



CAMPAIGN FOR STAMBELI TRADITION

REPORT ON STAMBELI TRADITION TODAY

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

CESCR – Committee On Economic, Social and Cultural Rights

CMAM – Centre des Musiques Arabes et Méditerranéennes (*Centre of Arab and Mediterranean Music*)

CNSS – Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale (*National Social Security Fund*)

OHCHR – Office Of The United Nations High Commissioner For Human Rights

UDHR – Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UNESCO – United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

Introduction

This Report was compiled as part of the “Campaign for Stambeli Tradition” project implemented by Art Solution, which started in February 2016 and will be completed in spring 2016. Such a project was designed to raise awareness of local authorities, cultural operators and young artists about the state of crisis of *ṣṭambēlī*¹ tradition today.

The campaign is part of the “Drama, Diversity and Development in the MENA region” project, co-funded by the European Union -through the MedCulture Programme- and Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development and implemented by Minority Rights Group International, Civic Forum Institute Palestine, Andalus Institute for Tolerance and Anti-Violence Studies and Prince Claus Fund for Culture and Development.

The ultimate goal of such an ambitious campaign is to increase respect for *ṣṭambēlī* tradition and *ṣṭambēlī*-tradition’s heirs. This Report should thus be seen as both an attempt to throw light on actual serious conditions of the *ṣṭambēlī* tradition in Tunisia and as a call for the undertaking of immediate actions aimed at the preservation of a tradition that, if not safeguarded, is in danger of being lost.

This Report is the result of a number of: in-depth interviews with core members and adepts of the *ṣṭambēlī* community of Tunis, carried out in February-March 2016; consultations with specialists and researchers in the music and cultural field; the analysis of written and audio-video sources (web; books; pamphlets; archive documents retrieved in the Centre des Musiques Arabes et Méditerranéennes –CMAM, *Centre of Arab and Mediterranean Music*- of Sidi Bou Said); the attendance of *ṣṭambēlī* music events held in February-March 2016.

¹ Note on transcription: in order to avoid confusion, Arabic/Tunisian terms will be transcribed henceforth utilising the system reported in Table 1 in Annex I of this Report. The utilized spelling is based on Tunisian oral pronunciation. Names of cities and geographical places are spelled according to commonly-used French transcriptions.

The content of this Report is organised in three main parts. The first part places *ṣṭambēlī* tradition in a historical perspective. Far from willing to exhaustively illustrate *ṣṭambēlī* tradition, this section intends to provide the reader with some information that may be useful to understand the following partitions. The second part pinpoints present conditions and the main issues. Finally, the third part provides recommendations and advice to tackle the existing critical situation of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition and *ṣṭambēlī*-tradition's heirs.

In particular, this Report intends to exhort Tunisian local authorities to engage in actions aimed at preserving and rehabilitating *ṣṭambēlī* traditional heritage, in accordance with the [UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage \(2003\)](#)².

² Ratified by Tunisia by Act 2006-21 of 8 May 2006.

I. Brief Presentation of *Ṣṭambēlī* Tradition

I.1. Historical Overview

The word *ṣṭambēlī* designates both a healing trance music and set of customs, and practices, which stand as a phenomenon of syncretism between sub-Saharan, Saharan and North-Saharan traits. Generally speaking, this term is often used to refer to all Tunisian musical traditions with strong black or sub-Saharan character. However, all those traditions differ in terms of origin, community they refer to, instrumentation, repertoire, customs and rituals; besides, each of them is usually known under another specific name. In line with this, *ṣṭambēlī* is also the name specifically ascribed to healing music practices carried out in Tunis, and to the set of traditional customs connected to it³. In this Report, the term *ṣṭambēlī* will be employed to refer to proper *ṣṭambēlī* tradition of the Tunis area.

No much evidence can be found to determine when *ṣṭambēlī* tradition appeared first. It might be assumed that it may hark back to ancient, pre-Islamic trends of combination between sub-Saharan and Saharan populations and their cultural features; such combination could actually be considered as the deep substratum upon which Tunisian traditional musical systems are based. Nevertheless, *ṣṭambēlī* tradition is generally associated with the history of black-slaves of Tunisia, while the late Ottoman period uncontestedly remains the time *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members refer to as its moment of thrive (for certain periods, *ṣṭambēlī* ceremonies were held at court).

In fact, although the black slave trade occurred all through the Islamic and pre-Ottoman times, it increased consistently during the latter period. The newcomers, who were mainly employed in agriculture, in the army or as servants at court or in noble residencies, were roughly indoctrinated in the Islamic religion and would have carried with them their own traditions, languages and cults. Therefore, it is possible to assume that these cultural identities coming from the confining central African countries and, particularly, from the Kanem-Bornu region (which, to some extent, had already been Islamised by the XI century), gradually intertwined with those shared by the locals,

³ As a general trend, the term *ṣṭambēlī* is also often applied to black-Tunisian syncretic music and ritual tradition of Sfax, given the similar central role ascribed to the *gombri* (type of lute) as it is found in Tunis. However, since today no authoritative player of *gombri* can be found in Sfax, terminology might need to be updated -actually, as these processes usually take place in societies through phenomena of adaptation over the long term, it is possible that, when such an update will happen, *ṣṭambēlī* will have undergone even more radical changes, in both Sfax and Tunis.

combining some aspects of their culture and animistic religion with some pre-existing local traditional features as well as with some peculiarities of Islam and the Sufi cult of saints.

In the city of Tunis, such a trend had possibly a boost between the eighteenth and the nineteenth century, when the members of the sub-Saharan community were organized in a system of communal houses. Social and private life of residents was regulated by Ottoman legislation and each household was organised according to a hierarchal division of roles.

Communal houses became a sort of shelter for all blacks (usually grouped according to their ethno-linguistic origins) who lived -or had just arrived- in Tunisia. This trend continued even after the abolition of slavery in 1846, and ended in very recent times. In these houses, Afro-descendants of different ethnical origins intermingled one with the other as well as with the majority group of Tunisians whom they had perforce to deal with⁴. Performance of rituals and communal life allowed communal houses' residents to share customs, languages, as well as knowledge of music, dance, cookery, medical remedies and oral accounts. Such knowledge, that is at the base of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition, was transmitted from mother/father to son/daughter, or from master to disciple and, to a certain extent, it was shared with adepts as well as with the majority of Tunis's population⁵.

In consideration of all such evidences, it would not appear anachronistic to identify the Ottoman times as the period in which *ṣṭambēlī* community became a socio-cultural group recognized by the state and whose activities became more and more acknowledged by the population.

Yet, even though many Muslims attributed to black people some special connections with the world of the supernatural, given the nature of *ṣṭambēlī* practices and their interconnection with sub-Saharan Africa, the *ṣṭambēlī* community always held a controversial place in Tunisian society and it has often been confined to its humbler sectors. However, the very same social marginalization of freed slaves and their gathering in small communities may be looked at as two important factors that may lay behind the establishment –and preservation over time- of *ṣṭambēlī* music cults among Tunis's black population or descendants.

⁴ As an evidence, given the percentage of mixed-race *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members descending from mixed-race families, over time, mixed-marriages became the more and more customary.

⁵ This theory is based on Richard C. Jankowsky's book *Stambeli; Music, Trance, and Alterity in Tunisia*, The University of Chicago Press, Chicago and London, 2010, and it was reconfirmed by the majority of interviewed people. Actually, a similar organization of communal houses could be found in Beja, Sousse, Bizerte and Gabes.

When Tunisia became a French protectorate, performances of *ṣṭambēlī* rituals were still allowed by the colonials. Then, some *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members were employed as navvies: in the capital, they worked at the construction of buildings and infrastructures⁶. Others were employed as servants, or artisans while women, among other occupations, would use their cooking knowledge to prepare special recipes for neighbours and external clients. In addition, healing ceremonies still represented an important form of revenue for *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members.

After Tunisian independence, *ṣṭambēlī* customs were particularly despised by the new political establishment, so much so that they were discouraged, some shrines of the community were closed (as in the case of Sīdī Sa'd, in Mornag) and their musical and dance heritage remained unrepresented by national institutions. In the second part of the 1960s *ṣṭambēlī* aroused some new interest in the Tunisian authorities, even though no official strategy to safeguard the *ṣṭambēlī* tradition's heritage was set in place. Since then, the tradition has been exposed to an ever-increasing trend of "folklorisation" or "vulgarisation". Besides, although some weak attempts to rehabilitate the tradition have been made by some local and foreign researchers, the responsibility for its survival relies mostly on the private initiatives of *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members who, today, deal with serious issues on an everyday basis. These aspects will be dwelt upon in the second part of this document.

I.2. Main Ritual Practices

Ṣṭambēlī tradition centres mainly on the worship of saints and the practice of healing ceremonies that have a strong performing character.

Rituals may be held either in private or public forms. The proper healing ceremony is usually private: single cases are treated here, in which trance always occurs⁷. In fact, according to the Hausa *bori* tradition, from which *ṣṭambēlī* was strongly influenced, people are affected by a vast range of diseases that might be due to the manifestation of a spirit. To re-establish a good relationship with the spirit, one needs to experience a highly regulated ceremonial whereby music, dance and symbols are meant to lead him/her to a state of possession trance, and then to recovery. In fact, neither *ṣṭambēlī* musicians nor dancers can actually heal. They are just the

⁶ Apparently, they could alleviate exhaustion from physical effort accompanying their rhythm-based walk with the singing: they used to gather around in circle, their master leading the tuning of the songs and, in order to break stones or fix the pavement, they slammed a rod on the ground producing a rhythmic sound. Such an activity was called *rzēmah*.

⁷ Despite the private nature of such ceremonies, they can be attended by a certain number of selected people.

“connectors” of men and spirits. Only the spirits have the healing power: it is up to them to decide if the music ritual is to their satisfaction and, consequently, whether they can conciliate with the affected person. As these ceremonies are not exorcisms, they must generally be repeated once a year to maintain a good balance between the parts⁸.

Public manifestations may occur during non-ritual events such as festivals or parades (as in the case of the *Bū Sa’diyyah*’s parade), or in ritual circumstances such as the *ziyārah* (pilgrimage to the shrine of the patron saint of each house/familial group) wherein the whole community participates in the music, dance and trance celebrations typical of these occasions. In the past, pilgrimages occurred every year, in a dedicated period that was repeatedly changed over time, and were as many as the number of communal houses⁹. Pilgrimage was a form of tribute to the saints -and an obligation- all members of *ṣṭambēlī* groups would take part in it at least once a year. Each group (usually sharing the same ethno-linguistic origin), or communal house, performed the pilgrimage to the shrine of its patron saint and participated in pilgrimages of other groups, with the major pilgrimage being organised in the shrine of Sīdī Sa’d (Mornag). Pilgrimages were thus moments of collective gathering and exchange.

Generally speaking, in both private and public manifestations, music, dance and ritual practices are performed. Music unfolds according to a highly-regulated mode. Each piece (this being rhythmical or melodic, with or without vocal sections), called *nūbah* (pl. *nueb*), is associated with a saint or spirit and must be played according to a hierarchical order. In fact, the *ṣṭambēlī* system of beliefs includes both Muslim/Tunisian saints (*awliyā’*, sing. *walī*, otherwise called the “Whites”) and spirits (*ṣālḥīn*, sing. *ṣālīḥ*, the “Blacks”) which derived from sub-Saharan contexts. Saints and spirits are grouped into families which give the name to the *salēsīl* (sing. *silsilah*, or chain of *nueb*). Each family of spirits is associated with a different colour; while to each saint, or spirit, differing characteristics and powers may be ascribed. Rituals generally entail: animal sacrifice (slaughtering is usually done at the beginning of the ceremony), the burning of incense, ritual supplies, the consumption of food, codified gestures and offerings (these may be of a different kind and be offered either by the performers to the attendants or vice versa) and, indeed, dance and music

⁸ Actually, this aspect may vary. In fact, according to the *ṣṭambēlī* system of beliefs there are “good” and “bad” spirits. Good spirits, if well treated, may effectively leave the afflicted body, in this case the afflicted person would be considered totally re-established. On the contrary, “bad” spirits may never leave their host, therefore an annual healing ceremony would be required in order to maintain the effect of the healing treatment over time.

⁹ The majority of interviewed people attested that, at some unspecified point of the twentieth century, there were fourteen communal houses in Tunis; still, since those people belong to a younger generation, this data should need to undergo further revision.

performances. As for the pilgrimage, it usually starts with a parade which follows a specific path with codified stops; while it may entail, apart from the already mentioned elements, the use of special paraphernalia (e.g. the *sanājiq*, sing. *sanjaq*, banner), instruments and music and dance repertoires, the cooking of special recipes and a specific organization of the ritual's unfolding.

Music, when properly performed, has the power to invoke the saints and the spirits of the *ṣṭambēlī* system of beliefs. It is always led by the *yinnah* (pl. *yinnawēt*), the master of the *gombri* (round-bodied lute not dissimilar from the Ghanaian *molo*), lead singer and main holder of the tradition. The *ṣunnā'*, or group of musicians, accompanies the *yinnah* usually playing the *shaqāshiq* (two sets of metallic, round-shaped cymbals) and singing. Even though nowadays some of them go almost unutilised, other instruments that may be involved, according to circumstances and times of the year/day, are: *ṭablah*, *korkutū*, *dundfah*, *qaṣ'ah lūḥ*, *gambarā*, *fakrūn*, *gūgay*. In some cases, the *bendīr* can also be played (even if this cannot be classified as an instrument of sub-Saharan origin).

The *'arīfah* (pl. *'arāyef*) -being a woman or a man- is the main dance connoisseur, has divinatory powers, can make diagnosis and indicate prescriptions. It is believed that he/she enjoys a special connection with one saint or spirit –or both- of the *ṣṭambēlī* system. Yet, the role ascribed to the *'arīfah* may differ according to the different interpretation of each *ṣṭambēlī* group: he/she may be the person appointed to supervise the possession trance, or the one who actually experiences it in order to allow the “connection” between the afflicted person and the spirits. A *kashākā*, may act as his/her assistant in both private, ritual and professional life. Dance repertoire, as in the case of music, varies according to the nature of performance, circumstances, needs and people attending the gathering. It can be of different kinds (i.e. of leisure, trance or possession). Each *nūbah* and, consequently, each saint and spirit, is associated with a specific dance and dance function.

Today, ritual performances occur less and less frequently, with the resulting effect that some peculiar parts of the ritual repertoire remain almost unperformed. If, in the past, *ṣṭambēlī* groups might have been thought of as a sort of brotherhood (given the similarity between their social organization, and ritual expressions, and Sufi practices), today they are acting more and more as “ensembles”, playing in concerts and venues for audiences that are increasingly unaware of what complexity of significances *ṣṭambēlī* tradition meant.

I.3. Non-Ritual Performances

A limited part of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition has always found expression in non-ritual performances. Since relatively recent times (around 1960s), *ṣṭambēlī* music began to appear together with shows of illusionism and folk music in coffeehouses and hotels around the capital, during Ramadan; while the custom to invite *ṣṭambēlī* groups to celebrate weddings is becoming more and more in-fashion. However, customarily, only a strictly-selected number of *nueb* are played and danced in these contexts, and a few ritual tools and figures may be represented, often deviating from established ritual patterns.

However, today, opportunities of work in non-ritual environments are overall less common than in the past; *ṣṭambēlī* music remains in a marginal position within the local and international artistic market and, even though some *ṣṭambēlī* performers play in scattered festivals and shows, general conditions are pushing them to discontinue their profession as performers. Therefore, if no strategy for preserving and increasing respect for *ṣṭambēlī* heritage will be set in place, such a heritage will be in serious danger of being lost. An in-depth analysis of present conditions and further considerations will follow in the section here below.



1. The *ṣṭambēlī* group “Lasmar Tounsi” performing the show *Ṣṭambēlīnā Dūngā* held on 13 February 2016 at the Mondial theatre of Tunis. (Photo by Chouaib Brik)

II. Analysis of Present Conditions

II.1. Housing System

The traditional system of housing of *ṣṭambēlī* community, consisting of a web of communal houses connected one to the other through a certain degree of familial and professional relationship between residents, has almost disappeared¹⁰. Although this evidence might be interpreted as part of a generalized phenomenon of transformation of the structure of the family (caused by the establishment of modern lifestyle, which privileges small-size family and housing structures to large-size systems of familial and social relationship), it is relevant here to underline that: A.) the lack of generational renewal and B.) the long-lasting absence of politics of preservation of both *ṣṭambēlī* tradition and historical buildings associated with the history of the black Tunisian community have played an additional role in determining the situation as it appears today. However, as far as this study could ascertain, in the capital the number of houses still inhabited by *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members holding relevant connection with the history of *ṣṭambēlī* communal houses is reduced to one specimen. Actually, Art. 4 of the [Tunisian Code for the Protection of Archaeological and Historical Heritage and Traditional Arts \(1994\)](#) states that all buildings (of either private or public property) carrying national values for their connection with national and universal history, aesthetics, art and tradition should be considered as historical monuments. However, as far as it could be ascertained, no measure of individuation and conservation of buildings precious for the history of Tunis's black-community have been carried out to present.

A slightly greater number of dwellings still house *ṣṭambēlī* groups' representatives who preserve the traditional structure of the family based on relationship of community bond and/or on a traditional distribution of hierarchical roles.

As a general evidence, houses –be they new-and-old-established family structures, or physical buildings bearing historical significance– have lost their traditional function as shelter for displaced people arriving from sub-Saharan areas.

All these factors, together with further elements such as the increased competition between groups (see point II.3); the diminution of ritual public performances (see points II.3 and II.5) and

¹⁰ Well before the abolition of slavery (1846), the *ṣṭambēlī* community of Tunis was organized in a system of communal houses, generally known after the name of the ethno-linguistic origin of their inhabitants, or after the role ascribed to them either in society or in *ṣṭambēlī* rituals (for more see part I, section I.1.). As the time passed, houses of *ṣṭambēlī* community members became generally known after the name of either the *yinnah*, or the *'arīfah* –and the people connected to them- that lived there. In some cases, members of *ṣṭambēlī* community could also inhabit the shrine of saints whom they had special connection with.

changes in life standards and expectations have contributed to the fragmentation of the *ṣṭambēlī* tradition's heirs as well as to the deterioration of their sense of a communal bond.

II.2. The Community

Although *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members and network cannot be considered as a minority in the generally-understood definition of terms, up to relatively recent times they represented a social group consisting of people whose interrelation was based on a certain sense of unity and interconnection. The term "community" would thus not be inappropriate as far as it is applied to groups of individuals sharing communal cultural and linguistic traits, social solidarity and hierarchical organization features. However, even though some *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members still refer to themselves as part of the same "family", the situation has undergone serious changes.

As was mentioned above, when *ṣṭambēlī* groups were recognised as social units, in Ottoman times, these were made up of black people (generally freed-slaves) or Afro-descendants coming, mostly, from central Africa¹¹.

Today they are either Afro-descendants of third, fourth or fifth generation (who are, as in the case of other black-Tunisians, naturalized), or white Tunisians.

In fact, notwithstanding testimonies to the contrary, familial bond or African-descent is not the only characteristic that establishes individual belonging to the *ṣṭambēlī* community. Generally speaking, people's acceptance as legitimate "community" or "family" members may be also due to: the quality of training received; the hierarchical position or origin of the person who imparted the training, or transferred the knowledge; the amount of time spent with the great masters of the tradition, or "legitimate" family members; personal attitude and commitment. In *ṣṭambēlī*, the concept of family should thus be understood in a broader sense: it includes a vast range of degrees of proximity and interrelation between members who share a knowledge and a sense of belonging to smaller (single families) and larger identity groups (*ṣṭambēlī* community as a whole). Today, this feature is rapidly deteriorating.

It must be revealed that: the lack of generational renewal; the unfavourable condition of work and standard of living; the establishment of bad practices of exploitation of the shared cultural background; the decline of the communal houses system; the change in the organization of the family structure; the loss of knowledge about some communal cultural traits (e.g. sub-Saharan

¹¹ As *ṣṭambēlī* families' members are not considered a minority, today they do not have special status to mark them off as different from the rest of Tunisians.

languages) and the long-lasting lack of politics of integration aimed at tackling prejudices towards afro-descendants, and *ṣṭambēlī* tradition, have decimated the number of people belonging to, or gravitating around *ṣṭambēlī* groups.

In other cases, all such evidence has brought many to loosen their connection with other members and with the tradition itself; so much so that today the application of the term “community” would sound almost anachronistic. A lack of sense of communitarian belonging is to be found also from a general point of view. In fact, connections of groups’ members of Tunis with other groups carrying similar kind of traditional practices scattered around the country, have seriously decreased; this is mainly due to the lack of opportunity of exchanges, previously provided by the fulfilment of ritual duties and the celebration of special events (e.g. pilgrimages).

II.3. Work Opportunities

As a general trend, it has been ascertained that *ṣṭambēlī* tradition’s heirs, in Tunis, suffer from a great reduction of work opportunities. The main causes identified are as follows:



2. Some members of the *ṣṭambēlī* group “Sidi ‘Abd el-Selēm” playing in the street of La Goulette, after the refusal of the local Town Hall to supply electricity for the stage’s technical equipment -that had been set in place in the main square of the town. (Photo by Valeria Meneghelli)

A. A rising unawareness of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition as a whole set of practices among the general public. It has been reported that this factor would be exacerbated, in some cases, by the media, which would convey a biased or folkloristic presentation of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition. Such a trend would thus impact on the general-public's possibility of understanding the complexity of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition and to recruit *ṣṭambēlī* groups for a diversified range of services.

B. A growing suspicion towards the effectiveness and professionalism of *ṣṭambēlī* groups. This is due to the establishment, in the entertainment market, of bad practices of exploitation of the musical and dance heritage by individuals with no real knowledge of, or connection with, both the above mentioned heritage and reliable professionals.

C. Although Tunisian State's commitment to promote and develop national heritage on fair basis for all parts, stated in Art. 42 of the [Tunisian Constitution](#) (2014, henceforth the Tunisian Constitution), and the State's compliance to prevent all forms of racism, mentioned in Art. 1-24 of [CESCR Tunisia State Party's Report to OHCHR \(E/C.12/TUN/3, June 2015\)](#) –henceforth CESCR Tunisia State Party's Report to OHCHR), the dearth of dedicated institutional public events aimed at increasing the knowledge and respect for the tradition among the general public is still contributing to undermine *ṣṭambēlī* groups chances of employability.

D. In spite of the Tunisian State's willingness to allow the renewal of national culture, and its commitment to protect cultural heritage as stated in Art. 42 of the Tunisian Constitution, it has been observed a lack of public measures aimed at fostering artistic experimentation and creative industry dynamism in the traditional music field.

E. An increase of prices of *ṣṭambēlī* ritual and commercial performances determined by the application of business strategies by individuals acting as business-decision-makers who control the relationship between recruiters and to-be-recruited musicians.

F. The stagnation of tourism and cultural markets affecting the whole country. It should be added here that, even though a number of cases proved that matching heritage and sustainable tourism would bridge the need for the application of safeguarding practices, and notwithstanding the creation of new markets ([UNESCO, Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage and Sustainable Cultural Tourism, 2007](#)), no attempt to integrate *ṣṭambēlī* tradition in long-lasting tourism policies aimed at promoting Tunisian national heritage have been set in place to the present; so that the call to develop communities' innovative ways to deal with present-day issues remains mainly unanswered.

G. Overly long waits in receiving State funding or approval for individual projects that discourage *ṣṭambēlī* performers from taking personal initiatives in promoting their own artistic projects.

H. Despite this data reported to a lesser degree of frequency, it should be mentioned that: some interviewed people have denounced the existence of racial-based prejudices among the majority group of Tunisians, as well as the fear of harassments by radical Islamists. These were described as further discouraging elements that prevent people from recruiting *ṣṭambēlī* groups for performing, or repeating, the annual healing practices in private houses¹².

These factors have generated:

- a decrease in demands for healing practices in private houses, which represented an important source of income for *ṣṭambēlī* tradition's heirs.
- a rising competition among *ṣṭambēlī* groups. This is seriously undermining the social cohesion of the groups' members, as well as their possibility to share, convey and transmit, one to the other, knowledge of the tradition and good working practices.
- a less diversified kind of services requested.
- the discontinuation of the tradition by a growing number of individuals.

II.4. Participation in Cultural and Social Life

With reference to Art. 22 of the [Universal Declaration of Human Rights](#) (UDHR, 1948, henceforth UDHR), each individual is entitled, as granted by the state, to enjoy the economic, social and cultural rights necessary for the development of his/her dignity and personality. Yet, today, *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members right to take part in cultural life appears limited as for:

- A. Despite the Tunisian government's claim of improvement in guaranteeing individuals' right to have a part in cultural life, and its willingness to guarantee right to decent work without any discrimination of sex, ethnicity, skin colour or belief (stated in Art. 2-28 of CESCR Tunisia State Party's Report to OHCHR; Art. 40 of the Tunisian Constitution), no specific plan has been set in place to assure *ṣṭambēlī* groups' professionals full enjoyment of such rights.
- B. The already stated circumstances that have led *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members to discontinue annual pilgrimages have deprived them of important occasions of exchange and manifestation of their belief in society.

¹² Generally, all people having benefited from a healing ceremony to cure a disease once, should repeat the ritual every year so as to keep a good balance with the spirit they were afflicted by (see part I, section I.2. of this document).

- C. Although Art. 42 of the Tunisian Constitution stipulates that "The right to culture is guaranteed. The freedom of creative expression is guaranteed. The state encourages cultural creativity and supports the strengthening of national culture, its diversity and renewal, in promoting the values of tolerance, rejection of violence, openness to different cultures and dialogue between civilizations. The state shall protect cultural heritage and guarantees it for future generations", no actual measure has been implemented to foster *ṣṭambēlī* groups' personal, or artistic development. In particular, it should be pinpointed that no fund has been assigned for the improvement of *ṣṭambēlī* heritage; while no professional training scheme has been set in place so as to enhance *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members professional growth. In addition, the lack of a dedicated festival and set of events that could contribute to rehabilitating *ṣṭambēlī* groups' position in society confirms old patterns of neglect and marginalization of the heritage and of those who perform it.
- D. Despite Tunisian improvements in developing special security coverage schemes "for those on a limited income and [...] for artistic, creative and intellectual professionals", reported in Art. 9-115 of CESCR Tunisia State Party's Report to OHCHR, the Caisse Nationale de Sécurité Sociale's (CNSS, *National Social Security Fund*) present schemes appear inadequate to provide *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members with affordable costs and advantages. This, together with the decrease in incomes of *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members is affecting their standard of living and the opportunity to actively contribute in both social and cultural life.

As a general consideration, the overall condition of *ṣṭambēlī* community of performers is affecting their opportunities of employment, marriage and social inclusion. In addition, the absence of a strategy to improve respect for their tradition and practices is seriously impacting on their possibility to freely choose their profession as well as to exploit their cultural heritage as a form of personal and professional development. On the other side, the same elements are preventing adepts, people gravitating around *ṣṭambēlī* groups and the audience, to have easy access to an important part of their national heritage.

II.5. Rites

As previously mentioned, today *ṣṭambēlī* healing ceremonies occur very seldom. This, together with the discontinuation of pilgrimages, is having a negative impact on the conservation of the heritage. Furthermore, the first element has strongly affected members of *ṣṭambēlī* groups

incomes and caused a twofold trend: at times, a depreciation of the cost of ceremonies, and at times an increase in prices which discourages people to ask for services.

Concerning the pilgrimages, the most important shrines, still visited until a few years ago, were Sīdī Sa'd (Mornag, Tunis) and Sīdī Fraj (La Soukra, Tunis). Sīdī 'Amar (Raoued, Tunis) was, even though to a lesser degree, still visited by some *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members until their decease (the last of them died in the current year). The shrine of Sīdī 'Alī al-Asmar (known as Sidi Ali Lasmar, Tunis) was recently turned to a residence of a member of a *ṣṭambēlī* troupe, where ceremonies are held quite frequently. However, no evidence of historical connection with pilgrimages could be ascertained with such a place¹³. The shrine of Sīdī 'Alī al-Mekkī (Ghar el-Melh, Bizerte) still hosts pilgrimages on an occasional basis.

Today, the fragmentation of the community and the establishment of bad practices of exploitation of the tradition –given away for sheer material purposes- have altered the nature of the *ziyārah*. This, if performed at all, has turned from a collective gathering, in which all groups' members could participate, to an event opened to just a selected number of participants, chosen according to organisers' personal affiliation, motivation, or personal liking.

Besides, other factors are discouraging its continuation:

- The lack of politics of preservation of the shrines as forms of tangible cultural heritage have negatively impacted on their attractiveness –e.g. they have undergone unrestrained transformations.
- The elders' decease and the new generation's loosening of ties with the tradition.
- Groups' members cannot afford ceremony's costs. For the same reason, pilgrimages' length has been turned from three days to one day only¹⁴. In some cases, they have been substituted by a one-day celebration held at the residence of the '*arīfah* (i.e. *sha'bāniyyah*).
- Groups' members feel that both practices and the very pilgrimage have lost authenticity.

The discontinuation or transformation of pilgrimages, which stood as important occasions where non-initiated people could acknowledge *ṣṭambēlī* cults, has increased ignorance about the tradition and contributed to the decrease of demand for private healing practices. An actual

¹³ According to some interviewed people, the shrine may be associated with old-days performances of the *dabdabū*. A special musical section of the pilgrimage's ritual (originally performed by women) that, in Sīdī 'Alī el-Asmar, was repeated and extended so much so that it became a full ceremony.

¹⁴ The increase of the cost of living, the reduction of revenues of *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members –due to the lack of demand for healing ceremonies- and the fragmentation of the community (customarily all members contributed in covering expenses) may be considered as further reasons to explain such a trend.

example of how ignorance may fuel preconceptions was offered by some shrine's caretakers. When interviewed, they stated that, irrespective of the fact that pilgrimage is performed or not, all *ṣṭambēlī* rites are "a lye", "a sin" -meaning that they are not in line with Islamic precepts-, when the *ziyārah* and *ṣṭambēlī* tradition as a whole are mainly performed in the name, and for the blessing of God.



3. The courtyard of the shrine of Sīdī Sa'd in Mornag, Tunisia. (Photo by Valeria Meneghelli)

II.6. Social Perception

As already stated, *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members may be described as a larger group of people sharing a Tunisian syncretic heritage. They may be: A. naturalized Afro-descendants; B. mixed-raced Tunisians; C. Afro-descendant/white-Tunisians' disciples of one of the formers. As such, they are Muslim Arabic-speakers, and Tunisian citizens. Yet, to a certain extent, they, as their tradition, are still perceived by the population as not-fully-Tunisian. This is the result of a number of factors.

Firstly, years of neglect and social marginalization of the Tunisian black community (of slaves/freed-slaves), to which *ṣṭambēlī* groups belonged, and of their descendants, brought *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members to act as a closed in reality –as from an old trend, they did not reveal their secrets and knowledge to the majority of the population. Secondly: ignorance of general

public; *ṣṭambēlī* stereotypically-understood connection with sub-Saharan Africa, as well as the nature of their syncretic cults, music and languages, encouraged people to conceive *ṣṭambēlī* tradition/practitioners as “others”¹⁵. Thirdly, *ṣṭambēlī* belief in saints and spirits, even though integrated into both north-African cult of saints and the widespread belief in genies (*jnūn*, sing. *jinn*), is still at the base of people’s distrust or, in some cases, rejection. This was particularly evident in the immediate period ensuing Tunisian revolution of 2011, which allowed radical Islamists to become active voices in the political arena. Effects of such evidence may be found in the fact that some families did not want to repeat their customary annual *ṣṭambēlī* ceremony at their houses so as not to encounter problems with radical Islamists or neighbours. A similar effect of this trend can be found in the behaviour of some adepts who, after partaking in a *ṣṭambēlī* ceremony, did not want to make this to become public knowledge since they were concerned about people’s judgmental opinion.

Besides, although the Tunisian State’s commitment to tackle racism expressed in Art. 1-24 of CDESCR Tunisia State Party’s Report to OHCHR, as in the case of other black-Tunisians, afro-descendant members of *ṣṭambēlī* groups still suffer from racism. Yet, according to the information cited above, it can be stated that the origin of prejudice against *ṣṭambēlī* tradition, today, is mainly based on its often-misunderstood interpretation as a form of “superstition”, or “backward tradition”. Even though it has been noted a certain degree of interest and appreciation of *ṣṭambēlī* music and dance among the young public, such preconceptions are fostered by:

- the overall lack of politics of traditional culture’s enhancement, that reconfirms “old-patterned” strategies of support of just a selected number of forms of national cultural expression;
- a dearth of public funding for new projects: it prevents experimentation as well as the development of new creative works that may allow *ṣṭambēlī* heritage to conform to new standards of the contemporary artistic market;
- the already mentioned absence of professional training programmes aimed at enhancing *ṣṭambēlī* music and dance performers’ professional skills necessary to facilitate their integration in institutionalised contexts of work;

¹⁵ This aspect was pinpointed by Richard C. Jankowsky in *Stambeli; Music, Trance, and Alterity in Tunisia* (ibid.). Actually, it is partly due to the fact that *Ṣṭambēlī* lyrics betray the syncretic nature of this tradition as they are partly in Arabic, partly in *ʿajmī*: a general term used to identify non-Arabic languages. In the case of *ṣṭambēlī*, the term designates all sub-Saharan languages spoken by sub-Saharan *ṣṭambēlī* groups’ members established in Tunisia over history (most spoken languages were central-Africa Husa, Kanuri and the dialects of the Songhai family).

- media biased messages about *ṣṭambēlī* heritage which foster folkloristic images and do not allow audiences to view *ṣṭambēlī* music and dance as forms of artistic expression.

II.7. Cultural Heritage

Today *ṣṭambēlī* cultural heritage appears extremely in peril. The most important issues to be identified are: A. the lack of transmission of knowledge of the tradition; B. the absence of an institutional plan for the preservation of such heritage. In fact, in spite of Tunisian State's commitment to "protect cultural heritage and guarantee it for future generations" (Art. 42 of Tunisian Constitution) and the State's efforts to strengthen the status of creative professionals, as provided in Art. 15-245 of CESCR Tunisia State Party's Report to OHCHR, no measures to safeguard *ṣṭambēlī* tradition have been issued to the present day. Even more alarmingly, it has been reported that no action has been undertaken by cultural authorities to compile an inventory of Tunisian traditional music (featuring, among the other genres, *ṣṭambēlī* tradition). Should the situation remain as such, this evidence would make the introduction of measures for the preservation of *ṣṭambēlī* heritage even more difficult.

It should be considered that the decease of the majority of people belonging to the old generations of *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members has already determined considerable human and heritage losses. Years of neglect and lack of politics aimed at fostering the socio-cultural integration of both black communities established in Tunisia and Tunisian-black-descendants induced some of the elders not to impart their knowledge to the young -in the attempt to prevent them from life's hardship and social marginalization. The death of old-generation-*ṣṭambēlī* performers was to the detriment of important heritage elements such as: music-and-dance repertoire's features/techniques; historical accounts and elements pertaining to the oral literature; the understanding of sub-Saharan words of some lyrics; the ability to play some musical instruments (e.g. *dundfah*) and, to a certain extent, elements of medical knowledge and aspects pertaining to ceremonial customs. Elders' decease also implied the loss of authoritative individuals holding strong ties with the tradition and, consequently, with its performance. Another matter of general relevance is in the fact that the lack of generational renewal and the dissolution of the communal houses' system resulted in a shortage of diversified styles, techniques and repertoires once shared by individuals belonging to, or gravitating around, each *ṣṭambēlī* familial or

professional group¹⁶. In such an impoverished scene, in Tunis, today, the knowledge and active performance of a reliable part of the heritage still relies on a young and middle-aged generation made up of an average of 30 individuals¹⁷. These are struggling to keep alive what remains of the legacy that was passed down to them. With reference to such evidence, some further elements should be pinpointed.

With reference to the music heritage:

- The lack of generational renewal and people's discontinuation of the tradition has resulted in a serious diminution in the number of professional music players.
- The teaching of *ṣṭambēlī* music has not, at the time of compilation of this Report, been formally included in dedicated programmes of formal music institutions. Consequently, the teaching of *ṣṭambēlī* music repertoire/instruments relies on the effort of a handful *gombri* and *ṣṭambēlī* music masters that refer to two main schools only; they are struggling to train students on a consistent and economically-rewarding basis.
- Similarly, no programme of professional training has been set in place to impart music theory to *ṣṭambēlī* music masters so as to facilitate their access to positions as teachers/trainers in formal institutions or, even, as fully trained musicians able to take part in productions of differing musical genres¹⁸.
- As a result of the discontinuation of the *ziārah* to Sīdī Fraj and Sīdī Sa'd and of the lack of a diversified range of work opportunities, chances to perform the music repertoire reserved for pilgrimages and private healing ceremonies are reduced. The same factor is affecting groups' opportunity to utilize a diversified range of instruments specific to differing *ṣṭambēlī* music encounters. This brings about an impoverishment of *ṣṭambēlī* music offer within the commercial music scene, in terms of both repertoire and instrumentation. It should also be taken into consideration that *ṣṭambēlī* ritual music sessions are usually regulated according to an ever-changing organization of *nueb*, which varies according to:

¹⁶ Each group, and people connected to it, may differ one from the other in terms of ritual customs, music and dance practices, medical knowledge, spoken languages, patron saint and in the way spirits and saints of the *ṣṭambēlī* system of belief were hierarchically conceived.

¹⁷ This estimation is referred to the number of people actively engaged in carrying on the tradition and to whom traditional legacy was passed down according to the traditional father-to-son/daughter or master-to-disciple pattern. It does not include students and scholars who carried out research on *ṣṭambēlī* nor people who have stopped utilizing the heritage as a form of professional engagement.

¹⁸ Usually, *ṣṭambēlī* music players do not know music theory; they owe their music knowledge to practice and imitation.

the situation in which the music is played; the special needs/characteristics of attendants; a hierarchical organization of music pieces and the corresponding saint/spirit to whom they are dedicated; particular circumstances that may occur during the session itself. Commercial performances, on the contrary, imply an enchainment of music pieces to respond to a codified pre-established programme/choreography that diverges from the traditional pattern.

Therefore, should the lack of private healing sessions remain the same in the long run, it would seriously impact the ability of music professionals to comply with an important aspect of the music heritage.

- The fragmentation of the community and the consequent competition between groups is affecting the circulation of diversified and plural information about the musical heritage among the remaining individuals who perform, practice and participate in *ṣṭambēlī* forms of musical expression.
- The lack of methodical recordings of old-generation performers has reduced the possibility of present-day performers to have access to reliable data, useful examples and models. Throughout the years, scattered recordings and inventory compilations were made, mainly, thanks to individual initiatives of scholars and researchers. A relatively recent attempt to record the repertoire of one of the remaining *ṣṭambēlī* family of Tunis was made by the CMAM of Sidi Bou Said, which keeps some archival materials (e.g. publications; a few audio recordings and some videos of shows that were presented in the Centre). However, the lack of both resources and safeguarding policies did not allow the Centre to undertake systematic recordkeeping activities or studies.

Furthermore, present recordings, mainly consisting of sound recordings with no accompanying music or lyrics transcriptions, are inadequate to provide a comprehensive documentation of the heritage. In fact, they do not bring into focus differences between cultural peculiarities specific to *ṣṭambēlī* groups which, particularly with reference to past times, shared differing regional and ethno-linguistic origins. Circulation of, and access to such evidences remain limited and, in some cases, unavailable to *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members (as in the case of important written materials only available in foreign languages, e.g. French and English).

As a general issue, it must be evidenced that, even though a certain degree of interest towards *ṣṭambēlī* music is arising among the new generation of musicians, researchers and

young public, no methodical inventory of *ṣṭambēlī* music repertoire has been compiled up to the present. The lack of this, which seems particularly due to institutional neglect, has already allowed the loss of important features pertaining to instrumental, vocal and linguistic features.

- Up to the time of compiling this Report, no dedicated festival nor series of events have been set in place in the area of Tunis, on recurring and strategically-conceived basis, in order to increase the knowledge, the preservation and the revitalization of *ṣṭambēlī* music heritage.



4. A collection of pictures of some of the most famous Tunisian musicians displayed in the waiting room of “La Maison du Musicien” (*The Musician’s House*) of Tunis, Tunisia. Among important artists of the past, feature some old-generation *ṣṭambēlī* music masters. (Photo by Valeria Meneghelli)

With reference to the dance heritage:

The above observations concerning *ṣṭambēlī* music should be repeated with reference to *ṣṭambēlī* dance heritage. However, some further elements have contributed (and still do) to undermine *ṣṭambēlī* dance preservation. Firstly: interviewed people lamented, as a relatively recent trend, that the lack of work opportunities have induced some 'arāyef to overuse their influence by faking diagnosis to treat diseases for which *ṣṭambēlī* healing would not be necessary or, even, applicable. This would have led some other professional dancers to cease taking part in *ṣṭambēlī* music and dance sessions; the resulting effect being a shortage of diversified dance features and styles in both ritual and commercial performances. Secondly, even though some studies and recording compilations have been compiled on *ṣṭambēlī* music and customs (see above), they failed to consider dance -and ritual features strictly connected to it -as seemingly important matters.

With reference to customs and practices:

Current risks and conditions of *ṣṭambēlī* customs and practices are possibly worse than those endangering *ṣṭambēlī* musical and dance heritages. For, if the latter may be inscribed in programmes of formal/informal teaching, the transmission of knowledge of customs and traditional practices relies on their repetition, as well as on people's observation, and on the way people experience them. Once again, scattered records are available in the case of *ṣṭambēlī* traditional customs and have failed to methodically expose differences between each *ṣṭambēlī* group in a comparative perspective.

Today, some customs have already got lost or have undergone significant changes. The transformation of households' organisations and lifestyles modified the way *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members organise their living, experience and exchange information about everyday-life habits.

Cultural authorities neglect, that hinders preservation of sites that stood as factual and symbolic bearings of the history of Tunis's sub-Saharan cultures have allowed significant places and buildings to disappear; think of the shrine of Sīdī Gharīb, in Bab el-Khadra (Tunis) which, until its demolition, hosted a huge pilgrimage gathering all *ṣṭambēlī* community of communal houses.

As a further example, the transformation of pilgrimages into a one-day event, has now caused an adaptation of the ceremony's unfolding that has meant the loss of some of its ritual peculiarities. The lack of generational renewal and the young generation's loosened ties with the tradition has resulted in a shortage of people actually carrying the knowledge about them. Again, as in the case of music and dance, the lack of ritual performances means the lack of continuation of specific

gestures, recipes, treatments, social and relational patterns as well as of embodied significances associated with each kind of ritual, *silsilah*, *nūbah*, saint, spirit, circumstance and disease; many of these elements remain completely unrepresented in commercial performances.

Should the present pattern not change in the near future, the resulting effect will be a lesser and lesser number of people able to perform the rituals and to utilize *ṣṭambēlī* heritage for healing purposes.

III. Recommendations

In consideration of all data presented in this Report, *ṣṭambēlī* tradition has been found in serious danger of being lost. Therefore, it should be recommended that:

1. **Tunisian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Culture and Cultural Institutions active in the field of the preservation of the national heritage, respect Art. 12 of the [UNESCO Convention for the Safeguarding of Intangible Cultural Heritage \(2003](#) -henceforth UNESCO Convention) by taking the necessary measures to update the inventory of the national intangible cultural heritage, inclusive of the *ṣṭambēlī* tradition.**
2. Tunisian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Culture, the National Commission of Heritage and Cultural Institutions engage in activities aimed at increasing respect for *ṣṭambēlī* tradition, in accordance with the principle stated in Art. 42 of the Tunisian Constitution and Art. 14 of the UNESCO Convention.
3. **Tunisian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Culture and the Cultural Institutions active in the field of the preservation of the national heritage, in line with Art. 13 of the UNESCO Convention, design a specific programme aimed at the safeguarding of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition, including activities of collection of data and field-studies (possibly extended to other forms of the same tradition still existing in the rest of the Tunisian country).**

In case Tunisian authorities do not have funding that is necessary to proceed with such processes, they are strongly advised to apply Art. 23 of the UNESCO Convention and submit a request for international assistance to the UNESCO's Intergovernmental Committee for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (or Bureau of Committee, depending on the amount requested).

Above all, it is highly recommended that the above mentioned authorities engage with UNESCO Intergovernmental Committee in order to start the process for inscription of *ṣṭambēlī* on the UNESCO's List of Intangible Cultural Heritage in Need of Urgent Safeguarding.

4. Tunisian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Culture and the Cultural Institutions active in the field of the preservation of the national heritage, ensure the widest possible

participation of *ṣṭambēlī* groups' representatives in the above process, in compliance with Art. 15 of the UNESCO Convention.

5. Tunisian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Culture and all competent cultural bodies, allocate special funding for the development of cultural activities to foster respect and raise public awareness of *ṣṭambēlī* cultural heritage. **In particular, cultural authorities are strongly encouraged to establish an annual event dedicated to *ṣṭambēlī* music and dance heritage.**
6. Tunisian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Culture and the CNSS representatives, in conformity with Art. 38 of the Tunisian Constitution and Art. 9-115 of the CESCR Tunisia State Party's Report to OHCHR, update present social security scheme in order to meet fair conditions for *ṣṭambēlī* groups' members.
7. In accordance with Art. 22 and 23 of the UDHR, and Art. 14 of the UNESCO Convention, Tunisian authorities, particularly the Ministry of Culture and the Ministry of Higher Education, promote special education and professional training schemes that may allow *ṣṭambēlī* music performers to: have access to formal teaching and training in an institutionalised context; participate actively in cultural society and enjoy their right to work and develop their professional and personal skills.

In line with the above recommendations, Tunisian authorities, cultural organizations, and civic society are strongly encouraged:

8. To foster activities aimed at rehabilitating and diffusing the knowledge of *ṣṭambēlī* tradition in a climate of dignity and respect for cultural diversity.
9. To engage in the process of inception of a governmental, or non-governmental body that could represent *ṣṭambēlī* heritage and groups' members in front of the State and the civil society.

Conclusion

Ştambēlī tradition is a Tunisian tradition combining different identity and cultural traits. For its characteristics and interconnection with the history of sub-Saharan community established in Tunisia, it stands as both a historical cultural intangible heritage of the Tunisian nation and as an exemplification of its cultural diversity.

This Report has focused on the particular *ştambēlī* tradition of the city of Tunis. There, after a period of relative enhancement, *ştambēlī* tradition was not included in the national cultural politics of safeguarding of traditional heritage, even though it continued to be performed and appreciated among a limited part of Tunis's society. In fact, given the nature of *ştambēlī* practices and their interconnection with the history of black slave trade and marginalization, *ştambēlī* groups' members have always held a controversial place in Tunisian society. Today, although a new interest by the young generation could be observed, a long-lasting neglect of cultural authorities, a lack of generational renewal as well as the absence of interlocutors, have strongly affected the very state of the tradition.

In effect, all presented data suggest that ritual customs, and practices, are already about to disappear. Still, what remains is the knowledge that is being preserved, and embodied, by the remaining *ştambēlī* groups' members of Tunis. These members, despite their newly-acquired willingness to transmit their heritage to the public, are struggling to carry on along these lines.

In light of all such evidence, and in line with the universal principles of human rights and UNESCO Convention, this Report has proposed a number of recommendations that would allow: the improvement of respect for *ştambēlī* tradition and groups' members; the safeguarding of a significant part of Tunisian national intangible heritage; an improvement in standard of living of *ştambēlī*-tradition's heirs; an increased participation of the formers in social and cultural life; an improvement of *ştambēlī* practitioners' professional and personal skills; an effective application of the declared State's willingness to promote politics aimed at tackling prejudice and racism among society; the enhancement and the diversification of the national cultural offer.

As a conclusive observation, this Report has finally ascertained that, should no action be implemented in the immediate future, a significant part of the Tunisian national heritage and thus world heritage is in serious danger of being lost.

APPENDIX I – Table of Transliteration

ء	'
ا	ā / ē
ب	b
ت	t
ث	th
ج	j
ح	ḥ
خ	kh
د	d
ذ	dh
ر	r
ز	z
س	s
ش	sh
ص	ṣ
ض	ḍ
ط	ṭ
ظ	ẓ
ع	'
غ	gh
ف	f
ق	q
ك	k
ل	l
م	m
ن	n
ه	h
و	w / ū
ي	y / ī
ة	h / t
غ	g

APPENDIX II - External Links

<http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images//0013/001325/132540e.pdf>

http://tbinternet.ohchr.org/_layouts/TreatyBodyExternal/countries.aspx?CountryCode=TUN&Language=EN

https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Tunisia_2014.pdf

<http://www.wipo.int/edocs/lexdocs/laws/fr/tn/tn039fr.pdf>

[http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/217\(III\)](http://www.un.org/ga/search/view_doc.asp?symbol=A/RES/217(III))

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