on

[15] The two most striking examples were the celebrated Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi, chief Maliki mufti and imam of Zitouna, who was born in Testour, and the man who assumed most of al-Riyahi's duties after his death, Shaykh Ahmad b. Husayn, born in Le Kef. Shaykh Ahmad was living in Le Kef when the bey invited him to succeed Shaykh al-Riyahi following the latter's death. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 74 and 401.

[16] Three of the six were from the same family, al-Bahi. Of the remaining three, one each was from the Talili, 'Azuz, and Bin Maluka religious families. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 161, 211, 231, 353, 288 and 337.

what occupation the son(s) followed (see Table 3). Forty-five of the sons became 'ulama.

A slightly smaller sample of thirty-five provides thirty-two with *at least* a three-generational continuity (grandfather-father-son) within the religious establishment, and only three cases where a son whose father and grandfather had been 'ulama adopted another profession (see Table 4). The latter group all became katibs, and in one of the three cases other siblings became

Table 2. Members of the 'Ulama Class: Father's Occupation

Origin	*Religious Establish-ment*	*Old Family*	*Politi-cal*	*Katib*	*Tribal*	*Other*	*Total*
Tunis	49	5	1	3			58
Provinces	15	8	1		3	1[1]	28
Not Specified	7	3					10
Total	71	16	2	3	3	1	96

[1] Father was a perfumer from Fez.

Table 3. Members of the 'Ulama Class: Occupation of the Son(s)

Origin	*Religious Establishment*	*Katib*	*Political*	*Old Family*	*Total*
Tunis	31	5[1]	1[2]		37
Provinces	11			1	12
Not Specified	3				3
Total	45	5	1	1	52

[1] In two cases other sons became 'ulama.
[2] The son became shaykh al-madina in Tunis.

Table 4. Occupation of Third-Generation 'Ulama

Origin	*Religious Establishment*	*Katib*	*Total*
Tunis	25	3	28
Provinces	5		5
Not Specified	2		2
Total	32	3	35

'ulama. This marked conservatism and continuity in choice of family occupation held true for both Tunis and the provinces.

The above three tables convert into percentages as follows (see Tables 5-7) (figures will not always add up to 100 percent because of rounding):[17]

Table 5. Members of the 'Ulama Class: Father's Occupation

Origin	*Religious Establishment*	*Old Family*	*Political*	*Katib*	*Tribal*	*Other*
Tunis	84%	9%	2%	5%		
Provinces	54%	29%	4%		11%	4%
Not Specified	70%	30%				
Total	74%	17%	2%	3%	3%	1%

Table 6. Members of the 'Ulama Class: Occupation of the Son(s)

Origin	*Religious Establishment*	*Katib*	*Political*	*Old Family*
Tunis	84%	14%	3%	
Provinces	92%			8%
Not Specified	100%			
Total	87%	10%	2%	2%

Table 7. Occupation of Third-Generation 'Ulama

Origin	*Religious Establishment*	*Katib*
Tunis	89%	11%
Provinces	100%	
Not Specified	100%	
All Tunisia	91%	9%

[17] The figures in all the tables are based on: (1) information given explicitly by Bin Diyaf, supplemented by (2) what can reasonably be inferred from the context, and (3) other sources, especially Shaykh Muhammad Nayfur, *'Unwan al-Arib 'amma nasha'a bil-mamlaka al-Tunisiya min 'alim adib*, 2 vols. (Tunis, 1301 [1883-1884]).

As between Tunis and the provinces, the wide difference in the number of 'ulama whose fathers were also in the religious establishment (84 percent and 54 percent respectively) may be more apparent than real. Bin Diyaf had less firsthand knowledge about the families of provincial 'ulama, and the large proportion of provincial 'ulama listed as springing from "old families" with no further details given (29 percent as opposed to only 9 percent in Tunis) may include many whose fathers were themselves members of the religious establishment.[18]

The information in Table 6 supports this interpretation. The sons of the provincial 'ulama would usually have been actively embarked on their own careers at the time Bin Diyaf was writing, and thus better known to him. The percentage of sons of 'ulama following their fathers' profession is even higher for those with roots in the provinces than for those long established in Tunis (92 percent to 84 percent).

Closer examination of Table 2 highlights the dominance of old families in the upper echelons of 'ulama ranks. The movement from katib to 'alim (or vice versa) entailed only a slight change in social prestige, usually in favor of the latter. It was more nearly a lateral movement within the same social class. The two 'ulama whose fathers had been in political careers could hardly be described as social parvenus. One boasted a grandfather who had been a major military figure in the service of Ali Pasha (reigned 1735-1756).[19] The other sprang from a notable family of Le Kef long noted for its political service, and it was with him that the "family moved from political to religious leadership."[20] This leaves only the three 'ulama of tribal origin unaccounted for (aside from the 'alim whose father had been a perfumer in Fez, but it might be observed that this was traditionally an occupation of some social standing). These three, including the celebrated Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi, appear to be the only examples (within this sample) of parvenus.[21]

[18] Of the eight provincial 'ulama whose fathers' occupation is obscured in the vague category of "old family," four were from Kairouan, two from Sfax, and one each from Sousse and Monastir. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 130, 178, 229, 333, 125, 189, 195 and 113, respectively.

[19] Bin Diyaf, Biography 298.

[20] Bin Diyaf, Biography 401.

[21] According to his son's biography, al-Riyahi's grandfather had been a Quranic teacher among the Riyah tribesmen. His father, whose occupation is not mentioned, had moved to Testour, where Ibrahim al-Riyahi was born

This implies that the 'ulama class—or at least its upper ranks—offered few opportunities for upward social mobility. The question deserves further reflection, even if speculative and based on fragmentary data. Bin Diyaf does not provide the family background or place of origin in all of his biographies. A discreet silence on the matter suggests that the 'alim in question came from humble stock. (A cultural Muslim of that age would not call attention to a man's modest origin just as he would not fail to mention a creditable family background.)

An attempt to estimate the percentage of those born in Tunis who advanced socially by becoming 'ulama might offer the best opportunity for relative precision. Bin Diyaf would have known the family background of those born and living in Tunis. He provided information on the family background of fifty-eight 'ulama (Table 2) born in Tunis, and all of them represented a previously established high social position:

Fathers of 'ulama	49
Old family	5
Fathers were katibs	3
Father in political career	1
Total	58

Four of the ten 'ulama whose origin is listed in Table 2 as "not specified" can reasonably be assumed to have been born in Tunis. Probably none of the four came from established families, although Bin Diyaf refers to one as following a good pious life "in accordance with the tradition of his family."[22] One of the four may well have been the son of a minor saintly figure.[23] Another of the four, named Smith (al-Haddad), became an expert on the

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in 1180. See 'Umar al-Riyahi, *Ta'tir al-Nawahi bi-tarjamat al-Shaykh Sidi Ibrahim al-Riyahi*, 2 vols. (Tunis, 1320 [1902-1903]), vol. 1. There is no mention of al-Riyahi's father in Bin Diyaf (Biography 74), nor in Nayfur, *'Unwan al-Arib*, 2: 90-97. Salih bin Abd al-Jabbar was the tribesman from the Farashish, already mentioned as having studied in Tunis and al-Azhar before returning to teach in his own tribe. Nothing seems to be known of his father. Had he been a tribal shaykh, Bin Diyaf would almost certainly have mentioned it. Bin Diyaf, Biography 115. Ahmad al-'Awadi was a tribesman of modest background from the Constantine (Algeria) area. Bin Diyaf, Biography 173.

[22] Shaykh Muhammad 'Abbas. See Bin Diyaf, Biography 309.

[23] At least the name so implies—Ali b. Yusuf al-Darwish al-Hanafi. Bin Diyaf, Biography 272.

histories of important Tunis families.[24] Possibly here was a man assiduously applying himself to the task of integrating himself and his descendants into the Tunis elite by showing appreciation of its traditions.

In addition to these four there is a total of twelve 'ulama about whom no information concerning either place of origin or family background is given. Assuming the two extreme possibilities that none or all of this group was from Tunis, one would then arrive at the following: between six and twenty-two percent of the 'ulama listed in Bin Diyaf's biographies, who were born in Tunis during the time period studied, appear to have appreciably bettered their social position by becoming 'ulama.[25] Probably some point in between the two extremes is closest to the truth. Perhaps one man in seven from among the 'ulama born in Tunis was an example of upward social mobility via the religious establishment. For the lesser members of the 'ulama class in Tunis and for the provinces in general, the percentage of upward social mobility would not have been less. By modern standards, this is a low infusion of new blood, but for a traditional society such as Husaynid Tunisia, it is a not unimpressive figure.

Even granting a healthy margin of error for such crude estimates, the 'ulama profession seems to have offered the greatest opportunity for both geographical and social mobility to the largest number of Tunisians. In its recruitment of new members just as in its social role, the 'ulama class played a well-nigh unique role of both leaven and cement for Tunisian society.

The entrenched 'ulama permitted competent newcomers to join their ranks. There is no indication of old religious families showing prejudice against a newcomer *qua* newcomer or attempting to block his advancement. Yet the newcomer usually required a patron or a sponsor. Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi considered emigrating because he was not earning a decent living as teacher. Only the timely intervention of the minister Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' insured that al-Riyahi's talents would remain in service of Tunisia.[26]

If it sometimes took a bit of luck in addition to talent to enter

[24] Bin Diyaf, Biography 318.

[25] That is, either a total of sixty-two (fifty-eight plus four) or seventy-four (fifty-eight plus sixteen) from which in either case fifty-eight can be accounted for as having come from families already well-established socially.

[26] Bin Diyaf, Biography 74.

the upper ranks of the 'ulama, an 'ulama family, once established could easily remain in good standing. The pattern, pronounced in Bin Diyaf's biographies, of 'ulama fathers producing praiseworthy sons reflected Tunisian society's implicit assumption: the son of an 'alim who followed in the same profession inherited his father's social standing. For example, the son of an old religious family in Sousse who received only "a bit of learning" nevertheless became mufti in his home town.[27]

Only certain egregious acts sufficed to remove the favorable prejudice with which a man born into the religious establishment began his career, but in such cases the descendant of even the oldest religious family could lose this inherited prestige. Perhaps the most striking case was Abu al-Ghayth al-Bakri, descendant of the family that had provided the principal imam of Zitouna Mosque in unbroken succession for over 190 years.[28] His father, who had been poorly qualified for this lofty position, was the last of the family to be appointed imam, but the son might still have managed to maintain or even recoup the declining family prestige. Instead, "lacking anyone to admonish and raise him" after the death of his father, he decided to go into governmental concession farming. Even worse, he sold habous properties attached to the Bakri family zawiya, thus accelerating both the social and economic decline of that once famous zawiya. It was the custom for government ministers to rise in honor of the zawiya shaykhs but when this unfortunate man appeared before Larbi Zarruq, the latter remained seated while observing, "We used to rise to greet you out of respect for your ancestors, but since you were not satisfied to follow in their way preferring instead governmental positions you must become as other men of government acting as they do without any other distinction."[29]

Muhammad al-Kawwash, son of the famous Salih al-Kawwash, offers another example. Bin Diyaf deplored that "as with certain sons of the distinguished he wanted to be at once as great as his father,"[30] which was not possible. There seems to have been more to the story than Bin Diyaf cared to relate, for at some time after the death of his father, Muhammad al-Kawwash was even stripped of his 'adala (i.e., he could not give testimony in court or carry out other functions of the 'adl). He was later restored

[27] Bin Diyaf, Biography 320. His son also became an 'alim.
[28] Bin Diyaf, Biography 71.
[29] Bin Diyaf, Biography 138.
[30] Bin Diyaf, Biography 94.

to the 'adala, and thus the opportunity to earn a living, in the following way. When the celebrated minister Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' finished building his mosque in the Halfawin area of Tunis, he chose the then quite young Muhammad Bayram III as khatib, but the latter's father, Bayram II, protested that such was not fitting as long as "the son of Salih Kawwash" remained stripped of the 'adala which he lived on. Whereupon Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' caused Muhammad al-Kawwash to be returned to the ranks of 'adls.[31]

Apparently, the son of Salih al-Kawwash was beyond redemption. His father's former students helped out financially, but to no avail. He remained a ne'er-do-well until his death by plague at a relatively early age in 1232 (1816-1817).[32]

Abu al-Ghayth al-Bakri and Muhammad al-Kawwash were exceptions. Normally sons stayed in the same profession, and the entrenched family position was more important than the variations of talents which one can expect to distinguish the several generations of any family. There was always room for new blood, but the continued importance of such families as Bayram, Barudi, Mahjub and al-Rassa' offered the dominant pattern.

The 'Ulama Value System

The 'ulama prized strict observance of traditionally established behavior patterns. An 'alim was expected to live an exemplary life in conformity with the precepts of Islam, free of scandal. He should affect a certain gravity, avoid the popular cafes, and not let himself be seen in public laughing, speaking in a loud voice, or eating. In his speech he was expected not only to avoid the trivial and the evanescent in favor of weightier matters but also to adopt a more formal, classical Arabic than that used by the man in the street. The ideal 'alim adorned his discussion with appropriate citations from the Quran, hadith, and the principal religious authorities. The ability to turn a phrase was highly valued, and the 'alim who could write poetry and was familiar with the secular Arabic literature earned additional esteem.

An elaborate code of *politesse* governed his daily contact with others and with his fellow 'ulama. Factors contributing to the in-

[31] Nayfur, *'Unwan al-Arib*, 2: 69-70.

[32] Ibid. He stubbornly remained in the house reserved for the shaykh of the al-Muntasariya mosque (the post long held by his father) despite the new appointee's pressure on him to move.

formal hierarchy of precedence among the 'ulama included respect for sharifs, venerable families, elders, and one's former teachers. Failure to observe the latter rule caused quite a flutter in 'ulama dovecotes in 1836.

A qadi, one Muhammad al-Bahri, was overruled in a legal point by his former teacher, Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi. The former insisted on presenting his argument before the bey and the Majlis al-Shar'i. When he went so far as to demand the bey's permission to read certain citations supporting his argument, al-Riyahi could stand no more. "Stop! Impudent person," he said, and insisted on resigning. Only with great difficulty were the bey and others eventually able to restore al-Riyahi's ruffled feelings.[33]

Questions of precedence and offended dignity could easily arise. When Muhammad al-Shadhili al-Mu'addib, then third imam of Zitouna, was appointed mufti, he refused to walk behind the second imam, Mahmud Muhsin. With the help of several mediators, the dispute was amicably settled "as usually happens among the distinguished."[34] Custom was upheld. The order of precedence of the three Zitouna imams was not to be related to the other positions the incumbents might hold, but Shaykh Mahmud Muhsin graciously agreed not to walk ahead of al-Mu'addib.

Another incident involved the haughty behavior of Shaykh Muhammad b. Salama. He did not bother to invite all members of the Majlis al-Shar'i, as custom and courtesy required, to hear his final lecture in a special series at Zitouna. As a result, the meeting was boycotted by the 'ulama, and Shaykh Muhammad became even more incensed when the bey refused to intervene. Relations between Shaykh Muhammad and his colleagues remained tense until they all happened to be gathered at the funeral of Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi's son. There Shaykh Muhammad told the assembled mourners that he and his fellow 'ulama, as men devoted to religious knowledge, were expected to show brotherhood and forgiveness. "I bear witness before God that I forgive all of you," he added and asked that they do the same for him. This gesture was highly appreciated by the 'ulama and good relations were immediately restored.[35]

There were many personal rivalries and considerations of

[33] Bin Diyaf, 3: 214-216; Brunschvig, "Justice . . . Tunisie," p. 58.
[34] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 273 and 384.
[35] Bin Diyaf, Biography 296.

amour propre, but the ideal man of religion was expected to rise above such things. It was especially commendable to acknowledge a mistake and accept being overruled (a difficult step to take, as the above incident concerning Ibrahim al-Riyahi suggests). Bin Diyaf praises the mufti Husayn al-Barudi who reversed a decision already made after being shown it was wrong.[36] Muhammad Za'fran, qadi of Monastir, realized the error in one of his judgments fully two years later and reversed himself. The man adversely affected by the change then took his case to the Majlis al-Shar'i, meeting in the presence of the bey, but the Majlis upheld the qadi and praised him for preferring the right over "personal considerations."[37]

Always acting as a counterweight to pretension and pride of place among the 'ulama was that basic principle of Sunni Islam asserting the equality of all believers before God. The most educated 'alim felt obliged to respect the pious ascetism of the unlearned man and was prepared to believe that God, in His wisdom, inspired the acts of the majdhub wali.[38] Even among the 'ulama themselves there was a point beyond which the usual considerations of family, education, and native ability seemed insignificant. Shaykh Muhammad Mzali, in an argument with the qadi of Monastir, Shaykh Hasan al-Khayri, asked "Whom did you study under?" not too subtly belittling the man's formal training. Shaykh Hasan retorted, citing the Quran, "Fear God and He will teach you." Mzali, to his credit, admired this response and praised the qadi.[39]

The 'ulama represented the conscience of the community, but they were extremely circumspect in assuming this lofty role. Their cautious relations with government are considered below, but even in their dealings with private individuals the 'ulama were more likely to convey their disapproval by a subtle gesture, a veiled reference in a sermon, or an avoidance of further contact with the transgressor. It was the rare 'alim who took individual action to right public or private wrongs beyond what was strictly required of him in his official capacity. The exceptions to

[36] Bin Diyaf, Biography 297. [37] Bin Diyaf, Biography 114.

[38] *Majdhub* ("possessed")—the customary term used to describe those whose aberrant behavior is interpreted as a sign of holiness or a special relationship with the Divine.

[39] Bin Diyaf, Biography 113.

this unwritten rule of prudence were noted with approval—the venerable Islamic admonition to "command the good and proscribe the evil" never lost its force as an ideal—but the few incidents of this kind cited by Bin Diyaf and the general context in which they took place leave no doubt that the chronicler is describing the seldom-to-be-attained ideal, not the norm.

For example, when Shaykh Muhammad al-Mana'i saw a crowd dragging the body of the assassinated minister Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' through the streets, he grabbed his sword and rushed out to stop them. Only the forcible intervention of his neighbors, fearful for his safety, held him back.[40] Al-Mana'i was of tribal origin (Drid), and his response may well be interpreted as that of a tribesman rather than a long-urbanized member of the 'ulama class.

Shaykh Hasan al-Sharif[41] also reacted bravely and decisively when presented with a crisis. A woman whom a Turkish soldier was forcibly carrying through the street clutched pleadingly at the shaykh's arm. He immediately intervened, and when insulted by the soldier, Shaykh Hasan took him to the dey, accompanied by the perfumers from the Suq al-'Attarin (where the incident took place), who wanted to insure the shaykh's safety. Presenting himself before the dey, he insisted that the soldier be held in prison until the bey himself was informed. Hamuda Bey ordered the soldier executed that very day.[42]

The same Shaykh Hasan al-Sharif was accosted once by a female slave who claimed to have been mistreated and asked him to intercede with her master so he might agree to sell her. The shaykh insisted on being taken at once to the man's house in Bab al-Suwayqa. The master was himself a "nobody," not known for his wealth.[43] (This single shred of evidence offers a suggestive insight to the pattern of slaveholding at that time.) The master, upon seeing Shaykh Hasan al-Sharif before his own house, took

[40] Bin Diyaf, Biography 194.

[41] His appointment as imam of Zitouna brought to an end the Bakri family's long monopoly of this post. See above, p. 160.

[42] Bin Diyaf, Biography 71. This forcible abduction of a female in broad daylight, which Shaykh Hasan thwarted—unusual enough for any settled urban environment—is jarringly out of line with what one would expect in a traditional city such as Tunis. Obviously an extreme example, the incident suggests at the same time the great gulf separating the ethnically distinct military from the native society of Tunis.

[43] "Min 'aamat al-naas."

fright and cried out, "Oh Sidi, if only you had sent for me I would have come to you," and freed his slave on the spot.[44]

These were the exceptional cases. Normally the 'ulama were content to set a good example. The story told of Bayram II depicts the classic exemplar. His barber, long accustomed to a stony silence on the part of his customer, was pleasantly surprised when one day Bayram II greeted him cheerfully and asked about his family. When the barber asked why the sudden change, Bayram II replied that he had now resigned his post as qadi. While he was qadi it would not have been seemly for him to have "contacts with people." This might have jeopardized his impartiality, but now he was free to resume his regular social relationships.[45]

The 'ulama expressed the conscience of the community in muted terms and along conservative lines, but when they spoke it was with more than the voice of blind traditionalism. There was a certain flexibility in their stand. Tactically, this flexibility saved them from confrontation (and possible defeat) with political authority or public opinion, but another consideration probably motivated them as well. The challenge of being able to find a plausible loophole or of treating a case according to different principles leading to a quite different judgment was ever present among trained Islamic judicial scholars in Husaynid Tunisia, as elsewhere.[46]

The result could often be a juxtaposition (confusing to the modern mind accustomed to positive law enacted by the political sovereign) of rigorously applied general principle and practical

[44] Bin Diyaf, Biography 72. Shaykh Muhammad al-Bahri bin Abd al-Sattar also freed a female slave who came with physical proof that she had been beaten by her master, but he—as a qadi holding court—was acting in a more customary manner. Bin Diyaf, Biography 234. These two references leave the larger issue of slavery and the law at that time tantalizingly vague. Since Bin Diyaf found these two incidents noteworthy, can it be assumed that slaves rarely made such appeals to the courts or that courts rarely decided in favor of the slaves? A careful sifting of the available evidence plus a diligent search for hitherto unexploited material could produce an excellent monograph on this important but largely neglected subject. On the general subject of slavery in Islam see the excellent article by Robert Brunschvig, "'Abd," in EI², with several references to Tunisia.

[45] The story is cited in the biography of his brother, Mustafa Bayram. Bin Diyaf, Biography 404.

[46] As has often been observed, it is in this loving regard for the intricacies of the law that Islam and Judaism are so similar, and at the same time so readily distinguishable from the Christian tradition.

expediency, and of apparently inescapable judgments accompanied by a not always logically consistent escape clause. In the plague of 1783, Hamuda Bey ordered the clothing and effects of those who died of the disease to be burned, but the mufti, responding to the hue and cry of those affected, claimed that this was unlawful. Man, he argued, should submit to God's will. In any case, he continued, if it were deemed medically advisable, the heirs who were deprived (including widows and orphans) were entitled to compensation. When the clamor continued against the measure, Hamuda backed down.[47]

What was the relative prestige accorded the different positions an 'alim was qualified to fill? Muftis and qadis rated high on the social scale, but they did not completely escape the lingering suspicion meted out to holders of public office. They were, after all, beholden to government and obliged to concur in, or at least overlook, its actions which violated the shari'a. At the other end of the social scale were those for whom Bin Diyaf often felt compelled to offer an explanation—the 'ulama who became notaries or went into business for a time. Economic circumstances forced such choices upon them. Otherwise, Bin Diyaf implies, they would have preferred to remain in teaching or another, more purely religious, calling.[48]

Higher education offered the best opportunity for devotion to religious studies without distraction from either the world of business or government, but there were drawbacks in teaching. It was not especially remunerative. Recall that Ibrahim al-Riyahi had planned to emigrate, despairing of ever being able to earn an adequate salary as a teacher. Shaykh Ahmad Zarruq al-Kafi taught for a time but then became a shahid in order to earn a living.[49] Even the celebrated and beloved teacher Hasan al-Sharif joined that profession by accident—only after the chief katib who was

[47] Bin Diyaf, 2: 14-15. The mufti *was* willing to accept the measure provided those affected should receive just compensation for any loss sustained by state action aiming to advance the public good. Nothing could be more modern than this. One would like more information on such seemingly banal incidents. Did the mufti really think the burning was prohibited by Islamic law, and mention compensation merely to avoid an overly abrupt confrontation with political authority? What exactly provoked him to take a stand on this issue? To what extent did public opinion play a role?

[48] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 156, 322, 355, 393, 214, 380 and 384.

[49] Bin Diyaf, Biography 187; Nayfur, *'Unwan al-Arib*, 2: 83.

jealous of him spread false stories which caused him to lose his job as katib.[50]

Also, in stark contrast with the handful of excellent teachers who were accorded the highest esteem was a much larger body of lesser lights whose native talents were inadequate to overcome the baleful effect of a jejune system of rote learning.

The stifling dullness of the system can best be sensed by reference to the pedagogical technique of one man who dared to be different, Shaykh Hasan al-Sharif. "He used to joke with his students during the lessons lest they become bored. If one of his students asked a question, he would pay attention to him and then, repeating what has been asked in a clearer fashion, ask his students, 'Can any of you think of the answer?' If one of them answered, he would again listen to him carefully and then repeat the answer as well. This was done to train his students in discussion while taking delight in their excellent qualities." Creditable but hardly noteworthy, the modern reader might say, but it is illuminating to see how Shaykh Hasan al-Sharif's own peers reacted. "Some of his colleagues reproached him that such ways were not appropriate to the dignity of shaykhs, but he answered, 'You take pleasure in cockfights. I enjoy battles among men using their intellects as swords.' "[51]

Our attempt to establish the relative prestige of the different positions open to 'ulama is condemned to partial failure. Such a neat scale reflects the values of a different age and another culture. A more diffuse formulation holds true, as a rule. The leading members of the religious establishment in Husaynid Tunisia were those who held, or were given the opportunity to hold if they so chose, several leading posts at the same time—teachers, muftis, imams, or qadis. Then they could vary the emphasis they cared to place on one or the other aspect of their multiform careers according to their own interests. Next down the scale were those who, although given fewer choices, were still able to devote full time to teaching, preaching, or the law. Then came those who, passed over for leading positions, earned their living as notaries, lawyers, habous administrators, functionaries in lesser mosques, and teachers in the less imposing madrasas.

Beyond this point one moves outside the religious establishment as here defined—meeting, on the one hand, those who although

[50] Bin Diyaf, Biography 72; Nayfur, *'Unwan al-Arib*, 2: 73.

[51] Bin Diyaf, Biography 72.

trained in religion had ceased to be members of the establishment as a result of entering business or the clerkly profession and, on the other, the lower ranks of teachers in the elementary schools, minor mosque functionaries, and religious administrators who, lacking the complete 'ulama training, never fully belonged. Even in this less orderly picture of social ranking, one must leave room for considerable change and mobility. A certain Muhammad al-Qabaili abandoned teaching to enter business. Later, he was appointed mufti by Ahmad Bey.[52]

The 'Ulama and Government

The precise relationship between government and the 'ulama in the world of Sunni Islam remains a matter of scholarly controversy. Certain scholars have been impressed by the similar training and sense of corporate identity which bound together the 'ulama. They have noted a major theme to be found in the biographical literature of saints and scholars—the pious man of God standing up to the corrupt governor and obliging him to change his ways. This school of thought has emphasized the 'ulama's role as mediators between government and people. Other scholars, especially those engaged in the complex task of discovering how Ottoman government actually worked, have emphasized the broad governmental functions filled by the religiously trained. Some in this latter school would even question the validity, or usefulness, of presenting the matter in terms of a religious group separate from government.

The issue will not be resolved until more circumscribed studies of the religiously trained and their relations with government for specific times and places are forthcoming. The following is a brief interpretation of the situation in Husaynid Tunisia in the early decades of the nineteenth century. Given the shared legacy of political and religious institutions, the Tunisian pattern should offer similarities with other parts of the Ottoman Empire, especially the Arabic-speaking portions of the Empire where a native Arabic-speaking religious elite was in a position to assert its separateness and relative independence from government.

The 'ulama in Husaynid Tunisia had a strong sense of separate identity vis-à-vis government, and for that matter, other elements of Tunisian society. The religiously trained did not become gov-

[52] Bin Diyaf, Biography 322.

ernment ministers of *a fortiori* military leaders, nor did their sons aspire to enter these professions. Nor was there a flow in the other direction, from political to religious careers. The few exceptions to be found in Bin Diyaf's biographies are listed in such a manner as to make it quite clear that they were exceptions. To move to and from an 'ulama position and clerkly profession was not really an exception, but only a broader extension of careers open to the religiously trained. To speak of the 'ulama is not only a useful way to divide Tunisian society for purposes of analysis. The 'ulama class was a living reality.

Although possessing a sense of separate identity, the 'ulama were closely tied to government. The bey had the formal authority to appoint and dismiss muftis, qadis, madrasa shaykhs, imams, and even, for that matter, shaykhs of zawiyas. He actively used this authority. Since government did not usually care to concern itself with such details, the 'ulama exercised a relatively broad *de facto* autonomy, but it could be disrupted at even the most insignificant level if the bey or one of his subordinates chose to act.[53]

The 'ulama carefully avoided conflict with the government, and the government with somewhat less care adopted the same position. When a dispute did flare up between an 'alim and the government, the matter was almost invariably resolved by the man's withdrawal or dismissal. Occasionally, the government arbitrarily intervened to dismiss or even imprison a religious functionary. In no such case did the 'ulama offer resistance, active or passive, to governmental authority.[54] They might advise, cajole, serve as intermediaries or withdraw from governmental affairs to show their disapproval. An especially bold 'alim might even make cautiously elliptical allusions in a sermon to governmental actions

[53] On the general subject of the courts see Brunschvig, "Justice . . . Tunisie," pp. 27-70.

[54] The apolitical stance of the 'ulama saved them at times from the suspicion of plotting against the government. For example, the Turkish soldiers who attempted a *coup d'état* against Mahmud Bey in 1816 rounded up the Majlis al-Shar'i and forced its members to draft and then sign a document replacing the ruling bey by his brother, Ismail. The abortive coup was soon suppressed, but at no time did the bey or his entourage show any suspicion of the Majlis al-Shar'i. Also, the Turkish soldiers in revolt showed throughout the affair a consideration for the Majlis al-Shar'i members not granted to their other prisoners from among the civil and military administration. Bin Diyaf, 3: 117-119.

of which he disapproved.[55] These were the limits of confrontation. They were in no way comparable to the great *institutional* conflicts which pitted church against state in Europe.

Such were the general principles governing relations between government and the 'ulama in Husaynid Tunisia. Specific examples clarify how things worked in practice. There are several known cases of the beys arbitrarily dismissing high religious functionaries. In 1814, soon after the assassination of Uthman Bey, Shaykh Muhammad b. Bakir was removed as imam of a small mosque since he had been close to Uthman Bey.[56]

Some fifty years later Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey dismissed Shaykh Mahmud al-Ubbay from his post as imam of Sahib al-Tabi' mosque (which had been held by his father before him) because he concluded the Ramadan ceremony before the arrival of the bey, having been misinformed that the bey had cancelled his decision to attend.[57] An even more outrageous example concerned the mufti Ismail al-Tamimi who was dismissed and banished in 1820 allegedly because certain slanderers informed the bey that he was prophesying the end of the regime.[58]

Other members of the religious establishment apparently did not protest these arbitrary acts. Their acquiescence in the first case is understandable. A new bey who had come to power by way of assassination would feel politically insecure and want only loyal followers preaching in the mosques. Their position in the case of Shaykh al-Tamimi is less easily justified. Shaykh al-Tamimi was himself, as mufti, a member of the Majlis al-Shar'i. Mahmud Bey had dismissed and banished him without prior investigation, and when he announced his decision to the Majlis al-Shar'i, not a single member registered a protest or even requested further information.[59] At least in passive resistance each

[55] For example, the 1845 sermon by Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi protesting the oppressions of the bey's concession monopolies. Bin Diyaf, 4: 82; 'Umar al-Riyahi, *Ta'tir al-Nawahi*, 2: 30-31.

[56] Bin Diyaf, 3: 106. [57] Bin Diyaf, Biography 398.

[58] Apparently, this was a conveniently vague accusation to bring against an 'alim. The faqih Ahmad bin Rajib, one of those imprisoned following the execution of Larbi Zarruq, was accused of star-gazing. Bin Diyaf, 3: 140.

[59] Bin Diyaf, 3: 132-133. The bey rescinded the banishment (to Mateur) after one month, and almost four years later he reinstated al-Tamimi as mufti. Bin Diyaf, 3: 146. Mateur is a mere forty-two miles northwest of Tunis. Had Shaykh al-Tamimi been a dangerous political prisoner, the bey

religious dignitary asked to replace al-Tamimi could have respectfully declined. Nothing of the sort occurred. Shaykh Muhammad Mahjub took Shaykh al-Tamimi's place as mufti and member of the Majlis al-Shar'i.[60]

The bey also intervened to settle disputes among religious functionaries. In 1818, Mahmud Bey dismissed the qadi of Sousse because he and the mufti of Sousse were deadlocked in a bitter quarrel that threatened to stop the regular process of justice. The bey ordered the Majlis al-Shar'i in Tunis to write a letter to the two parties admonishing them to mend their ways, but when this proved of no avail, dismissal seemed the only solution.[61] This beneficial intervention underscores the direct beylical authority in religious matters and the absence of institutionalized structures to settle such disputes without reference to the bey.[62]

The beys could be equally arbitrary in controlling the number of 'adls, and they played a decisive role in the appointment and dismissal of zawiya shaykhs. They possessed and exercised a broad power of appointment and dismissal in virtually all of the religious and educational offices.

These examples of arbitrary beylical authority can be matched by as many cases of prudence to avoid controversy. Shaykh Muhammad al-Nayfur was dismissed as qadi for the mahalla during the time of Ahmad Bey because he rashly sentenced a leading kahiya to imprisonment. The bey of the camp, Muhammad Bey, sent someone to persuade the qadi to back down since he could not imprison one of his chief military leaders. Al-Nayfur retorted, "I have done what was required of me. Now it is up to him (the bey of the camp) to imprison him or not as he chooses."[63] Such

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would surely have wanted to send him farther away. Banishment to a modest provincial town of no intellectual pretensions such as Mateur was apparently deemed punishment enough for an 'alim.

[60] Bin Diyaf, 3: 133.

[61] Bin Diyaf, Biography 314.

[62] The beys seem to have had a hand even in matters settled amicably by the 'ulama. When Mustafa Bey learned of the dispute over precedence among two imams of Zitouna (see above, p. 162), he sent Bin Diyaf and the qadi Muhammad al-Bahri b. Abd al-Sattar to mediate. Bin Diyaf, Biography 384.

[63] Bin Diyaf, Biography 339. Nayfur had apparently not wanted the job in the first place, and he accepted only after strong pressure from his mentor, Shaykh Muhammad Bayram III. Possibly this was his way of getting out of an unwanted governmental assignment.

a stiff-necked legist would not do as qadi of the mahalla, and he was dismissed when the mahalla returned to Tunis. Yet he was not penalized nor disgraced. He was later appointed qadi in Tunis and eventually became mufti.

Another example of beylical prudence, Mustafa Bey presented what appeared to be a reasonable request to the qadi Muhammad b. Hamida bin al-Khoja. The bey wanted to build a house for his favorite minister Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' on property that was held in habous. He proposed to place another property in habous in exchange for release of the former (which is acceptable in Hanafi law provided the two properties in question are of equal value). The qadi refused and Mustafa Bey reluctantly accepted the adverse verdict "as was his wont in shari'a judgments."[64]

Relations between political authority and the 'ulama were subtle. Although politically quiescent and readily cowed into submission on certain matters, the 'ulama were far from passive instruments of beylical power. Examples abound of 'ulama standing by their convictions at the risk of governmental disfavor. Shaykh Hasan al-Sharif's bravery in accosting a Turkish soldier who was abducting a woman, and personally bringing him to justice has already been cited. Acting on the orders of the bey, Larbi Zarruq in 1232 (1816-1817) attempted to get the leading Zitouna shaykhs to stop teaching courses also at the Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' mosque (the founder of the mosque which bore his name had been assassinated at the instigation of Larbi Zarruq only two years earlier). They refused. Shaykh Muhammad al-Fasi, the first to speak, pointed out that the bey "does not have the right to prevent me from disseminating religious science in a mosque devoted to the worship of God." Both Shaykhs Ahmad al-Ubbay and Ibrahim al-Riyahi concurred, and each alluded to their regard for the late Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi'. "But for him the bey would not even know my name," al-Riyahi added.[65] It took courage to express these sentiments before Larbi Zarruq.

Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi was once summoned to appear before Husayn Bey. Everyone except the members of the Majlis al-Shar'i was expected to kiss the bey's hand, and at that time, al-Riyahi was not yet a member. When the bey extended his hand to be kissed, the shaykh shook hands with him instead. Husayn

[64] Bin Diyaf, Biography 350.

[65] Bin Diyaf, 3: 122-124, and Biography 331.

Bey was both surprised and irritated, but he let the incident pass without comment.[66]

The sense of personal and professional pride is also noticeable in the appointment of Shaykh Muhammad al-Rassa' (from the venerable al-Rassa' family that had provided imams of Zitouna before the Bakris) as qadi al-farida and shahid of the Bayt al-Mal[67] (replacing his late father). One day the minister Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' said to him jokingly, "The Bayt al-Mal is in your hands and the hands of the agha. You pay what you wish to the state." Al-Rassa' responded haughtily, "The treasury is in the hands of the agha. He is closer to you than I am. You promoted me as shahid for what is collected, not what is spent. Since you now have some doubt as to my trustworthiness, look for someone else." Bin Diyaf's father explained to Shakir that al-Rassa' was from a family that would not tolerate such banter. Shakir tried, using Bin Diyaf's father as intermediary, to get al-Rassa' to reconsider, but in vain.[68]

Propriety as understood by the religious establishment is revealed in the story of Shaykh Ahmad al-Barudi who refused a gift of money sent by Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi'. He informed the messenger that he might have accepted a horse (hardly a trifling gift) or something to eat, but not money. Bin Diyaf's father, realizing Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi''s inadvertent blunder, returned the money himself, explaining to the minister, "This man (Shaykh al-Barudi) sees you as a friend and an equal. He would not even mind revealing to you his needs, but you send him money by way of Qasim the Doorman without even including a letter." Bin Diyaf's father then induced Shaykh al-Barudi to write the minister listing some of his needs. Thus, the original purpose was eventually achieved in a fashion acceptable to all.[69]

[66] Nayfur, *'Unwan al-Arib*, 2: 90-97.

[67] The two jobs were apparently held by the same person. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 103, 144, 133 and 397. It would seem that the qadi al-farida supervised the canonically fixed distribution of estates, especially those coming before the Bayt al-Mal. (See the article "Fara'id" in SEI.) According to Monchicourt, *Documents historiques sur la Tunisie*, footnote, p. 28, the Bayt al-Mal received the money of those dying without heirs, and of those leaving only female heirs, the equivalent of a male heir's portion. The money covered such expenses as burying indigents, circumcising the poor, and arranging for the marriage of girls.

[68] Bin Diyaf, Biography 397.

[69] Bin Diyaf, Biography 82.

A sense of honor which could easily slip into disdain, professional pride, prudence in the face of power which at times smacked of cowardice but was occasionally relieved by individual acts of courage and conviction—such were some of the confusing features discernible in the 'ulama's relations with government. Largely beholden to government for their very livelihood, they never really resisted the system, yet they never completely surrendered to it either.

As for the beys, they honored leading 'ulama, attended their funerals, built mosques and madrasas in their memory, made a great show of seeking their counsel and deferring to their judgment, but they maintained effective control in their own hands, and from time to time they arbitrarily intervened in important or petty matters as if to make it quite clear where ultimate power and authority resided.

B. Mysticism, Brotherhoods and the Religious Establishment

The Arabic word for Islamic mysticism—Sufi—evokes memories of the great intellectual and moral giants of Islam such as Ibn al-'Arabi or al-Ghazzali. It suggests primitive folk religion replete with amulets, exotic ceremonies, and semi-literate "holy men." The confusion is unavoidable. Sufism has always contained both elements—a sophisticated intellectualism within the framework of esoteric doctrines as well as the crude manifestations of popular religion.

The problem of presenting a balanced interpretation is even more difficult today because many Muslim intellectuals now regard Sufism and the brotherhoods with the same condescension that men of the eighteenth century Enlightenment in Europe reserved for the Middle Ages. Such a view is the legacy of the Wahhabiya and Salafiya movements, for in modern times puritanical reformism within Sunni Islam has radically changed the venerable medieval adjustment between orthodoxy and mysticism, between the learned legal tradition under the guardianship of the 'ulama and the illuminist tendencies associated with Sufism.

Husaynid Tunisia in the early nineteenth century was still living in the period of accommodation between orthodoxy and mysticism. Both 'ulama and people accepted the idea of intercession between certain individual believers and Allah, and it ap-

peared perfectly consistent that such persons—or "saints"—should receive special veneration. Even after their death, what could be more normal than that the believer would want to offer prayers at their tombs? A prayer was more likely to be heard by the Deity if transmitted through the channel of a person whom He had singled out for His special favor. Both 'ulama and people also believed that God could and did intervene to change the normal order of events in this world.[70]

God was not the transcendent deity of the post-Enlightenment West. He was immanent and His ways were inscrutable. He might work through an ignorant peasant or even a madman, man or woman. The believer should approach the possibility—indeed the likelihood—of divine intervention in daily life with a sense of awe.

With this attitude of mind, institutionalized mysticism could hardly be dismissed as heterodox. The attempt to understand God's will through the mystical ritual (*dhikr*) of a religious brotherhood was not in conflict with the formal requirements of Islamic law (*shari'a*). It was simply another and complementary manner in which finite man attempted to establish a proper relationship with his God.

Most members of the 'ulama class looked with a favorable eye upon Sufism and were themselves members of one or more brotherhoods. Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi, for example, was a leading member of the Tijaniya brotherhood and largely responsible for its rapid growth in Tunisia.[71]

Only the disapproval of the 'ulama class might have dampened the people's ardent will to believe in miracles and to seek refuge with saintly men and women who possessed the power of inter-

[70] A Wahhabi letter appealing to other Muslims had reached the beylik, and Hamuda Bey summoned the 'ulama to write an appropriate response as guidance to the people. The reply shows that the Tunisian 'ulama were unimpressed by the Wahhabi theological arguments, were scandalized by the sack of the Holy Cities (in 1804 and 1806) and rejected a doctrine authorizing warfare against fellow Muslims. Bin Diyaf, 3: 60-75.

[71] See Jamil Abu-Nasr, *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World* (London: Oxford University Press, 1965), pp. 82-83. Note also the highly critical account of al-Riyahi's adherence to the Tijaniya to be found in Muhammad al-Bahlawi al-Niyal, *Al-Haqiqa al-Tarikhiya lil-tasawwuf al-Islami* (Tunis, 1965), pp. 329-333 (which relies ultimately on Muhammad al-Sanusi, *Musamarat al-Ta'rif*), where it is suggested that al-Riyahi embraced the new brotherhood for prestige and worldly gain.

vention with the Deity (*baraka*). Given approval by the 'ulama, the full institutional organization of Islamic mysticism was assured. Virtually every Tunisian Muslim had his saint, usually the shaykh of an Islamic brotherhood. Brotherhoods were one of the great levelling agencies of Tunisian society, for in a brotherhood dhikr, the bey and his lowliest subject, the rich man and the poor, were on the same plane.

At the same time, the egalitarian aspect of brotherhood organization must not be exaggerated. The normal human tendency for persons of similar background and social standing to band together was always in effect. The urban bourgeoisie were usually to be found in certain brotherhoods, the peasants in others. The learned man felt more at home in a brotherhood which offered a sophisticated doctrine and which, in transcending state boundaries, was more thoroughly in the mainstream of Sunni Muslim universalism. Such a man might be drawn to the Shadhliya, Qadiriya or—beginning in the nineteenth century—the Tijaniya brotherhoods. A provincial man of no formal education might prefer venerating a local figure whose piety or whose reported miracles attested to his saintliness and his baraka.

The beys themselves helped maintain the importance of the saints and the brotherhoods. Most of the beys belonged to a brotherhood. Ahmad Bey was an active member of the Shadhiliya. When the shaykh of the Shadhiliya brotherhood, al-Shadhili bin al-Muaddib, died in 1847, Ahmad Bey was among those carrying his coffin in the funeral procession "just as any other member of the brotherhood."[72] Ahmad also visited the tomb of the brotherhood's founder (Sidi Abu al-Hasan Ali al-Shadhili, locally known as Sidi Bel Hasan, d. 1258), before leaving on his state visit to Paris and upon returning safely to Tunisia.[73]

The beys respected the tradition that made many zawiyas inviolate asylums for fugitives from justice, and many beys built tombs or zawiyas for their favorite saints. Mahmud Bey, for example, was remembered for renovating the tombs of many saints. His successor, Husayn, built the zawiya for Sidi Muhammad al-Bashir, and Ahmad's father, Mustafa Bey, built a tomb and dome in honor of the possessed (*majdhub*) saint, al-Sayyid Hasan bin Maskat.[74] The registers of treasury expenses for the years be-

[72] Bin Diyaf, 4: 112.

[73] Bin Diyaf, 4: 96 and 111.

[74] Al-Baji al-Mas'udi, pp. 142, 144 and 145; Bin Diyaf, Biography 165.

tween 1252 and 1258 (1836-1842) even reveal a modest monthly stipend to four Sufi shaykhs.[75]

As a result of this consideration granted them by the state, many of the saints and brotherhood leaders acquired political importance. Since the powers of baraka were believed usually to be passed on from father to son, certain families—or in some cases even parts of tribes (as the Awlad Sidi Talil)[76]—continued to enjoy political power. They might serve as advisers to tribal shaykhs, qaids, or even the beys, themselves. Often they acted as intermediaries between governmental authority and the people.

The potential political importance of a saint or Sufi shaykh is illustrated by the life of Muhammad al-Bashir.[77] This man, born in the Algerian Kabylia, came to Tunis to study and remained to teach. Later he went into religious retreat and soon achieved fame as a saint. Mahmud Bey sent his two sons, Husayn Bey and Mustafa Bey, to study under him, and Mahmud himself visited the saint on important occasions, as before leaving on the mahalla. Muhammad al-Bashir, a Berber Zwawa, became the patron saint of the Zouaves. It was legendary that if any Zouave swore by Sidi Bashir, he would keep his word. Sidi Bashir died in 1827 and was succeeded as leader of the zawiya by a nephew. In the late 1860s, Bin Diyaf could write, "To this day they [the Zouaves] seek baraka in his clothing and rosary."[78] The beys understandably courted the man (and his successors) who commanded the religious fealty of such an important part of the army.

The activist Sufi shaykh is well illustrated by Mustafa bin 'Azuz (d. 1866) of the well-known Sufi family with a parent zawiya in Biskra (Algeria). He was instrumental in spreading the Rahmaniya brotherhood in Tunisia, had a great reputation in the

[75] These were Ali b. Ziyad (four piastres per month), Mahraz b. Khalf, Ali 'Azuz, and Muhammad bu [*sic*] Hadid, all receiving eight piastres per month. AGT Registers 453, 463 and 470. Since these years span the reigns of Mustafa Bey and Ahmad Bey, these may have been customary grants in existence for many years. Mahraz b. Khalf was a descendant of the celebrated Sidi Mahraz (Abu Muhammad Mahraz al-Saddiqi, 340-413/951-1022), honored as the patron saint of Tunis. An Ali 'Azuz (d. 1122/1710-1711) founded a zawiya in Zaghouan. See al-Niyal, pp. 182-185 and p. 298; and Bin Diyaf, Biographies 96, 97 and 211.

[76] Cf. Henri Duveyrier, *La Tunisie* (Paris, 1881), p. 101.

[77] Husayn Bey built him a zawiya. Bin Diyaf, Biography 165. See also above, p. 139.

[78] Bin Diyaf, Biography 165.

western regions of the beylik, was well regarded by Ahmad Bey, and in the last years of his life played a leading role in putting down the 1864 revolt. Bin Diyaf, hardly naive politically, viewed Mustafa bin 'Azuz essentially as a religious figure with slight political influence. "There is," Bin Diyaf observed, "no severity in his brotherhood except for whoever wants to become completely absorbed in Sufi practices and seclusion. He commands the people to carry out the obligation of prayer and to say 'There is no God but God' whenever possible." Yet to the French consular authorities Mustafa bin 'Azuz was one of the most active agents sending contraband gunpowder into Algeria.[79] There is no reason to doubt either appraisal of Mustafa bin 'Azuz. In the context of Husaynid Tunisia these religious and secular activities by a regional Sufi leader were not viewed as discordant.

The beys were respectful of the moral influence, so readily convertible into political power, held by the saints and brotherhood leaders, and they showed them deference and special consideration. There were limits though, and when necessary the saints and Sufi leaders were, just as the 'ulama class, treated as subjects who must be made to realize where political sovereignty resided. In 1837, for example, Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' organized a military expedition to put down the revolt led by a zawiya shaykh. The considerable political power this shaykh had previously exercised by virtue of his friendship with 'Allalah, half-brother of Husayn Bey and Mustafa Bey, had been lost with the rise of Shakir. In irritation, he led other dissident elements into revolt. The revolt was crushed with no special consideration shown for his Sufi calling.[80]

The beys also used their power to appoint zawiya shaykhs as an instrument of political control. If a certain zawiya shaykh became too obstreperous it was not difficult to find a rival member of the same family who would assume the job. The bey obviously could not destroy the real personal power of a Sufi religious leader by an official decree appointing someone else, but often the question of who possessed commanding moral authority within a brotherhood or at a single zawiya was not clear-cut. In such cases, the bey's ability to grant or withhold legal recognition,

[79] Bin Diyaf, Biography 370; B. Slama, *L'Insurrection de 1864 en Tunisie*, passim (Tunis, 1967); report of Élève-Consul Tessot, AE Tunis (Memoires et Documents) 8, May 1853.

[80] Bin Diyaf, 3: 217.

with which went the right to collect and dispense the monies paid into the brotherhood or zawiya, was sufficient to assure compliance.

Even a most un-Machiavellian bey, desiring nothing more than to leave the brotherhoods free to engage in their religious activities, would be dragged willy-nilly into the politics of zawiya leadership. A document in the Tunisian archives drawn up during the reign of Muhammad al-Sadiq (1859-1882) sets out the conflicting claims of two families to the rights over the zawiya of a certain Sidi 'Umar b. Hijla. Each family's claims are buttressed by beylical decrees going back to the reign of Ali b. Husayn (1759-1782). Probably the document was drafted by a katib at Bardo as a succinct brief to help the bey decide this case of a zawiya about which apparently neither he nor his predecessors were especially well-informed nor even overly interested—as long as they did not disturb the peace.[81]

The legalistic orthodoxy represented by the 'ulama and the illuminist doctrines of Sufism could also achieve a working accommodation in Husaynid Tunisia because there was a marked tendency for the two elements to be espoused by the same religious figures. Most of the 'ulama were members of a brotherhood, and several (e.g., Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi) played an active role in spreading the doctrines and increasing the membership in one or another of the brotherhoods. In some cases it is meaningless to classify a religious figure as a Sufi leader rather than a member of the 'ulama class (or vice-versa). A good example was a certain Ali al-Nuri (d. 118/1706-1707), who had studied in Tunis and Cairo before returning to his home town of Sfax, where he "founded a madrasa for students and a zawiya for *murids* ("disciples of a Sufi order") from which sprang a great number of both the 'ulama and the brotherhood leaders of the Sahil."[82]

There were always individual Muslims, often with little or no formal religious training, who became recognized as possessing baraka. Such persons might collect a faithful following and perhaps found a zawiya, thus beginning the process of creating a new brotherhood in their own lifetime. Or perhaps the zawiya

[81] AGT Dossier 987, Cahier 81 bis (Decrees nominating zawiya shaykhs). This dossier, containing several score decrees for the period of the early and mid-nineteenth century, is tantalizingly incomplete.

[82] Al-Niyal, p. 319.

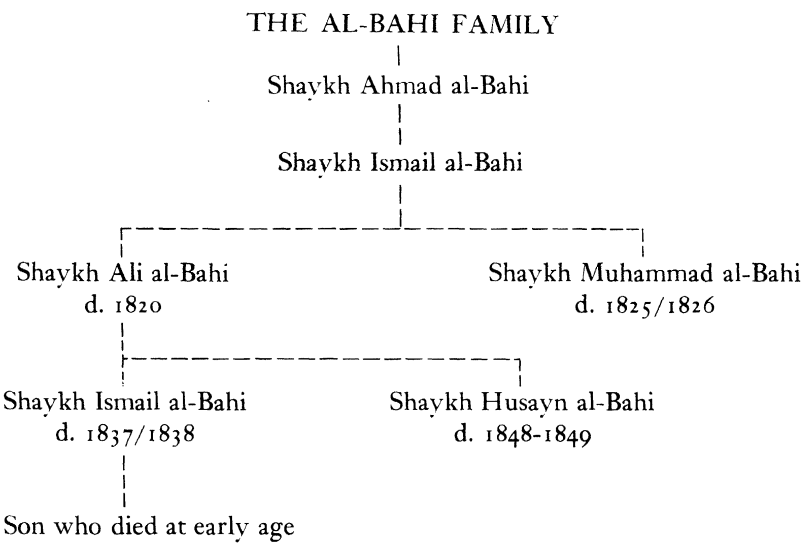
would be created around the saint's tomb following his death. To this extent, the spontaneity of mystical leadership would seem to be clearly distinguishable from the formal training required to achieve standing in the ranks of 'ulama. Even in such cases the apparent distinction between Sufi and 'alim evaporates as one follows the careers of zawiya founders' descendants. They often received the formal education of an 'alim before returning to assume leadership of the family zawiya. Nothing could have been more natural. The family zawiya usually served as a school in addition to a meeting place for mystical exercises. The prestige of the zawiya was enhanced to the extent that it offered a more impressive formal education.

Also, the descendant's claim to have inherited the saintly founder's baraka was always subject to the pragmatic test. He might not be as mystically inclined as his ancestor. His personality could well be different. His claim to a share of the original saintliness, and thus to the devoted loyalty of the zawiya disciples, could only be strengthened by the rigorous formal training of the 'ulama class. In Weberian terms the routinization of the baraka in a saintly family was thus assured, and at the same time the possibility of institutional rivalry among the 'ulama class and the zawiya leadership was largely avoided. The celebrated al-Bahi family illustrates this tendency at work. (See Chart 5.)

The al-Bahi family traced its genealogy back to the Prophet Muhammad. The founder of the family zawiya in Tunis, Shaykh Ahmad al-Bahi lived in the first half of the eighteenth century. He was venerated by the people of Tunis, believed able to perform miracles (*dhu kiramat*), and at the time Bin Diyaf was writing, in the 1860s, people still sought baraka at his tomb. The extent of his formal education is unknown, and it may well have been scant.

His son, Ismail, was sent to study in Djerba for nine years at the zawiya of the Saint Ibrahim al-Jumni. Then he returned to teach in his father's zawiya in Tunis. Thus far the Sufi tendency clearly overshadowed all else, for Shaykh Ahmad al-Bahi, living in Tunis where the best institution of orthodox higher Islamic studies in North Africa—Zitouna—was located, chose to send his son to be educated at the foot of another Sufi saint. Ismail's son, Ali, studied "the essentials" (*ma la budda minhu*) under his father. Ali's younger brother, Muhammad al-Bahi, however, received a

Chart 1



Source: Bin Diyaf Biographies 124, 151, 231, 288.

rigorous formal education under the leading 'ulama of the day. In the next generation, Ali's two sons, Husayn and Ismail, both received the same thorough education which qualified them to join the ranks of the 'ulama. The zawiya remained in the hands of the family with leadership passing in succession to the eldest lineal male descendant. It was still a zawiya in the customary mystical sense of the term, just as the al-Bahi remained a saintly family, but they were also now an 'ulama family, even marrying into other old 'ulama families. (Husayn al-Bahi married the daughter of his teacher Muhammad al-Bahri b. Abd al-Sattar.)[83] The al-Mahrizi and al-Talili families showed a similar development.[84]

An indication of this tendency for Sufi and saintly families to join the ranks of the 'ulama can be seen in the twenty biographies given by Bin Diyaf[85] of persons who can be *primarily* identi-

[83] Bin Diyaf, Biography 288. See also, for the al-Bahi family, Bin Diyaf, Biographies 124, 161 and 231.

[84] See especially Bin Diyaf, Biography 321 (Khalf al-Mahrizi) and 253 (Muhammad al-Shafi'i al-Talili).

[85] These concern those persons who died between 1814 and 1872—the same time period used in analyzing the political class and the 'ulama.

fied as saints or Sufis (thus excluding those already included on the 'ulama list who had strong connections with Sufism).[86] Of the twenty who fit into this classification, ten can clearly be qualified as 'ulama also. Others might have had an education equivalent to that of the 'ulama class, but Bin Diyaf is silent on the matter.

Only two clearly did not have such formal educational background. One, Sulayman al-'Arusi, was a descendant of the famous saint, Sidi Ahmad b. 'Arus (d. 868/1463), and Bin Diyaf notes tersely that the only respect and glory accorded to him was "derived from the baraka of his ancestor."[87] The other, Ali al-Mazaghini, was a tribal shaykh, and perhaps he should not be classified as *primarily* Sufi or saint. He was believed to have the miraculous power of prophecy, and he deserves mention in this category if only as a good example of how it was believed that anyone, regardless of background or formal training, might be granted supernatural powers.[88]

The mystical aspects of Sunni Islam were thoroughly and smoothly integrated into the fabric of life in Husaynid Tunisia. The Sufis and saints were part of the religious establishment, and there were no appreciable institutional or ideological disputes dividing them from the 'ulama, for often the same persons filled both roles.[89] Virtually every Muslim Tunisian belonged to a zawiya, and the influence of the Sufis and saints was undoubtedly pervasive. European literature on Islamic society has often stressed the explosive potential for insurrection and revolutionary violence

[86] Reference to 'ulama closely linked with Sufism may be found in Bin Diyaf, Biographies 92, 309, 313 and 321. This classification into separate lists of 'ulama and Sufis is at times arbitrary. For example, Shaykh Muhammad 'Abbas (Bin Diyaf, Biography 309) studied under all the major 'ulama of Tunis, was deemed one of the leaders of the Hanafi rite in Tunisia, and became imam of al-Qasba mosque. Yet, according to Bin Diyaf, "It was said that he had power over the spirits (*yatasarrafu fi al-jann*), and people sought him out to obtain his baraka for various purposes, to cure their illnesses, and for expiatory deeds."

[87] Bin Diyaf, Biography 175.

[88] Bin Diyaf, Biography 247. The term used is al-kiramat mulawwana bil-maqamat, but all the kiramat cited are those of prophecy.

[89] Only one reference noted in Bin Diyaf's long chronicle prefigures what might be called the salafiya position. Shaykh Muhammad bin al-Tahir bin Mas'ud once insisted to the young Bin Diyaf, who wanted to study mysticism with him, that only 'ilm was the proper tariqa. Bin Diyaf, Biography 101.

likely to be unleashed by some God-intoxicated provincial mystic, and the difficulties encountered by European colonial administrations in Muslim hands suffice to explain this viewpoint. In times of stress, social breakdown, or foreign threat, any resistance in a still largely theocentric society would likely take on religious coloration, led not by the urbanized judge or teacher but by someone more in the visionary or messianic tradition. Who would be more likely to dream dreams or see visions than an activist thoroughly indoctrinated with Sufi illuminist doctrines? This is all logical and consistent with what has often happened in Sunni Islamic society—especially, one might add, in North Africa—but it does not describe at all the pattern of what *actually* happened in Tunisia during the early and middle years of the nineteenth century.

Instead, Sufis and saints fitted into the overall religious institution and played an important role in socializing the Muslim masses and mediating among discrete parts of society and between society and the state. Rather than rallying the several parts of Tunisian society into a new working synthesis to meet the challenge of a new world, the Sufis and saints helped preserve the existing balance of stability-in-stagnation that characterized Husaynid Tunisia.

V

. . . And the Ruled

The Husaynids ruled over perhaps one to one and a half million persons, at most. An estimated two-thirds to three-fourths were sedentary, the remainder nomadic.[1] Even by the standards of the day, before the great world-wide population explosion, this was a a small population. In terms both of people and of land Tunisia was of modest size. The area under Husaynid political control—with all due reservations about the nebulous nature of the southern boundary—was perhaps 48,000 square miles, roughly the size of Louisiana.

With a small population, a territory of manageable size, most of which was easily accessible from the capital, Husaynid Tunisia was also, by comparison with the lands of Mediterranean Islam, a uniform country. Virtually the entire country was Arabic-speaking. Only a handful of Berber speakers remained in the extreme south and in a few isolated pockets to the west. Since the sixteenth century, immigration had brought in several thousand "Turks" and Andalusian Muslims fleeing the Spanish Reconquista.[2] Both of these groups were Sunni Muslims, the Andalusians were Arabic-speaking as well, and the Arabization of the Turkish speakers had been achieved for all practical purposes by the turn of the nineteenth century.

There was no native Christian population and there had not been for centuries. The Jews, mainly to be found in Tunis and the island of Djerba with small communities in the other towns and larger villages, accounted for perhaps 2 to 4 percent of the

[1] A general statement on population estimates for this period is to be found in Appendix III.

[2] From the Christian capture of Seville in 1248 until 1609 a continuous but modest stream of emigration brought perhaps a total of 100,000 Spanish Muslims to Tunisia. After 1609 (expulsion of the Moriscos) a mass exodus brought larger numbers. Almost 80,000 are estimated to have arrived in a single year. See Abd al-Wahhab, "Coup d'oeil général sur les apports ethniques étrangers en Tunisie."

total population.[3] The Jews were the one group of Tunisian subjects who, consistent with the existing religiously inspired mores, could not be completely integrated into Tunisian polity and society. They lived in their own ghettos (*haras*), had their own qaids, were judged by their own religious law, and as non-Muslims experienced both official (sumptuary laws, etc.) and informal acts of discrimination.

The only Muslim element in the population subject to discrimination tending to keep them at the lower social and economic rungs of society were the Negroes, to be found scattered in small numbers throughout the towns and villages of Tunisia and in somewhat greater relative density in the Southern Djerid region.[4] In virtually all cases, the Negro arrived in Tunisia as a slave brought by the great caravans that plied their way across the Sahara to the Sudan. Prejudice against the Negro, linked to his servile status, undoubtedly existed, but it was in no way as deep-seated nor as institutionalized as in the Americas. Observers were unanimous in describing the horrors of the caravan journey bringing slaves from central Africa northward, but once arrived in Tunisia (as in other parts of Northern Africa) they were integrated into a form of household rather than plantation slavery. The master-slave relationship was usually more intimate and less onerous than that of the cotton or sugar fields in the southern United States or the Caribbean. The offspring of concubinage were free. Little stigma attached to miscegenation, and many slaves were emancipated by their masters as a reward for faithful service. Nevertheless, slavery affected only Negroes (the mam-

[3] See Ganiage, *Origines*, pp. 152-161.

[4] L. Valensi suggests as few as 6 to 7,000 slaves or descendants of slaves in 1861. See her "Esclaves chrétiens et esclaves noirs à Tunis au XVIII siècle," *Annales Economies Sociétés Civilisations* 4, November-December 1967, p. 1278, and the map on p. 1286. This is a figure extrapolated from the medjba tax returns. See also Ganiage, "La Population de la Tunisie vers 1860," *Etudes Maghrébines: Mélanges Charles-André Julien* (Paris, 1964). This may be a low estimate for the total proportion of Blacks absorbed into the Tunisian population. For example, in modern times it has been estimated that Blacks account for one-fourth of the population in the Djerid (Robert Capot-Rey, *Le Sahara français* [Paris, 1953], pp. 167 ff.), and there seems to have been no great population movement since the early nineteenth century to explain this relatively high percentage. Possibly, the estimates derived from the medjba tax returns are too low because they overlook mulattoes and those sufficiently integrated to be no longer classified separately.

luk system, for alien whites brought when young into Tunisia, was so different in its aims and results as to be classified separately), and the black man was accordingly disadvantaged.[5]

For all its uniformity and cohesion by comparison with most countries in the Muslim Mediterranean, Tunisia was quite different from the modern democratic ideal of an integrated, open society with considerable social and geographical mobility. Tunisia in the early nineteenth century was a thoroughly segmented society completely in the tradition of the Mediterranean Islamic culture to which it belonged. Very few social or political institutions transcended the smaller units of family, clan, tribe, guild, or village. The state was not an instrument for social integration, or to use modern Western terminology, the state was not the political and legal expression of the nation. The religious institution came closest to filling this role of social integration, but with the several limitations described in the previous chapter.

[5] That Tunisia was far from "color-blind" can be seen in the story of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi"s attempt to recruit a Nizami army corps from freed Blacks. Bin Diyaf, 3: 207-208, describes the incident as follows:

"In the year 1252 (1836-1837) the minister Shakir proposed filling the ranks of the Nizami army with freed Blacks. The bey approved the idea, and immediately the minister ordered General Salim to recruit 1,000 men from among the freed Blacks. However, he did not give orders about how they were to be gathered nor the timing, and the general chose a means of his own creation. He went to the barracks of the capital, assembled the soldiers, ordered them to patrol the city and its environs, and to bring him every black-skinned man whether free or slave, whether Waraqli, Hamruni or Fezzani (the first two would indicate from southern Tunisia, the latter from the Fezzan region of southern Libya). The soldiers brought back some of the Hambas and doormen. They even came back with the bey's groom. The general placed everyone they brought back into the barracks, even the mukhazaniya whom he recognized, explaining to them 'If I let you free now, they would only bring you back again.' They went out to Mannuba (near Tunis beyond Bardo) and elsewhere. They went to the bey's gardens and other places whence they returned with slaves and servants. They created such a tumult in the city that many shops were closed. . . ." The soldiers had managed even to pick up a servant of the French consul. In the end, all were released. Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' was sent to the barracks where they were being kept "like herds of cattle." The general, when asked to explain himself, argued that such was the only way. Once all the Blacks were gathered, he could then distinguish between free and slave. Random insights on race relations in Husaynid Tunisia may be gleaned from the many sources, but the interpretative synthesis awaits its author. For example, a Sudanese shaykh visiting Tunis resented what he deemed a slight because of his color. Bin Diyaf, 3: 124-125. See also pp. 164-165.

The Andalusians who had immigrated to Tunisia, although Arabic-speaking Muslims, were not quickly absorbed and lost in the mass of Tunisian society. Rather, they formed a separate quarter in Tunis and created new villages elsewhere—such as Soliman, Testour, Galaat el Andeleus. The manufacture of shashiyas (the distinctive Tunisian red fez which found such a receptive market in both North Africa and the Levant) was largely in their hands. Jews not only had their own quarters but were concentrated in certain trades and professions such as money-lending and tailoring. The stevedores and porters of Tunis all came from the same area in southern Tunisia. Djerbans, just as they have continued to do to this day, monopolized the retail grocery trade.

The most distinctive classification of all was that dividing the townfolk, the sedentary rural population, and the nomads. The townfolk were so distinctive in the eyes of most European observers at the time that they were given a separate name. They were called Moors, as distinguished from the Arabs of the countryside and from the separate governmental class of Turks and mamluks. This was not simply the exaggerated distortion of the outsider who has not understood a culture different from his own. The native Tunisians also clearly differentiated the urbanite (*baladi*, vulg. *baldi*, meaning *inter alia*, "one from the town or city") from the countryman or the nomad, for his way of life and even his mannerisms were different.

The quintessence of Islamic urban culture in Tunisia was to be found in the capital and largest city, Tunis. A general description of Tunis would offer no surprises to anyone who has read of Mediterranean Islamic cities as they existed before modern times, or who has strolled through any of the still largely unchanged traditional sectors of present-day cities in that part of the world. The outer wall of the city with its several gates, all closed and locked at night, was not strong enough, or even sufficiently well maintained, to withstand any military challenge, but it did serve as a tangible symbol of the separation between the city and the surrounding countryside. Within these walls narrow, winding streets tied together a city which would probably impress the modern observer first by its apparent formlessness, inefficiency, and disorder. A closer examination would reveal, on the contrary, a logical city plan, itself a centuries-old group response to the requirements of urban life and Islamic moral and aesthetic values.

The narrow streets usually provided at their widest just enough room for two fully laden donkeys to pass, but the economic life was organized in a way that eliminated the need to bring heavy or bulky commodities into the heart of the city. The venerable Zitouna Mosque was situated at roughly the city's center, and around it could be found the suqs ("bazaars" or "markets") of the perfumers, gold- and silversmiths, book dealers, tailors, cloth merchants, and merchants in the prestigious shashiya trade. None of these trades or professions posed a problem of transport. Everything required could easily be carried by porters. Nor did these occupations provide any clamour or unpleasant odors to disturb the peace of Zitouna and environs.

The blacksmiths, carpenters, leatherworkers, and butchers were to be found in other quarters, usually close to the city wall where the unavoidable noise and smells of their trades were least disturbing. Caravansaries for traders coming from the interior or from abroad were also located close to the city walls at areas where fully laden camels or donkeys could be accommodated without disrupting the daily routine of the inner city. The rural people sold their produce in the open air markets outside the city walls and thereby secured the money to purchase what they required of goods and services from the city.

The city had no parks, no broad thoroughfares for triumphal marches or other demonstrations, no amphitheatres for sports or public meetings, and no statues commemorating heroic figures. Men could come together in the mosques, zawiyas, or coffee houses. As for the women, approved social contacts outside the home were almost nil, but they could convert the customary privilege to venture out without male escort in order to visit a saint's tomb or the cemetery (always beyond the walls) into a social gathering with other female friends.

In both work and play the resident of Tunis remained by preference within the confines of intimate social groupings. The architecture of the typical Muslim home revealed an effort to satisfy this ideal. A bleak, windowless wall was all that was presented to the outside world. The main door opened upon a small hall and from there a door at a right angle to the main entrance led to the interior. With this arrangement no casual passer-by could steal a glance at the inner life of the house, and the visitor who did not belong to the intimate family group could be received in the hall or kept waiting there until those within knew



4. Sketch entitled "un bazar à Tunis" showing seventeenth century Hanafi mosque with octagonal minaret in foreground and earlier Maliki mosque (Hafsid period) with square minaret in background. From Amable Crapelet, "Voyage a Tunis" in *Le Tour du monde: Nouveau journal de voyages*, Paris, 1859.



5. A coffeehouse in La Marsa, seaside suburb of Tunis. From Amable Crapelet, "Voyage a Tunis" in *Le Tour du monde: Nouveau journal de voyages*, Paris, 1859.

of his presence. The rigorous requirements of female seclusion influenced the architecture, but more than this was involved. The baldi head of family preferred to bar himself from either the emulation or the envy of the outside world.

The beys and leading officials at court built imposing palaces, but then, in the eyes of the baldiya the governors were a class apart, and this was reflected in the topography of the city. Government was quartered in its own special section of the city—the Qasba. The bey himself and his principal officers were even further removed, at Bardo, some two miles beyond the city walls. Each night the beylical apparatus literally withdrew from the city which was left to govern itself. This worked well because the loosely connected small social units which made up the city of Tunis were accustomed to doing just that all the time.

Within the city walls each trade or craft was grouped together, for this was the most convenient and logical way to organize the economy along guild lines. Each trade or craft had its own leader (*amin*) responsible for establishing uniform standards, overseeing the apprentice system, and settling disputes. Questions involving more than one guild could be referred to the Commercial Council (*Majlis al-Hukm al-Matjari*). Unfortunately, very little information seems to have survived concerning the precise workings of the guilds or of the Commercial Council. The council is known to have had ten members—it was occasionally referred to elliptically as the "ten important persons,"[6] including a president (*ra'is*), secretary, and eight others, each of whom was at the same time amin of one of the city's craft or trade guilds. The amin of the shashiya merchants was always president of the council, a clear recognition of the dominant position held by this trade in the commercial life of the country.[7]

The council had its own special headquarters near Bab al-Khadra. The existence of a fixed meeting place and a secretary[8] suggests that the council kept records and had clearly defined

[6] Al-'ashara al-kibar. Bin Diyaf, Biography 141, referring to Larbi Zarruq, who enjoyed mixing with the notables of the city such as "the ten important persons, the judges of the [Commercial] Council."

[7] Filippi (Monchicourt), p. 126.

[8] Bin Diyaf, Biography 308. The Turkish term for secretary—*yaziji*—survived into the nineteenth century, but significantly, in his biography of one council secretary, Muhammad Thabit (d. 1268/1851-52), Bin Diyaf felt obliged to explain that yaziji meant katib.

duties, not just vague consultative powers. It is not clear who appointed the ten council members, but probably the amins of certain important guilds possessed a prescriptive right to membership, just as the shashiya amin was always chosen as president.[9]

Probably neither the bey nor any of his subordinates (as the dey or the shaykh al-madina) attempted to interfere in the daily operations of the guilds or the Commercial Council, but there were undoubtedly strong ties with government. Muhammad Thabit held the position of council secretary when he was appointed shaykh of the Bab al-Manara suburb, and his son, 'Umar Thabit, who took his place as secretary, was later appointed (by Muhammad Bey 1855-1859) shaykh al-madina.[10] Indeed, the shaykh al-madina was often referred to informally as "amin of the amins."[11]

The amins of the guilds and *a fortiori* the Commercial Council belonged to that nebulous but important group often referred to in the sources as the notables (*a'yan*) or the special few (*al-khass*) as opposed to the mass (*al-'amm*). As such they were honored and consulted by the bey and his officials, but they were also held responsible when things went wrong in the area of their special responsibility. Linked to government in these informal ways, they remained, nevertheless, both in their own thinking and that of the government, a group apart.

This small group of notables, along with the 'ulama, preserved, just as they personified, the special Muslim bourgeois tradition of Tunis. They spoke for the baldiya, and in his heart the Tunis baldi knew that dynasties might come and go (if God willed, the Husaynids would some day meet the same fate as the Hafsids), but the good society would be maintained and passed on to the coming generation by their class.

[9] Aside from the clearly dominant role of the shashiya merchants there is little reliable data to indicate which were the more important or more prestigious guilds. A. Atger, in his brief survey, *Les Corporations tunisiennes* (Paris, 1909), lists the four most prestigious guilds as: (1) shashiya merchants, (2) perfumers, (3) saddle makers, and (4) silk weavers. Bayram V, 2: 127-129, lists the major crafts and trades of his times (just before the Protectorate) with very useful indications of which were then in a state of decline, but he offers no indication of their relative importance and prestige beyond singling out the shashiya merchants.

[10] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 308 and 391.

[11] See above, p. 123.

The baldiya ideal was an orderly, stable world which offered neither surprises nor rough edges to the individual Muslim. Everything conspired to make traditionally sanctioned behavior the most acceptable. Islam directed man's attention to the age of the Prophet and his pious companions, when the good society had been instituted. Things could never again be so perfect in this world, but it would surely help if the individual believer kept his attention focused on the golden age of the past. Also, the Islamic legal tradition—the shari'a was deemed to be all-encompassing and immutable[12]—indicated that the believer's task was to adjust himself to an already established pattern.

In a society possessing a well-defined social hierarchy and a pattern of approved behavior for every imaginable situation, the slightest deviation from established custom created ripples which reached all parts of the society, forcing people to evaluate this novelty and integrate it as best they could into the old order. This is just what the baldi sought to avoid. He did not want the challenge of new problems. He disliked the unknown. He did not seek to question the significance of things. He sought only to order his life in conformity with the existing pattern.

In this society sons respected their fathers. Even a mature man would rise in the presence of his father and not speak until spoken to.[13] Students deferred to their teachers. Old families were honored, and a special veneration was accorded the *ashraf* ("descendants of the Prophet Muhammad"). Guild members obeyed their amin.

The authority pattern governing relations between the sexes was even more rigorous. The wife completely effaced herself before her husband. She would have been living a sequestered life since puberty, fully covered and veiled when in the presence of men and having no real social contact with any males except for kin from the close circle whom it was taboo to marry.

[12] This was the theory, even though what can only be described as secular courts soon developed in Islamic society.

[13] Puckler-Muskau, 2: 280, in attending a formal audience of Mustafa Bey, reported that his son, Ahmad Bey, "sometimes presented his father's spectacles, to enable him to read a petition, and sometimes held him a silver basin to spit in, without seeming at all ashamed that the whole court should see him engaged in these menial offices." He added, "I have indeed often had occasion to remark the respectful manners of children towards their parents among all classes."

The marriage was legally a contract and its social significance is best seized if viewed as an alliance between two extended families (if not indeed marriage within the extended family with the union of first cousins). There was no courtship before marriage (the bride may not even have seen her husband) and no thought in the mind of either partner that a companionate marriage relationship would later develop. That the man might well be a full generation older than his bride also indicates the contractual and family-alliance nature of marriage. The legally approved system of polygyny, permitting any man up to four wives, and the ease with which a man could divorce his wife further underscored the dominant position of the husband.

Probably few men had more than one wife, and marriages may well have been as stable as in societies barring polygyny or easy divorce. Economic restraints—e.g., the obligation to return the *mahr* ("bride price")—sufficed to reduce the number who took advantage of easy divorce laws. Nevertheless, these laws, which *could* be used without social disapproval, reveal the subordinate position of the female. The woman expected to live her life in the shadow of her husband, with whom she might well have only the most limited contact.[14]

Respect and consideration was granted not so much to the individual but to age, sex, status, genealogy, and office, which usually befell the individual quite by accident. In granting certain persons this special measure of deference, the baldiya of Tunis were really showing their veneration for the total complex of traditions that made up their society. The individual so honored might increase his stature by especially meritorious acts just as he might forfeit all claims to respect through markedly egregious behavior, but the scope left to such individual enterprise was a narrow part of the total system which emphasized placing each person in his niche. A mastery of the rules was deemed the mark of a cultured

[14] There were exceptions. Bin Diyaf relates the poignant story of Mustafa Khoja on his death bed asking his wife, the daughter of Ali Bey, not to remarry so they could be together in heaven. Bin Diyaf, Biography 36. She did, however, subsequently marry Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi'. Bin Diyaf, Biography 98. In any case, this is an example drawn from the higher levels of the political class, not the baldiya. Perhaps, just as in Victorian society, the rigid rules governing marriage and sexual relations were observed most closely by the middle classes, with both the upper and lower classes showing a less formalized, more natural approach to the entire matter.

urbanite. The true baldi dressed as others dressed[15] and attempted to live as others in his class and station were expected to live.

A highly elaborate social code governing what is done and what is not done has characterized many societies, and it can take quite different forms. The medieval European nobility or the Spaniard of early modern times aspired to an ideal of chivalry that emphasized individual deeds of daring and self-endurance; the underlying values of the hunter and the warrior were clearly in evidence.[16]

The baldiya code, equally formalized and strict, produced radically different results. Its goal was moderation and, in the literal sense of the term, the avoidance of distinction. A baldi did not sing, eat, or in any other way call attention to himself while walking through the streets of Tunis. The sure mark of a hayseed was a man who conversed in a loud voice which could be overheard by passers-by. Among the leading notables it was even considered improper to be seen in public cafes.[17] They would by preference meet their friends at home. Fortitude and patience were highly prized. Individual acts of vengeance or overt resistance to constituted authority (even when that authority was clearly unjust) were viewed with more ambivalence. The ideal of the pious believer standing up to the evil prince is as venerable as Islam itself, but the baldi's strong preference for prudence and accommodation was usually enough to stay his hand. This was largely why he was content to leave government to others.

The baldiya attitude of mind produced several praiseworthy social virtues. The people of Tunis were very orderly. Crimes of violence or theft—even from open and unattended shops—were

[15] Bayram V, 2: 137, points out that the only difference in clothes between rich and poor was in the quality of material worn. Men seldom wore rings. They were deemed a mark of low quality, except among the top notables (i.e., political class).

[16] Thus, the Western concept of chivalry is comparable to the bedouin ideal which received its classic expression in pre-Islamic Arabic poetry—the sacrifice of all to avenge any slur, however slight, upon honor, the glories of the chase, the celebration of an idealized, unrequited love, great deeds against the enemy, etc.

[17] "To such extent that the notables do not have a public meeting place." Bayram V, 2: 116. The general interpretation in this section relies heavily on the excellent account given by Bayram V, 2: 115-120, entitled "Tunisian customs."

virtually unknown.[18] Although the nineteenth century European writings about Tunis (as about other parts of the Muslim world) are filled with vague references to Muslim fanaticism, the baldi actually seems to have been a fairly tolerant individual.

An English visitor to Tunis in 1845 noted, "In walking about the city, it is usual for the consuls or other Europeans to be accompanied by a dragoman attached to their consulate, who, with a sword by his side, a magnificent swagger in his gait, and a big stick, clears the way with little ceremony. In the suburbs and the outskirts, it is well to have a dragoman with you, but in the city, we usually dispensed with his attendance; and we never met with the slightest insult."[19]

During his stay in Tunisia a decade earlier, Temple had attended the funerals of the French consul-general and the English vice-consul. "Funeral processions," he reported, "composed of the other consuls and Christian inhabitants were formed, and proceeded in open day to the respective burial grounds, which are both at some considerable distance; the streets were lined with Turks, Moors and wild bedoueens; and yet, not only was there no necessity for a guard, but during the whole time I neither saw on their lips a smile of derision, nor heard a word of insult."[20]

[18] Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, pp. 13 and 16-17. Puckler-Muskau, 2: 189, observed, "If we do omit from consideration the wild Berber tribes, who do not belong to this nation, and who are engaged in regular war against all civilization, theft and murder are so rare, that they occur, in all these Mahometan countries taken together, less frequently than in London; and if one were to take also the dreadful list of crimes of this description in France and England, which fill half the newspapers, the comparison would be still more in favour of the Mahometans." Pellissier, *Description*, p. 322, also concluded that there was less crime among the Arabs in general than in Europe.

[19] Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, p. 43.

[20] Temple, *Excursion*, 2: 102. Earlier in the century, Frank, "Tunis," p. 93, spoke of possible insults or incidents; but these, he made clear, would likely come from soldiers or those not native to the city. To him, further, "of all the Barbary peoples the Tunisians are, in general, the most gentle and the most humane. . . ." In 1828, the French consul, de Lesseps sent home the son of a French merchant for getting into a street fight with the son of a mufti. This took place during Ramadan when tempers were expected to be taut. De Lesseps managed to calm the crowd with the help of the shaykh al-madina and others. Plantet, *Tunis*, 3, Document 1308, pp. 659-660. Note also the curious incident later (1850s) in which Captain Daumas, on service as military adviser to Ahmad Bey, dismounted in the streets of

There was a strong sense of Islamic solidarity. The baldi did identify with fellow Muslims everywhere in their struggles with non-Muslims, and he strongly deplored wars or struggle among Muslims. The political leadership was not necessarily the beneficiary of this sentiment. The baldi knew the long history of warfare between the deys of Algiers and the beys of Tunis, both Muslim regimes. He was aware of the struggles between the beys of Tunis and their nominal sovereign, the Ottoman sultan. He sensed that neither set his policy according to the needs of the greater Muslim umma. He knew of the tensions, capable of exploding at any time into open conflict, between nomad and sedentary, urban and rural, governor and governed.

He was a political pessimist. He did not believe in progress. When he saw something distasteful or improper while walking through the streets of his native Tunis, he was not provoked to mutter to himself that "there ought to be a law." He did not believe that men, working together, using their heads and their hearts, would manage to make things better. They would probably make things worse.

He was not a humanist. He did not put his faith in man. He placed his faith in the Law—God's command, the shari'a. Therefore, he gave alms to the poor not in the belief that if everyone followed his example poverty would be stamped out but rather because God had commanded that this be done. And surely it would have been the height of blasphemy to wonder what God intended to accomplish by such a law. Provided he followed the dictates of the shari'a, the baldi felt justified in his own conduct and reconciled to anything that might happen in this world.

The baldiya have been singled out from the many segmented groups that made up Tunisian society on the eve of Ahmad Bey's reign, since they are of greatest importance for an understanding of the political class. Ironically, the baldiya, with their ambivalent view of government, strongly influenced the Husaynid perception of the society it governed. The urban bias of government itself, the commanding position of the baldiya as social leaders in Tunis, and the close baldiya contact through education and inter-

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Tunis and whipped a Moor who allegedly insulted him. No one intervened. Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 13. This may demonstrate prudence, a desire not to get involved with government, or other motives, but in any case it hardly reveals a tendency to violence or fanaticism.

marriage with the two native groups involved in government (clerks and men of religion) made this possible.

Yet the impact of the baldiya was not that of a political force or a highly visible pressure group. Rather, the baldiya code of values—especially as it merged with that of the religious establishment—influenced the Husaynid notion of what was legitimate, what was "thinkable," in the realm of politics.

Governmental activity often bore more heavily on groups outside the cities, such as the peasants obliged to pay most of the taxes. The reformist efforts of Ahmad Bey would also hit the countryside with greater intensity—increased taxation plus ominous novelties such as conscription. The great masses outside of Tunis, however, could hardly express their grievances, even less insinuate their values into the Husaynid world-view. They were destined to become historically significant only at a later period.

* * *

The presentation of the baldiya, therefore, accomplishes the plan of Part One. The personnel and practice of government and the religious establishment have been presented in detail. The broad contours of Tunisian society have been sketched with a few more strokes provided for the baldiya. Husaynid Tunisia has been fixed in its appropriate Arabo-Muslim, Mediterranean, Ottoman setting. It has also been linked to that broader category—the precolonial, non-Western world on the eve of being buffeted about and broken by outside influences, then later put back together in quite different form. What was unique or distinctive about Husaynid Tunisia? Several points have been adumbrated in the earlier chapters.

Now, a more elusive and abstract task remains—to select from these diverse characteristics of different groups among the Tunisian political leadership, note the recurrence of common themes, and weigh the relative importance of traits that diverge, in order to offer, in brief, a recognizable portrait of Husaynid political culture.

The preference for order, stability, and continuity has already been largely explained—the religious value placed on a God-given, all-embracing Law, the penchant for looking back to a religiously sanctioned Golden Age, the legacy of political pessimism, the careful balance of numerous small groups juxtaposed

in a segmented society. Other things also conspired to keep Husaynid Tunisia in the even tenor of its way.

There had been no numerically important new immigration into Tunisia since the last great influx of Andalusian Muslims in the early seventeenth century. No new group tension comparable to Maronite incursions upon the Druze in Lebanon, the increase of Shi'ites in southern Iraq, or French colonization in Algeria disturbed the natural order. The townsman continued to scorn the countryman, the villager regarded the nomad with apprehension, the Jew, the Negro, the immigrant into town seeking work, all had their difficulties, all warily faced the government official—but these matters were constants. The pattern had long been fixed.

Nor did any great economic change intrude to upset the old ways. There was nothing comparable to the introduction of long-staple cotton and the opening of the Suez Canal in Egypt or the development of the silk trade in Lebanon. There was only the steady decline of economic power vis-à-vis a commercially more active and aggressive Europe. In the years immediately before and during the reign of Ahmad Bey there was no discernible population change.

No frontier beckoned to the Tunisian bored with his lot or down on his luck. Or, more precisely, there was no notion of such a frontier, for frontiers always exist. The Christian of Lebanon could seek his fortune in Egypt or Europe (later even more distant lands) just as the dispossessed or dissatisfied European might try again in America. Nothing equivalent existed in Husaynid Tunisia. An occasional tribesman, tiring of the rigors of nomadism might, as has been seen, settle in the towns. A few rural folk of modest origin might use religious careers to advance socially and settle in cities. Certain groups (as the Zwawa or the Djerbans) followed a well-defined pattern of temporary emigration from infertile homelands to work, put aside a few savings, and then return home. These conventional patterns hardly amounted to a society bristling with the friction of men and ideas on the move.

The absence of cataclysmic blows from outside to jar society out of its inertia was matched by the neat balance of the several segmented groups within. Why was the great mass of the people quiescent? Why were there no peasant jacqueries? Perhaps because the peasant, caught between the Scylla of tyrannical government and the Charybdis of anarchy which the nomad might

bring, saw no purpose in resistance. Then, too, the peasant was relatively leaderless.

One looks in vain for the Tunisian equivalent of a squirearchy living on their rural properties and defending the interests of the countryside in the capital. There were tribal leaders, several of whom were co-opted into the political class. There were also a few old families using provincial strength as a springboard to high position, but it is instructive to see where they drew their power from—Kairouan, Sfax, Djerba. The sources are silent concerning leadership from the Sahil, Cap Bon, the Medjerda valley. These were not regions plagued with political or social disintegration. Indeed, one of the most cohesive regions throughout Tunisia's history in Islamic times has been the Sahil, but no great leader speaking for the Sahil figures in Bin Diyaf's biographies nor did sons of the Sahilian countryside rise to prominence in Tunis or other parts of the country.[21]

The regions populated by a sedentary rural population were not lacking in village headmen but they kept themselves discreetly veiled from the government's (and thus in large measure from history's) searching eye. Oliver Goldsmith would not have found his "bold peasantry" in this society.

It has earlier been suggested that the 'ulama provided the one group capable of transcending the several barriers dividing, each from the other, a small, limited-purpose state and the many segmented groups making up society. Yet, the idea of the 'ulama as the integrating element in Husaynid society has a certain fugitive quality to it. Perhaps, it is more accurate to speak of the 'ulama as the baldiya at prayer. The 'ulama could often, as the religiously sanctioned conscience of the community, moderate governmental excess or private abuse, but the very fuzziness of their institutional arrangement precluded much more. How could elements of the society rally around an 'ulama whose members had no hierarchy save that granted and revocable by government, who chose to keep blurred their ambivalent ties to government, and who thought of themselves virtually as a single estate but, as it were, an occulted estate which preferred not to speak and act *ex officio*? A quiescent peasantry, a prudent bourgeoisie, a not-

[21] In striking contrast to the situation which has prevailed in the nationalist period and since independence.

quite-definable religious class, and a state that demanded little from its subjects combined in sluggish harmony.

Such a society was fearful of innovation. Bin Diyaf wrote of a fellow scribe marked "by Islamic simplicity," who even thought wearing the new Nizami uniforms was atheistic. When Bin Diyaf returned from his trip accompanying Ahmad Bey to Paris, this man carefully quizzed him to be sure that he had in no way wavered in his faith as a result of the baleful experience.[22] The man was probably not typical. The scant references in his brief biography seem to suggest a man who expressed his conservative reactions almost too openly, an extremist only waiting to be convinced by some leader that something could be done to stem the tide of change. Most Tunisians would have been more reticent. A certain *mesure*, an elaborate sensitivity to what is done and what is not done would have induced them to dissemble their disapproval and keep their own counsel. (The baldiya represented, of course, the fullest flowering of such restrained, patterned behavior, with the notoriously more outspoken tribesman at the other end of the spectrum.)

It is interesting to reflect on the fate of the innovator in a situation of this kind. He is not actively resisted. He may well meet formal compliance. The innovation is foisted upon society, or rather it takes its place in juxtaposition with the other components of the segmented society. It is thereby insulated, blocked out. In spite of formal acceptance it remains, in the most literal sense of the term, unthinkable.

Such an attitude of mind appears as the very opposite of the Promethean spirit.[23] Man was neither the measure of all things nor the master of his fate (both ideas being essentially blasphemous). The individual, standing alone, was of little importance. He became someone only in terms of groups and institutions to which he could properly relate—family, quarter, village, guild, brotherhood, tribe, or official position—and became a nobody when deprived of status in these groups. Man in Husaynid Tuni-

[22] Bin Diyaf, Biography 402.

[23] Significantly, the heroic genre of classical Arabic literature—best expressed in the epic poem (*qasida*)—is set in the bedouin environment. The urbanite could appreciate such literature (which he did and still does) but, given his ambivalent feelings toward the bedouin (seen as both heroic individualist and boor) and the radical difference separating the bedouin environment from his own, he did not allow this literature to influence his own daily life.

sia was more concerned with relating than achieving. Most of his energy was consumed in adjusting to an order of things, both natural and manmade, which gave little indication of being changeable. For this reason he was understandably fatalistic.

The whole pattern of life in Husaynid Tunisia—not some *sui generis* aspect of Sunni Islam—caused men to be fatalistic. The traditional Muslim did take thought for the morrow. He accepted the rudimentary, commonsense law of causality, the more refined lucubrations of Sunni theology to the contrary notwithstanding. He did not, however, expect to *insure* his future in this world. He was not overly surprised when his plans were dashed. Nor was he inclined to presume that some unanticipated good fortune could be attributed to his special merit, intelligence or industry. The attitude characterizing the traditional Christian "The Lord gives and the Lord takes away; blessed be the name of the Lord" fits equally well the traditional Muslim in Husaynid Tunisia.

Closely linked to this fatalism—the sense of man's finite creatureliness and his inability to control things during his allotted time in this world—was a mentality that the modern world would describe as superstitious. Men believed in miracles. They feared black magic. God, being omnipotent, could intervene at any time and through any instrumentality He in His wisdom might choose—a stone, a tree, a human being, even a madman. Such objects of God's special attention possessed baraka and they were to be venerated for their special relationship to God. Everywhere were to be found evil or mischievous spirits (*jinn*)[24] to be avoided or pacified by amulets and verbal incantations. The unlearned masses, convinced that the world was filled with baraka and jinn, often responded in ways that showed only the slightest patina of Islamic teaching. Yet there was no clear break between Islamic orthodoxy and pre-Islamic folklore at any point along the socio-economic (or educational) ladder in Husaynid society. The popular beliefs could always be Islamicized.

The 'ulama might deplore certain acts or beliefs which quite clearly violated the spirit of Islam as they interpreted it, but they also believed the world to be filled with baraka and jinn. Bin Diyaf, a cultured man *par excellence*, thoroughly familiar with the Islamic high tradition, records many miracles and acts of prophecy. These deeds and events are related without apology

[24] See "Djinn," SEI, for a general discussion of the place of jinn both in orthodox theology and in the folklore of the masses.

or mental reservation. In his mind, they are just as much a part of the real world as governmental decrees. He, himself, was taken while young by his father to visit several holy men to receive their baraka.[25] The baraka of many other figures is carefully reported. One was deemed capable of exorcising the jinn; many went to him for baraka.[26] A majdhub saint was believed to be so holy that even the water in which he had washed possessed baraka.[27] A great number of saints are cited for their ability to perform miracles.[28] Ali al-Ghazawi, shaykh of the Bardo madrasa, was well-versed in astrology.[29]

The account of how Husayn, the founder of the dynasty, came to have a son late in life reads like a Bible story. A pious man, sleeping by the tomb of a Shadhili saint in the hope that the baraka could cure him of an ailment, had a vision of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. The Prophet placed his hand on the man's affliction and he was immediately healed. When asked why he had appeared the Prophet replied, "We have come to congratulate Husayn bin Ali on this blessed slave girl. She will bear him two sons, one Muhammad and the other Ali. They will inherit his kingdom after him." The Prophet also foretold that the drought which prevailed at that time would end on the following Thursday. The pious man went to inform the bey. It did rain on Thursday. A few days later the bey's ship captured a Genoese ship; among the prisoners was a thirteen-year-old girl. She became the mother of Muhammad bin Husayn (1756-1759) and Ali Bey (1759-1782).[30]

A variant example of divine intervention has already been noted—Bin Diyaf's attributing the defeat at Navarino to the bey's having illegally executed two thieves on the very day the fleet set sail.[31]

All of these stories (and only those accepted by a man of the learned tradition, Bin Diyaf, have been mentioned) have one connecting thread—the emphasis on man's impotence.

Men in Husaynid Tunisia expected life to be harsh and arbitrary. With this view it is understandable that they could be politically quiescent in the face of governmental tyranny. The

[25] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 89 and 174.
[26] Bin Diyaf, Biography 309. [27] Bin Diyaf, 3: 145-146.
[28] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 244, 247, 285, 366 and 370.
[29] Bin Diyaf, Biography 186. [30] Bin Diyaf, 2: 97-98.
[31] See above, p. 143, n. 100.

occasional folly or cruelty of government was no more to be avoided—or explained—than droughts and epidemics, baraka and jinn. That was the way things were. One should hold to the old, established ways. Therein lay the best chance to avoid the unexpected and the dangerous. The arbitrary and the unexpected, whether natural or man-made, was, after all, intermittent. It was stronger than the individual and might well strike him down; but, God willing, the community would survive if only it persevered.

Such was the society that awaited Ahmad Bey in 1837.

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INTRODUCTION TO PART TWO

The study of the ruling elite and their links with Tunisian society, as set out in Part One, revealed a working political order that had evolved out of Tunisian experience. The resulting system was neither static (things *did* change) nor idyllic, but there was a definable, largely self-sufficient *system.* A logical pattern, comprehensible to the participants, governed the relations among the several parts. The historian could approach his subject with a wide angle lens.

In Part Two the focus of interest narrows to present in sharper detail a smaller cast of characters for the brief span of an eighteen-year reign. The narrative style, faithful to chronological sequence, is rejected, in order to get quickly beyond the question of what happened and probe more elusive matters.

The stark question "what happened?" is readily answered: a bey of Tunis with a handful of his followers began a great effort to emulate Europe, concentrating on military reforms. The endeavor brought in its wake innovations in the economy, in public administration, in patterns of relations between society and state (from conscription to emancipation of slaves), and—most important—in political ideology. Most of these plans seemed to fail, leaving little legacy. Yet the story of Tunisian history after the days of Ahmad Bey cries out that Ahmad and his contemporaries had managed to close the door on one epoch and haltingly cross the threshold of another.

How did a few persons from within the Tunisian political elite set in motion this process? How did they use the political machine described in Part One? What did they think they were up to? Which parts of the political apparatus were active in these events, and why? These are the questions to be considered in Part Two, and they dictate the approach chosen.

Chapter six brings together what can be reconstructed about Ahmad, the man. Then, the major figures in his retinue are presented. The aim is to indicate how this particular bey and his "team" adapted to and used the Tunisian political machine described in Part One.

Ahmad's frantic efforts at innovation make sense only if placed in the shadow of a lurking Europe. Chapter seven tells this story, emphasizing the Tunisian perception of their plight.

Chapter eight, on military reforms, is designed, rather more than other chapters, to detail what actually happened, but here too the purpose is to ponder why Ahmad and his followers chose this course and what legacy they left, rather than to fondle with unseemly *schadenfreude* the dismal details of failure.

Chapter nine shows how many seemingly unconnected events in Ahmad's career as ruling bey can be interpreted as his poignant efforts to secure membership in the European "club."

Chapter ten follows the basic plan of Part Two to emphasize individual actions, perceptions, and motives. The fiscal folly that brought to naught most of Ahmad's ambitious schemes is related through the career of a single official and his fateful tie to the ruling bey.

VI

Ahmad Bey

On October 10, 1837, Ahmad Bey became ruler of the beylik of Tunis. His father had died earlier that same day, and in accordance with custom, the important officials immediately gathered to offer the bay'a to the new bey. Just two months later he would observe his thirty-first birthday.

What little we know of the young Ahmad Bey before he became the tenth member of the Husaynid family to rule over Tunisia is largely confined to the years immediately preceding 1837, when he was beginning to assume responsibility and thus command public attention. Consistent with traditional Arabo-Muslim canons of biography, Bin Diyaf offers scant information about his childhood and adolescence. Still, scattered bits of evidence make possible a partial reconstruction of his early years.

His mother, as we have seen, was a slave girl of Sardinian origin, captured in a raid on the island of San Pietro in 1798, raised in the beylical palace, and later married to Ahmad's father. She may well have been a remarkable personality in her own right. She exerted a strong influence on Ahmad throughout his mature years. Before embarking on his state visit to France in 1846 Ahmad (then almost forty years old) sought his mother's approval and blessing.[1] It was his wish that his mother not be veiled before his chief ministers, for "she is my mother and yours." On holidays, Ahmad and his ministers would make a formal call on his mother. "Your sons of whom I am the oldest," he would announce, "have called upon you to extend their best wishes for the holiday."[2]

It is known that he had at least four sisters and a much younger brother, al-Amin (Lamine) born in 1825.[3] Growing up in Tunis as a member of the beylical family, he also had contact with his

[1] Bin Diyaf, 4: 93. [2] Bin Diyaf, 4: 177.

[3] Grandchamp, *Arbre généalogique de la famille Hassinite*, rpt. *Cahiers de Tunisie*, 49-52 (1965). Appendix I lists the marriages of Ahmad's sisters.

many relatives in the extended family. His cousins and successors, Muhammad Bey and Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey, were five and eight years his junior, respectively. His relations with them appear to have been good. The intimacy and complete mutual loyalty of the brothers Husayn Bey (1824-1835) and Mustafa Bey (1835-1837), Ahmad's uncle and father, seem to have set a pattern emulated by the sons of both.[4]

In his early years Ahmad probably felt secure and well-established within his own immediate family and the larger Husaynid family. Later, several events left him with the awareness that strange and terrible things could occur, even within the family, when political power is at issue.

Ahmad's father had his son receive the kind of education "circumstances required in those days."[5] Like every young Muslim boy, prince or peasant, he started his formal education by studying the Quran. When Ahmad was old enough to begin memorizing the Quran, Hamuda Bey (1782-1814) was in the last years of his long reign. Hamuda had chosen a learned shaykh, one Ahmad al-Sanan, to provide the young Husaynid boys and some of his mamluks their first training in the Quran. Ahmad joined the small, select group studying under this shaykh. He and the other students of Shaykh Ahmad al-Sanan were to look back on the experience with praise and gratitude.[6]

It is not quite clear how long Ahmad Bey studied under this man or what were the next steps in this formal education, but he learned to speak, and even to read a bit of Turkish. One can well question the intensity or effectiveness of this training in Turkish, for Ahmad was the first bey to write to the sultan in Arabic, pleading as excuse for this breach of protocol that he wanted to read and understand what he signed.[7]

Ahmad Bey also learned to speak, but not read, Italian, and if his schoolboy Turkish seems to have atrophied in later years (somewhat like the schoolboy Latin in our own culture) his Italian fared better. Through Italian, Ahmad was able to communicate directly with Europeans—diplomats, military advisers, businessmen, and distinguished guests. Ahmad's spoken knowl-

[4] See above, p. 39.

[5] Bin Diyaf, 4: 11.

[6] Bin Diyaf, 4: 11; Biography 168.

[7] His study of Turkish is mentioned in Bin Diyaf, 4: 11; the letter in Arabic to the Sultan, in Bin Diyaf, 4: 19. Discussion of the steadily declining use of Turkish in Husaynid Tunisia is found on pp. 46-47 and 67-68.

edge of Italian, albeit barely adequate, brought him in more direct contact with European modes and ideas. He thereby escaped, at least in part, the inevitable distortions that occur when strange, new ideas are filtered through third parties.[8]

Ahmad Bey also learned from Shaykh Muhammad Siyala, shaykh of the Bardo madrasa. Whether Shaykh Muhammad Siyala was Ahmad's teacher in the formal sense is not completely clear. Bin Diyaf mentions only that they used to spend evenings in informal discussions. Husayn Bey (1824-1835), who had brought the shaykh to Bardo, also enjoyed Siyala's company. By all indications the shaykh was a learned man who could express his thoughts in a meaningful but not overly tedious way to the bey and his immediate entourage. Muhammad Siyala was far from a typical member of the 'ulama class. He was well-versed in medicine and natural science. In addition, he had accompanied Muhammad Khoja on trips to London and other parts of Europe.[9]

For a man who might one day rule, a thorough training in the arts of the soldier-administrator was required. Much of this could

[8] Among the references to Ahmad's use of Italian are: Bin Diyaf, 4: 11, wrote that Ahmad "studied spoken Italian"; Vice-Consul Ancram mentioned that Ahmad understood a little French and Italian, FO 102/2, no. 26, 27 September 1838; Consul Schwebel reported that Ahmad Bey understood Italian and spoke some, AE Tunis (Politique) 3, no. 45, 11 October 1837; Capitaine X, *Promenade*, p. 162, stated that Ahmad spoke Italian, but incorrectly. (This author was a Swiss officer in service of the king of Two Sicilies. He was inclined to disparage everything Tunisian. He mentioned that Ahmad had a slight stammer.) Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, pp. 9-10, refers to the "slight hesitation" in Ahmad's speech and confirms his knowledge of Italian. Richardson, who visited Tunisia in 1845, also mentioned that Ahmad spoke Italian ". . . and is always ready to adapt himself as much as possible to European manners . . ." in his contacts with Europeans. *An Account of the Present State of Tunis*, 1845 ms in FO 102/29; and Marcel, "Tunis," p. 211, in referring to Ahmad's state visit to France and his formal call upon King Louis Philippe observed, "The knowledge that this prince had acquired of Italian, which he speaks with adequate facility, permitted him to converse uninterruptedly with the king without needing the interpreter who had been provided for this presentation." Note also the account of Bin Diyaf who was an eye-witness: "The king said, 'I am informed that you know Italian as do I. We have no need for an interpreter.' " Bin Diyaf, 4: 100.

[9] Bin Diyaf, Biography 189. Muhammad Khoja (d. 1846), longtime servant of the government since the time of Ali Bey (1759-1782), was especially concerned with naval affairs. His son, Mahmud, later replaced him as *amin al-tirsikhana* (roughly, Minister of the Navy). Bin Diyaf, Biographies 269 and 328.

be absorbed through his daily contacts at Bardo with mamluks (including those young mamluks his own age who were themselves in process of being prepared for state service), and other leading officials at court, but Ahmad's political and military training was not left to chance. He was always the responsibility of one of his father's most trusted mamluks. Ramadan Bash Mamluk had this charge when Ahmad was quite young. Later, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' concerned himself with the young man's education. It was he who incited Ahmad to study history and biography.[10]

As a young Husaynid prince living in these years, Ahmad Bey witnessed drama and danger well beyond the normal span of childhood experiences. When only five years old he must have been impressed by the worried faces of his father and other elders at the time of the abortive revolt launched by the Turkish jund against Hamuda Bey in 1811. Three years older in 1814, he lived through an infinitely more traumatic event—the assassination of Uthman Bey. In this coup, Husaynid blood was shed by other members of the family. Ahmad's grandfather, Mahmud, organized the plot. Ahmad's father, Mustafa, participated in the actual assassination. Indeed, when it was believed that the first shots had not killed Uthman Bey, Mahmud sent Mustafa back into the room to deliver the *coup de grace*.[11]

An added sensitivity to the high stakes of royal politics, and the harsh fate for losers, must have filtered into his subconscious when he learned that the two older sons of Uthman Bey were killed in cold blood on the orders of his uncle Husayn. The two younger sons were confined to prison. One was the exact age of Ahmad. How well had the two Husaynid cousins known each other? Had they been playmates? How did his elders explain and justify to Ahmad the sudden disappearance of Uthman Bey's young son?

A few months later, in January 1815, the court was shaken by the execution of the hitherto all-powerful minister, Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi'. This was also something of a constitutional crisis, or more precisely the final turn of the screw in the fundamental realignment of power begun with the assassination of Uthman Bey. Ahmad's father and uncle were intimately involved, and some of the excitement—and fear—attendant upon such plots

[10] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 261 and 342.

[11] Bin Diyaf, 3: 97.

must have found its way into young Ahmad's family life, even if he understood only vaguely what was at stake.

Ahmad Bey's own recollection of one striking event leading up to Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi"s execution has survived. In later years, he remembered having been sitting with his grandfather, Mahmud Bey, when a mamluk, Hasan Khaznadar, came in, threw himself down, exposed his neck as if to the executioner crying, "Kill me now. I would rather be killed by your command than that of Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi', a mamluk like me." This dramatic gesture, intended to convince the bey that Yusuf must be executed, left a lasting mark on the mind of the eight-year-old Ahmad. "It is as if I see him now," Ahmad Bey later observed to Bin Diyaf.[12]

In 1816, Ahmad must have seen England's Queen Caroline, who came to visit in the spring, just as he may well have journeyed with some member of his family to see the British fleet under Lord Exmouth in the harbor at La Goulette when they came to pressure the bey on piracy and slavery. (An older Ahmad would have been even more likely to see the combined Anglo-French fleet, which called with equally bellicose intentions in 1819.) Then came the second revolt of the Turkish soldiery within five years, again perhaps showing an impressionable youth that political power resides in control of the military.

By the time of the next major internecine political struggle—the execution of the chief minister Larbi Zarruq—in 1822, Ahmad Bey had approached young manhood. He was soon to be sixteen. Ahmad's Bey's sideline view of the Larbi Zarruq affair probably confirmed in him a tough, realistic attitude toward the exercise and maintenance of political power.

When Husayn became bey in 1824, his brother, Mustafa, as next in line of succession, became bey al-mahalla. It is quite likely that Ahmad often accompanied his father on these military expeditions. By the 1820s the young man was beginning to develop that active interest in military affairs destined to mark the remainder of his life and career. He also gained a reputation for high spirits, energy and talent—virtues all largely dissipated in debauchery. Filippi noted:[13]

> Sid Ahmad Bey would be the most dangerous prince at Bardo if he combined with his haughty, quick-tempered character a

[12] Bin Diyaf, 3: 109.

[13] Filippi (Monchicourt), p. 165.

more regular moral conduct that could inspire confidence. Instead, given over to every kind of debauchery, he often causes his father grief. His circle of friends is disreputable, and none of his confidants can make him correct his conduct. Perhaps it is also the policy of the pasha (i.e., his uncle Husayn, the reigning bey) to keep him in a position where it will be impossible for him to form a party.

Only a few years later, Temple offered a not dissimilar appraisal:[14]

Sidi Mustafa has a son, named Ahmed, a young man of good intellectual powers, but of a cruel and intriguing character; he is dreaded even by his uncle, the bey, who never dares to leave him at the Bardo when he is himself absent, even for a few hours.

Two perceptive foreign observers thus suggested that mutual fear and distrust divided Husayn Bey and his nephew, Ahmad. It is not clear what incidents had already taken place when Filippi wrote his account (1829), but the tension between the two surfaced the following year.

After the French had conquered Algiers in July 1830, they hesitated over what to do next. Among the ideas bruited during this indecisive period was that of offering the beyliks of Constantine and Oran to members of the Husaynid family. An agreement was actually reached, first for control of Constantine by Mustafa Bey and later for Ahmad Bey to serve in Oran.[15] The Constantine venture never had a chance, because another Ahmad Bey—the incumbent bey there at the time of the French conquest—had no intention of giving up without a fight. (The French finally conquered Constantine in 1837.) This idea had some logic to it, for the beylik of Constantine was contiguous with Tunisia. The plan to establish a Husaynid prince at Oran was foolhardy, and Ahmad had the good sense to realize it.

Ahmad saw the entire affair as a plot by Husayn to get him away from Tunis and out of the line of succession. He informed Husayn that the venture would require more nearly 30,000 than the 300 soldiers sent and, in addition, thousands of piastres. Fur-

[14] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 194-195.

[15] E. Rouard de Card, *Les arrangements conclus par le Général Clauzel avec le bey de Tunis* (Paris, 1927); Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, 1: 68-72; Jean Serres, *La Politique turque en Afrique du Nord* (Paris, 1925), pp. 66-87; Bin Diyaf, 3: 175-179.

ther, he observed, the Arabs in Oran would understand that the arrival of Tunisians merely played into the hands of the French, their enemies. Husayn Bey retorted, "You do not like to travel?" And Ahmad, with a bravado surely not intended to veil his disgust, said, "If you order me to go to my death, then I shall leave now in obedience to your order."[16]

This storm was weathered; the Oran expedition came to an ignominious end. The 300 troops sent to Oran in February returned in the fall of 1831, and there was no further talk about Ahmad's taking the impossible assignment. No other confrontations with his uncle developed in the remaining years of Husayn's reign. With his death in May 1835 and the beginning of Mustafa Bey's short rule, formal responsibilities increased for Ahmad. He became bey al-mahalla, leading both the winter and summer expeditions.

As heir to the throne, his father's son, and a proven man now in his late twenties, Ahmad began to show the initiative and decisiveness that would mark his own long reign. When, for example, the Ottoman Empire demanded a small annual tribute of the new bey—which Mustafa Bey was inclined to accept "for he was keenly concerned about the unity of Muslims"—Ahmad spoke out in opposition, suggesting that the Ottoman Empire would not remain satisfied with a small tribute and this slight concession could begin the weakening of the Husaynid dynasty. All the others present rallied quickly to Ahmad's argument.[17] (This event also presaged a major concern of Ahmad's during most of his own reign—Ottoman pressure and Tunisian resistance.)

It looked as if the restless, ambitious Ahmad Bey could face his political future with confidence after his father had come to power. There was no longer an uncle apparently scheming to remove him from succession, relations with his father were smooth, and he had responsibility in his own right. Actually, danger loomed in the form of an overly powerful chief minister. The political drama that had led to the execution of Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' and Larbi Zarruq was now destined to be replayed, with the major protagonists being Ahmad Bey and Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.

Shakir,[18] a Circassian mamluk and Husayn Bey's son-in-law, had assumed virtually full financial powers following the near-

[16] Bin Diyaf, 3: 177.

[17] Bin Diyaf, 3: 200.

[18] See above, chapter one, pp. 35 and 39.

bankruptcy brought on by Husayn's poor management. A competent administrator, he soon became accustomed to controlling affairs. The roots of his antagonism to Ahmad went back at least to 1830, for Shakir had actively supported the plan to have Mustafa and his son Ahmad shunted off to the beyliks of Constantine and Oran, thus leaving the succession open to Husayn's son, Muhammad Bey (probably assuming he could control the son of Husayn just as he had the father).[19]

A few years later, in 1833, Shakir was equally enthusiastic about getting for Mustafa Bey the beylik of Tripoli (when the Ottomans were having the difficulty with the Qaramanli governor of Tripoli, Ali Pasha). This idea proved equally fruitless, but in the meantime he seems to have become further emboldened both with the idea that such grand plans could be considered with impunity, and with the thought of calling in outside power (whether French or Ottoman) to redress a domestic political situation in Tunisia.

In the summer of 1837, Mustafa Bey removed Ahmad from command of the summer mahalla and bestowed it upon his nephew Muhammad Bey.[20] Ahmad bitterly asked his father what he was to do; there was no need for him at court, Mustafa Bey himself being perfectly familiar with his task and sound of body. He then requested a role in the army. Mustafa Bey obliged his son, and in August 1837 Ahmad was placed in command of the Nizami army. At the time of assuming this new command Ahmad gave Shakir a testy warning.[21]

When Muhammad Bey left later that same month in command of the summer mahalla "his uncle paid more attention to his departure than he had done (previously) for his own son."[22] Such gestures could only add to Ahmad's agitation.

The final move in the game costing Shakir his life involved Mahmud bin 'Ayad, who was being pressed by a French merchant

[19] See Serres, *La Politique turque*, p. 78.

[20] In accord with the promise Mustafa and his brother had made to their mother not to let the internecine disputes that had resulted in Uthman Bey's assassination recur. See above, p. 39.

[21] After receiving the investiture Ahmad taunted Shakir, "Advance and kiss my hand like the other government officials. I shall not submit to you while holding this rank for as long as I am alive and able." Shakir came forward and kissed Ahmad's hand. Bin Diyaf, 3: 219.

[22] Ibid.

to settle outstanding debts. To obtain the needed funds, he appealed to the beylik for payment of a large sum allegedly owed him. Shakir refused to honor the government's debt, but the bey reversed his minister and paid a reputed 300,000 piastres. (One rumor had it that Mahmud bin 'Ayad presented half of the payment to Ahmad.)[23]

Every man has his breaking point, and presumably Shakir, the old financial administrator who had earlier saved Tunisia from bankruptcy, could not accept this challenge to his fiscal authority. He apparently began to plot with army officers in the Sousse region, planning a coup to coincide with the return of Muhammad Bey from the mahalla.[24] Muhammad Bey, according to Shakir's plan, would then assume office in place of the ousted Mustafa. Shakir may also have been in touch with the Ottoman authorities. The arrival at this time of an Ottoman fleet at Tripoli rumored to be carrying 10,000 men to intervene in Tunis caused a stir among the diplomatic community in Tunis and was hardly calculated to calm Ahmad's apprehensions.[25]

According to Bin Diyaf, Shakir divulged his plan to an 'alim who tried to dissuade him, and when that failed, insured that Ahmad Bey would learn by informing one of his loyal Nizami soldiers. Ahmad told his father, who checked with two "elder statesmen" among the mamluks, Sulayman Kahiya and Khayr al-Din Kahiya.[26] Not surprised that Shakir was plotting, they advised the bey to extirpate the evil without delay (advice given perhaps in recognition of Mustafa Bey's indecisiveness). Shakir, upon his return to Bardo from Muhammadiya, was accosted and imprisoned by Ahmad. The bey immediately summoned his principal officers, received the expected concurrence that Shakir must be executed, and immediately gave the order of execution to Ahmad. Within a few minutes Shakir was dead, strangled by a rope—the form of execution reserved for officials in the Ottoman system.

When Muhammad Bey returned from the mahalla, he was able to convince his uncle—and presumably his cousin as well—that

[23] Ibid., pp. 220-221.

[24] Ibid., pp. 221-222.

[25] AE Tunis (Politique) 3, no. 41, 14 September 1837, and no. 42, 19 September 1837; Serres, *La Politique turque*, p. 182; FO 77/30, Ancram to Palmerston, 18 September 1837.

[26] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 237 and 323.

he was completely innocent. His relations with Ahmad remained correct, perhaps even close (there is no evidence to the contrary) during the latter's long reign.

Any possible repercussions were scotched by several important new appointments immediately following the execution. Men whom Mustafa (and Ahmad) could trust were assigned to Le Kef, Sousse, Monastir, Sfax and Muthalith, replacing men deemed loyal to the former minister.[27] The new appointees were ordered to leave for their posts at once. These appointments, and the replacement of Shakir's men, the immediate replacement of Muhammad Bey as commander of the mahalla and his summons to the capital, even the concern about the younger Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey (who was sent to Muhammadiya to bring his sister, the widow of Shakir, and her son back to Tunis) indicate that the execution of Shakir involved more than the removal of a single competent but overly ambitious minister. Shakir's very real power was based on an elaborate network of alliances throughout the entire governmental structure. There was a great convulsive change as supporters of Shakir were ousted from power and replaced by those loyal to Ahmad.

Less than one month later, Mustafa Bey died and Ahmad Bey succeeded his father. The man destined to preside over the beylik for the next eighteen years arrived at the pinnacle of power with well-established ideas and attitudes. He had been thoroughly molded, and in some ways scarred, by his eventful past. He also began his reign with a cadre of his own men, accustomed to work with him and prepared to move at once in implementing his plans. A review of the more important men who formed Ahmad's team illustrates for this specific reign the workings of the political system as described in Part One.

[27] Salih Zayd was appointed kahiya of Le Kef; Rashid, commanding officer and governor at Sousse; Hasan Saqisli, governor of Monastir; Muhammad Jaluli, governor of Sfax; and Muhammad bin 'Abbas, governor of Muthalith. Bin Diyaf, 3: 224. None of these appointments to governorates appear on AGT Register 2127 for that year. See the earlier discussion of qaids, chapter three, pp. 112-122. There are many blank entries for certain years, especially in certain qiyadas in the Sahil; and there may be several reasons for such omissions. It is possible, however, that these were what might be called purely political and public security appointments with no iltizam or other fiscal arrangements. The fiscal terms could come later in more peaceful times. For example, Salah does figure on the register at Le Kef for the following year.

For his principal adviser Ahmad chose Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi'. A Georgian mamluk presented by a member of the famous Jaluli family to Hamuda Bey, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' grew up during Hamuda's reign and was manumitted upon his death in 1814. Mahmud Bey, who came to power after the assassination of Uthman Bey, assigned the mamluk to his son Mustafa Bey. It was Mustafa Bey who gave him his title—*sahib al-tabi'* ("master of the seal")—a significant indicator of his standing with Ahmad's father. As has been seen, Mustafa Bey chose this mamluk to supervise young Ahmad's education. Mustafa Bey also gave him one of his daughters in marriage.

An in-law, an old family retainer for over twenty years, a mentor, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' was the ideal adviser and confidant for Ahmad as he began his reign. There is always a risk in such relationships. The older man might unconsciously have been a bit too avuncular, too much the schoolmaster to his former charge, for a strong-willed new bey such as Ahmad. With Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' this would never occur. Once taken to task by Bin Diyaf for responding "Whatever you wish" to Ahmad Bey's request for advice, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' retorted, "Do you think our service is limited to what is deemed of public interest and what is required by reason and experience without consideration of the wishes of kings? Do you think you are in France, oh learned one?"[28]

He was later to be pushed into the background by Mustafa Khaznadar, but this provoked no bitter in-fighting. Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' continued his unquestioning loyalty, hewing to a line of conduct worked out in years of service both to Ahmad and to his father.

There were several other mamluks who had similarly earned such high standing. They were proven, faithful mamluks of Mustafa, disposed to transfer that same measure of loyalty to his son. Ramadan Bash Mamluk has already been mentioned as the mamluk guardian of the young Ahmad Bey. He also later became a brother-in-law. Yet another mamluk of his father, and husband of a sister, was Mustafa Agha, who became Ahmad's war minister. He was among those who travelled with Ahmad on his state visit to France. Conversant in military matters, Mustafa Agha was also

[28] Bin Diyaf, Biography 342. "I could find no answer," Bin Diyaf admitted. And see above, p. 35.

successful in dealing with tribes. A blunt military man, "he would speak the truth without concern for the consequences."[29] And from Mustafa Agha, Ahmad Bey was willing to accept such conduct.

Other former mamluks of Mustafa Bey had positions of trust under Ahmad, but outside the circle of immediate advisers. One, Hasan 'Amil al-Monastir, held such important provincial posts as Monastir and Sfax during Ahmad's reign.[30] Yusuf Amir 'Askar Zwawa, still young when Hamuda Bey died, was assigned to Mustafa and was raised with Ahmad. Ahmad appointed the old family retainer and friend since childhood to the important post of kahiya at Bizerte. He was apparently a good soldier but lacked the finesse—or duplicity?—to be an effective provincial administrator, as the following story indicates. A man from Bizerte appeared before Ahmad Bey at court protesting that Yusuf had taken 300 piastres from him. Ahmad Bey turned to Yusuf, asked if the charge were true only to be told that it was. He then obliged Yusuf to repay the 300 piastres. When Yusuf left the court, Ahmad turned to his minister saying, "Yusuf doesn't know the ways of governors." The minister later conveyed the bey's words to Yusuf himself, who countered that he hated to lie, especially "to our master." Ahmad, upon hearing this, concluded "Yusuf's character fits him only for military service, not for provincial administration." He was transferred to the Zouaves.[31] Yusuf's sons stayed within the same clique. They worked for Mustafa Khaznadar.

In addition to mamluks inherited from his father, Ahmad drew upon the services of his own mamluks. These were men roughly his age or younger, who—consistent with the beylical system—were placed under his supervision in the early years of their palace training, and if a son had survived Ahmad, these would have been the loyal older generation of mamluks upon whom Ahmad's son could have relied. The famous Mustafa Khaznadar belonged to this group. Both he and his brother Ahmad, mamluks of Greek origin, were raised by Ahmad Bey. Mustafa was even "treated like a grandson by Ahmad Bey's mother."[32] Roughly eleven years younger than Ahmad Bey, Mustafa Khaznadar was just twenty

[29] Bin Diyaf, Biography 373. He was one of the rare mamluks whose sons went into religious studies.

[30] Bin Diyaf, Biography 311.

[31] Bin Diyaf, Biography 372.

[32] See above, chapter two, p. 43.



6. Mustafa Khaznadar. From portrait in Bardo Collection. Courtesy Tunisian Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

years old when Ahmad came to power. In spite of his youth, he was immediately made treasurer and confidant. He also married one of Ahmad's sisters.[33] Ahmad's regard for his young mamluk never waned during his long reign, and ultimately Mustafa Khaznadar, as chief minister, and Mahmud bin 'Ayad, as chief concession farmer and tax collector, became the two most powerful men in the beylik after the bey himself.

Mustafa Khaznadar's brother, Ahmad Amir Liwa al-Khiyala, held a secondary position of leadership, but as a mamluk of Ahmad Bey and brother of Mustafa Khaznadar, he belonged to the inner circle. He could be relied on when needed. Ahmad Amir Liwa al-Khiyala died on duty in 1849. He had been posted to the western part of the country to prevent people from coming into Tunis and thus extending the cholera epidemic then raging. He, himself, was smitten and died.

Farhat al-Mamluk was another of Ahmad's own mamluks. He was trained to be a soldier and later placed in charge of the palace bodyguard. He fulfilled other assignments for Ahmad Bey including a diplomatic mission to Tripoli. When Mahmud bin 'Ayad fled to France, leaving in disarray both the finances and the whole web of personal relations which made the administration work, Ahmad Bey understandably sought someone he could trust to take his place. He turned to his mamluk, Khayr al-Din, who asked to be excused. Then he selected Farhat al-Mamluk. The latter, Bin Diyaf records approvingly, "obtained [funds] for the state that Bin 'Ayad used to keep for himself."[34]

The celebrated Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi was also one of those in the inner circle by virtue of being Ahmad Bey's mamluk. Author of an important treatise advocating Western-inspired political reforms (1867), later chief minister from 1873 to 1877, and for a brief period grand vizier in Istanbul (1878), the young Khayr al-Din was already assuming positions of responsibility under Ahmad Bey, especially in the army reforms.

Thus, the three chief ministers at the beginning of his reign—Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', Mustafa Khaznadar, and Mustafa Agha—were all family mamluks and married to Ahmad's sisters. Another mamluk, Ramadan Bash Mamluk, was married to a fourth sister. In times of crises he turned for aid to other family mamluks. The client-patron relationship, the "old school tie" linking fellow

[33] Bin Diyaf, 4: 12-13.

[34] Bin Diyaf, Biography 357.

mamluks of the same master, and the years of working together as virtually a single family naturally accounted for Ahmad's use of this group as the cadre holding together his administration.

While the ruling bey was expected to prefer his own mamluks, he needed to leave other mamluks hope for advancement. Several mamluks whose prior loyalty went to other members of the Husaynid family were thus brought into the inner circle. Rashid, for example, a Georgian mamluk of Sulayman Kahiya, was later taken over by Husayn Bey and attached to his son, Hamuda. In spite of these ties to Husayn Bey's family, he became one of the most important military leaders during Ahmad Bey's reign. Ahmad's motive may have been two-fold. He may have wanted to share spoils of office with a leading mamluk attached to the late Husayn Bey's family. (The mamluks would attach importance to such a gesture, knowing of the rivalry between Ahmad and his late uncle, Husayn Bey.) Also, Ahmad probably found Rashid compatible since they shared a consuming attachment to the military. Rashid had earlier served as qaid of Sousse after the death of Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi', but he soon resigned "because it was not suitable to the military nature." One of the rare beylical officers to study books on military science, he rose to be one of Ahmad's chief advisers and commanded the troops sent to fight in the Crimea.[35]

Another mamluk of Husayn, Muhammad Ali Agha, was given high military command immediately following the execution of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi', replacing a mamluk implicated in the abortive coup that Shakir was allegedly planning. Muhammad Ali Agha later held various governorates in the southern part of the country and in Cap Bon. According to Bin Diyaf, he was a violent, hot-headed man who was harsh on his subjects. His rudeness to Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi, perhaps the most important single religious figure of those years, caused him to be criticized even by his fellow mamluks. Yet he was not relieved of office until the reign of Muhammad Bey, the son of his original master, Husayn Bey.[36]

Another mamluk, Farhat al-Mamluk (to be distinguished from Ahmad's mamluk of the same name) had served Hamuda Bey and

[35] Bin Diyaf, Biography 376.

[36] Bin Diyaf, Biography 343. As governor under Muhammad Bey he struck one of his subjects and almost killed him. The people of the governorate protested to the bey and the Muhammad Ali Agha was dismissed.

his successors until the time of Husayn Bey, when he was permitted to leave service. He married in Tunis. Then he returned to state service under Ahmad Bey, becoming one of his major military leaders and confidants. Farhat seems to have appealed to Ahmad Bey as an old-style Ottoman officer. Circassian in origin, he was "Turk in disposition." He was fluent in both Arabic and Turkish, and made more than one official trip to Istanbul for Ahmad Bey. He held several military posts including command of the Zouaves.[37]

Ahmad Bey had to cast his political net beyond the mamluk class. Although the Turkish jund were of decreasing importance by 1837, the old Turkish families could provide a source of strength and a reservoir of military and administrative competence for the regime. Two of the men Ahmad Bey later promoted to the office of dey represent important examples of Turkish participation.

Ahmad Agha, originally from the Tripoli jund, later came to Tunis and was duly enrolled in the Tunis jund. He was instrumental in stopping the revolt of the Turkish jund against Mahmud Bey in 1816. He rose to be bash Hamba and made several official trips to the Ottoman Empire before Ahmad appointed him dey.[38]

Kashk Muhammad al-Dey, originally from Albania, has already been mentioned. He was the young man who arrived in Tunis as a merchant, whose uncle in the Tunisian jund shamed him into joining the military. Most of his later career was in naval affairs. When Ahmad wanted to appoint him dey he asked to be relieved of certain old rules governing the office—that the dey could not call directly on the bey or his ministers and could not go anywhere without special permission. Ahmad was pleased to grant these exceptions to an old friend provided he did not spend the night outside of the capital, since he was responsible for its safety. The former rivalry between bey and dey which had been institutionalized in these rules was now a thing of the past. Only the need for a reigning bey to use these old Turkish families remained.

Ahmad did not need all of the old Turkish families, only enough to prevent any group malaise. Accordingly, he was prepared to dismiss those who displeased him. The dey whom

[37] Bin Diyaf, Biography 351. [38] Bin Diyaf, Biography 306.

Ahmad Agha replaced had been relieved of office ostensibly for having beaten a prisoner, but apparently the real reason was his failure to follow Ahmad's policy concerning the Ottoman Tanzimat.[39]

An even more imposing example of an old political family brought into Ahmad's inner circle was Mahmud Khoja. The son of Muhammad Khoja whose career was long connected with naval affairs and the governorate of La Goulette, Mahmud grew up, as Bin Diyaf expressed it, in the shadow of the state. Mahmud was well-travelled, knew Italian and understood European customs, all of which enhanced his importance. He was sent to France, for example, to represent Husayn Bey at Louis Philippe's coronation. When Mahmud's father died, Ahmad Bey appointed him as kahiya of La Goulette. He later became Ahmad's minister of naval affairs. Completely loyal and trustworthy, Mahmud Khoja was also a close family friend. When Ahmad's mother became sick she went to stay for an extended period of recuperation in Mahmud Khoja's palace at La Goulette, "living there as mother of the family."[40]

Among the native families whom Ahmad Bey included in his inner circle, pre-eminent was the bin 'Ayad, both father and son (Muhammad and Mahmud), and then after the break between the two, Mahmud bin 'Ayad acting alone. It is worth recalling that the rise of the bin 'Ayad family to even greater prominence during Ahmad Bey's reign was achieved at the expense of the other two native governmental and entrepreneurial families, the Jalulis and the bin al-Hajs. Again, the close interrelationship of individuals, families and political cliques is noteworthy.

Ahmad made just the mistake in his treatment of these important native families that he had avoided in sharing power among the mamluks and Turks. Mahmud bin 'Ayad became too powerful. The other families were weakened more than necessary. Ahmad was thereby deprived of a valuable brake on the excesses

[39] Bin Diyaf, 4: 63.

[40] Bin Diyaf, Biography 328. Mahmud Khoja maintained his loyalty at some family inconvenience. He gave one of his daughters in marriage to a parvenu favorite of Ahmad Bey, Salih Shaybub, even though the social standing of the two families was in no way equivalent. Bin Diyaf, Biography 365. (The social inferiority of the man is one of the canonically accepted impediments to marriage, unless both the guardian and the woman agree. SEI, "Nikah.")

committed by Mahmud bin 'Ayad. If these other families had been permitted to keep a hand in concession farming and tax collecting, they would have been able to stymie the more exorbitant malpractices of Mahmud bin 'Ayad. In this case, however, Ahmad's blind faith in his old friend led him astray.

Ahmad Bey needed an inner group of leaders drawn from the political class in the capital. Without complete control at that nerve center Ahmad's days in office would be limited. A network of relationship reaching out into the provinces was not so essential, but it would be helpful. Also, a dynamic, ambitious bey such as Ahmad who, in addition, was intent upon exploiting native manpower for his military, required more effective control beyond Tunis. Thus, Ahmad's political establishment included a few major regional families.

The Murabits in Kairouan were an important example. A member of the family was usually governor in Kairouan and often they branched out to assume other qiyadas as well. In addition, one member of the family, Muhammad al-Murabit, played a leading role in the newly organized army. Ahmad would probably have relied even more on the Jalulis in the Sfax area but for his having backed Mahmud bin 'Ayad in his rivalry with that family.

There were families equivalent to the Murabits in other parts of the country.[41] Ahmad apparently developed more intimate political ties with regional leadership than had previously been the case. He raised Qadum al-Farashishi, for example, "to a rank unknown for such persons."[42] Another tribal leader from the al-A'rad earned Ahmad's abiding gratitude for his help in putting down the incipient revolt in that region in 1840.[43] In an earlier period Ahmad could have been less sensitive about a revolt in the A'rad, but not after the re-establishment of direct Ottoman control in Tripolitania (1835) and—so Ahmad feared—Ottoman designs to do the same thing in Tunisia.

Ahmad not only sensed the need for ties with regional leadership, he also enjoyed close personal friendship with certain tribal shaykhs—one more way in which Ahmad accelerated Tunisification of the political class. Hamida b. al-Daliya al-Rizqi of the Banu Rizq, a part of the Drid confederation, was such a friend.

[41] See Appendix II, noting especially the families of Qadum al-Farashishi, Salih bin Muhammad, and the al-Sabu'i.

[42] Bin Diyaf, Biography 382.

[43] Bin Diyaf, Biography 388, and 4: 39.

Ahmad Bey placed him in charge of all the Drid and gave control of the Banu Rizq to his brother. Hamida attained the rank of general, and Ahmad always heeded his advice on tribal matters. When this man learned that Ahmad had been smitten by apoplexy in 1852 and left partially paralyzed, he broke into tears crying, "Oh, Lord, please do not let me live after him." Hamida did die first, while Ahmad Bey was still recuperating. For a time, Mustafa Khaznadar ordered that news of his death be kept from Ahmad, fearing the adverse reaction on the bey's own recovery.[44]

Ahmad's inner circle also included a few who, while making no claim to political power, exercised informal influence. Among this latter group was Bin Diyaf himself, as private secretary to the bey during his entire tenure.

A similar pattern of mutual influence governed the relationship between Ahmad Bey and several members of the religious establishment—qadis, teachers, muftis, and Sufi shaykhs.

An active member of the Shadhiliya brotherhood, Ahmad was also on excellent terms with Shaykh Mustafa bin 'Azuz, who brought the Rahmaniya order to Tunisia.[45] Further, he honored Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi by maintaining him in the office of chief Maliki mufti and later appointing him imam of Zitouna Mosque as well. Al-Riyahi was the man instrumental in introducing the Tijaniya brotherhood into Tunisia. Ahmad Bey was by all accounts a genuinely pious ruler, but he apportioned his piety in a politically sound manner.

The Christian, Giuseppe Raffo,[46] might also be classified with this group who possessed influence but not power. As an intermediary between the beylical government and the foreign consuls, who often described him as the Minister of Foreign Affairs, he was important during this reign when foreign relations were literally a matter of life and death for the dynasty. In this sense, he ranks among the top half-dozen advisers to Ahmad. Yet, as a Christian and legally subject of a foreign power (Sardinia), Raffo could exercise influence only to the extent that he could present himself as a non-political technical adviser. It is a tribute to his

[44] Bin Diyaf, Biography 307. [45] See above, pp. 177-178.

[46] Giuseppe Raffo, born in Tunis in 1795, entered the service of Husayn Bey in the 1820s and continued to serve successive beys until 1860, all the while remaining a Christian and a Sardinian subject. He was ennobled by the King of Sardinia in 1851. He died in Paris in 1862. Ganiage, *Origines*, pp. 29-30.



7. Giuseppe Raffo. From portrait in Bardo Collection. Courtesy Tunisian Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

intelligence and his integrity that he fulfilled this role creditably without arousing suspicion from any quarter in spite of his unusual position.

Also in Ahmad's inner circle were a few whose attachment was personal, not dictated by family, tribal, professional, or other reasons. Three such persons figure in Bin Diyaf's biographies. One, Hamda al-Shibab, was a native son of Tunis. His father had been amin of the tent and ropemakers' guild. The son followed in the same profession and began to work for Ahmad Bey during the reign of his uncle, Husayn Bey. When Ahmad became bey, he raised Hamda's standing and brought him close to him "as he tended to do with those who were loyal." He was given various important positions, such as the Customs.[47]

Another of this category was one Hamida 'Aziz, a self-made man from Sfax who had earlier worked for Mahmud al-Jaluli. He went into business and farming for himself, living in Soliman. Later he moved to Tunis and entered into an unspecified form of state service (probably concession farming or contracting) where he earned a reputation for probity. He became a confidant of Ahmad Bey, who used him for various important matters. A sign of the friendship binding the two men, when Hamida went on the pilgrimage in 1851, was his entrusting his only son to Ahmad Bey.[48]

Then there was Salih Shaybub. Bin Diyaf's biography makes it quite clear that he had no great regard for the man. His father, a Djerban, was a minor cloth merchant in Tunis. Salih at an early age joined the military band during the time of Husayn Bey. Later, he caught Ahmad's fancy and was given a succession of rapid promotions until he attained the rank of general. He built several lavish houses in various parts of the beylik and married a daughter of Mahmud Khoja. In the latter years of Ahmad's reign Shaybub fell out of favor, his wealth was confiscated, and he was imprisoned; but soon after, he was released and restored to wealth and high position. His fate after Ahmad's death was less happy. Muhammad Bey confiscated his wealth and banished him to Djerba. He seems to have antagonized his fellow Djerbans, and when he died in 1865 he was a poor man kept alive by a pittance from Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey.[49]

[47] Bin Diyaf, Biography 276.
[48] Bin Diyaf, Biography 303. Hamida died on pilgrimage.
[49] Bin Diyaf, Biography 365.

Salih Shaybub appears as the exemplar of the despotic ruler's personal favorite, a man who uses his wits to cajole advancement and private gain from his patron with absolutely no sense of responsibility to the government or even to the patron who makes possible such good fortune.[50]

Two specific instances underscore the importance of cliques and parties in the Husaynid system inherited by Ahmad Bey. Following Ahmad Bey's first stroke in July 1852, which left him partially paralyzed, the French consul reported rumors that there would be a succession struggle. Ahmad's younger brother might receive support from the army created by Ahmad, and especially some of the general officers, for they realized that Muhammad Bey would cut back on army expenditures. On balance, the consul concluded that Muhammad Bey's succession seemed secured. He was the legal successor; and, in addition, he was supported by *the group that used to be devoted to the cause of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'*.[51] When Muhammad Bey did succeed Ahmad in June 1855 he waited less than a month before moving to arrest and confiscate the wealth of Muhammad al-Murabit and Salih Shaybub. Other leading officers "from among those close to Ahmad" were dismissed.[52]

Second, in the polemical literature that developed following the final dismissal of Mustafa Khaznadar in 1873 (often written in

[50] Daumas and Pellissier de Reynaud insist that Ahmad was homosexual and Shaybub one of his many lovers. Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, pp. 6-7, 131; Pellissier de Reynaud, "Mémoire sur le consulat général de France à Tunis," p. 46. Unfortunately, the Arabic sources shed no light on the matter. Nor is there evidence to suggest links between Ahmad's alleged sexual proclivities and his policies or his world-view. One would like to exploit all such material (including Ahmad's relationship with his mother, his father, that shadowy figure who was his wife, etc.) but the data base is too thin for useful speculation.

[51] AE Tunis (Politique) 12, no. 99, 3 August 1852; AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 60, 3 August 1853; FO 102/42, no. 22, 31 August 1852.

[52] Bin Diyaf, 4: 194-196. Muhammad al-Murabit was forced to divorce his wife, Ahmad's sister; and other members of the Murabit family were harassed. Mustafa Khaznadar explained to the French consul, Leon Roches, that Muhammad al-Murabit and Salih Shaybub were "de basse extraction arabe" and had taken advantage of Ahmad Bey to enrich themselves. AE Tunis (Politique) 15, no. 3, 6 July 1855. Bin Diyaf, 4: 196, refers to the argument raised by Mustafa Khaznadar but from a different viewpoint. He points out that the people of Tunis were bitterly muttering that the only crime of these two men was their being native sons. The incident is also reported by the British consul, FO 102/48, no. 16, 8 July 1855.

French as the various antagonists in Tunisia vied for European support), one of the themes developed by Khayr al-Din and the group opposing the former chief minister was the charge that Mustafa Khaznadar had been instrumental in the assassination of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.[53] That they would exploit this argument in addressing a European audience, to whom Shakir was, at best, a shadowy figure from the past, indicates the continued importance throughout the nineteenth century of cliques divided according to their relationship to Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.

Ahmad Bey began his reign an experienced man, possessing his own loyal followers, and well-known by the Tunisian political class. The outside world had a less clear idea about this man destined to preside over an eventful eighteen-year period of crises and accelerated change in Tunisia. The first reactions of the consular community were favorable, reflecting that common tendency to give a new ruler the benefit of the doubt. French Consul Schwebel twice reported favorable native reaction to Ahmad in the months immediately preceding his father's death.[54] On announcing Ahmad's succession, Schwebel noted the general view that "he has always shown a desire to educate himself."[55] The consul in the following weeks was impressed by Ahmad's restless energy:

> He spends the mornings rendering justice, often visits public places in the city . . . wishing to see things with his own eyes. He seeks to reform the abuses introduced into the administration under Shakir, but [and here the consul adds another dimension to the importance of alignments for and against the celebrated minister] it seems to me that his prejudice against this minister makes him at times too prompt to undo what he did, and in this way perhaps to re-open the road to earlier disorders that had ruined the finances of the Regency.[56]

[53] M. S. Mzali and J. Pignon, "Documents sur Khereddine," *Revue tunisienne* (1936). The date of Shakir's death is erroneously given as 1838 instead of 1837.

[54] AE Tunis (Politique) 3, 30 May 1837: ". . . his son Achmet who is rather popular." AE Tunis (Politique) no. 36, 14 August 1837: "The Moors are quite pleased with the manner in which the son of the bey, Sidi Achmed, who has remained at Bardo, dispenses justice and disposes of matters submitted to him."

[55] AE Tunis (Politique) 3, no. 45, 11 October 1837.

[56] AE Tunis (Politique) 3, no. 48, 4 November 1837.

British Vice-Consul Andram also reported an auspicious beginning. Ahmad wanted to levy taxes more justly, establish manufactures, cotton spinning, and other branches of commerce. He was an activist with the right ideas. "In fact he wishes to follow as much as possible the example of the Pashaw of Egypt" (i.e., Muhammad Ali).[57]

From the earliest days of his reign all observers had occasion to note Ahmad's keen interest in military matters and his restless energy.

Captain Kennedy, who called on the bey in 1845, has left one of the fullest physical descriptions of Ahmad: "The personal appearance of Ahmad, the reigning sovereign of Tunis, is prepossessing; he is rather below the middle size, and having bright dark eyes, well-formed features, and a great power of expression in the lines about his mouth, his countenance becomes animated when he speaks which he does with a slight hesitation. Although only in his thirty-seventh year, the jet-black of his beard and mustachios are slightly sprinkled with grey."[58] James Richardson, who saw him the same year, presented an identical description: "The present Bey in person is rather undersized, not stout but of somewhat robust frame, with a darkish complexion but very expressive eyes . . ."[59] On the other hand, the newly-arrived French Consul de Lagau described Ahmad in 1838 as "d'une physionomie peu expressive."[60] Perhaps the difference between the British and French notion of an expressive face accounts for the disparity.

European accounts of Ahmad's intelligence, discernment, and attitude of mind seem to offer a contradictory picture, but a careful sifting leaves a fairly consistent portrait. The unfavorable accounts include those of Daumas, Filippi and Pellissier, which emphasize the debauché. The appraisal of Ahmad to be found in French Consul de Lagau's reports (he served in Tunis from August 1839 to April 1848) suggests the same lack of moderation without alluding to carnal concerns. De Lagau saw Ahmad as a

[57] FO 77/30, 18 October 1837 and 12 November 1837. One can well wish that Ancram had spelled out in greater detail the claim that Ahmad Bey was emulating Egypt's Muhammad Ali. He was a plausible source of inspiration for many of Ahmad's plans, but there are unfortunately few facts to clarify the matter.

[58] Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, 2: 9.

[59] Richardson, "Present State of Tunis," p. 43.

[60] AE Tunis (Politique) 3, no. 2, 2 November 1838.



8. Ahmad Bey. From portrait in Bardo Collection. Courtesy Tunisian Ministry of Cultural Affairs.

headstrong individual who would not listen to others, and a complete monomaniac on army matters. British Colonel Considine, who had an unsatisfactory brief stay in Tunis as military adviser to the bey, thought Ahmad was ignorant of military affairs and unwilling to delegate authority. His judgment of Ahmad suggested a man neither very intelligent nor self-assured:

> The Bey I should say was rather a difficult person to get on with. He is I think suspicious, extremely proud, and very particular about little forms of etiquette, neither forgetting or [*sic*] very easily forgiving what *he* may deem a slight to himself, but which probably the unwittingly offending party never intended as such. The Bey is certainly not clever and perfectly ignorant with regard to everything connected with the civilized world, but he is not deficient in good qualities or I am much mistaken.[61]

To be placed alongside these critical notices are several more favorable descriptions of Ahmad's intelligence and good sense. Richardson thought he possessed "a quick if not a powerful intelligence."[62] Kennedy was even more explicitly favorable. Describing his interview with Ahmad he wrote:

> The conversation now turned upon the affairs of Europe and the present condition of Africa, upon which topics he spoke with such just, clear-sighted views, as convinced me the report I had before heard of his being a man of talent, was correct. But what surprised me most was his knowledge of geography; not the superficial acquaintance that might easily be picked up even by a prince of a Mahometan state, whose learning is usually confined to the Kuran and the works of commentators, but it was evident from his incidental remarks that he was well versed in the subject. As a proof, I may mention an observation that he made, although in itself of no consequence. Hearing that I had been in China with the army, he asked several questions, one of which was, had I been at Peking?

[61] FO 102/4, letter from Considine to Palmerston dated 30 September 1838. In spite of Considine's unsuccessful mission as military adviser (see below, pp. 284-285) to the Bey, his report to Palmerston does not reveal any bitterness against Ahmad or the Tunisian government.

[62] Richardson, "Present State of Tunis," p. 43.

I replied in the negative, and added, that Nankin was the furthest point which the British army reached; on which he instantly said, "Nankin, the ancient capital of the Empire, deserted for Peking," and made inquiries concerning its size, population, and present state, in a manner that showed he understood and took an interest in the subject.[63]

Even his critics, Pellissier and Daumas, present on balance a more nuanced picture of the man. Ahmad Bey, Pellissier wrote, "is not lacking in quickness of mind, intelligence, nor above all good will. Unfortunately, his taste for reforms is almost exclusively directed toward military reforms."[64]

Daumas was even more positive:

> In spite of all his faults and in spite of the shameful and unfortunate passion with which his life was ever stained, Ahmad Bey was unquestionably the most intelligent and civilized inhabitant of the Regency. He alone understood the century we live in, and he tried to take his people out of the ignorance and apathy in which they have lived for centuries.[65]

Headstrong, dynamic, not lacking in native intelligence, and passionately committed to the creation of a new, Westernized army—thus the European world sized up the tenth Husaynid to rule over Tunisia. Native Tunisia started with a not unfavorable opinion but soon began to view him with the wariness of a traditional society that suspects the worst from any political innovation, especially one that appears bent upon extending the state's purview. The increased demands of Ahmad's government upon Tunisia's manpower and wealth quickly confirmed their worst fears.

At best, Ahmad faced an uphill struggle in his attempts to impose change upon this traditional society, but resistance from within was not to be the only obstacle. His ideas of change were not interpreted by the outside world as an internal Tunisian affair to which they were indifferent. Indeed, in many cases, his own motivation stemmed more from international than domestic con-

[63] Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, 2: 10-11.

[64] Pellissier, *Description*, p. 329.

[65] Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 135. On the alleged "shameful passion," see note 50, above, p. 230.

cerns. Tunisia's position in international politics was a determinant both of Ahmad's plans and their eventual fate, and in the years just before and during his reign many new international developments affected Tunisia. The following chapter will treat the most important of these changes.

VII

Tunisia and an Encroaching Outside World

Husaynid Tunisia was accustomed to live surrounded by more powerful states, and a pattern of diplomatic responses attuned to such a reality was well established. Yet, if Tunisia's statesmen were prepared to heed foreign developments, they had nevertheless been molded by a set of power relationships that no longer existed when Ahmad Bey began to rule. Nominally provincial governors owing allegiance to the Ottoman sultan, the beys of Tunis had come to expect only sporadic and half-hearted interference from Istanbul. When in trouble they might make pro forma appeals to the sultan just as they might respond to occasional calls for help from the sultan. These were hardly more than gestures. The political class in Tunisia sensed that if the Husaynid dynasty were threatened by internal revolt or external aggression Istanbul would not intervene in force. Instead, the sultan's government would patiently await the outcome and reach whatever accommodation was required with the victors.

Likewise, the maritime state of Tunisia was fully aware of the European powers whose ships plied the Mediterranean. Tunisian statesmen and men of affairs even had a reasonably sophisticated notion of how these states ranked in terms of power and influence, and they adapted their policies accordingly. They were accustomed to a balance of mutual antagonisms among the European states that insured Tunisian immunity from massive European intervention.

In terms of power, Europe, as viewed from Tunis, was somewhat like the Ottoman Empire. Both were infinitely more powerful than the beylik of Tunis, but each had more important problems occupying them elsewhere. The Husaynid political class had come to expect from Europe the same low intensity of interference it knew from the Ottoman Empire—sporadic and half-hearted. The more pressing foreign threats came from Algeria and, to a lesser extent, Tripoli. The rulers in these provinces (all

nominally part of the Ottoman Empire) could be expected to exploit any sign of weakness noted in Husaynid Tunisia.

Such was the pattern of international relations that members of the Tunisian political class had learned to cope with, but the few years before the beginning of Ahmad Bey's reign brought revolutionary change. The French conquest of Algeria began in 1830, and five years later the Ottoman Empire re-established direct control over Tripolitania. These developments offered scant comfort to Husaynid Tunisia. The overthrow of the dey of Algiers and the Qaramanli dynasty in Tripoli removed from the scene two political units having a military capability roughly equal to that of Tunis. In their place came two imposing neighbors, each capable of snuffing out the Husaynid dynasty.

The only salvation in the past had been the disinclination of such major powers to intervene, lest they provoke hostile action by other great powers. The old rules were changing. France, intervening in Algeria, and the Ottoman Empire in Tripolitania, had upset the regional status quo. There had been rumblings and protests in Europe but no action. What these two states had done in Algeria and Tripolitania they—or others—could do elsewhere. Perhaps Tunisia would be next. For Husaynid Tunisia, the only real security now lay with a combination of sufficient resistance from within to prevent either neighbor from being able to present the world with another *fait accompli*, plus reliance on outside powers to balance the long-term threat.

The former little world of Tunisia and her immediate neighbors had been eliminated as a semi-autonomous region in international politics. The tiny beylik was henceforth part of the Eastern Question.

In this revolutionary new world of diplomacy both the threats and the opportunities faced by Husaynid Tunisia were more imposing. There was the example of Egypt's Muhammad Ali to show how far an aggressive, ambitious provincial governor could go. Muhammad Ali's career suggested that a man such as Ahmad Bey should be daring, show a willingness to innovate, and not let himself be bound by venerable habits whether of allegiance or of military organization. Above all, he should quaff the elixir of Westernization. Muhammad Ali's challenges to the sultan, the Greek war of independence, and the European reaction to these events indicated that Europe planned the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire. Why should the bey of Tunis champion a lost

cause? Was not now the time to formalize the de facto Tunisian independence and perhaps even extend the boundaries of the state? With such ideas in the air it is hardly surprising that in the early 1830s Husaynid Tunisia explored with France plans for Husaynid princes to take over the beyliks of Oran and Constantine.

Yet the new threats outweighed the opportunities. Although to certain European eyes the Ottoman Empire appeared mortally ill—and the sooner divided up the better—the political class in Tunisia viewed matters differently. They saw a once remote political sovereign now well-established on their southeastern border. To politically conscious Tunisians this re-establishment of direct control in Tripolitania hardly suggested a dying empire. Sultan Mahmud was Westernizing his army and centralizing the Ottoman state. These policies were ominous signs of life emanating from Istanbul. Centralization meant that the sultan might no longer be satisfied with the former loose ties binding Tunis to Istanbul. Therefore, every Ottoman initiative—whether a demand for nominal tribute, a question of making the Tunisian flag conform to the Ottoman, or an order to apply the Tanzimat in Tunisia—was viewed in Tunis as part of a master plan to establish direct Ottoman rule in Tunisia.

Ahmad Bey has been presented as comparable to Egypt's Muhammad Ali, who was indisputably bent upon taking advantage of Ottoman weakness, even to the extent of exacerbating Ottoman difficulties for his own ends. Such a view is all very neat and logical, but it is not so satisfactory as the opposite interpretation which sees Ahmad Bey responding *defensively* to what he regarded as the aggressive intentions of Istanbul.

Once Ahmad Bey is seen as a ruler who felt threatened by a hostile world rather than a not-so-innocent minor figure eager to fish in the waters troubled by the Great Powers' machinations, certain seeming contradictions are reconciled. In a simplified view of the matter, Ahmad Bey adopted a pro-French policy. Was he not aware that there was a danger of being swallowed up by France moving against Tunisia from Algeria to the west? He was, and his stubborn refusal to consider any French proposals for changing the status quo illustrates his fears that France, as well as the Ottoman Empire, intended to absorb Tunisia. His major weapon was to maintain a precarious balance between his two powerful neighbors. Every Ottoman demand upon Ahmad was

reported to the French who let it be known that they would not accept such a change.

Yet, when in 1838 the French consul explored the matter of border adjustments in order to assure that the boundary followed tribal lines, Ahmad cannily replied that he would have to consult Istanbul, for, while he had full powers of administration in Tunisia, he was not authorized to reduce or modify existing Tunisian boundaries.[1] The stratagem worked. France could hardly approach the Ottoman Empire and thus acknowledge the Ottoman claim to authority over Tunisian foreign policy.

Ahmad Bey's government realized the dangers of this balancing act between France and the Ottoman Empire and tried to hedge on the gamble, but no good alternatives were available. Tunisia would have wished to rely more on Britain, a powerful counterweight to France, but Britain favored the assertion of Ottoman rights in Tunisia as the most effective way of stifling French ambitions. The other states concerned were either not sufficiently powerful or had no real interest in the survival of Husaynid Tunisia. The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey was inescapably at the mercy of a situation it had not created and could not control.

This is not to suggest that Ahmad Bey wanted only to be left alone by the outside world. He relished his forays into diplomacy and international politics. Until poor health and the failure of his domestic reforms sapped his enthusiasm late in the reign, Ahmad played his allotted role in international politics with genuine zest. It is just as well that he did for the beylik of Tunis was trapped in the dangerous "waltz of territories"[2] whereby Europe helped to keep the peace at home by an elaborate contest over control of the Ottoman Empire and adjacent areas. Under the circumstances the best Ahmad Bey could achieve was to dance his part as nimbly as possible.

Ahmad Bey was a practicing Muslim. He was not indifferent to the call for Islamic unity and solidarity. He wanted to be loyal to the Ottoman Empire. Bin Diyaf related that Ahmad "was more

[1] Bin Diyaf, 4: 16-17; Serres, *La Politique turque*, pp. 234-236.

[2] This phrase, first used cynically to describe Polignac's fabulous plan in 1829 to divide up Europe largely at the expense of the Ottoman Empire, describes equally well Europe's relations with the non-Western world for the entire period beginning with the Restoration, reaching a crescendo in the "scramble for colonies" in the 1880s and a final denouement with the dismemberment of the Ottoman Empire following the First World War.

inclined toward union with the Ottoman Empire than his predecessors since that strengthened Islamic forces. Signs to this effect appeared early in his reign. Then he realized that it was sounder for him to obey and follow according to accepted procedures" (i.e., carefully maintain the status quo).[3] Unlike Egypt's Muhammad Ali, Ahmad's ambition did not involve tweaking the sultan's nose. He was, rather, conscious of the sultan's established rights. In 1841, during the celebration of the Prophet Muhammad's birthday, Ahmad was urged to ride a horse from Bardo to Zitouna Mosque and to line the route with soldiers but he demurred saying, "This is what the Ottoman sultan does. It is not for us to do as he does."[4] Ahmad, however, did possess in full measure that trait common to most rulers and politicians everywhere—the determination to hold onto his existing political power.

Ahmad's attempts at Westernization of the army and his steps to gain Europe's approval—whether freeing slaves or changing some minor point in court etiquette—were also more than cynical efforts to curry the favor of the strong. A poignant sincerity underlay these acts. Ahmad wanted to be accepted by Europe's rulers as a fellow member of the club.

The on-the-spot results of this increased foreign pressure would ring familiar to anyone conversant with the nineteenth century history of Egypt or the Ottoman Empire. Foreign consuls, previously circumspect, began increasingly to bully the Tunisian government, harass Tunisian subjects (especially the international merchant class), demand—and usually receive—exceptional privileges and exemptions for themselves and their subjects domiciled in Tunisia. The foreign community grew in size, economic strength, and arrogance.

Tunisian merchants began to lose out to Europeans armed with extraterritoriality and better credit facilities. Tunisian crafts began to decline before the competition of cheap European goods.

[3] Bin Diyaf, 4: 49. Bin Diyaf's appraisal concludes his account of how Ahmad obtained the Ottoman title of *mushir* ("marshal"). On his own initiative Ahmad solicited this rank from Istanbul, overruling the advice of Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' against any formal change of the bey's status toward the sultan "even if a promotion." The Ottoman minister, Rashid Pasha, willingly agreed, seeing this as an entering wedge leading to greater Ottoman influence in Tunis. The title, granted in August 1840, was held thereafter by Ahmad and his successors. See also Mantran, *Inventaire*, pp. xviii-xix; Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, pp. 84-85.

[4] Bin Diyaf, 4: 54.

A small but significant number of Tunisians became closely linked with one or another of the European powers active in Tunisia—either as protégés, consular employees, or as informal spokesmen for that country's interests within the Tunisian government. A growing number of Europeans were directly employed by the Tunisian government as technical advisers. The intrusive force of Western ways began to make itself felt in new styles of architecture, dress, and sumptuary habits.

How did the individual Tunisian react to these strange, new pressures? What impact did all this have on the daily life of the mamluk, the 'alim, the merchant, or the farmer? This can best be illustrated by a representative cluster of events during Ahmad Bey's reign that brought foreigners into conflict with the bey or his subjects. Some of the incidents were grave. Others were ridiculously petty. All together, they forcefully indicate the corrosive impact of outside pressure upon the Tunisia of Ahmad Bey.

In earlier days before Europe was so overwhelmingly strong or so single-mindedly determined to bring Barbary to heel, it had been the custom of European consuls to kiss the bey's hand in formal audiences. As early as 1817, representatives of the fledgling United States of America had refused to do so, but this was an excusable exception. The United States was not a European power and was unorthodox in other ways as well. It was more important, however, when in May 1836 French Consul Schwebel, newly arrived to take up his duties in Tunis, refused to kiss Mustafa Bey's hand.[5]

This was a symbolic and important turning point. During this same period a new bluntness began to appear in the consular language addressed to the bey or his ministers. Withdrawal from formal audiences in a huff, threats to send a naval demonstration, or to break off relations, demands for acceptance of terms within an absurdly short time period became more common. It was almost as if the mark of a good consul in Tunisia was to be short-tempered.

In October 1843 the French consul calling at Bardo took umbrage when Muhammad Bey's carriage crossed in front of his

[5] AE Tunis (Commerciale) 51: 2, 1 June 1836. The first challenge to the custom came in September 1817 when the American Consul Anderson and his colleague William Shaler, who was regularly posted in Algiers, refused to kiss the bey's hand, pointing out that American citizens did not kiss their president's hand. See Plantet, *Tunis*, 3, Document no. 1109, p. 558.

own. He jumped down, reined in the horses, struck the driver and, trusting the driver might understand Italian, called him "*bestia.*" The vice-consul, it is related, was also abusive. Muhammad Bey kept calm. Then the French consul peremptorily retired from Bardo without seeing Ahmad Bey. Was the consul deliberately seeking to provoke an incident? He was attempting at the time to get the bey to agree to adjustments on the Algerian-Tunisian border. A display of temper, so alien to the diplomatic world of Metternich's Europe, might accelerate sluggish negotiations. In this case the consul demanded an apology [*sic*] within forty-eight hours, but later, sensing he had gone too far, backed down and let the incident come to a close.[6]

Consuls representing the smaller states were not slow to follow the lead set by representatives of the major powers. At roughly the same time as the above incident, the consul of Sardinia provoked a dispute which dragged on for several months and threatened to end in war. The point at issue could easily have been settled. In October 1843, Ahmad forbade the export of grain because the country faced a severe crop failure likely to lead to famine. The Sardinian consul protested this move as violation of a treaty between the two countries. Ahmad countered that the Sardinian merchants in Tunisia, whose rights the consul claimed to be championing, could easily resell any grain they held in Tunisia itself at a handsome profit. The bey also left the door open for honoring export contracts already negotiated.

The Sardinian consul then deliberately provoked an incident. After a second meeting with the bey during which another exorbitant demand was made, the consul left for Turin, leaving Ahmad with the impression that relations had been broken and a naval demonstration might be the next Sardinian move.[7] At great expense Ahmad Bey set out to mobilize his army and prepare the defenses of La Goulette. These developments quickly brought the major powers into action. The sultan sent a representative to Tunis and used the dispute to reassert Ottoman claims to sovereignty over Tunisia. Britain and France, each for its own purposes, preferred that the dispute not get out of hand. A settlement

[6] FO 102/17, no. 12, 30 October 1843 and no. 15, 3 November 1843; Serres, *La Politique turque*, pp. 300-301.

[7] "By his ruthless attitude M. Peloso (the Sardinian consul) gave the impression that he was seeking a rupture at all costs." Serres, *La Politique turque*, p. 303.

was arranged, with British mediation, and Ahmad was obliged to pay compensation to the "aggrieved" Sardinian merchants.[8]

Two bitter lessons had been learned: however unjustified the claim of a European consul, he was likely to win the case or at least not be penalized for his audacity; a European consul could use outrageous tactics without weakening his case. Even minor disputes were henceforth effectively "internationalized."

Tunisia was not free to settle scores with Sardinia. The initiative was quickly taken away from Ahmad, who was obliged, instead, to discover just what options the divergent positions and interests of France, Britain and the Ottoman Empire left him. In one sense, this was just as well. Tunisia was no match for Sardinia in a war. Even so, in the absence of such semi-automatic "internationalization," a Tunisian willingness to defend her interests would almost certainly have imposed a more circumspect policy upon Sardinia.

An ambitious, expansion-minded kingdom of Sardinia, destined to play in the coming years an important role in Italian unification, would be especially tempted to win a few cheap victories at Tunisia's expense. To Husaynid Tunisia this was the hardest blow to bear. The tiny beylik might adjust with good grace to the idea of being bullied by obviously much more powerful states such as Britain, France, and the Ottoman Empire. To take such arrogance from the old "prey" was too much.[9] And to make matters even worse Ahmad was denied the psychological catharsis of a show-down. The issue frittered away. His ministers warned him that his mobilized troops at Muhammadiya were becoming

[8] For detailed accounts of the incident, see Bin Diyaf, 4: 74-76; Serres, *La Politique turque*, pp. 302-311; P. Grandchamp, "Le différend Tuniso-Sarde de 1843-1844," *Revue tunisienne*, 13-14 (1933), pp. 127-213.

[9] The Husaynid court had begun to realize a full decade earlier that the kingdom of Sardinia had outstripped Tunisia. In the 1832-1833 dispute with Sardinia, Husayn Bey and certain of his ministers had wanted to risk war but the majority had counselled a more prudent policy. As Muhammad Khoja then advised the bey, "Sardinia and Genoa are not what we used to know. They have advanced in prosperity and power just as we have declined." Bin Diyaf, 3: 181-182. Also, P. Grandchamp, "Les différends de 1832-1833 entre la Régence de Tunis et les royaumes de Sardaigne et des Deux-Siciles," *Revue tunisienne* (1931), rpt. *Cahiers de Tunisie* 13 (1965). By 1844, however, Ahmad Bey had embarked upon modernization of his army. It was humiliating after all that effort to be pushed about with impunity by Sardinia.

restless,[10] he was increasingly hemmed in by the "advice" of the concerned powers, and in the end he accepted a solution which was a credit to his bleak realism but hardly balm for wounded pride.

Once the change in the international pecking order had made it possible for even the lesser European states to extort unjustified concessions from the bey, the consuls themselves were trapped. A consul might well want to be reasonable, but the subjects he represented in Tunisia would keep up a constant pressure forcing him to get for them whatever concessions others obtained.

The pressure of the European-community resident in Tunisia upon their respective consuls was most clearly manifest in commercial matters. Whenever the bey attempted to introduce a step that might offer protection to local commerce and industry (even if his own intention was, in some cases, not necessarily so far-sighted but simply an effort to gather more revenue), a deluge of memorials and protests poured in upon the consuls. Among the minor ironies of the situation are the existence of several protests sent by "British merchants" to their consul, written in French.[11] There were, indeed, very few merchants from the British Isles living in Tunisia. Those claiming British protection were mainly Maltese or other individuals of Mediterranean stock.[12]

Even though the constant European commercial pressure had the greatest long-term impact on Tunisia, the occasional cases involving the status of individuals probably impressed the Tunisian man-in-the-street. For example, in 1838, a fifteen-year-old Maltese girl reportedly left her husband to live with a Tunisian Muslim, declaring she was a convert to Islam. Upon the petition of the Maltese community, British Vice-Consul Ancram demanded her return, but the bey refused. Later, the bey relented (there apparently being genuine reason to believe the young woman really

[10] Bin Diyaf, 4: 75.

[11] See, for example, the petition dated 27 October 1851 attached to FO 102/40, no. 25, 24 November 1851, and the attachment to FO 102/45, Consular no. 8, 5 February 1853.

[12] Vice-Consul Ferriere's detailed "General Survey of Tunisia," FO 102/32, Consular no. 7, 31 March 1848, lists an estimated total of 5,800 British subjects in Tunisia. The overwhelming majority were Maltese with perhaps less than 200 "Greeks and Ionians." Scarcely more than threescore natives of Great Britain, including wives and children, lived in Tunisia.

wanted to extricate herself from the adventure), and she was sent to Malta.[13]

This all seems reasonable enough to modern minds, and in one sense such cases can be placed in the context of the movement to liberalize and expand the legal rights of individuals that clearly took place throughout the nineteenth century. Yet according to Islamic law a convert to Islam could not recant. The punishment for apostasy was death. Thus, Ahmad Bey was obliged under foreign pressure to concede a point that openly violated Islamic law.

A woeful lack of reciprocity prevailed in these conflict-of-law situations. Anyone living in Tunisia who was fortunate enough to have or obtain European citizenship could escape beylical law or, alternatively, could accept the privileges and advantages of beylical jurisdiction until it became inconvenient. Then he could invoke his citizenship and, with consular assistance, claim those rights. This imposed a radical change in Tunisian (and, more generally, Ottoman) mores. Since at least the sixteenth century, Tunisia (as other parts of the Ottoman Empire) had been relying on the influx of outsiders coming from non-Muslim areas to staff an appreciable portion of the highest military and political positions. Now, under the new dispensation imposed from outside, the "renegade" could seek consular protection to call the whole thing off if he had second thoughts.

In April 1840, Reade reported that two Greeks, one twenty-two, and one eighteen, who had been brought to Tunis from Constantinople a few years earlier as mamluks and who had embraced Islam, had recently taken refuge in the British consulate. They wanted to recant and return home. Reade approached the bey who gave his permission for them to leave and even ordered that any property they might own should be delivered to them.[14]

[13] FO 102/8, no. 6, 30 March 1840. Early developments in the case were reported in FO 102/2, no. 14, 2 June 1838, and FO 102/2, no. 27, 1 November 1838. Ahmad acceded to a similar request later without hesitation.

[14] FO 102/8, no. 8, 9 April 1840. See also, for earlier incidents of the same nature, Andre Martel, "L'armée d'Ahmed Bey d'après un instructeur français," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 15 (1956), note on pp. 398-399 where it is related that a few mamluks in 1831 took advantage of the Franco-Tunisian treaty signed on 8 August of the previous year and demanded repatriation by seeking asylum in the French Consulate. The French consul with the tacit agreement of the bey secretly got them out of the country on a ship bound for France. In this fashion, both the bey and the French avoided taking a stand on the conflicting principles at issue.

It is no wonder that Tunisian subjects also, from chief ministers of the bey to petty traders, or consular employees, quietly sought European protection. It was good insurance against future adversity.

The extent to which awareness of the foreign-imposed rules had filtered down into the Tunisian administration may be gauged by the following story. In March 1845, Pellissier, at that time French consul at Sousse, reported that a young Muslim from Kerkenna Island had befriended a Maltese, later converted to Christianity, and then moved to Malta. Returning to his homeland as crew member of a ship, he was recognized by the people and thrown into prison. When the British agent demanded his release the qaid complied on the spot without even consulting the bey.[15]

Some of the cases in which Europeans were able to flout Tunisian law border on the ludicrous. One night in January 1846, a Sardinian subject, disguised as a soldier of the bey, was arrested with dagger in hand and brought before the shaykh al-madina. He then proceeded to insult the shaykh al-madina and to blaspheme Islam. The shaykh al-madina had him bastinadoed, but since this was "contraire aux usages et aux traites" the Sardinian consul lodged a complaint. In the settlement the shaykh al-madina was obliged to call upon the consul to apologize and the man who had been "wronged" was paid an indemnity.[16]

The native Tunisian began to develop the impression that any dispute with a European was best avoided. Whatever the rights of the matter, the European won. Such a conditioning helps explain the examples of acquiescence and virtual servility toward foreigners, e.g., no one intervening when Captain Daumas dismounted to flog a Muslim who had displeased him, or the sentry saluting Captaine X at La Goulette even though the latter was in mufti.[17]

The European could seemingly get away with anything against a Tunisian subject—even murder, it once seemed, had not a crusty, strong-willed British consul possessed some singular ideas about justice. This is the story of the Xuereb case, which caused a sensation in 1844.

[15] AE Tunis (Politique) 9, no. 19, Sousse, 2 March 1845.

[16] The incident was reported by the French consul. AE Tunis (Politique) 9, no. 3, 22 January 1846.

[17] Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 13; Capitaine X, *Promenade*, p. 73.

In December 1843, a Maltese resident in Tunis named Paolo Xuereb murdered two men, a Tunisian Muslim who served as dragoman at the British consulate, and a Maltese. Later that month, Sir Thomas Reade, in reporting the incident to the Foreign Office, noted that the bey wanted to try Xuereb for the murder of the Tunisian according to Tunisian law. Reade added his opinion that there was no chance of justice if the case were referred to the courts in Malta, and he urged the British government to accept trial for the murder of the Tunisian Muslim in a Tunisian court.

Xuereb and his two accomplices were at that time imprisoned in the British consulate. Had Reade insisted on consular jurisdiction, Ahmad Bey would surely have given way. According to existing treaties, the beylik could claim jurisdiction for the murder of the Muslim, but in the context of those times it was hardly a case Ahmad or his government would have insisted upon. The murderer and one of the victims were indisputably British subjects and the other victim was an employee of the British consulate.

Reade's sense of justice—stimulated perhaps by his marked antipathy for the Maltese[18]—led him to propose a legally acceptable, but practically, a more eccentric, course of action. The Foreign Office agreed, and then the foreign community began its protests. By the time the trial opened on 27 March 1844, Reade could report that every foreign consul except the American, John Howard Payne (author of "Home, Sweet Home"), was "intermeddling."[19]

The matter did not remain on the high plane of formal protest and the signing of statements. A deluge of scurrilous pamphlets

[18] To a patrician consul such as Reade, the Maltese were a problem. The largest foreign community, many of them were at the lower rungs of the economic ladder where they were in competition with Tunisians of the same class. Most of the intercommunal marriages and murders involved Maltese and Muslims. Further, the Maltese were fervent Catholics and more inclined to listen to their bishop than their austere Anglican consul. Smuggling was in the hands of Maltese. Gunpowder was a favorite item of contraband, in great demand both within Tunisia and beyond the border in Algeria. Occasionally, hidden stores of gunpowder would explode, killing and maiming a number of people. FO 102/6, Consular no. 13, 12 November 1839; FO 102/43, no. 6, 2 February 1852. Since the Christians always lived close together in their own quarters, the smugglers were hardly appreciated by their neighbors.

[19] FO 102/20, Consular no. 16, 28 March 1844. Also AE Tunis (Politique) 8, no. 229, 12 March 1844.

and broadsheets, usually in Italian, began to appear in Tunis, and certain papers in Malta took up the campaign. With such an intrinsically emotional issue exacerbated in this fashion, the prospect of mob action loomed. Reade wrote the Foreign Office, "Seeing the menacing position of things, the Bey thought it prudent to establish a body of soldiers near the English Consulate; augmented the troops composing the garrison of the town citadel, and appointed guards to protect my own family from danger."[20]

The trial was conducted in the presence of Ahmad Bey and Sir Thomas Reade by the Maliki qadi Muhammad bin Salama with the consultation of the principal Maliki imams and muftis—Shaykhs Ibrahim al-Riyahi, Muhammad Mahjub and Muhammad al-Mu'addib.[21] The defendant was represented by three lawyers, one French, one Sardinian, and one Maltese, and the qadi carefully granted the defendant a fifteen-day delay to get witnesses and prepare his case.

When the court reconvened on April 13, the evidence of two notarized witnesses, in accordance with Islamic legal procedure, was presented and the arguments of the defendant's lawyers were heard. The qadi then, with the concurrence of the three muftis in attendance, judged Xuereb guilty and sentenced him to death, but he noted that it was legal for the parties to reach a pecuniary settlement instead if the plaintiff so desired. Probably the bey, the court, and Reade would have been relieved if such an arrangement could have been made, but the son of the murdered Tunisian adamantly refused. Immediately, the French consul, acting also in his capacity as representative of the Holy See, lodged a formal protest. Ahmad Bey granted a delay of six weeks in execution of the sentence in order for the consuls to have time to refer to their governments and receive instructions. French Consul de Lagau requested his government to intervene with the British government so they might instruct Reade to relent. It was, he

[20] FO 102/20, Consular no. 16, 28 March 1844.

[21] A copy of the qadi's decision in the original Arabic with a French translation is attached to FO 102/20, no. 18, 20 April 1844. The qadi had been a close personal friend of Ahmad since the time he had accompanied him on the mahalla. Bin Diyaf, Biography 296. Muhammad al-Mu'addib was shaykh of the Shadhiliya order to which Ahmad belonged. Bin Diyaf, Biography 273. In such a politically sensitive case, Ahmad was concerned about the composition of the court. Ahmad may well have ordered the trial conducted according to Maliki instead of Hanafi law in order to have these individuals presiding.

argued to Foreign Minister Guizot, a case of not letting "the head of a Christian fall almost at the feet of the chapel erected by the king (Louis Philippe) in memory of his ancestor, Saint Louis." Further, Europeans must be shielded from an "ignorant, fanatic and barbaric jurisdiction."[22]

There was one more fantastic turn of the screw before the Xuereb case closed. Apparently, Dutch Consul Nyssen, who spoke perfect Arabic, having grown up in Tunis,[23] attempted to suborn the two principal witnesses. He allegedly offered them a bribe of between 200 and 500 piastres to disavow their testimony, or so the two men later attested in a notarized statement. To make matters more delicate, Prince Henry of the Netherlands was visiting Tunisia at the time. The hard-pressed Nyssen, summoned to appear before the bey (in the presence of the two witnesses), called a meeting of the consuls and attempted to get them to organize a protest. The American consul, with the support of the Sardinian consul, argued that the consular corps should not interfere since no visible insult had occurred. This breaking of ranks was enough to prevent any joint consular statement, and no further action was taken by any side in the bizarre matter.[24]

The French Foreign Ministry at first supported their consul in Tunis, but in early May he was informed that the British government was determined to endorse Reade's actions and the French government was disinclined to insist further. The French consul led a group to submit a final protest two days before the execution, but by this time Ahmad Bey and his government knew that the other European governments intended to acquiesce in the Tunisian action, or perhaps it would be more accurate to say in the Anglo-Tunisian action. Paolo Xuereb was executed by the Tunisian authorities on 5 June 1844.[25]

[22] AE Tunis (Politique) 8, no. 237, 15 April 1844.

[23] Son of the Nyssen who wrote in 1788 the "Questions sur Tunis" cited often in Part One.

[24] See FO 102/21, Consular no. 19, 1 May 1844, and Consular no. 24, 12 August 1844; AE Tunis (Politique) 8, no. 244, 25 May 1844. Reade foolishly later employed the two Tunisians whom Nyssen had allegedly attempted to suborn. His responses in FO 102/24, no. 15, 5 May 1845, make it clear that the Foreign Office monitored him carefully in this matter, even to the point of assuming—until he could clearly prove the contrary—that Reade might have had a personal interest in the case.

[25] FO 102/21, no. 21, 8 June 1844, and no. 23, 20 July 1844. The trial of Xuereb's two Maltese accomplices was held in July with the qadi presiding

The Xuereb case was hardly a Tunisian victory against the constantly increasing foreign demands for extraterritorial rights and privileges. The beylical government had been only the shuttlecock in a power game played by the British and French consuls. His granting a six-week stay of execution after the trial illustrates that Ahmad Bey was at the mercy of the powers. If the British government had chosen not to support Reade, Ahmad would have had no choice but meekly to surrender the prisoners for a trial in Malta.

The consuls became almost a part of government, appearing constantly at court to press their claims, keep informed, and lay plans for new ventures. In the normal development of such political relationships the consuls came to establish especially close ties with certain leading members of the bey's government, and these men were identified as being, for example, pro-British or pro-French. Several Tunisian officials went so far as to seek the protection of an outside power (including full rights of citizenship where that could be arranged) to establish immunity against action of their own government. Others sought asylum with foreign consuls or by fleeing abroad. Normally, one would assume that such acts imply a case of espionage suddenly exposed. The pattern of events in the Tunisia of Ahmad Bey is better explained differently. Ahmad knew that certain of his ministers had especially close contacts with foreign consulates, and he probably encouraged such action. His position was so vulnerable, he was so inextricably caught in the web of European politics, that one of his major defenses was to have members of his government who, by establishing close informal ties with foreign governments, would be in a position to influence their policy or at least keep the beylik more accurately informed.

It was a classic stratagem of the weak and the beleaguered. Only those rulers forced to rely on their wits and agility in international politics would offer their own ministers such temptation to play a double game.

Ministers during Ahmad's reign linked to either the British or the French governments (the two principal protagonists, who usually divided between them the support and alliance of the other European powers represented in Tunis) included Muham-

in the presence of the bey. One was imprisoned for a year. The other was released, but the bey requested that he be deported to Malta.

mad bin 'Ayad who was considered to be pro-British and his son, Mahmud bin 'Ayad, regarded as pro-French.[26] Hasuna al-Murali was, by Reade's own acknowledgement, so strongly pro-English "that he has obtained the sobriquet of 'the Englishman' at the Bey's Court."[27] (This explains why French Consul Schwebel chose to belittle the man as "a religious fanatic.")[28] The Jaluli family appeared to have close connections with the French.

Mustafa Khaznadar, as might be expected for a man who remained in power from 1837 to 1873, was variously appraised by the British and French representatives at different times. The French consul suspected him of working against French interests in 1843. Reade listed him, along with Muhammad bin 'Ayad and Hasuna al-Murali, as pro-British in 1846. Yet, by 1853, French Consul Béclard could label Khaznadar as "our only friend."[29] Mustafa Khaznadar was to experience several other cyclical relations with British and French representatives after the reign of Ahmad Bey, but that devious history is best told elsewhere.[30]

For a leading member of the Tunisian political class to move from warm personal relations with a foreign government to using that government as a guarantor and an ally in his own political struggles within the Tunisian government was but a short step. Thus, the bey's calculated risk of letting his ministers establish close ties with foreign governments often worked against his interests. Men such as Muhammad bin 'Ayad or Mahmud bin 'Ayad could, when necessary, call upon their foreign ally to help them; and—such was the system—the foreign government in question

[26] See above, pp. 87-91.

[27] FO 102/25, no. 4, 28 September 1846. Reade's simplicity in reporting this with a touch of pride is to be remarked. If al-Murali's links with the British were so obvious as to have won him the disparaging nickname, he was clearly of less use to Reade.

[28] AE Tunis (Politique) 4, no. 12, 7 February 1839. It is ironical that the French consul should single out, of all people, Hasuna al-Murali to label a "religious fanatic." Bin Diyaf said of him "It was he would tell us about the conditions of Europe. We used to charge him with exaggeration until the truth of his story appeared to our own eyes." Bin Diyaf, Biography 279. The loose European usage of the term "religious fanatic" in describing Muslims raises socio-psychological questions that have yet to receive the judicious attention they deserve.

[29] AE Tunis (Politique) 7, no. 174, 10 May 1843; FO 102/23, no. 13, 23 December 1845; AE Tunis (Politique) 13, no. 57, 18 July 1853.

[30] Khaznadar's later activities figure prominently in Jean Ganiage's detailed *Les Origines du Protectorat français en Tunisie (1861-1881)*.

felt compelled to comply lest it lose prestige. Once a great power such as Britain or France had intervened, the bey was no longer free to punish his own official with impunity nor to consider the dispute a matter of internal administration.

Leading Tunisian officials began to rely on European protection early in Ahmad's reign. In 1840 Farhat Jaluli and his brother fled to Malta, having lost out in their power struggle with Muhammad bin 'Ayad and fearing even greater misfortunes unless they left the country. Their later return to Tunisia was arranged through the intercession of French Consul de Lagau.[31]

Then came the turn of Muhammad bin 'Ayad. In June 1847, he and his grandson Hamida sought protection in the British consulate. Muhammad bin 'Ayad was in conflict with his son, Mahmud, who was by that time fully in control of the beylik's financial affairs, having worked out a very effective cooperation with Mustafa Khaznadar. Muhammad bin 'Ayad, who had enjoyed an only slightly less powerful position himself a few years earlier, now claimed that his son was attempting to ruin him and confiscate his great wealth. The dispute dragged on for almost eighteen months, with Muhammad bin 'Ayad leaving the protection of the British consulate once, and then, when he feared that the protection promised by the bey was not as solidly guaranteed as he would like, returning to the consulate.

As soon as Ahmad heard of Muhammad bin 'Ayad's flight he sent a written promise of protection personally delivered by a leading official and favorite of the bey, Muhammad al-Murabit.[32] This was no longer enough. Muhammad bin 'Ayad wanted outside protection, and Sir Thomas Reade—always prepared to see things in a simple black and white—was willing to help. He greatly admired Muhammad bin 'Ayad, having described him somewhat earlier as "remarkable for everything that renders Man an object of respect,"[33] and this total commitment to the cause of the father was neatly balanced by a conviction that the son, Mahmud bin 'Ayad, was a rogue bent upon destroying the Regency in cooperation with the French.[34]

[31] Bin Diyaf, 4: 48, and Biography 316; AE Tunis (Politique) 5, 18 May 1841, and 14, no. 122, 17 September 1845; FO 102/31, no. 1, 3 January 1848.

[32] The letter was written by Bin Diyaf who gives the text in 4: 116.

[33] FO 102/23, no. 13, 23 December 1845.

[34] See especially Reade's long dispatch criticizing Mahmud bin 'Ayad, FO 102/27, no. 10, 25 September 1847.

Attempting to maintain some semblance of sovereign control over his own officials, Ahmad insisted that the dispute be adjudicated by the Commercial Council. Muhammad bin 'Ayad, with Reade's backing, at first resisted this idea. Later, they relented. Another precedent of consular intrusion into domestic affairs was then established. Sir Thomas Reade was invited to attend as well.[35] No agreement was reached in the Commercial Council, but in the meantime another development provided the solution.

For some time the French consul had been making informal overtures to Muhammad bin 'Ayad suggesting he should rely on French protection. Reade let it be known that he was inclined to cooperate, and after some difficulties Reade and French Consul Marcescheau agreed on a joint representation to the bey. This had immediate results. Muhammad bin 'Ayad and his son reached a public reconciliation. Small wonder, as Bin Diyaf reported, that some Tunisians felt the whole matter had been arranged by the two Bin 'Ayads, father and son, in order to secure consular protection.[36]

In 1850, Mustafa Khaznadar himself allegedly made a secret application for French citizenship using as intermediary none other than Mahmud bin 'Ayad. If true, it was an extraordinary request indeed—a secret application for citizenship from the chief minister of a friendly state—and it was almost honored. The French government apparently quietly withdrew the decree of naturalization in 1856 when the evidence of collusion between Khaznadar and Mahmud bin 'Ayad in defrauding the Tunisian treasury became more obvious.[37]

[35] Bin Diyaf, 4: 117; FO 102/31, no. 7, 22 November 1848. On the Commercial Council (*Majlis Matjari* or *Majlis al-Tijara*) see above, pp. 190-191.

[36] Bin Diyaf, 4: 117.

[37] Ganiage, *Les Origines*, pp. 93 and 185. This charge should be accepted with caution. It is based on Khayr al-Din's report to the French Inspector of Finances, Villet (sent on mission during the years 1869-1874 to make some order out of beylical financial records). See Mzali and Pignon, "Documents sur Kheredine," *Revue tunisienne* (1940), p. 100. Khayr al-Din and his followers are hardly unbiased sources on Mustafa Khaznadar. Yet, the charge is plausible. In July 1855, Leon Roches, newly-arrived French consul in Tunis, reported that Mustafa Khaznadar told him that one day he would demand the protection of the "nouvelle patrie" he had adopted, but for the moment all was going well with Muhammad Bey and there was nothing to fear. AE Tunis (Politique) 15, no. 2, 3 July 1855. Also, Mahmud bin 'Ayad, no less important as a Tunisian official, did receive French citizenship, and that after his flight from Tunis.

The most spectacular defection of all was that of Mahmud bin 'Ayad who left for Paris on 14 June 1852, ostensibly for his health. So well-guarded was the real purpose of his voyage that both the British and French consuls thought he was on a beylical mission to negotiate the Algerian border question with the French.[38] Only late that year did it become known that Mahmud bin 'Ayad had absconded with government funds plus official records with which to press other claims against the Tunisian government, had acquired French citizenship, and had no intention of returning to Tunisia.[39] When, in May 1853, payments were stopped in the state bank that Mahmud bin 'Ayad had organized, the matter was completely out in the open.

An appraisal of Mahmud bin 'Ayad's baleful influence upon Ahmad Bey's Tunisia can be left to a later chapter, but it is pertinent to note here the intervention of the French consul. Mahmud bin 'Ayad, armed with his new French citizenship, wanted his wives and children to follow him, but Ahmad Bey refused to let them leave the country. Thereupon, French Consul Béclard began in June 1853 to make representations to the bey.

Two months later he was still pressing for release of the Bin 'Ayad family while reporting, somewhat ingenuously, Ahmad's reaction: "The bey complains with a certain bitterness about the protection General Bin Ayad has received from the French government in a case involving efforts to force a Tunisian minister to restore to the Tunisian treasury money that he has embezzled."[40]

The French consul then planned to have the Bin 'Ayad family secretly slipped out of the country, but was foiled in this by Mahmud's timorous wives, who were unwilling to take the risk. Nothing if not resourceful, Béclard thought of relying on an unnamed "derviche" (i.e., Sufi shaykh) known to have great influence over the bey. Unfortunately, this idea came to naught since

[38] FO 102/42, no. 15, 15 June 1852; AE Tunis (Politique) 7, no. 96, 18 June 1852. French Consul Laplace assumed the matter was being kept secret so as not to offend Raffo, the ostensible Tunisian minister of foreign affairs.

[39] FO 102/42, no. 26, 20 November 1852 and no. 40, 20 December 1852. Bin Diyaf, 4: 151, states that Tunis learned of Bin 'Ayad's obtaining French citizenship (protection—*himaya*—is the word used) through the reports carried in Parisian newspapers.

[40] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 61, 16 August 1853. Raffo later informed the consul that Ahmad absolutely refused to release the family lest his action be interpreted as an implicit acceptance of Bin 'Ayad's French nationality.

the man in question turned out to be a bitter enemy of Bin 'Ayad.[41] In November 1853 Béclard finally arranged a clandestine departure of the Bin 'Ayad family from Tunisia. The feat was happily reported to the French Foreign Ministry in full detail.[42]

One can well imagine, after this minor coup, the reserve with which Ahmad Bey was likely to receive any new initiatives by French Consul Béclard in this field. Within ten months there was another confrontation, this time concerning a new development in the Jaluli affair. Jaluli was reported to be heavily in debt and was being hard-pressed by someone at court. Apparently convinced that a plot was afoot to get his land holdings away from him at forced-sale prices, Jaluli sought asylum with his family at the French consulate. Béclard sent his interpreter to ask the bey what was being done to "my protégés, but the bey responded dryly that the Jaluli family was definitely not French."

In the face of this contretemps, Béclard decided to call upon the bey himself. The historian can be grateful for the naive candor of a man like Béclard. His dispatch faithfully records the outburst of a hard-pressed Ahmad Bey, who by this juncture must indeed have wondered where it would all end.

"Am I no longer in charge in my own country?" Ahmad demanded. "Which of us governs this country? To what point are my subjects to be withdrawn from my authority?"

Béclard noted that it took him some time to calm the bey, but he was able to leave the audience with Ahmad's assurance that the Jaluli family had nothing to fear from him and they could safely return home. Someone in the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs had minuted in pencil the following query on Béclard's dispatch: "By what right does the consulate protect this Jaluli family? This protection appears to be irregular. Accordingly, it must if not cease at least soften and become less obvious."[43]

Actually, consular interference neither ceased nor grew milder. International competition destroyed any chance of that,[44] but one

[41] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, Confidential, 18 August 1853.

[42] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 76, 18 November 1853. British Consul Baynes (who had arrived in 1850, the year following Reade's death) had a more laconic report. Mahmud bin 'Ayad's family had indeed left Tunis, and the consul assumed that the bey had finally yielded to the "intimidation" of the French consul and let them go. FO 102/44, no. 27, 21 November 1853.

[43] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 122, 17 September 1854.

[44] There is always the problem of who should take the first step in re-

may assume that most consular reports of these encounters offered an expurgated account of what actually occurred.

The growing tendency to rely on outside protection in time of trouble was not confined to the bey's principal ministers. Cautiously, isolated individuals began to probe the matter in order to determine if they, too, might obtain asylum. In 1842 a Negro family took refuge in the French chapel of Saint Louis in Carthage, thus, as will be seen, accelerating the series of beylical steps that eventually led to complete emancipation of slaves in Tunisia.[45]

Only a few years later Shaykh Muhammad al-'Annabi, the qadi in Ra's al-Jabal (a small coastal village between Tunis and Bizerte), took refuge in the British consulate. The qadi was protesting the arbitrary action of Salih Shaybub, commander of the garrison at Porto Farina, who had allegedly seized Al-'Annabi's two sons for service in his palace at Porto Farina, had later accepted payment from their father, the qadi, for their release but then reneged on the arrangement. Shaykh Muhammad al-'Annabi's appeal to the British consul took place while Muhammad bin 'Ayad was still enjoying asylum there, and Ahmad Bey's irritation at the incident was heightened by his suspicion that Muhammad bin 'Ayad had encouraged al-'Annabi to seek foreign protection. After getting the man to leave the consulate by granting him and his two sons a pardon, Ahmad determined that the man should, at least, lose his official position as qadi and tried to solicit the support of the celebrated Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi. Al-Riyahi, citing several venerable legal precedents, refused to countenance the qadi's dismissal, arguing that in extremis a Muslim had the right to appeal for protection even to a non-Muslim. He advised Ahmad Bey to drop the whole matter, and the latter had little choice but to comply.[46]

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versing the process of consular interference. In 1853 British Consul Baynes suggested that his predecessor, Reade, should not have interfered in a family quarrel and given British protection to Muhammad bin 'Ayad. Yet he concluded that the British government should now honor its commitment. FO 102/44, Confidential, 11 February 1853.

[45] AE Tunis (Politique) 6, no. 161, 12 December 1842. Ahmad's emancipation of slaves will be treated below, pp. 321-325.

[46] Bin Diyaf, 4: 117-118. Brunschvig, "Justice . . . Tunisie," p. 61, citing the same source, says the qadi fled to the French consul. No reference to the incident was noted in either the British or French consular reports.

Then, in 1849, a high-ranking military officer sought refuge in the British consulate. This was too much. Military officers had previously been excluded from the customary right of refuge in certain mosques and zawiyas. Ahmad immediately sent Raffo to negotiate with Reade and also sound out French Consul Marcescheau in the hope that he, not being directly involved in the case, would accept the principle that military officers were not entitled to consular asylum. Marcescheau expressed sympathy, but refused to commit himself without consulting his government. In this case, the matter was settled amicably, and the officer left the British consulate.[47]

The bey was soon able to test the depth of Marcescheau's sympathy. Only a few days later a servant of General Murabit sought asylum in the British consulate. After an exchange of messages with the bey, Reade ordered him out. In leaving, he eluded the guards attempting to arrest him and escaped to the French consulate. When Raffo requested his release Marcescheau temporized, arguing that he could do nothing at the time, for the man's being thrown out of the British consulate had caused quite a stir in the European community. Then, a few days later the French consulate received another "guest"—this time the servant of Mustafa Khaznadar. The latter left several days later, having been pardoned by his master, but General Murabit's servant remained for almost two months before the new French Consul de Theis was able to obtain for him the bey's pardon.

There is no reason to assume that these developments grew out of a deliberate attempt by France to harass the bey or to chip away steadily at the authority he exercised over his own officials. On the contrary, the Quai d'Orsay must have found the whole series of incidents somewhat distasteful. "On what basis," reads a marginal comment to an early dispatch on the matter, "does this alleged right of asylum practiced by M. Marcescheau rest?"[48]

Unfortunately, Ahmad Bey was not privy to the reservations expressed in Paris. He could only see the constant erosion of his position in Tunis fostered by consuls seeking to outbid each other and responding all too readily to the whims of the resident European community.

[47] AE Tunis (Politique) 11, no. 34, 2 May 1849 and no. 37, 18 May 1849.
[48] AE Tunis (Politique) 11, no. 37, 18 May 1849. See also no. 43, 18 June 1849 and no. 7, 4 August 1849.

Ministers, servants, and even whole families could undermine beylical authority by seeking consular protection in Tunis, but at least the number who might be able to put themselves physically beyond the bey's reach was limited by the available accommodations in the consulates and the disposition of the consuls to let people in. In one area, however—along the Algerian border—not even this practical restraint prevailed. If the French authorities on the other side of the border were so disposed, there was no easy way to stop a whole tribe from escaping beylical control.[49] A tribe along the border could escape oppressive taxes, an unpopular qaid or, for that matter, punishment for its own misdeeds by migrating across the border. The tribal leadership could also urge the French authorities to place the tribe under French jurisdiction. Then the tribe would not even have to migrate.

In this border area loosely controlled by both sides, there was a constant interplay of migrations, and negotiations for protection, or special privilege, by tribes feeling no strong sense of loyalty to the authorities either in French Algeria or the beylik of Tunis. The bey of Tunis had the good sense to realize his vulnerability, and this accounts for the extreme reluctance of the Tunisian authorities to negotiate with the French even the most minor border rectifications.

A variant on the above theme was the case of the Waragha tribe, whose homeland was in the area between Le Kef and Constantine. Many members of this tribe had traditionally worked in Tunis as porters, watchmen, and bathhouse keepers. When, in 1843, Ahmad Bey attempted to impose a tax upon this group working in Tunis, they appealed to the French consul to be placed under French protection. Consul de Lagau, to his credit, deemed such a step excessive, but he did successfully intervene for them before the bey.[50]

[49] In the fall of 1844 the French authorities in Algeria reported that some 150 *douars* ("camping groups") of the Drid tribe had sought refuge in the Constantinois area. AE Tunis (Politique) 8, ministère de la Guerre to AE, 6 October 1844.

[50] AE Tunis (Politique) 7, no. 164, 9 January 1843. It is perhaps not coincidental that Farhat, son of the powerful Salih b. Muhammad (see Appendix II) replaced the existing qaid the following year. Farhat thereafter remained as qaid of the Waragha for a decade. AGT Register 2127. In at least one case, the French consul actively supported an Algerian (thus a French

Facing such outside pressure, the bey, his government, and his subjects usually could respond only with the subtle weapons of delay and dissimulation. Ahmad Bey may be said to have won a few battles. He successfully parried the constant British pressure to apply the 1838 commercial convention between Britain and the Ottoman Empire, which abolished monopolies and provided for uniform import and export duties. He was able to avoid, without undue tension, the repeated Ottoman demands that he implement the Tanzimat in Tunisia. The French government never succeeded in getting adjustments on the Algerian-Tunisian border.

A few successful rearguard actions could hardly satisfy an ambitious and dynamic ruler such as Ahmad Bey. This bleak situation leads logically to the subject of the following chapter—Ahmad's program of military reform. While attempting to parry the blows of a hostile outside world, Ahmad could at least work to strengthen the Tunisian state.

Many incentives pushed Ahmad Bey toward the idea of military reform—*raison d'etat*, his own obvious interest in military affairs, and even the tyranny of prevailing style. The material in this chapter has suggested another, equally powerful, motivation—a flight from hectoring foreign merchants, arrogant consuls, and devious ministers into a neater, simpler world where commands are obeyed.

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protégé) working in Tunis, who had become involved in a dispute with his craft amin. See AE Tunis (Commerciale) 55, no. 3, 17 July 1848.

VIII

Military Reforms

Nothing better illustrates Husaynid Tunisia as part of a larger Ottoman political culture than the story of efforts to Westernize the military. The Tunisian experience is strikingly similar to that of the Ottoman Empire and Egypt in methods attempted, the sequence in which innovations were introduced, successes, failures, and even unplanned consequences.

In all three there was a wholesale, often quite uncritical, borrowing of Western military techniques and methods, even extending to such seemingly irrelevant details as type of uniform and parade drill procedures. All imported Western military advisers to train the new armies. All established European-style military schools to train the needed new officers. All attempted to achieve military self-sufficiency by creating industries to provide military needs. All recruited soldiers from the native population, thereby setting in motion a process destined to reverse the traditional distinction between state and society. And the recruitment efforts met with stubborn resistance in all three countries. The military innovations in each of these countries also imposed sharply increased expenditures upon an administrative and tax-collecting apparatus incapable of standing the shock, and the military expenditures in all three constituted the first factor, both in point of time and in importance, leading to eventual bankruptcy.[1]

The judgments of later historians and scholars dealing with these events in any of the three countries are also strikingly simi-

[1] There is a wealth of material on Westernization and reform of the military in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. Further, the comparability of the two cases has often been noted. For a brief review with excellent bibliography see Elie Kedourie, "Djaysh," EI². By contrast, very little has been written on the subject in Tunisia, and the existence of a pattern similar to Egypt and the Ottoman Empire has gone virtually ignored. The net of comparative studies could also be extended to include efforts of military Westernization in Morocco and Iran during the nineteenth century.

lar. What might be called the standard interpretation goes something like this. The early innovators had a very narrow, instrumental purpose. They wanted to borrow Western technical advances in the military field and graft this onto the existing sociopolitical institutions. They were by no means conscious revolutionaries, but they started a revolution. They failed to perceive that Western technical progress was inextricably linked to a whole way of life, and that the one could not be separated from the other for export abroad. Therefore, they unwittingly opened the floodgates to the European concept of the nation-state.

The standard interpretation sees the military reforms as important only because of the larger process of Westernization they set in motion. The purposes, plans, and results of the military innovators are usually viewed somewhat condescendingly. The innovators, it is declared, should have concentrated on economic development or creating and spreading representative institutions. Many writers emphasize the economic loss and physical hardship inflicted on the populace by this concentration on military reforms.

This account accepts the broad lines of the standard interpretation. Ahmad's military reforms were important to Tunisia chiefly because they both accelerated the process of Westernization in other fields and tended to undermine the integrity of the traditional political system. The military reforms were, in themselves, ineffective, economically wasteful, and—for the most part—short-lived. The same amount of energy expended in different fields would almost certainly have produced more lasting results.

Nevertheless, reservations are in order. Ahmad and certain of his followers had a clearer idea about the implications of these foreign borrowings than is generally realized. Ahmad took steps to recruit from the local population, set up military schools, and establish factories servicing military needs. The standard interpretation would have it that these were merely the most convenient means, unthinkingly seized upon by a ruler to achieve the desired end of military Westernization; but these steps may also be viewed as an awareness that military Westernization involved changes in other fields as well.

Certain of Ahmad's acts and statements indicate a realization that his reforms required a more national basis of political power. With his reign, the idea of an ethnically and cultural distinct ruling class began to fade before the radically different notion that

native sons could play a role in affairs of state. Nor should the very daring of Ahmad's willingness to innovate, in itself a revolutionary break with established patterns and values, be minimized.

There is, further, a touch of the anachronistic in the standard interpretation. To suggest that Ahmad Bey should have plotted his Westernization according to principles of the welfare state before such principles were developed in Europe, the source of his innovating ideas, is unrealistic. The heady new ideas Ahmad borrowed were those available and *à la mode* in his own age. He applied them to the Husaynid environment he knew. He was not a philosopher-king planning the restructuring of his kingdom for a century hence. He was an ambitious but also frightened ruler of a small country threatened by infinitely more powerful states, and he believed that an immediate increase in his military prowess was not at all a bad idea.

* * *

The first steps toward the creation of a modern army along Western lines preceded Ahmad's reign by roughly seven years. In January 1831, Husayn Bey authorized the creation of Nizami units. The term is, significantly, borrowed from the Ottoman *Nizami Cedid* ("new order") which was used to describe the modernization efforts then being implemented by Sultan Mahmud II. In 1826, Sultan Mahmud had announced the establishment of a new corps. This provoked a revolt of the Janissaries, who were ruthlessly suppressed. Taking immediate advantage of his tactical victory, Sultan Mahmud abolished the centuries-old Janissary corps. The central Ottoman Empire was henceforth free to embark on an ambitious program of military reform and political centralization.[2]

Use of the word Nizami in Husaynid Tunisia (and all subsequent modernized corps were so designated) suggests the strong influence of the Ottoman experience, but the truth of the early Tunisian military reform is more diffuse. The Husaynid government had, in fact, been more impressed by France's defeat of the dey of Algiers. Husayn Bey, as was seen in the previous chapter, was soon negotiating with General Clauzel a scheme to make Mustafa Bey and his son Ahmad beys of Constantine and Oran, respectively.

[2] Sultan Mahmud's new corps in 1826 was actually a revival of Sultan Selim's earlier ill-fated efforts.

During these negotiations the French agreed to send two officers to train a European-type army corps. The two arrived in January 1831, but their tour of duty could hardly survive the inglorious breakdown of efforts to place Husaynid princes in Constantine and Oran. By July 1831 they had returned to Algeria. Even so, in that short period they had begun the training of roughly 1,000 Tunisian troops, "including," reported the French consul, "several young men of good family."[3] They were trained at Muhammadiya, at a discreet distance from the capital, in order to lessen the chances that the Turkish jund would take offense and perhaps even revolt.[4]

The sultan's government had some idea of the Tunisian-French negotiations and was understandably irate. To mollify Ottoman anger, Mustafa Balhawan and Bin Diyaf were sent on a special mission to Istanbul to explain Tunisian contacts with the French and to request permission to form a Nizami army. Actually, the two emissaries left Tunis in May 1831, several months *after* the two French officers had begun to train the new army.[5] They

[3] Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, p. 83, and "La Mission de Commandant Guy à Tunis (1831)," in the latter of which Hugon gives a good account of this first example of French cooperation with Husaynid Tunisia in military training. A summary of Commandant Guy's report on his training is included. Bin Diyaf, 3: 179, relates that some of the recruits were sons of soldiers already duly registered on the diwan (i.e., offspring of the old Turkish militia) and others were sons of the country (*min awlad al-bilad*).

[4] Bin Diyaf, 3: 180, remarks on the bey's efforts to avoid antagonizing the jund. The early training at Muhammadiya, away from the capital, is comparable to Selim III's training of his new corps outside of Istanbul. Later, Bin Diyaf notes, certain of the Tunisian Nizami troops were trained in Sousse.

[5] Bin Diyaf, 3: 178. According to Captain de Taverne, who as a member of the later French military mission to Tunisia, wrote a detailed report on Tunisian military reforms for his government in 1853, there had been an earlier attempt to train a Nizami army before the arrival of the two French instructors. Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' is reported to have retained a few Ottoman non-commissioned officers and enlisted men recently arrived from Istanbul to train a body of 300 Turks and Arabs soon after the French conquest of Algeria. This experiment had allegedly proved a failure before the two French instructors arrived. See Andre Martel, "L'Armée d'Ahmed Bey d'après un instructeur français," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 15 (1956), p. 378-379. (Martel's excellent paraphrased summary of de Taverne's report is hereafter cited as Taverne [Martel].) In view of Bin Diyaf's information and the apparent absence of any reference in the Tunisian archives, this seems unlike-

returned in November of the same year, wearing the Nizami uniforms they had been given in Istanbul and bearing the sultan's order that the Nizami uniform was henceforth to be the official dress in Tunisia as well. Husayn Bey quickly complied. As the French consul reported to his government, "Ministers, the court, all those attached to government must wear the new uniform, an innovation disliked by the Turkish militia and the populace."[6]

Thus, having dissimulated to the sultan by requesting permission to start a project already begun, the Husaynid court could now dissimulate to the jund and people by making the whole Nizami affair look like an Ottoman initiative. Husayn later attempted to pacify the sultan further by sending a contingent of officers and men to Istanbul to be trained in the new military regulations. He also sent twenty shashiya makers, for in 1828 Sultan Mahmud had adopted the North African fez as the headgear for his new uniforms.[7]

The bey and his leading officials had not all been converted to Nizami military reforms after 1831. Husayn Bey himself seems to have been lukewarm to the whole idea. Ironically, the champion of these military innovations in the early years was Ahmad's

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ly. There may have been former Ottoman soldiers who arrived in Tunisia during this period, but there is no evidence to suggest an official, or even semi-official Ottoman training mission before 1831.

[6] Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, p. 83. The uniform consisted of European trousers, blue jackets, red and white waistband, and a red shashiya. Several European observers were disappointed by the drabness of the Nizami uniform in comparison with the great variety and rich colors of the old. See, for example, Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 189. He claimed that the Nizami uniforms cost forty to fifty piastres whereas the old uniforms could cost as much as 3,500 to 5,000 piastres, it taking the tailor six to nine months to make one. Further, the bey ordered new uniforms each year. The tailors were ruined by the change, Temple observed.

[7] AGT Dossier 338, no. 194, cited in Mantran, *Inventaire*, p. 42, and Hugon, *Les Emblèmes*, pp. 83-84. According to an English travel account, the Tunisian shashiya makers sent to Istanbul alleged that the fez could not be dyed a rich red in the waters around Constantinople, presumably in order to protect the home market in Tunisia, but a wily Armenian discovered their secret process for the uniform, deep red color required. Thereafter, the Tunisians were sent home, and Turkish fez-manufacturing was launched. Julia Pardoe, *The City of the Sultan*, 2nd ed., 3 vols. (London, 1838), 3: 182-184. There is no echo of the alleged incident in the Tunisian sources consulted.

chief rival, Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.[8] Nevertheless, from 1831 on, the idea of military reform, plus the use of European advisers, was in the air. It could no longer be dismissed as unthinkable. By the time Shakir met his death in 1837, an even more ardent advocate of military reform, Ahmad Bey, was soon to begin his long reign.

By the end of Husayn Bey's reign in 1835, there seem to have been roughly 1,600 to 1,800 infantry troops organized into Nizami units.[9] How efficient were these new troops? In 1833, the French consul saw the new troops as a poorly fed, poorly clothed rabble.[10] Élève-Consul de Lesparda at the same time reported that they were out of hand and causing trouble to the civil population. Temple also cited several examples of their lawlessness.[11] Yet, after a few months' work in 1832, the French non-commissioned officer, Collin, who had been privately engaged, struck an encouraging note in a report to the Tunisian government. With regular pay (Collin suggested a pay schedule consistent with that in the Ottoman Empire) and more trained officers, he predicted "in six months one could have a well-disciplined army of more than 6,000 men able to serve with courage."[12]

The officers for these new units were mamluks or Turks, and commands continued to be given in Turkish. This was a wise policy. The Turks and mamluks were closest to the *esprit* of professional soldiers. Even more important, Turko-Mamluk fear

[8] Hugon, "La Mission de Commandant Guy," pp. 393-407. On Shakir Sahib al-Tabi"s support of the early Nizami reforms, see Bin Diyaf, 3: 180.

[9] The figure of c. 1,500-1,800 is given by A. Daux in his thorough article, "Achmed-Pacha," p. 352. Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 233, lists two regiments of Nizami infantry (each with two battalions) for a total of 2,000 in 1832. On the other hand, French Élève-Consul de Lesparda mentioned c. 5,000 new troops stationed in Tunis, La Goulette, and Sousse in his 1834 report (AE Tunis [Commerciale] 51, Attachment to No. 49, 27 June 1834), and de Taverne's report would also indicate this large a number. Taverne (Martel), pp. 379 and 384. The lower figure is probably more accurate for those on active duty, but Shakir also implemented a sort of reserve system in which troops were trained for a few months and then were demobilized, subject to later recall. Ahmad Bey modified and extended this reserve system.

[10] As noted in Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, p. 81.

[11] AE Tunis (Commerciale) 11, Attachment to No. 49, 27 June 1834, and Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 233.

[12] P. Marty, "Historique de la mission militaire française en Tunisie," *Revue tunisienne* (1935), p. 179. Hereafter cited as Marty, "Mission militaire française."

would be mitigated if they saw leadership for the Nizami corps remaining in their hands. Yet probably inertia rather than calculation dictated this policy. The government still looked to the Turks and mamluks for military leadership.

Little is known about how the first native sons were raised for the original Nizami battalions in 1831. Since the number raised was relatively small and probably recruited from many different sedentary areas, it is likely that the press-gang methods were less in evidence than at later times. When recruitment efforts began to impinge upon the capital itself, it was a different story, and the normally circumspect, quiescent residents of Tunis were aroused to take action.

In late 1836 or early 1837, Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' received the bey's approval for his plan of recruiting a new Nizami battalion composed of freed Negro slaves. The complete confusion attendant upon the crude plan of sending soldiers out to pick up every black man in sight was noted earlier.[13]

Yet, far from abandoning the idea of raising some of his army outside the normal bounds of Turks, Kulughlis, Zouaves, and an occasional tribesman, Mustafa Bey then hit upon an even more ambitious scheme—a regular census of all young men in the beylik from which lists the required number could be chosen by lot.

The project, begun in the capital, immediately provoked an imposing passive resistance movement. A group, gathered at the tomb of Sidi Mahraz (the patron saint of Tunis), vowed to stick together until they gained redress. Their number grew and leading 'ulama began cautiously to consider adding their support. Certain of the political class, especially Shakir Sahib al-Tabi', wanted a show of force, but Mustafa Bey found this distasteful. He pardoned the protesters and abandoned the idea of recruiting soldiers from the capital. The inhabitants of Tunis, at least, had been able to breathe new life into the old assumption that "the soldiers of Tunisia are Turks and Zouaves."[14]

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A few months after this incident Ahmad Bey assumed responsibility for the Nizami troops. Later in that eventful year Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' was executed (September) and Ahmad Bey succeeded his father as bey (October). Ahmad Bey had learned the

[13] See above, p. 186.

[14] Bin Diyaf, 3: 208-210.

lesson of the February 1837 disturbances in Tunis. He never attempted a census nor did he try to recruit troops from the capital city.

This was the only element of caution and forebearance in his military reforms. Ahmad had gone to the barracks and chosen a Nizami uniform the very day his father had given him command of the Nizami troops. Assuming personal command of the Nizami training, he even ordered all his mamluks and retainers to learn the new drill.[15] With the beginning of his reign, Ahmad set out immediately to expand and improve the Nizami reforms begun by his arch-rival, the late Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.

During the first weeks of his reign Ahmad initiated plans to organize a third Nizami infantry regiment and to organize both a Nizami cavalry and artillery regiment. By early 1838 the project to create a textile factory at Tebourba to produce military uniforms was launched.

Rapid military development continued throughout the first several years of Ahmad's reign. In 1840 the military school was established at Bardo. 1842 saw the creation of three new infantry regiments, and in 1846 a second artillery regiment was formed.[16] By the end of the first decade of Ahmad's reign a Nizami army of infantry, cavalry, and artillery had been developed with a projected strength of c. 26,000 (or 36,000 according to one estimate) and an estimated 16,000 men actually in service. There were seven infantry regiments, one each quartered at Tunis, Sousse, Monastir, Porto Farina, and Kairouan, and two at Muhammadiya. Two artillery regiments were quartered at Sidi Ismail, near Tunis, and a partial regiment of cavalry at La Mannouba (four kilometers beyond Bardo).[17]

[15] Bin Diyaf, 3: 219.

[16] Taverne (Martel), pp. 380 and 382. Slightly variant dates (and less complete detail) are given in Bin Diyaf, 4: 30 and 63.

[17] The estimates of effective strength given by Captain de Taverne for the period 1830 to 1853 inspire the greatest confidence, for he had long service as instructor to the bey's army and was a careful observer. His estimate for the years 1846-1848 ranged between 14,000 and 16,000. See in Taverne (Martel), p. 384, the very useful chart drawn up by A. Martel based on Taverne's figures. Other estimates by foreign sources for these years may be briefly summarized:

a. Two separate reports of the French consulate for 1842 suggesting 10,000 and 12-15,000, this being the year of most rapid expansion. AE Tunis (Poli-

In the late 1840s the financial strains on the Tunisian budget created largely by the imposing military expansion began to be felt, and Ahmad's declining health weakened his ardor. By early 1853, roughly six months after his first stroke, Ahmad Bey reluctantly agreed to a radical reduction of military forces in order to stave off bankruptcy.[18] Then came that final burst of Ahmad's military activity—the Tunisian expeditionary force to Crimea, still in full swing at the time of his death in May 1855.

With the above chronological sketch setting the stage, the details of Ahmad's military innovations, and their confrontation with the harsh reality of European intrusiveness and domestic resistance, are considered topically in the remainder of this chapter.

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tique) 6, no. 1, 16 February 1842 and 6, 15 April 1842, enclosure of a letter from Gillart to Marshal Soult, minister of war.

b. A British consular report of February 1844 (time of the Sardinian crisis) listing the regular army as containing 22,000. FO 102/19, no. 4, 14 February 1844.

c. James Richardson in 1845 reported 16,000 Nizami infantry, 3,000 artillery, and only 576 cavalry for a Nizami total of 19,576. Richardson, "Present State of Tunis," p. 146.

d. The report of Lieutenant Colonel Folly, dated 28 October 1846, which listed:

Regular Army	Officers	Men
6 infantry regiments	366	18,900
2 artillery regiments	56	5,800
1 light cavalry regiment	34	1,000
TOTAL	456	25,700

See Marty, "Mission militaire française," pp. 340-346, which reproduces the Folly report.

e. British Vice-Consul Ferriere in 1848 claimed there were 21,000 Nizami infantry, 4,800 artillery, and 600 cavalry, for a total of 26,400. FO 102/32, Consular no. 7, 31 March 1848.

f. A. Daux gave a paper strength in 1848 of 24,000 infantry, 2,000 cavalry, and 7,500 artillery, for a total of 34,000 [*sic*] but the actual strength was listed as 27,500. A. Daux, "Achmed-Pacha," pp. 353-354.

A complete examination of army records in the Tunisian archives can eventually provide more information, but the author's random sampling indicates that a thorough inventory of surviving military records will be required before the remaining pieces can be fitted into any coherent pattern.

[18] AE Tunis (Politique) 13, no. 13, 3 January 1853; FO 102/44, no. 3, 18 January 1853.

A. The Nizami Army

There is poignancy in the story of Ahmad's new, European-style army; the major effort seemed to have been misplaced. European-style drill was learned by rote without either the officers or men appearing to understand the purpose of the drill. Nothing would do but to have new uniforms *à la européenne* as if this change of clothing would achieve some miraculous metamorphosis. The *essence* of what made European armies more efficient seemed to have escaped the planners.

Ahmad Bey and his followers saw the decline of Ottoman military prowess. They had been awed by the French campaign that had defeated the dey of Algiers and his army. (Ironically, they overlooked the very effective guerrilla tactics, based on indigenous norms and experience, used by Algeria's Abd al-Qadir against a large French army.)[19] Realizing that their own military organization was comparable to those being regularly defeated by European forces, they saw salvation in borrowing from the victors. That the Egyptians and the Ottomans were already doing likewise confirmed them in their convictions.

European military theory in the post-Napoleonic period emphasized the infantry over the cavalry, the importance of concentrating overwhelming numbers against the enemy, and the establishment of secure and reasonably inflexible supply lines. The eighteenth century notion of limited war by small professional armies gave way to the mystique of the nation-in-arms, made possible by conscription and various systems of military reserves—again, the unquestioning emphasis on numbers.[20] These were the

[19] Although ironical, this oversight was not surprising. If Ahmad had been a military genius, he might have discerned the military potential—and economic feasibility—of highly mobile, reasonably self-sufficient small units unencumbered by sophisticated materiel, thereby freed from dependence on fixed supply lines. All of his *governmental* experience, however, would have made him suspicious of such military decentralization. Since it was hard enough to keep the tribes under control, Ahmad was not likely to create a military force inspired by the tribal model.

[20] The interpretation of European military theory and practice is based on the excellent summary by B. H. Liddell Hart, "Armed Forces and the Art of War: Armies," in New Cambridge Modern History, vol. 10, *The Zenith of European Power: 1830-70*. Since Jomini's ideas were made available to Tunisian officers through the work of Calligaris and probably other European military advisers as well, it is interesting to follow Liddell Hart's

ideas, filtered through available European military advisers, that reached Ahmad Bey and shaped his choices.

The basic organization of Ahmad's Nizami army was patterned on the French system. The largest unit was the regiment (c. 3,000 men), divided into three battalions (in one case, four), with each battalion usually divided into eight companies. There were nine commissioned officer grades and four non-commissioned ranks which also, with minor exceptions, accorded with the existing French system.[21]

As for the training of the troops, Lieutenant Colonel Folly's laconic report epitomizes the impressions of most foreign observers: "The military instruction is fairly satisfactory. They have an idea of our maneuvers. They need only to learn the purpose and the application in the field."[22] Captain de Taverne also emphasized that the training was generally limited to an exact "knowledge of maneuvers," in the restricted sense of parade drill. Captain Kennedy, generally more sympathetic and optimistic, gave essentially the same appraisal: observing a group of Nizami infantry on drill at Sousse he remarked, "On parade these regiments look well, and manoeuvre very fairly, indeed much better than could be expected when we consider how completely the European system of drill is opposed to their national habits of warfare." Daumas judged more cynically the troops he was personally training: "Without doubt these young men are adroit, but adroit like monkeys. They are satisfied to imitate me the way that animal might, and they do not try to grasp either the plan or the purpose of all these exercises."[23]

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appraisal of that seminal military writer (pp. 313-317)—and then to ponder the appropriateness of such an approach for the Tunisia of Ahmad Bey.

[21] For the military grades, the insignia worn distinguishing each, and the corresponding French grade, see Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, p. 87. See also Folly report, in Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 342, for a description of the differences in certain French and Tunisian officer grades.

[22] Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 345.

[23] Taverne (Martel), p. 395; Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, p. 68; Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 166. In 1846 Daumas had been one of the officers in charge of a gymnastic drill carried out by a light infantry unit which had especially caught Ahmad's fancy during his visit to France. Daumas was later posted to Tunisia in response to Ahmad's request that a similar light infantry unit be organized in his country. (See Martel, p. 381.) In the pas-

The revolutionary move from a small professional army composed of Turks and Zouaves to a larger Nizami army of reluctant recruits was obviously not to be accomplished without strain. The presence of these unmartial recruits had its impact on efficiency and morale. Yet, as de Taverne judiciously remarked, the French peasant had been no less reluctant to serve in Napoleon's army.[24] A highly-motivated officer corps could have overcome such obstacles.

The failure to create an adequate officer corps was the critical weakness in Ahmad Bey's entire effort at military reform. The officers, de Taverne lamented, had no military spirit. Why was this the case? The commander of every regiment, except the Fifth and Sixth Infantry, was either of mamluk or Turkish background;[25] and the one exception, General Murabit, was singled out by Colonel Folly as the best example of those few high-ranking officers who knew their profession and demonstrated a genuine desire to learn the art of war.[26] A cadre of Turkish officers or others with a military background must have existed at all ranks.

The native Tunisians brought into the officer class were either from families accustomed to leadership (e.g., the Murabits) or young men seeking to better themselves. Many an unfortunate was recruited into the army against his will, but it is implausible that such crude impressment techniques were used to man the officer corps. That Ahmad Bey (and his predecessors since 1831) may have pressured old families of shaykhs and qaids to send their sons to military service, when they would have preferred to maintain their political prominence in more traditional fashion, is quite likely. (This would be comparable to what happened in Muhammad Ali's Egypt.) Such a class of people, however, had the potential to make good officers. Unlike the hapless peasants and villagers dragooned into the army, they already had a tradition of state service.

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sage quoted Daumas describes what he saw as the absurdity of creating a gymnasium and instituting such a drill in Tunisia.

[24] Taverne (Martel), p. 385.

[25] Richardson briefly identifies the commanding officers as of 1845 in his report, "Present State of Tunis," p. 143.

[26] Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 345, which mentions also that Murabit "has a military library of many volumes including our best works."

There seem to have been several reasons for the failure. The unhappy effects of granting military grades to civilian members of the government and, even within the military establishment, of creating entirely too many officers without duties, was deplored by de Taverne—"this multitude of officers of all grades, but especially the upper ranks, doubling the strength of the regiments where they have never appeared, holding assignments and duties created and invented for them, find a commodious livelihood in their military position."[27]

All too many officers obtained their rank solely through political influence. This was especially true in the higher grades. Men such as the notorious Salah Shaybub owed their lofty position only to being favorites of the bey.

Aside from the small group of students at Bardo Military School, the training of officers seems to have been haphazard, with neither competitive exams nor fixed standards governing admission to the officer class or to promotion. Many of the officers had received little or no formal education, and according to Folly a good number of the majors, captains, and lieutenants were illiterate.[28]

An unusual disciplinary rule—one that the foreign military advisers were unable to get changed—gave only the higher-ranking officers power to mete out punishment. Although a check against abuse of authority in the lower ranks, the rule left company grade officers, not to mention the non-commissioned officers, limited means to compel obedience.[29]

[27] Taverne (Martel), p. 394. This abuse, Taverne continued, "has its source in the excessive, but poorly enlightened, natural kindness" of Ahmad Bey.

[28] Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 345. Folly found no fault with their native intelligence, and he was impressed by the good memory of the Tunisian officer (often the characteristic of an illiterate). Le Corbeiller stated that officers were required to pass no tests for promotion. The social position of the family and any other influence the man might bring to bear were the deciding factors. There were, he concluded, no other pre-conditions, not even the ability to read and write. Report of Le Corbeiller to Marshall Soult, minister of war and president of the Council of Ministers, 15 April 1842, enclosed in AE Tunis (Politique) 6.

[29] See Taverne's remarks in Martel, p. 395. Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 163, observed, "In the little army of Ahmed Bey the lines of discipline are excessively weak. Subordinate officers have no power. They are not able directly to punish a man. Superior officers and, above all, the corps com-

Probably the most important reason for the lack of a military spirit among the Nizami officers[30] was the feeling of impermanence about such a career. Obliged to master an unfamiliar drill taught by infidels, faced with the hostility of the old, established military units, the Nizami officers were also confronted with the fits and starts of active service followed by inactive status without pay. Also, the consular community, and even some of the military advisers, belittled the military reform efforts. This foreign criticism reached the ears of Tunisians.

The Nizami officers saw that only Ahmad Bey's enthusiasm sustained these efforts, opposed by many elements within the Husaynid political class and dismissed as frivolous by representatives of the states whom the bey was so assiduously emulating. They knew that Ahmad's successor, Muhammad Bey, was less keen on the whole idea. Following Ahmad's illness in 1852 even the most optimistic could be excused for losing hope.

Daumas reported that after the bey's first illness many of the captains whom he was training openly expressed to him their sentiments. " 'Why do you want us to work as in the past,' they would say to me. 'Sidna (i.e., Ahmad) is very sick and will die soon. Mahmud [*sic*] Bey, as you know, does not want an army. He will send us home, and the training that you intend to give us will become completely useless to us.' "[31]

The equipment and quartering of the Nizami army presents a mixed picture. The European-style Nizami uniforms were resisted by the recruits themselves, who found them uncomfortable, and disliked the jibes of "*Rumi*" ("Christian") and *Bu Sarwal* ("the trousered one"). They would carefully roll up the trousers over their knees when off duty and if caught by one of the officers attempt to justify their action by claiming they could not walk properly otherwise.[32] Nor did the Nizami dress meet with

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mander have the right to punish. Only the latter may command the bastinado."

[30] Among themselves they seemed to have good relations. "A perfect union of affection and frank cordiality reigns among the Tunisian officers. I confess that I was very surprised to see in this small army such good elements and above all a principle of good feelings and an extreme devotion to their sovereign." Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 346.

[31] Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 129.

[32] Taverne (Martel), p. 386.



9. & 10. Examples of Nizami uniforms. Charles de Chassiron, *Aperçu pittoresque de la Régence de Tunis*, Paris, 1849.



any less ridicule from European observers. Kennedy reported, "Individually the men have a mean, unsoldier-like appearance, with an awkward slouching gait, which may in great part be accounted for by the entire change of dress—from the freedom of their rags (for they are taken from the lowest class of the population) to the confinement of trousers and tight fitting jackets."[33] De Taverne deplored the needless expense of winter and summer Nizami uniforms whereas the national dress would have been adapted to all seasons with less cost and greater convenience for the troops. To Daumas, the Nizami uniforms were a burlesque of French military dress. "The tailoring of these clothes is so bad and the clothes so skimpy that the soldiers, cramped and poorly disposed to this uniform, resemble mannequins."[34]

On the other hand, the new barracks met with general European approval. Folly described them as large and well-ventilated, a judgment shared by de Taverne in his later report.[35] Kennedy was even more expansive in describing the cavalry barracks at Mannuba. "I was much surprised to find the barracks scrupulously clean, the bedsteads, of iron, with the bedding neatly arranged, as were also their arms, kits, and saddlery, all of a fair quality and in very good order. We visited the different regimental workshops, where the soldiers are employed in making their own clothing, appointments, etc. . . . We examined everything most minutely, and were much surprised to find the regimental economy so perfect, and, as our visit was quite unexpected, the messenger from Bardo having entered the gate with us, we saw everything in its every-day dress."[36] Kennedy also praised the cleanliness and good order of the infirmaries, a point worth noting in view of Britain's miserable experience a decade later during the Crimean War.[37]

[33] Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, pp. 68-69.

[34] Taverne (Martel), p. 386; Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, pp. 160-161.

[35] Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 344; Taverne (Martel), pp. 385-386.

[36] Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, pp. 159-160. The cavalry barracks seem to have been the most impressive. Capitaine X, *Promenade*, p. 103, compared them favorably to the infantry barracks which he also had visited.

[37] Indirectly, Folly corroborates this favorable appraisal of health facilities. He mentioned the small number of hospitals—"or rather infirmaries"—and the equally small number of those sick. Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 344.

The striking disparity between the apparent good order that prevailed in the barracks and the discordant performance at drill is perhaps explainable. The barracks built for the Nizami corps were merely larger models of conventional Husaynid Tunisian military architecture, or in some cases, converted Husaynid palaces. Admirably suited to the Tunisian environment and, equally important, familiar structures to the men quartered there, they were easily accepted by the troops. Unlike the Nizami drill, no foreign military adviser was needed to explain things.

Weapons and materiel were another matter. Here Ahmad Bey and his Nizami officers were seized with the problem of borrowing foreign artifacts and ideas. And, as with the question of Nizami drill, the results were unfortunate. The usual exchange pattern between "advanced" and "backward" states was very much in evidence. The latter received the former's cast-offs. The Nizami arms, Folly observed, were generally of poor quality. The muskets were those used by the French army in 1777. Obsolete—and unfamiliar—weapons were only part of the problem. De Taverne (and Daumas as well) bemoaned their diverse origins—"Belgian, English, Sardinian, Austrian, French."[38] Le Corbeiller estimated that no more than one-tenth of the guns could be fired without danger to the man pulling the trigger and to those close by.[39]

Very few changes were attempted in the transport and supply functions of the army. All supplies needed for the army on march were carried by camels, each regiment maintaining a number of camels three or four times beyond its immediate needs.[40] There was no equivalent of a Quartermaster Corps. Provisioning was haphazard. Certain items were supplied directly by state enterprises. Other needs were met by private contract. Daux referred to a "fournisseur general" who equipped and provisioned the troops, noting that Ahmad Bey avoided thereby the expense of additional administrative personnel for the army.[41] The system

[38] Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 344; Taverne (Martel), p. 389; Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 161. Capitaine X, *Promenade*, p. 73, noted that the guards at La Goulette were armed with old English muskets which they carried *ad libitum*.

[39] Le Corbeiller report, AE Tunis (Politique) 6, 15 April 1842.

[40] Taverne (Martel), pp. 390-391.

[41] Ibid., pp. 387-388; Daux, "Achmed-Pacha," p. 355.

does not seem to have been so neat and orderly as Daux implied, although Mahmud bin 'Ayad at the peak of his power came close to assuming the role of a "general supplier" for the entire army.

No integrated logistical or financial system existed. The Nizami army was an awkward transitional hybrid between the old Husaynid military establishment and a thoroughly self-contained modern army with its distinct supply, procurement, finance, and audit branches. The troops were provided more clothing and supplies than was the case with the Turkish jund and the Zouaves, but the Nizami army was not organized to do the job efficiently. Remuneration came from pay alone and not a combination of pay and perquisites as with the Hambas and Spahis or of perquisites alone as was usually the case with the irregulars. The pay, however, was not enough to attract any but the highest-ranking officers.[42] The Nizami army relied largely on the old-fashioned concession farming system to obtain its supplies.

Ahmad had attempted to graft the new European idea of a large standing army to a bureaucratic structure designed to handle a less burdensome military establishment. Perhaps he was right to avoid a separate military bureaucracy, but perhaps a European-style military bureaucracy could have better integrated the ancillary industries to military needs, revealed the real cost of a large standing army, and while not eliminating bribery and corruption, at least have reduced the dangers of using the old financial system in the new circumstances of increased state expenditure.

The greatest break with past military tradition was the recruitment of native Tunisians. The troubles and popular resent-

[42] Taverne (Martel), p. 388, presents a useful comparative chart of the Nizami army pay scale as reported by different European sources. Daux, "Achmed-Pacha," p. 354-355, not included in Martel's list, also gives the pay scale in French franc equivalents. His information varies only in detail from that assembled by Martel. Almost all sources agreed that the private soldier received four piastres a month and the general officer 400. Thus the general officer received a salary 100 times greater than that of the private. For certain other ranks the differences would be:

Sergeant Major	2½ times greater
Lieutenant	5 times greater
Lieutenant Colonel	20 times greater
Colonel	50 times greater

The great increases in salary began with the rank of colonel; a colonel earned more than double the salary of a lieutenant colonel. Promotion to general again resulted in a doubling of salary.

ment this new policy caused during the years 1831-1837 have already been described. How was Ahmad able to extend the policy of native recruitment to hitherto unprecedented levels while avoiding, or at least keeping under control, the earlier difficulties? The simplest answer is that he tempered his enthusiasm with circumspection.

He never revived the ill-fated scheme of a military census throughout all or most of the country, but he was able to achieve much the same result by selectively turning his recruiters' attention to different portions of the major sedentary area. No further effort was made to recruit the citizens of Tunis, nor did Ahmad waste any time attempting to impose an unwanted conscription quota upon the recalcitrant tribes.

There were no periodic levies that the populace could anticipate. Instead, when a corps was under strength, the bey would authorize the commander to go to a designated province and take, up to the number needed, one male member between the ages of fifteen and forty from each family.[43] This was done quietly and swiftly to minimize the local reaction. The military recruiters, working through village and rural shaykhs who were obliged to furnish lists, used the pressure of family loyalty to enforce compliance. The young man who attempted to escape exposed his family to fines and imprisonment, all to no avail from the family's point of view, for another male member of the family would be conscripted in the delinquent's place.[44]

There were no standards of height, physique, or general health to govern who should be selected. Even some one-eyed men were selected, and Folly estimated that one-fourth of the troops inducted would not be able to withstand the rigors of combat.[45]

Except for the possibility of being later placed on inactive service during periods of military cut-backs, or of transferring to a reserve unit, the new recruits faced the prospect of military service for the remainder of their active lives. This bleak fate, so completely contrary to what native Tunisians expected from government, provoked a profound and potentially violent reaction in

[43] Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 346.

[44] Taverne (Martel), p. 383.

[45] Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 346. Taverne, however, referred to a medical examination in the presence of the commanding officer upon the arrival of the total complement of new recruits. Taverne (Martel), p. 385.

the areas affected. De Taverne reported, "The departure of young men taken away forever from their home areas occasions each time public mourning and scenes of despair the likes of which Muslim resignation does not give even on the day of death; scenes so violent in their excesses that at times the authorities find themselves obliged to prevent the disorders they might lead to by imprisonment, confiscation of property, fines, and other such measures."[46]

Such were the crueler aspects of Ahmad's recruitment system. Even in these more docile sedentary areas revolts might have broken out but for certain mitigating circumstances. First, Ahmad, for all of his concern to make soldiers of native Tunisians, did not ignore the more conventional sources of manpower. For example, the Nizami cavalry organized in 1255 (1839-1840) was drawn exclusively from the Turkish Hambas, Turkish Spahis, and saqifa mamluks, much to the irritation of Bin Diyaf, who saw this as discrimination against Arab Hambas and Spahis.[47]

Also, in the first major levy of new troops from the Sahil region during the period December 1841 to early 1842, when Mustafa Agha was personally in charge of raising 3,000 men to form a new regiment, a number of equitable exceptions were uniformly applied. Those males responsible for orphans, widows, or the aged were exempted, a policy which Bin Diyaf noted with approval as an implicit implementation of the Ottoman Tanzimat rules.[48]

[46] Taverne (Martel), p. 385. French Consul de Lagau, reporting a similar incident, observed: "During the entire period of the recruitment the towns of the coast presented scenes of mourning and desolation. Several Moors called to service maimed themselves in the hope of avoiding recruitment. Although passably clothed and fed by the bey, they prefer to these advantages their habitual misery which accompanies independence. Their antipathy for the profession of arms is such that no volunteer comes forward for recruitment. If some circumstance should make it possible there is not one who would not abandon the colors. I have obtained these details from one of their instructors." AE Tunis (Politique) 6, no. 1, 16 February 1842.

[47] Bin Diyaf, 4: 30. The existing units were ordered on parade and Ahmad chose those from among the Turks and saqifa mamluks who appeared to be most fit to form the new Nizami cavalry. The Turkish Spahi unit was then disbanded. Bin Diyaf observed with native Tunisian pride and irritation that by passing over the Arab Hambas and Spahis Ahmad Bey missed "the true horsemen of the beylik who are capable of enduring harsh journeys and of bravely attacking fearsome and difficult targets."

[48] Bin Diyaf, 4: 56-58. His account may be contrasted with the report of French Consul de Lagau, "With the thought of replacing the discharged soldiers and those who are married, the bey ordered a levy of 3,000 men,

This new levy was accompanied by the demobilization of troops recruited earlier from the same area, and the beylical decree announcing the move promised that the new recruits would later be demobilized[49] to be replaced by yet another class of recruits from the area. Thus, the people of the Sahil could partially offset their sadness in losing young men to the army by the unexpected return of those drafted into the army a few years earlier. They could even harbor the hope that the experience might be repeated and this group, too, would return home after a few years.

Such demobilization was not unconditional. It was linked to a reserve system which had been inaugurated over a year earlier. In 1840, Ahmad Bey first permitted young men to reduce their military obligation by purchasing a substitute (the price apparently ranging from 200 to 700 francs).[50] The approximately 800 men who took advantage of this new policy were not immediately demobilized. They were moved to Monastir where they formed the nucleus of the new Third Infantry Regiment. The following year they were demobilized, subject to recall when needed. Then, to avoid being recalled to active duty, many of the wealthier young men purchased a second replacement (or, if necessary, even a third), an approach which was informally countenanced by the beylical authorities.

The commander of the Third Infantry Regiment soon adjusted to the special needs of the new policy. He kept his new recruits under arms only until trained and then transferred them to the reserves. As a result, this was the one Nizami regiment that actually received voluntary enlistments, for young men of means could thereby escape the peril of indefinite service in another regiment.[51]

The reserve system did not work for all regiments. Service in the Fifth and Sixth Infantry Regiments, for example, was for an

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but this measure having been poorly understood and, consequently, poorly executed, there resulted the rumor of a recruitment of 20,000 Nizamis. All men occupied with harvesting the olives sought safety in the mountains from which they are only now beginning to return to their labors." AE Tunis (Politique) 5, no. 142, 28 December 1841.

[49] After a year's service they remained subject to periodic recall. Taverne (Martel), p. 380.

[50] The former figures are given in the Folly report, Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 346; the latter by Taverne (Martel), p. 380.

[51] Taverne (Martel), pp. 379-380.

indefinite period, and each regiment was usually at full strength.[52] In general, however, the idea of reserve units and of purchasing a substitute alleviated somewhat the rigors of the system, at least for all but the poorest subjects. The reserve system was later extended to the Seventh Infantry Regiment created at Porto Farina. The troops there, later under the command of Ahmad's favorite, Salah Shaybub, were subject to six months' service each year, and many avoided even this duty by sending substitutes.[53]

Ahmad Bey stressed religious and patriotic themes in presenting military service to native Tunisians. The beylical letter to the people of the Sahil in December 1841, announcing the new levy of troops, cited the hadith lauding Muslim solidarity, "The relation of each believer to another is like that of a well-constructed wall. Each part supports the other." The same letter also quoted the hadith—later to become popular among Arab nationalists—"Love of the homeland is an aspect of the Faith."[54]

When the Fifth Infantry Regiment, commanded by the native son Muhammad al-Murabit, was organized the following year, Ahmad's message made an even more explicit appeal to local Tunisian pride: this was an army, he said, "completely composed of our sons." There were also references to "love of the homeland and the land . . . our land, where our fathers are buried and our sons will be born," and "Tunisia, our blessed home."[55] The traditional walls dividing state from society hardly fell at the first trumpet blast, but here was indeed a new sound.

B. The Foreign Military Advisers

An essential part of Ahmad's plan called for European military advisers who could train the Nizami troops. The precedent had

[52] Ibid.

[53] Apparently this regiment came to be made up entirely of those who had escaped service elsewhere by purchasing a substitute. Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 164, writes, "At first, when the bey authorized replacement all his best soldiers got themselves replaced or substituted a brother or a sickly relative in their place. This abuse caused the bey to revoke this overly permissive measure not subject to fixed rules. He decided that every man who was replaced would still furnish six months service each year and be enrolled in one of the regiments quartered at Ghar-el-Melh." Also, Bin Diyaf, Biography 365; Taverne (Martel), pp. 380-381; and AE Tunis (Mémoires et Documents) 8, Report M. Tissot, May 1853, pp. 133-134.

[54] Bin Diyaf, 4: 57.

[55] Ibid., pp. 63-64.

been established with the brief mission of two French army officers in 1831, and the use of European military advisers was consistent with the parallel efforts at military reform being made in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire. There were several problems to be faced. Should he rely exclusively on officers from one state? This might give the government of that state too much control over his policies, but if he recruited officers from several European states the resulting confusion of training methods might compromise the original aim. Should the officers be recruited by private contract or should the bey enter into an agreement with a European government to send an appropriate number of training officers? How, precisely, were these foreign officers to be employed? Were they commanding officers responsible for the training of these new military units, or simply advisers?

In the period between the departure of the first two French military advisers in 1831 and the beginning of Ahmad's reign, the Tunisian government had attempted to interest France in sending other military advisers, but to no avail. The beylik had to find its own European military advisers. Two French non-commissioned officers were recruited in late 1832. One left by the following summer. The other, Collin, was destined to remain for over twenty years, playing a major role in training the Nizami artillery.[56] In 1833 a Frenchman whose military credentials are not known (aside from his being the son of a general), and a Polish captain were engaged.[57] Neither had any impact on the training program. A few other inactive or pensioned officers offered their services during these years without reaching agreement on terms of service.[58]

Ahmad Bey soon revived the dormant idea of foreign military advisers. Mustafa Bey's approach to Sir Thomas Reade about obtaining a British military adviser was likely inspired by Ahmad, who had recently assumed command of the Nizami troops. Within weeks after he had succeeded his father, Ahmad had engaged three French military advisers. One, a French non-commissioned officer named Graeff (or Graff) had previously spent two years

[56] Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 179. AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 100, 27 March 1853, lists "Colin" as being still on duty in Tunisia at that time. (The name is spelled Collin by Marty.)

[57] Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 184.

[58] See, for example, the two cases cited in Marty, "Mission militaire française," pp. 180-183.

in Constantinople training Ottoman troops.[59] He, like Collin, proved effective and was to remain in Tunisia throughout the remainder of Ahmad's long reign.[60]

The two other men were adventurers with no military competence. According to French Consul Schwebel their "moral character appeared just as doubtful as their military capacity."[61] They were prime examples of the bey's vulnerability to the fraudulent claims of incompetents and adventurers when he attempted to recruit European military advisers directly.

The British government quickly honored Mustafa Bey's request for a military adviser in the person of a Colonel Considine who arrived in Tunis on 8 April 1838. Considine came with the idea that he would assume command of the small number of foreign advisers already present, and that later he would have the responsibility for procuring other foreign advisers (presumably British). This had certainly been Reade's plan, and the attractive possibilities this suggested had spurred the Foreign Office into action.

Ahmad was quick to realize that in Colonel Considine he was being offered an anti-French foreign policy in addition to a qualified military adviser. Ever fearful of Ottoman pressure, he was disinclined to antagonize the French, whose policy interests so neatly countered those emanating from Istanbul. Also, idealizing Napoleon, Ahmad probably preferred to see his Nizami army trained by French advisers.

Therefore, he temporized with Colonel Considine and refused to give him specific duties. After sixteen futile months in Tunis, Considine submitted his resignation. Ahmad accepted, and Reade's plan for British preponderance in Tunisian military affairs was quietly laid to rest with Considine's departure on 24 August 1839.[62]

[59] AE Tunis (Politique) 3, no. 52, 16 December 1837.

[60] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 100, 27 March 1854, Graeff, Collin, and another non-commissioned officer later engaged, Barbau, did not form part of the official French military mission established in 1842, but they worked effectively with those who did.

[61] AE Tunis (Politique) 3, no. 52, 16 December 1837.

[62] On the Considine interlude see Serres, *Politique turque*, pp. 224-226. Considine's own reactions to the Tunisian army and the diplomatic stalemate in which he was embroiled may be followed in the number of letters and official reports he posted through official channels from Tunis. See, especially, FO 102/4, letters from Colonel Considine dated 30 September 1838, 11 October 1838, and 9 December 1838.

Freed of the diplomatic embarrassment caused by Considine's presence, Ahmad renewed efforts to get European officers on private contracts. Late in 1839 a French merchant, associated in business with the son of Ahmad's minister, Raffo, was charged with the task. This bizarre manner of recruitment was understandable under the circumstances. Tunisia had no diplomatic representation abroad; few Tunisians were sufficiently familiar with Europe either to appraise prospective candidates or persuade them to come to Tunisia; the French merchant chosen for the task was known to at least one member at court; and presumably he could be trusted. Since the merchant was not an official of any foreign government, his selection could be rejected without the diplomatic imbroglio associated with the Considine affair.

The French merchant was able to retain the services of two French officers, an inactive infantry captain (Mamiot) and Chef d'Escadron Belmont, on six-months leave from active duty at Strasbourg, plus a Sardinian subject, a former artillery lieutenant, who because of an "affaire d'honneur" was for the moment unable to return to Piedmont.[63] Belmont arrived first in June 1840 and got the impression from his talks with Raffo and Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' (Ahmad Bey then being away from Tunis with the army) that he was to serve as chief of a military mission, taking the position of the departed Colonel Considine. On August 29, he had his first audience with the bey and learned that he was to have responsibility only for the artillery regiment. This Belmont refused to consider. Two days later, at a second audience, Ahmad Bey intimated that Belmont was eventually to receive "the position left vacant by Colonel Considine," but Belmont was unconvinced. By mid-September 1840 he was having trouble getting permission even to visit Tunisian military installations. A month later, Belmont resigned in spite of French Consul de Lagau's efforts to dissuade him.[64]

[63] AE Tunis (Politique) 4, no. 79, 20 September 1840. The Sardinian, Leonandy, was a cousin of the commander of the French fleet at La Goulette. Perhaps the French merchant heard of Leonandy's availability from his cousin.

[64] See Belmont letters to minister of war dated 29 June 1840, 29 August 1840, 1 September 1840, and 17 September 1840 in Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie no. 47. Also, AE Tunis (Politique) 5, no. 79; 20 September 1840; letter from Belmont to de Lagau dated 18 October 1840; and no. 82, 19 October 1840. Mamiot had left Tunisia soon after his arrival. Leonandy

Ahmad did not disguise his irritation to de Lagau and hinted that he might be obliged to seek his military advisers from other than French sources. De Lagau countered with the offer to help the bey find qualified replacements. Ahmad accepted the idea with obvious pleasure.[65] This meeting, which took place in October 1840, launched the French military mission to Tunisia.

At first de Lagau agreed to obtain two retired French officers and he charged Élève-Consul Delaporte, who happened to be returning to France on leave, with the task. Delaporte was soon convinced that retired officers would not be suitable, and he urged that two officers be relieved from active duty for assignment to Tunisia with the understanding that such special duty would not jeopardize promotions in their own regiments.

The Ministry of War agreed to the proposal, and de Lagau was able to inform Ahmad in July 1841 that the two officers he had requested would be arriving soon. He had not allowed for bureaucratic inertia in the Ministry of War. In spite of later pleas throughout the autumn, de Lagau had to wait until December before he could inform Ahmad that Chef d'Escadron Le Corbeiller and Adjutant Major Gillart had been chosen. The officers arrived in Tunis in January 1842.[66] The official French military mission had begun.

It appeared to be a golden opportunity for French interests in Tunisia. Those inclined to a machiavellian interpretation of modern imperialism might assume that France had finally induced Ahmad Bey to take the bait. Actually, the two governments stumbled into the arrangement, each side managing to convince itself and the other party that the idea was sound. The French delay in providing the officers hardly suggests a long-term plan.

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appears to have remained longer, but since he doesn't figure in later accounts his role must have been minimal.

[65] AE Tunis (Politique) 5, no. 82, 19 October 1840.

[66] AE Tunis (Politique) 5, no. 109, 17 July 1841; no. 120, 28 August 1841; no. 141, 20 December 1841; and 6, no. 147, 22 January 1842. Part of the delay stemmed from the novelty of the assignment. The two men received their orders from the minister of war in October 1841. Then, it was realized that French law required the king's approval if they were to retain their rights "comme officiers et comme citoyens." The king's approval was obtained in November. Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47. Orders dated 15 October 1841. Letter from Ministry of War to the king dated 5 November 1841.

Nor for that matter does the official correspondence between the French minister of foreign affairs and his counterpart in the Ministry of War. When the latter inquired if the two officers chosen were to be given any special instructions, the minister of foreign affairs replied, "For my part I have no other recommendation than that they should keep in touch with the consul general of the king in Tunis and inform him of anything they learn which might be of a nature to interest the government of the king."[67] There was no exhortation to extend French influence, identify potentially pro-French Tunisian officials for later use, or to counter British and Ottoman plans. The minister of foreign affairs had not even planned to give the two French officers any special instructions until specifically requested to do so by his colleague in the Ministry of War.

There was still no clear idea of a French military mission based on an agreement between the two states. For example, when Ahmad decided he needed another officer with the rank of lieutenant colonel to train a new regiment being formed at Muhammadiya, he commissioned Count Raffo to seek out the right man during his visit to France. Ahmad informed Consul de Lagau of the plan and expressed the hope that if Raffo were unsuccessful the French government would help again as he had in obtaining Le Corbeiller and Gillart.[68] Neither de Lagau nor his superiors in Paris felt that Ahmad had violated the earlier agreement by not submitting his requirements directly to the French consul in Tunis. The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs did help by inducing the Ministry of War to release an active duty officer to serve for an indefinite period as military instructor in Tunisia.[69]

These negotiations between the two French ministries leading to the assignment of one Lieutenant Colonel Laveleine-Maubeuge produced another step in the direction of a more systematically organized military mission. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs, noting that Laveleine-Maubeuge would be the highest-ranking French officer serving in Tunisia, suggested to the Ministry of War that he be recognized as chief of the mission for purposes

[67] Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47. Letter from minister of foreign affairs to minister of war, 21 October 1841.

[68] AE Tunis (Politique) 7, no. 167, 29 January 1843.

[69] Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47. Letters from minister of foreign affairs to minister of war dated 17 March 1843 and 6 April 1843.

of achieving its goals, defined as "the organization and military education of Tunisian troops." The dismal example of the earlier French military mission to Persia was cited as evidence that a commanding officer was needed.[70] The Ministry of War agreed, and Laveleine-Maubeuge arrived in Tunis armed with a letter to the other two French officers making it clear that he was in charge and that the three French officers detached from active service for duty as military instructors in Tunisia were expected to act as a group.

The French military mission had now attained the level of formal organization and functional definition it was to keep until disbanded, by mutual consent of both governments, in 1855 soon after Ahmad Bey's death.[71] (French military assistance survived after that period only in the person of de Taverne, who became director of Bardo Military School.) Henceforth there was always a ranking officer in command of the mission, and this situation seems to have been acceptable to the bey. Nevertheless, Ahmad continued to assign each French officer to specific training tasks, and there is no evidence of any initiative or control left to the military mission in determining training priorities or requesting additional personnel.[72]

In later years Ahmad decided from time to time that he needed another officer of some designated speciality, and he submitted

[70] Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47. Letter from Ministry of Foreign Affairs to Ministry of War dated 2 June 1843. In 1839 the Iranian government requested French military instructors to replace a British military contingent withdrawn following the severance of diplomatic relations. French officers in Iran soon aroused Russian enmity, and in 1843 the Iranian government terminated the contracts, in most cases with outstanding arrears in pay. The French government, having been faced with the complaints of these officers returning from Iran, wanted a more orderly and manageable relationship with the Tunisian government. (Mr. Colin Meredith, who is engaged in a study of Iran during this period, provided the above information.)

[71] Marty, "Mission militaire française," pp. 206-207; AE Tunis (Politique) 15, no. 6, 16 July 1855.

[72] For example, Colonel Walsin-Esterhazy (uncle of the Major Walsin-Esterhazy later caught up in the notorious Dreyfus affair) discovered to his dismay soon after arriving to assume command of the military mission that he had only the right to advise, not command. Further, instead of overall supervision for the instruction of all Nizami infantry he was given responsibility for the two regiments at Muhammadiya under General Murabit. See his letters to the Ministry of War dated 18 September and 29 September 1847 in Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47.

his request to the French government who usually produced an officer of the specialization sought. Yet Ahmad never completely abandoned the idea of having his own officials participate in the recruitment. For example, in November 1847, Jules de Lesseps,[73] Tunisian diplomatic agent in Paris, wrote directly to the French minister of foreign affairs explaining that the bey had charged him with procuring an engineering officer to direct the military school, and a mining engineer. De Lesseps requested the minister's help in contacting the French Ministries of War and Public Works.[74]

The three-man French military mission was destined to expand slightly in the years following 1843, and for most of the time until the mission was disbanded in 1855 there was an average of four or five officers and one or two non-commissioned officers[75] (in addition to the French subjects such as Graeff and Collin, who remained in service of the bey on private contract). A loosely organized group of officers and men, who never numbered more than ten, could hardly achieve radical transformations no matter how competent certain individuals might have been.

Other problems also restricted the mission's efficiency. During the less than twelve-year period when the military mission may be said to have been in full operation (i.e., from the arrival of Laveleine-Maubeuge as commanding officer) there were five different chiefs of mission. Only one, Colonel Walsin-Esterhazy, had a reasonably long tour of duty (five years) as principal officer.[76] The others served for less than two years and Colonel Folly served hardly more than a single year. Other officers provided more continuity. De Taverne served uninterruptedly from

[73] Jules de Lesseps was the son of the French consul to Tunis from 1827 to 1832, Mathieu de Lesseps, and the younger brother of Ferdinand de Lesseps of Suez Canal fame. See Serres, *Politique turque*, p. 335, and Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 302. He was the first appointee to the new Tunisian Diplomatic Agency established in 1846.

[74] The letter, dated 27 November 1847, is contained in AE Tunis (Politique) 10.

[75] Most of the names have been conveniently listed in Marty, "Mission militaire française," *Revue Tunisienne* 22 (1936), pp. 171-207, and 23-24, pp. 309-346.

[76] The French Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47, contain a letter in French from the bey dated 8 Safar 1268/2 December 1851, in which Ahmad acknowledges his satisfaction with the work of Esterhazy and requests that he not be transferred. Ahmad stressed the argument that changes in the military instructors were disruptive of the training effort.

his arrival in February 1847 until his death in Tunis in 1861; Gillart for a decade from 1842 to 1852; and Lion, the commanding officer at the time the mission was disbanded, for almost five years. There was the even longer tenure of Graeff and Collin who, as we have seen, were not technically part of the official military mission, having been privately engaged. Overbalancing these few was a much larger number who stayed for only a year or so, scarcely long enough to familiarize themselves with Tunisia and its customs, before returning to their regiments in France.

It was not always easy to obtain the best French officers for service in Tunisia. The concept of a military training mission as a significant instrument of state policy was far from clearly established at this time, and most of the French officers feared that the Tunisian tour of duty would cause them to fall behind in the competition for promotion. These concerns about promotion and pay filled the annual reports of the commanding officer of the mission to the Ministry of War, almost to the exclusion of any information on the mission's ostensible task—the training of Tunisian soldiers.

Nor were those officers necessarily mistaken in their fears that service in Tunisia might cause them to lose an opportunity for advancement. Even officers in the prestigious *bureaux arabes* in Algeria risked a slower pace of promotion than their age-peers who stayed with their regiments.[77] If these *bureaux arabes* officers, who served as the eyes and ears of the army on French territory (Algeria) and at a time (the 1840s) when only Algeria offered combat duty, risked being overlooked for promotion in favor of line officers, how much more perilous was the position of French officers serving a minor foreign ruler. Gillart, for example, impressed Colonel Folly as an excellent officer, and perhaps this is precisely why he tried for so long to get transferred back to regular duty in France.

Officers in the mission needed to possess diplomatic skill to be

[77] On the difficulties of promotion in the *bureaux arabes*, see Xavier Yacono, *Les Bureaux arabes et l'évolution des genres de vie indigenes dans l'Ouest du Tell Algérois* (Paris, 1953), p. 80. Admittedly, as Yacono reveals, a large proportion of the *bureaux arabes* officers later served as generals, but this is perhaps because they were an elite group, and the more successful did not stay too long in the *bureaux arabes*. See also the excellent general statement by Vincent Monteil, "Les Bureaux arabes au Maghreb (1833-1961)," *Esprit*, November 1961.

completely effective. Some such as de Taverne seem to have qualified admirably. Others left something to be desired. The first chief of mission, Laveleine-Maubeuge, was so difficult that when it came time to choose his replacement, the French minister of foreign affairs asked his colleague in the Ministry of War to select a man "of a character which could be recommended, sufficiently conciliatory to avoid misunderstandings and disputes with the other French officers also on mission in Tunisia, and sufficiently prudent to confine himself to his assigned prerogatives and duties."[78]

The language barrier also limited the efficiency of the military mission. Except for de Taverne, who became proficient in both written and spoken Arabic,[79] none of the officers in the French military mission seems to have acquired more than a limited working vocabulary of colloquial Arabic.[80] The language barrier was even more formidable since very few of the Tunisian officers knew enough French to communicate with the instructors in that language.

The actual accomplishments of the French military mission can easily be exaggerated. It is a tribute to the handful of competent officers such as de Taverne, Gillart, Lion, and Campenon[81] that a few new ideas and changes managed to strike root. Yet, if Ahmad's use of European military advisers was a limited success in immediate, practical terms, the plan nevertheless had great symbolic and long-term significance. Each military adviser brought to Tunisia was a living demonstration of Ahmad's willingness to innovate and his determination to learn from Europe. And their presence in Tunisia either cowed or convinced a few others in the Tunisian political class to follow Ahmad's lead. This same judgment of a short-term, practical failure but a major,

[78] Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47. Letter from minister of foreign affairs to minister of war, dated 19 June 1841.

[79] Martel, "L'Armée d'Ahmed Bey," p. 376.

[80] The Sardinian Calligaris who first directed the Bardo Military School became an accomplished Arabist, but he was not even informally part of the French military mission. It can be assumed that Graeff and Collin, who served for over twenty years in Tunisia, mastered spoken Arabic.

[81] Campenon came to Tunisia in 1852 to direct Bardo Military School. He departed two years later to fight in the Crimean War. He returned to Tunisia a decade later to direct again the military school from 1862 to 1864. He was later minister of war at three different times in the 1880s and, from 1883 until his death in 1891, a senator. See Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 116.

long-term, formative influence applies to another of Ahmad Bey's initiatives—the Bardo Military School.

C. The Bardo Military School

Ahmad Bey realized early in his reign the need for a special school to train a cadre of Nizami army officers, and in March 1840 the military school at Bardo was created.[82] Very little information has survived concerning the decision to establish the military school,[83] but Ahmad knew that modern European armies relied on prestigious officer-training schools such as the French Saint Cyr. Further, he could be guided by the efforts of Egypt's Muhammad Ali and Sultan Mahmud, both of whom had established such schools (in addition to many others), staffed with foreign specialists.

As director for the new school Ahmad Bey chose Luigi Calligaris, a Sardinian subject who had previously served as instructor in the Ottoman army. He had also visited Tunisia earlier in 1834 and written a brief account of his findings (cited several times in Part One). Calligaris, just thirty-two years old at the time of his appointment with the rank of colonel, proved to be a happy choice for the job. He plunged enthusiastically into the challenge of learning Arabic and was soon engaged in the task of providing Arabic translations for several elementary European military works. In 1842 he began his biography in Arabic of Napoleon which was published in Paris fourteen years later.[84] Calligaris was destined to remain as director of Bardo Military School until 1850 when he left to devote full time to his Arabic studies. In 1863, he became professor of Arabic at the University of Turin.[85] Whatever other problems the students of this school might have had,

[82] Several later accounts state that Bardo Military School was founded in 1838. The source of this error, or confusion, is not clear, but there can be no doubt that the school came into existence in 1840. See Bin Diyaf, 4: 36; and FO 102/7, no. 2, 3 March 1840.

[83] The catalogue of Tunisian National Archives lists three dossiers dealing with Bardo Military School. (Note also Mantran, *Inventaire*, p. viii.) Unfortunately, all three are missing. It is to be hoped that they have been misplaced and will eventually be discovered.

[84] Col. C.D.H.L. Calligaris, *Kitab sirat Napoleon al-Awwal (Histoire de l'Empereur Napoleon ler)* (Paris, 1856). Arabic text with introduction in French.

[85] Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 116 (citing Marty, "Mission militaire française," p. 317); Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, pp. 95-96.

they could at least communicate in their own language with its director. A few other foreign specialists (at most four, it would seem) and a Tunisian 'alim in charge of Quranic studies for the school, Shaykh Mahmud Qabadu, completed the teaching staff.[86]

The number of students must have ranged between forty and sixty.[87] They usually entered the school in early adolescence and remained in attendance for an extended but apparently somewhat flexible period ranging between six and nine years.[88] The curriculum of the school covered "what the Nizami soldier would need of the sciences such as engineering, surveying, mathematics and the like."[89] Understandably, the level of instruction was rudimentary. The teachers were dealing with a student body whose previous formal education was either quite limited or of an entirely different scholarly tradition.

Daumas, always severe on the Tunisian efforts, noted that a certain Captain Ali Mamluk, ordnance officer under General Murabit at Muhammadiya, had spent nine years at the Bardo school. "He has learned under the direction of an Italian *colonello, in partibus*, some idea of the French language. He has studied geography and the sciences, but all this knowledge is in such a chaotic state in his poor head that he mixes up one thing with the other."[90]

De Taverne was not overly sanguine about the Bardo graduates, either. Those who went on to line officer duty tended to forget much of what they had learned, but the great majority of graduates usually served as secretaries, aides-de-camp, or interpreters for general officers. Much of their education remained

[86] A later source listing the school's staff a few years after Ahmad's reign mentioned five persons: de Taverne (who had succeeded Calligaris); a M. Soulie, professor of French and Arabic; M. de Serre, professor of mathematics; and a captain and a lieutenant for the military arts. J. Henry Dunant, *Notice sur la Régence de Tunis* (Geneva, 1858), p. 81.

[87] The British consular report announcing the opening of the school spoke of forty students. FO 102/7, no. 2, 3 March 1840. De Taverne (Martel), p. 394, mentions fifty to sixty.

[88] Dunant, *Notice*, p. 81, speaks of a fixed period of six years but Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 99, refers to a captain who spent nine years at the school. Since students entered at different ages (Bin Diyaf, 4: 37), it is reasonable to assume that the period of time each student remained before graduation varied with his age and perhaps his academic progress as well.

[89] Bin Diyaf, 4: 36. Taverne (Martel), p. 394, lists as subjects taught "Arabic, French, Italian, surveying, drawing, arithmetic, temporary fortifications, elementary geometry and several other sciences."

[90] Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 99.

juxtaposed and unabsorbed as "*une bizarre nomenclature d'expressions techniques.*" Even so, the Bardo graduates did possess "a real superiority in reading and writing of their language" over other officers, and they were able to perform the other simple military techniques learned. The bey, de Taverne continued, was aware of the poor results thus far realized, and soon after Calligaris left he solicited a French officer to direct the school.[91]

This officer was Captain Campenon, who stayed for two years, from 1852 to 1854. Then the direction of the school was assumed by de Taverne himself, who remained in charge until his death in 1861. Soon after his death the bey—now Muhammad al-Sadiq—requested that Campenon return to assume yet again direction of the Bardo school. Thus, by this pragmatic test, Ahmad Bey's military school at Bardo may well be accounted one of his more enduring successes. The school survived the fiscal retrenchment and anti-Western orientation of Ahmad's successor, Muhammad Bey, and it continued in operation during the following reign as well.

The military school at Bardo had an important influence in ways not directly planned by its founder. Most of the early recruits to the school were members in good standing of the existing political elite. Daux claims that Ahmad sent to the school sons of first families—Turk, Moor, and Arab; and of the four prominent graduates whom Bin Diyaf cites to illustrate the importance of the school and its student body, three were mamluks and the other bore a name which could well link him to an old Hafsid political family.[92] The graduates of the school not only moved on to leading roles in the army, but many were destined to serve as ministers and in other important civil functions.

Bardo Military School may be seen as successor to the old mamluk school system. Both were designed to train a small elite corps of leaders. The old mamluk training system was hopelessly out of date by the middle years of the nineteenth century, and yet an institution was badly needed to develop a comparable body of trained public servants held together by an *esprit de corps.*

Judged from this perspective, Bardo Military School appears in a more favorable light. The best of the old mamluk *esprit* and

[91] Taverne (Martel), pp. 394-395.

[92] Daux, "Achmed-Pacha," p. 357; Bin Diyaf, 4: 37. The four were Husayn (Heussein), Rustam (Roustam), Jum'at al-Qarqani, later a leading naval officer, and Abu Hafs al-Haj 'Umar, one of the leading officials in the Ministry of War.

cohesiveness was maintained during a trying transitional period. The elite of the old mamluk and Turkish class were given the preference they considered their due by having access—to all appearances, priority—to the school. The new curriculum and the formal break with the old military training system made it easier to integrate a few native Tunisians into the school. The schooling itself, for all its weaknesses, did expose a handful of Tunisians destined for high military and political rank to a European language and to European ways of doing things. They became accordingly more capable of coping with the European world that was attracting and threatening them. Also, the existence of an institution such as Bardo served to assure that the new reformist ideas would develop *within* the existing governmental structure and not in opposition to it.

In the years following Ahmad Bey's reign, a significant proportion of the Tunisian officials supporting constitutional government and forming a reformist clique around Khayr al-Din were linked to Bardo Military School. Logical successor to the mamluk schooling system, Bardo was also the predecessor to Sadiqi College, founded in 1875.[93]

In fulfillment of its original, specific purpose the school was barely adequate. Yet the importance of innovations is revealed in the ultimate result rather than the immediate purpose. Especially is this the case where one people is borrowing the ideas and artifacts of another, for the "chaotic state of one's poor head" and the "bizarre nomenclature d'expressions techniques" emerge only slowly into a discernible pattern.

D. Rise and Fall of the Ancillary Industries

In creating Western-style industries servicing military needs, the Tunisia of Ahmad Bey took the path blazed by the Ottoman

[93] The crucial role of the military school in Tunisian reformist thought is emphasized by Shaykh Muhammad al-Fadil ibn 'Ashur in his *Al-Haraka al-Adabiya wa al-Fikriya fi Tunis* (Cairo, 1956), pp. 14-17, but he is inclined to give almost equal importance to reformist currents emanating from Zitouna, and to view Shaykh Mahmud Qabadu as the linchpin bringing together the religious and political groups later to rally under the leadership of Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi. We are not convinced that Qabadu played such an important role and are even more skeptical about the influence of reformist 'ulama during this period. The stimulus for change came, in our view, almost exclusively from the political class; this was only plausible, for they were the group most immediately exposed to the outside challenge.

Empire and Egypt. The actual results in Tunisia were modest, but a similar impulse informed the efforts in all three countries. Just as with the rulers in Istanbul and Cairo, Ahmad thought primarily in terms of military self-sufficiency. His was a race against the clock. There was so much catching up to do in military modernization that he felt compelled to borrow European techniques, materiel, and even to rely on European military advisers. At the same time these emergency measures compromised his independence. Where would he be if his new modern army, trained to use French tactics, supplies, and weapons were suddenly denied access to needed materiel following some diplomatic *démarche*? Ahmad's efforts at industrialization (if that name is not too misleadingly grandiose) may be seen as a partial hedge against loss of independence stemming from his reliance on foreign personnel, tactics, and materiel.

The state-initiated industries created during Ahmad's reign were all linked to the military. Powder mills were set up at the Qasba in the heart of Tunis and in El-Djem. Tanneries and factories to fashion saddles and other leather needs of the army were created at Muhammadiya. A mill and a bakery to service the army were located in the environs of Tunis. The venerable Hafsia foundry in Tunis served as the site of a would-be Westernized cannon foundry, under European supervision. Ahmad also created a small arms factory, located next to the artillery barracks of Sidi Ismail. There, under the control of French officers and the direct supervision of European craftsmen, Ahmad "installed companies of state workers with their special officers, the workers and officers drawn by him from the different guilds of the country." The small arms factory produced pistols, carbines, swords, bayonets and axes.[94]

The most ambitious project of all was the creation of a textile factory at Tebourba to provide the army's uniforms and clothing requirements. In all, the industrial effort during Ahmad's reign brought to Tunisia over a dozen European technical experts to assume important supervisory functions, plus several times that number of skilled European workers who served as foremen providing on-the-job training to the Tunisian workers.[95] The ambi-

[94] A. Daux, "Achmed-Pacha," pp. 357-368.

[95] For details on the European personnel Ahmad brought for these new industries, see Daux, "Achmed-Pacha," pp. 357-358; Ganiage, *Origines*, pp.

tious but ill-fated plans for ship building and servicing at Porto Farina (Ghar al-Milh) and La Goulette, plus the modernization of the naval arsenal at the latter (begun late in Ahmad's reign) should also be noted.[96]

The above list reveals the narrow range of Ahmad Bey's industrial interests. Further, he was an indifferent planner. Projects begun in a burst of enthusiasm would later die of neglect. The Tebourba textile mill epitomized the weaknesses in Ahmad's economic ventures.

Tebourba, a modest village twenty miles west of Tunis, on the site of the Roman Thuburbo Minus, was chosen for the new textile factory because a dam could be constructed across the Medjerda River to provide water power. The dam and the factory were built under the direction of a French engineer.[97] Machinery was imported from Europe,[98] and with the opening of the factory, the French engineer and his small staff of foremen brought from textile mills in France set out to produce the clothing needs of the Tunisian army, while at the same time training Tunisian workmen in European industrial techniques.

Captain Kennedy, who visited the Tebourba factory in 1845, left an optimistic report both of its existing performance and its future prospects. Work on the project had begun about eighteen months earlier. The building was now about two-thirds com-

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117-118 (plus a reference to material in the Tunisian National Archives); Marty, "Mission militaire française," pp. 309-311.

[96] Marty, "Mission militaire française," pp. 309-311; Martial de Pradel de Lampse, "La Station navale française de Tunis," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 4 (1956). The latter article relies almost exclusively on material available in the former.

[97] M. Benoit, who remained in Tunisia serving Ahmad until he and a Jewish official of the bey were assassinated by brigands in 1854 while returning from Muhammadiya to Tunis. AE Tunis (Politique) 14, 17 April 1854; Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, pp. 145-153.

[98] Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 117, mentions that seventy looms were imported from England. Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, p. 176, who visited the factory, claims that all the machinery was French save the looms, which were of simple Tunisian construction. English or European looms may have been imported after Kennedy's visit in 1845. That the other machinery was of French origin is also implicit in AE Tunis (Commerciale) 52, no. 65, 8 April 1838, where it is noted that the bey had engaged a French commercial house, Fabre & Guiraud, to import from France all that would be required for cloth manufacture.

pleted. The French director and six European supervisors guided the work of 400 Tunisian men, women, and children, and the number of Tunisian employees was expected to double when the factory was completed. The Tunisian workers received the equivalent of four to six pence which, adjusted for local food prices, was comparable to wages of European operators. The major problem faced by the European staff comes as no surprise to the reader familiar with the history of other peasant societies on the threshold of the industrial revolution. The European supervisors told Kennedy that they were hard put to keep the Tunisians at work, for they were inclined to be a bit lazy. The confrontation between time measured in seasons or by the clock, between conforming to the demands of nature or of the man-made assembly line was beginning to take shape in Tunisia.

The finished product, Kennedy observed, was a strong cloth, well-adapted to military use. Ahmad Bey was very interested in the scheme, and visited the factory himself. There seemed to be little doubt, Kennedy concluded, that the factory would be a success.[99]

Bin Diyaf may be called upon to give the disappointing sequel to the Tebourba textile factory project. Ahmad Bey had, indeed, visited the factory when it opened in 1844. Muhammad bin 'Ayad had been in charge of the project. This was the first factory of its kind in Tunisia. Later, the bey, losing interest, allowed the Tebourba textile factory to decline. Bin Diyaf concluded:

"If only he (Ahmad Bey) had considered that the greatest profit was in clothing his soldiers and the people of his country by this factory so that the value of cloth which is bought from others would remain in the country not to mention the benefits gained by those living near the factory and those working in it, all of which would increase the country's prosperity and stimulate the local markets, etc., then he would not have lost interest. Even giving the factory (free and without paying rent) to a merchant to produce the cloth would have been better than to let it remain idle, for it was built at great cost. However, the traits of ruler of the Maghrib tend toward great profits rapidly gained without thought of the future. This is unlike the Frankish nations. They spend money for a profit likely to be realized only years later. In their activities they are concerned with the benefit to be

[99] Kennedy, *Algeria and Tunis*, pp. 175-177.

derived from this approach, and of their ability to dispense with the need to rely on others. This is one of the greatest factors in their prosperity and wealth."[100]

Ahmad Bey's supporting industries for his military plans registered a few spotty, short-term gains and then declined, leaving as legacy considerable economic loss. Not even a small cadre of technically skilled workers, who might have been able to assure that subsequent attempts would be more successful, survived.

Yet, before dismissing Ahmad Bey's short-lived industrialization program it might be useful to recall Bin Diyaf's appraisal of the Tebourba project. Bin Diyaf had drawn several valid conclusions from the experience. On a more general level it can be seen that as a result of the dialectical process in which Tunisia confronted Europe—a process Ahmad Bey accelerated—Bin Diyaf had ceased being a traditional Muslim intellectual. He, too, had become a Westernizer. He, plus a small body of kindred souls, absorbed, built upon, and improved the Westernizing ideas first advanced by Ahmad Bey. At this rarefied level one can discern the influence of Ahmad Bey's economic plans—a rudimentary idea of reform from the top filtered down to, and in the process was refined by, a small number of Tunisians, all still within the established political elite.

Ahmad Bey's feeble industrial efforts created no multiplier effect among Tunisian workers and peasants. Among a small but ultimately influential group at the top, something survived and even grew.

E. The Navy

"One can only wonder what became of those proud sailors who forty years ago plowed and plundered the Mediterranean."

Captain de Taverne (1853)[101]

At a time when Ahmad Bey was straining Tunisia's resources to the breaking point in an effort at military modernization, the Tunisian fleet was in parlous condition. Organized European navies serving expanding European economies had made the traditional privateer as anachronistic as the galley. Tunisia ceased to

[100] Bin Diyaf, 4: 78.

[101] Martel, "L'Armée d'Ahmed Bey," p. 396.

attract potential sailors from abroad. The small number of native Tunisians born to the sea, as the inhabitants of the Kerkenna Islands and other points along the Sahil, could be more readily absorbed in fishing and minor cabotage trade. The absence of a manpower reserve that might have prodded Ahmad into a greater interest in the sea was matched by an unattractive economic prospect for either navy or merchant marine. Tunisia could not afford to purchase from abroad major ships of the line and did not have the technical competence to build them in her own docks. And, once the European powers had opted for large, regular navies and agreed to ban privateering, there was no prospect for smaller, faster ships that earlier could have made profitable hit-and-run raids against unprotected merchantmen.

Thus, by the early nineteenth century an effective navy was too expensive, and a more modest investment in naval strength offered no real advantage. Whereas improvement in the army could provide an immediate boon of increased internal security and at least offer some deterrence against a more powerful foreign invader, a small increase in naval forces provided no such compensation.

To complete the vicious circle, Tunisia could not profitably expand (or, more nearly, create) its merchant marine. A thriving merchant marine might have justified increased expenditure for a protecting navy (as happened in the early history of the United States), but Tunisia was unable to compete, in terms of lower cost and greater efficiency, with an expanding Europe at any of the crucial points—shipbuilding, distribution, manpower, or the availability of credit facilities. Everything conspired to turn Ahmad's attention away from the sea.

The classic inertia of state bureaucracies, capable of keeping an anachronism alive for a few extra generations, guided naval policy during this period. Foreign estimates of actual naval strength for the years 1833, 1834, 1839, 1845, and 1848 indicate that there was little increase in the total number of ships on duty either in the decade or so before Ahmad came to the throne or during the years of his rule.[102]

Efforts to utilize Ghar al-Milh (Porto Farina) as a major base

[102] Temple, *Excursions*, 1: 244; Élève-Consul Lesparda, "Notice sur la Régence de Tunis," attachment to AE Tunis (Commerciale) 51, no. 49, 27 June 1834; AE Tunis (Politique) 4, attachment to no. 37, 1 October 1839; FO 102/32, pp. 39-40; Richardson in FO 102/29, p. 154.

were frustrated by the continued silting up of the harbor, and instead Ghar al-Milh became the headquarters for a new military regiment.

A modest naval pride still existed, for in 1842 Ahmad presented the sultan a fully armed and equipped new corvette made in Tunisia.[103] This was at a time when Ahmad was resisting Ottoman pressures that he apply the Tanzimat reforms in Tunisia. The gift of the corvette, plus money and jewels to an estimated total of one million francs, was burdensome in Tunisia's straitened financial circumstances. Perhaps he chose this gift to emphasize Tunisia's claim to modernity. Ahmad's naval program was more nearly of symbolic than substantive importance.

In 1846 the French government presented Ahmad Bey with the vessel that had carried him to France for his state visit, the 160-ton steamship *Dante*. During that state visit the idea of a modest French naval mission, comparable to the existing French military mission, was also broached. The French commander of the *Dante*, one Captain Joseph Medoni, apparently got on well with Ahmad Bey and was interested in such an assignment. Fate, however, continued to plague all maritime efforts. The *Dante* ran aground during a storm at La Marsa on the return trip from France (fortunately the bey had taken another ship) and was decommissioned.[104] Roughly a year later, the French decided to offer another ship in its place, but delivery was delayed by the February 1848 revolution in France. Finally, Captain Medoni arrived with the *Minos* in June 1848. Medoni remained on duty in Tunisia until his premature death in 1853. He was replaced later that year, after some French hesitation, by a Captain Theobald Alliez. The idea of a French naval mission was brought to an abrupt end two months after the death of Ahmad Bey when his successor, Muhammad Bey, requested its withdrawal as an economy measure.[105] The brief French naval mission had been no more than a gesture to affirm French presence in Tunisia.[106]

[103] Bin Diyaf, 4: 58; Serres, *Politique turque*, pp. 276-277.

[104] De Pradel de Lampse, "La Station navale française de Tunis," *Cahiers de Tunisie*, 4 (1956), p. 353; Bin Diyaf, 4: 110; FO 102/27, no. 1, 2 January 1847.

[105] De Pradel de Lampse, pp. 353-357.

[106] Very little precise information has been uncovered on the French naval mission. De Pradel de Lampse's article is only a brief note. Perhaps the French Archives Centrales de la Marine (which have not been consulted) would offer more detail, but it is likely to be fleeting and incom-

Ahmad may have sensed a general Tunisian turning away from the sea. The perceptive Captain de Taverne reported that in the rare voyages still undertaken, the Tunisian captains were content to maintain order on board while leaving the control of the ship to Sardinian or Italian pilots. The Tunisians seemed to have lost interest in the art of navigation, almost as if they had given up in this activity where they had been bested by Europeans. This default of native leadership, just as in the army, largely frustrated any effective moves toward reform. The raw material was not lacking. "As for the sailor," de Taverne concluded, "if he is no longer today what the great school of piracy where he was raised and formed used to make of him, he remains, just as the soldier, agile, sober, adroit, patient, hardened to weariness and privation by the severity of the life he has always led; and he asks, just as his predecessor, only that he be well managed and led."[107]

Naval history during Ahmad's reign is thus dominated by symbols rather than substantive reality. The story is best conveyed in the gestures of man and of fate—a gift to the sultan or to the bey, a silting harbor, or a storm-induced shipwreck; and this brief account is most appropriately concluded by one more such gesture, the building of the ill-fated frigate, *Ahmadiya*, at La Goulette. Work on the frigate began in 1841 under the direction of a French engineer. Although advised that a ship of the size planned could not leave its basin and clear the straits leading from the lake of Tunis to the sea, Ahmad urged the builders to press on in their work, insisting that the channel linking the lake at La Goulette to the sea could be widened later. The ship was launched with due ceremony on January 2, 1853 in the presence of the convalescent Ahmad Bey (who had suffered his first stroke the previous July) and his ministers. The bey was so heartened by the launching that the ship was referred to as "Ahmad's cure." Yet nothing had been done about enlarging the opening to the sea. The ship remained imprisoned in its basin "like a wooden island."[108] Years later the useless vessel, having never put to sea, was destroyed.

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plete, commensurate with the relative lack of interest shown by both the French and the Tunisian authorities.

[107] Martel, "L'Armée de'Ahmed Bey," pp. 396-397.

[108] Bin Diyaf, 4: 142-143. The general story found in most European sources is that the builders had neglected to cover the hull in copper and it was consumed by shipworms. See, for example, Narcisse Faucon, *La Tunisie avant et depuis l'occupation française*, 2 vols. (Paris, 1893), 1: 188. This version is repeated by, among others, Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 128, and

Another symbol. Another absurdity. And to make matters worse, there she lay, exposed to the supercilious inspection of Europeans. Bin Diyaf observed bitterly, "When European visitors came to see the ship at La Goulette they were amazed and they laughed."[109] Bin Diyaf's sense of shame and disappointment was, of course, also a symbol. This was the positive side of an otherwise disappointing story.

F. The Expeditionary Force to Crimea

Ahmad Bey suffered his first stroke in July 1852. By January 1853 the stricken ruler was obliged to heed the advice of his own ministers, as well as the leading consuls, and disband virtually all of his Nizami army to avoid bankruptcy. At that time it might have seemed that a disappointed Ahmad, broken in health, would withdraw from public affairs and attempt no further initiatives.

Then came the Crimean War, pitting Russia against the Ottoman Empire (October 1853), with the latter picking up as allies Britain, France (from March 1854) and eventually Sardinia (January 1855). The sudden opportunity to play a military role in international affairs rekindled briefly the fire that had once burned so intensely in a younger, healthier, less jaded Ahmad Bey. He could send an expeditionary force to fight alongside the sultan's troops, expressing thereby his deep sense of Islamic solidarity. He could do so without alarming his dangerous neighbor, France, for this nation—*mirabile dictu*—was now an ally of the Ottoman Empire. Sending his Nizami units to a foreign war would show the world that he, too, was a modern ruler. Tunisia would join the responsible powers that decided issues of great moment. And the entire effort could be presented as a friendly gesture to all three of the powers whose policies described the limits of Tunisian maneuverability—France, Britain, and the Ottoman Empire.

Ahmad was not immediately free to aid the sultan following the outbreak of war. For a time it looked as if the old restraints growing out of Franco-British-Ottoman rivalries would limit Tunisian initiative. During the latter months of 1853 the French consul, Beclard, actively resisted any idea of a Tunisian expedition, to such extent that Ahmad had cause to complain both to

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de Pradel de Lampse, "La Station navale française de Tunis," p. 354. Daumas's account, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, pp. 102-103, accords with that of Bin Diyaf.

[109] Bin Diyaf, 4: 143.

his own ministers and to the British consul.[110] Beclard, intent on implementing the almost instinctive French reaction to any Tunisian-Ottoman rapprochement, failed to appreciate the new situation created by the Crimean War.

The French government had to show greater friendliness to its new ally, the Ottoman Empire, and the idea of a Tunisian expeditionary force to fight alongside the Ottoman army began to gain favor in Paris. As early as August 1853, before the formal outbreak of hostilities, Consul Beclard received instructions to moderate his position. By March 1854, he was asked to determine whether Tunisia would be able to furnish a contingent for Crimea and, if so, how effective it might be.[111] Beclard presented a pessimistic forecast, but at this juncture such a gloomy analysis could only temper French expectations; it could not change French policy.

There remained the problem of financing the expedition. No great improvement in the Tunisian government's fiscal position had taken place since January 1853, when the Nizami army had been disbanded to avoid bankruptcy. Squeezing more taxes out of the hard-pressed Tunisians looked unpromising. The British and French governments might facilitate loans in Europe, but they would be difficult to negotiate, and the terms onerous.

Ahmad's response to the financial problem was in the best tradition of the autocratic ruler. Unlearned in fiscal affairs, impatient with seemingly petty details that frustrated his will, and eager to dramatize his personal role, Ahmad hit upon the plan that would immediately get things moving. He gathered together his private collection of jewels and precious metals for sale. His chief minister, Mustafa Khaznadar, also contributed his own private collection, even taking the jewelry of his wife, the bey's sister. This hoard was given to Khayr al-Din to sell in Europe. At the same time Khayr al-Din was instructed to negotiate loans with European bankers. In this way Ahmad was able to raise from his own resources an estimated two million francs.[112] It was surely one of the last major wars in which participation by one belligerent was made possible by the ruler's contribution of his private wealth.[113]

[110] Bin Diyaf, 4: 156; FO 102/44, no. 24, Confidential, 18 August 1853.

[111] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 100, 27 March 1854.

[112] Bin Diyaf, 4: 156-157.

[113] There were also major efforts to obtain more revenue at home through the venerable emergency means of advanced collection of taxes and ad-

After having secretly arranged for Khayr al-Din to sell the jewelry and negotiate loans in Europe, Ahmad summoned his ministers. Addressing them from his sickbed, he said: "I have decided not to stay within the limits of previous custom. . . . I shall send troops with all they require of supplies and material."

His ministers demurred. "This would be an excellent idea if only we could," they told him, "but you know the straitened circumstances we are in." Ahmad, without informing the ministers of his private plan to raise money, responded grandly, "One must rely on God."[114] The stricken captain was back at the helm, and—it would seem—thoroughly enjoying himself.

On 10 May 1854 Aḥmad announced publicly his plan to aid the sultan.[115] Two months later he sent the governor of the Sahil, Muhammad Khaznadar, on a mission to Istanbul to make the necessary arrangements. Muhammad Khaznadar returned in November after having met with the Ottoman authorities and (an interesting sidelight on the rudimentary administrative apparatus) contracted with a group of Djerban merchants living in Istanbul to provide the Expeditionary Corps with its needs while in the field.[116]

Meanwhile army mobilization had been proceeding with amazing speed. On July 20-21 the first contingent of troops set sail and by 5 August 1854 an estimated 6,600 men, 722 horses and twelve cannons were enroute.[117] The original plan had been to send approximately 10,000 troops. Reinforcements were sent

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vanced sales. See AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 110, 7 June 1854 and no. 115, 7 July 1854. The latter dispatch claimed that these measures had produced by that date 4,685,250 piastres—estimated to be just enough to cover the first expenses of equipping and sending the troops to the front. The estimated two million francs obtained from the sale of the bey's jewelry did not finance the expedition. Indeed, the jewels were not even sold until after the first troops had arrived in Turkey, but well before that time European bankers and consuls knew of Khayr al-Din's mission. Knowledge that the bey's private fortune was committed to the enterprise probably sufficed to open up needed lines of credit.

[114] Bin Diyaf, 4: 156.

[115] FO 102/46, no. 7, 10 May 1854; AE Tunis (Politique), no. 107, 17 May 1854.

[116] Bin Diyaf, 4: 157.

[117] FO 102/46, no. 16, 7 August 1854; AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 117, 27 July 1854 and no. 118, 5 August 1854.

from August 1854 until a final contingent of approximately 2,000 sailed in late June 1855 (after Ahmad's death but planned for and assembled during his reign).[118] Ahmad had largely managed to fill his planned quota,[119] and he had raised the bulk of the troops within a few months in mid-1854. This was achieved even though he started with an almost completely demobilized and presumably demoralized army, and a rickety state apparatus teetering on the brink of bankruptcy.

Interestingly, the French military mission played little role in the mobilization. The French consul reported in May 1854 that both the chief of the French military mission, Colonel Margadel, and his assistant Colonel Lion were being excluded from the preparations. In July Margadel requested that he be returned to his regiment, arguing that he saw little need to remain in Tunisia. Daumas also left for active service in July 1854.[120]

The Tunisian officers were no doubt caught up in an enthusiasm similar to the bey's. It was good to be back in control of one's own affairs. The speed in mobilizing, equipping, and providing transport for over 6,000 troops in a few months time indicated either an efficiency remarked by no observers before 1854 or a special ardor sufficient to overcome routine inefficiency. This was apparently a popular expedition.

Even Bin Diyaf, always critical of Ahmad's military expenditures, and staunch opponent of arbitrary rule (did not Ahmad commit Tunisia to this expedition on his own despotic authority, indeed against the advice of his ministers?), could not bring himself to criticize this move. He lauded Ahmad's gift of his own jewelry as "among the greatest of his good works for the country."[121]

[118] FO 102/48, no. 17, 8 July 1855; AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 25, 28 June 1855.

[119] Bin Diyaf, 4: 157, reported that approximately 14,000 soldiers had participated in the campaign, but he included the crews of the seven Tunisian ships used in transporting the troops. Even so, his figure seems too high. The British and French consuls had both the motivation to report troop movements exactly and access to the information. One can assume their information was generally accurate on this point.

[120] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 109, 27 May 1854; Archives Guerre, Section OM Tunisie, no. 47, letter from Margadel to ministère de la guerre, 27 July 1854, and letter from Beclard to AE dated 6 September 1854.

[121] Bin Diyaf, 4: 157. "In raising this army the bey did not seek the aid of a single dinar or dirham from anyone in any way, except for the jewelry

Ahmad had wanted to address the departing troops in person but his continued partial paralysis made this impossible. Instead, he had Bin Diyaf draft a farewell message to be read to the troops. One passage, especially, expresses the idea of Tunisian nationhood as conceived by Ahmad and his entourage: "Do not forget what is due your homeland and your country, the resting ground of your fathers, the birthplace of your sons, and the abode of your hearts and bodies. Do not bring detestable disgrace upon it. . . . The flag of your homeland and territory will reveal to all eyes your honor. For God's sake, keep your honor spotless. For God's sake, let your flag be victorious."[122]

The Tunisian contribution seems to have been completely overlooked in the official and general histories of the Crimean War.[123] Nor did Tunisia produce its own historian to present the story of the Tunisian expeditionary force, as Prince Umar Tusun did for the Egyptian Expeditionary Army to the Crimean War.[124] Some details may lie buried in Ottoman archives, but it is more likely that little was recorded, in that war marked by an incredible degree of inefficiency and mismanagement by all the belligerents. The inventory of Turkish-language documents on the Crimean expedition in the Tunisian National Archives demonstrates that an adequate history of the campaign can hardly be recreated from this source. The Arabic documents could certainly provide more information on the financing and supplying of the Tunisian expeditionary force, but they too might well prove disappointing on the actual Tunisian military role in the field.[125]

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of the minister (Mustafa Khaznadar)." This could be interpreted as asserting that the bey's contribution financed the expedition, which was far from true. Considerable state revenue was used as well. A more accurate interpretation would be that Ahmad did not pressure any other ministers, concession farmers, or wealthy subjects to make a "voluntary" contribution—as had happened so often in past times of stress.

[122] Bin Diyaf, 4: 158-160.

[123] See Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, p. 161, for details.

[124] See Umar Tusun, *Al-Jaysh al-Misri fi al-Harb al-Rusiya al-ma'ruf bi Harb al-Qurm 1853-1855* (Alexandria, 1936).

[125] R. Mantran in his *Inventaire* lists 117 Turkish-language documents on the Crimean campaign. They contain no information about the actual use of the Tunisian troops beyond one reference (no. 22 on p. 12) to the Tunisians being assigned to the Batoum area and performing well. A survey of the Arabic materials indicates no separate bloc of documents on the subject.

When the true story is obscured, myths quickly arise and often prove to be tenaciously long-lived. American Consul Chandler, for example, reported, without reference to any source, that Tunisian troops defending the redoubts at Balaklava in November 1854 had fled before the Russian attack without firing a shot, even leaving their guns unspiked.[126]

This clearly accorded with the U.S. consul's expectation of what would happen (a prejudice shared by the other consuls), but there is no evidence that such an incident occurred or that Tunisian troops were ever stationed at Balaklava. From the time of the Crimean War itself to the present day, the few Western writers who have deigned to consider the matter insist that all the powers, including the Ottoman Empire, looked upon the Tunisian military contribution as a poor joke. The troops never saw combat duty and, presumably never rendered any other service. Instead, roughly 40 percent never returned, as a result of epidemics and woeful inefficiency. "Four thousand perished in Turkey without having even seen combat," Estournelles de Constant asserted in 1891.[127] More than a century after the war the debacle of the Tunisian expedition was depicted in even more categorical terms: "But at Constantinople," Ganiage insists, "no one dreamed of using the services of the Tunisian contingent. The soldiers of the bey perished without glory of sickness and misery in the Black Sea camps."[128]

What really happened? There is no doubt that the Tunisian expeditionary force suffered frightful losses, largely accounted for by epidemics in the Batoum area where most of them were quartered.[129] The Ottoman troops in Batoum were equally stricken.

Were the Tunisian troops merely an unnecessary encumbrance to the Porte, a welcomed sign of beylical loyalty but a nuisance on the spot? Those who so argue offer no evidence. These accounts are lazy reconstructions of what their authors assume *must have happened*. The Turkish-language documents in the Tunisian

[126] U.S. Consular Report (Tunis) vol. 8, no. 11, 27 November 1854.

[127] Estournelles de Constant, *La Politique française en Tunisie* (Paris, 1891), p. 18.

[128] Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 121.

[129] Bin Diyaf, noting this fact (4: 208), went on to laud the Tunisian commander Rashid for his personal attention to the needs of his men. Recall Captain Kennedy's earlier favorable report on the condition of the Tunisian military infirmaries (above, p. 276).

National Archives include several references to medals granted by the sultan to the Tunisian officers and men, and at least one report that the Tunisian troops were performing well. Admittedly, in the bland language of military bureaucracy this proves very little, but there is also no hint of Tunisian complaints to the bey that they were being poorly received, mistreated, or improperly used by the Ottoman authorities. Such friction invariably occurs in wartime, especially in multi-national armies. Usually, when the friction is getting out of hand some hint of what is happening seeps into the official correspondence.

In short, no one has yet uncovered enough evidence to offer a reasoned interpretation of how the Ottoman authorities received the Tunisian expedition and of what the two groups thought of each other. Even so, the *assumption* that Ottoman-Tunisian cooperation in the field was adequate seems rather more plausible than the contrary *assumption* that has prevailed unchallenged to this time.

The Tunisian troops apparently experienced some combat in the Batoum area and perhaps elsewhere as well. Others served garrison duty in the Sebastopol area after the fall of that city.[130] There is apparently no evidence that the Tunisian troops proved a failure in the field. On the contrary, Captain de Taverne (whose careful reporting on the Tunisian army establishes him as a reliable source) indicated, in an admittedly quite general statement, that the Tunisians have the makings of good soldiers. "Are not the most striking witnesses those Arab infantry battalions that our officers accompanied to victories in the Crimea?"[131]

Ahmad Bey died in May 1855, well before the end of the

[130] Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, p. 159.

[131] AE Tunis (Politique) 17, de Taverne report dated Bardo, 4 December 1856. This is a very detailed report, but it offers little new information to that found in de Taverne's earlier report to the Ministry of War (summarized in A. Martel, "L'armée d'Ahmad Bey"). De Taverne was frustrated in his quest for active duty in the Crimean War and spent 1854-1855 attached to the mission in Tunisia. It could be argued that he was as ill-informed as the others, not having served in the Crimean War. This, however, misses the point. De Taverne was the European most interested in and most informed about the Tunisian army at this period. He would have taken the trouble to find out what happened by interviewing those returning from the war, both Tunisians and others. If the performance of the Tunisian troops was generally known to have been little short of scandalous, de Taverne certainly would not have risked his reputation by claiming the contrary in a report destined for the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Crimean War, and this was perhaps a blessing. He was not obliged to live on and see the futility of his gesture. The military effort produced no advantage. The beylik was no better received as even a minor member in the concert of nations. A year after Ahmad's death Tunisia's sometime allies, Britain and France, were interfering in her domestic affairs more actively than ever before. Nor did the campaign strengthen Ahmad's cherished Nizami army. His successor, Muhammad Bey, immediately demobilized these units upon their return from the East just as he virtually dismantled all other aspects of Ahmad's military reforms.

And the campaign had been costly. Ahmad's contribution of his own jewelry had certainly helped by opening up lines of credit and getting things started, but additional expenses were met out of public revenue raised largely through advanced sales and tax collections. A bit more of the future had been mortgaged. Ahmad's gesture had clearly hastened the day when the beylik would resort to a combination of usurious foreign loans and intolerable tax demands on Tunisian subjects—a mad plunge from reality leading inexorably to the revolt of 1864 and state bankruptcy in 1869. His early death at the age of forty-eight spared Ahmad one more bitter demonstration of a magnanimous and bold plan turned to folly.

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What was the long-term effect of Ahmad's ambitious military reforms? The Nizami army failed to take root, being truncated first in the near-bankruptcy of Ahmad's latter reign and then, following the Crimean venture, even more decisively by the acts of his successor, Muhammad Bey.

Ahmad had innovated boldly in the use of native Tunisians for military service, and he justified his actions in what can be called the language of modern nationalism. Did these native Tunisians, by their military service, develop an increased sense of loyalty to the state, or even of *identity* with the state? Did the military service of these several thousand native Tunisians foster among villagers and peasants a tendency to shift their world-view somewhat more toward the national and away from the local unit?

It would be rash to suggest any such changes. Too few people were involved for too brief a time. Not only was there no multiplier effect, there was not even time to eradicate the traditional

antipathy to military service and to any involvement with the state.

Ahmad's military reforms were perhaps most effective in breaking down traditional patterns of political organization rather than in creating permanent new patterns. The old view that the military profession was the monopoly of Turks and Zouaves, plus a few tribesmen as cavalry, had been effectively challenged. These groups, which composed the previous military establishment, remained prominent in the new, but structural changes had taken place. Somewhat like the modern army sergeant who has his own outlook changed in meeting the challenge of training masses of civilians during wartime mobilization, the old Turkish military leadership must have adjusted to new ideas and techniques.

At the very top level of government one can talk with somewhat greater confidence of genuine change. Ahmad implemented his military reforms through a group of leaders who, whatever their own convictions at the beginning of the experiments, usually became committed to their success if only in order to assure their own advancement.

Further, more than the *mechanics* of politics was involved. Many of this small group of leaders came to accept the world-view implicit in these new reforms. Some were influenced by contacts with members of the French military mission. Others were shaped by the Bardo Military School. The handful whose new assignments gave them more direct contact with Europe (e.g., Khayr al-Din) or with a European language were molded by these experiences.

This new leadership, developed during Ahmad's reign, formed the first generation of reformers to be followed by those who rallied around Khayr al-Din in the mid-1870s and they, in turn, by the Young Tunisians at the turn of the century.

So, the cynic or the pessimist might conclude, at great expense to his country and considerable hardship to thousands of Tunisians, caught in the net of these innovations either as recruits or taxpayers, Ahmad Bey managed a healthy kick at the anthill of traditional military structures and developed a small cadre of leaders committed to many of his Westernizing schemes. He did not achieve much more.

Why did he persist, since the sluggish performance was evident in his own time? The presumably more rational criteria—the

foreign threat, the faintly-perceived panacea of European technology—have been adumbrated in this and previous chapters. Implicit in the account thus far has been the pull of irrational or subconscious factors—what might be called the tyranny of style. The next chapter will address this elusive element more directly.

IX

Marks of Modernity

European contemporaries of Ahmad Bey and later writers as well have been selective in their judgments of him. He has been generally condemned for wasteful expenditures. His penchant for what are taken to be the superficial aspects of European civilization has been noted, usually with disdain. There are numerous disparaging references to his building a Tunisian Versailles at Muhammadiya. On the other hand, most writers applaud his liberal attitude toward the church and toward the Jewish community living in Tunisia, seeing this as a move away from Muslim fanaticism. Ahmad's initiatives in freeing slaves have also met with almost universal approval. A few writers single out his effort to educate his own people in the ways of the modern world, and to play the role of enlightened despot.

What is often lacking in these European accounts is the thread connecting Ahmad's many plans, acts, and aspirations. Ahmad's activities actually fitted into an over-all pattern—an effort to prove to himself, his people, and to Europe that he was a very modern monarch.

Ahmad was neither a notably consistent nor thorough ruler. He was not an effective long-term planner. He approached matters in fits and starts. Yet, he did not lack an over-all vision to guide his political initiatives. Ahmad Bey, the man of military reforms, was an acknowledged modernizer and Westernizer. The Ahmad Bey who freed slaves, built lavish palaces and showered medals upon all too many recipients was the same man. The would-be military Westernizer did not from time to time indulge his whims in a more comfortable oriental despotism. Ahmad consistently lived and worked according to an uneasy juxtaposition of new ideals and old, traditional habits.

Ahmad had been trained to accept as normal a world of mamluks and harems. Arbitrary rule, a small, distinct ruling class, the notion of subjects instead of citizens, the subordinate role of non-

Muslim minorities, a sensitivity to the distinctions between urban and rural, a tendency to regard the tribes as being beyond the political community, a regard for the religious establishment tempered by a largely subconscious determination to keep them effectively insulated from political decision-making—these were Ahmad's political heritage.

To this ideological baggage Ahmad added the attractive alien concept of a powerful political apparatus that achieves new strength by binding together what had hitherto been loose. Centralization, greater demands on the members of the political community who are expected to think of themselves as active participants rather than passive and somewhat wary observers, a larger, more efficient army, and an organizing principle in other areas of political activity modelled on the military virtues of hierarchy, loyalty, and service—these were aspects of the intrusive new world-view that shaped Ahmad's conduct.

Viewed from the abstract perspective of the history of ideas, Ahmad was grafting the European notion of the nation-state onto the Ottoman-Islamic notion of the bureaucratic empire. Of course, neither he nor his detractors saw the matter in quite this light. Nor did Ahmad, as a practical ruler with little taste for intellectual pursuits, have a clear idea of the complexities and contradictions involved in his activities. A few of his contemporaries, Tunisian and European, understood somewhat better. Bin Diyaf could see the interrelatedness of Ahmad's acts and was generally able to judge them (some favorably, others very harshly) according to a consistent, working, political philosophy. Several of the more perceptive European observers realized, at least in part, that Ahmad's program ineluctably involved fundamental changes in Tunisian government and society.

For the most part, however, Ahmad and the others actively engaged in the political events of the times (whether partisan or opponent, Tunisian or foreigner) were carried along by a very simple outlook: the European system worked; the non-European systems were backward; the backward could catch up by emulating the advanced. To Ahmad and to many of his European critics it was as simple as that. Ironically, Ahmad and his European critics had amazingly similar conceptions of the task to be accomplished.

Ahmad found military modernization congenial. His desire to learn from the army that had produced Napoleon was directly

linked to his interests and values. Other acts cannot be explained in these terms; they were in stark contrast to the Tunisian political heritage. They did not accord with his own predilections. They did not increase his political power. They were not popular with any significant segment of Tunisian society, and in many cases were extremely unpopular. They cannot be dismissed as the capricious acts of an autocrat. Caprice involves inconsistency, and these deeds conform to a pattern.

The most plausible explanation is that these acts conformed to Ahmad's image of himself and his role. Ahmad wanted so much the respect of his arrogant, and at times reluctant, European mentors that he was poignantly eager to take initiatives having no apparent benefit other than the possibility of winning that respect. At the same time, like the Calvinist who defies the predestinarian logic of his faith by working to achieve a worldly standing as proof that he is numbered among the elect, Ahmad needed to demonstrate to himself and his world that he was indeed to be included among the modernizing elect.

This interpretation of Ahmad's underlying motivation can be tested by reference to a cluster of Ahmad's activities that would otherwise appear unrelated.

A. Protocol, Symbols and Artifacts of Westernization

In early 1842, newly arrived U.S. Consul Hodgson reported his first formal audience with Ahmad Bey. "The Bey was seated in an European armed chair. Musulman princes who have adopted the European system of military tactics, no longer sit cross-legged."[1] And, Mr. Hodgson added, the room where he was received was furnished in the European fashion.

This seemingly banal report contains an important truth. The complete rationalist has always scorned the confusion between symbol and substance, but a more sophisticated understanding of human nature, aided by psychological insights, suggests that things are never quite that neat and simple. Gandhi adopting the spinning wheel, Ataturk abolishing the fez, and today's young man deciding to wear his hair long—all perform acts that may properly be construed as a psychological crossing of the Rubicon,

[1] U.S. Consular Reports (Tunis), vol. 8, 15 February 1842.

an emotional commitment to replace the existing pattern with something else. Symbol and substance are ineluctably intertwined, and in a very profound sense, clothes make the man.

Every Western way adopted by Ahmad—whether clothing, furniture, or mannerism—may be seen as a commitment to the European-oriented new order. Ahmad's determination to force new ways upon himself and his society involved, as all radical acts of will must, considerable internal tension. When things went wrong, when doubts or fears arose, there was a very natural tendency to return to the womb of old ways. Soon after his first stroke in July 1852, Ahmad reverted to wearing native clothes. His ambitious reforms had been frustrated and he was broken in health. He was disappointed and perhaps even frightened. The old ways seemed more comforting. Then, although his health was not restored, came the challenge of sending troops to fight in the Crimean War. After the French consul had called on Ahmad Bey at the end of Ramadan in mid-1854, he reported to his government, "Instead of Arab clothes that he had taken to wearing since the beginning of his illness, he had again put on clothes in the European mode."[2] Again, the connection between symbol and substance is inescapable.

In June 1849, Ahmad Bey invited the consular corps to see the display of gifts that were to be sent to the Sublime Porte. By this time, Ahmad had made his celebrated state visit to France. He had come to learn at first hand that European etiquette required a greater mixing of the sexes. Therefore, on this occasion he invited French Consul Marcescheau to bring his wife, and the French consul reported that Mme. Marcescheau did attend and was graciously received by the bey. Earlier, the bey had ordered leading members of his court to attend the wedding ceremony of Giuseppe Raffo's daughter where these traditional Muslim males found themselves "mingling with European society of both sexes."[3]

Early in his reign, Ahmad had his palaces adorned with portraits of Napoleon and paintings depicting his most famous battles. That he would want to emulate Napoleon's tactics and military organization requires no explanation. His going further, in viola-

[2] AE Tunis (Politique) 14, no. 113, 29 June 1854.

[3] AE Tunis (Politique) 11, no. 43, 18 June 1849. The reception took place during the time when Consul Marcescheau was embroiled with Ahmad Bey over the issue of granting consular asylum to Tunisian army deserters.

tion of Tunisian mores, to fill his palace with European art (and representation of human figures, at that) reveals another dimension of acculturation.[4]

The most flamboyant of Ahmad's enterprises, in the eyes of both native Tunisia and the foreign community, was his construction of a palace complex, or more nearly a royal city, Muhammadiya. The story of Ahmad's Muhammadiya has been a bit distorted in the retelling. The original idea of building Muhammadiya was not to create a Tunisian Versailles. Indeed, construction at Muhammadiya had begun well before Ahmad's state visit to France (with two separate trips to Versailles), and by 1846 Ahmad was already spending more time at Muhammadiya than Bin Diyaf and other courtiers thought advisable.[5] The true story is fantastic enough, and the comparison with Versailles is, in many ways, apt. Muhammadiya epitomizes Ahmad's penchant for Westernization.

Located roughly ten miles south of Tunis on the road to Zaghouan, Muhammadiya had long been a country residence for leading state officials. The two most recent owners had been the chief ministers Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' and Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'. After the latter lost his life in his ill-fated power struggle with Ahmad, Muhammadiya reverted to beylical control. Ahmad first granted Muhammadiya to Mustafa Khaznadar. Then he got the idea of using the site to quarter units of his Nizami troops, induced Mustafa Khaznadar to accept other property instead, and ordered the building of military barracks which were completed in 1843-44.[6]

Ahmad's interest in Muhammadiya increased when it became a base for the Nizami army. His plans now expanded. Muhammadiya was to become Ahmad's preferred seat of government. This involved the virtual creation of a new city, or at the very least a new governmental complex, comparable to the imposing number of people and buildings brought together at Bardo. Quickly, plans were launched to build a mosque, a madrasa, a hammam. A special qadi for Muhammadiya was appointed, housing was provided for officials whom Ahmad needed to have at hand, and a suq was

[4] This is not to deny that there was a Turkish form of pictorial art well-received in Ottoman court circles. The point of interest is that Ahmad Bey was attracted to different subject matter and a different art form—both European.

[5] Bin Diyaf, 4: 69-72.

[6] Bin Diyaf, 4: 71.

created to provide for the needs of these growing numbers of people. Ahmad even pressured many of his leading officials to build their own villas nearby, and he provided generous support to those who complied.[7]

The creation of a new royal city was not, in itself, evidence of Ahmad's eagerness to ape Europe. Husaynid rulers had long shown a preference for building new palaces rather than simply taking over the existing palaces of their predecessors. There were also venerable Islamic precedents for a ruler turning his back on an existing capital and creating a completely new capital elsewhere. Baghdad, Samarra, Ja'fariya, Isfahan, Cairo, and in Tunisia itself, Mahdiya and Tunis (instead of Carthage) were all examples of just such an impulse. In deciding to build at Muhammadiya, Ahmad Bey was expressing himself as an energetic, traditional ruler. It is the architectural style and the specialists brought in to supervise the construction that betray Ahmad Bey the Europeanizer.

At this point, the seductive influence of Versailles may have been important. Even in the construction completed before 1846, Ahmad seems to have consulted European architects and builders, but following his first-hand view of royal architecture in France he was even more inclined to rely on European specialists. The last major building constructed at Muhammadiya was al-Salahiya, hastily erected at Ahmad's command following his first stroke. Ahmad had wanted to recuperate at his beloved Muhammadiya, but doctors advised against the existing beylical residence, located in the midst of the barracks, suqs, and other buildings. The answer, therefore, was to build a new residence on a hill overlooking Muhammadiya.[8] The work of an Italian architect, al-Salahiya had a thoroughly European style, and this distinction was immediately captured in the native language. Al-Salahiya was always referred to in Tunisian Arabic as "palace," whereas Ahmad's first residence at Muhammadiya maintained the more Islamic and indigenous label of "serail."[9]

Ahmad also surrounded al-Salahiya with a garden enclosed "by a balustrade with stakes painted in black topped by gilded points, causing it, as Sidna [Ahmad] said, to resemble that of the Tuileries."[10]

[7] Bin Diyaf, 4: 70.

[8] Bin Diyaf, 4: 141.

[9] Daumas, *Quatre ans à Tunis*, p. 130.

[10] Ibid., pp. 131-132. The avenue from al-Salahiya to the main road was

A French engineer, M. Charles Benoit, was commissioned to construct a hydraulic system to bring water from the nearby village of Fouchanna to irrigate the gardens and provide ornamental fountains. According to Daumas, Ahmad in his moments of good spirits would assert, "I want . . . to imitate, to surpass the great king of France at Versailles. They say my garden will die for lack of water. The Europeans are just foolish enough to say that, thinking that in my country one cannot conduct and raise water as in Europe."[11]

Other European specialists were summoned including a tapestry-maker. The irony of a Muslim ruler, heir to the aesthetic traditions of both Muslim Spain and the Near East, consulting European specialists on matters of fabrics and fountains seems to have escaped all contemporaries. An Ibn Khaldun would have understood. Did not the weak always try to imitate the strong, seeing in the latter's dress, insignia, furniture, and habits the secret of their invincibility? Ahmad even engaged two European cooks.[12]

Ahmad was clearly fascinated by Europe's machines. Technological borrowing from one culture by another is always fraught with difficulties. The previous chapter on military reforms has already documented several of Ahmad's efforts to integrate items of European technology into his projects—with almost invariably disappointing results. That chapter interpreted these attempts at technological borrowings within the framework of a definable program: Ahmad's efforts to achieve a measure of military strength and political autonomy. And yet, implicit even there was the confusion of symbol and substance. Ahmad enjoyed (the word is carefully chosen) the artifacts of Westernization—be they uniforms, guns, or textile machinery—without undue concern about their applicability in the beylik.

This raises a question not always squarely faced. Ahmad Bey (and other such borrowers) are often dismissed as impractical innocents who approach the artifacts of the new technology as

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lined with plane trees, and at the entrance were two columns on which had been placed two wooden lions "resembling more nearly two great apes than the king of the desert."

[11] Ibid., p. 132. After M. Benoit's assassination by brigands while en route from Muhammadiya to Bardo in 1854, the hydraulic system was abandoned.

[12] Marcel Gandolphe, *Résidences beylicales*, Cahiers d'histoire tunisienne, 1 (Tunis, n.d. [1942?]), p. 81.

toys to be played with, tired of, and broken. A strong case can be made for such an interpretation. Yet is it not possible that the innovator (and the trans-cultural borrower is an innovator) is often motivated by a childlike interest in the game, in his new toy? Would not the thoroughly practical man have an unavoidable conservative bias, since the most demonstrably workable solution is what has already worked? These doubts introduce one of the more whimsical of Ahmad's borrowings from Europe—the optical telegraph connecting his palaces at Bardo, La Goulette, and Muhammadiya.

The decision to install telegraph service linking his three palaces was another result of Ahmad's state visit to France. While in France Ahmad had been fascinated by the speed with which news could be conveyed by use of the Chappe optical telegraph—basically an elaborate mechanical semaphore system—first invented by Claude Chappe and his brother in the latter years of the eighteenth century. The Chappe telegraph was still a government monopoly in France (remaining so until 1852),[13] and when Ahmad, upon his return to Tunisia, ordered Mustafa Khaznadar to request French technical assistance in installing a Chappe telegraph, the French government acceded, viewing this catering to the bey's fancy as another means of extending French influence in Tunisia.

The engineer assigned to the project, M. Berrier-Fontaine, arrived with a French assistant in October 1847. By September of the following year the line from Bardo to La Goulette was completed, and the line from Bardo to Muhammadiya was ready the following month. Ahmad's fears that the lines were not yet in good order nor the Tunisian personnel properly trained were finally allayed the following year and M. Berrier-Fontaine left Tunisia, with Ahmad's thanks and best wishes, on December 4, 1849.

The Chappe telegraph was soon abandoned. If the Italian engineer to the bey, Gaspary, is to be believed, Ahmad lost faith in the device after his message from Muhammadiya to the governor of La Goulette was garbled by the operator. Ahmad had told the governor to expect him in La Goulette the following day. The message was received as an order for the governor to appear before the bey at Muhammadiya, which he duly did, to Ahmad's irritation. Ahmad reasoned, according to Gaspary, that if a sim-

[13] Ibid., p. 53.

ple, routine message could get that distorted, he could never trust the telegraph to convey any important instructions in the future.

Or had the innovating bey simply tired of his new European toy?

B. Ahmad's Anti-Slavery Program

Ahmad's policy of stopping the slave trade and, later, of freeing all slaves reveals direct European influence. In Tunisia, itself, slavery was not an issue. Nothing had yet happened to jar native Tunisian society out of a pattern that had existed for centuries.

Ahmad Bey did not wait for domestic opposition to slavery to develop. He did not even have to fend off a dynamic European anti-slavery campaign. The British had a consistent anti-slave-trade policy, but the major British efforts were directed at the sources of supply in Africa that could be monitored with British sea power. Tunisia was less important, and Sir Thomas Reade, fighting his constant struggle against French influence, was less importunate. The French also opposed slavery, but since their own abolition of slavery in Algeria (27 April 1848)[14] took place two years *after* Ahmad's decree it can hardly be suggested that he yielded to French pressure.

There was the issue of Ahmad's tenuous relationship with the Ottoman Empire. Not wishing to apply the Ottoman Tanzimat (and thus implicitly accept his status as provincial governor), Ahmad may have been eager to show the Ottoman Empire that his beylik was moving at its own pace along the path toward modernization. Such motivation is not to be ruled out,[15] but again it cannot be argued that Ahmad responded to direct prodding from Istanbul; the Ottoman decree abolishing slavery followed Ahmad's by one year.[16]

Aside from occasional acts of cruelty, usually ordered impetuously, Ahmad appears to have been a humane ruler with a genu-

[14] Julien, *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*, 1: 347-349. Also, French Consul de Lagau was lukewarm on the anti-slavery issue.

[15] Bin Diyaf, 4: 86, suggests this as one of Ahmad's reasons: "He [Ahmad] estimated that possibly this would satisfy anyone demanding [implementation of] the beneficial Tanzimat which has liberty as one of its principles." At the same time, it should be remembered that the British were *also* urging implementation of the Tanzimat in Tunisia.

[16] Niyazi Berkes, *The Development of Secularism in Turkey* (Montreal, 1964), p. 152.

inely paternalistic concern for all his subjects. The idea of extending justice to his lowliest subjects would have appealed to him. Nevertheless, his was a traditional mentality; justice, to him, was the proper ordering of relationships (including ruler-ruled, father-son, and master-slave) into a single organic whole. Something more than a traditional concern for justice prodded Ahmad Bey into freeing the slaves, and that something more was the desire to emulate and be accepted by Europe. To thus uncover Ahmad's motivation does not detract from the magnanimity of his actions. Ahmad's autocratic initiatives in stopping the slave trade and then freeing all slaves were an ornament to his long and eventful reign.

Ahmad moved with caution and calculation in proceeding from abolition of the slave trade to complete emancipation. The first step was taken in August 1841, and final emancipation was decreed in January 1846. Not usually inclined to be overly sensitive about public opinion, Ahmad gingerly felt his way on this issue.

In August 1841, Ahmad Bey closed the official slave market in Tunis—the Suq al-Birka. He abolished the office of *qaid al-birka* ("in charge of the slave market") and destroyed the stalls where the slaves on sale had been placed, as well as the stand, known as "the cage," from which the qaid al-birka had conducted the slave auction. He also abolished the tax levied by the government on each sale which had amounted to roughly 10,000 piastres a year.[17] The bey made it clear that this was being done for humanitarian reasons, stressing that it was wrong for human beings to be auctioned off like cattle. Implicitly, his action was a condemnation of the slave trade in general, but Ahmad was discreetly silent about the sale of slaves outside of Tunis.[18]

This first, tentative step met with some disapproval. Sir Thomas Reade reported that the suppression of the slave market was unpopular, especially among the rich who were great proprietors of slaves. Characteristically, he detected a French hand stirring up trouble. The French, he charged, did not hesitate to criticize publicly the bey's new regulation.[19]

There may have been a trace of truth in Reade's accusation. French Consul de Lagau deplored the bey's decree as hasty and ill-advised; and, tit-for-tat, he went on to report that the bey himself was now embarrassed and regretted having let Reade talk him into this premature initiative. De Lagau claimed that the

[17] Bin Diyaf, 4: 86-87. [18] Ibid., 4: 87.
[19] FO 102/10, no. 17, 21 September 1841.

Blacks were actually worse off as a result of the new measure. They had not been freed, but a slave who felt mistreated could no longer present himself to the qaid of the slave market and request that he be sold to another master. Also, de Lagau maintained, with no market, small owners could no longer get rid of extra slaves at a good price.[20]

Ahmad's next step was to prohibit Tunisian participation in the international slave trade. No more slaves could be imported from the interior of Africa, and any Black arriving in Tunisia was to be considered a free man. In addition, no slave was to be exported from Tunisia for sale abroad, and appropriate instructions to implement the new ruling were sent to all ports of the beylik.[21] The bey, according to Reade, was still having his difficulties on this issue, especially from "the old fanatical members of the Diwan who are holders of slave property to an immense amount, and who it is necessary to consult before any new regulations of any description whatsoever can be made law."[22]

The domestic opposition underlined the need to combine persuasion with legal pressure. One good tactic was to induce a leading Tunisian to set an example. In early 1842, Muhammad bin 'Ayad, responding to Ahmad Bey's specific request, freed sixteen of his slaves.[23] At that time the bey was collecting gifts to send the sultan. In the past it had been customary to include slaves among the gifts the bey offered his sovereign, but none were to be given this time. If the Ottoman authorities should wonder at this departure from custom, the Tunisian emissary was instructed to respond that such a gift would be inconsistent with Ahmad's intention to abolish slavery completely as soon as possible.[24]

Then, in December 1842, Ahmad issued another decree announcing that henceforth anyone born in Tunisia, regardless of his parents' status, would automatically be free.[25] An incident involving the Saint Louis chapel at Carthage had conveniently pre-

[20] AE Tunis (Politique) 5, no. 128, 30 September 1841.

[21] Bin Diyaf, 4: 87, mentions the prohibition on export but overlooks the more important ban on import. Reade, FO 102/16, Private, Reade to Bidwell, 28 April 1842, notes only the latter restriction. Reade's information is corroborated in the French consular reports, for example, AE Tunis (Politique) 6, no. 161, 12 December 1852.

[22] FO 102/16, Private, Reade to Bidwell, 28 April 1842.

[23] FO 102/15, no. 2, Slave Trade, 24 March 1842.

[24] Ibid. This was Guiseppe Raffo's explanation to Reade.

[25] Bin Diyaf, 4: 87.

pared the ground, if not indeed forced Ahmad's hand. The native Tunisian population had integrated the newly completed Saint Louis chapel into their own conception of religious buildings. The chapel was deemed a holy spot and, like their own zawiyas and marabouts, a sanctuary where fugitives could seek asylum. That the chapel was in the hands of Europeans could only increase the sense of awe and belief in its efficacy as a sanctuary, for even the most unlettered peasant realized the power of Europeans.

When an entire Black slave family, parents and children, took refuge in the Saint Louis chapel to avoid being sold separately, both the bey and the French were presented with an embarrassing predicament. Consul de Lagau, eager to avoid future incidents which would only consolidate the chapel's reputation as a respected sanctuary, induced the family to move to the consulate where, as he reported, the right of exile was fully recognized. He then contacted the bey. Ahmad summoned the family, questioned each member separately, and when he came to the six-year-old slave child informed the lad that he was free. He then announced that in the future, all children born of slaves would be free.[26]

Slavery in Tunisia, therefore, would slowly have passed from the scene with the death of the existing slave population, but Ahmad was not content with this. In January 1846, he ordered the immediate liberation of all slaves. His decree of abolition listed, among other reasons for the move, the need to avoid having slaves seek refuge in sanctuaries "from other than our religious community"—a subtle xenophobic appeal for acquiescence from those who might not be won over by other arguments. Ahmad also arranged to have the chief Hanafi mufti, Shaykh Muhammad Bayram, and the leading Maliki religious dignitary, Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi, write fatwas in support of the move.[27]

Ahmad Bey had achieved a great humanitarian advance. He had abolished a deeply rooted social institution, sanctioned by Islam, and had done so with only a minimum of protest and disorder in Tunisia. It was one of Ahmad's finest and most unambiguous successes, combining a lofty ideal with sound political tactics. And, for a brief period, he could relish the praise pouring in

[26] AE Tunis (Politique), no. 161, 21 December 1842.
[27] Bin Diyaf, 4: 87-89.

from "the nations of liberty." Notables from England wrote to congratulate him. Newspapers throughout Europe praised the step.[28]

It was an exciting experience for Ahmad Bey. The decree abolishing slavery in January 1846 ushered in what must have been the most exhilarating year of his reign, ending with his celebrated state visit to France.

C. The Great Symbol—Ahmad's State Visit to France

In the present age of routine peripatetic jet diplomacy it is difficult to appreciate the novelty of Ahmad Bey's state visit to Paris. State visits within the European family of monarchs were not uncommon in the 1840s, but the idea of a visit by a head of state from outside that system was extraordinary. The first Ottoman sultan to come to Europe other than as the leader of an invading army was Abdulaziz who made a state visit to France in 1867; Shah Nasiru'd-Din established the precedent for Persian rulers with his European visit in 1873.

The closest precedent in time, and perhaps an incentive to Ahmad's own plans, was the European visit made earlier in 1846 by Egypt's Ibrahim Pasha, the man slated to succeed to power in Egypt had he not predeceased his father, Muhammad Ali.

Ahmad's decision to visit Europe stands out as an excellent example of his penchant for combining the dramatic with *raison d'etat*. In mid-1845 there arose one of those periodically recurring rumors that the Ottoman Empire intended direct action against Tunisia. The Ottoman fleet was alleged to be on its way to Tunisia with the mission of overthrowing Ahmad Bey and re-establishing direct Ottoman administration. An alarmed Ahmad dispatched troops to Djerba and began to seek diplomatic insurance.[29] The invasion threat proved to be a false alarm, but the war of nerves was real enough. A state visit to France would more strongly commit that power to continued Tunisian autonomy and serve as a warning to the sultan.

[28] Bin Diyaf, 4: 89. Bin Diyaf's own position on emancipation of the slaves appears a bit more nuanced. He seems to have supported the measures leading to complete emancipation, but he ended his account (p. 91) by insisting that of the two forms of control by one man over others—absolute rule and slavery—the former is the worst since it is unrestrained whereas slavery is at least controlled by shari'a rules.

[29] Bin Diyaf, 4: 83.

Even so, Ahmad's state visit to Europe, coming more than a year after the Ottoman invasion scare, cannot be completely explained in terms of international power plays. The desire to bask in the warm glow of official recognition by the king of the French and (if possible) the queen of England helped Ahmad decide that the visit would be politically wise.

The visit to France was bound to provoke the Ottoman Empire, and whether there would be offsetting tangible gains in the form of more effective French support was unclear. The provocative nature of the state visit became even more pronounced when Ahmad's original plan to visit both England and France went awry, since the British government refused to receive him unless he was presented by the Ottoman ambassador. Unwilling to be ranked diplomatically as no more than an Ottoman provincial governor, Ahmad reluctantly cancelled London from his itinerary. Only the seductive attraction of being received in France as a sovereign and an equal—as a member of the exclusive club—probably induced Ahmad to abandon the circumspection that usually informed his difficult relations with the Powers.

There is reason to conjecture that Ahmad initiated the idea of the visit and virtually presented the French government with a *fait accompli.* King Louis Philippe's sons had recently visited Tunisia—the duc de Montpensier in June 1845 and the prince de Joinville a year later.[30] This was part of a French campaign to strengthen ties with the beylik, assert Tunisian independence from the Ottoman Empire, and capture a more predominant role in Tunisian affairs at the expense of both the British and the Ottomans. Ahmad, not unaware of the stakes, played his role with considerable flair. The duc de Montpensier's visit served as the occasion for the first awarding of the Tunisian medal, Nishan al-Iftikhar, to foreigners. Even more significant, Ahmad literally pressed upon the astonished duc de Montpensier the Nishan al-Dam medal (hitherto restricted to members of the Husaynid family) in order to (as the formal communication written a few days later put it) "draw tighter the alliance of your family with ours."[31]

Yet there is no evidence that either son of Louis Philippe invited

[30] Serres, *Politique turque*, pp. 318-320 and 346; Marcel, "Tunis," pp. 206-210.

[31] Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, pp. 124-125. The letter was dated 24 June 1845.

Ahmad Bey to return the visit. Ahmad seems to have thought of this on his own, and quite precipitously, at that. The British and French consuls learned of his plan to visit London and Paris in late September 1846.[32] Sir Thomas Reade, caught unaware by the proposal, suggested that Ahmad wait until late spring, but the bey was adamant on leaving within twenty or thirty days. Ahmad, actually, seems to have gone behind the backs of the British and French consuls in Tunis, for Bin Diyaf relates that the bey had sent ahead Muhammad bin 'Ayad "to discover how he would be received."[33]

Ahmad carefully prepared public opinion in Tunisia itself. He ordered Mustafa Khaznadar to visit the leading tribal qaids, then in residence at Muhammadiya, explain the purpose of the European trip, and solicit their approval.[34]

Ahmad's sense of derring-do—and, concomitantly, a felt need to be reassured by those close to him that his idea was sound—can also be inferred from his concern to receive his mother's approval. He ordered his loyal retainer, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', to broach the subject with her. Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' was to pretend that he had thought of the idea of Ahmad's trip to Europe and see how Ahmad's mother reacted. Only later did Ahmad call on his mother and receive her blessing for the trip.[35]

Then came the practical problem of assuring stability in Tunisia during the bey's absence. Orders were issued placing Muhammad Bey, the heir to the throne, in charge during Ahmad's absence. If he were incapacitated, then Muhammad al-Sadiq, next in line of succession, would take over. The same concern to avoid a dangerous situation in which no one knew who was in charge—creating thereby the temptation for a palace coup by those who could claim to fill the breach—was manifested also in Ahmad's command to the army. During his absence Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi'

[32] AE Tunis (Politique) 9, no. 27, 27 September 1846; FO 102/25, no. 4, 28 September 1846.

[33] Bin Diyaf, 4: 92. Bin Diyaf is almost certainly referring to the earlier trip by Muhammad bin 'Ayad to France in late 1845 (Bin Diyaf, 4: 83, and FO 102/23, no. 13, 23 December 1845), for Muhammad bin 'Ayad does not appear to have made a later trip to Paris in 1846. (See also FO 102/25, no. 4, 28 September 1846, where Reade suggests that Muhammad bin 'Ayad should be among those to accompany Ahmad, implying that he was then in Tunis.) If this interpretation is correct, then Ahmad had been considering the trip for over a year.

[34] Bin Diyaf, 4: 92.

[35] Ibid., p. 93.

was to be in charge. If he became sick then Khayr al-Din Kahiya was to assume command, and if he, too, were unable to discharge the duty then the responsibility fell to Mahmud Kahiya of La Goulette.[36]

Ahmad insured that his most loyal followers were in positions to keep the unruly parts of the beylik under control and to watch out against any potential coup from elements of the political class. Additional troops under the command of reliable officers were posted to al-A'rad, Djerid, Beja, and to the tribal areas of the Majir and Farashish. The four commanders were ordered not to leave their posts under any circumstances. The inhabitants of Tunis were informed that they would be relieved of their normal responsibility for police and guard duty during Ahmad's absence as these tasks would be assumed by the army. In this way, Ahmad intended to achieve two advantages: the inhabitants were freed of a chore they normally were required to assume without compensation; and the city was in the hands of reliable soldiers.[37]

Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', the man whom Ahmad felt he could trust above all others, was ordered to remain at Muhammadiya every night. He was never to go to La Goulette or Bardo except in the daytime. All state revenue was to be kept with him at Muhammadiya. He was to engage in no discussions with foreign diplomats who might arrive on warships. Any such emissary was to be told that he must await Ahmad's return.[38]

Before leaving Tunis on November 3, Ahmad received the members of the Majlis al-Shar'i and then paid a visit to the tomb of Sidi Bel Hasan al-Shadhili, founder of the Shadhiliya order, seeking the saint's blessing for a safe and useful trip.[39] As one final

[36] M. S. Mzali, "L'Exercice de l'autorité suprême en Tunisie durant le voyage d'Ahmed Bey en France 5 Novembre-30 Decembre 1846," *Revue tunisienne* (1918), p. 274.

[37] Ibid., and Bin Diyaf, 4: 96. This meant that the inhabitants of Tunis would be relieved of their normal police and guard responsibilities for the city *at night*. As has been seen, the dey routinely had police responsibility during the daytime.

[38] Mzali, "Exercice de l'autorité suprême en Tunisie." The French translation, but not the original text, is also in AGT Dossier no. 139, carton 29, dated 9 dhu al-Qa'da 1262 (29 October 1846).

[39] During Ahmad's reception of the Majlis al-Shar'i, Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi, always the gadfly who knew how to exploit an encounter with political authority even at the price of violating the traditional canons of *politesse*, asked who would stop the oppression of the tax farmers during Ahmad's absence. Al-Riyahi again brought up the issue upon Ahmad's

safeguard, Ahmad remained for two days in La Goulette to observe how the plans for governing Tunisia in his absence seemed to be working, and then on 5 November 1846 he set sail for France on the French ship, *Dante*, the first Muslim ruler of Tunisia to visit Christian Europe since the ninth century Aghlabids threatened the gates of Rome, and the first, ever since the rise of Islam twelve hundred years earlier, to come in peace.[40]

His ship arrived in Toulon on November 8. Then began the quarantine period. Ahmad and his party were obliged to remain on board ship for five days before disembarking on November 13. He was in France, and his official visit had begun in earnest.

The most complete French account of Ahmad's visit to France insists that immediately upon touching foot on French soil at Toulon he was welcomed by all the civil and military authorities, and received at the prefecture with all the honors that one usually grants reigning princes and allies of France."[41]

Bin Diyaf's account is more nuanced, suggesting the sensitivity if not indeed psychological insecurity that haunted Ahmad. Would he be treated with due deference and respect? Ahmad was concerned to find himself, while the ship was still in quarantine, officially met by a lieutenant. Ahmad immediately "pondered whether those of his rank should be received by lieutenants." His face must have betrayed this thought, for the lieutenant, ". . . , who spoke Arabic, replied, 'Sire, those of my rank are not sent to receive such as you. Our king has ordered that all France is to receive you as you will see with your own eyes. My task is only to make arrangements for your journey and to attend to your needs.' "[42] Ahmad was mollified by this answer, and by

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return, insisting that these individuals were still as corrupt as ever. Bin Diyaf, 4: 96 and 111. The incident is a classic example of the modalities, and limitations, of 'ulama pressure upon the beys.

[40] According to Marcel, "Tunis," fn. pp. 213-214, when Ahmad saw the coastline of Tunisia fade in the distance he exclaimed, "Muslim princes in going to Arabia to visit the two holy cities seek the title of pilgrim (*hadjy*) to Mecca. I will be the first to have visited the land of the Franks in order to merit the title 'pilgrim to European civilization' (*hadjy frandjy*)." It is a good story, but Ahmad probably never made such a statement. A Muslim ruler of that age, especially one of Ahmad's obvious piety, would probably have felt it improper to use the venerable religious title in a secular sense—especially with the implication of a Muslim's "pilgrimage" to a non-Muslim land.

[41] Marcel, "Tunis," p. 211.

[42] Bin Diyaf, 4: 97.

the time he walked down the gangplank of the *Dante* a few days later both sides were committed to a rococo performance.

Ahmad's two-day stay in Toulon sounds like a present-day official visit of a Third World leader to an industrial power. A dizzy round of visits to shipyards, arsenals, and factories was combined with military and naval reviews, demonstrations of fire-power, and official receptions. On November 15 he set out for his eight-day journey by carriage from Toulon to Paris.

Diplomacy geared to the man in the street has become commonplace in the late twentieth century. The head of state who steps out of his motorcade to shake hands with the crowd, pat children on the head, and exchange brief homilies with political nonentities is in the mainstream of current diplomatic practice. Such was not the norm in mid-nineteenth century Europe, but the visitor from Tunisia brought with him a different tradition. The beys were accustomed to mingle with the crowd on certain religious and festive occasions. The narrow streets of Tunis made this almost unavoidable as a bey and his party made their way to Zitouna Mosque or some other public building. Further, however hierarchically structured political and social life in Husaynid Tunisia actually was, the Islamic *ideal* of a ruler accessible to even the lowliest subject survived as a powerful leaven.

When Ahmad Bey heard the shouts of welcome outside the hotel where he was staying in Aix-en-Provence while en route to Paris, he insisted on going out to talk to the assembled crowd. He let it be known that he regretted not being able to thank personally each individual assembled there for the welcome, and then—sighting the French tricolor—he saluted, exclaiming that this should be taken as a personal salute to each. "This noble gesture," we are told, "strongly impressed the crowd."[43] Ahmad was responding with increasing fervor to his European visit.

The present-day head of state making an official visit finds himself whisked by jet aircraft from his own capital to his destination—all in a few hours. The monotonous similarity of international airports and main thoroughfares from airports to capital cities leaves the foreign visitor with little sense of what is culturally distinct in the host country. By contrast, Ahmad Bey and his party received an intensive eight-day exposure to the French countryside.

[43] Marcel, "Tunis," p. 211.

Moving along in a horse-drawn carriage, the bey had ample time to contrast the panorama of rural France with what he had been accustomed to seeing at home when the annual mahalla took him deep into the Tunisian hinterland. Bin Diyaf recorded his strong impression of what the traveller from Toulon to Paris would see. The bey's private secretary was, of course, relating what he felt the Tunisian ruler *ought* to see; and although Ahmad himself may have been neither so perceptive nor so enthusiastic, Bin Diyaf probably conveyed Ahmad's own awe as well:

"The traveler on this route," Bin Diyaf maintained, "witnesses the significance of prosperity and gets a picture of progress in the several fields of civilization, as well as the results of peace and security. Hardly a spot is to be found that has not been improved by a tree, cultivation or pasturage, all of which is watered to the point of overflowing by the abundant rains of justice. The traveler on this easy road wishes only that the journey might continue; for he sees good roads, is surrounded by buildings, trees, fertile lands, and rivers, and there are many other travelers of all kinds. He cannot hear the voice of the oppressed unless it be from one who has brought this state upon himself. And this is indeed an almost unheard-of wonder in view of the many taxes and levies. The secret is that these taxes are not unfair. The inhabitants know exactly what is required, and the revenue collected is spent for the benefit of all without distinction."[44]

Bin Diyaf waxed even more lyrical in his description of Paris—"all you could wish of sciences, industries, wealth, good administration, elegance, civilization, and justice."[45] It would require a separate book to do justice to Paris, Bin Diyaf insisted, and he referred his readers to the earlier work by the celebrated Egyptian, Rifa'a Rafi' al-Tahtawi.[46] Clearly, neither the bey nor other members of his party would return to Tunis with quite the same ideas concerning government and civilization.

Ahmad Bey arrived in Paris on November 23. The Ottoman ambassador in Paris had refused to call on him.[47] Ahmad could sense the gravity of his offense against his sovereign, the sultan, and perhaps wondered if his flamboyant gesture of a state visit to Paris were well-advised.

[44] Bin Diyaf, 4: 99.

[45] Ibid. We have translated *siyasa* in this context as "good administration."

[46] *Takhlis al-Ibriz ila talkhis Bariz*, first published in 1834.

[47] Bin Diyaf, 4: 100.

Such fears and doubts were blotted out by the excitement of Paris. Ahmad Bey was now in the country that had produced Napoleon, and the legacy of that military genius could be evoked on all sides. To Ahmad's keen pleasure, the aged Marshal Soult, one of Napoleon's most famous generals, called upon him. The bey visited the Invalides, gave an impassioned speech to the assembled veterans, paid his respects at the tomb of Napoleon, and was duly moved to see the intendant—an old soldier of Napoleon—reduced to tears when he showed the bey Napoleon's old uniform.[48]

The heady experience continued for Ahmad with visits to the École Militaire, École Polytechnique, and Versailles. At Versailles he reviewed and saluted warmly several regiments that had fought in Algeria.[49]

One visit to Versailles had not satisfied the bey. Another was arranged, and this time the cadets of Saint Cyr marched in review. This occasioned another warm speech by the Tunisian guest: "At the Invalides I have witnessed the former glory of France. At the review of France's admirable army on the Champs de Mars, I have seen her present glory. Now in you I witness her future glory."[50]

On the return journey from Paris, Ahmad Bey spent the first night at Fontainebleau and then moved on in stages to Marseilles, and finally to Toulon where he boarded the ship taking him back to Tunisia. The bey and his party arrived at La Goulette on the last day of 1846. The Grand Tour was over.

Ahmad had responded to the experience in a manner consistent with his cultural heritage. He had matched the hospitality of his hosts with a lavish outpouring of praise, gifts, and medals. As a token of gratitude to the inhabitants, he presented 25,000 francs to the prefect of Paris to be distributed to the poor. Equivalent sums went to the other towns visited on his return trip to Toulon.[51] Ahmad presented at least twenty-two and perhaps over

[48] Bin Diyaf, 4: 104.

[49] According to Marcel, "Tunis," p. 212, the Bey "wished to applaud the victories gained by these brave soldiers over the natural and for so long bitter enemies of the Regency that he governs." This is going a bit far, but it is significant that neither the hosts nor the guests felt that there was anything improper about this Muslim ruler saluting the victory of Christian troops over his Muslim neighbors to the west.

[50] Marcel, "Tunis," p. 212.

[51] Ibid., p. 213.

thirty of Tunisia's highest decoration (save for the Nishan al-Dam which was, as the name indicates, reserved for members of the beylical family), the Nishan al-Iftikhar.[52]

It was a bit like *The Thousand and One Nights* except that Ahmad Bey was no Harun al-Rashid. He was a minor ruler of a small territory that owed what little independence it had more to the precarious balance of contending outside powers than to its own strength and resources. Ahmad had wanted to be the gracious guest and the modern man. His concern to do the right thing, and in the grand style, can surely strike a responsive chord of sympathy in all but the most cynical.

It could not be achieved. The efforts of an entourage poorly prepared to hold its own in such company can be perceived in surviving snippets of information about the trip. For example, the list of gifts granted to those who had served the bey on board ship contains the quaint reference to an otherwise unidentified member of the crew as "the old man who loved his food."[53]

The ever-perceptive Bin Diyaf had sensed the disproportion of Ahmad's gifts and gestures. He relates that the French translator assigned to Ahmad for the state visit had attempted to dampen the bey's excessive zeal by asserting, "Sire, medals do not make kings. Kings make medals."[54]

And the final thrust of the knife—the supercilious reaction of the French hosts themselves—is brutally summed up by Hugon: "The contemporaries of Louis-Philippe long remembered the happy riches distributed by Ahmad. Somewhat later, Alexandre Dumas related, as he knew how to do so well, in his account of his voyage to Africa on the *Veloce*, the circumstances of his nom-

[52] Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, pp. 100-101. Hugon mentions that "about thirty" were distributed. Each medal was worth 10,000 to 30,000 francs. He had probably overestimated the total number of Nishan al-Iftikhar medals of the highest order distributed. Two lists of medals presented during Ahmad's visit to France, contained in the Tunisian Archives (AGT Dossier 132, carton 29) indicate that seven of the Nishan al-Akbar (the highest order of the Nishan al-Iftikhar) had been presented (mainly to French cabinet ministers). On the other hand, at least thirty-eight Sanf al-Awwal (First Order) Nishan al-Iftikhar medals were distributed. Further, there were respectively thirty, thirty-nine and eleven recipients of Orders II, III and IV of the same medal. It is not certain that the two lists to be found in the Tunisian Archives contain all the decorations granted during the state visit to France.

[53] AGT Dossier 132, carton 29. [54] Bin Diyaf, 4: 167.

ination into the order (Nishan al-Iftikhar) of the bey. Then came Daudet who in *Le Nabob*, extolled not without malice 'the pretty green and red ribbon.' "[55]

At Ahmad's farewell audience with Louis Philippe the French king had insisted that the bey return to Tunisia on a larger ship than the *Dante* that had brought him to France from Tunis. It was a providential gesture. The *Dante*—which had been presented as a gift to augment the small beylical navy—ran aground off La Marsa on the return to Tunisia.

* * *

The loss of the *Dante* could be taken as symbolic of Ahmad's earnest efforts to act, and be accepted, as a modern ruler, worthy of membership in that exclusive club whose rules were made in Europe. Tunisia survived Ahmad's modernization campaign, and in the process many Tunisian political ideas and structures were modified. An even larger number of bold schemes were, like the *Dante*, shipwrecked. The storms of European pressures, the unreliable navigational charts of European supercilious indifference, and the shoals of Tunisian traditionalism proved too formidable.

Ahmad Bey, under the circumstances, could hardly have gained any greater measure of success in being *accepted* by Europe. In a cross-cultural situation, acceptance of the weak by the strong is, at best, a fragile plant of slow growth. Given different planning, and a bit more of that elusive quality—luck, Ahmad Bey might have been able to achieve a better performance record at home, which could have done more than anything else to nurture a greater disposition by Europe to support his efforts. Many reasons why Ahmad attained so few of his goals have already been set out in this and the previous chapters. There remains one crucial flaw to consider. This will be the subject of the next chapter.

[55] Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, p. 113.

X

The Fatal Flaw

Man is always tempted to explain great turning points in terms of a single individual. Carlyle insisted on the hero in history. Pascal claimed that if only Cleopatra's nose had been shorter, the whole face of the earth would have been changed. Parson Weems, lustily echoed by subsequent generations of schoolmarms, depicted George Washington as the father of his country. Russian peasants, groaning under institutionalized oppression, clung to the belief that if only the tsar knew, their burden would be lifted. Such notions, whether sophisticated or simple, bespeak the urge to simplify and individualize history.

The historian knows he must plumb deeper. He adopts Marxist concepts of the dialectic, class struggle and modes of production as the major determinants of societal norms and institutions. He borrows quantitative techniques from the social scientists. In such approaches to history, the individual is likely to be dethroned, making way for groups, social forces, and world-views.

And yet man's need to simplify and personify is never uprooted. Nor, for that matter, does he surrender his common sense, here-and-now perception of the individual's ability to achieve or hopelessly to mess things up. The awareness that things might well have been otherwise but for the actions of one person is a sharp axe cutting through the thicket of social forces, modes of production, operative ideals, and the like.

The previous chapters have indicated the severe limits within which Ahmad Bey was obliged to work. He could no more order the Tunisian political class to change its prejudices and life-style than he could command that Europe mind its own business. The reality of a sluggish economy and an underdeveloped society ineluctably fixed constraints on what could be achieved in any one generation. Equally important, Ahmad Bey was the product of his own background and times, and as a result, there were

certain things he might well perceive and consider, but other things that were literally unthinkable.

There nevertheless remains one imposing individual who can be singled out as evidence of the Cleopatra's-nose theme in history. This person was Mahmud bin 'Ayad. If, instead of Mahmud bin 'Ayad, there had been a top official and confidant of the ruler who could have been to Ahmad Bey what Colbert was to Louis XIV, nineteenth century Tunisian history might well have been appreciably altered. At the very least, many of the imposing changes Ahmad Bey attempted to effect might have struck deeper roots.

Mahmud bin 'Ayad has already figured prominently. The Bin 'Ayad family was singled out, in Part One, as a leading example of native old families in the Husaynid political elite. Mahmud's connection with Ahmad predated the latter's reign, strengthened—one might even say, sealed in blood—by their collaboration in the events leading to the execution of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'. Mahmud bin 'Ayad's bizarre conflict with his father, Muhammad, was examined in chapter seven. There have been countless references to Mahmud bin 'Ayad, the principal tax and concession farmer and the *éminence grise* of Ahmad's reign.[1]

It remains now to ask more directly what this man did that had such a destructive impact on Ahmad's reign. How could such a man have reached this lofty position of power? How could he maintain that position long after the harmful nature of his policies was clear?

When Ahmad began his reign in 1837, Mahmud bin 'Ayad was already wealthy and accustomed to high-level financial deals of the sort that more orthodox financiers would unhesitatingly label shady. (Recall that Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' triggered the events leading to his execution by attempting to block payment of an alleged government debt to Mahmud bin 'Ayad, temporarily caught in an embarrassing low-liquidity situation.) Mahmud could look upon the new reign happy in the feeling that he had cemented close ties with Ahmad Bey. His friendship was destined to survive all vicissitudes and rumors until abruptly broken by Mahmud's flight to Paris in 1852.

During the first few years of Ahmad's reign, Mahmud was not nearly so prominent as his father, Muhammad bin 'Ayad. The latter had soon garnered most of the major farmed concessions and

[1] See above, pp. 225-226.

had obtained such wealth and standing that he could present the beylik with a steamship. She was the first steam-powered vessel owned by the Tunisian state, but this was an honor only to be relished for a brief time. The *Ibn Ziyad*, as Ahmad named her, was wrecked and broke up off Cap Bon following a storm in the fall of 1841.[2] It was a portent of things to come for Ahmad in his relations with the Bin 'Ayads.

During these early years, Mahmud could rely on his father's contacts and wealth to further his own ends. Roughly a year after Ahmad's reign began he took over as qaid of the important province of Cap Bon, a post he was destined to hold, with only one year's interruption, for the next decade.[3] This was not Mahmud's first governorship. In 1244 (1828-29) when he must have been in his early twenties, he had served as governor of Djerba, the Bin 'Ayad family's home area. The following year saw him as governor of Sousse. These may be seen as early probationary posts arranged by his father and perhaps other members of the well-placed Bin 'Ayad family. Not so the governorship of Cap Bon and the many other posts held during Ahmad's reign. In these cases, Mahmud was an important figure and an asset to Ahmad (according to at least one dubious criterion) in his own right.

Mahmud's standing with Ahmad was based on performance as well as friendship. In addition to his long tenure at Cap Bon, Mahmud took over as governor in three different tribal areas, two for a period of only one year and the third for a three-year contract. In all four governorships, his advent to office marked a sharp increase in the ittifaq price. The previous governor had paid 40,000 piastres for Cap Bon. Mahmud started at 49,000 and within a few years had raised the amount to 100,000 piastres per year. He doubled the ittifaq in one tribal governorate from 40,000 to 80,000 piastres, another from 13,000 to 60,000.

The third tribal area was the only exception. Mahmud accepted this governorate in 1259 for 100,000 piastres per year whereas the rate for the previous year had been a whopping 200,000. The

[2] Bin Diyaf, 4: 31. The recurring shipwreck-as-symbol theme—e.g., the *Ibn Ziyad*, the *Dante*, even the *Ahmadiya* that was never launched—would impress the reader as tediously unrealistic were this a work of fiction. Yet they happened, and in circumstances that invite symbolic interpretation.

[3] AGT Register 2127. Even this interruption was only nominal. In 1261 (1845), the governorship was given to Yusuf b. Bakkar al-Jaluli "on the guarantee of our son, General Mahmud bin 'Ayad."

holder of the ittifaq for the latter sum, however, had been none other than his father, Muhammad bin 'Ayad, who had outbid the previous governor by quadrupling the existing rate of 50,000. This had apparently proved unprofitable, and the ittifaq was lowered. Even so, Mahmud's successful bid of 100,000 still constituted a 100 percent increase over the earlier rate.[4]

This explains why the Bin 'Ayads (first father and son, and then son to the exclusion of the father) were able to establish a virtual monopoly over the many available tax and concession farms when the usual pattern was for a certain rotation and competition among the several potential concessionaires. The Bin 'Ayads, most aggressive among the contenders, were also the first to detect the subtle change in the existing political ground rules. Ahmad's ambitious program of military reforms required money, and he was willing to go beyond the prudence of the conventional, traditional ruler in support of that program. The traditional ruler in this system balanced his desire for money with his equally important need for stable control of the country. A provincial official should produce more revenue, but not if his actions created unrest likely to require an expensive military expedition.

Ahmad, however, was mainly concerned with threats, real or fancied, from abroad. Willing to gamble on a measure of disaffection at home to achieve his domestic program, he would overlook the vexatious tyrannies of his own officials provided they produced the needed revenue. Bin Diyaf relates that Ahmad, when holding court, hardly ever heard other than "complaints of those mistreated against collectors and governors. And he offered no answer except, 'Settle your bill with the collector.' "[5]

The Bin 'Ayads sensed that Ahmad placed no high premium on preventing any one financial concessionaire from becoming too powerful, just as a judicious ruler would assure that no tribal leader or military figure could acquire disproportionate power.

This explains their successful campaign to break the power of the Jalulis and the Bin al-Hajs. Members of both families had sought asylum abroad as well as protection from foreign consulates. Later, members of both families were to be found working in subordinate positions under the Bin 'Ayads. Mahmud, for example, seems to have secured a governorship for Yusuf bin Bakar al-Jaluli in 1845.[6]

[4] Ibid.

[5] Bin Diyaf, 4: 144-145.

[6] As explained in note 3 above.

Sir Thomas Reade had occasion to report that Mustafa Khaznadar would often try to settle government debts to foreign merchants by referring the claim to Mahmud bin 'Ayad, who would, in turn, attempt to settle with IOUs drawn on a "bankrupt" named Belhage (clearly, a member of the Bin al-Haj family). The tactic, according to Reade, was to string out payment as long as possible in the hope that the despairing creditors would settle for less than the face value of the debt or would accept the notes of the state bank (to be explained below).[7]

This use of members of the Jaluli and Bin al-Haj families is not to be explained by any magnanimity on the part of Mahmud. He needed financially competent persons in his constantly expanding network of operations, and these men, once tamed, were ideal for his purposes. He could, at the same time, better keep an eye on those few individuals daring and talented enough to be potential rivals.

Why Mahmud bin 'Ayad and his father later split remains something of a mystery. Not a few Tunisians suspected that the dispute was staged, as a means of assuring that one member of the family had standing with each of the major foreign powers, Britain and France.

If, however, there was any such family connivance at the beginning of the affair between father and son it soon faded before a genuine personal animosity. Before Mahmud had fled to France in 1852, his own father went to the bey, warning him of what was being planned and urging Ahmad to seize his son and the assets he was planning to take out of the country before it was too late.[8] The simplest explanation for the dispute is quite likely closest to the truth—they were two strong-willed men, neither of whom was capable of remaining subordinate to the other.

Since Mahmud bin 'Ayad was presumably securing a greater "rake-off" for himself and his satellites, it would appear that less money was available for Ahmad Bey's ambitious plans. That is, Bin 'Ayad might wrest concessions away from competitors with exorbitant bids, but then it might be assumed that he would skim off from some other account more than the extra amount his high bid made available to the government.

Such was not the case. Mahmud bin 'Ayad was able to place greater revenues in the hands of Ahmad Bey. In the Tunisian

[7] FO 102/27, no. 11, 30 November 1847.

[8] Bin Diyaf, 4: 151.

National Archives is to be found a single-page, undated, and unsigned document entitled "Receipts and Expenditures 1257-23 Sfar 1276" (1841-September 1859).[9] It is of dubious accuracy and almost certainly not a total list of either expenditures or receipts (among other improbables, it shows receipts exceeding expenditures for the total period—so why the need to stave off bankruptcy in 1853 by virtually disbanding the army and why the constant search for foreign loans beginning in the mid-1840s?).[10] Nevertheless, it may be used to give some notion of the general trend.

In the four years 1257-1260 (1841/42-1844/45) the total receipts ranged from a low of roughly 5.4 million piastres to just over ten million piastres. This was the period when—according to the report—Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' was in charge of the treasury. Thereafter began the tenure of Mustafa Khaznadar and the steady rise of Mahmud bin 'Ayad to the commanding position of chief financial personage in the regime. During this period, from 1261 until 1268, when Mahmud bin 'Ayad fled to Paris (1845-June 1852), receipts ranged from a low of 9.1 million piastres to a high of just under seventeen million. Above and beyond what stuck to his hands, Mahmud bin 'Ayad was managing to raise more money for Ahmad Bey.

Further corroboration of this interpretation may be found in another source of even more suspect objectivity and accuracy, but usable for present purposes. This is the book published anonymously in Paris in 1853 entitled *Notice sur le Général Benaiad, sa famille et son administration à Tunis.* It was a polemical defense of Mahmud bin 'Ayad, almost certainly either written by him or by a writer he had hired, timed to sway the arbitration proceedings pending between Bin 'Ayad and the Tunisian government. Among the claims to be found in this little tract are: that Mahmud bin 'Ayad had been able to raise government revenues by at least ten million (francs or piastres?) per year; that since he

[9] AGT Dossier 93 bis, carton 93.

[10] Yet the possible accuracy of this document—once its precise terms of reference are clearly established—is indicated by AGT Register 491 (receipts for the years 1268-1271). Total receipts as recorded in the two reports match for three of the four years. Only for 1268 does the latter list 5,168,473 piastres against the former's 6,314,401. Register 491 offers a fairly detailed breakdown and it *seems* to include all major receipts except the tithe on grain (*'ushr*) and the customs of La Goulette.

had left, revenues had declined at least three million per year; that the bey's treasury used to get 350,000 piastres per year from the leather farm concession but the government received a healthy 1,500,000 piastres under his direction; that his operation of the mint reaped 200,000 piastres per year for the bey whereas formerly the minting of money had cost the government 300,000 per year; and that Bin 'Ayad had raised the annual receipts of the grain tithe by 200,000 piastres per year.[11]

Bin 'Ayad did not bother to point out that receipts were declining in the last two years of his tenure in power—down to 9.1 million piastres in 1267 (1850-51) and dropping even further to 6.3 million in 1268 (1851-52), the year he left the country. Shrewd enough to see that the whole shaky edifice was soon to come tumbling down, he left in good time. This is another aspect of the story to be examined later, but for the period before things fell apart, his own claims to have increased revenue may be taken as proven in general if not in detail.

How, then, was it possible to collect more money both for the government and himself? Just as his father before him had, Mahmud bin 'Ayad forced out competitors by offering the beylik vastly increased sums for available concessions. The extra money was then raised by squeezing more out of those being taxed. And those oppressed could not secure redress of grievances from the bey, nor could they rally around a rival to Bin 'Ayad; there were none. If the Bin 'Ayads could bring down the Jalulis and the Bin al-Hajs, what chance would some provincial notable have? How could he pit his puny financial resources against an elaborate Bin 'Ayad financial apparatus capable of winning any concession through exorbitant overbidding—in classical economics terms, a form of cut-throat competition leading to monopoly control? Obviously, it was better for the provincial notable to come to terms with Bin 'Ayad and work as a member of his team.

The system was not only oppressive, it was blatantly arbitrary and unfair, lacking even an effort at saving appearances. Bin Diyaf, writing his chronicles almost a generation later, could still convey his sense of frustration and outrage. In collecting the tithe for the Rabita, Bin 'Ayad took more nearly 20 percent than the

[11] (Mahmud bin 'Ayad?) *Notice sur le Général Benaiad, sa famille et son administration à Tunis* (Paris, 1853), pp. 11-19. (A copy is to be found in the Bibliothèque Nationale, Paris.)

legal 10 percent. Yet, in making disbursements, instead of what was supposed to be 10 percent, the officials would measure out roughly 6 percent. "Other than Tunisians might doubt this or consider it impossible," Bin Diyaf asserted. "After all, a measure is a measure and this can hardly be falsified. A Tunisian, however, who has seen this with his own eyes, might well assert that the tithe turned out to be even more than 20 percent."[12]

Oppression and extortion were manifestly involved, but these factors alone do not account for the extra revenue raised. Although one is reluctant to give an obvious scoundrel his due, there is good reason to assume that Mahmud bin 'Ayad's system was more efficient—or at least bore the seeds of a potentially greater efficiency. He was in a position to achieve certain economies of scale. By virtually monopolizing tax and concession farming he could assure greater central control, both in the assessment and collection of revenue. Instead of the many examples of petty tyranny, inefficiency, and the under-reporting of taxable items which is characteristic of a thoroughly decentralized tax and concession farming system, Mahmud bin 'Ayad substituted a more competent, centralized tyranny.

Mahmud bin 'Ayad's activities were serving to shake the Husaynid beylik out of what the Marxists would call its feudal stage into one of primitive capitalism. Or, to use the lingo of the modern developmentalists, Bin 'Ayad's approach entailed a greater mobilization of men and resources.

This was scant comfort to the olive grower or wheat farmer being virtually measured out of his livelihood by extortionate tax collectors who themselves were under almost inescapable pressure to produce ever-increasing revenues. Nor is this to argue that Bin 'Ayad's devious and tyrannical ways—like those equally oppressive equivalents, child labor and the fourteen-hour workday in early capitalist England—were an inevitable historical stage.

Yet, Mahmud bin 'Ayad did reveal considerable organizational and managerial skills in creating his fiscal empire. Unfortunately, through defect of character or perhaps lack of nerve he was unable to turn this achievement into any kind of lasting institutional legacy for his native Tunisia. Instead of being honored as the Tunisian Colbert or Alexander Hamilton, he is remembered as the author of a breathtakingly daring fraud against the entire government and people, a fraud entitling him to sit in the historical

[12] Bin Diyaf, 4: 145.

gallery with the likes of Ivar Kreuger, the Swedish match-king, Billy Sol Estes, and the perpetrators of the "South Sea Bubble."

A major example of the move toward central financial control was Ahmad Bey's authorizing Mahmud bin 'Ayad, in 1847, to create a state bank that would issue paper money, redeemable in coin at a 4 percent discount. At the same time, the bey granted Bin 'Ayad the concession to mint silver piastres.[13] He was authorized to print and circulate up to four million piastres in notes, using as cover export permits for olive oil in the amount of eight million piastres (but redeemable at diverse periods according to the date of the *tizkera* ["permit"]).

The 4 percent discount for redeeming paper money amounted to a commercial tax. Further, in the hands of a Mahmud bin 'Ayad, the power to print and issue paper money was a dangerous weapon. Nevertheless, state control over the fiscal system and state regulation of credit and banking are fundamentals of national economic planning. In this regard, the specific protests lodged by the European merchants doing business in Tunisia are significant.

In a memorial to British Consul Reade, those merchants under British protection registered the following points: The 4 percent discount in exchanging paper for specie is unfair. (This seems a reasonable argument.) Business in the Regency often requires extending credit for two or three years, and paper money of this sort will not do. (In other words, the merchants feared depreciation or fluctuating value and wanted, instead, to bind Tunisian merchants and the Tunisian government to bullion or an international currency such as sterling or the franc.) Their third point was that this Tunisian paper money would mean giving Tunisian government agents greater credit so they could monopolize trade. (Here, indeed, was the crucial point. Who was to control Tunisian trade, the European merchants or groups from within Tunisia itself?)[14]

The many jeremiads of the European merchants and consuls against all of Ahmad Bey's economic policies should be taken with a grain of salt. Their notion of a rightly ordered economic world would have left European commercial interests in a posi-

[13] Bin Diyaf, 4: 113-114; Hugon, *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis*, pp. 25-28; AE Tunis (Commerciale) 56, no. 15, 18 May 1853 (a general report on Mahmud bin 'Ayad).

[14] FO 102/27, Enclosure to no. 6, 20 July 1847.

tion to control trade and credit terms in Tunisia, to buy Tunisian raw materials cheaply, and to undercut native crafts and industries (whether traditional or the rudimentary efforts at industrial modernization as represented by the Tebourba textile mill) with European manufactures.

Mahmud bin 'Ayad's state bank represented one of the few available weapons of the economically weak state system facing those who are stronger. As with Mahmud bin 'Ayad's other ideas and operations, the fault lay less with the plan itself than with Bin 'Ayad's unchecked exploitation for his own purposes. After Mahmud had fled to France, Ahmad Bey checked to see if the cover for the bank notes in circulation was still in the bank. There was, of course, "ni argent, ni billets" as the French consul tersely reported.[15] Further, since Ahmad Bey had originally granted Mahmud bin 'Ayad this cover on faith without any accountability, the stage was set for the inconclusive arbitration proceedings between Bin 'Ayad and the Tunisian government.

The French government, having granted Bin 'Ayad French citizenship, apparently felt obliged to give the appearance of fair play and justice to the whole miserable affair by establishing a court of arbitration. For Tunisia it was an exercise in futility. In spite of Khayr al-Din's competent and conscientious efforts in pleading the beylik's case in Paris, there was no chance of recovering any assets or even of obtaining pro forma vindication. Mahmud bin 'Ayad's *modus operandi* was to leave as few tracks as possible. When the arbitration decision was finally announced in Paris on 30 November 1856, blissfully for Ahmad Bey more than a year after his death, it was found that Bin 'Ayad's "proven" claims on the Tunisian government exceeded those of the Tunisian government upon Bin 'Ayad.[16] The beylik repudiated the sentence and refused to settle with Bin 'Ayad.

Mahmud bin 'Ayad had left Tunisia in June 1852, never to return. To the end, his ability to throw sand in the eyes of those around him remained unimpaired. British Consul Baynes reported Mahmud bin 'Ayad's departure to France, ostensibly for reasons of health, but he speculated that Bin 'Ayad might have a secret mission connected with the Algerian boundary question, then causing tension between Tunisia and France. French Consul

[15] AE (Commerciale) 16, no. 15, 18 May 1853.

[16] Ganiage, *Origines*, pp. 182-186.

Laplace was of the same opinion.[17] Neither consul suspected the man had absconded with government funds and assets. Even five months later the British consulate assumed that Bin 'Ayad had *not* fled, was still a power in the beylik, and was, indeed, allegedly negotiating a badly needed loan for Tunisia in France. The true situation became clear to the British consulate only in December 1852.[18]

Indeed, what exactly took place, and who, in addition to Mahmud bin 'Ayad, were the culprits remains obscure to this day.[19] Were Mahmud bin 'Ayad's activities all part of a long-range plan? Or did he see that things had gone awry and choose to leave in good time? Or were his actions to be attributed to a sudden loss of nerve?

No precise answer is possible. Mahmud bin 'Ayad was destined to live for almost twenty-eight years after his flight from Tunisia. After a few years in France, he settled in Constantinople in 1857, where he remained until his death on 18 February 1880.[20] Although during that long period of time he was by no means taciturn—having written or overseen the writing of several polemics justifying his activities—the secret of his own motivation died with him. Perhaps he never really knew this clearly himself. Surely Mahmud bin 'Ayad never intended to spend roughly half of his mature years in exile. While in Tunisia he had been a major figure. He must have found those years until his flight in 1852 thoroughly exhilarating. As an exile he was not lacking in means (having lavishly provided for himself), but he was never again center-stage. Would he have chosen to opt out of the action in his mid-forties, at the peak of his intellectual and physical powers?

What little we know of the psychology of those who perpetrate great frauds suggests that they, themselves, are usually taken

[17] FO 102/42, no. 15, 15 June 1852; AE Tunis (Politique) 12, no. 96, 18 June 1852.

[18] FO 102/42, no. 26, 20 November 1852 and no. 40, 20 December 1852.

[19] In addition to the two British consular dispatches cited in the preceding note, see FO 102/45, no. 16, 12 May 1853. In general, the British consular reporting of the affair was sparse. The different views from the French consulate, after the fact, are well set out in AE Tunis (Commerciale) 56, no. 15, 18 May 1853; AE Tunis (Politique) 13, no. 46, 2 June 1853, and 15, no. 7, 18 February 1855.

[20] See Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 181, and references cited there.

in by the game they are playing. Believing themselves to be more intelligent and more daring than most men, they expect to move from success to success.

In line with this interpretation, the intersecting of two difficulties may well have caused Mahmud bin 'Ayad to flee. First, although he had been trying off and on since 1846,[21] he was never able to secure European loans to the Tunisian government. The talented Bin 'Ayad, given access to this outside financial support, could probably have kept his financial operations solvent indefinitely. (When foreign loans did begin in the mid-1850s under Muhammad Bey, less gifted officials were able to avert state bankruptcy until 1869—even with the intervening 1864 revolt.) Mahmud was never able to exploit this hedge of foreign credit.

Then came two poor agricultural years in succession, with sharply reduced revenue. Bin 'Ayad saw the handwriting on the wall and fled. It was close timing. In January 1853 the financial crisis forced the bey to take the one step he had heretofore adamantly rejected—the disbanding of most of his military units. The bubble had burst. Mahmud bin 'Ayad, as the chief fiscal official whose activities led to the debacle, was obviously the most vulnerable for reproach, disgrace, and perhaps even imprisonment—unless the man immediately responsible for the exorbitant military expenditure, Ahmad Bey himself, were to be successfully overthrown in some form of palace coup. This might have been possible. Ahmad was a sick man, recovering from his first stroke the previous July (1852), but such a coup could hardly have strengthened Bin 'Ayad. Instead, six months earlier, Mahmud bin 'Ayad chose the sanctuary of Paris.

If Bin Diyaf is to be believed, Mahmud bin 'Ayad made a genuine effort to inform the bey that financial crisis could be averted only by reducing military expenditures, and when his advice—matched by that of other ministers—went unheeded he decided to flee. According to Bin Diyaf, Mahmud bin 'Ayad realized that the government was overspending and overtaxing.[22]

He well knew that Tunisia was already obliged to import annually quantities of wheat and barley. He understood the deteriorating commercial standing of the government in its last major revenue base—the export of olive oil. Pressed by current fiscal

[21] FO 102/31, 20 May 1848; AE Tunis (Politique) 13, no. 46, 2 June 1853.
[22] Bin Diyaf, 4: 147-149.

needs to make advance sales as well as to sell even when unfavorable market conditions prevailed, the government was fated to realize progressively smaller profits.

Bin 'Ayad, therefore, went to Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', seeking his help in urging Ahmad Bey to cut expenditures. (It is interesting to see how Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', the loyal old mamluk, was sought out for such delicate tasks.) After consulting with Mustafa Khaznadar, Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi' advised Bin 'Ayad to write a long account of the financial crisis to Khaznadar which would then be shown to Ahmad Bey. This was done, and the letter was read to Ahmad surrounded by his chief ministers.

Ahmad immediately saw that all of his ministers and advisers were pressuring him to cut back his army, and this he adamantly refused to do. Even the pleas of Mustafa Bash Agha, minister in charge of army affairs, were to no avail.

Thereupon, continuing Bin Diyaf's account, "when Bin 'Ayad despaired of changing the situation, he became convinced that he was falling into the abyss that had caused the downfall of others such as the house of Jaluli and Sulayman bin al-Haj . . . and he arranged to save himself and his wealth." From that time, perhaps several months before his flight, Bin 'Ayad got all possible assets outside of the country while arranging the government account books to obscure what was taking place. In the entire last-ditch operation, Bin 'Ayad continued to receive complete support from Ahmad Bey. Without this he might still have been able to flee with considerable personal wealth, but the thorough fleecing of the Tunisian government could have been avoided.[23]

The Bin Diyaf interpretation also suggests that Bin 'Ayad had no long-range plan to defraud the beylik and then flee to safety in France, but responded to adversity with a sudden loss of nerve. The incident dramatizes the over-all operating climate that engulfed the Tunisian political elite. Reflecting on the fate of the Jalulis and the Bin al-Hajs (which he had so intemperately brought about) Mahmud bin 'Ayad was reminded that the most powerful man in the beylik could, with a change of luck, be brought to nought. There was the even more disturbing ghost of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi' to warn him how the mighty could fall.

[23] Ibid. The Bin Diyaf interpretation is credible. He claims to have read the Bin 'Ayad letter to the bey at the meeting in which the financial crisis was discussed, which is completely consistent with his official position as private secretary.

Bin 'Ayad had been ruthless with all who stood in his way. If he slipped and fell, would his enemies act any differently?

Apparently, Mahmud bin 'Ayad had no great confidence in being able to survive a setback. The daring, double-or-nothing mentality that had characterized his previous financial career marked, equally, the manner in which he bowed off the stage.

Mahmud bin 'Ayad the victim of a system that he, himself, developed in its most extreme form? Or Mahmud bin 'Ayad the unscrupulous financial wizard who knew how to exploit an anachronistic political and financial system, had a good run for his money, and got out safely, living wealthily thereafter? Whichever comes closest to the truth, the result for Ahmad Bey's Tunisia was the same. Either interpretation endows Mahmud bin 'Ayad with a crucial historical role.

A less efficient Bin 'Ayad would have slowed the pace of Ahmad Bey's reforms. A more loyal Bin 'Ayad could have generated additional revenues for his ruler while effecting structural change. A Bin 'Ayad committed to the task of making Ahmad's programs work would have been obliged to be candid with his ruler in explaining convincingly the limits of the possible. This same candor would have provided a guideline for his subordinates who could then have seen an underlying rationale and purpose in what was taking place. The result could have been loyalty, not just to a man or a transient personal interest, but to a new program. This would have paved the way for structural changes preserving, at least in part, the greater centralization and mobilization of resources Mahmud bin 'Ayad had temporarily achieved.

The title of this chapter has a double meaning. The fatal flaw was Mahmud bin 'Ayad. The fatal flaw, in another sense, was Ahmad Bey's permitting a man like Bin 'Ayad to maintain financial control of the beylik, unchecked by rivals and unaccountable to anyone.

Why did Ahmad Bey allow this? Ahmad was loyal to a fault. The handful of officials with whom he was accustomed to work from the beginning of his regime—Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', Mustafa Khaznadar, Giuseppe Raffo, Khayr al-Din and, of course, Mahmud bin 'Ayad—was deemed part of the family. Their loyalty was not to be questioned. "The bey had faith in those he loved,"[24] asserted Bin Diyaf. Part of the answer is as simple as that.

[24] Bin Diyaf, 4: 149. See also the touching story of how Ahmad deflected Raffo's desire to resign following a dispute with the French consul, by

In addition, Ahmad Bey, for all his political sophistication, was more concerned with threats to his regime from outside Tunisia—from France and the central Ottoman Empire. These he parried with consummate skill. The Tunisian infrastructure he ignored, or rather—what was worse—delegated to Mahmud bin 'Ayad. Ahmad Bey had that touch of monomania which made him unwilling simply to follow in the old ways. To achieve his diffuse ideal of reforms and modernization he was willing to turn a blind eye on many things that a less gifted, less ambitious ruler might have monitored with ease. The greatest oversight of all—one can clearly perceive in retrospect—was in financial administration.

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appeals to mutual attachment and loyalty cemented with the years. "I have become accustomed to you and you to me. I ask only of God that he not let our group be broken up." Bin Diyaf, 4: 177-178.

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CONCLUSION

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Conclusion: The Meaning of it all

On 30 May 1855 Ahmad Bey died. His cousin, Muhammad Bey, was immediately called in to receive the bay'a khassa. The following day he received the bay'a 'amma. The consular community duly noted that the succession had taken place without incident. They even voiced the optimism, characteristic in witnesses to a new reign, that things might now get better. "In a word," French Consul Rousseau informed his government, "Tunis is not only calm but is given over to a sentiment of joy which creates confidence in a better future and the hope of soon seeing wise and useful reforms change the situation of the country."[1]

Thus ended, without excessive emotion or untoward incident, an eighteen-year reign. A bey of the Husaynid dynasty had died. Another had taken his place. Ahmad Bey's reign had been eventful, even at times dramatic, but Tunisia bore little evidence that it had been jolted out of the even tenor of its traditional ways. A bit more vulnerable in the face of a threatening outside world, and debilitated by the demands of excessive taxation, the Tunisia of 1855 was not so different from the Tunisia of 1837. Or so it seemed.

The daily life and work of the average Tunisian had hardly been modified by that eighteen-year reign. The industries, begun to sustain an overly ambitious military effort, were either already closed or in an advanced state of decline. Within a year the expeditionary forces would return from the Crimea, be demobilized, and fade imperceptibly into the countryside.

Roughly the same numbers of Tunisians in 1855 were farmers, arboriculturalists, pastoralists, craftsmen, and merchants as in 1837. School attendance had not increased. The earlier sluggish pace of social mobility was not visibly altered. Tunisia and Tunisians seemed weary of Ahmad's frantic pace and wanted nothing more than to settle back into a comfortable conservatism.

Yet appearances were deceiving in June 1855. Ahmad Bey's reign had undermined an old order and sowed the seeds of a new.

[1] AE Tunis (Politique) 15, no. 18, 1 June 1855; FO 102/48, no. 9, 1 June 1855.

Ahmad's stirring appeals to "sons of the homeland" may well have done little more than increase consternation among his reluctant conscripts, but a few individuals among the political elite had begun to ponder this strange new principle of political organization. The notion that a man's ranking in the beylik's political structure depended on other criteria than race or language was nurtured every time Ahmad established a close working relationship, often sealed in personal friendship, with a native Tunisian tribal leader.

When a native Tunisian such as Bin Diyaf, whose education and life-style should have made him perfectly at home with the old pattern of politics separating an ethnically and culturally distinct ruling class from the native subjects, felt justified in criticizing the alleged prejudice against native sons in appointment to high government post, then clearly a new spirit was developing.

Bardo Military School, for all its shortcomings, represented a new idea of military and administrative professionalism. At a time when the former mamluk system was bound to decline—if only because the foreign source of new recruits was drying up—undermining in the process the rationale behind the old mamluk schooling system, Bardo Military School offered a feasible alternative. It maintained the *esprit de corps* of a small elite, but within the framework of a revised curriculum, integrating a passing knowledge of Western languages and culture as well as Western military technology. Also, the principle of selection for the military school—as well as for officers throughout the new Nizami army—mitigated the distinction between native sons and those who had previously been deemed the only natural source of an officer class.

Ahmad's measures to break down the distinctions, in terms of official perquisites, separating Hanafi from Maliki 'ulama constituted yet another series of steps toward what can be called national unification.

The abolition of slavery, an important humanitarian gesture, fitted neatly into the developing pattern—that of removing ascriptive criteria of social organization and laying the groundwork for what could eventually become a society characterized by greater cohesion and individual mobility.

Ahmad's very excesses and setbacks contributed to the development of the next generation of reformers. Their own experience taught them that Ahmad's modernizing zeal had been largely dissipated because there was no effective check to his arbitrary

whims. Ahmad's innovations had revealed the inadequacy of the traditional governmental machinery in coping with the expanded role of government that his program ineluctably involved.

The next generation of Tunisian leadership was to include a group that campaigned for increased Westernization, but controlled and rationalized within the framework of constitutionalism. They were the product of Ahmad's eventful reign. Many such as Khayr al-Din himself had been connected with the Bardo Military School. Others sprang from the quite different background of the 'ulama and clerkly classes. Of the latter, Bin Diyaf and Bayram V were the most prominent. That such a varied group would later combine in a reformist salon was itself an eloquent sign of the new times.

Even the superficial aspects of Ahmad's reign served to provoke change. The European style in architecture, as at Muhammadiya, in Nizami uniforms and medals, even in court procedure, all bespoke a new orientation. The results were often ill-digested, at times tawdry. Nevertheless, the cumulative impact of such gestures and symbols cannot be denied. Under Ahmad's whiplash, Tunisia was lunging toward another of its many historical encounters with the ideas, artifacts, and men of another culture.

For all that, a muted, minor key enveloped Ahmad Bey's imposing efforts. Bold schemes ended not in a crescendo of success or failure but faded out in a whimpering refrain. The scale of contemporary European response to Ahmad's ambitions also ranged from mildly favorable to disdainful—again an absence of extremes.

If, however, Ahmad's reign lacks for promethean peaks it is no less significant as a story filled with the ironies of misapplied enthusiasms and of life-sized leaders tormented by a special fate from abroad. The resulting tableau, with all its incongruity, is a realistic picture of what *most* of the political leadership in *most* of the world has wrestled with in modern times.

Most of the non-Western world in modern times has been obliged to assimilate, in disconcertingly breathless fashion, radically new modes of organizing human and inanimate power. This—the challenge of modernization—has been even more traumatic for having hit these cultures in the form of an ideological and physical assault by hectoring alien peoples.

The response of the many different groups in the non-Western world has been diverse—from zealotry to quietism, from a

dogged, *ils-ne-passeront-pas* intellectual nativism to an uncritical assimilationism; from pragmatic, day-to-day reactions to ideologically all-embracing world-views that become surrogate religions. Yet this diversity of response is by no means formless. It is reducible to a limited number of patterns. Tunisia in the age of Ahmad Bey provides one pattern of early modernization efforts.

* * *

What are the more important conclusions to be derived from the Tunisian case? First, when a venerable governmental apparatus exists, possessing its own bureaucracy, procedures, and patterns of recruitment, members of that governmental apparatus will be in the vanguard countering the first blows from the West.

This is a useful distinction. Innovations from abroad are not always met first by governments. The crucial role of government in the early phase of Tunisian modernization indicates the special importance of formally constituted political processes and existing political elites in such historical circumstances.

For this reason the student of early modernization in the non-Western world would be well advised to adapt to other purposes the celebrated dictum of Kwame Nkrumah, "Seek ye first the political kingdom." Where such "political kingdoms" (in the sense of a distinct officialdom, bureaucratically arranged and given legitimacy as part of a comprehensive religious value-system) existed, one could expect a pattern not dissimilar from what took place in the Tunisia of Ahmad Bey.

Countries meeting this criterion would include (in addition to Egypt and the central Ottoman Empire so often linked to Tunisia throughout this study) Morocco, Iran, and among non-Muslim states, China and Japan.

In much of Africa similar bureaucratic governments linked to an international high-culture tradition were seldom found on the eve of the Western impact, and accordingly a different pattern of response usually developed.

Other parts of the non-Western world where the existing political kingdoms split asunder in the early phase of the Western intrusion—one thinks of Moghul India and Indonesia—produced yet another variant pattern.

In Tunisia, the first response came almost exclusively from the political class. What of the religious establishment? As a class they were far from moribund. Although circumspect in their relations

with government they were neither supine nor lacking in self-confidence. Why were religious leaders not more in evidence during those years of political innovations championed by Ahmad Bey?

The religious establishment was accustomed, by venerable tradition, to play the role of watchdog over society's public and private morals. They could legitimize or condemn innovative action by government.

During the period of Ahmad's reign the religious establishment provided no intellectual leadership either to the reformist efforts or to those who would wish to oppose such steps. A shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi might cautiously deplore excessive taxation. Other 'ulama must have shaken their heads in ponderous disapproval at other innovations, but none evinced any awareness that all of this marked the beginning of a massive borrowing from an alien culture, exceeding in intensity anything experienced by Islamic civilization in the Mediterranean area since the thinkers and rulers of the Abbasid period confronted a combination of Greek thought and Byzantine-Sassanid modes of government.

Nothing had yet happened to challenge the 'ulama way of life. The Bardo school, from their perspective, was a continuation of the mamluk training system. Military conscription went against custom as did state intervention in industry, but the religious leadership had long been conditioned to expect periods of seemingly foolish or erratic behavior from government. This, too, would pass.

Accordingly, the religious leaders were not the initiators of new thought and action in the early phase of modernization. They were, instead, the passive recipients of initiatives coming from government. Ahmad Bey could reorganize the curriculum at Zitouna, establish fixed salaries, and take steps to equalize the rights and perquisites of Hanafi and Maliki officials without arousing fears from the religious establishment; these moves could be explained as consistent with the Islamic ideal.

The efforts in his reign that can be classified as increasing the sentiment of national unity—such as appeals to nativism, more state intervention, increased Arabization of administration, or perhaps the Crimean campaign—could hardly be consistently deplored by the 'ulama, for such initiatives were justified in that most powerful of religious appeals, the unity and mutual support incumbent upon all believers. Even the abolition of slavery, which

discomfited the traditionalists, was consistent with the Islamic *ideal* of the equality of all believers.

Bin Diyaf was in many ways the personification of an emerging modernizing ideology. He knew and understood the religious establishment. He could address himself to the 'ulama in their own language. He was, however, a man of government and the son of a man of government. That the first intellectual argument for change came from such a man, rather than a member of the religious establishment, underscores the role of the political elite as vanguard in the early stirrings of modernization.

Moreover, little intellectual ferment of any kind or from any source preceded the early political efforts at change. This also provides a useful clue in interpreting the modern history of such societies as Tunisia. Does not the Tunisian history traced in this book suggest that anyone studying the non-West in modern times must guard against unconsciously bringing to his task implicit assumptions and concepts borrowed from Western experience?

For example, the pattern of intellectual precursors preparing the ground for later political change stands out in bold relief in much of modern Western history: first, the work of the *philosophes*, then the French Revolution; first, the small cadres of intellectuals, artists, and youths who swelled the ranks of the Romantic movement, and then the political revolutions that created nation-states in Central and Eastern Europe; first, the leavening of socialist and communist thought by latter-day Romantics and Utopians, and then the Russian Revolution.

Such a sequence did not take place in Tunisia, nor does it seem to have characterized the early modernization efforts of other non-Western societies possessing venerable bureaucratically organized governments. In such societies selected members of the existing political class experimented in a piecemeal, pragmatic fashion with Western-inspired reforms. Then, only in the second generation of Westernization did a few individuals seek to give intellectual coherence to what might be called an ideology of eclectic acculturation.

In Tunisia, for example, the challenging work of Khayr al-Din, *The Surest Path*, appeared in 1867, twelve years after the death of Ahmad Bey. Published both in Arabic and French, *The Surest Path* was an attempt to win the blessing or at least the benevolent

neutrality of both the 'ulama class at home and European statesmen abroad. By this time Khayr al-Din had begun to recruit a small salon of reformists, including Bin Diyaf and, from the 'ulama class, such individuals as Shaykh Bayram al-Khamis. Two points are worth noting: the tentative efforts at Westernizing reforms *preceded* the intellectual writing and discussion on the need for reforms; second, even when the intellectual arguments began they were conducted by a small body of individuals, *largely from within the governing class.*

The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey, like most traditional bureaucratic polities, possessed as intellectuals only a body of persons largely religiously oriented, imbued with an elaborate notion of role and hierarchy, intimately tied to the existing political establishment and of marked conservative bent. A religious posture that emphasized form as a guarantor of content, ritual word and deed as the vessel containing faith and ultimate reality, was married to a sophisticated cynicism about the efficacy of this-worldly activism. How one lived his life was more important than what he did. Among such intellectuals the approved life-styles lay within the narrow range bounded by epicurean and stoic. The individual tormented with the conviction that the times were out of joint was obliged either to adopt the quietism of a Sufi mystic or leave the socio-political establishment, take to the hinterland, and attempt a revolution of the saints in the pattern of the Wahhabiya or the later Sudanese mahdiya.

Intellectual ferment from within the establishment as a precursor of socio-political change was rare, for there were virtually no marginal or semi-attached intellectuals in-but-not-of the system who could readily play the roles of public censors, socratic gadflies, or social critics. There was little or no dynamic tension within the educational system provoking sectaries or polemical treatises. Newspapers were yet to be created. Even the patron-client relationship in literature and the arts, so characteristic of eighteenth century England (another institutionalized pattern giving a class of intellectuals livelihood and limited freedom of expression) did not flourish.

It is, therefore, quite natural that the ideology of reform would follow—not precede—the first establishment-initiated reformist efforts. The existing political elite had to create, however unconsciously, a new stratum of thinkers, enjoying at least partial

intellectual and economic independence from government (an intelligentsia, in a word) before a reformist ideology could begin to develop.[2]

Another pattern of change so clearly discernible in modern Western history is the rise of new socio-economic forces, not linked, or only tenuously linked, to the establishment, that come forward to challenge the existing regimes. Rising burghers and ambitious kings combined to wrest power away from feudal lords and create the early absolute monarchies. A capitalistic bourgeoisie later challenged the absolute monarchy system, with its survivals of ascriptive status, to create the modern liberal nation-states. Then, the growing numbers and power of socio-economically mobile wage earners, themselves the product of that modernity induced by the capitalist system, pressured the bourgeois establishment for a place in the sun.

There was nothing comparable in the Tunisian experience. The hammer blows of European commercial intrusion were having their effect, but as yet only in an indistinct fashion. Several members of the once prestigious shashiya trade could be detected moving to new occupations. There was increasing pressure on the rural population, arising out of both higher taxes to finance Ahmad's innovations, and the accelerated move to an export-oriented economy. The pre-conditions for later socio-economic change were falling in place during Ahmad's reign, but this was all. No native entrepreneurial class emerged. No major change in land tenure or cropping took place. No important technological innovations were introduced.

Perhaps one exception was the growth in importance of what the Marxists would label a *comprador class*—a native merchant

[2] Just as in Tunisia Ahmad Bey's reformist efforts precede *The Surest Path* and the later intellectual ferment connected with the Young Tunisians, so too, in the Ottoman Empire, there were the earlier reformist efforts of Sultan Mahmud, and then the men of the Tanzimat, before the intellectual contributions of the Young Ottomans and the Young Turks. The pattern in Egypt was similar: the bold efforts of Muhammad Ali, followed after an interval by the great initiatives of Ismail, prepared the ground for both the Islamic modernism of Shaykh Muhammad Abduh and his Salafiya as well as the more secularist orientation of Ahmad Lutfi al-Sayyid in the early years of this century. Historical scholarship of the modern Arab world, concentrating more on intellectual history than on material changes, has tended to obscure this general historical sequence.

group serving as agents and middlemen for the European commercial penetration. Even in this matter one might well question whether a structural change had taken place by the end of Ahmad's reign. In effect, this comprador class had always existed, and had long served the dual role of tax and concessions farmers for the Husaynid government as well as merchants and agents in international trade. Their leaders were such families as the Bin 'Ayads and the Jalulis. They had been subjected to vicissitudes of fortune in earlier years, and as revealed throughout Part Two, they, as a group, experienced similar precipitous rises, falls and recoveries during Ahmad's reign. They were no longer so completely vulnerable to arbitrary acts of the Husaynid government, but this potential new freedom was more than offset by both a vulnerability and an increasing subordination to the European political and commercial power structure. Their changed status was a significant omen, but they hardly constituted a historically significant class leading Tunisia to a new socio-political orientation.

Eventually, during the years of the French Protectorate in Tunisia, the cumulative economic changes throughout the country resulted in a different socio-economic orientation for Tunisia—the rise of an agricultural class who regarded farming more as a commercial venture than a way of life—a new agricultural proletariat; the rise of a newly urbanized working class and the growth of trade unionism; the shift from the bazaar and small-trader pattern of exchanging goods and services to one that increasingly emphasized the large retail enterprise introducing merchandise from the international market, etc. Such major changes were ushered in by critical technological and organizational innovations—mechanization, the creation of a modern transportation and communication infrastructure, the joint-stock company, and more sophisticated credit facilities, to name only the more obvious.

For this later stage of Tunisian history—well beyond the age of Ahmad Bey—one can not only discern change imposed upon all levels of society but also detect a creative response to that change from all levels of society. An era is reached in modern Tunisian history when the historian must look beyond the activities of the governing class in order to interpret events.

Not so for the age of Ahmad Bey, when one looks in vain for a creative response from groups outside government. The his-

torian's attention for the period treated in this book is necessarily drawn to the activities of that small group who made up the governing class.

Modern European history also reveals a more internal and self-sufficient pattern of development. The idea that change might be provoked, or imposed, from outside (not just across a political boundary, but from another cultural area) seems strange to the European experience. The situation has been just the opposite in the non-Western world, and the Tunisian case provides strong corroboration: the foreign source of the challenge to change was *the* dominant variable in the non-Western world, especially at the beginning of the modernization process.

Further, extrapolating from the study of Tunisia during the age of Ahmad Bey, the extent to which non-government forces later emerge, begin to respond creatively, and play a historically significant role can serve as an important index of societal transformation or modernization. To plot such a development for any given country, it is crucial to have a clear idea of the terrain in that first leg of the journey.

* * *

Certain other characteristics distinguishing this pattern of early modernization—imported from abroad and first parried and adapted almost exclusively by a single small group, the political elite—may be distilled from the study of Tunisia under Ahmad Bey.

First, a strikingly disjunctive development is evident. The result of efforts initiated by Ahmad Bey and his entourage should properly be to widen the circle of those who actively participate in, and have a sense of identity with, government—the move toward the nation-state. The earlier system, described in Part One, presupposed a crisp dividing line between state and society, with a minimal body of duties for the former. With Ahmad Bey came initiatives for a conscript army, recruitment of native Tunisians into high positions of government previously reserved for mamluks or Turks, the elimination of special perquisites for Hanafi jurists over the native Maliki jurists—all moves likely to increase politization, or in the terminology of an earlier age, to foster the rise of nationalism.

These early reformers, belonging to a political elite accustomed to adopt a superior, paternalistic attitude to the governed, were

marked by what we might term *the pygmalion syndrome*. The political elite, previously inclined to ignore the governed, were now attempting to mold this improbable human clay into new shapes. The reformers, if they were to succeed, needed increased participation by the governed. Unfortunately for the immediate success of their efforts, the reformers from within the political elite could find no group among the governed sufficiently enthusiastic to champion such change.

As a result, it was always a matter of reform from the top imposed upon a confused and resistant society. Finding little or no favorable response from the rank-and-file of Tunisian society, the first generation of political reformers could only be confirmed in their prejudices that the governed were as cattle to be whipped and driven to the desired goal. Ironically, the reformers were exposed to the temptation of becoming even more manipulative and cynical in their relations with society. This could only increase their sense of separateness from society—the very antithesis of the needed outcome.

Tunisian society lacked the institutionalized ways to protect itself against a suddenly intrusive government. They could not effectively signal to government when and where things were going awry. The many failures connected with the conscript army, increased taxation, the efforts creating military-related industries and the state bank are attributable, as was demonstrated, to many causes—the excesses of a headstrong ruler, Ahmad's bad luck in certain of his chief advisers such as Mahmud bin 'Ayad, divided counsel within government, etc. Perhaps the most important reason for failure was the absence of a clear response from society. In such circumstances the would-be reformer was rather like the artist obliged to paint blindfolded. He might have the desired picture well-fixed in his mind's eye, but he could not see the mistakes that had to be corrected on the canvas.

This image of poor communication, mutual misunderstanding, and near-tragic misconceptions evokes another characteristic: the early stage of modernization in a bureaucratic polity such as Ahmad Bey's Tunisia is likely to be thoroughly disorderly and confused. This points to a useful historical corrective. One expects disorder and confusion to reign during a revolution or a war. One can accept without demurrer that a different sort of broad social change, such as the industrial revolution, was made up of thousands of confusing individual gains, losses, false starts,

unplanned breakthroughs, out of which ultimately emerged a pattern, clearly discernible to the historian after the fact.

On the other hand, when the historian turns his attention to social change in a smaller society during a phase when the initiative lies with a limited number of persons grouped together in a discernible institutional framework, he is likely to assume that things should be neater and more rational. It is very natural and human to praise or blame Ahmad Bey and his followers for this or that action, the implicit assumption being that they *should* have been in a position to perceive their great chance and act upon it.

In fact, there is no reason to assume that the small Tunisian political elite had any greater over-all perception of their situation and the range of their choices than the limitless thousands whose combined individual actions ushered in the industrial revolution. Throughout Part Two, whether the subject was relations with foreign powers, military reforms, marks of modernity, or the difficulties of increased taxation and abusive changes in governmental credit and fiscal administration, the prevailing motif was that of fits and starts, trial and error, and divided counsel.

Ahmad Bey's Tunisia exemplifies a historically specific pattern: reform from above by a bureaucratic polity with a governmental class both divided among themselves and looking always over their shoulders to the harassing, intrusive foreigners. As a class they were understandably confused by the novelty, uncertain of how to proceed, and tempted to try different—even contradictory—measures in rapid succession. In such a historical setting, simplicity, order, and high predictability are not to be expected.

Historians have yet to appreciate the psychic strain that ensues from such a tantalizing existence. Indeed, the legend of Tantalus seems best to depict the plight of that first generation of Tunisian political reformers. They were never completely crushed, never overwhelmed by either an explosive reaction from within or unbearable pressure from abroad. They were sometimes enticed to try this or that venture, or sometimes discouraged from entering another field of endeavor, but in all cases they were spared (or denied, varying according to the specific incident) either the triumph of a great breakthrough or the ignominy of crushing defeat. Again, one sees the theme in muted half-tones.

In such a setting the symbol does become confounded with the substance, the ritual with the reality. It was not that those

reformers in Ahmad Bey's entourage were less sophisticated or more superstitious than political elites elsewhere and at other times, but rather, that given their limited margin of maneuver, placed as they were between an unresponsive traditionalism at home and a now-beguiling, now-threatening siren from abroad, they could hardly act otherwise. The gesture, the symbol, the tentative statement of aim was, itself, a discreet first step in the direction of change.

From this viewpoint, Ahmad's Muhammadiya, the state visit to France, the Nizami uniforms, the ill-fated vessel that never left La Goulette, even the introduction of fauteuils, portraits, and European ladies to receptions at Bardo appear more logical. Many of these symbolic acts—the staking out of a position—must still be judged as failures. In objective terms they can be judged as having often deflected important human energies away from more demanding tasks. Nevertheless, they are understandable.

In effect, the first generation of reformers under Ahmad Bey was engaged in an unacknowledged alliance with a constantly changing group of certain European forces in order better to fend off other European forces and *at the same time* use the foreign threat to induce change at home. It was—to use a provocative term that may help to illustrate the peculiarity of the situation—a politics of collaborationist modernization.

These reformers were utilizing the balance-of-power political rules of the weak, but it was a game not to be understood in terms of conventional international relations in which the only actors are states. Instead, the historical setting can be understood in terms of a thorough blending of the international and the domestic.

The early reformers in Tunisia were never completely in control of affairs either at home or abroad. They felt obliged constantly to test the weather and make changes accordingly. And they were, understandably, even more sensitized to the tempests that might come from abroad than the domestic danger of becoming becalmed. This generation developed into consummate "trimmers"—in a fashion that the first marquis of Halifax might well have appreciated.

* * *

A major subject of modern history is the diversity of the non-Western world's response to the Western challenge, but it is a

diversity reducible to a limited number of patterns. The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey presents one such pattern—that of the first generation of Westernizers or reformers in a bureaucratic polity.

Many other state systems—and especially the bureaucratic polities—adopted a not dissimilar approach during that first phase. After isolating this early stage of collaborationist modernization, the historian can then reconstruct somewhat more clearly the varieties of subsequent stages.

In some cases the existing political elites broke down under the strain, provoking crisis situations to which a school of African historians has given the name "primary resistance movements."[3]

In other cases the pattern of imposed change, of reform from the top, of innovations hurled hastily at the great masses who are expected to conform and keep quiet, prevails into subsequent generations, widening dangerously with each passing year the gap between political ideology and political institutions. Ultimately an expanded state is left to dominate a people now stripped of traditional political patterns and left only to demonstrate the violent swings of political activity associated with "mass society."[4]

Or, in happier circumstances, reform from the top can create a slowly widening circle of supporters from within the political elite, and in time this new modernized sector from above joins with those forces from within society that are responding to the changing economic, social, and intellectual environment. This, tailored to traditions of the Third World, would be the classic evolutionary pattern.[5]

All of the above represent pure or ideal types. In the history of modernization in the Third World every society has demonstrated some measure of all three patterns, and will continue to

[3] A concise statement of the "primary resistance" idea, with bibliographical references, is found in the first few pages of the article by Eric Stokes, "Traditional Resistance Movements and Afro-Asian Nationalism: The Context of the 1857 Mutiny Rebellion in India," *Past and Present* 48, August 1970.

[4] William Kornhauser, *The Politics of Mass Society* (Glencoe, Ill.: Free Press, 1959).

[5] That Tunisia comes close to such a pattern is the argument in Micaud, Moore and Brown, *Tunisia: The Politics of Modernization* (New York: Praeger, 1964). The same theme has been extended to a broader spectrum of time in the author's "The Tunisian Path to Modernization," *Society and Political Structure in the Arab World*, ed. Menahem Milson (in press).

do so. This developmental spectrum can perhaps provide a guide to classification and interpretation.

In each society both the chronological and the substantive point of departure is that first generation of modernizers. For Tunisia, this was the political generation of Ahmad Bey.

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APPENDIX I

Husaynid Marriage Patterns

A. The Daughters of Husayn Bey (1824-1835) and Mustafa Bey (1835-1837)

Husayn's first daughter married	Ismail Kahiya, Georgian mamluk of Hamuda Bey.
His second daughter married	'Allalah, a son of Husayn Bey's wife by a previous marriage. He was of Turkish origin on his father's side. The family had a tradition of military service in Ottoman Tunisia, his grandfather having risen to the post of bash Hamba.
His third daughter married	Husayn Khoja, mamluk of the Minister Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi'. He was originally from the island of Favignana off the west coast of Sicily.
His fourth daughter married	The famous Shakir Sahib al-Tabi', a Circassian mamluk of Husayn Bey.
Mustafa's first daughter married	Ramadan Bash Mamluk, a mamluk who came to Tunisia from some unspecified part of Europe in the reign of Hamuda Bey. He served as one of Mustafa Bey's retainers and as guard for his young son, Ahmad Bey.
His second daughter married	Mustafa Sahib al-Tabi', mamluk from Georgia presented as a gift by a leading Tunisian qaid and merchant, Mahmud Jaluli, to Hamuda Bey. He later served as tutor to Ahmad Bey and a principal advisor in the early years of his reign.
His third daughter married	Mustafa Bash Agha, mamluk originally from Georgia, in the service of Mustafa Bey.

Another daughter (Kalthum) married	Mustafa Khaznadar (whose important role in Ahmad's reign is noted in Part II).[1]

B. Other examples of mamluk marriages into the beylical family:

An earlier Georgian mamluk also named Ismail Kahiya married the daughter of Ali Bey (reigned 1759-1782). Later Mahmud Bey (reigned 1814-1824) arranged for a daughter born of that union to be married to Yusuf Kahiya Dar al-Pasha, another Georgian mamluk.[2]

Yusuf Sahib al-Tabi' married another daughter of Ali Bey. This was her second marriage to a mamluk, for she was the widow of the Georgian, Mustafa Khoja. And Mustafa Khoja, it might be added, had previously married another daughter of Ali Bey who died at an early age. Then, he married the second daughter.[3]

Sulayman Kahiya, Georgian mamluk, married a daughter of Mahmud Bey. Their sons were listed as receiving a beylical allowance in 1256 (1840-1841).[4]

C. The complete social acceptability of mamluks is further illustrated in the quadruple marriage ceremony for four of Husayn Bey's children which took place in 1826:

[1] The sources for this information are:

a. AGT Registers nos. 453 and 463. These registers contain expenses for the Bayt Khaznadar for the years 1252 (April 1836-April 1837), 1255 (March 1839-March 1840) and 1256 (March 1840-February 1841), and they list the monthly stipends granted members of the beylical family. For the females the names of the husbands are given as well.

b. Bin Diyaf, Biographies 226, 261, 317, 332, 342, 358 and 373.

c. Filippi provides the information that Husayn Khoja (whom he erroneously calls Hasan Khoja) came from the island of Favignana. Bin Diyaf simply relates that he came "from the district (governed by) the city of Naples." Filippi (Monchicourt), pp. 166-167; Bin Diyaf, Biography 237.

d. The information concerning the marriage of Mustafa Bey's daughter, Kalthum, is related in Grandchamp and Mokaddem, "Une Mission tunisienne à Paris," where it is further noted that the daughter of this union married Khayr al-Din Pasha.

[2] Bin Diyaf, Biographies 2 and 215. [3] Bin Diyaf, 3: 98 and Biography 36.

[4] AGT Register no. 463; Bin Diyaf Biography 237.

Muhammad Bey (1855-1859) married the daughter of Shaykh Muhammad Bayram.

Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey (1859-1882) married the daughter of his maternal uncle, Ahmad al-Munastiri.

Hamuda Bey married a slave girl who had been raised by his grandfather, Mahmud Bey.

Husayn's fourth daughter married the mamluk Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.[5]

[5] Bin Diyaf, 3: 158. After the execution of Shakir Sahib al-Tabi', his widow was married to another mamluk, Qara Uthman (Bin Diyaf, Biography 403).

APPENDIX II

Provincial Qaids

An official list of qaids for the years 1244-1272 (July 1828-August 1856), preserved in the Tunisian National Archives, illustrates the pattern of multiple holdings by leading provincial figures. It also demonstrates that even the most powerful were occasionally removed from their home fief. The following information is extracted from this official list (AGT Register no. 2127):

Qadum al-Farashishi was qaid of the following tribal qiyadas in the years noted:

Qiyada	*Years*
Farashish	1253-1256, 1258, 1260-1261 & 1267-1270
Majir	1257, 1262-1263, 1267, 1270 & 1272
Awlad Sandasin	1264
Al-Ka'ub & al-Qawazin	1263
al-Hammama	1259
Awlad bu-Ghanim	1272
Al-Khamansa & al-Difaan	1272

This means that Qadum was qaid for both Majir and al-Ka'ub & al-Qawazin for the year 1263. He was qaid for both Farashish and Majir during the years 1267 and 1270. For one year, 1272, he was qaid of three qiyadas—Majir, Awlad bu-Ghanim and al-Khamansa & al-Difaan. Qadum, as his laqab al-Farashishi indicates, was from the Farashish tribe. This tribe was the major base of his political influence, and in the twenty (lunar) year period from the time of his first appointment as qaid of the Farashish, he held office for eleven years. Yet, even for a man of his importance (or perhaps because of his importance), there were long periods when he was removed from the qiyada. When he was obliged to relinquish the qiyada it seems that the bey chose another leading family. The list reveals that a certain Hamida b. Ali held office in 1259, and then after two years of Qadum's

stewardship, Hamida's son, Ahmad Hamida b. Ali, took over and remained in power for five years.[1] One can well assume that the struggle between the families and supporters of Qadum on the one hand and the Bin Alis on the other served to keep each in line with beylical policy.

The list of qiyadas held by the al-Sabu'i family is as follows:

Tribal Qiyada		*Year*	
Awlad Sandasin	Husayn b. al-Sabu'i	1244-1250	
		1251	Muhammad b. al-Haj al-Sabu'i
	Husayn b. al-Sabu'i	1252	
		1254	Muhammad b. al-Haj al-Sabu'i
		1256-1257	"
		1261	"
		1270-1272	"
Awlad Ayar	Husayn b. al-Sabu'i	1245	
Al-Ka'ub & al-Qawazin	al-Mirghani b. al-Sabu'i	1256	
		1270-1271	Muhammad b. al-Haj al-Sabu'i
Kisra		1269-1272	Muhammad b. al-Haj al-Sabu'i
Al-Hammama		1251	Muhammad b. al-Haj al-Sabu'i
		1254	"

Again, a similar pattern is discernible. A tribal base in the Awlad Sandasin, but even here a few breaks in tenure.[2] There were also several examples of multiple holdings—especially Muhammad b. al-Haj al-Sabu'i, who for two full years 1270-1271 held three qiyadas.

Salih b. Muhammad was qaid of Le Kef in 1246 and from 1253 to 1272. (There is no entry from 1247-1252 [1831-1832/1836-1837]. It is possible that he held office for all or part of this time as well.) In addition, he held concurrently a number of other qiyadas:

[1] The incumbent for an earlier period—1257—was a certain Hamida b. 'Azuz. It is quite likely that this was actually Hamida b. Ali. The scribe in Tunis who drew up the list would not necessarily have known the personalities involved and he might have been obliged to decipher a very rough hand as forwarded from the provinces (or perhaps from notes taken by a scribe on duty to the mahalla).

[2] A member of the al-Murabit family, Hasan al-Murabit, became qaid of the Awlad Sandasin for one year in 1258 and then again for a four-year period from 1266 through 1269.

Qiyada	*Year*
Baja	1257-1258
Zaghalima	1257
Al-Raqab	1259-1267
Janduba	1264-1268
Sharin	1266

Further, his sons received during this period the following postings:

	Qiyada	*Year*
Farhat b. Salih	Waragha	1259-1268
Muhammad b. Salih	Al-Hinansha & al-Ribaya'	1259-1263
'Umar b. Salih	Al-Khamansa & al-Difaan	1257-1267
'Umar b. Salih	Al-Tawabi'	1260-1267

The beys apparently did not attempt to offset Salih b. Muhammad's power by occasionally having him relinquish office to a tribal rival. This may be explained by the politico-military sensitivity of his qiyada, guarding the route to Algeria.[3]

[3] If Berbrugger, who visited Le Kef in the mid-1850s on an archaeological expedition, is to be believed, the bey had good cause to be concerned about the activities of his qaid: "The good relations that I had enjoyed with the Kiaia (kahiya) of Le Kef, Salah ben Mohammed, and with his eldest son, the Kaimakan [qaimaqam], changed somewhat at the end of my visit, because the latter, having wished to draw me into certain political and administrative intrigues had been subjected to a peremptory refusal on my part. He had the unusual pretension to be nominated bey of Constantine by the French government, and had cast his eyes on me to aid him in this affair. The caid ed dokhan (farmer of the tobacco concession) Haim, an honest Jew . . . was his intermediary in this absurd negotiation. . . ." A. Berbrugger, "Itineraires archéologiques en Tunisie," p. 370.

APPENDIX III

A Note on Population

A bewildering variety of population estimates may be gleaned from European consular reports and travel literature on Tunisia throughout the nineteenth century. Such information (or, as is often the case, misinformation) should be received with considerable skepticism. Quite often the author of a travel book simply cribbed from an earlier source. And the consul sending in his report may have done little more than pose the question to his harassed dragoman, himself unaccustomed to think in terms of population numbers.

Information from these sources can, at best, provide only a crude working hypothesis pending a more adequate exploitation of more reliable sources such as tax records. Attention, in this regard, is called to Jean Ganiage's interesting estimate of the total population derived from the *majba* tax records ("La Population de la Tunisie vers 1860"). In addition, Ganiage's monograph, *La Population Européenne de Tunis au milieu de XIXe siècle* (Paris, 1960) is a good example of what can be extracted from parish registers for the European population.

The solid study by Mme. Valensi on a more narrowly circumscribed demographic subject ("Calamités démographiques en Tunisie et en Méditerranée orientale aux XVIIIe et XIXe siècles," *Annales Economies Societes Civilisations* 6, November-December, 1969) also shows what a painstaking methodology and an ability to exploit all kinds of sources to their full advantage can achieve.

The weaknesses of estimates found in travel literature and consular reports must be recognized, but the cumulative evidence is not for all that simply to be ignored. After all, the statistical data that may eventually be "teased" out of the official archives will also need to be interpreted subject to a generous margin of error. How accurate were the capitation tax reports, and in which way can one assume they were likely to be distorted? Can the native Tunisian society of the time studied be expected to provide any source equivalent to European parish records of births and

deaths? If so, then what—biographical dictionaries, careful measurement of urban areas coupled with reconstructions of man-land ratios, enumeration of mosques and other public buildings, or other possibilities not yet thought of?

In such a necessarily imprecise matter, one should hesitate before abandoning any source of possible aid. And, in the present case, after an author has virtually lived with some of the sources for several years he begins to sense their strengths and weaknesses. Grenville Temple is revealed to have been a careful observer. Filippi combined a good eye for detail with long residence. Capitaine X actually claims to have surveyed death lists by quarters in Tunis for a six-month period which was marked by no famines or unusual activity. Here, evidently, was a man attuned both by training and disposition to give a serious population estimate.[1] On the other hand, Colonel Ducouret (Hadj Abd el-Hamid Bey) was an almost pathological liar, and to make matters worse, it is difficult to discern when he might be motivated to distort. The researcher also learns, as experience with his material grows, to weed out certain possible sources whose information is revealed to be too scanty and derivative, just as he can—with a sense of dispensing justice too long delayed—consign to the outer darkness such works as *Under the Palms in Algeria and Tunis* (London, 1868) by one Lewis Wingfield, a shameless plagiarizer.

The fruits of this labor are presented below in tabular form, showing population estimates for Tunisia as a whole and for its major cities. The dates of the sources utilized range from the late eighteenth century (Nyssen, 1788) to the 1880s.[2]

[1] This is an intriguing nugget of information. Capitaine X, *Une Promenade à Tunis*, p. 81, implies that the shaykhs of the several quarters in Tunis kept death lists and he was able to consult them. If this was true, has such information survived? His own account, in any case, seems too high. He estimates a total of 180,000, which he breaks down as follows:

140,000 Muslims
20,000 Jews
12-14,000 Europeans (mainly Maltese)
5-6,000 floating

[2] An alphabetical listing of the sources used, with the date of the information, follows (titles of the works may be found in the bibliography): Bayram (1884), Calligaris (1834), Capitaine X (1842), Chassiron (1849), Cubisol (1867), Daumas (1852), Dilhan (1866), Ducouret (1850), Dunant (1858), Duveyrier (1881), Ferriere (FO 102/32, no. 7, 31 March 1848), Filippi

Appendix III

	I *# of Estimates*	*II* *Lowest Estimate*	*III* *Highest Estimate*	*IV* *Conservative Estimate*
Tunisia	15	1,000,000[1]	5,000,000[2]	1,000,000 to 1,500,000
Major Cities				
Tunis	25	70,000	200,000	85,000
Beja	6	4,000	9,000	6,000
Bizerte	9	4,000	12,000	6,000
Djemmal	2	6,000	8,000	6,000
Gabes	7	7,500	30,000[3]	7,500
Gafsa	5	3,800	8,000	[4]
La Goulette	3	3,000	30,000	[5]
Kairouan	10	12,000	60,000	20,000
Le Kef	9	5,000	8,000	6,000
Mahdiya	6	3,000	10,000	5,000
Msakin	2	10,000	10,000	7,000
Monastir	9	4,000	12,000	7,000
Nabeul	4	4,800	15,000	6,000
Nefta	4	5,000	10,000	6,000[6]
Sfax	11	6,000	12,000	10,000
Sousse	13	5,000	15,000	7,000
Tozeur	5	2,000	12,000	10,000[6]
Zaghouan	5	2,500	12,000	———[7]
		Total (Cities over 5,000)		194,500

[1] Nyssen (1784).
[2] Duveyrier (1881).
[3] The highest estimate includes the entire oasis.
[4] Not counted. Less than 5,000.
[5] Not counted. Permanent population probably considerably less than 5,000. Highest estimates include summer population (already included under Tunis).
[6] Actually, a cluster of oasis villages.
[7] The center of shashiya manufacturing, Zaghouan was surely over 5,000 early in the nineteenth century but had probably declined to less than 5,000 by mid-century.

(1829), de Flaux (1865), Greaves (1824), Kennedy (1845), de Lesparda (AE Tunis [Commerciale] 51, no. 49, 27 June 1834), MacGill (1811), Mattei (AE Tunis [Commerciale] 56, no. 14, 18 May 1853), Noah (1813-1815), Nyssen (1784), Pellissier de Reynaud (1853), Plichon (AE Tunis [Mémoires et Documents] 8, April 1842), Puckler-Muskau (1837), Richardson (1845), Rousseau (AE Tunis [Commerciale] 56, no. 44, 26 October 1854), St. Lager (1874), Temple (1835), Tissot (AE Tunis [Mémoires et Documents] 8, May 1853).

Column I of the table lists the total number of estimates consulted for each item. (That is, a few sources, such as Filippi or Richardson, suggest an estimate for almost every city listed. Many others did not penetrate into the countryside, or if they did, refrained from providing such information. There are, accordingly, a greater number of estimates for, say, Tunis than for Msakin.)

Column II gives the lowest estimate recorded and Column III the highest. These two columns clearly reveal the elusiveness and imprecision of such data.

Column IV lists our own *conservative* estimate of the population. This figure is *not* an average of all estimates recorded for Tunisia or for any particular city. It is, rather, arrived at after an evaluation of the sources themselves, their over-all reliability, their likely competence to make reasonable estimates, and their access. This is, admittedly, a very subjective if not at times intuitive approach.

The estimated total population of cities with populations of over 5,000 indicates that perhaps 12-20% of the total population was urban. Probably two-thirds to three-fourths of the population were sedentary, the remainder being transhunants or nomads.

GLOSSARY

'adl	notary
agha	military commander
'amil	title used both for provincial governor and tax collector
amin	weight supervisor (tax collecting), head of craft or trade guild
'askar	soldier in the regular army
baldi	urbanite
baraka	charisma
bash	from Turkish meaning chief, e.g., bash katib, bash khoja, etc.
bash katib	chief clerk
bash khoja	chief of the Turkish scribes
bay'a	acknowledgment of new bey, roughly oath of allegiance
b. khassa	the first and smaller ceremony
b. 'amma	the larger, more public ceremony on the following day
Bayt Khaznadar	treasury
bey	Ottoman title that came to be the most commonly used by Tunisians and Europeans in designating the Tunisian ruler
daftar	register, ledger
dawlatli	dey
dey	Ottoman title that came to designate the Turkish military officer in charge of Tunis. Also dawlatli
dhikr	religious service in a zawiya
diwan	office, chancellery, cabinet, official register, as diwan al-jund
diwan al-hisban	bureau of clerks responsible for accounts
diwan al-insha	bureau of clerks responsible for writing reports and correspondence
diwan al-jund	regular infantry muster rolls
Funduq al-Ghilla	office of the market tax
al-Ghaba	office collecting tax on olives
Hamba	special cavalry guard
hara	Jewish quarter of a city

imam	prayer leader. Also, by extension the leader of all Muslims, the caliph
ittifaq	annual purchase price of office paid by provincial governors
jund al-Turk	regular infantry composed, in principle, of Turks
kahiya	second-in-command (military and provincial administration)
khalifa	deputy qaid
khatib	preacher
khatm	seal
khaznadar	treasurer
khoja 'askar Zwawa	chief clerk of the Zouaves
Kulughli	lit., son of the slave (of the sultan), i.e., son of Turkish father and native Tunisian mother
kuttab	Quranic school. Muslim elementary school
lafziya	Additional special amount paid annually by the provincial qaid to the government (see ittifaq)
madrasa	Muslim school or college (in the English sense)
mahalla	Biannual military expedition to collect taxes from the tribes
majdhub	possessed (a sign of holiness or a special relationship with the Divine)
Majlis al-Shar'i	Religious court in Tunis and the principal cities of the beylik
makhzan	storehouse or warehouse and, by extension, a general term for government
mufti	jurisconsult
mukhazaniya	Tribal cavalry who join the mahalla and carry out other military and political positions in government
muzariqiya	tribal irregulars
Nizami	general Ottoman (and Tunisian) term for new-style, Westernized military
pasha	Governor of province in the Ottoman system. Thus, Ottoman title for the ruler of Ottoman Tunisia
qadi	judge
qaid	provincial governor
qanun	tax on date and olive production
qasba	lit., castle or citadel. A section of governmental buildings in Tunis and other cities. Popular French transliteration: casbah

qiyada	province
al-Rabita	office collecting and disbursing tax on grain
sahib al-tabi'	master of the seal
shahid	lit., witness. One qualified to give testimony in a Muslim court
sharif	putative descendant of the Prophet Muhammad
shaykh	Tribal or village headman. Also, general title of respect for religious leaders
shaykh al-balad	headman in a town or village
shaykh al-madina	mayor of a city
Spahi	cavalry
tawthiq	notarial work and letter writing
tizkera	export permit
umma	the community of Muslims
'urf	custom, customary law
'ushr	tithe tax
wakil	lit., one delegated to a certain task by a principal. Supervisor of habous properties. Also, agent in tax collecting
wali	saint
zawiya	lodge of religious brotherhood

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Public Archival Collections

Tunisia:

The national archives—Archives générales tunisiennes—are located in the Dar el-Bey in Tunis which now houses the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The collection, which includes public records covering both internal government and administration as well as foreign relations, is classified according to two separate series of (1) registers and (2) dossiers. The former, in principle, cover single documents (such as individual sheets or notebooks on separate tax receipts or expenditures) while the latter are groups of documents on a specified subject assembled in a single file (e.g., beylical correspondence with qaids, lists of appointments, etc.). A catalogue in French of the dossiers and an Arabic index of the registers may be consulted at the Archives. A brief historical sketch and general guide to the Archives is found in the introductory pages of Mantran, *Inventaire.*

France:

Correspondence between French consuls in the beylik of Tunis and their ministry in Paris is to be found in the archives of the Ministère des Affaires étrangères (Paris), grouped in the series "Tunis" and classified either as "Correspondance politique" or "Direction commerciale." For the period of Ahmad Bey's reign the former are assembled in volumes 3-15 and the latter in volumes 49-56. Attention is also called to the individual reports and miscellaneous material related to Tunisia found in the series "Mémoires et documents (Tunis)."

Correspondence and reports related to the French military mission to Tunisia are filed unbound in several cartons in the Archives de Ministère de la Guerre (Vincennes) under the rubric "Section OM Tunisie."

Great Britain:

Consular correspondence between British consuls in Tunis and the Foreign Office is at the Public Record Office in London. The series number used for Tunisia was FO 77 (volumes 1-30) through 1837. Thereafter, FO 102 designated consular correspondence between Tunis and London. The material for 1837 through 1856 is found in volumes 1-50. Miscellaneous material

from the consular archives in Tunisia is classified in series FO 335.

United States:

Microfilm copies of correspondence between U.S. consuls in Tunis and the State Department were consulted at the Princeton University Library.

Unpublished Manuscripts

Paris. Archives Nationale. F^{17} 2957^{2}. "Rapport général sur la Régence de Tunis, l'Ouad Sus et l'Oued Rir par Hadji Abd-el-Hamid-Bey (M. Ducouret) en mission en Afrique."

Ducouret, ostensibly a convert to Islam and almost certainly a mountebank, arrived in Tunisia in February 1850 on mission from several French government ministries to explore parts of Africa. He never got beyond Tunisia and the oases of southeast Algeria. His detailed report should be used with great caution. On Ducouret's background and his poor reliability see Mantran, "Une Relation inédit d'un voyage en Tunisie au milieu du 19eme siècle," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 11 (1955); and Marcel Emerit, "Un Collaborateur d'Alexandre Dumas: Ducouret Abd el Hamid," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 4 (1956).

Tunis. National Library. "Mémoire sur le Consulat général de France à Tunis, 1792-1848" (by E. Pellissier de Reynaud).

Oxford. Oxford University. "British Policy toward Tunis, 1830-1881" (by André Raymond). Doctoral dissertation (1953).

Well-researched study.

London. Public Record Office. FO 102/29 (1845). "An Account of the Present State of Tunis" (by James Richardson).

A thorough account by the well-known British explorer. Contains detailed estimates of governmental finances and the military. One of the best European sources.

Vincennes. Archives du Ministère de la Guerre, Section OM Tunisie. "Rapport sur une expédition dans le sud de la Régence de Tunis, adressé au chargé d'affaires de France" (by Élève-Consul Tissot). Thirty-seven page manuscript (no pagination) dated October 1857.

Good report of the mahalla by a young French consul who had been permitted to join the expedition as an observer.

Books and Articles

Abd al-Salam, Ahmad. (See Ibn Abi Diyaf.)

Abd al-Wahhab, H. H. "Coup d'oeil général sur les apports ethniques étrangers en Tunisie." *Revue tunisienne* (1937).

Includes useful general speculation on numbers of Andalusians and Turks who emigrated to Tunisia and where they settled.

Abu-Nasr, Jamil. *The Tijaniyya: A Sufi Order in the Modern World.* London, 1965.

An interesting brief section on "The Tijaniyya in Tunisia" (pp. 82-93) plus an additional reference (pp. 166-168) to the celebrated Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi.

Arnoulet, F. "La pénétration intellectuelle en Tunisie avant le Protectorat." *Revue africaine* 98 (1954).

Most of the article is concerned with the creation of Sadiqi College (1875) long after Ahmad's reign, but the first few pages survey earlier activities of Abbé Bourgade, Mgr. Sutter, les freres de la doctrine chretien en Tunisie, and others.

Atger, A. *Les Corporations tunisiennes.* Paris, 1909.

Thin study of Tunisian guilds, lacking in detail.

Al-Baji al-Mas'udi, Muhammad. *Al-Khulasa al-Naqiya fi umara Ifriqiya.* Tunis, 1283 (1866-1867)

This is, indeed, a khulasa (summary or synopsis) of Tunisian history covering the period from the Arab conquest to the nineteenth century in less than 150 pages. Nevertheless, the author, a government clerk and contemporary of Bin Diyaf (al-Mas'udi lived from 1810 to 1870), offers a few details on the Husaynid period not found elsewhere.

Bayram al-Khamis, Shaykh Muhammad. *Safwat al-I'tibar bi Mustawda al-Amsar wa al-Aqtar.* 2 vols. Cairo, 1302/1884.

Although the title and format would suggest that the book is intended to fit into the genre of classical Islamic geographical or travel books, most of the book is about Tunisia—the last third of volume I and all of volume II. An indispensable source for nineteenth century Tunisian social history. The author was a member of the celebrated Bayram family of 'ulama cited often in chapter four.

Berbrugger, A. "Itineraires archeologiques en Tunisie." *Revue africaine* 1 (1856-1857).

A good observer and a few interesting asides, but his major interest was classical archeology.

Bercher, L. (See al Muchrif.)

Bin 'Ashur. (See Ibn 'Ashur.)

(Bin 'Ayad, Mahmud?) *Notice sur le Général Benaiad, sa famille et son administration à Tunis.* Paris, 1853.

An apologia written to strengthen Bin 'Ayad's case against the beylik following his flight to France. By filtering out the self-serving and often dubious facts, the reader can obtain useful insights into the workings of financial administration during Ahmad's reign.

Bin Diyaf. (See Ibn Abi Diyaf.)

Bin al-Khoja, Muhammad (Belkhoja). *Tarikh Ma'alim al-Tawhid fi al-Qadim wa al-Jadid.* Tunis, 1358-1939.

Especially useful for information on the mosques and madrasas of Tunisia.

Bin Hamida, Muhsin. *al-Baji al-Mas'udi.* Tunis, 1962.

A brief biography of the Tunisian scholar, government clerk, and chronicler, followed by excerpts from his work.

Bourgade, M. l'Abbé. *Soirées de Carthage.* Paris, 1847.

Charmingly ingenuous and diffuse book by the first chaplain of the chapel to Saint Louis at Carthage. Well-disposed toward Ahmad Bey and Tunisians, Abbé Bourgade represented the less-hectoring variety of European influence during Ahmad's reign. He naively acted in the apparent belief that a little charity, understanding, and instruction might return the homeland of Saint Augustine to the Church.

Braudel, Fernand. *La Méditerranée et le monde méditerranéen à l'époque de Philippe II.* 2nd ed. 2 vols. Paris, 1966.

This classic study of the Mediterranean world in the sixteenth century offers massive data and brilliant interpretation (e.g., climate, corsairs, demography, prices, military technology, etc.) that can be used to better situate Husaynid Tunisia in its proper historical and geographical frame.

Brunschvig, Robert. *La Berberie orientale sous les Hafsides.* 2 vols. Paris, 1940-1946.

This excellent major study of Hafsid Tunisia is the fundamental reference for any effort to gauge the survival of Hafsid ideas and institutions into the time of Husaynid Tunisia.

———. "Justice religieuse et justice laïque dans la Tunisie des deys et des beys, jusqu'au milieu du XIXe siècle." *Studia Islamica* 23 (1965).

Beautifully-wrought study of this subject, relying heavily on Bin Diyaf but carefully bringing together other pertinent material, both Tunisian and European. Important in its own right, the article is also an excellent model of how precise information on specific topics can be teased from seemingly unpromising sources.

———. "Quelques remarques historiques sur les medersas de Tunisie." *Revue tunisienne* (1931): 261-285.

Especially important in showing tangible examples of beylical catering to the religious establishment (during the Muradid period) by building madrasas.

Calligaris, C.D.H.L. *Kitab Sirat Napoleon al-Awwal (Histoire de l'Empereur Napoleon Ier).* Paris, 1856. (Arabic text with introduction in French.)

A few useful items in the introduction.

———. (See Monchicourt, *Documents historiques.*)

Capitaine X. *Une Promenade à Tunis en 1842, 1844.*

By a Swiss officer formerly in service of Sardinia. Somewhat derisive in tone, but apparently a good observer.

de Chassiron, Charles. *Aperçu pittoresque de la Régence de Tunis.* Paris, 1849.

Excellent illustrations and limited but sound commentary.

Chérif, M. H. "Expansion européenne et difficultés tunisiennes de 1815 à 1830." *Annales Économies Sociétés Civilisations* 3 (May-June, 1970).

An intensively-researched, solid article. Well-balanced use of public archival material both in France and Tunisia. Chérif and Valensi (see below) are the two scholars most familiar with the wealth of material on the early modern and modern period available in the Tunisian archives.

Colombe, Marcel. "Contributions à l'étude de récrutement de l'odjaq d'Alger dans les dernières années de l'histoire de la Régence." *Revue africaine* 87 (1943).

Useful for comparative perspective on what might have been the case in Tunisia, especially since all aspects of this subject are clouded in obscurity.

Cubisol, Charles. *Notices abrégées sur la Régence de Tunis.* Bone, Algeria, 1867.

Essentially a good, accurate handbook of facts and figures about Tunisia by an author who was born and died in Tunisia (1817-1868), serving as vice-consul of France, consul of Belgium and consular agent for several other European powers. (See biographical notice in Ganiage, *Origines*, p. 104.)

Darmon, Raoul. "La Société à Tunis sous le second empire." *Bulletin économique et social de la Tunisie* (November 1951).

Several items of social history, interestingly presented but basically derived from other sources.

Daumas, Philippe. *Quatre ans à Tunis.* Algiers, 1857.

Supercilious at times, occasionally exaggerated, the Daumas account is, nevertheless, especially good on Ahmad's military projects. Daumas was an officer in the French military mission.

Daux, A. ingenieur au service du bey. "Achmed-Pacha, Bey du Tunis et des reformes qu'il a faites dans l'administration de ses états." *Revue de l'orient de l'Algérie et des colonies* 4 (1848).

Solid account, especially of the military reforms, by author favorably disposed toward Ahmad and his Westernizing efforts. Daux is one of the few who shows awareness of comparable efforts in the Ottoman Empire and Egypt, adding that Ahmad's task would be especially difficult since, he maintained, there is greater back-

wardness and fanaticism the farther one gets from the center of Islam in the Near East. Thus, according to Daux, the task of a Moroccan ruler would be even more imposing.

Davis, Reverend Nathan. *Evenings in my Tent or Wanderings in Balad Ejjareed (Illustrating the Moral, Religious, Social and Political Conditions of Various Arab Tribes of the African Sahara).* 2 vols. London, 1854.

———. *Tunis, or Selections from a Journal during a Residence in that Regency.* Malta, 1841.

A Polish Jew converted to Protestantism, according to British Consul Reade, Davis played a flamboyant role as missionary to the Jews in Tunisia (with the Church of England and then later the Scottish Church) during several years of Ahmad's reign. Something of a maverick with perhaps a touch of the charlatan, Davis is neither reliable nor especially significant. His *Tunis*, especially in the French version annotated by Paul Sebag (q.v.), is more important than *Evenings in my Tent*, which is largely fluff.

Demeerseman, André. "Catégories sociales en Tunisie au XIXe siècle d'après la chronique de A. Ibn Abi d-Diyaf." *Revue de l'institut des belles lettres arabes (IBLA)* 117 (1967); 123 and 124 (1969); 125 (1970).

Useful analysis and classification of the several different Arabic terms used by Bin Diyaf in his chronicle to describe social groups.

Dessort, Charles Roger, et al. *L'Histoire de la ville de Tunis.* Algiers, 1924.

An outsized, illustrated early example of the coffee-table book, partially redeemed by Marcel Gandolphe's chapter on "La Vie à Tunis, 1840-1881."

de Dianous, Paul. *Notes de legislation tunisienne.* Paris, 1894.

As the title and date would suggest, basically a work for lawyers and administrators in the early years of the Protectorate. Does, however, provide some background data on pre-Protectorate administration.

Dilhan, Alphonse. *Histoire abregée de la Régence de Tunis.* Paris, 1966.

The author spent seven years in Algeria during which time he assembled his data. A handbook.

Drevet, Commandant R. *L'Armée tunisienne.* Tunis, 1922.

Early pages provide some background material on the army in the pre-Protectorate period. Only general study on this subject, but shows signs of haphazard research. See the critical review by H. Hugon, "Les instructeurs français de l'ancienne armée beylicale." *Revue tunisienne* (1923): 152-160.

Dunant, J. Henry. *Notice sur la Régence de Tunis.* Geneva, 1858.

The Swiss humanitarian who later founded the Red Cross, Dunant wrote a sympathetic account, occasionally naive but serious and well-informed on certain points.

Duveyrier, Henri. *La Tunisie.* Paris, 1881.

Well-informed, detailed account by the indefatigable French explorer who at the time of writing this book could look back upon more than twenty years of travel and study linked closely to Tunisia and parts of the Sahara.

Emerit, Marcel. (See Ducouret, "Rapport General.")

Estournelles de Constant. *La Politique française en Tunisie.* Paris, 1891.

Good account of the first decade of the Protectorate, but sketchy on the period treated in this book. Early pages do offer interesting examples of how most French observers regarded the Husaynid political culture—sluggish, tradition-bound and slightly absurd.

Faucon, Narcisse. *La Tunisie avant et depuis l'occupation française: Histoire et colonisation.* 2 vols. Paris, 1893.

Adequate general account. Weak on analysis or interpretation.

Filippi. (See Monchicourt, *Documents historiques.*)

de Flaux, A. *La Régence de Tunis au dix-neuvième siècle.* Paris, 1865.

General, but does contain a few perceptive insights.

Frank, Dr. Louis. "Tunis," in *L'Univers: Histoire et description de tous les peuples: Algérie états tripolitains Tunis.* Paris, 1850. (Frank was the author of Part I, pp. 3-143. This section was edited by J. J. Marcel who added a summary historical account as Part II, pp. 144-214 and an appendix on Tunisian money, pp. 215-222.)

A major source for reconstructing Husaynid political culture as it existed before the reign of Ahmad Bey. Frank, a doctor who served the bey in the early years of the nineteenth century, wrote this account in 1816.

Gandolphe, Marcel. *Résidences beylicales.* Cahiers d'histoire tunisienne. Vol. 1. Tunis, n.d. (1942?).

This small book provides information on Bardo and Muhammadiya not available elsewhere.

Ganiage, Jean. *Les Origines du Protectorat français en Tunisie (1861-1881).* Paris, 1959.

A massive study. Some 700 pages of text and over fifty pages of bibliography. Copious biographical data on European and Tunisian figures which can be readily consulted through use of the index. The first c. 200 pages of the book describe Tunisian government and society as it existed before 1861 and provide a brief historical sketch of the period from Ahmad's reign to the first

foreign loan in 1863. An essential source for any serious student of nineteenth century Tunisia. Ganiage's view of the traditional Husaynid system is, however, faulted by a consistently sardonic attitude, a poor grasp of Muslim institutions, and an inability or unwillingness to appreciate the bewildering cross-currents faced by the early generations of Muslim political Westernizers.

Ganiage, Jean. "La Population de la Tunisie vers 1860." *Études Maghrebines: Mélanges Charles-André Julien* (1964).

First-rate article estimating Tunisian population from the majba tax records and discussing cogently the related problems of method and sources.

———. *La Population européenne de Tunis au milieu de XIXe siècle.* Paris, 1960.

Very good, detailed monograph based on parish church records in Tunisia.

Grandchamp, Pierre. "Arbre généalogique de la famille Hassanite." Rpt. *Cahiers de Tunisie* 49-52 (1965).

Not an article, but a detailed family tree of the Husaynids. Avoid trying to consult in tight quarters. It folds out to a whopping six feet.

———. "Le différend Tuniso-Sarde de 1843-1844." *Revue tunisienne* 13-14 (1933).

———. "Les différends de 1832-1833 entre la Régence de Tunis et les royaumes de Sardaigne et des Deux-Siciles." *Revue tunisienne* (1931): 1-95. Rpt. *Cahiers de Tunisie* 13 (1965).

———. *Documents relatifs à la révolution de 1864 en Tunisie.* 2 vols. Tunis, 1935.

Mainly detailing the diplomatic and military activities of the 1864 revolt, the collection also provides some background information of use for the earlier period under Ahmad Bey.

Grandchamp, Pierre, and Mokaddem, B. "Une Mission tunisienne à Paris." *Revue africaine* 90 (1946).

Treats Tunisian mission in 1853 to congratulate Napoleon on proclamation of empire. Article important only for good biographical detail on several of Ahmad's principal officials.

Greaves, Joseph. "Journal of a Visit to some Parts of Tunis." Appended to William Jowett, *Christian Researches in Syria and the Holy Land.* Boston, 1826.

Really no more than a chapter, but not lacking in interest.

Hugon, Henri. *Les Emblèmes des beys de Tunis.* Paris, 1913.

Subtitled "Étude sur les signes de l'autonomie Husseinite: Monnaies, sceaux, étendards, armoiries, marques de dignités et de grades, décorations, médailles commemoratives militaires." This book—although whimsically antiquarian in organization—is filled with important material for the historian of Husaynid Tunisia.

———. "La Mission de Commandant Guy à Tunis." *Revue tunisienne* (1937): 393-407.

Guy was in Tunisia from December 1830 to July 1831. This article draws on Guy's later report to General Clauzel. Chiefly important in offering some detail on early Nizami efforts sparked by Shakir Sahib al-Tabi'.

———. (See Drevet.)

Ibn Abi Dinar (Abi Abdullah Muhammad bin Abi al-Qasim al-Ru'ayni al-Qayrawani, known as Ibn abi Dinar). *Al-Mu'nis fi akhbar Ifriqiya wa Tunis.* Ed. Muhammad Shammam. Tunis, 1967.

Excellent chronicle. Good for background, but does not carry the story beyond time of the Muradid beys who preceded the Husaynids.

Ibn Abi Diyaf, Ahmad. *Ithaf Ahl al-Zaman bi Akhbar muluk Tunis wa 'ahd al-Aman.* 8 vols. Tunis, 1963-1966.

The basic source for this study (see appraisal of Bin Diyaf on pp. 12-13). Volume 1 contains an introductory essay (77 pages) on the forms of government in which the author uses conventional Muslim terminology and references to argue for constitutional government (a section eminently worthy of a separate monograph), followed by a summary sketch (113 pages) of Tunisian history from the Muslim conquest to the end of the Hafsid dynasty. Volume 2 covers the period from the beginning of the Ottoman conquest through the reign of Ali b. Husayn (1759-1782). Almost half of Volume 3 is devoted to the important reign of Hamuda (1782-1814), the balance on the reigns of Uthman, Mahmud, Husayn and Mustafa. Volume 4 treats the reigns of Ahmad (pp. 11-182) and of Muhammad. Volumes 5 and 6 cover the reign of Muhammad al-Sadiq until the end of the chronicle in 1872 (the last few years very sketchily treated). Volumes 7 and 8 contain biographies of Tunisian notables, conventionally arranged according to death dates. All references in this book are to this complete 8-volume edition published by a special committee working under the auspices of the Tunisian Secretariat of State for Cultural Affairs and Information. Ahmad Abd al-Salam's carefully edited edition of that portion of Bin Diyaf's chronicle covering the reign of Ahmad Bey (Publications of the University of Tunis, 4th ser., History, vol. 12. Tunis, 1971) should always be consulted where appropriate. The Abd al-Salam edition has a good introduction, is carefully indexed, contains a useful year-by-year summary of Bin Diyaf's treatment of Ahmad's reign, and includes as well the text of several documents (from the Tunisian National Archives) referred to in the Bin Diyaf chronicle.

Ibn 'Ashur, Shaykh Muhammad al-Fadil. *Al-Haraka al-Adabiya wa al-Fikriya fi Tunis.* Cairo, 1956.

A masterful work of synthesis in modern Tunisian intellectual history. Deals chiefly with the Protectorate period, but first chapter draws on developments in Ahmad's time. The author, in our view, exaggerates the role of Zitouna and the 'ulama.

Julien, Charles-André. *Histoire de l'Algérie contemporaine*: La Conquête et les débuts de la colonisation (1827-1871). Vol. 1. Paris, 1964.

A few pages in chapters one and two recount Tunisian reactions to the conquest of Algeria and subsequent Franco-Tunisian negotiations concerning the beyliks of Oran and Constantine.

Kennedy, J. Clark. *Algeria and Tunis in 1845.* 2 vols. London, 1846.

Captain Kennedy was a shrewd, perceptive and impartial observer.

de Latour, Antoine. *Voyage de S. A. R. Monseigneur le duc de Montpensier en Tunisie, en Égypte, en Turquie et en Grèce.* Paris, n.d.

Records the visit of Louis Philippe's son to Tunis in 1845. An appendix relates Ahmad's visit to France in the following year. Marcel relied heavily on this in his own account of the two visits (see Louis Frank).

Loth, Gaston. "Arnoldo Soler, chargé d'affaires d'Espagne à Tunis et sa correspondance 1808-1810." *Revue tunisienne* (1905).

A few observations on international trade and customs farming at that time.

———. "Le pillage de Saint-Pierre de Sardaigne par les corsaires tunisiens, en 1798." *Revue tunisienne* (1905): 9-14.

Brief article based on the Soler correspondence. It was in this raid that the young girl destined to become Ahmad's mother was captured.

MacGill, Thomas. *An account of Tunis: Of its government, manners, customs and antiquities; especially of its productions, manufactures, and commerce.* Glasgow, 1811.

One of the better European accounts by a hard-bitten Scots businessman.

Makhluf, Muhammad b. Muhammad. *Shajarat al-Nur al-Zakiya fi Tabaqat al-Malikiya.* 2 vols. Cairo, 1350 (1931-1932) and 1352 (1933-1934).

A biographical dictionary of Maliki 'ulama and scholars with considerable detail on those from Tunisia.

Mantran, Robert. "Documents turcs relatifs à l'armée tunisienne." *Cahiers de Tunisie* 15 (1956).

———. "L'Évolution des relations entre la Tunisie et l'Empire Ottoman du XVIe au XIXe siècle." *Cahiers de Tunisie* 26-27 (1959).

Provides the best, most reliable statement on this important subject.

———. *Inventaire des documents d'archives turcs du Dar el-Bey (Tunis)*. Paris, 1961.

A classified inventory of the Turkish language material with brief identification or summary of contents for each document. In addition, a long introduction provides precise detail on Tunisian-Ottoman relations and other useful material. Indispensable.

———. "La Titulature des beys de Tunis au XIX[e] siècle, d'après les documents d'archives turcs du Dar el-Bey." *Cahiers de Tunisie* 19-20 (1957).

———. (See Ducouret manuscript, "Rapport général.")

Marcel, J. J. (See Dr. Louis Frank.)

Martel, André. "L'armée d'Ahmed Bey d'après un instructeur français." *Cahiers de Tunisie* 15 (1956).

Article based on the report of Captain de Taverne. A major source for details of Ahmad's military reforms.

Marty, Paul. "Historique de la mission militaire française en Tunisie." *Revue tunisienne* (1935): 171-207, 309-346.

The most detailed account of the French military mission. Author is far more interested in personnel of military mission than in the army they were sent to train, but this is nevertheless a basic source.

Mechra el Melki. (See Seghir ben Youssef.)

Mercier, Ernest. *Histoire de l'Afrique septentrionale*. 3 vols. Paris, 1891.

Dry, narrative politico-diplomatic history ending in 1830. No analysis or interpretation. Useful to establish chronology, names, etc.

Monchicourt, Charles. *Documents historiques sur la Tunisie: Relations inédites de Nyssen, Filippi et Calligaris (1788, 1829, 1834)*. Paris, 1929.

Absolutely first-rate. Filippi is perhaps the single best European source for history of this period, but the Nyssen and Calligaris accounts also rank high. Just the sort of essential work that this generation of Tunisian scholars should be encouraged to republish with appended notes and commentary based on Arabic sources.

———. *La Région du Haut Tell en Tunisie (Le Kef, Teboursouk, Mactar, Thala)*. Paris, 1913.

Solid geographical study interlaced with several points of historical interest.

Al Muchrif (L. Bercher). "La Réforme de l'enseignement à la grande mosquée de Tunis." *Revue des études Islamiques* 4 (1930).

Provides a few details on reforms of Zitouna implemented by Ahmad in 1842.

Mzali, M. S. "L'Exercice de l'autorité suprême en Tunisie durant le voyage d'Ahmed Bey en France 5 novembre-30 decembre 1846." *Revue tunisienne* (1918): 274-284.

Useful in detailing the steps taken by Ahmad before departing for his state visit to France, noting the officers relied on to assume certain duties in his absence.

Mzali, M. S., and Pignon, J. "Documents sur Khéréddine." *Revue tunisienne*: "A mes enfants" (1934); "Mon programme" (1935); "Le problème tunisien vu à travers la question d'Orient" (1935 and 1936); "Réponse à la calomnie" (1937 and 1938); "Correspondance" (1938 and 1940).

Disappointingly little on the period of Ahmad's reign.

Nayfur, Shaykh Muhammad. *'Unwan al-Arib 'amma nasha'a bil-mamlaka al-Tunisiya min 'alim adib.* 2 vols. Tunis, 1351 (1932-1933).

Biographical dictionary of Tunisian 'ulama and scholars, often with examples of their poetry. In most cases the factual biographical information adds little to that given by Bin Diyaf, but well worth checking.

al-Niyal, Muhammad al-Bahlawi. *Al-Haqiqa al-Tarikhiya lil-Tasawwuf al-Islami.* Tunis, 1965.

A general study of Sufism and Sufi leaders in Tunisia.

Noah, Mordecai M. *Travels in England, France, Spain and the Barbary States in the Years 1813-14 and 15.* New York, 1819.

Quixotic American on diplomatic mission. Not overly reliable.

"Notes sur les tribus de la régence," *Revue tunisienne* (1902).

Basically, a detailed list. Article would be of some help in any attempt to work on such historical problems as population shifts, incidence of taxation according to region and ecological situation, etc. In itself, of no utility.

Nyssen. (See Monchicourt, *Documents historiques.*)

Pellissier de Reynaud, E. *Description de la régence de Tunis.* Exploration scientifique de l'Algérie, vol. 6. Paris, 1853.

Pellissier knew his subject. A professional soldier, he participated in the capture of Algiers and was later instrumental in establishing what became the *bureaux arabes.* His three-volume *Annales algeriennes* is indispensable for the first decade of French Algeria. A good, reliable observer. His account of Tunisia based on his tour there during the years 1840-1842 is severe, even sour, but accurate.

Plantet, E. *Correspondance des beys de Tunis et des consuls de France avec la cour (1577-1830).* 3 vols. Paris, 1893-1899.

The bulk of the material would interest only a very narrow, old-fashioned diplomatic historian; but a careful search will uncover nuggets of information and leads concerning how the Husaynid political system worked.

Playfair, R. L. *Travels in the Footsteps of Bruce.* London, 1877.
A few notes and details may be gleaned, but in no way important for study of this period.

de Pradel de Lampse, Martial. "La Station navale française de Tunis." *Cahiers de Tunisie* 4 (1956).
Almost all the data in this article taken from the earlier study by Paul Marty.

Puckler-Muskau. *Semilasso in Africa.* Translated from German. 3 vols. London, 1837.
A readable, somewhat discursive travel account that also inspires confidence.

Raymond, André. "La France, la Grande-Bretagne et la problème de la reforme à Tunis (1855-1857)." *Études Maghrebines: Mélanges Charles-André Julien.* Paris, 1964.
Excellent article. Demonstrates how later reformist activities developed naturally out of projects and ideas set in motion during Ahmad's reign.

Reid, T. Wemyss. *The Land of the Bey.* London, 1882.
Among the lesser travel accounts. Of little value.

al-Riyahi, 'Umar. *Ta'tir al-Nawahi bi-tarjamat al-Shaykh Sidi Ibrahim al-Riyahi.* 2 vols. Tunis, 1320 (1902-1903).
Biography of Shaykh Ibrahim al-Riyahi by his son.

Rocca, Nonce. *La France en Orient.* Paris, 1876.
A scant half-dozen pages on Ahmad's reign. Adds nothing new. Tantalizingly, Rocca asserts that Ahmad followed the example of Egypt's Muhammad Ali, but provides no details.

Rouard de Card, E. *Les Arrangements conclus par le Général Clauzel avec le bey de Tunis.* Paris, 1927.
Precise study of the negotiations between France and the beylik of Tunis concerning the possibility of placing Husaynid princes in the beyliks of Oran and Constantine.

Rousseau, Alphonse. *Annales tunisiennes.* Algiers, 1864.
Treats the period up to 1830. Rousseau served as premier dragoman at the French consulate in Tunis from 1846 to 1858, having previously served in Mosul and Cairo. Rousseau was no stranger to his subject. *Annales tunisiennes* is, however, of only limited value and reliability.

Saint-Lager, Marcel Juillet. *La Régence de Tunis.* Algiers, 1874.
Noted especially for providing population estimates for most towns. Passages of the book very flattering to the country and to Khayr al-Din (then serving as chief minister).

Sebag, Paul. "Un Description de Tunis au XIX[e] siècle." *Cahiers de Tunisie* 21 and 22 (1st and 2nd trimester 1959). Trans. with notes and commentary, N. Davis (*Tunis* [q.v.]).

Seghir ben Youssef, Mohammed. *Mechra el Melki: Chronique tunisienne (1705-1771)*. Trans. Victor Serres and Mohammed Lasram. Tunis, 1900.

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(Arabic names are alphabetized according to first name except for a few individuals more readily identified by family name, e.g. Bayram, Bin 'Ayad, Jaluli, Lasram. In alphabetizing, the Arabic *al* is ignored. Thus, al-Haj Hamida al-Ghammad is to be found under "H.")

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