

# La Mission Civilisatrice, Le Bourguibism, and La Sécuritocratie: Deciphering Transitological Educational Codings in Post-spaces – the Case of Tunisia

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*This article builds upon Robert Cowen's (1996) work on educational coding in transitological settings and post-spaces by deciphering the efficacy of political and economic compressions in Tunisia from the French protectorate period to the 2011 post-Jasmine revolution. First, I diachronically decrypt and elucidate the specific experiences and trajectories of Tunisia's transitologies, while paying attention to the emergence of specific synchronically educational moments. It is suggested that educational codes during transitory periods are framed by political compressions and preconceived philosophies of modernity. It is postulated that four educational codings can be derived in Tunisia's post-spaces: (a) the protectorate code defined by la Mission Civilisatrice (the civilizing mission); (b) the post-protectorate code defined by le Bourguibisme (Bourguibism); (c) the post-Bourguibisme code defined by la Sécuritocratie (securitocracy) in the form of the national reconciliation; and (d) the post-Sécuritocratie period defined by the National Constituent Assembly (NCA) – as economic and political power is compressed into educational forms. I situate educational patterns within the Tunisian context to illustrate how educational codings shape post-spaces across these four transitory periods.*

*Keywords: Tunisia, la Mission Civilisatrice, la Bourguibisme, la Securitocracy, transitology and educational codings.*

## Introduction

This paper employs Robert Cowen's (2000) concept of "educational coding, that is, the compression of political and economic power into educational forms" (p. 10) within the context of transitologies (the study of transition) to reading the *motor nuclei* (a sequence of signposts that transcend discourse) of educational development across post-spaces. This is done by explaining the efficacy of transitologies in pre- and post-authoritarian contexts, settings, and spaces by using Tunisia as a case study to chart the trajectory of a particular national context using pre-modern, modern, and late modern ideologies (Cowen, 1996) and transitologies. Cowen (2000) notes that transitologies refer to the "simultaneous collapse and reconstruction" of institutional systems such as "state apparatuses; social and economic stratification systems; and political visions of the future" during which "education is given a major symbolic and reconstructionist role in these social processes" (p. 338).

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<sup>1</sup> Acosta and Perez Centeno (2011) use *motor nuclei* to explain "a series of milestones or episodes which have become transdiscursive as the discipline has evolved" (p. 1) as such, this article modifies their original idea of *motor nuclei* to focus on the transdiscursive evolutionary dynamics of changes in educational 'post-spaces' within the discipline of comparative and international education.

For Cowen (2000), educational patterns or ideal-type modules become visible as ideological, social, political, economic, and cultural complexities of societies are exposed during the redefinition period in the aftermath of a transition (be it peaceful, dramatic, or turbulent). As societies' complexities are exposed during the transition, educational sites display an array of educational forms (political compressions) and educational patterns that reveal new educational codes "that captures the intersections of the forces of history, social structures and the pedagogic identities of individuals" (Cowen, 2000, p. 336). Education is observed as habitually comprising a methodical segment of the transitological process since it connotes the 'shape' and 'vision' of the state apparatuses, the socio-economic orthodoxy of the stratified system, and the political dreams of modernization.

In what follows, this article will diachronically decrypt and elucidate the specific experiences and trajectories of Tunisia's transitologies, while at the same time considering the emergence of specific synchronically educational moments. This is done with the aid of "concepts, abstractions, [and] theories, ... [to] provide lenses or frameworks to compare, explain and interpret historical phenomena" (Kazamias, 2001, p. 446). Given the complex nature of the educational project in 'post-spaces' (used here as a generic term to capture the transitory undercurrents of several paradigms – post-socialism, post-revolutionary, post-authoritarian, and post-Sovietology), attention is given to the metamorphosis of "immunologies and permeologies of social and educational patterns" (Cowen, 1996, p. 85; see also Jules & Barton, 2014) as countries readjust their 'filters' to consider: *Why are some reforms filtered in and others filtered out preceding and subsequently after a transitology has occurred?* In using educational codes to decipher this question, this article suggests that the creation of "policyscapes" (Carney, 2009) or policy discourses that are grounded in a distinctive nationalist transitological language are implicit. The theoretical insight for this article stems from that transitology literature, and the core concept worked with is 'post-spaces,' which "provides the lenses or the medium to select, organize and interpret the historical material" (Kazamias, 2001, p. 446).

This paper is divided into three parts. In the first part, the existing literature on transitologies in Comparative and International Education is reviewed and updated. It is suggested that educational codings facilitate a holistic depiction of studying the historical trajectory of a national educational system since it focuses on the efficacy of endogenous time and space compressed within national educational systems. In focusing on the *motor nuclei* of education coding, this study is "...situat[ed within the context of] local action and interpretation within broader cultural, historical, and political investigation ... [to grasp] ... which historical trends, social structures, and national and international forces shape local processes" (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006, p. 96). The study is grounded in a "historical-comparative or comparative-historical approach" (Acosta & Perez Centeno, 2011; Cowen, 2000; Larsen, 2010; Schriewer, 2002), as the "method of inquiry and as a frame of analysis" (Novoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003, p. 424). As a vertical site or "vertical case study" (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006), the aim is to illuminate the evolutionary dynamics that undergird educational reforms during times of transition.

In the second half of the paper, it is indicated that educational codes during transitory periods are framed by political compressions and preconceived philosophies of modernity. *Apropos* to my argument, educational codings in Tunisia's educational transitologies exist across different educational patterns. Based on the findings, it is advanced that four educational codings can be derived: (i) the protectorate code defined by la Mission Civilisatrice (the civilizing mission); (ii) the post-protectorate code defined by le Bourguibisme (Bourguibism); (iii) the post-Bourguibisme code defined by la Sécuritécratie (securitocracy) in the form of the national reconciliation (particularly the concepts of *le Changement* – the Change – and *le Pacte National* – the National Pact; and (iv) the post-Sécuritécratie period defined by the ascendancy of the National Constituent Assembly (NCA). In seeking to understand the evolutionary dynamics of agenda-setting attitudes after transitions have occurred, attention should be paid to the 'transitological moments' that come to define and dominate the educational architecture as new futures are envisioned, and the past gives way to historical revisionism. Such an approach focuses on "'transversal' and 'horizontal' comparisons, and what connections and colorations one can see as a result, or what has been called "'situatedness'" or "embeddedness" (Robertson, 2012, p. 39) to highlight the "politics of knowledge production" (Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006, p. 98). As economic and political power is compressed into educational forms, this article aims to illustrate how the context of the educational patterns generated educational codings that were shaped across these four transitory periods. In exploring the post-Sécuritécratie period, the paper concludes by framing the efficacy of Tunisia's transitions upon the Arabic Spring.

### **Educational coding: An approach to deciphering transitologies**

The transitology framework accommodates "the historical contingency of particular forms of educational systems," along with their "cultural variations" and their "transitions from one major historical paradigm to the next" (Rappleye, 2012, p. 52). While Cowen (2000) asserts that transitologies transpire within the first ten years after a changeover and "they occur at remarkable speed and often with stunning suddenness" (p. 339), I concur with Bray and Borevskaia (2001) that a linear timeline imperils not all transitologies. Tunisia's complex history lends itself to a theory that illuminates multiple dimensions of its educational past, while simultaneously offering insight into possible trajectories of its educational future. The argument presented here implies that in addition to transitology not being linear in scale, there can also exist a 'transitology of transitology' in the form of an ideational. The transitology scholarship emerged as a way to study the economic, social, and cultural problems of Southern Europe, Latin America, and Central and Eastern Europe (Cowen, 1996; 1999; 2000; Lowenhardt, 1995; Petsinis, 2010; Griffiths & Millei, 2013). In comparative education, several studies have drawn on Cowen's (1996) typology to examine educational transitologies by replacing the Sovietology research with this typology as a way to examine ideological differences (Cowen, 2000; Gans-Morse, 2004; Millei, 2013); focusing on how post-soviet countries have transitioned towards democratic educational systems (Silova, 2009); using the typology as a comparative framework for interpreting developments in countries of transition, as in the case of Mongolia (Steiner-Khamsi & Stolpe, 2004); operationalizing it by way of cases that may give rise to one or more forms of comparative education (Carney, 2009); and exploring the financing of education during transitory periods (Bray & Borovskaya, 2001). However,

using Cowen's conceptualization, I expand on earlier literature to explain transitions within Tunisia – a post-authoritative state without prospects for effective integration.

Despite the apparent linearity through which Cowen's three educational paradigms are often viewed, Cowen (1996) contends that "evolution is not linear – it is not possible to assume that shifts from pre-modern to modern to late-modern educational patternings are routinely predictable – embedded within an automatic historical sequence" (p. 162). Thus, the purpose of using a transitological framework in the Tunisian setting is to gauge educational occurrences by examining these transitions, or 'turbulences' – through the uncovering "acts of rupture, conflict, tension, and resistance" (Carney, 2009, p. 69) and creating a "mini-narrative" (Cowen, 1996). Thus, "transitologies become our compass, helping us get our bearings in relation to time (history) and space (geography)" (Rappleye, 2010, p. 15). It is important to note, however, that transitology research is not an end in itself and does not aim to explain causality, but instead offers a clear agenda with profound insight (Rappleye, 2012). What truly sets transitologies apart from other analytical research tools in Comparative and International Education is its acuity to "tell us of the spirit of the battles still to come" (Cowen, 2000, p. 339). It challenges researchers to travel beyond the present, which is essential in making grounded policy decisions. Further, transitologies give academics "new and meaningful insights into the interconnectivity of politics, history, and culture across localities at a time when these three elements are often dismissed as outmoded..." (Carney, 2009, p. 69). Taking into consideration this concoction of elements brings new meaning and trajectories for education research, "including the redefinitions of the past and the visions of the future" (Cowen, 2000, p. 2).

To best study transitologies, Cowen (1996) forces researchers to think both historically and holistically, offering three educational patterns – pre-modern, modern, and late-modern – to analyze against the central leitmotifs of political, economic, and cultural development. By focusing on the evolutions of these educational periods, scholars can better understand the intricacies in educational processes and development. Further, shifts and educational experiences within pre-modern, modern, and late-modern systems are often experienced globally (with exceptions); therefore, opening doors for future comparative analysis across vertical and horizontal levels.

It is in times of disarray that "the educational patterns that are ordinarily, in ordinary daylight as it were, difficult to see" (Cowen, 2000, p. 339) are revealed. These patterns are dependent on local conditions and assume a unique historical identity—adapting and diverging from perceived educational models (Rappleye, 2010). In this way, "educational reform itself helps to construct not sequential equilibrium conditions but more transitologies..." (Cowen, 2000, p. 339). Therefore, by historically analyzing the changes within Tunisia's education system, educational codings may be revealed that are "the compression of political and economic power into educational forms" (Cowen, 2000, p. 339). An example of such compression is an education provision in Tunisia that was sanctioned by the Ben Ali regime, which provided all families with a computer, which, in turn, created a cadre of educated Tunisians that turned against their government (Covatorra & Haugbølle, 2012).

Just as transitologies compress power, they can lead to expansion. Cowen (2000) asserts that educational codes are made most visible in transitologies, which often occur “when there is a collapse (and rapid redefinition) of international political boundary, of political regime and of political vision” (p. 341). Reading transitologies and transitological moments in the post-Arabic Awakening period is thus a step towards “reading the global,” which “edges us toward reading the forces of history and the interplay of the domestic and the international in the construction of educational patterns,” specifically “educational codings” (Cowen, 2000, p. 339). Attempting to understand educational codes is not a unidirectional process, but instead, a deep historical practice that focuses on political, economic, and cultural relations. Therefore, education is not divorced from other social, political, and economic occurrences; each domain is but a number needed in conjunction with other numbers to provide the entire code, which often appears in times of chaos. It is this exact process that “captures collective and socio-specific time” and “allows for national context specificity, and allows etic and emic perspectives to coexist” (Rappleye, 2010, p. 15). Further, by attempting to uncover and analyze educational codes, research has the potential not only to be comprehensive, but more comparable.

The complexity of transitologies leads one to question whether such research can ever be successful. Rappleye (2012) asserts that the very act of deciphering educational codes would indeed be difficult or “nearly impossible ... or at least a single, definitive decryption of them” (p. 409). However, Rappleye (2012) posits that perhaps Cowen uses a plural ‘codings’ to suggest not only “different countries and different transitions, but different codes for different actors/groups within the same transition or transfer moment” (pp. 409-410). What is suggested here is that educational codings were never meant to result in a single script or model, but, instead, transitology research often yields “parallel codes or multiple views of a single transition...” (Rappleye, 2012, p. 410). Again, this produces a line of research inquiry that focuses on the totality of the transitional process, a path that creates various insights and codes within single monumental events. While this approach transcends the existing analysis that calls for attention to a historicization of recent educational transformation against the milieu of political, economic, and social change, the location of transitological disruptions and divergences within shifts; or ‘transitologies of transitologies’ that can occur simultaneously as progression transpires between educational paradigms, can be located. The rest of the paper applies the concept of educational coding to four periods of transitions that have experienced political and economic compressions in Tunisia.

### **Methodologically Framing Educational Codings**

Methodologically, this paper employed a “historical-comparative or comparative-historical approach” (Cowen, 2000; Kazamias, 2001; Larsen, 2010; Nóvoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003; Schriewer, 2002), “centered on historically contextualized causal relationships within a comparative framework” (Ritter, 2014, p. 98). Following Kazamias (2001), this historical-comparative study within the context of transitologies in Tunisia represents an “understanding an educational system or aspects of it, not for purposes of changing or improving it” (p. 446). Discourse is an institutional way of thinking, and, therefore, the aim is to study transitologies within and across different scales to decipher how educational codes are governed. Such an approach attempts to re-conceptualize “...the relations between space and time in historical and

comparative research” (Nóvoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003, p. 429) by grounding this study in the contexts and history of Tunisia. In returning to Kazamias’s (2001) idea that historical research involves the use of core concepts, the concepts (development, modernization, authoritarianism, unemployment, and stability) were selected by the author to frame this paper while recognizing that several other concepts warrant coding.

The starting point was that educational codes are discursive trace patterns that exist across and within multiple discourses (cultural, political, social, and economic), and therefore, these codes are transdiscursive. Thus, new spatial arrangements embedded within transitologies are trans-historical and transdiscursive and can be studied to understand better the architectonic components that emerge as multiple discourses compress. These codes were developed and employed to contextualize the Tunisian milieu since comparative-historical analysis “assumes that the relevant causal factors ... identified are somehow rooted in, and influenced by, *historical trajectories*” (Ritter, 2014, p. 99). The aim was “to develop, test, and refine causal, explanatory hypotheses about events or structures integral to macro-units such as nation-states” (Skocpol, 1979, p. 36). Following Mahoney and Rueschemeyer (2003), the comparative-historical analysis used has three features: (i) the explanation of causal configurations; (ii) the focus on explaining processes over time; and (iii) the description sequels within delimited historical contexts (Jules & Barton, 2018). The aim was to focus on the macro-descriptions of the historical educational policy narratives that existed across the different transitory periods Tunisia has undergone. In other words, the focus was on unearthing casual relationships, and not correlational variables, by paying attention to the long-term policy processes from Tunisia’s two dictatorial regimes. The techniques of *process tracing* (outlining the trajectory of a phenomenon over time by linking a causal factor) and *path dependence* (locating sequential changes that influence institutional patterns and outcomes) were employed to “uncover the link between cause and effect ... through the ‘reconstruction of the origin of a certain event’” (Ritter, 2014, p. 99).

In developing educational codes, the analysis focused on the discursive level of policymaking, and different national plans, policies, and papers that were active during the education reforms across these periods were analyzed. Convenience sampling was used, and over fifty documents were analyzed. The codes were developed by identifying “steps in a causal process leading to the outcome of a given dependent variable of a particular case in a particular historical context” (George & Bennett, 2005, p. 176). This was done by “establish[ing] and evaluat[ing] the link (or the absence of a link) between different factors” to determine “whether the causal process of the theory that [is being used] can be observed in the sequence and values of the intervening variables” (Vennesson, 2008, p. 231). As such, in developing codes, the focus on was on what mechanisms contributed to a given outcome in education by paying attention to how structural and institutional environments shape educational patterns. Again, earlier policy decision in education has a direct impact on contemporary reform agendas.

The arguments here are derived from the scanning and coding of several textual sources for themes, patterns, and keywords. In using such an approach, the focus was on exposing the “intangible, impalpable, spiritual forces” (Kandel, 1933, p. xix) or

“forces and factors” (Kazamias, 2001) that shape the different types of educational patterns to understand the major educational codes embedded in the political, economic, and cultural configuration. Thus, the historical analysis relied on what White (1996) describes as a “signpost,” since codings can take place across several sources, including official policy documents, government-funded studies, and administrative reports from the colonies, educational policies, white papers – all to examine what the different administrations (pre-and post-colonial) say about the policies that were being implemented. Therefore, the educational codings across different educational patterns “places historical analysis of local histories and local trajectories front and center” (Rappleye, 2012, p. 52). In grounding the analysis in the “genealogy of problems” of educational systems, where history is used to “understands *facts* to be objects of knowledge brought into view and highlighted in a conceptual system in which specific processes are seen as a *problem*” (Nóvoa & Yariv-Mashal, 2003, p. 431), the aim was to take up Cowen’s (2000) infant conceptualization of educational codings by considering the context of Tunisia’s educational system.

While space does not permit a detailed overview of Tunisia’s entire educational system, for the remainder of this article, the educational codes (La Mission Civilisatrice, Le Bourguibism, La Sécuritocratie, and post-Sécuritocracy) emerging from the historical-comparative perspective are used to illustrate Cowen’s typology (pre-modern, modern, and late-modern) as they occurred during different transitions in Tunisia’s history. In using these codings, it is suggested that as economic and political compressions occur to create macro transitological processes, we can simultaneously have micro or meso transitologies happening across vertical sites. Following Cowen’s (1996) framing of educational patterns, his three ideal-type models of transitologies can be viewed within the context of Tunisia and how these patterns are central to the development of what I call transitologies of transitologies. Moreover, during the transition from one period to another, we see the transitologies of transitologies develop as the old system fragments, and, in the new system, we see vestiges of that old transitology.

**Pre-Modern Educational Codings: *La haute Mission Civilisatrice de la colonisation***

For Cowen (1996), pre-modern educational patterns held political rather than economic purposes in high regard within the state. Tunisia’s pre-protectorate educational coding not only corroborates Cowen’s (1996) postulations, but they were significantly influenced by France’s cultural policy, which arrived in the Middle East around the 1860s. In 1878, the *Alliance Israélite Universelle* (AIU), viewed as modern and perceived as second only in importance to Quai d’Orsay’s (the Foreign Ministry), set up its first school in Tunis. Its policies ultimately yielded the long-term consequence of creating the “francophone factor” – where “Tunisian are Arabs, and the educated ones seem to be more at ease in France than in the Arabic countries” (Borowiec, 1998, p. 9). At the beginning of the French protectorate period, Tunisia had one of the most advanced Muslim educational systems in the Maghreb region. Following the Bey of the Husainid Dynasty, Tunisia’s pre-modern education codings are deeply entrenched in and defined by France’s “la mission civilisatrice” (the civilizing mission), which gave France significant control over Tunisia under the 1881 Treaty of Bardo and total rheostat under the 1883 Treaty of La Marsa. This occurrence not only cemented Tunisia’s status as a French protectorate but also led to the beginning of the Tunisian transitology from one exogenous ruler (the Bey of Ottoman

Eyalet Tunis) to another (the French). When the French formally took control of Tunisia, they found an educational system consisting of *kuttabs*, Zitouna, and Sadiki College. Under the Beys, the *kuttabs* – Islamic primary schools – used Arabic as its method of instructions for basic reading, writing, and arithmetic skills to educate a small selected group of Tunisians. Students who showed an aptitude for learning were sent to pursue supplementary religious studies in the mosques, such as the Grand Zitouna Mosque-University, located in Tunis (DeGorge, 2002; Sizer, 1971). Upon finishing the Zitouna, a small number of graduates found positions as Islamic teachers, judges in Sharia courts, or became members of the Ulama ranks (an exclusive group of religious leaders) (Green, 1978; Micaud, 1964). In returning to the concept of transitologies of transitologies, in keeping the pre-French system intact during the transition to French protectorate and building a new system upon the old, we see how political and economic compressions shape new educational patterns.

The movement toward colonial rule, as well as ensuring political and economic compressions of this transitology, saw Tunisia steadfastly hold onto its schools, guilds, and limited judicial jurisprudence. However, in reality, the French had ultimate power in Tunisia under the system of *le Control*, grounded in the Office of the French Resident-General (Alexander, 2010; Ikeda, 2006). Over time, power and ensuring “governance activities – funding, ownership, provision and regulation” – (Dale, 2005) of education became centralized in the office of the Resident-General, and the French language replaced Arabic in the public sphere (Jules & Barton, 2014). The French found that the education at the *kuttabs*, Zitouna, and Sadiki College did not meet their administrative needs, and, in 1883, the Tunisian system came under the control of *la Direction de l’Enseignement Public* with Louis Machuel becoming the Director of Education (Green, 1978). The educational system was thus reformed to mirror the French school system. By the time educational reforms were completed, the *kuttabs* had remained untouched. However, the Franco-Arab school system was established to instruct Tunisians in French. In 1881, the European-style French secondary school, *Lycée Carnot*, was established and modeled after the French *lycées* in France and staffed entirely with French nationals.

A distinctive feature of francophone educational patterns of the pre-modern era focused on preparing the political and administrative elites to function in the colonial bureaucracy (Cowen, 1996; Ikeda, 2006; Rappleye, 2012; White, 1996). The evolution of Tunisia as a protectorate was accompanied by the influx of French civil servants and administrators, creating “a colony of servants” who command a salary known as “le tiers colonial” (a colonial third). As France expanded its economic interests in the Middle East, its educational interest developed. As the French solidified their control over Tunisian society, it “retained, strengthened, and extended the bureaucratic administration of the local state” (Anderson, 1986, p. 9), while at the same time laying the foundation for what ultimately became a powerful centralized educational bureaucracy that still exists. France’s intervention in Tunisia was purely economic, and the French never wanted to create a “settler colony” (Alexander, 2010) as it did in Algeria. Thus, this pattern – governance from afar by France – is one that depicts the educational code of ‘*la haute mission civilisatrice de la colonization*,’ since pre-modern Tunisian education aimed at doing the absolute minimum in the colony while reaping the maximum benefits by ensuring that the bureaucratic machinery had the necessary human capital requirements.



### **Modern Educational Codings: From *La Mission Civilisatrice* to *Bourguibisme***

The modern educational paradigm has three dimensions: “the role and moral messages of the central state, educational content and structures and the inter-national relations of the education system” (Cowen, 1996, p. 168). Independence from France signaled the movement from the pre-modern educational patterns categorized as *La Mission Civilisatrice* to modern educational codings classified by what is term *Bourguibisme*. In defining the post-independence period as an era of modern education and the coding of this period as Bourguibisme is twofold in that it has to do with the education reforms that occurred after abolishing the Beys and the creation of the Republic of Tunisia by Habib Bourguiba in 1956. It is throughout this phase that a shift in educational ideology becomes clear: a focus on the perceived benefits to the nation. The transition from pre-modern to modern created a policyscape for the incubation of Bourguibisme that ultimately rose as economic and political compressions occurred through the transformation of the Tunisian landscape. Throughout the struggle for independence, the emergence of modern educational codings during the Tunisian transition can be seen. In Tunisia, the post-independence period was characterized by the consolidation of its independence, sovereignty, and the abolishment of the monarchy under the proclamation of a Republic with Habib Bourguiba as president, ‘father of the nation,’ ‘le Guerrier Suprême’ (the Supreme Warrior), ‘le Combattant Suprême (the Combatant Supreme), and later ‘Presidential Monarch’ as he assumed the role of both chief of state and chief of government.

The economic and political compressions under the leadership of le Guerrier Suprême is defined by his focus on constructing the modern Tunisian state by ‘Tunisifying’ the bureaucratic structures and institutions (particularly the unification of the judiciary and education) through governing and redefining the society and the individual (Jourchi, 2013). Le Guerrier Suprême viewed modernity as a drastic break from the historical orthodoxy of Arabic-Islam, which was persuasive in the region at the time and focused on developing Western-type systems. The educational codings prevalent under Bourguibisme are intricately linked to Bourguiba’s ruling Party *Parti Socialiste Destourien* ([PSD], the Destour Socialist Party), and the educational policies in which they advanced. The most significant reform in the immediate aftermath of the transition to self-determination occurred in 1957 when the 1956 *Code du Statut Personnel* (Code of Personal Status) – proscribing polygamy, yielding female and male equivalent rights, ascertaining a minimum age for marriage, authorizing women to initiate divorce, and requiring the right to education for women – went into effect. The second tenant of Bourguibisme was the 1958 ten-year educational plan that concentrated on “training expeditiously the cadre that the ongoing state-building urgently needs” (MOET, 2002, pp. 9-10) and expanding access to schooling from first grade through university. At the heart of the expansion of mass education was the emphasis on technical and vocational education to ensure that the French bureaucratic structures were able to function. The third attribute that led to the categorizing of the modern educational codings, as being defined by Bourguibisme, has to do with Bourguiba personal philosophy that education held great power in transforming the nation to ensure that the “...legitimate right to fundamental needs such as sufficient food, decent housing, education, culture, health and a job” (TECA, 1992, p. 21). Additionally, he viewed education as the “training consonant with demands and needs of a society that aspires to progress and is resolutely open onto modernity”

(MOET, 2003, p. 9). At the core of Bourguibisme was the educational policy of Tunisification or Arabization – “(i) evoking history; (ii) enhancing culture and religion; and (iii) promoting gender equity” – (Fryer & Jules, 2013, pp. 409-410) that aimed to unify the country. During this period, Bourguiba used “education to create citizen-subjects ... in which Westernization and Tunisian Islamic culture would be ‘synthesized’” (Champagne, 2007, p. 204), and by 1967, 90% of school-aged boys and 50% of girls were receiving a primary education (Sizer, 1971).

Under Bourguibism, the quest for modernity created several junctures within the ensuing polycscape. The political decision and revision of the Tunisian constitution in 1959 that made Bourguiba president for life, coupled with economic decisions and socialism, illuminated another case of the transitology of transitology. Bourguibisme fell under pressure during the first five years, and the economy moved away from a centrally planned system to a form of state capitalism in the hope of creating jobs and encouraging development. While the plan for mass schooling continued, in 1961, Bourguiba appointed Ahemed Ben Salah, author of the 1955-56 socialist plan, as the head of the Ministry of National Plan and Economy with the mandate of developing the Tunisian economy at any cost. Ben Salah, like many other leaders, turned to import-substituting industrialization (ISI) – substituting foreign imports with domestic products – to rejuvenate the Tunisian economy. However, Tunisian Socialism – void of class conflict, Marxist communism, and revolution – lasted for one decade and concentrated on developing cooperation as a way to reduce the disparities between the governorates. Tunisian socialism, grounded in aspects of Islam, was about planning and efficiently using resources; therefore, it did not signal a significant break or transitology from the forgoing era. Instead, it was a well-crafted plan to safeguard the “implicit contract” (Alexander, 2010). By 1970 socialism had failed, unemployment was high, elites were disenfranchised, and a growing educated population was becoming discontent. As a way to tackle these issues, the *infitah* (opening) reforms were implemented and led to the promotion of fiscal austerity in education while promoting privatization in other sectors. However, it was the 1984 bread riots and the treatment of rising Islamic fundamentalism that led to the unraveling of Bourguibism and the rise of Ben Ali and his securitocracy state.

#### **Late-modern Educational Codings: From *Bourguibisme* to *Securitocracy***

Cowen’s last educational paradigm, late-modern, is a system concerned with creating “new patterns of labour force formation: the economic dimension of education becomes more influential than the civic” (Cowen, 1996, p. 161). Education takes on a neoliberal structure; whereas, choice becomes a prerogative for state and consumer. This is in sharp contrast to the modern paradigm given that states seek an “off-loading” of educational responsibilities “while official and political discourse recasts citizens as consumers of education” (Rappleye, 2010, p. 11). The business approach to education shifts away from the modern educational paradigm’s commitment to “equality of educational opportunity” and replaced “by conceptions of the internal efficiency of educational institutions and their external effectiveness” (Cowen, 1996, p. 161). Competition becomes the driving force within late-modern education systems – locally, nationally, and internationally.

The historical trajectory of Tunisia’s transitology to the late modern educational patterns commenced on November 7, 1987, in the bloodless *coup d’état constitutionnel*

or “medical coup d’état” (Jebnoun, 2014) or “tranquil revolution” (Alexander, 1997) by Zine El Abidine Ben Ali that removed Bourguiba from power, citing his senility and incompetence in handling state affairs. The educational patterns under Ben Ali’s rise to power are framed by the securitocracy of the state apparatus. Securitocracy – a strong security apparatus or “*mukhabarat* [intelligence-based] police state [based on a] ‘strong neo-corporatist state’ or the ‘force of obedience’ or an ‘authoritarian syndrome’” (as cited in Schraeder & Redissi, 2011, pp. 5-6) with securitocrats and the backing of Ben Ali’s Party, the *Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique* (the Democratic Constitutional Rally or RCD) – emerged as the counter narrative to Bourguibisme. Unlike the rest of the Arabic World, Tunisia’s military is a “meritocratic national institution” (El-Shimy, 2011) structured around military defense. It is a composite of several sectors of the society and thus out of the control of the president. Ben Ali’s new national program, steeped in the neoliberal discourse of “national reconciliation,” quickly became the dominant rhetoric of the transitology. The national reconciliation had two key components, *le Changement* (the Change) and *le Pacte National* (the National Pact), both of which focused on economic and political change based on an “ahd jadid” – New Era or New Covenant – (Alexander 2010; Erdle 2004). *Le Changement* became the official policy speak from the replacement of *le Parti Socialiste Destourien* (the Socialist Destour Party [PSD], renamed in 1964 from Neo Destour party / *Nouveau Parti Libéral Constitutionne*) to *le Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique* (the Constitutional Democratic Rally). The first reason for the Party’s name change was to disassociate it with the failed socialist experiments of the 1960s that did not yield the intended economic result of incubating militant Islam.

The second reason was that it signaled to the West that Tunisia was embarking upon new modes of economic governance and tackling its economic problems and high unemployment through neoliberalist policies. In this vein, the national reconciliation focused on ensuring political pluralism by bringing legal recognized political forces and the social and political organization into *le Pacte National*. Among other things, *le Pacte National* called for recognizing the multiplicity of opinions, restoration of Arabic and Islamic influences, development of Tunisian values, and commitment to the political system and goals for development. Subsequently, reforms took place that focused on – “vaccinat[ing] against fundamental Islam” (Alexander, 2010, p. 50) by specifically claiming that Islam is the national identity of Tunisia; allowing the Theology school of University of Tunis to use its old Islamic name, Zitouna; abolishing the State Security Court that dealt only with cases involving fundamentalists; and prohibiting political participation base on “religion, language, race or region” (Alexander, 2010, p. 45) – amending the penal codes for arrest and custody. *Le Pacte National* restructured the political landscape of Tunisia by consolidating power into the “president democracy” – whereby all decisions were made by him – to guarantee political stability and security.

The rhetoric of these reforms signaled the demise of Bourguibism and the beginning of securitocracy, defined by the “rise of a security ‘technician’” (as cited in Jebnoun, 2014, p. 108) under the aegis of “democratic apprenticeship” (Alexander, 2010). In theory, Ben Ali’s policies contained the reforms that Bourguiba had begun, but instead, the national reconciliation fixated on ridding the country of Bourguibisme, in all but name, and moving away from socialism by concentrating on reforming living standards (Alexander, 2010). In essence, securitocracy did not change the state’s

relationship with education as much it changed how Ben Ali talked about the virtues of Tunisian education. Whereas Bourguibisme used a “single hegemonic party and state bureaucracy as tools to accomplish his ambitious political goals, Ben Ali mainly mobilized his power by closely surveying the population in both public and private space” (Jebnoun, 2014, p. 102), and, therefore, its educational patterns stressed a new form of modernity. Ben Ali’s Party became more dominant while educational partnerships were expanded with Europe, and economic restructuring focused on nurturing Tunisians for the European markets.

**Conclusion: From la Sécuritocratie to post-Securitocracy (the National Constituent Assembly) and New Educational Transitologies**

To conclude, the contextualization of the second part of Tunisia’s late-modern period of transitologies can be defined as the post-Securitocracy era. As Tunisia’s population is mostly devoid of prehistoric cleavages, tribalism, and sectarian issues, it is easier to chart this transitology in a general sense. Noting the post-Jasmine revolution era, with the imposition of a state of emergency and the suspension of the 1959 constitution, on October 23, 2011, Tunisians elected the 271 members of the National Constituent Assembly (NCA) with a mandate of drafting a new constitution (completed in January 2014). The post-Securitocracy era is defined by three periods: (i) the rise of the Troika (the alliance of the three large parties in Tunisia – Enahda [the Renaissance Party], the Congress for the Republic [CPR], and Ettakatol [the Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties]), (ii) the interim period of Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa (January 29, 2014, to February 6, 2015); and (iii) the democratic transition under Beji Caid Essebsi, elected president as of December 2014 to July 2019.

The NCA is, therefore, the commencement of transition from la sécuritocratie under Ben Ali’s regime to the post-Securitocracy era system of governance. In this context, post-Securitocracy is seen as a break from the political repression of the past and movement toward consolidated democracy. However, the transitology from the post-Securitocracy has only maintained the existing structures, and pre-revolutionary reforms are still being implemented. Under Prime Minister Mehdi Jomaa (January 2014 to February 2015) no significant educational reforms were undertaken, but Arabic became the de facto language of instruction in primary and secondary schools. Under President Beji Caid Essebsi’s, Tunisia’s first post-revolutionary democratic president, the existing state security system was overhauled, and the remaining vestiges of authoritarianism were stripped. In fact, no major educational reforms were undertaken, and simple tweaks to the educational system were proposed under the Planned Strategies for the Education Sector 2016-2020, which called for private sector partnerships, curricula upgrades, teacher training, and quality in standards. What this shows is that during transitions, politicians were hesitant to make broad-based changes to the educational system and focused on band-aid solutions in the hope that they will trickle down – what I call a transitologies of transitologies. This meant that unemployment among youths remains high as the educational system is not catering to improve labor market performance.

In placing this study within the broader literature in Comparative and International Education, it has been advanced that transitologies are not linear but multiscalar and embedded in several governance activities. In what follows, the idea is advanced that “educational codings” (Cowen, 2000, p. 339) permit us to view educational disruptions

within transitologies that can give rise to the 'transitologies of transitologies' as educational reforms emerge under the compression of societal turbulence. In other words, as the transition occurs during any period of educational change (pre-modern, modern, and late-modern) as the efficacy of political and economic compression, the subsequent educational codes that emerge after the transition gives rise to new transitologies within education. This transitologies of transitologies create a splinter in the new system where vestiges of that old transitology remain within the current education system, and new transitological patterns emerge. The ensuing educational codes materialize during this period of educational change, thus creating a mega transitological event. Therefore, transitologies of transitologies can exist within a specific educational transition, even if there is no significant social turbulence occurring within the society.

It has been argued that education in transitory contexts is prized to undergo a different evolutionary dynamic. In other words, we can have different transitologies occurring at the same time and transitological moments within transitologies. Therefore, a historical coding of Tunisia's educational patterns suggests that transitologies are a complex web of interstellar relations that crisscross different scales, include different actors, and exist outside of the compressions of political and social actions. As the world becomes more connected, innovation becomes key to establishing a knowledgeable economy. It can be suggested that as new players enter the educational landscape, national ideologies no longer drive transitologies, but rather, they are being driven by regional aspirations, international commitments, bilateral and multinational actors and agencies, transnational cooperation, and global transdiscursive practices. Moreover, in the current error that legitimates megatrends (disruptive technology, demographic changes, climate security, and data mining), transitologies are no longer a national undertaking by a multiscalar activity that, in several instances, is also out of the hands of the state apparatus. It is suggested that while Tunisians were firmly in control of the uprising that brought down the Ben Ali regime, the revolution was not the sole "coordinator in chief" (Dale, 2005) of Tunisia's transitological trajectory. However, it certainly played a crucial role in strategically directing key transitological moments. Such a distinction is essential in the current transitological period since transitologies are no longer solely shaped by political and economic compressions but are heavily included by ideological pivots in an era of uncertainty.

Thus, educational coding, as discussed above, is brought to fruition at the whims and fancies of personalities, donors, agendas-setting attitudes, and a host of other uncontrollable factors. While political and economic compressions create the perfect transitological storm, this trickledown effect of this storm into sectors such as education may have unintended and unmitigable consequences, thus giving rise to transitologies within transitologies. Moreover, this study suggests that it is possible to do comparative research within one country by focusing on the transdiscursive architectonic components, particularly within the new cosmos that are coming to define economic capitalism (see Vavrus & Bartlett, 2006). The common thread that runs through all of the Tunisian transitologies is that educational codings across different educational patterns begin and end with an over educated and unemployed youth population. It was the educated elite that rejected the mission civilisatrice and rose against the French. It was the post-independence educated elite that silently sanctioned the transition from Bourguiba to Ben Ali in 1987. And again, it was the

educated masses that toppled Ben Ali in the Jasmine Revolution, causing the Arab Awakening.

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