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General conditions of Tunisia before the French protection was imposed 12 may 1881

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ABSTRACT :

The countries of North Africa are considered an important center in various fields, especially economic. Political social and military. There fore, they were coveted by various colonial peoples since ancient times, in which the features of urbanization and prosperity emerged, starting with the Islamic conquests, where they become one of the pillars of the caliphate, and countries and territories have passed through them. It has also become an important part of the Ottoman states in spite of its nominal dependency, except for the far Marghreb, and for the sake of mentioning the Tunisian voyage that was built for centuries in its international and regional powers. At the end i twas subjected to a group of internal and external pressures and crises, all of this paved at its end and rushed to the European accusations against it in order to drain its resours and radically change its features.

Keywords: debt – dependency – bytes – financial commission – reforms – French protection.

Introduction

Tunisia is one of the North African countries and the smallest of the Maghreb states. It is bordered to the north and east by the Mediterranean Sea, to the south by Libya, and to the west by Algeria. Its area is estimated at 125,000 square kilometers, and its capital is "Tunis." Its most famous cities include "Kairouan," renowned for its mosque named after the Muslim conqueror "Uqba ibn Nafi"; "Sfax," the capital of the east and a major commercial port; "Tozeur," the capital of the Djerid region; "Sousse," known for its historical monuments; "Bizerte," situated on the well-known military port; "Mahdia," the capital of the Fatimids; and "Nefta," which was called "the little Kufa" because of the abundance of its mosques and scholars.

Tunisia is also the closest African country to Europe, separated from the island of Sicily by only 140 kilometers, and less than 200 kilometers from Sardinia. It therefore controls one of the two shores of the Strait of Sicily, a position that has made it an attractive prize for the great imperial powers seeking to dominate the Mediterranean, from the Phoenicians to the French.

Tunisia came under Ottoman rule in 1574. In 1705, "Hussein ibn Ali" governed the country with the title of "Bey," endorsed by the scholars, notables, and military leadership, and established the "Husainid State," which gradually began to separate from the Ottoman state, its allegiance to the Ottomans becoming nominal in order to preserve the mutual interests between the Bey and the Ottoman Sultan. Despite what has been mentioned above regarding its social, political, economic, and military greatness, it began to decline during the reign of "Muhammad al-Sadiq Bey," amid mounting debts and an inability to repay them, as the country faced successive crises in various fields. All of this hastened its downfall at the hands of the powers coveting its possession, especially colonial France in the Mediterranean basin.

Problem Statement of the Study

Through this research, we will attempt to answer the following problem: What were the general conditions of the Tunisian Regency before the imposition of the French protectorate system upon it? From this main problem, the following sub-questions may be raised:

Did these crises and problems manifest in a particular domain? Did colonial imperialism contribute to creating that internal and external turbulence? Did it hasten this process for the sake of its own interests and ambitions regarding the

country's resources and people? Did the Tunisian government take any necessary measures to curb it? We will seek to answer all these questions based on a set of sources and documents related to the subject.

Hypotheses of the Study

To answer the research problem and the sub-questions, the following hypotheses may be proposed:

- The separation from the Ottoman state led to a deterioration in all of Tunisia's political and economic domains.
- It led to the European scramble over the region.
- It hastened the matter of the French protectorate.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to achieve the following objectives:

- To address the transformation that occurred in Tunisia following its separation from the Ottoman state.
- To identify the protectorate system that was imposed on the Tunisian Regency and its consequences.

We relied on the descriptive-analytical method, which allows for the provision of data and facts concerning the problem of the study in order to interpret them and determine their significance, so as to arrive at results and answer the questions raised.

1 – The Internal Conditions of Tunisia Prior to the Protectorate

1 – The Political and Administrative Situation

A – The Political Situation

Tunisia's conditions in the nineteenth century did not differ from those of any other Arab province. Its political and administrative conditions prior to the French protectorate were pervaded by chaos and unrest that extended everywhere, with the exception of the period of the ministry of "Khayr al-Din"¹, which witnessed a relatively stable political, economic, and social situation. The causes of this tension may be set out as follows:

The encouragement of this chaos by the Beys, who came to agreements with the rebellious and unruly Bedouin tribes and granted them freedom of action in areas far from the capital, which resulted in the spread of corruption and disorder; the Bey's forces would not move unless the danger was close to the seat of government (Abu Hamdan, 1993, pp. 15–16).

The Bey's neglect of his administrative duties, to the point that a third of the fertile lands ended up becoming barren wasteland (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 19).

Nominal subordination to the Ottoman state, which granted Tunisia a form of quasi-independence, and thus it resolved its problems—particularly its internal ones—on its own, without Ottoman assistance, which enabled the Bey to manage the affairs of the Regency according to what his own interests and considerations dictated (Brockelmann, 1968, p. 629).

The impact of the fall of Algeria on 5 July 1830 into the hands of the French colonizer, as Tunisia found itself caught between opposing pulls: France sought to consolidate Tunisia's independence from the Ottomans, while the latter tried to keep Tunisia under its dependency (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 20).

The manner of selecting the men of government, which took into account the Bey's personal interests without regard to competence (Abu Hamdan, 1993, pp. 20–21).

Foreign interference in the affairs of government, through consuls and businessmen, among them the French consul "Léon Roches"², and the Italian community present in large numbers in the capital, Tunis (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 22).

B – Administrative Organization

Tunisia was administratively divided into four parts:

1. **The Qiyadas (Commands):** Their task was to manage local affairs in addition to judicial matters, assisted by deputies (*khulafa'*) and shaykhs, and they drew their salaries from tax collection. The number of qiyadas varied from one period to another; under "Muhammad al-Sadiq" there were 62 qiyadas, 22 of them in tribal regions and 40 in the remaining towns.
2. **Administration of the Settled Population:** Overseen by prominent figures at the court, and present in the towns, the plains, the coast, as well as the oases.
3. **Administration of the Nomadic Population:** Responsible for overseeing the nomadic Bedouin, and considered a difficult task given the nature of the Bedouin.

¹ Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi: a mamluk of Circassian origin and the leader of the reform movement in Tunisia. He held the post of Minister of War in Tunisia (1856–1862), then presided over the country's first consultative council (1860–1862), held the premiership (1873–1877), and finally became Grand Vizier at the Sublime Porte (1878–1879), resigning from the latter two positions due to his failure to carry through his reforms because of obstruction by the rulers. His work had a fundamental influence on the history of the Tunisian reform movement, and he published his book *Aqwam al-Masalik fi Ma'rifat Ahwal al-Mamalik*, which, in the manner of Ibn Khaldun's *Muqaddima*, offers a penetrating analysis of the causes of the Islamic world's decline and Europe's advancement. This book was published beginning in January 1868 in installments, the last of which appeared in August 1869, and it was later reprinted after the addition of reports that reached Khayr al-Din once intellectuals had become acquainted with it.

² Léon Roches: this man had a strange past in Arab lands, which he recounted in his book *Trente-deux ans à travers l'Islam* ("Thirty-Two Years amid Islam"). He had feigned conversion to Islam and called himself "al-Hajj Umar," accompanied Emir Abd al-Qadir for a period of time, and was among the causes of the collapse of the latter's resistance.

4. **The Religious Orders (Turuq):** These were regarded as a form of administrative organization, owing to the hold their shaykhs exercised over the hearts and consciences of their followers.

2 – The Economic and Financial Situation

A – The Economic Situation

- **Agriculture:** Despite its reliance on traditional tools, it was quite flourishing in grain production, with the harvest before the protectorate ranging between one million and three million quintals.
- **Industry:** This was simple and traditional, consisting of small crafts, the most important of which was textile manufacturing, such as rugs and especially the *shashiya* (fez), which faced competition from European manufactured goods, as well as the manufacture of pottery vessels, jewelry, and necklaces.
- **Trade:** European products flooded the Tunisian market, which led to the bankruptcy of local merchants and opened the way for European merchants, who, thanks to the privileges enjoyed by their states, came to dominate commercial activity, along with the Jews.

Competition was fierce among foreign companies, particularly French and Italian, seeking to exploit the country's resources solely for their own interests (Brockelmann, 1968, p. 629).

B – The Financial Situation

At the end of the nineteenth century, Tunisia's economic and financial conditions fell into crisis, weighed down by debts that reached "150 million French francs." Indeed, the final period of the ministry of "Mustafa Khaznadar" (1873) witnessed the suspension of the sending of the "*surra*"—that is, the proceeds of the endowed *waqf* properties—to the two Holy Sanctuaries, a practice that had not been interrupted since 1705 (al-Zahir, n.d., p. 15), the date marking the beginning of the rule of the Husainid dynasty. This, if it indicates anything, confirms the financial crisis from which Tunisia suffered during this period (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 38).

B-1 – Causes of the Financial Crisis

- The greed of the later rulers played a major role in the financial crisis, in addition to their collusion with influential figures and their promotion of foreign products.
- The poor financial policy pursued by the First Minister "Mustafa Khaznadar," who exploited the weakness of the Bey "Muhammad Pasha" and his successor "Muhammad al-Sadiq Pasha." His policy relied on:
- Borrowing from foreign states at unreasonable rates of interest (al-Sahili, 1992, pp. 46–47).
- Extravagance and a life of excess, at a time when solutions should have been sought, such as reducing expenditure and encouraging agricultural and industrial production (Abd al-Salam, 1987, pp. 12–19).
- The poor tax policy imposed on the poor inhabitants of the towns and villages, while exempting the influential and the rebellious tribes in exchange for their not threatening the ruling system—a policy that led to unrest and drove peasants to abandon their lands (Yaghi & Shakir, n.d., p. 93).
- The conclusion of deals exploited for his own benefit and that of his partner "Mahmoud Ben Ayad,"¹ the latter having managed to smuggle vast sums of money to France, of which "Khayr al-Din" was able to recover 24 million Tunisian piastres (Abd al-Salam, 1987, p. 19).
- The embezzlements of the state's revenue collector "Nissim Shamama,"² whose fortune reached 27 million francs, a sum equivalent to one and a half times Tunisia's annual revenue (Hamdan, n.d., pp. 28, 30, 48).

B-2 – Its Consequences:

"The Formation of the International Commission for the Financial Control of Tunisia"

As a result of the financial crisis in Tunisia, the Bey decided to raise taxes on a proposal from "Mustafa Khaznadar," which provoked the anger of the common people, giving rise to the revolt of "Ali Ben Ghedhahem" against the arbitrary and oppressive tyranny in tax collection. The revolt was followed by severe repression, which further worsened conditions, spreading ruin everywhere, and led to the suspension of the constitutional era. Six years of drought then followed, causing Tunisia's material conditions to collapse and its problems and crises to intensify (al-Zahir, n.d., p. 12)—crises that provided a convenient pretext for foreign intervention, under the guise of the Bey of Tunisia's inability to repay the Regency's debts. The European states, "on a proposal from France" (al-Zahir, n.d., p. 20), placed Tunisia's finances under international oversight through the "International Financial Commission," known as the "Commission Financière," headed by the minister "Khayr al-Din," with the French financial inspector "Villet" acting as his deputy. It was formed between 5 and 6 July 1869, and the tasks assigned to it were: determining the debt and scheduling it, the manner of its repayment, setting the interest due on it, and then designating the specific Tunisian public services through which the debt alone would be collected, with the Commission itself administering these services (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 40).

State revenues were divided into two parts:

- The first part: allocated to state expenditures.
- The second part: for the repayment of debts.

This commission worked to oversee the state's resources and stripped the Bey of several powers, such that he could not conclude any agreement or grant any concession without its approval. This commission comprised two principal bodies: an executive committee and a control committee (al-Jamal & Ibrahim, 2002, p. 276):

- **The Executive Committee:** Consisted of three members and was headed by the Prime Minister, assisted by a Tunisian member and a French financial inspector appointed by the Bey. This committee represented the administrative apparatus tasked with collecting the taxes allocated for the repayment of Tunisian debts.

- **The Control Committee:** Consisted of six elected members representing the creditors of the Tunisian government—two from France, two from England, and two from Italy. This committee had the right to oversee all operations carried out by the Executive Committee.

The two committees held joint meetings to discuss the budget allocated for debt repayment or matters relating to the Bey's requests. They also delegated authority to a council composed of five members: one representative for Tunisia, three representing the creditors, and one European representative; this council operated under the supervision of the two committees.

Between 1871 and 1877, the commission achieved an annual surplus of 5%, equivalent to 25 francs for every share of 500 francs, and over the ten years preceding the protectorate—that is, between 1871 and 1881—the average surplus rate was estimated at 4.733% per year (al-Mahjoubi, 1986, pp. 9–10).

3 – The Social and Cultural Situation

The population of Tunisia by the mid-nineteenth century reached one and a half million inhabitants (al-Mahjoubi, 1986, pp. 10–11), while the population of the city of Tunis ranged between 70,000 and 80,000, or 100,000 according to different sources, though "Muhammad Bayram V" estimated it at 150,000, of whom 90,000 were Muslims and the rest Christians and Jews.

This population was divided as follows:

A – From an Ethnic Perspective, into Four Groups:

- **The Indigenous Population:** The native inhabitants who had resided in Tunisia since the beginning of the Hafsid era.
- **The Migrant Population:** Those who had come to settle in Tunisia, particularly from neighboring countries (Algeria and Libya).

- **The Andalusians:** Those who came to Tunisia especially during the reign of "Uthman Dey" (1598–1610) and who played a role in developing many traditional crafts, such as weaving, carving, and architecture, as well as agriculture.

- **The Descendants of the Turkish Troops and Mamluks:** Whose arrival began with "Sinan Pasha" in 1575, among them the Kouloughlis, most of whom held important administrative and political positions. As for the Mamluks, they were brought by the Turks once their rule had become firmly established in Tunisia; most of them were of Circassian origin, such as "Shakir, Keeper of the Seal" and "General Hussein," or of Georgian origin, such as "Mustafa" and "Isma'il Kahiya," or of Greek origin, such as the renowned minister "Mustafa Khaznadar" (Ibrahim Bek Halim, 1988, p. 245).

- **The European Communities:** Most of whom lived in the city of Tunis and who monopolized the country's wealth for themselves; this community wielded considerable influence over the country's economic and financial policy (al-Sahili, 1992, pp. 56–58). This community increased.

Their number in Tunisia increased markedly, until the Italians in the city of Tunis alone reached approximately 11,000 persons (al-Zahir, n.d., p. 15).

B – From a Social Perspective, They Were Divided into Three Categories:

The Urban Population: whose livelihood depended on simple crafts and trade.

The Rural Population: who practiced agriculture, relied on simple tools, and lived in isolation.

The Bedouin: the inhabitants of the encampments and tents, who relied on herding and on assisting the villagers with agriculture, especially at harvest time (Brockelmann, 1968, p. 17).

Speaking of the social situation in Tunisia, it can be seen as a product and reflection of both the economic and political situations, as the financial crisis cast its shadow over social conditions, compounded by natural disasters. The population was burdened with taxes, particularly the notables among them, who were called upon to contribute to resolving the crisis—something that drove them to seek refuge with the European consulates, which further widened the gulf between the populace and the rulers (Abu Hamdan, 1993, pp. 16–17).

What further aggravated social conditions was the crisis of 1867–1868, which "Ibn Abi al-Diyaf" described as "the Grizzled Year" (al-Sana al-Shahba'), while the common people called it "the Year of the Braq." The country was struck by famine, making it a year of hunger and scarcity, intensified by the absence of savings and by unemployment. Diseases and epidemics spread, resulting in the death of more than a fifth of Tunisians, reaching, in some regions such as "Kairouan," two-thirds of the inhabitants, while among the tribes of "al-Hamama" it reached four-fifths, which drove them to rebellion, refusal to pay taxes, and flight to the mountains (al-Sharif, 1993, p. 98).

As for cultural and intellectual life, it was no better off, having repeated itself unchanged for centuries. The Quranic schools (kuttabs) retained their old curricula, following the method of rote memorization of the Qur'an and some prophetic hadiths, up to the teaching of grammar and morphology; likewise, the Zaytuna Mosque-University did not surpass this, save for the addition of a few supplementary texts. As for the European communities, they established private schools for their own children (Abd al-Salam, 1987, pp. 17–18).

4 – Attempts at Reform

A – The Reforms of Marshal Ahmad Bey and His Successors

Under these conditions, the throne was assumed by "the Husainid Bey Ahmad Pasha" (1837–1855), who carried out a series of reforms along European lines to develop Tunisian society, at the request of the Ottoman Sultan and under the

influence of the Keeper of the Seal, Minister "Mustafa," the latter having been influenced by the thought of "Ibn Khaldun." "Bey Ahmad" was himself dazzled by the West and convinced that the cause of its superiority lay in its adoption of modern sciences and civilization (Abu Hamdan, 1993, pp. 16–17); he therefore sought to imitate it by establishing a modern state and a modern army, undeterred by the limited resources of his own state (al-Sahili, 1992, p. 69). Among his reforms:

The establishment of the military school in his palace at Bardo¹ in 1840, which he named the "School of Engineers" or the "School of Military Sciences," to train technical officers, engineers, and administrators. He entrusted its technical and professional leadership to the Italian officer "Caligaros," and its administration to a brilliant young Mamluk, "Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi." He engaged expert instructors from France and Italy—military men, administrators, and urban planners (al-Zahir, n.d., p. 17)—and also enlisted some Zaytuna shaykhs to teach Arabic and religious sciences, most notably Shaykh "Muhammad Qabadu" (1815–1871), the first advocate of reform. Among his students were the generals "Hussein and Rustom," the most prominent graduates of the military school, as well as the shaykhs "Salim Bouhajeb," "Muhammad Bayram V," and "Muhammad al-Sanusi," graduates of the Zaytuna, all of whom later became part of the elite of the reform movement led by Minister "Khayr al-Din" and the writer "Ahmad Ibn Abi al-Diyaf" (Yaghi & Shakir, n.d., p. 94).

- The establishment of an army numbering 25,000 soldiers, munitions factories, and a shipyard, and the building of a fleet with which he participated alongside the Ottoman state in the Crimean War (al-Sahili, 1992, pp. 69–72).

- Efforts to spread education and abolish slavery (al-Sahili, 1992, p. 85).

- Encouragement of learning and the founding of the "Ahmadiyya Library," in which he assembled a great scholarly treasure, including more than two thousand rare manuscripts, which he attached to the Zaytuna and made accessible to the public (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 73).

Bey "Ahmad" rejected political and constitutional reforms on the grounds that they contravened the Sharia, and his successor "Muhammad Bey" (1855–1859) likewise rejected them at the beginning of his reign. However, after his execution of the Jew who had insulted the Islamic religion in 1857, the European powers compelled him to issue a constitution protecting his subjects, and so he promulgated the "Fundamental Pact" (*'Ahd al-Aman*) in 1857 (Abu Hamdan, 1993, pp. 23–26), comprising 114 articles, whose content included:

- Guaranteeing the rights of the subjects and their security regarding their persons and dignity.

- Guaranteeing the realization of justice and equality among individuals in rights and duties.

- Equality between the *dhimmis* (protected non-Muslim subjects) and the native population.

- The absolute right of foreign communities to engage in trade and to own real property.

Through these last two articles, foreign influence becomes apparent, since Islam had already dealt in detail with the matter of the *dhimmis* and had affirmed and safeguarded their rights, while it is unreasonable that a foreigner should be placed on equal footing with the native inhabitant.

It was to be expected that this Pact, whose proclamation was attended by the consuls of the foreign powers, would not satisfy the people of the country, as it had thrown their country wide open to foreigners; accordingly, the French fleet stood off the Tunisian coast at that time to protect the Bey against any eventuality (al-Sahili, 1992, p. 73).

A committee was formed to draft the country's first constitution in light of what had been set out in the "Fundamental Pact," in August 1858, headed by the Prime Minister Mustafa Khaznadar, with Minister Khayr al-Din and the Bey's private secretary "Ahmad Ibn Abi al-Diyaf" as members. The committee completed its work on 19 August 1860 (Yaghi & Shakir, n.d., p. 96).

Among the reforms of "Bey Muhammad" was also the introduction of letterpress printing, replacing lithographic printing, and the piping of water from Zaghouan to the capital, as well as the appointment of "Khayr al-Din" as Minister of War, who made major contributions to the reform process (al-Sahili, 1992, pp. 74–75).

B – The Reforms of General Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi (1860–1873)

During this period of reforms, "Khayr al-Din al-Abazi al-Tunisi" was brought to and attached to the court of "Ahmad Bey," and was subsequently integrated into the army following the arrival of the French mission tasked with developing it (Yaghi & Shakir, n.d., p. 97). He rose progressively through various military and political ranks until he became a skillful statesman. During the reign of "Muhammad Pasha Bey," he was appointed Minister of War and carried out a series of reforms—for which he came to be called "the Father of the Tunisian Renaissance" (*Abu al-Nahda al-Tunisiyya*)—among them:

- The expansion of the port of La Goulette (*Halq al-Wadi*).

- The establishment of a steam-powered factory for building and repairing ships.

- Efforts to modernize society, particularly following his visit to Europe (Yahya, 1999, p. 257).

As for the reign of Bey "Muhammad al-Sadiq" (1859–1882), the reforms were broader and more comprehensive, particularly in the political domain, most of them undertaken at the instigation and under the influence of "Khayr al-Din." The most important of these were:

- Ordering the establishment of the official printing press and the newspaper *al-Ra'id al-Tunisi* on 20 July 1860 (Yaghi & Shakir, n.d., p. 95).

- The adoption of the constitution in January 1861 (al-Zahir, n.d., p. 21). This constitution established a constitutional monarchical system on the model of Western states (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 32); strikingly, however, "Sadiq Bey"

presented this constitution to "Napoleon III" during the latter's visit to Algeria in 1860, which reveals the strength of foreign intervention in the country's internal affairs and the subservience of its rulers (al-Sahili, 1992, pp. 74–77).

- The separation of powers.
- The establishment of the "Grand Council" (*al-Majlis al-Akbar*) in 1860, composed of 60 members, whose task was to assist the Bey in enacting laws and preparing the budget; its presidency was entrusted to Minister "Mustafa, Keeper of the Seal," and after his death, to his deputy "Khayr al-Din al-Tunisi" (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 33).
- The establishment of municipal councils in 1861, the first municipal council in Tunis being headed by General "Hussein" (Abd al-Salam, 1987, p. 58).

These reforms, however, did not please certain figures at court, among them the governor and his minister "Mustafa Khaznadar," as well as the European consuls, who worked by various means to bring them to a halt, and they largely succeeded in doing so. They wanted, in 1862, following the disagreement in the Grand Council over the matter of the tax increase—which the Council had opposed by a majority—yet the Bey approved it on the instigation of his minister, prompting "Khayr al-Din" to resign from the presidency of the Council (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 36).

Because of this unjust fiscal policy imposed on the population, conditions in the country worsened further; many refused to pay taxes and broke their allegiance, and the situation deteriorated until a widespread revolt broke out in 1864, led by one of the Zaytuna graduates, "Ali Ben Ghedhahem." Opponents of reform spread the claim that the constitutional changes were the cause of these problems, and so the Bey issued orders to reverse the tax increase and to suspend the constitution and the councils (al-Sahili, 1992, pp. 78–79).

C – The Reforms of Khayr al-Din Following His Assumption of the Premiership (1873–1877)

The reform movement of "Khayr al-Din" had a profound impact on the Tunisian renaissance, the most notable of which were:

- The encouragement of agriculture, by restoring lands to their owners, reducing taxes, and appointing trustworthy men to collect them, going so far as to exempt certain crops, such as date palms and olives—the latter being exempted from taxation for twenty years—so that the area under cultivation reached one million hectares during his tenure, compared to no more than 60,000 hectares at the time of his appointment to the ministry.
 - Personally listening to the concerns and complaints of the people, by placing an iron box in the capital's main square for that purpose, its key kept in his own pocket; it is recounted of him that he would stop by the box every morning before reaching his office (al-Sharif, 1993, p. 98).
 - The establishment of the "Sadiki School" in 1875, an institution of a modern character teaching, alongside literature and Islamic sciences, foreign languages and the experimental sciences. He placed at its head "Muhammad al-'Arabi Zarrouk," mayor of Tunis, who was the only one to openly oppose the signing of the Treaty of Bardo, by virtue of which France occupied Tunisia. Its first graduating class was sent in 1880 to France and England to complete their education, and despite the obstruction of the colonial authorities, the school continued its work until independence.
 - The reform of Zaytuna education, by the decree issued in 1876 establishing more advanced curricula, introducing other sciences alongside religious sciences, increasing the recruitment of teachers, and raising their salaries (Abu Hamdan, 1993, pp. 44–45).
 - The establishment of the public library known as "al-'Abdaliyya" or "al-Sadiqiyya," by gathering manuscripts scattered here and there and purchasing a large quantity of books, in addition to his own private library.
 - The encouragement of printing, the press, and publishing, by organizing the publication of *al-Ra'id al-Tunisi*, entrusting its direction first to "Muhammad Bayram V" and then, in 1876, to "Shaykh Muhammad al-Sanusi" (al-Sahili, 1992, pp. 80–83).
 - The organization of the *waqf* endowments, placing their administration in the hands of a trusted figure, "Muhammad Bayram V," while also working to reform the judiciary and to regulate the legal system (Abd al-Salam, 1987, p. 66).
- Among his supporters in reform was "Ahmad Ibn Abi al-Diyaf," the Bey's private secretary, author of the book *Ithaf Ahl al-Zaman bi-Akhbar Muluk Tunis wa-'Ahd al-Aman*, as well as "Shaykh Muhammad Bayram V," author of the book **Safwat al-I'tibar bi-Mustawda' al-Amsar wa-l-Aqtar*, on whom Khayr al-Din relied in implementing some of his reform projects, along with General "Hussein," "Shaykh Salim Bouhajib," and others. As usual, the foreign powers were opposed to these reforms, and through their pressure on the Bey by means of their consuls—most notably "Théodore Roustan," the French consul since 1874—"Khayr al-Din" was forced to resign from the position of Prime Minister on 21 July 1877. This time, however, he left Tunisia for good, filled with bitterness and sorrow over a homeland he had loved and which he watched collapsing, without being able to do anything to save it (Abu Hamdan, 1993, p. 46).

Conclusion

In sum, Tunisia's condition during that period was similar to that of the other Arab countries, whether in terms of social structure or in terms of the relationship between rulers and subjects, in addition to the neglect of scientific knowledge, particularly the modern sciences, and their confinement to religious sciences and the Arabic language—a state of learning that could not keep pace with the developments taking place in the world at that time, especially the intellectual and scientific developments Europe was experiencing. In addition, corruption had eaten away at Tunisia in all political, economic, and social domains, compounded by the foreign pressures exerted upon the men of the court. Despite the reform efforts, they came somewhat too late and lacked genuine political will, which left Tunisia easy prey for the colonial West, which had come to lie in wait for the first suitable opportunity to pounce upon it.

Once the government of the French Third Republic had consolidated its position in Algeria—beginning with the treaty of surrender of 5 July 1830 with "Dey Hussein"—it turned its attention to the neighboring countries, a tendency accelerated by the events of 1870 and the domestic French political impasse. Its politicians and economic powers looked for solutions to extricate the country from its multiple crises, and among the solutions they pursued was the occupation of the Tunisian Regency through the principle of the protectorate, which began to take effect with the "Treaty of Bardo" on 12 May 1881. In this way, France succeeded in stripping Tunisia of Ottoman protection and placing it under its own control.

Provide, in the research conclusion, a summary of what was set out in the body of the research, with reference to the most important findings reached, and offer relevant recommendations related to the subject of the research.

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