This book runs over 700 pages and is divided into three main sections. The first gives a detailed historical account of the city of Tunis from its foundation 5000 years ago up to the late 20th century. Each chapter of this section deals with a particular era, starting from the Phoenicians, Romans, and Vandals; followed by the various Muslim civilisations such as the Aghlabids, Fatimids, Hafsids and Ottomans, followed by the French protectorate and the independence era. The impact of these civilisations on the city’s architecture, population, economy, and culture are explained, together with a depiction of the city’s various suburbs as well as its major landmarks. The second section deals with the most important movements of national and foreign migration to the city, which led to its expansion and the changing of its demographic composition. The third section focuses on the problems and challenges facing the present city of Tunis such as the growing of slums, and the solutions for tackling these problems.
This book is an important source that can be used by researchers studying not only the history of the city of Tunis, but the history of Tunisia in general. It thoroughly covers various aspects of the history of old and contemporary Tunis. Hence, the chronological order of the chapters makes the book easier to follow and track the development of the city throughout time. Furthermore, the writer uses a simple language, which makes the book accessible to most readers. Besides, he provides some pictures at the end of each chapter, making the subject of the book more tangible. The fact that the author is a native of Tunis, gives his accounts and descriptions a sense of genuineness and originality.

However, the book has a few shortcomings. For example, the title does not reflect the whole content, since it leads the readers to believe that the book solely focuses on the twenty-first century. Another major weakness is repetition as the writer frequently restates information already mentioned in previous paragraphs or chapters. In addition, the number of sources cited in the book is quite limited and the bibliography reflects this thinness. Finally, although the author provides definitions of many terms, he does not explain one important word: “al-Hadira” Apparently, he assumes that any reader would know this term, while it is quite difficult for a non-Tunisian reader to guess that this was the name of Tunis after it became the capital of Tunisia.

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