Educational governance activities and the rise of educational contagion in the Islamic Maghreb

The case of Tunisia

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Introduction

Educational governance activities[1]—the funding, provision, ownership, and regulation of education (Dale 2005)—are no longer solely conducted by state apparatuses, but are now a permanent feature and orthodoxy of the »politics of education« at the transnational and transdiscursive levels. We build upon the insights of the »pluri-scalar mechanisms of governance« (Robertson, Bonal, and Dale 2002) to empirically conceptualize the scalar dynamics of transitological educational governance activities and politics in post-authoritarian and post-revolutionary settings and contexts (hereinafter post-spaces) in comparative and international education. We use a »historical-comparative or comparative-historical approach« (Cowen 2000; Larsen 2010; Schriewer 2002), grounded in an historical policy analysis (HPA) (Hanberger 2003; Jules 2013a; Jules 2013b; Schram 1993; Torgerson 1996) of national educational policies to illustrate how various policy discourses arose in the post-authoritarian period in Tunisia. Such a methodology illuminates how perceived educational problems are first rescaled endogenously by exogenous forces during different »transitologies«—the collapses of one empire and

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1   Following Dale (2005) we use »educational governance activities« as a generic term to encompass the funding, provision, ownership, and regulation of education that may be carried out independently by different actors that are endogenous or exogenous to the nation state.

its replacement with another (Cowen 2000)—within the context of the project of modernity. We see Tunisia's post-spaces as consisting of the (i) post-independence policyscape, (ii) post-Bourguiba policyscape (first authoritarian president), and (iii) post-Ben Ali policyscape (second authoritarian president). These post-spaces stem from some form of regime change and from internal uprisings and have ultimately shaped Tunisia's transitologies.

A plethora of studies have concentrated on Tunisia's political transitologies by illuminating the precipitous collapse of one of the most unwavering countries in the Arabic world (Chomiak and Entelis 2011; Schraeder and Redissi 2011) by drawing attention to several internal factors. These include its economic system and excessive unemployment (Hibou, Meddeb, and Hamdi 2011), the three perceived myths (economic miracle, democratic gradualism, and *laicité*[2]) credited to Ben Ali's regime (Cavatorta and Haugbølle 2012), and the role of external actors (Youngs 2011) in the massive uprisings against the regime, as well as the conceivable broader lessons that the Arabic world could learn from the Jasmine Revolution (Murphy 2011; Pickard 2011). Few studies have sought to empirically study the historical impact of Tunisia's political transitologies on educational governance activities. Governance in post-spaces is a spatial scale based on the outcomes of struggles between social forces that are embedded within the contestations of power and capability (Robertson 2010). In focusing on Tunisia, the most recent state to emerge within post-authoritarian spaces, our emphasis is on understanding the political role of the »*mukhabarat* (intelligence-based) police state [based on a] ›strong neo-corporatist state‹ or the ›force of obedience‹ or an ›authoritarian syndrome«« (Schraeder and Redissi 2011, 5–6) in relation to the role and function of education in Tunisian society.

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2   *laicité* links economic underdevelopment closely with cultural and religious backwardness that had to be eliminated through subscription to modernizing values and the French model of social development (see Cavatorta and Haugbølle 2012).

This paper draws on political economy literature, particularly on the concept of »financial contagion,« to propose the rise of »educational contagion«—the spreading of ideas due to spillovers—within post-authoritarian and post-revolutionary spaces and across different scales. Financial contagion occurs as a result of several small economic shocks that initially affect only a few institutions, a particular region or a specific section of the economy, and then begin to spread across the entire economic system. The ripple effects of these small shocks are driven by economic fluctuations and ultimately lead to a tsunami of policy solutions. In applying this concept to an empirical conceptualization of education in post-authoritarian and post-revolutionary settings and contexts, we aim to understand how educational policy ideas spread across various regions of a country. We propose a »a model in which small shocks lead to large effects by means of contagion, more precisely, in which a shock within a single sector [such as education] can spread to other sectors and lead to an economy wide financial crisis« (Allen and Gale 2000, 3). *Apropos* to our argument, educational contagion outcomes may be derived from a scalar empirical analysis of educational governance activities in post-spaces. This paper suggests that countries are subjected to different externalities as they construct imagined post-spaces or »imagined communities« (Anderson 1991; see also Sadiki 2002) in the aftermath of regime changes, since they are greatly influenced by regional and global processes. Within this context, this paper sets out to argue that educational contagion, embedded within a broader framework of scales, is but one empirical approach that we can use to understand how processes of globalization and regional integration influence post-spaces. Our starting point is the national policy level of the Tunisian educational system. Simultaneously, we pay attention to the processes and actors above and below the state level, since the pluri-scalar mechanisms of governance allow us to understand the »coordination of activities, actors/agents and scales through which education is constructed and delivered in national societies« (Simons, Olssen, and Peters 2009, 78).

Our principal argument is that scales help us to understand the rise of regulated educational governance activities and the subsequent outcome

of educational contagion in a particular context. First, we recognize that authoritarianism is a problematic concept to define and even more precarious when applied to the nation-state (Heryanto and Hadiz 2005). In conceptualizing educational governance activities, we draw on a variety of literatures in comparative and international education to show how the different levels of »scale« (Robertson, Bonal, and Dale 2002; Robertson 2012), the projectability of »scoptic systems« (Sobe and Ortegon 2009), and the broader cultural, historical, and political investigation of »vertical studies« (Bartlett and Vavrus 2011; Vavrus and Bartlett 2006) within »policyscapes« (Carney 2009) provide an opportunity for us to consider the way in which policy ideas flow within and between different aspects of the policy environment in post-spaces. We use such an elaborate framework, giving these approaches a particular treatment or viewing them through the »optique of globalization« (Carney 2011), since one cannot study »post-spaces« in education without locating and accounting for the various governance mechanisms that have managed and regulated education prior to the emergence of new spaces. Second, we make an assessment by employing an HPA aimed at exploring the question of how educational policymaking has been regulated and governed in Tunisia's post-spaces. For us, education is one of many regulated and governed aspects of the post-authoritarian spaces that exist at different scalar levels in Tunisia. Third, this paper is an attempt to scrutinize and wrestle with the nature of the problems that confront post-authoritarian Tunisia in light of its historical past. This is done by briefly reviewing the historical and post-independence aspects of education in Tunisia. The premise of this essay suggests that even at the height of authoritarianism in Tunisia, education was seen as essential and as part of the regime's civilizing mission. Finally, we gauge the Tunisian example by examining major reform agendas, along with the actors, agents, and institutions that promoted them.

**Post-spaces as vertical comparisons, scopic systems, and
policyscapes**

In examining the notion of scale in post-authoritarian spaces we draw on
the work of Robertson, Bonal, and Dale (2002) and Robertson (2012),
who argue that scales are constructs that take place at different levels
that are entwined and fixed through different processes. Struggles
between actors (political and others) may occur at any level within a scale
and consequently produce different outcomes. Thus pluri-scalar gover-
nance pays attention to how education is delivered and constructed as
well as to the power relations that arise during the coordination of activi-
ties, actors, and agents at different scales in post-spaces (Dale 2005;
Robertson, Bonal, and Dale 2002; Simons, Olssen, and Peters 2009;
Verger 2009). Whereas Dale's (2005) work uses *a priori* elements to sug-
gest that movement towards governance can be categorized by the
emergence of a multilayer or pluri-scalar process that involves non-state
actors/agents in national decision-making, our focus here is on the
posteriori conceptualization of governance activities regarding educational
politics. In building upon the existent governance research that pays
attention to the scales of governance (sub-national, national, and
supranational) in relation to the institutions or agents (state, market,
community, and household) that coordinate these various scales, resul-
ting in the »coordination of coordination« (Dale 2005; Robertson, Bonal,
and Dale 2002), our work draws attention to the embryonic scalar dyna-
mics of governance activities before they move up the decision-making
ladder to the transnational level (Mundy 2007). Educational governance
is multidimensional, multileveled, and multiscalar, and therefore,
educational governance activities in post-spaces take place at the
subnational, national, supranational or regional, and international levels.
Any analysis of national governance structures should draw attention to
both the »»politics of education‹ in capitalist societies and to ›education
politics‹ as specific events within governance structures« (Simons,
Olssen, and Peters 2009, 79). We therefore examine pluri-scalar patterns
of coordination since educational reforms in post-spaces are »now being
asked to do different things in different ways, rather than the same

things in different ways« while on the systemic level »the constitution of education sectors may be in the process of changing, with a development of parallel sectors at different scales with different responsibilities« (Dale 2005, 117).

In essence, we use Robertson's (2012) typology as a conceptual approach to the study of governance activities in post-spaces, and suggest that these spaces represent a »»condition of the world,‹ ›discourse,‹ ›project,‹ ›scale‹ and ›means of identifying the reach of particular actors«« (35). As conditions of the world, processes of globalization, American exceptionalism, neoliberalism, and post-Washington censuses shape post-spaces. As a discourse, post-spaces are invoked as a means of splitting with the past and constructing a revisionist view of history. As a project, post-spaces structure the perceptions and scopes through which particular educational challenges and solutions are framed. Finally, as a scale, post-spaces allow actors to pick and choose which ideas will be legitimized and which will be discouraged. Therefore, by empirically conceptualizing post-spaces, we can begin to see these spaces as part of a vertical landscape within which we can situate past and present discourses in order to understand »multi-layered and cross cutting proceeds and modes of interaction« or what has been called »»situatedness«« or »embeddedness« (Robertson 2012, 39). In other words, vertical comparisons draw attention to the »politics of knowledge production« (Vavrus and Bartlett 2006), particularly in an era of regulated governance in which »[…] nation-states continue to be central players in a globalizing world, but partly as local agents of global forces, for the nation-state now operates within global economic constraints« (Marginson and Mollis 2001, 601). Such recognition of the changing role of the nation-state implies that we need to develop a different empirical approach to situate the new geo-political educational architecture of power in a globalizing world.

In returning to the ways in which we can empirically study policy discourse in post-spaces, »scopic systems in education« (Sobe and Ortegon 2009) invite us to examine how education, historically and in

the present, has been projected globally. Sobe and Ortegon (2009, 59) challenge us to use scopic systems in education to think about »projected realities (and the means of projection)« (59) that are central to »performance legitimacy« (Huntington 1991) in any regime. In heeding this call, we take Sobe and Ortegon's (2009) notion of the projection of globality a bit further by suggesting that the »totality and reflexive comprehensiveness of projection and reality« (58) is a *condition* and not a process, since it is not a result of technological innovation. Globality is seen as a new »condition or state in which things are global,« which stems »from conscious and intentional actions of individuals and collective human actors« (Shaw 2000, 17–18). In locating the array of scopic systems that exist in post-spaces, we focus on identifying how these systems have historically and in the present projected ideas of education. Educational scopic systems represent a form of power that frames educational challenges within the policy environment and tries to find solutions by employing mechanisms that ultimately reinforce social practices over time (Robertson 2011; Robertson 2012). While scopic systems help us to understand the projectability of globality as constructed through the national optic, vertical comparisons allow us to »grasp the complexity of the relationships between the knowledge claims among actors with different social locations as an attempt to situate local action and interpretation within a broader cultural, historical, and political investigation« (Bartlett and Vavrus 2011, 96). In other words, the context within which post-spaces operate, taking into consideration the »historical trends, social structures and national and international forces [that] shape local processes« (Vavrus and Bartlett 2006, 96). Vertical comparisons not only help us to understand how projected realities occur in post-revolutionary spaces, but also focus on understanding how social interactions are shaped by institutional forces, across nations as well as across different political periods. These comparisons help us to understand how multilevel dimensions ultimately allow the construction and subsequent projection of a version of reality that authoritarian regimes strive to maintain in the form of performance legitimacy. At the end of the day, legitimacy matters in any post-space, and thus any empirical

study of post-revolutionary or post-authoritarian spaces must consider the role of performance legitimacy in shaping and constructing a country's identity as projected to the rest of the world. For us, vertical comparisons are ways to explain the claims to legitimacy bolstered by the persuasive use of state propaganda, the illusion of political inclusiveness, the supply of standard public goods, and the dispensing of patronage through client networks (Burnell 2006).

The final element we suggest is critical to understanding post-spaces is a focus on policyscapes, as notions of globality are projected across different scales within the policy environment. Like Carney, (2009, 2011), we uses policyscape as a way to understand »the spread of policy ideas and pedagogical practices across different national school systems« (68). However, in applying this notion to post-spaces, the aim is to look at policy diffusion through both vertical and horizontal lenses to capture the ideological essences that remain after regime implosion, giving rise to post-spaces that are focused on creating a new imagined community. Vertical comparisons of scales within post-spaces allow us to draw attention to the lived consequences of entanglement that exist within an imagined community. The aim of such a comparative approach is to better understand the horizontal and vertical spatiality of transnational flows and how they affect educational systems (see Ferguson 2006). Policyscapes allow us to focus on the »time present transitologies« (Cowen 2000) that shape educational systems and spaces in the aftermath of regime collapse, given the changing nature of regional and international architecture and their impact upon practices and processes. Transitologies, for Cowen (2000), have a shelf life of 10 years and stem from the collapse and reconstruction of »(a) state apparatuses; (b) social and economic stratification systems; and (c) political visions of the future; in which (d) education is given a major symbolic and reconstructionist role in these social processes of destroying the past and redefining the future« (338). If we accept that the Tunisian revolution began December 17, 2010 with the self-immolation of the fruit vendor Tarek al-Tayeb Mohamed Bouazizi, then Tunisia represents a prime example of how we

should study transitologies in post-spaces by drawing from the vertical and horizontal scales that exist within the policyscape.

We shall now turn to historicizing Tunisia's educational systems to show the emergence of Tunisia's transitological policyscape.

Transitological educational governance activities in Tunisian history

As noted above, governance can be broken down into independent activities—funding, provision, ownership, and regulation—that are carried out by different actors/institutions (market, community or household) in addition to the state, thus giving rise to a pluri-scalar module (Dale 1997). It is therefore the coordination of these independent activities by state and non-state actors/institutions that signals the rise of governance. This does not mean that the state is absent from governance activities, in fact the state is still actively present »through its role as ›coordinator in chief‹ that determines by whom and under what conditions government will be accomplished« (Dale 2005, 129). However, because of space constraints, the paper will only focus on educational governance activities during transitologies. For us, educational governance activities during political transitions represent a new and distinctive aspect in the study of the rise of pluri-scalar governance in that »transitological moments« (Cowen 2000) help us to understand the process of rescaling governance activities during times of crisis.

Tunisia's pre-independence educational system can be categorized in »pre-protectorate education« and »protectorate education.« Such a distinction draws attention to the scalar dynamics of educational reform in Tunisia and to why its subsequent leaders broke from the past to project an »imagined community« around education reform. It is during the transition from a French protectorate to an independent country in 1956 that we see the evolution of different scales of educational governance activities as well as how new policyscapes were constructed to protect these activities. Long before Tunisia became a protectorate of France, education was of high priority in the North African country. With one of

the most advanced Muslim educational systems in the Maghreb region, traditional education in the 19th century largely consisted of religious schools (madrassas). A small percentage of Tunisian children attended Islamic primary schools, *kuttabs*, where students learned the Qur'an thoroughly (Ling 1979). These small schools were often connected to local mosques and were privately funded. The most promising students furthered their religious studies by attending city mosques—the most prestigious among them being Ez Zitouna mosque and university, located in Tunis (DeGorge 2002; Sizer 1971). Founded in 734 C. E. and technically a secondary school, Ez Zitouna was considered the most important center of Islamic scholarship in the Maghreb region (Berry and Rinehart 1987). In the pre-protectorate period, educational governance activities were imbedded in religiosity, since the curriculum largely focused on the Arabic language and the Qur'an, with similar pedagogical methods as *kuttabs*, albeit much more advanced (Green 1978). The small number of graduates from the mosque often took positions as Islamic teachers or judges in Sharia courts, or became members of the Ulama ranks—an exclusive group of religious leaders (Green 1978; Micaud 1964). As Tunisia began to take steps towards modernization in the 19th century, Ez Zitouna remained conservative and aimed to keep »Islamic tradition alive by carrying out its ritual and legal duties« (Sizer 1971, 6). Gaining acceptance into Ez Zitouna was difficult, with only 800–900 students enrolled annually (Green 1978). Students had to have graduated with high standing from a *kuttab*, be at least 12 years old, able to read and write, and have a large portion of the Qur'an memorized (Sizer 1971). In the 1870s, Prime Minister Khair al-Din, who had lived in Europe in the 1860s, began to focus his attention on modernizing Tunisian educational institutions, especially Ez Zitouna, whose educational governance activities were still religiously driven. Since graduates of the university often held bureaucratic positions, he aimed to reform the university to match the needs of contemporary Tunisians (Perkins 1986). In the end, Ez Zitouna and is educational activities remained conservative, with few changes to the curriculum.

On the initiative of Prime Minister Mohammed al Sodok, Sadiki College (technically a secondary school) was established and opened its doors in 1875. The modern college aimed to train young Tunisians for state service (Perkins 1986) and offered gifted Tunisians lessons in European languages and sciences (Anderson 1986). Sadiki's curriculum was divided into three sections and spanned eight years. The first two sections covered »the Koran [Qur'an], grammar, literature, rhetoric, logic, and jurisprudence. The third section was optional and reserved for the most gifted« (Sizer 1971, 7). Languages offered under the third section consisted of Turkish, French, and Italian. The college also offered instruction in rational sciences, although instructors (some foreign) were advised to »inculcate love of the Faith and to discourage questioning from the students« (Sizer 1971, 7). The Sadiki design was an »early model of bilingual and bi-cultural education« (Sizer 1971, 7) and became the standard for future educational endeavors under French rule.

When the French took control of Tunisia in 1881, they found an education system consisting of *kuttabs*, Ez Zitouna, and Sadiki College. French officials originally stated that little changes would be made to the Tunisian education system, but a growing European population, from 77,000 in 1895 to 129,000 in 1905, put pressure on the government to provide more European educational institutions (Sizer 1971). The first transitological moment of education in Tunisia commenced in 1883 when the education system was placed under *la Direction de l'Enseignement Public,* with Louis Machuel appointed Director of Education (Green 1978). Machuel was put in charge of all schools, including religious institutions. The newly established school system closely resembled and was integrated with the school system in France (Sizer 1971). By establishing a unified system, officials intended to draw the European and Tunisian populations together. The institutional expansion of assimilationist Francophone education policies aimed to create »an elite cherishing metropolitan values—Black Frenchman« (Clignet and Foster 1964, 191), leading to a centralized political framework with some local autonomy. For the French administration, the main goal of education was »that a modern education would facilitate relations between France

and the native people by fostering an understanding of the Arab-Islamic culture and the newly arrived European cultures« (DeGorge 2002, 580–81). Further, the government needed an educated Tunisian workforce to fill government positions. It is within this transition that we see the creation of a separate schooling system and policyscape in which governance activities are state-motivated and meant to fulfill bureaucratic requirements.

Taking a modest approach, Louis Machuel left the *kuttabs*, untouched and established new Franco-Arab schools to pragmatically instruct both French and Tunisian students in modern subjects in French. These schools were loosely modeled after the bi-cultural Sadiki design, with Arabic and Italian taught as second languages. Some geography of the North African region was included. The schools were intended to be open to all citizens (French and Tunisian), but many Tunisian Muslim students were excluded because of their low proficiency in French (Sizer 1971). Although the schools achieved some success in desegregating European and Tunisian students, the proportion of French to Tunisian students remained unequal throughout the protectorate—the schools never enrolled more than a fifth of the region's eligible students (Perkins 1986). Along with the new Franco-Arab schools, the French administration also opened a European-style French secondary school, *Lycée Carnot*, in 1881. This school utilized the same system as *lycées* in France, and the entire staff was French. Again, as in the Franco-Arab schools, the language of instruction was French (DeGorge 2002). Historically, we can see that the establishment of the Franco-Arabic schools and *lycées* represents the first movement of governance activities away from religious control and towards the rise of the state as chief coordinator within a very centralized French bureaucratic system. The modern approaches employed by the new educational division favored a European education system; traditional Arabic schools and the Arabic language were viewed as inferior and were paid little heed.

In considering the pluri-scalar appeal of educational governance and the »tiered nature of political authority in addition to that located nationally«

(Lingard and Rawolle 2011, 99) we suggest that a plausible hypothesis of educational activities of governance within transitory post-spaces is driven by educational framings at the political level. For example, one of the earliest political framings of educational governance activities was the opening of Sadiki College in 1875, which was a calculated move by Prime Minister Mohammed al Sodok. The Sadiki design is an example of how political processes and interactions yield surprisingly effective educational reforms during different transitological moments, when the foci of activities, actors/agents, and scales of governance are endogenously developed and reformed to accommodate the structures and processes of modernity—placing considerable attention on the nation-state, national education systems, and the individual (see Chabbott 2003; Meyer et al. 1997).

Sadiki College remained the premier center of learning. With its highly competitive entrance examinations, »its graduates were almost assured government positions by virtue of their advanced training in modern subjects and in the increasingly important French language« (Perkins 1986, 88–89). Graduates from Sadiki and the other modern education establishments began to criticize the recently adopted education system. They argued for their own society's need »to make room for concepts and practices then current in the West but without discarding the Arabo-Islamic traditions in which it rested« (Perkins 1986, 92). In response to their concerns, alumni began publishing a new newspaper—*al Hadira*—that promoted societal change while maintaining Islamic principles (Perkins 1896). This led to the opening of a new educational organization in 1896, Khalduniyyah, which was designed to provide a European curriculum for students attending Zitouna in addition to their Islamic education (Anderson 1986). Although the Sadiki graduates worked in tandem with French officials to establish Khaldiuniyya (Micaud 1964), officials became concerned that the modern education system was »creating an educated elite who could cause political problems« (DeGorge 2002, 583). Their concerns were substantiated; Tunisians became less passive and more concerned with maintaining their culture while simultaneously demanding access to schools with modern curricula.

These political reformers became known as *Jeunes Tunisiens*, named after the Turkish revolutionaries, the Young Turks (DeGorge 2002). One of their most salient demands was to make modern education more readily available to all Tunisians, in both urban and rural areas. As a result, the Department of Public Education began to deny access to European-style education for Tunisians (Anderson 1986).

This initial pushback from French officials did not last long. From 1914 to 1942, student attendance and the number of schools established to educate both Tunisians and the French increased. In 1914, Tunisia's education system consisted of 30 private schools and 288 public schools. Most of the schools were primary schools, along with one *lycée* for boys, a secondary school for girls, two colleges, two normal schools, and a professional school. In 1942, in addition to new primary schools, technical and professional training institutes were opened. Further, *jardine scolaries* were established for practical training in agriculture (Sizer 1971). Finally, putting the educational processes in perspective, a conference was held in Tunis in 1949 to address educational issues and »proposals called for teaching methods suitable for the Tunisian child, programs adapted to local realities, and the use of Arabic as a vehicular language« (Sizer 1971, 12). The conference, along with a report commissioned by the French government, brought a twenty-year plan, to fruition, the *Plan de Scolarisation Totale de la Tunisie* (1949–1969), which expanded France's educational governance activities within Tunisia. The plan addressed demographic, economic, and cultural concerns within the current education system, such as providing educational options for girls, preparing students to aid in the development of the country, and the need for an elite Arab-Muslim class to fill government positions. The plan succeeded in increasing the population of children receiving an education, but »the proportion of eligible children in school remained between thirty and thirty-five percent« (Sizer 1971, 16). Education continued to be for the elite and wealthy.

In sum, by the 19th century, Tunisian educational governance activities existed in bifurcated and stratified policyscapes, with a traditional system

dating back centuries and linked to religion, and an elitist, centralized, French, state-driven system. Individual activities, funding, provision, ownership, and regulation during the pre-independence period were divided among different entities and across different scales. By the end of the protectorate in 1956, only ten percent of the population was receiving an education (DeGorge 2002). Traditional Tunisian schools were nearly the same as in the pre-protectorate era, and the »French system was merely juxtaposed to it, more modern in outlook, but transposed directly from France with little adaption to local needs« (Sizer 1971, 18). Although the reforms brought about during French rule created more schools, they also created an educational space that was highly complex and incongruous.

Transitologies and imagined post-spaces

In post-spaces, the broader narratives of transitologies show traces of Robertson's (2012) typology discussed above, especially the condition, discourse, project, and scale that define government mechanisms. Whereas governance activities were splintered in the protectorate period, a vertical comparison shows that during the independence period, governance activities were streamlined under the control of the state apparatus. In applying Robertson's (2012) conceptual approach to the study of governance activities, we suggest that in post-spaces, conditions of the world shape notions of modernity as embedded in post-colonial projects that in turn fashion the activities of governances. We see the project as challenges confronting educational activities, framed in a way that prioritizes the state's agenda. Discourse uses transitologies to project an illusion of what can be possible once there is a radical discontinuity from the past and scale constitutes the ways in which actors frame reform. Cowen (2000) warns that transitologies are dramatic and occur quickly; however our HPA shows that Tunisia's post-independence educational transitologies are now in their third wave. The first wave of transitologies began in the post-independence period of Tunisia's release from France as a protectorate, when the educational policyscape was transferred to the new post-protectorate administration.

In 1957, the French proclaimed Tunisia a republic and subsequently named Habib Bourguiba—»father of the nation,« »Supreme Warrior,« and »Combatant, Supreme«—president. Bourguiba swiftly placed education at the forefront of his agenda, and stressed the importance of education for social advancement (Rossi 1967). Bourguiba's governmental activities placed emphasis on expanding educational access, both in urban and in rural areas, to provide more opportunities for all children in Tunisia, not solely the elite. The country had a long way to go—at Independence »less than one quarter of Tunisian children were in primary schools, and fewer than five percent of the school-aged population had been exposed to modern secondary education« (Berry and Rinehart 1987, 128). The Education Act of 1958 attempted to remedy this. Within the post-protectorate policyscape created by Bourguiba, all educational governance activities were absorbed with developing the necessary human resources for the modernization project as conceived by him. The fundamental tenants of Bourguiba's modernization project, and the evolution of appropriate governance activities, were voiced within the 1956 Code du Statut Personnel (Code of Personal Status) that went into effect in 1957. The code prohibited polygamy, granted women and men the same rights, introduced a minimum age for marriage, permitted women to initiate divorce, and mandated the right to education for women. As part of Bourguiba's new educational policyscape, school curricula and textbooks were modernized to reduce religious influence while simultaneously widening participation.

The 1958 ten-year education plan not only addressed educational access and expansion, but also aimed at both the unification and Tunisification of the country (Fryer and Jules 2012; Sizer 1971). This move thus cemented the government's role, a clear change in governance practices. In the post-protectorate policyscape, the Tunisification process was embedded in the governance activity of regulation. Bourguiba's aim was to ensure that education was a central component of the state apparatus. The Tunisification process had three core elements: »(i) evoking history; (ii) enhancing culture and religion; and (iii) promoting gender equity« (Fryer and Jules 2012). Education in the immediate post-independence

period used »education to create citizen-subjects […] in which Westernization and Tunisian Islamic culture would be ›synthesized‹« (Champagne 2007, 204). After decades of French rule, the country needed to establish a unique Tunisian identity. Further, the government desired a cadre of workers that could replace French personnel and improve the economic conditions of the country. All educational institutions were first placed under one secular institution (DeGorge 2002), the Ministry of Education (MOE), which strove to reform education from the ground up. Higher education reform was placed on hold until more Tunisian youths were prepared for university level courses (Sizer 1971). Although the plan set out to transform the current education system, the French model still provided the framework for the Tunisian government.

Universal primary education, free to all Tunisian children, was the first goal—set to be accomplished by 1968 (Sizer 1971). Every child had the right to primary education; however, secondary education was designed to be more selective. Beginning at age six, Tunisian children were to attend primary school for a total of seven years. Soon after the national plan went into effect, overcrowding issues arose and the quality of education deteriorated (Allman 1979). Further, there was a shortage of qualified teachers and space. To rectify these issues, the MOE cut weekly school hours in half during the first two years of primary school, from 30 to 15, which allowed schools to operate in shifts. Students attended school for 25 hours a week and the seventh year of primary school was eliminated (Allman 1979; Sizer 1971). Utilizing a bilingual approach, students were taught in Arabic for the first two years and then were instructed for ten hours a day in French from the third year on. While the French model of schooling continued to permeate the Tunisian educational infrastructure, the Tunisification, or nationalization, of Tunisia became an integral part of the revamped education system (Sizer 1971).

The Education Act limited secondary education, which was considered selective, but not elitist. Entrance was gained through high scores on a

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competitive national exam taken during the last year of primary school. The duration of secondary school was six years. However, after the first year of general instruction, students were tracked into different fields—making students more adept in certain subjects (Allman 1979). Early specialization also aimed to prepare students for universities, specifically universities considered more modern. After Independence and the centralization of governance activities under the state, religious institutions lost their appeal and were considered impractical (Micaud 1964). Ez Zitouna's prestige wavered, especially after the creation of the University of Tunis in 1960, which catered to students who wished to fill positions formerly held by the French or students who wished to go abroad for work or study (Rossi 1967).

For the most post, Tunisians considered the reforms successful. By 1967, 90 percent of school-aged boys and 50 percent of girls were receiving a primary education (Sizer 1971). However, a report released in the same year resulted in some alterations to the 1958 plan. As more students attended school, issues relating to educational quality became prevalent. In some areas, primary education was increased to the original 30 hours a week, and all primary classrooms became co-educational. The plan also encouraged smaller class sizes (Sizer 1971).

Throughout the rest of Bourguiba's presidency, he focused on the governance activity of educational provision that contributed to the rise in school attendance in primary school and secondary school. However, low quality remained an on-going issue. The University of Tunis continued to expand and gain prestige, although many qualified students chose to attend universities abroad. All things considered, by the mid-1980s the reforms did what they had intended—most primary and secondary school teachers were Tunisian rather than French, school attendance drastically increased (DeGorge 2002), and more attention was brought to the distinctive culture and language of the Tunisian people. This, of course, did not occur without considerable investments. From 1980–1990, 27 percent of the state budget was spent on national education.

In 1988, the second transitological moment occurred as the post-Bourguiba imagined community was constructed by Ben Ali after he took office. The »palace coup« that brought the peaceful transition from Bourguiba to Ben Ali, known as *le Changement* (the change), was dominated by *le Pacte National* (the National Pact)—political and economic reforms to encourage foreign investment (Borowiec 1998). In the post-Bourguiba policyscape, we see the rise of three myths (the economic miracle, democratic gradualism, and *laicité*) that shaped educational governance activities, ultimately providing fertile ground for the rise of the post-Ben Ali policyscape. While Ben Ali preserved and expanded the foundational attributes of Bourguiba's educational governance activities to guarantee political stability and security under the »presidential democracy« system, several myths permeated the post-Bourguiba space. Ben Ali wanted to distance himself wherever possible from Bourguiba's educational governance activities, which were founded on Western ideas and the principle of modernization. The three myths mentioned above are central to the ways in which education was projected in the post-Bourguiba period and has its roots in the 1989 education reforms that sought to »reshape [educational] structures according to a rational approach that takes into account the national reality, inspired of success instances worldwide« (MOEHRST 2008, 71) and provided »compulsory and free basic schooling […] redefined the mission and finalities of education, restructured secondary education« (MOET 2002, 10–11). This reform not only sought to respond to the gaps in student performance across the system, but was also Ben Ali's way of suggesting to the international community that not only was Tunisia serious about addressing its educational deficits, but also that Tunisia embraced modernity and democratic governance. However Cavatorta and Haugbølle (2012) suggest that this projection of embracing modernization and educational reforms was a myth. In 2002, Ben Ali engaged upon the second set of reforms in the post-Bourguiba era. Ben Ali's reforms were based on »social liberalism« (Mbougueng 1999), since they adopted aspects of neo-liberal market reforms in conjunction with heavy state intervention in the social sector. In this context, the Educational Reform Act states that

»education aims at cultivating fidelity and loyalty in students to Tunisia« (MOET 2002, 5) while increasing their »capacity for self-education and […] prepar[ing] them for access to the educated community« (MOET 2002, 9). The link between Ben Ali's aim to develop an educated populace while projecting the notion of himself as a democratic leader was the

> Tunisian economic miracle […] [where the leadership sought] to tackle the most pressing problems of the country and then generate sufficient growth to be able to defuse social tensions in order to open up the political system without risking the growth of Islamic extremism (read Islamism), as economic success could be used to undermine the attraction of political Islam. (Cavatorta and Haugbølle 2012, 183).

During the post-Bourguiba era, Ben Ali increased spending on education —6.3 percent of the gross national product in 1993—and focused attention on cultivating competencies, including: (i) practical (mathematics, science, computer science, and technology); (ii) strategic (organize, analyze, and search for correct information); (iii) initiative (spirit of creativity); and (iv) behavioral (senses of responsibility, self-reliance, and cooperation (MOEHRST 2008). There is no clear evidence whether there is a connection to the investment in education, but Tunisia's annual growth rate did increase from 5 to 6 percent between 1996 and 2005. In 2005, another set of educational reforms called for »a large scientific and technological partnership with overseas« (MOEHRST 2008, 155) as part of »Tunisia Tomorrow«—a set of reforms introduced in 2005 that focused on technological partnerships. In light of these reforms, it is ironic that one of the most important reasons for the post-Ben Ali transitology period was high unemployment among young people, especially university graduates, which rose from 30 percent in 2009 to 45 percent in 2011. Distinctive in the development of the post-Bourguiba space is the movement from the process of Tunisification towards liberalization of entry into the global market. For example, while reforms drew on Tunisia's historical past, they also projected a sense of Ben Ali's performance legitimation in that higher education reforms sug-

gest »the university will […] boost the comprehensive process of economic development. It will remain an inexhaustible source of creation and innovation […] So that Tunisia remains forever, the symbol of science, culture and civilization which it has always been throughout history« (15). As part of Ben Ali's projection of democratic values, the post-Bourguiba era continued to promote »absolute equality among the sexes,« which was considered »the best means of social promotion« (MOET 2003, 17). The idea of competing internally and externally permeated the post-Bourguiba space, as education was expected to generate a »link between training and the labour market at the regional and national level« (MOET 2008, 19).

Conclusion: Educational contagion

In examining the role of educational developments in post-spaces, we suggest that several small internal shocks to Tunisia's educational system were driven by political fluctuations and transformations. These ultimately led to the tsunami of policy solutions that have altered the Tunisian landscape, giving rise to education contagion—the spreading of ideas due to spillovers. In essence, one conceivable supposition is that educational contagion is a byproduct of the educational governance activities that are utilized during different transitological moments.

In focusing on the evolutionary dynamics of governance activities, transitological moments within transitologies, we suggest that future research should now be able to identify how activities eventually spilled over as transitological periods expanded. Essentially, while the post-protectorate policyscape cemented governance activities under the state apparatus to achieve modernization in the post-Bourguiba policyscape, *le Changement* was utilized to consolidate crucial decisions under the »presidential system« in the post-Ben Ali policyscape, which continues to be an extension of earlier scales of governance activities. Thus educational contagion, or the spillover effects, ultimately cemented the seeds of the Tunisian Uprising, or »Jasmine Revolution« as coined by the Western media, and the ensuing Arab Spring. Based on our analysis, we suggest that the Tunisian Uprising not only went against the dictatorship *per se,*

but also against the policyscapes that different governance activities had created, expanded, and maintained over time. After all, it was the centralized bureaucratic system that funded, provided, owned, and regulated the independent activities of education, and it was the products of the system, its human capital, that rose up against the state apparatus when they could not find employment. While we recognize that several factors contributed to the demise of the Ben Ali regime after 23 years of governance, we advance that educational contagion ultimately shaped the pre-revolutionary events and the extent to which they spilled over, given that 43.7% of the population were aged 15–39 and were products of post-protectorate governance activities. An example of educational contagion can be seen in the evolution of political slogans as the uprisings progressed from an initial call for »employment is a right, oh gang of thieves« and »bread and water, not Trabulsis[3]« to calls that »the people want to bring down the regime« (Sadiqi 2011, 21). Other slogans, such as »the people want to topple the regime,« invoked aspects of the work of the Tunisian poet Abu al-Qasim al-Shabbi, who died in 1933 at age 25. In returning briefly to the situatedness or embeddedness of transversal comparisons, a second example illustrates how, as the state cemented control of the various educational governance activities in the post-Bourguiba policyscape, endogenous actors were used to protect and legitimize this space. It is within the context that the *mukhabarat* became the disciplinary arm of the neo-corporatist security state that arose in the post-Bourguiba policyscape. The *mukhabarat* had its hands in all educational governance activities, since it infiltrated all spheres of Tunisian society as Ben Ali consolidated his presidential democracy. At its height, there were close to a 130,000 *mukhabarat* employed to protect the security of the state, with the university system having its own heavy-handed *mukhabarat* division, which functioned in an atmosphere of impunity and maintained an air of fear to keep university students and officials in line.

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3   Refers collectively to the family members of Leïla Ben Ali, second wife of President Zine El Abidine Ben Al.

In putting forth educational contagion as a theoretical module with which to understand the multi-scalarity and multi-spatiality that exists in post-authoritarian spaces, we trace the metamorphoses of educational policies within Tunisia's authoritarian space to examine the conceptualization and actualizations of empirical research on education. The post-Ben Ali periods have begun with destroying and discrediting the historical, social, and professional past (Cowen 2002). In this paper we have made two observations: (i) we have advanced a way of studying post-spaces in the hope that we can better understand the type of transitological processes that states go through as different educational systems are restructured after the collapse of a regime and (ii) we have suggested that in the case of Tunisia, the transitological process has given rise to educational contagion at different policyscales. In the post-space, projected globality is not embedded in the governances negotiated, but instead stems from educational contagion. In essence, over time these various projections have occurred in small shocks that now shape Tunisian society within the post-space.

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