

A Study of Tunisia's Educational Reform Efforts

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Introduction

This paper attempts to examine major historical developments of the educational reforms undertaken in Tunisia since the late 1800s. The extent to which the Ottoman Empire influenced these efforts, as well as the impact of its political elite on the education reform program mapped out by Tunisia's prime minister Khayr al-Din Basha in 1873, will be outlined. Since the Ottoman Empire provided the impetus and momentum for reform based on western concepts, a major part of the prime minister's reform program consisted of combining traditional Islamic learning with western knowledge. Although numerous reform ideologies emerged at that time, I will focus primarily on two that were popular either among the scholars or the general public: the secular-based movement and the Islamic modernist movement. The first movement provided a nationalist foundation that emphasized the western aspects of reform, whereas the second one adopted a more religious foundation that encouraged holding a relatively broad range of religious views. The majority of people viewed Islam primarily in personal terms and did not analyze the broader issues of social structure and communal identity being governed by modern ideas. Most of them moved toward an individualized style of Islam within the framework of a modern, secularist orientation.

In fact, the Sadiki College, which the prime minister established, had the greatest and most long-lasting impact on most of Tunisia's next generation of leaders. As a result, Tunisia's educational system evolved and helped scholars move away from subjugation to self-assertion. Although conservative Tunisian

Muslim scholars gradually accepted reform, they seldom participated in opposition movements. Instead, they relied on their political skills to limit change and remove reformers who advocated westernization from positions of power. Since reform efforts undertaken by Zaytuna University also encouraged conservative Muslim scholars to adopt educational reforms, I will examine its reform program.

The second part of this paper will analyze the educational policies that developed in Tunisia after its declaration of independence from France in 1956. Issues that developed during former president Bourgiba's term in office (1956-87) will also be identified in order to highlight the major steps that helped secularize Tunisia's educational system.

Tunisia's Educational System before the Protectorate

Historically, Tunisia had been more exposed to the modernizing influences of Europe than the rest of North Africa. From 732 onward, the country's Zaytuna Mosque has been known as one of the most religious teaching institutes in the region, particularly during the Hafsid dynasty (1228-1534) and Ottoman rule. Since 1575, it had served as the center of all religious teaching in the entire country for people of all ages. Throughout these centuries, it played a major role in spreading the Islamic culture and Arabic language, along with the great Mosque of Kairouan, Okba Ibn Nafa'a, the mosque, of al-Azhar in Egypt, and the mosque of al-Qarawiyin in Morocco.

The only nation-wide educational system was the traditional one, which spread knowledge through the great Zaytuna mosque and the Qur'anic schools (kuttabs).¹ Given that no form of modern education existed at that time, the fundamental basis of Zaytuna's education system was religious, as it was based upon learning the Qur'an and the Sunnah.

It concentrated on the religious sciences, the Qur'an, Qur'anic interpretation (tafsir), Islamic theology (kalam), jurisprudence (fiqh), and the Arabic language. The general methodologies were

based on memorization and the understanding that this information is not really open to disputation and criticism.

As the only local institute of higher education, Zaytuna played an important role in Tunisian society by training the area's scholars (ulama), judges (qadis or muftis), mosque leaders (imams), and religious teachers. In particular, it maintained the people's Islamic values as well as their high regard for scholarship, the Arabic language, religious knowledge, and what was considered sacred. This kind of learning continued during the nineteenth century until the imposition of the French protectorate in 1881. After that event, some manifestations of reform appeared with two notable attempts at reform and modernization being made by Ahmed Bey (1837-55) and Khayr Din Pasha. Ahmad Bey was considered the first modernizer and reformer. He started organizing the nation-wide education system and made the "first regulation on Zaytuna's teaching dated from 1842, when thirty paid teachers of higher course were appointed by Beylical decree."²

Tunisia's first constitution was issued in 1861 as part of a reform program to control and reverse, particularly, the regime's military decline and the Tunisian administration in general. With the help of Western advisers, "Ahmad Bey created the Bardo polytechnic school in 1838, which was run by a European till 1862, when a Tunisian took over. The school mixed traditional religious sciences with mathematics, topography, modern languages, and military history."³ This school also "represented a new idea of military and administrative professionalism. It offered a feasible alternative program and maintained the 'esprit du corps' of a small elite, but within the framework of a revised curriculum, integrating a passing knowledge of western languages and culture as well as western military technology. Also, the principal selection for the military school as well as for officers was throughout the new Nizami Army."⁴ Ibn Abi al-Diyaf also described Ahmed's reforms: "Ahmed concentrated on the improvement of his military establishment. He thus founded a

military academy which he staffed with European advisers, equipped his soldiers with new weapons and uniforms, and attempted to create a modern navy. These reforms also included the upgrading in 1842 of the Zaytuna Mosque in Tunis as a center of Islamic learning.”⁵

It is quite clear that “the religious leaders were not the initiators of new thought and action in the early phase of modernization. They were, instead, the passive recipients of initiatives coming from government. In the meanwhile, Ahmed Bey could recognize the curriculum at Zaytuna, established fixed salaries, and take steps to equalize the rights and perquisites of Hanafi and Maliki officials without arousing fears from the religious establishment; these moves could be explained as consistent with the Islamic ideal.”⁶

Also, Ahmad's measures to break down the distinctions, in term of official perquisites, separating Hanafi from Maliki Ulama constituted yet another series of steps toward what can be called national unification.”⁷ In contrast, during the period of Ahmad Bey's reign, the religious establishment provided no intellectual leadership either to the reformist efforts or to those who wished to oppose such steps. Even though these reforms were initiated, “nothing [had] yet happened to challenge the ‘Ulama’s way of life. From their perspective, they believed that the Bardo School was a continuation of the Mamluk training system.”⁸

Khayr din Pasha, who was considered the greatest Tunisian reformer and was known by his progressive movement (begun in 1849), served as prime minister from 1873-77.⁹ Before heading the Supreme Council, he had lived in Paris from 1852-56 and had acquired an accurate understanding of the French way of life. He admired certain of their ways and believed that selective cultural borrowing would enable traditional Tunisian beliefs and values to exist with whatever could be adopted from the French. As a result, his term was characterized by highly successful reforms of the economic, political, and social ills that had bedeviled the country

for so long. "Knowing its shortcomings, he did not restore the constitution of 1860, but revived the authority of government through overseeing the Qua'ids (provincial governors) and state expenditure. Khayr din made his short term as prime minister a period of intense reformist activity.

He created a central bureau (jam`iyat al-awqaf) to administer public endowments and hired accredited notaries to serve as trustees. In 1875, the minister Khayr dine founded the Sadiki College, which was the first large educational establishment and the first Tunisian school to have a modern curriculum. The property confiscated from the former greedy Prime Minister, Khaznadar, in partial reimbursement of his debts to the state, was constituted into a hubus (Muslim charitable donations) and became the main source for financing this college."¹⁰ The college taught math, the sciences, and Italian and French.

This curriculum was in no way ambitious by modern standards, but in the Tunisia of the 1870s it was a revolutionary Franco-Arab educational system. The purpose of Sadiki College was to train young Tunisians for professional and administrative careers according to modern ideas. Khayr din founded this secondary school in order to give potential civil servants an adequate background in modern subjects, including European languages. At the same time, he reorganized educational procedures at the Zaytuna mosque by "introducing modern subjects into its curriculum and giving the prime minister's office strong control over its management. He also established higher standards for mu'addibs (Qur'anic school teachers), who henceforth had to be certified by the government. He created a new bureau (idarat al-`ulum wa al-ma`arif) to coordinate and to supervise all educational facilities."¹¹ It was not easy for him to make these radical changes, due to the opposition of the majority of Zaytuna Ulama. However, it is significant to note that institutions like Zaytuna, in the crucial nineteenth century, "did not respond to the new trends; the reaction to the new ideas were rather

fear, apathy or passive resistance; no new branches of learning were created, no reform of organization or teaching took from within; everything had to be imposed by government and parliament, as far as the latter was under Zaytuna control; even then the imposed reforms were not always executed because of latent passive resistance. No modern historical methods were applied, a broadening of one's self under the influence of modern thought did not take place; in fact, the rigidly traditionalist spirit and the archaic method of instruction could not but be obstacles to all progress in profane sciences and to any liberalism in religious matters."¹² But under the decree (Al-manshur al-wizary) of December 26, 1875,¹³ Khayr din made a structural reform of the subjects and exams, and emphasized the presence of the students and the scholars without touching the fundamental religious program and its way of learning. He began to recruit a small group of reformists, including bin Diyaf and, from the Ulama class, Sheikh Bayram V, in an attempt to realize two points: "the tentative efforts at westernizing reforms preceded the intellectual writing and discussing on the need for reforms; second, even when the intellectual arguments began they were conducted by small body of individuals, largely from within the governing class."¹⁴ This new leadership, developed during Ahmad's reign, formed the first generation of reformers and was followed by those who rallied around Khayr din in the mid-1870s. This group, in turn was followed by the Young Tunisians at the turn of the twentieth century. In their program of great political, economic, and administrative reforms, according to Abdu Allah Al-Irwi, "It is important to note that Khayr din prepared the way for the absorption of Tunisian society by the capitalist system and thus favored the rejects of the foreign society, regardless of the motives that inspired Khayr din and his following of enlightenment men, who were to transmit their political ideal to the young Tunisians of the twentieth century."¹⁵

The Education System during the French Protectorate

The French protectorate began in 1881. Within one generation, the dynamic contained in the colonial confrontation between an alien ruling power and a subject population led the Tunisian elite to examine in detail a new school movement that appeared in the country. Tunisians were encouraged to open a new school, such as the Khalduniya, in addition to Sadikki College because they thought that "if the Sadikki College represented an attempt to bring some of Tunisians and Arabic culture into modern, westernized education, then Khalduniya (1895) represented a parallel attempt to blend some modern methods and subjects into the Zaytuna education."¹⁶ Khalduniya was established by group of Tunisian reformers to help modernize some Zaytuna students by providing them with a background in modern studies. This school was officially obliged to give additional hours of instruction to teach foreign languages and modern studies on a completely voluntary basis to interested Zaytuna students. The founding of Khalduniya was a major step in Tunisian educational history. With the help of Tunisian group named "the young Tunisians,"¹⁷ the subject of establishing Khalduniya came to fore. They argued that "their country needed a system of modern French schools equal in quality to those in France. Anything less would compromise the chances of Tunisians - administrative cadres, merchants, craftspeople, and farmers alike - to achieve full modernization. If Arabic and Islamic subjects, including North African history and geography, were taught, they ought to be given in addition to, not at the expense of, the normal French curriculum."¹⁸

Other young Tunisians, however, wanted to reform the Tunisian education system and provided ideas on the best system of education for the country. One of them, Khayr Allah bin Mustafa, who was a former graduate student of Sadikki College, did not agree with the traditional elementary education given at the Qur'anic schools. He criticized them strongly, saying that "the lack

of hygiene, the low pedagogic quality of teachers, the frequent resort to corporal punishment, and the exclusive emphasis on memorization without understanding”¹⁹ were serious drawbacks. Clearly, he was not satisfied with some Qur’anic instructors and their improved forms. He said that this system should be replaced by an essentially modern education. He asked the French protectorate to help him use modern pedagogical techniques to teach Arabic and to study how it could be used as a language of instruction for a modern curriculum. Through this project, “Khayr Allah tried to sell his idea to certain French officials, who urged him to seek the support of Bashir Sfar, president of the Hubus council.”²⁰ With Bashir’s support, “Khayr Allah had opened his school in December 1906 and called [it] a Kouttab reform or modern Qur’anic school - the first one of its kind in North Africa. The school began with well-qualified director in a large, comfortable house in the Tunis medina, and within a month it attracted 200 students.”²¹ Khayr Allah’s school did not completely reject the traditional Islamic curriculum; however, the program was totally modern. “The students first learned to read, write, and understand Arabic before beginning the study of the Qur’an. They then memorized about one-fourth of the Qur’an and learned the basic tenets of Islam and morality. At the same [time], the students received a lay instruction including reading and writing, the memorization of literary selections of poetry and prose; grammar; arithmetic; the metric system; basic element of geography, especially that [of] Tunisia and France; history, particularly that of Tunisia, preceded by a survey of history of Arabic and of French, with accounts of the greatest men of all time; and basic elements of natural sciences.”²² To teach these subjects, Khayr Allah made use of vocalized Arabic textbooks published in Egypt and Syria. He later modified the curriculum when he became convinced of the need to give the students a good working knowledge of French as well as Arabic.”²³

Politically, Khayr Allah’s modern Qur’anic school caused a

negative reaction within the French protectorate, because the “colons did not wish to have Muslim children in the public schools together with their own children. Thus they seized upon the modern Qur’anic school as an instrument by which Muslim children could be kept out of public schools and to this end they extolled its virtues, even to the point of making an apologia for the scientific merits of the Arabic language.”²⁴ Socially, most of the young Tunisians opposed the concept of the modern Qur’anic school for several reasons. Most of them appeared when “they felt that even in the best circumstances the instruction given in modern Qur’anic school was second rate. It would maintain the inferiority of the students vis-à-vis European children because of the mediocrity of the Egyptian textbook and the inability of the Arabic language to adapt itself to scientific ideas. Finally, they feared that if modern Qur’anic schools developed on the large scale, they would eventually replace Franco-Arab schools altogether.”²⁵ The Young Tunisians found a compromise on this concern by supporting the establishment of modern Qur’anic schools as a temporary measure wherever no Franco-Arab schools existed, while at the same time demanding their creation (because of their pedagogic value) in areas devoid of colons. “This position approximated Khayr Allah’s original intention, which had been to use modern Qur’anic schools as a transitional system until a sufficient number of Franco-Arab schools could be created. The Young Tunisians finally became unanimous in favor of the development

of Franco-Arab schools in areas where Europeans resided, but on the express condition that modern Qur’anic schools be established throughout the country.”²⁶ Khayr Allah Ibn Mustafa’s first modern school subsequently served as a model for the creation of many similar institutions in Tunisia during the next two decades.

The French administration, while continuing its benevolent tolerance, moved to establish an element of government control over the modern Qur’anic schools. “A Beylical decree was thus

passed on 28 June 1938 to govern the curricula, the diplomas required for teaching personnel, the conditions of opening, operating and controlling the schools, as well as the procedures involved in distributing the government subsidy.”²⁷

Toward the end of the Second World War, as the French administration in Tunisia planned a vast expansion of the public schools system, an effort was made to ensure that teaching personnel in private schools would receive adequate salaries. “Under the terms of the Beylical decree of 19 August 1944, completed by the decree of the 7 December of the same year, salaries in the form of government subsidy were paid to teachers in the modern Qur’anic schools according to a scale determined by the direction de l’instruction publique. This decree left intact, however, the essentially private nature of the schools and did not infringe on the considerable latitude which they enjoyed in drawing up their curricula.”²⁸

The Tunisian school movement went through a period of moderate expansion that lasted nearly the whole decade. “Between 1929 and 1936, only four new schools were opened. An increase that year in the government subsidy granted to the schools encouraged a more rapid expansion of the movement. The subsidy was raised to 378,000 francs in 1936 (about \$21,000), 801,400 (\$44,000) in 1937, and 1,301,400 francs (\$62,000) in 1938. Six new schools opened in 1937, three in 1938, and nine in 1939; this made a total of 42 modern Qur’anic schools in Tunisia with 10,116 students by the end of 1939.”²⁹

Following World War two and in the context of the increased tempo of the Tunisian nationalist movement led by the neo-Destourien party, the modern Qur’anic school movement underwent a rapid expansion. The example of the Sahil village of Hamam Susa provides a brief case study of this post-war expansion: “The village scholar, a man called Sheikh Bahri, who had studied in Zaytuna University, established a modern Qur’anic school in Hamam Susa in 1945. The Neo-Destour clandestinely

helped Sheikh Bahri to raise the necessary funds. The village had only one elementary school at that time with two classes. A considerable desire for a modern education had built up among the villagers, who raised funds themselves for their new school. Beginning with six classes in 1945, the school doubled within three years and continued to expand thereafter.”³⁰

Prior the independence in 1951, the “enrollment in the modern Qur’anic schools had reached 23,000 students. It rose more than 4,300 the next year to a total of 27,497, as compared to 81,387 Muslim children in the Franco-Arab schools. That meant there was one student in a modern Qur’anic school for every three in the public system.”³¹ The curriculum of the modern Qur’anic schools, despite the considerable emphasis given to Arabic and Islamic studies, was designed – beginning at least in the 1930 if not earlier – to lead to the ‘certificate d’etude primaire’ issued by the direction de l’instruction publique. “The quality of instruction compared for this can be found in the proportionately high number of graduates of modern Qur’anic schools who were admitted to Tunisia’s elite secondary school, Sadikki College.”³²

On the whole, the modern Qur’anic schools served a useful function by providing a reasonably modern education for the many Tunisians who were reluctant to make a radical break with their society’s traditional Arabo-Islamic culture. “On the negative side, the schools were too often exploited by the groups opposed to modernization and westernization. Moreover, they failed to produce any important leaders, all of whom have continued to come from the French or Franco-Arab schools.”³³

Returning to the Zaytuna mosque and after the First World War, however, students demanded reforms, other methods and books, and the introduction of modern sciences. Of course French influence played a role: “A reform took place in 1933, but appeared to [be] insufficient. The Zaytuna educational system included three stages of elementary schools, outside of Tunis, secondary and higher education, in Tunis. These studies took,

respectively, four, three, and three years. In 1945, the construction of a Zaytuna University city was started. In 1949 a student's strike began that would last for a year and resulted in the introduction of a modern section in addition to the traditional one at the second level. This became official in 1955 and meant a break in the closed system of the Zaytuna. In 1953 there were altogether over 11,000 students of whom more than 650 at the higher level were studying either in the section of the Arabic language and literature or in that of jurisprudence. About twenty pursued their studies abroad."³⁴

The Education System after Independence

According to Carl Brown, at the time of Tunisia's independence in 1956, there was an increase in the number of the students enrolled in the schools. "There were some 35,000 students in modern Qur'anic schools or about one for every four in the public system."³⁵ After independence, the Tunisian government took full control of the modern Qur'anic schools. Its major goals were, first, to unify the country's education system and, second, to nationalize it. In this regard, the Tunisian government wanted to base education upon the realities of national life and allowed Arabic to resume its rightful place as the national language. The third goal was to extend the education system throughout the country. These major points have remained in the forefront since October 1958, which the education system was reformed.

Thus, the Tunisian government pursued reform to unify and nationalize the education system so that it would fit into the national condition as well as the nation's social, cultural, and economic evolution. In 1958, President Bourguiba stated: "When we were in the opposition, outside the mainstream of civic life and harassing the Protectorate to obtain the recognition of our rights, I vowed that if ever we took over the apparatus of the State, the very first problem we would deal with would be that of education."³⁶ In general, right from the first years of independence, Tunisia education system sought to provide the country with an educational system corresponding to its genius, its cultural

tradition, and contemporary ideals.

Major radical changes were made, starting with Zaytuna. Immediately after independence, the Tunisian government separated secondary education from higher education of Zaytuna, so that Zaytuna's teaching was reduced to higher education only.

The government staff, headed by the President Bourguiba, praised Zaytuna for the role it had played throughout history and specifically during the French protectorate by "preserving the Arab and Islamic heritage, but to follow this praise with the observation that resistance is no longer needed, as independence has been achieved. Zaytuna is now no longer needed any more. Among the aims of independence, according to the official Tunisian education and documentation, was to begin the unification of the general unfashionable Zaytuna education with the new general education."³⁷ Major changes were made in the addition of the old annexes of the Zaytuna mosque in the entire country into the secondary system of the national education. Later on, Zaytuna became a public institution that communicated directly with the minister of education. Its new program concentrated on two major categories of studies: Arabic language and literature, and the juridical and religious sciences. In short, the traditional Zaytuna Mosque is no longer a system and the remaining University Mosque is under considerable pressure to become a modern faculty within the new Tunisian university. However, "the teaching staff of Zaytuna and, in general, the religious leadership of similar background had fallen into such low eastern that changes that might have caused no end of conflict in other Arab or Islamic countries went into effect in Tunisia with hardly a murmur of protest."³⁸ By 1958 the Zaytuna problem was virtually out of the way. After two years of independence, the Tunisian government had given the new leaders the chance to understand the problems and reform the country's religious education system.

In the public sphere, the government primary schools taught Arabic as well as French. The Sadikki College became the model

for a special Tunisian type of secondary education, equivalent to the French high school but including substantial Arabic studies. Thus, on the one hand, the Tunisian government wanted to equip modern Tunisian students with two cultures so that they could communicate their ideas through a variety of Arabic intermediaries to the traditional society. On the other hand, it sought to increase school enrollment without changing, in substance, the system inherited from the days of the protectorate. In two years after independence "the total primary school population had risen from 180,000 to 265,000."³⁹ In general, Tunisian schools developed in several ways: they adopted the bilingual, French–Arabic, curriculum designed to lead the elementary system that was guided by the direction of public instruction. This emphasis qualified Tunisian students to enter public secondary schools. Also, in the secondary schools, the language of instruction was French, just as it had been under the protectorate. French was the fundamental language in every course, except the teaching of Arabic, religious studies, and the study of Islamic thought.

In addition to the reform program, the Tunisian government created an Office of Pedagogy (Diwan al-Tarbiya). This office "assists in working out a uniform curriculum, publishes a journal keeping the instructor up to date on problems and new developments in education, and so on. The office has the task of supervising the writing and publishing of appropriate textbooks. Most of the pedagogical office books published thus far are either selections of texts for use in teaching Arabic and French, or history and geography books closely following previously used texts." Finally, the education reform stressed national and cultural unity, and this idea of unity was extended to both men and women. The minister of education, Mahmoud al-Misadi, in a September 1960 press conference, "went on to deplore the fact that only 27 percent of the girls of primary-school age were attending school."⁴⁰ The Tunisian government was dedicated to the idea of bringing Tunisian Muslim women into full participation in society, and

President Bourguiba considered himself the first feminist.

Conclusion

The Tunisian government showed achieved major successes in its education system reform effort, all of which pointed to the fact that new forms of expression were growing in the education system. Politically, this progress might have resulted in a uniform national culture, and a widespread new style of education in the Arab world, which progressively helped the extension of this culture to an inestimable level. But this was not the aim of the French protectorate. It would, of course, be absurd to claim that France made no contribution to Tunisian education. To a certain extent, colonialism enriched Tunisian education and thought by introducing genuine modernism through the French language. But unfortunately, the French presence did not mean simply the genius of France only; it also meant an army presence and a political system with an imperialist outlook. But the new Tunisian government regime, once it was freed from the French protectorate, immediately considered the problem of reforming the nation's education system one of its first priorities.

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¹ The Qur'anic schools featured single classes, which generally were taught by a teacher named *mu'addib* who did not always have the most useful qualifications and who taught children of all ages reading and writing.

² L. Carl Brown, *The Tunisia of Ahmed Bey 1837-1855* (Princeton University Press, 1974) p145

³ Noureddine Sraïeb, *Le collège sadikki de Tunis, 1875-1956, enseignement et nationalisme* (Paris: CNRS, 1995), 14-15, 21.

⁴ L. Carl Brown, *The Tunisia of Ahmad Bey*, p.354.

⁵ Ahmad Ibn Abi al-Diyaf, *Ithaf Ahl al-Zaman bi Akbar Tunis wa Ahd al-Aman*,. (Tunis: Ministry of Culture, 1963-66), vol IV pp. 65-69.

⁶ L. Carl Brown, *The Tunisia of Ahmed Bey*. p 357

⁷ *Ibid*, p 354

⁸ *Ibid*, p.357.

⁹ The Challenge Work of Khayr Din: *The Surest Path. Is this a book*, this work appeared in 1867, twelve years after Ahmad Bey died. Published both in Arabic and French, it sought to win the blessing, or at least the benevolent neutrality, of both the Ulama class at home and European statesmen abroad.

¹⁰ L. Carl Brown, *The Tunisia of Ahmed Bey*. p 357

¹¹ L. Carl Brown, *the Tunisia of Ahmad Bey*, p 349.

¹² R. Brunchig, "Tunisia: Muslim Religious Education," *Encyclopedia of Islam*, Vol 4.p863 (English edition).

¹³ Ibn Abi al-Diyaf, *Ithaf Ahl al-Zaman*, p359

¹⁴ Ibn Abi al-Diyaf, *Ithaf Ahl al-Zaman*, p359

¹⁵ Abdullah Laroui, *The History of the Magreb An Interpretive Essay*, Translated from the French By Ralph Manheim (Princeton University Press, 1977) pp314-15.

¹⁶ L. Carl Brown. *Tunisia: Education, "Cultural Unity," and the Future*. ed.by William I. Zartman, *Man*,

State, and Society in the Contemporary Magreb (New York: Praeger, 1973), p369

¹⁷ From the mid-1890 until a self-styled modernizing elite was active in Tunisia. This small group, dubbed the "Young Tunisians" by the French because of its similarity to the "Young Turks," was composed mostly of men from the close-knit Tunisian aristocracy, which, in turn, was mainly of Turkish origin. The leading members, like Ali Bash Hanba and 'Abd al-Jalil al-Zawash, had a modern education and many had also, studied in French. The young Tunisian movement aimed at modernization and westernization by means of practical and well-reasoned reforms. Rejecting Islamic reform as inadequate for the modern world, the movement favored a policy of assimilation to France in order to bring Tunisian society up to the level of the West. They assumed the role of spokesmen for their countrymen to the French and interpreters of French civilization for their own society. In 1907, they founded a weekly journal, *Le Tunisian*, which appeared in both a French and Arabic edition and served as a sounding board for their ideas until the movement ended in 1912. For a concise analysis of this movement, see Leon Carl Brown, "Treatment," in *Tunisia: The Politics of Modernization*, ed. Charles A. Micaud, Leon Carl Brown, and Clement Henry Moore (New York: Praeger, 1964), pp22-37. For more details, particularly concerning relations with the French community in Tunisia, see Charles-Andre Julien, "Colons Francais et Jeunes Tunisiens (1882-1912)", *revue francaise d'histoire d'outre*, vol. 54 (1967)pp 87-150.

¹⁸ Brown, "Treatment," in *Tunisia: The Politics of Modernization*, ed. Charles A. Micaud, and Leon Carl Brown, and Clement Henry Moore, pp 30-32.

¹⁹ Charles-Andre Julien, "Colons Francaise et Jeunes-Tunisiens 1882-1912" *Revue Francaise D'histoire*

D'outre-Mer, Vol LIX (1967), pp.110-11.

²⁰ Mohammed al-Fadil bin Ashur, *Al-Haraka al-Adabiyya wa al-Fikriyya fi Tunis* (Cairo: 1956) p 85.

²¹ Brown, "Treatment, in *Tunisia: The Politics of Modernization*" p 32.

²² Julien, "Colons Francaise et Jeunes-Tunisiens 1882-1912 " pp.138-139. *Ibid.*, p.139

²³ *Ibid.*, p.139

²⁴ *Ibid*, p140

Brown, "Treatment in *Tunisia: The Politics of Modernization*," p33

²⁵ Brown, "Treatment in *Tunisia: The Politics of Modernization*," p33

²⁶ Julien, "Colons Francaise," p140

²⁷ Lucien Paye, *l'enseignemet en tunisie,*' encyclopidie mensuelle d'outre- Mer, document n#8 May 1952

p359-60. Mohammed al-Fadil bin Ashur, *Al-Haraka al-Adabiyya wa al-Fikriyya fi Tunis* (Cairo: 1956) p

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²⁸ Lucien Paye, *l'enseignemet en tunisie,*' encyclopidie mensuelle d'outre- Mer, document n#8 May

1952,pp 367-68

²⁹ *Ibid*, pp.359-60

³⁰ Clement Henry Moore, "Politics in Tunisian Villages," *Middle East Journal*, vol. 17 (1963) pp531-33.

³¹ Lucien Paye, *l'enseignemet*, p316

³² *Ibid*, p 531

³³ L. Carl Brown. *The Tunisia of Ahmed Bey*, p151

³⁴ About the history of the Zaytuna Mosque see: leon Bercher, "la reforme de l'enseignemet a la grand

mosquee de tunis," REI, vol 4 (1930) pp 441-515; Brunschvig,

"Tunisia," EI1, Vol. 4; Michel Lelong,

"l'enseignemet suprieur Islamic," IBLA 25 (1962) pp 181-84; A Louis,

"la jeunesse Tunisian et les

edutes," IBLA 16 (1953) pp1-46 and "la jeunesse tunisienne et les etudes

traditionnelles," IBLA 19

(1956)pp 139-47.

³⁵ Leon Carl brown, Tunisia, in James S. Coleman (ed) education and development (Princeton: university

press 1965) p 151

³⁶The journal of the institute des Belles-Letters Arabes concerning this question:IBLA (Tunis), No. 105, January-March 1964.)

³⁷ Lucien Paye, *l'enseignemet en tunisie*, p 370

³⁸ Ibid, p369

³⁹ L. Carl Brown, "Tunisia: Education, Unity and the future" *Man, State and society in the contemporary Maghreb*, p 37

⁴⁰*Ibid*, p 374