

Italian-speaking communities in early nineteenth century Tunis

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Résumé

En s'appuyant en grande partie sur les archives du Département d'Etat Américain (Consulat de Tunis) et sur plusieurs travaux antérieurs, l'auteur a donné un tableau des Italiens de Tunisie de 1830 à 1860 environ. Leur nombre a varié et ne peut être affirmé avec certitude. Leur origine remonte à de nombreux Italiens capturés comme esclaves, au Juifs livournais ou Grata venus s'installer à Tunis au XVIII^e siècle, à des exilés qui acquirent d'importantes positions à Tunis, comme médecins par exemple . Grâce à eux, la langue italienne tint une grande place jusqu'au milieu du XIX^e siècle et les Italiennes s'allièrent souvent à des membres de l'élite tunisienne, voire de la famille beylicale. L'émigration italienne, importante à partir des années 1830, amena en Tunisie bon nombre de techniciens qui contribuèrent à la modernisation de la Régence, puis des exilés politiques, carbonari entre autres, qui animèrent la vie tunisoise en créant écoles, théâtres, journaux et loges maçonniques. De plus certains Italiens, Calligaris surtout, collaborèrent efficacement à la modernisation de l'armée tunisienne, puis à la formation des cadres du pays par l'école militaire que dirigea Calligaris et qui servit de modèle au fameux Collège Sadiki. Vers 1850 l'influence officielle italienne décrut, à cause de l'effort français dans la Régence, mais aussi parce que l'unité italienne en formation rappelait beaucoup d'Italiens dans la Péninsule.

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ITALIAN-SPEAKING COMMUNITIES IN EARLY NINETEENTH CENTURY TUNIS

SOMMAIRE

En s'appuyant en grande partie sur les archives du Département d'Etat Américain (Consulat de Tunis) et sur plusieurs travaux antérieurs, l'auteur a donné un tableau des Italiens de Tunisie de 1830 à 1860 environ. Leur nombre a varié et ne peut être affirmé avec certitude. Leur origine remonte à de nombreux Italiens capturés comme esclaves, au Juifs livournais ou *Grana* venus s'installer à Tunis au XVIII^e siècle, à des exilés qui acquirent d'importantes positions à Tunis, comme médecins par exemple.

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1. This paper is a study of the various Italian-speaking communities in early nineteenth century Tunis, and of the role which they assumed within Tunisian society*. Drawing primarily upon the little known American consular records of the Department of State, I shall focus on the composition, character, and life of such communities, both in order to show the part they played in the wider context of Tunisian society at the time, and in order to analyze

* I wish to thank here Professor Ibrahim Abu-Lughod, of Northwestern University, who supervised this work, read its first draft, and offered many helpful suggestions at different stages of my research.

their impact during those crucial years which preceded, and prepared for, the reforms in the late 1850's, and the important innovations of Khayr al-Dîn in the 1870's.

Through a reassessment of the consistency and role of these alien groups, I hope to provide a framework of analysis which will eventually deepen our understanding of the complexities of Tunisian society in the first part of the nineteenth century, a period of history which, in the words of the French scholar A. Martel, "still awaits its historian"¹.

To reconstruct adequately a demographic picture of the various Italian-speaking communities in Tunis in the first part of the 19th century is no easy task. The first official statistics were made in the late 1860's and their reliability has been questioned by many authors². Consular statistics for the preceding period were no better ; the Italian-speaking "community" in Tunis was a highly unstable one, seasonal in part, its members falling under the jurisdiction (before 1860) of five Consulates : Sardinia, Tuscany, Naples, France (Roman subjects and, theoretically, all Catholics), and Austria (Lombard-Venitians) : many arrived without passport, lived *incognito* with relatives, and only a few registered their presence at the respective Consulates³.

Most authors agree, however, that by the early 1830's there were about 8 000 Europeans in the Regency ; of these, Michel estimated the Italians were approximately one third, while Loth more cautiously, asserted that they formed "une notable partie" of the European colony⁴. Statistics aside, it seems far more important to consider briefly the composition and origin of these communities⁵.

Until the early 1830's, when the "Italians" represented "a notable share" of the European colony in Tunis, the Bey's kingdom had witnessed the arrival of different groups of Italian-speaking peoples who, by force or by election, were led to settle in the "Barbary Coast". Some were brought in as slaves, and were later freed ; some had escaped justice on the nearby Continent and only sought a temporary refuge ; some had come to stay and settled permanently in the country. Their background, interests, and motivations varied greatly, and it is to these different "communities" that I will turn my analysis.

1. Martel, 1967, p. 13.

2. Loth, 1905, pp. 8,72.

3. Ganiage, 1960, p. 19 ; Loth, 1905, p. 72.

4. Michel, 1941, p. 97 ; Loth, 1905, p. 68.

5. This question seems to be of some importance since it was going to be a source of many future misunderstandings in the years to come. Whenever possible I will refrain from using the term "Italian community". The reason for doing so is twofold : first, it seems improper to keep calling Italian a group of people who were subjects of various European governments at a time when the Italian unity - hence the state- was yet to be achieved. Second, it is my contention that the word "community", with its connotation of a corporate group of people having the same origin and pursuing similar interests, scarcely fits a characterization of the various Italian-speaking groups living in Tunis in the first part of the 19th century. The term "Italian-speaking communities" or similar, would seem to be more representative of the complex social reality of the different alien groups living in the Regency at the time.

2. In the first place, the slave population. By 1816, when Lord Exmouth forced on the Bey peace treaties with Naples and Sardinia⁶, the Regency's long-standing practice of slave-raiding along the Mediterranean coasts had brought to Tunis vast numbers of slaves, most of whom came from the Italian islands and mainland. The *Némoire sur Tunis* of 1788 indicated that most Christian slaves were of Italian origin⁷, while the first American Consul in the Regency, W. Eaton, shortly after arriving, wrote that most slaves in Tunis were Neapolitan subjects⁸ :

"*Naples* has a royal kennel full of dogs - a country full of priests - churches full of gold - and Barbary full of slaves... whenever we go in this country we are saluted : "Give something to a poor slave for the love of God". Ask the wretch to what king he belongs (all slaves here belong to kings) he will say "Il Re di Napoli". "

By 1811 there were 1200 slaves, "Roman, Neapolitan and Sicilian Christians"⁹, still kept in the Regency, and after the treaties of 1816, 800 slaves were freed, mostly Neapolitan and Sardinian subjects¹⁰. The year 1816 marked the official end of Tunisian slave-raiding along the Mediterranean shores ; by then a sizable Italian-speaking community had been formed in Tunis. Some had converted to Islam and had become court functionaries¹¹; some elected to stay after they were freed from slavery, and entered trading and other small business activities ; some joined existing commercial houses or were employed in Consulates as junior clerks.

Of the ex-slaves, by far the most sizable group was that formed by the former inhabitants of the small islands of Tabarca, S. Pietro and S. Antioco (commonly referred to as *Tabarchini*), who had been enslaved in various raids between 1741 and 1815¹². This group of people, mostly dedicated to fishing and the various minor crafts, because of long years spent in the Regency and decreasing contact with the countries of origin, had gradually been absorbed into the cosmopolitan Tunisian society of the time. They had adopted local customs and values, many had converted to Islam, and some of their women had been given in marriage to members of the Bey's family :

6. Cambon, 1948, p. 93.

7. Monchicourt, *RHCF*, 1923, p. 83, The *Némoire* was most likely written by A. Nyssen, then Dutch Consul in Tunis.

8. U.S. State Department, National Archives, *Despatches from the U.S. Consuls in Tunis, 1797-1906* (hereafter SDA), Eaton to Marshall, Dec. 20, 1800. Unless otherwise specified, all such dispatches are sent from Tunis ; the sender is the U.S. Consul in the Regency, and the receiver is the U.S. Secretary of State in Washington.

9. Billon to de Champigny, Tunis, March 3, 1811, in Plantet, 1899 ; doc. 944, p. 491.

10. Cambon 1948, p. 94.

11. Conversion to Islam, however, was not a prerequisite for entering the Bey's service. In 1834, in stating that all trusted servants of the Bey were of Italian extraction, Calligaris added that they were kept at court "in spite... of the fact that none of them had wanted to abjure their Christian faith". Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, : p. 575.

12. About the forced wanderings of the *Tabarchini*, and the different Tunisian raids against them, see De Leone. 1957, pp. 191-9.

in short, they "had come to consider Tunisia as their second home"¹³.

The Sardinian Consul in Tunis, Count Filippi, expressed a severe judgement about them, no doubt being influenced by their unorthodox religious and social habits¹⁴ :

"... without customs, without religion, without the immediate jurisdiction of local authority, without foreign protection... [they] acquire for themselves the means for survival by abandoning all principle, by sacrificing all which is honest..."

In addition to this slave population, a second community had established itself in Tunis since the 17th. century, that of the "Leghorn Jews", also called *Grana*¹⁵. Since the time of their arrival in Tunis to the early 19th. century, the *Grana* succeeded in establishing themselves as the main commercial power group within the Regency. In the words of Ganiage, they had "un véritable monopole des affaires"¹⁶. They were helped in attaining this monopoly by two factors : by the spontaneous "division of labour" provided through the Regency's main economic activity, i.e., the sea war in the Mediterranean, which left the internal market to the Jews ; and by the trading relations which the Leghorn Jews had maintained with their coreligionists on the opposite shores of the Mediterranean.

Evidence for this fact is to be found, among others, in the consular dispatches sent from the U.S. Legation in Tunis at the turn of the 18th century. Consul Eaton, relying on informations "obtained from a principal Hebrew merchant in this city", wrote in 1799¹⁷ :

"The Commerce of Tunis is principally monopolized by the Jews. The hides and waxes of the whole Kingdom, which are considerable articles of exportation, are farmed by a company of merchants composed principally of Jews, called Giornata [Grana], for which they pay the Bey annually sixty thousand piastres... The subjects are compelled to

13. De Leone, 1957, p. 199.

14. Filippi, *RHCF*, 1924, p. 587.

15. *Grana* or *Qrana*, from the arabicized "el-Gorni" or "Qurni", inhabitant of Leghorn (Dessort 1924, p. 132). Historians disagree over the exact date and origin of the Leghorn Jews. De Leone (1957, p. 190) states that they were of Spanish origin and that they came to Tunis "around 1700". Ganiage (1959, p. 153) dates their arrival in Tunis by "the end of the 18th century, beginning of the 19th" and emphasizes in particular their Andalusian extraction, although they had settled in Tuscany since the end of the 16th century. Dessort (1924, p. 131) thinks they migrated to Leghorn after they had been expelled from Genoa in 1598, and from here they migrated to Tunis at the end of the 16th century. Ganiage's dates (turn of the 18th c.) seem to be incorrect since the *Grana* officially separated from the Tunisian Jews around 1710, when they were allowed their own temple, tribunal, butchery and cemetery. See Cazès, 1889, p. 120 ; Dessort, 1924, p. 132 ; Loth, 1905, p. 319 ; Grand-champ, *RT*, 1938, p. 157.

16. Ganiage, 1959, p. 156.

17. SDA, Eaton to Pickering, June 15, 1799. The Hebrew merchant was probably a Tripoline Jew, Azulai, who had been asked "to provide with economy a convenient house with suitable furniture" for the arrival of the U.S. delegation to the Bey in 1799. SDA, Eaton to Pickering, April 15, 1799.

sell the hides to this company... The *Giornata* have had a factory established at Leghorn, whither these raw materials were exported, till the operations of the French in Italy, since which the factory is moved to Messina".

The 19th. century traveller Mac Gill, writing in the second decade of the century, confirmed the commercial predominance of the *Grana*¹⁸ :

"Hides form an article of export from Tunis, of no small consideration... Hides are farmed to a company, who have the sole privilege of sending them out of the country... "

And again¹⁹ :

"The principal of these *appalti* (as they are called) on the articles of export, is called the "giornati" ; and is in the hands of a company of Jews. This *appalto* is upon hides, wool, wax and tobacco... The *Giornati* collect through the state all the hides which are to be found".

Formally, the *Grana* lived secluded from the rest of the Jewish community in Tunis : they had their own schools, temple, internal organization, and their own Rabbi²⁰. Two factors, however, seem important concerning their influence on the larger community. First, in spite of the official separation between the Tunisian Jews and the *Grana* (which ended formally only in 1899), the two communities lived side by side, and the more educated and richer *Grana* could not fail to make a strong impact on the rest of the Jewish community. The *Grana* certainly had an economic influence, because they made the Tunisian Jews participate if not in the profits of their trade, at least in the daily operation of it, thus imparting to them, perhaps unwillingly, the technical "know how" which the *Grana* had imported from Europe²¹. In addition, they had a not indifferent cultural influence, for they stimulated a revival of religious literature and opened schools, thus furthering the spread of literacy²².

Between 1759 and 1886, about one hundred works were printed at Leghorn for the Jewish community of Tunis, written by the Tunisian Rabbis in Hebrew²³. In 1862, three Jews of Tunis printed in Arabic, but with Hebrew characters, the Tunisian code of 1861 "with a printing press made out of pieces brought from Leghorn". It was, according to Vassel, "the first Tunisian work in Arabic language printed in Hebrew characters²⁴". In this sense, the socio-economic impact of the Leghorn Jews on Tunisian society produced not just

18. Mac Gill, 1811, p. 142.

19. Id., p. 161-2. The monopoly on hides and wax was also confirmed by Caronni (1805, p. 100) and at the end of the 18th c. by Nyssen (*RHCF*. 1923, p. 88) writing in 1788.

20. Vassel, *RT*, 1904, p. 287 ; 1946, p. 349 ; Eisenbeth, *RA*, 1952, pp. 155-63.

21. See especially Dessort, 1924, p. 133.

22. *Idem*, pp. 133-34.

23. Vassel, *RT*, 1904, p. 285. A description of these works is contained in Cazès, 1893.

24. Vassel, *RT*, 1904, p. 288.

usury and indifference to the lot of the Jewish community²⁵, rather it represented an important, if limited and indirect, contribution to their cause.

Second, the Spanish origin of the *Grana*, emphasized by French authors, had lost most, if not all, of its relevance during the course of the two centuries when the *Grana* had lived within, or in close contact with, Italian-speaking communities of the peninsula or Tunis. Leghorn was not only the place where they printed their books, it was also the place where they had most of their economic interests and where many of their coreligionists lived.

The richer families sent their children to Italian universities²⁶, and Italian was used among the *Grana* especially in their commercial dealings²⁷. Except for the period between 1822 and 1847, they were under the protection of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany²⁸. It was they, according to Loth, who "gradually came to impose on the other Europeans their language, their customs, their institutions, and lost no occasion to give witness of their fidelity to the mother country²⁹".

Finally, a third, more heterogenous group, variously composed of renegades, merchants, a few professionals and other, less orthodox, exiles, had gradually joined the cosmopolitan Tunisian society and had been absorbed into it. Together, they dominated the Bey's court, the liberal professions and the economy of the country; they maintained the Italian language as the official language of the European community, and as the *lingua franca* of the country. Unknowingly, they prepared the ground for the migrations which were to follow in the third and fourth decade of the 19th century.

"At the Bey's court" writes Loth, "the highest functions seemed to be reserved to Italians, by right of seniority"³⁰. Mariano Stinca, a Neapolitan, was private secretary and interpreter of Bey Hamûda (1782-1814)³¹, while the Bey's "Guardian Basha, or head guard over all the slaves" was "a Neapolitan renegade"³². According to Franck, in 1816 the "internal service of the Palace" was confided to "six Italian lads" who served as servants and pages³³, while Calligaris stated a few decades later that "all the servants of confidence of the Bey... were Sicilian or Neapolitans or originated from Pantellaria³⁴". At the Bardo, the official residence of the Bey, of the two

25. As in Ganiage, 1959, p. 157.

26. Loth, 1905, p. 320 ; Dessort, 1924, p. 133.

27. *Idem*, p. 144.

28. Ganiage, 1959, pp. 157-8 ; De Leone, 1957, p. 191.

29. Loth, 1905, p. 318. See also Sayous, *REI*, 1927, pp. 84-5.

30. Loth, 1905, p. 317.

31. The official title of M. Stinca was that of *bashi-Kasûk*, or "chief of the wardrobe". De Leone, 1957, pp. 180-1 ; Caronni, 1805, p. 101 ; Filippi, *RHCF*, 1924, p. 222.

32. Mac Gill, 1818, p. 33.

33. Franck, 1850, p. 68. Franck, a Frenchman, was the Bey's physician from 1806 to 1815.

34. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, p. 575.

categories of Mamluks, the *mamlûk as-sarâya* (or mamlûk of the serai) and the *mamlûk as-saqîfa* (or mamluk of the vestibule)³⁵, it would seem that the Italian-born slaves filled the first one, the more prestigious, better paid and more influential, even if they were not absent from the second³⁶.

The title of *bashi-kasûk* ("chief of the wardrobe"), which had belonged to Stinca under Hamûda, was given by his successor Mahmûd (1814-1824) to Giuseppe Raffo who was to become the Regency's Minister of Foreign Affairs under the next three Beys³⁷. Husayn Bey (1824-1835) created a new title, that of *bashi-mamlûk* (chief of the Mamluks) for the Sicilian Giovanni Certa, his friend and confidant, who converted to Islam, changed his name into Husayn Khoja, married the Bey's daughter, and became his prime minister until he lost his master's favour³⁸.

By tradition the Bey's health was entrusted to Italian-born doctors, and both the heir to the throne and the Bey's army had their own Italian physician, following a three century-old custom³⁹. The Genoese Mendrici was Hamûda's private doctor and adviser⁴⁰, and another doctor at his court was the Neapolitan Ronchi. Castelnuovo and Lumbroso, two "Italian Israelites", were Ahmad's personal physicians, and Lumbroso accompanied him to Paris in 1846⁴¹. Dr. Nunes-Vais, "a very intelligent Italian Israelite, and a great favourite with his master", was the personal physician of the heir-apparent Muhammad, and accompanied him in the yearly *mahallah*, or tributary expedition, in the late 1840's⁴². In the late 1850's "the doctors were all Italian", according to Dessort⁴³. Still in the mid 1860's most of them were Italians, according to Perry, who notes: "Some of them are scientific and skillful practitioners, and half of them are in the service of the Bey, either as surgeons of the army or as doctors of the court"⁴⁴.

Christian slaves or renegades, merchants and doctors, high-placed mamluks or low-born artisans, these individuals, Italian-born but Tunisian subjects, played a crucial role in the Tunis of the first quarter of the 19th century. At a time when French influence was on the wane⁴⁵, and Italian

35. The first one looked after the internal service of the Bey's palace, the second one presided over its external defence. For a discussion of these terms see Demeerseman, *IBLA*, 1969, pp. 248-53.

36. In 1833, for example, one *awdabûshî* (chief) of the Bardo's "skifa" was a Genoese. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, p. 584.

37. De Leone, 1957, p. 185.

38. A biography of Husayn Khoja is in Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, pp. 570-80.

39. Dessort, 1924, p. 133.

40. Cambon, 1948, p. 82; Plantet, 1899, p. 497.

41. Ganiage, 1959, p. 28; Dessort, 1924, p. 138; Ganiage, *RA*, 1955, p. 156.

42. Davis, 1854, p. 5.

43. Dessort, 1924, p. 144.

44. Perry, 1869, p. 514.

45. See, for instance, Mac Gill, 1818, p. 96.

unity was far from being realized in the nearby peninsula, the Italian-speaking communities of Tunis were able to integrate themselves into Tunisian society without the uncomfortable shadow of a mother country's flag, or the dream of an illusory civilizing mission.

3. They were aided by two factors they themselves had helped to create : the spread of the Italian language in the Regency, and the multiplicity of interpersonal ties which the different communities of Tunis had created among them. I will briefly consider both factors here, and the consequences which derived from them.

According to E. Rossi, beginning with the Muslim conquest of Sicily, a gradual process of linguistic interchange had occurred between the two opposite shores of the Mediterranean : Arabic words were introduced into the Italian language, and Latin and Italian terms were absorbed by the Arabs. By the late Middle Age, "a kind of dialect or *lingua franca*" had been created⁴⁶ and was used in commercial exchange along the southern Mediterranean, while in the North African Regencies, especially Tunis and Tripoli, the continuous presence of thousands of Italian slaves made possible an even greater development and spread of a corrupt form of Italian.

Supporting evidence for this is to be found both in travellers' accounts since the late 16th century, and in archival records. John Covel, visiting Carthage in 1670, writes that he was accompanied by a local guide who spoke "broken *Italian* and *lingua franca*"⁴⁷, while, later on, a Milanese priest, Don Felice Caronni, who was taken prisoner to Tunis at the beginning of the 19th century, related in his *Ragguaglio* the colorful conversations which he had with his captors, all in the make-shift Italian of the Tunisian corsairs⁴⁸. Similarly, the registers of the various European consulates in Tunis were written in Italian for the most part⁴⁹.

To be sure, Italian was, and remained, "the language of trade, sea, and diplomacy"⁵⁰, basically, a communications tool in a polyglot society, whose center of diffusion was the "Franc Quarter" in the capital⁵¹. As first language, it was probably spoken by less than five percent of the population of Tunis, although it was the main language both among the *Grana*⁵² and the Maltese⁵³ who made the bulk of the European population of the time. The rest

46. Rossi, *RCI*, 1928, suppl., p. 143.

47. Covel, 1942, p. 122.

48. Caronni, 1805, *passim*.

49. See, for instance, Grandchamp (1920-30) for the acts of the French Consulate in Tunis, and Martel, (*CT*, 1957, pp. 349-80) for those of the Austrian General Agency.

50. Gallico, 1928, p. 218.

51. Ganiage, 1960, p. 23, n.

52. Dessort, 1924, p. 144.

53. Reclus, 1886, p. 279.

of the population, that is the great majority of the Tunisian inhabitants, spoke the "Arabic of Barbary" which was the "language of the country⁵⁴".

Yet, there was some truth in the statement, made by A. Gallico, that Italian in Tunis was used "from the *piazza* to the Court⁵⁵". Like any makeshift language, Italian was used not only by the European community in Tunis, but by all those who, for one reason or another, were in daily contact with the Europeans. Italian slaves had brought their language into the homes of the rich Tunisians whom they served, and into the fields, the arsenals and all other places where they worked side by side with Tunisians. Some of them were allowed to open taverns and small shops, and to exercise their professions, like pharmacy and medicine⁵⁶.

Furthermore, those slaves, Mamluks and renegades who had worked for years at the Bey's service, had brought their language and some of their customs to court. Capt. de Lyle-Callian, writing to Paris in 1772 after an official visit to Bey Ali (1759-1782), stated that both the Bey and the French Consul spoke Italian between them, and that the Consul had to translate into Italian the message which the French Captain had brought to the Bey⁵⁷. According to Davis, his successor, Bey Hamûda, was "a man of a handsome, shrewd, and penetrating countenance... He reads, writes, and speaks, the Arabic and Turkish languages, and also speaks the "lingua Franca", or Italian of the country⁵⁸".

When Bey Ahmad visited Paris in 1846, Louis Philippe "addressed him in Italian, the only language which they had in common⁵⁹".

Italian was the second language at Court, and it appears to have been used in all official dealings with alien powers, in diplomatic correspondence, and in legal acts. The dispatches of the American Consuls in Tunis after 1797 bear ample evidence of this point. When the U. S. special envoy M. Noah visited the newly elected Bey Mahmûd in 1814, bringing presents and a message from the American President, he wrote in his *Journal*⁶⁰:

54. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, p. 559. He adds though: "On y parle aussi ce qu'on appelle *la lingua franca*, composée d'un mélange barbare de langues de différentes nations, et dont un italien très corrompu est la base". See also Filippi, *RHCF*, 1924, p. 423.

55. Gallico, 1928, p. 231.

56. Rossi, *RCI*, 1928, suppl., p. 144.

57. De Lyle-Callian to de Boynes, Toulon, Nov. 12, 1772, in Plantet, 1899, doc. 39, p. 19. The French Consul was De Sauzieu, who was posted at Tunis from Nov. 1762 to Dec. 1776.

58. Davis, 1818, p. 15.

59. Cambon, 1948, p. 107.

60. SDA, "Journal of proceedings, including pecuniary concerns, commencing Tunis December 16th 1814", encl. in Noah to Monroe, Jan. 12 1815.

"After having kissed his [the Bey's] hand as customary, Mr. Coxe [the U.S. Consul in Tunis] presented me as his successor. Has he brought a letter from the President ? asked the Sapatapa, or Prime Minister, in no very gentle tone. I have, I replied, here it is. He took it, and asked, is it in Italian ? No Sir, it is in English, replied the Chargé des Affaires - If you please I will read it. No, no replied the Prime Minister, I will get it translated".

Throughout the first part of the 19th century most of the diplomatic correspondence exchanged between the Government of the United States and the Regency of Tunis was in Italian. In 1805, when the first Tunisian mission went to the United States to negotiate an indemnity for Tunisian vessels which had been seized by the U.S. Navy, the "credentials" of Sidi Sulayman Mel-limelni, the Tunisian ambassador, were written in Italian, as were the official letters which he brought to Washington from the Bey and his Prime Minister⁶¹. Until the last part of Bey Ahmad's reign, Italian seems to have prevailed as the official language of diplomatic exchange⁶², although Arabic was used increasingly⁶³, and French on occasion⁶⁴. As late as 1854, when U.S. Consul Chandler made his official first visit to Bey Ahmad, the dialogue was carried on "from the Bey to his minister [Raffo] in Arabic, and from the Minister in Italian to Mr. Ferrier [a U.S. aide] who translated to me in English...⁶⁵".

A second factor beside the importance of the Italian language explains, perhaps at a deeper level, both the degree of interaction existing between the different Italian-speaking communities, and the ties which they had with the Tunisian society of the time. In the Regency, members of the Italian communities played a wide variety of roles and the Italian family relationships extended into a vast and enduring network.

According to Ganiage, by the middle of the 19th century, Tunis 'high society' could number "something like thirty families", mostly of Genoese

61. State Department, National Archives, *Notes from the Legation of Tunis in the United States to the Department of State, 1805-1806* (hereafter, SDA, *Notes*), Hamûda to Jefferson, Tunis, July 17 and Aug. 31, 1805 ; and Hoggia [Yûsuf Khoja] to Madison, Sec. of State, Tunis, Aug. 31, 1805.

62. See, for instance, SDA, Mahmûd to Chancy [Commander in Chief of the U.S. Naval Force in the Mediterranean], Sept. 9, 1817 ; Mahmûd to U.S. President [J. Monroe], Sept. 22, 1817 ; Raffo to Heap [U.S. Consul in Tunis], June 23, 1824, or Same to Cons. Payne, Aug. 19, 1844.

63. SDA, Ahmad to Payne, Aug. 26 and Sept. 2,3, 1844, encl. in Payne to Calhoun, Dec. 2 ; 1844 ; Ahmad to U.S. President [F. Pierce], Aug. 16, 1854, encl. in Chandler to Marcy, Aug. 27, 1854 ; Muhammad to U.S. President [F. Pierce], June 6, 1855.

64. See, for instance, SDA, Ahmad to Heap, July 9, 1849.

65. SDA, Chandler to Marcy, July 24, 1854. Even internal correspondence between the American House in Tunis and the various U.S. consular agents in the country was often held in Italian. See, e.g., SDA, Gaspary to Heap, La Goletta, July 3, 1847, and May 31, 1849 ; Mustafa ben Ibrahim to Ferrière, Gerbi [Djerba], Jan, 10, 1854.

and Marseillaise origin⁶⁶. Though small in number, these families had a high sense of familial unity, and filled influential roles at the three strategic points in the Regency, the Court, the European consulates and the trading industry. Furthermore, the diffuse character of their occupational roles allowed them both a wide scope of action and a pursuit of interests which linked their activities with those of their fellow relatives and business partners. Consuls and merchants in particular performed indistinguishable functions, their official roles often being fused and interchangeable. "All the Consuls have the right to enter the trading business" wrote A. Nyssen in 1788⁶⁷, and most Consuls lost no occasion to exercise this right.

Big trading groups like the Gnecco, the Vignale, the Traverso, or the Gandolfo families all had strong connections at Court, in the Consulates, and in sister firms, mostly through marriages. P.A. Gnecco was the wealthiest merchant in Tunis, and built for his family a palace which rivalled in beauty the Bey's⁶⁸. He married two of his daughters to Sardinian consular aides, G.M. Farina and E. Fasciotti⁶⁹. The Vignale were related to the Raffo family and were business partners; A. Traverso married Agnes Werry, daughter of the British Vice-Consul, and one Gandolfo daughter was married to the Bey's secretary, A. Bogo⁷⁰. The story of the Mendrici and the Allegro families offers further examples of the successful integration of Italian-born families into the European community and the local society⁷¹. Almost all French merchants "had married Italian women", and their alliances "formed kinship ties among all important European families in Tunis"⁷². The specialization of the consuls in the Barbary ports, and their recruitment among settled merchants were both the consequence, and the cause, of these dynamic marriage activities⁷³.

In a similar way, an important web of protections, "god-fatherhoods", and family ties was readily created, at court, around the Bey's mamluks, advisers or physicians. The Neapolitan Consul De Martini owed his appointment at the Bey's Court in 1812 not only to his diplomatic abilities but also to his cousinship with M. Stinca, the Bey's favoured slave and private

66. Ganiage, 1960, p. 27.

67. With the exception of that of France. See Monchicourt, *RHCF*, 1923, p. 79.

68. Sebag, *CT*, 1958, p. 164.

69. Not three, as in Ganiage, 1960, p. 26. See De Leone, 1957, p. 240.

70. A. Bogo was official interpreter and an influential member at court for many years. Italian-born but an Austrian subject, he is described in 1842 by U.S. Consul Hodgson as the "acting Secretary for Foreign Affairs" under Bey Ahmad (SDA, Hodgson to Webster, Feb. 15, 1842), while later on he is referred to as "a confidential adviser of the Bey and a member of his Cabinet". SDA, Perry to Seward, Aug. 9, 1862.

71. For the Mendrici, a Genoese family who had strong connections both with the European consulates and with the court's physicians, see De Leone, 1957, pp. 180-1. A masterful account of the gradual integration within Tunisian society of the Allegro family is in Martel, 1967.

72. Ganiage, 1960, p. 26, n.

73. Martel, 1967, p. 22.

secretary at the time. His successful attempts to break the French monopoly on coral fishing along the Tunisian coast was no doubt helped by "the protection of his uncle⁷⁴".

The Sicilian Husayn Khoja, *bashi mamlûk* of Bey Husayn, "loved very much the people of his country, whom he helped in all possible ways⁷⁵", and the Jewish doctor Castelnuovo, Ahmad's own physician, according to Ganiage, "did not forget his coreligionists⁷⁶". In this way, and because of the role which they were able to play at Court, these Italians at the Bey's service were also at the service of their respective communities whom they often favoured, and for whom they became "precious intermediaries" at Court⁷⁷.

This web of family ties reached not only the personnel who surrounded the Bey, but involved the Bey's family as well. Ibn Diyâf, in his chronicle, calls it the *musâhara*, which Demeerseman defines as "family tie through women", or "second stage of ennoblement" of the mamluks⁷⁸. Between 1835 and 1859, three of the ruling Beys had Italian-born wives: Mustafa (1835 - 37) had married a renegade woman from the Sardinian island of S. Pietro, by whom he had his son and successor Ahmad⁷⁹; Ahmad Bey (1837-55) was himself married to an Italian⁸⁰, and so was Husayn's eldest son, Muhammad Bey (1855-59), who had married another Sardinian subject from S. Antioco⁸¹.

Through the *musâhara*, the Bardo's favoured mamluks were "ennobled" by bringing them into the Bey's own family. Husayn Bey had given one of his daughters to his Sicilian *bashi-mamlûk*⁸²; G. Raffo was Mustafa's brother-in-law and uncle of Ahmad Bey⁸³. These ties strengthened both the political importance of the people so ennobled, and at the same time favoured their own relatives and protégés. The intimacy with the Bey was the best, if temporary, road to the highest spheres of government.

74. Billon to Duc de Bassano, Tunis, Oct. 25, 1813, in Plantet, 1899, doc. 1005, pp. 511-12.

75. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, p. 575.

76. Ganiage, 1959, p. 160.

77. Martel, 1967, p. 25.

78. Demeerseman, *IBLA*, 1969, p. 254. The first stage was *tabanni*, or adoption.

79. Filippi, *RHCF*, 1924, p. 582.

80. Michel, 1941, p. 113.

81. De Leone, 1957, p. 236, n. In 1798 a Tunisian raid against the island of S. Pietro had brought to Tunis 830 Sardinian slaves (of whom more than half were women), while in 1815 an analogous raid at S. Antioco had brought another 158 Sardinian subjects to Tunis as slaves. (De Leone, 1957, pp. 195, 198). Although most of them were later repatriated, according to Filippi, "Many members of the Bey's family married Sardinian girls of this origin". Filippi, *RHCF*, 1924, p. 580, n.

82. Filippi, *RHCF*, 1924, p. 584; Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, p. 574.

83. SDA, Nicholson to Cass, July 7, 1860. The procedure was far from being unique in the Regency. M. Khaznadar, Tunisian prime minister until 1873, had married Ahmad's sister, and had given his daughters to important court dignitaries, the generals Khayr al-Dîn, Husayn, and Rustam. Another general, Zarruk, had married Muhammad as-Sâdiq's sister. Demeerseman, *IBLA*, 1969, p. 254; Martel, 1967, p. 78.

Thus Husayn's *bashi-mamlûk*, who was "the only mamluk who enjoyed the favour to dine at his [the Bey's] table", was elevated through the marriage of his master's daughter "to the post of Second Vizier and in this quality he administered all the affairs of the Regency⁸⁴". G. Raffo was the most important court dignitary under three Beys, and his position at Court, heightened by his family tie with the ruling dynasty, was so strong that even the newly elected Bey Muhammad, who belonged to a different branch of the Husseinite family, "could not ignore this parentage with his predecessors⁸⁵". Muhammad Bey himself had married an Italian whose brother, a Sardinian renegade, had been appointed *qâ'id* of Nefzawa, a provincial governorship in the south of the Regency⁸⁶. As suggested by Demeerseman, such ties had important and well-recognized consequences : "Brothers and sons-in-law of the Bey, or of his ministers, will fill the most important posts. The government of the country will become a family affair⁸⁷".

4. In the early 1820's and 1830's, when two new and numerically more important migratory waves occurred from the close-by Italian peninsula, a long-standing tradition of social and political integration made it possible for the new migrants to insert themselves into Tunisian society with relative ease. The newcomers represented two aspects of the Italian presence in the country : a labour force, composed mostly of small artisans, peasants and fishermen (but also of a few merchants and professionals as well), who served to diversify further the country's economy ; and an intellectual force, mostly represented by political refugees, who contributed both to the first efforts at modernizing Tunisian society and also to an intellectually more sophisticated European community in Tunis.

After the 1816 peace treaties, a slow but gradual process of labour migration took place from Italy to Tunisia. The causes of these new migrations varied considerably. The official end of piracy in the Mediterranean and the establishment of peaceful relations along its southern shores had made the Regency territories safe once again, and the natural interchange between the two continents was allowed to resume its traditional course. Overpopulation, lack of work, chronic poverty, social and economic injustice, a failing administration : all the century-old problems of Southern Italy and the small islands in the Mediterranean gave further stimuli to these migrations⁸⁸.

In the Regency, the new migrants found a climate and seasonal cycle similar to that of Italy, the same agricultural products to cultivate, better

84. Filippi, *RECF*, 1924, p. 584.

85. Martel, 1967, p. 78.

86. De Leone, 1957, p. 199, n.

87. Demeerseman, *IBLA*, 1969, pp. 254-5.

88. Loth, 1905, pp. 10-11 ; Frascara, *NA*, 1903, p. 494.

fishing coasts, and especially important, more freedom from authority. In the words of Loth⁸⁹:

"Workers, farmers, traders, find here not only better economic conditions, but also a small fiscal burden and a greater individual liberty. From a still completely feudal and strongly hierarchical society, they come to a democratic milieu where each one of them can make for himself a honorable living with his work..."

Most of the immigrants were Sicilians, from the western point of the island, and inhabitants of the small islands around the Italian coast: Favignana, Pantelleria, Procida, Carloforte⁹⁰. Like the Maltese, who had come to the Regency in great numbers, they crossed the strait between Tunis and Marsala aboard small fishing boats, often with little money, no passport, and many relatives. Their number is difficult to ascertain for the period up until the late 1860's, when the first official statistics were made.

A few generalizations, however, may be safely drawn. The migratory wave had two main origins, and two distinct characters: the smaller group came from Northern Italy, was rather temporary in character and professionally more qualified⁹¹; the larger group from Southern Italy, tended to be rather unskilled and had a more permanent character⁹². The number of Sicilian migrations rose rapidly especially after 1826⁹³. These migrations had a seasonal character at first, but then gradually became permanent. They were attracted mostly by the new fishing activities along the Tunisian coasts, the commercial boom of the port of La Goletta, and the new demand for agricultural products (especially olive oil, corn, and wool) and raw materials. The coral fisheries of the Genoese Bagigalupi around Bizerte, and the *tonnare* (tuna fisheries) of two other Genoese, Bonfiglio at Monastir and Raffo at Cap Bon, drew large numbers of Sicilian fishermen to the Tunisian shores every year⁹⁴.

89. Loth, 1905, p. 66. The picture of a "democratic" Regency, as opposed to "feudal" Italian states, is of course an idealization of the Regency's political situation. There is no doubt, however, that in the more centralized Italian states authority, both central and provincial, was enforced to a higher degree than in the looser and more decentralized Regency.

90. Ganiage, 1960, pp. 20-21; 1959, p. 44.

91. At about this time (ca. 1816) arrived the "Genoese merchants": the Gnecco and the Vignale in Tunis, the Costa at Bizerte, the Calamarino at Sousse. G. Terzi, a Lombard, arrived in 1826 and built Tunis' first theater. C. Borgia refugee from Velletri, was granted permission by Bey Mahmūd to conduct archeological excavations. Two Sardinian Jews, Treves and Jaracha, were operating silk factories. See, De Leone, 1957, pp. 200-1.

92. Yver, *AG*, 1897, pp. 129-30.

93. Michel, 1941, p. 53.

94. Bonfiglio had started his fishing activities between 1817 and 1820, while G. Raffo was given his fishing concession by the Bey in 1826. The Raffos would renew their concession periodically until 1901. Every year they would employ about 180 fishermen, mostly from Trapani, for this purpose. Later on they drew their labour force from among the Sicilians who had settled in the Regency on a permanent basis. See Ganiage, 1960 (a), p. 14 f.

These labour migrations had a further increase with the French occupation of Algiers in 1830, and continued steadily in the next decades. By the early 1850's they had changed considerably the demographic structure of the European communities in more than one city. L. Paladini, visiting Tunis in 1849, found Tunis inhabited "mostly by Italians", a statement which was clearly exaggerated but which is important because it conveys the atmosphere of the Tunisian capital in the late 1840's⁹⁵. Some localities were assuming an Italian-looking tone ; La Goulette was slowly being transformed into a "Sicilian village"⁹⁶, Monastir and Mahdiah's European population was composed "mainly of Italian and Maltese" ; the same held true for Sousse and for Sfax⁹⁷.

According to Loth, the "minimum number of Italians established in Tunisia" by 1856 was 4 200, three quarters of whom were probably Sicilians⁹⁸. Most of them (42 % of the active population) were engaged in construction work, as masons (27 %), carpenters (13 %) and painters. Roughly 18 % were sailors and fishermen, less than 8 % were traders, shop-owners or keepers, and 5 % were millers, bakers and noodle makers. On the whole, about 88 % of the Italians were engaged in manual work⁹⁹.

The modernization of the country under Bey Ahmad provided new employment opportunities, for the naval industries, the arsenals, the new factories, all needed skilled labour. At court, "the great dignitaries of the Palace had, like the Prince, their credited doctor, Italian or Tuscan Jew, a secretary, a cook or a barber, French or Italian". Like Raffo, "they entrusted the building or keeping of their palaces, or of their country houses, to groups of Sardinian or Sicilian masons"¹⁰⁰.

The new impulse given to trade affected the port of La Goletta which increased its commercial exchange manyfold in the late 1820's and early 1830's. The states of Sardinia, Naples and Tuscany by themselves accounted for almost half of this exchange. U.S. Consul Heap, for instance, reporting arrivals at La Goletta in the early 1830's, listed 312 Sardinian, Neapolitan, and Tuscan boats out of a total of 566 in 1833, and 206 out of 366 in 1835¹⁰¹.

95. Paladini, 1897, p. 87. He also stated that Italians in Tunis numbered 9-10 000 which appears to be an inflated figure. Id., p. 153. *Contra*, Loth, 1905, pp. 68-9.

96. Ganiage, 1959, p. 46.

97. Despois, 1955, pp. 187, 190-2 ; De Leone, 1957, p. 244.

98. Loth, 1905, p. 72. The total European population of Tunisia at the same date seems to have been around 15 000, of whom about 7 000 were British-subject but mostly Italian-speaking Maltese. Id., p. 69 ; Ganiage, 1959, p. 44.

99. These percentages are given by Ganiage (1960, p. 25, n.) and relate to the time period 1845-64. The sample, however, was taken exclusively from parish archives in Tunis, and included only 333 families. Id., pp. 11-18.

100. Id., p. 21.

101. SDA, "Abstract from the agents' report of arrivals at the Goletta from 1st January to the 31st December 1833", encl. in Heap to Lane, Jan. 4, 1834 ; and for the year 1835, encl. in Heap to Forsyth, Jan. 7, 1836. The volume of trade is not given by Heap for these years, so that these numbers represent merely the arrival of Italian-manned boats at La Goletta, rather than the volume of effective trade with the Italian states.

The new arrivals and their economic activities in the Regency could not but provoke economic change and differentiation within Tunisian society. The most visible change was the dissolution of the monopoly by the *Grana* over most trading activities of the country. By the middle of the 19th century the situation had changed considerably : the "grand commerce" was now in the hands of Genoise merchants and their French counterparts from Marseille¹⁰².

The *Grana* had lost their trade monopoly to a new class of merchants, and their local business activities were now challenged by the new migrations of laborers and artisans from Italy. The recent migrants appear to have been less exclusive in their dealings with the local population than the Leghorn Jews, and more willing to integrate themselves with the society which had accepted them. Together with the other Italian-speaking communities, they laid the ground for the last "migration" which I will consider here, that of the political exiles who migrated to Tunis in the first part of the 19th century in search of a freedom of action and thought which had been denied them in their home-countries.

5. Between the 1830's and the late 1840's the North African Regencies were, according to the Neapolitan historian P. Colletta, those "Barbar kingdoms which, alone in this civilized age, gave a kind asylum to refugees¹⁰³". Three waves of political refugees, or *Carbonari*, followed the Risorgimental "moti" or uprisings, in the near-by peninsula : after 1820-21, during the period 1834-48, and after 1848 till the late 1850's. The *Carbonari* came either individually or in small groups, at times shipped off by the hundreds by their own governments who would charter a special boat, fill it with "undesirable elements", and send it off to the Regency. After the 1820-21 "moti", more than 400 political refugees from Naples were thus sent to Tunis, and after the disruptions of 1848, 200 Tuscan subjects found refuge there¹⁰⁴.

Quite understandably, the Beys were not altogether pleased with these undesired "gifts" with which the Italian Princes, not always graciously, presented them. The Beys usually allowed the *Carbonari* to stay, however, provided the respective consulates would guarantee both their basic subsistence and their behaviour. In 1827, U.S. Consul Coxe informed the State Department that¹⁰⁵ :

102. Ganiage, 1959, p. 156.

103. Colletta, 1930, vol. III, p. 347.

104. Michel, 1941, pp. 26, 225.

105. SDA, "Extracts from the Journal kept in the Consulate of the U.S. at Tunis", July 1st to Dec. 31st 1827, encl. in Coxe to Clay, Feb. 18, 1828 (The entry is for Aug. 15, 1827). The sum of 12 ducats monthly seems to have been the standard stipend paid by the governments of the peninsula to their "illegal opposition members". In Aug. 1824, 43 Sicilian subjects were already "on welfare" (Michel, 1941, p. 42) ; in 1834 they were 14 (Id., p. 97). It should be remembered, however, that only a minor part of the exiles were granted such facility.

"A Neapolitan vessel of war came in today bringing a number of exiled Carbonari, of whom there are at present in Tunis nearly one hundred, there are but a few men of education or political influence among them ; the Bey in the first instance refused to permit them to remain here unless the Neapolitan government would provide for their subsistence ; the King of Naples has accordingly authorized his Consul here to pay to each exile twelve ducats monthly".

The length of stay of the *Carbonari* in the Regency varied considerably, but on the whole, they were a highly fluctuating group. The great majority of them only stayed a few months and returned to Italy as soon as permission was granted, or when they were officially "pardoned" by their governments. Many of them, however, stayed either because their reentry to the peninsula was not allowed, or because they found in the Regency a climate which was more congenial to their interests and activities.

Together they animated Tunis life for more than three decades. Whatever their particular reasons for coming to Tunis or for staying there, they were the closest of the Italian-speaking communities at the capital. They shared similar feelings and ideals, and had fought for the same basic rights against the Restoration regimes which had persecuted and exiled them. They were nationalist revolutionaries of the post-Napoleonic period, had liberal feelings, and for the most part, were pro-Mazzini and favoured a republican rather than a monarchical form of government for their country¹⁰⁶. They were the radicals of their time. Their presence in the Regency during the first part of the 19th century had a considerable impact not only on the Italian Risorgimento, but also on the Regency's first attempts at modernization. While the first aspect has been studied by many authors¹⁰⁷, the second one still awaits an adequate analysis. What follows is a limited attempt to work in this direction.

Consul Coxe's assertion that there were "but a few men of education or political influence" among the *Carbonari* should not be taken at face value. The Risorgimental "moti" were a product of an educated bourgeoisie's disaffection with the reactionary governments of the times. Their leaders were mostly intellectuals and military officers, and the Tunisian exiles generally reflected this background. The Sardinians were almost all sons of the high bourgeoisie¹⁰⁸ and, although there were undoubtedly workers and artisans among the refugees, the community of political refugees was the most intellectually oriented of the Italian-speaking groups.

In 1828 two Neapolitan refugees, L. Visconti and L. La Rotonda, opened the first private school in Tunis. It consisted mainly of Italian lessons which the two refugees would give to children of their community and to young Tunisians¹⁰⁹. In 1831 a political exile from Leghorn, P. Sulema, together

106. Michel, 1941, p. 279.

107. Notably, Michel, 1941 ; Riggio, *RSRI*, 1951.

108. Michel, 1941, p. 54.

109. Id., p. 34. See also, Arnoulet, *RA*, 1954, pp. 141-3.

with his sister Ester opened a second school to provide for the increasing educational needs of the European community of Tunis¹¹⁰. According to Gallico, Sulema's school absorbed in particular the Israelite children, not just those of the *Grana*, however, but also "indigenous Jews, who did not have their own schools¹¹¹". The school started with 15 boys and 7 girls but soon the increased number of applications made it necessary to enlarge both the original facilities and the faculty. Sulema thus fused his school with the newly born Collège Bourgade in the early 1840's. Under the direction of the Abbé Bourgade, the school increased its attendance to 2-300 students and lasted until 1863, when it was absorbed by the newly opened Christian Brothers' schools. The teaching language was Italian, but French and Arabic were also taught and the first elements of Latin and Greek were given¹¹².

In the early 1840's a new school was opened by three other Italians¹¹³ and continued its activities until 1863, when Bey Muhammad as Sâdiq granted some land to the Italian government to build its official "Collegio Italiano¹¹⁴". In the late 1820's and the 1830's these schools offered the only westernized and lay educational facilities in the Regency. The Collège Bourgade was opened by the French in the early 1840's¹¹⁵, while the British made little effort to provide schooling for their Maltese subjects, who at first attended the Italian schools and later were sent to the Christian Brothers' schools.

Tunis had its standing theater too, aptly called "Cartaginese". Built by G. Terzi, a political exile, in 1826, this theater contributed to the peculiarly wordly tone of the capital in the 19th century, and gave Tunis the prestigious title "Paris of Barbary¹¹⁶". The theater hosted musical and literary productions ; the comedians, the singers, the director and his staff were all Italian, many coming from their homeland on specific "tournées". The hall was far from adequate and the seats were simple straw chairs ; however, the prices were reasonable¹¹⁷. On the whole, the artistic performances of the Regency "would hardly delight a refined audience", according to U.S. Consul Perry, an opinion confirmed by Chevalier de Hesse Wartegg, who remarked that the musical events of the theater were "not exactly on a level with Covent Garden¹¹⁸". Yet, the few boxes and the stalls were always taken. Indeed, it was "*bon ton* to possess, besides carriage and riding horses,

110. De Leone, 1957, p. 202 ; Ziadeh, 1962, p. 18.

111. Gallico, *RI*, 1928, p. 83.

112. Loth, 1905, p. 376.

113. Morpurgo, Salone and Luisada. Dessort has it started in 1840 (1924, p. 166), Gallico in 1845 (*RI*, 1928, p. 84).

114. Dessort, 1924, p. 166.

115. *Id.*, pp. 164-8.

116. Michel, 1941, p. 54.

117. Dessort, 1924, pp. 172-3. See also, Dunant, 1858, p. 250.

118. Perry, 1869, p. 515 ; Hesse Wartegg, 1882, p. 181.

a box in this miniature theater¹¹⁹. In addition, "a few barely respectable painters and photographers" and "several amateur pianists and musicians, mostly Italians" represented the "fine arts of Europe" in Tunis¹²⁰.

If the artistic "happenings" of the Regency did not appeal to the sophisticated taste of Western diplomats and casual observers, yet they provided a form of cultural experience, stage performing, which was completely new in the Regency and was yet to develop in the Arab world¹²¹.

Both the contemporary chronicle written by the Tunisian intellectual and statesman, Ibn Diyâf, and the recent studies by Père Demeerseman¹²², have demonstrated the cultural vitality of the Regency in the 19th century, and the importance of Tunis as a crucial Islamic cultural center in North Africa. If Tunis was the Islamic "Versailles de l'époque¹²³", it was also the North African capital where a westernized and modernizing élite acted under the influence of cultural currents coming from the West, whose first intermediaries were to be found among the Italian-speaking communities in Tunis.

The derogatory statements frequently made both by travellers and residents of the time criticizing the Regency's social and political life often show a remarkable lack of knowledge and understanding. For instance, Hesse Wartegg's statement that the Regency was a country "without newspapers and without books¹²⁴" is contradicted both by the numerous publications which circulated among the Tunisian Jews at the time, and by the works of Islamic learning which radiated from the Zaytûna Mosque and the other religious centers in the Regency, like Kairwan, Gafsa or Sfax¹²⁵.

In fact, the development of newspapers was far from absent in pre-protectorate Tunisia. Once again, it was the *Carbonari*'s community which provided the first stimulus. In 1833, a local printing press was set up by a political refugee, G. Romeo¹²⁶, and it was from this press that the first Tunisian newspaper, the *Giornale di Tunisi e Cartagine* saw the light on March 21, 1838. Unfortunately, the available data about this newspaper are very scattered; its editor and subsequent issues have left no trace. We only know that the first issue was printed in Italian, that it praised "our young

119. Id., p. 181.

120. Perry, 1869, p. 515.

121. The first Arabic play on stage was written by Mârûnal-Naqqâsh (1817-1885) after visiting Italy and seeing for the first time a play performed on the stage. See Abu-Lughod, 1963, pp. 70-1.

122. Demeerseman, *IBLA*, 1967, pp. 1-12; 1969, pp. 17-36, 241-72; 1970, pp. 69-101, 121.

123. Demeerseman, *IBLA*, 1970, p. 86.

124. Hesse Wartegg, 1882, p. 143. For the latent prejudices of a western Consul, see SDA, Nicholson to Cass, July 7, 1860.

125. Demeerseman, 1970, pp. 84-7.

126. Michel, 1941, p. 92; Marchitto, 1942, p. 23.

Prince Ahmad", and that it claimed in its editorial the approval of the Bey and of the European consuls¹²⁷.

Whether or not this freedom was soon abused, it appears that the publication of the Journal was suspended after the first issue. In the early 1850's another refugee named Doria, made a second unsuccessful attempt to print a newspaper in Tunis¹²⁸, but no local paper appears to have been allowed until the next decade¹²⁹. In 1860, however, Muhammad as Sâdik allowed the publication of "a weekly newspaper, which made its first appearance on the first of May in Italian¹³⁰", while by 1863 an "Arabic journal, printed here under government auspices" was circulated in Tunis giving weekly summary of the news "with liberal comments¹³¹".

In July 1864 U.S. Consul Perry informed the State Department of the existence of an "official Arab journal which is edited by an ardent friend of America and contains some piquant articles on the slavery question and a weekly summary of American news¹³²". This journal was probably the same publication which Hesse Wartegg contemptuously listed in 1882 as the "official paper called *Rayed el Tuniste* [al-râid al-tûnisi]" and which allegedly contained "nothing but panegyrics of the First Minister and long lists of promotions and appointments¹³³". Finally, European newspapers arrived in Tunis with the mail¹³⁴, and clandestine publications about the struggle for constitutional rights in the near-by continent were sent to Tunis by two illustrious exiles, Fabrizi in Malta and Mazzini in London¹³⁵, and were circulated among the political refugees.

The lack of newspapers in Tunis until 1860, however, does not appear to have put any effective stop to the circulation of ideas and opinions among the different communities of the capital. The discussion of local issues and important events, in the absence of newspapers, found expression in writings

127. See note by R. Gallico in Dessort, 1924, pp. 113-4. Gallico had in his possession a copy of the Journal.

128. Michel, 1941, p. 365.

129. SDA, Nicholson to Cass, Jan. 28, 1860.

130. SDA, Nicholson to Cass, July 7, 1860. It was probably "il Corriere di Tunisi" which continued its publication until 1881. Michel, 1941, p. 371; Marchitto, 1942, p. 35.

131. SDA, Perry to Seward, May 2, 1863, and Aug. 8, 1863.

132. SDA, Same to Same, July 30, 1864. The name of the editor appears in a later dispatch as "Mr. Carletti, Editor of the Arabic Journal". SDA, Perry to Seward, Dec. 7, 1864.

133. Hesse Wartegg, 1882, p. 143. The paper *al-râid al-tûnisi*, according to Ziadeh (1963; pp. 16-7), "had been appearing, though irregularly, for fourteen years" before Khayr al-Dîn's arrival to power in 1873. Of the other newspaper, about which Hesse Wartegg wrote, the "*Ennuzhat-ul-Khairia*, a kind of Tunisian *Almanach de Gotha*, which was printed in Italian", and which "ceased to be published after 1877", very little is known, this being the only mention I could find in the literature. See Hesse Wartegg, 1882, p. 143.

134. Ganiage, *CT*, 1955, p. 395.

135. Michel, 1941, pp. 305-6; Marchitto, 1942, p. 32.

posted on walls, and in leaflets left or posted at convenient meeting places, like cafés or clubs. Thus, in 1844, on the occasion of the much debated trial of the Maltese Paolo Xuereb, accused of killing the Muslim Dragoman of the British Consulate and a fellow Maltese, public discussion of the case was heightened by such placards.

U.S. Consul Payne, in sending an English translation of two such writings to the State Department, stated¹³⁶ :

"There are no newspapers in Tunis, and all the mischief attempted elsewhere by anonymous paragraphs, is sought to be done here by writings posted on walls, [and] posted or dropped in coffee houses. On the morning of Saturday, March 9th [1844], there appeared in this way papers to the following effect, which are given as translated from the Italian and Maltese..."

The placards, which contained strong criticism of the British Consul, must have worried the Bey who sent a circular letter to all the Consuls stating that¹³⁷ :

"during these last days, there have been affixed to walls certain writings in the Christian language".

which be condemned because they contained :

"indiscreet sentences impugning the honour of persons attached to us, wherein there are unbecoming expressions, and altogether a spirit tending to much harm".

The warning however was not heeded, since two days later another poster was affixed to public walls and three new ones appeared during the trial's audiences the following month¹³⁸.

Posted writings, European newspapers, and clandestine publications from exiled *Carbonari* contributed to the discussion of current news and kept Tunis in touch with the events of the outside world. The Arabic Journal of Tunis, for example, was praised by U.S. Consul Perry for "the support given to the cause of freedom, as opposed to slavery" and for the liberal stands which it took concerning the American civil war of the 1860's¹³⁹. The war, and the question of slavery since its abolition in the Regency in the early 1840's¹⁴⁰, appear to have found early defenders among educated Tunisians. General Husayn, ex-President of the Tunisian Municipality and one of the

136. SDA, Payne to Upshur, March 25, 1844.

137. SDA, Ahmad Pasha Bey to Payne, March 9, 1844, encl. in Payne to Upshur, March 25, 1844.

138. The first three were in Italian, the last one was in French, probably inspired by French Consul Lagaud. SDA, Payne to Upshur, April 3 and 29, 1844.

139. SDA, Perry to Seward, Dec. 7, 1864.

140. SDA, Heap to Webster, Aug. 5, 1841, and Jan. 28, 1842.

Bey's Ministers, while visiting Paris in the early 1860's, engaged in a long defence of the abolitionists' cause with a "distinguished American politician¹⁴¹".

"The African of Barbary" -so related Consul Perry to the State Department in caustic terms - "was so hard of comprehension that he could not appreciate the benign influence of slavery though he complimented the rhetoric and zeal employed in its defence".

The same general, who was depicted by Perry as "one of the most respected and worthy men of the regency", later wrote a public letter to the U.S. Consul exhorting the American people not to harbour the institution of slavery, which had produced "so many evils in the world¹⁴²".

A second "institution" which has usually been underestimated by observers of the Tunisian scene in the 19th century was free-masonry. Yet Consul Perry listed it "among the educational instrumentalities of the place" and as embracing "among its members Christians, Musulmans and Jews, bringing into fraternal relations those who would otherwise have no intercourse or fellowship¹⁴³". Masonic lodges were created in Tunis by Italian political refugees. The first lodge was set up in 1839, and appears to have included in its membership educated Tunisians. A second, set up by the Sicilian A. Montano under the name 'I Figli di Cartagine', was created two years later, in 1841¹⁴⁴. According to Michel, in 1858 two lodges were created in Tunis¹⁴⁵, and by the late 1860's Perry listed "several lodges", one of which, "Cartagine e Utica", was "founded a third of a century ago... [and] alone [was] efficiently sustained in 1867¹⁴⁶". Other lodges were set up in the interior and in the cities of the coast. On the whole it would seem that these lodges, though their fortunes were not uniform and their membership fluctuating, served the important purpose of creating a network of under-ground political activities which were joined by "a few of the most liberal Mussulmans¹⁴⁷".

Although their impact on Tunisian life has never been adequately examined, it would appear that the political potential of these lodges was greater

141. SDA, Perry to Seward, Dec. 12, 1862.

142. The original Arabic text was translated into English by Consul Perry and Mr. Carletti, the editor of the Arabic Journal, and sent as enclosure in Perry to Seward, Dec. 8, 1864. The letter was later published in various European newspapers and much publicized. A French translation appeared in *L'Europe* of Frankfurt in two parts, July 18 and 21, 1865. In sending clips of the article to the State Department, the U.S. Consul wrote: "How the letter found its way into the French and Italian Journals, I know not. It has been printed entirely in some dozen different papers with various comments. It was first printed and circulated here in the Arab language". SDA, Perry to Seward, Aug. 24, 1865.

143. Perry, 1869, p. 542.

144. Michel, 1941, pp. 120, 131.

145. The two lodges were the "Cartaginense" under Vigna, and "Perseveranza" under Sulema. Michel, 1941, pp. 120, 131.

146. Perry, 1869, p. 542.

147. Id., p. 542; Martel, 1967, p. 84.

than is commonly believed¹⁴⁸. Their leaders, though "not highly educated men" were "liberal and progressive", and the lodge "Cartagine e Utica" in particular was formed by "active men who take note of passing events and sympathize in (sic) the progressive movements of the age¹⁴⁹". That this lodge was still politically active by the mid 1860's, and that its interests were not purely parochial, was shown by its active interest during the much debated American civil war. In May 1865, when the news of President Lincoln's assassination reached Tunis, a delegation from this lodge presented an official address at the American Consulate in Tunis expressing sorrow for the fate of the U.S. President¹⁵⁰. Later, the lodge petitioned Washington, through its representative in Tunis, asking that the life of the confederate leader J. Davis be spared in the name of humanity¹⁵¹.

6. The Masonic lodges were not the only place in the Regency where political refugees and educated Italians and Tunisians would meet and cooperate. Possibly the greatest impact of the refugees' presence in Tunis was to be felt at court, in the administration, and in the army, where many of them entered the Bey's service continuing a tradition of social integration which, as we have seen, had distinguished the Regency in the past. By 1834 two Piedmontese officers, L. Calligaris and B. di Glory, had entered the Bey's service and were helping to restructure and modernize the Bey's army¹⁵². Both officers played a vital role in the Regency. Calligaris planned,

 148. *Contra*, Ganiage (CT, 1955, p. 396) : "La vie politique est nulle. Deux loges maçonniques perpétuaient mal chez les Italiens le souvenir des luttes et des révolutions de la péninsule".

149. Perry, 1869, p. 542.

150. The address, which was forwarded to the State Department, was dated May 12, 1865, and was signed by Dr. A. Mugnaini, I. Santi, Dr. G. Zerafa, L. Falca, and G.B. Gioja. In the address they called themselves "free and accepted Masons in this city". SDA, Perry to Hunter (acting Secr. of State), May 19, 1865.

151. The petition was signed by "G.B. Gioja, Secretary", Zerafa and Mugnaini. SDA, Gioja to Perry, Aug. 19, 1865, encl. in Perry to Seward, Aug. 24, 1865.

152. Since October 1811, when Bey Hamûda first attempted to liquidate its Turkish militia (SDA, Coxe to Monroe, Oct. 20, 1811) to gain more independence for the throne, different attempts to reorganize the Regency's army were made by his successors. The most important reforms, however, were introduced under the reign of Bey Ahmad. Ahmad's attempts to modernize his own army, reflecting his tenacious aspiration to gain a *de facto* independence from the Porte, were badly misjudged by western observers. Typical was the following reaction by U.S. Consul Payne : "The Bey has a military mania ; he affects, on a small scale, the Napoleon ; he has never yet had so good an opportunity as now offers for showing off, and he is surrounded by mercenary parasites who are not reluctant to encourage the great openings for peculation and pilfering afforded to them by their Majesty's propension for soldierly parade". (SDA, Payne to Upshur, Nov. 25, 1843). Consul Heap later confirmed his predecessor's judgement accusing the Bey of nourishing "a foolish passion for 'playing at soldiers'". (SDA, Heap to Buchanan, Jan. 2, 1847). French authors have especially emphasized the role played by their compatriots in restructuring the Regency's army since the early 1830's (See, Martel, CT, 1956, pp. 373, 378-9, 394-5 ; Ganiage, 1959, p. 113-4 ; Hugon, RT, 1923, p. 294 ; Mantran, 1961, p. XXXIII ; Marty, RT, 1935, pp. 171-208, 309-46). It would seem, however, that French influence on military reforms started in the mid 1840's, increasing rapidly only after Bey Ahmad's visit to Paris in 1846 (SDA, Payne to Upshur, March 1, 1844 ; Heap to Buchanan, Jan. 2, 1847).

created and directed for twelve years the first military school of the country, and di Glory was the Bey's "principal military instructor" until 1840, when he died suddenly of a sun stroke while accompanying Bey Ahmad's military expedition in the interior¹⁵³.

Other exiled officers soon joined the two Piedmontese : Pinelli, who instructed the Bey's troops between 1838 and 1840, De Cristofaro and two other unknown officers, who arrived in the early 1840's, and del Carretto, who taught at the Military School for eleven years till 1852¹⁵⁴, when the growing French influence in the Regency required a French director and French instructors for the School. In 1854, when the unfortunate expeditionary corps was sent to Crimea in support of the Ottoman forces, Dr. Mugnaini, a Tuscan exile who had helped fight the cholera epidemic of 1848, was appointed medical inspector of the Tunisian troops, while another Italian, Dotallievi, was in charge of the ambulance service¹⁵⁵.

The most important contribution to Tunisia's modernizing efforts in the 1830's and the 1840's however, was that given by the group of Italian-born officers and instructors who, under the direction of Calligaris, set up the Regency's Military School, or *Scuola Politecnica Militare*¹⁵⁶. In a country which, from a military standpoint, had "neither school nor experience¹⁵⁷", the idea of a military institution, modeled after the famous Eski Serai of Constantinople, was proposed by Calligaris as early as 1834¹⁵⁸. The School, however, officially started only in 1840. Calligaris himself, beside being its director and planning all of its regulations, taught mathematics and military art. Under him a British officer, Delcassel, taught artillery and topography, the Frenchman Verrier taught drilling, and various Italian officers taught French and Italian language (Troani), equitation (Visconti), design and calligraphy (Trapani), and other courses at different stages, (del Carretto, Falca, the French Yeyer)¹⁵⁹. Arabic language and literature were taught by

153. SDA, G.H. Heap to S.D. Heap, July 25, 1840 (G.H. Heap, who was S.D. Heap's son, was acting U.S. Consul in his father's absence from Tunis), encl. in Heap to Forsyth, Oct. 10, 1840.

154. Michel, 1941, pp. 122, 131, 140, 324-5.

155. Q. Mugnaini was granted by the Bey, in acknowledgement for his services to the Regency, the Tunisian Nishan Iftikhar Order. He left the country in 1860, with the advent of Italian unity. Michel, 1941, pp. 227, 294 ; De Leone, 1957, p. 235, n.

156. The school had different Arabic names : *Maktab al 'Askar* (military school) according to Calligaris, *Maktab harbi* (school of war) according to Ibn Diyaf, and *Maktab al 'ulum al harbiyyah* (school of military sciences) according to Shayikh Qabadu. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, p. 528 (Introduction by Ch. M.) ; De Leone, 1957, p. 227, n.

157. Filippi, *RHCF*, 1924, p. 558.

158. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928, p. 552. Calligaris, who arrived in Tunis after serving in the Ottoman army as military engineer, had taught practical geometry and trigonometry at the Eski Serai of Constantinople. Member of the Ottoman council of war, he had gained some reputation by translating technical books for the use of his students in Constantinople, and by planning the fortifications of strategic military posts. Id., p. 527 ; De Leone, 1957, pp. 206-7.

159. Id., p. 227 ; Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928 (Introduction by Ch.M.), pp. 528-9.

Shayikh Mahmūd Quabādu, who was considered the most knowledgeable and greatest poet of his time. Tunisian-born, Qabādu had taught theoretical philosophy at the University of Istanbul until 1841, when he returned to Tunis¹⁶⁰.

Until the School closed in 1855, it was frequented by an average of 70 to 80 cadets, usually sons of important Tunisian families and of government employees. The training period lasted eight years, and about ten new officers came out of the school each year. Food, board, and uniforms were taken care of by the Tunisian government¹⁶¹. Ahmad Bey had a great interest in, and high hopes for, this School, which he had located in one of his palaces. He often visited it, came to its classes, talked and encouraged the cadets. In his mind, the young officers were going to "constitute not only the cadres of the army but those of the civil administration as well¹⁶²".

In 1852, when Calligaris was dismissed, allegedly because of insufficient results¹⁶³, the School had accomplished a role in Tunisian society which it would be a mistake to underestimate. First of all, the School had succeeded in creating the cadres of a regular army, and a more qualified group of civil servants. If the Crimean expedition ended up by decimating the core of the School's cadets, still a few of them, like the generals Khair al-Dīn, Rustam, and Husayn, filled important posts in the Tunisian government and administration of the State, and their impact on Tunisian political life was long felt¹⁶⁴.

Second, the School played an important role in Tunisia's cultural revival under Bey Ahmad. According to 'Abdul Wahāb, about 40 books in various fields were translated into Arabic at the School in a show of "close collaboration and cooperation" between European and Tunisian teachers which "was

160. Id., p. 529.

161. Dunant, 1858, p. 81; De Leone, 1957, p. 228. Monchicourt's wish that Calligaris' memories will one day be found (*RHCF*, 1928, p. 537) has been fulfilled by Prof. De Leone, of the University of Cagliari, who has succeeded in locating and examining Calligaris' *Memorie* in the family's private archive in Italy. Most of the above details concerning the School come from this source.

162. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928 (Intro. by Ch. M.), p. 529.

163. The question of the School's diminishing returns, and of the Bey's disaffection with Calligaris' work, has been referred mainly by French authors on the basis of a "Rapport" written on Apr. 1, 1852, by the French Gen. Walsin-Esterhazi for his government, and first quoted by Hugon, 1913, p. 95. Monchicourt (*RHCF*, 1928, Intro., p. 530), Cambon (1948, p. 104), Martel (*CT*, 1956, p. 394), and Ganiage (1959, pp. 116-7), all express a somewhat negative judgement about the School. The Bey's "wish" that Calligaris' successor at the direction of the School be a French officer is in this line. Yet, it has been suggested (by De Leone, 1957, pp. 233-4) that in reality both the change of direction, and the following decline of the School (it stopped functioning at Ahmad's death in 1855; a second, more limited, attempt under French direction took place after 1855, but by 1863 had failed), was a result of French pressures, and of a French policy which was incompatible with the School's aim of creating a body of military officers and civil servants.

164. Demeerseman, *IBLA*, 1969, p. 266; Hourani, 1962, pp. 65-6.

certainly outstanding¹⁶⁵". Their working method has been related by Shayikh Qabâdu himself : "Calligaris explained in Arabic the French text. Two student officers, among whom was the future general Husayn, put down on paper the sense of it in Arabic. Mahmûd Qabâdu revised their translation¹⁶⁶". Works which had been printed at the famous Cairo school of translation under the direction of Shayikh al-Tahtâwi were also accessible to students¹⁶⁷. On the whole, a true "dialogue Orient-Occident" seems to have taken place within the School¹⁶⁸.

Thirdly, the military School, together with the Zaytûna Mosque where Shayikh Qabâdu also taught, played a determinate role in the forming of a new political consciousness, influencing people and events which would later contribute to the reform movement of the late 1850's, and to Khayr al-Dîn's reforming leadership in the 1870's. Traditional historiography has emphasized the role played by foreign powers, France in particular, in the Bey's granting of the "Pacte Fondamental" of 1857, and of the Constitution in 1860¹⁶⁹, the first constitution to be issued in the Muslim world in modern times. This interpretation of the events grants little or no importance to the fertile period which preceded the reforms, and in some way prepared for them.

The fact that France did undoubtedly, though for dubious reason¹⁷⁰, force the Bey's hand on this matter, should not detract from an understanding that the reforms were the result of many factors and influences, some of which, but not all, were determined by exigencies of foreign policy. As for the rest, "Tunis is not far from Italy, there were Italian political exiles at the Bey's court, there were Tunisian officials who knew French and had visited France, and it is not difficult to find different sources through which the idea of a constitution may have come¹⁷¹".

 165. Ziadeh, 1962, p. 12. That this collaboration was really "outstanding" is born by the fact that Calligaris, who was later to teach Arabic at the University of Turin, worked, during his stay in Tunis, on two important projects : an Arabic grammar, and a "European-Arabic" Polyglot Dictionary (where each French term was translated into Latin, Italian, Spanish, Portuguese, German, English, Modern Greek, Arabic, literary and vulgar, and Turkish), a work based on the lexicon of Firouzabadi, which he consulted at the library of the Zaytûna. Among the Tunisian literati who helped him, he praised in particular, beside Qabâdu, Hamûda b. Khoja, *qâdi* of Tunis in 1860's, his brother Mahmûd, professor at the Zaytûna, and the Tunisian grammarian al-Lakhmi. With the linguistic help of Mohammed al-Titaunni, Calligaris also wrote a *Histoire de Napoléon* in Arabic, published in France in 1856, which was apparently "appreciated by the Tunisian public for whom it had been written". Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928 (Intro. by Ch. M.), pp. 531-5.

166. Calligaris, *RHCF*, 1928 (Intro. by Ch. M.), p. 529.

167. Fontaine, *IBLA*, 1967, p. 77. On Tahtâwi and his work as translator, see Abu-Lughod, 1963, p. 41.

168. Demeerseman (quoting 'Ashûr), *IBLA*, 1970, p. 71, n.

169. Cambon, 1948, p. 104 ; Ganiage, 1959, pp. 71-6 ; De Leone, 1957, p. 250.

170. U.S. Consul Chandler, for instance, expressed "great doubts as to the loyalty and sincerity of one of the parties [France] pressing the demands". SDA, Chandler to Cass, Sept. 5, 1857 ; see also Nicholson to Cass, July 7, 1960.

171. Hourani, 1962, p. 65.

7. The school which Calligaris planned and directed was undoubtedly one of these "sources". When Khayr al-Dîn rose to power in 1873, he brought with him his ex-colleagues of the military School, people who shared his own ideas and who helped the now prime minister to carry out the important reforms of the 1870's. It is also interesting to note that, among the more permanent reforms of Khayr al-Dîn's period, were the opening of the Sâdiqî College, and the reform of the Zaytûna mosque. These two events had a definite impact on early Tunisian nationalism¹⁷², and recalled the fecund period when Shayikh Qabâdu's liberal teaching at the Zaytûna was complemented by that of Calligaris' teachers (among whom the Shayikh himself) at the Military School.

Modeled in part after the school of the early 1840's, the Sâdiqîyah was established as a national institution with the aim of creating a new class of state functionaries, better qualified and more prepared to cope with the difficult problems of the country's administration. As in the old school, the students were provided with scholarships, studied science, mathematics, foreign languages and Islamic doctrine in a learning process which, once again, attempted to combine religious instruction with modern technology¹⁷³. By the 1880's, the school had gained such a reputation that Hesse Wartegg was prompted to state that "no school in the East can be compared in excellence to the College Sadiqi¹⁷⁴". Similarly, important changes were introduced at the Zaytûna, where "the studies were regulated and a certain amount of science and mathematics was included in the program¹⁷⁵".

In other words, that "dialogue Orient-Occident", which was initiated in the old Military School, was continued and enlarged in its more famous and more lasting successor, the Sâdiqîyah. When Calligaris was asked to leave the direction of the School in 1852, the Bey conferred upon him the Tunisian Nishan Iftikhar Order and appointed him as his nominal aide-de-camp¹⁷⁶. France's increasing involvement in Tunisian affairs, however, was changing the tide and the fortunes of the informal influence exerted on Tunisian society by these Italian-born individuals.

Calligaris left the Regency in 1853, del Carretto had left the School the year before, Mugnaini would leave in 1860, Raffo would resign from his

172. One of Tunisia's early nationalist groups was in fact formed by the "anciens élèves" of the Sâdiqî. Julien, 1952, p. 68.

173. Ziadeh, 1962, p. 16 ; Ganiage, 1959, p. 455.

174. Hesse-Wartegg, 1882, p. 55.

175. Ziadeh, 1962, p. 16.

176. De Leone, 1957, p. 234, n. When he was director of the School, Calligaris had the Tunisian rank of *emir alai* or colonel. He contributed to the introduction of the Nishan Iftikhar Order in the Regency by convincing Bey Mustafa to adopt the Ottoman decoration. Bey Ahmad was going to be its first dispenser. See Calligaris, *RHCP*, 1928 (Intro. by Ch. M.), pp. 528, 529.

post as Foreign Minister of the Regency in April 1859¹⁷⁷. The now approaching Italian unity recalled home many political refugees and self-imposed exiles, while France was increasingly able to consolidate its strong position in the Regency. In communicating to the State Department the news of Raffo's dismissions, U.S. Consul Nicholson wrote : "... it is very evident that French influence is in the ascendant here¹⁷⁸".

The 1850's mark the effective end of individual, unofficial Italian influence in the country, a presence gradually superseded by mission-oriented, official French influence which culminated with the formal Protectorate in 1881. These years also marked the end of more than three decades of fruitful cooperation among Italian-born subjects and Tunisian citizens, an interesting experiment in social integration which did not find an equivalent in the following years.

When the new realities of the 1860's forced the interests of the state into conflict with the delicate balance of informal cooperation, the "raison d'état" destroyed the very essence of this collaboration. Ironically, the newly created Italian state, in spite of its official efforts, was never going to recover the influence on the Regency which Italian-born individuals had managed to achieve at an informal level in the preceding decades.

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CT Cahiers de Tunisie
IBLA Institut des Belles Lettres Arabes
NA Nuova Antologia
RA Revue Africaine
RCI Rivista delle Colonie Italiane

 177. SDA, Nicholson to Cass, July 7, 1860 : "Count Joseph Raffo - a Sardinian by birth and a Roman Catholic by religion - who has held the post of Minister of Foreign Affairs for some twenty or thirty years, retains his former salary and a post near the government with the title and duties of Minister Member of the Council of the Bey. He and the late Bey married sisters. He has since been selling the greater part of his property, evidently with the intention of retiring to Europe. He has only remained until now, for the benefits of his son, who is retained as First interpreter to the Bey and principal Secretary to the Council".

178. SDA, Nicholson to Cass, July 7, 1860.

- REI* Revue Economique Internationale
- RHCF* Revue de l'Histoire des Colonies Françaises
- RI* La Rassegna Italiana
- RSRI* Rivista Storica del Risorgimento Italiano
- RT* Revue Tunisienne
- SDA U.S. State Department, National Archives, Washington, RG 59, *Despatches from the U.S. Consuls in Tunis, 1797-1906.*
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