A HISTORY OF MODERN TUNISIA

SECOND EDITION

Kenneth Perkins's second edition of *A History of Modern Tunisia*, updated with a new chapter, carries the history of this country from 2004 to the present, with particular emphasis on the Tunisian revo lution of 2011 the first critical event of that year's Arab Spring and the inspiration for similar populist movements across the Arab world. After providing an overview of Tunisia in the years preceding the inauguration of a French protectorate in 1881, the book examines the impact of colonialism on the country, with particular attention to the evolution of a nationalist movement that secured the termina tion of the protectorate in 1956. Its analysis of the first three decades of Tunisian independence, during which the leaders of the anticolonial struggle consolidated political power, formulated a series of economic strategies, and promoted a social and cultural agenda calculated to modernize both state and society, assesses the challenges that they faced and the degree of success they achieved. The final chapter brings the book up to the present, examining the 2011 revolution and Tunisia's part in the Arab Spring. No other English language study of Tunisia offers as sweeping a time frame or as comprehensive a history of this nation.

KENNETH PERKINS is an emeritus professor of history at the University of South Carolina. A frequent traveler to the Middle East and North Africa, Dr. Perkins has conducted scholarly research in Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, France, the United Kingdom, and Sudan. He is the author of *Qaids, Captains, and Colons: French Military Administration in the Colonial Maghrib, 1844 1934*; *Port Sudan: The Evolution of a Colonial City*; *Tunisia: Crossroads of the Islamic and European Worlds*; *A History of Modern Tunisia* (2004); and two edi tions of the *Historical Dictionary of Tunisia*; as well as of numerous articles, book chapters, book reviews, and encyclopedia entries.

To Rebecca and Durham,
who I look forward to introducing to Tunisia

A HISTORY OF MODERN TUNISIA

Second Edition

KENNETH PERKINS
University of South Carolina

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

32 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10013 2473, USA

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest level of excellence.

www.cambridge.org
Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781107654730

© Kenneth Perkins 2005, 2014

This publication is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements, no reproduction of any part may take place without the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First edition published 2005
Second edition published 2014

Printed in the United States of America

A catalog record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging in Publication Data
Perkins, Kenneth J., author.
A history of modern Tunisia / Kenneth Perkins, University of South Carolina. Second edition.
page cm
Includes bibliographical references and index.
ISBN 978-1-107-02407-6 (hardback) ISBN 978-1-107-65473-0 (pbk.)
1. Tunisia History 19th century. 2. Tunisia History 20th century. I. Title.
DT263.P47 2013
961.104 dc23 2013015495

ISBN 978-1-107-02407-6 Hardback
ISBN 978-1-107-65473-0 Paperback

Cambridge University Press has no responsibility for the persistence or accuracy of URLs for external or third-party Internet Web sites referred to in this publication and does not guarantee that any content on such Web sites is, or will remain, accurate or appropriate.

Contents

List of Maps		*page* vi
List of Illustrations		vii
Acknowledgments		ix
A Political Who's Who of Modern Tunisia		xi
	Introduction to the Second Edition	1
	Introduction to the First Edition	6
1	The March to the Bardo, 1835–1881	15
2	Whose Tunisia? 1881–1912	44
3	Squaring Off, 1912–1940	79
4	Redefining the Relationship, 1940–1956	110
5	The Independent State Sets Its Course, 1956–1969	135
6	Regime Entrenchment and the Intensification of Opposition, 1969–1987	160
7	Constancy and Innovation in the "New" Tunisia, 1987–2003	188
8	A Revolution for Dignity, Freedom, and Justice	214
Notes		261
Suggestions for Further Reading		279
Index		297

Maps

	Tunisia	*page* xx
1.1	Tunis and vicinity, ca. 1898	28
2.1	Cities and tribes, ca. 1912	47
2.2	Land in settler hands, ca. 1911	56
2.3	Transportation networks, ca. 1904	64

Illustrations

1.1 The throne room of the Bardo Palace (Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress) *page* 16

1.2 Worshippers leaving the Zaituna mosque (Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress) 24

1.3 Collège Sadiqi (collection of the author) 40

2.1 Avenue de France, ca. 1920 (collection of the author) 50

2.2 *Colon* grain-storage building (collection of the author) 59

2.3 A carriage of the Tunis–La Goulette–La Marsa railway (Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress) 66

3.1 ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Thaʿalbi (collection of the author) 84

3.2 Leaders of the Neo-Dustur political bureau (Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, Tunis) 102

3.3 Abu'l Qasim al-Shabbi and Khumais Tarnan (collection of the author) 106

3.4 Poster commemorating the April 1938 nationalist protests (collection of the author) 108

4.1 General Charles de Gaulle, Amin Bey, and Resident General Charles Mast, 1943 (Prints and Photographs Division, Library of Congress) 113

4.2 Labor leaders Farhat Hached and M'hammed ʿAli (collection of the author) 118

4.3 Place des Martyrs, Sousse (collection of the author) 128

4.4 The return to Tunis of Habib Bourguiba, June 1, 1955 (Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, Tunis) 133

5.1 Salah ben Yusuf (Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, Tunis) 137

5.2 Postage stamp publicizing the Personal Status Code, 1958 (collection of the author) 141
5.3 American cartoonist Bill Mauldin on the Bizerte crisis (copyright © Bill Mauldin 1961, courtesy of Bill Mauldin Estate LLC) 148
5.4 President Habib Bourguiba at his desk, ca. 1965 (Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, Tunis) 152
5.5 The beach at Monastir, ca. 1985 (collection of the author) 157
6.1 "I was born in Tunisia" (collection of the author) 164
7.1 Zine al-'Abidine ben 'Ali (collection of the author) 189
7.2 Tunisian cinema (courtesy of Professor Roy Armes) 193
8.1 A Postage stamp commemorating the revolution, 2011 (collection of the author) 224
8.2 A Postage stamp commemorating the revolution, 2011 (collection of the author) 225
8.3 Protesters at the office of the prime minister, February 2011 (courtesy of Aidan Lewis; used with permission) 231
8.4 Revolutionary graffiti, Tunis, February 2011 (courtesy of Aidan Lewis; used with permission) 249
8.5 Voters at a polling station in Tunis (courtesy of Deborah Hakes, the Carter Center; used with permission) 250
8.6 Voters in the Zaghouan area proudly display their ink-stained fingers as evidence of having voted, October 2011 (photo by Leila Blacking; used with permission) 252
8.7 Tallying votes in Zaghouan, October 2011 (photo by Leila Blacking; used with permission) 253

Acknowledgments

The need to select images to illustrate this book confronted me with the pleasurable task of poring over a collection of photographs, stamps, postcards, and other miscellaneous ephemera gathered in Tunisia over the course of the past forty years. It also prompted me to seek out repositories of older images. I am most grateful for the assistance of Dr. James A. Miller, former director of the Centre d'Etudes Maghrébines à Tunis (CEMAT), in locating and securing copies of photographs held by the Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National. I am also very much in the debt of M. Fayçal Chérif, of the institute, who kindly arranged to provide the photographs I requested and especially to Dr. Faouzi Mahfoudi, the institute's director, for permission to use those images again in this second edition.

Keith McGraw of the Instructional Services Center of the University of South Carolina supplied the expertise needed to transform postcards, stamps, and slides into images suitable for publication, and the Department of History provided the funding for that project.

I am also grateful to the Carter Center for inviting me to join its international team of observers for the Tunisian constituent assembly elections of October 2011, which provided my first views of postrevolutionary Tunisia as well as an education in how elections are organized and orchestrated by the responsible local authorities.

Special thanks go to Deborah Hakes at the Carter Center; Leila Blacking, my observer partner in Tunisia; and Aidan Lewis of the BBC for allowing the use of their photographs, as well as to the estate of Bill Mauldin for the use of one of his cartoons.

A sabbatical leave in 2002–2003 expedited the completion of the first edition of this book. My wife Margaret's appointment as a Fulbright scholar in the Department of English at Ibn Zuhr University in Agadir, Morocco, enabled us to spend the year in North Africa. Living in Morocco while writing about Tunisia may have been unorthodox, but doing so greatly enhanced my appreciation of the similarities and differences between the two countries and I am deeply grateful to Margaret for making that experience possible.

A Political Who's Who of Modern Tunisia

ʿAchour, Habib (1913–1999)
Union leader and champion of workers' rights. Despite a long record as a party loyalist, he was highly critical of the detrimental impact of Socialist Dustur economic policies on Union Général des Travailleurs Tunisians (UGTT) members in the 1970s. Jailed for a time after the 1978 riots, he resumed his union activities in 1981 but was arrested again in 1985 after attacking the government's sponsorship of a rival labor union. On his release in 1988, he eschewed further activism.

Ahmad Bey (1806–1855)
Tenth ruler of the Husainid Dynasty, 1837 to 1855. Westernizing reforms that he introduced with an eye toward protecting Tunisia from foreign encroachment proved ruinously expensive. Although few of his projects survived his death, his reign provided many future Tunisian leaders with their first experiences in international affairs.

Amin Bey (1879–1962)
Nineteenth, and last, ruler of the Husainid Dynasty, 1943 to 1957. He sought to maintain a good relationship with both the Neo-Dustur and the French administration after replacing the deposed Moncef Bey. Nevertheless, the independent Tunisian government, eager to eliminate a rival locus of authority, demanded his abdication as a prelude to the abolition of the monarchy.

Bash Hamba, ʿAli (1876–1918)
Young Tunisian activist. He founded the Association des Anciens Elèves du Collège Sadiqi in 1905 and in 1907 was a cofounder and political director of *Le Tunisien*, the first French-language newspaper published by Tunisians. After organizing a boycott of the Tunis tram system in an attempt to win equal treatment for Tunisian and European employees, he was expelled from the country in 1912 and died in exile in Istanbul.

Ben ʿAli, Zine al-ʿAbidine (1936–)
President of Tunisia, 1987 to 2011. He held ambassadorial and ministerial appointments after retiring from the armed forces, becoming prime minister and, with the removal of Habib Bourguiba, president. His economic policies brought improvements to the quality of most Tunisians' lives, but pledges to implement meaningful political pluralism were never fulfilled. The regime's Islamist opposition was eradicated in the 1990s and its secular opponents systematically excluded from meaningful roles in the political arena. Widespread accusations of graft, bribery, nepotism, and other forms of corruption marred his last decade in office and culminated in his and Leila Trabelsi, his intensely disliked spouse's, departure for exile in Saudi Arabia.

Ben ʿAmmar, Tahar (1889–1985)
Political figure who participated in the founding of the Dustur Party, abandoned it in favor of the Parti Réformiste, and then eschewed any specific party affiliation as a member of the Grand Council from 1928 to 1934 and as its president after World War II. Named prime minister in 1955, he oversaw the negotiations leading first to internal autonomy and then to the termination of the protectorate.

Ben Jaafar, Mustafa (1940–)
Opposition political leader and human rights activist of the post-Bourguiba era. Working in Tunis as a physician in the 1970s, he helped create the Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (LTDH; Tunisian League of Human Rights), the nation's first such organization. In 1994, he founded the Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés (FDTL; Democratic Forum for Labor and Liberty), which was not legalized until 2002 but then was one of the few opposition parties allowed under ben ʿAli. Ben Jaafar attempted to run against the president in the 2009 elections, but his candidacy was disallowed. Following the revolution, he served briefly as minister of health but was most active in preparing a new party, Ettakatol (the Bloc), for the constituent assembly elections. As a result of the party's relative success, he became the assembly's president in December 2011.

Ben Salah, Ahmad (1926–)
Political activist and labor organizer. Named minister of planning in 1961, he was given the task of developing the postcolonial economy. His efforts to bring agriculture under state control provoked strong criticisms that, coupled with accusations of corruption and mismanagement, led to his dismissal and arrest in 1969. He formed the Mouvement de l'Unité

Populaire (MUP) while in exile after 1973 and briefly returned to Tunisia in 1988 after Bourguiba's removal. Failing to secure authorization for the MUP, however, he resumed his exile until 2000. The party finally achieved legal status only after the revolution, but it then fared poorly in the 2011 constituent assembly elections.

Ben Yusuf, Salah (1920–1961)
Neo-Dustur militant who challenged Habib Bourguiba for control of the party on the eve of independence. Critical of Bourguiba's willingness to compromise with the French, his secular orientation, and his disdain for pan-Arabism, he precipitated an open revolt that was subdued only with French assistance. He left the country in 1956 but continued to attack Bourguiba from Cairo until his assassination.

Bouazizi, Mohamed (1984–2011)
Street vendor from Sidi Bouzid in the economically depressed interior of the country. In personal economic distress and believing himself the victim of harassment by local police and other officials, he doused himself with gasoline and struck a match in December 2010 as a dramatic public protest of his situation and that of many of his contemporaries. Bouazizi died of his self-inflicted injuries a few weeks later in a Tunis hospital. He became an icon of the revolution that ultimately brought down the Ben ʿAli regime and that many Tunisians believed his death had launched. The revolution would almost certainly have occurred with or without his suicide, but there can be no doubt that his gesture of futility epitomized the anger and frustration of other young Tunisians who took to the streets in its wake.

Bourguiba, Habib (1903–2000)
Nationalist leader, cofounder of the Neo-Dustur Party, first prime minister of independent Tunisia, and president of the country from 1957 until his removal for health reasons in 1987. His pragmatic strategies for ending French rule dominated the anticolonial movement, while his aggressively modernist and staunchly secularist philosophy shaped policy making in the postcolonial state.

Cambon, Paul (1843–1924)
French resident general, 1882 to 1886. As France's first chief executive in Tunisia, he oversaw the implementation of reforms agreed to in the treaty establishing the protectorate. His decision to maintain the appearance of beylical sovereignty while reserving real power for himself and a small cadre of French administrators established a pattern that became the norm for his successors.

Ghannushi, Muhammad (1941–)
In 1999, after Ghannushi had served effectively for several years as minister of international cooperation and foreign investment, ben ʿAli named him prime minister. For the most part, Ghannushi steered clear of the egregious scandals of the last years of the dictatorship, but he was nonetheless tainted by his close association with the dictator and his entourage. Inevitably, as the president's last selection as head of government, he became a target of protesters' antipathy during the 2011 revolution. Ghannushi made a bid to assume the presidency when ben ʿAli fled, but his ambitions were thwarted by other political elites and he continued as prime minister. His efforts to form a national unity government after the revolution were not well received by the many citizens who resented the continuing presence in it of former leaders of the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD) and the prime minister's apparent affinity with many of them. Failing to assuage his increasingly vocal critics, Ghannushi resigned from office in late February, paving the way for a more stable interim government led by Beji Caid al-Sebsi as prime minister.

Ghannushi, Rashid (1941–)
A founder in 1979 of the Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique (MTI), a society dedicated to the restoration of Islamic values. He was imprisoned twice in the closing years of the Bourguiba era but was freed in 1988 as President ben ʿAli sought to improve relations with Islamic groups. After the government banned his al-Nahda (Renaissance) Party from standing in the 1989 elections, he went into exile, settling in England. Subsequently, the Tunisian authorities accused him of orchestrating a wave of violence for which he was convicted (in absentia) of conspiring to overthrow the government. He returned to Tunisia after the revolution and worked to revive al-Nahda, which he led through its victory in the constituent assembly elections in 2011. Thereafter, he officially stepped aside, but retained considerable weight in party councils as the spiritual leader.

Guellaty, Hassan (1880–1966)
Young Tunisian activist expelled from the country for his role in the 1912 Tunis tram boycott. Returning after World War I, he broke with his former colleagues who established the Dustur Party and, in 1921, organized the less militant Parti Réformiste. French liberals hailed his moderate philosophy, but it found little support among Tunisians and the party quickly withered away.

Hached, Farhat (1913–1952)
Labor organizer and founder of the Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT) in 1946. By mobilizing workers in support of Neo-Dustur political objectives, he added clout to the party's demands and earned the animus of French settlers and administrators. His assassination gave the nationalist movement a prominent martyr and touched off a spate of violence throughout the country.

Jebali, Hammadi (1949–)
An engineer by training, Jebali was drawn to the Islamic Tendency Movement in the early 1980s. He became the editor of al-Nahda's newspaper, *al-Fajr* (*Dawn*), in the early 1990s and was convicted later in the decade of involvement in plots to overthrow the ben 'Ali government. He was imprisoned until 2006, when he benefited from a general amnesty and resumed his activities in Islamic circles. With the legalization of al-Nahda after the revolution, he became one of the party's leading spokespersons and, after its victory in the constituent assembly elections of 2011, the nation's prime minister. He resigned in February 2013, amid the most serious public demonstrations since the revolution, when his party colleagues rejected his proposal to create a national unity government intended to address the deep anxiety felt across virtually the entire political spectrum following the assassination of the leftist politician Shukri Belaid.

Khair al-Din al-Tunsi (ca. 1822–1890)
Statesman who held a series of offices until his self-imposed exile to Europe in 1862 as a result of differences with Mustafa Khaznadar. Returning to Tunisia in 1869, he advocated reforms designed to forge a strong, just, and responsible state, many of which he implemented after becoming chief minister in 1873. When associates of Khaznadar drove him from office in 1877, he went to the Ottoman Empire.

Lavigerie, Charles-Martial (1825–1892)
Catholic clergyman who espoused the spread of Christianity along with French political control in North Africa. The White Fathers, a missionary order he founded in 1868, helped advance French interests in Tunisia even before the protectorate. Named cardinal-archbishop of Carthage and Algiers in 1882, he advocated harmonious church-state relations in the interest of strengthening France's position in Tunisia.

Macheul, Louis (1848–1922)
Director of public education, 1883 to 1908. Convinced that education held the key to viable relations between the races, he organized a Franco-Arab

school system blending elements from both cultures. Despite the opposition of many settlers, he remained a strong proponent of educational opportunities for Tunisian students throughout his service in the protectorate.

Marzouki, Moncef (1945–)
Political and human rights activist of the post-Bourguiba era. In 2001, he founded a new center-left and secular party, the Congrès pour la République (CPR; Congress of the Republic), which failed to gain legal status. He directed the party from self-imposed exile until the revolution in 2011. The CPR's showing in the constituent assembly elections in 2011 led to his selection by that body as the interim president of the republic, pending legislative elections to be held the following year.

Mestiri, Ahmad (1925–)
Socialist Dustur politician ousted from the party in 1974 after calling for institutional checks on the power of the president and greater transparency in the transaction of party business. He then founded the Mouvement des Démocrates Sociales (MDS), which he led through several undistinguished legislative election campaigns between its official recognition as a political party in 1983 and his retirement from political life in 1992.

M'hammed ʿAli (ca. 1888–1928)
Labor organizer and Dustur Party militant. In 1924, he organized the Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (CGTT), believing that the promotion of social and economic justice for the working class would broaden the party's bourgeois base. But the Dustur turned its back on the CGTT in 1925 when a series of strikes raised concerns that repressive measures directed against the union might also be applied to the party.

Millet, René (1849–1919)
French resident general, 1894 to 1900. Sympathetic to the Young Tunisians' aspirations to act as interlocutors between their countrymen and the West, he supported their educational undertakings and provided government subsidies for their publications. French settlers pressured him to refrain from these practices and ultimately lobbied successfully for his dismissal.

Moncef Bey (1881–1948)
Eighteenth ruler of the Husainid Dynasty, 1942 and 1943. With prominent Neo-Dustur Party figures in jail or in exile because of their anti-French activity before World War II, he presented himself as a nationalist spokesperson. He maintained only formally correct relations

with German officials during their occupation of Tunisia (1942–1943), but his nationalist sympathies alarmed the French and they forced him to abdicate on their return.

Muhammad Bey (1811–1859)
Eleventh ruler of the Husainid Dynasty, 1855 to 1859. By distancing himself from many of Ahmad Bey's policies, he hoped to lower government expenditures. To protect their interests in Tunisia, Great Britain and France pressured him to implement judicial reforms and accept substantial foreign investment in the country.

Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey (1814–1882)
Twelfth ruler of the Husainid Dynasty, 1859 to 1882. Ill-conceived development projects and bureaucratic corruption marked his reign, producing substantial indebtedness. The inability to repay loans from abroad led to the formation of an international commission to oversee Tunisia's finances. The subsequent collapse of a movement of political and economic reform spearheaded by his prime minister paved the way for the French invasion of 1881.

Mustafa Khaznadar (1817–1878)
Frequent chief minister of the beys from the 1850s to the 1870s. He amassed a personal fortune, much of it from collaborating with Europeans anxious to do business in Tunisia. Widely despised for saddling the country with crippling debts and brutally repressing a rebellion spurred by higher taxes, he fell from power in 1873 while attempting to play the country's creditors off against each other.

Mzali, Muhammad (1925–2010)
Prime minister, 1980 to 1986. His introduction of reforms promoting a more open, plural political environment antagonized conservatives within his own Socialist Dustur Party, while his inability to stimulate the depressed economy alienated Tunisians of the middle and lower classes. When influential critics persuaded President Bourguiba to dismiss him in 1986, he left the country to avoid further political and legal reprisals.

Nasir Bey (1855–1922)
Fifteenth ruler of the Husainid Dynasty, 1906 to 1922. He tried to pressure the French to negotiate with the newly formed Dustur Party in 1922 by threatening to abdicate if the party's demands were not addressed. He backed down when Resident General Lucien Saint surrounded the beylical palace with French troops, making it clear that he would not respond to such threats.

Nouira, Hedi (1911–1993)
Neo-Dustur politician. He served as director of the Tunisian Central Bank from 1958 to 1970, then as prime minister until 1980. His main task in that office was to foster a recovery from the disarray brought on by Ahmad ben Salah's experiments in socialist planning. An economic liberal, he promoted private enterprise and sought out foreign investment but also left in place many state enterprises created in the previous decade.

Peyrouton, Marcel (1887–1983)
French resident general from 1933 to 1936. Hoping to aggravate differences within the nationalist movement and to marginalize its more radical elements, he opened his administration with an offer to lift a ban on the Dustur Party if it disavowed the views of its most militant younger members. When the latter formed the Neo-Dustur Party in 1934, he ordered their arrest and set about attempting to destroy the new party.

Roches, Léon (1809–1901)
French consul general in Tunis, 1855 to 1863. Charged with strengthening French influence in Tunisia, Roches formed close personal relationships with the beys that facilitated his advocacy of pro-French policies. Just prior to the end of his assignment, he arranged with a Parisian bank for the Tunisian government's first international loan.

Saint, Lucien (1867–1938)
French resident general, 1921 to 1929. Assuming office amid the most articulate and organized opposition to the protectorate since its creation, he rejected the key demands of the Dustur Party, intimidated the bey into distancing himself from the nationalists, and severely restricted journalistic and political activity. Beneath a surface calm, Tunisian resentment of French rule rose significantly during his administration.

al-Sebsi, Beji Caid (1926–)
Politician and bureaucrat whose lengthy career began in 1956 as an adviser to Habib Bourguiba. Later appointments included numerous ministerial and subministerial postings and ambassadorships. His reputation as a Dusturian stalwart amenable to modest reform (though not inclined to take the lead in advocating change) enabled him to become the prime minister when Muhammad Ghannushi, the last holder of that office under ben ʿAli, resigned in February 2011, having proven unable to form a government acceptable to the revolutionaries. Al-Sebsi filled the office until the constituent assembly elections in October 2011, after which he resigned to enable the assembly to designate his successor.

Sfar, Bashir (1865–1917)
Activist in the Young Tunisian movement. His education at the Collège Sadiqi led to positions in the protectorate administration. He resigned as director of the Habus Council in 1898 in a protest over French use of lands designated as religious trusts. A decade later, his continuing criticism of the protectorate resulted in his reassignment far from the capital, severely diminishing his influence.

Thaʿalbi, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz (ca. 1875–1944)
Leader of the Dustur Party from its founding in 1920 until his death. Fearful that a wave of repression would follow the party's opposition to French reform proposals, he fled Tunisia in 1923 and did not return until 1937. In the interim, a new generation of activists had taken control of the nationalist movement. When his efforts to reassert himself foundered, the Dustur remained on the margin of the anticolonial struggle.

Wood, Richard (1806–1900)
British consul general in Tunis, 1855 to 1879. His work in safeguarding the interests of British subjects and in promoting investments enhancing the British presence there sparked a long-running rivalry with his French counterparts that was further aggravated by his campaign to tie Tunisia more closely to the Ottoman Empire.


Mediterranean Sea
Jazīrat Jāliṭah
Canal de Jāliṭah
Bizerte
Qar'at al Ashkal
1716
Buḥayrat Banzart
Ghār al Milḥ
Jazīrat Zambrah
Cape Bon
Manzil Bū Ruqaybah
Mātir
Sīdī Dā'ūd
Ṭabarqah
Banzart
TELL
Al Judayyidah
Ṭaburbah
Majardah
Gulf of Tūnis
Al Marsá
Annaba
Skikda
El Kala
Ayn ad Darāhim
Wādī Tūnis
Ḥalq al Wādī
JAZĪRAT SHARĪK
Qulaybīyah
Pantellaria (Italy)
Gara'el Fzâra
Bājah
Tūnis
Qurunbālīyah
Hanshīr al Libnah
Jundūbah
Mastūtah
Maʼāz al Bāb
Wādī Milyān
Qurbah
Mila
Ghār ad Dimā
3773
Jundūbah
Sīdī Ismāʻīl
Merdja Khereddine
3159
Saminjah
2464
Nābul
Guelma
Constantine
Souk Ahras
Oued Medjerda
Nibbar
Zaghwān
Qantarat al Fahs
Al Ḥammāmāt
Qaʼfūr
Wādī Mallāg
Al Kāf
Les Salines
Silyānah
3238
An Nafīdah
Khalīj al Ḥammāmāt
Ain M'lila
Al Kāf
DORSALE
Salaṭah
Al Qusūr
Fajj at Tāmir
Makthar
As Subaykhah
Sūsah
Juzur Qurayyāt
Aïn Beïda
Qalʻat as Ṣanam
Wādī Sarrāt
4337
Masākin
Al Munastīr
Oued Mellegue
Al Qayrawān
Ḥaffūz
Ayn Ghuraseisā
Al Mukniīn
Tālah
Rhilane
Heydarah
Sabīṭah
Al Qayrawān
Sūsah
Al Mahdīyah
Khenchela
Tébessa
Sabkhat Sīdī al Hānī
Al Qaṣrayn
Ad Dūāb
Subaytilah
Al Jamm
5065
4268
Al Qaṣrayn
682
AS SAHIL
ALGERIA
Qamūdah
Faʼiq
Jabinyānah
Furnīyānah
Ṣafāqis
883
Bir el Ater
Mahārī Jabbās
Ṣafāqis
Bi'r 'Alī Bin Khalīfah
Juzur Qarqannah
Qafṣah
Maltīah
Hanshīr as Sawāqīr
Al Miknāsī
Al Ghurayyibah
Al Mahras
Ar Rudayyif
Qafṣah
3816
Jazīrat Khunayyis
Al Mediaouï
Al Maqtīah
Sabkhat an Nawāl
Aṣ Ṣukhayrah
Shaṭṭ al Gharsah
1995
72
30
Gulf of Gabes
Shaṭṭ al Fijāj
Naftah
Tawzar
Qābis
Hawmat as Sūq


Shaṭṭ al Jarīd
Qibilī
1539
Al Jurf
Ajim
Jazirat Jarbah
causeway
Khalij Bū Ghirārah
Maṭmāṭah
Mārith
148
56
Dūz
Jarjīs
El Oued
Bi'r al Ḥujaylah
Madanīyīn
Sabkhat al Mīlh
Q ā b i s
Bi'r ash Shaykh 'Alī
722
AZ ZAHR
Bin Quirdān
2172
Taṭāwīn
Zuwārah
Al Jumayl
Bi'r Zunayqirah
Bi'r ar Rūmān
M a d a n ī y ī n
Bi'r al Uwaynah
Ramādah
Burj Bū Ruqaybah
1132
Adh Dhahībah
Nālūt
Al Janā'in
Al Burmah (El Borma)
L I B Y A
1155
Burj al Ḥaṭṭābah
Pillar 220
Pillar 233
Ghudāmis
Daraj
Key
International boundary
Governorate bundary
National capital
Al Qasrayn Governorate capital
Railway
Surfaced road
Unsurfaced road
Airfield
Major port
Populated places
Over 500,000
50,000 to 100,000
20,000 to 50,000
Under 20,000
1155 Spot elevations in feet
0 20 40 60 80 100 km
0 20 40 60 miles

Tunisia

Introduction to the Second Edition

For more than fifty years after Tunisian independence in 1956, a small cadre of Western academics and steadily growing numbers of their Tunisian colleagues – historians, political scientists, economists, anthropologists, sociologists, linguists, archeologists, classicists, and others – devoted their professional lives to the study of the country, publishing works that enhanced scholarly knowledge about Tunisia, its people, and their culture. Away from academia, however, Tunisia attracted limited interest. In global corridors of power, the country mattered only rarely and fleetingly. Its essentially moderate, usually Western-oriented political and economic alignment projected an unremarkable blandness that (for good or ill) lacked the anxiety-producing component often generated among international observers and analysts by its near neighbors in the Maghrib, not to mention its more distant Middle Eastern cousins, with whom it shared centuries-old associations rooted in language, religion, and culture. Beyond the specialists, most outsiders familiar with the country knew it as a site of ancient Mediterranean civilizations or, yet more likely, as a superbly endowed and outfitted holiday setting whose proximity to Europe and established record of tranquility heightened its attraction as a venue seemingly immune to the intrusion of disruptive political, economic, and social forces. Indeed, on the strength of that image the Tunisian tourist industry became an indispensable component of the national economy. But like all such idealized constructs, this one could be undermined by realities that were more easily ignored than confronted.

Everything changed in Tunisia in January 2011, although, especially in retrospect, the revolution that erupted in that month and unleashed the "Arab Spring" had, like all such movements, deep roots. It may not have been predicted, but it was hardly astonishing. The scale of subsequent manifestations of this populist movement in Egypt, Libya, and elsewhere and the greater international implications and, therefore, journalistic coverage, of events in Cairo, Benghazi, Tripoli, Sanaa, and Manama often

displaced Tunisia from center stage as the less dramatic work of applying the gains of the revolution went forward, ultimately producing the country's first meaningful elections (to a constituent assembly). That body was dominated by al-Nahda, a party intent on the preservation of Islamic culture and tradition but also pledged to honor Tunisia's history of progressivism in key arenas and to hold a second round of a elections to a constitutionally legitimated parliament when the fundamental law was completed. While it remains too early for a definitive judgment of the outcome of Tunisia's revolution in a setting that remains fragile and prone to spasms of violence extending even to the assassinations of prominent political and civil society figures, the initial post-revolutionary sense of cautious guarded optimism that Tunisians would demonstrate the wisdom and patience needed to cultivate a democratic and consensus driven political future has eroded badly, but not vanished entirely. Only the passage of time will confirm or disprove the validity of so sanguine an assessment.

This revised and updated edition of *A History of Modern Tunisia* brings the account onward from 2004, describing, assessing, and contextualizing the extraordinary transformation the country has experienced. The same four key themes identified in the introduction to the first edition recur here, each with its emphasis altered to one degree or another by the revolution and its aftermath: (1) the search for political leadership acceptable to rulers and ruled alike; (2) the quest for something approaching consensus on the contentious question of the appropriate weight to assign to traditional beliefs and practices, including their bearing on such matters as gender or on the public function of religion, on the one hand, and on the other, on the importance of innovation, individualism, and personal liberty; (3) the management of the economy so as to foster and sustain steady and wisely distributed benefits free of the taint of corruption to the citizenry; and (4) the value of and need to encourage the country's literary and artistic heritage. Each of these themes bears powerfully on all the others. The uprising, the ouster of Ben ʿAli, the victory of al-Nahda, the contrasting and competing visions of that party's supporters and Tunisian secularists, and the frustrations of ordinary Tunisians that stemmed from the culture of corruption, favoritism, nepotism, and incompetence are illustrations of these connections, though hardly the only ones. In the artistic realm, the impact of the revolution will manifest itself more clearly as time passes. Before Ben ʿAli's removal, expressions of literary, cinematic, or artistic criticism entailed risk. In the postrevolutionary atmosphere, they are far less likely to put their creators in harm's way. Undoubtedly, many observers of and participants in the revolution, some intellectuals but others ordinary

Tunisians, are already at work on projects related to it, although few of these have, as yet, seen the light of day.

The introduction to this book's first edition described an imagined journey through Tunis and its suburbs. That same journey today, with a few additional stops and an updated commentary, brings one face to face with the revolution and the new Tunisia at a number of junctures. En route to and from Tunis, the TGM tracks still pass by the presidential palace in Carthage, which, from the windows of the train, appears no different than in the past. But its 2004 residents, Zine al-'Abidine ben 'Ali and his second wife, Leila Trabelsi, departed in haste in January 2011 for the safety of exile in Saudi Arabia as the revolution reached a crescendo that doomed the dictatorship. Moncef Marzouki, a former human rights activist and long-time political foe of ben 'Ali, became the interim president after elections for a constituent assembly in October 2011 produced an agreement on the division of offices among the leaders of the most successful parties that competed in Tunisia's first free and fair elections in its history. As a matter of symbolism and national pride, Marzouki, the interim president, has retained some of the trappings of the prerevolutionary era, but as this study will show, the oppressive philosophy of governance of the former regime has given way to still-crystallizing (and not always agreed on) notions that, unlike in the past, can be publicly debated, assessed, and decided on.

When the train arrives at the Tunis-Marine station, it is only a short walk to the lower end of Avenue Bourguiba, at what was, from 1987 until 2011, the Place du 7 Novembre but has been renamed Place Bouazizi in memory of the young man whose suicide in Sidi Bouzid helped set the revolution in motion. Ironically, on the same square stands the Ministry of the Interior, the site of violent and costly clashes between regime opponents and supporters, including the forces of the Gendarmerie National, whose often brutal treatment of protesters left it feared and hated by many Tunisians and whose headquarters are on the square as well. It is, all in all, a set of highly charged reminders and symbols of the struggle that played out there and across the country.

Continuing up Avenue Bourguiba into the heart of the downtown central business district, most of the visible evidence of the turmoil that rocked these streets has been repaired or removed, although occasional graffiti-covered walls, especially on side streets off the avenue, remain as mute testimony of the violence that unfolded there during and after the revolution. Indeed, a particularly attentive observer walking toward the Bab al-Bahr at the avenue's upper end, might recognize any number of hotels, businesses, and other landmarks that featured as backdrops for the corps of

international journalists who recorded and reported the revolution in real time. Casual tourists can be forgiven for overlooking distressing aspects of the recent past in a city and country not their own, where they have come on holiday; they have no need to probe beyond the ambience, charm, and exotica of surface appearances, especially when that past is largely out of sight. But for anyone better acquainted with Tunis, a walk along Avenue Bourguiba is likely to invoke images and memories of how quickly and deeply Tunis (and the rest of the country) was plunged into violence and mayhem as never before. With that in mind, a short detour off Avenue Bourguiba to the Central Post Office presents an opportunity to carry away a physical reminder of the revolution in the form of a set of four postage stamps issued in 2011 to commemorate it, including one stamp depicting Bouazizi.

Returning to the avenue, but before entering the medina, a short walk off either the Boulevard Bab Souika or the Boulevard Bab Jazira, main thoroughfares that ring the old city, leads into the old city's residential neighborhoods. Given Tunisia's youthful population, a short stroll into any one of these is likely to lead to an elementary school that served as a polling place for the October 2011 legislative assembly elections. Now returned to their educational role, there is nothing extraordinary about them, but on Election Day, they, and thousands of other polling places across the country, symbolized something the country had never before experienced – the chance to cast a vote in a political process; to have that vote be honestly counted; and for the result of the exercise to have some influence on future developments.

If, rather than skirting the medina on the peripheral boulevards, one enters it directly from the Bab al-Bahr and continues along Rue Zaituna beyond the historic mosque, the visitor arrives at the Place de la Casbah, formally known as the Place du Gouvernement, one of the most active and important sites of the revolution. Here, in the small tree-lined square rimmed by government buildings in the architectural style of the beylical era, is the office of the prime minister. In the turbulent weeks after ben 'Ali's flight, thousands of protesters from all over Tunisia created an encampment in the square, making clear their rejection of the half-measures and dilatory diversions employed by the former president's last appointee, Muhammad Ghannushi, in dismantling the remnants of the old regime. Initially populated by students, workers, labor activists, and the impoverished and unemployed, the ranks of the self-contained community on the square were swollen by the addition of lawyers and other professionals, as well as by many middle-class Tunisians who had come to the end of their tethers and

now demanded meaningful evidence that the country's political leadership had, indeed, turned over a new leaf. They disbanded their makeshift community only when Ghannushi resigned and Beji Caid al-Sebsi replaced him and began implementing policies more closely aligned to the populist spirit of the Kasbah protests in early February. During this "occupation," government buildings on and around the square were covered with graffiti of every sort from political slogans, including the omnipresent "Ben ʿAli, Dégage!" ("Ben ʿAli, Get Lost!"), to cartoonish caricatures of the deposed president and other figures of his regime. But as the protesters departed, they scrubbed clean most of the traces of their newly discovered opportunity to express themselves fully and freely. In short order, on the Place de la Casbah, as on Avenue Bourguiba and on other thoroughfares across the capital, little evidence of this aspect of the revolution remained visible.

Farther afield, however, vestiges of the revolution's destructive physical impact linger – the burned-out shell of a villa belonging to a Trabelsi family member on the road just beyond downtown La Marsa; the incinerated and now riotously painted hulk of a sports car of similar provenance somewhat incongruously displayed in front of the Carthage Museum (the former Basilica of St. Louis IX) on the Byrsa Hill as an objet d'art; or scores of similar "ruins" all over the country left as reminders of the excesses that helped bring on the revolution.

From the Bab Saadoun station of the regional light-rail system, located not far from the Place de la Casbah in the northwestern precincts of the medina, a ride of only a few stops to the Bardo station on the Place de l'Assemblé Constitutionelle (the once and future Place de l'Assemblée Nationale after the election of a permanent legislative body, scheduled for 2013) also evokes the revolution and its aftermath. The Chamber of Deputies has long convened in the former beylical palace in a wing adjacent to the National Museum, with its unrivaled collection of Roman-era mosaics; the Constituent Assembly has held its deliberations in the same venue since its inauguration in December 2011. Thus, it is there that postrevolutionary Tunisia has been taking shape.

Introduction to the First Edition

For the attentive traveler, a ride on the TGM – the Tunis, La Goulette, and La Marsa, a light railway linking Tunis with a string of suburbs along the Gulf of Tunis – can become an extraordinary trip through the country's history and culture. Not far from the end of the line in La Marsa are the remains of a sixteenth-century palace where Tunisia's rulers passed the summer months to avail themselves of the sea breezes and where, in 1882, the reigning bey signed the document establishing a French protectorate over his country. A mile down the tracks, the train reaches Sidi Bou Said, a village that welcomed Muslims fleeing from the Iberian Peninsula in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries and that has been, for many years, a favorite haunt of local and European artists. The Museum of Traditional Music and Musical Instruments, located in what was the home of Baron Rudolphe d'Erlanger (1872–1932), honors the work of this French scholar who spent years helping Tunisian musicians preserve the Andalusian melodies and techniques brought to "Sidi Bou" by their refugee forefathers.

The next six TGM stops, spread out over two or three miles, are all in Carthage. Two bear the names of the ancient city's most famous father and son, Amilcar and Hannibal. Down the hill from the Amilcar station is a hotel built in the early days of the campaign to attract European tourists to the newly independent country's beaches. A few hundred yards west of the station, a World War II military cemetery – one of many British, French, German, and US burial grounds scattered across Tunisia along the battle lines of 1942 and 1943 – memorializes the men who fought in North Africa and shelters the remains of almost three thousand American soldiers.

Just before pulling into the Hannibal station, passengers catch glimpses of Roman Carthage on either side of the railway. Toward the Gulf of Tunis sprawl the Antonine Baths, now an archeological park encompassing the vestiges of a complex of buildings commanding stunning views across the gulf to the Cap Bon peninsula. On the opposite side of the train lies an excavated neighborhood of Roman villas. The station between Amilcar and

Hannibal, Présidence, is close to the official residence of the president of the republic. Perhaps few commuters making their way to or from jobs in Tunis give a second thought to this juxtaposition, but it has no doubt reassured Habib Bourguiba and Zine al-ʿAbidine ben ʿAli, the only two chief executives since 1956, to dwell within the symbolic embrace of two such stalwarts of the Tunisian past.

Still another Carthage station, Byrsa, derives its name from the hill where the Carthage acropolis stood and where, by Virgil's anachronistic account, Queen Dido entertained the travel-weary Aeneas. After France established its protectorate over Tunisia, the Catholic Church erected the Cathedral of St. Louis atop the hill to commemorate the saint-king whose ill-fated thirteenth-century crusade foundered on the shores below. From the Byrsa station, an easy walk leads to the twin seaports of Punic Carthage, one for the city's merchant fleet, the other for its warships. A similar walk from the Salammbo station (named for the daughter of Amilcar who also provided Gustave Flaubert, one of many nineteenth-century European writers entranced by Tunisia, with the title for his 1862 novel) ends at the Tophet, a sanctuary at which, some scholars believe, child sacrifices were meant to appease the Carthaginian gods.

A few stops farther on is a station named for Khair al-Din Barbarossa, the sixteenth-century corsair captain whose ships struck fear into the hearts of European sailors – or perhaps for Khair al-Din al-Tunsi, the reform-minded prime minister of the nineteenth century who lived in France for a decade and believed that Tunisia had much to learn about the modern world from the nations of Europe. Inasmuch as the station is on the outskirts of La Goulette, the port from which both Khair al-Dins sailed on their quite different missions, the ambiguity seems appropriate enough.

Situated on the Gulf of Tunis where a break in the coastline provides a passage into the shallow Lake of Tunis – the gullet to which its name refers – La Goulette served for centuries as the port of Tunis. In keeping with its maritime links around the Mediterranean, the city had a cosmopolitan air and, even after independence, remained one of the most ethnically and religiously mixed communities in the country. The TGM passes beneath the massive battlements of the fortress erected in 1535 by the Spanish Hapsburgs to consolidate their conquest of the region. Down the street along the structure's southern wall, far enough away to be difficult to distinguish clearly, is an equestrian statue of Habib Bourguiba that once stood in downtown Tunis but was moved to this less visible location at the end of his presidency in 1987. Leaving La Goulette, the railway tracks turn westward to cross the lake on a causeway built by the Tunis Tram Company

in 1905 to replace the longer route along the western shore of the lake which had been laid out by the Italian concessionaires who constructed and initially operated the line in the early 1870s. Arriving at the Tunis-Marine station after a run of some fifty minutes and fifteen miles, the train has passed by sites associated with three millennia of history.

A leisurely walk of an hour or two after exiting the TGM terminus builds upon the ride's introduction to Tunisian history. Just beyond the turnstiles is the main east–west thoroughfare of the "new" city, built in the nineteenth century on the mudflats bordering the lake to accommodate a European quarter outside the walls of the Arab city, the medina. A massive clock tower overlooks the busy Place du 7 Novembre 1987, named in honor of the "Historic Change" of that date when ben ʿAli replaced the ailing Bourguiba as president after the latter had dominated the Tunisian political scene for more than half a century. Before the "Historic Change," the centerpiece of the square was the statue of Bourguiba now consigned to La Goulette.

Nevertheless, the avenue still bears the name of the ex-president. A wide central mall, with towering shade trees on both sides, divides the traffic along the length of the boulevard, creating a pleasant pedestrian space rendered visually attractive and odoriferous by the profusion of flower stalls and the ubiquitous men and boys selling jasmine nosegays. Some three hundred yards up Avenue Bourguiba from the TGM station is the National Theater. Built in the early twentieth century as part of an entertainment center for European settlers that also included a casino, it became the home of Tunisian drama troupes whose productions fueled nationalist sentiments even as they elevated the level of cultural life. Two blocks farther on loom the most powerful symbols of seventy-five years of French colonial rule: the Cathedral of St. Vincent de Paul and, directly opposite, the Embassy of France which, before independence, was the seat of the resident general and headquarters of the protectorate administration. Between them, in the median of Avenue Bourguiba, is a statue of the renowned fourteenth-century scholar Ibn Khaldoun, a native of Tunisia. The main point of contact between the downtown business district and the medina lies just slightly more than a hundred yards farther west.

Only a few vestiges of the gates that once pierced the medina's walls remain. By far the best known is the Bab al-Bahr, or Gate of the Sea, which offered the most direct access to the lake. Today, it is more commonly known as the Porte de France. Just inside the gate is the embassy of the United Kingdom, where Her Majesty's consuls once schemed against their French and Italian counterparts in the competition to draw Tunisia into the European orbit. Nearby are the neighborhoods of "Little Malta," a quarter

once filled with immigrants from that island, who enjoyed British protection, and the mellah, which once housed the Jewish population. One of two streets plunging into the medina from the Porte de France is Rue Jamʿa Zaituna (Zaituna Mosque Street). It slopes gently uphill past an astounding variety of shops, many of them now specializing in items favored by tourists, to end at the main portal of the mosque. Built in the eighth century, Zaituna served not only as a place of worship but also as the premier educational institution in Tunisia. Even after modern secular schools began to usurp that role in the nineteenth century, the mosque constituted the locus of Muslim intellectual life until its teaching functions were transferred to a faculty of theology and religious sciences at the University of Tunis in the 1960s. The winding streets and alleys around Zaituna offer numerous diversions, as the mosque is surrounded by the highest quality souks, or markets, in the city. Perfumes, spices, books, jewelry, and fine fabrics create a riot of colors and blend of aromas that set the precincts of the mosque apart as a unique environment. Not far from Zaituna, toward the southern edge of the medina, is the Tourbet al-Bey, which houses the tombs of the monarchs of the Husainid Dynasty (1705–1957).

A second major street traversing the medina from the Porte de France passes close by the mosque but ends at the center of secular, rather than religious, authority in the medina, the Casbah. The former palace of the ruler, the Dar al-Bey, now houses the prime minister's office, while buildings containing other government offices line the Place du Gouvernement at the western edge of the medina. Across the busy avenue that hems in the old city in the absence of its walls is the Collège Sadiqi. This still-functioning legacy of Khair al-Din al-Tunsi endowed the sons of the Tunisian bourgeoisie with modern secondary educations and served as a veritable nursery of generations of nationalist leaders.

The final leg of this journey through Tunisian history entails a walk along the perimeter of the medina to the Bab Souika neighborhood, a thirteenth-century suburb of the medina, and from there to the Bab al-Khadra station of the Tunis Metro, a tram system begun in the 1980s to relieve urban traffic congestion and connect the city with its northern, western, and southern suburbs. Line Four, the western route, makes a stop at Le Bardo, the beylical palace where the 1881 treaty, giving France special rights in Tunisia and paving the way for the protectorate, was signed. The National Assembly now occupies a portion of the palace, its entry flanked by soldiers dressed in ceremonial uniforms of the nineteenth century. Other wings of the palace house a world-class museum exhibiting an array of Tunisian artifacts but best known for its collection of mosaics, many from

Carthage, others from sites elsewhere in Tunisia: Dougga, El-Djem, Thurburbo Majus, and Bulla Regia. Some experts rate the Bardo holdings as the finest collection of Roman-era mosaics in the world. In a country where layers of history blend so seamlessly, it seems fitting that their twenty-first century home be in a royal palace begun in the fourteenth century.

As extraordinary as is the historical richness and diversity observed in the less than twenty-mile trip between La Marsa and Le Bardo, it is by no means unique to the region of Tunis. Although the entire country is only slightly larger than the American state of Florida, equally short journeys of similar diversity could readily be undertaken in such other urban centers as Sousse, Mahdia, Sfax, Gafsa, Kairouan, or Bizerte; among the towns and villages of the Majerda Valley west of the capital; or in Jarid oases of the southwest. How has it happened that the historical experience of what is now Tunisia has unfolded with such density and with so many traces of different cultures?

The southern curve of the African coastline at the Cap Bon peninsula has given Tunisia two windows on the Mediterranean Sea, one opening toward Europe, the other toward the Middle East. Since antiquity, this situation made it easy for peoples from both regions – Phoenicians, Romans, Arabs, Turks, Spaniards, Italians, Maltese, British, and French – to enter, and often take control of, the region. Its name has varied with time – Carthage, Africa (or, in its Arabized form, Ifriqiya), Tunisia – as its population has repeatedly absorbed waves of new arrivals from throughout the Mediterranean basin, all of them leaving their cultural imprints on the landscape and its inhabitants. But of all the rich legacies bestowed on Tunisia, that of the Arabs has unquestionably proven the most profound and enduring. The language, faith, and culture that the Arabs brought to the Maghrib ("the west," which to them meant all the lands beyond the Nile Valley) almost fourteen centuries ago have forged the innermost identity of the region's people ever since.

Nonetheless, the scant eighty-mile width of the Sicilian Channel separating island from Cap Bon has assured the ready transmission of European influences as well. The rulers of the Mediterranean's northern shores sometimes competed with their counterparts in Tunisia for mastery of the lands bordering the sea. More commonly, however, they imposed their political and economic will on northern Africa, absorbing it into the Roman, and much later the French, empires. Only on rare occasions, such as at the height of the Carthaginian era in the sixth century BCE or during the rule of the Aghlabid Dynasty in the ninth century CE, did political entities based in what later became Tunisia turn the tables and make European territory their own.

But whatever the nature of the relationship between Tunisia and its neighbors at any given historical moment, the land was awash with an array of exogenous influences. Contemporary Tunisians take great pride in their ancestors' skill in blending the many stimuli to which they were exposed into their own distinctive culture. Tunisia's modern history clearly reveals how extensively key challenges confronting the country have elicited responses grounded in concepts and approaches that draw on the full spectrum of the nation's cultural inheritance. An appreciation of the relative strength and popularity of Western versus Arab-Islamic influences at any given moment, of how various segments of the population assessed those influences, and of why they held the views they did, can facilitate our understanding of the country's recent past.

In the modern era, four recurrent themes that have determined the trajectory of Tunisian history well illustrate the interplay of these influences. In the telling of that history, this book weaves together the most salient components of all four – a mix that varied with changing times and circumstances. The themes are (1) the effort to create a political environment deemed acceptable by rulers and ruled alike; (2) the endeavor to modify or, in some cases, eradicate traditional beliefs and practices deemed to impede "progress" while, at the same time, retaining a national identity rooted in the precolonial past; (3) the attempt to foster economic growth sufficiently vigorous to diminish dependence and provide a stable platform for political and social development; and (4) the quest to formulate an artistic tradition mirroring the many divergent inputs the country has undergone.

Modern Tunisia has experienced rule by an indigenous monarchy, colonial control as a French protectorate, and an independent republican government. Early in the protectorate era, Tunisians, many of them veterans of precolonial campaigns to reform the political structure or their protégés, sought a greater voice in their governance. At first, they petitioned for the same rights and privileges enjoyed by European residents of their country. The failure of France to satisfy that appeal led to demands for the termination of French rule altogether. The most successful leaders of the anticolonial struggle utilized ideas and techniques learned as a result of their experiences with Europe and Europeans to build a movement whose insistence on acquiring the assets of the West while still preserving Tunisia's Arab and Islamic cultural inheritance resonated with a broad spectrum of the population. As a result, they were well positioned to mold, and then to dominate, the political system that emerged after independence in 1956. By the 1970s, however, waning

popular enthusiasm for the secular, single-party, authoritarian regime they had put in place produced calls to overhaul the political system with an eye toward restraining executive power and promoting pluralism. But it was not until 1987 that the former nationalist chief Habib Bourguiba, who had been acclaimed "president for life," left office. The extent to which ben ʿAli, his successor as president and party leader, had engineered meaningful and satisfying changes in the political arena remained uncertain as Tunisia entered the twenty-first century.

The most disruptive, unsettling, and far-reaching, but also certainly the most consequential, social debates in modern Tunisian history have centered on the value of traditional beliefs and practices. The enactment of legislation banning or restricting long-established customs and institutions, often in conjunction with other, subtler, forms of governmental pressure, has rendered compliance all but inescapable. From the precolonial era to the present, much of what successive governments have targeted as outmoded, and thus attempted to eliminate or radically alter, has been linked to Islam. Although the state has had the power to secure outward compliance with its will, its approach to religious matters has given a weapon to its opponents and has provoked serious backlashes. The protectorate authorities introduced French courts and schools. Comparable Tunisian (and Islamic) legal and educational institutions remained in place but, over time, lost much of their prestige and relevance in the public arena. Following independence, the nation's new leaders, virtually all of them products of French educations through which they had assimilated the philosophical underpinnings of Western culture, initiated sweeping social reforms allegedly designed to liberate Tunisians from beliefs and practices they saw as obsolete in the modern world and as deterrents to development. In terms of its breadth and impact, only Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's secularization of Turkey in the 1920s and 1930s offered a comparable parallel in the Muslim world. The fact that most Tunisians derived their worldview from different sources than did these Western-educated elites guaranteed that tensions accompanied such reforms. For many years, the power of the government prevented opposition to these policies from crystallizing, but when it did crystallize, it was often very successfully couched in terms of the necessity of preserving Tunisia's traditional Arab-Islamic heritage from an onslaught of imported values and practices.

The rulers of modern Tunisia adopted a variety of strategies as they strove to forge an economy with sufficient strength and stability to support their governments' political and social agendas. During the protectorate era, economic decisions made in Tunis invariably privileged certain segments

of the population, facilitating Europeans' acquisition of land and generally promoting the interests of European rural settlers and urban entrepreneurs over Tunisian farmers and merchants. Europeans held the richest, most profitable land in the country and controlled what few manufacturing enterprises emerged. Tunisians pushed to the margins of the economy often found themselves in straitened circumstances, but in singularly hard times, such as the 1920s and 1930s, especially in rural areas, many were unable to survive at all. As a result, economic discontent proved a powerful factor in galvanizing opposition to French control. With independence, the government's key economic objectives became the assertion of Tunisians' control over the economy and the intensification of the process of industrialization. To hasten reaching these goals, the state assumed a prominent role in the planning and management of the economy, as suggested by the 1964 addition of the adjective "socialist" to the name of the ruling party. Serious shortcomings in this arrangement, along with vigorous popular resistance to such policies as the collectivization of agricultural land and the establishment of cooperative farms, compelled the government to rethink its economic philosophy and, at the start of the 1970s, to replace it with another premised on dramatically different tenets. With the restoration of liberal principles and the development of an open, extroverted economy in which petroleum and tourism played major roles, some Tunisian capitalists fared extremely well, but most ordinary Tunisians did not. Class disparities widened as the despair of those experiencing a declining quality of life deepened. Shaken by deadly riots in 1978, 1980, and 1984, the government formulated the economic policy that it has pursued ever since, navigating between the two courses it had previously advocated.

The performing arts, painting, and literature provide a series of relatively little-studied cases revealing the impact on Tunisia of divergent cultural influences. Although theatrical works do not feature significantly in traditional Arab literary expression, Tunisians familiar with productions staged for European settlers began mounting Arabic versions of Western plays early in the twentieth century. In the interwar years, their repertoires broadened to include more material by Arab authors, including Tunisians. At about the same time and as the result of a similar process, the first Tunisian novels written in Arabic also appeared. To these were added, toward the middle of the century, a flood of new fiction that adopted not only European form but also European language. Many of the country's most distinguished novelists, whatever their language of expression, have taken as their subject matter the tugs of competing, and often conflicting, cultures that they encounter in their own lives.

Like drama and the novel, painting and sculpting were largely unknown in the traditional Arab-Islamic culture of North Africa. Some European artists lived in the protectorate, however, and many others visited it. Exposure to their work induced a handful of Tunisians to experiment as painters during the 1920s and 1930s. Following World War II, these men became the driving force behind the "School of Tunis." As its first masters, they fostered the creation of an authentically Tunisian artistic personality that valued the country's traditions and symbols but expressed them in modern forms. Tunisian musicians and musicologists manifested a similar respect for authenticity by preserving the nation's vocal and instrumental heritage as the radio and records popularized Western music throughout the world. Following in the footsteps of these pioneers, the postindependence generations of playwrights, actors, authors, musicians, and artists have called upon both Arab-Islamic and European traditions for inspiration, frequently fusing elements from both. Many have won accolades for their work at home, throughout the Arab world, and in Europe. But the facet of Tunisian artistic expression that has achieved the widest international recognition is the cinema. Even in their infancy, motion pictures attracted the interest of a few Tunisians, while foreign producers availed themselves of the country's abundant sunshine and varied landscape to make it a location for filming. More recently, the country's movie industry, which has often combined the talents of Arab and Western writers, producers, directors, actors, and technicians, has evolved into one of the most highly respected and successful in the non-Western world.

The precise point at which Tunisia's "modern" history begins is a matter open to interpretation, but the imposition of French rule in the 1880s unquestionably constituted a turning point of enormous importance. Thus, it is with an account of the environment that set the stage for the protectorate that this book begins.

CHAPTER 1

The March to the Bardo, 1835–1881

Fiercely independent tribes with a long history of rejecting outside control inhabited the ruggedly mountainous, heavily forested area of the Tunisian-Algerian frontier. Recurrent feuds, compounded by a border that ignored many traditional tribal boundaries, rendered the region dangerously volatile. During the 1870s, the local Algerian military authorities recorded well over two thousand incidents, many of them involving incursions across the border.[1] Thus the February 1881 ambush of a Tunisian Khmir tribesman by a group of Algerians might well have faded into oblivion with the arbitration of local notables and the payment of blood money if the confluence of French ambitions in North Africa, the willingness of other European powers to accommodate them, and the inability of the Tunisian government to impede them had not made a pretext for a military campaign in Tunisia highly desirable.

Toward the end of March, when French military administrators in La Calle, Algeria, hampered negotiations among them, the frustrated tribesmen predictably erupted into new outbreaks of violence. Asserting the need to stabilize the region, units of the French army crossed the border on April 24, capturing the garrison town of Le Kef two days later. At the same time, French warships shelled Tabarka and then sailed east to the larger and more strategically located port of Bizerte. In accordance with orders he had received from Tunis, the city's governor surrendered on May 1 without offering any resistance. Strengthened over the following week by significant reinforcements from France, General Jules-Aimé Bréart prepared to move on Tunis itself. Persistent rain made the march longer and more difficult than anticipated, but Bréart finally reached Ksar Sa'id, the beylical palace at Bardo, on the western outskirts of the capital, on May 12. Anxious to complete his mission, he insisted on an immediate meeting with Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey, at which he and Théodore Roustan, the French consul general, demanded the ruler's agreement – within three hours – to a document regulating Franco-Tunisian relations. In view of

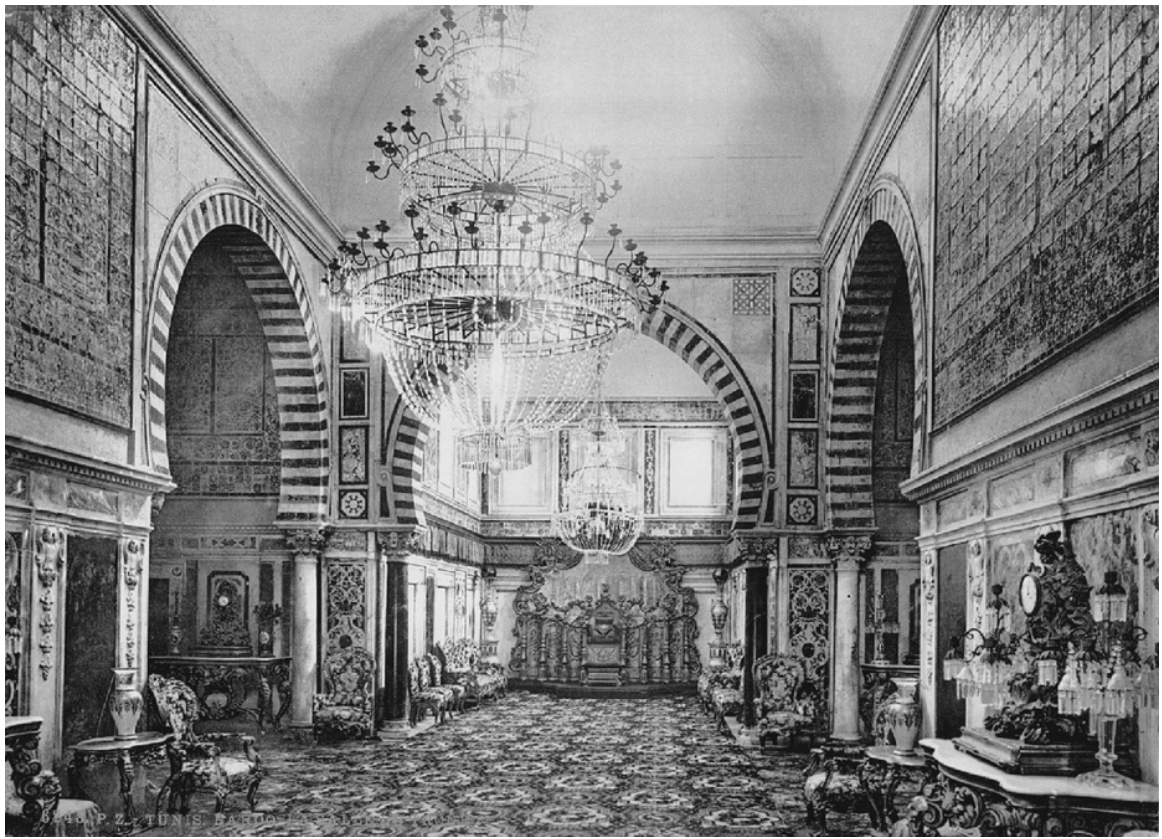


Figure 1.1. The throne room of the Bardo Palace. The beys formally received Tunisian government officials and foreign dignitaries in this ornately decorated salon

the overwhelming military power of France, all but one of the notables summoned to the palace as the French approached urged him to comply. The sole objection came from Larbi Zarruk, the mayor of Tunis. The Bardo Treaty acknowledged the bey's sovereignty but placed Tunisia's external relations under the supervision of a French resident minister and its army under the command of a French general. Additionally, the treaty allowed France to station as many troops throughout the country as it deemed necessary to maintain order.

Although ostensibly tied to the recent disturbances in Khmir territory, the constraints embodied in the Bardo Treaty were the culmination of a process whose roots went back half a century. People from every corner of the Mediterranean basin had long been present in Tunisia, often as transients engaged in commerce but also as residents of diaspora communities that had carved out places for themselves in Tunis and other coastal cities. During the reign of Ahmad Bey (1837–55), however, European persons, commodities, and ideologies flooded into Tunisia in greater numbers and with greater intensity than ever before. At first, these developments primarily affected the upper echelons of Tunisian society, but in short order their impact was discernible everywhere. As happened at more or less the same time in several regions of the Ottoman Empire, the penchant for the things of Europe pushed the government to the brink of bankruptcy even as the ideas of Europe challenged, in extraordinarily unsettling ways, traditional thinking about the most basic concepts of political, social, and economic organization. This debilitating combination of circumstances undermined the country's capacity to cope with a growing European appetite to dominate it politically and economically, although some Tunisian statesmen attempted, almost to the very end, to implement a program of internal reforms that would avert the worst-case scenario. As the manifestation of a critical turning point in Tunisia's history, the signing ceremony in the Bardo Palace on the evening of May 12, 1881, confirmed their inability to do so. A full appreciation of the significance of that gloomy occasion requires embedding it within the context of what had been transpiring in Tunisia since the time of Ahmad Bey.

The tenth ruler of the Husainid Dynasty that had governed since 1705, Ahmad came to the throne at a time when his family's historically successful practice of safeguarding its substantial autonomy within the Ottoman Empire appeared threatened. In 1835, Ottoman troops had occupied the adjacent province of Tripoli, where the Qaramanli family had enjoyed similar latitude since 1711. The French conquest of Algeria in 1830 had jolted Istanbul into this dramatic demonstration of its interests in North

Africa. The restoration of direct Ottoman control was intended to deter further losses by emphasizing that this was territory over which the sultan, and not merely a local potentate, held sway, but it registered with Ahmad as a prelude to a similar campaign in Tunisia. Moreover, the easternmost Algerian province of Constantine, with its many political, economic, and social connections to Tunisia, fell to the French in the very year of Ahmad's accession. Thus, at the start of his reign, an army of the power to which he owed allegiance as a faithful Muslim lay just across one of his frontiers, while an army of the power to which he owed considerable money (as the result of an upsurge in French commercial activity in Tunisia since the 1830 invasion of Algeria) lay just across another.

Ahmad believed that he could relieve the discomforting sensation of being in a vise between more powerful neighbors by adopting a bold but deliberate two-pronged strategy. He well understood that France's advocacy of Tunisian autonomy within the Ottoman Empire stemmed from a desire to keep the Turks as far removed from Algeria as possible and to pave the way for the eventual extension of French influence into his country. Appreciative of the French interpretation of Ottoman-Tunisian relations but wary of the intentions of his powerful new neighbor, Ahmad solicited the support of Britain, which he was confident would thwart any attempt by France to expand its North African holdings at Tunisian expense. British officials received Ahmad's overtures warmly but, to his annoyance, urged him to forge stronger and more overt bonds with the Ottoman authorities, maintaining that such a course of action would help to keep France at arm's length (to say nothing of facilitating Britain's own economic entrée into Tunisia). Despite this importuning, the bey never lost sight of the danger of smothering in the Ottoman embrace and adamantly refused to act as if he were no more than a provincial governor. Thus he studiously avoided proclaiming the provisions of the landmark 1839 imperial decree (Hatt-i-Sharif) enhancing the rights of the sultan's subjects, although his own edicts abolishing the slave trade and emancipating slaves (in 1841 and 1846, respectively) suggest that his response to the Ottoman reforms had more to do with avoiding the appearance of subordination than with opposition to their substance. Royal displeasure with the bey led to the dispatch of an Ottoman fleet to Tunisia in 1840, prompting France, and then Britain, to send their own warships to Tunisian waters. Only the concurrent outbreak of a more serious crisis in Ottoman Syria averted a showdown. Thereafter Istanbul insisted on retaining practices that symbolized its ultimate sovereignty as diligently as Ahmad sought to dispense with them. These included the payment of tribute and the sending of gifts to the sultan, as well as his

issuance of a decree formally confirming the accession of each bey. As they had been since the arrival of the Turks in the sixteenth century, Istanbul, the sultan, and the Ottoman provinces in the Middle East remained powerful religious and cultural poles of attraction for all Tunisian Muslims, despite the ambiguity fostered by Ahmad's elaborate choreography of political relations with the empire.

Beyond this diplomatic front, Ahmad initiated a program of military modernization designed to enable Tunisian forces to hold their own against challenges from any quarter. In their broad outline, Ahmad's plans paralleled similar undertakings over the previous fifty years by the Ottoman sultans Selim III and Mahmud II and by Muhammad ʿAli, the viceroy of Egypt. The acquisition of up-to-date weaponry and other military matériel topped Ahmad's agenda, with the equipment coming from several European suppliers, not the least of which was France. After 1830 the French government had taken pains to emphasize its opinion that Tunisia was a fully independent political entity, since that status would, in time, permit France to incorporate Tunisia into its North African territories with minimal grounds for objections from Istanbul. This perspective put France and Britain at odds and provided an important ingredient in their bitter rivalry over Tunisia that endured almost until the beginning of the protectorate. It also placed France in the somewhat peculiar position of preparing the Tunisian army to safeguard the very independence that France itself might one day seek to terminate – and, in the process, find French armaments turned against its own troops. Ahmad well knew that all the Europeans with whom he dealt kept their interests, not his, uppermost in the formulation of their policies, but he very much enjoyed the fuss that French officials made over him in according him the trappings of sovereignty. This flattery reached its apex in the bey's 1846 state visit to France, after which he adopted, often at great expense, many of the accoutrements of the French court.

Muskets, cannons, and warships constituted one important aspect of Ahmad's modernization program, but their effectiveness hinged on two requirements: an officer corps familiar with the new military and naval hardware, as well as with the contemporary tactical and strategic thinking it was intended to support, and a sufficient number of soldiers and sailors to put teeth into the refurbished military establishment. To meet the first of these needs, Ahmad created a military school in the Bardo Palace. There, European instructors educated future officers, most of them the sons of mamluks (the prestigious class of state officials purchased by Husainid agents in the slave markets of the Ottoman Empire and trained in Tunis

to fill high-level government positions), although some were scions of the *baldiyya*, the socially prominent class of the capital whose traditional bailiwick was commerce. The Bardo school was small and never produced enough officers to staff the revamped armed forces, but its graduates' exposure to an array of new ideas and concepts – in addition to pursuing their military courses, they were the first Tunisians to systematically study modern mathematics, engineering, and the applied sciences – instilled in them a sense of cohesiveness and set them apart as a unique elite whose influence in state councils persisted long after Ahmad's military visions had faded.

To provide manpower for the army and navy, Ahmad took the innovative step of conscripting the peasantry. Previously, the Husainid army had consisted only of "Turks" (the descendants of Turkish soldiers and officials or adventurers recruited throughout the Ottoman Mediterranean world), Zouaves (members of an Algerian Kabyle tribe, the Zwawa, renowned for their skill as warriors), Spahis (Tunisian tribal horsemen), and Hambas (mounted units including both "Turks" and Tunisians that performed police functions). An irregular cavalry drawn from tribes receiving tax concessions and other privileges in return for military service supplemented these troops as necessary. Ahmad's significant departure from traditional practice in filling the ranks of his military establishment inevitably triggered a certain amount of popular discontent. Government agents' frequently heavy-handed and capricious application of conscription, not to mention the uncertainties that awaited recruits and the economic distress that their families experienced, heightened opposition and encouraged evasion. In the short term, conscription did little more than add bodies to the ranks of the armed forces, but, in time, the practice contributed to implanting the concept that ordinary Tunisians could have a place in the apparatus of the state and, consequently, a stake in the nation's future.

To finance his extensive plans, Ahmad devised new taxes and increased existing levies. He also imposed a government monopoly on the export of agricultural products, reviving a system that had soured economic relations between the European powers and several of his predecessors. In the wake of its 1830 victory at Algiers, France had pressured Husain Bey (1824–35) to terminate a similar monopoly and grant the French free access to the Tunisian market. Thus Ahmad's resurrection of export controls was perceived by Europeans as a step backward in their efforts to advance the economic penetration of the country. Despite the vigorous push to increase government revenues, many ancillary projects designed to support the military establishment proved too costly. Small factories producing

uniforms and basic supplies rarely operated at maximum potential. Because of the expenses entailed, some projects remained unfinished, while others fell victim to the bey's erratic level of enthusiasm.

Ahmad flirted with financial disaster throughout much of his reign, but it was not until a member of his inner circle absconded with a substantial portion of the state treasury in 1852 that curtailing expenditures received serious consideration. Even then, however, he resisted a retrenchment that might deprive Tunisia of its status (in his own mind at least) as a strong and effective state. Caught between grandiose ambitions and dire financial realities, Ahmad ended his reign on an especially poignant note. Seizing the opportunity to showcase the army he had built and to demonstrate Tunisia's equivalence with the mightiest powers of Europe, Ahmad joined Britain and France in dispatching troops to the Crimea in 1855 to assist the sultan in meeting the threat posed by Russia. To finance the expedition, he sold some of the royal family's jewels, undoubtedly deriving great pleasure from imagining a scenario in which the theoretically subordinate bey helped save his Ottoman master. Ahmad was confident that Tunisian participation in the war would earn it respect and renewed support for ventures he still hoped to initiate. Perhaps it was for the best that he died before learning that his army had sustained enormous losses in the Crimea, not from combat, which it never saw, but from disease. This disaster, so far from home and ultimately to no avail, delivered a final, and fatal, blow to the military modernization program. No subsequent bey showed the slightest inclination to revive it.

Throughout his reign, Ahmad faced a series of exceptional challenges. In the absence of a traditional local paradigm on which to model his responses, he acted much as his earlier counterparts, Muhammad ʿAli in Egypt and the Ottoman sultans Selim III and Mahmud II, had in similar circumstances: initiating pragmatic, ad hoc measures, many of which deviated radically from past practices. Because the bey and the elite coterie around him constituted the sole group articulating the need for major changes, such changes always came from above, where the raw power to impose them existed but was rarely matched by an awareness of (or even an interest in) their impact at the grassroots level. Virtually none of Ahmad's reforms met with unequivocal success, but neither, until the Crimean venture, were any so disastrous as to doom the entire process.

In pursuit of the twin objectives of defending Tunisia and winning respect for the country and for himself in the international arena, the bey forged alliances with European powers that met his immediate needs, which very often entailed offsetting the influence of other Europeans. At the same

time, he justified the introduction of innovative, and often unpopular, practices in the name of shoring up the state against increasing foreign influences. That Ahmad's eighteen-year reign was too short a time for the unfamiliar ideas and new technologies that he transplanted to Tunisia to take firm root should in no way devalue his efforts. On the contrary, to have done nothing at the outset of his reign would have courted disaster and to have attempted to address the problems he faced with only the meager resources initially at his disposal would almost certainly have failed.

The most influential and enduring of Ahmad's reforms eroded organizational principles that the Tunisian state had long observed. Allowing the sons of the *baldiyya* class to attend the Bardo military school and conscripting peasants into the armed forces introduced the hitherto unheard-of notion that native Tunisians – the "sons of the homeland" – might play a role in the governance of the country and, therefore, have a genuine stake in its future. In exposing a select group of young men to the material things and intellectual concepts of the European world, Ahmad set in motion a process that profoundly affected the Tunisian state and its society. Within a few years of his death, new efforts to implement fundamental political and social reforms, juxtaposed against the continuing European competition for influence in the country, had created an environment that Ahmad could scarcely have imagined.

Wary of the outcome of the course his predecessor had set, Muhammad Bey would have liked to have distanced himself from the Europeans with whom he believed Ahmad had consorted too freely and spent too lavishly. His plans for a cooling-off period after Ahmad's frenetic reign replicated the hopes of Egyptian and Ottoman rulers who had succeeded dynamic pioneering reformers in their lands, but, like them, Muhammad found very little respite. His accession in 1855 coincided with the arrival in Tunis of two powerful men who lost no time in attempting to bend Muhammad to their will. For most of their tenure, Richard Wood and Léon Roches, the consuls of Britain and France, respectively, competed fiercely with each other to gain an economic and political edge in Tunisia, but in their first overtures to the bey they acted in concert. At the end of the Crimean War, Sultan Abdul-Majid complied with his British and French allies' demand that he demonstrate his commitment to tolerance and progressiveness by publicly affirming the rights of his non-Muslim subjects. Whatever concerns the European powers may have had about the well-being of Ottoman Christians and Jews, their underlying calculation was that a more open regime would be more susceptible to Western economic penetration and the empire's integration into the world economy. As the consuls expected,

Muhammad declined to apply the 1856 royal decree in Tunisia, just as Ahmad had declined in 1839, and for precisely the same reasons. Wood and Roches had no intention of letting the bey sidestep the issue so easily, however, and now they could look for support from a group, consisting primarily of mamluks, that concurred with them.

Although these men were protégés of Ahmad Bey, they lamented the surge in imports that had accompanied the former ruler's policies. Extending well beyond military matériel to a wide variety of consumer goods, the foreign products had inflicted severe damage on many small-scale Tunisian artisanal enterprises. Reversing the trend required a thorough overhaul of the Tunisian economy leading to its integration into the international system – precisely the objectives of Britain and France in the Ottoman Empire. In their European-influenced view, providing ordinary Tunisians with guarantees of protection against arbitrary government was an essential prerequisite for setting such a process in motion. With the people assured of their personal freedom and the security of their possessions, these modernizers envisaged the unfolding of a scenario that included an increase in production not only in the traditional handicraft sector but also in agriculture, where cultivation had declined by 80 percent during Ahmad's reign.[2] In time, an expansion of the nascent industrial base Ahmad had created could also be expected. Such growth would encourage capital investment, both domestic and foreign, in those areas of the economy, but also in the development of a modern transportation and communication infrastructure that would underpin the whole structure and expedite domestic and international marketing.

An incident in 1857 enabled Wood and Roches to intensify their pressure on Muhammad. The bey sanctioned the execution of Batto Sfez, a Tunisian Jew who had quarreled with a group of Muslims when a cart he was driving killed a Tunisian child. In the heat of the moment, Sfez allegedly committed the capital offense of blaspheming Islam.[3] Expressing indignation over the death sentence, the two diplomats presented Muhammad with a slate of judicial and economic demands. When Muhammad proposed to comply only in part, Roches summoned French warships to the Tunisian coast and Muhammad understood that he had no real options. He met the consul's terms by issuing the 'Ahd al-Aman, or Security Covenant, proclaiming the civil and religious equality of all his subjects. But, as per the pair's original stipulations, the decree went much further, committing the bey to formulate criminal and commercial codes and establish mixed courts to hear cases involving Europeans. It also announced the termination of the state monopolies. To insure the bey's adhesion to these obligations, Roches

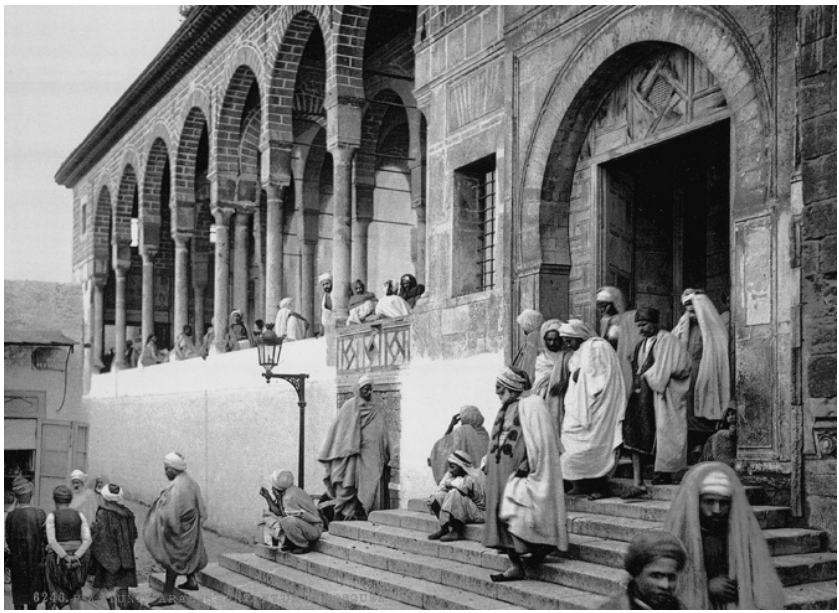


Figure 1.2. Worshippers leaving the Zaituna mosque. The oldest and most important mosque in Tunis, it was not only a place of worship but also the seat of the most renowned insitution of Islamic higher education in the country. The mosque university lay at the intellectual heart of Tunisian Islam.

and Wood insisted that he confer with them as he implemented the decree. The 'Ahd al-Aman paved the way for sweeping economic and social changes. Like Ahmad's reforms, it was imposed from above but, more ominously than in the past, also from outside.

The mamluks, who advocated modernizing the economy, recognized the importance of foreign involvement in the process, but most either underestimated the risk of European hegemony or overestimated their ability to prevent it. In some cases, venality dominated their thinking. European entrepreneurs would need middlemen for their Tunisian ventures and the mamluks' familiarity with European culture and languages made them the ideal choice to play, and profit from, such a role. But within another segment of the elite, the ulama, or religious scholars, far greater skepticism prevailed. In accordance with traditional Muslim views about *dhimmis* (monotheists who lived in Islamic lands and enjoyed the protection of the state), the ulama had no objection to the bey's affirming the security of his non-Muslim subjects, but they opposed the concept of non-Muslim

equality in taxation or in matters of the law. Those who worked as government administrators and clerks tended to mute their criticisms, but others, especially the shaikhs and muftis of the prestigious Zaituna mosque-university, aired their views more candidly. Perhaps to stress the official view of the ʿAhd al-Aman's conformity with Islam, Muhammad ordered the reading of its preamble, which focused on the welfare of the bey's subjects but glossed over the decree's economic and juridical content, at Friday prayer services. The broad dissemination of such an abridged version of the proclamation suggests that Muhammad knew that its details would meet with disapproval.

Small numbers of European merchants had resided in Tunis since the al-Muwahhid era (twelfth-thirteenth centuries), but the flood of speculators and businessmen who arrived after 1857 raised their profile considerably. As both the Sfez incident and the ulama concerns about certain provisions of the ʿAhd al-Aman reveal, however, the social fabric of the country also included other, more substantial, non-Muslim populations. Batto Sfez belonged to a Jewish community of perhaps eighteen thousand persons that traced its roots to the Diaspora from Palestine following revolts against Roman rule in the first and second centuries. These Tunisian Jews lived in both rural and urban areas, were generally poor, and exerted little political or social influence. A very different and much smaller group of Jews – only one or two thousand[4] – was descended from refugees from Spain in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries and immigrants from the Italian city of Livorno in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Most of the latter were merchants who made use of their linkages to Mediterranean commercial networks to assume important and remunerative roles in Tunis, at first often as agents for the corsairs and their financial backers. The education and European contacts of some of these Grana (the Tunisian colloquial Arabic for Livorno) enabled them to join the circle of the ruling elite, where they served as advisers, business representatives, or physicians to several beys.

In addition to the Jews, several thousand persons who were neither Arab nor Muslim lived in Tunis and its suburbs during Muhammad's reign. The largest contingent among them, about seven thousand, came from the nearby island of Malta and usually worked in unskilled occupations, on the docks, as carters, or as laborers. Speaking a language akin to Arabic, living, for the most part, in a quarter of the medina, or walled city, and adhering to social customs that were variations on those familiar in Tunisia, the Maltese differed from the country's natives primarily in their Roman Catholicism. Sicilians, Sardinians, and mainland Italians

accounted for forty-six hundred more foreign residents, although political and economic circumstances in Italy caused this number to more than double in the two decades following Muhammad's reign.[5] Their concentration in the Tunis port of La Goulette as early as the time of Ahmad Bey, whose modernization projects had attracted many skilled and semiskilled workers and artisans, made that town almost as Italian as it was Tunisian. Other Italians were miners, farmers, and laborers or, like the Maltese, operated small shops, restaurants, and taverns catering to the needs of their compatriots.

Except as pork butchers, purveyors of alcohol, or practitioners of certain skilled trades, Italians and Maltese competed for employment with their Tunisian counterparts at the bottom of the socioeconomic ladder. Nevertheless, by the middle of the century, the immigrants had carved out recognizable niches for themselves in Tunis that made it feasible for wives and children to join what had been an overwhelmingly adult male community. Thereafter, most immigrants arrived as families. Because the commercial treaties that had traditionally regulated trade between Muslims and non-Muslims precluded European women from residing in Muslim lands, this unprecedented situation affected social and economic interactions throughout Tunisian society, and the proximity in which immigrants and Tunisians lived further compounded matters. Conflicting notions of appropriate women's behavior exacerbated communal tensions and ultimately required the government to attempt to regulate socioeconomic issues once deemed private matters.[6]

The 'Ahd al-Aman applied to these immigrants as it did to other Europeans, but the Italians and Maltese continued to rely on consular officials (in the case of the latter, British agents, since their homeland was a colony) to protect and advance their interests. The diplomats did not ignore them – the presence of sizeable numbers of their country's citizens or subjects provided potential leverage – but after 1857 they much preferred to concentrate on facilitating the proposals of businessmen and speculators whose Tunisian ventures more immediately advanced the strategy of the governments they represented. In any case, many of the consuls associated the surge of immigration in the 1860s and 1870s with a rise in crime, some petty, but some, such as widespread smuggling that included contraband weapons, far more serious and a threat to their mission. Drawing a connection between criminality and the low socioeconomic status of most immigrants, the diplomats occasionally allowed class interests to supersede national solidarity by colluding with each other and with powerful Tunisians to the disadvantage of subsistence immigrants, and especially

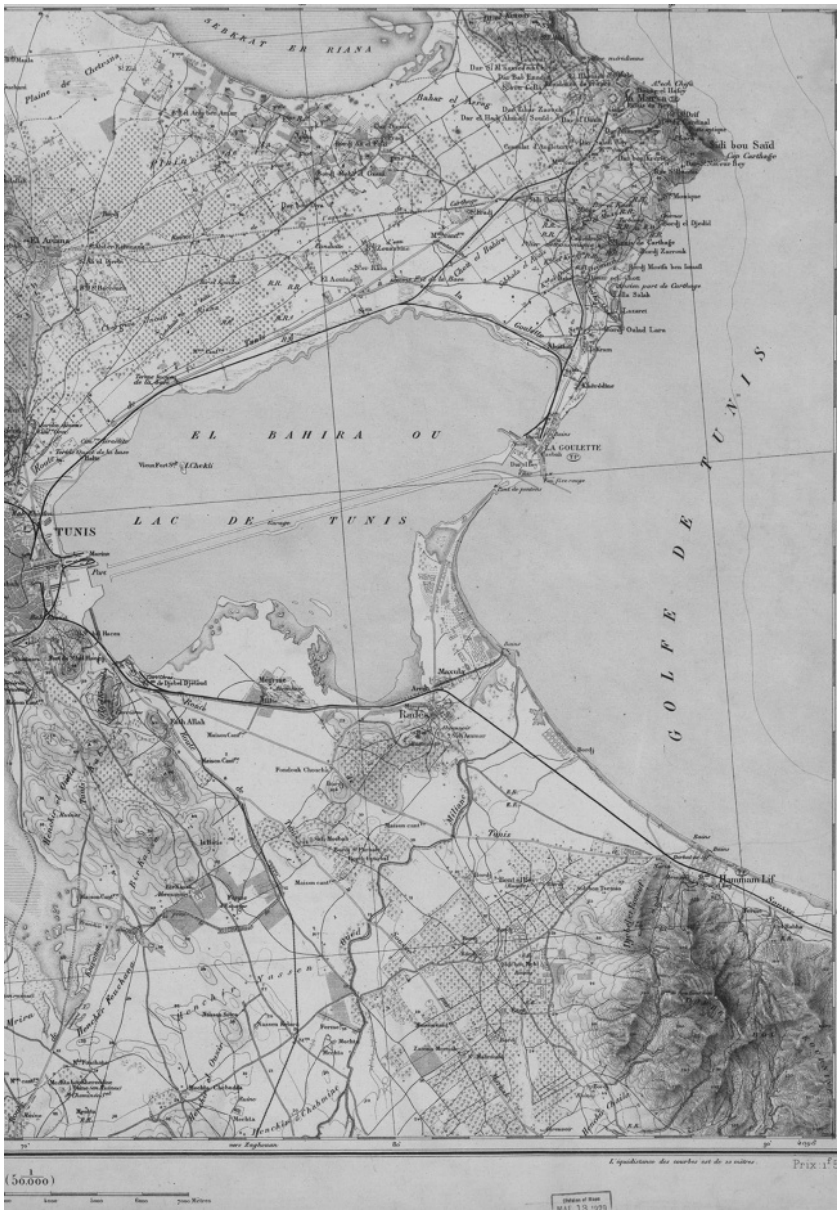
women, from the "not-quite-European" shores of the Mediterranean (i.e., Malta and the Italian islands).[7]

The duress under which Muhammad Bey had issued the ʿAhd al-Aman greatly distressed him. He took few steps to implement the decree, but as European speculators swarmed into Tunisia, their consuls invoked it regularly. Wood and Roches led this chorus, even as they were bringing new pressure to bear on Muhammad to augment the ʿAhd al-Aman with a full-fledged constitution. Although he had no desire to do so, he knew from experience that he had little choice in the matter. To make the most of an unpalatable situation, the bey formed several commissions to examine possible formats for such a document. In addition to appointing the veterans of Ahmad Bey's entourage, who, as the most outspoken advocates of reform, could hardly be excluded, Muhammad also named a number of ulama to the commissions. Many of the religious leaders had familial and social ties to the city's merchants, who had fallen on hard times as Europeans came to dominate international trade. Consequently they resented the scenario they saw unfolding, associating it with the rampant growth of European influence that, in turn, they linked to the many innovations that had occurred since Ahmad's reign. They feared that, once opened, the door allowing European penetration of Tunisia could never be closed and that Tunisians would have no control over what passed through it. Ulama in Egypt and the Ottoman Empire had expressed similar concerns a few decades earlier that, by the late 1850s, were proving prophetic. Even more importantly, the ulama believed that Tunisia already had a constitution – the Qur'an – and that no other legislation was necessary to ensure the proper ordering of society. The ulama commissioners, however, lacked the political skill and connections of the modernizers. Rather than embarking on a bruising battle that they were certain to lose, the ulama opted to retire from the deliberations.

As the constitutional commissions set about their work, Muhammad Bey made a final effort to check European ambitions by embracing what now appeared as the lesser of two evils and identifying Tunisia more closely with the Ottoman Empire. His agents traveled to Istanbul with an offer to acknowledge the rights of the sultan over Tunisia in exchange for his allowing the Husainids a free hand in the running of the country. The Tunisian emissaries stressed that the proposal constituted no more than a formal recognition of the status quo. Knowing that the bey acted from weakness, the sultan refused to countenance any modification of the traditional Ottoman view that Tunisia was simply an imperial province. The sultan's obduracy pushed the most avid Tunisian reformers further toward



Map 1.1. Tunis and vicinity, ca. 1898. Founded in 698 by Arab armies advancing from the Nile Valley, Tunis replaced Carthage as the most important city of the region. Tunis enjoyed a golden era under the Hafsid Dynasty (1227–1574) and served as the capital of the Husainid beys (1705–1957) both before and after the La Marsa Convention formalized the French



Map 1.1. (*cont.*) protectorate over Tunisia in 1883. Thereafter, many of the suburbs stretching along the Gulf of Tunis from La Goulette, the city's port, to La Marsa became fashionable communities for European residents of the city.

Europe, but there remained others of the opinion that a good relationship with the world's most powerful Muslim state remained imperative.[8]

Long before the constitutional commissions had concluded their work, the Anglo-French cooperation that had fostered their creation transformed itself into a fierce rivalry over investment opportunities. Both Wood and Roches regarded Mustafa Khaznadar, the prime minister for both Ahmad Bey and Muhammad Bey, as the most influential figure in the ruling elite and a man who could readily expedite or impede their plans. Roches approached Khaznadar first, in 1858, offering him access to French bankers willing to provide financial support to the beylical government. Sensing a trap, Khaznadar sounded out Wood to determine what sort of counter-proposal he might make. The British official seized the opportunity to advocate the establishment of an Anglo-Tunisian Bank jointly underwritten by investors from both countries and controlled by the consulate. In addition to linking Tunisia to the international (or at least the British) monetary system, this institution would also enjoy a monopoly over the issuance of legal tender. Roches, of course, fulminated against this arrangement, but Muhammad sanctioned it, adding the suggestion that the Europeans sort out their differences over the bank. This they failed to do (as the bey assumed they would), but neither did the Tunisian strategy of playing the powers off against each other succeed. Continuing pressure from France, some of it in the form of unsubtle reminders of its strong military presence in Algeria, convinced Muhammad that he could not, in either this or most other matters, defy French wishes with impunity, especially since no such immediate show of military force stood behind Britain's pledges of support. Ultimately, he withdrew his endorsement of the bank, despite incurring a substantial indemnity for this about-face.

Later in 1858, Wood advised the bey of the desire of a group of British entrepreneurs to construct a telegraph line connecting Tunis with La Calle, Algeria, where an undersea cable crossed the Mediterranean to Europe. Even before the bey could respond to this overture, Roches demanded that he reject it and agree, instead, to a competing project that not only benefited the French but had the additional advantage of keeping British economic interests away from Algeria. The proposals differed only in that the French company wanted the Tunisian government to bear a portion of the expenses. Muhammad rebuffed this arrangement, but he did accept a modified French tender calling for a more modest Tunisian payment to cover ancillary aspects of the project. Similar investor insistence that the state participate financially in, as well as cede the right of way and provide free labor for, the construction of a railroad linking the port of La Goulette

to the capital prevented work from going forward, despite the obvious importance of such a connection for Tunisian integration into the world economy. A few years after Muhammad's death in 1859, a British consortium proposed building the line without a Tunisian contribution in return for a ninety-nine-year concession to operate it. Their intention to extend the line west to the Algerian border disconcerted the French, and, as with the telegraph, Roches sabotaged the arrangement before it crystallized.

Even as the Anglo-French rivalry and the greed of potential investors aborted plans that could have advanced Tunisia's economic development, other schemes serving Tunisian needs less well, or only at too high a cost, went forward. This anomaly did not, however, stem exclusively from the ability of the consuls to bring to bear the imbalance of power between Europe and Tunisia, for the ventures brought handsome profits not only to foreign investors but also to their local intermediaries who, accordingly, promoted them vigorously. Had the Anglo-Tunisian Bank come to fruition, for example, Mustafa Khaznadar would have become its president (ostensibly by virtue of his position as prime minister, but certainly in return for his cooperation with Wood). Other prominent Tunisians engineered partnerships with European investors, while those with access to the corridors of power were well positioned to ingratiate themselves with foreigners by arranging introductions for them and guiding them through the unfamiliar business environment. Corruption and cronyism, hardly unknown in the past, became ever more pronounced during Muhammad's reign. A prime example was the contract secured by a French company in 1859, through a combination of bribes and pressures exerted by Roches, to construct, with government funds, an aqueduct from Zaghouan to Tunis. The expense involved should have been prohibitive, but the weary Muhammad succumbed. His successor, Muhammad al-Sadiq, inherited obligations that the treasury, already depleted by the decline in tax revenues and the abolition of monopolies – both consequences of the 'Ahd al-Aman – simply could not meet. Tunisia's modernization and its dependence went forward hand in hand.

The commissions Muhammad had formed to study the question of granting a Tunisian constitution were just completing their work at the time of his death. Muhammad al-Sadiq expressed enthusiasm for such a step, convinced that adopting this political model would embed Tunisia in the good graces of the European powers and ease the pressure they had exerted during Muhammad's more reactionary reign. In the best-case scenario, such a major reform might prove an important step toward earning Tunisia the parity with European countries that Muhammad al-Sadiq,

like his cousin Ahmad, so highly prized. That eventuality would permit Tunisia to keep its distance from the Ottoman Empire and perhaps even to secure its formal sovereignty. A genuine reordering of the Tunisian political system, however, ranked fairly low in the bey's priorities. In light of the traditional French view of the Ottoman-Tunisian relationship and of France's particularly ardent support for a constitution, Muhammad al-Sadiq showed a draft of the document to Napoleon III, with whose approval he promulgated it in 1861.

The first legislation of its kind in the Muslim world, the fundamental law established a constitutional monarchy whose ministers answered to a sixty-member grand council appointed by the ruler. Many of those named to the council were committed proponents of reform, the most prominent of whom was its president, a mamluk named Khair al-Din al-Tunsi. But powerful figures such as Mustafa Khaznadar, who had flourished in the environment of ill-defined responsibility and obligation that had prevailed in the past, also sat on the council and wanted nothing to do with reforms, particularly those stressing accountability. For reasons quite different from Khaznadar's, other Tunisians also had reservations about the process that was unfolding.

To some, the insinuation that Qur'anic teachings no longer sufficed as a sociopolitical frame of reference epitomized the misguided policies of the reformers, turning the constitution into a lightning rod around which a host of grievances coalesced. Having absented themselves from the discussions about its formulation, the ulama largely ignored the proclamation of the constitution, but unrest from other quarters bubbled up in short order. The steady integration of Tunisia into the international economy sharply increased exports of agricultural products such as wheat and olive oil, making these staples more expensive on local markets. In protest, a group of merchants and Zaituna ulama coordinated a demonstration in the Tunis souk (central market) in late 1861, underscoring their action with a march on the Bardo Palace. The beylical response to this confrontation was swift and vigorous: the arrest of many of its secular participants and the co-option of a few moderate ulama into official positions. The government's account of these incidents played down their significance, but it was well known, both in the royal court and the foreign consulates, that the protesters regarded their economic woes as a consequence of the root problem of rampant foreign influence, which the constitution now symbolized.

Strapped for revenue, the bey had begun issuing bonds in 1860, but only the more thorough and systematic collection of taxes from rural regions offered any real prospect of keeping his finances out of the red. Naturally,

any such effort met with resistance and was, quite correctly, regarded as a consequence of the government's indebtedness to foreign creditors. The fear that judicial reorganization would lead to the introduction of state courts in areas where tribal shaikhs had customarily dispensed justice produced further antipathy toward Tunis. In this instance, the reform process, with the constitution at its apex, once again was perceived to lie at the heart of a distasteful situation. Roches blamed Khaznadar for sparking this unrest, and although the prime minister and his allies no doubt took advantage of the situation, many ordinary Tunisians had been adversely affected in one way or another by the course of events since 1857. It seems, therefore, reasonable to conclude that their actions flowed primarily from their perceptions of their self-interest.

The naïveté of Muhammad al-Sadiq's hope that his self-portrayal as an enlightened constitutional monarch would relax European pressures was hammered home by two events in 1863. The bey's decision first to put his financial house in order by arranging a loan with Parisian bankers and then to offset France's augmented clout by granting special privileges to British subjects pushed a pervasive mood of agitation into one of open rebellion in Tunisia. To meet its international debt of some 30 million francs, the Tunisian government borrowed 35 million, although commissions and discounts reduced the amount actually at its disposal to 29 million. At 12 percent interest, the repayment totaled nearly 65 million francs, with yearly payments set at 7 million, or roughly half the state's average annual income.[9] To meet this obligation, the bey pledged the revenues generated by the personal tax, or *majba*, but he made the imprudent decision to double its rate too, lest it fail to bring in sufficient funds.

Muhammad al-Sadiq was also discovering that, despite the powers' advocacy of the constitution, members of the Maltese, Italian, and other European communities disliked its declaration of equality for all residents of Tunisia insofar as that concept resulted in the loss of certain of their privileges. Rather than submit to the jurisdiction of Tunisian tribunals, for example, they wanted to retain the consular courts, as well as to continue to enjoy exemptions from certain forms of taxation. Nevertheless, they asserted their entitlement to the protections guaranteed by the constitution. This highly selective interpretation angered Tunisians, further discrediting the reforms. Consequently, the bey looked favorably on the offer of a formal agreement placing British subjects, including the substantial Maltese population, on an equal footing with Tunisians under the umbrella of the constitution. To Muhammad al-Sadiq, the Anglo-Tunisian Convention terminated the extraterritorial status of a large and important foreign

community; to the British, its provisions, which confirmed the right of property ownership granted by the constitution, sanctioned their endeavors in the country. Of great importance to both parties, the treaty counterbalanced French weight, which the recent loan had augmented. To most of the bey's subjects, however, the accord merely represented yet another mechanism for foreigners to insinuate themselves into the country's affairs, almost certainly to the disadvantage of Tunisians.

Fear, anger, frustration, and disgust exploded into full-scale revolt in 1864. Observing the situation from Europe, where he had gone after his failed attempt to dissuade the bey and Khaznadar from borrowing money overseas had marginalized him in Tunis, Khair al-Din painted a grim picture of the situation:

> The Arabs, no longer able to support the regime of despotism and injustice that was imposed upon them, rose up from one end of the Regency to the other; this formidable insurrection left the government on the brink of ruin. The Bey was in distress and unable to repress the revolt, waiting from day to day to see the insurgents invade the city and his residence.[10]

The uprising, instigated by ʿAli ibn Ghdahem, a *marabout* (pious figure, or local saint) and the son of a *qadi* (Muslim judge), originated among tribes in the region between Kairouan and Le Kef. The rebels demanded an end to the crushing taxes; a reversal of the reforms curtailing the prestige of local notables, especially in the judicial arena; and the abolition of the constitution. They laid the blame for all of these undesirable innovations at the doorstep of the palace, denouncing Muhammad al-Sadiq and his mamluks as the perpetrators of their misery. ʿAli's self-styled title of "bey of the people" brazenly manifested his contempt for a ruler who disregarded his subjects' welfare.

With its ranks decimated by the desertion of long-unpaid troops and no prospect of raising tribal levies, the army could not suppress the rebellion, which quickly spread to the Sahil, the rich plain along the eastern Mediterranean coast. The largely sedentary population of this region shared the tribesmen's grievances, but as producers of the cereals and olive oil that were Tunisia's most valuable exports, they grasped more clearly than the tribesmen did the roles played by foreign diplomats, merchants, and speculators in what had been transpiring. Their more sophisticated assessment of the situation led them to conclude that Muhammad al-Sadiq no longer acted as a free agent and had lost the capacity to rectify matters even if he wished to do so. Rather than awaiting new policies from Tunis, many Sahilians hoped for the intervention of the Ottoman Empire, particularly

as British and French warships, dispatched to protect the interests of their nationals, appeared on the horizon.

From the viewpoint of Istanbul, the beylical regime appeared on the verge of going under, taking with it the Ottomans' frayed, but to them still important, connections to Tunisia. Imperial officials harbored no illusions about the outcome of an attempt at intervention along the lines envisioned in the Sahil, but neither could they stand idly by. A senior Ottoman diplomat embarked for Tunis, carrying funds to revitalize the demoralized army and enable it to bring the uprising under control.[11] Even before the Ottomans stepped in, however, Khaznadar had begun to cripple the tribal rebellion by distributing bribes to its leaders, making promises of government employment, and manipulating local rivalries. When autumn plowing required the warriors' presence in their fields, the movement petered out. Ironically, it was in the Sahil, where the rebels had counted on Ottoman support, that the government deployed its Ottoman-financed reinforcements to cow them into submission.

A combination of force and persuasion crushed the uprising, but not before it had achieved a key objective, the revocation of the constitution. In this matter, however, the bey acted more in response to foreign than to domestic pressures. The advantageous position Britain had secured by means of the Anglo-Tunisian Convention, in no small part as a result of Prime Minister Khaznadar's close ties to the British consulate, greatly disturbed France. At least by this gauge, the reform movement had gone awry, strengthening its main competitor for influence in Tunisia. French officials linked the constitution and the convention, as General Jean-Baptiste Campenon, the chief of the military mission during the rebellion, made clear: "The English convention is the consequence of the Tunisian constitution; let the constitution become a dead letter, let it fall . . . and it will carry in its wake the English treaty."[12] Toward that end, but under the pretext of ending rampant injustices, France called for Khaznadar's ouster, encouraged the rebels, and demanded that the bey suspend the constitution. As in the past, the credible inference that the French would resort to military means to have their way impelled Muhammad al-Sadiq to accommodate them and dismantle the constitutional system they had so recently insisted he impose. As Campenon had predicted, without the safeguards of the constitution, the Anglo-Tunisian Convention withered. In short order, the status quo ante, with its virulent competition among Europeans and the absence of constraints on Tunisian officials, had returned. On the other hand, the end of the revolt brought about a change, at least on paper, in Tunisia's relationship with the Ottoman Empire. At the bey's request,

Khair al-Din reached an understanding with the sultan by which imperial sovereignty was acknowledged in return for the sultan's recognition of hereditary Husainid rule and Tunisia's administrative autonomy. Bearing in mind the events that had precipitated Khair al-Din's mission, the sultan also explicitly retained his right to intervene in any future troubles arising in Tunisia.

The sultan's willingness to come to terms with Muhammad al-Sadiq did not extend to providing him with what he needed far more urgently than esteem – money. Having spent the Ottoman emergency contribution to mount the campaign against the rebels, the bey still needed substantial funds to make the repayments on the 1863 loan. Reasoning that the people of the Sahil should pay a price for their disloyalty, Muhammad al-Sadiq approved Khaznadar's orders to Ahmad Zarruk, a trusted retainer, to plunder the region, confiscating real property and crops, imposing extortionate indemnities, and conscripting hapless residents into military service. The ruthlessness with which Zarruk executed his task devastated the Sahil, destroying its economy and depopulating cities, villages, and countryside alike as their inhabitants lost all they had in lieu of the levies they could not pay. Similar, if less remunerative, depredations befell the tribes that had rallied around ʿAli ibn Ghdahem. Even so, the vicious onslaught failed to raise sufficient funds to allow the bey to settle with his creditors, forcing him to suspend reimbursements in 1866. More significantly in the long term, Zarruk's tactics created a reservoir of deep enmity toward the central government, and specifically the bey. In 1881, with the French army on Tunisian soil, Muhammad al-Sadiq reaped the whirlwind he had sown after the rebellion. But his creditors had more immediate humiliations in store.

The derailing of the liberal reforms, resulting from the same external pressures that had imposed them, occasioned little mourning in the inner circles of the Tunisian government. As their brutality in the wake of the rebellion demonstrated, the bey, Khaznadar, and their associates returned reflexively to the exercise of arbitrary power. To preclude a repetition of the rebellion, they purchased substantial quantities of military matériel from Europe, even as they continued to pursue ill-conceived investments enriching themselves and their business associates, both Tunisian and European. By the end of the decade, however, creditors had concluded that they were throwing good money after bad. In 1869, Britain, France, and Italy compelled the Tunisian government to agree to the creation of an international finance commission. Hoping to mollify the country's largest creditors, Prime Minister Khaznadar prevailed on Khair al-Din, whose advocacy of judicious and responsible government was well known, to

end his self-imposed exile and return to Tunisia as the commission's chairperson. The commissioners supervised reforms in fiscal policy designed to protect foreign investments, but their power to allocate government revenues for the repayment of existing debts transferred a crucial aspect of financial management from Tunisian to European hands.

Italy's partnership in the International Finance Commission reflected more the growth in the number of its citizens (particularly Sicilians) living in Tunisia and quickly becoming its largest foreign community than it did a high level of Italian economic engagement, which remained an objective but was not yet a reality. An 1868 Italo-Tunisian treaty expedited the acceleration of economic infiltration by guaranteeing resident Italians privileges similar to those secured five years earlier by Britain for its subjects. These included the retention of Italian citizenship; the right to work, including to fish in Tunisian waters;[13] and the acquisition of property. The treaty also allowed Italians to maintain their own laws and courts in matters solely within their community or involving only other non-Muslims.

No sooner had the commission set to work than Khair al-Din and Khaznadar found themselves at daggers drawn. In an approach entirely consonant with his past behavior, the prime minister's first impulse regarding the commission was to sabotage it altogether or, failing that, to stonewall directives imperiling his lucrative business arrangements or easy access to state funds. Khair al-Din, despite his chairmanship of the commission, had no enthusiasm for foreign interference in Tunisia but believed that setting the country on an even keel required a housecleaning that no powerful figure, least of all the bey or his prime minister, would willingly countenance. In the face of such determined opposition, no Tunisian, including Khair al-Din, could engineer such a process without outside assistance. Britain continued to support Khaznadar, but the French and Italian members of the commission lobbied for his removal on the grounds of fiscal irresponsibility and flagrant corruption. When Muhammad al-Sadiq named Khair al-Din prime minister in 1873, Tunisia's creditors demonstrated that their control extended from the budget to key ministerial appointments.

Khaznadar's cronies and clients vowed to take their revenge. Consul Wood, on the other hand, did not hesitate to abandon his discredited associate and begin cultivating Khair al-Din, lest the new prime minister cite the disreputable Wood-Khaznadar collaboration as reason enough to disregard British interests. Moreover, Wood realized that the French regarded Khair al-Din as something of a protégé – he had spent several

years in Paris in the 1850s and returned there when he left Tunisia in 1862 – and welcomed his ascendancy at a time when French prestige was still recovering from the defeat by Prussia in 1871. The astute Khair al-Din intended to make the most of the competition for his goodwill by playing Britain, France, and Italy off against each other in order to maximize the arena in which he could maneuver with relative freedom.

A book Khair al-Din had published in 1867, *Aqwam al-masalik li ma'rifat ahwal al-mamalik* (*The Surest Path to Knowledge Concerning the Conditions of Countries*), provided the blueprint for his prime ministry. In part a study in comparative politics, in part a political manifesto, *The Surest Path* drew on the three most important components of Khair al-Din's intellectual heritage: Muslim piety, the traditional statecraft incorporated into his training as a mamluk, and the modern culture of the West that he first encountered in Ahmad Bey's service but comprehended more fully as a result of his residence in France. His experience of the West taught him that its political, social, and economic development had endowed it with countless assets – some concrete, others less tangible – that Tunisia might usefully borrow or imitate, provided it did so selectively and judiciously. However, he also understood that Western institutions had undergone a centuries-long process of maturation within a specific cultural context and that their successful transplantation in societies not embedded in Western culture hinged on laying the groundwork in a similar, albeit telescoped, process.

In Khair al-Din's view, good governance equated with prudent stewardship and conscientious guidance, and was reciprocated by public confidence and trust – a relationship between ruler and ruled analogous to that between a shepherd and his flock. Any mandate for change had necessarily to come from above, but it also had to fall within the parameters of Islamic values, as confirmed by its endorsement by the ulama, the guardians of those values. Because Khair al-Din regretted the widespread abstention of the ulama from the process that had transpired in Tunisia, he targeted them as the key audience for *The Surest Path*. He called on them to join with honorable statesmen in a coalition that would cleanse government of its oppressive character, eschewing abusive or arbitrary practices of any kind. Guided by Islamic precepts, including sharia law, this new order would bestow on its subjects the blessings of justice, security, and prosperity, thereby restoring the public confidence that recent leaders had forfeited by their behavior. On these principles, and with the support of the ulama, Khair al-Din governed until 1877.[14]

At the start of Khair al-Din's administration, almost a decade after the 1864 rebellion and its repression, agriculture in the Sahil remained in

disarray. Judging that its revitalization was critical for Tunisia's stability and prosperity, the prime minister canceled unpaid taxes, offered tax exemptions to farmers who planted new olive trees,[15] and lowered export duties. Higher tariffs levied on imports aided artisans, and closer monitoring of tax collectors checked many of the abuses to which they had been prone. Such measures came only at a cost, in terms of their implementation as well as of the revenue lost from lowering taxes and abandoning extortionate methods of gathering them. The continuing work of the International Finance Commission further constricted the funds available to underwrite Khair al-Din's agenda. As a result, he devoted considerable attention to less costly reforms designed to adapt existing institutions, many of them religious in nature, to contemporary needs.

With the goal of introducing contemporary managerial concepts into the hitherto uncoordinated administration of the almost 25 percent of Tunisian land set aside as pious trusts (*habus*), Khair al-Din established the Habus Council in 1874, appointing as its director Muhammad Bairam al-Khamis, one of the country's most respected ulama. The prime minister also spearheaded the modification of the Zaituna mosque-university curriculum by the addition of secular disciplines to the traditional religious studies, reflecting his certainty of the relevance of these subjects in the education of Tunisians, including future religious scholars. This conviction also lay behind Khair al-Din's most enduring contribution to his country, the creation of Sadiqi College. The school combined a course of traditional studies, taught in Arabic, with a French-inspired curriculum emphasizing modern languages, mathematics, and science. Sadiqi's bicultural training made its students ideal candidates for positions in a government thrust into wide-ranging contacts with a Western world barely comprehended by most Tunisians. Sadiqi graduates soon began to supplant their counterparts from the Zaituna in government clerkships and secretarial positions. Many advanced rapidly through the ranks of the civil service, forming a tightly knit cadre that preserved and, when possible, acted on Khair al-Din's philosophy well beyond the end of their mentor's ministry. As Tunisia's leading institution of secular education for many decades after its founding, the college produced generations of graduates who figured prominently in the country's subsequent history.

In the realm of international affairs, Khair al-Din achieved an objective as prime minister that he had advocated throughout his career: the strengthening of Tunisia's ties with the Ottoman Empire. In contrast to the beylical view that the sultan was an impediment to Tunisian autonomy, Khair al-Din saw him as the spiritual and temporal head of the world's most

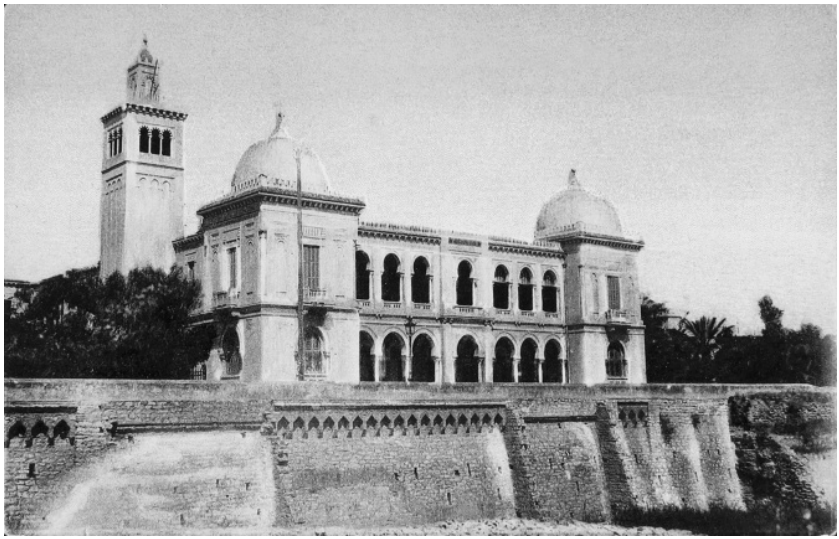


Figure 1.3. Collège Sadiqi. Founded by Khair al Din al Tunsi in 1875, Sadiqi made a secular Western education available to Tunisian students for the first time. Many of its early graduates worked in the protectorate administration; many later alumni were activists in the nationalist movement.

important Muslim state and a figure with whom any leader guided by Islamic principles would feel a natural affinity. At the same time, Khair al-Din also believed that the recognition of imperial rights in Tunisia provided the country with "its best safeguard against the covetousness of various European powers."[16] But to calculate that as long as the Ottoman Empire continued to exist a Tunisia formally bound to it would remain free of European control was to assume, quite wrongly, that imperial survival implied the capacity to influence events within its sphere of interest. The sultan's request for Tunisian troops to help repel the Russian invasion of 1877 hinted at this miscalculation. Financial and diplomatic constraints prevented Khair al-Din from obliging, although he urged Tunisians to donate money to the Ottoman war effort. The episode did not shake his confidence in the Ottoman-Tunisian relationship, but it does raise the question of which party stood more in need of the other.

Khair al-Din's attitude toward Istanbul augmented French distress with the course of action he had pursued since taking office. Irritation over his willingness to entertain business propositions put forward by Wood turned to alarm with the conclusion of a new Anglo-Tunisian commercial treaty in

1875. Although Théodore Roustan, who had arrived in Tunis as consul general the previous year, initially met with some success in his vigorous efforts to promote French interests, he was soon calling for Khair al-Din's ouster. The Khaznadar clique, still smarting from its own removal, enthusiastically joined the chorus clamoring for the prime minister's downfall. At the same time, British interests in the Mediterranean were shifting eastward as the Suez Canal, which had opened in 1869, began to assume a dominant place in imperial thinking. Wood gradually distanced himself from Khair al-Din, thus clearing the way for Muhammad al-Sadiq to dismiss him in 1877. The reformer's strategy of playing the powers off against each other ended with all of them aligned against him. Ottoman loyalist that he was, Khair al-Din retired to Istanbul, where he spent the last decade of his life, including a brief term, in 1878–9, as the sultan's grand vizier (prime minister). The bitter and ailing Khaznadar returned to the prime ministry but died less than a year later.

As it happened, Khaznadar's demise came in the midst of a spate of European diplomatic and economic activity that presaged the end of the regime in which he had figured so prominently. Britain's need to safeguard the approaches to the Suez Canal led to its acquisition of Cyprus in 1878, signaling the abandonment of its venerable policy of supporting Ottoman integrity – a shift that led Britain to dissociate itself more or less entirely from Tunisian affairs. In that same year, the European powers convened the Congress of Berlin to consider the fate of the Ottoman Empire following its defeat by Russia. The Berlin agenda included negotiations over competing interests and claims regarding Tunisia. Britain remained on the sidelines of these discussions as France and Italy presented their cases. Germany, seeing in Tunisia a prize capable of diverting France from its potentially destabilizing obsession with recovering the provinces lost in the Franco-Prussian War, pressed successfully for unrestricted French influence there. Doubts about German motives led France to hesitate to accept such an arrangement, but pressure from business interests and investors heavily involved in Tunisia, along with the emergence of an aggressive Italian campaign predicated on its citizens' fifteen-to-one numerical advantage over French residents of Tunisia, reversed this stance. The distraught but relatively weak Italian government had to settle for promises of a similar status in Tripolitania. The endemic unrest in Khmir territory provided France with a bridge from the negotiating table at Berlin to the table in the beylical palace around which Muhammad al-Sadiq, Consul General Roustan, and General Bréart gathered to finalize the Bardo Treaty in May 1881.

Their mission apparently accomplished with the bey's compliance and the stifling of resistance to the invasion, most of the French forces not designated as part of the garrison permitted by the treaty were withdrawn in June. In the following month, however, an uprising erupted across much of the country, revealing that beylical submission did not translate into popular acceptance of the French presence. Frequently justified in its early stages in the rhetoric of a jihad against an infidel incursion, the insurrection ultimately targeted Muhammad al-Sadiq and his entourage as much as it did the French. The bey had lost the respect of his subjects, many of whom seized on the uprising as a means of avenging grievances nursed over many years. His assertion, albeit probably under French duress, to officials ordered to contain the rebellion that the French had come at his request and as friends, left him vulnerable to portrayal by his enemies as either a lackey or a fool.[17]

The most prominent instigator of the uprising was ʿAli ibn Khalifa, a tribal *qaid* from the southeast. He owed his appointment to the government, but like most agents of beylical authority in rural regions, he recognized that failing to repel the French would lead to the imposition of controls restricting tribal independence in a process parallel to the subjugation of the bey. Rebel hopes for the appearance of an Ottoman *deus ex machina* had even less chance of fulfillment at this time than in 1864. A few days after the French invasion, Ottoman officials reminded the European powers of the empire's rights in Tunisia and subsequently made an ostentatious show of rejecting the Bardo Treaty. But the sultan had no intention of challenging a curt French warning that it would regard the passage of Ottoman naval vessels out of the Dardanelles as an act of war.

As tens of thousands of tribal warriors joined the insurgency, much of the south and west, as well as rural regions of the Sahil, fell to them, but their inability to gain control of the Sahil's cities deprived them of resources crucial for a final victory. Urban defiance stemmed from city dwellers' longstanding mistrust of the volatile, and always potentially destructive, nomads. For the most part, they preferred to cope with whatever liabilities might accompany the imposition of order by the French than to risk the certain instability of tribal dominance. Fear of a reprise of the government's actions after the 1864 revolt further dissuaded urbanites from supporting the rebels. The dispatch of French reinforcements during the summer turned the tide of the uprising. The dissidents fell back on the holy city of Kairouan, where they held out until October before dispersing into fragmented bands, some of which kept up a sporadic resistance in the south until the end of the year. Superior French firepower ultimately doomed the

insurrection, but other problems contributed to undermining it. Habitual rivalries often thwarted cooperation among the tribes, while the demands of the approaching harvest distracted many of the warriors. As the rebellion collapsed, more than one hundred thousand tribesmen and their families sought refuge in Ottoman Tripolitania.

With the revolt extinguished and the Bardo Treaty ratified by the French parliament, Paul Cambon, a senior diplomat, arrived in Tunis in early 1882 as France's first resident general. His mission was to represent the interests of the French government and, as specified in the treaty, to serve as the foreign minister of the bey, from whom he planned to tolerate no obstructive behavior. Muhammad al-Sadiq died only a few months later, however, leaving the new resident general to establish the parameters of the new Franco-Tunisian relationship with a new bey, Muhammad al-Sadiq's younger brother, ʿAli.

CHAPTER 2

Whose Tunisia? 1881–1912

FRANCE'S TUNISIA: INSTALLING THE FRAMEWORK OF THE PROTECTORATE

ʿAli Bey well knew that retention of his office hinged on his rapport with the French resident general Cambon. The new bey had initially condemned the French invasion, but, once the antibeylical character of the resistance had come to light, he took command of Tunisian forces serving with the French army in Khmir territory. Mindful of rumors that some French officials responsible for planning the 1881 operation had advocated deposing Muhammad al-Sadiq in favor of his brother Taieb, despite his own designation as heir apparent, ʿAli had no reason to doubt that installing Taieb on the throne remained an option. For Cambon, the beylical transition afforded the opportunity to underscore the right of diplomatic supervision that France had secured through the Bardo Treaty, as well as to prepare for the extension of France's role to the much broader administrative and political oversight endorsed at the Congress of Berlin. Such oversight might, if properly managed, also help to put paid to Ottoman political claims in Tunisia. Toward these ends, and without objection from the insecure ʿAli, Cambon orchestrated the October 28, 1882, accession ceremony of the new ruler. The resident general accompanied ʿAli from his seaside residence in La Marsa to the Bardo Palace, where Cambon invested him as bey in the name of France, bestowing on him the *grand cordon* of the Légion d'Honneur. The adroit prior intervention of the French ambassador in Istanbul ensured that this usurpation of the sultan's customary practice of issuing an investiture decree passed without incident in the Ottoman capital. In the evening, the resident general, acting as the senior diplomat in Tunis, gathered the foreign consuls together for an audience with the bey.

Confident that ʿAli would toe whatever line the French chose to draw,[1] Cambon now prepared to remove the two major obstacles to the exercise of

a totally free French hand: the International Finance Commission and the Tunisian government ministries responsible for internal affairs. This he accomplished on June 8, 1883, when he obtained the bey's signature to the La Marsa Convention. By its terms, France guaranteed the repayment of the Tunisian debt (thus rendering the International Finance Commission irrelevant) in return for the execution of administrative reforms stipulated by the resident general. In depriving ʿAli of any meaningful sovereignty, the accord converted Tunisia into a French protectorate. ʿAli Bey continued to reign, but he no longer ruled. By the time his son Muhammad al-Hadi (1902–6), and then his nephew Muhammad al-Nasir (1906–22), came to the throne, protectorate officials took beylical subservience for granted.

The La Marsa Convention ended a debate in France, dating from the invasion, about Tunisia's final status. Many opponents of colonial expansion lobbied for a total withdrawal, arguing that the deployment of troops in Tunisia weakened the defenses of metropolitan France. They also feared that the multitude of international agreements to which Tunisia was a party, many of them including most-favored-nation clauses, in conjunction with Tunisia's substantial Maltese and Italian populations, made for a diplomatic morass likely to confound the most determined French administration. French military leaders and businessmen already established in Tunisia drew a quite different lesson from the same set of facts. To them, any approach short of a declaration of full French sovereignty, suppressing all foreign claims at a single stroke, would saddle France with the burdens of annexation but none of its advantages. Protectorate proponents occupied a middle ground. They believed that preserving the shell of an indigenous government lessened the likelihood of stimulating the bitterness and hostility that political assimilation to France had produced among the indigenous people of neighboring Algeria. Moreover, maintaining such a façade allowed for the Tunisian funding of a French-supervised administration. For the duration of the protectorate, French officials and residents in Tunisia frequently referred to Algerian policies and practices, occasionally as models to emulate but more often as examples of what *not* to do.

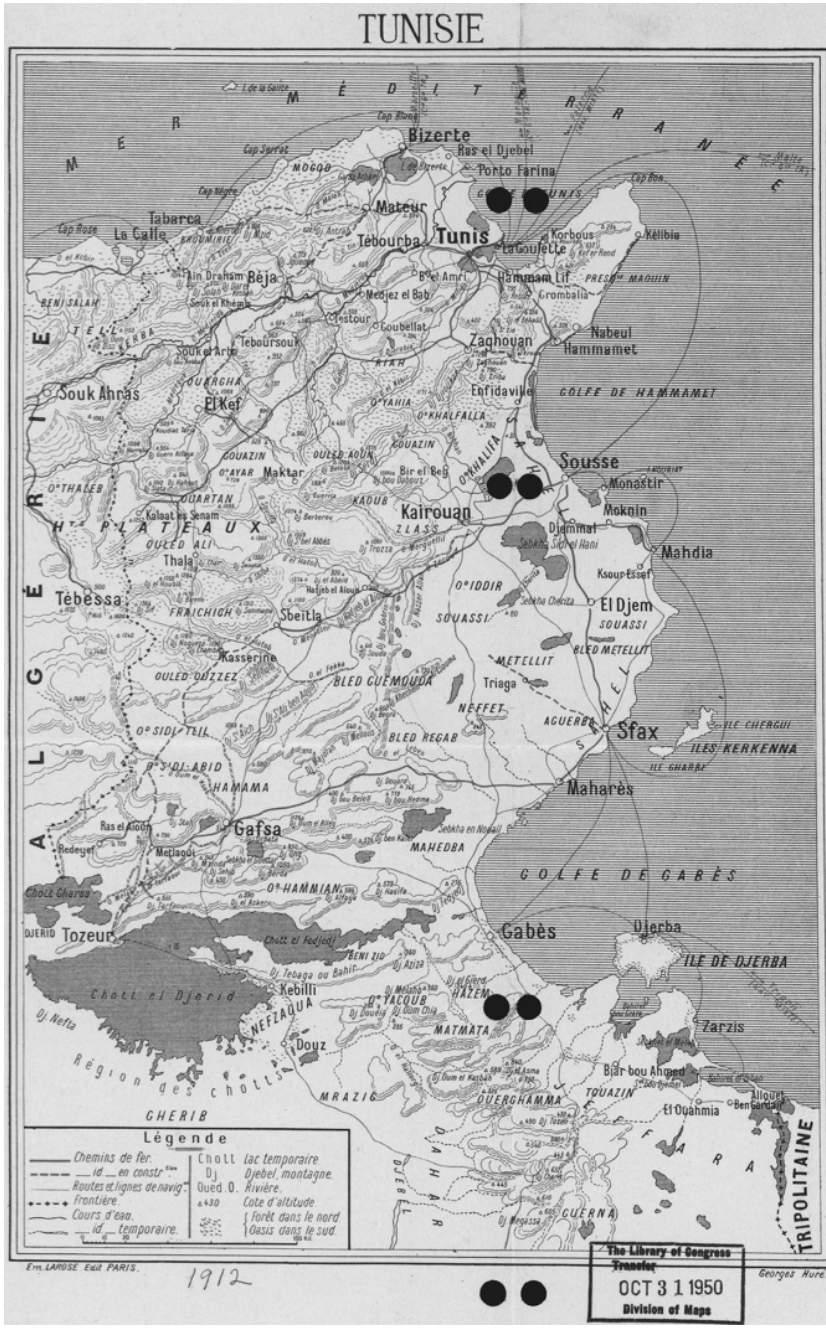
By 1883, the Tunisian debt had soared to more than 140 million francs, or eleven times the government's annual income.[2] As the initial quid pro quo for guaranteeing the debt, France insisted on placing key agencies, beginning with the Ministry of Finance, under the leadership of French specialists accountable to the resident general. Cambon made this department his first target because the systematic collection and sound management of government revenue were critical both to maintaining the confidence of foreign creditors and to implementing the reforms envisioned in the La Marsa

Convention. To satisfy their chronic need for funds, leaders in the preprotectorate era (with Khair al-Din as a notable exception) had imposed a welter of generally regressive levies on production and commerce. After the restructuring of the ministry into a directorate of finances, its French head reduced the rate of many existing taxes and saw to the disciplining of state agents responsible for irregularities in their assessment and collection. These measures, coupled with the protectorate authorities' greater thoroughness and proficiency, increased revenue and placed the government on a solid financial footing that enabled it, in the decade after 1883, to phase out most export duties, lower market fees considerably, and reduce the *majba* by 25 percent.[3] Even with these cutbacks, however, the payment of taxes still occasioned significant hardships for many Tunisians.

Under Cambon and his successors, Justin Massicault (1886–92), Urbain Rouvier (1892–4), and René Millet (1894–1900), all but three Tunisian ministries experienced similar reorganizations under the supervision of French officials. Collectively labeled as the technical services of the protectorate, these agencies employed a smattering of Tunisians, but only at the lowest echelons or as interpreters, a practice that embittered the many displaced administrators, clerks, and other officials of the beylical bureaucracy. With the resident general acting as the foreign minister and the general commanding French troops as the minister of war (as stipulated by the Bardo Treaty), only the minister of the pen (the chief clerk), the minister of justice, and the prime minister were Tunisians and had Tunisian staffs. To advise the prime minister and coordinate the bureaucracy, Cambon created the office of secretary-general of the protectorate, to which he appointed Maurice Bompard, a senior French diplomat.

Provincial governance lent itself less well to the displacement of Tunisian office holders. The *qaids* and *khalifas* who represented beylical authority in the cities, towns, and other sedentary regions usually came from powerful local families; in rural areas where the tribe and the *qiyada* (the administrative unit headed by a *qaid*) overlapped, they were tribal leaders. Few showed any inclination to change habitual, and sometimes repugnant, practices. In order to standardize administrative units, but also to curb the tribal notables, the protectorate authorities redrew the boundaries of the existing *qiyadas* to form divisions based on geography rather than on kinship. Beginning in the 1890s, appointments as urban provincial officials often went to promising graduates of Sadiqi College in the expectation that they would bring an enlightened approach to these positions.

At the start of the protectorate, French consuls and vice-consuls represented the resident general in several of the larger provincial centers, while



Map 2.1. Cities and tribes, ca. 1912. With the exception of the desert regions of the deep south, which were administered by French army officers, the cities and tribal areas of the protectorate were presided over by *contrôleurs civils*, French officials whose supervision of local Tunisian authorities replicated the resident general's oversight of the bey and his ministers.

French soldiers monitored the behavior of *qaids* and *khalifas* in rural areas. Cambon worried that permanently sanctioning such a role for the army would give rise to a destabilizing, Algerian-style "régime du sabre." Throughout his tenure he sought a viable alternative, but was thwarted by the military's insistence that it alone could guarantee security in the countryside. In 1887, shortly after becoming resident general, Justin Massicault built on Cambon's efforts and created a corps of *contrôleurs civils* (civil controllers) to act as his eyes and ears beyond Tunis. Posted from La Goulette to Gafsa in thirteen *circonscriptions* corresponding to *qiyadas*, the *contrôleurs* provided direction and guidance to *qaids* and *khalifas* and had at their disposal small contingents of Tunisian gendarmes to carry out basic police work. In those cities and towns where the size of the European population warranted the creation of a municipal council, they also monitored the work of that body.[4] This arrangement preserved the façade of Tunisian government, but the *contrôleurs* and the resident general, to whose office they reported directly, expected nothing less than the diligent execution of their own suggestions. In a few remote areas of the south and west where tribes had customarily heeded the writ of the government only under duress, a Service des Renseignements (renamed Service des Affaires Indigènes in 1900) based on the Algerian model of military administration of the tribes fulfilled a similar function. Only in 1906, after twenty years of intense efforts by Cambon, Massicault, and their successors, did the Residency finally gain control over these officers and dispel the recurrent nightmare of a military role in the administration of the protectorate.

The restructuring of the central and regional governments consolidated French control over the Tunisian population, but Cambon also recognized the need to bring the foreign community, 95 percent of whose twenty thousand members in 1883 were not French,[5] within the orbit of the protectorate. The Ottoman-era Capitulations and the more recent treaties negotiated with, or imposed by, European states, accorded foreigners privileges, most notably the maintenance of consular courts, that had limited the beylical government's control over them and now similarly constrained protectorate officials. Cambon ordered the consular courts' suppression in 1883. Individuals subject to their jurisdiction acquired full access to the French judicial system that was emerging in the protectorate and consisted of local justices of the peace and a court of first instance in Tunis (eventually supplemented by other courts in Sousse, Sfax, and Bizerte).

Britain, which confronted a similar situation in Egypt, raised no objection to this decision. Italy's acceptance was considerably more grudging,

and neither the Italian residents of Tunisia, who constituted more than half of the foreign population, nor the Italian government intended to surrender other dispensations secured in the 1868 Italo-Tunisian treaty merely at the behest of France. The Italian premier, Francesco Crispi, described Tunisia as "an Italian colony occupied by France," while *L'Unione*, the leading Italian-language newspaper in Tunis, insisted that the situation in North Africa remained "unsettled, that it could not last, and that the rights of Italy in Tunisia were equal to those of France."[6] As Italy stubbornly refused to acknowledge the inevitability of French control, the Italian population of Tunisia mushroomed, increasing by 88 percent during the first decade of the protectorate. By 1896, when France acquiesced to Italian insistence on retaining most of the privileges accorded in the 1868 Italo-Tunisian treaty in return for Italy's recognition of the protectorate, the fifty-five thousand Italians living in the country outnumbered French citizens by a ratio of five to one.[7] Confident that the 1896 settlement had carved out a secure, albeit not dominant, niche for them, Tunisia's Italians began enlarging and refining the numerous political, educational, social, cultural, and religious institutions that already existed within their community in order to underscore and preserve its distinctive identity.

The thin French population in the protectorate led to a search for "demographic allies" to offset the Italians' numerical superiority. Britain's retreat from Tunisia and the absorption of its subjects into the French legal system made the seven thousand Maltese living in the country in 1883 prime candidates for this role. When French Catholics first came into contact with the Maltese in Tunisia, they tended to belittle the traditional, and in their view unsophisticated, Maltese practice of the faith. Among other things, they cited as evidence the blind obedience of the Maltese to their clergy and their exceptionally high birthrate. By the end of the century, however, supporters of the protectorate had come to see its twelve thousand–strong Maltese community as a fertile source of settlers not only for Tunisia but for all of French North Africa. In his dealings with the Catholic population, Cambon had an important ally in Cardinal Charles Lavigerie, the archbishop of Carthage and Algiers. Lavigerie fervently advocated linking France's political mission and the church's spiritual one in North Africa – a connection symbolized in Tunis by the situating of the Residency building and the cathedral directly opposite each other on the Avenue de France. The prelate urged French priests to support the policies of the protectorate and to foster the assimilation by Maltese and Italian Catholics of France's aims. A concordat between France and the Vatican in 1891 left the See of Carthage a preserve of the French church, much as the Tunisian state had



Figure 2.1. Avenue de France, ca. 1920. The main thoroughfare of the European city ran from the medina to the Lake of Tunis. This view is from the Bab al Bahr (Porte de France), the most important junction between the old and new cities. The spires of the Cathedral of St. Vincent de Paul can be seen in the left background. The headquarters of the protectorate administration were across the avenue.

become a preserve of the French government. When the last Italian Capuchin priests, whose order had worked in Tunisia since the seventeenth century, decided to leave in the same year, Lavigerie made no effort to discourage them.[8]

The establishment of French courts endowed Tunisia with two discrete judicial administrations (not unlike the preprotectorate legal configuration, except for the consolidation of the foreigners' tribunals under a single authority). Justice for Tunisians was dispensed in religious courts (both Islamic and Jewish) or by the ministry of Tunisian justice, referred to simply as *wizara* (ministry), unless the Tunisians became parties to a dispute involving Europeans, in which case the French courts took precedence. The *wizara* – in essence, the state secular court – derived its authority from the traditional right of the ruler to adjudicate criminal and civil matters. The sharia courts judged personal status cases and property disputes in accordance with Islamic law, while the rabbinical courts applied the Mosaic law to similar issues.

Preserving the sharia courts was essential to virtually all Muslims, but considerable differences of opinion about an appropriate legal structure

emerged among Tunisia's twenty-five thousand Jews. In the early years of the protectorate, a number of prosperous Grana businessmen requested access to French courts, and even to French citizenship, on the basis of the 1870 Crémieux Decree granting those rights to Jews in Algeria; however, protectorate officials firmly rejected the extension of such privileges. They pointed out that the Bardo and La Marsa protocols precluded the transfer of Tunisians from beylical to French sovereignty, a prohibition that they knew the contingent of politically conscious Tunisians emerging in the late 1880s would defend vigorously. In any event, many Tunisian Jews also opposed assimilation, the desirability of which became the central issue dividing two well-organized and articulate political camps within the Jewish community. In addition to advancing cultural and religious arguments, critics stressed the imprudence of alienating the Muslim majority, with whom Tunisian Jews had generally enjoyed good relations and with whom they had more in common than with the French, particularly after the establishment of the protectorate. Reminding their coreligionists of the virulent anti-Semitism of many settlers, they cast doubts on the alleged benefits of integration and warned of the cool reception its pursuers were likely to encounter.[9]

In 1909 the news that impending French legislation would facilitate the naturalization of Tunisians provoked animated debate in Jewish circles, as well as between Jews and Muslims. Under the final terms of the 1910 Messimy Law, however, very few Tunisian Jews qualified for citizenship. Those whose hopes were dashed by the rigorous conditions of the bill reacted with bitterness to their experiences of rejection by French officials, contempt on the part of many private French citizens in Tunisia, suspicion from their Muslim countrymen, and estrangement from their fellow Jews. The search of these deeply frustrated individuals for a hospitable political environment led some to French socialist circles and others to the Aghoudat-Sion, a Tunisian Zionist movement organized in 1911. These were the ideologies to which they subsequently devoted themselves.

Although French officials refrained from infringing on the operation of the religious courts, they did introduce changes in the *wizara*, most dramatically in 1896 by placing it under the control of a newly created technical service, the Directorate of Judicial Services, headed by a French judge. Over the next few years, this agency established regional tribunals in six large cities, leaving the *wizara* to hear cases from the capital but also to rule on the most serious matters arising in the provinces and to resolve appeals from lower court judgments. A decade later, the directorate attached French representatives, called *commissaires du gouvernement*, to all Tunisian secular courts, creating yet another network of French supervision ostensibly

parallel to, but in reality in control of, officials of the beylical government. Not all of these men spoke Arabic – the language of the proceedings they were meant to oversee – and few had any legal background or training, but their negative assessment could result in the destitution of even the most senior Tunisian judge. Between 1906 and 1913, French lawyers and Tunisian *wizara* officials collaborated in drawing up a code of contracts, a penal code, and a code of civil procedures, all of them deeply rooted in French law.

The jurisdiction of sharia courts over property matters had long enabled Tunisians to use their knowledge of Islamic law to obstruct foreigners' attempts to acquire land and to challenge their title to parcels they professed to own. Cambon recognized the importance of sidestepping a procedure certain to inhibit future European settlement, but, in deference to Tunisian sensibilities concerning the sharia, he proceeded cautiously. He began by appointing a Franco-Tunisian commission, a third of whose members were either ministers in the beylical government or high officials of the Islamic legal system, which he charged with the tasks of codifying existing property laws and developing a method for representatives of the protectorate to have a voice in their adjudication. In 1885 the commission formulated a mechanism, available to Tunisians and foreigners alike, for registering privately owned land with the state, which then issued an unassailable title. Disputes involving such land went before the Tribunal Mixte Immobilier (Mixed Real Estate Court), presided over by a French judge and staffed by six other magistrates, half of them French, half Tunisian.[10] The placing of this hybrid court under the aegis of the Directorate of the Interior rather than the Directorate of Judicial Services confirmed its primary purpose of strengthening foreigners' claims to land rather than guaranteeing the equitable dispensation of justice.

THE EUROPEAN SETTLERS' TUNISIA: PROSPERITY AND PENURY

In the early years of the protectorate, French land acquisition followed a pattern that had emerged soon after the 1861 constitution had legalized the purchase of real estate by foreigners. Corporations and wealthy speculators bought large tracts of land, often in the form of *hanashir* (rural estates belonging to the royal family or other notables and usually consisting of a combination of state-owned and *habus* land). In 1880, Prime Minister Khair al-Din had sold one such property near Enfida that comprised more than 100,000 hectares. Five years later, the Enfida and Sidi Thabit holdings of the Société Marseillaise de Crédit, along with 30,000 hectares controlled by

five other investment companies, accounted for 88 percent of all French property in the protectorate, with the remaining 12 percent divided among thirty-four other owners.[11] Tunisian peasants continued to work this land, occasionally as renters but more likely as sharecroppers, since the speculators drove up its value to a level few Tunisians could afford. Alternatively, the companies resold smaller parcels to individual buyers, many of whom were Italians. Much of this land was well suited for growing wheat, but the surge of Russian and North American cereal exports to Europe over the last two decades of the century steadily reduced their prices, making it difficult to export Tunisian wheat profitably. As a result, as much as a third of the speculators' land sometimes lay fallow.

Although the French population of the protectorate exceeded ten thousand within a decade, few of the new arrivals chose to settle in rural areas. Some 400,000 hectares had come into French hands by 1892, but the number of properties had risen only to 333 and no more than fifteen hundred French citizens were engaged in agricultural work. Only in 1897 did the number of French-owned properties reach 1,000, although the census of the previous year placed a mere 22 percent of the French population (just over two thousand persons) on the land. By contrast, roughly one thousand Italian families, some of whose claims predated the protectorate, owned and worked 27,350 hectares in the early 1890s, at a time when the overall Italian population exceeded that of the French by a factor of five.[12] This pattern of large French commercial ventures with few settlers and small Italian holdings farmed by their owners heightened concerns in Tunis and Paris about demographic imbalances in the protectorate and stimulated efforts to attract French *colons* (settlers).

In 1890, Resident General Massicault created a directorate of agriculture to facilitate French citizens' purchases of desirable agricultural property. "Official," or state-promoted, colonization began in the following year, when the directorate placed on sale thousands of hectares of state-owned land in the vicinity of Tunis.[13] But the stringent conditions it imposed – cash payments, a commitment not to resell, and the formal deeding of the land only after the construction of a house and the start of cultivation on two-thirds of the plot – deterred many would-be buyers. Not until 1896, when these obligations were relaxed and the size of the parcels doubled, did sales reach desired levels. A more immediately successful step entailed simplifying the land registration process and making it less expensive by transferring most of the costs incurred from the registrant to the government. In 1893, the first year of this revised system, more registration applications were filed than in the previous seven years combined, although

many of these claims originated with Tunisians. By beylical decree *mawat*, or dead land, reverted to the state in 1896, thus also becoming available for French purchase.

Land collectively held by tribes and *habus* land represented two other large and lucrative reservoirs that were also tapped for the benefit of *colons*. The government seized the former in 1901. Three years later, the Tribunal Mixte ruled that tribes did not constitute organized groups and could not, therefore, own property as collectivities. Extensive areas that had always technically belonged to the state, but on which tribes had enjoyed rights of usufruct and pasturage, were now subject to alienation. Even before the inauguration of "official" colonization, a legal ruse had enabled non-Muslims to lease *habus* lands on a permanent basis. Starting in 1898, the government required the Habus Council to sell a minimum of 2,000 hectares of its property to French buyers each year. The Directorate of Agriculture selected the parcels, setting their prices in consultation with the council. Between 1892 and 1914, these and other "official" colonization strategies transferred more than 250,000 hectares from Tunisian to French control and increased French landholdings to approximately 700,000 hectares, or 84 percent of all the land in non-Tunisian hands, by the outbreak of World War I.

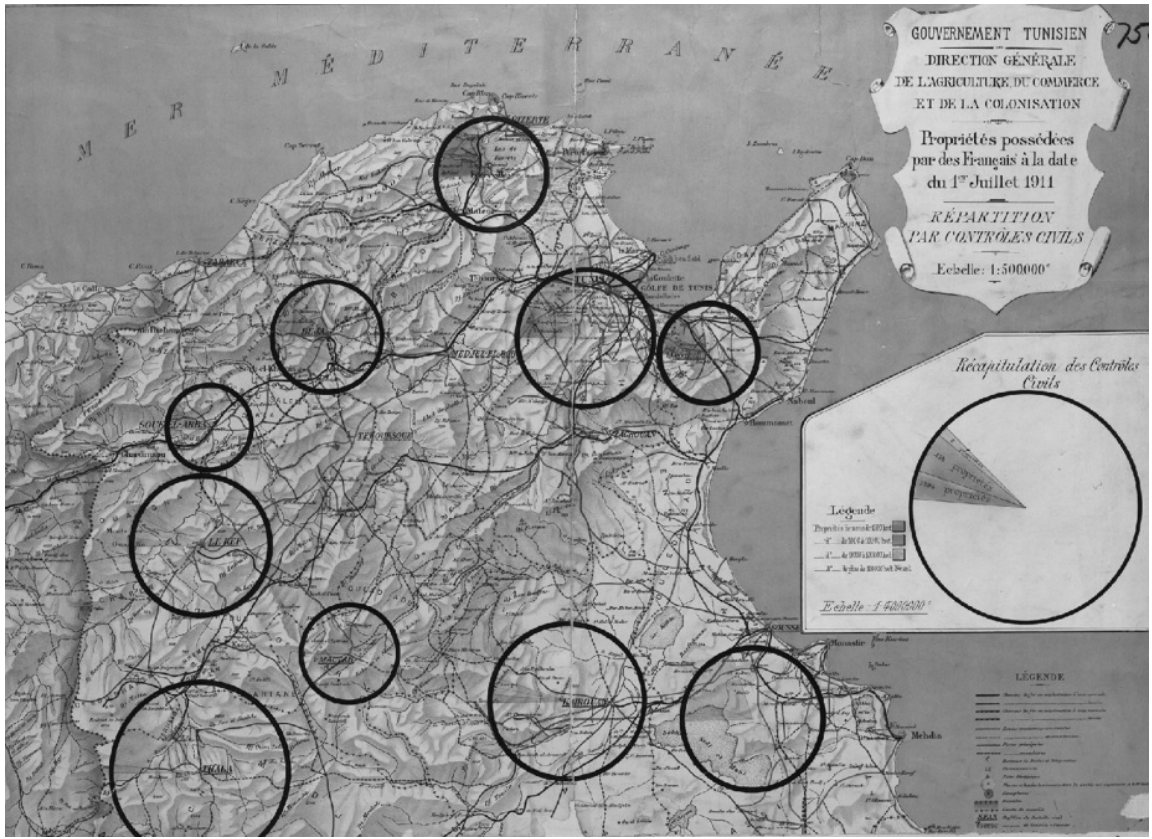
The cultivation of vines and olive trees predominated on the property acquired by the French during those two decades as grapes and olives, and their by-products of wine and oil, developed into the most lucrative products of *colon* agriculture. The devastation wrought on French vineyards by phylloxera infestations beginning in the 1860s prompted the extension of viticulture in both Algeria and Tunisia. In the latter, during the 1880s, the area planted with vines quintupled from 1,000 to 5,000 hectares. Although French production revived in the 1890s, the demand for Tunisian wine remained strong, with the area devoted to viticulture covering more than 15,000 hectares by the turn of the century.[14] Small-scale French settlers owned most of the vineyards, which were located in the region of Tunis and in the Majarda Valley, but often hired Italian agricultural laborers to work them. Because Tunisians had no interest in acquiring the skills necessary to produce wine, the profits of viticulture accrued almost entirely to *colons*.

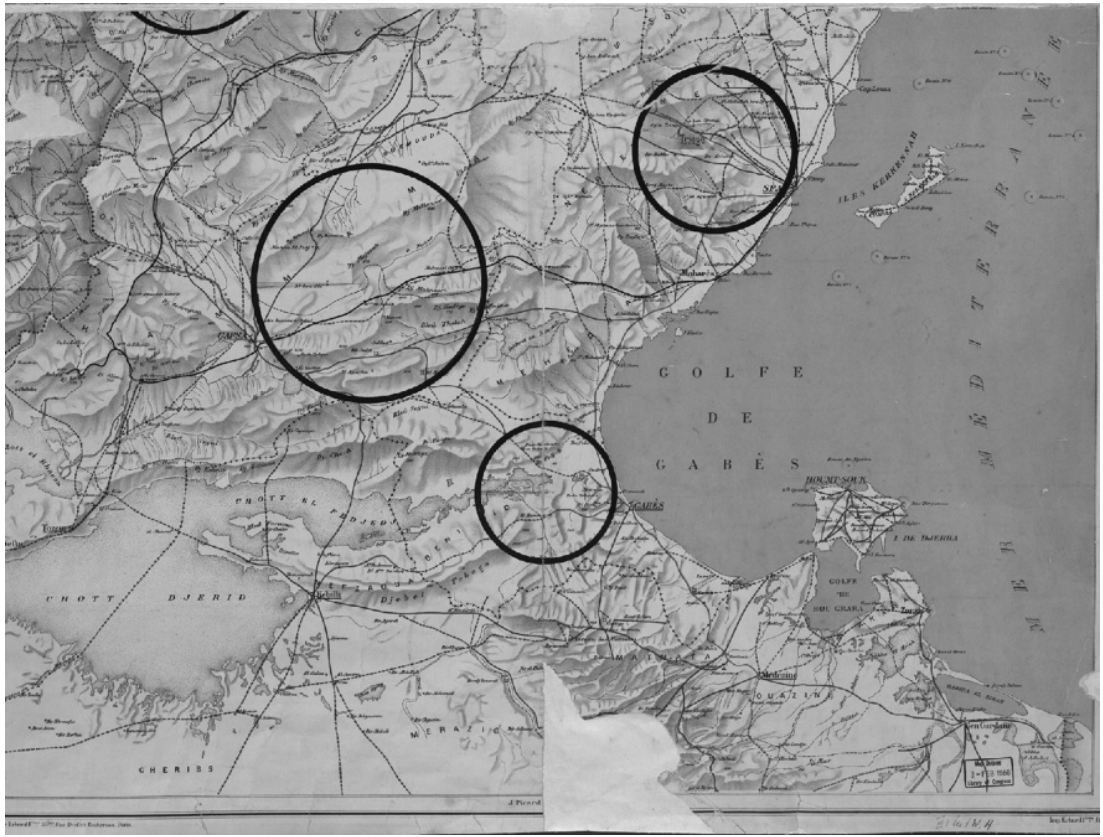
Olives were an entirely different matter. In the Sahil, the focal point of olive cultivation and oil production, small privately owned farms immune to foreign acquisition except through voluntary sales, flourished. But Paul Bourde, the director of agriculture from 1891 to 1895, envisioned the development of *colon* olive plantations in the triangle of steppe land bounded by Kairouan, Gabès, and Gafsa. He knew that the historical and archeological

record showed that this desolate region in which nomadic tribes pastured their livestock and raised small crops of cereals had been an important olive-producing area in antiquity. In 1892 he used his authority to open state lands for colonization to place on sale, at bargain prices, a vast tract of land west of Sfax that Muhammad al-Sadiq had confiscated from a family of local notables, the Siala, in 1871. Within a year, the directorate received eight hundred requests to purchase portions of the estate. Most came from the Tunisian bourgeoisie of Sfax, but French settlers also laid claim to more than a third of the land. At Bourde's insistence the new owners negotiated traditional agricultural contracts, called *mugharasat*, with Tunisian peasants. In this arrangement, the owner leased the land to peasants who planted and cultivated olive trees while raising cereal crops for their own use between the trees until they bore fruit, at which point the owner and the lessee divided the land equally. The cultivation of the Siala lands made the Sfax region and its hinterland a major *colon* center for the growth and processing of olives, albeit at the expense of the nomadic tribes.

Many French officials in both Paris and Tunis considered strong, mutually beneficial Franco-Tunisian commercial relations to be as important in binding the protectorate to France and marginalizing the interests of other European states as was the acquisition of property by French citizens. Tunisian international trade entailed the export of agricultural products, with olive oil foremost, and the import of manufactured ones. Even after the inauguration of the protectorate, however, more of Tunisia's crops went to Italy than to France, owing to the former's lower tariffs. In order to capture this trade, in 1890 France removed the duty on many imports from Tunisia and imposed only minimal taxes on the remainder. Skyrocketing sales to France led to an immediate and massive influx of francs, which had become legal tender in the protectorate in 1888. This glut, in conjunction with a scarcity of piasters, which had begun disappearing from circulation as Tunisians hoarded them to protest the new coinage, diminished the franc's value relative to the piaster. Within months of the new tariff regime taking effect, the Directorate of Finances ordered the withdrawal of Tunisian piasters and their replacement by coins minted in Paris and denominated in francs and centimes. Each had a French reverse and an Arabic obverse, on which the name of the bey, the value of the coin, and the *hijra* date appeared.[15]

The most-favored-nation clauses of several commercial treaties negotiated between Tunisia and European countries prior to the protectorate continued, however, to preclude a reciprocal arrangement for imports from France. Not until 1898, after Italy and Britain had renounced such


GOUVERNEMENT TUNISIEN
DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE
DE L'AGRICULTURE, DU COMMERCE
ET DE LA COLONISATION
Propriétés possédées
par des Français à la date
du 1er Juillet 1911
RÉPARTITION
PAR CONTRÔLES CIVILS
Echelle: 1:500000e
Récapitulation des Contrôles Civils
Légende
LÉGENDE
MER MÉDITERRANÉE
Tunis
Bizerte
Sousse
Sfax
Gabès
Gafsa
Kairouan
Mahdia
Medjez el Bab
Le Kef
Souk el Arba
Tebourba
Grombalia
Zaghouan
Enfidaville
Hammamet
Nabeul
Kelibia
Zarzis
Djerba
Ben Gardane
Tataouine
Medenine
Gabès
Gafsa
Tozeur
Kebili
Nefta
Metlaoui
Redeyef
Moularès
Mahdia
Sfax
Sousse
Kairouan
Bizerte
Tunis
Medjez el Bab
Le Kef
Souk el Arba
Tebourba
Grombalia
Zaghouan
Enfidaville
Hammamet
Nabeul
Kelibia
Zarzis
Djerba
Ben Gardane
Tataouine
Medenine
Gabès
Gafsa
Tozeur
Kebili
Nefta
Metlaoui
Redeyef
Moularès



Map 2.2. Land in settler hands, ca. 1911. *Colons* acquired the most productive and profitable agricultural land throughout Tunisia, often pushing indigenous farmers and herdsmen to marginal lands on which they could not survive. Pie charts on this official map indicate the percentage of land held by Europeans in various regions.

concessions, were protectorate authorities in a position to cancel duties on goods originating in France while leaving them in place for the products of other countries. As a result, France supplied approximately 60 percent of Tunisia's imports and was the destination for a similar percentage of its exports at the turn of the century.[16] Easy access to the French market served all cultivators well but particularly advantaged the *colons*. Although agriculture remained an overwhelmingly Tunisian pursuit, the modern methods employed by the relatively small number of European farmers enabled them to produce a disproportionate amount of the harvest in both quantity and value. Assurances of the settlers' ability to import machinery and other supplies inexpensively and of their opportunity to export crops to France at a profit contributed significantly to ensuring the success of "official" colonization.

With that success came the dispersal of Europeans throughout rural Tunisia. In the mid-1880s three-quarters of all European-owned rural property lay within an arc stretching from Bizerte to Nabeul, none of it more than fifty miles from Tunis. Twenty years later, Europeans were farming land in the Majarda Valley, the High Tell, the interior steppes, and even some of the pre-Saharan oases. Furthermore, European shopkeepers, businessmen, bankers, and government officials settled in regional market towns and administrative centers – Béja, Souk al-'Arba (now Jendouba), Testour, Le Kef, Maktar, Kasserine, Gafsa, Gabès, and Kebili, among many others – where their work supported the agricultural enterprise with essential goods and services. The settlers' distinctively European houses transformed the landscape, as did, in time, the roads and railroads, and the telegraph, telephone, and electricity lines that snaked through the country in their wake. Only in the rural Sahil were Europeans a rarity, although many of them did live in its urban centers on the coast – Sousse, Monastir, Mahdia, and Sfax.

Not surprisingly, however, Tunis and its suburbs remained the preeminent European communities of the country, with some 55,000 foreigners (35,000 Italians, 10,000 French citizens, 8,000 Maltese, and 2,000 others) living there in 1904, along with 80,000 Muslims and 39,000 Jews.[17] This burgeoning European population, which at the start of the protectorate had resided in a partially walled medina and two immediately adjacent neighborhoods, literally reshaped the capital. In the 1880s and 1890s, a quarter built to European specifications, with broad boulevards, multistory buildings, large retail shops, theaters, and churches, took shape in reclaimed marshland between the medina walls and the Lake of Tunis. Most Muslims and Jews continued to live in the original agglomeration, but virtually all of the Europeans who had resided there decamped to the new city, as did some



Figure 2.2. *Colon* grain storage building. Although not as numerous as in neighboring Algeria, European settlers in Tunisia enjoyed considerable political and economic power. The caption at the bottom of this interwars era postcard reads: "The peopling of North Africa by the French is the national work of France in the twentieth century."

Jews. The creation of a new quarter beyond the walls of the existing city "manufactured" space where Europeans could live and work in a familiar, comfortable, and largely segregated setting. Sousse, Sfax, Bizerte, Kairouan, and other cities imitated the Tunis model, which had itself drawn on urban practices in Algeria. Because European Tunis was situated on unproductive land, its construction did not necessitate the displacement of many individuals, although the development of some of the other *nouvelles villes* did entail the displacement of Tunisians and provoked anger and resentment.

Accommodating rural European settlers posed greater complications. Unclaimed cultivable land was rare and, unlike urban neighborhoods, new fields and orchards could not be "manufactured." In the first few years of the protectorate, however, the European acquisition of rural property hardly disturbed the Tunisian peasants living on it. They continued to cultivate the large estates that they themselves had never owned and that had passed into the hands of corporations, individual speculators, and

private proprietors, all of whom needed their labor to keep the land productive. This situation changed in the 1890s. "Official" colonization had as its goals the transfer of smaller parcels of rural real estate from Tunisian to French hands and the promotion of the personal, physical attachment of French citizens to Tunisian soil. Thus, as French settlers began to carve out farmsteads from what had been state lands, collective tribal lands, and *habus* lands, the Tunisians who had cultivated them or grazed flocks on them were displaced. Those who opted to continue farming or herding could do so only on the marginal lands that held no interest for the colonizers. Some peasants driven from the land found jobs on the French farms, but their culturally divergent work habits and agricultural practices led *colon* owners, especially those who were mechanizing their operations, to prefer French or Italian laborers, despite having to pay them higher wages. Others who had been uprooted turned to vagabondage and lives of petty crime. Still others drifted to the towns and cities, where their lack of education and skills gave them access only to the least desirable jobs, if they found employment at all.

Bashir Sfar, an early graduate of Sadiqi College, headed the Habus Council until his 1898 resignation in protest at the enforced sale of its land to settlers. Like many other Sadiqi alumni who had benefited from their exposure to Western culture, Sfar initially believed that the French presence, including a thoughtfully managed program of rural colonization, could raise the quality of all Tunisians' lives. A decade of "official" colonization, however, left Sfar frustrated, bitter, and angry. "France," he wrote in 1903, "is wealthy enough to finance the installation of its citizens without having to condemn its protégés to starvation or flight, or turn them into a dangerous proletariat."[18] In the alienation of men like Sfar lay serious troubles for the protectorate.

The displacement of the rural population at the end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth centuries had adverse economic effects on many Tunisians in the towns and cities. For example, the tribes' loss of good grazing land diminished the size and quality of livestock herds, which in turn reduced the supply of meat, butter, and other animal products in urban markets. It also deprived weavers and leatherworkers of raw materials, further crippling artisans devastated by decades of European competition. In contrast to urban areas, where the growing taste for European goods had lessened demand for locally produced commodities of virtually every kind, rural regions had shown less enthusiasm for imports and so had provided an important outlet for artisanal production. But the impoverishment of the countryside enervated that market, delivering a near knockout blow to craftsmen all over the country.

As French *colons* shouldered them aside, the productivity of Tunisian peasant farmers and herdsmen declined precipitously. The taxes extracted from them did not. By one estimate, government receipts in 1896 translated into an average tax of ten francs per person,[19] a considerable burden, particularly in the distressed rural regions. This figure, averaged across the entire population, masks the twenty-franc annual personal tax (*majba*) that all rural Tunisian males paid, but from which some urban residents, and all foreigners, enjoyed an exemption. The *istitan*, a personal tax set at ten francs a year and imposed on all males, including foreigners, replaced the *majba* in 1913, but for many Tunisians, who accounted for 90 percent of the revenue it generated, halving the levy provided very little relief. Other forms of direct taxation weighed far more heavily on rural Tunisians than on their urban counterparts or on foreigners. Without exception, cultivated land was subject to the *'ushr*, an assessment determined by the area sown, regardless of yield. In 1914, settler farmers controlled 10 percent of Tunisia's agricultural land, but they paid just over 1 percent of the *'ushr* owing to discounts given farmers using machinery and modern techniques to work the land – practices limited almost exclusively to foreigners.[20] The inequitable distribution of the *'ushr* looms larger in view of the quality and productivity of the tenth of the land in *colon* hands. Tunisians occupied more land, but of marginal value; thus they produced less, but paid more. In a similar vein, grapes, the quintessentially European crop, were not taxed at all, whereas the harvests of olives and dates, crucial to the economy of the Sahil and the desert oases where few *colons* had penetrated, carried additional levies. That a significant portion of tax receipts financed the colonization projects that were rending the fabric of Tunisian rural society added insult to injury.

Under the circumstances, conflict between settlers and Tunisians was inevitable. The incursion of nomads' livestock into sown fields provoked frequent confrontations, but robbery, theft, marauding, and assault all escalated in the 1890s. Tunisians as well as Europeans fell victim to these crimes, which were spawned by the desperate misery permeating the countryside. René Millet, the most liberal resident general since the beginning of the protectorate, did not hesitate to place much of the responsibility for the deteriorating rural situation at the feet of the *colons*. "Colonization," he chided them,

> has made the European a competitor of the native, and a formidable one at that. He gains control of land and raises its price, along with the prices of essential goods. Each year he brings more land under his control, encloses it, guards it, and defends it against pasturage and trespass. He introduces new methods of cultivation and upsets the routine of the Muslim laborer.[21]

In 1896, Millet agreed to supplement the gendarmes attached to each *contrôle civil* with village policemen, as the *colons* had requested, but attacks on European property remained a fact of life in the countryside, their frequency rising and falling in a rhythm dictated by local tribes' encounters with bad weather, poor harvests, detrimental government policies, and settler arrogance.

Millet warned the *colons*, whom he knew objected vehemently to any measure calculated to empower Tunisians, not to use the rural turmoil as an excuse to attack protectorate policies, including his collaboration with urban, Western-educated Tunisians (among them, Bashir Sfar). They could not "openly demand that a million and a half Arabs be sacrificed to 20,000 of our nationals," but if their assertion that "the Arab population and its chiefs [are] resolutely hostile to our action and the development of our influence" gained credence in French political circles,

> there would remain no other choice. . .than to inaugurate in Tunisia a regime of reducing and driving back the native population, a regime of exceptional measures, of assigning to the French alone all the budgetary resources. . .. Such a regime existed in Algeria and its results are too well known to be necessary to recall.[22]

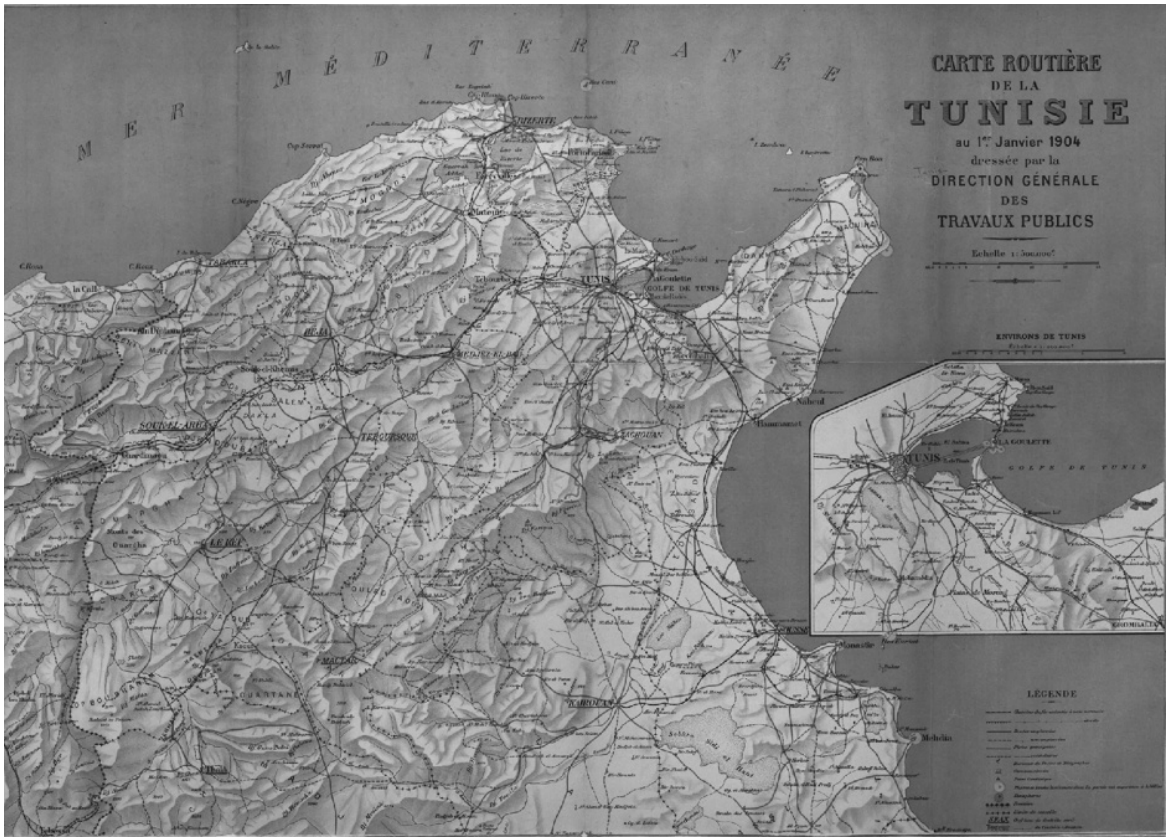
Millet's running battle to restrain the settlers led to his recall in 1900, underscoring the power the *colon* lobby wielded by that time and the extent to which settler interests set the agenda of protectorate policy.

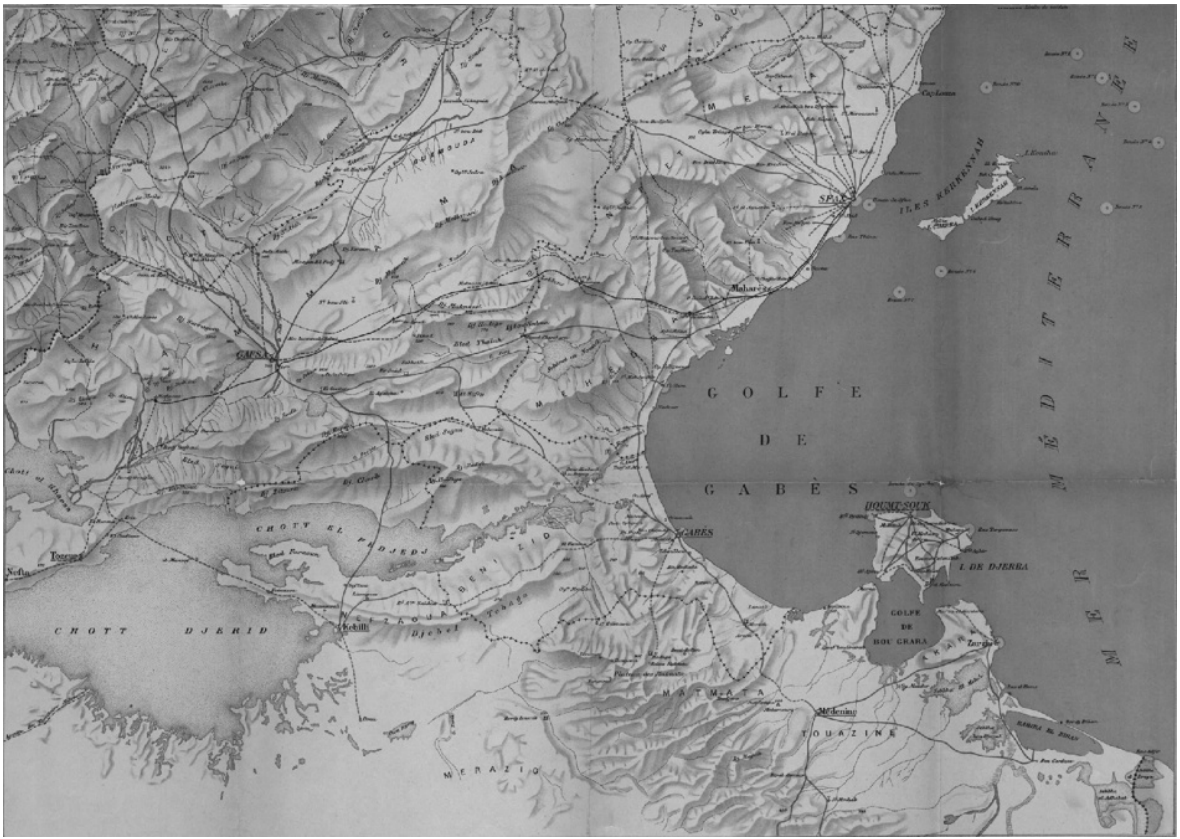
The transportation and communication infrastructure developed by the Directorate of Public Works, one of the first technical services set up under the protectorate, exemplifies the privileging of *colons* over Tunisians. In 1884 the Algerian-based Compagnie du Bône-Guelma completed the railroad between Tunis and Algiers for which it had won the concession in 1878. Passing through the Majarda Valley and the High Tell, where Europeans were already acquiring land, the line expedited the movement of agricultural products to market but also served a military and strategic purpose in binding the new protectorate to the French departments of Algeria. As French settlers spread more widely through the Tunisian countryside in the 1890s, they demanded the construction of new lines, but the company resisted undertaking operations in areas thinly populated by Europeans. To resolve this problem, protectorate officials arranged for the Tunisian government to absorb virtually all the costs entailed in extending the Bône-Guelma's main line to Bizerte, Sousse, Sfax, and Kairouan. The vast majority of state revenues thus expended had come from Tunisian taxpayers, but *colons* profited far more from the railroads than did Tunisians.

When the focus of railroad construction shifted in the early twentieth century from supporting agricultural development to facilitating the exploitation of mineral deposits, other European entrepreneurs benefited from the company's receipt of state subsidies to build spurs, and sometimes whole new lines, to mineral-rich regions. Between 1902 and 1912, the Tunisian government borrowed more than 200 million francs to finance infrastructural expansion, of which the Compagnie du Bône-Guelma received well over half.[23] This growth shifted the company's main focus from Algeria to Tunisia and enabled it to survive the Algerian government's 1915 takeover of its assets there.

In addition to the Bône-Guelma system, two other railroads were in service at the turn of the century. The short Italian-owned Tunis–La Goulette–La Marsa (TGM) route connected the capital with its eastern suburbs; the Compagnie des Phosphates et Chemins de Fer de Gafsa operated a line carrying phosphates from mines in the southwest to the Mediterranean. Following the discovery of major phosphate deposits near Gafsa in 1885, the government offered a concession for their exploitation, but required that the concessionaire also develop a port suitable for exporting the ore and link it with the mines by railroad. These terms elicited no serious response until the mid-1890s, when a consortium of investors began raising funds that enabled them to form, in 1897, the Compagnie des Phosphates et Chemins de Fer de Gafsa. In the interim, the government, in view of expansion and modernization projects then underway at the port of Sfax, had dropped its requirement to construct an export terminal. The final terms of the concession authorized the company to work the mines and run the railroad for ninety years. Participants in the Compagnie des Phosphates included the St. Gobain Chemical Company (Europe's largest consumer of phosphates), the Mukhtar Hadid Mining Company (an important investor in Algerian mineral development), the Duparchy Company (the firm responsible for the improvements to the port of Sfax, and for which the new company represented an invaluable customer), a number of prominent French industrialists, and thousands of smaller investors. The first shipment of ore reached Sfax on the newly completed railroad in 1899.[24]

The railroads and the Compagnie des Phosphates, which became the single largest employer and one of the largest taxpayers in the protectorate, illustrate the important role of French capital investment, channeled through large, specialized companies, in creating Tunisia's colonial economy. The land speculation in which the earliest of these companies had engaged never diminished appreciably, even after the inauguration of "official" colonization,


MER MÉDITERRANÉE
CARTE ROUTIÈRE
DE LA
TUNISIE
au 1er Janvier 1904
dressée par la
DIRECTION GÉNÉRALE
DES
TRAVAUX PUBLICS
Echelle 1:
ENVIRONS DE TUNIS
TUNIS
GOLFE DE TUNIS
LA GOULETTE
LÉGENDE



Map 2.3. Transportation networks, ca. 1904. Railroad construction after the inauguration of the protectorate primarily served the interests of *colon* farmers and European mine owners. By the start of World War I, a railroad through the rich farmland of the Majerda Valley connected Tunis with Algeria, while other lines extended to Bizerte, Sousse, Sfax, and Kairouan. An industrial railroad carried phosphate ore from deposits around Gafsa to the port at Sfax.



Figure 2.3. A carriage of the Tunis La Goulette La Marsa railway. Italian entrepreneurs operated this railway, built in the 1870s to link Tunis with its coastal suburbs, until 1898. Thereafter, the Bône Guelma Company ran the line until its incorporation into the Tunis tram system in 1905.

with its preference for small farmers. From the 1890s on, however, other sectors of the economy, with mining (iron, lead, zinc, and phosphate) in the forefront, began to attract the serious attention of investors. During the four decades from the beginning of the protectorate until the end of World War I, the exploitation of mineral resources, the development of a transportation system (dominated by railroads), the improvement of port facilities (at Tunis, Sousse, and Sfax), the construction of a massive naval base (at Bizerte), and the acquisition of land collectively accounted for three-quarters of all capital investment.[25] Wealthy *colons* joined metropolitan shareholders in reaping the profits of these enterprises, but few Tunisians had the wherewithal to make such investments. Nor did they even participate in these projects as workers. The railroads and the companies developing the ports hired French and Italian laborers and even in the mines migrants from Tripolitania, Algeria, and Morocco were given preference over Tunisians, whom European foremen often characterized as unreliable and incompetent.

THE TUNISIAN BOURGEOISIE'S TUNISIA: FROM HIGH HOPES TO BITTER DISILLUSION

The effective replacement of the beylical government by a French administration, the ascendancy of French interests throughout the country, and the relegation of ordinary Tunisians, in some cases quite literally, to the margins of the economy and the society could not fail to provoke deep resentment. The unsophisticated rural population most often manifested its antagonism in inchoate and spasmodic violence, while the modest attempts of a few Tunis ulama to express their discontent early in the protectorate era had sputtered out inconclusively. A small cadre of educated urbanites with training in a European language and an awareness of Western scholarship and technology was, however, learning to articulate its grievances with the protectorate in ways that were less physically aggressive than those of the tribesmen, and in a format and vocabulary that their European interlocutors understood better than they did those at the disposal of the ulama.

Prior to the protectorate, Tunisians had few opportunities to receive such instruction, which was offered only at schools maintained by Christian religious orders for the children of the European community and at specialized institutions like the Bardo military academy that admitted only the sons of the elite. The formal education of male Tunisian Muslims took place in a *kuttab*, whose curriculum revolved around the memorizing of the Qur'an. A select group of young men continued their studies at the renowned Zaituna mosque-university in Tunis. Only after Sadiqi College opened in 1875 did Muslim youths have access to instruction ranging beyond traditional Islamic topics, but admission to Sadiqi was quite limited. The education of most Jewish boys in Tunisia went no further than elementary religious studies in schools similar to the *kuttab*. Neither Muslim nor Jewish girls customarily received an education beyond the training in domestic skills they acquired in their homes. Louis Macheul, the director of public instruction from 1883 until 1908, understood the risks of intervening directly in Muslim and Jewish education. Instead, he chose to oversee them from a distance and quietly promote select reforms aimed at associating them with a secular education system, designed to encourage Tunisian assimilation of French attitudes, that he began implementing at the start of his administration.

The secular system rested on French-language elementary schools open to Tunisian and to French and other European boys. These Franco-Arab schools employed an appropriately modified French curriculum and included Arabic as a subject of study. From the Directorate of Public

Instruction's point of view, the schools enabled it to pose as a guardian of Tunisia's Arab heritage, as befit a protectorate administration, while still promoting assimilation through the spread of French. For the settlers, the schools gave their sons a basic French education, while the study of Arabic, despite having some distasteful overtones, equipped them with a potentially valuable skill that relatively few Europeans possessed. Some Tunisians welcomed the schools as points of access to the European community, but government officials and local notables often enrolled their children only under duress or to curry favor with the French. Many more Tunisians opposed the Franco-Arab schools, usually on religious grounds, than supported them.

Nevertheless, the realities of life under the protectorate made at least a passing familiarity with the culture and language of the colonizers all but essential, particularly in urban areas. Starting in 1908, liberal Tunisian educators organized "reformed" *kuttabs* that provided such an introduction to Muslim students who rejected the secular Franco-Arab schools in favor of a religious education. Within the Jewish community, the Westernized Grana gravitated to French public schools, an environment that most Jews of Tunisian origin found uncomfortable. Teachers working for the French Alliance Israélite exposed this more tradition-bound community to the rudiments of Western education.

The first elementary school to offer a modern curriculum to Muslim girls opened in 1900 with the enthusiastic backing of Louise Millet, the wife of the resident general. The school took as its objective the dissemination of progressive ideas that would "ameliorate the lot of [Tunisian women] and provide a direct opportunity for French influence to be exercised on them."[26] To alleviate parental anxieties about sending their daughters to the school, its headmistress, the French widow of a protectorate official who knew Tunisian society well, observed traditional social standards, even hiring elderly instructors from the Zaituna mosque-university to teach the Islamic component of the curriculum. The Habus Council provided funds that sustained the school through several years of low enrollments, while its moral support constituted an invaluable imprimatur in the Muslim community. In 1905, enrollment reached one hundred, and by 1912, when its relocation led to its designation as the Ecole Rue du Pacha, almost five hundred young women were attending the school. The Directorate of Public Instruction did not establish public primary schools for Muslim girls until 1908. In them, Muslim women assisted French instructors with a curriculum that combined academic studies with vocational and domestic training.

Beyond the elementary level a few other public schools included both Arab and European students. The Collège Alaoui, established in 1884 at Macheul's prodding, but officially by order of the bey, prepared young men to teach in the Franco-Arab schools. Although intended primarily for Tunisians at its inception, the college also enrolled the sons of settlers and protectorate officials. By the early twentieth century, some 20 percent of its students were Europeans.[27] The Lycée Carnot presented a mirror image of Alaoui College. French missionaries founded the school for young men under the name Collège Saint Louis in 1875, but when it later proved to be a financial burden, Cardinal Lavigerie handed it over to the Directorate of Public Instruction in 1889. Renamed Lycée Carnot in 1894 in honor of the French president assassinated in that year, it stood at the pinnacle of French public education in Tunisia. Accordingly, it had a predominantly European clientele, although it always included a handful of the best Muslim and Jewish students to have gone through the Franco-Arab schools. A corresponding institution for women, the Lycée Armand Fallières, trained female teachers and was overwhelmingly European.

Alaoui College and Lycée Carnot also attracted those Sadiqi College graduates capable of continuing their education, but the Sadiqi curriculum did not adequately prepare most students to compete successfully with young men trained in the Franco-Arab schools for admission to the post-elementary institutions. Recognizing Sadiqi's value as a source of clerks and translators for their administration, French officials had acted quickly to bring the college under their control. In 1882, even before the La Marsa Convention formalized the protectorate, Resident General Cambon's appointment of an administrative council to oversee the school undercut the authority of its director, a protégé of Khair al-Din who did not welcome the French presence. Thereafter, the Directorate of Public Instruction had no interest in altering the nature of the college, but only in introducing changes in the course of studies to better serve French needs.

Thus, in the first decade and a half of the protectorate, thousands of Tunisian men and a much more modest number of women were receiving an education that exposed them to an array of new ideas and brought them into direct contact with the French population. For most, the experience ended at the primary level, but hundreds went farther. By the 1890s, those who had completed the highest levels of the public education system were assuming positions in the protectorate government. There they joined Sadiqi College graduates of the preprotectorate era who had studied in France and returned to launch careers in public service. Macheul and other officials saw in these Western-educated Tunisians, and especially in the

nucleus of Sadiqi graduates, bridges to the broader Tunisian society and, therefore, invaluable allies in the campaign to secure broad public acceptance of the protectorate. Many of the Tunisians shared this view and were prepared to act accordingly. Attuned to the principles of 1789, they believed that the application of those ideals in Tunisia would benefit the entire society. Their country would become a modern state, as France had; technology would bind the country together as never before; and republican rule would replace arbitrary monarchical power.

For all that, these men were not deracinated and they continued to care deeply about their Arab-Islamic heritage. For most of them, a second intellectual concept, *Salafiyya* (Islamic reform), exerted at least as strong a pull as did European progressivism. Its advocates preached a renewal of the core values of their ancestors (*al-salaf*), arguing that Muslims had abandoned or distorted them over the centuries. The ensuing ignorance and neglect weakened the Muslim community, ultimately leaving it vulnerable to the ills plaguing it in the nineteenth century, not the least of which was European imperialism. Adherents of the *Salafiyya* did not necessarily reject all things non-Islamic, and many approved of the adaptation of Western cultural features capable of enhancing Muslims' lives. The thinking of Khair al-Din embodied *Salafiyya* ideals, which had naturally taken their place in the Sadiqi College curriculum. In 1883, a follower of Khair al-Din, Muhammad al-Sanusi, founded in Tunis a chapter of the most prominent *Salafiyya* organization of the time. At al-Sanusi's invitation, Muhammad ʿAbduh, the movement's leading light, visited Tunis in 1885 and again in 1903. ʿAbduh understood that Tunisians lacked the capacity to break the French hold on their country. Under the circumstances, he counseled his audiences to work in the protectorate system for reforms embodying Muslim principles of equity and justice – advice modeled on his own engagement with the British in Egypt.

Three years later, a group of *Salafiyya* adepts, including al-Sanusi, ʿAli Bu Shusha, Muhammad al-Qarwi, and Bashir Sfar, established an Arabic newspaper, *al-Hadira*, to publicize their call for modernization and social change that respected the centrality of Arabic and of Islam in Tunisian culture. These men all had links to the Khair al-Din era of reforms, either as collaborators of the former prime minister or as Sadiqi students of the preprotectorate era. *Al-Hadira* particularly targeted the two most literate Arabic-speaking components of Tunis society, the *baldiyya* and the ulama. Its appeals met with some success among the former and among the more progressive ulama, for both of whom the message echoed the words of *The Surest Path*, Khair al-Din's treatise on government. But the more

conservative ulama showed themselves stubbornly resistant to innovation. The paper survived for twenty-two years, thanks in no small part to a subsidy paid by protectorate officials, who considered it a useful tool in reconciling Tunisians of a certain persuasion with the French presence.

The appointment of René Millet in 1894 brought a sympathizer with the reformist strain of Islam to the office of resident general. Millet reinforced the status of the men associated with *al-Hadira* as the most apt interlocutors between Western and Arab-Islamic culture by discussing with them their expectations as summarized in an article that appeared on his arrival. He indicated his broad support for their objectives, which addressed the issues of greatest concern to urban, educated Tunisians: the respect of the protectorate authorities for Muslim practices and institutions, the engagement of Muslims in government service, the expansion of public education, and the institution of tariffs to protect domestic craftsmen. He further encouraged the reformers to explore additional methods of disseminating their message. In 1896, Sfar and Muhammad Lasram took the lead in founding the Khalduniyya, an educational society that opened a window to the West for Arabic-speaking Tunisians. With the goal of "expanding among Muslims a taste for the sciences . . . destroy[ing] once for all their prejudices and . . . open[ing] to them, in the practical and commercial domain, many horizons which were totally unknown,"[28] its members offered free instruction in a variety of subjects not taught in the Islamic schools. Any Tunisian could study at the Khalduniyya, but the organization made a special effort to attract students from the Zaituna mosque-university, where a highly traditional Islamic curriculum remained in place. As one of the few venues where young men from the different school systems interacted, the Khalduniyya focused not on building bridges between Tunisians and Europeans, but on familiarizing Tunisians of divergent educational backgrounds with each other.

Millet's positive approach to Tunisians prepared to reach an accommodation with the government under certain circumstances distressed the *colons*, who deemed the competition for political and economic power in the protectorate a zero-sum game. By the turn of the century, Western-educated Tunisians represented a threat to settler hegemony. Despite their modest numbers – in any given year between 1885 and 1900, less than 0.5 percent of the Tunisian population attended a school with a Western curriculum, while only about 3 percent of the entire Tunisian population in 1900 had ever followed such a course of studies – they induced a splenetic rage among the many settlers who abhorred the thought of educating the colonized population. They insisted that Tunisian children did not belong

in the Franco-Arab schools, where they slowed the progress of European students, but should learn only the skills needed for employment as agricultural workers on *colon* properties.

Victor de Canières, the publisher of *La Tunisie Française*, the journalistic voice of extremist settler opinion from 1892 until the 1950s, insisted on the limitations of the Tunisians, who were, "after all, just Arabs." Misguided French officials who believed that "Arabs are men like any others and ought to have rights equal to those of the French" failed to understand that "they constitute a race that a depressing religion and a long atavism of laziness and fatalism have rendered manifestly inferior."[29] Modern education raised Tunisians' expectations and even promoted competition for certain kinds of jobs between them and settlers at the lower end of the economic ladder. Their expectations could obviously not be fulfilled at the European population's expense, but ignoring them ensured Tunisian enmity. "[S]cholarly familiarity kills the respect," thundered de Canières, "without which hundreds of *colons* embedded in the midst of a hostile population cannot enjoy full security."[30] Educating Tunisians simply endangered the privileged position the settlers had monopolized since the start of the protectorate. These views could not have been at greater variance with the thinking of leading figures in the Directorate of Public Instruction, as a comment by the headmaster of Alaoui College clearly revealed. While harboring no doubts about the superiority of his own culture, he bemoaned the inability of so many of his compatriots to appreciate that they lived

> in the midst of a civilization other than ours, it is true; let us hasten to add, inferior to ours . . . but, in a word, a civilization. Let the *burnous* and the *chechia* not create any illusion: it is with very cultivated people that we have business here.[31]

In this fundamental policy disagreement, the *colons* prevailed, persuading the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to order the protectorate to scale back education for Tunisians. Reluctantly, between 1898 and 1901 the Directorate of Public Instruction closed ten Franco-Arab schools that had only a few French students. For the first time since the inauguration of the system more than a decade earlier, Tunisian enrollments declined steadily over the same period. The directorate responded to another aspect of the settlers' educational agenda by establishing a vocational school in 1898. Most of its students were European, however, and those Tunisians who did attend were pushed into training as traditional craftsmen rather than receiving an opportunity to learn more modern, and better remunerated, skills.

The *colons*' success in this campaign demonstrated their effectiveness in articulating a shared perception, presenting it with conviction and persistence, and pressuring key organs of government to accept it. *La Tunisie Française* played an important part in this process, as did the settlers' participation in the Consultative Conference, a body formed in 1892 to advise the resident general, principally on budgetary matters. Originally consisting of two colleges that were extensions of the settlers' chambers of agriculture and commerce, the conference expanded to include a third, for government officials and members of the liberal professions, in 1896. Although it had no power to legislate and could not compel the resident general to follow its recommendations, the conference afforded a forum for the airing of *colon* opinions and grievances. Tunisians had no parallel official forum, nor were any appointed to the Consultative Conference for more than a decade. In 1907, the addition of sixteen Tunisians brought the total membership of the conference to fifty-two. Even this obvious underrepresentation of Tunisians (30 percent of the conference as opposed to more than 90 percent of the total population) incensed the settler delegates, who succeeded in segregating the Tunisians in 1910 by recasting the conference's three chambers into two, one for the "natives," the other for the French *préponderants*.

The curtailing of educational opportunities for Muslims, which the reformers had always seen as a sine qua non for the society they envisaged, profoundly disappointed and frustrated them. Their encounters with widespread and overt racism compelled reformers to acknowledge that the settlers would never accept Tunisians as equals simply because of their "otherness, no matter how far down the road to assimilation they traveled." Their confidence in both the will and the ability of protectorate authorities to persevere in implementing policies that improved the lot of Tunisians also diminished. Even specialists like Macheul answered to Parisian ministries that came under intense pressure from colonial lobbyists whose ear the Tunisian settlers had. Western educations detached Tunisians from the mainstream of their society and underscored their minority status. As a result, the reformers risked falling between two stools, credible neither to their fellow Tunisians nor to the Europeans. Finally, as they took stock of the setbacks to their agenda, they realized that similar, and even more tragic, misfortunes had befallen many of their countrymen in the 1890s. For years, the reformers had focused on articulating the desires of the urban educated class, downplaying criticisms of the government in order to stay in its good graces, but the devastatingly pervasive effects of "official" colonization and all that had followed from it could no longer be ignored.

These realities encouraged the reformers to adopt a more aggressive and political position, one with a broader outlook. In the transition from advocacy of social change to engagement in political activism, Bashir Sfar, who had already crossed swords with the French over the sale of *habus* land, led the way. In a 1906 speech he called attention to the pauperization of Tunisian society, noting that the quality of virtually all Tunisians' lives had deteriorated in the quarter century of French control. To reverse this trend, Sfar demanded that the government introduce measures protecting rural land from the grasp of the settlers, reviving artisanal production but also developing new industries, and expanding the number of academic, vocational, and agricultural schools for Tunisians.

Later that year, Sfar's Khalduniyya colleague Muhammad Lasram embarked on the first of three endeavors to publicize the reformers' views to a more extensive audience when he spoke before the Congrès Colonial in Marseille. Appealing to the French to treat Tunisians as equals, not subordinates, he emphasized the imperative of building an education system that prepared Tunisians for the widest possible range of employment, not merely to work as "interpreters for the police or subaltern agents of the administration."[32] Lasram assured his listeners that he and his associates were not calling for the end of the protectorate, but only that its administrators redirect their attention to their original charge of implementing beneficial reforms. With that in mind, he advocated the association of French and Tunisian citizens in a genuine partnership putting the genius of both to work for the development of the country, while acknowledging that important differences of perspective and interest separated the two peoples. Authorizing Tunisians to sit in the Consultative Conference constituted, in Lasram's view, the most logical initial step toward engaging them in public life.

The reformers took advantage of the 1908 Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord in Paris to communicate for a second time with an audience drawn from France and its dependencies. No fewer than six prominent figures in the movement, now widely referred to as the "Young Tunisians," addressed the congress. They hammered away at familiar themes and unveiled new initiatives, including one to replace the *majba* with a universally applied levy assessed on ability to pay. This time, however, de Canières and other *colons* were in attendance, and their public derision of the Tunisians sparked a verbal brawl. The disgusted response of one Tunisian to the settlers' defense of "official" colonization epitomizes the feeling of bitterness and futility that enveloped the entire delegation: "No doubt you wish to drive us back to the zone where scarcely any rain falls. Go and colonize it yourselves:

you have the financial means and technical knowledge to modify its hydraulic regime."[33]

The third example of the Young Tunisians' placing their ideas before new audiences was the publication, beginning in 1907, of *Le Tunisien*. In this instance, however, a new type of activist presented the message. The newspaper's editor, thirty-one-year-old ʿAli Bash Hamba, was the product of an exclusively Western education, culminating with a French law degree. He showed little interest in the *Salafiyya* precepts that had influenced his older colleagues, deriving his inspiration from the ideology of pan-Islam and the campaign of the Young Turks (whose intellectual backgrounds so closely resembled his own) to breathe new life into the Ottoman Empire (whose moribund condition so closely resembled his country's). Bash Hamba wanted to explain the Young Tunisians' objectives directly, and in their own language, to French centrists and leftists (the right-wing *colons* immediately dismissed the paper as "dogmatic . . . a screen behind which war against the French is prepared"[34]) in order to correct misunderstandings about the movement, assuage concerns, and perhaps even win allies. The strategy met with very limited success, but *Le Tunisien* did fill an important niche by giving bilingual Tunisians who were movement sympathizers news and information presented with a far more secular and cosmopolitan outlook than that of *al-Hadira*. To make the same perspective available to all literate Tunisians, Bash Hamba supplemented *Le Tunisien* with an Arabic counterpart, *al-Tunisi*, in 1909. Its editor, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Thaʿalbi, was an atypical graduate of the Zaituna mosque-university whose modernist and controversial views had involved him in several clashes with the establishment ulama.

The divergence of viewpoint between Bash Hamba and the *al-Hadira* group reflected the influence of the Khair al-Din era on the first generation of reformers and the impact of education under the protectorate on the second. The activity of an alumni association that Bash Hamba helped to create at Sadiqi College in 1905 further manifests this difference. A key objective of the Association des Anciens Elèves du Collège Sadiqi was to advocate the transformation of the school into a genuine lycée on the French model. Five years later, their efforts resulted in government approval of a major curriculum revision that far better equipped Sadiqi students to pursue higher education leading to a career in the liberal professions. The organization also sponsored public classes similar to those at the Khalduniyya. But in contrast to its predecessor's philosophy of fostering the coexistence of traditional Islamic and modern educations, the Association des Anciens Elèves focused on instruction that subordinated

the former to the latter, in keeping with the school's evolving course of studies. Bash Hamba's high profile meant that when the government named Bashir Sfar to a post in Sousse in 1908 (primarily to remove him from the hub of Young Tunisian activity in the capital), the editor of *Le Tunisien* effectively assumed the leadership of the movement.

Virtually all of the Young Tunisians came from *baldiyya* families in Tunis or their counterparts in provincial cities. This shared social background underscores the importance of different educational experiences in accounting for their varied assessments of the centrality of *Salafiyya* principles to their objectives. The Young Tunisians' bourgeois origins inevitably distanced them from the bulk of the population. Although they began to close that gap to some degree after 1906, the concepts of appealing directly to a mass audience or mobilizing popular demonstrations in support of their demands remained alien to them until the closing days of their activities. Nor could most of them ever bring themselves to endorse measures potentially harmful to the class with which they identified. A case in point was the dissipation of Young Tunisian support for tax reforms that they themselves had sought once they realized that the Directorate of Finance's proposed solution, while easing the plight of the most impoverished of their countrymen, had costly consequences for the more prosperous.

Despite his secular education and modern outlook, Bash Hamba never lost sight of the importance of positioning the Young Tunisians as defenders of the traditional Muslim social and cultural values that continued to form the core of most of his countrymen's lives. This image sat well with the Tunisian public, but it also had the advantage of making it difficult for the non-Muslim protectorate authorities or the conservative ulama to criticize the movement. In 1911, Bash Hamba invoked a combination of contemporary pan-Islamic political rhetoric and traditional concepts of Muslim identity to raise money and collect supplies to support the resistance of the people of neighboring Tripolitania to Italy's invasion. Amid the fervor generated by this solidarity campaign, an incident in Tunis, at the Muslim cemetery of Jellaz, seemed to reveal a threat to Islam much closer to home.

The municipal council had scheduled a survey of the cemetery for autumn 1911, but it abandoned the plan when ʿAbd al-Jalil Zaouche, a council member and prominent Young Tunisian, warned of Muslims' resentment at such an intrusion. Although word of the impending survey had spread through the city, the news of its cancellation did not, and a crowd gathered at Jellaz on the appointed day. After clashes between the protesters and the police, French soldiers, brought in as reinforcements, opened fire on the demonstrators and drove them into a nearby Italian

quarter. Shooting from houses there touched off a riot that left dozens of Europeans and Tunisians dead.[35] French officials strongly suspected the Young Tunisians of orchestrating this outbreak of urban mob violence – the first of its kind, and a terrifying event for *colons* and protectorate officials alike. Bash Hamba's journalistic and oratorical exploitation of European infringements on Islamic sensibilities undoubtedly inspired some protesters, but he had not yet decided to advance his agenda by popular recruitment. Despite a dogged attempt by French investigators to link the Young Tunisians to the Jellaz events, none of the thirty-five men found guilty of participating in the riots held leadership positions in the movement.

Tunisian antipathy toward Italians, already quite strong owing to the competition between them for jobs, escalated after the Jellaz incident and increased still further a few months later, when an Italian streetcar driver ran down a Tunisian child. Bash Hamba took advantage of the public's acute outrage to plunge, at last, into broad political mobilization by organizing a boycott of the city transportation system. Two conditions for the boycott's termination – limiting employment on the streetcars to French and Tunisian staff and adopting an equal pay for equal work rule – directly concerned the system's workers, but a third – the election rather than appointment of the Tunisian members of the Consultative Conference – had a far broader political thrust. Protectorate officials who had supported the early *Salafiyya* reformers and then the Young Tunisians regarded the strike as a betrayal. More worryingly, Bash Hamba's success in galvanizing the previously inert masses contained within it the germ of full-scale rebellion, and the government ordered an immediate end to the boycott. The Young Tunisians refused to give in until their demands were met, but after a month of defying the authorities, Bash Hamba, Tha'albi, and Hassan Guellaty, all of whom had been instrumental in mounting and sustaining the boycott, were arrested and expelled from the country. Several other key organizers were sent to internal exile in the southern town of Medenine.

Decapitated before belated efforts to broaden its base had produced an entity strong enough to survive such a loss, the Young Tunisian movement never recovered from this blow. The state of emergency imposed by the nervous government, and kept in place until 1920, prevented the appearance of any new leadership cadre. French officials, thwarted in their efforts to reconcile Tunisians to the protectorate through the mediation of elites with modern educations, executed an about-face in the aftermath of the Jellaz incident and the streetcar strike. Although they had little use for the conservative, and in their view retrograde, ulama, they quickly began to cultivate them lest public sympathy for the Young Tunisians push the

religious leadership into opposition to the protectorate. The ulama naturally welcomed this attention, as they did the apparent failure of their nemeses, the reformers. When the Ottoman sultan urged a jihad against the Allies at the start of World War I, the Tunisian ulama's expressions of loyalty to France neutralized the appeal from distant Istanbul. Despite the dispatch of many French troops to the front, the forces that remained were able to suppress the single serious incidence of opposition during the war, a tribal uprising in the south. Tunis, which the Young Tunisians had threatened to turn into a battleground, remained calm, but it was the calm before the storm. By the end of the war, Sfar and Bash Hamba were dead, but Tha'albi, Guellaty, and their comrades in exile were reassembling in Tunis, reenergizing old networks of sympathizers, and awaiting an opportune moment to return to the political arena.

CHAPTER 3

Squaring Off, 1912–1940

WORLD WAR I

Their pan-Islamic sentiments and affinity with the Young Turks made Istanbul a logical place of refuge for many Young Tunisian exiles, but they regarded the Ottoman capital as merely a temporary haven. They were anxious to return to Tunisia at the earliest opportunity in order to continue their drive to reform the protectorate. Those who still resided in Istanbul at the outbreak of World War I contributed to the Ottoman and German war effort, often by writing anti-French propaganda. They hoped that the victory of the Central Powers would strip France of its North African holdings, enabling Tunisia to reclaim its earlier political identity as an autonomous region of the Ottoman Empire. Another group of Tunisians, led by Muhammad Bash Hamba, 'Ali's brother, spent the war in Switzerland, where they published the political journal *La Revue du Maghreb* from 1916 to 1918. Bash Hamba warned that by crushing the Young Tunisian movement in 1912, France had destroyed any prospect of a fruitful association between Muslims and Europeans. Without such collaboration, future stability would hinge on the promulgation of a constitution explicitly defining the powers of the protectorate and the rights of Tunisian citizens. As the likelihood of an Allied victory increased, *La Revue du Maghreb*, basing itself on the concept of self-determination included in Woodrow Wilson's Fourteen Points, called for a postwar referendum to determine the political future of Tunisia. At the same time, the paper also encouraged the Young Tunisians to make use of the impending peace conference as a forum for presenting their grievances.

With the defeat of Germany and the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, Tunisians who had cast in their lot with the Central Powers or who had taken advantage of the war to try to shift the political agenda from reforming the protectorate to ending it had neither financial support nor political alternatives. The activity of the expatriates ground to a halt in early 1919,

after two formal appeals to address the peace commissioners fell on deaf ears. In reality, their wartime efforts had almost no impact in Tunisia, since the protectorate authorities invoked their exceptional powers under the state of emergency to block the importation of *La Revue du Maghreb* and other publications they judged inflammatory. Perhaps even more to the point, however, a wave of prosperity swept over Tunisia during the war years, severely blunting the appeal of anticolonial rhetoric.

The departure of French citizens for military service benefited Tunisians in every region of the country and every sector of the economy. Because the government took very little property for "official" colonization during the war, peasant and tribal fears of losing their land eased for the first time since the 1890s. Moreover, some 80,000 hectares of existing *colon* farmland went on sale when its conscripted owners were unable to work it or meet mortgage payments. Tunisians, many of them middle-class urban merchants whose enterprises had flourished when their French competitors were drafted, acquired almost three-quarters of this land. They invested the increased profits of their businesses in mechanizing their farms and employing other modern techniques that enhanced productivity. Italians purchased another 15,000 hectares of the forfeited land, planting most of it with vineyards that strengthened their dominance over viticulture.[1] The combination of high agricultural prices attributable to shortages in Europe and a succession of remarkably good harvests during the war years brought farmers in the protectorate substantial profits that more than offset the increased cost of living.

In the cities, lawyers and other professionals, many of them former Young Tunisian activists, expanded their practices as their French counterparts left for the front. The unprecedented levels of personal success they enjoyed during the war diverted their attention from political issues and contributed to a damping down of expressions of anti-protectorate sentiment. The disruption of imports from Europe provided a much-needed boost for craftsmen, as did the rising fortunes of the rural areas on which they depended for both suppliers and customers. Unemployment, which had long plagued unskilled and semiskilled Tunisian laborers, ended as they moved into jobs vacated by conscripted working-class settlers and others in new industries created to manufacture commodities previously imported. The shortage of labor assured them of higher wages than they had earned in the past.

In contrast to their countrymen who remained at home and prospered as a result of the war, eighty thousand Tunisians served in the French army. With some exceptions based on educational level and family status,

Tunisian young men were subject to conscription, which accounted for more than 85 percent of these Tunisian troops. Most of them went to the Western Front, where twenty thousand lost their lives or were wounded. Another five thousand fatalities occurred among Tunisian troops assigned to Morocco and Syria. In addition to those in combat and support units, fifteen thousand conscripts and an equal number of volunteers worked in France, on farms, in mines, and in factories, where they took the place of French workers serving in the armed forces.[2] Tunisians welcomed the 1917 promise of Prime Minister Georges Clemenceau that France would remember and reward the sacrifices made by the people of its dependencies when the war had been won.

In view of this pledge, the dramatic deterioration of the economy in 1919 and 1920 angered many Tunisians. Imports soared as French industries aggressively sought to recover their prewar markets, much to the detriment of local producers and businessmen. This resurgence of imports, aggravated by inflation, prolonged an upward trend in consumer prices that had had little effect in the midst of wartime prosperity but caused great hardship as the economy faltered. An array of new taxes to support an ambitious program of infrastructural development, including building dams, roads, and new railway lines, imposed a similar burden. These levies weighed heavily on Tunisians from all walks of life, although the settlers had the most to gain from the projects they financed. Perhaps the most galling use of tax revenues, however, was the payment of the "colonial third," a salary supplement first given to French officials in 1919. By making employment in the protectorate administration more attractive to Frenchmen, it reduced the number of posts available to Tunisians, even as it widened an already significant gap between the compensation of French and Tunisian employees of the protectorate.

The return of demobilized *colons* cost Tunisian merchants their privileged position in commerce and Tunisian workers their jobs precisely at a time when each group could least afford such a blow. Tunisian veterans found the state of affairs that greeted them on their homecoming particularly reprehensible. Their discontent contributed to the politicization of their families, neighbors, and fellow workers, all of whom regarded postwar conditions in the protectorate as poor recompense for the misery their countrymen had endured for the sake of France. Strikes and popular demonstrations erupted in Tunis and a few provincial cities on several occasions in 1919 and 1920. To compound the country's woes still further, dreadful harvests in those two years brought famine and disease in their wake.

As the protectorate's most valuable resource, agricultural land remained a bone of contention in the difficult days following the war. With much of its own farmland devastated, France expected Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco (which had become a protectorate in 1912) to supply more of its food needs than ever before. In 1920, as he was preparing to leave office, Resident General Etienne Flandin (1918–20) issued a directive calling for the cultivation of all unplanted arable land. In no mood for charity to France, Tunisians judged Flandin's initiative as nothing more than a ploy to gain control of those *habus* lands still beyond the protectorate's grasp, in furtherance of its intention to revive "official" colonization. The allocation to land purchases of some 10 percent of a loan of 255 million francs contracted by the government in 1920,[3] with most of the rest earmarked for the augmentation of the rural infrastructure, reinforced their assessment.

THE DUSTUR

Amid universal disgust with economic conditions, and inspired by events that they interpreted as presaging a new era for colonized people – the Paris Peace Conference and the Fourteen Points, Egyptians' campaign for independence from Britain, and Italy's promise to install a liberal, representative political system in Tripolitania and Cyrenaica (which, in fact, it never implemented) – the Young Tunisians reorganized. Resident General Gabriel Alapetite (1906–18) had permitted ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Thaʿalbi to reenter Tunisia even before the war had begun. Other exiles who had kept their distance from the Central Powers were authorized to return in late 1918 and early 1919; those confined within Tunisia received their liberty at the same time. In March 1919, Khairallah ben Mustafa, who had worked at *Le Tunisien*, convened a meeting to consider the adaptation of prewar activism to postwar circumstances. Encouraged by the attendance of several dozen persons, he, Thaʿalbi, Hassan Guellaty, and Ahmad al-Safi established the Parti Tunisien. The party attracted young men eager to seize the place in shaping Tunisia's future to which they believed their Western education entitled them, but it also appealed to those who feared that their traditional training, once the hallmark of the cream of society, would now make it difficult for them to figure in the same process. Recalling a demand enunciated in *La Revue du Maghreb*, Thaʿalbi struck a note that resonated with both groups and focused the party on its key goal: the promulgation of a constitution. The widespread conviction that France's role in the collapse of the postwar economy represented a monstrous injustice in view of its debt to Tunisians for their war services, as well as the absence of other

vehicles of protest, expanded the party's potential audience well beyond the Tunis bourgeoisie who participated in its creation.

When their petition for an audience with the peace commissioners elicited no response, party leaders chose the French left as an alternative milieu for the presentation of their protests. At their request, Ahmad Sakka, a lawyer familiar with leftist circles, moved to Paris in April. Before joining him in the summer, Thaʿalbi pored over Young Tunisian documents dating as far back as the 1908 Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord. He concluded that events since 1912 had invalidated the moderate positions of an earlier time and asked his associates to develop a tougher position for his and Sakka's mission to take. Thus armed, the two Tunisians courted Parisian liberal opinion in the autumn, encountering sympathy but making little political headway. The major achievement of their stay was the anonymous publication, at the end of 1919, of *La Tunisie Martyre*, a diatribe drawing heavily on the material developed in Tunis but even less accommodating. Thaʿalbi subsequently claimed sole authorship of the book, ignoring the invaluable work of his collaborators in Tunis and the crucial contribution of Sakka, who knew French far better than the Zaituna-educated Thaʿalbi.[4]

La Tunisie Martyre handed down an unqualified indictment of the protectorate administration. By contrasting an array of specific social, economic, and political conditions before and after the inauguration of the protectorate, the book purported to demonstrate the willful destruction of a prosperous, progressive society experiencing a "golden age" made possible by the ʿAhd al-Aman and the 1861 constitution. Ending the abuses introduced by the protectorate required restoring an organic law originally passed in the nineteenth century. The book stopped short of making the politically unrealizable demand for the termination of the protectorate, but it did denounce cooperation with its administration as treasonous, thereby definitively discarding the prewar philosophy of association. As bitter as its invective was, *La Tunisie Martyre* attacked neither France nor the French people, carefully placing the blame for the ills it described on the settlers and officials of the protectorate. Its highly idealized interpretation of the past discredited it in the eyes of all those who knew the realities of the precolonial period and of Tunisians who had benefited from aspects of the French presence, especially educational opportunities. Although a founding member of the Parti Tunisien, one such person, Hassan Guellaty, labeled Thaʿalbi's thesis "unjust and maladroit."[5] He and other party moderates also viewed the rejection of cooperation with France as a serious error.

Although it was officially banned, hundreds of copies of *La Tunisie Martyre* were smuggled into the protectorate and it soon acquired the status



Figure 3.1. ʻAbd al ʻAziz Thaʻalbi. The refusal of the Dustur leader to accept the primacy of the young men who bolted from the party and founded the Neo Dustur in 1934 made him anathema for decades. The 1999 issuing of this postage stamp in Thaʻalbi's honor indicated his rehabilitation.

of the quintessential statement of the country's grievances. Among French readers, who were the book's primary target, it had a positive reception only among leftists. The limited value of the support available from this quarter was further reduced by a decided swing to the right in the parliamentary elections of 1919. With few effective allies in France or, as the closure of the peace conference with no reference to North Africa showed, anywhere else on the international scene, the Tunisians redoubled thier activity at home, which assumed critical importance. In February 1920, the Parti Libéral Tunisien supplanted the Parti Tunisien, which had done little more than sponsor the mission of Sakka and Thaʻalbi. When word of the new party's creation reached Thaʻalbi in Paris, he urged the inclusion of an additional word in its title, which became Parti Libéral Constitutionnel Tunisien (in Arabic, *al-Hizb al-Dusturi al-Hurr al-Tunisi*), or simply the Dustur (Constitution).

The new party differed from the old in more than just name, however. Secretary-General Ahmad al-Safi headed an executive committee consisting

primarily of government clerks, artisans, progressive ulama, and businessmen and landowners (often one and the same after the war). Although some committee members had had some exposure to the French school system, and a handful held degrees from French universities, the Western-educated individuals so prominent in the Young Tunisian movement were less in evidence in the Dustur's leadership cadre. A common thread did, however, run through many of the career patterns represented on the committee: traditionally well respected, they were particularly hard hit by protectorate policies, with their practitioners suffering a dramatic loss of power, income, and prestige. Naturally, they had bridled at the concurrent ascendancy of the Young Tunisians, whom they disdained as upstart social climbers and lapdogs of the French. Through the Dustur, they intended to promote political measures enabling them to hold the line against any further erosion of their status. Residents of the capital dominated the executive committee, but the Dustur broke important new ground by recruiting outside Tunis. Tha'albi's claim of one hundred thousand members in 1922 undoubtedly exaggerated the strength of the party, but its geographical expansion clearly alarmed the authorities.

As early as 1921, protectorate secretary-general Gabriel Puaux acknowledged that he was "frightened by the progress made by the nationalists in the interior in the past year," ominously adding that the time had come "to stop this propaganda."[6] Puaux's "propaganda" consisted of the extremely popular and (as he was among the first French officials to admit) nationalist program that Dustur officials had developed from *La Tunisie Martyre*. Its objective was "the emancipation of the Tunisian country from the bonds of slavery,"[7] and its core demands included the issuance of a constitution and the formation of a parliament, elected by universal suffrage, with both Tunisian and French representatives, and to which the government answered. The party platform also called for the full access of qualified Tunisians to administrative positions, equal pay for equal work, the popular election of municipal councils, freedom of the press and of association, Tunisians' right to acquire land sold by the state, and the institution of compulsory primary education in Arabic, with instruction in French at higher levels.

To prove that its proposals enjoyed the support of most Tunisians, the Dustur devoted considerable effort to gathering signatures on petitions seeking their enactment. Party leaders hoped to make formal presentations of these appeals, along with copies of the Dustur agenda, to the bey and the resident general in Tunis, and to agents of the government, politicians, and the general public in France. Al-Safi led a delegation to Paris in June 1920,

but its visit ended on a thoroughly sour note when Thaʿalbi was arrested, deported to Tunisia, and imprisoned. In any event, al-Safi and his colleagues had made no progress toward reversing the widely and firmly held conviction in France that a constitution was not compatible with the protectorate. Even when another Tunisian envoy marshaled sufficient evidence in the following year to persuade two eminent University of Paris jurists to issue a public statement that the constitution and protectorate were not inherently contradictory, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs simply ignored their conclusion, which did, however, help change the opinion of some French socialists and other liberals.

A second delegation, headed by a Dustur moderate, Tahar ben ʿAmmar, secured a meeting in December 1920 with officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, including the recently appointed resident general, Lucien Saint (1921–9). The session seemed, in itself, a significant achievement, especially in view of growing *colon* insistence on curbing the Dustur, which they persistently conflated with international communism. However, only a few weeks later, Saint expressed his definitive refusal to sanction a parliament, although he did promise to take other steps to improve relations with the nationalists. Shortly afterward, the state of emergency in effect since 1912 was terminated and Thaʿalbi was released from prison. However much the party may have welcomed these actions, they did not address its key demands.

Dustur efforts to woo the bey succeeded far better than their overtures to the French. In an audience with Nasir Bey (1906–22) in June 1920, party leaders outlined their position and assured him of their loyalty. Gauging the monarch's role in the political system envisioned by the Dustur as more substantial than his current ineffectual status, Nasir encouraged his interlocutors. Protectorate administrators took a dim view of the linkage between the nationalists and the bey, with the particularly apprehensive Puaux encouraging Saint to deal sternly with Nasir. So long as the bey did not overplay his hand, however, Saint preferred to concentrate on undermining the Dustur.

Accordingly, he welcomed Hassan Guellaty's decision to break with the Dustur mainstream and found the Parti Réformiste in early 1921. Guellaty harbored a visceral resentment of Thaʿalbi, whose provocative polemics had driven a wedge between the French and moderate Tunisians, such as himself, who clung to the prewar notions of association and collaboration. Behind this disagreement over political tactics lay the highly Westernized Guellaty's arrogant confidence in his superiority to the likes of Thaʿalbi, whose more modest social and more traditional educational background did

not (in his view) equip them to grasp the complexities of the modern world. Guellaty had no qualms about abandoning the quest for a constitution and parliament that would fundamentally alter the protectorate's political environment in favor of seeking piecemeal concessions that raised the small, Westernized elite to a level of equality with the colonizers. The Dustur caustically dismissed the affiliates of the Parti Réformiste as traitors, but it never regarded them as a particularly serious threat, since the sycophancy of the party attracted almost no support among the increasingly radicalized masses. Despite his satisfaction with Guellaty's challenge to the Dustur's political monopoly, Saint had "no illusions about [the party's] value."[8] As the need arose, he pointed to it as evidence of Tunisian acceptance of protectorate policy, but Saint evinced no interest in working with Guellaty in ways that might have broadened his credibility.

The visit of the French president, Alexandre Millerand, in spring 1922 provided an ideal occasion for the resident general to showcase the Parti Réformiste, particularly since he suspected that Dustur leaders were encouraging Nasir Bey to use his meeting with Millerand as an opportunity to acquaint him with that party's program. To make it difficult for Nasir to act on the Dustur's behalf, Saint arranged for a French journalist who interviewed the bey in advance of Millerand's arrival to portray him as a critic of the nationalists. Nasir, who spoke no French and had not approved the content of the interview prior to its publication, threatened to abdicate when he realized what had happened. The Dustur rallied behind the bey, organizing demonstrations in Tunis and at the beylical palace in La Marsa. Buoyed by this expression of his subjects' support, Nasir prepared to confront the resident general.

When they met, the bey offered to remain on the throne if Saint agreed to a list of demands based on, but even more far-reaching than, the Dustur's announced stance. He further insisted on the sacking of Puaux, the aggressive secretary general, and of several Tunisian officials whose recent behavior suggested a stronger loyalty to the French authorities than to the bey. Saint expressed indignation at Nasir's presentation of an ultimatum but consented to take the proposals and grievances under advisement. On Saint's return visit to La Marsa he agreed to the dismissals Nasir had sought but refused to satisfy the rest of his conditions. These might remain on the table, he intimated, but he ordered Nasir to withdraw his abdication threat. The deployment in the palace grounds of a contingent of French troops made clear Saint's unwillingness to tolerate a negative response. With Nasir and the Dustur finessed, Millerand's trip proceeded smoothly, and thereafter Saint made no attempt to revisit the bey's demands. This episode

demoralized the Dustur, and Nasir's death a few months later deprived it of a valuable ally and a symbol of French duplicity. His cousin and successor, Muhammad al-Habib (1922–9), assured the French, apparently with all sincerity, that he had no use for the Dustur and no objection to protectorate administrators' taking whatever measures they deemed appropriate to deal with the party.

As the abdication crisis subsided, the arrest of a number of particularly vocal Dusturians served notice that a resident general with no qualms about employing the stick in his relations with the bey would not hesitate to apply it to the nationalists, particularly after Guellaty's defection had narrowed the Dustur's membership to the most obdurate opponents of the protectorate. Even so, Saint saw merit in the carrot, and, in July 1922, he announced the creation of elected councils for Tunisians in the *qiyadas* and the *contrôles civiles* districts that lacked municipal commissions. These bodies made nonbinding recommendations on budgetary and other economic matters but exercised no legislative authority in any field. They also selected Tunisian delegates to a grand council, which superseded the Consultative Conference and, like its predecessor, consisted of separate French and Tunisian chambers. Carefully crafted voter qualifications enfranchised primarily local notables and others linked to the government. French delegates to the Grand Council, unlike the members of the "native section," were elected directly. Forty-four of them represented the protectorate's 54,000 French citizens (roughly one for every 1,200 settlers); eighteen Tunisians represented 1,865,000 Muslims and 50,000 Jews (roughly one for every 106,300 persons). The concurrence of the two sections on matters before them obligated the government to accept their advice, although the French minister of foreign affairs, on the recommendation of the resident general, held an absolute veto over the council's decisions. In the more likely event of a disagreement, the mechanism for resolving the difference insured victory for the French point of view.

Although the protectorate authorities introduced these reforms with great fanfare, they merely gave the appearance of complying with the demand for representation, while producing impotent assemblies incapable of compromising French control. The Parti Réformiste accepted them, but the Dustur did not, urging eligible Tunisians to boycott the elections. Despite the disapproval of party leaders and the obvious shortcomings of the councils, their inauguration provided timid Dusturians, worried about what might happen if, as seemed increasingly likely, the French lost patience, with an excuse to break ranks. Others, craving the forum the councils provided, stood for election. To induce important party members

to defect, protectorate officials promised them seats on the Grand Council. Whether precipitated by fear, greed, ambition, or conviction, these desertions devastated the Dustur at a time when even its few French friends were reassessing their support in the belief that Nasir Bey, prodded by the Dustur, had gone too far. Lethargy enveloped all but the most ardent Dusturians. In 1923, Habib Bey and Resident General Saint both pointedly informed Thaʿalbi that he would be well advised to leave Tunisia if he intended to persist in advocating the rejection of the reforms. Fearing a crackdown reminiscent of 1912, he left for the Middle East. Saint had correctly identified Thaʿalbi as a central figure in the Dustur, but just as Thaʿalbi's presence failed to energize the party after the abdication crisis, his absence also had little effect. Al-Safi and the assistant secretary-general, Salah Farhat, kept the Dustur afloat at home and tried to regain support in France.

The Morinaud Law (1923) and the emergence of a Tunisian labor union, the Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (1924), provided the Dustur with fresh ammunition against the protectorate, while the advent of a left-wing coalition government in Paris (1924) held out the hope of a sympathetic hearing in France. Implicitly aimed at the Italian population of the protectorate, which in the 1920s outnumbered the French by two to one, the Morinaud Law facilitated the naturalization of non-French residents of Tunisia. Since 1921, children born in Tunisia to non-French European parents automatically received French citizenship, but this legislation enabled any foreigner to claim French citizenship after three years of residence. It also eased some of the restrictions on, and lowered the educational requirements for, the naturalization of Tunisians, although few Tunisian Muslims ever showed any interest in taking this step, which removed them from the jurisdiction of the sharia. During the 1920s about ten thousand Italians (10 percent of that community) and five thousand Tunisian Jews (a comparable 10 percent) opted for French citizenship, whereas only one thousand Tunisian Muslims (fewer than 0.5 percent of their total number) made the same choice.[9] Most of those who did were government employees eager to increase their incomes with the "colonial third" or to gain access to positions available only to French citizens. Despite the Morinaud Law's minimal impact on Tunisians, the foundering Dustur seized on it, condemning its intentions to assimilate the protectorate to France, marginalize Tunisians further by endowing foreigners with privileges enjoyed by the French but denied to them, and undermine Islam.

A government ban on fund-raising, which was imposed after the rejection of the 1922 reforms, and declining membership in the party

made financing this campaign a challenge. But the leadership regarded it as crucial to the Dustur's revitalization and developed a novel approach to raising money and, at the same time, to spreading their message. Most Tunisian actors and playwrights had begun their careers in the five or six years prior to the war, when members of the Young Tunisian movement were among the few Tunisians drawn to the theater. Hassan Guellaty and ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Thaʿalbi had served on the board of directors of al-Adab al-ʿArabiyya (Arab Culture), a troupe that flourished at that time. Both men envisioned the stage as a vehicle not only for entertainment but also for the expression of political views and public edification, and both remained involved with the theater until political activities became their full-time pursuits. One of the most successful plays in al-Adab al-ʿArabiyya's post-war repertoire was *Huwa Am!* (*What a Year!*), which reminded audiences of the suffering visited on Tunisia by the war. In 1922 the troupe merged with another established Tunis company, al-Shahama al-ʿArabiyya (Arab Pride), whose European board members had resigned rather than agree to a program with political overtones, to form al-Tamthil al-ʿArabi (the Arab Theater).[10] It was to sympathizers and to party faithful affiliated with these and other smaller troupes that the Dustur executive committee appealed in 1923, asking them to stage benefit performances for the party, particularly of productions that emphasized Tunisia's Arab-Islamic identity and history – concepts that reflected the party's philosophy and underscored its criticisms of naturalization in an indirect way that avoided confrontation with the government.

As high-level Dustur leaders made use of the decidedly bourgeois medium of the theater, a few party members were developing connections with working-class Tunisians. One such activist, M'hammed ʿAli, spent much of 1924 organizing consumer cooperatives as tools for fighting poverty and winning support for the party in the lower-class neighborhoods that remained a mystery to most Dusturians, few of whom interacted with workers or understood their problems. In that same summer, the refusal of European longshoremen to endorse their Tunisian coworkers' demands for wage parity, despite their common affiliation with the French Confédération Générale du Travail (CGT), exemplified the kind of discrimination Tunisian workers faced, even in a socialist union. The Morinaud Law aggravated this particular situation. By facilitating the naturalization of Italian and Maltese workers and, consequently, their acquisition of salaries and working conditions comparable to those of other French citizens, it deprived Tunisian laborers, now the sole victims of a two-tier system, of potential allies in the workforce.

Since the Dustur, and the Young Tunisians before it, advocated equal pay for equal work, the isolated longshoremen turned to the party for help. M'hammed ʿAli saw their appeal as an opportunity to strengthen the links he had begun forging between workers and the nationalist movement. More with an eye toward the usefulness of large numbers of workers in putting pressure on the protectorate than from any sense of solidarity with their cause, the Dustur leaders supported M'hammed ʿAli's decision to make the striking dockworkers the core of a new Tunisian union, the Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (CGTT). Along with M'hammed ʿAli, a handful of Dustur radicals and several Tunisians prominent in the Parti Communiste Tunisien (PCT) played leading roles in organizing the new union, which very quickly drained almost all Tunisian workers away from the CGT. During late 1924 and early 1925 the CGTT orchestrated a wave of strikes in Tunis, Bizerte, and Sfax, but in February the authorities determined to halt the unrest by crushing the union. The CGTT leaders were arrested, and the nascent labor movement collapsed.

The Dustur made no effort to sustain the CGTT, from which it had, for a variety of reasons, begun to distance itself well before the repression. Taking their own generally docile and circumspect approach of dispatching delegations and presenting petitions as the most suitable form of political activism, party leaders considered the confrontational tactics of the union – noisy street demonstrations and strikes, both of which often ended in violent clashes with the police – as vulgar and dangerously provocative. Unlike CGTT activists, whose prison sentences became badges of honor, the prospect of incarceration intimidated most Dusturians, who saw it only as a shameful and humiliating experience to be avoided. In working with the PCT to develop the CGTT, M'hammed ʿAli had provided ammunition to Dustur critics who had tried since the party's creation to discredit it by demonstrating a link between it and the communist movement. Until 1924, the Dustur had kept its distance from the PCT, while the communists were, in turn, contemptuous of leading Dusturians, whom they regarded as ineffectual, arrogant, and out of touch with the true sentiments of ordinary Tunisians. In the hands of Resident General Saint, evidence of Dustur-PCT collaboration in the emergence of the CGTT could prove extremely damaging, if not fatal, to the party.

Apart from these powerful anxieties, Dustur hopes of cultivating allies in France also pushed it away from the union. The victory of a leftist coalition in French parliamentary elections in 1924 brought to office politicians whose beliefs and values might be expected to incline them to give the party's program a sympathetic hearing. But the Dustur's enemies in Tunisia

sabotaged its attempts to open lines of communication. Habib Bey, Saint and other protectorate officials, and spokespersons of the settlers all hastened to warn the new government in Paris that Dustur claims of moderation and its recent acceptance of the 1922 reforms as an initial step toward reaching their goals were a smokescreen camouflaging the party's unwavering hostility to the protectorate. In the face of so concerted a campaign to malign it, one way for the Dustur to demonstrate its receptivity to dialogue and cooperation was to disassociate itself from extremists like the communists, which it unequivocally did, and the CGTT, on which it turned its back without directly denouncing it. Thus the party's abandonment of the union made a virtue – portraying itself to potential supporters in France as an organization eschewing radicalism – out of the necessity of adopting a position that safeguarded it against being swept up in the union's destruction. As further evidence of its restraint, the Dustur joined French socialists living in Tunisia, as well as the Parti Réformiste and Tunisian members of the Grand Council, both of which groups it had previously denounced as traitors, in a moderate political bloc promoting structural reforms in the protectorate. In the end, however, this expedient came to naught.

French Prime Minister Edouard Herriot convened a consultative commission for the study of Tunisian reforms, but the appointment of Resident General Saint as chair of a key subcommittee insured that the commission's work would result in no substantive changes. When the commission released its proposals in March 1925, the Dustur, the Parti Réformiste, and the Socialists all dismissed them as superficial and tangential to the most pressing political issues in the protectorate. Disillusioned Dusturians realized that they had left the CGTT, with its potential for greatly enhancing the strength of the party, in the lurch, in return for a slap in the face from Paris. Embittered and embarrassed, Dustur leaders reacted in predictable ways, but the impact on the party of M'hammed ʿAli, his creation (the CGTT), and his following (the working class) gave the round of protests that followed a more highly charged atmosphere than ever before.

During spring and summer 1925, crowds of nationalists regularly took to the streets of Tunis in imitation of the belligerent tactics of the CGTT. In the autumn, the sentencing of the union organizers and the unveiling of a statue marking the centenary of the birth of Cardinal Lavigerie, roundly despised by Tunisians for his missionary efforts, set the stage for particularly raucous scenes. Given the furor over the Morinaud Law, which had revived when the bill's sponsor visited Tunis earlier in the year and encouraged Jews to adopt French citizenship, paying homage to a colonial figure committed to converting Muslims to Christianity inevitably offended public opinion.

The stodgy Dustur leaders were coming to recognize the lower-class Tunisians who swelled the ranks of these demonstrations as an asset, but they remained uncomfortable interacting with them. As a result, they exercised less and less control over the protests, even as the frequency, magnitude, and virulence of the demonstrations increased.

Other aspects of the Dustur's strategy also changed during 1925. No longer did the party focus on persuading the French that its case had merit. Instead, it lashed out at its enemies, determined to extract a price for their refusal to satisfy Dustur demands. In speeches and newspaper articles, party leaders expressed support for anti-French movements elsewhere in the Arab world, most notably those of ʿAbd al-Krim in Morocco and the Syrian nationalists. This particularly galled the French authorities. When Ahmad Tawfiq al-Madani, a distinguished intellectual and member of the Dustur executive committee, arranged for al-Saʿada (Good Fortune), a theatrical company with which he was affiliated, to produce a play about the seventh-century hero of the Arab conquest of North Africa, Tariq ibn Ziyad, that was actually a thinly veiled encomium to ʿAbd al-Krim, the authorities closed the theater, banned performances of the play, and arrested al-Madani. Its overt enthusiasm for anticolonialists of whatever stripe cost the Dustur the support of the Socialists and the Parti Réformiste, both of which held considerably more nuanced views on the subject of overseas territories. France responded to the radicalization of the Dustur with a campaign of repression that included the arrest of party leaders and participants in the demonstrations, as well as the closure of the Arabic newspapers through which the Dustur spread its views. Only the Parti Communiste Tunisien stood with the Dustur during 1925, but this solidarity only reinforced the perception of a connection between the two organizations, such as the French authorities had persistently alleged and the Dustur just as persistently denied.

With the nationalists on the brink of total disarray, Saint moved decisively against them. In January 1926 he issued a series of decrees severely constraining basic freedoms. The ordinances forbade criticism of French or Tunisian government officials, whether in public or private; criminalized a wide range of political activities legal under the existing penal code; transferred all trials involving matters deemed to affect the security of the protectorate to the French courts, regardless of the nationality of the accused; and brought the French-language press, which had until then escaped restrictions imposed on Arabic newspapers, under close government scrutiny. The resident general did not foreclose the possibility of future reforms, but did insist that none could receive consideration before

calm had been restored. Most *colons* applauded Saint's actions, but the liberal minority among them decried "*les décrets scélérats*" (the villainous decrees), which impinged on their freedoms no less than on Tunisians'. The Dustur, reeling under the repression that had preceded the decrees, could barely muster any response to them. Saint had sidelined the party, and although it continued to recruit new adherents, it maintained a low profile for the duration of his tenure.

In addition to the hostility of the resident general, Dustur leaders confronted new problems within the party after 1926. Tahar Haddad, a professor at the Zaituna mosque-university and a prominent Dustur activist, wrote *al-ʿUmmal al-tunisiyyun wa zuhur al-harakat al-niqabiyya* (*Tunisian Workers and the Emergence of the Trade Union Movement*) in 1927. This wide-ranging essay attacked the growing taste for European goods that had proven so detrimental to Tunisian craftsmen but also faulted the Dustur for its failure to embrace the CGTT and its general lack of interest in the working class. In the following year, Haddad authored a series of articles in a Tunis journal that were subsequently published as *Imra'tuna fi'l-shariʿa wa'l-mujtamaʿ* (*Our Women in Islamic Law and Society*). In the essays, based on his bold and innovative interpretation of Qur'anic teachings, he advocated greater rights for Tunisian women and encouraged them to take a more active role in public affairs, thus implicitly criticizing the Dustur's tendency to cling to traditional practices, in this and in other matters, merely for their own sake. Haddad's works irritated party leaders, but their anger paled in comparison with the rage of Zaituna officials, who labeled Haddad a heretic and expelled him from the faculty. Nevertheless, the ideas of the youthful social critic – he was not yet thirty when he wrote these books – struck a responsive chord with younger Dusturians who were troubled by the party's docility in the wake of Saint's crackdown.

Many provincial youths with a modern education often capped by a French university degree had joined the Dustur in the 1920s because it was the only viable outlet for political activism. Its lack of success disturbed them, however, and they viewed the post-1926 retrenchment as a surrender in which they were loathe to participate. The personal and professional achievements of these young men flowed from their familiarity and comfort with Western culture and their capacity to function as effectively in such an environment as in their own native milieu. While the Dustur hierarchy yearned for the revival of an idealized past and detested the transformations wrought in Tunisia by the West, the members of this younger generation harbored no such animus – association with the West had, after all, made them what they were – although they took exception to many French

policies. Based on their understanding of contemporary political processes and ideologies, frequently gleaned from personal experience in France, they believed that the eventual triumph of the party hinged on more vigorous activism and broadening the movement to include the full spectrum of the Tunisian population.

THE SPLIT IN THE DUSTUR'S RANKS AND THE EMERGENCE OF A NEW PARTY

A nationwide demographic trend gave added weight to the views of this younger generation: in 1930 more than a quarter of Tunisia's population was under twenty-five years of age (an increase of 50 percent in the size of that group since the end of World War I).[11] The expression of reservations about the principles and strategies of the Dustur leadership constituted a subset of this rapidly growing segment of the population's widespread questioning of old norms, not only in the political arena but in virtually every aspect of daily life. The older Dusturians' rigidity and their resistance to accommodating the ideas of the increasingly numerous younger generation within the party's ranks encouraged the latter to push themselves and their ideas to the forefront. A downturn in the economy in the early 1930s and several ill-considered French decisions played into their hands.

The decision of the Catholic Church, with the approval of the French and Tunisian governments, to convene an international eucharistic congress at Carthage in May 1930 gave the Dustur mavericks an opportunity to assert themselves. Writing in the party newspaper *La Voix du Tunisien*, men like Habib Bourguiba, a twenty-seven-year-old lawyer who had returned from his studies in France in 1927, condemned as an affront to Tunisia's Muslim personality the celebration on Tunisian soil of a religion they and their countrymen associated with the Crusades and colonialism. Parades of Catholic youths dressed as crusaders, the distribution of pamphlets in Arabic promoting conversion, and the rhetoric of the papal legate, who characterized the Islamic era in North Africa as "fourteen centuries of desolation and death,"[12] revealed congress organizers' ignorance of, and insensitivity to, the very core of Tunisian identity, providing the nationalists with a surfeit of ammunition. In conflating the defense of the nation with the defense of Islam, the militant Dusturians, most of whom were quite secular, put forward a concept with broad mobilization possibilities. Longshoremen launched wildcat strikes as congress participants arrived in Tunis and a protest rally of students from both the Zaituna mosque-university and the elite secular schools – the first such student political

alliance – brought opponents of the government into the streets for the first time since 1925.

La Voix du Tunisien also noted economic and political issues raised by the congress. Despite obvious Muslim distaste for the event, the Tunisian government's contribution to its funding of two million francs derived primarily from their taxes. This illustration of the ease with which protectorate authorities could sidestep the Grand Council in budgetary matters reinforced the nationalist demands for a constitution and an elected assembly controlling state expenditures. The paper also urged Ahmad II Bey (1929–42) to resign his honorary presidency of the congress and for other Tunisian officials who had lent it their support to distance themselves from it. The leaders of the nationalist campaign claimed that those who ignored this call, including the bey, revealed their subservience to France, abdicating to the Dusturians the role of defenders of Tunisian interests.

Just as the furor over the Eucharistic Congress was subsiding, the commemoration in 1931 of the fiftieth anniversary of the French presence gave Dustur activists a new cause enabling them to sustain the momentum they gained in the previous year. In a remarkable repetition of recent errors of judgment, the Tunisian government again allocated substantial sums to an event Tunisians could hardly be expected to applaud, and a high official, this time the French president, Gaston Doumergue, described a period of Tunisian history in terms bound to give offense when he observed that the protectorate had embodied only the highest humanitarian principles. *La Voix du Tunisien* again served as the vehicle for the expression of nationalist anger, but the French attempted to short-circuit this round of protest by arresting several of its most outspoken contributors. The suspension of their trials in the face of public demonstrations appeared to confirm the effectiveness of this tactic, favored by the younger militants but with which their elders remained uncomfortable. Indeed, wary Dustur leaders chastised the activists for putting the movement at risk. Frustrated with the old guard, and anxious to preserve their ability to denounce the authorities, Bourguiba and several of his associates created a paper of their own, *L'Action Tunisienne*, in 1932.

Eager to identify controversies around which it might rally the Tunisian masses, the *Action* group recognized in certain consequences of the Morinaud Law problems they could exploit to the detriment of the protectorate administration. The small number of Tunisian Muslims who had opted for French citizenship had generally been treated as pariahs on the grounds that their abjuration of the sharia amounted to apostasy. For that reason, they were customarily denied burial in Muslim cemeteries. An

attempt to contravene this practice in Bizerte in 1932 precipitated a spontaneous protest that thwarted the burial, while another similar interment proceeded only with police intervention. In the hope of preventing an escalation of the situation, Resident General Joseph Manceron (1929–33) instructed the chief Muslim jurists of the capital, the Maliki and Hanafi muftis, to issue a ruling (fatwa) on the subject, but their carefully constructed rationalization satisfied no one.

Portraying the French as again meddling with Islam, and summoning Tunisians to defend the faith that lay at the heart of their identity, Bourguiba and his colleagues assailed both protectorate officials and the collaborationist ulama in the pages of *L'Action*. In a similar vein, other articles and editorials implored readers to ignore French encouragement to abandon traditional forms of dress, including the veil for women, and, instead, to regard such attire as a facet of Tunisia's Arab and Islamic cultural legacy to be safeguarded from colonial subversion. Thus the secular, modern-educated young Dusturian radicals positioned themselves as defenders of religion and tradition – including some traditions, like veiling, that most of them considered backward but that they knew were impervious to assault from any quarter – while the far more traditional, but timid, party leadership, fearful of the repercussions attendant on a bold public stand, hovered ineffectually in the background. The *Action* group alienated conformist religious leaders by articulating a stand on the controversial issue of the burials that reflected the public mood more faithfully than did their own. On the other hand, many forward-thinking Zaituna faculty members and their students, not at all displeased to see their eminent but hidebound superiors challenged, supported the Dustur dissidents, providing them with an entrée to the mosque-university.

Fanned by the rhetoric of *L'Action*, which was disseminated through Dustur branches that by then existed in most parts of the country,[13] protests beginning in Tunis spread far and wide during 1933, as each new attempted burial of a naturalized French citizen in a Muslim cemetery rekindled the flames. Manceron recognized his inability to impose the solution embodied in the muftis' fatwa, particularly after the Dustur campaign acquired support from Muslim leaders in Egypt and Palestine – the first time the nationalists had attracted backing elsewhere in the Arab world. Aware that party militants were pushing the Dustur in dangerous directions, the resident general sought to defuse the immediate crisis before tackling the general radicalization of the movement. To do so, he ordered that enclaves for the naturalized be set aside in Muslim cemeteries, a compromise that *L'Action* accepted. Although the proposal failed to satisfy La Ligue des

Musulmans Français, Manceron declined to reopen the case. Following these events, many of the so-called *musulfrancs*, feeling abandoned and vulnerable, renounced French citizenship and initiated appeals for reintegration into the Muslim community. Their status, however, remained a matter of contention for the duration of the protectorate.

Manceron's anxiety was well founded. In May 1933, Bourguiba and three of his *L'Action* colleagues, Bahri Guiga, Mahmud Matari, and 'Ali Bouhajib, won election to the Dustur executive committee. Flushed with the success of their incitement against naturalization, the militants were crystallizing a somewhat modified version of the Dustur political platform. Demands for a constitution and a government responsible to an elected assembly remained at its core, but with some new twists: an emphasis on the constitution's function of protecting the national character – a concept that had served them so well as a mobilization technique – along with an insistence that the parliament be solely Tunisian and that all officials, including the resident general, answer to it. The last two provisions symbolized the rejection of the Dustur's willingness to accept political arrangements based on the equality of Tunisians and Frenchmen (but which necessarily implied the prolongation of the protectorate) in favor of demands couched simply in terms of Tunisians' rights. Of greater consequence, the program expounded by the *Action* group put forward a call for independence.

The explicit reference to terminating the protectorate provoked a harsh response from Manceron, one of whose last acts as resident general was to approve decrees authorizing the bey to detain Tunisian subjects accused of political acts deemed inimical to France or the protectorate. The apparent empowerment of the bey shielded these "*super-scélérats*" ("utterly outrageous") edicts from the interference of metropolitan parliamentarians. The regulations also limited the latitude of the French-language press, leading to the suspension of *L'Action*. Finally, Manceron ordered the dissolution of the Dustur. Party leaders responded, as they had to Saint's repressive measures in 1926, by hunkering down to await the passing of the storm. In keeping with their efforts not to call attention to themselves, they chastised Bourguiba for leading a delegation of protesters from his hometown of Monastir to Tunis for an audience with the bey in August, prompting his resignation from the executive committee. Resident General Marcel Peyrouton (1933–6) tried to further the rift in the party by hinting at the party's revival if the radicals could be restrained. When Guiga alerted his colleagues to the attempted co-option of the executive committee, the remaining members of the *Action* group left the Dustur.

Their skill in identifying issues evoking a visceral response with the Tunisian public, their willingness to defy the French authorities, and their control of an effective information medium in *L'Action* all helped Dustur militants to advance their agenda and begin to construct a support base independent of the mainstream party. That their emergence as an identifiable group coincided with an economic crisis highlighting weaknesses in the economic structure, the protectorate authorities' lack of concern for Tunisians' problems, and the incapacity of the Dustur chiefs to demonstrate effective leadership – all topics enthusiastically tackled by *L'Action* – unquestionably contributed to attracting many of their disgruntled countrymen into their camp. Infestations of locusts and a severe drought, broken only by equally destructive floods, wrought havoc on agriculture and herding in 1930 and 1931, particularly in central and southern Tunisia. Just as this dreadful situation eased, the effects of the Great Depression rolled over Tunisia, converting a crisis of underproduction into one of overproduction. France and other European countries closed their doors to Tunisian agricultural exports even as increased quantities of French manufactured goods poured into the protectorate, disrupting local artisanal output. The other mainstay of the economy, mining, also experienced severe setbacks. At mines throughout the country, including the lucrative phosphate deposits around Gafsa, production levels, profits, and the number of workers all declined precipitously in the early 1930s.

Small farmers, both Tunisian and European, were particularly hard hit, with many losing their property and others having to seek work on the larger *colon* farms that had been better able to weather the storm. Tunisian peasants abandoned the desolate countryside in droves. Unable to find accommodations or jobs in the cities – estimates of unemployment in the mid-1930s reached thirty thousand in Tunis and one hundred thousand nationwide[14] – they joined indigent urbanites in the shacks and tents of spontaneously constructed slums (*bidonvilles*) on vacant land, in cemeteries, and in garbage dumps. In the all but complete absence of sanitary facilities, medical services, or any forms of social assistance, such neighborhoods became breeding grounds of physical disease and social malaise, raising the twin specters of epidemic and revolution. The imposition of regulations to prevent rural people from traveling outside their regions, campaigns to drive inhabitants of the *bidonvilles* back to the countryside, and the creation of government camps for the homeless and unemployed all failed to eliminate this desperate problem.

Government relief efforts in the agricultural sector focused on shoring up the price of wheat, authorizing the entry of Tunisian wines into France, and

offering incentives to vintners to replace grape vines with fruit trees – all measures advantaging the export crops at the center of the rural settler economy. Conversely, olive growers, whose crop supported, directly or indirectly, a third of the Tunisian population, received no comparable aid. This emphasis on rescuing European farmers particularly galled Tunisians, who paid a disproportionately high share of agricultural taxes, which were calculated on the area sown rather than on the amount produced. The creation of a farm credit bureau to consolidate debts and lend money also benefited *colons* more than Tunisians, since the bank required loan recipients to produce the title to their land, which not all Tunisians could do.

Although peasant farmers lacked leverage with the protectorate authorities, a few Tunisians hit hard by the deteriorating economy were in a position to bring pressure to bear. One such person was M'hammed Chenik, a wealthy businessman and landowner. Chenik had cast in his lot with the French in the 1920s, creating with their financial backing the only truly Tunisian bank, the Coopérative Tunisienne de Crédit, in 1922. Ignoring Dustur calls to boycott the Grand Council, he rose to the presidency of its Tunisian section. Chenik's dispatch of delegations to France in 1931 and 1932 to warn metropolitan officials of the gravity of the situation, along with his calls for more effective responses from the protectorate authorities, earned him the enmity of Manceron, who orchestrated a smear campaign accusing the magnate of financial malfeasance in connection with the bank.

Habib Bourguiba and M'hammed Chenik had little in common, but their mutual scorn for both the Dustur leadership and the resident general proved sufficient to engender a profitable alliance. Bourguiba courted Chenik, whose substantial contributions made possible the emergence of *L'Action*. The paper defended Chenik but also, more importantly, pointed to his case as proof that "sincere, loyal collaboration with the government has been shown to be impossible."[15] In 1933, the Tunisian section of the Grand Council voted not to cooperate with the government. In the crucible of the Depression, relations between the colonial regime and the minority of Tunisians who had prospered under the protectorate were being redefined. Race was trumping class.

By the end of 1933 the Dustur was in shambles. As its official leaders and the more militant *L'Action* group traded mutual recriminations, the gulf between them regarding tactics and long-term goals on both the political and economic fronts so widened as to preclude any prospect of being bridged or of a coordinated policy emerging. Early in 1934, Bourguiba

and Tahar Sfar, an especially articulate ally, crisscrossed the Sahil, explaining their views at local Dustur branches and calling for a party congress whose delegates would chart a course for future activism. In a region teeming with olive growers, many of them being crushed by the Depression, in which the native son Bourguiba enjoyed great popularity and in which M'hammed Chenik had numerous business associates, they encountered broad support. The Dustur executive committee flatly refused to endorse such a session, lest it legitimate its rivals, but it proved unable to maintain party discipline down the line. When the militants summoned a congress in the Sahil town of Ksar Hellal on March 2, 1934, representatives from forty-nine Dustur branches, most of them in the Sahil and the Tunis regions, answered their call, and eleven others sent messages of encouragement. They voted to dissolve the executive committee and create a new one, called the political bureau, consisting of Bourguiba, his brother Muhammad, Guiga, Sfar (all Western-trained lawyers), and, as president, the physician Mahmud Matari. When al-Safi, Farhat, and their colleagues declined to cooperate in their own ouster, the split was complete and a Neo-Dustur party existed side by side with the original Dustur.

To capture disgruntled Dusturians and those components of the population in which the older party had shown little interest, the political bureau instructed congress attendees to create Neo-Dustur cells in the cities, including their working-class neighborhoods, and in provincial towns. As small merchants and artisans, modern businessmen, and landowners deserted the Dustur for a movement they deemed more likely to advance their interests, the original party shrank to its core of upper-middle-class urbanites and Zaituna ulama, although many of the younger faculty at the mosque-university, as well as its students, gravitated to the new party. The Neo-Dustur also quickly formed cells in the rural regions that the Dustur had neglected but which, in the depths of the Depression, were ripe for incorporation in the anti-French movement. The cellular structure facilitated communications within the party, making possible the rapid mobilization of the masses that party leaders regarded as their most powerful weapon. Each cell constituted a self-contained entity, with specific, but limited, links to other cells and to the party hierarchy. In this way, the likelihood was lessened that the party would collapse should the government take repressive measures against it – a scenario that the Neo-Dustur's intention of using aggressive tactics to achieve the restoration of full Tunisian sovereignty made virtually inevitable.

As opening gambits, party leaders brought the rank and file into the streets with protests calling on Tunisians to defy the protectorate by



Figure 3.2. Leaders of the Neo Dustur political bureau. The four most prominent driving forces behind the Neo Dustur from its creation in 1934 until the party's suppression on the eve of World War II were, *from left to right*, Habib Bourguiba, Mahmud Matari, Bahri Guiga, and Tahar Sfar.

boycotting French products and refusing to pay taxes. After a summer of demonstrations, Peyrouton struck in early September, arresting Bourguiba and other Neo-Dustur leaders as well as prominent figures in the Parti Communiste Tunisien, which had also increased its activities in response to the stagnant economy. The Neo-Dustur survived the attempt to decapitate it, but on each subsequent occasion that the party tried to mount a public campaign, more arrests ensued. Over the first twenty months of its existence, the political bureau was reconstituted four times as one set of leaders after another – forty-six in all – were incarcerated. Assuming near-dictatorial powers, Peyrouton "the Satrap" demanded nothing less than the total capitulation of the Neo-Dustur as his price for freeing the prisoners, who remained in detention when he left in March 1936 to take up the post of resident general in Morocco.

Their release came three months later, following the victory of the left-wing Popular Front coalition in French parliamentary elections. Willing at least to listen to the grievances of the colonized, officials of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs authorized Resident General Armand Guillon (1936–8) to release the Neo-Dusturians and invited Bourguiba to Paris for talks. Quite familiar and comfortable with the French left from his years as a student in Paris, Bourguiba saw in the government of Léon Blum genuine prospects for ameliorating the political and economic situations in the protectorate. In making the Neo-Dustur case, he specified as priorities the termination of arrangements advantaging French citizens in Tunisia, such as "official" colonization and the "colonial third," along with the installation of a constitutional government. At the same time, he omitted explicitly calling for independence and endorsed the concept of a gradual political evolution that safeguarded legitimate French interests. The Dustur accused its breakaway militants of selling out to gain their freedom. This charge, in conjunction with the continuing downward spiral of the economy, pushed the Neo-Dustur leaders toward stands more intransigent than they might otherwise have adopted. As it pursued its dialogue with the Neo-Dustur, the Popular Front encountered stiff resistance from *colon* interests and from the French military, which feared that loosening the colonial grip on North Africa as a European war loomed could have only negative consequences. Further talks in early 1937 ended with the nationalists and the government still far apart; before the end of the year, the Front collapsed.

The great benefit to the Neo-Dustur of the Popular Front's fifteen months in power was the party's ability, after Guillon lifted the strictures in place since 1933, to recruit and to function openly without fear of repression. *L'Action* reappeared and party membership soared to some seventy thousand organized in more than 450 cells. During 1936 and 1937, party leaders cultivated the Neo-Dustur's image as "the party of the whole nation and the emanation of its desires and its will"[16] by expanding into new regions of the country and by consciously forging ties with youth organizations, cultural societies, sports clubs, and other key interest groups. The Etoile Scout and the Jeunesse Libérale Néo-dusturienne became fixtures at party rallies, with the scouts, who assumed the role of a paramilitary unit, maintaining crowd discipline and accompanying party leaders on their travels outside Tunis. Neo-Dustur influences readily penetrated the modern schools that had produced its leaders, and these institutions, along with the Khalduniyya and the Sadiqi College alumni organization, channeled many young men, and a few women, into the party.

Although the public sphere offered limited opportunities for women, some did participate in Neo-Dustur activities. Chedlia Bouzgarou, whose hometown of Monastir was a hotbed of party activity in the Sahil, coordinated a group of women who joined other protesters in appealing to the bey to intercede with the resident general on behalf of Neo-Dustur prisoners in 1935, and did similar work for subsequent party demonstrations. Another female pioneer, B'chira ben M'rad, created the Association des Femmes Tunisiennes Musulmanes in 1936. In the same year, the Neo-Dustur sponsored the publication, albeit in France, of a women's magazine, *Leila*, which attempted to reconcile traditional and modern views on gender-related issues.[17] Most male Neo-Dustur leaders had no objection to including women in the party and to providing a forum for the discussion of issues particularly relevant to them, but they preferred not to unsettle the social status quo until the battle for national liberation had been won.

The party also made an effort to improve relations between Muslims and Jews, which had deteriorated in the 1930s. The growth of Zionism, and particularly its radical Revisionist manifestation, distressed the minority of Tunisian Muslims familiar with the ideology. But for most Muslims, Jewish commercial and financial dealings, which left many Muslims in their debt, constituted a more immediate irritant, the more so as the economic crisis deepened. After violent clashes between Muslims and Jews in Sfax in the summer of 1932, similar disorders broke out in several towns in the Sahil and in suburban Tunis. The *Action* group denounced Zionism no less vigorously than the Dustur leadership, but the more sophisticated younger men drew the distinction between the religion of Judaism, for which there was a place in the Tunisian nation, and the political concept of Zionism, for which there was not. In 1934, to stress the Tunisian identity of both groups, and their shared grievances with the French, Salah ben Yusuf, a young Neo-Dustur militant destined to play a major role in the party, led a crowd of demonstrators in chanting "the Jews are our brothers."[18] The revival of the Neo-Dustur in 1936 coincided with the eruption of chaos in Palestine, to which party leaders responded with unequivocal condemnations of both Tunisian anti-Semitism and Tunisian Zionism.

Although small in number, Tunisia's artistic community helped to advance Neo-Dustur objectives with its emphasis on dramatic, literary, musical, and visual forms of expression underscoring the country's Arab-Islamic identity and its cultural patrimony that predated, and existed independently of, colonialism. In the first half of the 1930s, al-Tamthil al-'Arabi, the troupe whose origins lay in resistance to European control of the Tunisian theatrical repertoire, made a practice of staging plays based on

events in Arab history or that explored the impact of foreign influences and the cultural clash that came in their wake. Al-Masrah (the Theater), a company founded in 1934, promoted the growth of a specifically Tunisian theater by offering prizes and performance opportunities for works written or translated by Tunisians. Between 1931 and 1936, Muhammad Lahbib, the director of al-Saʿada, the most overtly politicized company, wrote six plays drawn from Arab historical themes, two of them revolving around Tunisian figures of the classical era. At the suggestion of Mustafa Sfar, the mayor of Tunis and a patron of the arts, the city's several troupes merged in 1936 to form al-Ittihad al-Masrahi (the Theatrical Union). In addition to encouraging Tunisian playwrights, the consolidated company also created a division that specialized in developing and staging works focusing on social issues.

Along with these dramatists, the prose and poetry of two Zaituna-trained writers, Tahar Haddad and Abu'l Qasim al-Shabbi, presented themes that supported the nationalist cause and were incorporated into Neo-Dustur thinking. Haddad's innovative essays have already been noted; al-Shabbi's poetry emphasized the dignity of the common people and the value of tradition. Ironically, both men died before the Neo-Dustur truly came into its own, Haddad in 1935 at the age of thirty-six, and al-Shabbi in the previous year at only twenty-five. No writers schooled in the protectorate's modern education system established themselves in the interwar period, although some who later carved niches for themselves on the literary scene – most notably Mahmud al-Mas'adi (best known for his 1955 existentialist drama *al-Sudd*) and ʿAli al-Duʿaji (whose short stories were anthologized only after his death in 1949) – were part of a bohemian coterie known as the Jamaʿa Taht al-Sur (the "Under the Ramparts" Group, from the name of a café they frequented). Its participants also included the singer and actress Fathia Khairi, who performed with a number of theater companies and sang with the orchestra of the Rashidiyya Institute. Khumais Tarnan, a talented musician and composer, founded the institute in 1934 at the instigation of Mayor Sfar and Baron Rudolphe d'Erlanger, the leading European expert on classical Arab music, to preserve and promote Tunisia's Arab-Andalusian musical heritage (*ma'luf*). Tarnan's original compositions and the recordings and concerts of the institute's orchestra ensured that the genre was not totally eclipsed by increasingly popular contemporary Arab and European music. European painters had long flocked to their country, but few Tunisians pursued this largely alien art form. The first artist to distinguish himself was Yahya Turki, whose work began appearing in the late 1920s. He displayed little interest in European trends, and most of his paintings



Figure 3.3. Abu'l Qasim al Shabbi and Khumais Tarnan. The preservation of the traditions of Tunisian culture was an important consideration during the interwar period. Al Shabbi's poetry and Tarnan's music both contributed to this movement.

depicted scenes of everyday life. Like Lahbib's plays, al-Shabbi's poems, and Tarnan's scores, Turki's canvases evoked respect and appreciation for the same Tunisian heritage that the Neo-Dustur defended. This common objective insured a generally warm relationship between nationalist politicians and the artistic community.

ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Thaʿalbi returned from exile in July 1937, believing that his prestige would suffice to restore the unity of the nationalist movement. With the breach closed, the Dustur, under his guidance and adhering to his platform, which now included Tunisian independence, would resume the struggle against the protectorate with renewed vigor. But in Thaʿalbi's absence, the political culture had changed too drastically for that to happen. The Neo-Dustur leaders welcomed him but had no intention of ceding their authority to him. Indeed, they used their party's eight-to-one numerical advantage over its rival to disrupt Thaʿalbi's rallies when he toured the country in August, forcing him into the embarrassing position of requiring a police presence to give his speeches.

When the Popular Front fell in the following month, Bourguiba concluded that the Neo-Dustur had nothing to lose in thwarting Thaʿalbi's attempt to outflank it by assuming a still more radical stand. He asserted that, having failed to win concessions from the Popular Front, none would be forthcoming from a far less liberal Parisian government that, in any case, was focusing on events in Europe. At the autumn 1937 party congress, he warned of the likely extension to Tunisia of the recent suppression of nationalist activities in Morocco and Algeria, and urged his followers to prepare for a direct confrontation with the French. Bourguiba's assessment of the situation carried the day, but only at considerable cost. Several of the Neo-Dustur's highest-ranking members, including Matari, Sfar, and Guiga, resigned in protest over a course of action they deemed dangerous and counterproductive. Nonetheless, they preferred to retire from politics, at least for the moment, rather than rejoin the Dustur.

Even as the Neo-Dustur began to implement its more aggressive strategy, some of its leaders continued to hope that France would yield before the situation spiraled completely out of control. As Europe moved toward war, Slimane ben Slimane, a member of the political bureau, took the occasion of the German annexation of Austria in March 1938 to assure protectorate officials that Tunisians, despite their legitimate grievances, would remain loyal to France if France granted them their basic rights. By alienating the Neo-Dustur, he lamented, France hurt itself as well as the party. In view of well-known Italian overtures to both the Dustur and the Neo-Dustur, such a declaration had real value, but it elicited no response and demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience continued, as did the arrest of militants and party leaders. More than ten thousand Neo-Dusturians participated in a demonstration in Tunis on April 9 to demand the release of the prisoners. When the crowd learned of the arrest of a Sadiqi College instructor who had delivered a fiery speech on the previous evening, a deadly and destructive rampage ensued.

The Neo-Dustur's course of action in the months since the end of the Popular Front had paved the way for such a violent outburst. Nor did Bourguiba necessarily regret it. Although the party accused the police of deliberately provoking the crowd, Mahmud Matari, who remained close to Bourguiba despite their disagreement over tactics, wrote in his memoirs that Bourguiba told him just before the disturbances that to achieve the party's objectives "it was necessary for blood to flow." Neo-Dustur militants among the demonstrators were no doubt on the lookout for situations they could exploit to keep the political situation at a boil.[19] Beyond the numerous deaths and injuries (of which the Tunisians and the French gave

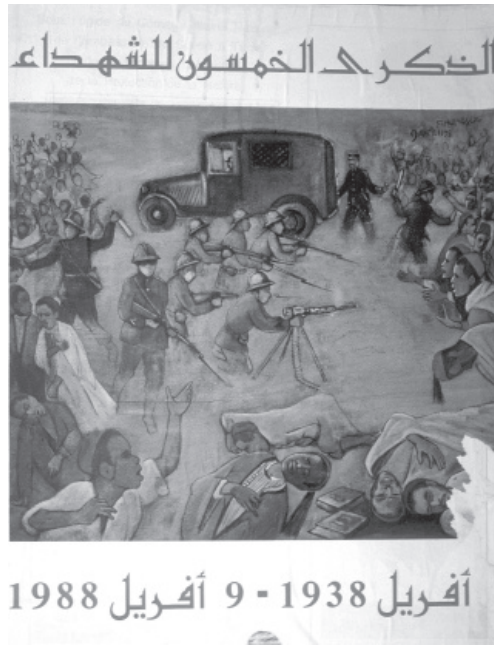


Figure 3.4. Poster commemorating the April 1938 nationalist protests. The most intense anti French demonstration of the interwar period ended with police firing on the crowds (depicted here) and the arrest of virtually all of the Neo Dustur's leaders. This poster marked the fiftieth anniversary of the event.

widely conflicting estimates), the toll of the rioting was high: the dissolution of the Neo-Dustur; the imprisonment of more than seven hundred of its members, including all its key figures; and the imposition of a state of siege rendering political activity by Tunisians virtually impossible. In the government camp, Resident General Guillon also fell victim to the unrest. Powerful businessmen, whom he had alienated by attacking corruption and mismanagement in lucrative public works concessions, added their voices to the chorus faulting him for failing to address the dangers posed by the Neo-Dustur in a more timely fashion. Before the end of the year, Erik Labonne (1938–40) replaced him, armed with a mandate to prepare the protectorate to weather the storm of a European war.

Combining clemency for rank-and-file members of the Neo-Dustur with a tough stand toward those held responsible for the violence, Labonne lifted the state of siege and freed numerous prisoners. The ban on the party continued, however, as did the detention of its top echelon, whose trials

were scheduled to be held in France in the hope of avoiding new demonstrations in Tunisia. Under Habib Thameur, a relatively minor party stalwart who assumed control of the political bureau, the debilitated Neo-Dustur could do little more than campaign for the release of the remaining prisoners. As a European war drew closer, the pro-Axis sympathies expressed by Thameur and some of his associates reflected views widely held among their countrymen. Bourguiba and a few other party officials took exception, however, cautioning that an alliance of convenience with Germany and Italy might rid Tunisia of the French but would prove disastrous in the long term.

As the Neo-Dustur clung to a precarious existence, the Dustur lay low, hoping for an opportunity to benefit from the crippling of its rival. Between 1934 and 1938 neither party could completely drive the other from the political arena. From 1938 until the start of World War II, neither could organize serious opposition to French rule. With both parties down, and quite possibly out for the count, their prospects of reforming the protectorate, much less terminating it, appeared remote. This dire reality, after two decades of nationalist activity, invited a fresh initiative from an unexpected quarter.

CHAPTER 4

Redefining the Relationship, 1940–1956

THE WAR YEARS

Most Tunisians took satisfaction in France's defeat by Germany in June 1940, but the nationalist parties derived no more substantive dividend from the colonial power's humiliation. Following the Franco-German armistice, the government of Marshal Philippe Pétain sent to Tunis as resident general Admiral Jean Esteva (1940–3), who had no intention of permitting a revival of Tunisian political activity. The arrests of Habib Thameur and Taieb Slim, key figures in the Neo-Dustur political bureau and partisans of collaboration with Germany, weakened the party. As had become customary when the Neo-Dustur operated clandestinely, their replacements had been named in advance, but the available cadre consisted primarily of youthful militants with little experience and little chance of eluding the authorities for very long. Sporadic acts of sabotage and terror carried out during 1941 by the Main Noire, a shadowy underground organization, symbolized the nationalists' despair.

The stimulus for renewed opposition to the protectorate came from an improbable source: the palace, where Moncef Bey (1942–3) acceded to the throne in June. The sixty-one-year-old Moncef had cut his political teeth in the 1922 confrontation between Resident General Saint and his father, Nasir Bey, whose streak of defiance toward the French authorities he shared. Rejecting the role of a figurehead, Moncef served notice on Esteva that he expected his subjects and French citizens to enjoy equal treatment. Accordingly, he ordered the extension of the "colonial third" to Tunisian administrators. Moncef toured the country during 1942, dispensing with protocol and making himself accessible to his people in a way that no previous monarch ever had. Well aware that the anti-Semitic propaganda of the Vichy government had triggered clashes between Tunisian Muslims and Jews prior to his accession, the new ruler made a point of expressing his solicitude for the welfare of his Jewish subjects. In a matter of only a few

months, Moncef strode into the political space vacated by the enfeebled parties, supplanting them as the rallying point for the nation and assuming their leaders' mission of articulating grievances to the French. Emboldened by his popularity and success, Moncef called for Esteva's dismissal in October. So straightforward a challenge might have proven his undoing, had not the war impinged directly on Tunisia shortly afterward, altering the political situation in a way that, initially at least, worked to the bey's advantage.

British and US troops landed in Morocco and Algeria in November, opening a North African campaign whose ultimate objective was the capture of Tunisia and its use as a jumping-off point for an invasion of Sicily. When Vichy commanders negotiated a cease-fire, Germany seized the Vichy-administered area of France and Tunisia. German forces poured into the protectorate, halting the Allied advance along a front through the center of the country. Both the Allies and the Axis vied for Tunisian support, but Moncef judiciously declined to take sides. Nevertheless, Esteva intercepted the bey's letters to the US and British governments containing his pledges of neutrality. With the Germans Moncef maintained a careful and correct relationship that neither endorsed their war aims nor provided them with a justification to unseat him.

Shortly after occupying southern France, Germany remanded Bourguiba and the other Neo-Dusturians imprisoned there to its Italian partners, who hoped that the Tunisians would broadcast anti-French propaganda while "guests" of the Fascist state. Certain that Germany would also free political prisoners in the protectorate in a bid to turn them against France, Esteva himself ordered their release in December. Many of them had advocated an alliance with Germany and viewed the occupation as a prelude to the collapse of French rule. The pro-German Habib Thameur, who resumed his 1938–41 position as head of the political bureau, was quite prepared to work with officials of the Third Reich, despite the reproaches of Bourguiba and others. Ordinary Tunisians, however, increasingly resented German food requisitions and labor mobilization as the military campaign continued into spring 1943. To the exceptional financial levies and other discriminatory practices that befell Tunisian Jews fewer objections were raised, but the bey made no attempt to conceal his displeasure.

The Neo-Dustur recovered some of its past strength, but Moncef held uncontested sway over the political arena. Although unwilling to throw in his lot with Germany, he did use the opportunity offered by the occupation to take a bold political step that his nemesis Esteva would never have allowed had not the Germans compelled him to do so in the interest of

not antagonizing a ruler whom they preferred to have as a friend with reservations rather than as an active enemy. Using this leverage, Moncef appointed the first truly Tunisian government since the beginning of the protectorate. He drew from a broad political spectrum, the most prominent figures in which were M'hammed Chenik (from the pro-Allied wing of the Neo-Dustur), the prime minister; Mahmud Matari (an independent, but still widely seen as aligned with the Neo-Dustur); and Salah Farhat (Dustur).

Even before Moncef took this bold step, a shrill chorus of settlers and officials in Algeria, where the Free French supplanted the Vichy authorities after the landings, had begun to denounce him as a German collaborator. With a powerful Allied offensive in the spring foreshadowing an Axis defeat in Tunisia, *colons* and administrators there made similar accusations. In early May, British, US, and Free French forces bottled up almost a quarter of a million German and Italian soldiers on the Cap Bon peninsula. Several thousand escaped by sea, but most surrendered, ending the North African campaign. After assuming responsibility for the protectorate, the Free French moved quickly, exiling Moncef to Algeria and forcing his abdication in favor of his cousin Amin (1943–57). General Alphonse Juin, the military commander in Tunisia after the liberation, doubted that the bey had compromised himself with the Axis and tried to prevent his ouster. But the French community demanded its pound of flesh, and Juin feared a movement to abolish the monarchy altogether if the vengeful settlers were denied the satisfaction of unseating Moncef. The collaboration charges provided a pretext, but it was the bey's defiance of the French that cost him his throne. Resident General Charles Mast (1943–7) steadfastly refused to countenance any discussion of the return to Tunis of "the sovereign [who] had become, if not the chief, at least the standard-bearer of the nationalists."[1] Yet even in exile, and even as other forces asserted themselves, the former bey continued to influence Tunisian politics.

During his sojourn in Italy, Bourguiba proved of little value to his hosts, since he insisted on a commitment to Tunisian independence as the price for his cooperation. In any case, the impending defeat of the Axis in North Africa put paid to Italian ambitions there. Thus he was repatriated in April 1943. Because the reappearance of the Neo-Dustur had coincided with the German occupation and been directed by Thameur and Slim; because Chenik, a prominent Neo-Dusturian (albeit one known for his Allied sympathies), had participated in Moncef's government of Tunisians; and because the French authorities downplayed Bourguiba's condemnation of collaboration, Mast took a dim view of the Neo-Dustur as the former party



Figure 4.1. General Charles de Gaulle, Amin Bey, and Resident General Charles Mast, 1943. Installed following the deposition of Moncef Bey, Amin spent his reign navigating between the French authorities and the nationalists. When Tunisia was proclaimed a republic in 1957, he abdicated, ending the Husainid Dynasty that had reigned for more than two and a half centuries.

chief sought to reaffirm his control over the still outlawed organization. Juin disparaged Bourguiba as a tool of the Axis, but US diplomats, with whom he had initiated contacts (through his wife and son) while still a Vichy prisoner, provided evidence of his loyalty that shielded him from French reprisals. Other high-ranking party militants, however, fled Tunisia just before or after the liberation, either because they had worked with the Germans or because they doubted that French vengeance would discriminate between divergent strands in the nationalist movement. Mast's desire

to restore the prewar status quo justified their concerns. Between May and December, four thousand Tunisians were interned in prison camps.[2]

This sweep primarily targeted Neo-Dusturians, but it also rounded up key members of the "Moncefist Committee" created by the former bey's brother Hassine and others in his entourage soon after the deposition. The committee drew support for the reinstatement of Moncef from the Dustur and the Parti Réformiste (largely spent forces whose fortunes could only improve through association with the popular ruler), as well as from activist students and faculty of the Zaituna mosque-university and members of the Parti Communiste Tunisien, but not from the Neo-Dustur. Bourguiba saw no merit in easing the misfortunes that had befallen the one Tunisian political figure capable of short-circuiting the Neo-Dustur's own renaissance or subordinating its agenda to his own. The resident general's repressive tactics limited the immediate impact of this Moncefist bloc, but its existence worried French officials, who also kept a wary eye on Bourguiba and Salah ben Yusuf, now Bourguiba's key deputy and the Neo-Dustur's secretary-general.

As the two men set about rebuilding the shattered Neo-Dustur in 1943 and 1944, they expressed the view that the war would leave France a second-tier power, dependent on Britain and the United States and far less able than in the past to stifle nationalist demands, particularly those formulated by leaders, like Bourguiba, who had developed a relationship with the Allies. They recommended that the party maintain a low profile, refraining from provoking the protectorate authorities, but that it prepare to make political capital of French weaknesses as they revealed themselves. Their vision of self-rule under a Tunisian government in which Neo-Dusturians had prominent roles accorded with the December 1943 remark of Charles de Gaulle, the head of the provisional French government, that "we ought to move towards making the administration of Tunisia a Tunisian administration. . . . Direct administration is outmoded."[3] Likewise, it found an echo among members of the Tunisian section of the Grand Council, including Tahar ben ʿAmmar, a founding father of the Dustur who had pursued an independent political course since the late 1920s. Slowly but systematically the party began to recoup its losses, with the resident general estimating its strength at one hundred thousand in late 1944.[4]

Despite this impressive figure, the Neo-Dustur was operating on shaky ground. It remained proscribed, the intensity of its members' commitments varied and was untested, and it had to reckon with the Moncef loyalists who held the political high ground. Although they refused to put the Neo-Dustur's assets at the disposal of its rivals by taking the party into the

coalition supporting the former bey, Bourguiba and ben Yusuf also appreciated the risks of criticizing the movement, much less attempting to shoulder it aside, as long as Moncef remained an icon of Tunisian opposition to France. They made a public show of deference to the deposed ruler but assiduously avoided acknowledging his authority. In these circumstances, they and other top Neo-Dusturians welcomed the opportunity to work with a diverse group of prominent opponents of French rule to formulate a "Manifesto of the Tunisian Front" in February 1945.

THE NEO-DUSTUR REBORN

The gulf between the manifesto's core demand for self-government and an anodyne reform package Mast introduced in the same month doomed to failure the first overture to the nationalists in almost a decade. The Parti Communiste Tunisien alone endorsed the plan, arguing that only solidarity between France and its dependencies could protect both from the clutches of Britain and the United States in the postwar world, a perspective decidedly at variance with the Neo-Dustur leaders' conception of allegiances. Situating the nationalist movement in the context of the looming East-West struggle created a rift between the communists and the Neo-Dustur that persisted well beyond the colonial period. Employing a tactic from his days as a political journalist, Bourguiba sought to undercut the PCT's appeal by decrying the discrepancy between the communists' imported ideology and traditional Tunisian values.

The attempt to placate the nationalists with insignificant concessions convinced Bourguiba that only a combination of Tunisian opposition and international pressure on France would create a political climate conducive to terminating French rule. He left for Egypt in March 1945 to solicit the help of the recently created League of Arab States. In Cairo he, Thameur, Slim, and other political refugees formed the Bureau d'Information du Néo-Destour. The Tunisians joined forces with Algerian and Moroccan nationalists in 1947 to create the Bureau du Maghreb Arabe and then participated in the Comité de Libération d'Afrique du Nord, launched in 1948 under the chairmanship of the Moroccan resistance leader ʿAbd al-Krim, a recent escapee from French custody. Despite the efforts of these organizations, the members of the League of Arab States provided little assistance. Influential countries such as Egypt and Iraq had poor relations with Britain and thought better of simultaneously antagonizing France. More to the point, however, problems closer to the Middle East, and particularly the question of Palestine, relegated North African issues to a

back burner. Bourguiba shifted his public relations campaign from the Arab world to Europe and North America.

Within Tunisia, French unwillingness to carry out meaningful reforms met with anger and hostility. On top of the rising tensions in the protectorate, virulent clashes between Algerian nationalists and *colons* in Sétif on V-E Day sent shock waves across all French North Africa. A few months later, in a drive to dampen nationalist fervor, the French authorities transferred Moncef to France and briefly detained ben Yusuf, who had assumed the mantle of Neo-Dustur leadership from Bourguiba. Rather than diminishing his impact, putting distance between Moncef and his partisans enhanced his image as a martyr. Representatives of all strands of opposition to the French, meeting in August 1946, categorically rejected Tunisian membership in the recently devised French Union. Instead, they pronounced themselves in favor of the exiled bey's immediate restoration and the acknowledgment of full, unrestricted independence. Ben Yusuf not only gave Neo-Dustur backing to this program but also spoke forcefully on its behalf. That the secretary-general's alignment with his Moncefist rivals represented a tactical move rather than a genuine desire to close ranks became evident with the appointment of a new resident general whose socialist background hinted at a loosening of the French grip.

Shortly after his arrival, Jean Mons (1947–50) met with prominent figures from all the nationalist factions to learn their views on a "co-sovereignty" regime: a Tunisian prime minister (under the continuing supervision of the secretary-general) presiding over a mixed cabinet of Tunisian and French ministers, with the former more numerous than before. The resident general's discussions revealed important differences among the parties. Salah Farhat, who, following Tha'albi's death in 1944, again led the Dustur, dismissed Mons's plan as falling far short of the requirements enunciated the previous summer. Ben Yusuf, on the other hand, showed more interest. While committed to independence, he nonetheless expressed a willingness to proceed in stages and without the restoration of Moncef.

Despite the certainty of ongoing French control under the proposal, many of the one hundred thirty thousand French settlers, businessmen, and bureaucrats condemned it as inimical to their interests. With the right-wing Rassemblement Français de Tunisie having won 60 percent of the votes in the 1946 constitutional referendum establishing the Fourth French Republic and holding thirty-five of the fifty-four seats on the Grand Council, Mons could not discount its insistence that the French (less than 4 percent of Tunisia's population) would never accept subordination to the Tunisian majority. In a pointed barb drawing a parallel between the

attachment of the French to North Africa and the Muslims to the Iberian Peninsula, Antoine Colonna, the founder of the Rassemblement, expressed his contempt for the resident general by suggesting that he would end his administration much as Abu ʿAbdallah, the last Muslim king of Granada, had ended his reign – weeping like a woman over what he could not defend like a man.[5]

The implementation of the reforms by the appointment of Mustafa Kaak, a lawyer open to cooperating with France, as prime minister and the exclusion from the cabinet of both the Dustur and Neo-Dustur satisfied no one. For the nationalists, it was too little; for the *prépondérants*, even this essentially meaningless nod in the direction of giving Tunisians a voice in the management of the protectorate appeared as the thin edge of a wedge that would sooner or later pry open the door to self-government. Kaak's minimal support evaporated further in August 1947, when police in Sfax fired on workers participating in a nationwide general strike called by the recently established Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT), killing twenty-nine and injuring one hundred fifty.

The unceremonious demise of the Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens in 1925 and a failed attempt to revive it in 1936 had left the organization of Tunisian labor in the hands of the French Confédération Générale des Travailleurs (CGT) and its Tunisian affiliate, the Union Départmentale des Syndicats de Tunisie (UDST). Distaste for the communists, who controlled both unions, prompted Farhat Hached, a veteran UDST activist in Sfax, to establish the UGTT in 1946. He and most of the twelve thousand workers who followed him into the new union were avowed nationalists. Indeed, some powerful labor leaders, such as Habib ʿAchour, who succeeded Hached at the head of the Sfax local, already enjoyed some standing in the Neo-Dustur. Nevertheless, the UGTT cultivated a distinctive identity based on the belief that the social and economic liberation of Tunisian workers required the liberation of the Tunisian state from colonialism. The union applauded ben Yusuf's efforts to rebuild the Neo-Dustur and encouraged its members to join the party, giving it a significant labor constituency for the first time in its history. But with the future prospects of the Neo-Dustur still in doubt, and the nationalist movement badly fractured, the audacity of the 1947 general strike propelled the UGTT into the vanguard of the opposition to French rule.

The UGTT did not, however, have a monopoly on the organization of Tunisian labor. A few months after its founding, the UDST separated from the CGT, became the Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Tunisiens (USTT) and offered workers a communist Franco-Tunisian union, with



Figure 4.2. Labor leaders Farhat Hached and M'hammed 'Ali. The political agenda of the short lived CGTT, founded by M'hammed 'Ali in the 1920s, provided a model for Hached when he organized the UGTT and tied it closely to the Neo Dustur in the years following World War II.

an ideology built around class struggle, as an alternative to the UGTT. As the two unions vied for the loyalty of Tunisian workers, they created antagonisms analogous to those between the Parti Communiste Tunisien and the Neo-Dustur. Hached and his USTT rivals also competed for legitimization within the global labor movement. The World Federation of Trade Unions (WFTU), an influential umbrella organization, denied the UGTT's application for admission on the grounds that limiting its membership to Tunisians was racist – an assessment revealing the WFTU's failure to appreciate the circumstances of colonialism, and one which Hached refuted vehemently. On the other hand, the USTT gained admission within weeks of its formation. Hached had misgivings about the WFTU's communist leanings, but he put them aside in the belief that international recognition and the contacts attendant on affiliation with the federation were crucial to the UGTT.

Given the WFTU's preference for communist organizations, it promoted either the subordination of the UGTT to the USTT or a merger

that dissolved the former into the latter. Hached and his colleagues regarded such outcomes as variations on the theme of "co-sovereignty," which they refused to countenance on either the labor or the political front. Following the Sfax tragedy, the USTT chastised UGTT decision makers for playing into the government's hands to the detriment of all workers. Later in the year, Hached broke off contact with the USTT until such time as the WFTU admitted the UGTT. That occurred in 1949, but even then Hached resisted any attempt to bring the two groups together. The ideological gap between them was too wide, and the UGTT simply could not accommodate itself to the USTT's willingness to embrace members of any nationality, which resulted in the organization having a French majority. In any case, the UGTT's numerical edge over its rival negated the need for it to compromise. More anxious to develop national consciousness than class consciousness, the UGTT swelled its ranks with the addition of associations representing not only salaried workers but also teachers, bureaucrats, and other tertiary-sector employees. By the end of the decade, its strength had increased to nearly fifty thousand, while the USTT's numbers remained static. In 1950 the UGTT withdrew from the WFTU and affiliated with the recently created International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), whose anticommunism and Anglo-Saxon leadership were more to Hached's liking.

Resident General Mons also sought to smash the UGTT. He reacted to the 1947 general strike by removing union representatives from national boards, thus greatly impairing the UGTT's ability to influence decisions affecting its members' welfare. Amin Bey flatly rejected Mons's demand that he dissolve the union. To the contrary, he expressed his condolences to the victims and contributed heavily to a fund for their support. He also granted an audience to a UGTT delegation that impressed upon him the plight of ordinary Tunisians, who were seeing postwar inflation and the devaluation of the French (and Tunisian) franc slash their purchasing power just as a severe drought caused food shortages throughout the country and famine conditions in some particularly hard-hit areas.[6] Although ben Yusuf and a few other Neo-Dusturians with connections to the royal family had been attempting to draw Amin into their camp for some time, the bey had shown little inclination to challenge the protectorate authorities. Both his indignation with them and his compassion for his subjects caught up in the violence at Sfax appear to have been genuine expressions of his convictions rather than acts calculated to improve his image among those Tunisians who regarded his accession to the throne as an act of usurpation.

Even amid the political and social turmoil of the postwar era, the arts continued to reinforce the nationalist cause through their exaltation of Tunisian identity. The stage had fallen dark during the war but came back to life in 1945, when the Tunis Municipal Council renewed its patronage by sponsoring the Comité de Défense du Théâtre Tunisien. Its ambitious program included subsidizing the translation into Arabic of foreign plays set in Tunisia, the adaptation of European novels about Tunisia for the Arab stage, the presentation of original plays based on Tunisian history, and the establishment of the Ecole d'Art Dramatique, which opened in 1951. Radio broadcasting offered a new medium for disseminating dramatic works and other forms of entertainment, as well as news. Private radio stations dated from the mid-1930s and the government-operated Radio-Tunis went on the air in 1939, but all shut down during the war. When Radio-Tunis obtained a broadcasting monopoly in 1948, 45 percent of its programming was in Arabic.

A new postwar generation of Tunisian painters followed the lead of already established artists in emphasizing traditional Tunisian life and values. Despite sometimes stark differences between their styles and techniques, their desire to develop an authentically Tunisian artistic personality honoring the country's symbols and expressing them in modern forms brought them together in 1948 as the "Ecole de Tunis." Its adherents, almost all of them in their twenties at the time, would exert a powerful influence on Tunisian art for the next several decades.

The death of Moncef Bey in September 1948 altered the balance of political forces in the protectorate. Deprived of its raison d'être, the Moncefist coalition disintegrated. Ben Yusuf had worked hard to position the Neo-Dustur to capitalize on this moment, and when it came none of the party's rivals could prevent it from resuming its former domination of the nationalist movement. His overtures to Amin developed into a sympathetic relationship between the monarch and the Neo-Dustur that enhanced the standing of the party. At the other end of the socioeconomic spectrum, the party's developing relationship with the UGTT gave the Neo-Dustur an entrée to the Tunisian masses, although its continuing illegality made large public gatherings infeasible. Party leaders avoided antagonizing the French authorities, particularly after conveying to Mons their willingness to participate in a government of reform. On two potentially volatile occasions in 1948 – the tenth anniversary of April 9, 1938, and Moncef's death – ben Yusuf and his lieutenants dissuaded their followers from challenging the forces of order.

As he had from his first days in the Neo-Dustur, ben Yusuf insisted that it should represent all Tunisians. Under his tutelage, the party expanded

deeper into areas of the country beyond its traditional bases in the Sahil and Tunis, increasing its membership by 1950 to two hundred ten thousand in 260 cells.[7] Following Bourguiba's departure, the secretary-general welcomed into the Neo-Dustur many civil servants and bourgeois capitalists who discerned advantages in distancing themselves from a France shaken by its recent history and contemplating changes in the protectorate that boded ill for their prestige and power. As the party emerged in 1948 from its enforced inactivity, it included substantial new infusions of government employees – from clerks and schoolteachers to *qaids* and *khalifas* – and of entrepreneurs, two groups once scorned by its leaders. Some of the new members even sat on the Grand Council, whose delegates had rarely seen eye to eye with the Neo-Dustur before the war. The educational and financial resources of these new recruits helped them to acquire positions of influence in the party. In the late 1940s, 42 percent of its leaders (at all levels) also held government jobs, as opposed to a mere 6 percent before the war.[8]

As a native of the island of Jerba, whose people customarily migrated to urban centers to engage in retail trade, Salah ben Yusuf moved comfortably among the businessmen who were gaining new importance in the Neo-Dustur. In 1948, he engaged the party, along with the UGTT, in the creation of a business federation, the Union Tunisien de l'Artisanat et du Commerce (UTAC). The UTAC reflected a shift in the sources of Neo-Dustur support in the business community. Many merchants of long standing in the party objected to the term *commerce* (business), preferring what was for most of them the more accurate phrase *petits commerçants* (shopkeepers). As they feared, wealthier and more powerful entrepreneurs dominated the UTAC, and their financial backing as the Neo-Dustur got back on its feet lessened the smaller merchants' influence in the party.

Before the war, Neo-Dustur encouragement of efforts to update the Zaituna mosque-university curriculum – a recurrent but largely unachieved theme during much of the 1930s – had gained the approval of many students and progressive faculty members. Ben Yusuf had been a familiar figure at Zaituna, contributing to its politicization and cementing Neo-Dustur links with its student organizations, some of which participated in the demonstrations of April 1938.[9] But with the Neo-Dustur in eclipse thereafter, Zaituna activists had to fend for themselves. When political activity resumed at the mosque-university following the liberation, parochial concerns again mixed with national issues. A 1944 faculty congress conflated a demand for reforms with one for the restoration of Moncef Bey.

Ben Yusuf viewed the revitalization of the party's Zaituna alliance as important, but Bourguiba preferred to concentrate on the more secular

components of the party. Although Ahmad ben Salah, a young Neo-Dustur militant, inaugurated a joint Zaituna-Sadiki student commission in 1944 to lobby for improvements at the mosque-university, Moncefism dominated postwar Zaituna activism. At the same time, pan-Arabism and pan-Islam attracted many mosque-university students and faculty, as they did other Moncefists. The formation of the League of Arab States, the crisis in Palestine, and the establishment of Pakistan as a Muslim state all had an impact on Tunisians with a strong sense of Arab and Islamic identity. Nonetheless, two facts became clear very shortly after Moncef's death: Palestine preoccupied the League of Arab States, which never seriously tackled the issue of colonialism in North Africa, despite the work of the émigrés in Cairo; and the Neo-Dustur was the only viable Tunisian political organization in the protectorate. Zaituna activists responded positively to ben Yusuf's appeals to reconnect with the party, in which they soon constituted an Arab- and Islamic-oriented wing that coexisted, sometimes uncomfortably, with the secular, more or less Westernized, nationalists who constituted its majority.

As the chief architect of the Neo-Dustur's reconstruction, and of its connection (or reconnection) with crucial social and economic forces, Secretary-General ben Yusuf established the Neo-Dustur as the sole valid interlocutor with France in the protectorate. In the process, he garnered sufficient personal prestige and influence to lead the party in a direction of his choosing. His willingness, at the outset of Mons's administration, to accept a gradualist approach toward the determination of Tunisia's political future if that were the price of serving in the government was a tactic born of the circumstances of the moment, for he had always favored immediate and unrestricted independence and did so forcefully after Moncef's death. Ben Yusuf warned the French that time was running out. The protecting power had to demonstrate its commitment to end the protectorate; the reinvigorated and unrivaled Neo-Dustur would no longer tolerate insincere avowals, insignificant concessions, and other delaying tactics.

BRINGING DOWN THE CURTAIN

But, in a sense, time was running out for ben Yusuf as well. Habib Bourguiba had never relinquished the presidency of the Neo-Dustur. From Cairo he closely followed events in Tunisia, not all of which were unfolding to his liking. He questioned some of ben Yusuf's decisions and doubted the wisdom of drawing into the Neo-Dustur some of the groups favored by his deputy. Bourguiba also feared that the secretary-general

would provoke a showdown with France that could easily spiral out of control. On a more personal level, his own prolonged absence had detached him from the day-to-day management of party affairs and he bristled at ben Yusuf's growing popularity. The protectorate authorities knew of Bourguiba's concerns and, with an eye toward promoting dissension within the party, Mons conveyed to Bourguiba an assurance that nothing stood in the way of his return to Tunisia.

Realizing that his attempts to marshal international support had reached an impasse, at least for the moment, Bourguiba left Egypt in September 1949. Both he and ben Yusuf understood the resident general's motives and assiduously avoided playing into his hands. Bourguiba toured the country, sometimes in the company of ben Yusuf, drawing reassuringly large crowds everywhere he went. Consummate politician that he was, he quickly sized up the situation in the protectorate. He recognized the assets that the bourgeois elements ben Yusuf had recruited in his absence brought to the party and implicitly acknowledged the secretary-general's prescience in this matter. But the tensions between the two men were real – on the personal level, with regard to tactics, and in terms of their increasingly divergent global orientations (ben Yusuf to the Arab and Islamic worlds, Bourguiba to the West) – and they eyed each other warily.

The failure of the 1947 reforms, the death of Moncef Bey in the following year, and the reemergence of the Neo-Dustur as a force to be reckoned with thereafter all combined to produce a volatile political atmosphere in the protectorate. The 1949 decision of the United Nations to grant independence to Libya a year hence threatened to provide the detonating spark if Tunisians' own more fully articulated nationalist aspirations remained unfulfilled. Just before the end of the year, the French minister of foreign affairs, Robert Schuman, admitted the urgency of devising a policy accommodating both Tunisian and French requirements. His announcement prompted Amin Bey to align himself more publicly with the Neo-Dustur. The monarch undoubtedly hoped for the popularity that his predecessor had accrued by opposing the protectorate and that the Moroccan sultan Muhammad V had also been acquiring by his defiance of the French. Amin also sought to preclude his marginalization by the nationalist leaders, who would inevitably take the lead in any negotiations. The bey's clearest statement of his views came in May 1950, a month after Bourguiba had laid out a detailed Neo-Dustur proposal – the first in a succession of attempts that dragged on over the next five years to redefine the Franco-Tunisian relationship.

The plan emphasized placing meaningful power in Tunisian hands – a government of Tunisians appointed by the bey, the abolition of the

contrôleurs civils, the holding of municipal elections, and the creation of a national assembly mandated to write a constitution and to determine a course for Franco-Tunisian relations that respected both Tunisian sovereignty and French interests. Bourguiba called for cooperation and stressed that the Neo-Dustur wished to avert conflict. Tunisia was

> too weak militarily and too strong strategically to do without the assistance of a great power. To the extent that it will admit the legitimacy of our demands, we want that power to be France, and we are fully prepared to cooperate with it on a footing of equality between our two people.[10]

But he warned that rejecting legitimate Tunisian expectations might make conflict unavoidable. This first official statement of Neo-Dustur policy since Bourguiba had retaken the helm of the party made it clear that the objective of negotiations was independence. Whether this was to be immediate or accomplished incrementally and, if the latter, over how long a period and with what intermediate arrangements, remained contentious issues within the party.

France accepted the Tunisian proposal as a basis for further discussions, although the Rassemblement dismissed it out of hand, insisting on the nonnegotiability of co-sovereignty, which preserved *colon* influence in governing the country. Inasmuch as co-sovereignty was also nonnegotiable from the nationalists' perspective, a diametric opposition developed. In any case, the Tunisians considered only the French government, not the settlers, as a legitimate negotiating partner – a reasonable view but one certain to complicate any conversations. Already having failed to shepherd one reform process to a successful conclusion, Mons resigned in June. Schuman stated the task of his replacement, Louis Périllier (1950–2), with unambiguous clarity: "to lead Tunisia towards independence." But no sooner had Périllier arrived in Tunis than the new resident general began to backpedal, declaring that he hoped to guide Tunisia "by progressive institutional modifications towards internal autonomy."[11]

The resident general's waffling cast doubt on the willingness of the French government to stay its course in the face of pressure from the right, whether in the form of *colons* in the protectorate or parliamentarians and other politicians in France. Neo-Dustur leaders anxiously awaited Périllier's first move. To their satisfaction, M'hammd Chenik became prime minister in a cabinet composed equally of Frenchmen and Tunisians including Salah ben Yusuf (as minister of justice) and several independents sympathetic to the Neo-Dustur. Despite apoplectic recriminations by the Rassemblement, the resignation of almost all the French members of the Grand Council, and charges of

collaboration from some nationalist quarters, the ministry unveiled a proposal in February 1951 that envisioned, for the first time in seventy years, a fully Tunisian ministry and, for the first time in sixty-eight, a prime minister free from the control of the secretary-general. The Neo-Dustur spurned the plan for offering too little, the settlers for offering too much.

Dustur leaders pointed to the impasse as evidence that in their eagerness to enter the government the Neo-Dusturians had either been duped by the French or had conspired with them to thwart the negotiations. Such criticisms from its all-but-defunct former rival mattered little to the Neo-Dustur, but it took more seriously those emanating from within. A small leftist contingent attacked the party's growing bourgeois appearance and its friendly relationship with Amin Bey, but it was the party members and sympathizers who denounced cooperation with the protectorate authorities as a sellout (associated with the return of Bourguiba) that posed the greatest potential problem. Bourguiba's allies met this challenge by disseminating an adulatory pamphlet entitled *Habib Bourguiba: Pages de son combat*. Omitting all but negative references to party leaders, regardless of their past importance, who had questioned the *za'im* (leader), the publication portrayed Bourguiba as the only suitable leader, spokesman, and policy maker of the Neo-Dustur.[12]

Detractors still unmoved by this rather crude propaganda were brought into line through more forceful methods. Among them were Zaituna students, who had mounted protests against the Chenik ministry from its inception, often turning out thousands of demonstrators. As in the past, political and educational concerns fused together. In 1950 Sawt al-Talib al-Zaituni (the Voice of the Zaituna Student), a committee that had enjoyed the patronage of the Neo-Dustur since its founding three years earlier, published its "Sixteen-Point Charter," which was designed to raise the mosque-university from the lowly status accorded it under the protectorate and to replace the existing school system with one of Arab-Islamic inspiration that would employ Zaituna graduates. The Chenik government accepted the charter in principle, briefly damping down student hostility. But it lacked the ability to implement the demands, and student needling of the government, and of the Neo-Dustur, continued.

In November, critics of the government, with the Zaituna students in the forefront, held Chenik, his cabinet, and, by extension, the Neo-Dustur responsible for a police assault on protesters in the town of Enfidaville that left seven people dead and dozens injured. Sawt al-Talib al-Zaituni demanded the convocation of a Neo-Dustur congress to purge leaders who had, in its estimation, turned against the Tunisian people. Bourguiba

and the Western-oriented modernists who dominated the political bureau prodded party youth groups to confront the members of Sawt al-Talib al-Zaituni in street clashes – an uncharacteristically reckless response that inevitably inflamed matters. Neo-Dustur officials encouraged students to disavow Sawt al-Talib al-Zaituni and form an independent organization that the party promptly brought under its tutelage. Over the next three years the Neo-Dustur marginalized the opposition at the mosque-university and consolidated its supporters there into the Comité National des Etudiants Zeytouinens. This fracturing of the Zaituna student body reflected the gap between Bourguiba's modernist Francophile wing of the party and its more traditionally oriented components. Ben Yusuf, who had courted the latter in the rebuilding of the party, maintained a low profile throughout this process, but it greatly discomfited him. The taming of its Zaituna adversaries served the immediate needs of the Neo-Dustur but imbued the students with a reservoir of ill will that guaranteed future problems.

The Chenik government soldiered on, introducing a revised reform program in October 1951. As usual, a government of Tunisians answering to an elected assembly formed its core, but it left France in control of Tunisia's defenses and diplomatic relations and acknowledged the legitimacy of a number of specific French interests. The Neo-Dustur reacted more prudently than it had to the government's first proposal, in part so as not to jeopardize the legalization it had secured in the interim, but also to avoid fostering an image of intransigence and negativism abroad, where its leaders were again soliciting support. When Farhat Hached, whose break with the WFTU had made him a favorite in the noncommunist trade union movement, visited the United States in 1951 at the invitation of the American Federation of Labor, Bourguiba accompanied him. The union provided them with a platform for familiarizing the American public with the links between trade unionism and nationalism in colonial societies. Both men emphasized the moderation of the movements they led, their anticommunism, and their willingness to negotiate with France.

The Rassemblement equally reviled Chenik for putting the plan forward and Périllier for allowing him to do so. Repudiating the resident general, the *colons* appealed directly to sympathizers in the French government, insisting on the categorical rejection of any arrangement not embracing the concept of co-sovereignty. Their attitudes were the fruit of seven decades of colonialism in the protectorate, but the timing of the Bourguiba-Hached foray to the United States intensified *colon* antipathy and helped their cause in Paris. Since the end of World War II, American businessmen had discovered Tunisia. American companies held a majority interest in the Société Nord-Africaine

des Pétroles, which was prospecting for oil in the protectorate, and US diplomats extolled the profitability of investments in agriculture, irrigation projects, small factories, and tourism. The French settlers – and many of their countrymen across the Mediterranean – distrusted American commercial intentions across North Africa and looked askance at Tunisians who promoted ties between the two countries.

The French government's response to the Chenik proposal came in December and revealed the effectiveness of the Rassemblement's campaign. It affirmed that the settlers' participation in fulfilling the mission of the protectorate, and particularly in developing the economy, made their exclusion from Tunisian political institutions unthinkable. In positing this principle as the basis for future discussions, Paris scrapped the concept of internal autonomy, much less independence – a reversal that it underscored by recalling the resident general ostensibly dispatched to lead Tunisia to independence. Jean de Hautecloque (1952–3), a Quai d'Orsay official better known for his links to conservative French political circles than for his diplomatic skills, replaced Périllier.[13] A firestorm roared through Tunisia. In a rare show of unanimity indicative of the magnitude of resentment, the Dustur and the USTT joined the Neo-Dustur and the UGTT in a three-day general strike. Bourguiba and Chenik each concluded that further negotiations were futile, and each changed course as the new year began. Echoing the rhetoric he had employed in 1937 to harden the stance of the Neo-Dustur, Bourguiba urged his followers to prepare for "combat on a grand scale. A revolt is going to develop and blood is going to flow."[14] France, he warned, risked losing everything. Chenik expressed his frustration by adopting a strategy Bourguiba had been urging on him for some time. He sent two of his ministers, Salah ben Yusuf and Muhammed Badra, to Paris to lodge a complaint with the United Nations that France was in violation of its treaties with Tunisia.

Hautecloque lost no time in doing what he had been sent to do, but he plunged the protectorate into turmoil in the process. The arrest of most of the Neo-Dusturian leadership incited riots that took the lives of several dozen participants, policemen, and soldiers. In retaliation for particularly fierce opposition in the Cap Bon area (where many residents possessed weapons abandoned by retreating German troops a decade earlier), Foreign Legionnaires conducted a brutal search-and-destroy operation to root out nationalists. They killed and captured some militants but also caused the death or injury of scores of innocent persons and the extensive destruction of homes, fields, and other property. The sweep hardened opposition to the French throughout the country.



Figure 4.3. Place des Martyrs, Sousse. The statue memorializes nine demonstrators killed in January 1952 while protesting the refusal of France to grant autonomy to Tunisia.

Since taking office Hautecloque had pressured the bey to dismiss Chenik. The seventy-three-year-old Amin held his ground as long as he dared, but the arrest of Chenik and all but one of the Tunisians in his cabinet, along with thousands of Neo-Dusturians and UGTT members, frightened him, as did reports of the Moroccan resident general's recent abusive treatment of Sultan Muhammad V. With no reason to believe that Hautecloque would not follow suit, and isolated from potential supporters, the bey yielded, naming another septuagenarian and former *qaid* who was sure to toe Hautecloque's line, Salaheddin Baccouche, as prime minister in March. Anxious for himself, his family, and his dynasty, the elderly ruler saw no other option, but his collapse angered some Neo-Dustur leaders. In an ironic bid to lend credibility to his government, Baccouche named Hedi Nouira, who sat on the Neo-Dustur political bureau and, remarkably, remained at liberty, to a cabinet position. When Nouira refused to accept a portfolio, he too was jailed.

Falling back on the Neo-Dustur's proven method of survival, middle-level cadres managed the party while key leaders were in detention or overseas (ben Yusuf and Badra had fled Paris for Cairo one step ahead of the French police). But it was Farhat Hached who emerged as the de facto

leader of the nationalist movement after the 1952 arrests. In the crucible of French repression, the already numerous linkages between party and union, reflected in their extensively overlapping constituencies, evolved into an almost total identification between the two as the union subordinated its social and economic agenda to political action. The networks and skills of UGTT organizers enabled them easily to mobilize their fifty-six thousand members for anti-French demonstrations, thus ensuring that the voice of the Neo-Dustur continued to be heard in the streets. Despite his followers' defiance of the French, Hached's high international profile endowed him with a measure of immunity from official retribution. He forcefully argued the nationalist position on a broadly representative commission convened by Amin Bey to evaluate Hautecloque's version of governmental reform. Its firm rejection of the plan did not, however, prevent the resident general from bullying the bey into approving some of its provisions, including the holding of municipal council elections predicated on a fifty-fifty split of seats between Tunisian and French representatives – a formula anathema to the Neo-Dustur. The party's successful boycott of the balloting rendered it meaningless.

As the committee disbanded in September, Hached issued a bleak assessment of the political situation, concluding that "when all negotiation becomes impossible, people will have recourse to arms."[15] Less than two months later, he was dead, assassinated by the Main Rouge, a *colon* terrorist organization that viewed his international linkages not as a shield against harm but as an incentive for it. Whatever satisfaction Hautecloque derived from the murder (in which the UGTT, the Neo-Dustur, and even some of the resident general's colleagues thought him complicit) quickly evaporated, as many Tunisians acted on Hached's estimate of the situation. Gangs of *fellagha* (literally, bandits), often consisting of unemployed workers led by men with experience in the UGTT, began to prowl southern and western Tunisia. They attacked French farms and police stations and sabotaged lines of communication. Motivated by poverty and frustration as much as by political conviction, they were too valuable a resource to remain outside the nationalist orbit for very long. The fear they sowed in the French community heightened tensions and invited reprisals by the army, the police, and the Main Rouge. Hautecloque's approach revealed not only the limits of repression but also its risk of international censure. A bloc of Afro-Asian states in the United Nations proposed that the organization facilitate Franco-Tunisian negotiations, but France staunchly opposed the internationalization of what it insisted was an internal matter. But how long its iron fist policy could withstand outside scrutiny remained to be seen.

Hautecloque departed, to the jeers of the Tunisians and the consternation of the settlers, in autumn 1953. His manifest failure to impose order compelled France to reopen negotiations, although Pierre Voizard (1953–4), Hautecloque's successor, intended to keep the Neo-Dustur out of the process. The bey, whose confidence Voizard gained by showing him the respect that Hautecloque never had, recommended Muhammad Salah Mzali, a lawyer and a veteran of several governments, including Chenik's, and a man with strong ties to palace circles but few to the population at large, to the resident general as someone who could help him "disentangle this whole thing."[16] Mzali and Voizard drew up a plan of reforms that Amin approved along with his appointment of Mzali as prime minister in March 1954. While this scheme strengthened the powers of the prime minister, it also included a national assembly with equal French representation in budgetary deliberations and endorsed settler participation in the municipal councils. Its preservation of co-sovereignty guaranteed Tunisian opposition, which increased when Voizard sent Bourguiba to a French prison, physically detaching him from the country as he had earlier detached him from its political arena. In the end, the plan proved too little, too late and, most of all, too out of sync with nationalist requirements.

Mzali resigned after only three months in office, the reforms stillborn and the country in chaos. To demonstrate that France could not finesse them with impunity, the Neo-Dustur and the UGTT had responded to Voizard's exclusionary strategy by strengthening their links with the *fellagha*. Party and union men helped in their training, usually in Libya, where they acquired modern weapons. By mid-1954, they numbered several thousand and had evolved from rural bandits into competent guerrillas, touted as a patriotic army of liberation by the nationalist leadership, but rarely truly controlled by it. *Fellagha* operations tied down tens of thousands of French troops and threatened to turn Tunisia into another Indochina. Convinced that a continuation of the deadlock entailed unacceptable risks, the French prime minister, Pierre Mendès-France, determined to take previously unacceptable steps to break it. Assured by a confidant who had recently met with the Neo-Dustur chief that "a policy can be directed against Bourguiba . . . or it can be formulated with Bourguiba. . . . It is inconceivable without Bourguiba,"[17] Mendès-France quietly initiated talks with him.

With more fanfare, Mendès-France and Pierre Boyer de la Tour, his choice as resident general (1954–5), informed Amin Bey at a July audience that France now recognized Tunisian internal autonomy. They encouraged the ruler to appoint a government reflecting a range of Tunisian political views to manage the transition, in the hope – however far-fetched – that the

inclusion of men outside the Neo-Dustur would minimize adverse settler reaction. Almost half of Prime Minister Tahar ben ʿAmmar's cabinet were Neo-Dusturians, as were two of the three delegates it selected to hammer out the precise terms of the new arrangement. As a sine qua non for proceeding, however, the French demanded the curbing of the *fellagha*. In an unprecedented display of cooperation expedited through the "back channel" contacts with Bourguiba, the Neo-Dustur, the Tunisian government, and the French civil and military authorities drew up a plan to disarm and amnesty the guerrillas. The party and the UGTT used all their influence to win over the *fellagha* who, with few exceptions, surrendered their weapons in an orderly procedure in early December.

The official negotiations moved forward slowly, and not without opposition. Correctly viewing the successful conclusion of the talks as the end of their way of life, the *colons* kept up an unrelenting attack on all those, Tunisian or French, who favored them. More ominously, not all Neo-Dustur leaders endorsed the dialogue, which brought the long simmering feud between Bourguiba and ben Yusuf into the limelight. The latter most often attacked the willingness of Bourguiba and his allies on the political bureau to discuss an agreement offering less than full independence, but the divergent worldviews of the two men ensured a tension that went well beyond tactical disagreements. Ben Yusuf had gravitated more and more into the pan-Arab camp just as his rival was laying the groundwork for the preservation of a strong, if decidedly altered, relationship between Tunisia and France. Bourguiba's role in the negotiations shifted from behind the scenes to center stage when Edgar Faure, the new French prime minister, solicited his active participation as the negotiations threatened to bog down.

Agreement on the terms of an internal autonomy convention came in late April 1955. By its provisions, France retained control of Tunisia's foreign relations and defense (in accordance with the Bardo Treaty), but it abrogated the clauses of the La Marsa Treaty that successive residents general had interpreted as empowering them to rule the country. The accord allowed the French of Tunisia to retain their metropolitan citizenship and guaranteed their rights to own property; pursue cultural, religious, economic, professional, and social activities; and have recourse, for a five-year period, to their own courts. On the other hand, they lost their political rights except at the municipal council level, where demographic formulas for French representation assured them of as many as three-sevenths of the total seats in cities with large *colon* populations. Other facets of the convention ensured the continuation of close economic ties, arranged for the transfer of police powers from French to Tunisian hands after two years,

and gave the French language a privileged status, particularly in education. In May, between fifteen thousand and twenty thousand settlers demonstrated against the agreement in Tunis, but their hopes that the French parliament would reject it were dashed in July.[18] Thereafter, most turned their attention to salvaging what they could, although diehards unwilling to accept the failure of the Rassemblement joined Présence Française, a still more radical paramilitary group determined to perpetuate French control by whatever means necessary.

Ben ʿAmmar formed a majority Neo-Dustur government at the end of the summer, but Bourguiba, who had returned home to a tumultuous reception in June, declined a portfolio. Instead, he rallied support for the accord, stressing that internal autonomy represented an interim status toward independence and not – despite Mendès-France's view – an end in itself.[19] Bourguiba explained his acceptance of this incomplete arrangement by arguing that the French defeat in Indochina, the outbreak of revolution in Algeria, and the strength of opposition to decolonization prevented France from placing any greater concession on the table. Political realism required adopting a step-by-step approach, taking what was on offer and building on it to secure a more advantageous agreement when better circumstances arose. Ben Yusuf reentered the country in September, also to an enthusiastic welcome, and immediately took the offensive against what he labeled as "a step backward."[20] At first, Bourguiba and ben Yusuf occasionally appeared together, but their personal, political, and ideological differences made reconciliation impossible. In October, the political bureau ousted the secretary-general from the party.

The expulsion intensified ben Yusuf's campaign, which especially drew support from disenchanted Neo-Dusturians and several of the national organizations ben Yusuf had helped to form after the war. Although Ahmad ben Salah, who succeeded Hached at the helm of the UGTT, kept most of his powerful forces in the Bourguibist camp, many members of the UTAC and the Union Générale des Agriculteurs Tunisiens (UGAT) gravitated to the Yusufist ranks. So did Zaituna students and the remnants of the Dustur, two other groups with scores to settle with the Neo-Dustur. Ben Yusuf assailed the convention, the economy (which was faltering under the Neo-Dustur minister of national economy, Muhammad Masmoudi), and the entire ben ʿAmmar government (which was falling short of many Tunisians' naïvely high expectations). In encounters reminiscent of ʿAbd al-ʿAziz Thaʿalbi's 1937 appearances, Neo-Dustur militants disrupted ben Yusuf's speeches and roughed up his sympathizers. Bourguiba's embrace of liberal values did not extend to the tolerance of contrary views.



Figure 4.4. The return to Tunis of Habib Bourguiba, June 1, 1955. Bourguiba met with a tumultuous reception in Tunis following his release from prison and his successful negotiation of an accord with the French government granting Tunisia internal autonomy.

The confrontation climaxed at a party congress in November 1955. Ben Yusuf's attempts to block it or to organize a boycott failed. With Bourguiba and his allies providing the orchestration, congress delegates endorsed the accords, along with all other decisions of the political bureau since the

party's last general meeting in early 1952. The congress also adopted a UGTT report outlining a progressive social and economic agenda implicitly rejecting ben Yusuf's preference that the party focus on pan-Arab issues. Despite this setback, ben Yusuf and his followers – twenty thousand of whom came into the streets of Tunis to protest against the congress[21] – carried on. Some organized rival party cells; others turned to violence against the mainstream Neo-Dustur that extended to a recrudescence of *fellagha* bands. With the country on the verge of civil war, ben Yusuf fled to Cairo in January, but he continued to berate his former comrades until Bourguiba arranged for his assassination in 1961.

Just as the Franco-Tunisian talks wound down in 1955, France began discussions with Morocco that produced a nationalist government and restored the pronationalist Sultan Muhammad V, deposed two years before. Eager to shift resources from Morocco, whose independence now seemed inevitable, to Algeria, whose rebellion it had to crush, France terminated its protectorate over Morocco in early March. Bourguiba lost no time in demanding similar treatment for Tunisia, and France assented on March 20. Nonetheless, pro-Yusufist *fellagha* fought on in the south and west. It was no coincidence that the areas where the Yusufist threat lingered longest were the most economically depressed of the country. The unsettled conditions at the moment of independence highlighted serious problems facing the state's leaders: the need to close political fissures, the need to promote social and economic development, and the need to lessen the disparities between the coastal areas and the interior. In tackling the first two they met with varying degrees of success; the third proved impervious to their decidedly less resolute efforts.

CHAPTER 5

The Independent State Sets Its Course, 1956–1969

STATE IN THE SERVICE OF THE PARTY, PARTY IN THE SERVICE OF THE PRESIDENT

The magnitude of the support for ben Yusuf appalled Bourguiba. Basking in the titles *al-za ʿim* (the leader) and *al-mujahid al-akbar* (the supreme combatant), he had persuaded himself that his combination of charisma and dedication to the nationalist struggle ensured him the gratitude and loyalty of all Tunisians. The rebellion that had, at its height in late 1955, threatened to plunge the country into civil war still cast a pall over the celebrations marking the end of the protectorate in March 1956. It provided Bourguiba with a sobering reminder that the Tunisian public knew that others, whose thinking differed from his, had also played important roles in the acquisition of independence. The presidency of the Neo-Dustur did not translate into the unswerving allegiance of the masses, particularly if the party suffered from internal fragmentation.

Bourguiba had masterfully employed the rhetoric of nationalism to mobilize hundreds of thousands of ordinary Tunisians behind the readily comprehensible demand to end French rule, but with independence fiery anticolonial speeches lost most of their currency. To move from that achievement to the construction of a viable, prosperous, and modern state required convincing those same Tunisians of the merits of social and economic ideas that had taken a back seat during the campaign against the protectorate regime – ideas whose value they did not always find inherently obvious and that rarely enjoyed the breadth of support national liberation had. Ensuring their widespread acceptance required a lengthy process of education. As that went forward, Bourguiba prepared to advance his postindependence agenda and to guard against future challenges by securing a role in the new government and strengthening his position within the Neo-Dustur. With a self-confidence that frequently slipped into arrogance, Bourguiba cast himself in the roles of patriarch, teacher,

and disciplinarian, making it clear that he, the founding father of modern Tunisia, knew better than anyone else what its people, his children, required.

Scheduled prior to the French decision to end the protectorate, elections for the assembly charged with writing a constitution took place as planned on March 25, less than a week after independence. In a secret meeting with the bey in January, Bourguiba had threatened to publicize Amin's sympathy for the Yusufists unless he enacted an electoral law by which voters cast ballots for a list of candidates drawn up by the party, with the list receiving a majority in a district winning its seat. This guaranteed that Neo-Dustur candidates chosen by the political bureau would control the Constituent Assembly, but it flew in the face of recurrent nationalist demands for an assembly that was popularly elected, since voters had to accept or reject in its entirety a list formulated by party officials. Both the surreptitious manner in which Bourguiba negotiated this arrangement and its substance distressed many high-ranking Neo-Dusturians who preferred a more democratic approach accommodating a wider range of views and offering an opportunity for party dissidents like ben Yusuf to engage their rivals peacefully within the political arena rather than violently outside it.

The Neo-Dustur list, which included candidates selected in consultation with the UGTT and other national organizations controlled by the political bureau, won all ninety-eight seats in the assembly, although abstention rates of 71 percent in Jerba and 41 percent in Tunis demonstrated that ben Yusuf continued to command a substantial following.[1] Replacing ben ʿAmmar as prime minister following the elections, Bourguiba saw to the quelling of the Yusufist uprising, but he had no remedy for the sullen opposition of those who had refused to lend legitimacy to the voting by their participation. Because the Tunisian army consisted of only a few thousand men, many of them former guerrillas lacking adequate training, ending the rebellion required the assistance of the former colonizer. With some reluctance, the French army and police cooperated with the Bourguiba government, as they had with ben ʿAmmar's, and by June 1956 the last of the *fellagha* were killed or captured. The "High Court" that was created specifically for the purpose tried them and other partisans of ben Yusuf accused of criminal activity. Bourguiba justified this exceptional measure on the rather dubious grounds that ben Yusuf's tenure as justice minister had given him extensive contacts with judges that might color their assessment of his followers. The court also punished Tunisians who had profited from collaboration with the French. In 1957, laws of "ill gotten gains" and "national indignity" set in motion a succession of show trials that lasted until 1959, ruining the reputations and



Figure 5.1. Salah ben Yusuf. The differences between ben Yusuf and Bourguiba came to a head in the months immediately preceding independence. When it became clear that ben Yusuf would not prevail, he fled to Cairo, where he was assassinated in 1961.

careers of prominent figures such as Tahar ben ʿAmmar, Salah al-Din Baccouche, and Muhammad Mzali but also of scores of lesser functionaries.

The formation of the "High Court" was but one of several steps taken by Bourguiba to shape the political system so as to maximize his powers. Ignoring the objections of liberal deputies, he encouraged the assembly to focus exclusively on devising a constitution and used the bey's legislative power to relegate it to a largely consultative role. The assembly did, however, vote in July 1957 to abolish the office of bey, create a republic, and vest Amin's legislative and executive powers in the president, a title it bestowed on Bourguiba, making him the head of state as well as the head of the government. The promulgation of the constitution came only in June 1959. By then, Bourguiba had concentrated virtually all the state's power in his own hands, creating a "presidential monarchy" legitimized by the fundamental law. The Neo-Dustur swept parliamentary elections held later in the year, with list voting giving the party all the seats in the

toothless National Assembly. Bourguiba won massive public support in an unopposed bid for a five-year term as president, a scenario repeated in 1964 and again in 1969.

As he was consolidating his control of the government, Bourguiba was also asserting his primacy in the Neo-Dustur. He had never relinquished its presidency, and by the end of the 1950s he stood at the apex of a system weaving together the institutions of the party, the state, and the national organizations. In 1957 the Neo-Dustur boasted of an astonishing six hundred thousand members – almost twice as many as it claimed at the time of the party congress only two years before. While certainly exaggerated, the figure nevertheless reflects a surge in party membership as Tunisians who had previously stood aloof rushed to affiliate with the winners of the long battle for independence. For the first time in its history, public attachment to the party entailed no risk. On the contrary, the absence of ties created potential problems, since the postindependence Neo-Dustur operated a patronage network providing sinecures for its stalwarts. Party membership was de rigeur for government jobs; a record as a militant was frequently the key qualification for the more important posts. Following the artificial spike in 1956 and 1957, the introduction of a distinction between militants and adherents leveled off the number of activists at around three hundred fifty thousand, with the number of cells dropping from 1,830 to 1,000.[2] At the command echelon, the political bureau, now restyled as the central committee, grew from fifteen to fifty members during the first few years of independence. While still an elite component of the party, it no longer wielded the power of its smaller, closely knit predecessors. Its influence diminished further with the establishment in 1964 of a fifteen-member political bureau, handpicked by the president to make policy and set the party's course. Except for Bourguiba, these bodies included none of the first-generation leaders of the party, all of whom had come into conflict with him, often amid accusations of betrayal or abandonment in moments of crisis. Not all the men climbing the Neo-Dustur's leadership ladder unquestioningly toed the party line on all matters, but few of them had the backing to challenge Bourguiba and the loyal coterie surrounding him.

Ahmad ben Salah did. The UGTT illustrated a dilemma confronting the Neo-Dustur after 1956. Universal concurrence on the need for independence, despite tactical disagreements about how to achieve it, had unified the various constituencies within the party, but once that goal had been attained, greatly divergent views about the nature of the independent state came to the surface. Particularly acute philosophical differences between the

union and the party meant that tightening Neo-Dustur control over the UGTT assumed an extremely high priority following independence. Bourguiba believed that the socialist programs ben Salah had called for at the 1955 party congress would jeopardize crucial Western support for his government and had no intention of implementing them, even after they received the endorsement of a majority of the union's one hundred fifty thousand workers at its 1956 congress. Privately encouraged by Bourguiba, Habib 'Achour, an aide to Hached in the earliest days of the UGTT and a Neo-Dusturian even before that, challenged ben Salah by enticing a third of the UGTT's membership into a rival organization that demanded ben Salah's removal as a condition for reuniting the labor movement. When Bourguiba publicly threw his weight behind 'Achour, the UGTT administration fell into line and appointed a new secretary-general, Ahmad Tlili, who also served on the Neo-Dustur political bureau. Ben Salah resigned, and for the next fifteen years the union disappeared from the political stage except as an appendage of the party. Symbolizing this demise, UGTT members of the Constituent Assembly secured no more than a passing mention of social guarantees in the final draft of the constitution, which did not even sanction workers' right to strike.

Ben Salah fared better personally than did the UGTT institutionally. Less than five years after ben Salah was discredited, Bourguiba rehabilitated him, added him to the Neo-Dustur political bureau, and appointed him minister of national planning, charging him with the supervision of a major overhaul of the economy. Many came to regard him as Bourguiba's choice for his successor. On the political bureau, ben Salah replaced Muhammad Masmoudi, a rival whom Bourguiba believed had intrigued to bring about his downfall. As minister of information, Masmoudi oversaw *L'Action* (the renamed *L'Action Tunisienne*, which had resumed publication in 1955). After several years during which the paper had made scathing comments on the 1956 electoral law, the work of the Constituent Assembly, and the "High Court" trials, as well as on the direction of the country's foreign policy, Bourguiba expelled Masmoudi from the party. Like ben Salah, he subsequently regained a position of prominence, ironically when ben Salah's fortunes again took a turn for the worse late in the 1960s. Banishing his critics from the inner circles of the state and the party only to summon them back, appropriately chastened after a period of powerlessness – a severe deprivation for members of the Tunisian political elite, most of whom had dedicated their adult lives to the quest for power – remained a favorite technique of Bourguiba, whose intolerance for opposition showed no signs of abating after 1956.

THE TRANSFORMATION OF THE SOCIAL ENVIRONMENT

In spring and summer 1956, Bourguiba took advantage of the national enthusiasm for independence, his own generally positive image and high public profile, and the considerable power he was already amassing to impose state control over certain aspects of religion. To do so reflected a very significant contrast between the views of Bourguiba and those of ben Yusuf on the important issue of the role of Islam in the state. The choice of these reforms and the speed with which they proceeded revealed Bourguiba's eagerness to assert the domination of his interpretations, not those of his rival, over the Tunisian body politic. The Habus Council, which managed land set aside for the support of mosques, Qur'anic schools, and other Islamic institutions, came under fire first. The government confiscated the property of the administration, which was tainted by its willingness to provide land for colonization during the protectorate, thus bringing the religious, educational, and charitable institutions that were beneficiaries of the agency's funds under state control. A year after dismantling the "public" *habus* system, the government ordered the distribution of "private" *habus* lands (whose usufruct accrued to the heirs of the founder, who had ceded ownership rights by creating the endowment) among the heirs as private property.

The state judicial system absorbed the two sharia courts (one for adherents of the Maliki rite, the other for Hanafi Muslims) in August 1956, clearing the way for the introduction of a personal status code altering certain practices sanctioned by Islamic law but regarded by progressives as prejudicial to women. The code strengthened the nuclear family and fostered a more equitable relationship between the genders. Women won new rights, including those of divorce and the approval of arranged marriages, and expanded existing entitlements in questions of child custody and inheritance. At the same time, the code explicitly placed obligations on women, such as contributing to the maintenance of the household if their means allowed. Other provisions outlawed polygyny, ended the male right of repudiation, and set minimum ages for marriages.

The most innovative legal reform in the Muslim world since the abolition of the sharia in Turkey in the 1920s, the Personal Status Code clearly revealed the social trajectory envisioned by the country's leader. He took pains, however, to portray himself not as sweeping aside Islam, as had Ataturk, but rather as reinterpreting it through *ijtihad*, or independent reasoning – a process esteemed by the nineteenth- and twentieth-century



Figure 5.2. Postage stamp publicizing the Personal Status code, 1958. The code introduced dramatic changes in the law, banning polygyny, setting minimum ages for marriage, and enabling women to initiate divorce proceedings. It represented the most revolutionary such legislation in the Muslim world since the reforms of Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in the Turkey of the 1920s.

Islamic reformers as well as by Bourguiba, for whom the rationalism instilled by his French education ranked among the most noble of human qualities. Addressing an audience of Europeans and Tunisians not long after the enactment of the code, the prime minister observed that Tunisia's deeply rooted Arab and Islamic traditions in no way lessened its desire

> to live in close communion with the modern world . . . [and] to open windows on other cultures, particularly Western culture, in order to come to grips with reality. In this way, our country can remain faithful to its cultural past while forging the instruments required for its future.[3]

By appointing a moderately forward-looking figure as rector of the Zaituna mosque-university, reorganizing the sharia courts and reassigning or retiring some of their judges, and offering blandishments of various kinds to other prominent members of the religious establishment, the government succeeded in muting opposition to the code. Many less well-placed ulama cast

aspersions on both the senior officials' timidity and Bourguiba's temerity, but they knew they were powerless to stop him. Ben Yusuf thundered that Bourguiba had taken it upon himself to "prohibit what God has authorized and authorize what God has prohibited"[4] – an inversion of a traditional obligation of the just Muslim ruler – but he spoke from Cairo and could not affect developments in Tunis.

For the male Neo-Dusturians who engineered the Personal Status Code – not until 1955 did women enter the inner circle of the party, and then only a few – the full emancipation of Tunisia required the elimination of antiquated social practices, in gender relations no less than in labor relations. This attitude, rather than a more feminist one, gave rise to the code, as it did to a campaign to discourage all forms of traditional dress, but particularly veiling. Bourguiba believed that old-fashioned clothing encouraged old-fashioned modes of thinking and acting; those who chose to wear it were, at least subconsciously, expressing their rejection of the modern world. In speech after speech during the first years after independence, he condemned the veil as an "odious rag" that demeaned women, had no practical value, and was not obligatory in order to conform to Islamic standards of modesty. Always appearing in public in a coat and tie – another point of divergence from ben Yusuf – the Neo-Dustur leader made similar arguments concerning traditional male garments. Despite his strong personal convictions, Bourguiba well understood the tenacity with which many Tunisians clung to customs they had followed since childhood and, except for banning the veil in classrooms, he refused to proscribe traditional clothing.

To educate Tunisian women about the Personal Status Code, encourage them to venture beyond habitual limits, and offer them opportunities to improve their day-to-day lives, a number of women related to Neo-Dustur leaders formed the Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes (UNFT) in 1956. The party had some ties to the Union Musulmane des Femmes de Tunisie, an organization founded in 1936 on the *Salafiyya* reform model, but had generally shown little interest in supporting such associations. In the 1930s most were too conservative for Neo-Dustur tastes; in the postwar years, the most active groups were communist fronts. Beginning in the early 1950s, with more women taking more active roles in the nationalist campaign than ever before, they began creating networks of assistance for families whose men were in prison or had joined the *fellagha*. Some women also joined the guerrilla bands, while others provided information, served as scouts, or transported small arms, since French soldiers and policemen were unlikely to stop and search them. In 1955 a congress of

three hundred women demanded civil and political equality with men, enfranchisement, the right to stand for elected office, and greater attention to female education, but the ben ʿAmmar government set the women's agenda aside while it focused on bringing the protectorate to an end. The Neo-Dustur, on the other hand, responded with the Personal Status Code and the UNFT. By 1960 the latter had almost fourteen thousand members in 115 branches.[5] In addition to promoting the Personal Status Code, particularly in rural areas where women and men alike had reservations about the reforms, the UNFT concentrated its initial efforts on urging women to exercise their right to vote granted in 1957, on sponsoring literacy classes for the 96 percent of the female population who could not read or write, and on developing health programs, some of them devoted to family planning. In the decade between 1956 and 1965, women's literacy rose and their fertility fell, both quite dramatically. While by no means solely responsible for such reversals, UNFT members unquestionably contributed to them as the organization's educational work benefited tens of thousands of women in the early years of independence.

Hundreds of thousands of their daughters profited from party and government campaigns in favor of formal schooling for young women. Because a modern education had played so formative a role in the life of most of independent Tunisia's leaders,[6] they recognized the importance of expanding the state education system, aligning it with contemporary national needs, and drawing more students into it. In the past few girls had attended school, but Neo-Dustur officials knew that providing girls with a modern education would influence the social values they would impart to their families when they became wives and mothers. In the mid-1950s, few women worked except in their homes and fields, but efficient economic development necessitated an increase in the number of women in the workforce and the opening of new sectors to their employment, thereby creating additional impulses to educate more females. The last decade of the protectorate had seen significant growth in the primary school population – a doubling for boys, a quadrupling for girls – but in 1956 still only 13 percent of primary school–aged girls attended classes regularly.[7] The comparable figure for boys (33 percent) reveals that educational deficiencies, while most acute among women, were by no means gender specific. Past the primary level, enrollments declined precipitately for both.

Starting in 1958, with the objective of providing a primary education for all children within a decade while also improving secondary schools, the government began dedicating approximately one-fifth of its budget to the construction of new schools, the training of additional teachers, and the

revamping of the curriculum. One crucial early decision determined the language of public instruction. Despite the status of Arabic as the official national language, government and party leaders recognized the importance of French as a bridge to the world beyond Tunisia and an essential tool for economic development. In any case, the country's reliance on a cadre of foreign instructors to supplement the six thousand Tunisian teachers available at independence, and the disinclination to recruit educators from Arab countries with quite divergent political outlooks, made some instruction in French inevitable. Satisfied with the resulting bilingual system, the government made a commitment to eventual Arabicization but took no significant steps in that direction. In primary schools the first two years were taught in Arabic, the remainder in French or a combination of the two languages. French was the norm at the secondary level, although the use of Arabic gradually became more common in subjects such as history, geography, and philosophy. This bilingual structure, along with the paring down of religious instruction in the curriculum, left Zaituna graduates, many of whom traditionally pursued teaching careers, with few prospects in the postindependence education system.

A second important decision concerned the method of promoting education. To fill the schools, government and party leaders preferred to utilize their considerable powers of persuasion rather than to make education compulsory. Enrollments at the primary level climbed steadily, eventually peaking (in the 1980s) at around 85 percent of the boys and 70 percent of the girls aged between six and eleven. A similar trend occurred in the secondary schools, except that attendance never exceeded 40 percent of the twelve- to seventeen-year-old population and only about a third of all students were women.[8] The ambitious goal of universal education was achieved only after the passage of a 1991 law making school attendance mandatory for all children between the ages of six and sixteen.

The social revolution set in motion during the first several years of independence brought Tunisia into the international spotlight. Devised by high-level Neo-Dustur and government officials, and imposed from above by a regime enjoying broad support but hardly respectful of democratic conventions, the reforms embodied the agenda of a leader confident that he knew (better than they) what his countrymen needed and determined to build a "modern" society respected by the global community. At a time when colonial mentalities about the Afro-Asian masses' need for enlightened (Westernized) guidance remained prevalent, neither the arrogance of the reformer nor his sometimes heavy-handed methods drew criticism from abroad. Instead, the Bourguiba government won praise for

its assault on "outmoded traditions" and its expansion of education and enhancement of the status of women. These social policies, coupled with Bourguiba's unflinching Cold War alignment with the West, helped to secure the economic assistance of the United States, which touted Tunisia as a model for other developing countries, comparing it particularly favorably with Arab states that had sacrificed social progress to revolutionary politics. By the 1960s, with decolonization in full stride across Africa, independent Tunisia's social programs had taken root and were bearing fruit. Some emerging leaders in former French colonies had personally known Bourguiba in their student days in France; others, from all over the continent, knew and respected his reputation as a nationalist and an advocate of social change. The Tunisian example influenced many of them as they set their own countries' postindependence courses.

Respect in the international arena meant little to resolute opponents at home, especially within the religious establishment. The many Zaituna students, faculty, and alumni who had broken with the mainstream Neo-Dustur leadership either in the last years of the independence struggle or in the midst of the Yusufist challenge resented the placement of the mosque-university under the supervision of the Ministry of Education in 1956, regarding the step as a prelude to more stringent official control over religious matters. The subsequent state domination of Islamic educational, legal, and other institutions once within the purview of Zaituna ulama bore out their concerns. But it was Bourguiba's public disparagement of the Muslim fast during the month of Ramadan that caused their indignation to boil over.

In a 1960 speech the president asserted that Tunisia's involvement in a jihad against underdevelopment absolved its citizens from fasting, just as warriors in a jihad in defense of Islam were exempted. To sanction this interpretation as a product of *ijtihad* (as he had justified controversial provisions of the Personal Status Code), Bourguiba demanded a fatwa of endorsement from the mufti of Tunis. When his statement failed to offer unequivocal support, he lost his job. Even among the party faithful, however, few Tunisians heeded their leader's advice. In the following year, as he prepared to renew the campaign, rioting erupted in Kairouan. A Yusufist stronghold since well before independence, this venerable religious center had discovered that the price of its defiance of Bourguiba and his allies was its exclusion from the projects that were improving the quality of life elsewhere in the country. Its influential ulama openly denigrated Bourguiba's views of Islam and despised his efforts to cast himself as a religious authority. A government decision to reassign a popular and

outspoken imam sparked a day of street battles between demonstrators and the police in the most serious and bloodiest challenge to the political establishment since the crushing of the Yusufist *fellagha*.

Bourguiba subsequently smeared the religious leaders with allegations that their loss of economic power with the confiscation of *habus* lands, rather than spiritual concerns, lay behind their discontent and the encouragement they had given to the protesters. He made a point of once again urging Tunisians to ignore the fast, but then he let the matter drop. Regardless of the extent to which new schools and new legal codes were transforming their society, the vast majority of Tunisians had no intention of breaking with the fundamental religious practices that defined them as Muslims. The assault on Islamic institutions and practices between 1956 and 1961 confirmed the ulama in their abhorrence of the Neo-Dustur and its secular leader, but they knew they were powerless to defy them. As if to underscore that reality, when the University of Tunis opened later in 1961, it absorbed the Zaituna mosque-university as a faculty of theology, clearly subordinating it to the state and its graduates to their countrymen with a Western education. Since both Bourguiba and the ulama understood that the state had the power to hold the religious establishment in check, there was, for the moment, no merit in either continuing to antagonize the other.

THE LINGERING SHADOW OF FRANCE

Bourguiba's permission for the Algerian Front de Libération Nationale (FLN) to establish camps inside Tunisia – a decision designed in part to outflank ben Yusuf, who had maintained close relations with the FLN since its inception – strained independent Tunisia's rapport with France, leading to the suspension of promised economic assistance between 1957 and 1963. Only the infusion of substantial aid from the United States prevented the withholding of French funds from crippling the reforms already under way. Tunisians enthusiastically backed the Algerian revolution, and the government of the newly independent state could hardly fail to help its neighbor attain its own independence. Although Bourguiba attempted to balance Tunisian support for the Algerian military campaign with steps promoting a peaceful settlement, a combination of French intransigence and virulent opposition to compromise among vocal Arab nationalist proponents of the FLN, led by the Egyptian president, Jamal ʿAbd al-Nasser, undermined that approach. Because of his distaste for Nasser's pan-Arab rhetoric (which had made Cairo a comfortable political environment for ben Yusuf since 1956) and for the Egyptian leader's domination of the League of Arab States,

Bourguiba endeavored to distance his country from the turbulent politics of the Arab east. Tunisia did not join the League until 1958, and its decision to do so then stemmed less from a reorientation of interests than from the need to avoid isolation as its relationship with France deteriorated.

In February of that year, French aircraft attacked Sakiet Sidi Youssef, a village on the Algerian border, causing scores of civilian deaths. Bourguiba responded with a revival of anticolonial rhetoric, mobilizing public opinion behind a demand for the withdrawal of most of the several thousand French troops still garrisoned in Tunisia and the restriction of the remainder to a few posts in the Sahara and the massive naval installation at Bizerte. The formation of a provisional Algerian government in Tunis later in the year provided an additional irritant to France, but it was an incident at the Bizerte base that provoked an armed confrontation in July 1961. To pressure France into acceding to his demand to evacuate the base, Bourguiba urged party militants to form a "people's army" to join soldiers and policemen in blockading the French positions scattered throughout the vicinity of Bizerte. In several days of clashes for which they were woefully ill prepared, thousands of these volunteers were killed or wounded as French troops seized key parts of the city and the surrounding region. Tunisia appealed to the United Nations, which ordered France to pull its forces back to the naval base and urged negotiations to resolve the dispute. After delaying serious discussions on the status of the base until the Algerian war ended in summer 1962, France then agreed to hand it over in the following year. Despite his responsibility for the heavy loss of life at Bizerte, Bourguiba's firm grip on party and state minimized any serious internal backlash. The recklessness of the venture did, however, shock Western friends of Tunisia, although their concerns abated as it became clear that the incident did not signal a Cold War realignment. If, however, Bourguiba had entertained expectations that the restoration of the Bizerte base to Tunisian sovereignty might cause him to be lionized outside the country in the way that the expulsion of the British from Suez had enhanced Nasser's regional prestige, he was mistaken.

The last French soldiers left Tunisia on October 15, 1963, although several thousand French settlers still refused to join the exodus that had followed independence. Between 1955 and 1959, one hundred seventy thousand Europeans – roughly two-thirds of the total – left the country. Among them, in the first eighteen months alone, were eight thousand French functionaries. Tunisian lycée and university graduates filled some of the higher-level posts that they vacated, but party loyalists filled many more, despite their frequent lack of appropriate skills. The rolls of Muslim public



Figure 5.3. American cartoonist Bill Mauldin on the Bizerte crisis. Mauldin had been with US forces in Tunisia during World War II and retained an interest in the country afterward, drawing several editorial cartoons on the situation there in the early 1960s.

employees rose from twelve thousand prior to independence to eighty thousand five years later. Reduced, like the French, to the category of resident aliens, a third of the sixty-seven thousand Italians in Tunisia in 1956 left before the end of the decade.[9] Some settlers left because they could not, or did not wish to, cope with the adjustments necessitated by independence. For others, the businesses in which they worked closed down or government restrictions made it difficult for them to earn a living.

Nor were foreigners the only emigrants from Tunisia during these years. The creation of Israel in 1948, at a time of uncertainty about the future of their own homeland, prompted almost 15 percent of the Jewish population of roughly eighty-five thousand to leave in the four succeeding years. In the year of Tunisian independence, sixty-five hundred departed, leaving the new state with some fifty-eight thousand Jewish citizens.[10] The number of emigrants declined significantly over the next several years, as none of the misfortunes feared at the end of the protectorate befell the community. To

the contrary, a prominent Jewish lawyer served in the first administration and Jewish members of the liberal professions held other state offices. The new government made no attempt to block Tunisian Jews from emigrating to Israel, and, although not publicly known at the time, Bourguiba maintained discreet contacts with officials of the World Jewish Congress, with whom he discussed matters of common interest and to whom he revealed, as early as 1957, his view that the Arab states needed to reconcile the justice of the Palestinians' cause with the acceptance of the existence of Israel.[11] Eight years later, he made a public proposal that the newly created Palestine Liberation Organization accept the 1947 UN partition of Palestine as a point of departure for negotiations with Israel. In response, Nasser orchestrated a barrage of ridicule and hostility so scathing that Tunisia severed diplomatic relations with Egypt in 1966. But the outbreak of war in the following year between Israel and its Arab neighbors revealed that few Tunisians shared their president's view on the emotionally charged issue of Palestine. Anti-Zionist demonstrations erupted throughout the country, some of them provoking assaults on members of the Jewish community or damage to synagogues and other Jewish-owned property. Despite Bourguiba's denunciation of these incidents, a sustained wave of Jewish emigration following the war rapidly reduced the community to less than half its 1956 size.

FROM LIBERAL ECONOMY TO "NEO-DUSTUR SOCIALISM"

The outflow of Europeans in the first few years of independence created many economic difficulties for the new government but also provided it with some opportunities. On the one hand, the country lacked the resources adequately to offset the loss of large numbers of health care professionals, lawyers, engineers, civil servants, entrepreneurs, middle-level managers, and skilled workers. Perhaps most critical of all was the loss of many commercial farmers, whose share of output was greatly disproportionate to their numbers or to the extent of their property because they used machinery and modern techniques on particularly rich parcels of land. Their departure had an extremely negative impact on agricultural productivity. In other sectors of the economy, few Tunisians were in a position to fill the vacuum created by the massive flight of capital, and those who were hesitated to act. Government attempts to draw local investors into the management of the public utilities that it had nationalized in 1956 failed, leaving the state to operate those services itself, less by choice than by necessity. In a more positive vein, Europeans' decisions to leave made jobs available to Tunisians

(albeit primarily to those with an education who lived in urban areas) and the government's seizure of land abandoned by settlers returning to France and Italy brought under its control thousands of hectares of valuable rural real estate.

Responsibility for managing the economy fell to Hedi Nouira, the director of the Central Bank of Tunisia from its inception in 1958 until 1970. A member of the Neo-Dustur political bureau, Nouira's personal friendship with Bourguiba, a contemporary and fellow native of the Sahil town of Monastir, gave him influence and latitude. Like his chief, Nouira believed that preserving the liberal economy of the protectorate era held the key to creating prosperity while keeping Tunisia on an even economic keel during its transition to independence. In accordance with this thinking, the state provided land for peasant farmers who had little or none, but did so without infringing on private ownership rights. Instead, it distributed farmland abandoned by former *colons*, property recovered from the Habus Council, and estates that it purchased from willing European sellers still resident in the country. The new owners were urged to form cooperatives that enabled them, while retaining their individual titles, to secure advantageous credit terms and gain access to farm machinery. Along with evidence of social progress and political reliability, this course of economic moderation brought some $50 million in US aid to Tunisia in the first five years of its independence.[12] Disappointingly, however, neither foreign nor domestic investment came close to attaining their desired levels.

As population growth, which had not yet begun to respond to government efforts to curb it, outstripped the growth of the economy, the latter stalled, causing discomfort for some Tunisians and serious hardship for many more. Coping with this situation required state and party leaders to move beyond the previously dominant ideology of nationalism, with its scant attention to economic issues, while attempting to prevent the multiplicity of classes and interest groups that had united in the independence struggle from turning against one another. They did so by focusing attention on a systematic battle against underdevelopment. As early as 1958, the rather ineffectual National Planning Council linked representatives of the major national organizations – the UGTT, the UNAT (Union Nationale des Agriculteurs Tunisiens, which had supplanted the Yusufist UGAT after 1955), and the UTIC (Union Tunisien des Industriels et Commerçants, the name adopted by the UTAC after independence) – with appropriate government officials. The Neo-Dustur congress of the following year issued a call for the creation of a national plan to address the problems of the economy, but in the months following the bombing of Sakiet Sidi Youssef the campaign to restrict

France's military presence in Tunisia took precedence over all others. Early in 1961, Bourguiba confirmed rumors of an impending significant decision on the economic front by naming Ahmad ben Salah to head the newly formed Ministry of Planning, thus bestowing on him the influence over the national economy that he had unsuccessfully sought in 1956. As the president made it clear that ben Salah now enjoyed his total confidence, both men began to speak not only of planning but also of "Neo-Dustur socialism."

The renaming of the Neo-Dustur as the Parti Socialiste Dusturien (PSD; Dustur Socialist Party) at the party congress that took place in "liberated" Bizerte in 1964 conveyed the official embrace of this ideology. Other decisions taken at the congress restructured the party and reformulated its relationship with the national organizations and the government, all with the aim of reviving its preindependence place at the vanguard of the nation rather than allowing it to slip into a bureaucratic torpor, as some of its leaders feared was happening. The PSD tightened its control over the national organizations, seen now less as partners of the party calling its attention to the interests of their members than as subordinate agencies expected only to endorse and promote its views. The party insisted that members of the national organizations also join the PSD as individuals (instead of automatically acquiring membership through affiliation with the organizations, as had been the case in the past). This measure eliminated the possibility of an organization pressuring the party by threatening to sever its connection and withdraw its members. The party congresses of 1955 and 1959 had sidestepped the issue of the relationship between party and state, but the 1964 session explicitly tied them together, with the party acting as the agent of impulsion, the state the agent of execution. Regional and local branches of the party had paralleled the structure of the government since 1958, but now regional governors simultaneously represented both the state and the PSD. Moreover, substantial numbers of well-educated technocrats began to replace unskilled party loyalists in key executive positions in both government and PSD agencies, especially those engaged with the economy and planning. Officially the only party in the country after the Parti Communiste Tunisien was banned in 1963 following its implication in an antigovernment conspiracy, the Parti Socialiste Dusturien emerged from the 1964 congress with a tighter grip on the state and its citizens than ever before, while Bourguiba left the gathering with the party equally well in hand.

In the three years between ben Salah's appointment as minister of planning and the Bizerte congress, "Neo-Dustur socialism" had taken shape. The first Ten-Year Plan (1962–71) envisaged an annual growth rate of 6 percent that would increase self-sufficiency, raise living standards, and



Figure 5.4. President Habib Bourguiba at his desk, ca. 1965. As prime minister, president, and party leader, Bourguiba charted the political, economic, and social course of independent Tunisia. His bold approach won him the friendship of many Afro Asian leaders, but also of prominent political figures in the West.

begin to achieve an equitable distribution of income. Limited structural reforms anticipated state intervention in critical, but previously neglected, sectors of the economy, such as industry; in bringing foreign-owned enterprises under Tunisian control (the last stage of decolonization); and in the establishment of a network of agricultural cooperatives. Carrying out so ambitious an agenda demanded greater investment in the economy than had previously materialized. From the early 1960s to the end of the decade, the proportion of gross domestic product (GDP) represented by investment climbed from 10 percent to 23 percent, but reliance on external loans and grants for more than a third of the financing of development projects during those same years created great difficulties. Although some established aid donors' unhappiness with the turn to socialism prevented foreign aid from attaining what Ministry of Planning officials regarded as optimal levels, public and private inputs from abroad reached $31 per capita in 1969, a figure higher than almost anywhere in the world. Because most funds came

in the form of loans, they contributed to a quadrupling of government debt between 1960 and 1972, producing a ratio of debt to GDP also higher than almost anywhere in the world.[13]

THE INDUSTRIAL SECTOR

Industrialization projects designed primarily to lessen reliance on imports also served other economic and political purposes. Food-processing plants and textile factories in less developed parts of the country – the center, south, and west – not only provided consumers with import substitutions, they also balanced economic growth by extending modern industries beyond the capital, where they had been concentrated in the colonial period, and shored up regions whose economic plight had helped to propel them into the Yusufist camp at the end of the protectorate. Some small- and medium-scale endeavors of this type met with success; many others did not. Low wages and high unemployment limited the demand for their products, the capital imports that they required compounded balance of payment problems, and they did not create enough jobs to stimulate the economy.

In terms of heavy industrial projects, the two most successful ventures involved subsoil resources. The relatively high cost of mining Tunisian phosphate prevented the raw mineral from competing with deposits elsewhere in the world, but government construction of plants to manufacture phosphate by-products revived the mines, which had been in a slump since before World War II. International contracts for the purchase of fertilizers and phosphoric acid generated substantial income, but their contribution to export earnings paled in comparison with revenue produced by the sale of petroleum. Beginning with the 1964 discovery by an Italian company of commercial quantities of oil at al-Borma, joint ventures between the government and foreign concessionaires brought a number of fields in the Saharan region into production. After a decade of steadily increasing exports that ended with the jump in crude oil prices following the 1973 Arab-Israeli war, petroleum became the most valuable of the country's export commodities in 1974. The construction of a refinery at Bizerte soon after the initial discoveries made possible the processing of modest amounts of crude oil that lessened reliance on imported petroleum and its derivatives, but because of the high international earning power of crude, more was usually exported than was retained for the domestic market.

Many other large, capital-intensive, showpiece projects failed to meet planners' expectations because of their high construction costs; inefficient management, often owing to the monopoly, or near monopoly, that they

enjoyed; and paucity of downstream industries requiring their output. Industrialization made both the coastal cities and the regional centers magnets for rural residents hoping to find jobs and improve the quality of their lives. Although the factories fostered an image of dynamic development, they simply could not absorb more than a modest fraction of these migrants, most of whom swelled the ranks of the urban unemployed. Those who did find jobs faced a steadily rising cost of living throughout the 1960s, with only a single, and modest, adjustment in the minimum wage. The inability of the once-powerful but now completely emasculated UGTT to defend workers' interests lost the union what little influence it retained and its leaders the respect of the rank and file.

THE AGRICULTURAL SECTOR

When the Ten-Year Plan took effect, the agricultural sector accounted for approximately a quarter of the GDP, half of all exports, and half the workforce. Planning Ministry officials believed that they could rationalize agricultural production through a centrally controlled system of state cooperative farms. The rural bourgeoisie, many of whom had long-standing ties to the Neo-Dustur, took a dim view of this threat to their ownership rights, but in the first years of the cooperative experiment their land remained undisturbed. In 1964 strong anti-French sentiments in the aftermath of the Bizerte crisis enabled the government to confiscate real estate still held by Europeans. This decision brought the state some half million hectares of the country's best cropland, but it also led to the termination of French economic assistance and set in motion the departure of most of the remaining foreign population, which soon plummeted to around seven thousand. The seized property became the core of the cooperative system, to which were added the amalgamated holdings of many peasant farmers. By 1968 the cooperatives included more than a third of all rural land and a quarter of the rural population (750,000 people).[14] Although wealthy landowners did not see their property swept into the cooperatives, many of them began to diversify their investments as a hedge against the possibility of more aggressive property acquisitions by the state in the future, putting money into the public works and other construction projects that blossomed after the initiation of the plan.

The planners' high expectations for the farms – that they would finance the development of other economic sectors by producing surpluses for export or would ensure artificially low prices for basic commodities in urban markets, and that they would arrest the flight of the rural population to the cities and,

increasingly, overseas by offering it gainful employment – did not materialize for many reasons. Peasant cultivators forced into the cooperatives resented the loss of their land; had little regard for the farms' managers, who were frequently technocrats with no practical knowledge of rural society; and rarely viewed the arrangement as improving their lives. Because the government purchased their produce at low prices, their earnings, which in 1968 amounted to only a third of what the plan had projected, often represented a decline in their real income. Lengthy gestation periods involved in converting land customarily planted with cereals to the production of more profitable export-oriented crops such as olives and citrus fruits had a negative impact on production in the short term. These factors, compounded by weather conditions that caused a succession of ruinous harvests between 1964 and 1968, resulted in an overall drop in agricultural production in the 1960s. At the end of the decade only 15 percent of the more than 250 cooperatives were operating at a profit.[15]

Believing that only drastic action could save his agricultural policy, at the start of 1969 ben Salah announced his intention to bring all remaining farmland into the cooperative system. The proposal unleashed a furious reaction. Thousands of large landowners used their considerable influence at the highest levels of the PSD to protest against the application of the principles of Neo-Dustur socialism to their property. Despite the formidable power of his opponents, as well as strong warnings from a growing number of prominent figures within the party, ben Salah determinedly pressed ahead, even devising a plan to bring local government officials under the control of his ministry in a bid to bypass the PSD. Outraged by ben Salah's defiance and his imprudent alienation of important components of the party with his overly zealous promotion of the cooperatives, Bourguiba turned on his protégé. Ben Salah forfeited his ministerial portfolio and, for a second time, his place in the political bureau. More ominously, he stood accused by the president of deliberately misleading him about the implementation and objectives of agricultural policy. After Bourguiba's about-face, other critics of ben Salah voiced concerns they had feared to articulate while he remained in favor. Some objected to his economics, others saw dangerous precedents in his sweeping powers, and still others simply envied his proximity to Bourguiba. Rumors of widespread corruption in the Ministry of Planning abounded. Charged with treason, ben Salah was tried, convicted, and imprisoned. He escaped from custody in 1973 and fled abroad, where he remained until after Bourguiba's death.

As the government distanced itself from the disgraced former minister, it also renounced his plan to eliminate private agricultural property. Farmers already in the cooperative system were permitted to withdraw, which they did

in droves, effectively reducing it to the property of the former *colons*. Direct government investment in that land gave way after 1969 to the provision of credits and subsidies – to all intents and purposes the privatization of the remaining cooperatives. In these circumstances, the former *coopérants*, bereft of property or capital, had no options beyond taking jobs on the estates of large landowners or going to the cities in search of work in the emerging industrial sector. Those who made the former choice soon fell into debt to their employers; those who made the latter rarely found the opportunities they sought. In a reprise of the 1930s, the shattered agricultural economy drove the desperate rural population into the already overcrowded urban *bidonvilles*.

TOURISM

Under the Ten-Year Plan, more consistent growth occurred in the service sector of the economy than in either agriculture or industry. Few elements of the tertiary sector performed as impressively as the burgeoning business of tourism. Over the long term, the Société des Hôtels Tunisiens Touristiques (SHTT) may well have compiled the most successful record of all of the approximately 160 state-run enterprises created in the 1960s. Between 1965 and 1967 alone, investments in SHTT projects more than doubled, from 6.5 million dinars (the unit of currency that replaced the franc in 1958 and whose value stood at roughly US$2) to 13.8 million, and the pace of growth quickened further in the years that followed.[16] The SHTT selected pristine Mediterranean beaches on the island of Jerba and along the east coast, in the Sousse–Monastir area and around Hammamet, at the base of the Cap Bon peninsula, as locations for the construction of its first luxury hotels. Before the end of the decade, the company was building properties in less developed areas of the country, on the north coast at Tabarka and in southern oases such as Tozeur and Gafsa. Planners correctly calculated that European tourists would flock to high-quality resorts whose profitability would stimulate significant private investment in tourism. The construction of hotels and the establishment of companies to manage them did attract considerable capital from abroad, as well as from rural landowners who worried throughout the 1960s about ben Salah's ultimate plans for the agricultural sector.

In working to attract European visitors to Tunisia, the SHTT and its private-sector competitors were not embarking on a novel endeavor but were reviving a dormant business that had begun even before the French protectorate. Unlike the European middle- and working-class population that the industry targeted with elaborate advertising campaigns in the 1960s, however, the earliest foreign sightseers in Tunisia were upper-class men and



Figure 5.5. The beach at Monastir, ca. 1985. Tourism became a major industry in Tunisia following independence. Although many visitors came primarily to enjoy the country's superb beaches, historic and cultural sites often formed a part of their itineraries as well.

women who alone enjoyed the leisure time and wealth that nineteenth-century travel required. Indeed, until tourism dried up amid the international crises of the late 1930s, above-average incomes characterized almost all visitors to the country. Its winter climate attracted those in search of a more exotic locale than the French or Italian Riviera or of a variation on the theme of the better-known winter season in Algiers. Tunisia offered early generations of travelers opportunities to engage in pursuits particularly appealing to their class and background. Two Britons who traveled in the protectorate in 1883 and again in 1885 urged prospective visitors not to venture into the interior without a gun – not for reasons of security, but because of the superb hunting. The countryside "abounds in game. . . . The gazelle as well as the wild boar haunts the plains; [and] the panther and the hyena are as yet far from exterminated"[17] – although, thanks in no small part to European sportsmen, they soon vanished. The classical education of many of these wealthy travelers piqued their interest in the sites of antiquity scattered across Tunisia and prompted them to explore the ruins with an almost scholarly thoroughness, occasionally referring to the works of Latin authors or, more rarely, medieval Arab writers to enhance their understanding of

what they were seeing. In 1902 the ultimate symbol of inclusion in the most fashionable European tourist itineraries of the day – a branch office of Thomas Cook and Sons – opened in Tunis. No longer could new arrivals in the capital feel, as did an 1882 visitor, that they had "got beyond the reach of Mr. Cook and his 'personally-conducted' flock."[18]

What few of these visitors came expressly to do, even as late as the 1930s, was sunbathe, swim, or engage in other water sports, but these were precisely the preferred activities of the "recreational" tourists of the 1960s. With memories of the colonial era receding into the past, most of them knew very little about Tunisia, its history, or its culture, leading them to fall back on stereotypes of the country and its residents. The holiday packages that brought most of this new wave of tourists to the country usually included a foray into a medina and a tour of an archeological site, but the exceedingly unfamiliar atmosphere of the former, the sublime monuments of the latter, and the aggressive sellers of cheap, pseudoartisanal souvenirs at both more likely contributed to reinforcing stereotypes than to refuting them. Many tourists' hedonistic pursuit of personal pleasure, boisterous behavior, and ideas of acceptable public contact between the sexes or appropriate attire on the streets so contrasted with Tunisian standards that they offended their hosts without intending to, or even knowing that they did so. But the goal of tourism was not to promote cross-cultural understanding, which, in any event, was probably no more remote in 1970 than in 1900, but to earn foreign currency, and this it did extremely well. From the middle of the 1960s until the escalation of oil prices after 1973, tourism produced more such revenue – often as much as one-fifth of the annual total – than did any other source.

Set against the substantial economic benefits of tourism were a variety of costs and risks, most of them more problematic than visitors' limited understanding of the country. The industry was extremely vulnerable to factors over which Tunisians exercised no control. Economic conditions in their own countries or political instability anywhere in North Africa or the Middle East constrained Europeans' travel and vacation plans, as revealed by the June 1967 Arab-Israeli war. The threat of fighting, and then its outbreak, slowed the flow of tourists to a trickle, confronting the hotels with their first major crisis. The government acted promptly to reverse the trend. Bourguiba offered prospective European visitors public assurances of their security, and although tourism revenues did decline in 1967, they rebounded strongly in the following year. On the other hand, Tunisian officials made the decisions regarding the location of the new hotels, whose initial concentration along the Mediterranean aggravated the disparate pace of development between the coastal zones and the interior.

The jobs offered at the new hotels, and the many others that they spawned in supporting businesses and industries, provided much-needed relief at a time when the unemployment rate regularly hovered around 15 percent. But most work in the hotels consisted of low-wage menial labor (as maids, porters, waiters, janitors, gardeners, and the like) that replicated colonial conditions of Tunisian subservience to Europeans. In the SHTT properties, Tunisians did fill the more remunerative and responsible administrative and managerial positions, but at the many privately owned hotels operated by multinational corporations, foreigners generally performed those functions. In areas targeted for the most intensive development, hotels and other tourist facilities added to the woes of the already beleaguered agricultural sector by taking thousands of hectares of farmland out of production and creating demands for water that drove its price beyond the means of local farmers working irrigated plots. Economic planners, investors, and government officials alike paid scant attention to ecological issues in the early years of the tourist boom or, if they did, dismissed them as insignificant when compared with the profits the industry generated. The magnitude of new construction and the influx of huge numbers of visitors to the new centers of tourism did, however, pose threats, even if not always immediately apparent ones, to fragile environmental conditions in both coastal and desert regions.

In early 1968, the growth rate of the overall economy stood at 3.3 percent a year, an impressive figure for a developing country, but only about half the rate anticipated. Well before the Ten-Year Plan had run its course as the blueprint for the economy, it had become clear that the original estimate of growth, like many of its other targets and policies, had been unrealistically ambitious or far out of alignment with existing economic and social realities. Critics skewered the Ministry of Planning for these technical miscalculations. They trod on far more sensitive ground when they questioned the extensive powers wielded by ben Salah, the fervent support he enjoyed for many years from Bourguiba, or the president's rush to discredit him as his plans came undone. On a scale not seen since ben Yusuf's challenge at the 1955 congress, party dissenters, most of them in early middle age – the generation that entered politics in the waning years of the protectorate – were voicing doubts about the political acuity and judgment of "the supreme combatant" and his narrow circle of advisers. The failure of the Ten-Year Plan to attain so many of its goals made a reexamination of national economic policy inevitable and a reorientation all but certain. Under the circumstances, such a reappraisal could hardly avoid grappling with discontent over the allocation and exercise of political power.

CHAPTER 6

Regime Entrenchment and the Intensification of Opposition, 1969–1987

REPAIRING THE DAMAGE OF THE SOCIALIST EXPERIMENT

In the aftermath of the experiment in economic planning, the Parti Socialiste Dusturien found itself at a fork in the political road. Since independence, a small coterie of party leaders had determined state policy and then imposed it through the agency of interlocking party and state organisms. The paternalistic conviction that the party-state president and, by extension, his inner circle inherently understood Tunisians' needs and aspirations rendered the reverse flow of information irrelevant, or at least of negligible interest to its recipients. Redefining the relationship between the party and the national organizations following the 1964 congress was merely a variation on this theme. Any semblance of dialogue between party and people disappeared, as the PSD's obdurate support for the cooperatives in the face of mounting popular opposition illustrated. The party's claim to embody the collective will of the Tunisian people had served it well against the protectorate and in the consolidation of the independent state, but it rang hollow by the late 1960s as broad resentment of economic policies opened a gulf between state and society. At the same time, the crystallization in the PSD's upper echelons of an opposition bold enough to challenge the authority and the methods of the increasingly isolated leadership revealed similar fissures within the party elite.

As in the past, the highly centralized, authoritarian power structure of the party could readily stifle internal critics. The choice confronting party leaders at this critical juncture lay between resorting to this technique at a time when discontent in the party paralleled widespread restlessness in the society at large or, as their critics urged, adopting more open procedures, widening the circle of key decision makers, and limiting personal power with institutional constraints, all with an eye toward giving voice to a more diverse array of views that would enable the party to establish strong connections with as much of the population as possible. Dissidents argued

that resistance to change would cause the party to atrophy, while its entrenched leaders feared that acceptance of these demands would ultimately lead to their replacement, the diminution of their power, or their relegation to symbolic roles.

In 1970 the most influential spokesperson for the liberal viewpoint within the PSD was Ahmad Mestiri. Few contemporaries of the forty-five-year-old Mestiri could match either his party credentials or, as the son-in-law of M'hammed Chenik, his family connections. Appointed to the Neo-Dustur political bureau in 1957, he also sat in the National Assembly from its inception; headed the Ministries of Justice (1956–8) and of Finance and Commerce (1959), and served abroad in ambassadorial posts in Moscow, Cairo, and Algiers (1960–6). Returning to Tunisia for the first time since the introduction of Neo-Dustur socialism, he became minister of national defense. Mestiri had no use for ben Salah's economics, which he publicly condemned as ruinous. Convinced that ben Salah remained in power only because of the personal favor of a president on whom there were no checks, his criticisms soon extended to Bourguiba as well. Finding himself in an untenable position, Mestiri resigned in 1968.

When ben Salah's own dismissal appeared to bear out Mestiri's misgivings, Bourguiba invited him to reenter the political fold, naming him minister of the interior in 1970. He and other party liberals drew up reforms to democratize the transaction of party business and restrict the exercise of arbitrary power, presenting them at the 1971 PSD congress, a gathering marked, in a manner unthinkable at any of the previous seven, by expressions of considerable doubt about the president. These stemmed primarily from his relationship with ben Salah, but they also derived from the sixty-eight-year-old leader's increasing medical problems. Bourguiba's poor health had necessitated lengthy treatment abroad in recent years and had contributed to his decision to step down as prime minister in favor of PSD secretary-general Badi Ladgham in 1969. Critics argued that prolonged absences affected the president's grasp of important matters of state and subtly suggested that his health might render him unfit to fulfill the duties of his office. In this climate, congress delegates ignored Bourguiba's wishes by electing liberal candidates to the central committee that selected the political bureau and by endorsing a presidential succession process that prevented the chief executive from naming his successor.

The opposition had won a tactical victory, but the party apparatus provided no mechanisms for enforcing it. Less than a year after the congress ended, Bourguiba ordered the expulsion of Mestiri and other outspoken critics. With their voices silenced inside the party, their ideas were ignored

and their reforms evaded. The men who for more than thirty-five years had presided over the PSD, and before it the Neo-Dustur, had no intention of delivering the party into their critics' hands. Three years later, when the PSD congress next convened, a much healthier and more aggressive Bourguiba asserted his control over the party, crushing any lingering tendencies toward the democratization of its inner workings. Delegates to the 1974 congress discarded the practice of the central committee electing the political bureau in favor of the appointment of the bureau by the party president, a position they offered to Bourguiba as a lifetime appointment. In the same year the National Assembly, composed exclusively of PSD members, bestowed on him the title "president [of the republic] for life." The most powerful figures in the party and the state never doubted which fork of the political road they would follow. Their decision not only to continue along the path of authoritarianism but also to reinforce their powers, to control opinion rather than to mobilize it, slammed the door on the expression of opposing political viewpoints. Symbolic of the prevailing climate for much of the decade was the 1976 amendment of Article 4 of the constitution, altering the motto of the republic from "liberty, order, and justice" to "order, liberty, and justice."

Reform-minded party members who had avoided the 1971 purge wisely lowered their profile thereafter. Many who had been swept up in it joined Mestiri in promoting concepts of political participation and transparency among the Tunisian people, but in the face of PSD absolutism they encountered little success beyond a small circle of intellectuals. Ben Salah's efforts to maintain a support base were even less effective. His Mouvement de l'Unité Populaire (MUP; Movement of Popular Unity), organized after his escape to France in 1973, espoused his socialist principles but consisted almost exclusively of fellow exiles. One other group that coalesced at around this time deserves mention. Zaituna mosque-university students founded the Association pour la Sauvegarde du Coran (Association for the Preservation of the Qur'an) in 1970 to express their anguish over the diminishing Muslim identity of Tunisia and the parallel deterioration of moral standards, both of which they attributed to government policies of secularization and Westernization. Framing its message primarily in cultural and religious terms, the association urged Tunisians to place Islam at the center of their personal lives as the essential first step toward overcoming these ills. In contrast with their previous attitude toward the religious establishment, national political leaders made no attempt to interfere with the association, probably in the hope of lessening tensions with the religious authorities at a time when the party was dealing with intense criticisms from

its own liberal wing, but perhaps also with the thought that the association might provide a useful counterweight to secular opponents of the regime.

With the same enthusiasm that it employed in resisting political change, the PSD engineered an extraordinary overhaul of the national economy following the dismissal of ben Salah. Supervising the recovery from the damage inflicted by the previous decade's often poorly designed socialist policies fell to Hedi Nouira, Bourguiba's designee as prime minister in 1970. An economic liberal skeptical of ben Salah from the outset, Nouira held decidedly illiberal political views that accorded with the impulse, prevailing at the highest levels of the party, to quash dissent. Private capital dedicated to industrial expansion, much of it inevitably coming from abroad, formed a crucial component in Nouira's economic salvage operation. To reassure investors apprehensive about the state's recent economic past, the government devised attractive concession packages that targeted foreign entrepreneurs willing to develop export-oriented industries providing desperately needed jobs but not offering competition for Tunisian products. During the first planning cycle under Nouira's direction (1973–7), more than five hundred foreign-owned factories opened. As the maintenance of a centralized planning process suggested, however, the state did not abandon all economic activity to the private sector nor, except for a few disastrous ventures – most notably the cooperatives – did it withdraw its participation from existing public-sector undertakings. Nearly a hundred new state companies, most of them heavy industries turning out primary products, emerged in the 1970s. The percentage of government spending on the public sector more than doubled between 1972 and 1984, while the state's share of total capital investment never fell below 50 percent.[1]

Increased industrialization created thousands of new jobs, most requiring minimal skills, paying low wages, and presenting limited opportunities for advancement or the acquisition of technical expertise. Yet it did not appreciably lower unemployment; nor did it generate substantial export revenue. Throughout the 1970s, the official national unemployment rate fluctuated between 13 and 16 percent, but it reached markedly higher proportions in the cities and among the young. By the middle of the decade, the continuing flight from the countryside had brought the urban and rural populations into balance for the first time ever, a process that contributed significantly to urban unemployment. Young men between the ages of fifteen and twenty-five suffered a rate of joblessness approaching 50 percent and accounted for almost three-quarters of those without work.[2] The birth of some two million Tunisians between 1956 and 1976 simply outstripped, by far, the government's ability to generate jobs.



Figure 6.1. "I was born in Tunisia." The sign in the rear window of this vehicle makes this statement in French and Arabic. Renault was one of many European businesses to set up manufacturing plants in Tunisia during the 1970s and 1980s.

Two other factors provide further explanations of the new industries' negligible impact on unemployment. In the 1970s, women went to work outside their homes or fields in much larger numbers than previously, often holding jobs once reserved for men. In 1975, women comprised slightly more than a quarter of the economically active population, over a third of them employed in the industrial sector.[3] This situation reflected the evolving status of women since independence, the economic straits of many Tunisian families, and the greater willingness of foreign entrepreneurs (in comparison with their Tunisian counterparts) to hire women, albeit usually at lower wages than men. This augmentation of the workforce meant that reducing overall unemployment figures necessitated creating new jobs at a more feverish pitch than planners had foreseen or could accomplish. The second explanatory factor lay in the government's persistent unwillingness to come to grips with the problem of regional imbalances. During Nouira's first Five-Year Plan (1973–7), the government made no greater effort than its predecessors to disperse the new industries beyond the coast, and

particularly beyond the Tunis area. As a result, the relief that they provided had no impact on the south, center, or west, traditionally the regions with the most severe levels of unemployment.

Many of the plants built by private investors manufactured either textiles or clothing. Because government dispensations and low wages held down their production costs, these goods initially found profitable markets across the Mediterranean. In 1977, however, the European Economic Community (EEC) imposed high tariffs on products of this kind in order to protect its own industries from being swamped in a flood of inexpensive imports. The impact on Tunisia was so devastating that many factories closed in the final year of the Five-Year Plan, contributing to its falling short of the 10 percent expansion originally envisioned for the industrial sector. Even so, at the conclusion of the plan, the industrial sector accounted for almost 20 percent of all employment (nearly a quarter of a million jobs) and manufactured products comprised more than a third of all exports.[4]

EEC import restrictions also hurt Tunisian agriculture. Following the collapse of the cooperatives, large landowners relentlessly squeezed out smaller farmers, mechanized their own operations more thoroughly, and concentrated on raising crops for lucrative markets abroad rather than domestic consumption. Diverse government assistance programs, not the least of which entailed the construction of several dams under consideration since the colonial period, benefited those in a position to pursue large-scale farming. But the need to import significant quantities of basic foodstuffs counterbalanced the profits derived from agricultural exports. Although the rate of growth of the agricultural sector doubled between 1969 and 1977 (from a starting point driven down by the miscalculations of the ben Salah era), farm exports during those years rarely covered even half the cost of imported food. Tunisia's most valuable agricultural commodities, olive oil and citrus fruits, replicated those of Greece, Spain, and Portugal. To strengthen the economies of those countries as a prelude to their admission to the EEC, the Community raised barriers against competitive agricultural products in 1977, effectively sealing off the European market to Tunisian growers.

The Nouira government stabilized the economy, set aside the unworkable and damaging strategies of the socialist era, restored the trust of investors, and plotted a recovery course that, while imperfect, nevertheless achieved a growth rate of 5.6 percent a year between 1973 and 1977. Such a turnaround could not have occurred as rapidly as it did without the impressive capacity of tourism to earn foreign revenue, the confidence of international creditors, and fortuitous financial underpinning from two

local sources of unanticipated magnitude. Tunisia's ability to contract substantial foreign loans facilitated the execution of Nouira's initial plan, but the worldwide hike in crude oil prices as it went into effect proved even more beneficial. Government coffers soon bulged with petrodollars, for although oil exports held steady throughout the decade, their value increased tenfold. By the final year of the plan, income from the sale of oil made up one-sixth of the government's revenue. It used this windfall to finance its own investments in the industrial and service sectors; fund capitalist agricultural ventures; offset the concessions tendered to entice foreign investment; subsidize the prices of essential commodities, utilities, and housing to curb unrest among the poorest (and frequently unemployed) segments of the population; improve the overall quality of life by expanding and accelerating the delivery of educational and social services; and maintain the balance of trade at an acceptable, although still negative, level.

Remittances from overseas workers constituted the other unforeseen source of wealth in the 1970s. Limited labor migration to France predated independence and after 1956 some Tunisians also found their way to Italy, Germany, and other European countries, but what money they sent back had little impact on the national economy. Most held unskilled jobs in factories, construction, or public works, often of sorts disdained by local workers. But the oil boom of the 1970s created large demands for labor in the sparsely populated Arab oil-producing states. Unemployed, underemployed, and employed but underpaid Tunisians had only to cross the border into Libya to benefit from this situation, and tens of thousands of them, mostly from depressed and neglected areas of the country, did so. Because secondary schools and universities were producing more graduates than the economy could absorb, the profile of Tunisians seeking economic opportunity abroad assumed greater diversity and sophistication during the 1970s. In addition to laborers, teachers, clerks, technicians, and semiskilled workers dispersed throughout the Arab world, particularly the Arabian Peninsula, and Europe. By the end of the decade, remittances from the more than quarter of a million Tunisians working outside their country constituted almost a quarter of the gross domestic product.[5] The increase in labor migration brought large sums of money into the country at an extremely opportune moment, but its usefulness as a safety valve transcended its monetary importance. In addition to curbing domestic unemployment and the anger and malaise that accompanied it, emigration prevented already overcrowded urban slums from deteriorating still further.

For the most part, the 1973–7 Five-Year Plan expanded the economy through circumstantial, as opposed to structural, modifications. A handful

of Tunisians able to make substantial investments, enter into partnerships with foreign entrepreneurs, or provide the intermediary services required by outsiders doing business in the country turned huge profits in the booming economy. Many of these wealthy capitalists owed their prosperity to the ownership of rural property, and all enjoyed considerable influence in the PSD. Wage earners did not fare so well. Although average income climbed steadily, the percentage of national revenue allotted to salaries dropped. Moreover, the high production cost of local goods and the expense of now readily available imports drove consumer prices upward twice as rapidly as salaries. Disparities between rich and poor were hardly unknown, but the mechanisms of the liberal economy dramatically deepened the gulf between classes. During the 1970s, the expenditures of the wealthiest 20 percent of the population exceeded those of all other Tunisians combined, while the poorest 20 percent accounted for only 5 percent of spending.[6]

So acute a compromise of workers' interests aroused the UGTT from years of lethargic subordination to the party. In the transition from the socialist to the liberal economy, a succession of wildcat strikes revealed the PSD's inability to keep the union under its thumb. This renewal of activism coincided with the return of Habib ʿAchour as UGTT secretary-general, a post he had held from 1963 until 1965, when his attempts to assert the union's independence led to his dismissal from the PSD. Reinstated in 1971, his resumption of the leadership of the union and appointment to the powerful party political bureau reflected his quarter-century-long affiliation with both. But ʿAchour faced a virtually impossible task: to foster an autonomous union effectively addressing issues critical to the welfare of the working class while ensuring that labor unrest did not thwart the attainment of overall PSD goals, from whose formulation, however, the UGTT remained excluded. In 1973 the government introduced an institutionalized bargaining system that provided a mechanism for it, the union, and employers to discuss wages, working conditions, and other relevant questions, but at the same time it outlawed work stoppages. With no other weapon at their disposal, union members did not hesitate to strike in defiance of the ban, but the authorities' resort to the police and the army to break the strikes left no question in their minds regarding the government's position on their demands. ʿAchour genuinely sympathized with the workers, and under his direction the UGTT became the sole national entity potent enough to confront the PSD.

The inauguration of Nouira's second Five-Year Plan in 1977 brought the tension between the UGTT and the government to a head. Believing that ongoing labor unrest jeopardized the support from international lending

agencies on which the new plan relied more heavily than its predecessors, PSD leaders pressured ʿAchour to bring the union into line. As an inducement, they proposed to raise the minimum wage and promised additional increases linked to inflation over the course of the plan. Despite UGTT acceptance of this "social contract," the government failed to address workers' grievances and the strikes continued. ʿAchour resigned from the political bureau in disgust at the end of the year, and the union scheduled a general strike – the first it had called since independence – for January 26, 1978. Like its forerunners in the waning days of the protectorate, this general strike had strong political overtones, since UGTT leaders coupled demands for political pluralism with others of a more purely economic nature. In cities throughout the country, the protest ended in violent clashes as demonstrators vented their frustration by attacking the symbols of the regime, including its policemen and soldiers. The number of fatalities reported ranged from forty-seven to more than four times that number; hundreds more, including ʿAchour, received prison sentences for their involvement. The PSD promptly installed a more malleable UGTT executive committee, but its obvious subservience prevented it from bringing the outraged rank and file under control. Even though few Tunisians had ever doubted either the capacity or the willingness of the government to quash serious opposition, its actions on "Black Thursday" revealed an unexpectedly ruthless dimension that many found frightening and repellant.

Political liberals seized the opportunity presented by apprehension over the government's behavior to acquaint more Tunisians with their own thinking. Since leaving the PSD, Mestiri and his associates had campaigned for a more open society; played an instrumental role in creating the Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (LTDH; Tunisian League of Human Rights), the first such body in the Arab world, in 1977; and consistently supported workers' demands for a more equitable society. In June 1978, Mestiri announced the formation of the Mouvement des Démocrates Sociales (MDS; Movement of Social Democrats). The government denied an MDS request for recognition as a political party, but the organization quickly became a rallying point for leftist dissidents, while its French and Arabic newspapers served as forums for outlining their criticisms.

More or less concurrently, an opposition political movement centered on religious conviction surfaced for the first time in almost twenty years. The growing influence of the UGTT disconcerted leaders of the Association pour la Sauvegarde du Coran and similar Islamic groups. Fearful that abandoning the political arena to the union and the emerging secular organizations would greatly impair their ability to deliver their message to

the public, they formed the Harakat al-Ittijah al-Islami, known in French as the Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique (MTI; Islamic Tendency Movement). Inspired by the example of the Islamic Revolution in Iran (although not entirely wedded to its ideology) and led by Rashid Ghannushi, a former secondary school teacher, and ʿAbd al-Fattah Mourou, a graduate of both Sadiqi College and the faculty of theology (the former Zaituna mosque-university), the MTI reiterated the earlier Islamic organizations' calls for individuals to embrace the moral and ethical values of the religion in their personal lives, but went on to demand that the government reverse its ruinous economic policies and craft a more representative political structure. It gained a following in several, often overlapping, quarters: among poor and disadvantaged Tunisians victimized by a freewheeling economy that reduced a third of the population to poverty by the end of the decade, among young persons who had no respect for the PSD as the party that had won independence (for most, before they were born) but rather regarded it as an anachronism with little to offer them, and among many older middle-class men and women who turned to their Islamic heritage when both socialism and capitalism failed to fulfill the expectations of prosperity and security they had raised.[7]

Despite mounting pressures to reform a system described by a Western social scientist as a mixture of a "Smithian way of getting rich with a Hobbesian way of governing,"[8] the high command of the PSD made only insignificant concessions. For the 1979 national assembly elections, the party presented lists with twice as many candidates as seats, but all had to be party members in good standing. Critics refused to participate in the election or spoiled their ballots, pointing out that so ineffectual a modification demonstrated how thoroughly the party had lost touch with much of the population, replacing concern for it with contempt. On January 26, 1980, the second anniversary of "Black Thursday," a band of guerrillas seized police and military installations in the southern phosphate mining center of Gafsa, hoping to spark a general uprising. A steady decline in phosphate prices had stalled the region's already depressed economy, creating exceptionally high unemployment and exceptionally bitter resentment. At least thirty-seven people (the official estimate), but quite probably many more, died in the battle to regain control of the city. Tunisia accused Muammar Qadhafi, with whom Bourguiba had conducted a running feud since rejecting Libyan overtures to unify the two countries in 1974, of training and equipping the attackers. Foreign complicity aside, the Tunisian authorities could not wash their hands of responsibility for the atmosphere that had spawned the raid. The admiration expressed by a

senior commander of the mission for Salah ben Yusuf implicitly indicted the government for not having redressed the grievances that had propelled so many southerners and other aggrieved citizens into the Yusufist ranks twenty-five years earlier. As the new decade began, the malaise that had gripped the least privileged segments of Tunisian society was spreading. "Black Thursday" and the sortie at Gafsa laid bare the fragility of the regime, making it impossible to put off major political and economic reforms any longer. When the powerful and well-connected Nouira, identified so closely with the formulation of the policies of the 1970s, suffered an incapacitating stroke a few months after the Gafsa raid, many in the upper echelons of the PSD must have breathed a sigh of relief.

SPIRALING OUT OF CONTROL

The Tunisian constitution provided for the prime minister to succeed the president in the event of the latter's death or incapacitation. With Bourguiba continuing to experience recurrent health problems, this proviso significantly enhanced the prestige and power of the head of government. Inasmuch as Bourguiba effectively controlled the appointment of the prime minister, policies emanating from his office bore the imprimatur of the chief executive. Following Nouira's stroke, Muhammad Mzali, a politician with a history of allegiance to the party chief, became prime minister and PSD secretary-general. The president set him a difficult task: to shore up what had once been a monolithic political and economic system but was now so fissured by particularistic interests as to verge on disintegration, and to do so while retaining maximum control at the party core, where it had always resided. Rather reminiscent of the opening gambits of reform-minded residents general in the colonial era, Mzali inaugurated his administration by releasing Habib ʿAchour and other labor activists imprisoned after "Black Thursday." He then filled several cabinet positions with individuals not affiliated with the party and induced Mestiri to return, with his MDS colleagues, to the PSD fold as a loyal opposition movement.

These gestures smacked of the Bourguibist device of marginalizing, then reinstating, senior party members who had crossed him. More innovative, and potentially more significant, was the pursuit of political pluralism. Scheduling new elections for 1981, the government invited political organizations to present lists of candidates, provided only that they did not draw support from outside the country, did not advocate class struggle or sectarianism, and agreed to avoid criticisms of the "president for life." Mzali pledged to grant official recognition as political parties to those

receiving at least 5 percent of the vote. In a show of harmony intended to underscore the evolving political atmosphere, the PSD and the UGTT combined forces to offer a "National Front" list. None of the fledgling groups had the resources to mount an effective campaign, and all fell short of the threshold, barely capturing 5 percent of the vote among them. Despite the electoral results, the government initiated a multiparty system of sorts in 1982 by legalizing the Parti Communiste Tunisien (which had only about 2,000 members) on the grounds that, unlike the other political organizations, the PCT had been functioning in 1963 when the ban on opposition activities took effect. Bourguiba made it clear that he regarded such reforms as, at best, necessary evils, grousing that "I gave them pluralism . . . They will not be able to say they had to wait for the death of that fascist Bourguiba."[9]

A particularly disturbing feature for the secular PSD leadership in the run-up to the 1981 elections was the strong popular enthusiasm for the MTI, the only political group other than the communists that did not trace its roots to the PSD. Intent on laying the groundwork for an Islamic government, Ghannushi tested the limits of the regime's tolerance, often using mosques as the venues for his condemnation of twenty-five years of Neo-Dustur and PSD policies that had removed virtually any trace of an Islamic dimension from Tunisian public life. The arrest of Ghannushi, Mourou, and scores of MTI adherents on charges of defaming the "president for life" threw the movement into disarray shortly before the elections. Nevertheless, in the voting, candidates linked to the MTI fared as well as, and often better than, their secular counterparts. Most of the latter viewed as cynical and opportunistic subsequent proposals by the Islamists that they forge a common front, convinced that the MTI wanted primarily to take advantage of the networks and organizational structures the secularists had painstakingly built. The specter of an alliance, however unlikely, between the MTI and one or another of the secular opposition parties alarmed the government enough for Mzali to attempt to forestall it in 1983 by recognizing as political parties the MDS and the Parti d'Unité Populaire (PUP; Popular Unity Party), a group that had broken away from ben Salah's MUP. Citing the prohibition against sectarian parties, the prime minister rejected repeated MTI demands for the same status.

In less than three years, Mzali had undercut PSD opponents' criticism of the party's monopolization of the political arena, although the pluralism that emerged had limits and had not yet weathered a genuine electoral contest. He had also succeeded in playing important components of the opposition off against one another. He had not, however, managed to unite

all the influential figures of the party behind him, and pockets of disapproval formed within its inner circle. Censure came from old-guard PSD conservatives but also from high-ranking younger party members to whose political ambitions the prime minister represented an obstacle. By virtue of his post, he, and none of them, would accede to the presidency; unless he fell from power before Bourguiba's demise, others had no hope of attaining the country's highest office. Moreover, pluralism potentially jeopardized the party's guaranteed access to powerful government offices. Some of the bitter debates that developed within the PSD over the wisdom of Mzali's policies reflected genuine substantive misgivings, but others served as ploys to maneuver their proponents into advantageous positions on the matter of presidential succession. In addition to these open confrontations, the prime minister's enemies also conducted a campaign of innuendo to discredit him with the president. An adept politician, Mzali retained Bourguiba's confidence and shouldered aside his challengers. In the process, however, he alienated men and women who, in less combative circumstances, might have helped advance the reforms.

Political infighting left Mzali vulnerable when economic circumstances produced a situation of crisis proportions. The first plan formulated under his direction (1982–6) centered on investments in industries outside the petrochemical sector, with the objectives of reducing unemployment, bolstering exports, and cutting imports. Until substantial progress toward achieving those goals materialized, however, the preservation of stability necessitated the maintenance of state subsidies on basic commodities, despite the budgetary strain they created. When Nouira inaugurated the first postsocialist Five-Year Plan in 1973, the government expended some ten million dinars a year on subsidies; a decade later, the annual burden approached eighty million dinars.[10] Serious problems arose in the very early stages of the implementation of the 1982–6 plan, as the income that financed the subsidies, especially revenue from the sale of crude oil, unexpectedly leveled off and unfavorable weather conditions resulted in several exceptionally poor harvests. To cope with the deepening budget deficit, the government imposed austerity measures that reduced its own spending, restricted imports, and, with considerable trepidation, marginally reduced some subsidies. Its increased borrowing abroad reflected the priority assigned to ensuring political calm, even at the expense of sound economics.

Late in 1983, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank demanded the lifting of subsidies on bread and on semolina, the basic ingredient of couscous, the staple of the national diet, as a requisite for their continuing support. The doubling of the price of these commodities

triggered two weeks of antigovernment demonstrations throughout the country in January 1984. On one occasion, protesters went so far as to stone a vehicle in which Bourguiba was riding – a gesture once unimaginable and indicative of the depth of frustration and rage among the poorest and most afflicted Tunisians. As on "Black Thursday," the police and the army restored order, but only at the cost of thousands of civilian casualties. Mzali's political foes within the PSD condemned both the cancellation of the subsidies and the method of quelling the ensuing disorders, but the recently legalized political parties, still uncertain of their limits, refrained from actively fanning the unrest.

In order to distance himself from the public outrage and to polish his somewhat tarnished image, Bourguiba restored the subsidies, allowing Tunisians to believe that the prime minister had acted without his authorization. Yet he did not dismiss Mzali, preferring that his current protégé, now instilled with a heightened appreciation of the reality that supreme power resided with the president, not the prime minister, remain in office. Ironically, Bourguiba suffered a severe heart attack a few months later, enabling the chastened Mzali to strengthen his position. Aware that future economic adjustments were imperative, but that they would meet as hostile a reception as had the termination of the subsidies, he took steps to minimize the effectiveness of the opposition. Among other measures, he recalled General Zine al-ʿAbidine ben ʿAli from an ambassadorial appointment in Europe to resume his position as director general of national security, a post in which he had achieved prominence with his forceful suppression of the 1978 disturbances. Precisely because of that record, the UGTT questioned ben ʿAli's reappointment. In retaliation, the government brushed the union aside in favor of a rival body, the Union Nationale Tunisienne du Travail (UNTT; Tunisian National Labor Union), whose members had separated from the UGTT in the previous year because they objected to its militant and confrontational approach to the government. The split only intensified ʿAchour's rhetoric, and the outspoken UGTT secretary-general was imprisoned for a second time in 1985.

By closely monitoring the political parties' leaders and their newspapers, ben ʿAli and Mzali (who was minister of the interior as well as prime minister) ensured that the opposing parties did not challenge the government. It was the MTI, however, that came under the most intense scrutiny. Accusing the organization of masterminding the 1984 riots, the government arrested scores of its sympathizers. Although MTI leaders, in contrast to their secular counterparts, had encouraged their followers to participate in

the protests, the authorities could produce no evidence that they had engineered them. The Islamists jailed in January, along with Ghannushi and Mourou, both of whom had been in detention since 1981, were released a few months later, but the government persisted in its refusal to permit the MTI to organize as a political party. What many Tunisians perceived as government persecution added to the movement's stature, enhancing its standing as an independent organization committed to championing equitable and culturally appropriate solutions to the country's problems.

The traumatic events of January 1984 constituted but a prelude to a period of economic calamity brought on by an unforeseeable confluence of circumstances that took a particularly harsh toll on the most highly profitable facets of the economy. A fall in crude oil prices on the international market translated into a staggering reduction of the revenue generated by petroleum exports – for years the lifeblood of the economy – from 778 million dinars in 1984 to 322 million in 1986. The return to Tunisia of tens of thousands of workers from Libya and elsewhere as a result of the recession in the petroleum industry posed a double liability, depriving the national economy of their remittances even as it aggravated already high levels of unemployment. During the same two-year period, a sustained drought cut the cereal harvest by half.[11] The Tunisian decision, taken reluctantly and at the urging of the United States, to allow the Palestine Liberation Organization to establish its headquarters in Tunis following the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon put the tourism industry at risk by identifying the country with the Palestine-Israel conflict, a drawback it had avoided in the past. A spate of terrorist attacks around the Mediterranean basin and in Europe after 1982, the 1985 Israeli bombing of a Palestinian compound in the Tunis suburb of Hammam Lif that killed sixty-eight Palestinians and Tunisians and injured over a hundred, and air raids by the United States on Libyan targets in 1986 further stifled tourism, with consequences that rippled through the economy. With oil revenues in precipitate decline and other sources of income also falling off significantly, the government could no longer sustain its previous spending levels. Investments and the jobs they produced dried up, the balance-of-payments deficit increased, foreign reserves dissipated, international borrowing rose, and the annual growth rate of the economy over the span of the 1982–6 planning cycle plummeted to 2.9 percent, the lowest level since independence. As the ill-fated plan stumbled toward its conclusion, the external debt reached approximately $5 billion, or nearly 60 percent of GNP, while its servicing consumed slightly more than a quarter of the government's receipts.[12]

All Tunisians felt the pinch of the deteriorating economic situation, but it naturally afflicted the poor most severely. Although the MTI drew support from a wide cross-section of the population, many of its more impoverished constituents experienced acute misery and often suffered the indignity of lacking the resources needed to provide, even minimally, for their families – a state of affairs utterly antithetical to the concepts of community, justice, and human dignity that the Islamist movement advocated as the philosophical underpinning of national life. Consequently, the MTI vigorously and persistently inveighed against the government. Some of its proposals focused on correcting fundamental deficiencies in PSD economic policies and had no direct links with religion or culture. Rather than building an economy dependent on international tourism and manufacturing "things we don't need with cheap labor for the West,"[13] MTI leaders advocated achieving greater autarky by increasing food production through the modernization of agriculture and by developing industries that met the needs of the domestic market. Other recommendations for dealing with the economic crisis derived more explicitly from Islamic contexts, often reflecting long-established views on gender roles. In 1985, the movement sought a national referendum on the Personal Status Code, contending that its facilitation of their entry into the public sphere encouraged women to take jobs once reserved for men, the traditional breadwinners. By so doing, women not only aggravated the problem of (male) unemployment but also undermined what the Islamists regarded as a basic societal and familial precept dictating distinctly different male and female responsibilities. In related issues that went beyond economic concerns, the MTI also promoted the limitation of contacts between the sexes and the revival of traditional forms of dress as a manifestation of the rejection of foreign influence. The PSD, the opposition parties, and women's advocacy groups all came to the defense of the code, thwarting any immediate prospect of its abolition, which the MTI continued to favor.

Consistently denied legitimization as a political party, and thus officially excluded from the dialogue set in motion by Mzali, the MTI risked less in attacking the government than did the MDS or the PUP, whose primarily middle-class adherents were, in any case, better equipped to survive the economic shocks the nation was undergoing. But, in reality, the very concept of pluralism was foundering. Convinced that the prevailing political and economic climate militated against free elections that might empower opponents of the government, all the parties except the PSD boycotted the balloting for municipal councils in 1985, thereby

rendering Mzali's political opening meaningless. Not even the collapse of the multiparty experiment assuaged the staunchest party conservatives, however, for they deeply distrusted the instincts and ambitions of the man who stood first in line to replace the president. As Bourguiba resumed a more active political role after recovering from his heart attack, influential associates who had his ear sowed seeds of doubt about the judgment, competence, and loyalty not only of his prime minister but of other prominent members of the party's inner circle, including his wife, Wassila ben 'Ammar, and his son, Habib Jr.

Intent on clinging to the power he had wielded for half a century, in 1986 the aging leader moved against those whom he believed threatened his authority. Mestiri, who had epitomized the liberal opposition since its inception, was arrested in April while leading a demonstration protesting the government's failure to condemn an attack by the United States on the Libyan cities of Tripoli and Benghazi. At the same time, Bourguiba appointed several hardnosed party conservatives to important ministerial positions; relieved Mzali of responsibility for the Interior Ministry, naming ben 'Ali to that post; and severed his ties with both his wife and son. When the axe inevitably fell on Mzali in July, he fled the country in fear of additional reprisals, which did, in fact, follow in the form of trials in absentia that imposed prison sentences for financial and political improprieties alleged to have occurred during his ministry.

The most urgent task facing Rashid Sfar, the president's choice to replace Mzali, was to put an end to the economic slide. As the 1982–6 planning cycle had drawn to a close, the IMF and the World Bank had begun to warn Tunisian officials that the country risked losing its access to credit unless it carried out a structural overhaul of the economy that reduced the deficit and relieved the mounting pressure exerted by external debts. Mzali's last budget, for 1986, trimmed government expenditures by 15 percent from the previous fiscal year and included deep cuts in basic food subsidies,[14] but the structural adjustment program envisioned by the international agencies entailed policy revisions reaching to the very roots of the economy. Their agenda included trade liberalization and the devaluation of the dinar to facilitate integration with the global economy, extensive privatization and deregulation to enhance the influence of the market, the stimulation of sound investments to reduce unemployment, and the reduction of public expenditures, particularly by the elimination of subsidies. The 1987–91 plan drawn up by Sfar's economic advisers spelled out the detailed implementation of this sweeping program, for which the IMF and the World Bank made available some $800 million.[15]

Whatever the economic merits of the structural adjustment program, the likelihood of its success hinged on the PSD's ability to persuade the Tunisian people, at a time of considerable economic and political uncertainty, of its necessity and to rally them behind the belt-tightening it required – a challenge of significant proportions. Although the party counted more than forty-four hundred cells and a million members (15 percent of the total population),[16] its militant fervor had evaporated since independence, few of its members accorded it more than pro forma allegiance, and its leaders had come to rely more on repression than on mobilization to achieve their objectives. Obsessed with the retention of power and convinced, in no small part because of the innuendoes circulated by Mzali's conservative opponents in the party, that political enemies abounded, Bourguiba adamantly refused to relinquish control over the party or the state, even though recurrent bouts of physical, and occasionally mental, infirmity prevented him from playing an effective public leadership role. Anxious to avoid the upheavals that had accompanied the 1983 price hikes, the government attempted to disguise the withdrawal of the subsidy on bread by reducing the weight of a standard loaf rather than by raising its price, but it could not conceal, nor even appreciably soften, the hardships attendant, at least in the short term, on structural adjustment. In addition to their distress over the economic consequences of the program, its critics also expressed disgust at the surrender of sovereignty embodied in allowing the IMF and the World Bank to formulate national economic and fiscal policy. Sfar made it clear from the outset, however, that his government would not tolerate challenges to its authority. In so uninviting a climate, the opposition parties again refused to participate in elections, this time for the National Assembly, in November 1986.

After a spate of demonstrations in the following year, the authorities arrested Ghannushi and other prominent MTI figures, charging them with fomenting a plot to overthrow the government and create an Islamic state. Consistently denied recognition as a legitimate political organization in an allegedly pluralist system, the MTI, as it sought to position itself to seize power, appeared to be charting a collision course with the government. Bourguiba and his closest associates thoroughly despised the Muslim activists, deeming their aspiration to center public life on Islam as the antithesis of the modern, Western-oriented, secular outlook that the party and state had assiduously promoted. Conversely, MTI members believed that their movement's exclusion from the political process represented only the most recent manifestation of a systematic campaign, dating from before independence, to push Tunisian Islam to the sidelines. In their view, the

rejection of Islamic values in favor of imported ideologies, all of which had failed to create a just society, had been a grave error. Restoring hope to the Tunisian people required a state committed to encouraging and assisting them to cultivate their deep, but long neglected, Islamic roots.

Acting under presidential orders, ben ʿAli turned the extensive resources of the Interior Ministry toward crushing the movement. The ensuing spiral of violence came to a head in August 1987, when bombs exploded at tourist hotels in Sousse and Monastir. Because Bourguiba and other prominent PSD officials hailed from Monastir and retained close ties with the city, but also because the incidents occurred on the eve of the national holiday marking the president's birthday, they conveyed a sense of personal vendetta. Moreover, an outrage of this kind, in cities that had grown into beach resorts popular with international visitors, weakened the government by guaranteeing an economically destructive decline in the vital tourism industry. At the same time, it enabled its perpetrators forcefully to convey their discomfort with the offensive behavior of many Western visitors. The blasts, for which the MTI denied responsibility, created a highly charged atmosphere at the trials that convened a few weeks later for the Islamists arrested earlier in the year. Those proceedings imposed the death penalty on several key leaders, including Ghannushi, and lengthy prison terms on scores of lesser party militants.

Bourguiba applauded the sentences, but ben ʿAli, a police and security specialist, won the president over to his and other ministers' rationale that capital punishment risked endowing the prisoners with an aura of martyrdom, thereby fueling an already blazing fire. Bourguiba expressed his respect for ben ʿAli's judgment by promoting him to the office of prime minister in October 1987, but he then reverted to his insistence on the execution of the Islamist leaders. Convinced by the elderly chief executive's physical deterioration and erratic behavior that he no longer had the capacity to govern, ben ʿAli requested that a team of physicians assess the state of the president's health. They reached the same judgment and, in accordance with the provisions of the constitution, declared him unfit to remain in office. Zine al-ʿAbidine ben ʿAli assumed the presidency on November 7, 1987; Habib Bourguiba retired to Monastir where he died thirteen years later, aged ninety-seven.

Ben ʿAli had enormous powers concentrated in his hands as head of state, head of government, and head of the sole effective political party (the post of PSD secretary-general having been held by the prime minister since Nouira's time), and as the man who had engineered a peaceful transition sparing the country further stress, but he also benefited from vast reservoirs

of goodwill that were deepened still more by his apparent willingness to reach out to all segments of the population and by the fact that few Tunisians mourned the end of Bourguiba's sixty years of public life. Even the former president's strongest supporters had recognized, although hardly any had publicly acknowledged, the signs of physical and mental deterioration that had in recent years rendered him dangerous to allies and enemies alike and a liability to the nation. To put in order the political, economic, and social disarray of the house he had inherited, ben ʿAli required all the advantages he had in his possession.

THE ARTS AND LITERATURE IN BOURGUIBA'S TUNISIA

The thirty-one years during which Habib Bourguiba presided over Tunisia witnessed the development of a rich, diverse, and expressive national culture frequently contrasting with the repressive political environment and the debilitating fluctuations of the economy. After World War II, the well-known history of collaboration between the Neo-Dustur leadership and the theatrical community in the 1930s hindered a genuine revival of the theater until 1954, when the Tunis municipal council created al-Firqa al-Baladiyya (the Tunis Municipal Theater Company). With independence, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs assumed financial sponsorship of the troupe, providing it with a sizeable annual subsidy that enabled the talented young actor ʿAli ben ʿAyad, who served as its director from 1963 to 1972, to mold al-Firqa al-Baladiyya into the most professional and successful company in the country, and to win international acclaim in tours throughout the Arab world and in Europe. After its leader's sudden death, the company faltered, and although it continued to mount successful seasons, later under the name Masrah al-Madina (the City Theater), it rarely recaptured the dynamism of the ben ʿAyad era.

Government support for the Tunis company reflected a policy enunciated in 1962 by Bourguiba, whose elder brother Muhammad had directed and acted in a number of troupes in the 1930s. The president characterized stage productions not merely as entertainment but as vehicles for popular education and the nurturing of national pride. Thereafter, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs took a number of measures to fulfill his vision. It created two agencies, the Service du Théâtre to promote the work of existing companies and foster the creation of new ones, and the Commission Nationale d'Orientation Théâtrale to review material and prevent the staging of "inappropriate" productions. The ministry also organized annual theatrical festivals showcasing Tunisian amateur and professional

companies, to which it later added two additional celebrations, the Festival du Théâtre Maghrébin for North African amateur companies and the Festival du Théâtre Arabe for professional troupes from throughout the Arab world. The generally high quality of these events attracted an international audience and enhanced the reputation of Tunisian theater within the country and abroad. Finally, in an effort to overcome the elitist aura of the theater, the ministry offered extensive subsidies to local and regional companies in the early 1970s. Occasionally, however, this program backfired. The highly successful troupe created in Gafsa, for example, tailored its productions to the city's largely working-class population, staging satires of contemporary political and social issues in the regional idiom and accent – a provocative artistic philosophy that fueled the discontent spreading, particularly in the south, as the economy deteriorated.

In 1974, Fadhel Jaibi, an actor and director who had supervised the regional theater movement, became the head of the Centre d'Art Dramatique in Tunis, a school established by the French in 1951 to provide training in the management of theatrical enterprises. Jaibi reoriented the center's curriculum, introducing courses in performance, direction, and technical aspects of the theater that, for the first time, made it possible for Tunisians to receive professional training in these areas in their own country. Along with several of his colleagues at the Centre d'Art Dramatique, the pioneering Jaibi opened Tunisia's first private commercial theater, the Théâtre Nouveau, in 1975. Drawing heavily on the talents of the center's faculty and students, who acted in, but also frequently wrote or adapted, productions addressing controversial social and political issues, the Théâtre Nouveau gained rapid recognition as the preeminent company in the country. In the face of better organized and more vocal political opposition after Muhammad Mzali became prime minister in 1980, the government was loathe to abandon the theatrical milieu to potential critics. In 1983 the Ministry of Cultural Affairs launched the Théâtre National Tunisien, although its endeavor bore fruit only several years later, when Muhammad Driss, a playwright, director, and principal in the Théâtre Nouveau, accepted the position of director. Driss saw to the expansion of the national company and its acquisition of suitable facilities. He also used his standing in the theatrical community to forge productive contacts between his company, the Théâtre Nouveau, and the many private theaters springing up around the country.

Among the innovations of the Théâtre Nouveau were two experiments in filming stage productions for release as motion pictures, but Jaibi and his collaborators lacked training in cinematic techniques. As a result, their work

had little impact on a relatively sophisticated industry in which film production by Tunisians dated back to the 1920s. Albert Samama, a Tunisian Jew known professionally as Chikly, made the first Tunisian short film, *Zohra*, in 1922, and the first feature, *'Ayyil al-ghazwa / La Fille de Carthage*, two years later. Both exemplified the "mysterious Orient" genre popularized by Paramount Pictures' 1921 hit, *The Sheik*. 'Abd al-'Aziz Hassine, an actor, directed a second feature, *Targui*, in 1935, but for the next three decades no other Tunisians followed the trail blazed by these pioneers. During the 1920s and 1930s, however, the mild, sunny climate – not unlike that of southern California – attracted Western filmmakers, mostly European, but including the American actor and director Rex Ingram, who shot *The Arab* in Tunisia in 1924.[17]

Following independence, a state corporation, the Société Anonyme Tunisienne de Production et d'Expansion Cinématographique (SATPEC; Tunisian Company for Film Production and Expansion), assumed responsibility for regulating the importation, distribution, and exhibition of the foreign motion pictures that were, and have remained, the most popular and most readily available fare in the nation's theaters. The output of the Tunisian industry has averaged only two feature films a year since SATPEC built a studio in the Tunis suburb of Gammarth in 1966 in furtherance of an additional mandate to promote the development of cinematic production. In the same year, the Ministry of Cultural Affairs organized the first Journées Cinématographiques de Carthage (Carthage Film Festival), which awarded the Tanit d'Or prize to the best entry in a competition among Arab and African films. The biennial festival immediately became a landmark event in non-Western film circles. Its inaugural session, however, included no Tunisian contender for the Tanit d'Or. The first Tunisian feature film since the 1930s, *al-Fajr / L'Aube*, directed by Omar Khlifi, a self-taught amateur filmmaker, appeared in 1966 but was too late for consideration. A patriotic film about three youths who die in the independence struggle, it formed the first episode in a trilogy including *al-Mutamarrid / Le Rebelle* (1968) and *al-Fallaqa / Les Fellagas* (1970), each recounting historical instances of Tunisian resistance to outside control. A fourth film, *al-Surakh / Hurlements* (1972), focused on the constraints imposed on women by traditional Arab society. Other amateur filmmakers emerged in the late 1960s and 1970s, but few made more than a single successful feature or had any significant impact on cinematic thinking in Tunisia. Ridha Behi's *Shams al-dhiba / Soleil des Hyènes* (1977) forcefully condemned the destructive effects of the international tourism that had by then become an essential element in the Tunisian economy. Although the controversial feature,

which Behi chose to shoot in Morocco, enjoyed critical praise in Europe, SATPEC's refusal to distribute it nullified the impact of the movie in Tunisia itself.

A quartet of young men and two young women, all of whom had studied at prestigious French (or in one instance, Belgian) film schools and refined their professional skills in Europe before returning to Tunisia, mostly in the late 1960s, greatly influenced the country's nascent film industry. Historical topics figured in the filmography of Brahim Babaï and ʿAbd al-Latif ben ʿAmmar, as they had in that of Khlifi, but they and their colleagues, Sadoq ben ʿAicha and Naceur Ktari, devoted greater attention to the malaise gripping Tunisia as ben Salah's socialist experiment collapsed and the freewheeling economy of the 1970s began to take its toll on the lower and middle classes. Ben ʿAicha's *Mukhtar* (1968) examined the disillusion and frustration of young Tunisians; Babaï's *Wa ghadan? / Et Demain?* (1972) told the by then tragically familiar story of a young man's journey from a drought-stricken village to Tunis in search of work; and ben ʿAmmar's *ʿAziza* (1980) won the Tanit d'Or for its exploration of the debilitating problems of urban life. The conflict between Tunisian and European cultures – readily comprehended by filmmakers with a foot in both camps – lay at the core of ben ʿAmmar's *Hikaya basita kahadhihi / Une Si Simple Histoire* (1970), while Ktari's *al-Sufara' / Les Ambassadeurs* (1975), the first Tunisian film awarded the Tanit d'Or, in 1976, described the difficulties faced by Tunisian labor emigrants to France. Similar social concerns characterized the work of Tunisia's first female directors. Selma Baccar's *Fatma 75* (1978) sketched a series of cinematic portraits of Tunisian women from the Carthaginian era to the twentieth century. In *al-Sama / La Trace*, the story of a young village woman from the south, Neija ben Mabrouk wove together issues relating to gender, poverty, and emigration. Ben Mabrouk completed its filming in 1982, but a dispute with SATPEC, the producer, delayed its release until 1988.

SATPEC's involvement in the production of some of Tunisia's better films in the 1970s, but also in numerous and often not very successful coproductions with European directors, gave it a mixed record. In 1981 the Mzali government withdrew SATPEC's import and distribution monopoly, at the same time levying a 6 percent tax on box-office receipts to finance a fund promoting independent cinematic ventures. Among the new companies benefiting from this initiative was Cinétéléfilms, which rapidly assumed pride of place among production companies. Its owner, Ahmad ʿAttia, used his considerable knowledge of Tunisia's film industry, in which he had worked since finishing his directorial studies in Rome in 1970,

to identify promising young directors whom he encouraged to craft semiautobiographical movies. His first protégé, Nouri Bouzid, boldly confronted questions of sexuality and homosexuality, subjects rarely approached in previous motion pictures made in the Arab world, in *Rih al-sadd / L'Homme de Cendres* (1986). Despite, or perhaps because of, its controversial nature, *Rih al-sadd* received the Tanit d'Or at the 1986 Carthage Film Festival, the third Tunisian feature to achieve that accolade. ʿAttia also encouraged Férid Boughedir, an established film critic and historian, to explore this genre after he had completed three highly acclaimed documentaries on African and Arab cinema: *Caméra d'Afrique* (1983), *Cińema de Carthage* (1984), and *Caméra Arabe* (1987). With social and economic problems persisting in the 1980s, many directors making their feature-film debuts in those years continued to be drawn to themes reflecting the national malaise. *Zill al-ard / L'Ombre de la Terre* (1982) by Taieb Louhichi, for example, tells the tale of an isolated rural community devastated by natural disaster and the intrusion of modernity. More successful at the box office than any of the weighty films of social commentary, however, was *Farda wa liqat ukhtaha / Deux Larrons en Folie*, a 1980 comedy directed by ʿAli Mansour, although even it centered on the theme of migration from the countryside to Tunis.

Like others who made their mark in the film industry (including ben ʿAicha, Behi, and Baccar), Mansour had begun his career in the television section of Radiodiffusion Télévision Tunisienne (RTT), which started transmitting limited programming to northern Tunisia in 1966 and by 1971 reached the entire country. As in the case of the theater, government officials hoped to exploit television as an educational and civic tool – an experimental broadcast aired the 1964 party congress in Bizerte at which the Neo-Dustur redesigned itself as the Parti Socialiste Dusturien – in addition to its role as an entertainment medium. In a speech inaugurating the station, Bourguiba urged every family to buy a television set. To make such a purchase possible for average Tunisians, the government drove down the price by importing thousands of sets, although it also adopted the practice of charging a small annual licensing fee for each set, as it did for radios, which remained in effect until 1980.

In keeping with the government's aspirations, news reports, religious presentations, documentaries, instructional programs, and cultural performances initially dominated the airwaves. But a limited capacity for original production created a difficulty as the broadcast day gradually lengthened from its original three hours. Even after a decade of operation, the RTT relied on foreign sources (both Western and Arab) for more than half its televised material. The ease, at least in densely populated northern

Tunisia, of receiving broadcasts from France and Italy increased pressure on the RTT to fall into line with Western programming. As it did so, however, the MTI and other conservatives expressed distaste for the content of much of the imported programming, which they also attacked as an example of the country's abandonment of its indigenous heritage.

Although a similar shift occurred in the field of painting in the 1960s and 1970s, it did not elicit the same criticisms because conservative Muslims disliked the figural representations common in the art of the "Ecole de Tunis." Independence lessened the urgency for Tunisian painters to establish a visual record of the country's heritage, which many of them had come to regard as a patriotic obligation, and also facilitated their access to the global artistic community. A wave of experimentation with new, primarily abstract, forms of expression followed. By encouraging Tunisian painters to broaden their horizons, Hedi Turki and Hatim al-Mekki, successful artists who had traveled widely in Europe and North America, helped to endow Tunisian art with a cosmopolitan aura it had not previously known. Of the two, Turki was the more self-conscious, disdaining what he viewed as his contemporaries' provincialism, while al-Mekki's eclecticism and curiosity ruled out any prospect of his limiting himself to a single genre.

Many younger artists influenced by Turki and al-Mekki embraced the new forms without reservation; others took advantage of the progressive creative climate to try their hand at media previously little known in Tunisia, including engraving and printmaking. The most successful newcomers in the first generation after independence, however, were artists who found ways to distinguish their work by infusing it with indigenous cultural features. Najib Belkhodja and Nja Mahdaoui established reputations in the 1960s by utilizing Arabic calligraphy to design abstract paintings in which the significance of the text was entirely subordinated to the visual impact of the work, occasionally going so far as to employ brushstrokes that resembled Arabic letters, but were not. An older and already established painter, ʿAli Bellagha, affected a similar blend by combining cubist techniques and traditional Arabic geometric patterns. A few artists doggedly resisted the prevailing trends and continued to produce ingenuous depictions of traditional life. Largely ignored in the enthusiasm for innovation marking the first two postindependence decades, the canvases of ʿAli Guermassi and other adherents of a naïve school of painting came back into vogue in the 1980s, their wistful commemoration of a Tunisia few of its citizens had ever personally experienced acting as a soothing balm to men and women frazzled by the volatile nature of the times in which they lived.

The social and economic transformations that flowed from political independence provided an abundance of multifaceted themes and evocative settings for the generation of poets, short-story writers, novelists, and essayists whose careers more or less coincided with the era of Bourguiba's presidency. But two of the country's most promising literary figures, Hachemi Baccouche and Albert Memmi, viewed the termination of the protectorate as an event likely to circumscribe their artistic license, and both moved permanently to France, Memmi in 1956, Baccouche in the following year. The first novel of the French-educated, bourgeois Baccouche, *Ma foi demeure* (1958), explored the complexities of a mixed Franco-Tunisian marriage that served as a metaphor for the many cross-cultural linkages of the colonial period that the author doubted would survive the triumph of nationalism. Memmi, also the recipient of a French education that included a degree from the University of Paris, came not from the urban middle class but from the Tunisian Jewish community. Prior to independence, he published two largely autobiographical novels, *Le Statue de sel* (1953) and *Agar* (1955), that examined the impact of colonialism on an individual doubly marginalized, first as a Tunisian, then as a Jew. A cogent treatise on oppression, *Portrait du colonisé précédé du portrait du colonisateur* (1957), established Memmi's reputation as a social analyst and was followed by other essays on identity (particularly Jewish identity), dependency, and racism. In subsequent works of fiction, Memmi, like Baccouche, availed himself of Tunisian themes and milieus, but the self-imposed exile of both men for more than half their lives calls into question their categorization as "Tunisian."

Although some authors publishing in Tunisia after 1956 used French, most preferred Arabic, a language in which they enjoyed greater facility and that made their work accessible to the widest local audience. The literary review *al-Fikr*, begun in 1955 by the same Muhammad Mzali who later became prime minister, provided an invaluable outlet for aspiring writers over the next three decades. Among the writers first published in *al-Fikr* was Bashir Khurayyif, a transitional figure in the shift from the nationalist and patriotic topics that had dominated earlier fiction toward themes derived more directly from contemporary Tunisian society. Often hailed as the first modern Tunisian novelist, Khurayyif built his fiction around straightforward descriptions of Tunisian life. *Iflas aw Hubbuka darbani* (1959) depicted the lives of the country's youth as modernist pressures reshaped their environment, while *al-Daghal fi ʿarajiniha* (1969) focused on the particularly trying economic and social conditions of the underdeveloped south.

Following independence, women began to publish in much larger numbers than previously. In the late 1960s, no doubt influenced by trends in Europe and North America, a wave of feminist writing took place. Short stories by Hind ʿAzzuz, collected as *Fi'l-Darb al-tawil* (1969), explored the circumstances of middle-class women and addressed such sensitive topics as birth control and abortion; Laila ben Mami's novel *Sawmaʿa tahtariq* (1968) portrayed the lives of women who had achieved high levels of sexual freedom; and a collection of poetry by Zubaydah Bashir, *Hanin* (1968), embodied her disillusion and rebelliousness over the social constraints imposed on women. Prominent male authors joined these female pioneers in employing their literary talents to draw public attention to the problems facing Tunisian women. Two novels set against the background of rural decay, the collapse of the cooperative movement, and increasing migration to the cities, ʿAbd al-Qadir ben al-Shaykh's *Wa nasibi min al-ufuq* (1970) and ʿUmar ben Salim's *Waha bi-la zill* (1979), presented perceptive vignettes of women's fears and concerns as the authors made the case for emancipation and the easing of traditional restrictions. While the books do not specifically focus on it, the evolving status of women is a recurrent theme in a trilogy of historical novels by Muhammad Salah al-Jabiri – *Yawm min ayyam Zamra* (1968), set in the late colonial period; *al-Bahr yanshur al-wahahu* (1975), recounting the political and social challenges of a newly independent state; and *Laylat al-sanawat al-ʿashr* (1982), exploring many of the issues that gave rise to the 1978 "Black Thursday" riots.

Bourguiba's early insistence on the importance of education found an echo in numerous essays and fictional works. Among the most popular of the latter was *al-Munbatt* (1967), a semiautobiographical novel by ʿAbd al-Majid ʿAtiyah about the efforts of a government clerk to improve his lot. But as political and economic difficulties multiplied in the 1970s and 1980s, many of the country's leading writers found themselves more frequently at odds with the authorities than enthusiastic about their programs. Such men and women turned their imaginative powers to producing works whose criticism of the Parti Socialiste Dusturien and the government had considerable power, despite being camouflaged within a fictional context. *Fi Bayt al-ʿankabut* (1976), Muhammad al-Hadi ben Salih's first novel, took as its theme the exploitation of the masses. In a second book, *al-Haraka wa intikas al-shams* (1981), ben Salih followed the lead of other literary figures, including the poet and critic Salah Garmadi and the playwright and essayist Samir al-ʿAyyadi, as he struggled to comprehend and articulate the obligations of intellectuals in the midst of social and political unrest. As the

Bourguibist regime began to crumble, ʿUmar ben Salim produced two more novels that addressed contemporary issues. *Da'irat al-ikhtinaq* (1982) concerned the beleaguered union movement, and *Abu Jahl al-Dahhas* (1984) tackled questions of emigration, racism, and nationalism. At the same time, ʿArusiyah Naluti, who had won considerable popularity when some of her short stories were read on the radio, published *Maratij* (1985), a novel that examined the emotions of Tunisian students in France as their country was buffeted by the political turmoil of the late Bourguiba years. When Prime Minister ben ʿAli eased out the ailing president two years later, the literary community could take satisfaction in the part it had played in the downfall of the regime and, like other Tunisians, look forward to better days ahead.

CHAPTER 7

Constancy and Innovation in the "New" Tunisia, 1987–2003

THE NEW REGIME SETTLES IN

Zine al-Abidine ben ʿAli's deft removal of Bourguiba produced a public reaction well described with an analogy to the world of sports. Just as knowledgeable spectators respond with relief to the retirements of once-great athletes who have extended their playing days well past their prime, lost the gift for making the big play, and become a liability rather than an asset to their teams and a source of embarrassment, perhaps not to themselves, but certainly to aficionados of the game who remember their peak performances, the public was relieved when Bourguiba stepped down from office. Alert to popular anxiety about the chief executive's health, and fearful that Bourguiba's vindictive, erratic behavior would sooner or later cause irreparable damage to the state, those positioned to effect a leadership change judged, correctly, that the Tunisian people would support them. The transfer of power elicited no protests on behalf of a restoration; nor were there jubilant celebrations. Rather, the prevailing mood was one of gratitude that the transition had occurred constitutionally, peacefully, and seamlessly. Ben ʿAli promptly stepped into Bourguiba's role not only as head of state but also as head of the PSD, suggesting that whatever transformations might flow from the "Historic Change," they would not include a disentangling of the thoroughly interwoven lines between the state and the party. To symbolize the advent of a new leadership, however, the PSD was renamed the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD; Democratic Constitutional Rally). The retention of the reference to the constitution tied the party to its predecessors, but the remainder of the title anticipated a broader and more egalitarian institution than the Dustur, Neo-Dustur, or Socialist Dustur had ever managed to become.

Nevertheless, the first RCD congress, in 1988, invested ben ʿAli with complete control of the party and, by extension, the state. The political bureau shrank from twenty-two members to seven, all of them avowed



Figure 7.1. Zine al ʿAbidine ben ʿAli. As prime minister in 1987, ben ʿAli invoked constitutional provisions on presidential capacity to remove Habib Bourguiba from office and replace him as chief executive, a post that he held until 2011.

supporters of the new president, and Hedi Baccouche, a party veteran who had assisted ben ʿAli in easing Bourguiba out, became vice-president of the RCD and prime minister. Staunch Bourguiba loyalists soon found themselves marginalized in both the party and the government. A few of the former president's close associates whose venality was common knowledge were arrested, but the absence of any more stringent measures contributed to keeping the transition on an even keel. Conversely, ben ʿAli freed thousands of political prisoners, including Ghannushi and other MTI detainees, and encouraged opponents of Bourguiba who had gone into exile to return to Tunisia, assuring them that his government intended to foster a plural political environment capable of accommodating the RCD and its rivals, both secular and religious. Prominent among the returnees was Ahmed ben Salah, the minister of planning who had fallen afoul of Bourguiba in 1969.

The "Historic Change" of 1987 enabled intellectuals who had fled Tunisia in search of a less restrictive environment and young men

and women who had remained abroad at the conclusion of their higher education or professional training programs to consider returning to their homeland. Some did, but others, including exiles who had successfully established reputations in international circles – among them the authors Tahar Bekri, Abdelwahhab Meddeb, and Mustapha Tlili – did not. The early poetry and prose of Bekri, who left Tunisia after serving time in jail as a result of his political activities while a student in the 1970s, often reflected the emotional pain of displacement. Bekri regarded his decision to stay in France after 1987 as artistic rather than political, and Tunisian cultural and historical influences continued to inform his writing. Unlike many other exiles, he continued to publish in Arabic as well as in French, which made his work accessible to readers on both sides of the Mediterranean. His contemporary Meddeb published only in French, but his novels *Talismano* (1979) and *Fantasia* (1989); *Le Tombeau d'Ibn Arabi* (1988), a collection of poetry; and essay *Suhrawardi Shihab al-Din Yahya. Récits de l'exil occidental* (1993) all reveal his deep knowledge of classical Arab-Islamic civilization, which has assured him an audience among Tunisian, as well as other Arab, intellectuals. The eldest of this trio, Tlili completed a philosophy degree at the Sorbonne, worked for over a decade at the United Nations, and then took up residence in France in 1980. His novels condemned corruption among the elite, but until the appearance of *La Montagne du lion* (1988), which was set in Tunisia, none had any relationship to his North African heritage. Like Hachemi Baccouche and Albert Memmi in an earlier generation, the mentality, themes, and impact of writers in more or less permanent exile all set them apart from their colleagues working in Tunisia itself.

By and large, novelists and poets popular in the 1970s and 1980s continued to dominate the literary scene during ben ʿAli's presidency. Muhammad al-Hadi ben Salih's novel describing the 1978 riots, *Safara al-nuqla wa'l-tasawwur* (1988), embodied criticisms of the previous regime, but when the political atmosphere under ben ʿAli failed to change in the ways that ben Salih and other writers had hoped it would, they lost no time in articulating their dissatisfaction with the new government. Ben Salih reopened the issue of the role of the intellectual in *Min haqqihi an yahlum* (1991), sadly concluding that neither he nor most of his colleagues had lived up to their obligations. Frustration with the absence of meaningful change permeated ʿUmar ben Salim's novel, *al-Asad wa'l-timthal* (1989), in which animal characters illustrated the course of modern Tunisian history. *Wa kana ʿurs al-hazima* (1991), a novel by the feminist Hayat ben al-Shaykh, revisited the still pertinent issues of corruption and the abuse of power. In

her *Feux d'oiseau* (1989), Amina Said, a poet and one of the minority of Tunisian authors regularly publishing in French, sought to bring individual and collective memories to light as a means of understanding the impact of the past on the present – a theme that had attracted the attention of the poet and literary critic Muhammad Aziza (writing under the pseudonym Chems Nadir) a decade earlier and had underpinned two collections of his verse, *Silence des semaphores* (1978) and *L'Astrolabe de la mer* (1980).

As the twentieth century entered its final decade, the Tunisian cinema increasingly displayed its prowess as a vehicle for the presentation of political and social concerns to the public. In keeping with the policy of privatization, SATPEC, whose influence had waned steadily since the 1980s, ceased to function altogether in 1992, its work rendered largely superfluous by production companies like Ahmad 'Attia's Cinétéléfilms. In addition to nurturing the careers of Férid Boughedir and Nouri Bouzid, who had won acclaim as the "father of Tunisian nouveau cinéma," 'Attia took another promising director, Moufida Tlatli, under his wing. Within a few years of his triumphant directorial debut in 1986, Bouzid brought two new features to the screen. *Safā'ih min dhahab* / *Sabots d'or* (1989) told the story of a man broken by long years in prison and ultimately driven to suicide, while the deep inconsistencies and contradictions in Tunisian life provided the underlying theme of *Bezness* / *Business* (1992), a film that contrasted the personal behavior of a male prostitute with his treatment of his female relatives and friends. After absences of several years, two distinguished directors returned to filmmaking early in the 2000s. Naceur Ktari took third prize at the 2000 Carthage Film Festival with the psychological drama *Sois Mon Amie*, and Nouri Bouzid won the second prize at the 2002 festival for his recently released *Poupées d'argile*.

Boughedir's first full-length feature film, *Asfour stah* / *Halfaouine: L'Enfant des Terrasses* (1990), was a semiautobiographical portrait of a child growing up in Tunis' Halfaouine neighborhood in the 1950s. It not only enjoyed a warm reception from Tunisian audiences but also garnered greater critical acclaim, including the 1990 Tanit d'Or, and achieved greater popularity abroad than had any previous Tunisian film. His next, less critically acclaimed, feature, *Salifan fi Halq al-Wadi* / *Un Eté à La Goulette* (1995), paid tribute to an aspect of Tunisian diversity more commonly acknowledged in the past. Set in the Tunis suburb of La Goulette in the 1960s and focused on three teenaged girls, one Muslim, one Jewish, and one a Catholic of Italian ancestry, the film stressed the virtues of religious tolerance at a time of widespread chauvinism, but also revealed, through the

attitudes of the girls' fathers, cultural affinities common to all the peoples of the Mediterranean world.

Moufida Tlatli had studied cinema in France in the 1960s and had worked as a film editor for well over a decade prior to her debut as a director. *Samt al-qasr* / *Les Silences du Palais* (1994), a tale of women's repression in the 1950s, was a sympathetic portrayal of an earlier generation of Tunisian women that reinforced the recent efforts of feminists (and others) to safeguard rights guaranteed in the Personal Status Code in the face of Islamist criticisms of the statute. Like *Halfaouine*, Tlatli's film fared well both in Tunisia and abroad, winning first prize at the 1994 Carthage Film Festival. Her second feature, *La Saison des Hommes* (2001), told the story of contemporary women on the island of Jerba whose husbands work for most of the year elsewhere in the country or abroad, leaving them to cope with personal and communal issues within the framework of a society that, despite its exclusively feminine composition, accords women no greater latitude than traditionally restrictive customs allow.

In addition to *Halfaouine* and *Les Silences du Palais*, a third important film released in the 1990s had the decade of the 1950s as its setting. ʿAli ʿAbidi's *Redayef 54* (1997), described a confrontation in a southern mining town late in the protectorate era between supporters of Bourguiba and the Yusufists – a subject that could not have been broached prior to ben Yusuf's rehabilitation, which had occurred in stages after 1987. (At the invitation of ben ʿAli, the widow of Bourguiba's main rival returned to Tunisia in 1988. Ben Yusuf's remains were brought back three years later for reburial in his native land.) In each of these films, Boughedir, Tlatli, and ʿAbidi were contributing to a quest by their generation – born in the colonial period, too young at the time of independence and the immediately succeeding years to comprehend the events swirling around them, and now in positions of influence – to preserve an accurate memory, replete with both positive and negative features, of the culture from which they had sprung.[1]

Like most prominent writers, members of the cinematic community, and intellectuals in general, ben ʿAli, when he came to the presidency in 1987, had little sympathy for the vision of the Islamist movement, although he did believe that it constituted a greater potential threat outside the political tent than within it. To demonstrate his willingness to deal seriously with the MTI, ben ʿAli accommodated some of its more symbolic demands, publicly affirming Islam as the state religion, authorizing Tunisian radio and television stations to broadcast the call to prayer, and legalizing an MTI student organization that mobilized postsecondary students. In addition, the president made a highly publicized pilgrimage to Mecca. In the fall of 1988, the

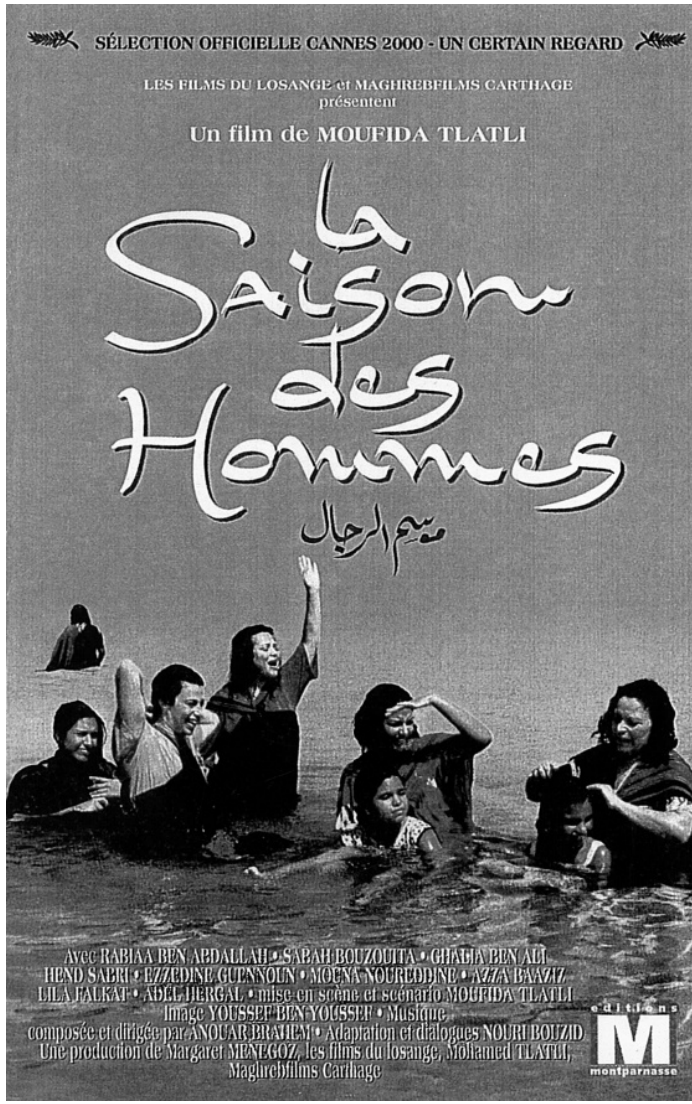


Figure 7.2. Tunisian cinema. Like several of her male counterparts, Moufida Tlatli, Tunisia's first female director of major motion pictures, has won international recognition for her films, including *La Saison des Hommes* (2001).

MTI was invited to send a representative to join government officials, leaders of civil society, the heads of the secular political parties, and other prominent national figures in deliberations to formulate a statement of political philosophy and objectives on which all could agree in advance of the first elections of the post-Bourguiba era, scheduled for early in the following year.

Ben ʿAli unveiled the National Pact on the first anniversary of his accession to the presidency. It acknowledged the centrality of the Arab and Islamic heritages of Tunisia that many citizens believed the Bourguiba government had deliberately disparaged, calling for closer ties between Tunisia and the rest of the Arab world, particularly the other countries of the Maghrib. The document referred to the importance in nineteenth and twentieth century Tunisia of the movements of Islamic reform and modernism, but it also expressed an appreciation of the Personal Status Code, which it insisted should remain unassailable. In becoming a signatory to the National Pact and thus agreeing to this assessment, the MTI made a major concession. The government also offered a significant concession – not specifically to the Islamists, but to the entire spectrum of the opposition – by accepting the pact's proposal to remedy the political shortcomings of the past through pluralism, respect for human rights, and explicit guarantees of basic freedoms.

The National Pact appeared to offer the MTI its first opportunity to enter the political arena. In order to conform to electoral laws prohibiting religious terminology in the names of political parties, the organization became the Hizb al-Nahda (Renaissance Party) and applied for political party status. Despite the rhetoric of the pact, suspicions that the Islamists' ultimate goal remained the dismantling of the secular state led the government to temporize. Desperate for a mechanism to pressure the authorities without provoking a self-destructive backlash, Ghannushi launched a drive to recruit new members for al-Nahda within the UGTT, hoping eventually to barter Islamist influence in the union for official recognition as a party. But the government, intent on rebuilding (and controlling) the UGTT following its near collapse in the last years of Bourguiba's presidency, thwarted al-Nahda at every turn. When campaigning for the April 1989 legislative contests began, the party remained ineligible to offer lists of candidates. Determined not to accept their exclusion from the electoral process, Ghannushi and other members of al-Nahda stood for seats in the National Assembly on an independent list in twenty-two of the country's twenty-five electoral districts. They accused the government of impeding the emergence of genuine democracy in Tunisia by excluding Islamist

groups from its conceptualization of pluralism and reminded voters that pressure from Islamists earlier in the decade deserved much of the credit for precipitating political reform, however incomplete it might have proven. Occasionally, they explicitly asserted that without the Islamist movement, Bourguiba would have remained in power.

Tunisia's political evolution, or lack thereof, from 1989 until the early years of the new millennium is clearly discernible in the three national elections held during that period. Of the five secular opposition parties that competed in the 1989 contest, only Mestiri's MDS had an organization capable of mounting a viable nationwide challenge to the RCD (and the independents). Neither the Parti d'Unité Populaire nor the three new parties legalized in 1988 – the Union Démocratique Unioniste (UDU; Democratic Unionist Union), the Parti Social du Progrès (PSP; Social Progress Party), and the Rassemblement Socialiste Progressiste (RSP; Progressive Socialist Rally) – managed to field candidates in more than a quarter of the districts. The RCD won a landslide victory, winning almost 80 percent of the popular vote and sweeping all of the parliamentary seats. Slightly more than 15 percent of the overall vote went to the al-Nahda "independents," although in the Tunis suburbs where they enjoyed particularly strong backing, and in some districts in the south they obtained more than 30 percent of the ballots. Together, the secular opposition parties garnered a mere 5 percent of the vote. Only the MDS surpassed the one percent mark, an anemic showing attributable to widespread defections from the party to the RCD following Bourguiba's removal from office. In the presidential race, ben ʿAli ran unopposed and secured 99 percent of the vote. The 1989 elections created a foundation for the new government in a manner reminiscent of the first postindependence elections in 1956. On both occasions, a serious regime competitor – the Yusufists in 1956, the Islamists in 1989 – appeared to lack adequate popular support to claim a role in shaping Tunisia's political future, but only because on both occasions the dominant party had tilted the playing field to its own advantage.[2]

Nevertheless, the elections established the Islamists as a political factor of greater significance than the secular parties and second in importance only to the RCD. When al-Nahda's leaders used the results to press their case for recognition as a party, their demand was again denied. A disgusted Ghannushi abandoned Tunisia for exile in France (as did an equally disenchanted Ahmad ben Salah). The management of al-Nahda's day-to-day business fell to its secretary-general, ʿAbd al-Fattah Mourou, who, unlike Ghannushi, claimed not to have lost faith in the democratic process as a means of achieving the organization's goals. But Ghannushi, who

retained his position as spiritual and political mentor of al-Nahda, threw down the gauntlet to the political establishment: "Until now," he warned ominously, "we sought only a shop and we did not get it. Now it's the whole souk (marketplace) we want."[3] Militant Islamists were no longer content to secure seats in a multiparty parliament – even if such a body were to come into existence, which they now had reason to doubt – but sought instead to dominate the political realm. Comments such as these enabled ben ʿAli to cast himself as the defender of a progressive, secular republic under threat from religious chauvinism and to meld his vision of constrained political pluralism with a modified version of his predecessor's authoritarianism. Filling such a role brought him the support of the many Tunisians who wanted an Islamist government no more than they had wanted the autocracy of Bourguiba. It also assured him of the sympathy of Tunisia's Western allies, who had viewed the political resurgence of Islam since the Iranian Revolution with a jaundiced eye.

Neither economic nor foreign policy received much attention in the first year of the ben ʿAli presidency, but after the RCD's commanding victory in the 1989 elections, the government intensified the application of the structural adjustment plan devised at the end of the Bourguiba era. The deleterious impact on middle- and working-class Tunisians of the International Monetary Fund's prescription for resuscitating the Tunisian economy continued to provoke angry reactions from an already aggrieved al-Nahda and milder criticisms from within the tattered and demoralized ranks of the secular opposition. When Baccouche, fearing a repetition of the 1978 and 1984 riots, urged restraint on the economic front, ben ʿAli removed the cautious prime minister, replacing him in late 1989 with Hamid Karoui, a veteran of several of Bourguiba's cabinets. By the time the 1987–91 plan had run its course, the economic slide had been arrested and a healthy annual growth rate achieved.

The government also devoted considerable attention to an initiative combining economic and foreign policy while advancing an important objective of the National Pact. The growing movement within the European Community (EC) toward greater integration and the eventual creation of a single continental market compelled Tunisia and its neighbors in the Maghrib to explore cooperative arrangements making it possible for them to better cope with the challenges and to seize on the potential opportunities presented by the evolving economic situation across the Mediterranean. In February 1989, Tunisia, Libya, Algeria, Morocco, and Mauritania established the Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA; Arab Maghrib Union) not only with an eye to the situation in Europe but also

to foster partnerships among states that had much in common but that had, since gaining independence in the 1950s and 1960s, as often been at odds with or ignored each other as they had worked together. The union raised the level of regional cooperation, particularly in the cultural, educational, and scientific fields, but its members proved unable to lay aside their political differences concerning the fate of the former Spanish Sahara. Algerian support for the POLISARIO, an indigenous liberation movement that opposed Moroccan efforts to absorb the territory the group had occupied since 1976, split the union. Since the approval of UMA business required the consent of all five states, significant initiatives ground to a halt in 1995.

In the Arab world beyond North Africa, the Tunisian government devoted more effort than it had in the past to cultivating strong relationships, particularly targeting the Arabian Peninsula oil states whose investment petrodollars it hoped to attract for development projects in the country. Nevertheless, in the wake of the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in the summer of 1990 – an event that affected Tunisia more profoundly than had any other that occurred in the Arab East since 1956 – ben ʿAli refused to support Saudi Arabia's appeal for the creation of a multinational military force including European and American troops. Tunisia did not sanction Iraq's seizure of the emirate, but it did insist that intra-Arab problems required intra-Arab solutions, a stance applauded by its own citizens across the political spectrum but viewed dimly by traditionally friendly powers such as the United States and France, to say nothing of the irritation of Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. During the fall, Ben ʿAli sent a ministerial-level delegation to Iraq in an unsuccessful attempt to stimulate negotiations between the opposing factions. Similarly, Rashid Ghannushi, now residing in Algeria, joined two other prominent Islamist leaders, the Algerian Abbas Madani and the Sudanese Hassan Turabi, in an equally futile effort to open a dialogue between Baghdad and Riyadh that would avert the stationing of non-Muslim soldiers in Saudi Arabia. On the domestic front, the UGTT, along with several opposition parties, set up the National Committee to Resist Aggression against the Arab World and to Support Iraq; and the first legal public demonstrations since the "Historic Change" coincided with the arrival of Western troops in the Arabian Peninsula. The outbreak of the Gulf War in January 1991 generated new large-scale protests that the government monitored closely in order to prevent its opponents from taking control of them and using them to push it toward a more pro-Iraqi position than it wished to adopt.

For a time, at least, Tunisia paid dearly for its policies during the crisis in the Gulf. With Westerners hesitant to travel to the Arab world, and especially to a country that had opposed the United States–led coalition, six hundred thousand fewer European tourists visited Tunisia in 1991 than in the previous year, a drop of 36 percent. An almost equal increase in the number of tourists arriving from other Maghrib countries partially compensated for the decline in Europeans, although the North Africans spent considerably less during their stays. Tourism statistics for 1992 closely matched those of the prewar years – more than three million visitors annually (more than half of them from Europe) pumping almost a billion dollars into the economy – and thereafter the industry experienced steady growth for the remainder of the decade, attracting five million visitors annually at the turn of the century.[4] The United States retaliated against Tunisia by slashing the economic assistance it gave the country from roughly $30 million in 1990 to $8 million in 1991 and a mere $1 million in 1992 and by terminating military aid altogether. In 1993, however, disbursements climbed back to their earlier levels. Donations from the Gulf states, which plummeted from $100 million in 1990 to less than $3 million in 1991, were resumed more slowly, with Kuwait refusing even to restore diplomatic relations with Tunisia until 1994.[5]

BRINGING THE OPPOSITION TO HEEL

The Gulf conflict led directly to a split within al-Nahda. Most of its members lined up behind Ghannushi, whose move into the Iraqi camp as Western troops poured into the region put him at odds with official Tunisian policy. On the other hand, Mourou, who had studied in Saudi Arabia and maintained numerous links to that country, endorsed its appeal for international military assistance, with the result that his influence in the organization dwindled virtually to nil. With its radical wing in control, the Islamist movement turned against the government with a ferocity not seen since the last days of the Bourguiba regime. Late in 1990, a number of militants were arrested on charges of planning terrorist attacks that included a plot to assassinate ben ʿAli. In February 1991, a deadly act of arson at an RCD office in the Tunis neighborhood of Bab Souika caused a wave of public revulsion at the extremists' resort to the kind of indiscriminate violence that placed innocent persons at risk. Judging that the situation verged on spiraling out of control, ben ʿAli directed his security forces to undertake a severe crackdown on al-Nahda and its sympathizers.

Events unfolding at more or less the same time in neighboring Algeria deeply disturbed many Tunisians and inevitably influenced their assessment of matters in their own country. Local elections in June 1990 gave the Front Islamique du Salut (FIS; Islamic Salvation Front), an Islamist party, control of numerous municipal councils across the country. A combination of its own program of political and social reform and widespread disillusion with the Front de Libération Nationale (FLN; National Liberation Front) that had ruled the country since its independence in 1962 positioned the FIS as a strong contender in legislative elections in December 1991. The Islamists' enormous success in the first of two rounds of voting set in motion a catastrophic chain of events: army officers forced the president to resign, took control of the government, cancelled the elections, and soon faced a vicious civil war as the Islamists attempted to gain by force of arms the victory snatched from them at the ballot boxes. Ghannushi, who had developed close ties with the Algerian Islamists, later ruefully observed that the course of events in Algeria did the Tunisian movement "a great disservice" in that it

> gave our adversaries the opportunity to appear threatened. It created the impression that the West needed them to face the danger . . . spreading from Algeria towards Europe.[6]

Indeed, as millions of Tunisian citizens looked across their western border in horror, they endorsed, or at least did not openly oppose, harsh measures designed to rein in al-Nahda, lest its clash with the government unleash a nightmare scenario replicating the Algerian tragedy.

Although similar campaigns directed against opponents of the regime – particularly religiously inspired opponents – had often ignored the constraints of the law in Bourguiba's Tunisia, ben ʿAli had made choices early in his presidency that appeared to disavow such cavalier behavior. Citing the need for national reconciliation, he expressed the belief that adherence to the principles of the United Nations' Universal Declaration of Human Rights constituted the surest means of achieving that end. In his first government, the president entrusted the Ministry of Health to Saadeddin Zmerli, [a medical doctor who was one of the founders of the Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (LTDH; Tunisian League of Human Rights)]. Since 1977, the league had boldly tracked, publicized, and condemned disparities between the law and its application in the government's dealings with its critics, especially trade unionists, students, and Islamists. Whether sincerity or expediency initially motivated ben ʿAli, the violence that erupted after the 1989 elections and the subsequent descent of Algeria

into chaos convinced him of the need, and the public support, for aggressive countermeasures. The LTDH did its best to monitor the activities of both the security forces and the Islamists, but in the overheated atmosphere abuses inevitably occurred. In 1992, 279 members of al-Nahda stood trial on a variety of charges, the most serious of which alleged involvement in the preparation of a coup d'état paving the way for the creation of an Islamic state. The movement's most prominent figures (including Ghannushi, who was tried in absentia) received sentences of life imprisonment. Defense lawyers leveled accusations of widespread human rights violations, including the use of torture, against the security forces, while also claiming that legal irregularities tainted the trials themselves. Efforts by the league to investigate these allegations completed its transformation, underway since the 1989 elections, into an adversary of the government.

Few Tunisians outside the Islamist camp joined the LTDH in expressing reservations about the state's dealings with al-Nahda. In exchange for protection from the "green threat" of Islamic radicalism, the majority of secular Tunisians turned a blind eye on excesses committed by the authorities. Leaders of the opposition political parties contented themselves with the collapse of so formidable a rival as al-Nahda and, anxious to shield their own organizations from a similar fate, repressed whatever misgivings they may have harbored. Further encouraging their "go along to get along" attitude was the knowledge that, even after years of recruiting and organizing, no opposition party – nor any combination of them – could survive a head-on confrontation with the government or hope to prevail in an electoral challenge against the RCD, now estimated at 1.6 million strong.[7] As a result, they raised no objections to a law passed in anticipation of parliamentary elections in 1994 that guaranteed opposition parties crossing a relatively low threshold of votes a proportional share of nineteen set-aside seats in the Chamber of Deputies. In this way, ben ʿAli cultivated the appearance of pluralism without providing the concept with substance. The system pitted the opposition parties against each other, rather than against the RCD, for a prize of dubious worth: their meager 12 percent of the seats in the legislature assured them of a presence but denied them the opportunity to have any impact. In the presidential election, not even the pretense of pluralism was advanced. The government rejected the candidacy of Moncef Marzouki, a leading figure in the LTDH and the only person who came forward to challenge the incumbent. Ben ʿAli ran unopposed for a second term.

The MDS, despite having experienced major upheavals since the 1989 elections – Ahmad Mestiri left public life in 1990 and a dissident faction

withdrew from the party in 1992 when its new secretary-general, Muhammad Mouada, applauded some of ben 'Ali's policies – fared better than its competitors in the 1994 elections, winning ten of the opposition seats. (That it did so on the basis of 31,000 votes, or barely one percent of the total cast,[8] however, reveals the anemic nature of even the oldest and best-organized opposition party.) The PUP took two seats, the UDU three, and the Mouvement de la Rénovation (the former Parti Communiste Tunisien) the remaining four. Only the left-wing RSP adopted an aggressively critical stance toward government policies, but it failed, by a considerable margin, to cross the threshold set for representation in the parliament. Pointing to its proven ability to provide security and asserting that economic liberalism was translating into personal prosperity and national development, the RCD captured more than 90 percent of the total vote in every district in the country.

Such lopsided results were in keeping with the pattern of all previous elections. In 1994, as in 1989, even with alternatives available to the voters, the RCD dominated the political arena no less formidably than had its Neo-Dustur and PSD forerunners in a classically single-party setting. Opposition politicians accused the RCD of various improprieties in both elections, but, except for the "independents" in 1989, their parties remained so ineffectual, even after years of legal operation, that manipulating vote counts and intimidating the electorate, both of which undoubtedly occurred to some degree, were unnecessary, and potentially counterproductive, on a grand scale. The RCD enjoyed a measure of genuine popularity that the PSD had forfeited (if, indeed, it had ever enjoyed it) long before the "Historic Change."

In 1989, the electorate enthused over the leaders who had shouldered Bourguiba aside, committed themselves to strengthening the economy and supporting social development programs, and dug in against political Islam. Five years later, the success of the campaign against the Islamists, an economy growing at a sustained rate of more than 4 percent a year, and progress in alleviating some of the country's social inequities, as demonstrated by programs such as the Fonds de Solidarité Nationale (FSN; National Solidarity Fund) further enhanced the stature of the RCD and contributed to the magnitude of the party's electoral triumph.

PLUS ÇA CHANGE . . .

The FSN, established in 1992, had within it the potential not only to win support for the RCD government but also to undermine the Islamists.

Soliciting private contributions (which ultimately comprised a third of its resources) to supplement its base of public funds, the FSN initially targeted 1,100 of the least developed areas of the country (*zones d'ombre*, or shadow zones) as beneficiaries of projects to ensure the availability of electricity, clean drinking water, adequate housing, basic health care, and schooling. In addition to helping reduce poverty to the lowest level in the Arab world other than in the oil-based economies, this approach deprived Islamist social agencies of the opportunity to attract adherents by supplying basic services in underprivileged areas previously neglected by the government. But against the FSN's desperately needed elevation of ordinary Tunisians' living standards must be set a record of corruption and cronyism that increasingly seemed to characterize not only the FSD, but also many agencies of the state, the party, and the government at every level, including their highest echelons, as officials well positioned to manipulate insider information, engage in extortion, receive bribes and payoffs, and otherwise negligently (and sometimes criminally) mismanage public funds began to accumulate sizeable fortunes. In time, rumors implicated even the president and members of his family and inner circle in similar illicit activities.

Despite a few modest and largely inchoate glimmers of discontent, the 1994 vote underscored the impressive power of the RCD, which the Tunisian political tradition of party-state interconnectedness reinforced still further. The man who headed both, Zine al-Abidine ben ʿAli, had become at least as powerful as Habib Bourguiba had been in his heyday. The composition of the elite surrounding him reinforced ben ʿAli's power. By shouldering aside once-influential figures of the old regime, he made room for a younger generation of technocrats that answered to him. Many were modern, well-educated women who had carved out careers in the liberal professions, academia, and business. Their advocacy of progressive social programs and their disdain for the Islamists' agenda, which they viewed as a backward step for Tunisian women, made them ideal RCD recruits and, often, effective spokespersons for the party. Members of the new cadre who attained ministerial rank encountered frequent reshufflings of the government – during the first decade of the ben ʿAli presidency, over a hundred men and women held portfolios – that prevented them from exercising real power. "The ministries and the names change," noted an observer, "but the policy of the president remains and all the cards are in the hands of the Chief of State."[9] At a lower echelon, ben ʿAli encouraged the infusion of new blood into the party by rejuvenating its urban neighborhood cells, which served as training grounds for young men and women

preparing to serve the RCD in more elevated capacities. The results of the 1994 elections bore the imprint of these moves. More than three-quarters of the new legislators were under fifty years of age; more than half had never before held elected office at the national level; and a mere five had sat in the Chamber of Deputies before 1987.

Two critical and related questions faced ben ʿAli and the RCD after the 1994 elections: Could the party indefinitely sustain its popular support, particularly among a middle class that comprised more than 80 percent of the population, without converting its contrived pluralist system into a more genuinely participatory arrangement, and were they willing to pursue a course of action transforming the RCD from the master of the political arena to simply one of many parties vying for influence within it? An indication of high-level thinking on these matters came shortly after the elections with the arrest of Moncef Marzouki on charges that his calls for greater political freedom and the legalization of al-Nahda defamed the state. In 1995 the once compliant MDS secretary-general Muhammad Mouada and Khemais Chammari, who had a long history of LTDH activism, addressed an open letter to the president decrying the restrictive political environment. Both were jailed. With its al-Nahda critics out of the way, the government was cracking down on outspoken secular political opponents and human rights advocates, who now joined al-Nahda militants as political prisoners.

Authoritarianism in the political sphere coexisted with, and frequently expedited, the state's commitment to the economic restructuring tirelessly promoted by the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank, whose president described Tunisia as the organization's "best student . . . in the region."[10] In 1995, Tunisia entered into an agreement with the two-year-old European Union (EU) that began the process of putting a free trade zone in place by 2007. Since acquiring associate member status in the European Economic Community in 1969, Tunisia had received preferential treatment in certain aspects of its trade with Europe. By the mid-1990s, the recently integrated European economy supplied 70 percent of the country's imports and purchased 80 percent of its exports, making the EU Tunisia's most important commercial partner. Because the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade, to which Tunisia had adhered at the urging of the international financial agencies in 1990, banned discriminatory trade practices of the kind from which Tunisia had previously benefited, the free trade agreement represented its only realistic means of breaking into the EU market.

The price, however, was high. To begin with, the immediate loss of the 20 percent of state receipts derived from duties on imports from Europe threatened to decimate social programs essential for the maintenance of stability. To preclude such an outcome, the government imposed an unpopular value-added tax in 1996. In the face of intense competition, Tunisian exporters sought to make their products more attractive in Europe even as they searched for new, alternative markets. Planners calculated that as many as two-thirds of all Tunisian businesses, particularly small companies and firms relying on traditional techniques, would either fail or experience serious economic difficulties as the agreement took hold. The enterprises that weathered these short-term adversities would emerge as the core of a more modern, more vigorous, and more globally competitive economy. Inasmuch as an authoritarian regime offered the greatest likelihood of keeping the country on course through this difficult and turbulent process of globalization, the governments of capitalist countries whose economies were poised to reap substantial profits from the expansion of free trade largely overlooked, and often quietly approved of, the autocratic inclinations of the RCD. Within the country, those who opposed the economic policies of the government like those who criticized its understanding of pluralism, risked harassment or worse if they expressed their views too forcefully. The RCD had evolved into more of a security apparatus than a political party, and the Tunisia of ben ʿAli had begun to resemble nothing so much as "the Corsican police state managed by hard-line French residents such as Marcel Peyrouton in 1934 and Jean de Hautecloque in 1952."[11]

Any inclination to interpret so apparently conciliatory a decision as the rehabilitation of ben Yusuf or even the holding of elections (however pro forma) as implicitly sanctioning principled opposition to single-party rule was exposed as fanciful, as regime adversaries continued to meet with very little success in their efforts to cobble together viable alternatives to the RCD. Following the 1994 elections, Mustafa ben Jaafar, an LTDH activist and a former member of the MDS who had broken with the party when Mestiri's successors showed their willingness to cooperate with the government, founded the Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés (FDTL; Democratic Forum for Labor and Liberty) in an effort to sustain the pressure for democratization, but the authorities denied the party legal status for more than eight years. With the same goal in mind, ben Jaafar joined other liberals in creating the Conseil National des Libertés en Tunisie (CNLT; National Council for Liberties in Tunisia) in 1998, but this umbrella organization also failed to gain access to the political arena. On the eve of the 1999 elections, Najib Chebbi, the leader of the

Parti Démocratique Progressiste (PDP; Progressive Democratic Party) – the former RSP, which steadfastly refused to soften its criticisms of the government – noted with disgust that "Tunisia will enter the twenty-first century with an electoral system from the fifties."[12]

During the latter half of the 1990s, the government assiduously maintained the appearance of promoting pluralism even as it tightened its hold over the limited opposition that did function legally. After 1997, for example, each party represented in the Chamber of Deputies received an annual subvention based on the number of its parliamentarians. Nonetheless, the 1999 legislative elections produced results that differed in no substantive way from the two earlier contests of the ben ʿAli era. The usual group of opposition parties – the Mouvement des Démocrates Sociales, the Parti d'Unité Populaire, the Union Démocratique Unioniste, the Mouvement de la Rénovation – and one newcomer, the Parti Social Libéral (PSL; Liberal Social Party), held a meaningless total of just over thirty seats among them. In nationwide municipal elections held the next year, even these "successful" parties proved unable to field candidates in more than a handful of voting districts, most of them in the larger cities.

In the 1999 presidential elections, ben ʿAli faced opposition – albeit of the most perfunctory nature – for the first time since coming to power. Revisions in the election law permitted the heads of political parties represented in the outgoing parliament, who also met qualifications based on age and the length of their service as party leaders, to stand for the presidency. Both Muhammad Bel Hadj ʿAmor of the PUP and ʿAbderrahmane Tlili, secretary-general of the UDU, satisfied these requirements and both mounted uninspired campaigns against ben ʿAli. In the end, most opposition voters preferred to support ben ʿAli's inevitable victory rather than to cast a vote for the leader of a rival party – a clear indication of the opposition's resistance to pooling their meager resources against an entrenched power no one of them could hope to defeat by itself. As a result, ben ʿAli received 99.44 percent of the votes cast. In 2002, Tunisians again went to the polls, this time to approve a constitutional amendment enabling ben ʿAli to stand again for election at the end of his third term in 2004. Of those who participated, 99.52 percent gave their assent. The outcome of the referendum, while entirely predictable, left a particularly bitter taste in the mouths of those who had hailed, as the first step in a much-needed political opening, the removal of the country's first "president for life" a mere fifteen years earlier, at a time when there had been virtually universal agreement that granting such tenure in so critical an office had been an act of folly.

When the nonagenarian former president died on April 6, 2000, the government decreed a week-long period of official mourning, but Bourguiba's passing occasioned little of the outpouring of emotion that marked the demise of such other twentieth-century Arab political luminaries as Gamal Abdel Nasser of Egypt, King Hussain of Jordan, or King Hassan of Morocco, all of whom had dominated their states as Bourguiba had his. Whereas Nasser and the two monarchs were in power at the times of their deaths, the nearly thirteen years since Bourguiba had left office (and the eleven since his last public political appearance in 1990, when he received ben 'Ali in Monastir on the eve of the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique party congress) constituted a considerable length of time for a citizenry whose median age was less than twenty-five and few of whom had more than distant memories of the nationalist campaign. Indeed, many younger Tunisians dismissed the protectorate era as "ancient history," viewing Bourguiba and his contemporaries as fossilized remnants of a time they did not regard as relevant to their lives. Nor did they think that the survivors of that era who retained positions in government understood, or even cared about, the debilitating social and economic problems the younger Tunisians confronted on a daily basis. Having grown up in an atmosphere awash with speculation about Bourguiba's physical and mental fitness to govern, they viewed his death as neither surprising nor tragic. Making matters worse, obituaries in the Western press, no doubt written years earlier and last updated in 1987, tended to echo a national mythology fostered at the highest levels of party and government during the fifty-three years that Bourguiba stood astride Tunisia like the proverbial Colossus. This narrative cast the nation's modern history exclusively in terms of Bourguiba and the Neo-Dustur, downplaying, marginalizing, and sometimes entirely ignoring events and personalities that would have required its formulators to revise their partisan interpretations. This reading of the past had begun to lose its appeal even before Bourguiba was ushered out of the presidential palace, in no small part owing to dwindling numbers of Tunisians with active, personal memories of those years. All Tunisians, however, were well aware of the history they themselves were living and of the nature of the regime that had displaced Bourguiba – a regime that increasing numbers of Tunisians were coming to believe was clothing itself in an authoritarianism that was at least the equal of any the country had known in the past. To the extent that mourners felt nostalgia for the old regime, it was a nostalgia mingled with regret over disturbing features of the new and the farewell bestowed on the deceased leader lent itself to interpretation as criticism of his successor.

THE BOURGUIBIST LEGACY

The most influential architect of the Bourguibist construction of the past was Muhammad Sayah, a prominent member of the PSD political bureau from 1964 to 1987 and a frequent holder of ministerial portfolios in the latter half of that period. In 1969, Sayah took over the editorship of a project, initiated several years earlier, to produce the official history of the nationalist movement as embodied in the Neo-Dustur. Under his supervision, *Histoire du Mouvement National Tunisien*, the fifteenth and final volume of which appeared in 1979, evolved into a collection that was at least as much Bourguiba hagiography as it was (highly subjective) party history. Sayah carried the account beyond independence in two additional books, *Le Nouvel état aux prises avec le complot youssefiste, 1956–1958* (1983) and *La République délivrée de l'occupation étrangère, 1959–1964* (1986). The final contribution of the industrious compiler, which appeared in 1986 and 1987, was a four-volume compendium of Bourguiba's letters and documents entitled *Ma vie, mon oeuvre*, covering the years from 1934 to 1956. School history texts naturally privileged Bourguiba as well, customarily linking his name with the abstraction of "the Nation."[13] Because Bourguiba's success in subverting the colonial political structure had not been matched by a similar triumph in creating one to replace it, Sayah (and others engaged in enhancing the presidential image) concentrated much of their effort on Tunisia's anticolonial and newly independent past.

By the time of Bourguiba's death, many ordinary Tunisians, if they had not entirely forgotten this once iconic figure, had largely put him out of mind. The new government expedited this process by removing or altering some of the more obvious superficial vestiges of the old regime – the statues of Bourguiba that were commonplace in town squares; the postage stamps, coins, and banknotes that bore his image; and the names of the myriad streets honoring him. Within a short time of his removal from office, the most conspicuous, if morbid, public evocation of the former president was the grandiose mausoleum in Monastir that he had ordered built years earlier as his final resting place. In the reworking of the national mythology that inevitably accompanied this process, ben ʿAli's accession to power emerged as the new central focus of Tunisian history. November 7 assumed pride of place among the country's holidays, while "Avenue du 7 Novembre 1987" became the preferred designation of the streets that had formerly been "Avenue Habib Bourguiba."

In the early days of his presidency, ben ʿAli often reminded Tunisians that Bourguiba's contributions to the nation entitled him to their respect.

Nevertheless, the new regime did not muzzle critics of the old. Pointing out the deficiencies of Bourguiba and the failure of policies pursued at his direction served, after all, to underscore the legitimacy of those who had shouldered him aside. Some enemies of the former president availed themselves of the opportunity to take the offensive without fear of retribution, primarily to avenge real or imagined slights. Others, however, were chiefly concerned with disclosing information that made possible the establishment of an accurate account of events. Revelations about the Bourguiba years continued to trickle out during the 1990s, with his death stimulating renewed efforts to come to grips with his life and times. This cathartic process highlighted the alienation and isolation that had developed between Bourguiba and the Tunisian people during his years in power. While so complex a phenomenon obviously cannot be explained solely by reference to personality traits, Bourguiba's narcissistic arrogance and egotism – the *hubris* of Greek tragedians – do shed helpful light on the disjunction between a leader who believed the people of his country owed him a great debt of gratitude, even as they viewed him as a distant, uncaring authoritarian responsible for most of the problems in their daily lives.

Years of study in French schools of the Third Republic endowed the young Bourguiba with an appreciation for such concepts as secularism, rationalism, and modernism, all of which became core components in his belief system. His successful navigation of this alien educational system reinforced an already healthy measure of self-confidence and fueled a conviction that his ideas, judgments, and interpretations of events had inherently greater worth than those of others, even others with credentials that matched his own and who worked in concert with him. Consequently, from the beginning of his political career, he rarely gave more than pro forma consideration to advice that ran counter to his own views and tolerated dissent grudgingly, if at all. In a contemplative essay written shortly after Bourguiba's death, the historian L. Carl Brown asserted that he could interact only with subordinates, never with partners. A factor contributing to this flaw, Brown suggests, was Bourguiba's certainty that even his closest associates could not be trusted to stay the course or to remain unwaveringly loyal, but would "let him down" time after time.[14] Lesser mortals could not bring to the analysis of complex issues the same acumen that he possessed, and they could not understand them with the same clarity. During the nationalist struggle, this mind-set drove a wedge between Bourguiba and the other cofounders of the Neo-Dustur. Later, it opened the more dramatic and destructive break with ben Yusuf. Although Bourguiba's assessments of the circumstances surrounding these rifts may

have been more accurate than those of his colleagues (as Brown maintains), his systematic denigration of alternative viewpoints poisoned the post-independence political environment.

In the matter of dissent, Bourguiba established the tone for the next thirty years in a speech to the Chamber of Deputies a month after independence. "It is," he told the legislators, "essential to put an end to the activity of elements of anarchy and destruction that seek to counteract our work."[15] His audience correctly linked these remarks to the still smoldering Yusufist movement, but in reality they had a much broader implication. The Manichean dichotomy between "our work" and elements that "seek to counteract [it]" left scant ground for other perspectives. It clearly did not invite them. Bourguiba's superiority complex fostered his absolute certainty in the perfection and, therefore, the indispensability of the course he had charted for the future of Tunisia – a conviction that validated his authoritarian inclinations and enabled him to conflate dissent with treason.

Thereafter, in his capacity as the chief executive of the Republic of Tunisia, Bourguiba's self-importance manifested itself in many destructive ways: his tendency to formulate policy unilaterally or in consultation only with a coterie of cronies, giving short shrift to government ministers and party officials; his reluctance to acknowledge or express appreciation for the contributions and ideas even of this shifting inner circle; his resistance to institutionalizing a succession process or even designating a political heir, despite his own poor health; and his determination to stifle opposing views, initially repressing them, later rendering them ineffectual by permitting them to be aired only within the tightly controlled framework of the PSD (*pluralité monopartisane*),[16] and, when even that stratagem failed, creating a superficially multiparty system in which the government resolutely stacked the deck against the opposition parties. Such practices turned many members of the elite against Bourguiba. Their exclusion from meaningful engagement in political affairs frequently prevented them from realizing their own ambitions and often lay behind their alienation, although others simply feared that Bourguiba was leading the country down a path fraught with danger. Nevertheless, disillusioned elites and their followings represented only a tiny minority of the population. The alienation of the Tunisian masses stemmed primarily from the consequences flowing from the president's inability to come to terms with, or even acknowledge, his shortcomings. As social and economic problems intensified in the late years of his presidency, so also did their resentment of the regime.

This state of affairs rendered government espousals of Tunisian democracy increasingly hollow. "*Démocratie à la tunisienne*" frequently glossed

over principles as basic as "liberty, equality, and fraternity" – ideals that had informed Bourguiba's education and with which he had browbeaten the French authorities during the protectorate. It drew sufficiently on the trappings of democratic government – regular (if not necessarily free or fair) elections and a representative (if not necessarily empowered) legislature – to keep up appearances, but overarching these symbolic nods in the direction of popular sovereignty, and trumping them as deemed necessary, was an authoritarian ruler prepared to brook neither interference with nor evasion of his will. *Démocratie à la tunisienne* gave citizens the opportunity to endorse the work of their government, but not to set its agenda. Bourguiba shaped this system, positioned himself squarely at its center, and rarely missed an opportunity to point out that he alone could insure its smooth functioning. Although the monarchy had been abolished soon after independence, in all but title Bourguiba became the bey, exercising his authority, working and residing in his palaces, and reveling in the pageantry and rituals once reserved for the Hussainid rulers. The elections that confirmed him in office resembled nothing so much as the *bai ʿa*, the oath of fealty sworn to the bey by his retainers.

Somewhat paradoxically for a person who expected others to accept without challenge the wisdom of his views and the soundness of his decisions, Bourguiba placed a high premium on education. He believed that his own schooling, by exposing him to a culture based on principles and practices vastly different from those of his ancestral society and teaching him how to function in it, capitalize on its assets, and turn them to his advantage, had liberated him from traditional restraints. Making a similar education available to the Tunisian population at large was, in his view, the sine qua non for sustained national development. The independent government's emphasis on education did succeed in greatly enlarging the number of citizens equipped to appreciate the social and economic programs then transforming Tunisia into a nation with all the accoutrements of modernity. The tangible improvements in the quality of life that these programs produced in the early years of the republic brought the vast majority of Tunisians into line behind their president. Those who did dare to criticize Bourguiba's policies fell into the perilous category of "elements of anarchy and destruction."

Conservative Muslim leaders, disturbed by the state's cavalier interference in deeply entrenched social, educational, legal, and religious practices, were the first to mount an organized protest. Seeing their disapproval primarily as a challenge to the secularism that he valued so highly, Bourguiba dismissed their objections out of hand, going so far as to insist

that his intellectual prowess enabled him to interpret Islam with as much authority as any religious scholar. This show of contempt, along with a callous disregard for Muslim sensibility – exemplified by such provocative acts as the public consumption of orange juice during Ramadan or the mean-spirited remark that "if the Prophet were alive, he would not give you what I have given you"[17] – horrified religious leaders and rendered any accommodation on their part all but impossible. Thereafter, conservative Muslims, thoroughly alienated from the regime, sullenly despised it, convinced that the abandonment of traditional values and practices lay at the root of all subsequent political, social, and economic troubles. When a religiously based opposition movement reappeared in the last decade of the Bourguiba era, his disdain proved even more virulent than before and he furiously lashed out at the Muslim activists. But by then the curtain was coming down on his political career. His instinctive intolerance of opposition had degenerated into a parody of single-party governance. His attempts to continue ruling unilaterally and with an iron fist, despite his worsening health and increasingly erratic behavior, reduced him to an object of widespread ridicule. *Hubris* had given way to *pathos*. Bourguiba's physical and mental degeneration played into the hands of the Muslim activists as surely as did the economic and social malaise pervading the country.

TUNISIA AT THE MILLENNIUM

As denunciations of the state's often arbitrary actions continued to increase in frequency and intensity in the wake of the 1999 elections, the political leadership worked mightily to conceal discontent from the outside world and even, to the extent possible, from its own citizens. It hoped that the appeal of Western-style consumerism would prove more attractive to the citizenry than the challenging, and occasionally risky, task of demanding broader civil rights and liberties. For such a scenario to succeed, a strong economy was essential. And indeed, the prosperity that marked most of the ben ʿAli era did go far toward neutralizing what limited political opposition had managed to survive. Around the turn of the millennium, economic indicators reflected a sustained period of growth: since the mid-1990s, the overall economy had expanded at an average rate in excess of 5 percent a year; exports were increasing by more than 7 percent annually, despite the challenges of globalization; and foreign investors, most of them Europeans, were infusing as much as a billion dinars a year into the economy. Some of that investment was linked to privatization, an important aspect of the original structural adjustment plan that was intended to fortify an enfeebled

private sector but received limited attention until the IMF and the World Bank insisted on its more rigorous application in the late 1990s. As a result, almost as many state enterprises were privatized between 1997 and 2001 (78) as in the entire preceding decade. Inflation, the budget deficit, and the ratio of external debt to gross domestic product all stood at manageable, if still improvable, levels. The thriving economy made it possible to continue building on earlier progress in the social sphere. Education, health care, and other similar services regularly commanded more than half of the state's annual budget. Population growth leveled at 1.1 percent a year; nationwide, literacy reached 75 percent; and life expectancy rose to almost seventy-three years.[18] In the prevailing circumstances, individual financial success, access to consumer goods, and a share in the "good life" assumed greater importance for many middle-class Tunisians than did the mechanics of the political process. Sustaining this economic vitality was, therefore, of the utmost importance to the government and the RCD.

For that reason, the threat posed by the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks in the United States to the international tourist trade on which Tunisia so heavily depended was a matter of grave concern throughout the country. Even as government officials and private citizens who worked in the tourist industry – one out of eight Tunisians depended, directly or indirectly, on this sector for their livelihoods – were taking steps to minimize the fallout from the events of September and the subsequent war in Afghanistan, an act of terrorism on Tunisian soil severely compounded matters. In April 2002, a bomb blast at a historic synagogue on the popular resort island of Jerba killed twenty-one persons, fourteen of them German tourists. Although Tunisia hosted five million international visitors during 2002, that figure represented a decline of 6 percent from the previous year, while revenues from tourism fell by 13 percent. Travelers' concerns about security were the most obvious cause of this downturn, but economic setbacks in Germany, which accounted for roughly one-fifth of Tunisia's tourists, also played a part. Even as the recovery from the shocks of 2001 and 2002 appeared to be getting underway, however, the invasion of Iraq by the United States and Great Britain in the spring of 2003 again plunged international tourism into a period of uncertainty, causing this critical engine of Tunisian development to stall, at least until the threat the fighting posed to the security of global transportation networks and energy supplies became clear. By the tourist season of 2003–4, the Tunisian industry had weathered the storm and was experiencing encouraging signs of recovery.

These fluctuations underscored the problems of reliance on an industry subject to vicissitudes over which its beneficiaries exercised no control.

Implicitly acknowledging ben ʿAli's record of vigorous action against threats to national security, the Tunisian minister of tourism attributed the relatively modest decline of this period (in comparison with much harder-hit destinations such as Morocco and Egypt) to the "sure and stable image of our country in the world."[19] Nonetheless, tourism officials set to work devising campaigns to decrease the industry's heavy dependence on Europeans and to develop new markets in the Middle East and the Arabian Peninsula. They also targeted the neighboring North African countries, since a substantial increase in guests from Algeria and Libya during 2002 had been a major factor in offsetting the decline in Western visitors.

Seemingly broad acceptance of the decisions of the party-government during the recent past had shielded it from the need to make concessions to critics calling for a more open and participatory political process. In 2000, however, a well-informed French observer of Tunisian politics argued that obliging citizens to barter political apathy for material prosperity had created "a silent, and perhaps sullen, majority [of persons hostile to ben ʿAli], largely persuaded of democratic ideals and political pluralism, but thwarted in their application."[20] Defending the status quo in an interview with a foreign journalist in 2002, Faïza Kéfi, the minister of professional training and employment, boasted that

> no one is hungry in Tunisia; there are no people sleeping under bridges. Tunisians have a roof over their head and a decent income that allows them to handle their basic expenses.[21]

The hyperbole of politicians aside, her remarks reflected RCD satisfaction in meeting Tunisians' most urgent needs and paving the way for the fulfillment of their longer-term aspirations, which, in turn, accounted for the party's successes at the polls. Given the top-down, essentially one-way, relationship between the party-government and the people, the former imposed its policies on the latter without prior consultation – the conceit of the authoritarian ruler intuiting the best interests of the population that had characterized Tunisia since 1956.

CHAPTER 8

A Revolution for Dignity, Freedom, and Justice

PRELUDE TO THE UNEXPECTED

Neither the 2004 nor the 2009 presidential and parliamentary elections, whose results closely replicated patterns reaching back, essentially without deviation, to 1989, held the slightest promise of meaningfully altering the political landscape. As had become routine, the weak and fragmented opposition proved unable to achieve what, historically, only the Neo-Dustur and its later incarnations had accomplished – galvanizing and mobilizing a critical mass of the populace in a concerted demand for a change in the status quo. Despite carefully crafted appearances, few civil society organizations had the ability to function at all effectively beyond the limited parameters permitted by the authorities, and only the largest, best organized, and most entrenched such as the UGTT had any real possibility of challenging the practices of the regime, and they only with considerable discretion and circumspection. Indeed, with increasing regularity, vocal critics of the state were subjected to harsh and arbitrary retribution ranging from personal surveillance and threats against associates and family members if behavior deemed objectionable by the authorities was not curbed to more severe judicial punishments – arrest, detention, and physical or mental abuse that could rise to the level of torture – meted out by the agents of a swollen state security apparatus that numbered some one hundred thirty thousand (roughly one for every eighty Tunisians). Its members were no less heartily loathed by the populace than were their Middle Eastern *mukhabbarat* counterparts that had inspired ben ʿAli, ever attuned to his training and career as a policeman, to triple their numbers in Tunisia since coming to power.[1] Although they concentrated their attention on domestic opponents of the government, they had no qualms about harassing international journalists known or suspected to fall into the same category, as occurred, for example, during the 2005 UNESCO-sponsored World Summit on the Information Society. Its Tunis venue

irked both local critics of the government and well-informed members of the international community who understood that this forum to promote global interconnectedness was being hosted by a country that routinely denied its citizens unrestricted access to the Internet, was labeled by Reporters Without Borders as an "Internet enemy," and had been identified by *Forbes Magazine* as one of the three most repressive countries in the world with respect to the Internet. Perhaps not surprisingly, observers affiliated with Reporters Without Borders were denied entry to the country to cover the meeting. Demonstrators took to the streets as the delegates convened to call attention to the ben ʿAli government's hypocrisy and its increasingly kneejerk tendency to respond to dissent with repression.[2] The authorities made the protesters' point by doing precisely that for the international media to document. In its embrace of these and similar authoritarian stances, Tunisia in the early years of the new millennium exemplified what some contemporary political theorists had begun to describe as "illiberal democracies" or "liberalized autocracies."[3]

On the economic front, the elaborate state planning that had long characterized Tunisia continued apace. Ambitious Five-Year Plans continued to formulate overall goals for the economy, along with specific objectives for its component sectors, which were often met, at least on paper. The 2003–7 plan focused on upgrading the manufacturing sector, and particularly the textile industry, which was a crucial key to export earnings. The 2007–11 plan called for an annual growth rate of 6.1 percent, which was achieved, until the consequences of the global financial crisis of 2008 made themselves felt in the country. Throughout those years, the regime did its best to adhere to its strategy of assuaging political dissatisfaction through economic prosperity, encouraged by the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank, and other global financial institutions whose recommendations it had long been routinely incorporating. But even before the dramatic downturn of 2008, many millions of Tunisians from a broad swath of economic classes, social backgrounds, and regions of the country who were cognizant of recent developments and trends were coming to realize, some intuitively, others by personal experience, that the apparently booming economy masked treacherous flaws and that, in the political realm, all was not as the government wished to portray it.

Early in the new millennium, rampant consumerism drove up the cost of living and initiated a rise in the inflation rate from a modest 2.7 percent at its start to a less impressive 4.5 precent by the end of 2010,[4] even as skyrocketing personal debt created an average burden equivalent to more than $2,000 per household.[5] Over roughly this same period, official statistics

showed the per capita income to have risen by 37.6 percent and the number of Tunisians living in poverty to have declined, from 4.2 to 3.8 percent of the population,[6] but a careful examination of these figures suggests tinkering designed to present the country's situation in the most favorable light possible. The criteria utilized to define poverty, for example, set the bar unrealistically low (at 400 dinars per person per year), or less than US$1 per person per day.[7] The truth was that even by a more realistic measure, a smaller percentage of Tunisians lived in poverty than did any other citizens of their region not residing in an oil-based economy. As a result, not only was the value of the statistical manipulation diminished, but also evidence of the government's untrustworthiness emerged as the data came under scrutiny. Similarly, a rigorous analysis of the much-touted growth of the middle class revealed interpretive problems, among the most striking of which was the high percentage of persons – as many as half – who, while by government standards, were statistically middle class, more precisely constituted "a floating middle class" whose incomes or job security, or both, left them constantly teetering on the brink of a fall back into poverty. How the international financial institutions that were so deeply engaged in Tunisia could have overlooked such red flags warning of serious problems in the reporting and analysis of the data from there may have reflected an "emperor's new clothes" mentality in which they chose not to scrutinize the Tunisian situation too carefully lest doing so reveal that their star regional pupil was cheating or offering a knowingly fraudulent interpretation of its work. "Their [the institutions'] reliance on selected macroeconomic indicators which painted a rosy national picture but which obscured the imbalances, inequalities and distortions that were evolving below the surface" led them toward a self-fulfilling prophecy that, given the realities on the ground, had little hope of ever materializing short of a dramatic alteration in the existing environment.[8]

Whether they were literally impoverished or not, every Tunisian had to cope with financial pressures induced by the country's continuing march toward integration with the global economy and particularly with the economy of the European Union, by far the country's largest and most important trading partner. In 2008, as Tunisia experienced the ripple effects from the recession's taking its toll across the Mediterranean, its manufacturing exports to the EU dropped off. At the same time (coincidentally), drought-stricken harvests reduced production in the agricultural sector, which employed about a quarter of the population. The price of imported energy also soared, although the impact of that expense was cushioned by an increase in yields from domestic oil and gas fields. Overall, this combination

of circumstances drove the growth rate of the GDP down from its fairly steady average approximating 5 percent a year since the turn of the century to 1.3 percent at the beginning of 2009, a figure that, had it persisted, threatened to cancel out recent progress. Ordinary Tunisians were slammed by rising prices – some of which had doubled or even tripled between 2000 and 2010 – for such commodities essential to survival as cereals (half of which had to be imported). Such hikes were especially devastating for the least well off, but they also took a heavy toll on Tunisians in less precarious conditions, for whom the issue was often less a matter of lacking necessities than of lacking products central to their self-image as persons in, or poised to enter, the middle class. The government's time-honored practice of subsidizing foodstuffs, energy, and other costly high-demand products, now perceived by both the regime and its citizens as more necessary than ever, provided much-needed relief to struggling Tunisians, but it came with a high price tag for the state. Early in the 2000s, food and fuel subsidies had amounted to only some 4 percent of government expenditure, but they had reached nearly 12 percent by the close of the decade, necessitating cutbacks in allocations for the reduction of the national debt, the provision of social services, and the fostering of infrastructural growth. The cost of oil and gas consumed close to 2 percent of GDP in 2010, whereas at the start of the decade it had been a "negligible" component of the figure.[9]

Demography posed another formidable challenge. Although the birth-rate had remained impressively low for decades, the proportions of the adolescent and young adult populations, which, depending on the criteria utilized, constituted between a quarter and two-fifths of the total, had severely adverse implications in areas such as education and employment. The state's commitment to the schooling of its citizens-in-the-making had never wavered, but, despite the substantial resources it dedicated to the public education system (which were still not always sufficient to guarantee effective instruction or adequately fund infrastructural requirements), the state betrayed its charges by failing to adapt to the changing needs of the marketplace. It never thoroughly revamped its emphasis on near-universal literacy – a point of enormous and justifiable pride in early postcolonial Tunisia – toward the provision of more sophisticated scientific, technical, and business-oriented training. As a result, school leavers lacked the skills that were most in demand in the marketplace. Once their educations were completed, moreover, young Tunisians had to confront the reality that the creation of jobs of any kind had not kept pace with demand. Midway into the decade of the 2000s, there were very limited opportunities for new entrants to the job market, regardless of their education or skills.

With unemployment officially standing at 15 percent nationwide, but estimated at over 40 percent for younger Tunisians (and climbing higher still in the most severely depressed regions in the center and south of the country, which job creators had long spurned in favor of coastal areas, with their better-prepared human resources and ancillary facilities), the prospects of the situation's improving were dim.[10] Because a secondary school diploma or even a university degree was no longer the exceptional credential it once had been, this situation affected even university graduates, who made up more than half of the unemployed.[11] Many found themselves compelled to accept less prestigious and lower-paying positions than they believed their educations had earned them or to resort to the humiliating alternative of bribery to obtain a position for which they were clearly well qualified. Still others concluded that the only way to capitalize on the skills provided by their education was to immigrate, usually either to the West or to the Gulf, with all of the unsettling personal and familial issues associated with such a decision. Those who remained in Tunisia did not, however, escape having to contend with similar dilemmas. Unable to establish themselves securely in the workforce, many had no choice but to live with their parents and to defer marriage and the starting of a family, both of which contributed, especially in young men, to the sense of inadequacy already engendered by their joblessness. Youths whose educations had terminated at the secondary level, or who had dropped out even earlier, were unable to compete for remunerative jobs and if they did find work were frequently underemployed or otherwise not fully integrated into the economic mainstream. Further worsening this scenario were the increasing fiscal pressures facing the government. Traditionally, public employment had often made room in the workplace for graduates, but as it proved less able to continue this practice, recent graduates quickly felt the pinch. The private sector, of course, saw no need to act with similar magnanimity, and certainly not to do so at the expense of profits or the hiring of the best-qualified workers available. According to a United Nations Development Program report, these deplorable conditions were an important factor in the growth of a "culture of suicide which disdained the value of life, finding death an easier alternative because of the lack of values and a sense of anomie" in conjunction with the apparent deafness of the Tunisian administration to what was happening. Its principal victims were Tunisian youths depressed by their dismal circumstances.[12]

Even as its role in the economy grew at the urging of the international financial institutions in the 2000s, however, the private sector faced an uphill battle with ingrained cultural issues, including nepotism, bribery,

graft, extortion, and other forms of corruption. Although these problems were not new, the increased emphasis on the private sector tended to amplify them and bring them to the forefront. Despite such known drawbacks, however, Tunisia's reputation within the international business community had been largely positive, especially in comparison with other states in the Middle East and North Africa. But between 2000 and 2010, the country slid from thirty-third to sixty-fifth place on Transparency International's Corruption Perception Index, suggesting that changes were afoot in the business environment. Adding credence to these statistics, domestic and international investors were beginning to hesitate about committing financial resources in such potentially risky circumstances, particularly if they lacked an "inside track" to the nation's business or political elites. Certainly not the only example of untoward business practices, but one of the most egregious, and one that thwarted legitimate investment, deeply antagonized the many Tunisians struggling to survive in a shaky economy, and exposed a grasping, seamy side of the regime was the growth within the private sector of a subset of business and commercial interests controlled by members of the presidential family and entourage, including ben ʿAli himself, his children and their spouses, and his second wife, Leila Trabelsi (widely despised as "*la régente de Carthag*e" for her extravagant and publicly supported lifestyle), and numerous members of her extended family. Further from the center of this charmed circle were key figures in the party and the government deemed important or knowledgeable enough to require admission. Resembling nothing so much as a family of Mafioso, they took advantage of their privileged position to amass a vast collection of business enterprises and real estate holdings that appeared to derive from the recent growth of the private sector, which had been undertaken to add strength to the economy. In fact, however, the fruits of these ventures exclusively benefited the ben ʿAli family and its favored hangers-on, who used their clout to shelter such assets from unwanted interference. Members of the president's coterie were, for example, granted sweetheart deals in the purchase of state companies put up for privatization (a process that accelerated markedly in the mid-1990s, following Trabelsi's appearance on the scene, and that included many more attractive enterprises than had been made available for private purchase). They also received lucrative concessionary rights from foreign manufacturers and distributors and accumulated kickbacks, bribes, and payoffs, including valuable shares in international corporations investing in Tunisia, as compensation for their services as negotiators and intermediaries well positioned to expedite investors' contacts with government officials and wealthy private-sector

businesspeople. Given the power, influence, greed, and ruthlessness of these odious schemers, and the protective umbrella under which they operated, they were subject to no regulation or supervision of any kind. Their ill-gotten gains financed extravagantly luxurious lifestyles with money that should have been enriching the nation, but which they were, instead, safely sequestering in overseas bank accounts, ultimately to the detriment of the Tunisian government and people. In the end, their actions deprived less favored investors of some of the most potentially profitable opportunities in the Tunisian market.[13] Although the scope available to them was considerably more restricted, lesser party officials and agents of the government did not fail to follow suit, turning their own access to political and economic power to their personal advantage and that of their friends. The ability to do business of any kind in such an environment soon hinged on a willingness to embrace corruption or, at the very least, turn a blind eye to it.

At the start of 2008, pervasive frustration and outrage over the government's inability or unwillingness to come to grips with concerns that were, by then, very nearly universal among Tunisians took a decidedly confrontational turn in the mining communities of the Gafsa basin when several hallmark issues came to the fore simultaneously. The furor began when the state-owned Gafsa Phosphate Company, the largest employer in the region (and, when its local service providers were considered along with it, virtually the only employer), announced the results of a recruitment competition for relatively well-paying, but primarily unskilled, jobs. Many workers and some local UGTT representatives protested the company's hiring decisions. They charged that it had deliberately discriminated against qualified applicants, including some whose families had long worked for it and even had relatives who had been killed in mine accidents, in order to award prized jobs to less deserving, but better connected, candidates. Some of those hired were protégés of the local union boss himself, who enjoyed a close relationship with the regional government and the RCD, of which he was a senior member. For individuals all too accustomed to petty corruption, nepotism, and bribery as requirements for survival, this situation could not have been surprising, but in so severely economically ravaged a community at this juncture, it proved the proverbial last straw. A popular committee of workers and sympathetic union officials attempted to defuse the crisis through negotiations but made no headway in moving the company toward its perspective. Undeterred, the miners adopted an array of tactics – work stoppages; street protests and demonstrations; hunger strikes; sit-ins at company facilities; roadblocks impeding the movement of vehicles throughout the basin; blocking and, in some instances, destroying the

railroad tracks on which the phosphate ore moved to processing and export terminals; throwing up tent cities to call attention to their grievances; and appealing to colleagues in the national labor movement and other progressive forces to adopt their cause. From the birthplace of the protests in Redeyef, they quickly spread to Moularès, M'dhila, and Metlaoui, mobilizing participants from the secondary school level to aged relatives of current and former miners.[14] Among the allies produced by this appeal was the Union of Unemployed Graduates. Formed in the previous year by University of Tunis students, most of them veterans of antiregime protests elsewhere in the country, these young men and women contributed useful organizational and tactical skills to the protesters that helped them continue their resistance with greater or lesser intensity and in one mining community or another into the spring. An attack on a police post in Redeyef in April may have convinced the authorities to ratchet up their response to the disturbances, or perhaps it merely provided them with an excuse to do so. Well aware of Gafsa's prominence in earlier economic, social, and political upheavals, the authorities reinforced their security assets in the region, which already included some military units but consisted mainly of ben ʿAli's most-trusted, and his people's most-feared, henchmen, the National Gendarmerie, perhaps in the hope of intimidating the activists into standing down. The weeks that followed were tense and violence ridden, as the police detained several hundred persons on numerous charges stemming from clashes that swept through all the mining towns. The situation spiraled completely out of control in June, however, when the security forces opened fire on unarmed demonstrators in Redeyef, killing one and wounding many others. Ultimately, more than two hundred protesters, most of them miners and their families, but also a few unionists and human rights advocates from outside the region, faced trials; another fifty had gone underground and were tried in absentia.

Many of the accused produced credible evidence of their allegations of torture, but the government stubbornly denied any impropriety on the part of its agents. For the purposes of damage control, ben ʿAli removed the governor of Gafsa and fired the head of the Gafsa Phosphate Company. Stopping well short of an apology for the government's excesses in dealing with the situation, he did acknowledge that those in charge had committed "irregularities" and promised that a portion of the state's revenue from phosphate exports would be exclusively dedicated to job creation and infrastructural development in the mining area. In trials at the end of the year, severe prison sentences, some as lengthy as ten years, were imposed. Following this wave of repression, an edgy calm settled over the region. A

year later, shortly after winning a fifth presidential term, ben ʿAli, pardoned the sixty-eight prisoners still in detention. But the fact that none of the core problems giving rise to the disorder had been satisfactorily addressed, much less resolved, left an ominous atmosphere primed to explode.

The immediate trigger of the Gafsa riots had been what were widely regarded as unfair labor practices, but once on the streets, the demonstrators vented their anger at a much wider range of grievances that were variations on themes that bedeviled all Tunisians: inadequate job creation; uneven regional access to education and the delivery of basic services; poor housing; corruption; and, perhaps more painfully striking to Gafsawis than to other Tunisians, the heavy hand of the state raised against any who dared to question it. Other Tunisians drew inspiration and lessons from the events in the Gafsa basin, which had been the most serious challenge to the state since it had, with similar brutality, and on an even larger scale, crushed al-Nahda. Although the opponents of the dictator could not very convincingly claim victory, they may have offered inspiration to many of their countrymen by pointing to tiny but exploitable chinks in his armor at a relatively small cost in fatalities (at least in view of the large number of participants). In retrospect, what occurred in Gafsa may be seen as a prelude to, or perhaps a dress rehearsal for, the wave of populist fury that rocked the country at the start of 2011, forever transforming not only Tunisia but the entire region and, ultimately, the whole of the Arab world.

THE REVOLUTION

The Tunisian "revolution for dignity" that overthrew the ben ʿAli regime and precipitated a thorough overhaul of the country's political culture, even as it offered an example and inspiration to victims of similarly repressive autocracies in Egypt, Libya, Yemen, Syria, and Bahrain, had, at its immediate origins, what became the movement's most iconic event: the attempted suicide by self-immolation on December 17, 2010, of a twenty-six-year-old street vendor in Sidi Bouzid, a provincial city in Tunisia's depressed interior whose residents' prospects of breaking the cycle of poverty and despair in which they had long been trapped were as dismal as the bleak surrounding steppes. Repeated run-ins with the police had convinced Mohammed Bouazizi that the authorities' overzealous enforcement of municipal regulations and their demands for bribes were hindering him from earning a livelihood and set him on the desperate course that left him critically burned by an act of self-immolation that led to his death in a

Tunis hospital a few weeks later. In the prevailing atmosphere, particularly in the central part of the country, his actions encapsulated and came to symbolize the frustrations of millions of Tunisians with the difficulties of everyday life and their disgust toward a government that not only showed little interest in alleviating their plight but also often appeared to complicate it further.

As the news of Bouazizi's gesture spread through his closely knit community, at first mostly by word of mouth, antigovernment protests broke out there and were quickly replicated in other regional centers such as Kasserine and Thala, where youthful unemployment and a general sense of malaise was as acute as they were in Sidi Bouzid. That such protests occurred at all suggests both that the authorities were caught off guard and that the intensity and scope of the reaction overwhelmed them. In the previous year's unrest in the Gafsa area, the regime had adopted a modus operandi of viciously squelching its opponents. For years before that, it had capitalized on the public's fear that so drastic an approach always remained a tool in the state's arsenal, never completely off the table if the authorities were sufficiently discomforted or angry. But in this instance, the protesters, perhaps concluding they had little to lose, carried on. Strengthening the regional security forces was rendered impractical in early January, when the protests expanded from the hard-pressed interior to the more prosperous coastal regions. Popular expressions of opposition to the regime crossed a wide spectrum of intensity that ranged from full-scale riots to peaceful work stoppages, such as the highly successful strike by virtually all of the country's lawyers that paralyzed the court system at the start of the year.

Few outlets existed for venting these debilitating frustrations, but, for the youth at least, hip-hop and rap artists, with their tremendous popularity and followings in many Arab countries, spoke to them, often critically of the status quo, in language they readily understood. In the joyless years of the dictatorship, would-be performers in this medium were limited to disseminating their music through Facebook and other forms of social media, since the state, well attuned to the dangers of giving voice to the disenchanted, banned their work from the state-controlled airwaves and blocked their access to recording facilities and performance venues. Consequently, the genre tended to be produced using rudimentary methods by the performers themselves and their friends. Some Tunisian rappers, perhaps the most popular of whom was Hamada ben Amor, better known as "El General," a twenty-one-year-old from Sfax whose personal circumstances mirrored the deep disillusion of his peers and whose work came to epitomize their despair, acquired nationwide followings. In 2010, ben Amor recorded a video for his



Figure 8.1. A postage stamp commemorating the revolution, 2011.

song "Rais Lebled" ("President of the Country"), a stark aural and visual attack on poverty and corruption that indicted ben ʿAli as unconcerned with his people's plight – "Mr. President, your people are dying."

On January 12, 2011, rioters poured into the streets of downtown Tunis, venting their wrath on buildings symbolizing the government and the party, with the Interior Ministry and the RCD headquarters serving as especially inviting targets. The mob, however, continued about its business without discernible centralized leadership or direction – a situation made possible by the ease with which technologically sophisticated young men and women utilized social media to organize the protests, announce and disseminate their objectives, and alert their friends to changes in the fluid and



Figure 8.2. Postage stamp honoring Mohamed Bouazizi, iconic martyr of the revolution, 2011.

volatile environment as the authorities began to respond. Youths distraught over their social and economic lot remained at the core of the movement, but they were soon joined on the front lines by older citizens seizing a rare opportunity to publicly vent their anger toward the regime. Within a matter of a few weeks, the example of a populist, youthful, and technological Tunisian uprising inspired antiregime groups in Egypt, Libya, and Yemen to attempt to replicate it – perhaps the revolutionaries' most significant contribution to the "Arab Spring" that cascaded across the region in its wake.

Thereafter, the pace of events in Tunisia was dizzying. Between January 12 and January 17, no corner of the country escaped the mayhem attendant

on a population moving into full-scale revolt against a regime seemingly determined to stand its ground. The revolutionaries adopted "Rais Lebled" and a second ben Amor release, "Tounes Lebled," "Tunisia, Our Country," as their anthems. With protests engulfing the country, El General was arrested, but with protesters' demands that their media hero be released stoking an already raging fire, the police did so. His videos and story were circulated by *al-Jazeera*, assuring their notoriety across the Arab world, where they were heard at protests from Cairo to Sanaa to Manama throughout the "Arab Spring." A minoritarian, antiestablishment musical genre of protest ideally suited the tastes and needs of young Tunisians and other regional protesters, but sometimes met with criticism from conservatives who attacked rap and hip-hop as too closely tied to Western, non-Islamic, popular culture, although this charge ignored the fact that many of its practitioners considered themselves, and acted like, devout Muslims.[15]

Recognizing its vulnerability, the government sent military and gendarmerie units into the streets of Tunis and other urban centers, imposed curfews, and banned gatherings of more than three persons. But within days of the outbreak of the uprising, thousands of young Tunisians had taken on roles as "public journalists," using Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Internet blogs, Skype, and mobile phones to transmit information and images globally. In addition, the international news media, with *al-Jazeera* in the lead, descended on Tunis in force and kept up a steady stream of reporting during the revolution, thereby helping to ensure that developments in Tunisia did not unfold in a vacuum. Years of experience evading the regime's censorship and outwitting its restrictions on Internet access enabled Tunisians to remain "plugged in" even when faced with the authorities' control of servers and their intention to isolate protesters from global electronic networks. Inevitably, confrontations increased in frequency and severity, accompanied by a corresponding rise in the resort to lethal force by the police. Most of the police had never contended with so clear a threat to their own safety, and they reacted in many instances by indiscriminately firing on crowds of demonstrators, virtually none of whom had firearms or any other weapons more menacing than knives, cudgels, or Molotov cocktails. Although these were not inconsequential, a disciplined police force, with its antiriot gear, tear gas, and high-pressure water cannons, might have been expected to restore order at a considerably lower cost in lives. In any event, according to a UN official, some three hundred persons died in the uprising and another seven hundred were injured.[16] Recognizing the imperative of bringing the situation throughout the country under control quickly and decisively, but well aware that the methods

initially conceived to do so were not working, ben ʿAli tried to temper the iron fist of his security forces with promises designed to placate the demonstrators, who were now demanding that he step aside. His enemies gave no credence to this desperate effort to cut short a revolutionary dynamic. Ironically, just as his tenure in power was drawing to a close, his promise to create three hundred thousand new jobs that could relieve the suffering and uncertainty of at least some of those in the streets revealed a clearer understanding (whether sincere or not) of Tunisian realities than his government had shown in the recent past. He also assured Tunisians that state censorship, a particularly sore point for the youth, would end. In another dubious gesture that offered too little, came too late, and was widely regarded as disingenuous, he also reshuffled his cabinet, implying that subordinates acting without his approval or knowledge were responsible for decisions that had brought the country to its current impasse. In a similar effort to displace blame and responsibility, ben ʿAli also "played the Islamist card," inappropriately labeling the revolutionaries as "Islamic terrorists" to capitalize on Western Islamophobia and stoke anxiety among modernist and secularist Tunisians of a reinvigorated al-Nahda bent on destabilizing the country for its own nefarious ends. Certainly, many al-Nahda adherents were involved in the uprising, but as individuals sharing the conviction that the country's problems could not be resolved until the regime was ousted. In a final flourish, the president revealed that he would not seek another term, in 2014, but would step down in favor of a freely elected successor. After years of mistrust between the people and the regime and the systematic maltreatment of the former by the latter, however, the "revolution for dignity" had no further patience with rhetoric, and no amount of promises could persuade the demonstrators to cease their activities. Running out of options to quiet the chaos, ben ʿAli ordered the army, already on the streets of Tunis and other trouble spots, to lend its weight to the task of crushing the demonstrations once and for all. In the past, the army had occasionally been assigned duties more appropriately within the purview of the police (as at Gafsa in 2010), but never in a context of so vehement and sustained a threat to the regime, nor in one so out of control that only the most drastic measures appeared capable of forcing the genie back into the bottle. Reminiscent of some aspects of the collapse of the Soviet Union in the 1990s or the fall of the shah of Iran in 1979, and a model that would shortly be adopted by Egyptian soldiers in Tahrir Square, army commander Rashid ben ʿAmmar defied ben ʿAli by ignoring orders to fire on the demonstrators. He further cautioned ben ʿAli that no level of security could guarantee the president's safety if he clung to power against the wishes of his people,

which could no longer be in doubt. Those wishes were expressed in the battle cry of the streets, repeated incessantly and displayed on banners and placards everywhere: "Ben ʿAli, Dégage!" ("Ben ʿAli, Get Lost!"). The army's pronouncement knocked out one of the last remaining props from under the regime,[17] and its commander's refusal to accede to the army's politicization as a compliant tool of the dictatorship underscored its heritage as a well-trained, highly professional force, with no history of meddling in politics. This contrasted with the gendarmerie, on which ben ʿAli had long relied, which had no such reservations and which inflicted heavy casualties throughout the uprising. On January 14, President and Mrs. ben ʿAli and members of their family secretly fled Tunisia. Later, from exile in Saudi Arabia, the deposed leader claimed that after escorting his family to safety, he had intended to return to Tunis and resume the battle to suppress the rebellion, but was unable to carry out his plan when the crew of the presidential aircraft ignored his order to stand by and await further instructions but instead left for Tunisia without him.[18]

Even before the first family's scuttle, some of their more prescient associates, seeing the writing on the wall, had begun scrambling to activate escape hatches for themselves and to expatriate as many of their unprotected movable assets as they could ahead of the now very possible collapse of the regime, which had been so unthinkable a mere month before. Some of their anxiety was fueled by the protesters' visceral antagonism toward the highest socioeconomic and political strata that had, in their view, turned its back on them. This they manifested by looting, burning, and desecrating properties belonging to the ben ʿAli and Trabelsi families and their associates, many of which were offensively ostentatious reminders that Tunisia's economic hardships did not fall evenly on its people. Perhaps the most graphic example of such an incident occurred at the lavish Hammamet home of Sakhr al-Materi, ben ʿAli's son-in-law. Although the crowd that pillaged the estate needed no more incentive than the abundant rumors that had long circulated concerning Materi's profligacy and dishonesty, the inclusion in the 2010 Wikileaks disclosures of a June 2009 report by the American ambassador that detailed Tunisians' thinking about their political leadership contained damning characterizations sure to incite regime opponents who would be in the streets within a month of the leak's appearance. A second cable, prepared after the ambassador had dined with the al-Materis at their villa in July 2009, described a household and a menagerie (which included a pet tiger) that were "over the top."[19] But when the revolution came, even more modest homes and businesses known to belong to persons tainted by complicity with the regime fell before the rioters' vengeance.

The news of the ben ʻAlis' departure was met with a mixture of euphoria and apprehension. Streets in the cities remained turbulent, with little certainty as to where effective power resided. In some quarters, citizen watches attempted to impose law and order, but for several days, sporadic gunfire and occasional violence continued as outsiders intruded into defended neighborhoods and central business districts suffered extensive damage and looting. Having acclimated themselves over decades to the constant presence of the heavy hand of the state, many citizens found it improbable that its power would dissipate so quickly and completely. They feared that what they were witnessing was only a lull during which the authorities would regroup and launch a renewed assault on the revolution. They especially worried that regime supporters among security service personnel, who might have much to lose if their patrons were to vanish from the scene, would try to thwart the revolutionaries just as they were on the brink of success. These fears did not, however, materialize. Quite to the contrary, many police joined the antiregime forces, revealing a socioeconomic affinity that they felt safe in expressing only after the state and party apparatus on which their own livelihoods depended had begun to crumble. This unanticipated turn of events suggests how thorough was the dictatorship's collapse and how indisputably it was, in the jargon of youthful Tunisians, "Game Over."

Accepting a ruling by the Constitutional Council, Prime Minister Muhammad Ghannushi, who had claimed the presidency on ben ʻAli's departure, agreed instead that Fouad Mezbaa, the president of the Chamber of Deputies, become chief executive. Mezbaa had a lengthy record of public service going back to the Bourguiba era, was untainted by recent political travesties, and, at the age of seventy-eight, was believed to be without future political ambitions. Thus, Ghannushi took the reins of an interim government, promising to hold elections within six months so as to set in place a more permanent and stable polity. Among his first acts was the appointment of Yadh ben ʻAchour, a distinguished legal scholar, as head of a commission on political reforms. Selectively reaching out to the revolutionaries, the prime minister brought into his government a few political novices who had figured prominently in the uprising, Among these were Slim ʻAmamou, an Internet activist who had been orchestrating anticensorship protests for over a year and had been arrested along with other widely followed bloggers whose posts publicized the severely deteriorating situation throughout the country in December and January. In the post–ben ʻAli era, Tunisian bloggers provided key access to events transpiring in the country and opinion trends among its citizens. Two of the most influential

cyberactivists were Lina ben Mhenni, who blogged as "A Tunisian Girl" and whose name was put forward for the 2011 Nobel Peace Prize, and Riadh Guerfali, known by his pseudonym, Astrubal, the cofounder, almost a decade earlier, of the Web portal collective Nawaat, which provided opportunities for regime critics. ʿAmamou's appointment as minister of youth and sports was meant to appeal to a major contingent within the uprising, giving young men and women a spokesperson whom they regarded highly and whose independence they trusted. Female ministerial appointments were hardly novel in Tunisia, but the interim government did take care to put in place an internationally known scholar, Lilia Labidi, as minister of women, family, and children, and women's rights advocates organized a well-attended rally in central Tunis. Initially, prominent members of the legal opposition, including Mustafa ben Jaafar and Najib Chebbi, also responded positively to Ghannushi overtures. Not surprisingly, however, in view of the tempo at which developments were moving and thus the urgency that the new government assert itself without delay, Ghannushi inevitably also recruited individuals with links to ben ʿAli and the RCD. Protesters who had risked their lives to bring down the regime vociferously objected to preserving its vestiges in this way. They remained in the streets demanding the dismantling of the apparatus that had kept the party in power, which most saw as a sine qua non for genuine change. Popular solidarity on this point prompted the abrupt resignations of some new appointees, who declined to join a government so obviously lacking public confidence, and forced Ghannushi to reshuffle his cabinet to rid it of the most egregious holdovers from the RCD. The revolution remained incomplete even as its ranks continued to grow. In the last week of January, reflecting the current locus of power, the focal point of the protests shifted to the prime minister's office in the Place de la Casbah. By the end of the month, thousands of students, young professionals, union members, and adherents of numerous civil society organizations had created a makeshift camp in the square, effectively laying siege to Ghannushi's office and demanding the installation of a government that truly mirrored Tunisia's new political realities. As had occurred when he prevented the army from engaging the protesters, General ben ʿAmmar again buoyed their spirits, this time with his assurance that "Your revolution is our revolution."[20]

Despite several well-received measures, including easing restrictions on political party activity and allowing exiled leaders such as al-Nahda's Rashid Ghannushi to return, the interim government continued to lack credibility and generated little enthusiasm among either the Casbah protesters or the less vocal general populace. The former reacted to the relaxation of the ben



Figure 8.3. Protesters at the office of the prime minister, February 2011.

ʿAli stranglehold with an exuberant display of slogans, cartoons, and other graffiti on the walls of the stately precolonial buildings of the administrative quarter; the latter waited with uncertainty and mounting anxiety for the political dust to settle and their lives to return to normal. Their uneasiness was heightened when a peaceful downtown demonstration on February 25 triggered a brutally disproportionate reaction that claimed several lives and led to looting and destruction in the business district. This show of the government's willingness to employ the same despised tactics as its predecessor produced widespread demands that the government step down. Acknowledging the dissipation of what little confidence he still enjoyed, Ghannushi resigned on February 27. To replace him, Mezbaa tapped Beji Caid al-Sebsi, another aging politician (he was eighty-four at the time) whose political capital appeared to reside in his participation, more than thirty years before, in the Bourguibist experiment in pluralism and in the fact that he had been largely ignored since 1987. The new prime minister did not deceive himself regarding the mood of the country and lost no time in dissolving the RCD, although, perhaps mindful of the unfortunate repercussions of the American approach to the Iraqi Baath in 2003, the wholesale demonization of party members was avoided and punitive measures imposed only on its most odious officials. As the protesters prepared to

leave the Place de la Casbah, they whitewashed walls, removed accumulated trash, and generally tried to restore the neighborhood to the condition it had been in when they arrived, as an expression of their self-respect and pride in their country. Most had a realistic sense of what they had achieved but understood that more remained to be done. "We almost won," a departing protester said. "It is eighty percent of a victory."[21]

In the rest of the country, similar scenes unfolded, as active demonstrations wound down and citizens evaluated the new circumstances. As the situation inside the country appeared poised to turn a postrevolutionary political corner, however, serious problems continued to loom on the horizon. Some involved the economic issues that had played so central a role in stimulating the revolution and remained deeply worrisome, if held in abeyance since January. Others were rooted in events transpiring outside Tunisia, not least of all being the instability throughout the Arab world, some of it provoked by the very success of the Tunisian revolution. Libyan efforts to overthrow Muammar Qaddafi had awakened great sympathy on the part of Tunisians, as had the Egyptian campaign to bring down the dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak, both of which Tunisians justifiably believed had been inspired, at least in part, by their own successes. In the Libyan case, though, there was a painful downside: as many as a million and a half refugees, most desperately in need of humanitarian assistance, poured into Tunisia to escape the chaos surrounding the unraveling of the regime. Among the refugees were guest workers from throughout the Arab world and Africa, including many Tunisians. All were eager for repatriation, but, lacking resources, and often the necessary documentation, they found themselves wards either of thinly stretched international NGOs working at the frontier or a Tunisian state awash in its own problems and unable to cope with a crisis of such magnitude in any but the most haphazard way. Some refugee Libyan nationals had business or family links with Tunisians from the south, but most had to fend for themselves and quickly drained whatever funds they had managed to remove from Libya. To make matters worse, pro- and anti-Qaddafi forces sometimes carried their animosity into their new surroundings, for a time turning the Medenine area into an extension of the Libyan battlefield.

ASSESSING BEN ʿALI

When Zine al-ʿAbidine ben ʿAli took power in 1987, he was widely seen as a dynamic figure well positioned to extract the country from the morass that had been created by a fatigued, fearful, and increasingly impulsive

(sometimes to the point of irrationality) leadership. Many Tunisians placed great hope in the "Historic Change" of 1987, but, in a variety of ways, and well before the revolution of 2011, that hope was betrayed, and a critical mass of the Tunisian people stood ready to dismantle the thoroughly discredited regime deemed responsible for the ills of the past quarter century.

At the start of his presidential tenure in 1987, ben ʿAli invoked constitutional provisions regarding presidential incapacity to derail Bourguiba's pursuit of anti-Islamist measures that he believed were certain to incite serious strife. The new chief executive's command of the Gendarmerie National during his military career, and his appointment, on several subsequent occasions, to key positions in the Ministry of National Security, made him an advocate of law and order, but a practical and prudent one. In his mind, the tactics favored by Bourguiba were counterproductive and likely to swell a minority of the politically discontented into a much larger and more dangerous group. Such an approach entailed too many risks for the state unless and until it could be carried out without any constraints and resulted in the total annihilation of the state's opponents – an outcome that, despite the authorities' impressive power, remained, for the moment at least, beyond their grasp. Soon after ben ʿAli's accession, his decision to release numerous political detainees, including some Islamists, hinted at a readiness to permit some dissenting views; the legalization of several political parties appeared to confirm that stance; and the multiparty elections of 1989 put it to the test. It failed. To most Tunisians, the *pluralisme contrôlé* (restricted pluralism)[22] that proved to be the extent of ben ʿAli's commitment to diversity preserved the most objectionable features of the political past. The exclusion of the Islamists was enshrined as a regime policy, and the secular opposition, although permitted to organize in a way unimaginable under Bourguiba, had no chance of mounting a viable challenge to the ruling party. The "Historic Change" had in reality changed very little in the nation's political arena, and it certainly had not advanced the process of democratization. To the limited extent that party platforms or active campaigning had a bearing on elections in Second Republic Tunisia, in 1994 and 1999, ben ʿAli and the RCD touted their record of unseating the old order, and, more importantly, saving the country from Islamic radicalism while improving the quality for life of many Tunisians. In 2004 and 2009, the stress fell on economic development and prosperity, albeit generally eliding over their unevenness. As the years went by, in almost every respect, Tunisia's second president looked increasingly like a repackaged version (and perhaps even a caricature) of its first. Ben ʿAli did, however, distinguish

himself from his predecessor with successes in two areas where Bourguiba's record during his last years in power had been dismal. Ironically, however, each of these triumphs contained the seeds of future disaster.

The first revolved around the economy. Its revitalization in the 2000s pushed annual per capita income up to the equivalent of twenty-one hundred dollars by 2001 – higher than in any Maghrib country except for thinly populated and oil-rich Libya. Upper- and upper-middle-class Tunisians fared better still, enabling them to enjoy a standard of living approximating that of areas of southern and eastern Europe. Although the earnings of the lower class fell short of the average – often by a considerable amount – it was nonetheless true that as the twentieth century drew to a close, almost all Tunisians experienced some amelioration in their quality of life, although not always of a magnitude sufficient to spark their gratitude, or in the most impoverished cases, even to be very noticeable. In contrast with the ways economic travail had turned Tunisians against Bourguiba in droves, the prosperity of the 1990s shored up ben ʿAli and the RCD well into the new millennium. But it was that same economic prosperity, and the investors, both foreign and domestic, it attracted, that paved the way for the onslaught of dishonesty, bribery, and financial malfeasance of every kind that beset ben ʿAli's Tunisia. Corruption had long been a reality of daily life, but the magnitude and rate of recurrence of the temptations facing businessmen and government officials, and the pressures applied to them to embrace this culture, led many, from the president down to low-level inspectors and regulators, to succumb. This is not, of course, to say that the country would have been better off had this surge of prosperity not occurred or had it been poorer and less attractive to investors, but the freewheeling environment accepted and promoted by Tunisia's ruling elite unquestionably worsened matters and made the final crisis of confidence in the regime all but inevitable by spreading convictions about disadvantage, distrust, and disillusion among a wide spectrum of the population. When galvanized to translate their malaise into action, ordinary Tunisians needed no prodding to situate the blame for their woes squarely on the shoulders of those in the political and business communities that had long controlled their lives.

The second distinction entailed the security of the state. Before the revolution, the defining moment of ben ʿAli's rule had come in his confrontation with militant Islamists who were resorting to violence in the 1990s. To the political elites of the time, not presenting Islamist propaganda with a windfall victory deriving from the state's overreacting was one thing, but allowing its avowed ideological enemies the opportunity to replicate the

recent tragic history of neighboring Algeria was quite another. The decision to treat the Islamists as a national security threat and to eradicate them root and branch, which by then, the government was capable of doing, won ben ʿAli the gratitude of Tunisians who believed that any gains by the Islamists jeopardized the nontraditional, Westernized lifestyles they had cultivated under the aegis of the secular state championed by Bourguiba and his successor. Conversely, of course, it ensured the animosity of the men and women (and their families) who had been arrested, forced into exile, tortured, or "disappeared" in the crackdown that ensued. Countless Tunisians, preferring to protect their privileges rather than to safeguard the rule of law, looked the other way as the state's repression of the Islamists proceeded with scant regard for legal formalities. This tacit acceptance of the suspension of fellow citizens' civil and human rights bound them, whether they so intended or not, to the regime and added to its potency. Having unleashed its fury on a component of the body politic that it deemed "beyond the pale" without encountering any significant opposition, there was little standing in the way of the government turning on other groups or individuals that it might designate as dangerous or offensive. The treatment meted out to the Islamists put every would-be adversary of ben ʿAli and the RCD on notice and, for a time, smothered public dissent.

But the political and economic difficulties of the 2000s inevitably increased and intensified criticisms of the regime, particularly given the meaningless elections in 2004 and 2009 – both of which perpetuated patterns established at the start of the ben ʿAli era. Memories of al-Nahda's fate inspired a certain wariness among the opposition, which by then included many who had earlier supported the repression of the Islamists, as well as remnants of the organization itself (adherents who had gone underground or had completed prison sentences); however, al-Nahda as such remained nonexistent in Tunisia, and ben ʿAli was determined not to allow it the slightest opportunity for regeneration. His government consistently denied holding prisoners of conscience, but laws regulating the press and associations, political or otherwise, and the holding of public meetings empowered it to detain individuals for a wide range of offenses amounting to lèse-majesté.

The image that ben ʿAli cultivated as a fierce proponent of law and order and a stern disciplinarian was fitting for the policeman that, at his core, he always was, but his focus was narrowly on matters of security and, sadly for the nation, did not (unsurprisingly) extend either to curbing the rampant corruption marking his years in power or to policing the criminal activities of the predatory kleptocracy over which he presided. He, his family, and his

associates were quite content with the status quo; those who wished to see it altered had limited, and generally ineffectual, vehicles for expressing dissatisfaction. As early as 2002, Moncef Marzouki accused the president of "establishing laws in order to violate them and . . . proclaiming democracy in order to mask his totalitarian regime." Ben 'Ali's Tunisia, he lamented, had become "schizophrenic"[23] – a diagnosis to which there is every reason to believe he still adhered when he succeeded ben 'Ali as president following the 2011 constituent assembly elections.

In 1989, ben 'Ali and the RCD had pledged to guide the country out of the morass in which it had become mired during Bourguiba's last years in power and restore confidence in its future, but by the end of 2010 there was no confidence and the patience of the long-suffering population was exhausted. Nevertheless, the iron grip of the regime, combined with the relative prosperity many Tunisians were experiencing, meant that hardly any observer of the Tunisian scene, foreign or domestic, had predicted the imminence of the revolution. Yet, very few were surprised when it erupted. No doubt more startling to many was ben 'Ali's quick decision to cut and run. While made for the most self-serving of reasons, it was arguably the president's greatest gift to his countrymen. Even from his Saudi exile, however, his political ghost continued to hover over Tunisia long after he had left, especially at those times when the recent past felt very present – during the attempts to extradite him, his in absentia trial, and the effort to launch a national reconciliation dialogue. Numerous candidates campaigning for the Constituent Assembly in October 2011 hoped to boost their chances by recounting personal histories of opposition to the deposed president, but a more measured opinion recognized that the leaders of a truly reconstructed Tunisia needed to bring more to the table than "the number of years spent in prison under ben 'Ali, the insults they had hurled at him, and the magnitude and intensity of their militancy."[24] Brave and patriotic as such acts may have been, they offered no guidance on the social, economic, and political problems whose solution had to be a high priority of the assembly – a perspective evidencing political maturation that, if cultivated, could bode well for the future.

SUMMER OF UNCERTAINTY

On March 1, Acting President Mezbaa announced that elections for a constituent assembly charged with proposing a new constitution would take place on July 24, inaugurating a democratic process meant to culminate, once the fundamental law was agreed on, in the establishment of the

country's first-ever popularly elected legislature. In an environment where elections had never mattered in the past, except as a show of party loyalty, and where many citizens had never seen the point of casting a ballot, the tasks of readying the electorate, tutoring the participating parties in electoral protocol, and helping the state to position itself to carry out its logistical responsibilities in the voting process were essential building blocks for guaranteeing the successful outcome of an undertaking that would place Tunisia – the first "Arab Spring" country to reach such a milestone in its political evolution – squarely in the international limelight. A vital component in all of this was the High Commission for the Realization of the Objectives of the Revolution, of Political Reform, and Democratic Transition, an expanded and revamped incarnation of the ben ʿAchour commission, whose participants soon came to include prominent national figures and representatives of the rapidly proliferating political parties and civil society organizations.

For the handful of parties that had endured through ben ʿAli's years in power and that had some financial resources and organizational capability, the scheduling of elections set in motion a flurry of activity. More importantly, a myriad of new parties, many of which lacked both of these assets, also began clawing for traction in the political arena. As often as not, however, their limited, at times provincial, agendas and their often personality-driven leadership combined with financial and organizational shortcomings to impede their success on the national stage. The well-established Tunisian tradition of voting by party lists also tended to disadvantage smaller parties. As the electoral landscape took shape, however, it became clear that planners had taken an overly optimistic view of the time needed to complete their work and that the goal of holding the elections within the envisioned timetable was impossible. In June, the government decided to postpone the elections until October. Given the still highly charged political atmosphere, the delay provoked criticism and suspicion on the part of al-Nahda. A new legal entity as of March 1, but one with a longer and more familiar history than most of its rivals, the party enjoyed greater name recognition, could cite ben ʿAli's amply demonstrated loathing of everything for which it stood as proof of its clean hands during the dictator's rule; and could claim a longer and bolder record of speaking out against the old regime than any other political organization, often at the cost of the persecution, torture, or exile of its members. Because the party markedly outpaced its competitors in presenting its message to audiences throughout the country, many of its supporters viewed the rescheduling – with some justification – as little more than a scheme to buy time for other

parties to catch up. As a result, the proposed delay precipitated heated debate before it was accepted by all, including al-Nahda, which ultimately subordinated its reservations to the national need for unity and stability.

As they reintroduced their party to prospective voters, Ghannushi and his colleagues worked diligently to forge a positive public image and promote its interests in the volatile postrevolutionary environment. They especially emphasized al-Nahda's renunciation of the violent tactics that had marred its past and insisted that its vision of a new Tunisia was solidly grounded in democracy and respect for principles once anathema within the party, including women's rights and freedom of conscience. Ghannushi was at pains to emphasize that "no one in my party rejects the principles of democracy or believes there is a contradiction in Islam and democracy."[25] His years of exile in the United Kingdom helped him cultivate a perspective that transcended his own personal background and exposed him more thoroughly than might otherwise have been the case to a diversity of contemporary Islamic thought, even as his own ideas gained broader circulation. In his public appearances, he frequently cited the Turkish Justice and Development Party of Tayyib Rajib Erdoğan as a model for achieving his goal of creating "the most democratic model of government in the Arab world."[26] Decrying the tendency of secularists to stereotype political movements associated with Islam, he let his discomfort with the label "Islamist" be known, asking, "If the Islamist spectrum goes from Bin Laden to Erdoğan, which one of them is Islam?. . . Why are we put in the same place as a model that is far from our thought, like the Taliban or the Saudi model, while there are other successful Islamic models that are close to us, like the Turkish, the Malaysian and the Indonesian models, models that combine Islam and modernity?"[27] Not surprisingly, Ghannushi's dealings with the High Commission and the secular parties could be prickly. Twice he pulled the party out of the High Commission, accusing it of arrogating to itself unwarranted powers, dismissing legitimate criticisms, and attempting to shape the Constituent Assembly by its rulings rather than through the electoral process. In mid-September, a crisis developed as the components of the High Commission squabbled over the powers to be vested in the Constituent Assembly. As in the earlier row over the date of the elections, al-Nahda saw efforts to restrict the assembly as directed specifically against its interests, since by midsummer, public opinion polls showed the party to have the support of approximately a third of the electorate – a figure that edged upward in the months leading to the October balloting. The disagreement was resolved with an all-party acceptance of the "Declaration of the Transitional Process," which fixed the term of the

Constituent Assembly at a maximum of one year, to be followed by legislative elections, and focused its task exclusively on reworking the constitution.

Neither the new image of al-Nahda nor the soothing rhetoric of its leaders carried much weight with the party's fiercest opponents – modern, Westernized, secularists – who wanted no part of a state linked to Islam, and particularly not one conceived by al-Nahda, which they associated, often through personal memories, with the violence of the 1990s. No litany of disavowals nor overtures for dialogue on the part of the movement shook their certainty that party representatives dissimulated in public statements meant to obscure the ultimate goal of aligning Tunisia more closely with Islamic values, whether by democratic means or, more likely, otherwise. In this conviction, their instinctive fear was reinforced by the Western slur that Islamic political parties approved of elections only on the basis of "one man, one vote, one time." What the party would do were it to come to power could not, they were firmly convinced, be accurately judged by what it said in the course of an election campaign. So deeply entrenched was this point of view that the gulf between the camps did not lend itself to bridging. Instead, the fundamental question confronting the electorate boiled down to how postrevolutionary Tunisia wished to define itself, which, in turn, hinged on the role Islam would have in that formulation. The spectrum of potential responses and the enthusiasm with which newly empowered Tunisian voters approached their first opportunity to have a say and have it count made a divided outcome lacking majority support a distinct possibility. Recognizing this, Ghannushi put on the record al-Nahda's willingness to collaborate with other political forces. "We seek," he said, "a consensus with the other parties because we believe that Tunisia must have a coalition government for the next five years, because the situation in the country cannot be handled by a single party."[28] There was no shortage of possibilities in this regard, although some choices were obviously more attractive than others.

On the left and center of the political spectrum, al-Nahda faced opposition from forces that had their origins in the insincere gestures of pluralism made by ben 'Ali, and by Bourguiba before him, for the sake of appearances, but that lacked any real political meaning. Among these were the Parti Démocratique Progressiste of Najib Chebbi and Mustafa ben Jaafar's Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés, now more commonly designated as Ettakatol. Each of the party leaders held a position in the interim government, Chebbi as minister of regional development, and ben Jaafar (a physician) as minister of health. Espousing socialist or social

democratic philosophies, both these organizations stressed better-balanced development, guarantees of personal and national security, and an end to all vestiges of arbitrary rule. Both encountered their greatest successes among leftists, secularists, and intellectuals – a frequently overlapping set of bases. The PDP also drew considerable support from business circles, especially media corporations and tourism-related enterprises. Other parties with prerevolutionary histories included the Parti Communiste des Ouvriers de la Tunisie (PCOT; Communist Party of Tunisian Workers) and al-Tadjid (Renewal), both heirs of the Tunisian Communist Party that had operated intermittently after independence. Both affiliated with the Pôle Démocratique Moderniste (al-Qutb; Modernist Democratic Pole) when it coalesced in the late spring. Scores of other parties blossomed and secured legal recognition at roughly the same time, dedicated to causes as diverse as environmental protection, pan-Arabism, scientific socialism, Maghrib unity, and many others, but most proved ephemeral. Two new parties whose bases did appear broad enough to permit them to function competitively were the Congrès pour la Rèpublique (CPR; Congress for the Republic), created by the longtime human rights activist and LTDH organizer Moncef Marzouki, and Afek Tounes, a center-left group. Several dozen parties were also formed by ex-RCD loyalists determined not to cede the political process to their erstwhile opponents without a struggle. The largest of these was Kamel Morjane's al-Moubadara (the Initiative), but, like the others of its ilk, it had limited support, at least publicly. Those who did back it, however, may have considered discretion to be the better part of valor in the prevailing circumstances. This binge of party creation also produced the Parti de la Dignite et de l'Egalite (Party of Dignity and Equality), whose very name encapsulated the essence of the revolution, and a number of youth-oriented groups like the Parti des Jeunes Democrates (Party of Young Democrats) that focused their attention on the young men and women who had been so instrumental in the uprising. There were also new parties whose names incorporated the word "Dustur" or "NeoDustur," either as reminders of Tunisia's constitutional heritage or to trigger nostalgic or mythical views of the anticolonial and nationalist eras. One even called itself the Union Néo-Bourguibienne (Neo-Bourguibist Union). Each recognized party was entitled to a share of public funding that totaled some nine and a half million dinars payable in two installments, the first when the party acquired official authorization and the balance before the end of the campaign, but with the proviso that parties failing to garner at least 3 percent of the votes would have to pay back any public funds they had received.

Among those Tunisians unalterably opposed to al-Nahda, perhaps the most vociferously outspoken and adamant were women, primarily of middle age and from the middle and upper classes, who had lived their lives under the aegis of the social and legal reforms of the Bourguiba era that had opened for them opportunities in education, employment, and societal engagement richer than their mothers or grandmothers could have dared to imagine. They wanted no less for their daughters but worried that decades of progress would be curtailed, if not entirely obliterated, were al-Nahda to gain control of the Constituent Assembly. To remain silent, much less to endorse the party, was unthinkable for these women who, more than merely rejecting its program, were utterly contemptuous of it as a throwback to medieval Islam – a view that was by no means gender specific. Women, however, were in a better position than were men to express their views on appropriate public behavior by choosing or declining to wear the *hijab*. The most "Westernized" of the women showed little enthusiasm for headscarves, despite their popularity following the revolution, and denounced their reappearance on university campuses (where they had been prohibited in the past). But there were also many Tunisian women who believed that the country's leaders had for too long ignored beliefs and practices that made up the very core of Tunisian Islam and that a restoration was in order. One woman supporter of al-Nahda angrily told a foreign reporter, "I have a master's degree in physics but I wasn't allowed to teach for years because of this [her *hijab*]." Female members of the party's executive council told the same reporter that the party welcomed strong, critical women in the ranks. "Look at us. We're doctors, teachers, wives, mothers – sometimes our husbands agree with our politics, sometimes they don't. But we're here and we're active."[29] Another interviewee speaking to a foreign journalist framed her support for al-Nahda more simply, but in a way that many of her sisters could identify: "I don't want to vote for a party that does not consider Islam."[30] The challenge for Tunisians, male and female alike, was to guide change down a constructive rather than a destructive path – a delicate task when the stakes were as high as they were and mutual respect was as low.

One decision of the interim government that pleased women regardless of their feelings about al-Nahda came from the Instance Supérieure Indépendante des Elections (ISIE; Independent Higher Authority for the Elections), headed by Kemal Jendoubi (a human rights activist who had lived in France during the later ben ʿAli years). The ISIE was assigned the mission of organizing, regulating, and overseeing the elections. In April, it won government approval for a gender parity law requiring party lists to

have alternating male and female candidates. Al-Nahda willingly applied the principle and because it was the only party in a position to put forward lists in every electoral district, ended up being the one with the most substantial female representation among its candidates. A few parties objected to the new law on the grounds that it compromised the complete equality of all citizens by requiring the inclusion of women on lists, and others argued that the regulation infantilized women, but most endorsed it and took steps to conform. Nevertheless, female candidates were at the head of only about 5 percent of the lists. Al-Nahda's position on this matter increased the enthusiasm of its own female backers, but even its acceptance of this democratic and antisexist measure had no persuasive power among voters who simply did not trust the party.

In addition to criticisms from the political left and center, al-Nahda also came under attack from the right by adherents of Salafism, a transnational movement that in Tunisia styled itself Hizb al-Tahrir (Liberation Party). It promoted rigorous and literal observance of the Qur'an and *sunna* (the traditions of Prophet Muhammad as conveyed in the *hadiths*, anecdotal accounts of his sayings, practices, and advice). Some of its devotees wore the traditional apparel of their Muslim ancestors (the meaning of the Arabic word *salaf*) and sought to replicate what they understood to have been the personal appearance of the Prophet. The phenomenon originated in the 1950s in Palestine, but it became more visible in the wake of the Islamic resurgence of the 1970s. Politically, Salafis encouraged Muslim unity and the rejection of externally derived political systems in favor of the restoration of the Muslim caliphate. They favored the application of sharia law, while criticizing capitalism, imperialism, and democracy as damaging concepts to which nonbelievers had exposed Muslims.

When the procedures for registering parties for the constituent assembly elections concluded, a staggering total of 112 parties had been approved, and a perhaps equally staggering 162 parties had been denied the government imprimatur needed to organize legally. Campaigning began officially on October 1, and on Election Day voters chose among almost eleven thousand candidates grouped into 1,517 lists, almost half of them independent of any party affiliation, competing for the 199 seats in the Constituent Assembly from Tunisia proper. Another five hundred thirty candidates vied for 18 seats allocated for the million or so Tunisians living outside the country, half of them in France but the remainder scattered from Australia to Canada. These numbers speak eloquently to the eagerness of Tunisians of every political stripe to find a place in the political arena once the pressures imposed by the dictatorship evaporated. Hizb al-Tahrir was blocked from participating owing

to, the authorities contended, its ambivalence regarding democracy, respect for which had been enshrined as a prerequisite for engaging in the contest. Party leader Ridha Belhadj insisted such an allegation was misleading, that his party did not oppose the electoral process, and that it would have taken part had it been allowed to do so. "We did not refuse to participate in the election for ideological reasons; there are elections in Islam."[31]

Throughout the summer and early fall, al-Nahda endeavored to counter damaging charges made against it and to address rational allegations put forward by its competitors. One persistent concern was the source of the party's apparently substantial funds. Its spokespersons maintained that the largest donors were former militants who after serving time in prison (or going into exile) had had successful careers and were reconnecting with the party by investing in its revival. Other wealthy backers included expatriates who had left Tunisia and prospered in Europe, North America, and the Gulf. Smaller contributors were said to come from all walks of life and showed their support through (usually small) financial contributions or by their donation of time and service to the party. Al-Nahda's adversaries, however, made clear their conviction that, in violation of Tunisian laws, conservative Arab governments, including Saudi Arabia and Qatar, were bankrolling the party.

The ban on al-Nahda under ben ʿAli and the fact that its top leaders were in exile abroad as the revolution erupted meant that, like other national organizations, it did not engage with the youthful activists until their work was well underway, although Ghannushi offered encouragement and support for their cause and some individual participants surely imagined that the end result of their efforts would be a political culture that accommodated both secular and religious approaches to governance. This scenario could not have been otherwise at the outset, but after the revival of al-Nahda, it nevertheless prompted some skeptics to question the commitment of the party (and of others that had existed under ben ʿAli) to the hard slog of revolutionary action and to wonder if they might be exploiting others' sacrifices to further their own, not necessarily congruent, political purposes. Al-Nahda faced several generational challenges. For one, most of the young people who had engineered the uprising had little or no personal knowledge of the party, which had been eradicated two decades earlier, around the time most of them were born. To compound this problem, most of the party's leaders were of a generation with few connections to, and a limited understanding of, the youth culture that had become so central to what was happening in the country. In this, they were not unlike Muhammad Ghannushi, the ousted prime minister; or al-Sebsi, his

successor; or even ben ʿAli himself. Images of all of these men, neatly attired in three-piece tailored suits, contrasted sharply with the jeans-clad, leather-jacketed youths who had protested in downtown Tunis or at the Place de la Casbah. Many youthful candidates capitalized on this discrepancy. In the words of Yassine Ayari, who had been arrested along with Slim ʿAmamou, "When I saw the parties still led by dinosaurs over sixty who hadn't understood, and who refused to understand that their time was up and that a new way of reasoning and of seeing things had been born, a new generation wanted their say, I decided . . . to be the spokesperson for youth whose parents wanted to steal their revolution and future."[32] Sartorially, the seventy-year-old Rashid Ghannushi may have been little different from his contemporaries, but he bested them in the eyes of some young Tunisians by laying out his party's 365-point platform offering avenues for positively responding to the increasingly articulated frustration of those who examined postrevolutionary Tunisia, and asked, disconsolately, "Has anything really changed?" True, the dictator had fled, but much of the bureaucracy and government remained in the hands of former members of the RCD, even if the most egregious offenders of public propriety had lost their political clout. More appalling and worrisome to many Tunisians, the economy remained in a state of dangerous disarray.

At the end of the week preceding the election, in a televised address intended to encourage Tunisians to participate in the balloting, al-Sebsi presented a mixture of political and economic news, all of it framed positively. He reassured his viewers that he and his ministers would step down by November 9 to make way for the elected members of the Constituent Assembly but also took the occasion to point out that his government had created some fifty thousand jobs – certainly a hopeful sign, but a mere drop in the bucket given Tunisia's economic situation. During the campaign, Ghannushi had repeatedly promised that if al-Nahda came to power, it would dedicate itself to creating over half a million jobs within five years as part of a plan to lower unemployment, still officially mired at around 14 percent, to a less devastating 8.5 percent. But both al-Sebsi's and Ghannushi's clearly political statements reflected the superficiality of most of the economic ideas of the campaign. Party spokespersons proclaimed platitudes that won applause at partisan rallies, but they rarely offered detailed, concrete, or viable programs to revive a faltering economy. Jalloul Ayad, the minister of finance, left no doubt, as the elections were about to unfold, just how fragile conditions were when he reported that tourism revenue and the number of visitors to the country had both shrunk by more than a third after the revolution – a potentially catastrophic statistic

in light of that sector's employment of one in five workers. Although the economy showed some signs of turning a corner, little improvement had yet registered, and most informed predictions estimated that GDP growth in 2011 was unlikely to exceed 1 percent and might be closer to zero. In a more positive vein, Ayad noted that stocks, which had nosedived in the wake of the revolution, had rebounded, although they remained well below their peaks of a year or so earlier. Pledges of $38 billion by the G-8 finance ministers (for all the North African countries) and $4 billion in loans and grants from the EU exclusively for Tunisian economic recovery permitted guarded optimism for the future, as did sundry other commitments to help shore up the economy to preserve the achievements and fulfill the hopes of the revolution, including one from the United States, where Sebsi visited and conferred with President Obama in October. Complementing his support of privatization, Ayad also unveiled plans for two state investment vehicles to cofinance private-sector projects and spoke of the need for the country to focus on promoting small and medium enterprises, the technology sector, and microfinance, and the aspirations of young entrepreneurs. None of this, he added, would occur without first creating a "culture of good governance, transparency, and social responsibility."[33] But the efficacy and desirability of the prescriptions were questioned both inside the country and abroad. To many Tunisians, privatization epitomized the abuses of the ben ʿAli years and they had no stomach for its resurrection. Many foreign critics dismissed Ayad's vision of his nation as "the Singapore of the Mediterranean" –an admittedly lofty goal – out of hand. In the words of a British economist, the remarks could have been made by any similarly placed minister of the ben ʿAli era. "It's not enough for a really fluent minister to talk to you if that's not going to filter down to the electorate and that probably will go over most of the electorate's head."[34] Foreign investors, he cautioned, had to recognize that the initial postrevolution reflex in Egypt and Tunisia had been to increase the role of the state rather than make space for the private sector.

As the elections loomed, the major secular parties opposed to al-Nahda sought to convey an air of confidence to their prospective supporters. But they had no illusions about their rival's strength, so they also began laying the groundwork for viable postelection coalitions with like-minded parties to restrict al-Nahda's freedom to maneuver should it prove necessary in the worst-case, – but increasingly probable – scenario of the party's making a strong showing at the polls. To the distress of many Tunisians, less than two weeks before the voting, Hizb al-Tahrir militants were involved in several troubling efforts to compel fellow citizens to fall into line with their very

conservative perspectives. In early October, they demonstrated at the University of Sousse when officials there refused to allow a young woman to wear the *niqab*, a full face covering uncommon in Tunisia that had been banned from campuses even after the restrictions of the ben ʻAli years had been relaxed. Several days of violent protests ensued, with women's groups launching counterdemonstrations decrying what they saw as religious extremism and intolerance. Soon afterward, Salafis again reacted forcefully when Nessma TV, one of a score of independent media outlets licensed by the interim government, aired the Iranian film *Persepolis*, whose depiction of God in human form they denounced as heretical. Protesters at the station's Tunis offices were dispersed, but when the police arrested the alleged ringleaders at a Salafi mosque in the suburb of Ariana, rioting ensued, with similar clashes breaking out in other cities and giving rise to fears that at least some citizens were prepared to resort to violence to have their way. But not only Salafis were offended by the film. Many moderates expressed their distaste as well. Al-Nahda questioned Nessma's judgment at a time of political tension but urged calm, as did many secular parties. Ghannushi and his colleagues worried that events such as these would have a negative impact on their party and worked to distance it from the more extreme views of Belhadj and his supporters, knowing full well that al-Nahda's opponents, especially those given to fear mongering, would do all they could to tar it with the same brush they used on the Salafis. Burnishing his own credentials while reaching out to Salafis, he told audiences that "democracy is capable of absorbing extremism" and even hard-line Salafists could be "contained" if they were allowed a political voice.[35]

But on the eve of the voting, the usually judicious Ghannushi himself played into the hands of his party's enemies when he suggested a few days before the vote that al-Nahda's securing a smaller than expected victory would signal electoral fraud which the party would combat vigorously. Accused of implicitly threatening a coup, Ghannushi walked back his statement, explaining that all Tunisians would reject any outcome not seen as entirely transparent and fair. Perhaps the most graphic example of fear mongering, however, targeted al-Nahda (without specifically identifying it) in television and Internet advertisements dubbed "The Morning After," which imagined Tunisia following an al-Nahda triumph at the polls. One ad depicted empty hotels, cafés, and restaurants ruined by the disappearance of tourists unwilling to vacation in a state that observed Islamic norms; in another, a woman expressed the fear that her husband would take additional wives and leave her without the resources to care for

her children; others focused on a modern young woman who has lost her job to a man, or on a student who has slept through Election Day and is remorseful about the potential consequences of his failure to vote.

As the parties went about preparing for the fall elections, eagerly anticipated trials of the former presidential couple and prominent figures in their entourage took place beginning in July. Since Saudi Arabia rejected Tunisian authorities' requests to extradite ben 'Ali or his family members granted asylum in the kingdom, and because other principal targets of Tunisian prosecutors had fled to safe havens outside the country, the trials were conducted in absentia. The charges lodged against the ben 'Alis included money laundering, embezzlement, drug trafficking, and illicit trading in antiquities; many of these charges derived from searches of the presidential palace that uncovered some $27 million in hidden cash and jewelry. Found guilty, they were given prison sentences of thirty-five years, along with fines of 25 million euros. Eventually, the former president and his spouse were indicted in military and civilian courts on 159 counts ranging from corruption to murder, the latter stemming from decisions taken in response to the January protests. All of these proceedings brought to light additional evidence of the malfeasance of the presidential clique, but above all they confirmed what the vast majority of Tunisians already knew, or at least strongly suspected. Faced with the need to untangle a web of financial arrangements even more complex than previously imagined, the courts froze the assets of more than a hundred ben 'Ali family members and business associates to facilitate investigators' efforts to understand the manipulation and shady practices that had been so common among them. Rather than shutting down these enterprises, most were placed in the care of court-appointed managers until their current status and past history and practices could be sorted out. Given how crucial many of them were to the national economy, which was still reeling in the aftermath of the revolution, these were sound and prudent measures. By this time, the government had also begun the complicated and time-consuming process of identifying, laying claim to, and ultimately repatriating wealth that had been illicitly removed from Tunisia and deposited in banks around the world. The identification and recovery of as many of these assets as possible was a matter of no small consequence, not only in terms of the sums themselves, which estimates placed in the hundreds of millions of dollars, but also symbolically, since recovery of these assets represented state retribution against criminals who had had bilked the Tunisian people and their government but would almost certainly never be brought to account because they had fled beyond Tunisian jurisdiction.

CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY ELECTIONS

On October 23, 2011, a thousand international volunteers from the United States, the European Union, and numerous other countries joined another four thousand representatives of Tunisian political parties and civil society organizations to observe the first free elections in the country's history and then to report their assessment of the transparency and validity of the process. Although voter registration had been less comprehensive than hoped (only about half of all those eligible) – perhaps reflecting an ingrained skepticism that more than half a century of political traditions could truly be reversed or perhaps revealing that many citizens did not exactly understand, despite the voter education efforts of the ISIE and the main political parties, what a Constituent Assembly was or did – more than 90 percent of those who had registered did cast ballots, equating to a turnout of some seven and a half million, most of them jubilant at the opportunity to exercise their franchise. Some of the results had been anticipated, although the magnitude of success or failure did, in some instances, prove surprising. Al-Nahda captured 41.4 percent of the popular vote, entitling it to eighty-nine seats in the assembly, by more by a factor of three than any of its competitors, no one of which secured more than 15 percent of the vote. The CPR came in a distant second, with a 13.8 percent share of the votes and twenty-nine seats, while the FDTL (Ettakatol) had less than 10 percent of the vote and twenty seats, a disappointing performance for the political veteran ben Jaafar. But the most debilitating blow fell on Nejib Chebbi and the PDP, which had done well in preelection polling and believed, with some justification, that it would have pride of place among the secular parties of the left and center. Instead, it, too, won less than 10 percent of the vote and a mere sixteen seats. Contrasting with the dramatic collapse of the PDP was the success of the Pétition Populaire party (ʿAridha Chabbi), whose surprisingly strong showing netted it 8 percent of the vote and twenty-six seats, putting it roughly on a par with the Ettakatol and the PDP. Within days of the election, however, the ISIE disqualified the party's lists in several election districts for violating provisions of the electoral law on campaign financing and the exclusion of former RCD officials. Party leader and international media mogul Hachmi Hamdi, who had orchestrated the activity of al-ʿAridha from his base in England, instructed its successful lists to withdraw from the assembly pending the controversy's resolution, which occurred several weeks later when all but one of its challenged seats were validated. Of the other parties that acquired seats in the Constituent Assembly, the

Modernist Democratic Pole (al-Qutb) had five, with (2.3 percent of the vote); al-Moubadara had four, with a similar percentage; and Afek Tounes had four, with less than two percent. A smattering of other parties, none able to lay claim to even 2 percent of the total vote, rounded out the tally. Female candidates received 24 percent of the overall vote, earning them forty-nine seats.

Although charges and countercharges of electoral misconduct filled the air before, during, and after Election Day, most entailed minor infractions, with the al-'Aridha incident by far the most serious. Party workers who ferryied voters to polling stations, offered money in exchange for votes, and, in particularly zealous cases, attempted to coerce voters even as they stood in line to cast their ballots were by no means unheard of, but the organizational work of the ISIE, seconded by the conscientious logistical support of the army, still basking in the glow of the popularity and respect accruing to it from its behavior in the revolution, paid off by minimizing problems at the polling stations. By October 26, the ISIE, the European Union, and observers from the American NGO the Carter Center had all issued preliminary reports declaring the election to have been free, fair, and reflective of the wishes of the Tunisian people.



Figure 8.4. Revolutionary graffiti, Tunis, February 2011.



Figure 8.5. Voters at a polling station in Tunis, October 2011.

There were fairly raucous protests in Tunis and other cities in the days immediately following the vote, most of them the work of anti-al-Nahda forces that feared what they claimed was the impending Islamization of the country. But the heads of several of the parties to which some of those protesting the election's outcome almost certainly adhered lost no time placing on the public record their willingness to participate, given appropriate assurances, in a coalition government of national unity. Of the major preelection parties, only the PDP rejected exploring such an arrangement, but that hardly mattered any longer, for, as one anonymous Ettakatol supporter bluntly put it, "The PDP is gone."[36] Both the CPR and Ettakatol understood, of course, that their weak showing at the voting booths made their joining an al-Nahda-led coalition the only avenue for influencing decision making once the new assembly convened. Reversing his previously stated opposition to cooperation with al-Nahda, Marzouki told reporters, "We are willing to negotiate with the Islamist party and we do not want to engage in an ideology fight with them," while another senior CPR official reiterated that "we do not believe that we have to be al-Nahda's enemies to be accepted in the political scene." All of the party's spokespersons insisted, however, that certain sacrosanct principals had to be respected by the dominant party, with Marzouki stressing that

collaboration hinged on the prospective partners, posing no threat to Tunisian citizens' civil liberties. "Human rights and women's rights are a line not to be crossed," he said, warning that any such development would cause him to take his followers into opposition.[37]

Marzouki's interlocutors in al-Nahda, including Soumaya Ghannushi, who often spoke on her father's behalf, appeared to accept these red lines. Ghannushi acknowledged the public's desire to put aside partisan and ideological politics in order to address social and economic needs more effectively. Al-Nahda, she vowed, was "intent on forming a national unity government in which Tunisians of all political affiliations and social backgrounds" were represented. "We are absolutely open to everyone without any exclusion and any alliance will be based on a shared, clear, economic, social, and political program." Other party leaders reinforced her position by saying that they were "prepared to collaborate with others on all positions of the political spectrum."[38] In preliminary discussions with its potential partners, al-Nahda further clarified some of its own requirements. By virtue of its control of the largest bloc of seats in the Constituent Assembly, it claimed the prime ministry for itself in the person of Hammadi Jebali, its sixty-three-year-old secretary-general, long-time militant, close associate of Ghannushi, and former editor of the party newspaper, *al-Fajr*, who, like most of the leaders emerging from the elections, did not belong to the youth generation that had made the revolution. The party also announced that it would not present a candidate for the presidency, leaving that office for one of its collaborators.

The greatest uncertainty before the election was not whether al-Nahda would poll more strongly than its opponents, but whether it would capture a majority. In this it failed, but the size of al-Nahda's plurality surprised many. However, the more important – and to many Tunisians, more troubling – question in the aftermath of the vote was how to account for the dreadful performances of virtually all the modernist, secular, centrist, and center-left parties. One explanation lay in the proliferation of miniscule independent parties, which created some seven hundred lists. So unwieldy was the number of parties gasping for political oxygen that only the largest and best organized among them – essentially al-Nahda and the survivors of earlier opposition movements – had any realistic hope of doing well enough to capture an assembly seat. In many electoral districts won by al-Nahda, the second greatest number of votes, sometimes collectively amounting to more than any one party had received, was dispersed among parties that failed to win seats. Close to a third of the total vote nationally was frittered away in this manner, ultimately doing its recipients no good, while

weakening their more viable rivals. Wasteful as this may have been, it was understandable in view of Tunisians' eagerness to make use of their long-withheld right to vote, whether or not they fully grasped the implications of their choices. Another contributing factor was the inexperience of many independent party organizers who, like everyone else in the country, had had no opportunities for on-the-job training in the political arts during the dictatorship.

The larger parties, with more money to spend and, in many instances, an already identifiable following, devoted an inordinate amount of their resources and energy to castigating their (frequently, ideologically compatible) rivals rather than hammering home to voters the merits of their parties' policies for guiding the country toward a prosperous future. Oftentimes, they preferred mass-media advertising to campaign rallies and personal appeals to prospective backers, especially in rural constituencies where, in any event, they were weaker than in the cities and their suburbs, where their bases were most concentrated.

A month of postelection interparty bargaining, inevitably delaying the business of governing and generating considerable public criticism, finally produced an agreement on the division of the political pie among the coalition participants, as well as a broad, if not universally accepted, consensus on the powers of the major officeholders. On December 22, the Constituent Assembly held its opening session, at which it confirmed that Jebali would serve as prime minister and that the presidency of the republic, coveted by both Marzouki and Ben Jaafar, would go to the former, with the latter assuming the leadership of the assembly. In addition, the three-legged partnership, widely referred to as the troika, assigned nineteen ministries to



Figure 8.6. Voters in the Zaghouan area proudly display their ink stained fingers as evidence of having voted, October 2011.



Figure 8.7. Tallying votes in Zaghouan, October 2011.

al-Nahda, including such key ones as Interior, Justice, Health, Education, and Foreign Affairs. The CPR and Ettakatol each had six, with the remaining dozen or so entrusted to independent technocrats selected for their professional expertise. These newly constituted officials were immediately confronted by a host of crucial issues clamoring for their attention. In addition to writing a new fundamental law and managing the transitional period until it took effect, they also had to tackle urgent economic, social, and political questions that included attempting to restore the growth disrupted by the revolution and initiating political reforms, both of which would be, for many citizens, the measure of the success or failure of the dramatic events of the previous year. Shortly after these decisions were made, Ghannushi traded his position as party leader for a less formal, albeit no less influential, role as al-Nahda's elder statesman and senior adviser.

The party's impending dominance of the assembly, despite being tempered by the other components of the coalition, refocused attention on many of the same hot-button issues that had surfaced during the campaign, compelling party spokespersons to continue reassuring Tunisians that it was not bent on a campaign of Islamization and Arabicization that would have

deleterious impacts on the daily lives of secular Tunisians or on such critical national institutions as education and the tourism industry. In regard to education, the party emphasized its published platform, which acknowledged both the importance of improving and expanding Arabic as the vehicle of primary and secondary school education and safeguarding its status as the national tongue, while also, in a globalizing world, making readily available opportunities for students to acquire proficiency in French, English, and other languages as well. The party's view of tourism – a subject that had been opportunistically exploited heavily by some of its fearmongering enemies preceding the election – was clearly articulated in the weeks after the balloting when it indicated that it would introduce no new legislation (e.g., regulating attire in public or the availability of alcohol) whose effect might be to slow the influx of international visitors. On the contrary, the party announced its intention to adopt and implement a detailed tourism development plan recommended before the revolution by international consultants that addressed the full spectrum of what were then, and still remained, the industry's most pressing problems. To the millions of Tunisians who derived their livelihoods, directly or indirectly, from tourism, party leaders asserted that the expansion and diversification of the industry envisioned in the plan would not only halt the slide the tourism sector had experienced in the wake of the revolution but would also create badly needed new jobs in hotels, restaurants, and similar components of the hospitality industry. Al-Nahda leaders knew perfectly well that throwing obstacles in the way of tourism growth was tantamount to killing the proverbial goose that laid the golden eggs – a suicidal economic stance that would have devastating consequences for the entire economy. As they anticipated, their plan came under attack from Hizb al-Tahrir, but the vast majority of the population, including al-Nahda's own base, agreed with the need to promote much-needed economic growth even if that meant accommodating some practices that, in an ideal world, they might see as distasteful. The industry did, in fact, enjoy a resurgence during 2012. Although visitors that year fell almost a million short of the record numbers prior to the revolution, the specter of collapse had been averted and a significant measure of stability restored, at least in the short run. The implementation of managerial reforms and the introduction of innovative measures envisioned by government agencies and their advisers, along with input from international investors, held out the promise of continued growth.

Despite the party's concerted efforts to reassure the dubious, many outside the al-Nahda fold continued to regard the party warily, and meticulously parsed its public statements for clues to its "real" agenda. Shortly after

becoming the presumptive prime minister, Jebali unleashed a firestorm when he spoke of a "sixth caliphate" as a model of governance, thereby panicking secularists, including his partners in the prospective coalition that was still feeling its way toward solidification. Whatever may have been his intent, Jebali issued a clarification a few days later in which he avowed that

> our choice of political governance is republican and democratic, drawing its legitimacy solely from the people through free and transparent elections and respecting the liberties and rights that guarantee the peaceful alteration of power. These are the principles we are committed to anchoring irreversibly in the future constitution, in accordance with the principles of the revolution and the aspirations of our people to build a civil, democratic, and plural society.

His original statement, he explained, merely pointed to the desirability of "drawing inspiration from our values, our political and cultural heritage, and the patrimony of Tunisian society to which all of us are all proud to belong."[39] The uproar over the "sixth caliphate" subsided, but it was not forgotten by those whom it had alarmed. When the Constituent Assembly opened, it remained a contributing factor in that body's initial atmosphere of partisanship, suspicion, and mistrust. Good will was still to be built as the new year began and the first anniversary of the collapse of the dictatorship approached.

Agreement on the desirability of eliminating the old regime had been widespread (although not universal), but crafting its replacement was another matter. As the assembly set to work, public confidence in its ability to produce a satisfactory final outcome was tempered by doubts and suspicions that were as entrenched as at any time since the revolution, particularly among secularists and women outside the al-Nahda and Hizb al-Tahrir orbits. In addition to concerns over the political and ideological directions of the assembly, its critics also attacked it for the slow pace of its deliberations, bemoaning the fact that there were few mechanisms for prodding its members toward pursuing a more intense agenda. On the other hand, conscientious members of the assembly tried to reassure the public of their dedication to the tasks at hand and that their work was going forward in beneficial ways. In March, for example, al-Nahda announced that the new constitution would not cite Islamic law as a source of legislation – a long-standing concern of secularists – but would instead replicate the existing constitution by designating Islam as the state's religion and Arabic as its language as part of its attempt to build a strong national consensus that advanced the transition process by lining up the majority

of the political forces behind agreed-on positions from which they could collaborate in confronting national challenges. Not surprisingly, the Salafis objected, but there was little other reaction.

Impatience with the government's apparent inclination to drift came to a head in April 2012. As thousands of demonstrators participated in a (technically illegal) march along Avenue Bourguiba in downtown Tunis, primarily to commemorate the anniversary of 1938 protests against colonial rule but also to express dissatisfaction with the current government's dilatory handling of issues ranging from judicial reforms to programs to jumpstart the economy, violence erupted between them and the police, with each side accusing the other of provocations. The demonstrators claimed that "bearded men" brandishing cudgels and other makeshift weapons attacked marchers as the police failed to intervene. Crystallizing as a confrontation between opposition groups and al-Nahda supporters, the episode revealed the tensions that were rife in the country, as well as the need for moderation so as to protect the fragile equilibrium under construction. The immediate crisis passed, but the general sense of uneasiness remained and was, in fact, aggravated by other reports of police abuses and brutality that struck many Tunisians as painfully reminiscent of the era of the dictatorship.[40] Striking a balance between national security and public expressions of protest posed a challenge to leaders who, whatever their own views on the subject, had limited experience in applying them and few models on which to draw beyond the practices of the Bourguiba and ben ʿAli eras – an unattractive option at a time when many former officials, including the deposed president, had still not been fully brought to justice for crimes they had allegedly committed during the dictatorship. Recognizing the importance of moving toward some form of closure on this question, the national political leadership trio of Hammadi Jebali, Moncef Marzouki, and Mustapha ben Jaafar, all of whom had been imprisoned or forced into exile by the old regime, convened a national conference aimed at bringing justice to the legions of ordinary Tunisians similarly victimized. As he opened the proceedings, Marzouki declared, "Tunisians expect tangible results [and] cannot wait indefinitely. The wounds of the past must be cured and healed." Ben Jaafar added, "It is possible to forgive . . . but the scores must be settled before reconciliation," while Jebali called particular attention to the sacrifices of members of his party.[41] Whether citizens drew encouragement from statements and gestures such as these, or whether they dismissed them as mere politicking, depended largely on their political alignment. The remarks may have prompted moderates to credit the government and the assembly with trying

to address issues, but for avowed partisans of any position, good intentions were never, by themselves, sufficient. The assembly's deliberations continued throughout the summer and into the spring of 2013. In a country scarred by decades of dictatorship, the powers that were to be vested in its new chief executive were a matter of particularly great concern and lengthy debate within the assembly, but the most immediate and challenging issues revolved around the economy, which remained in the doldrums, thereby leaving some of the most cherished expectations and hopes of the revolution unfulfilled.[42] Faced with this dismal situation, many citizens appeared to lose interest in the assembly's business, concluding that its deliberations were remote from their own most pressing concerns and had little likelihood of alleviating their most onerous burdens. Both the government's announcement in May that the new constitution would be ready for public discussion by the first anniversary of the Constituent Assembly elections and its decision in October 2012 that Tunisians would go to the polls in June 2013, this time to vote for a president and a full-term National Assembly, met with largely apathetic responses.

A few weeks before this apparent positive developement for democratization, however, a wave of dramatic public disorder radiating across the Middle East and North Africa took a toll on Tunisia. In country after country, Muslim protesters, many of them goaded by radical Salafis, reacted with violent rage against an anti-Islamic video that had been posted on YouTube. Rumors about its source (an Islamophobic provocateur in the United States), its specific content, and its ultimate purposes raced through the region, leading, in neighboring Libya, to an attack on the American consulate in Benghazi that took the lives of several Americans, including the ambassador. A similar scenario unfolded in Tunis, as militants linked to Hizb al-Tahrir took to the streets of the capital to demand vengeance on the perpetrators of what they viewed as an act of blasphemy. Demonstrators reached the American Embassy compound in the suburb of Berges du Lac, where they attacked the embassy and the neighboring American School, doing considerable damage to both and causing the deaths of several participants. The episode placed the government in an uncomfortable position. Interim President Marzouki, with his long record of advocacy for free speech and human rights, denounced the resort to violence, but given the deep antagonism felt by Muslims – and not only those with Salafi inclinations – he and most other secular government officials were wary of criticizing demonstrators portraying themselves as defenders of Islam, lest by doing so they play into the hands of al-Nahda and its supporters. Indeed, their party spokespersons downplayed their responses and joined the chorus

directed against the video, revealing their politically motivated unwillingness to condemn the violence it had spawned. This approach reaffirmed the view of many secular enemies of al-Nahda that the democratic values it purported to embrace were less firmly held than was claimed. The situation gradually stabilized, but the episode highlighted the polarization that continued to characterize the cultural divide between secularists and those who advocated a strong role for religion within the state. It also underscored the anger of the Salafis over their continued marginalization in the Tunisian political process. Their numbers remained small in absolute terms, but their capacity for disruption remained disproportionately great.

The country's factionalism and its uncertain future again exploded into violence with the February 2013 assassination of the outspoken liberal politician Shukri Belaid, putting the country in its most distressing condition since the elections more than a year earlier. Accusations of complicity in the murder resounded from every quarter, prompting *Le Monde Diplomatique* to observe in the following month that "almost everyone in Tunisia believes that the benefits of the revolution are in danger."[43] Despite so dire an assessment, the situation began to right itself with the arrests of four alleged perpetrators said to have ties to extremist organizations. Planning for the summer elections continued with the hope that another free and fair vote would produce a national assembly with a widely acknowledged mandate to address the country's political, economic, and social needs.

But the murder in July of Mohamed Brahimi, an outspoken secularist member of the Constituent Assembly, precipitated renewed clashes between pro- and anti-government groups, which the authorities proved unable to contain. Nor, in an atmosphere of deep suspicion rife with theories of conspiracy, did any of its opponents in the body politic believe that it had neither promoted nor condoned the assault. A substantial contingent of Assembly delegates resigned and joined opposition protesters, their ranks were swollen by UGTT members mobilized in support of the demand that the Constituent Assembly be suspended. On August 6, ben Jaafer, its presiding officer, did so pending the holding of talks among all political factions – a decision certain to postpone further the already delayed June 2013 elections for a regularized National Assembly. It is now doubtful that such a vote could occur in 2013. The outcome, thus far, of the "Arab Spring" in the Maghrib and Egypt has prompted one scholar to suggest that what has transpired should rather be labeled an "Islamist Spring," or even a "Secular Winter,"[44] – a reasonable proposition given the rapid regeneration of al-Nahda, its strong showing in the constituent assembly elections, and the unimpressive performance of its secular rivals in that contest. Some sympathy

for the party unquestionably stemmed from previous governments' abusive treatment of Islamists, but more came from supporters' deeply and sincerely held conviction that Islam was, had been for centuries, and should continue to be a central component of Tunisian culture, even though the application of that conviction leaves vast room for interpretation among men and women of good will. Despite the efforts of ben 'Ali, and of Bourguiba before him, to minimize the role of Islam in Tunisian national life, the end of the dictatorship and the rejuvenation of al-Nahda were, for all intents and purposes, simultaneous. Enthusiasm for a party advocating the values and traditions of Islam at this specific juncture fits neatly into the warp and weft of contemporary Tunisian history. Between the purge of the Islamists in the 1990s and the revolution in 2011, disgust with the culture of rampant consumerism, greed, dishonesty, and selfishness that flourished seemingly everywhere and that ordinary Tunisians felt powerless to change, proliferated unchecked. Many such persons reacted by reviving their engagement with the rituals and practices of daily Islam, which comforted and strengthened them. They did so spontaneously, not at the urging of an organized political or religious leadership, which had already been broken or co-opted by the regime. Since the authorities made clear their distaste for such pursuits, they also offered one of the very few ways Tunisians could, more or less safely, thumb their noses at the government. When the revolution came, these pious souls joined it, generally not as members of a part of an organized movement, but as individuals. Inevitably, they became a vanguard for a resuscitated al-Nahda, most of whose principles they already embraced.[45]

Notes

CHAPTER 1 THE MARCH TO THE BARDO, 1835–1881

1. Mohamed Hedi Chérif, "*L'Incident des Khmirs de 1881, d'après les sources tunisiennes,*" *Cahiers de Tunisie* 45:162–3 (1992): 150.
2. According to Hachemi Karoui and Ali Mahjoubi, *Quand le soleil s'est levé à l'ouest: Tunisie 1881 — impérialisme et résistance* (Tunis: CERES Productions, 1983), 24, the decline was from 750,000 hectares in 1840 to 150,000 in 1855. The high taxes of the era, peasant conscription, and widespread corruption in rural regions help to explain so dramatic a drop. For an overview of premodern Tunisian agriculture, see Lucette Valensi, *Fellahs tunisiens: L'économie rurale et la vie des compagnes aux 18è et 19è siècles* (Paris and The Hague: Mouton, 1977), or its English translation, *Tunisian Peasants in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985).
3. Mezri Bdira, *Relations internationales et sous-développement: La Tunisie, 1857–1864* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell, 1978), presents an excellent study of the troubled reign of Muhammad Bey and forms the basis of the account herein. Noting (p. 47) that shortly before the Sfez incident, Muhammad had imposed the death sentence on a Muslim soldier who had killed a Jew, Bdira suggests that the bey may have seen Sfez's punishment as a means of restoring balance to intercommunal relations.
4. This figure is based on the estimate of fewer than twenty-five thousand Jews at the start of the French protectorate that appears in Jacques Taieb, "*Evolution et comportement démographiques des Juifs de Tunisie sous le protectorat français (1881–1956),*" *Population* 37:4–5 (1982): 953, and a percentage breakdown of the two groups in the same period in Mohammed Larbi Snoussi, "*Aux origines du mouvement sioniste en Tunisie à la veille de la Grande Guerre: Création de l'Aghoudat-Sion et sa première scission (1887–1914),*" *Cahiers de Tunisie* 44:157–8 (1991): 227.
5. Janice Alberti Russell, "The Italian Community in Tunisia, 1861–1961: A Viable Minority" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1977), 39. The estimate of the Maltese population is from Julia Clancy Smith, "Marginality and Migration: Europe's Social Outcasts in Pre-colonial Tunisia, 1830–1881," in *Outside In: On the Margins of the Modern Middle East*, Eugene Rogan, ed. (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), 150.
6. The best study of the issues raised by the presence of European women is Julia Clancy Smith, "Gender in the City: Women, Migration and Contested Spaces

in Tunis, c. 1830 1881," in *Africa's Urban Past*, ed. David M. Anderson and Richard Rathbone (eds.) (Oxford: James Curry, 2000), 189 204.

7. Ibid., 200. A growing body of literature has also brought to light important material concerning the lives of Tunisian women in the precolonial period. See, for example, Abdelhamid Largueche and Dalenda Largueche, *Marginales en terre d'Islam* (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 1992); Adelhamid Largueche, *Les ombres de la ville: Pauvres, marginaux et minoritaires à Tunis* (Tunis: Centre de Publications Universitaires, 1999); and Dalenda Bouzgarrou Largueche, *Histoire des femmes au Maghreb: Culture matérielle et vie quotidienne* (Tunis: Centre de Publications Universitaires, 2000).
8. Andreas Tunger Zanetti, *La communication entre Tunis et Istanbul, 1860 1913: Province et métropole* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996), 18 19, describes nineteenth century Tunis as having two external metropolises, Paris and Istanbul. He argues that for Tunisia's leaders the former took precedence over the latter in the 1850s. For the country's bourgeoisie, the shift took another two decades, and for ordinary Tunisians, the European city never supplanted the Muslim one.
9. Anne Marie Planel, "*Etat réformateur et industrialisation au XIXe siècle: Les avatars d'une manufacture (1837 1884)*," *Maghreb-Machrek Monde Arabe* 157 (1997): 103, observes that because the Ottoman Empire had taken out six major loans in Europe between 1854 and 1862 and because Mexico, Peru, and the Confederate States of America were seeking loans in the early 1860s, the cost of borrowing on European markets at the time was quite high. Although this is true, the terms of the Tunisian loan must be considered excessive.
10. Cited in Noureddine Sraieb, "*Elite et société: L'invention de la Tunisie de l'état-dynastie à la nation moderne*," *Tunisie au présent: Une modernité au-dessus de tout soupçon?*, ed. Michel Camau (Paris: CNRS [Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique], 1987), 83. Translations throughout this volume are by the author.
11. With the money came renewed demands for obeisance. The ambassador chided the bey for his attitude toward Istanbul, reminding him that the sultan had never recognized the Husainid claim to hereditary rule as he had, for example, for the descendants of Muhammad ʿAli in Egypt. The exasperated Muhammad al Sadiq responded, "If the Porte recognized the hereditary power of my family . . . why would I not be obedient, as the Egyptians are?" Quoted in Abdeljelil Temimi, "*Considérations nouvelles sur la révolution d'Ali ben Gadehem*," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 7 (1970): 181.
12. Ibid., 176.
13. For insight into the importance of fishing for the Italian community in Tunisia and a discussion of some fishermen's roles as cultural mediators, especially outside the region of Tunis, see Hassine Raouf Hamza, "Les pêcheurs saison niers italiens à Mahdia (1871 1945)," in Institut de Recherches et Etudes sur le Monde Arabe et Musulman (IREMAM), *Etre marginal au Maghreb* (Paris: CNRS, 1993), 155 9.

14. Khair al Din's appeal found a particularly responsive audience among ulama who had come to Tunis from the provinces. Because of their origins, many of these men were relegated to a second tier in the religious establishment of the capital and saw reform as an avenue of personal advancement. Moreover, some of them, or their families, had been victims of Ahmad Zarruk's rampage through the Sahil, which persuaded them of the necessity of reform. The prime minister also enjoyed stronger support from ulama of the Hanafi *madhhab* (school of legal interpretation) than from the more numerous fol lowers of the Maliki *madhhab*. See Arnold Green, "*Political Attitudes and Activities of the 'Ulama in the Liberal Age: Tunisia as an Exceptional Case*," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 7 (1976): 230.
15. This incentive was particularly important because of the lengthy period often as long as ten years between planting and first harvest. A similar inducement applied to date palms, most of which were cultivated in regions other than the Sahil.
16. Quoted in François Arnoulet, "*Les rapports tuniso-ottomans de 1848 à 1881: D'après les documents diplomatiques*," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 47 (1988): 148.
17. Hachemi Karoui, "La résistance populaire à l'occupation française (1881) chez les élites tunisiennes, désavoue et oubli," in *Connaissances du Maghreb: Sciences sociales et colonisation*, Jean Claude Vatin, ed. (Paris: CNRS, 1984), 415. Despite the provisions of the Bardo Treaty, France made no effort to shore up Muhammad al Sadiq's credibility. Through an intermediary, Roustan coun seled one leader of the revolt that his overtures to the bey to end hostilities were pointless because matters were entirely in the hands of the French. Mohamed Hedi Chérif, "*Les mouvements paysans dans la Tunisie du XIXe siècle*," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 30 (1980): 43. Even so, until his death in 1882, Muhammad al Sadiq rarely passed up an opportunity to obstruct, however feebly, French policy.

CHAPTER 2 WHOSE TUNISIA? 1881 1912

1. Cambon's boast that 'Ali would do nothing without his approval is reported in Moncef Dellagi, "*L'avènement d'Ali Bey en octobre 1882,*" *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 17 18 (1980): 18, which is also the basis for this account of 'Ali's investiture.
2. Jean François Martin, *La Tunisie de Ferry à Bourguiba* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1993), 58.
3. These policies bore strong similarities to those introduced by Khair al Din a decade earlier. For a description of the tax system in the early years of the protectorate, see Richard A. Macken, "The Indigenous Reaction to the French Protectorate in Tunisia, 1881 1900" (Ph.D. diss., Princeton University, 1973), 146 61.
4. Using the unusually rich records of the Nabeul municipality, Yahya al Ghoul has captured the essence of a typical council, with its mixed membership but

European domination, in a series of microstudies: "*Colonisation et vie municipale: Nabeul à la fin du 19è siècle*," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 45:159–60 (1992): 25–45; "*Colonisation et vie municipale: La fiscalité et les recettes municipales à Nabeul à la fin du XIXe siècle*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 176 (1995): 261–88; and "Colonisation et vie municipale: Les services et les dépenses municipales à Nabeul à la fin du 19e siècle," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles. Lettres Arabes* 177 (1996): 3–31.

5. Hachemi Karoui and Ali Mahjoubi, *Quand le soleil s'est levé à l'ouest: Tunisie 1881 impérialisme et résistance* (Tunis: CERES Productions, 1983), 31.
6. Crispi is quoted in Arthur Marsden, *British Diplomacy and Tunis, 1875–1902* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1971), 228. Janice Alberti Russell, "The Italian Community in Tunisia, 1861–1961: A Viable Minority" (Ph.D. diss., Columbia University, 1977), 115, cites the Tunis newspaper.
7. Russell, "The Italian Community," 43. The size of the Italian population, both in absolute terms and relative to the number of French citizens in Tunisia, caused protectorate officials great anxiety over the next fifty years.
8. For a study of Lavigerie's important role in the protectorate, see J. Dean O'Donnell, *Lavigerie in Tunisia: The Interplay of Imperialist and Missionary* (Athens: University of Georgia Press, 1979). François Arnoulet, "*Le Cardinal Lavigerie et le clergé italien en Tunisie, 1881–1891*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 71–2 (1993): 375–86, presents a more narrowly focused examination of the prelate's dealings with the Italian clergy.
9. On the Jewish community in the early years of the protectorate, see Mohammed Larbi Snoussi, "*Aux origines du mouvement sioniste en Tunisie à la veille de la Grande Guerre: Création de l'Aghoudat-Sion et sa première scission (1887–1914)*," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 44:157–8 (1991): 229–33. For the population of the Jewish community throughout the protectorate period, see Jacques Taieb, "*Evolution et comportement démographique des juifs de Tunisie sous le protectorat français (1881–1956)*," *Population* 37:4–5 (1982): 952–8.
10. Mohamed Dabbaband Tahar Abid, *La justice en Tunisie: Un siècle d'histoire judiciaire (essai); De 1856 jusqu'à la veille de l'indépendance* (Tunis: Ministère de la Justice, 1998), 164–6. Other portions of this official publication provide useful overviews of changes in the judicial system during the protectorate.
11. Ali Mahjoubi, *L'etablissement du protectorat français en Tunisie* (Tunis: Publications de l'Université de Tunis, 1977), 309.
12. Macken, "The Indigenous Reaction," 303, 330, and 332; Russell, "The Italian Community," 43.
13. The description of "official" colonization that follows draws on Macken, "The Indigenous Reaction," 303–36. On this topic, see also Charles C. Harber, "*Tunisian Land Tenure in the Early French Protectorate*," *Muslim World* 63:4 (1973): 307–15; Carmel Sammut, "*Régimes de terres collectives de tribus*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 6 (1976): 195–202; and Byron Cannon, "Le marché de location des habous en Tunisie: Dialectique de développement agricole, 1875–1902," in *Terroirs et sociétés au Maghreb et au Moyen Orient*, ed. Byron Cannon (Lyon: Maison de l'Orient, 1988), 79–108.

14. It continued to rise steadily, if less dramatically, thereafter, as French vintners used the generally potent Tunisian wines to add alcohol content to their own. For cultivation figures, see Martin, *La Tunisie*, 74.
15. A good study of this convoluted process whose author maintains that "the franc was not introduced into Tunisia, but the monetary unit of Tunisia became the franc" is Carmel Sammut, "*L'installation du protectorat français et la reforme du système monétaire tunisien*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 4 (1975): 184–94.
16. Macken, "The Indigenous Reaction," 354; Mahjoubi, *L'etablissement du protectorat*, 41.
17. Macken, "The Indigenous Reaction," 387.
18. Quoted in ibid., 328.
19. Jacques Taieb, "*La Tunisie des premiers temps coloniaux*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 141 (1978): 68.
20. These tax statistics appear in Mahjoubi, *L'etablissement du protectorat*, 61–5.
21. Quoted in Moncef Dellagi, "*Une campagne sur l'insécurité des colons de Tunisie en 1898*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 7–8 (1977): 101.
22. Ibid., 104.
23. Carmel Sammut, *L'impérialisme capitaliste français et le nationalisme tunisien (1881–1914)* (Paris: Publisud, 1983), 125–30. On the company's role in exploiting Tunisia's minerals, see Mohamed Lazhar Gharbi, "*La Compagnie Bône-Guelma et son reseau minier tunisien (1900–1914)*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 164 (1989): 227–54. After World War I, the company dropped the Algerian cities from its name, becoming the Compagnie Fermière des Chemins de Fer Tunisiens.
24. For the formation of the company, see Noureddine Dougui, "*La naissance d'une grande entreprise coloniale: La compagnie des phosphates et chemins de fer de Gafsa*," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 30:119–20 (1982): 123–64. The same author discusses the railroad component of the concession in "*La construction et l'exploitation du reseau de chemin de fer Sfax-Gafsa (1897–1914)*," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 31:123–4 (1983): 13–46.
25. Noureddine Dougui, "*Sociétés capitalistes et investissements coloniaux en Tunisie (1881–1920): Quelques éléments d'approche*," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 33:131–2 (1985): 77.
26. Julia Clancy Smith, "*L'Ecole Rue du Pacha, Tunis: L'education de la femme arabe et 'La Plus Grande France' (1900–1914)*," *Clio: Histoire, Femmes, et Société* 12 (Dec. 2000): 33–55. See also Souad Bakalti, "*L'enseignement féminin dans le primaire au temps de la Tunisie coloniale*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 166 (1990): 260, for enrollment figures.
27. Patrick Cabanel, "L'ecole laïque française en Tunisie (1881–1914): La double utopie," in *La Tunisie mosaïque: Diasporas, cosmopolitanisme, archéologies de l'identité*, ed. Jacques Alexandropoulos and Patrick Cabanel (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2000), 266.
28. Carmel Sammut, "*La genèse du nationalisme tunisien: Le mouvement Jeunes-Tunisiens*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 2 (1974): 158, quoting Bashir Sfar.

29. De Canières is quoted in Pierre Soumille, "*L'idée de race chez les européens de Tunisie dans les années 1890 1910*," *Revue de l'Histoire Maghrébine* 5 (1976): 63, and in Charles André Julien, "*Colons français et Jeunes Tunisiens (1892 1912)*," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-mer* 54 (1967): 131.
30. Cited in Macken, "The Indigenous Reaction," 414.
31. Quoted in Cabanel, "L'ecole laïque," 278. Cabanel uses this statement to buttress his assertion that French educators accepted a "Tunisophile myth" that Tunisians were particularly cultured and well disposed to education parallel to the Algerian "Kabyle myth" of the inherently greater receptivity of Berbers than of Arabs to assimilation.
32. Noureddine Sraieb, "*Le Collège Sadiki de Tunis et les nouvelles élites*," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 72 (1994): 51.
33. Charles André Julien, "*Colons français et Jeunes Tunisiens (1882 1912)*," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-Mer* 54 (1967): 136. For an account of the proceed ings of the congress, see 134 41.
34. Noureddine Sraieb, "*L'idéologie de l'école en Tunisie coloniale (1881 1945)*," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 68 9 (1993): 248.
35. A good account of the Jellaz incident appears in Taoufik Ayadi, "Insurrection et religion en Tunisie: L'exemple de Thala Kasserine (1906) et du Jellaz (1911)," in Direction des Archives de France, *Révolte et société* (Paris: Histoire au Présent, 1989), 170 3.

CHAPTER 3 SQUARING OFF, 1912 1940

1. Ali Mahjoubi, *Les origines du mouvement national en Tunisie (1904 1934)* (Tunis: Université de Tunis, 1982), 151 2.
2. Ibid., 150 and 185.
3. Ibid., 174.
4. For a discussion of the controversy over the book's authorship, see Adnan Zmerli, "*La Tunisie martyre, ses revendications: Oeuvre collective ou oeuvre individuelle?*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabe* 187 (2001): 25 38. Thaʿalbi asserted that his claim was intended to shield others from prosecution but that, in any event, he had substantially revised the earlier material before the publication of *La Tunisie martyre*.
5. Quoted in Mustapha Kraiem, "*Le Parti réformiste tunisien (1920 1926)*," *Revue de l'Histoire Maghrébine* 4 (1975): 152.
6. For several estimates of Dustur numbers between 1922 and 1925, see Mahjoubi, *Les origines*, 260. Puaux's concerns are cited on 261.
7. Robert Raymond, *La nationalisme tunisienne* (Paris: Comité Algérie Tunsie Maroc, 1925), 21.
8. Quoted in Kraiem, "Le Parti réformiste," 157.
9. Juliette Bessis, "*A propos de la question des naturalisations dans la Tunisie des années trente*," in *Les mouvements politiques et sociales dans la Tunisie des années trente*, ed. Moncef Chenoufi (Tunis: Le Ministère de l'Education, de l'Enseignement et de la Recherche Scientifique, 1985), 602 3.

10. The standard history of the theater in colonial Tunisia, on which this paragraph draws, is Hamadi Ben Halima, *Un demi siècle de théâtre arabe en Tunisie (1907–1957)* (Tunis: Publications de l'Université de Tunis, 1974).
11. Hassine Raouf Hamza, "Eléments pour une réflexion sur l'histoire du mouvement national pendant l'entre deux guerres: La scission du Destour de mars 1934," in Chenoufi, *Les mouvements politiques et sociales*, 51–78.
12. Cited in Mahjoubi, *Les origines*, 469.
13. Mustapha Kraiem, "Le Néo-Destour: Cadres, militants et implantations pendant les années trente," in Chenoufi, *Les mouvements politiques et sociales*, 24–5, argues that, far from stagnating after 1926, the Dustur actually expanded its membership, particularly in the Sahil—the region from which Bourguiba and his closest allies hailed. In 1933, the Sahil accounted for 59 percent of the party's members.
14. Mahjoubi, *Les origines*, 563.
15. Quoted in Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830–1980* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 171.
16. Kraiem, "Le Néo-Destour," 37, quoting Salah ben Yusuf. Because it was to the advantage of the party to inflate them, and of the protectorate authorities to trim them, records of the Neo-Dustur's membership vary significantly. The seventy thousand figure, attributed to Mahmoud Matatri and judged reasonably accurate by Kraiem, appears on 46.
17. On these early examples of the politicization of Tunisian women, see Ilhem Marzouki, "*La voile des colonisées: Tunisie, 1924–1936*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 161 (1988): 59–89, and two articles by Lilia Labidi, "Circulation des femmes musulmanes dans l'espace public et politique formel: Le cas de la Tunisie en période coloniale," and "L'emergence du sentiment politique chez les féministes dans la première moitié du XXème siècle: Le cas de la Tunisie," both in *Participation des femmes à la vie politique*, ed. Lilia Labidi (Tunis: Centre de Recherche et de Formation Pédagogique, 1990), 19–43 and 44–62.
18. Ahmad Kassab, "La communauté israélite de Tunis entre la francisation et le sionisme (1930–1940)," in Chenoufi, *Les mouvements politiques et sociales*, 546.
19. Tahar Chikhaoui, "*Les journées d'avril 38 à travers les mémoires de Mahmoud Matari: Mouvance et obliquité*," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 47–8:145–8 (1988–9): 214–15. Matari also believed, in retrospect, that a Franco-Tunisian accommodation would have occurred before World War II had it not been for the events of 1938. Matari's recollections are not without a self-serving aspect. Bourguiba later accused him of deserting the Neo-Dustur at a critical moment, and Matari was defending himself. But others have also laid responsibility for the events of April 1938 at Bourguiba's feet. See, for example, Georges Adda, "*Quelques souvenirs et réflexions à propos des événements du 9 avril 1938*," in *Cahiers de Tunisie* 47–8: 145–8 (1988–9): 201–10. The conference marking the fiftieth anniversary of the 1938 riots, for which both these articles were prepared, met a few months after Bourguiba's removal from the presidency, which undoubtedly facilitated the presentation of perspectives that did not accord with the standard nationalist mythology. For a well-balanced assessment of the responsibility for the rioting, see Hassine Raouf Hamza, "Les émeutes du

9 avril 1938 à Tunis: Machination policière, complot nationaliste ou mouvement spontané?," in Direction des Archives de France, *Révolte et société*, II (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1988), 185–91.

CHAPTER 4 REDEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP, 1940–1956

1. Quoted in Abdelhamid Hassen, "*Moncef Bey et le mouvement moncefiste (1942–1948)*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 49–50 (1988): 25.
2. Mokhtar Ayachi, "Le mouvement zeitounien dans le contexte de la seconde guerre mondiale," in *La Tunisie de 1939 à 1945* (Tunis: Ministère de l'Education, de l'Enseignement Supérieur et de la Recherche Scientifique et Technique, 1989), 291.
3. Annie Rey Goldzeiguer, "L'opinion publique tunisienne, 1940–1944," in *La Tunisie de 1939 à 1945*, 155.
4. Hassine Raouf Hamza, "Le Néo-Destour, dès lendemains d'avril 1938 à la veille de l'indépendance: Hégémonie et institutionalisation," in *La Tunisie de 1939 à 1945*, 212.
5. Selwa Zangar, "*La Tunisie et l'Union Française: Position nationaliste et positions coloniales, 1946–1951*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 67–8 (1992): 313–14.
6. Mustapha Kraiem, "*Les événements du 5 août 1947 à Sfax*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 9 (1977): 319, cites government figures based on a retail price index of 100 for the year 1940 that showed an increase from 512 in 1945 to 1,280 in 1947. Lazhar Gharbi, "La politique financière de la France en Tunisie au lendemain de la Deuxième Guerre: Contraintes mondiales et exigences nationalistes," in *La Tunisie de l'après-guerre (1945–1950)* (Tunis: Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales, 1991), 29–31, discusses the impact of the 30 percent devaluation of the franc in December 1945. In the following year, protectorate officials dismissed the Grand Council's attempt to detach the Tunisian franc from the French currency as a purely political endeavor.
7. Hamza, "Le Néo-Destour," 212.
8. Ibid., 213.
9. For accounts of political activity at Zaituna in the 1930s, see Ayachi, "Le mouvement zeitounien," 272–84, and Mokhtar Ayachi, "Le Néo-Destour et les étudiants zeytouniens: De l'alliance à l'affrontement," in *La Tunisie de l'après-guerre*, 232–6.
10. Noureddine Sraieb, "*Le problème franco-tunisien est un problème de souveraineté: Traduction et présentation de la lettre de Bourguiba à la beyya*," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 1 (1966): 206.
11. Charles Robert Ageron, "La parti colonial face à la question tunisienne (1945–1951)," in *La Tunisie de l'après-guerre*, 199, quotes both Schuman's charge to his resident general and Périllier's less sweeping description of his mission. Charles André Julien, *Et la Tunisie devint indépendante, 1951–1957* (Paris: Editions Jeune Afrique, 1985), 27, suggests that Schuman made his remark offhandedly, without "considering its impact."

12. Khaled Ben Fredj Abid, "*Le conflit Bourguiba-Thameur en Egypte et ses incidences: Vers une vision 'jugurthienne' de l'histoire bourguibienne, 1947 1950*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 102 3 (2001): 247 8. Identifying Bourguiba with unremitting resistance to foreign rule, the pamphlet praised him as a new Jugurtha, the Berber leader who had rebelled against Rome in the second century BCE. His associates betrayed Jugurtha, causing him to fail in his mission disloyalty that the new Jugurtha would not tolerate.
13. Hautecloque was a protégé of Gabriel Puaux, whom he served as secretary general of the Syrian mandate while Puaux was high commissioner. Puaux held the Damascus post after his assignment as secretary general of the Tunisian protectorate in the 1920s, during which time he had encouraged Resident General Saint's hard line toward Nasir Bey and the Dustur. After the war, Puaux enjoyed considerable influence in French right wing circles. In 1951, his son François headed the Ministry of Foreign Affairs office that oversaw all the protectorates. At its upper echelons, the "parti colonial" consisted of a closely knit collection of "insiders."
14. Julien, *Et la Tunisie*, 47.
15. Abdesslem Ben Hamida, "*Le rôle du syndicalisme tunisien dans le mouvement de libération nationale (1946 1956)*," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 29:17 18 (1981): 242.
16. Julien, *Et la Tunisie*, 124.
17. Jean François Martin, *La Tunisie de ferry à Bourguiba* (Paris: Editions L'Harmattan, 1993), 163.
18. For a survey of right wing settlers' attitudes in the final years of the protec torate, see Amira Aleya Shgaier, "Les groupements politiques français de droite en Tunisie et la décolonisation, 1954 1956," in *Actes du IXe colloque international sur processus et enjeux de la décolonisation en Tunisie (1952 1956)* (Tunis: Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, 1999), 205 36. The figure of twenty thousand demonstrators appears on 226.
19. On Mendès France and the autonomy talks, see Mohammed Lotfi Chaibi, "*Les enjeux d'une décolonisation négociée: L'exemple tunisien (1954 1956)*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 186 (2000): 191 211.
20. Clement Henry Moore, *Tunisia since Independence. The Dynamics of One-Party Government* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), 62.
21. Susan Waltz, *Human Rights and Reform: Changing the Face of North African Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995), 57.

CHAPTER 5 THE INDEPENDENT STATE SETS ITS COURSE, 1956 1969

1. Clement Henry Moore, *Tunisia since Independence: The Dynamics of One-Party Government* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), 74.
2. Ibid., 151, and Charles Debbasch, "*Du Néo-Destour au parti socialiste destourienne: Le congrès de Bizerte*," *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 3 (1964): 37.

3. Driss Abassi, "La conception de l'histoire selon Bourguiba," in *Habib Bourguiba et l'établissement de l'état national: Approches scientifiques du bourguibisme*, Abdeljelil Temimi ed. (Zaghouan: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 2000), 22. Abassi also notes Bourguiba's references to the Pakistani philosopher and reformer Muhammad Iqbal's belief in the importance of rethink ing Islam without breaking with the past.
4. Mounira M. Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001), 223. For a general discussion of the code, see 219 31.
5. For a survey of women's roles in the national liberation movement, see Souad Bakalti, "Mouvement et organisations féminines de lutte de libération natio nale en Tunisie," in *Actes du IXe colloque international sur processus et enjeux de la décolonisation en Tunisie (1952 1964)* (Tunis: Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, 1999), 187 204. Membership statistics appear on 194.
6. In defining the political elite as members of the government or of key bodies within the Neo Dustur, Noureddine Sraieb, "*Le Collège Sadiki de Tunis et les nouvelles élites*," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée*, 72 (1994): 51, notes that, between 1955 and 1969, 65 percent of them were graduates of the Sadiki College, while 14 percent studied at the Lycée Carnot and 15 percent more at other lycées and colleges offering a European education.
7. Souad Bakalti, "*L'enseignement féminin dans le primaire au temps de la Tunisie coloniale*," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 166 (1990): 267.
8. Zakya Daoud, "*Les femmes tunisiennes: Gains juridiques et statut économique et social*," *Maghreb-Machrek* 145 (1994): 31, and Kenneth J. Perkins, *Tunisia: Crossroads of the Islamic and European Worlds* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 120.
9. Statistics on European demography in the latter half of the 1950s are drawn from Habib Kazdaghli, "Communautés européennes de Tunisie face à la décolonisation (1955 1962)," in *Actes du IXe colloque international*, 332 4; Lilia Ben Salem, "Stratégies politiques et formation d'une élite: Les premiers cadres de la Tunisie indépendante," in *Actes du IXe colloque international*, 348 1; and Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830 1980* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 236.
10. Statistics on Jewish population movements at this time appear in Abdelkrim Allagui, "La minorité juive de Tunisie face à la décolonisation au cours des années 50," in *Actes du IXe colloque international*, 306 9; Jacques Taieb, "*Evolution et comportement démographiques des juifs de Tunisie sous le protectorat français (1881 1956)*," *Population* 37:4 5 (1982): 955; and Moore, *Tunisia since Independence*, 10 n.
11. On Bourguiba's contacts with the World Jewish Congress, see Abdeljelil Temimi, "La question palestinienne et les relations de Bourguiba avec le Congrès Juif Mondial," in Temimi, *Habib Bourguiba et l'établissement de l'état national*, 109 27.
12. Moore, *Tunisia since Independence*, 195.

13. Jean Poncet, "*L'economie tunisienne depuis l'indépendance*," *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 8 (1969): 104. For the heavy reliance on foreign aid, see Samir Radwan, Vali Jamal, and Ajit Ghose, *Tunisia: Rural Labor and Structural Transformation* (London: Routledge, 1990), 30 1. On investment levels and national debt, see Karen Pfeiffer, "Between Rocks and Hard Choices: International Finance and Economic Adjustment in North Africa," in *North Africa: Development and Reform in a Changing Global Economy*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 43.
14. Stephen J. King, "Economic Reform and Tunisia's Hegemonic Party: The End of the Administrative Elite," in *Beyond Colonialism and Nationalism in the Maghrib: History, Culture, and Politics*, ed. Ali Abdullatif Ahmida (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 175. On the shrinkage of the European population, see Kazdaghli, "Communautés européennes," 336.
15. Alaya Allani, "Bourguiba et le courant 'libéral' au sein du parti destourien: 1970 1971," in Temimi, *Habib Bourguiba et l'établissement de l'état national*, 51.
16. Poncet, "L'economie tunisienne," 110.
17. Alexander Graham and H. S. Ashbee, *Travels in Tunisia* (London: Dulau & Co., 1887), 149.
18. T. Wemyss Reid, *The Land of the Bey, Being Impressions of Tunis under the French* (London: Sampson Low, Marston, Searle & Rivington, 1882), 53.

CHAPTER 6 REGIME ENTRENCHMENT AND THE INTENSIFICATION OF OPPOSITION, 1969 1987

1. Kenneth J. Perkins, *Tunisia: Crossroads of the Islamic and European Worlds* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986), 136; Karen Pfeiffer, "Between Rocks and Hard Choices: International Finance and Economic Adjustment in North Africa," in *North Africa: Development and Reform in a Changing Global Economy*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 43; and Stephen J. King, "Economic Reform and Tunisia's Hegemonic Party: The End of the Administrative Elite," in *Beyond Colonialism and Nationalism in the Maghrib: History, Culture, and Politics*, ed. Ali Abdullatif Ahmida (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 181.
2. Samir Radwan, Vali Jamal, and Ajit Ghose, *Tunisia: Rural Labor and Structural Transformation* (London: Routledge, 1990), 10 and 25 6.
3. Zakya Daoud, "*Les femmes tunisiennes: Gains juridiques et statut économique et social*," *Maghreb-Machrek* 145 (1994): 31.
4. Pfeiffer, "Between Rocks and Hard Choices," 44.
5. Radwan et al., *Tunisia: Rural Labor*, 4. Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830 1980* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), 244, estimates that the number of Tunisians working abroad in the late 1970s exceeded that of the entire industrial workforce in the country.
6. Perkins, *Tunisia*, 139.

7. For a biography of one of the MTI's founding fathers and most influential leaders, see Azzam Tamimi, *Rachid Ghannouchi: A Democrat within Islamism* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2001). The percentage of persons living in poverty is based on Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation*, 244, citing a criterion established by the World Bank.
8. Clifford Geertz, as quoted in King, "Economic Reform," 183.
9. Quoted in Lisa Anderson, "*Political Pacts, Liberalism and Democracy: The Tunisian National Pact of 1988*," *Government and Opposition* 26:2 (1991): 249. The estimate of the strength of the Tunisian Communist Party appears in Kenneth Perkins, *Historical Dictionary of Tunisia*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 143.
10. Emma C. Murphy, *Economic and Political Change in Tunisia: From Bourguiba to Ben Ali* (London: Macmillan, 1999), 90.
11. Vincent Geisser, "*Tunisie: Des élections pour quoi faire? Enjeux et 'sens' du fait électoral de Bourguiba à Ben Ali*," *Maghreb-Machrek* 168 (2000): 41.
12. Murphy, *Economic and Political Change*, p. 94. Figures on the annual average growth rate of the economy appear in *Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent*, no. 2180 1, October 21 November 3, 2002, 76.
13. Lisa Anderson, "Democracy Frustrated: The Mzali Years in Tunisia," in *The Middle East and North Africa: Essays in Honor of J. C. Hurewitz*, ed. Reeva Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 201, quoting an MTI official.
14. Murphy, *Economic and Political Change*, 96.
15. Geisser, "Tunisie: Des élections pour quoi faire?," 42.
16. Clement Henry Moore, "*Tunisia and Bourguibisme: Twenty Years of Crisis*," *Third World Quarterly* 10:1 (1988): 186.
17. Ingram later returned to North African locales, shooting *Garden of Allah* in Algeria in 1927 and *Baroud* in Morocco in 1932. For an overview of Tunisian cinema, a filmography of its most important productions, and biographies of key filmmakers, see the section on Tunisia in Roy Armes, "Cinema in the Maghreb," in *Companion Encyclopedia of Middle Eastern and North African Film*, ed. Oliver Leaman (London: Routledge, 2001), 490 51. Much of the material that follows is drawn from this source and from earlier unpublished essays by Professor Armes.

CHAPTER 7 CONSTANCY AND INNOVATION IN THE "NEW" TUNISIA, 1987 2003

1. For the retrospective thoughts of a pioneer of the Tunisian cinema, see Stefanie van de Peer, "*An Encounter with the Doyenne of Tunisian Film, Selma Baccar*," in *Journal of North African Studies* 16:3 (2011): 471 82.
2. This argument is developed in Vincent Geisser, "Tunisie: Des élections pour quoi faire? Enjeux et 'sens' du fait électoral de Bourguiba a Ben Ali," *Maghreb-Machrek* 168 (2000): 24 6. The author points out that the Islamists' success in

the 1989 elections may have done them more harm than good. By giving them the appearance of being the sole opposition worthy of notice, the election results encouraged the government to focus its attention on them.

3. Abdelbaki Hermassi, "The Rise and Fall of the Islamist Movement in Tunisia," in *The Islamist Dilemma: The Political Role of Islamist Movements in the Contemporary Arab World*, ed. Laura Guazzone (London: Ithaca Press, 1995), 120.
4. *Tunisia: Basic Data* (Tunis: Tunisian External Communication Agency, 1993), 79, 82 3; "Une destination toujours prisée," *Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent*, 2194 (January 26 February 1, 2003), 81.
5. Kenneth J. Perkins, *Historical Dictionary of Tunisia*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997), 64 5 and 185.
6. Hermassi, "The Rise and Fall," 125. Not coincidentally, the restoration of significant levels of US aid to Tunisia came as the situation in Algeria deteriorated.
7. Michel Camau, "*D'une république à l'autre: Refondation politique et aléas de la transition libérale*," *Maghreb-Machrek* 157 (1997): 10. In 1994, the RCD oper ated 6,800 cells.
8. Perkins, *Historical Dictionary*, 117.
9. Camau, *D'une république à l'autre*, 9.
10. Guilain Denoeux, "*La Tunisie de Ben Ali et ses paradoxes*," *Maghreb-Machrek* 166 (1999): 51.
11. Clement Moore Henry, "Post Colonial Dialectics of Civil Society," in *North Africa in Transition: State, Society, and Economic Transformation in the 1990s*, ed. Yahya H. Zoubir (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), 12. The author argues that the Islamists' effort to carve out a role for themselves in civil society replicates the nationalist struggle against French colonialism.
12. Geisser, "Tunisie: Des élections pour quoi faire?," 19.
13. For a discussion of the content of Tunisian textbooks in secondary schools and professional training institutes, see Driss Abassi, "La conception de l'histoire selon Bourguiba," in *Habib Bourguiba et l'établissement de l'état national: Approches scientifiques à du bourguibisme*, ed. Abeleljelil Temimi (Zaghouan: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 2000), 26 9.
14. L. Carl Brown, "*Bourguiba and Bourguibism Revisited: Reflections and Interpretation*," *Middle East Journal*, 55:1 (2001): 50.
15. Abassi, "La conception de l'histoire," 21.
16. This apt term is used by Geisser, "Tunisie: Des élections pour quoi faire?," 15.
17. Quoted in Fathi Kacemi, "*La deuxième conférence internationale sur Bourguiba et les bourguibiens: Prélude d'une polémique politique*," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 28:102 3 (2001), 241.
18. These statistics appear in "L'économie: Ouverture et partenariat," *Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent*, no. 2197 (February 16 22, 2003), 59. On privatization, see "Changement de tempo," *Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent*, no. 2180 81, October 21 November 3, 2002, 79 80.
19. Quoted in "Tunisie: Une destination toujours prisée," *Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent*, no. 2194, January 26 February 1, 2003, 80.

20. Geisser, "Tunisie: Des élections pour quoi faire?," 16. The author draws a contrast with Bourguiba who, he asserts, confronted "an active, but minority, opposition."
21. *Jeune Afrique / L'Intelligent*, no. 2180 81, October 21 November 3, 2002, 63. Quoted in "Tunisie: Une destination toujours prisée," 63.

CHAPTER 8 A REVOLUTION FOR DIGNITY, FREEDOM, AND JUSTICE

1. Amy Aisen Kallander, "Tunisia's Post Ben Ali Challenge: A Primer," *Middle East Report Online*, January 26, 2011. (Available at http://www.merip.org/mero/mero012611.html.)
2. An account of the summit and the controversies that disrupted it appear in a dispatch filed from Tunis on November 18, 2005, by Jo Twist, a BBC technol ogy reporter. (Available at bbc.co.uk/2/hi/technology/4450474.stm.)
3. The former term was coined by Fareed Zakaria in *The Future of Freedom* (New York: W. W. Norton & Co., 2003); the latter by Daniel Blumberg, "*The Trap of the Liberalized Autocracies*," *Journal of Democracy*, 13:4 (2002): 56 68. For a discussion of the terms' relevance to North Africa, see George Joffé, "*The Arab Spring in North Africa: Origins and Prospects*," *Journal of North African Studies* 16:4 (2011): 505 32. For specific reference to Tunisia, see Mehdi Mabrouk, "*A Revolution for Dignity and Freedom: Preliminary Observations on the Social and Cultural Background to the Tunisian Revolution*," *Journal of North African Studies* 16:4 (2011): 625 35.
4. CIA World Factbook, 2011. (Available at http://www.cia.gov/library/public ations/the world factobook/geos/ts.html.)
5. Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2011, *BTI 2010 Tunisia Country Report*. (Available at http://www.bertelsmann transformation index.de/145.0.html?L=1.)
6. IBRD, *Country Partnership Strategy for the Republic of Tunisia* (Washington, DC: World Bank, 2009), 2.
7. Naouar Labidi et al., *Food Security in Tunisia: Rapid Assessment Report*. Rome: World Food Program, 2011. (Available at http://www.wfp.org/feed.security/reports/.)
8. This view is elucidated convincingly and with great clarity in Emma Murphy, "Under the Emperor's New Clothes," in *The Tunisian Revolution: Contexts, Architects, Prospects*, ed. Nouri Gana (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming). This insightful essay by a thoughtful longtime observer of the Tunisian economy places the closing years of the ben ʿAli era in perspective, particularly in regard to the economy's relationship to international financial agencies. For a longer view, see the same author's *Economic and Political Change in Tunisia: From Bourguiba to Ben Ali* (London: Macmillan, 1999).
9. Ronald Albers and Maarga Peeters, *Food and Energy Prices: Government Subsidies and Fiscal Balances in South Mediterranean Countries*, European Economy Papers 431 (Brussels: European Commission, 2011).

10. World Bank, *Economic Developments and Prospects; Job Creation in an Era of High Growth* (Washington, DC, 2007). (Available at http://topics.development gateway.org/arab/rc/filedownload.do itemid=1123820.) As early as 2000, the Bank had determined that Tunisia's economy would need to grow at an average 8.6 percent a year between 2005 and 2025 just to absorb new job seekers a goal that it was not meeting at the time of the revolution.
11. The World Bank, *Country Partnership Strategy* (2009), 12, puts this figure at 57 percent in that year.
12. Cited in Mabrouk, "A Revolution for Dignity and Freedom," 629. Although the practice of self immolation is especially associated with the start of the revolution in Tunisia, youthful suicides by deliberate electrocution, provocative confrontation with the police, and other techniques were known and resorted to throughout the Maghrib earlier. For examples, see "Tunisia: Dependence on Europe Fuels Unemployment Crisis," *Los Angeles Times*, December 27, 2010 (available at http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2010/12/tunisia dependence on european union fuels unemployment crisis.html), and "Pressure Rises in Morocco after Self Immolation," *Maghrebia*, August 17, 2011. (Available at http://www.magharebia.com/cocoon/awi/xhtml1/en GB/features/awi/features/2011/08/17/feature 01.)
13. For the names of some of the individuals involved in these deals and the assets that they acquired, see Murphy, "Under the Emperor's New Clothes."
14. For an overview of the upheavals in the Gafsa region see Eric Gobe, "The Gafsa Mining Basin between Riots and a Social Movement: The Meaning and Significance of a Protest Movement in Ben Ali's Tunisia." (Available at halshs 00557826, version 1 http://halshs.archives ouvertes.fr/halshs 00557826 oai: halshs.archives ouvertes.fr:halshs 00557826.)
15. Robin Wright, "The Hip Hop Rhythm of the Arab Revolt," *Wall Street Journal*, July 23, 2011. (Available at http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424053111903554904576457872435064258.html.) For a more detailed account, see also the same author's *Rock the Casbah: Rage and Rebellion across the Arab World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011). The YouTube video and lyrics of "Rais Lebled" are available at http://newanthems.blogspot.com/2011/01/rayes lebled hamada ben amor el general.html. For a broader study of young Tunisians' participation in, and attitudes about, the revolution based heavily on interviews conducted with participants in the months immediately following the events, see Alcinda Honwana, "Youth and the Tunisian Revolution." (Available at http://www.general.assembly.codesria.org/IMG/pdf/Alcinda Honwana.pdf.)
16. *Al-Arabiyya*, May 22, 2011. (Available at http://english.alarabiya.net/articles/2011/05/22/150022.html.)
17. *Independent* (London), January 19, 2011. (Available at http://www.independent.co.uk/opinion/commentators/kim sengupta head of tunisian army restrains his troops and watches and waits 2187962.html.)
18. *Voice of America News*, June 20, 2011. The assertion was made by ben 'Ali's lawyers at his trial in absentia in Tunis. (Available at 2011 http://www.voanews.

com/english/news/africa/Tunisia Begins Trial Against Former President 124 178269.html.)

19. *Guardian*, December 7, 2010. (Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2010/dec/07/wikileaks tunisia first lady.) The text of the later (July 27, 2009) cable is in Ibid. (Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/us embassy cables documents/218324.)
20. *New York Times*, January 24, 2011. (Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/25/world/africa/25tunis.html.)
21. Steve Coll, "The Casbah Coalition," *New Yorker*, April 4, 2011, 40.
22. Victor Geisser, "*Tunisie: Des élections pour quoi faire?, Enjeux et 'sens' du fait électoral de Bourguiba a Bon Ali,*" *Maghreb-Machrek* 168 (2000): 15.
23. Danny Braün, "Tunisie: Le pays muselé," *L'Actualité*, August 2002, 62.
24. Business News.tn.com, November 18, 2011. (Available at http://www.businessnews.com.tn/Tunisie %E2%80%93 Les partis se %C2%AB chamaillent %C2%BB, mais qu%E2%80%99en pensent les vrais tireurs de ficelles ,519,27719,1.)
25. "Tunisia's Islamist Party Leader Seeks to Allay Fears of Extremism," *Guardian*, October 21, 2011. (Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/21/tunisian exile rejects claims fundamentalists?newsfeed=true.)
26. Jean Daniel, "Islamism's New Clothes," *New York Review of Books*, December 22, 2011, 72.
27. Anthony Shadid and David Kirkpatrick, *New York Times*, September 29, 2011. (Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/09/30/world/middleeast/arab debate pits islamists against themselves.html?pagewanted=all.)
28. "Tunisia Islamists Set for Big Election Gains,"Associated Press, October 16, 2011. (Available at http://www.sfgate.com/cgi bin/article.cgi?f=/n/a/2011/10/16/international/i010103D02.DTL&ao=2.)
29. Monica Marks, "Can Islamism and Feminism Mix?," *New York Times*, October 26, 2011. (Available at http://www.nytimes.com/2011/10/27/opinion/can islamism and feminism mix.html.)
30. Joshua Hammer, "Will Tunisia Become Less Secular?," *New York Review of Books*, September 26, 2011. (Available at http://www.nybooks.com/blogs/nyrblog/2011/sep/26/will tunisia become less secular/.)
31. Al-*Jazeera*, October 22, 2011. (Available at http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/10/201110111317345448 94.html.)
32. "Tunisia's Most Influential Bloggers Prepare for Historic Elections,"*Guardian*, October 22, 2011. (Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/22/tunisian elections bloggers?INTCMP=SRCH.) This article contains brief biographical sketches of a number of bloggers.
33. "Tunisia Says Next Government Needs to Revive Privatization," Reuters, October 18, 2011. (Available at http://af.reuters.com/article/investingNews/idAFJOE79H0AR20111018?sp=true.)
34. Ibid. Ayad had considerable experience with global finance, having worked for the American corporation Citibank for almost a quarter century before accepting his position in Tunis.

35. "Tunisia's Islamist Party Leader Seeks to Allay Fears of Extremism," *Guardian*, October 21, 2011. (Available at http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2011/oct/21/tunisian exile rejects claims fundamentalists?newsfeed=true.)
36. "Ettakatol Reacts to Election Results: Possible Cooperation with Ennahda?," Tunisia Net, October 26, 2011. (Available at http://www.tunisia live.net/2011/10/26/ettakatol reacts to election results possible cooperation with ennahda/.)
37. "CPR Hints at Coalition with Ennahda, Calls for Long Duration for Constituent Assembly," Tunisia Net, October 26, 2011. (Available at http://www.tunisia live.net/2011/10/26/cpr hints at coalition with ennahda calls for long duration for constituent assembly.)
38. "A Triumphant Ennadha: Jebali for Prime Minister; No Candidate for Presidency," Tunisia Net, October 26, 2011. (Available at A Triumphant Ennahda: Jebali for Prime Minister, No Candidate for Presidency http://www.tunisia live.net/2011/10/26/a triumphant ennahda jebali for prime minister no candidate for presidency/.)
39. The "fifth" caliphate is a numerically inaccurate but commonly used reference to the rule of Omar II (717 20), widely regarded by Muslims as a paragon of justice, righteousness, and good governance. Jebali's remarks imply an attention to similar qualities in a Tunisia guided by al Nahda. (Available at http://www.leaders.com.tn/article/hamadi jebali clarifie sa position au sujet du 6eme calif at?id=6945.)
40. One such incident, which occurred at Radès, close to the Port of Tunis, paralleled protests in the Gafsa area before the revolution. Most of the participants were young, unemployed men and the initial source of the anger precipitating clashes with the police was the locally headquartered National Shipping Company's decision to offer jobs to men from outside the community, ignoring the plight of individuals within it. Tunisia Alive, April 16, 2012. (Available at http://allafrica.com/stories/201204161571.html.)
41. Agence France Presse, April 14, 2012. (Available at http://za.news.yahoo.com/tunisian leaders scores must settled ex regime 180119660.html.)
42. See the comments of President Marzouki to National Public Radio, June 7, 2012. (Available at http://m.npr.org/news/World/154430397.)
43. *Le Monde Diplomatique*, March 2013, 1.
44. Raphaël Lefévre, "*Current Events in North Africa*," *Journal of North African Studies*, 17:2 (2012): 373 7.
45. This process, and an example of a local self help agency that it spawned, is discussed in Rikke Hostrup Hauhølle and Francesco Cavatorta, "Beyond Ghannouchi: Islamism and Social Change in Tunisia," *Middle East Report* (Spring 2012): 20 5.

Suggestions for Further Reading

Until 1956, scholarship on Tunisia was largely a French preserve. Since then, other European and North American and Asian historians and social scientists have conducted extensive research in the country and published their findings in their own languages. Nevertheless, fifty years after independence, the bulk of publication on Tunisian topics continues to appear in French, although it is increasingly the work of Tunisian scholars, some of whom also publish in Arabic (while others write exclusively in that language). The French and English language sources cited in what follows do not, by any means, constitute an exhaustive bibliography. For a more thorough compilation that was up to date at the time of its publication, see the relevant sections of Kenneth J. Perkins, *Historical Dictionary of Tunisia*, 2nd ed. (Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press, 1997).

Two books in English that provide useful overviews of modern Tunisia, but that are less sharply focused than this study, in one instance chronologically and in the other geographically, are Lisa Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation in Tunisia and Libya, 1830 1980* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1986), and Kenneth J. Perkins, *Tunisia: Crossroads of the Islamic and European Worlds* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986). A similar survey in French is Jean François Martin, *Histoire de la Tunisie contemporaine: De Ferry à Bourguiba*, 2nd ed. (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003).

Like all of those books, many other of the suggested readings contain material germane to more than a single chapter of this work. Such entries are indicated by an asterisk(*) following the citation.

CHAPTER 1 THE MARCH TO THE BARDO, 1835 1881

A survey of political, social, and economic conditions in early nineteenth century Tunisia, along with an account of the changes introduced by Ahmad Bey, make up the focus of L. Carl Brown, *The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey, 1837 1855* (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1974). Mezri Bdira, *Relations internationales et sous-développement, la Tunisie, 1857 1864* (Uppsala: Almqvist & Wiksell International, 1978), explores the growth of European influence that confronted Ahmad's suc cessors. Studies of the role of non Muslim minority communities in precolonial Tunisia include Claude Hagege, "Communautés juives de Tunisie à la veille du

protectorat français," *Le Mouvement Social* 110 (1980): 35 50; Julia Clancy Smith, "Marginality and Migration: Europe's Social Outcasts in Pre colonial Tunisia, 1830 1881," in *Outside In: On the Margins of the Modern Middle East*, ed. Eugene Rogan (London: I. B. Tauris, 2002), 149 82; Andrea L. Smith, "Les Maltais en Tunisie à la veille du protectorat: Une population intermédiaire," in *La Tunisie mosaïque: Diasporas, cosmopolitanisme, archéologies de l'identité*, ed. Jacques Alexandropoulos and Patrick Cabanel (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2000), 115 27; and a doctoral dissertation by Janice Alberti Russell, "The Italian Community in Tunisia, 1861 1961: A Viable Minority" (Columbia University, 1977). The marginalization experienced by these minorities also extended to some Tunisians, particularly by virtue of their gender or social class. Many of them are discussed in a collection of essays edited by Fanny Colonna and Zakya Daoud, *Etre marginal au Maghreb* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1993)*, and in Abdelhamid Largueche and Dalenda Largueche, *Marginales en terre d'Islam* (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 1992)*.

Abdelmajid Kraiem and Hédi Jellab, *Le mouvement réformiste en Tunisie, 1815 1920* (Tunis: Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, 1994)*, presents an overview of the political reform efforts that began in the nineteenth century. L. Carl Brown, *The Surest Path. The Political Treatise of a Nineteenth-Century Muslim Statesman* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1967), is an English translation of Khair al Din's influential book that includes an introduction providing a useful contextualization of the work. The spread of modern education figured prominently among Khair al Din's objectives. Laroussi Mizouri, "La pénétration de l'enseignement européen dans la Tunisie précoloniale: Origine et répercussions," in *Cahiers de Tunisie*, 44:157 8 (1991): 177 96, places the prime minister's educational reforms within an already existing trend, while Noureddine Sraieb, *Le Collège Sadiki de Tunis, 1875 1956* (Paris: Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique, 1995)*, devotes considerable attention to the early history of one of the most important legacies of his administration. The role of the religious leadership at a time when traditional patterns of life were in great flux is documented in Arnold H. Green, *The Tunisian Ulama, 1873 1915: Social Structure and Response to Ideological Currents* (Leiden: Brill, 1978)*. Reform from above sometimes met with opposition at the local level, particularly in the less prosperous rural regions. For an overview of nineteenth century rural resistance, see Mohamed Hédi Chérif, "Les mouvements paysans dans la Tunisie du XIXe siècle," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 30 (1980): 21 55. An extremely valuable, and broader, survey of Tunisian rural life is Lucette Valensi, *Tunisian Peasants in the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985). The importance of developments in rural areas is also explored by F. Robert Hunter, "Capital Appreciation and Provincial Power in Pre Protectorate Tunisia (1850 1881): Notes from the Tunis Archives," *Middle Eastern Studies* 23 (1987), 108 15.

Despite its age and conventional approach, Jean Ganiage, *Les origines du protectorat francais en Tunisie* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1959), remains an important source for the diplomatic and financial events leading to

the French occupation of Tunisia. British policy prior to the inauguration of the protectorate and during its early decades is discussed in Arthur Marsden, *British Diplomacy and Tunis, 1875 1902* (Edinburgh: Scottish Academic Press, 1971)*. Tunisia's linkages with the Ottoman Empire are the subject of several studies, including Pierre Bardin, *Algériens et tunisiens dans lémpire ottoman de 1848 à 1914* (Paris: Centre Nationale de Recherche Scientifique, 1979)*; Andreas Tunger Zanetti, *La communication entre Tunis et Istanbul, 1860 1913. Province et métropole* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996)*; and Kenneth J. Perkins, "'The Masses Look Ardently to Istanbul': Tunisia, Islam, and the Ottoman Empire, 1837 1931," in *Islamism and Secularism in North Africa*, ed. John Ruedy (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 23 36*.

The 1881 French incursion into Tunisia and the resistance that it sparked are the subjects of Hachemi Karoui and Ali Mahjoubi, *Quand le soleil s'est levé à l'ouest. Tunisie 1881 impérialisme et résistance* (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 1983); Mohamed Hédi Chérif, "L'Incident des Khmir de 1881, d'après les sources tunisiennes," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 45:162 3 (1992 3): 149 55; and Byron Cannon, "Tribal Polities on the Algero Tunisian Border before 1881: The Kroumir Problem Reexamined," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 45:105 6 (1978): 49 77.

CHAPTER 2 WHOSE TUNISIA? 1881 1912

The mechanics of imposing French control over Tunisia lie at the core of a study by Ali Mahjoubi, *L'etablissement du protectorat français en Tunisie* (Tunis: Publications de l'Université de Tunis, 1977). The most detailed account of this process in English is an unpublished doctoral dissertation by Richard Macken, "The Indigenous Reaction to the French Protectorate in Tunisia, 1881 1900" (Princeton University, 1972). A third useful work covering a similar period is Carmel Sammut, *L'imperialisme capitaliste français et le nationalisme tunisien (1881 1914)* (Paris: Publisud, 1983). The responses of one especially important segment of the Tunisian population, the religious leadership, form the basis of Arnold H. Green, "The Tunisian Ulama and the Establishment of the French Protectorate, 1881 1892," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 1 (1974): 14 25. Gabriel Payre, "Les origines et le rôle du contrôle civil dans la régence de Tunis (1881 1956)," *Revue d'histoire diplomatique* 98 (1984): 267 88*, describes the formation and operation of the corps of civilian agents representing French authority in the Tunisian country side. The impact of the protectorate on the Italian population is considered in Laura Davi, "Entre colonisateurs et colonisés: Les Italiens de Tunisie (XIXè XXè siècle)," in *La Tunisie mosaïque: Diasporas, cosmopolitanisme, archéologies de l'identité*, ed. Jacques Alexandropoulos and Patrick Cabanel (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2000)*, 99 113. An excellent and wide ranging study of the central Mediterranean maritime corridor that accounted for the infusion of vast numbers of migrants and commodities, both licit and illicit, into Tunisia, and their impact on their new residence, their new neighbors, and the French and Tunisian authorities is in Julia Clancy Smith, *Mediterraneans: North Africa, Europe, and the Ottoman Empire in an Age of Migration, C. 1800 1900* (Berkeley: University

of California Press. 2011). Jewish Tunisians and the growing attraction of some members of their community to Zionism are examined in Mohamed Larbi Snoussi, "Aux origines du mouvement sioniste en Tunisie à la veille de la Grande Guerre: Création de l'Aghoudat Sion et sa première scission (1887 1914)," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 44:157 8 (1991): 225 74. Two broad surveys that comment on changes introduced by the French into the judicial system are Mohamed Dabbab and Tahar Abid, *La justice en Tunisie: Un siècle d'histoire judiciaire (essai); De 1856 jusqu'à la veille de l'indépendance* (Tunis: Ministry of Justice, 1998)*, and Adnen Mansar, "Pouvoir colonial et justice tunisienne," *Rawafid* 4 (1998): 39 57.

Several of the preceding works touch on the question of *colon* land acquisition, but more sharply focused essays appear in numerous articles, among them Byron Cannon, "Le marché de location des habous en Tunisie: Dialectique de développement agricole, 1875 1902," in *Terroirs et sociétés au Maghreb et au Moyen Orient*, ed. Byron Cannon (Lyon: Maison de l'Orient, 1988), 79 108; Charles C. Harber, "Tunisian Land Tenure in the Early French Protectorate,"*Muslim World* 63:4 (1973): 307 15; and Pierre Voizard, "Paul Bourde et l'olivier de Tunisie," *Comptes Rendus des Séances Trimestriels de l'Académie des Sciences Outremer* 34 (1974): pp. 205 19. Jean Poncet, *La colonisation et l'agriculture européenne en Tunisie depuis 1881* (Paris and The Hague: Mouton, 1962)*, is a sweeping study of the kinds of crops and methods of cultivation employed by settler farmers. Tunisian resentment over the loss of agricultural land is evident in Moncef Dellagi, "Une campagne sur l'insécurité des colons de Tunisie en 1898," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 7 8 (1977): 99 106, as well as in Taoufik Ayadi, "Insurrection et religion en Tunisie: L'exemple de Thala Kasserine (1906) et du Jellaz (1911)," in Directíon des Archives de France, *Révolte et société* (Paris: Publications de la Sorbonne, 1989), 166 75. A good picture of *colon* life in provincial Tunisia emerges in a series of articles by Yahya al Ghoul on Nabeul, the most general of which is "Colonisation et vie municipale: Nabeul à la fin du 19è siècle," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 45:159 60 (1992), 25 45.

The Tunisian scholar Noureddine Dougui has written extensively on French capital investment and particularly the development of the phosphate industry. On the broader theme, see Dougui, "Sociétés capitalistes et investissements coloniaux en Tunisie (1881 1920): Quelques éléments d'approche," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 33:131 2 (1985): 73 105, and "Etat colonial et entreprise concessionnaires en Tunisie (1890 1940)," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 46:161 (1992): 3 23*. On the phosphate mines and the railroad that transported the ore to the coast, see Noureddine Dougui, "La naissance d'une grande entreprise coloniale: La compag nie des phosphates et chemin de fer de Gafsa," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 30:119 20 (1982): 123 64, and "La construction et l'exploitation du réseau de chemin de fer Sfax Gafsa (1897 1914)," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 31:123 4 (1983): 13 46. The importance of other railroads is shown in Mohamed Lazhar Gharbi, *Impérialisme et réformisme au Maghreb: Histoire d'un chemin de fer algéro-tunisien* (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 1994).

For many Tunisians, education represented the surest, and often the only, method of advancement. As a supplement to the sections on education included

in many of the works previously cited for this chapter, see François Arnoulet, "Les problèmes de l'enseignement au début du protectorat français en Tunisie (1881 1900)," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 167 (1991): 31 62; Patrick Cabanel, "L'ecole laïque française en Tunisie (1881 1914): La double utopie," in *La Tunisie mosaïque: Diasporas, cosmopolitanisme, archéologies de l'identité*, ed. Jacques Alexandropoulos and Patrick Cabanel (Toulouse: Presses Universitaires du Mirail, 2000), 216 85; and two articles by Noureddine Sraieb, "L'idéologie de l'école en Tunisie coloniale (1881 1945)," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 68 9 (1993): 239 54*, and "Le Collège Sadiki de Tunis et les nouvelles élites," *Revue de l'Occident Musulman et de la Méditerranée* 72 (1994): 37 2*. Women's education is the theme of Souad Bakalti, "L'enseignement féminin dans le primaire au temps de la Tunisie coloniale," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 166 (1990): 249 74*, as it is of Julia Clancy Smith, "L'Ecole Rue du Pacha, Tunis: L'education de la femme arabe et 'La Plus Grande France' (1900 1914)," *Clio: Histoire, Femmes, et Société* 12 (2000): 33 55.

The turn to political activism by Tunisians disillusioned with the shortcomings of the protectorate administration also receives attention in many of the works pre viously cited. A more detailed account appears in Ali Mahjoubi, *Les origines du mouvement national en Tunisie (1904 1934)* (Tunis: Université de Tunis, 1982)*. Taoufik Ayadi, *Mouvement réformiste et mouvements populaires à Tunis (1906 1912)* (Tunis: Université de Tunis, 1986), focuses squarely on the Young Tunisian move ment. Charles André Julien, "Colons français et Jeunes Tunisiens (1892 1912)," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-mer* 54 (1967): 87 150, a study by one of the giants of French North African scholarship, remains authoritative despite its age. Another lengthy article that has also stood the test of time well is Bechir Tlili, "Socialistes et Jeunes Tunisiens à la veille de la grande guerre (1911 1913)," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 22:85 6 (1974): 49 134. Little has been written in English on the Young Tunisians. Byron Cannon, "Rural Social Justice Rhetoric and the Young Tunisian Movement, 1907 1912," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 59 60 (1990): pp. 63 71, links questions of rural unrest with this early period of political activism.

CHAPTER 3 SQUARING OFF, 1912 1940

In addition to Ali Mahjoubi, *Les origines du mouvement national en Tunisie (1904 1934)* (Tunis: Universite de Tunis, 1982)*, two older books on nationalist movements across North Africa offer good points of departure for an understanding of the formation of the Dustur Party. These are Charles André Julien, *L'Afrique du nord en marche: Nationalismes musulmanes et souveraineté français* (Paris: Julliard, 1972)*, and Roger Le Tourneau, *L'evolution politique de l'Afrique du nord musulmane, 1920 1961* (Paris: Armand Colin, 1962)*. The evolutionary process leading from the Young Tunisians to the Dustur provides the topic for Noureddine Sraieb, "Aux Origines du Destour ou une continuité exemplaire," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 65 6 (1992): 71 9. Daniel Goldstein, *Libération ou annexion aux chemins croisés de l'histoire tunisienne* (Tunis: Maison Tunisienne de l'Edition, 1978), discusses the impact of World War I on Tunisian and French thinking about the protectorate. A study of

Dustur efforts to gain support in France at the end of the war is Mohammed Dabbab, *Les délégations destouriennes à Paris ou la "Question tunisienne" dans les années 1920* (Tunis: Maison Tunisienne de l'Edition, 1980). A study of the Parti Reformiste, which competed with the Dustur for a time in the early 1920s, appears in Mustapha Kraiem, "Le Parti réformiste tunisien (1920 1926)," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 4 (1975): 150 62. For the linkages between the Dustur and organized labor, see Béchir Tlili, "Des rapports entre le Parti Libéral et Constitutionnaliste Tunisien et la Confédération Générale Tunisienne du Travail (1924 1925)," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 28:113 14 (1980): 115 64. Ahmed Ben Miled, *Mhamed Ali: La naissance du mouvement ouvrier tunisien* (Tunis: Editions Salammbo, 1984), surveys the life and times of the founder of the first Tunisian labor union. A shorter sketch of his life, in English, is Eqbal Ahmad and Stuart Schaar, "Mhamed Ali: Tunisian Labor Organizer," in *Struggle and Survival in the Modern Middle East*, ed. Edmund Burke III (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1993), 191 204.

The devastation visited on Tunisia by the Great Depression contributed to a resurgence of nationalist activity after a period of relative quiescence. Various aspects of the Depression's impact are explored in Abdesslem Ben Hamida, "Les bourgeois tunisiens face `a la crise économique de 1929," *Cahiers de la Méditerranée* 45 (1992): 129 36; Claude Liauzu, "Un aspect de la crise en Tunisie: La naissance des bidon villes," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-mer* 63:232 3 (1976): 607 21; and André Nouschi, "La crise de 1930 en Tunisie et les débuts du Néo Destour," *Revue de l'Occident Musulmane et de la Méditerranée* 8 (1970): 113 23. The consequences of hard economic times for European settlers form the core of Jean Poncet, "La crise des années 30 et ses répercussions sur la colonisation française en Tunisie," *Revue Française d'Histoire d'Outre-mer* 63:232 3 (1976): 622 7.

The surveys of North African nationalism cited earlier include accounts of the split in the Dustur that led to the founding of the Neo Dustur in 1934 and the new party's subsequent strategies in mobilizing resistance to French control. Analyses of many critical political and social occurrences of the 1930s have been collected in Moncef Chenoufi, ed., *Les mouvements politiques et sociales dans la Tunisie des années trente* (Tunis: Ministère de l'Education, de l'Enseignement et de la Recherche Scientifique, 1987). Many contributors to this work are Tunisian scholars, some well established and others relative newcomers to the writing of their country's history. The schism in the nationalists' ranks is reviewed in Hassine Raouf Hamza, "Eléments pour une réflexion sur l'histoire du mouvement national pendant l'entre deux guerres: La scission du Destour de mars 1934," pp. 51 78. Two chapters deal with the politically charged question of naturalization, in Juliette Bessis, "A propos de la question des naturalisations dans la Tunisie des années trente," pp. 597 609, and Abdelmajid Kraiem, "L'echec de la politique de natural isation en Tunisie (1933/1937)," pp. 623 51. Mustapha Kraiem, "Le Néo Destour: Cadres, militants et implantation pendant les années trente," pp. 17 49, assesses the early work of the party, while Mohamed Hédi Chérif, "Composition sociale des mouvements de rue en Tunisie dans les années trente," pp. 611 21, considers the background of Tunisians engaged in public protests. Other especially useful chapters are Ahmad Kassab, "La communauté israélite de Tunis entre la

francisation et le sionisme (1930 1940)," pp. 525 48; Mokhtar Ayachi, "La polit ique coloniale et la question zeitounienne dans les années trente," pp. 817 35; and Mohamed Larbi Snoussi, "Le mouvement national et les régimes totalitaires à la veille de la seconde guerre mondiale (1934 1939)," pp. 365 83. Although not part of the same volume, Hassine Raouf Hamza, "Les émeutes du 9 avril 1938 à Tunis: Machination policière, complot nationaliste ou mouvement spontané?" Direction des Archives de France, *Révolte et Société* (Paris: Publications dela Sorbonne, 1988), 185 91, is an important attempt to evaluate the causes of the April 1938 disorders that temporarily crippled the Neo Dustur. A general overview of the party in the decade after its founding is Samya el Méchat, *Le nationalisme, 1934 1944* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2002)*. Hamadi Ben Halima, *Un demi siècle de théâtre arabe en Tunisie (1907 1957)* (Tunis: Université de Tunis, 1974)*, surveys the theater, of which the nationalists occasionally made highly effective use.

Among the articles that look specifically at the role of women in the nationalist movement are Ilhem Marzouki, "La voile des colonisées: Tunisie, 1924 1936," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 161 (1988): 59; Souad Bakalti, *La femme tunisienne au temps de la colonisation: 1881 1956* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1996); and two essays by Lilia Labidi, both in a volume edited by her, *Participation des femmes à la vie publique* (Tunis: Centre de Recherche et de Formation Pédagogique, 1990), "Circulation des femmes musulmanes dans l'espace publique et politique formel: Le cas de la Tunisie en période coloniale," pp. 19 43, and "L'emergence du senti ment politique chez les féministes dans la première moitié du XXè siècle: Le cas de la Tunisie," pp. 44 62. The writings of Tahar Haddad, an outspoken advocate of women's rights, are discussed in Zeineb Ben Said Cherni, *Les dérapages de l'histoire chez Tahar Haddad. Les travailleurs, dieu et la femme* (Tunis: Ben Abdallah, 1993), and in Noureddine Sraieb, "Tahar Haddad, une pensée au service de l'action émancipatrice en Tunisie," in *Les Africains*, ed. Charles André Julien (Paris: Editions Jeune Afrique, 1977), vol. 7, pp. 73 97.

Two volumes of letters and other documents produced by Habib Bourguiba, *Ma vie, mon oeuvre, 1934 1938* (Paris: Plon, 1986), and *Ma vie, mon oeuvre, 1938 1943* (Paris: Plon, 1986)*, are useful sources of primary material, as is a collection of newspaper articles, Habib Bourguiba, *Articles de presse, 1929 1933* (Tunis: Dar al Amal, 1982). The editor of these compendia was Bourguiba's longtime colleague Mohamed Sayah, who also compiled the fifteen volume *Histoire du mouvement national tunisien* (Tunis: Ministère de l'Information, 1967 79)*, a work whose subjectivity necessitates cautious usage. A political memoir by a close associate of Bourguiba throughout much of the 1930s is Mahmoud Materi, *Intinéraire d'un militant (1926 1942)* (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 1992)*.

CHAPTER 4 REDEFINING THE RELATIONSHIP, 1940 1956

The brief reign of Moncef Bey and the deposed ruler's continuing impact on Tunisian political life are at the center of Abdelhamid Hassen, "Moncef Bey et le

mouvement moncefiste (1942 1948)," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 49 50 (1988): 25 45; Omar Khlifi, *Moncef Bey: Roi martyr* (Tunis: Editions Kahia, 1994); and Rachid Driss, "Résistance du Néo Destour. Contribution de Moncef Bey à l'action nationale (1941 1943)," *Cahiers de Tunisie* 28:113 14 (1980): 255 88. A concise account of the military campaign that ended in the Allied victory that preceded Moncef 's removal can be found in "North African Campaign," in *The Oxford Companion to the Second World War*, ed. I. C. B. Dear and M. R. D. Foot (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1995), 813 18. Other important events of the World War II period are treated in *La Tunisie de 1939 à 1945* (Tunis: Ministère de l'Education, de l'Enseignement Supèrieur et de la Recherche Scientifique and Centre National Universitaire de Documentation Scientifique et Technique, 1989). As in its com panion volume (cited earlier) focused on the 1930s, the authors of this collection of essays are primarily Tunisian historians. Among its chapters are Mohamed Hédi Chérif, "Mouvement national et occupation germano italienne de la Tunisie (novembre 1942 mai 1943)," pp. 157 69, and Mokhtar Ayachi, "Le mouve ment zeitounien dans le contexte de la seconde guerre mondiale," pp. 271 309.

The creation of the UGTT and its role in the revival of Neo Dustur fortunes after the war have been the subject of numerous studies. Abdesselem Ben Hamida, *Le syndicalisme tunisien de la deuxième guerre mondiale à l'autonomie interne* (Tunis: Université de Tunis I, 1989), examines both the objectives of the union and its connections with the nationalist movement. Two articles by Mustapha Kraiem offer a detailed account of the rivalries among fledgling labor organizations in the postwar era. They are "La question de l'unité syndicale entre l'UGTT et l'USTT," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 12 (1978): 271 85, and "L'adhésion de l'UGTT à la Fédération Syndicale Mondiale," *Revue d'Histoire Maghrébine* 1 (1974): 26 34. Also by the same author is "1952, l'année ultime de la vie de Hached: Son action de résistance et son assassinat," in *Actes du IXè Colloque International sur Processus et Enjeux de la Décolonisation en Tunisie* (Tunis: Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, 1999), 149 86, a review of political and labor questions in the year that saw the assassination of Farhat Hached, the UGTT leader and a key figure in the Neo Dustur. An older but still useful source, in English, on union activities in the 1940s and 1950s is Willard A. Beling, "WFTU and Decolonization: A Tunisian Case Study," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 2:4 (1964): 551 64.

The reassertion of Neo Dustur prominence and its dealings with other compo nents in the anti French camp are treated in yet another volume of collected essays concerning a narrow chronological period of nationalist history, *La Tunisie de l'après-guerre (1945 1950)* (Tunis: Faculté des Sciences Humaines et Sociales, 1991). See, for example, Hassine Raouf Hamza, "Le Néo Destour, des lendemains d'avril 1938 à la veille de l'indépendance: Hégémonie et institutionalisation," pp. 209 29, and Mokhtar Ayachi, "Le Neo Destour et les étudiants zeytouniens: De l'alliance à l'affrontement," pp. 231 50. The activities of the Tunisian Communist Party are developed in detail in Hassine Raouf Hamza, *Communisme et nationalisme en Tunisie de la "Libération" à l'indépendance* (Tunis: Université de Tunis, 1994). The nationalists' decision to take the Tunisian case for the termination of the protectorate to the United Nations is explored in Samya El Machat,

"L'indépendance de la Tunisie gagnée à l'ONU? (1952 1954)," in *Actes du IXè Colloque International sur Processus et Enjeux de la Décolonisation en Tunisie (1952 1964)*, pp. 27 38, and in greater detail in the same author's *Tunisie: Les chemins vers l'indépendance (1945 1956)* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992). Mohammed Lotfi Chaibi, "Les enjeux d'une décolonisation négociée: L'exemple tunisien (1954 1956)," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 186 (2000): 191 211, focuses on the closing stages of the negotiations. Some of the problems arising at that point are also examined in Juliette Bessis, "La crise d'autonomie et de l'indépendance tunisienne, classe politique et pays réel," in *Mouvemenet ouvrier, communisme et nationalismes dans le monde arabe*, ed. René Gallissot (Paris: Les Editions Ouvrières, 1978), 265 92. An account of the decade leading to independence by a French scholar who personally knew many of the figures involved on both sides of the table is Charles André Julien, *Et la Tunisie devint indépendante, 1951 1957* (Paris: Editions Jeune Afrique, 1985).

CHAPTER 5 THE INDEPENDENT STATE SETS ITS COURSE, 1956 1969

Clement Henry Moore, *Tunisia since Independence: The Dynamics of One-Party Government* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1965), the first English language study of politics and governance in independent Tunisia, remains a superb source for the early postcolonial period. Despite being of similar vintage, a second work on Tunisian politics, Lars Rudebeck, *Party and People: A Study of Political Change in Tunisia* (London: C. Hurst & Co., 1969), also remains a useful source for this period. Habib Bourguiba has been the subject of numerous biographies, most of them in French or Arabic. The best in English is Derek Hopwood, *Habib Bourguiba of Tunisia: The Tragedy of Longevity* (NewYork: St. Martin's Press, 1992)*. The second of a two volume account by Sophie Bessis and Souhayr Belhassen, *Bourguiba: Un si long règne (1957 1989)* (Paris: Jeune Afrique, 1989)*, largely avoids either the excessive fawning or the bitter polemics that characterize many accounts written primarily for political purposes. An attempt to assess the place of Bourguiba in the overall scheme of modern Tunisian history, made soon after his demise in 2000, is L. Carl Brown, "Bourguiba and Bourguibism Revisited: Reflections and Interpretation," *Middle East Journal* 55:1 (2001): 43 57*.

Two articles addressing quite different points of contention with the former colonial power in the 1950s appear in *Actes du IXè Colloque International sur Processus et Enjeux de la Décolonisation en Tunisie (1952 1964)* (Tunis: Institut Supérieur d'Histoire du Mouvement National, 1999). They are Gian Paolo Calci Novati, "Le bombardement de Sakiet Sidi Youssef et les péripéties de la politique tunisienne face à la guerre d'Algérie," pp. 55 75, and Habib Kazdaghli, "Communautés européennes de Tunisie face à la décolonisation (1955 1962)," pp. 321 38. The same volume also has a parallel article on the Jewish community, Abdelkrim Allagui, "La minorité juive de Tunisie face à la décolonisation an cours des années 50," pp. 305 19. The conflict with France over the naval base at Bizerte is

the subject of Werner Ruf, "The Bizerte Crisis: A Bourguibist Attempt to Resolve Tunisia's Border Problem," *Middle East Journal* 25 (1971): 201 11. Bourguiba's unorthodox (for an Arab head of state) approach to the problem of Palestine is outlined in Yaroslav Bilinsky, "Moderate Realism in an Extremist Environment: Tunisia and the Palestine Question (1965 1970)," *Revue de l'Occident Musulmane et de la Méditerranée* 13 14 (1973): 109 23, and discussed further in Abdeljelil Temimi, "La question palestinienne et les relations de Bourguiba avec le Congrès Juif Mondial," in *Habib Bourguiba et l'établissement de l'état national: Approches scientifiques du bourguibisme*, ed. Abdeljelil Temimi (Zaghouan: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 2000), 109 27.

General surveys of the Tunisian economy that treat the immediate postinde pendence efforts to formulate a viable economic approach include Allan Findlay, "Tunisia: The Vicissitudes of Economic Development," in *North Africa: Contemporary Politics and Economic Development*, ed. Richard Lawless and Allan Findlay (London: Croom Helm, 1984), 217 40*, and the more recent Emma C. Murphy, *Economic and Political Change in Tunisia: From Bourguiba to Ben Ali* (London: Macmillan, 1999)*. The shift from a liberal economy to Neo Dustur socialism is reviewed in Charles Debbasch, "DuNéo Destour au parti socialiste destourien: Le congrès de Bizerte," *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 3 (1964): 27 3, while Jean Poncet, "L'economie tunisienne depuis l'indépendance," in *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 8 (1969): 93 114, presents an overview of economic issues facing the country during its first decade of independence. Tahar Haouet, "L'expérience tunisienne de développement agricole," in *Problèmes du développement économique dans les pays méditerranéens*, ed. Jean Cuisenier (Paris and The Hague: Mouton, 1963), 65 116, focuses specifically on the agricultural sector, while C. Zarka, "L'economie tunisienne à l'heure de la planification impérative," *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 1 (1962): 207 41, is an early illustration of the case for economic planning. Key aspects of Ahmad ben Salah's thinking become apparent in Marc Nerfin, *Entretiens avec Ahmed ben Salah sur la dynamique socialiste dans les années 1960* (Paris: Maspero, 1974), while a sample in English of the planning minister's ideas can be found in his essay "Tunisia: Endogenous Development and Structural Transformation," in *Another Development: Approaches and Strategies*, ed. Marc Nerfin (Uppsala: Dag Hammarskjold Foundation, 1977), 242 62. John Simmons, "Agricultural Cooperatives and Rural Development," *Middle East Journal* 24 (1970): 455 65, and 25 (1971), 45 57, assesses ben Salah's policies, and Mouldi Lahmar, "La réforme agraire dans les années soixante en Tunisie: Le PSD contre ses assises rurales," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 52: 163 (1989): 39 68, is a later critique by a Tunisian scholar. An early study on tourism that highlighted serious problems emerging in regions where the industry was heavily concentrated is Hafedh Sethom, "Agriculture et tourisme dans la région de Nabeul Hammamet, co existence féconde ou déséquilibre croissant?" *Cahiers de Tunisie* 24:93 4 (1976): 101 11*.

Relevant sections of Mounira M. Charrad, *States and Women's Rights: The Making of Postcolonial Tunisia, Algeria, and Morocco* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001)*, give a good overview of changes in the legal status of

Tunisian women and especially of the impact of the Personal Status Code of 1956, as does Mark Tessler, Janet Rogers, and Daniel Schneider, "Women's Emancipation in Tunisia," in *Women in the Muslim World*, ed. Lois Beck and Nikki Keddie (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1978), 141 58*. Women's mobilization efforts, extending into the precolonial era, are discussed in Ilhem Marzouki, *Le mouvement des femmes en Tunisie au XXè siècle: Féminisme et politique* (Paris: Maisonneuve et Larose, 1993)*. Mohamed Ennaceur, "La politique sociale de la Tunisie depuis l'indépendance et sa place dans le développement," in *Le développement en question*, ed. Abdelwahab Bouhdiba (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 1990), 335 92*, explores the use of social policies, including those targeting women, as instruments of development. James Allman, *Social Mobility, Education and Development in Tunisia* (Leiden: Brill, 1977)*, looks specifically at the role played by education in fostering develop ment following independence.

CHAPTER 6 REGIME ENTRENCHMENT AND THE INTENSIFICATION OF OPPOSITION, 1969 1987

Demands for reforms within the Socialist Dustur Party in the early 1970s provide the backdrop for Alaya Allani, "Bourguiba et le courant 'libéral' au sein du parti destourien: 1970 1971," in *Habib Bourguiba et l'établissement de l'état national: Approches scientifiques du bourguibisme*, ed. Abdeljelil Temimi (Zaghouan: Fondation Temimi pour la Recherche Scientifique et l'Information, 2000), pp. 51 7. More research on the events of the past thirty years has been published in English than is true of any earlier period in Tunisia's history. A contemporary evaluation of the reform movement is John Entelis, "Ideological Change and an Emerging Counter Culture in Tunisian Politics," *Journal of Modern African Studies* 12 (1974): 543 68. Jon Marks, "Tunisia," in *Economic and Political Liberalization in the Middle East*, ed. Tim Niblock and Emma Murphy (London: British Academic Press, 1993), 166 76*, surveys the changes that marked the 1970s and 1980s. A second such overview is Asma Larif Beatrix, "L'évolution de l'état tunisien," *Maghreb-Machrek* 116 (1987): 35 44. Possible explanations for the political leader ship's survival, despite its resistance to anything more than superficial manifesta tions of pluralism, emerge in Dirk Vandewalle, "Bourguiba, Charismatic Leadership and the Tunisian One Party System," *Middle East Journal* 34 (1980): 149 59. Clement Henry Moore, "Tunisia and Bourguibisme: Twenty Years of Crisis," *Third World Quarterly* 10:1 (1988): 176 90, summarizes the many difficul ties that plagued Bourguiba in the later years of his rule. Fitting within that period is the sharply focused study by Lisa Anderson, "Democracy Frustrated: The Mzali Years in Tunisia," in *The Middle East and North Africa: Essays in Honor of J. C. Hurewitz*, ed. Reeva Simon (New York: Columbia University Press, 1990), 185 203.

The public disturbances triggered by economic policies beginning in the late 1970s are compared by David Seddon to similar outbreaks of violence in "Riot and Rebellion in North Africa: Political Responses to Economic Crisis in Tunisia,

Morocco, and Sudan," in *Power and Stability in the Middle East*, ed. Berch Berberoglu (London: Zed Press, 1989), 114 35. Along the same lines, see Mouldi Lahmar, "La 'révolte du pain' dans la campagne tunisienne: Notables, ouvriers et fellahs," *Esprit* 100 (1985): 9 19. A memoir by Habib Achour, *Ma vie politique et syndicale: Enthousiasme et déception (1944 1981)* (Tunis: Alif, 1989)*, sets forth the veteran labor leader's views on these events and places them within the broader context of the relationship between the party and the union. An analysis of the attack on Gafsa in 1980 is Pierre Robert Baduel, "Gafsa comme enjeux," *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 19 (1980): 485 511.

Much has been written on the restructuring of the Tunisian economy that began in the waning days of the Bourguiba presidency. An introduction to the issues involved is provided by Mahmoud Ben Romdhane, "Fondements et contenu des restructurations face à la crise économique en Tunisie: Une analyse critique," *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 26 (1987): 149 76. Other helpful surveys include Stephen J. King, "Economic Reform and Tunisia's Hegemonic Party: The End of the Administrative Elite," in *Beyond Colonialism and Nationalism in the Maghrib: History, Culture, and Politics*, ed. Ali Abdullatif Ahmida (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 165 93, and Karen Pfeiffer, "Between Rocks and Hard Choices: International Finance and Economic Adjustment in North Africa," in *North Africa: Development and Reform in a Changing Global Economy*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 25 63*. Samir Radwan, Vali Jamal, and Ajit Ghose, *Tunisia: Rural Labour and Structural Transformation* (London: Routledge, 1990)*, probes some of the specifically rural dimensions of restructuring. Efforts to promote privatization are examined in Iliya Harik, "Privatization and Development in Tunisia," in *Privatization and Liberalization in the Middle East*, ed. Iliya Harik and Dennis J. Sullivan (Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1992), 210 32*, and in Abdelsatar Grissa, "The Tunisian State Enterprises and Privatization Policy," in *Tunisia: The Political Economy of Reform*, ed. I. William Zartman (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner, 1991), 109 27*. Also in the latter collection is Eva Bellin, "Tunisian Industrialists and the State," pp. 45 65*, which explores the links between powerful business interests and the government.

The emergence of an Islamist movement posing a serious challenge to the Bourguiba presidency also spawned great scholarly interest. Among the many articles that discuss the early activity of the movement are two by Abdelbaki Hermassi, "La société tunisienne au miroir islamiste," *Maghreb-Machrek* 103 (1984): 39 56, and "The Rise and Fall of the Islamist Movement in Tunisia," in *The Islamist Dilemma: The Political Role of Islamist Movements in the Contemporary Arab World*, ed. Laura Guazzone (London: Ithaca Press, 1995), 105 27*, which, as the title suggests, presents a more comprehensive picture of the movement. Also helpful for the early period is Patrick Bannerman, "The Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique in Tunisia," in *Islamic Fundamentalism*, ed. R. M. Burrell (London: Royal Asiatic Society, 1989), 67 74. Several other articles that posit theories on the popularity of the Islamist cause are Abdelkader Zghal, "Le retour du sacré et la nouvelle demande idéologique des jeunes scholarisés: Le cas de Tunisie," *Annuaire de l'Afrique du Nord* 18 (1979):

41 64; Susan Waltz, "Islamist Appeal in Tunisia," *Middle East Journal* 40 (1986): 651 70; and Norma Salem, "Islam and the Politics of Identity in Tunisia," *Journal of Arab Affairs* 2 (1986): 194 216. Abdelbaki Hermassi, "The Islamist Movement and November 7," in Zartman, *Tunisia: The Political Economy of Reform*, pp. 193 204, looks into the Islamists' role in bringing down the Bourguiba government.

The history of the Tunisian cinema and vignettes of many of its most important productions are in Roy Armes, *Postcolonial Images: Studies in North African Film*. (Bloomington, Indiana: Indiana University Press, 2005); in Mohamed Salah Rassaa, *35 ans de cinéma tunisien* (Tunis: Sahar, 1993); and in Sonia Chamkhi, *Cinéma tunisien nouveau* (Tunis: Sud Editions, 2002). Férid Boughedir, "Le cinéma en Tunisie (1966 1986): Vingt ans de cinéma tunisien; La société tunisienne vue par ses films," *Revue Tunisienne de Communication* 9 (1986): 88 113, writes as both a Tunisian critic and the director of some of the country's most successful films. The work of a pioneer in Tunisian cinema and photography is examined in Guillemette Mansour, *Cinéma et photographie en Tunisie Samama Chikly Un tunisien à la rencontre de XXè siècle* (Tunis: Simpact, 2000). Badra Bchir, *Eléments du fait théâtral en Tunisie* (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 1993), and Mohamed Masood Driss, "L'activité théâtrale en Tunisie, 1970 1980: Essai de bilan," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 156 (1985): 313 29, deal with stage productions. The first venture into private commercial theater is described by Jean Fontaine, "Le 'Nouveau Théâtre' de Tunis, 1976 1982," *Revue de l'Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes* 151 (1983): 123 33. Fontaine is also the author of *La littérature tunisienne contemporaine* (Paris: Centre Nationale de Recherche Scientifique, 1990); *Le roman tunisien de langue arabe, 1956 2001* (Tunis: Centre d'Etudes et de Recherches Economiques et Sociales, 2002); *Ecrivaines tunisiennes* (Tunis: Gai Savoir, 1990), on women writers; and, in English, "Arabic Language Tunisian Literature (1956 1990)," *Research in African Literatures* 23 (1992): 183 93. Sophie el Goulli, "Les arts plastiques en Tunisie," *Europe* 702 (1987): 49 56, focuses primarily on painting. On modern Tunisian music, see Ali Racy, "Music of Tunisia: A Contemporary Perspective," *Arabesque* 5:1 (1979): 18 24 and 28.

CHAPTER 7 CONSTANCY AND INNOVATION IN THE "NEW" TUNISIA, 1987 2003

Early assessments of the "Historic Change" of 1987 are Mohsen Toumi, *La Tunisie de Bourguiba à Ben Ali* (Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1989); Clement Henry Moore, "La Tunisie après vingt ans de crise du succession," *Maghreb-Machrek* 120 (1988): 5 22; and two articles in *Middle East Journal* 42 (1988), Dirk Vandewalle, "From the New State to the New Era: Towards a Second Republic in Tunisia," pp. 602 20, and Lewis B.Ware, "Ben Ali's Constitutional Coup in Tunisia," pp. 587 601. Guilain Denoeux, "La Tunisie de Ben Ali et ses paradoxes," *Maghreb-Machrek* 166 (1999): 32 52, and Michel Camau, "D'une

république à l'autre: Refondation politique et aléas de la transition libérale," *Maghreb-Machrek* 157 (1997): 3 16, both survey the political terrain in the decade after the transition. An account of the new regime's initial attempt to build a broad base of support appears in Lisa Anderson, "Political Pacts, Liberalism and Democracy: The Tunisian National Pact of 1988," *Government and Opposition* 26 (1991), 244 60. Mohamed Abdelhaq and Jean Bernard Heumann, "Opposition et élections en Tunisie," *Maghreb-Machrek* 168 (2000): 29 40*, analyzes the results of several ostensibly multiparty national elections.

The role played by labor organizations since 1987 is examined in Riadh Zghal, "Nouvelles orientations du syndicalisme tunisien," *Maghreb-Machrek* 162 (1998): 6 17, and in Christopher Alexander, "State, Labor, and the New Global Economy in Tunisia," in *North Africa: Development and Reform in a Changing Global Economy*, ed. Dirk Vandewalle (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1996), 177 202. The ties between labor and the Islamist movement are outlined in Christopher Alexander, "Opportunities, Organizations, and Ideas: Islamists and Workers in Tunisia and Algeria," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 32 (2000): 465 90. Clement Henry Moore, "Post Colonial Dialectics of Civil Society," in *North Africa in Transition: State, Society, and Economic Transformation in the 1990s*, ed. Yahya H. Zoubir (Gainesville: University Press of Florida, 1999), 11 28, describes the emergence of other components of civil society in the post Bourguiba era. The growth of a human rights association and its engagement in the political process provide the subject matter for Susan Waltz, *Human Rights and Reform: Changing the Face of North African Politics* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1995).

Delphine Henry, "Le Président Ben Ali et les islamistes," *L'Afrique et l'Asie Moderne* 164 (1990): 135 49, treats the new chief executive's initial approach to the Islamist movement. The deteriorating situation brought about by the failure of the movement and the government to reach a modus vivendi is described in Michael C. Dunn, "The al Nahda Movement in Tunisia: From Renaissance to Revolution," in *Islam and Secularism in North Africa*, ed. John Ruedy (New York: St. Martin's Press, 1994), 149 65*, but perhaps the most interesting account in English of the political role played by Tunisian Islamists is by a former activist, Mohamed Elhachmi Hamdi, *The Politicization of Islam: A Case Study of Tunisia* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1998). Concerns that Islamist successes might jeopardize advances secured in the past by Tunisian women constitutes an under current in Zakya Daoud, "Les femmes tunisiennes: Gains juridiques et statut économique et social," *Maghreb-Machrek* 145 (1994): 27 48*.

The national economy receives treatment in Hachemi Alaya, *Les nouvelles règles du jeu économique en Tunisie: Principes et mécanismes de l'économie de marché* (Tunis: Centre de Publications Universitaires, 1999). A broader perspective on recent economic developments is afforded by André Wilmots, *De Bourguiba à Ben Ali: L'etonnant parcours économique de la Tunisie, 1960 2000* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 2003)*. Addressing the challenges posed by globalization lies at the core of Hakim Ben Hammouda, *Tunisie, Ajustement et difficulté de l'insertion internationale* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1995), and of a study by the World Bank, *Tunisia's Global Integration*

and Sustainable Development: Strategic Choices for the 21st Century (Washington, DC: World Bank, 1996). The economic consequences for Tunisia of its formal relationship with the European Union are discussed in Jean Pierre Cassarino, "The EU Tunisian Association Agreement and Tunisia's Structural Reform Program," *Middle East Journal* 53:1 (1999): 59 74.

CHAPTER 8 A REVOLUTION FOR DIGNITY, FREEDOM, AND JUSTICE

General studies of the series of revolutions that swept through the Middle East and North Africa beginning in early 2011 the movement that came to be called "The Arab Spring" began appearing even before the dust of the uprisings had settled, suggesting the importance and the novelty attributed to this collective surge of populist sentiment by journalists, scholars, and other observers worldwide. Among the works that examine Tunisia, along with other states, the best of this first generation is Marc Lynch, *The Arab Uprising: The Unfinished Revolutions of the New Middle East* (Washington, DC: Public Affairs Press, 2012). Other analyses taking a broad overview of the Arab Spring, and useful for comparative purposes, but not devoted primarily to Tunisia include James L. Gelvin, *The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs to Know* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012); Lin Noueihed and Alex Warren, *The Battle for the Arab Spring: Revolution, Counter-Revolution and the Making of a New Era* (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 2012); Jean Pierre Filiu, *The Arab Revolution: Ten Lessons from the Democratic Uprising* (London: Hurst, 2012); a collection of essays by a variety of scholars, journalists, and diplomats, *The New Arab Revolt: What Happened, What It Means, and What Comes Next* (Washington, DC: Council on Foreign Relations, 2012); and a similar volume of essays gathered by the Saban Center of the Brookings Institute, *The Arab Awakening* (Washington, DC: Brookings Institute, 2011).

Quite rightly, the authors of all these works give considerable attention to the youthfulness of the protesters in the uprisings. For a study that draws connections between popular culture, music, entertainment, and political unrest, see Robin Wright, *Rock the Casbah: Rage and Rebellion across the Islamic World* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 2011). For a more narrowly focused study of young Tunisians' participation in, and attitudes about, the revolution that is based heavily on interviews conducted with men and women in the months immediately following the events, see Alcinda Honwana, "Youth and the Tunisian Revolution," a publication of the Council for the Development of Social Science Research in Africa (CODESIRA), available at http://www.general.assembly.codesria.org/IMG/pdf/Alcinda Honwana.pdf.

A short and helpful article that strives to elucidate the reasons for the Tunisian uprising is Mehdi Mabrouk, "A Revolution for Dignity and Freedom: Preliminary Observations on the Social and Cultural Background to the Tunisian Revolution," *Journal of North African Studies* 16:4 2011: 625 35. The difficulties that faced the early postrevolutionary government are highlighted in Duncan Pickard,

"Challenges to Legitimate Governance in Post Revolutionary Tunisia," *Journal of North African Studies* 16:4 (2011): 637–52. A collection of essays on events in Tunisia is Nouri Gana, ed., *The Tunisian Revolution: Contexts, Architects, Prospects* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, forthcoming). An especially noteworthy contribution to this volume is the superb study by Emma Murphy, "Under the Emperor's New Clothes," which presents the clearest, most thoughtful, and best balanced account of the shortcomings of both the ben ʿAli regime and the international financial organizations in their dealings with each other in the twilight of the dictatorship and the dreadful consequences for ordinary Tunisians of their mutual lack of sentience. When coupled with Murphy's earlier study, *Economic and Political Change in Tunisia: From Bourguiba to Ben Ali* (London: Macmillan, 1999), this material constitutes a solid basis for assessing the economic conditions that ultimately led to the revolution. A serious source of economic and political unrest prior to January 2011 was the disorders of the previous year in the Gafsa region. These are detailed in Eric Gobe, "The Gafsa Mining Basin between Riots and a Social Movement: The Meaning and Significance of a Protest Movement in Ben Ali's Tunisia," available at halshs 00557826, version 1 http://halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr/halshs-00557826 oai:halshs.archives-ouvertes.fr:halshs-00557826.

Two studies published since the revolution, but researched and written preceding it, offer informative bridges between pre- and postrevolutionary Tunisia. Both Beatrice Hibou, *The Force of Obedience* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), an English translation of *La force de l'obéissance: Economie politique de la repression en Tunisie* (Paris: Découverte, 2006), and Mahmoud Ben Romdhane, *Tunisie: Etat, économie et société. Ressources politiques, légitimation, et régulations sociales* (Paris: Edisud, 2011) take a long view that serves to put recent events more sharply into perspective. The same is true of Michel Camau and Vincent Geisser, *Le syndrome autoritaire. Politique en Tunisie de Bourguiba à Ben Ali* (Paris: Les Presses de Sciences Politiques, 2003). Journalistic accounts of the revolution itself, published quickly to take advantage of interest in the Maghrib but still helpful for laying out the basic course of events on the ground, include Pierre Puchot, *Tunisie: Une revolution arabe* (Paris: Editions Galaade, 2011); Olivier Piot, *La revolution tunisienne: Dix jours qui ébranlèrent le monde arabe* (Paris: Les Petits Matins, 2011); and Vivianne Bettaieb, *Dégage. La révolution tunisienne 17 décembre 2010–14 janvier 2011* (Paris: Editions du Layeur, 2011). The visceral hatred that so many Tunisians felt for ben ʿAli, and often even moreso for Leila Trabelsi, is reported in several popular books that appeared (outside Tunisia) in the twilight of the regime. The best known of them is Nicholas Beau and Catherine Graciet, *La regente de Carthage* (Paris: Editions Découverte, 2009). This account particularly infuriated Trabelsi who, along with her family, was its primary target and led her to launch a lawsuit in an effort to block its publication. Similar in tone and content is Lotfi Ben Chrouda and Isabelle Soares Boumaala, *Dans l'ombre de la reine* (Paris: Michel Lafon, 2011). Leila Ben ʿAli joined the fray with her own (to most Tunisians, unconvincing) version of events, *Ma verité* (Paris: Editions du Moment, 2012).

One of the most controversial issues arising from the Tunisian revolution concerns the effect it is likely to have on the country's female population.

Opinion on the question has been sharply divided, and it is, as yet, too soon for definitive judgments. One article that assesses women's views, bridging the periods before and after the revolution (it was researched and written before the event but amplified by a follow up study afterward) is Jane D. Tchaïcha and Khedija Arfaoui, "Tunisian Women in the Twenty First Century: Past Achievements and Present Uncertainties in the Wake of the Jasmine Revolution," *Journal of North African Studies* 17:2 (2012): 215 38. Based heavily on interviews, it is an important source, but much more will need to be done on this topic as the situation in the country unfolds. A useful aid in contextualizing such future studies is Fatima Sadiqi and Moha Ennaji, eds., *Women in the Middle East and North Africa: Agents of Change* (New York: Routledge, 2010). While this collection includes essays on Tunisia, it also ranges much further afield, revealing the importance and singularity of Tunisia's long tradition of activism in causes related to women and the weight attached by many, although not all, contemporary Tunisian women to keeping that heritage intact.

Not surprisingly given their proximity to the present, keeping tabs on events in Tunisia since the revolution necessitates a heavy reliance on information from a variety of electronic media sources. These are led by the Web pages of such tradi tional giants of the international press as the *New York Time*s (www.nytimes.com), the *Guardian* (www.guardian.co.uk/), and *Le Monde* (www.lemonde.fr), and of the surviving remnants of the once great international press agencies Reuters (www. reuters.com), the Associated Press (www.ap.org), and Agence France Press (www.afp. com/afpcom/en). In Tunisia, as elsewhere during the "Arab Spring," al Jazeera (www.aljazeera.com) made a powerful contribution to the reporting, recording, and transmitting of information (for the most part objectively, and often despite the best efforts of governing regimes to impede it). Many Tunisian newspapers are affiliated with political parties and are intended as much to promote a point of view as to provide accurate coverage of news. Papers that maintain useful Web sites include *La Presse* (www.lapresse.tn/) and *Le Temps* (www.letemps.com.tn/). Three other non daily publications deserve mention. They are the weekly newsmagazine *Jeune Afrique* (www.jeuneafrique.com/pays/); the widely respected *L'Economiste Maghrébin* (www.leconomistemaghrebincom/); and the regular political, economic, and social reporting on African topics in *Africain Intelligence* (www.africainintelli gence.fr/aif/channel/country/TUNISIE). A recent overview of Tunisian media dur ing the dictatorship, with particular attention to broadcasting, is Rikke Hostrup Haugbølle and Francesco Cavatorta, "'*Vive la grande famille des médias tunisiens*': Media Reform, Authoritarian Resilience and Societal Responses in Tunisia," *Journal of North African Studies* 17:1 (2012): 97 112.

Finally, although both are focused primarily beyond Tunisia, there has been excellent coverage of the postrevolutionary period in the country on the Web sites of Foreign Policy (www.mideast.foreignpolicy.com) and of the Middle East Information and Research Project (MERIP) (www.merip.org).

Virtually every commentator on the Tunisian revolution has noted the influen tial role of Facebook, Twitter, and other social media, along with the contributions of the countless Tunisian bloggers whose posts contained invaluable eyewitness

accounts and assessments of what was transpiring on the front lines, not only in Tunis, where external coverage was strong, but in other parts of the country as well. Their views were supplemented by those of expatriate Tunisians observing the situation in their homeland from every corner of the globe. Once unleashed, this torrent of opinion continued to flow as circumstances in Tunisia continued to evolve. A Web portal offering access to many bloggers' work is Nawaat de Tunisie (http://nawaat.org/portail/). Some blogs have built international followings, with perhaps the best known the work of Lina ben Mhenni, who blogs as "A Tunisian Girl" (atunisiangirl.blogspot.com) and is the author of the memoir *Tunisian Girl: La Bloggeuse de la Révolution* (Paris: Indigène, 2011).

Index

ʿAbd al-Krim, Muhammad ibn, 93, 115
ʿAbd al-Nasser, Jamal, 146, 149
ʿAbduh, Muhammad, 70
Abdul-Majid (Ottoman sultan), 22
ʿAbidi, ʿAli, 192
ʿAchour, Habib, 117, 139, 167–168, 173
Action, L' (newspaper; originally *L'Action Tunisienne*, 96–99, 103, 104
Afek Tounes, 240, 249
Afghanistan, 212
Aghlabid Dynasty, 10
Aghoudat-Sion, 51
agriculture
  Pre-Protectorate Era, 20, 23, 32, 37
  Protectorate Era, 52–54
    Directorate of Agriculture, 53–54
  Independent Tunisia, 154–156
    Cooperatives, 154–156, 160, 165, 186
    Ten Year Plan (1962–1971), 154–156
ʿAhd al-Aman (Security Covenant), 23, 25, 26, 31
Ahmad Bey, 17–22, 23, 26, 38
Ahmad II Bey, 96
Alapetite, Gabriel, 82
Algeria. Algerians, 15, 59, 62–63, 66, 107, 111, 112, 199
  Front de Libération Nationale (FLN), 146, 199
  Front Islamique du Salut (FIS), 199
  Islamist movement in, 199
ʿAli Bash Hamba, 75–78
ʿAli Bey, 44–45
ʿAli ibn Ghadhem, 34, 36
ʿAli ibn Khalifa, 42
Alliance Israélite, 68
ʿAmmamou. Slim 229, 244
American Federation of Labor, 126
Amilcar, 6, 7
Amin Bey, 112, 113, 119, 123, 128, 137
Anglo-Tunisian Bank, 30, 31
Anglo-Tunisian Commercial Treaty (1875), 40
Anglo-Tunisian Convention (1863), 33, 35
Anti-Semitism, 51, 104, 111
Arab-Israeli Wars
  1967, 149, 158
  1973, 153
Arabian Peninsula, 166
Arabization (of education), 144
artisans, 18, 33, 60, 80, 85, 99, 101
Association des Eleves du Collegé Sadiki, 75
Association des Femmes Tunisiennes Musulmanes, 104
Association pour la Sauvegarde du Coran, 162–163, 168
Astrubal (Guerfali, Riadh), 230
Ataturk, Mustafa Kemal, 140
ʿAtiyah, ʿAbd al-Majid, 186
ʿAttia, Ahmad, 182, 191
Ayad, Jalloul, 244–245
Ayari, Yassine, 244
ʿAyyadi, Samir al-, 186
ʿAziza, Muhammad. *See* Nadir, Chems
ʿAzzuz, Hind, 186

Babai, Brahim, 182
Baccar, Selma. 182
Baccouche, Hachemi, 185, 190
Baccouche, Hedi, 189, 196
Baccouche, Salaheddin, 128, 137
Badra, Muhammad, 127, 128
Bairam al-Khamis, Muhammad, 39
Baldiyya, 20, 22, 70, 76
Bardo Palace (Ksar Said), 5, 16, 17, 32, 44
  Military School, 19, 20, 22 67
Bardo, Treaty of, 15–17, 41, 42, 44, 51, 131
Behi, Ridha, 181–182
Béja, 58
Bekri, Tahar, 190
Belaid, Shukri, 258
Bel Hadj Amor, Muhammad, 205
Belhadj, Ridha, 243, 246
Belkhodja, Najib, 184
Bellagha, Ali, 184
Ben ʿAchour, Yadh, 229, 237

Ben Aicha, Sadoq, 182
Ben ʿAli, Zine al-ʿAbidine, 2, 3, 4, 173, 176, 178, 188–189, 192, 194–200, 202–207, 211, 213, 221–222, 227–229
  removal of Bourguiba and, 178–179
  trial of, 247
Ben al-Shaykh, ʿAbd al-Qadir, 186
Ben al-Shaykh, Hayat, 190
Ben ʿAmmar, ʿAbd al-Latif, 182
Ben ʿAmmar Rashid, 227, 230
Ben ʿAmmar, Tahar, 86, 114, 131, 132, 143
Ben ʿAmmar, Wassila, 176
Ben Amor, Hamada: *See* El General
Ben ʿAyad, ʿAli, 179
Benghazi, 1, 176, 257
Ben Jaafar, Mustafa, 204, 230, 239–240, 248, 256, 258
Ben Khairallah, Mustafa, 82
Ben Mabrouk, Nejia, 182
Ben Mami, Laila, 186
Ben Mhenni, Lina: *See* Tunisian Girl, A
Ben M'rad, B'chira. 104
Ben Salah, Ahmad, 122, 132, 138, 139, 151, 156, 159, 161, 162, 163, 189, 195
Ben Salih, Muhammad al-Hadi, 186
Ben Salim, Umar, 190
Ben Yusuf, Salah, 104, 114, 116, 117, 119, 124, 126, 127, 128, 135, 136, 137, 140, 143, 146, 170, 192, 208
  Post-war revival of Neo-Dustur and, 120–122
  tensions with Bourguiba, 122–123, 131, 133–134
Bizerte, 15, 48, 58, 59, 62, 66, 91, 97, 147, 151, 153, 183
Bizerte Crisis, 147–148, 154
Black Thursday (1978 General Strike), 168, 170
Blum, Léon, 103
Bompard, Maurice, 46
Bone-Guelma, Compagnie de, 62–63
Borma, al-, 153
Bouazizi Muhammad, 4, 222–223
Boughedir, Férid, 183, 191
Bouhajib, ʿAli, 98
Bourde, Paul, 54–55
Bourguiba, Habib, 95, 97, 98, 100, 101, 102, 109, 111, 112–113, 114, 115, 121, 124, 125, 130, 132, 133, 134, 135–136, 137–138, 139, 140–142, 144, 145, 146, 147, 149, 150, 151, 155, 158, 161, 162, 163, 169, 170, 172, 173, 176, 177, 178, 179, 183, 192, 207–211
  Bizerte Crisis and, 147–148
  criticism of within PSD, 160–162
  domination of government and party at independence, 135–139
  Habib Bourguiba: Pages de son combat, 125
  health of, 161, 170, 179
  Islam and, 141, 145–146
  Ma vie, mon oeuvre, 207
  Palestine and, 149
  personality and views of, 207–211
  Post-war negotiations with France, 123–124, 130, 131
  radical tactics pursued by, 107–109, 127
  removal from office, 178
  rivalry with ben Yusuf, 122–123, 131, 133–134
Bourguiba, Habib, Jr., 176
Bourguiba, Muhammad, 101, 179
Bouzgarou, Chedlia, 104
Bouzid, Nouri, 183, 191
Boyer de la Tour, Pierre, 130
Brahimi, Mohamed, 258
Bréart, Jules-Aimé, 15, 41
Britain, 18, 19, 34, 36, 37, 41, 49, 55, 111–112, 115
  Pre-Protectorate rivalry with France, 30–31
Brown, L. Carl, 208–209
Bulla Regia, 10
Bureau d'Information de Néo-Dustur, 115
Bureau du Maghreb Arabe, 115
Bu Shusha, ʿAli, 70

Cairo, 1, 115, 122, 128, 134, 146
Cambon, Paul, 42, 44–45, 46, 48–49, 69
Campenon, Jean-Baptiste, 35
Cap Bon Peninsula, 112, 127, 156
Capuchins, 50
Carter Center, 249
Carthage, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10
  Byrsa, 7
  Salammbo, 7
  Tophet, 7
Carthage Film Festival, 181, 183
  Tanit d'Or. 181, 182, 183
Centre d'Art Dramatique, 180
Chamber of Deputies: *See* National Assembly
Chammari, Khemais, 203
Chebbi, Najib, 204, 230, 239, 248
Chenik. M'hamed, 100–101, 112, 124–126, 161
Chikly, 181
Cinema: *See* Motion Picture Industry
Cinétéléfilms, 182, 191
Clemenceau, Georges, 81
Collège Alaoui, 69, 72
Collège Sadiqi, 39, 40, 48, 60, 67, 70
Collège Saint Louis, 69
Colonial "Third", 81, 103, 110
Colonna, Antoine, 117
Colonization, Colonists (*Colons*), 54–55, 58, 60–62, 66, 80, 81, 103, 112, 126, 150
Comité de Défense du Théâtre Tunisien, 120
Comité de Libération de l'Afrique du Nord, 115

Commissaires du Gouvernement, 51
Commission Nationale d'OrientationThéâtrale, 179
Communism, Communists, 86, 91, 118, 142. *See also* Parti Communiste Tunisien
Confédération Générale des Travailleurs (CGT), 90, 117
Confederation Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (CGTT), 89, 91–92, 117
Congrès Coloniale, 74
Congrès de l'Afrique du Nord, 74, 83
Congrès pour la République (CPR), 240, 248, 250, 253
Congress of Berlin, 41, 44
Conseil Nationale des Libertés en Tunisie (CNLT), 204
Constantine (Algeria), 18
Constitution (of 1861), 29, 31, 33, 35, 52, 83
Constitution (of 1959), 139, 170
Consular Courts, 33, 48
Consultative Conference, 73, 74, 88
Contrôleurs Civils, 48, 62, 124
cooperative farms, 155–156, 160, 165, 186
Cooperative Tunisienne de Crédit, 100
corruption, 218–220, 234–236
  Ben ʿAli presidency and, 219–220
co-sovereignty, 116, 119, 124. 126, 130
Crémieux Decree, 51
crime, 26, 60–61
Crimean War, 21, 22
Crispi, Francesco, 49
Cultural Affairs, Ministry of, 179–181
Cyprus, 41
Cyrenaica, 82

De Canières, Victor, 72
Declaration of the Transitional Process, 238–239
Décrets Scélérats, 94
De Gaulle, Charles, 114
De Hautcloque, Jean, 127, 128, 204
D'Erlanger, Rudolph, 105
Dhimmis, 24
Dougga, 10
Doumergue, Gaston, 96
Driss, Muhammad, 180
Duaji, ʿAli, 105
Duparchy Company, 63
Dustur Party (Parti Libéral Constitutionnel Tunisien), 85, 89, 98, 101, 103, 104, 106, 107, 109, 114, 116, 117, 127, 132
  Confédération Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens and, 90–91
  delegations to Paris, 85
  emergence of Neo-Dustur from, 101
  French left and, 91
  Nasir Bey and, 86–87
  problems within, 95
  program of, 84–85, 93, 97–98

Ecole d'Art Dramatique, 120
Ecole de Tunis (group of artists), 120, 184
Ecole Rue du Pacha, 68
Economy
  Independent Tunisia:
    al-Nahda plans for, 244–245
    ben ʿAli presidency and, 215–217, 234
    Crisis of 1980s, 174, 203–204
    Five-year-plan (2007–2011), 215
    global crisis of 2008, 215–217
    Mzali and, 172
    national policy following independence, 149–153
    Parti Socialiste Dusturien policies, 160–163, 170–171
    Structural Adjustment Program, 176–177
  Protectorate Era, 52–55, 58–63, 66
    crisis of 1930s, 99–100
    World War I impact on, 81–82
education
  Independent Tunisia, 143–144
  Pre-Protectorate Era
    Collège Sadiqi, 39
  Protectorate Era
    Collège Sadiqi, 68, 69, 70, 75
    Franco-Arabe schools, 68, 69
    Jewish schools, 68
    Khalduniyya, 71, 74
    women's education, 69
Egypt, Egyptians, 1, 2, 29, 48, 82, 97, 115, 222, 225, 258
El-Djem, 10
El General, 223, 226
Elections
  Constituent Assembly (1956), 136
  Constituent Assembly (2011), 236–237, 242–243, 246, 248–252
  Suspension of, 258
  Municipal Council (1985), 175
  Municipal Council (2000), 205
  National Assembly (1959), 137–138
  National Assembly (1979), 169
  National Assembly (1981), 170–171
  National Assembly (1986), 177
  National Assembly (1989), 195
  National Assembly (1994), 194–195
  National Assembly (1999), 204–205
  National Assembly (1999–2009), 236
  Presidential (1999), 205
  Presidential (2009), 222
Enfida (ville), 52, 125
Erdoğan Tayyib Rajib, 238

Esteva, Jean, 110–111
Etoile Scout, 103
Eucharistic Congress (1930), 95–96
European Economic Community (EEC); later European Community (EC), 165
European Union (EU), 196–197, 203, 216, 248–249

Facebook, 223, 226
Fajr al-, 251
Farhat, Salah, 89, 101, 112, 116
Faure, Edgar, 131
Fellagha, 129–131, 134
Fikr, al- (literary review, 185
Finance, Directorate of, 46, 55
Flandin, Etienne, 82
Flaubert, Gustave, 7
Fonds de Solidarité Nationale (FSN), 201
Forbes Magazine, 215
foreign aid, 146, 150, 152–153
foreign investment
  Protectorate Era, 67
  Independent Tunisia, 153
Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés (FDTL), 204, 239
Fourteen Points, 79, 82
Franco-Arabe Schools, 67–69
Franco-Prussian War, 41
Franco-Vatican Concordat (1891), 49
France, 14, 31–32, 34, 35, 36, 40, 41, 58, 66–67, 110, 166, 184, 187
  Free French, 112
  negotiations with Tunisian nationalists, 124–125, 130
  Policy towards Ottoman territory in North Africa, 13–14
  Post-independence Tunisian relations with, 146–149, 154
  Pre-protectorate rivalry with Great Britain, 30–31
  Protectorate structure and, 44–52
  Tunisian resistance to 1881 invasion of, 41–42
French Foreign Legion, 127
French Union, 116

Gabès, 54, 58
Gafsa, 48, 54, 58, 63, 99, 156, 169–170, 180
Gafsa Phosphate Company, 220–221
Gammarth, 181
Garmadi, Salah, 186
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT), 203
Germany, 79, 109, 110, 111, 166
Congress of Berlin, 41
  World War II, 111–112
Ghannushi, Muhammad, 4, 5, 229–231, 243
Ghannushi, Rashid, 169, 171, 173, 177, 178, 189, 194–197, 199, 230, 238–239, 243–244, 246, 251
Ghannushi, Soumaya, 251
Grana (Jews of Livornese origin), 25, 51, 68
Grand Council, 32, 88–89, 92, 96, 100, 116, 121, 124
Greece, 165
Guellaty, Hassan, 78, 82–83, 86–87
Guerfali Riadh: *See* Astrubal
Guermassi, ʿAli, 184
Guiga, Bahri, 98, 101, 107
Guillon, Armand, 103, 108
Gulf War (1991)
  consequences for al-Nahda, 198–201
  impact on Tunisia

Habib Bey, 88, 92
Habus, 54, 60, 74, 82, 146
Habus Council, 39, 54, 60, 68, 140
Hached, Farhat, 117–119, 126, 129, 139
Haddad, Tahar, 94, 105
  Our Women in Islamic Law and Society, 94
  Tunisian Workers and the Emergence of the Trade Union Movement, 94
Hadira, al- (newspaper), 70–71, 75
Hambas, 20
Hamdi, Hachmi, 248
Hammamet, 156, 228
Hammam Lif, 174
Hannibal, 6
Hapsburg Dynasty, 7
Hassine, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, 181
Hassine, Prince, 114
Hatt-i-Sharif, 18
Herriot, Edouard, 92
High Commission for the Realization of the Objectives of the Revolution, of Political Reform, and Democratic Transition, 237
High Tell, 58, 62
hip-hop, 223
Hizb al-Tahrir, (21st Century Salafi Movement), 242–243, 245–246, 256–257
Husain Bey, 20

Ibn Khaldoun, 8
Indochina, 130, 132
industrialization, 153–154, 163–165
Ingram, Rex, 181
Instance Supérieure Indépendante des Elections (ISIE), 241–242, 248–249
Internal Autonomy Convention (1955), 131
International Confederation of Free Trade Unions (ICFTU), 119
International Finance Commission, 36–37, 39, 45

International Monetary Fund (IMF), 172, 176, 196, 203, 212, 215
Iran, 169
Iraq, 115, 212
Islam, 140–142. *See also* Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique; al-Nahda; Ulama; Zaituna Mosque University
Israel, 148–149, 174
Istanbul, 79
Istitan, 61
Italo-Tunisian Treaty (1868), 37, 49
Italy, Italians, 25–26, 33, 37, 45, 49, 53, 55, 58, 60, 63, 66, 77, 80, 82, 89, 90, 109, 111, 112, 166, 184
  Congress of Berlin, 41
  land acquisition by, 53
  population in Tunisia, 53, 58, 148

Jabali, Hammadi, 251, 255
Jabiri, Muhammad Salah al-, 186
Jaibi, Fadhel, 180
Jamaʿa Taht al-Sur, 105
Jarid
  Jazeera, al-, 226
Jellaz Cemetery Incident, 76–77
Jendouba (ex-Souk al-ʿArba), 58
Jendoubi, Kemal, 241
Jerba, 121, 136, 156, 192, 212
Jeunesse Libèrale Nèo-dusturienne, 103
Jews, 25, 51, 58, 69, 92, 104, 110, 111, 149, 185
Judicial Services, Directorate of, 51
Juin, Alphonse, 112–113
Justice and Development Party (Turkey), 238

Kaak, Mustafa, 117
Kairouan, 34, 42, 54, 59, 62, 145
Karoui, Hamid, 196
Kasserine, 58, 223
Kebili, 58
Kèfi, Faiza, 213
Khair al-Din al-Tunsi, 32, 34, 35–37, 46, 52, 69, 70
  Prime Ministry of, 37–41
  Surest Path to Knowledge Concerning the Conditions of the Countries, The, 38, 70
Khair al-Din al-Barbarossa, 7
Khairi, Fathia, 105
Khalduniyya, 71, 75, 103
Khlifi, Omar, 181, 182
Khmir, 15, 17
Khurayyif, Bashir, 185
Ksar Hellal, 101
Ktari, Naceur, 182, 191
Kuttab, 67
Kuwait, 197–198

Labidi, Lilia, 230
Labonne, Erik, 108
labor migration, 166
La Calle, 15, 30
Ladgham, Badi, 161
La Goulette, 7, 25, 30, 48
Lahbib, Muhammad, 105, 106
La Marsa, 5, 87
  Treaty of, 45, 51, 131
land acquisition
  Independent Tunisia, 149–150
  Protectorate Era, 52–55, 80
  registration of property, 53
Lasram, Muhammad, 71, 74
Lavigerie, Charles Cardinal, 49, 50, 69, 92
League of Arab States, 115, 122, 146
Lebanon, 174
legal system
  Independent Tunisia, 140–142
    High Court, 136–137
  Protectorate Era, 50
    French courts, 46, 48
    Tribunal Mixte Immobilier, 52
    Tunisian courts, 50–52
    religious courts, 50–51
    state courts (*wizara)*, 50–52
Leila (women's magazine), 104
Le Kef, 15, 34, 58
Libya, 1, 2, 123, 166, 169, 174, 222–223, 232, 234, 257
Ligue des Musulmanes Français, La , 97–98
Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (LTDH), 168, 199, 203
literature, 185–187
  Abu Jahl al-Dahhas, 187
    Agar, 185
  Asad wa'l timthal, al-, 190
  Astrolabe de la mer (poetry), 191
    Bahr yanshur al-wahahu. al-, 186
    Daghla fi ʿarajinha, al-, 185
    Da'irat al-ikhtinaq, 187
    Fantasia, 190
    Feux d'oiseau (poetry), 190–191
  Fi Bayt al-ʿankabut, 186
  Fi'l Darb al-tawil (short stories), 186
  Hanin (poetry), 186
  Haraka wa intikas al-shams (essay), 186
  Iflas aw hubbuk darbani, 185
  Laylat al-sanawat al-ʿashr, 186
  Ma foi demeure, 185
  Maratij, 187
  Min haqqigi an yahlum (essay), 190
  Montagne du lion, *La,* 190
  Munbatt, al-, 186
  Portrait du colonisé précédé du portrait du colonisateur (essay), 185

literature (cont.)
Sifr al-nuqla wa'l tasawwur, 190
Sawma'a al-tahtari, 186
Silence des semaphores (poetry), 191
Statue du sel, Le, 185
Suhrawardi Shihab al-Din Yahya. Recits d'exile occidental (essay), 190
Talismano, 190
Tombeau d'Ibn Arabi (poetry), 190
Waha bi-la zill, 186
Wa kana 'urs azhazima, 190
Wa nasibi min al-ufuq, 186
Yawm min ayyam Zamra, 186
Livorno, 25
Louhichi. Taieb, 183
Lycée Armand Fallières, 69
Lycèe Carnot, 69

Macheul, Louis, 67, 73
Madani, 'Abbas, 197
Madani, Ahmad Tawfiq al, 93
Mahdaoui, Nja, 184
Mahdia, 58
Mahmud II (Ottoman sultan), 19, 21
Main Noire, 110
Main Rouge, 129
Majba, 33, 46, 61, 74
Majerda River, 54, 58, 62
Maktar, 58
Malta, Maltese, 25–26, 33, 45, 49, 58, 90
M'aluf, 105
Mamluks, 19, 23, 24
Manceron, Joseph, 97, 98, 100
Manifesto of the Tunisian Front, 115
Mansour, 'Ali, 183
Marzouki, Moncef, 3, 200, 203, 236, 250–252, 256
Mas'adi, Muhammad al-, 105
Masmoudi, Muhammad, 132, 139
Massicault, Justin, 46, 48
Mast, Charles, 112–114
Matari, Mahmud, 98, 101, 107, 112
Materi, Sakhr al-, 228
M'dhila, 221
Mecca, 192
Meddeb, 'Abd al-Wahhab, 190
Medenine, 77, 232
Mekki, Hatim al-, 184
Memmi, Albert, 185, 190
Mendès-France, Pierre, 130, 132
Messimy Law, 51
Mestiri, Ahmad, 161, 162, 168, 170, 176, 200
Metlaoui, 221
Mezbaa, Fouad, 229, 231, 236
M'hammed 'Ali, 90–91, 92, 118
Millerand, Alexandre, 87
Millet, Louise, 68
Millet, René, 46, 61–62, 71
mining, 63, 66, 99
Ministry of the Interior, 224
Monastir, 58, 98, 104, 150, 156, 178
Moncef Bey, 110–114, 115, 120, 121, 122
Moncefist Committee, 114
Mons, Jean, 116, 119
Morinaud Law, 89, 90, 92, 96
Morjane, Kamel, 240
Morocco, 66, 81, 93, 107, 111, 115, 134
Motion Picture Industry, 181–183
Films
Arab, The, 181
'Aziza, 182
Bezness, 191
Caméra d'Afrique, 183
Caméra Arabe, 183
Cinéma de Carthage, 183
Eté à La Goulette, Un, 191
Fajr, al-, 181
Fallaqa, al-, 181
Farda wa liqat ukhtaha, 183
Fatma75, 182
Fille de Carthage, 181
Halfaouine, 191–192
Hikata basita kadhihi, 182
Mukhtar, al-, 182
Mutamarrid, al-, 181
Poupées d'argile, 191
Redayef 54, 192
Rih al-sadd, 183
Safa'ih min dhahab, 191
Saison des homes, La, 192
Sama, al-, 182
Shams al-dhiba, 181
Silences du palais, Les, 192
Sois mon amie, 191
Sufar'a, al-, 182
Surakh, al-, 181
Targui, 181
Wa ghadan?, 182
Zill al-ard, 183
Zohra, 181
Mouada, Muhammad, 201, 203
Moubadara al-, 240, 249
Moularès, 221
Mourou, 'Abd al-Fatah, 169, 171, 174, 195, 198
Mouvement de la Rénovation, 201
Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique, 169, 171, 173–175, 177–178, 184, 194
Mouvement de l'Unité Populaire (MUP), 162, 171
Mouvement des Démocrates Sociales (MDS), 168, 170, 171, 175, 195, 200–201, 203–205
Mugharasat, 55

Muhammad V (sultan of Morocco), 123, 128, 134
Muhammad al-Hadi Bey, 45
Muhammad Ali (ruler of Egypt), 19, 21
Muhammad al-Habib Bey, 88
Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey, 15, 31, 33, 36, 41, 42, 43, 44, 55
  Constitution of 1861 and, 31–32
Muhammad Bash Hamba, 79
Muhammad Bey, 22
Mukhtar Hadid Mining Company, 63
music, 105–106
Mustafa Khaznadar, 30–37
Mzali, Muhammad, 171–173, 175, 176, 180, 185
Mzali, Muhammad Saleh, 130, 137

Nabeul, 58
Nadir, Chems (pseudonym of Muhammad ʻAziza), 191
Nahda, al-, 2, 194–196, 198–200, 222, 227, 230, 235, 237–239, 241–242, 245–248, 250–251, 253–255, 259
Naluti, ʻArusiyyah, 187
Napoleon III, 32
Nasir Bey, 45, 86–89, 110
National Assembly, 138, 162, 177
National Committee to Resist Aggression against the Arab World and to Support Iraq, 197
National Front, 171
National Gendarmerie, 3, 221, 226, 228, 233
National Pact, 194
National Planning Council, 150
naturalization, 51, 89, 90, 96–98
Nawaat, 230
Neo-Dustur Party, 110, 111–112, 114, 122, 123, 124, 125, 126, 127, 128, 129, 130, 131
  composition and structure, 100–101, 102–103, 138
  Congress, 1955, 133
  intellectual community (1930s) and, 104–106
  negotiations with France (1950s), 123–125
    Dissension within party over, 125–126
  post-war revitalization, 120–122
  Renamed Parti Socialiste Dusturien, 151
  Repression of 1953, 127–129
  rivalry between Bourguiba and ben Yusuf, 120, 123–124, 125–126, 131, 132–134, 141–142
  UGTT and, 117, 128–129, 133–134, 138–139
  Zaituna Mosque University and, 121–122, 125–126
    radicalization of (1938), 107–109
Neo-Dustur Socialism, 150, 151–159
Nessma TV, 246
Newspapers
  Action, L' (originally *L'Action Tunisienne*, 139
  L'Action Tunisienne, 96–100
  Hadira, al-, 70–71, 75
  Revue du Maghreb, La, 79, 82
  Tunisi, al-, 75
  Tunisie Française, La, 72, 73
  Tunisien, Le, 75, 82
  Unione, L', 49
  Voix du Tunisien, La, 95–96
Nouira, Hedi, 128, 150, 170, 178
  economic policies of, 163–168, 172

Obama, Barack, 245
olive cultivation, olive oil, 34, 38, 54–55, 61, 100, 101, 165
Ottoman Empire, 17–19, 22–23, 29, 34–36, 39–40, 41, 42, 44, 79

painting, 105, 120, 184
Pakistan, 122
Palestine, 97, 104, 115, 122, 149, 174
Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), 149, 174
Pan-Arabism, 122, 134, 146
Pan-Islam, 75, 76, 79, 122
Paris Peace Conference, 82, 84
Parti Communiste Tunisien (sometimes Parti Communiste des Ouvriers de la) Tunisie (PCOT), 91, 102, 114, 115, 118, 151, 171, 24
Parti de la Dignité et de légalité, 240
Parti Démocratique Progressiste (PDP), 204–205, 239, 248, 250
Parti des Jeunes Démocrates, 240
Parti d'Unité Populaire (PUP), (originally Mouvement d'Unité Populaire), 171, 175
Parti Libéral Constitutionel Tunisien: *See* Dustur Party
Parti Libéral Tunisien, 84
Parti Réformiste, 86–88, 92, 114
Parti Social du Progrès, 195
Parti Social Libérale (PSL), 205
Parti Socialiste Dusturien (PSD), 151, 167, 169, 170, 171–172, 175, 177, 186, 188–189
  Congress of 1971, 161
  Congress of 1974, 162
  UGTT and, 167–168, 171
Parti Tunisien, 82, 83, 84
Périllier, Louis, 124, 127
Persepolis, 246
Personal Status Code, 140–142, 175, 192, 194
Pétain, Philippe, 110
Pétition Populaire (al-ʻAridha), 248–249
petroleum, 153, 166, 172
Peyrouton, Marcel, 98, 102, 204
phosphates, 63, 66, 99, 153, 169
Phosphates et Chemin de Fer Gafsa, Compagnie du, 63

phylloxera, 54
Planning, Ministry of, 151, 155, 159
Pôle Démocratique Moderniste (al-Qutb), 240
Polisario, 197
Popular Front, 103, 107
Portugal, 165
Présence Française, 132
Protectorate Concept, 44–46
protests and demonstrations, 220–232, 257
Puaux, Gabriel, 85, 87
Public Instruction, Directorate of, 67–68, 72

Qadhafi, Mammar, 169
Qaramanli Dynasty, 17
Qarwi, Muhammad, 70
Qatar, 243

Radio Tunis, 115
  Radiodiffusion Télévision Tunisienne (RTT), 183–184
railroads, 30–31, 62–63, 66
"Rais Lebled", 223–224, 226
Rashidiyya Institute, 105
Rassemblement Constitutionel Démocratique (RCD), 188–189, 195–196, 198, 200–204, 206, 212–213, 220, 224, 230–231, 233–234, 236, 240, 244, 248
Party Congress (1988), 188–189
Rassemblement Française de Tunisie, 116, 124, 126
Rassemblement Socialiste Progressiste (RSP), 195, 201, 205
Redayef, 223
refugees, 232
Reporters Without Borders, 215
Revolt of 1864, 34–35
  impact on Sahil, 36
Revue du Maghreb, La, 79, 82
Roches, Léon, 22–23, 29–30, 33
Roman Catholic Church, 49–50, 95–96
Roustan, Theodore, 15, 41
Rouvier, Urbain, 46
rural to urban Migration, 99, 154–155, 163, 186

Sadiqi College. *See* Collège Sadiqi
Safi, Ahmad al-, 82, 85, 89, 101
Sa'id, Amina, 191
Saint Gobain Chemical Company, 63
Saint, Lucien, 86–89
Sakiet Sidi Yusuf, 147, 150
Sakka, Ahmad, 83–84
Salafiyya Movement, (late 19th and early 20th centuries), 70, 75–77
Salafiyya Movement (21st Century), 242, 246, 254–256, 258. *See also* Hizb al-Tahrir
Samama, Albert. *See* Chikly
Sanusi, Muhammad al-, 70
Saudi Arabia, 3, 197–198
Sayah, Muhammad, 207
  Histoire du Mouvement National Tunisien, 207
  Nouvel état au prise avec le complot youssefiste, 1956–1958, 207
  République délivrée de l'occupation étrangère, 1959–1964
Schuman, Robert, 123, 124
Sebsi, Beji Caid Caid al-, 5, 231, 243, 245
Secretary-General of the Protectorate, 46
Selim III (Ottoman sultan), 19, 21
Service des Affaires Indigènes, 48
Service des Renseignements, 48
Service du Théâtre, 179
Setif, 116
Sfar, Bashir, 60, 62, 70, 74, 78
Sfar, Mustafa, 105
Sfar, Rashid, 176
Sfar, Tahar, 101, 107
Sfax, 48, 55, 58, 59, 62, 66, 91, 104, 117, 119
Sfez, Batto, 23, 25
Shabbi, Abu'l Qasim, al-, 105–106
Sharia, 242
Siala Lands, 55
Sicilian Channel, 10
Sicily, Sicilians, 37, 111
Sidi Bou Said, 6
Sidi Bouzid, 3, 222
Sidi Thabit, 52
Skype, 226
Slim, Taieb, 110, 112, 115
Slimane ben Slimane, 107
Social Contract, 168
Socialist Party (French), 92
Société Anonyme Tunisienne de Production et d'Expansion Cinématographique (SATPEC), 181–182, 191
Sociéte des Hôtels Tunisiens Touristiques (SHTT), 156
Société Marseillaise de Credit, 52
Souk al-'Arba (now Jendouba), 58
Sousse, 48, 58, 59, 62, 66, 76, 128, 156, 178
  University of, 246
Spahis, 20
Spain, 165
Spanish Sahara, 197
Structural Adjustment Program, 176–177. *See also* Economy, Independent Tunisia
Suez Canal, 41
Switzerland, 79
Syria, 81, 93

Tabarka, 15, 156
Tadid, al-, 240

Taieb, Prince, 44
Tariq ibn Ziyad, 93
Tarnan, Khumais, 105–106
taxation, 61
telegraph, 30
television broadcasting, 183–184
Testour, 58
Thala, 223
Thaʿalbi, ʿAbd al-ʿAziz, 75, 78, 82–83, 84, 86, 89, 90, 106, 116, 132
Thameur, Habib, 109, 110–112, 115
theatre, 89–90, 104–105, 179–180
  festivals, 179–180
    Festival du Théâtre Arabe, 180
    Festival du Théâtre Maghrébin, 180
  productions
    Huwa Am!, 90
    Al-Sudd, 105
  troupes
    Adab al-ʿArabiyya, al-, 90
    Firqa al-Baladiyya, al-, 179
    Ittihad al-Masrahi, al-, 105
    Masrah, al-, 105
  Masrah al-Madina, 179
  Saʿada, al-, 93, 105
  Shahama al-ʿArabiyya, al-, 90
  Tamthil al-ʿArabi, al-, 90, 104
Théâtre National Tunisien, 180
Théâtre Nouveau, 180
Thomas Cook and Sons, 158
Thuburbo Majus, 10
Tlatli, Moufida, 191–192
Tlili, ʿAbd al-Rahman, 205
Tlili, Ahmad, 139
Tlili, Mustafa, 190
"Tounes Lebled" , 226
tourism, tourists, 156–159, 198, 212–213, 244–245, 254
Tozeur, 156
Tripoli, Tripolitania, 1, 17, 43, 66, 76, 82, 176
Trabelsi Clan, 3, 5, 219, 228
Transparency International, 219
Tunis, 6, 7, 17, 49, 54, 58, 59, 62, 66, 76, 81, 91, 95, 191, 195, 198, 215, 220, 223, 226–228, 244, 246, 250
  Ariana (suburban neighborhood), 246
  Avenue de France, 49–50
  Avenue Habib Bourguiba, 3, 4, 8
  Bab al-Bahr (Porte de France), 3, 4, 8, 9
  Bab al-Khadra, 9
  Bab Jazira, 4
  Bab Souika (neighborhood), 4, 9, 198
  Berges du Lac (suburban neighborhood), 257
  Dar al-Bey, 9
  Halfaouine (neighborhood), 191
  Jellaz Cemetery, 76
  Little Malta (neighborhood), 8, 25
  Mellah (Jewish Quarter), 9
  Place Bouazizi, 3
  Place du Gouvernement (Place de la Casbah), 4, 5, 9, 230–231
  Place du 7 Novembre 1987, 3, 8
  Saint Vincent de Paul, Cathedral of, 8, 49–50
  Tourbet al-Bey, 9
Tunis-La Goulette-La Marsa Railway (TGM), 63, 66
Tunis Municipal Council, 120, 179
Tunisi, al- (newspaper), 75
"Tunisian Girl, A" (ben Mhenni, Lina), 230
Tunisie Française, La (newspaper), 72
Tunisie Martyre, La, 83–84
Tunisien, Le (newspaper), 75–76
Turabi, Hassan, 197
Turkey, 12
Turki, Hedi, 184
Turki, Yahya, 105–106

Ulama, 24–25, 29, 32, 67, 70, 76, 77, 97, 141, 145
unemployment, 99, 155, 163
Unione, L' (newspaper), 49
Union Démocratique Unioniste (UDU), 201, 205
Union Départmentale des Syndicats de Tunisie (UDST), 117
Union des Syndicats des Travailleurs Tunisiens (USTT), 117–119
Union du Maghreb Arabe (UMA), 196–197
Union Générale des Agriculteurs Tunisiens (UGAT), 132, 150
Union Générale des Travailleurs Tunisiens (UGTT), 117–119, 120, 121, 127, 128–129, 130, 131, 132, 134, 136, 137, 150, 154, 168, 171, 173, 194, 197, 214, 220, 258
Union Musulmanes des Femmes de Tunisie, 142
Union Nationale des Agriculteurs Tunisiens (UNAT), 150
Union Nationale des Femmes Tunisiennes (UNFT), 142, 143
Union Nationale Tunisienne du Travail (UNTT), 173
Union Néo-Bourguibienne, 240
Union Tunisien de l'Artisanat et du Commerce (UTAC, 121, 132, 150
Union Tunisien des Industriels et Commerçants (UTICA), 150
Union of Unemployed Graduates, 221
United Nations, 123, 127, 129, 147, 226
United Nations Development Program (UNDP), 218
United States, 113, 114, 115, 126–127, 145, 146, 150, 174, 176, 197–198, 212, 245, 248, 257

Universal Declaration of Human Rights, 199
University of Tunis, 145
ʿUshr, 61

veil, veiling, 97, 142, 241, 246
Vichy Administration, 110–111
vineyards, 54, 61, 80
Voix du Tunisien, La (newspaper), 95, 96
Voizard, Pierre, 130

wheat, 32, 53, 99
Wikileaks, 228
Wilson, Woodrow, 79
Wizara, 50
women, 69, 104, 142–143, 164, 230, 238, 241–242, 246, 255
Wood, Richard, 22–24, 27, 30–31
World Bank, 172, 176–177, 203, 212, 215
World Federation of Free Trade Unions (WFTU), 118–119
World Jewish Congress, 149
World Summit on the Information Society, 214–215
World War I, 78, 79
World War II, 110–112

YouTube, 226, 257
Young Tunisians, 74–78
Young Turks, 75, 79

Zaghouan, 31
Zaituna Mosque University, 25, 67–68, 71, 75, 94, 141, 144, 162, 169
  clash between Bourguiba and, 145–146
  Comité National des Etudiants Zeytouniens, 126
  curriculum, 39, 123–124
  political activism at, 95, 97, 114, 125–126, 132
  precolonial reforms and, 25, 32, 39
  Sawt al-Talib al-Zaituni, 125–126
Zaouche, ʿAbd al-Jalil, 76
Zarruk, Ahmad, 36
Zarruk, Larbi, 17
Zionism, 51, 104
Zmerli, Saad al-Din, 199
Zones d'ombre, 202
Zwawa (Zouaves), 20