THE ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS IN INFLUENCING INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE:

The Case of Boundary Spanners in Post-Revolution Tunisia – Sfax and Kairouan

By

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ABSTRACT

The role of individuals in institutional change in post-conflict societies has received relatively little attention. This qualitative case study examines how individual boundary-spanners influence institutional change across two localities in post-revolution Tunisia: Sfax and Kairouan. A novel framework is developed that recognises the relationship between structure, agency, and ideas; and in so doing enabled the assessment of changes in societal logics, their impact on boundary-spanners' practices and the effect such practices had on institutional change in both localities. Selecting Tunisia as a critical case, the study identified boundary-spanners as agents working across complex issues within their localities. The dominant and competing logics available to them at societal level are the autocratic-state, the democratic-state and religion. The findings show, however, that these dominant societal logics do not align with religious versus secular identities. While post-revolution logics shifted, the legacy of the autocratic-state logic continue to be translated into practices by some actors. Although institutional change was observed in the local organisational field, the pace was different in the two localities, leading to institutional transformation in Sfax and more of maintenance in Kairouan. Boundary-spanners engaged in boundary spanning practices more proactively in Sfax than in Kairouan, through transformational decision making and identity-based mobilisation. Overall, the role of boundary-spanners in this post-autocratic environment was transformational in terms of setting and enforcing new norms of democratic participation, respect for diversity, and the acceptance of civil society into the local organisational field. Most significantly, the study found that the interplay between structure, agency and ideas, makes institutions more of scaffolds rather than cages, guiding and enabling the agency and relative autonomy of actors. This duality of structure and agency is not only mediated by ideas but, importantly, the dialectic process involving boundary-spanners' multiple identities, salient issues and multiplicity of logics is the *generator* of ideas.

Dedication

To my parents, my wife and my teachers.

To all those working for a better Tunisia.

Acknowledgements

My thanks, first and foremost, are to God who has endowed me with insatiable thirst for knowledge.

The journey to accomplish this thesis, undertaken on a part-time basis and alongside many other commitments, has been long and, at times, would have seemed an impossible task, were it not for the support and encouragement of many.

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Studying a society other than your own, can be a daunting task. Undertaking social science research that generates rich descriptions and the need to get 'under the skin' of the issues being studied in such a society can only be accomplished with the help and cooperation of generous people. Special thanks in this regard go to my research assistant Semah Jaoua, who taught me so much about Tunisia and enabled me to use my time effectively, as we often shuttled between Tunis, Sfax and Kairouan, and at times farther afield, to undertake interviews with participants.

The field work was undertaken during a period when most participants were still engaged in the very issues being studied. Their enthusiasm and commitment to make a difference within

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List of Abbreviations

ANPE	Agence Nationale de Protection de l'Environnement
BK	*Bait el-Khibra*
CEDS	Collectif Environnemental et Developpement de Sfax
CPG	*Compagnie Phosphate de Gafsa*
CRQ	Critical Research Question
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
CSP	1956 Code of Personal Status
ESCWA	Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia
FAR	Framework of Accountability Relationship
GCT	Groupe Chimique Tunisien
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
IMF	International Monitory Fund
IQ	Interview Question
IRI	International Republican Institute
JCI	Junior Chamber International
LTDH	*Ligue tunisienne des droits de l'homme* (Tunisian Human Rights League)
MPA	Member of Peoples Assembly
NCA	National Constituent Assembly
PB	Participatory Budgeting
PRC	Pew Research Centre
RCD	*Rassemblement Constitutionnel De´mocratique*
SM	Sfax el Mezyena
SPNE	Society for Protection of Nature and the Environment
TN	Tunisie Numerique
TNN	Tunisia News Network
TQ	Theoretical Question
TSIM	The Tunisian Society for Interactive Monitoring
TYM	Tunisian Youth Movement
UGET	*Union Générale des Etudiants de la Tunisie*

UGTT	*Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail* (Tunisian General Labour Union)
USIP	United States Institute for Peace
UTICA	*Union tunisienne de l'industrie, du commerce et de l'artisanat*
UTAP	Union Tunisienne de l'Agriculture et de la Peche
WBG	World Bank Group
WDR	World Development Report

Political Timeline

1881	Start of French Mandate
1956	**INDEPENDENCE - end of French Mandate; 1956 Code of Personal Statute comes into law**
1957	End of Monarchy and start of Republic
1978	Deadly suppression of UGTT-led protests
1984	Bread riots
1987	**Palace coup: Ben Ali removes Bourguiba from power and takes over presidency.**
1988	**The Tunisian National Pact [Security Pact] signed by most political parties**
1991	Start of severe repression of political opposition
2008	Gafsa mining basin revolt
2010	Anti-internet-restriction protests

	Jan 2011	**JASMINE REVOLUTION: 17 December 2010 to 14 January 2011**
	Oct 2011	First democratic NCA Elections
	Jan 2014	New 2014 Constitution Adopted by the NCA
Period of Extraordinary Politics	Nov 2014	Second Peoples Assembly and Presidential elections - Caid Essebsi President
	May 2018	First democratic local elections
	Sep 2019	Third Peoples Assembly and Presidential elections - Kais Saied President

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION- THE CRITICAL, BUT UNDERREPORTED, ROLE OF INDIVIDUALS IN THE PROCESS OF INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE IN POST-CONFLICT SOCIETIES

Section One: Institutional Change - What role do individuals play, in the context of multi-level, post-conflict, societal change?

The Question

A number of pathways of institutional change have been recognised in the literature (Evelyn Micelotta, Michael Lounsbury, and Royston Greenwood, 2017), including exogenous changes in institutional environments (Alan Meyer, 1982; Elizabeth S. Clemens, and James Cook, 1999) and institutional entrepreneurship (Paul DiMaggio, 1988; Julie Battilana, Bernard Leca, & Eva Boxenbaum, 2009). However, the attention paid in the literature to the role of individual actors in the institutional change process, more recently under the broader theme of microfoundations of institutionalism (Walter W. Powell & Claus Rerup, 2017), although growing since 2017, has been intermittent thus far (Patrick Haack, Jost Sieweke and Lauri Wessel, 2019). Studies, mainly in the management and business literature, are founded on the concept of institutional entrepreneurship, where the act of change is viewed as purposeful (Battilana, Boxenbaum, and Leca, 2009; Julie Battilana and Thomas D'Aunno, 2009; Micelotta,

et. al., 2017). The few notable studies into the role of individuals in institutional change have tended to be of mature and stable organisational fields, such as Julie Battilana's (2011) study of the British National Health Service (NHS), and Thomas J. Roulet, Lionel Poelella, Claudia Gabbionet, and Danile Muzio's (2019) study of UK elite law firms. Furthermore, such studies are rarely of fields in transition, experiencing wider societal flux, or the consequences of unintended day-to-day activities and practices aimed at solving local complex issues – as opposed to purposeful actions aimed at institutional change. Such hesitancy in pursuing this research line, may stem from what some critics see as the reductionist approach pitfalls (Pamela S. Tolbert and Lynne Zucker, 2020; Haak, et al., 2019), and attempts to organise the discussion have only been recently started by Haack et al., in their edited works: *Microfoundations of Institutions* (2019). In the context of post-conflict societies experiencing transformational, multi-level change, and where the actions of individuals are often aimed at dealing with complex local socio-economic, daily-life challenges, such interest by extant scholarship is conspicuous by its absence.

This study is, therefore, timely on two counts. First, it is contributing to the development of microfoundations of institutional theory by identifying the practices of individuals that influence institutional change. Secondly, the study is doing so in a post-conflict society where change is often by definition multi-level – that is at societal, institutional and the organisational field levels. This study aims to investigate the role of boundary-spanning individuals, engaged in the process of solving complex issues within their localities in post-conflict Tunisia, and the changes their practices cause within the local organisational fields and institutions, and where their institutional entrepreneurship may not be purposeful.

Boundary spanners have been variously identified as those undertaking cross-boundary work needed to develop coordination and collaboration across boundaries of organisations and institutions, and can be embedded in leadership position or they can occupy a peripheral and lower position within their organisation and organisational field (Paul Williams, 2012; Ingmar van Meerkerk and Jurian Edelenbos, 2018). Where an organisational field refers to the community of organisations that share common interest and "whose participants interact more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside of the field" (W Richard Scott, 1994, pp. 207–208). Therefore, this study seeks to answer the following research questions:

(CRQ) Why and how do boundary-spanners influence institutional change in post-revolution Tunisia?

Sub-questions:

(TQ1) What are the post-revolution logic changes affecting Tunisian society, and why?

(TQ2) How do fields emerge in which boundary-spanners operate? Accounting for institutional change.

(TQ3) How do boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan access and mobilise competing logics to affect institutional change?

Responding to these research questions will make a contribution to a related gap recognised by Micelotta et al. (2017), Mike Zapp and Justine J. W. Powell (2016), Melissa Wooten and Andrew John Hoffman (2010), and others; namely the dearth of analysis of, "theorisation and

empirical investigation of the emergence of fields" (Micelotta et al., 2017: 539). Additionally, this study will explore the extent to which societal-level institutional logics, as conceptualised by Roger Friedland and Robert R. Alford (1991) and Patricia Thornton, William Ocasio, and Michael Lounsbury (2012), inform and enable the agency of local boundary-spanners to influence institutional change in a non-Western developing society.

Institutions and institutional change

The research question, therefore, is essentially considering the agency of actors, boundary-spanners in this case, and their capacity to influence their local environment, in the context of a dynamic post-conflict space for new and established ideas. In other words, it is about the relationship between structure, agency and ideas in a particular time and place. The literature covering this was ignited by the work of Anthony Giddens (1979; 1984) and the resulting theory of structuration. The hallmark of Gidden's theory is that "it goes beyond just looking at structures or just looking at agents… It gives primacy to both" (Rob Stones, 2005, p. 4). Much of the debate concerning structure and agency has often been led by the notion that agents are constrained by what Weber called the "iron cage" in which society is imprisoned (Paul DiMaggio and Walter W. Powell 1983), and what Matt Andrews (2016) calls "hero dependency"; the heroic and purposeful agency of the institutional entrepreneur. Therefore, while the main outcome of this study is a better understanding of the role boundary spanners play in institutional change, a broader view is also expected to emerge; that is, an assessment of whether institutions are 'cages' restricting the freedom of actors, or 'scaffolds' that empower and support them, and the role ideas play in this regard.

It is important and useful though to clarify at this stage some of the terms that will be referred to in this, and subsequent chapters, including the terms *institution*, *old* and *new institutionalism* and *isomorphism*. Definitions of what constitutes an institution can vary, and depend on the particular lineage of the dominant forms of institutionalist thinking – that is sociological, rational choice and historical institutionalism; a lineage steeped in organisational, economic and political literature (W. R. Scott, 2001; Peter A. Hall, 2009; Vivian Lowndes and Mark Roberts, 2013). In the sociological approach, institutions are viewed as constraining, or offering opportunities, to actors within a particular organisational context (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991a; 1991b)… Logics of appropriateness (James G. March and Johan P. Olsen, 2004, p. 3) are 'followed because they are seen as natural, rightful, expected and legitimate'. For rational choice institutionalists, institutions are viewed as "conspicuous rules of the game which are obvious to all actors and designed to maximise return" (Lowndes and Roberts, 2013, p. 30). In historical institutionalism, interest is in politics on a grand scale over prolonged periods of time; such scaling contrasts with sociological institutionalism (organisation level) and rational choice institutionalism (individual), and where path-dependency creates a powerful cycle of self-reinforcing activity that is only disrupted by moment of punctuated equilibrium and critical junctures (Ruth Berrins Collier and David Collier, 1991).

It must be acknowledged also, at this stage, that the evolution of the definition of institutions reflects developments within the three literatures since the first half of the twentieth century, but particularly in the latter half of the century; a development often described to be from *old* institutionalism to *new* institutionalism. Rhodes A. W Rhodes (1997, p 68), describes the old institutionalist approach in political science as "covering the rules, procedures and formal

organisations of government", employing " the tools of the lawyer and the historian" in order to explore the effectiveness of political behaviour and democratic effectives. In other words, the primary focus of the analysis was upon formal rules rather than informal conventions, and on "official structures of government rather than broader institutional constraints on governance" (Peters P. G., 1996, p 2). While the old approach in sociological/organisational institutionalism studied the way organisations became 'institutionalised' as they become value-laden, mainly through internal developments, new institutionalism scholars argue that organisations adapt to 'institutional templates' or 'myths' present in the wider organisational field (John Meyer and Brian Rowan, 1979). This process of institutionalisation is attributed by new institutionalist in the sociological tradition as being due to the isomorphic pressures exerted by coercive, mimetic and normative forces, arising from laws and regulations, common beliefs and shared logics, and binding expectations within the organisational field, respectively.

In terms of the more widely used definitions, institutions came to be understood as "more-or-less taken for granted repetitive social behaviour that is underpinned by normative systems and cognitive understandings that give meaning to social exchange and thus enable self-reproducing social order" (Greenwood et al., 2008, p. 5). Another widely used definition is offered by Scott (2014, p. 56), where he suggests that, "institution comprise[s] regulative [laws and regulations], normative [conventions and norms of behaviour], and cultural-cognitive [frames and mental models] elements that, together with associated activities and resources, provide stability and meaning to social life". In a more accessible language, describing the institutionalisation process, Tolbert and Zucker (1983: 25) gave three indicators: (1) they are

widely followed, (2) without debate, and (3) exhibit permanence. The problem with this concept though, as later identified by DiMaggio (1988), was the portrayal that organisations were 'caged' within institutionalised norms; thus, institutional theory – in these early conceptions - was not found to explain fundamental change in institutions.

In response to DiMaggio's (1988) challenge to explain institutional change, the 1990s witnessed a flurry of interest in institutional entrepreneurship, or "[the] activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or transform existing ones" (Hardy and Maguire 2008, 198). It was identified that actors' response to their environmental context can be governed by a number of factors, including position, power and identity (Julie Battilana, 2011). The position of actors in their social structures: including centrality, status and ties – what you do is determined by your position. The power of dominant actors, due to the strength of coalitions and access to resources, for example, influences the institutional model adopted (Royston Greenwood and C. R. Hinings 1993). Status – that is position within hierarchy and authority - was also identified as a factor. Finally, how actors respond to their institutional context and expectations is mediated by their identity. This, however, reinforces the view of institutional context as being 'out there' and constraining, or caging, the organisation, rather than something that actors interact with, and create or change (Royston Greenwood, Christine Oliver, Kerstin Sahlin-Anderson, and Roy Suddaby, 2008).

In advancing this research, the organisational field became the arena of attention (Huseyin Leblebici, Gerald R. Salancik, Anne Copy, and Tom King, 1991), where peripheral, less embedded, actors are the 'locus' of change within a field. Internal contradictions within a field

were also seen by Leblebici and colleagues (1991) to be likely to emerge as fields develop. The idea of endogenously driven change, however, continued to also be contradicted by studies that advanced the notion that change is exogenously driven by shocks and jolts (Clemens and Cook 1999), such as global financial crisis, environmental catastrophes and new innovations. The main thrust of studies in the 1990s, was to present institutional settings as highly contested terrains of struggles and power relations, rather than characterised by stability and conformity, and where the main actors were organisations rather than individuals.

Section Two: The role of individuals and ideas

Even though the focus has been on organisations as agents of change, individuals or groups can also take on this role. Early attempts were made by scholars that could have led to considerations of agency at the individual level, such as when DiMaggio and Powell (1991) introduced Pierre Bourdieu's (1977) concept of *practice* into the debate. This attempt, however, had limited traction, for two reasons. First, the focus of practice-oriented writing – that is a focus on the formative and summative, in other words on the 'how' - was seen to be on the micro/individual level, rather than the collective and, secondly, it has a temporal orientation towards short-term moves (Roy Suddaby, Yves Gendron and Helen Lam, 2009; Ngulube, P., Mathipa, E. R. & Gumbo, M. T., 2015). A couple of decades later, this is now seen as the very stream of research that needs to be taken forward through what is likely to become the microfoundations movement in institutional theory, to which this study will make a contribution.

In a renewed attempt to reconcile the relationship between agency and institutions, and the practice approach, Thomas B. Lawrence and Roy Suddaby (2006) introduced the concept of institutional work. Defined as, "the purposive action of individuals and organisations aimed at creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions," (Lawrence and Suddaby 2006, p. 215) institutional work is attempting to create a broader vision of agency that also incorporates the everyday and the mundane adjustments to maintain institutional arrangements - such as attendance in routine meetings, issuing of circulars, etc. While Lawrence and colleagues (2009) recognise the relationship between agency (action) and institutions to be recursive, their study is focused on, "how action and actors affect institutions" through institutional work, rather than how institutions affect actors (Lawrence et. al., 2009, p 7). There is, therefore, a missing link; for, in acknowledging the relationship between structure and agency, and how each influences the other, Lawrence and colleagues, like DiMaggio before them, seem to overlook the third element in the relationship, that is the role and source of ideas that are deployed by actors in their institutional work, as will be discussed in Chapter Two.

The research question central to this study calls for a deeper exploration of agency, where the definition provided by Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische (1998), that human agency constitutes *iteration, projectivity, and evaluation*, is particularly helpful. Where *iteration* is the selective reactivation of a past pattern of thoughts and actions; *projectivity* is the imaginative generation, by actors, of possible future trajectories of action; and *practical evaluation* is the capacity of actors to make practical and normative judgements among alternative possible trajectories of action. Interestingly, therefore, by focusing on boundary-spanning individuals,

what this study offers is the opportunity to explore Emirbayer and Mische's suggestion that actors located at the 'intersection of multiple-relational contexts' are more able to develop the capacity for creative intervention (p. 1007).

Why would the position of boundary-spanners at the intersection of multiple contexts make them more able to influence institutional change? To answer this question, it is helpful to turn to Friedland and Alford's (1991) work, where they sought to move institutional thinking forward and introduced the concept of institutional logics as an explanation of institutional change that enables such actors through ideas and contradictions. Friedland and Alford proposed that modern Western societies are made up of key institutions that have incompatible institutional logics. Actors located at the interstices of competing logics appeal to their favoured logics to further their agenda for change (Patricia Thornton, 2004). The answer to the question just posed, therefore, lies in how boundary spanners use institutional logics.

So, what sets the institutional logics perspective apart from other scholarly endeavours in explaining agency is that, "it incorporates theoretical mechanisms that explain the partial autonomy of actors from social structures" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 7). It explains that the suggestion made by Friedland and Alford (1991) is one where the relationship between individuals and intuitional logics is one of 'opportunity' and 'constraint'. The opportunities arise from the contradictions in the different symbols and practices of higher-order institutional logics, such as market, society, religion, etc., which are available to individuals to invoke, as a source of ideas, and by doing so effectuating change in organisations and institutions. Whilst constraints arise from the fact that dominant logics provide, "core

principles [a system of beliefs] for organising activities and channelling interests," and not by providing scripts – a prescribed sequence - for actions as per DiMaggio and Powell's (1991) position. This conception of multiple logics has the potential to address the missing link in the structure-agency-ideas debate, which is the source of ideas that actors can access in order to promote institutional change, as will be discussed in detail in Chapter Two.

What makes boundary-spanners of interest to this study?

The discussion above has shown that the journey of the literature so far is moving on from the concept of isomorphism - the pressures that drive organisations to resemble one another - as the master narrative in new institutionalism and is beginning to recognise the phenomena of institutional change, but it has struggled to make a convincing account of it. This is mainly due to the duality of structure and agency that continues to play out among scholars (Derek Harmon, Patrick Haack, and Thomas Roulet, 2019). But for change to take place, there has to be change carriers, or institutional carriers (Scott, 2014). Individuals are the actors undertaking social interactions and must, therefore, be a locus of studies to explain institutional change.

The interest of this study in boundary-spanning individuals, specifically, is due to the fact that they are likely to be, by definition, more connected within their environment - than other more embedded actors, as they operate in, "multiorganizational and multisectoral environments" (Williams, 2012). The growing literature relating to boundary-spanners, including Paul Williams (2012) and van Meerkerk and Edelenbos (2018), recognises their role in information exchange, brokering, and coordination between their home organisation and

its environment. Entrepreneurialism is also attributed to actors in boundary-spanning roles (William, 2012). However, the literature situates them in the context of resource-based theory of the organisation, with the assigned role of improving the resources and bargaining position of their home organisation. The term '*organisation* is used here to mean a planned, coordinated and purposeful action of human beings to construct or compile a common tangible or intangible product. A key characteristic of such organisation is membership by a group of people working together to achieve such product; examples include municipalities, businesses, civil society organisations, schools and hospitals.

The location of boundary-spanners, due to their social interaction, at the interstices of institutional logics - straddling different meanings as they do - exposes them to different ideas and options that are likely to empower them with a degree of autonomy. It is this empowering 'freedom', or autonomy, created by the interplay between agency and ideas that leads to a process of framing (Robert D. Benford and David A. Snow, 2000) and sense-making (Karl E. Weick, 1995), which allows actors to conceptualise and understand their environment. This role of framing and sense-making enables boundary-spanners to act as "cognitive filters" (Williams, 2012), and so influence others in the way they perceive and interpret their environment and exercise preferences. So, by virtue of their position, often on the periphery of organisations due to assigned role as communicators, coordinators and ambassadors, boundary-spanners are more likely than many other actors to exercise agency, undertake relevant practices and impact institutional change. Such periphery position, it must also be acknowledged, is sometimes due to marginalisation during certain periods in the life-span of the organisation. Periphery actors therefore exhibit two advantages (Emirbayer and Mische,

1998): being more exposed to external logics and ideas and being less invested in established rules and norms in their home organisation. This is the reason they are of particular interest for this study.

Section Three: Institutional change in post conflict countries

Scholars such as Douglas North (1995, p. 24) attribute revolutions and conflict to the conditions when, "organisations with different interests emerge [typically as a result of the dissatisfaction of performance of existing institutions] and the fundamental conflict between organisations over institutional change cannot be mediated within the existing institutional framework." Post-conflict and/or post-revolution countries are, therefore, evidently characterised by major changes engulfing the whole of society, at societal and local levels, and the question that arises is what role do individuals play in institutional change and the re-stabilisation of society? Referencing Scott's (1995) definition of institutions as being comprised of regulative, normative and cultural-cognitive elements, it becomes evident that in periods of conflict, key societal institutions become inherently unstable and contested. Whilst in the literature addressing the role of individuals in institutional change, change is pursued by institutional entrepreneurs within established and stable fields, in post-conflict societies, fields and institutions are in flux and the task of change makers is to ensure transition and stability.

In post-conflict societies, change usually occurs in stages, where the start can be when peripheral actors are not satisfied with the way things are done within their society, such as

conditions of inequality and structural violence (Adam Curle, 1971). At this stage, contestation can be due to the role of actors, such as those described by John Paul Lederach (1997) as, "educators," exercising their agency for change, which may lead to open violence and absence of security, or a change of regimes through revolutions, for example. This process is one of delegitimisation of extant institutions, as described in the quotation from North (1995), earlier. The educators' role is crucial in awakening the masses and erasing ignorance of injustices and the need to restore equity in such societies; they include organisations as well as individuals. In challenging the prevailing equilibrium under conditions of structural violence, educators exercise their agency through practices not too dissimilar to institutional entrepreneurs, such as 'reflexivity', 'envisioning', as well as 'advocacy' and mobilisation (Lederach, 1997; Wooten and Hoffman 2008; Cynthia Hardy and Steve Maguire 2008).

The logic underpinning failed institutions, then, becomes contested by alternative logics, that is alternative ways of doing things in society. Such change comes about due to these agents having access to alternative ideas at the interstices of competing institutional logics (Friedland and Alford 1991). Ultimately, however, in order to attain the condition of stability, where the institutional arrangement is acceptable to society, and the 'rules of the game' are no longer contested, the journey of institutional change has to pass the "stickiness" test (Scott, 2014). This means that, for institutional change to deliver stability and sustainability, the new practices reflecting emerging rules and norms have to become the 'new normal.' The period in society between when the old ways and institutions become discredited until new ways and institutions become agreed to and established is often referred to as a period of, "extraordinary politics" (Sami Zemni, 2015). It is during this period that actors, including

boundary-spanners, work to tackle the many complex issues within their communities and, in the course of doing so, adopt practices that impact the institutional change that is underway. This study is concerned with the practices of boundary-spanners in the localities of Sfax and Kairouan, in post-conflict Tunisia, because they actively worked to solve some of the socio-economic problems facing their communities during that period.

Why Tunisia?

Due to the transformational change taking place at many levels within society, Tunisia is a valid place to study the role of boundary-spanners in institutional change. Tunisia prides itself on a revolution achieved endogenously and relatively peacefully, rather than being a result of international intervention, or full civil war. Nevertheless, the prescription followed in the post-revolution settlement has reflected the globalised neo-liberal model, most manifest in the market-led economy and social liberalism; looking at the new 2014 Constitution, there are strong reflections of the extreme neo-liberal polycentric approach described by Houtzager (2003, p. 4) of faith in the market, and where civil society is unshackled to help limits public authority. Citing evidence from more than five thousand projects supported by the World Bank, Matt Andrews (2013, pp. 8-10) identifies three reform similarities: fostering market-friendly governments, creating disciplined governments, and modernising and formalising government processes. These top-down driven processes seem to have been pursued in Tunisia during the post-revolution period of extraordinary politics. Given the institutional logics perspective, and the role dominant societal logics play in institutional change, this national development becomes relevant to how individuals and organisations react to, support or resist change.

The selection of Tunisia, and the two cities of Sfax and Kairouan, for this case study was, therefore, found to meet the 'criticality' test advised by Bent Flyvbjorg (2006), where selection can be a random or information-based selection; this study has adopted the latter. A critical case aims, "to achieve information which permits logical deduction of the type, 'if this is (not) valid for this case, then it applies to all (no) cases" (Flyvbjorg, 2006' p 34).

Critically, Tunisia was developing into an exception among the so-called Arab Spring countries, in that it has been able to build on the revolutionary change and not collapse into violence or revert into autocratic rule, as all other countries of the same genre have, indicating characteristics that are worthy of such a study. Given that the focus of this study is on individual actors engaged in solving chronic complex issues resulting from the nature of previous institutional arrangement under autocratic regimes of limited accountability, this study has the potential to highlight some important policy implications.

Section Four: Structure of the thesis

Chapter Two starts by reviewing the development of institutional theory into the three schools that came to be known as historical, rational choice and sociological institutionalism. The three schools are explored in terms of their treatment of two key issues: the relationship between institutions and behaviour and the process by which institutions emerge and change, giving reasons why sociological institutionalism is selected to inform this study. The chapter then elaborates on the literature with the aim of placing boundary-spanners in relation to

consideration of agency from the perspective of sociological new institutionalist scholarship, including institutional entrepreneurship and institutional work. The nature of incremental and dialectic institutional change espoused by sociological institutionalists is set in the context of the structure-agency-ideas consideration of Giddens (1979; 1994), Colin Hay (1995; 2002), Bob Jessop (1997) and Margaret Archer (1995). Stripped from its place and temporal consideration, a conceptual framework is developed to explain the practices of boundary-spanners, which brings together Lawrence and colleagues' (2009) concept of institutional work with Friedland and Alford's (1991) institutional logics perspective. The framework identifies the competing societal logics, the practices of boundary-spanners of sense-making and sense-giving, decision-making and mobilisations, guided by the dominant and competing societal logics, and importantly the impact of such practices on changes in local organisational fields and, therefore, in local institutions.

Chapter Three sets out the research methodology adopted to operationalise the conceptual framework. The novel conceptual framework developed in Chapter Two is operationalised through an innovative research design based on embedded, comparative case study, where boundary-spanning practices are examined by consideration of multiple issues within each locality. The research included over forty participants interviewed with actors who were directly involved in, or close to, 12 complex local issues. The aim here is to reveal the intense boundary-spanning and social interactions and secure thick description and interrogation of any hidden meanings behind such practices. In doing so, the chapter details the research design; the specific methods used; case selection; research integrity, in terms of validity and reliability, positionality of the researcher; as well as criteria to assess institutional change on

the basis of changes to core components of the organisational field (Scott, 2014; James Owen-Smith and Walter P. Powell, 2008). Importantly, it recognises that research in the real world is far more involved than that; where, a well-crafted qualitative research design has to offer the flexibility to allow the researcher to navigate the reality of the situation encountered in the field.

Consideration is given in **Chapter Four** to the background of the case being studied; that is the temporal and place dimensions of the structure-agency-ideas relationship during the time of *extraordinary politics* in Tunisia. The discussion demonstrates that post-conflict Tunisia is experiencing institutional flux at all levels of society – where the country is moving from one way of doing things to a new way that is still in the making. The interaction between the societal, institutional, organisational and individual levels is, therefore, uniquely dynamic, contested and evolving. In such an environment, the ingredients for institutional development exist, including dominant and competing logics, actors that are motivated and empowered as demonstrated by the expansion of political and civil society organisations, and due to the historic absence of accountability, the causes around which organisational fields form can be extensive.

Being the first of the three analysis chapters, **Chapter Five** forms part of the three-level analysis of this study: at societal (Chapter Five), field (Chapter Six) and individual (Chapter Seven) levels. This chapter responds to the research sub-question (TQ1), *What are the post-revolution logic changes affecting Tunisian society, and why?* Changes in organisational fields and, therefore, institutions, "can be fruitfully examined by considering competition and

struggle among various categories of actors, committed to contrasting institutional logics" (Scott, 2014, p. 91). The Chapter identifies the dominant institutional logics operating at a societal level in Tunisia, and how they impact on individuals and organisations working to create, maintain or disrupt institutions in the two localities of Sfax and Kairouan.

The second of the analytical chapters, **Chapter Six**, aims to address the second research sub-question (TQ2): *How do fields emerge in which boundary-spanners operate? Accounting for institutional change.* Building on the analysis and discussion in Chapter Five in terms of the shift in societal logics, and tracking changes to membership and boundaries of organisational fields - using the WDR triad framework (WBG, 2003), the core of the chapter explores the emergence and institutional development of the organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan. This is carried out by examining one of the key components of the organisational field, the *relational arrangements* among field members, which is carried out by looking at the four relational systems identified by Owen-Smith and Powell (2008): (1) increased interaction among participants; (2) the development of well-defined status order and patterns of coalition; (3) heightened information sharing; and (4) mutual awareness and responsiveness. These are indicators of field densification and the extent of institutional change; showing whether such change is transformational or more of maintenance.

The third and last of the analytical chapters, **Chapter Seven**, responds to the research sub-question TQ3: *How do boundary spanners in Sfax and Kairouan access and mobilise competing*

logics to affect institutional change? Current insight from the literature (Thornton et. al, 2012) suggests that individuals access new ideas by being exposed to multiple logics through social interaction and multiple identities. Through the practices of sense-making, decision making and mobilisation, individual actors are able to defuse and sustain new ideas in their organisational field. The role of this chapter is to identify how boundary-spanners, depending on the experience of complexity, respond to logic shifts, and how logic pluralism influences the actions of such change agents, and the extent to which the three practices identified in the literature are undertaken, modified or developed.

Finally, **Chapter Eight** concludes by reflecting on the previous three analytical chapters and examines the extent to which the primary research questions were addressed. In doing so, this chapter specifies contributions to the identified gaps in the literature by focusing on the micro-foundations of institutional theory where the focus is on the actions of individuals and the extent to which that influences institutional change. The chapter also highlights contributions to the theorisation and empirical investigation of the emergence of fields; the application of the Institutional Logics Perspective to a post-conflict, non-Western environment; and develops a novel way of linking changes in issues-fields to the broader organisational fields in each locality.

To conclude, the final section in Chapter Eight recognises the fluid situation in Tunisia today, especially in the period since 2021, where there is a strong drift back towards the autocratic state logic.

CHAPTER TWO

INSTITUTIONAL DUALITY: A CAGE OR SCAFFOLD FOR THE BOUNDARY-SPANNER?

Introduction

Why and how do boundary-spanners influence institutional change? This research question deals with some of the most foundational topics discussed in the social science literature; namely, the relationship between agency, structure, and ideas. That is, the agency of boundary-spanners, the institutional structures within which they operate and the ideas influencing boundary-spanners as reflexive agents as they undertake their institutional work. The aim of this chapter is to elaborate a framework that brings these three macro theoretical perspectives together to aid the study of the practices inside the processes of institutional change.

Boundaries exist in various forms and have to be negotiated in many spheres of life, be it between the home and work environment at the most basic level, or between organisations, sectors, social or policy areas. Looking through the references section of the key texts on the subject, Paul Williams' *Collaboration in Public Policy and Practice: Perspectives on Boundary Spanners* (2012), and the more recent van Meerkerk and Edelenbos' *Boundary Spanners in Public Management and Governance: An Interdisciplinary Assessment* (2018) will bear testimony to the increasing richness of the literature. This literature has been driven by

interorganisational collaboration, such as collaborative governance, joint ventures, and public-private partnerships, where the role – in the main - is focused on coordination, collaboration and information exchange. Of particular interest in this study, however, is their entrepreneurial role, which encompasses innovation, problem solving and mobilisation, and the impact such practices have on institutional change. The central purpose of this chapter is to paint the theoretical landscape of boundary-spanners and the practices they undertake in the transformation of their institutional environment; in doing so, and as discussed in Chapter One, the review of the literature will also explore whether institutions are 'cages' that restrict the freedom of actors, or 'scaffolds' that empower and support them.

In this chapter, **Section One** charts the development of institutional theory into the three schools that came to be known as *historical, rational choice* and *sociological institutionalism*. The three schools are explored in terms of their treatment of two key issues: the relationship between institutions and behaviour and the process by which institutions emerge and change. At the heart of any treatment of institutional change, is the need to understand the relationship between institutions as structures and the agency of actors, and the dialectical relationship between these two meta concepts. Consideration of institutional change, and the dialectic relationship between structure and agency, leads to the selection of sociological institutionalism as offering a better theory to address the role of boundary spanners in the process. This is due to the school's commitment to incremental rather than punctuated change; with their commitment to the actors and their environment, the school offers a more sophisticated approach to explaining institutional change in post-2011 Tunisia.

Section Two takes forward the process of institutional change through a structuralist perspective, as elaborated by sociological institutionalists, and reveals the foundations of the concept of boundary-spanning which is based on the model of the organisation as an open system with boundaries of exchange within its environment; at this stage the organisation's environment is not viewed as being particularly organised. The organisational field model is then introduced, where the field is described as the 'organised' environment consisting of organisations that share a common meaning system and the site most relevant to the study of institutional process and change. While the organisation as open system and the organisational field are powerful concepts and serve to account for the materialisation of institutional life and institutional change, they will be seen as limiting as they fail to ascribe any agency to actors, and do not explain the practices they undertake within the process.

In **Section Three**, the focus shifts to the agency and role of boundary spanners as institutional entrepreneurs undertaking institutional work to affect change within the organisational field. Here, it is demonstrated that entrepreneurial boundary-spanners share essential characteristics of entrepreneurship and the added advantage of having a higher level of social interaction. A range of entrepreneurial boundary spanning practices is identified, and how such practices impact institutional change and maintenance. **Section Four** then explores the role of boundary-spanners in the context of changes in societal logics, and how dominant and/or conflicting logics impact the behaviour and practices of boundary-spanners, by restricting or expanding the scope for innovative ideas, and the subsequent impact on institutional change. Consideration of culture as being external to the individual and organisation has provided this study with the missing link explaining the source of ideas that

endow boundary-spanners with their relative autonomy and agency. **Section Five** concludes the chapter, by building on the reviewed literature in the previous four sections, with reflections on boundary-spanning in the context of the trilogy of structure, agency and ideas. This is viewed from the perspective of boundary spanners as institutional entrepreneurs occupying peripheral and external positions to the field, undertaking institutional work, influenced and enabled by the 'scaffold' of the diverse logics within society. The section, therefore, brings together institutions, agency and ideas in a novel conceptual framework for addressing the main research question.

SECTION ONE: Institutions and institutional change – three perspectives

Institutions, according to political scientists, such as Mark Blyth (2002), are recognised to be particularly concerned with the "the production of order", and as such, are seen as performing defined functions that are necessary for society to endure, and the more "specialised and differentiated [a set of institutions were]…the more developed the state was seen to be" (Blyth, 2002, p. 297). As briefly introduced in Chapter One, the lineage of institutionalism has its origins in political theory, organisation studies and economics, where 'old' institutionalist thinking emerged. Politics scholars viewed the institutional approach as "a subject matter covering the rules, procedures and formal organisations of government" (Rhodes, 1997, p. 68). Such view led to a focus "upon formal rules and organisation rather than informal conventions; and upon official structures of government rather than broader institutional constraints on governance" (Lowndes and Roberts, 2013, p. 24). While institutional consideration in political theory can be argued to date back to the late 19th century, in

economics, institutions were conceptualised in the earlier part of the Twentieth Century, and rested upon the belief that individuals are primarily utility maximisers (Rhodes, 1995). The hypothesis here is that "institutions exist where their benefits exceed the costs involved in creating and maintaining them" (Lowndes and Roberts, 2013, p. 23). Sociological institutionalism, with its roots in organisation studies, originally held the view that organisations, as functional constructs for a means-ends relationship, become institutionalised when they become value laden, and therefore become 'indispensable' (Philip Selznick, 1957, p. 17). Although institutions have been recognised during the period well preceding the 1950s, the 1960s and 1970s witnessed the dominance of behaviouralism, an approach in political science that sought to provide an objective, quantifiable approach to explain and predict behaviour.

Development in institutional theory, or what became known as *new institutionalism*, grew in reaction to the dominance of the behaviouralist approach in the social science in the 1960s and 1970s (Peter A. Hall and Rosemary C. R. Taylor, 1996). New institutionalism, developed in the 1980s and 1990s can be differentiated from the old in three respects, according to Lowndes and Roberts (2015): first, it expanded its concern to include the informal conventions that shape political conduct; second, it embodied values and power relations; and third, while asserting that institutions constrain individual conduct, they are also creations that change and evolve through the agency of actors (pp. 28-29). This led to the formation of different camps of institutionalism – the three schools - due in the main to scholars from different intellectual traditions, with variety of purposes in mind, converging upon new institutionalism.

Scholars acknowledge that the three schools represented different analytical approaches; where, sociological institutionalism developed by organisational scholars, rational choice institutionalism grew within the domains of economic studies, while historical institutionalism was favoured by students of politics, even though its lineage is more complicated (Hall and Taylor, 1996). A suggested approach to present the contrasting perspectives is to consider two different dimensions: the relationship between individuals and institutions, and institutional development and change. These two dimensions ought to help us appreciate two key issues fundamental to institutional analysis: the relationship between institutions and behaviour, and the process by which institutions originate and change. It is important to highlight here, though, that the demarcation between the three schools is not as clear cut as some of the early literature would lead us to believe. The behavioural approach of the 1960s and 1970s had a profound impact on the later development of all three schools. In political science, for example, Guy Peters (1999) suggests that the influence includes methodological individualism, "the assumption that individuals are the only actors and that they are motivated by individual utility maximisation… [leading to a large subset of political scientists] adopting rational choice models devised by economists to better explain the emergence and functioning of political institutions" (Scott, 2014, pp. 9-18). Another overlap between the three traditions is the recognition that institutionalisation assumed time horizon given that it is long term in the case of historical institutionalism, and relatively shorter for sociological institutionalism.

The relationship between institutions and behaviour

The very definition of institutions, common to all three schools, as *rules of the game* (Douglass North, 1990), or the "rules that frame the interaction between members of different size collectives" (Dirk Sauerland, 2015, p.561), or more specifically consisting of rules, norms and narratives/mental models, as stated by Scott (2014) and Lowndes and Roberts (2015), suggests that they directly impact behaviour. John L. Campbell (2019, p.12) puts this more succinctly, where he states that "individuals and organizations are always embedded in some sort of institutional environment. Altering the institutions around them can increase or decrease their opportunities for acting in ways that are self-responsible and beneficial for themselves and society".

Beyond this common starting point in the three schools, there develops a different conception of the relationship, where rational choice scholars take the view of individuals as maximisers rather than satisficers (Hall and Taylor, 1996), and therefore see institutions as existing where their benefits exceed the costs involved in creating and maintaining them. This ontological position means that institutions are products that individuals use to structure choice (Blyth, 2002, p. 300). In other ways, according to this school, while influencing the behaviour of individuals, the relationship is based on the acknowledgment of the individual being a priori of the institution. This is in contrast to historical institutionalists, who see institutions as "historical products which exist anterior and a priori to any agent who happens to operate within them at any given moment in time" (Blyth, 2002, p. 300). One of the central factors behind historical development, according to this school, is the way institutions are seen as

persistent features of the historical landscape (David Collier and Ruth Collier, 1991). Given this norm of path dependency, scholars of this tradition recognise change as only occurring at critical junctures, mainly due to exogenous forces. Ideas were later recognised to also play a significant role in institutional change.

In between these two approaches, is the sociological school, which sees the relationship as much more dialectic and evolutionary, where the work of Lynne Zucker (1977), DiMaggio and Powell (1983; 1991), Scott (1995; 2004; 2014) and Thomas B. Lawrence and Roy Suddaby (2006) stand out in particular. The initial focus of interest of sociological institutionalists in the late 1970s and early 1980s was on explaining the similarities between institutional forms, and the identification of the observed conformity; where, three types of *isomorphic* pressures where identified: the coercive, normative and mimetic – as explaining the relationship between institutions and behaviour (Zucker 1977, 1983; DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). However, while isomorphism explained the sustenance of institutions and path dependency, it was later challenged as not being sufficient to explain institutional change (DiMaggio 1988; DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Friedland and Alford, 1991). This led to consideration of agency, in what later become known as institutional entrepreneurship, then institutional work.

Institutions are recognised to do their work differently by each of the three traditions. While sociological institutionalists would argue that institutions influence behaviour by "shaping the individual's values, norms, interests, identities and beliefs" (March and Olsen, 1989, p. 17), rational choice scholars argue that, rather than influencing behaviour, institutions impact the "structure of the situation" in which actions are selected (Elinor Ostrom, 1985, p 5-7), and

therefore institutions are built by people and are chosen structures. Historical institutionalists view institutions as much more constraining, compared to the other two schools; they constrain, rather than enable political action. While acknowledging these difference, there is increasing convergence, where institutions are recognised to influence behaviour through rules, practices and narratives (Scott, 2001). Rules, or regulations, being the obvious and recognised means by which institutions influence behaviour, as recognised by the three schools. These are formally constructed and written laws and procedures that set out expectations and enforcement mechanisms, and carry from the old institutionalism. Norms, or practices, unlike regulations, are not formally recorded or officially enforced, and are a feature of new institutionalism; actors simply know 'how they are supposed to behave' – "it is how we do things around here" (Scott, 2004). Norms may sustain positive behaviour, such as public service ethos, or may underpin negative ones, such as sexism and racism (Lowndes and Roberts, 2015, p. 58). Formal and informal institutions interact in four ways, according to Gretchan Helmke and Steven Levitsky (2006), they can be: complementary, accommodating, competing and substitutive. Institutions exert greater influence on behaviour where the interaction is complementary or accommodating, and weak when competing or substitutive.

The most interesting dimension of the relationship between institutions and behaviour, is the one recognised mainly by sociological institutionalists (Scott, 2001, 2014) and termed cultural-cognitive or scripts, and by some politics scholars (Lowndes and Roberts, 2015) termed narratives. While rules are transmitted by written documents and legislation, and norms are modelled by actors, and rely on third party enforcement – such as courts and professional associations, narratives or scripts are transmitted by the spoken word, or relayed in symbolic

forms, and embody values, ideas and power (Scott, 2014, Lowndes and Roberts, 2015). A classic case were narratives are invoked is when governments, or any authority, successfully activate "the cognitive and moral resources of citizens through signals and appeals that educate and remind people of what is "the right thing to do" (Claus Offe, 2009, p. 559). A relevant recent example here in the UK, is the Government's messaging during COVID-19 pandemic, such as "Stay Home – Protect the NHS – Save Lives" (www.gov.uk, 2021). Institutions that are based on rules, norms and narratives exhibit endurance and stronger influence on behaviour.

The three schools offered different interpretation as to the relationship between institutions and behaviour; historical institutionalists, being at one end, accept the path dependency approach to the relationship, where actors perform actions within the constraints dictated by the institutional setting, rational choice scholars recognise a much more instrumental relationship where actors have the power to design institutions to serve benefit maximising ends. Sociological institutionalists, while being closer to the position of historical institutionalists in recognising the constraining effect of institutions, have made much more stride to recognise the incremental effect of actor practices on institutions. The following paragraphs will shed further light on developments within the three schools by exploring the treatment of the issue of institutional emerging and change; a research area that grew in importance from the early 1990s.

Process of institutional emerging and change

The journey from the rediscovery of institutionalism in the 1980s, with its priority on moving away from individualism to explaining institutional change posed a dilemma for new institutionalists. Each of the three schools, influenced by their own lineage of scholarship and ontological position, developed a different perspective on institutional emerging and change. Initial interest was to explain what became recognised as 'critical junctures' (R. B. Collier and D. Collier, 1991), defined as "a discontinuous conception of political time in which periods of comparatively modest institutional change are interrupted by more rapid and intense moments of transformation" (Hay, 2002, 161). The three schools, however, provided different explanations for these critical junctures. Rational choice scholars, with their recognition of the individual as a maximiser, attribute these moments to the activity of strategic agents who are able to act beyond the constraints of existing institutional path. This can be elaborated with an example from Peter John and Helen Margetts (2003, p. 412 – quoted in Lowndes and Roberts, 2015, p. 114), stating that critical junctures arise "when the agenda of the political system shifts, such as when parties have an influence on policy outcomes … or when the indivisibility of a new programme demands a large-scale policy change, an example being space exploration". The motive of change here, is clearly the rational actor within the political space.

Historical institutionalists recognise the concept of punctuated equilibrium, that is the junctures during which new institutional path is started; however, they tend to attribute such periods to exogenous factors, such as wars, global crisis, pandemics, or even new ideas.

Scholars subscribing to this school recognise change as a sharp break with the past, rather than evolutionary or elaboration, generated by external developments (Guy Peters and John Pierre, 1998). An example from recent history is the critical juncture represented by the 2008 global financial crisis and its impact on bank regulations. John L. Campbell (2019, p. 10) explains this in the context of the move from self-responsibility, where financial organisations were less tethered by regulation, to one of more institutionally embedded action:

> "The rise of self-responsibility as practiced in many public policy areas was part of the more general rise of neoliberalism. … This led, in the world of finance, to the 2008 financial crisis, thanks to various deregulatory moves beginning in the early 1980s. … The basic argument [for institutional change] is that self-responsibility is not a phenomenon that can be reduced to individual action; it cannot work properly without that action being embedded in an appropriate institutional environment. This is [a change in] an argument at odds with neoliberal theory."

Whilst historical institutionalists recognise critical junctures being caused by external environmental factors, they are often unable to offer adequate explanation of the process of change – they simply recognise it when it takes place. The logic for this school of thought is that, if no one operating within these constraining institutions is likely to change things, "then change can only occur due to large-scale external events such as wars and depression" (Blyth, 2002, p. 301). However, such external punctuations are not the only way in which institutions change. Rational choice scholars on the other hand, are more straight forward in their explanation, which is driven by the self-interest of the maximising actor. This notion of how institutions change is problematic though, as it can lead to a world of constant and chaotic

change, in addition to which, institutions have been proven to outlast their immediate usefulness to a group of actors. The case of Kodak, the photography company, is an example of an institution that has adapted its purpose, due to competition and changing technology, from film roll camera production to its current focus on commercial digital products and lately even pharmaceutical materials (Chris Carr, Anais Auriau, Patricia Ramos, 2020) .

Institutional emergence and change, however, needs a more sophisticated explanation than that offered by these two schools; for, it can be seen in both examples provided by Campbell (2019) and John and Margott (2003), that institutional emergence and change is a process that doesn't stop between periods of extreme shifts, nor is it driven either – and only - exogenously or endogenously. A richer explanation has emerged over the last two decades among sociological institutionalists, and their recognition of the relationship between institutions and actors as much more dialectical, building on the strategic-relational approach of Hay and Jessop (Lawrence, Suddaby and Bernard Leca, 2009).

Sociological institutionalists, sought first to 'bring the actor back in', in order to explain institutional change, with the development of 'institutional entrepreneurship' as a major theme within the school. Initially recognised by DiMaggio (1988), the term institutional entrepreneurship refers to the "activities of actors who have an interest in particular institutional arrangements and who leverage resources to create new institutions or to transform existing ones" (Maguire, Hardy and Lawrence, 2004: 657). This, however, was seen later to endow institutional entrepreneurs with 'heroic' powers, very much in the tradition of rational choice institutionalists, as the definition of the term suggests. In the meantime, and

in parallel, two developments where taking place within political science and sociology. Prominent among the political scientists are Jessop (1990), Hay (1995; 2002) and Archer (1996); these scholars, as part of their critique of Gidden's (1979; 1984) structuration theory developed the strategic-relational approach which recognised the effect structure has on agency, and agency has on structure, as well as the role ideas play in the change process. Such development allowed some sociological institutionalists to develop the concept of "institutional work" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006; Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca, 2009). Although they acknowledge their indebtedness to the foundational work of DiMaggio (1988) and Oliver (1991; 1992), Lawrence and Suddaby (2006, p. 219) identify their point of departure as their focus on the *practice* of actors, "as they attempt to shape those processes," and so creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions. In adopting a practice theory, inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1997; 1993), Lawrence and Suddaby reviewed empirical work spanning 15 years and identified institutional work as highlighting three key elements: (a) actors being aware, skilled and reflexive; (b) institutions as being constituted in the conscious action of actors; and (c) the notion of 'action as practice' "intelligent, situated institutional action" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006, pp. 219 – 220).

So, another way of representing the spectrum of possibilities in institutional change is to view it as a continuum. This conceptualisation is helpful, and lends itself to the definition offered by Scott (2001) of institution as comprising regulative (rules), normative, and cognitive (narrative) dimensions. Significant, or punctuated, institutional change is envisaged when change takes place in all three dimensions, while path dependency is maintained when no change takes place in any of these dimensions; change in one or two of the dimensions results

in institutional change at various points along the continuum (Campbell, 2004, 2019; Scott, 2015). Sociological institutionalists, with their commitment to incremental rather than punctuated change – although they do recognise the latter, with their commitment to the actors and their environment, offer a more sophisticated approach to explaining institutional change – an approach developed over the last three decades. While starting with *bringing agency back in* through institutional entrepreneurship (Di Maggio, 1988), later incorporated the dialectic approach of *institutional work* (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006), then *ideas and interests* (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury, 2012; Scott, 2014). Importantly, by recognising that institutional change is a result of a dialectic relationship between structure (institution) and the agency of actors, a process described as structuration by Anthony Gidden (1984), and by offering a means to test for institutional change - by recognising changes to the organisational field, the approach lends itself to this study. The following sections will elaborate this approach in more detail. However, it is important to make a slight, but helpful, deep dive to better understand the relationship between structure (institutions) and agency, as well as ideas and interests – since these relationships lie at the heart of any examination of institutional change.

Structure, agency and ideas in political and sociological theories.

The duality of structure and agency, as has already been noted above, proved to be an issue that exercised social science scholars as they sought to reconcile the two, following the shift in the 1960s and 1970s from a structuralist to a behaviouralist approach. The advent of Giddens' ground-breaking structuration theory (1979; 1984), the strategic-relational approach

developed later by Jessop (1990) and Hay (1995), and the morphogenetic approach by Margaret Archer (1995) ushered in a number of studies of boundary spanning on the basis of the duality between structure and agency. At the heart of these considerations is a simple, but powerful observation: we can only account for structure by the effect it has constraining agents, and conversely, we can only recognise agency by the impact it has on structure (Hay, 1995). While these three conceptions of the relationship of structure and agency acknowledge the role of agency in advancing structural change, all be it within the pre-existing structural constraints, they differ in how this can be analytically demonstrated.

Gidden's structuration theory is acknowledged as being a breakthrough attempt to transcending the dualism - that is the rigid separation of structure and agency (David Held and John B. Thompson, 1989; Hay, 1995) - and to consider the relationship as a duality, where they are depicted as two sides of the same coin. What Giddens essentially introduces is the mutual dependency between human agency and social structures, which leads him to introduce the concept of duality of structure, meaning that "social structures are both constituted by human agency, and yet at the same time are the very medium of this constitution" (Giddens, 1976, p. 121). Critics of Gidden's theory, raise two objections: that structure and agency are not mutually constitutive, where Archer (1996) accuses Giddens of central conflation, and that there is "huge problem in using structuration theory empirically...[where Giddens] is unable to ... give a sense of the practical interaction between structure and agency" (Stuart McAnulla, 2002, pp. 279-90).

To overcome this handicap of structuration theory, Bob Jessop (1990) and Colin Hay (1996), developed the *strategic-relational* approach, which clarifies the nature of the dialectic relationship between structure and agency. The key term in this conception is that of *strategy*; as well as making clear separation between the two terms – no longer the two sides of the same coin – Jessop and Hay argue that "action only takes place within a pre-existing structured context" (McAnulla, 2002, p. 280). The strategic-relational approach introduces the possibility for the actor to work selectively, or strategically, within available options offered by a given social structure. So, while the structure constrains the options available, it nevertheless offers certain options which the actor can strategically explore; in doing so, the actors undertake a process of strategic learning, and over time this dialectic process can lead to changes, which may be unanticipated and unwanted (Hay, 1995, pp. 201-2). In a later paper, *Institutional re(turns) and the strategic-relational approach*, Bob Jessop (2001) elaborates in more detail the nature of the dialectic relationship through an iteration process of five stages. Starting from a dichotomy of structure and agency, to duality of relationship (Giddens' position), to genuine dialectic duality, resulting in reflexive "unity of purpose" to a transformed structure (Jessop, 2001, pp. 1223-1224). Most importantly, and this is where the strategic relational approach is so critical to the gradualist approach to institutional change adopted by sociological institutionalists, is that institutions are "path dependent, emergent phenomena, recursively reproduced through specific forms of action [by reflexive actors]" (Jessop, 2001, p. 1230). This dialectic relationship, where structures (institutions) provide the templates for possible strategies and where actors select from the available – if limited – range of strategies to exercise agency, while acknowledging the actor's interests as informing their selectivity as

well as their reflexivity and learning through the dialectic process, does not yet recognise the role of ideas influencing those interests.

At about the same time period, Margaret Archer (1996), in a similar approach to Jessop (1990) and Hay(1996), considered structure and agency to be separate – dismissing Giddens (1979; 1984) structuration theory – with much clearer emphasis on the relationship over time. Like Hay and Jessop, Archer argues that structure "necessarily predates agency, and changes of structure necessarily post-dates these actions" (McAnulla, 2002, p. 285-286). Importantly, Archer is one of the first theorists to acknowledge the role of the ideational, by placing culture alongside structure, and argues that "the relationship between culture and agency is similar to that between structure and agency", but being careful not conflate the structural (material) and the ideational (McAnulla, 2002, p. 287). The role of ideas is later picked up by Hay (2002), in Chapter 6 of his now classic *Political Analysis: A Critical Introduction*. In fact, Hay himself reflects on how remarkable it is that the discussion has left it so late for such consideration (Hay, 2002, p. 195). Ideas, asserts Hay, provide, "the point of mediation between actors and their environment," (Hay, 2002, pp. 209-210), while Archer (1996) also clarifies that such mediation, takes place in the context of social interaction. This, however, raises two crucial questions: what are these ideas, what role exactly do they play in the dialectic process and what are the sources of ideas that agents turn to? Hay and Archer are both not forthcoming on this. In Archer's morphogenetic cycle, the crucial stage is that of social interaction, where agents face the conditioning influence of both structure and ideas. It is the intention of this chapter to elaborate a theoretical framework for the study that brings together the three

meta concepts of structures, agency and ideas. But first, it is important to elaborate further on the concept of ideas and their relationship with interests.

The role of ideas and interests

As discussed above in the review of the three schools of institutionalism, vested interests clearly provide economists and other social scientists aligned with rational choice school with a powerful conceptual lens with which to analyse the determination of policy and institutions. The exclusive focus on interests, however, leaves many unanswered questions, including the fact that changes rarely rely on appeal to interest alone; when pursuing change, agents also attempt to persuade and convince wider public and target audiences, through social interaction and the promotion of ideas. The Oxford English Dictionary defines an idea as, "a conception of what is desirable or ought to be" (OED Online, 2022), which, according to John Campbell (2002) can be, for example, "conceptual models, theories, (and) frames." Ideas, as models, theories and frames, and in the absence of perfect information, enable actors to make sense of the world in which they act.

Among the three schools, historical institutionalists make clearer accounts of the role of ideas in institutional change process, citing examples such as prohibition of slavery, women's rights and the rise of Marxist ideology, while rational-choice institutionalists are faced with the collective-action problem when dealing with ideas – in other words the free-rider syndrome (See Blyth, 2002, pp. 302-304). Sociological institutionalists on the other hand, have given increasing consideration to the role of ideas in institutional change, where Friedland and

Alford (1991) in their critique of DiMaggio's (1988) concept of institutional entrepreneurship put the case for 'bringing the state back in' and put forward the concept of institutional logics. Although not picked up immediately after publication, institutional logics became a dominant theme among sociological institutionalists in the last decade and a half, especially the work of Patricia Thornton and William Ocasio (1999), Thornton (2004), and the more extensive treatment in Thornton et al. (2012).

Mukand and Rodrick (2016) argue that there are two domains of ideas that can be deployed to influence actors through social interaction. *Worldview politics* type of ideas, defined as being "geared to altering public perception about the underlying state of the world", and *identity politics* type of ideas, which are about actor's self-identity – perceptions about who they are" (Mukand and Rodrick, 2016, p. 3). Political entrepreneurs deploy what Mukand and Rodrick describe as memes; these are defined as "combination of cues, narratives, symbols or indeed any choice of communication that is deployed by the political entrepreneur such that exposure to it either shifts views about how the world works or makes an identity salient" (p. 3). Political scientists often analyse the role of ideas in how they impact voter preferences; one of the powerful examples of a meme is the notion that "we cannot live beyond our means", deployed by world leaders in response to the 2008 financial crisis, such as Angela Merkel in Germany in 2008 and the UK Coalition Government in 2010 (Henry Farrell and John Quiggin, 2012). This worldview-type meme was seen to resonate with the public and win their support, as people think about their own finances in the same way. The focus on ideas and their influence on policy and institutional change is not to discount the role of interest, they are recognised to feed into each other; ideas, according to Kenneth Shepsle (1985), can be

regarded as "hooks on which politicians hang their objectives and political interest". More on the role of ideas in the process of institutional change will be discussed in Section Four, when considering Friedland and Alford's (1991) *institutional logics* concept; very much in the realm of worldview politics-type of ideas. Friedland and Alford suggested that Western society comprised five institutional orders: the *capitalist market*, *bureaucratic state*, *democracy*, *nuclear family*, and *Christian religion* (Friedland and Alford, 1991, p. 248). Contradictions between logics is experienced by actors working at the interstices of such logics, which can give rise to ideas alternative to those based on past practice.

One of the shortcomings of the literature so far, even the ones acknowledging the role of ideas, is in identifying their source and how they are accessed and mobilised. Most of these will be covered in Sections Four and Five, but a brief mention of the seminal work of Mustafa Emirbayer and Ann Mische (1998) first, where a conception of human agency is given as constitutive of, "iteration, projectivity and practical evaluation." In this conception, *iteration* refers to the selective activation of past thoughts and action, and where *projectivity* is the generation of potential future tracks for action, while *practical-evaluation* refers to the 'judgement-call' in the selection of which track to take among identified options (1998, p. 971). Emirbayer and Mische (1998) take us a step further by suggesting that the source of ideas can come from the process of iteration, where actors are able to recall past thoughts and experiences to inform future trajectories. However, this can only serve to reinforce established structure, so, there has to be another source of ideas that can serve to challenge familiar thoughts and actions and suggest alternative tracks. This is where the concept of

culture being external to individuals and organisations developed by Friedland and Alford (1991) is helpful, as will be discussed in Section Four.

Building on Hay's (2002) acknowledgement that ideas play the crucial role of being, "the interface between actors and context," (Williams, 2012, p. 195), Williams indicates a three-way interaction, not only between structure and agency, and ideas and agency, but between ideas and structure as well. However, while this is not different from Hay, Williams suggests a direct relationship between structure and ideas, but does not offer an adequate explanation as to how this is enacted. The proposed conceptual relationship discussed in the final section addresses this point, by considering such relationship as a legacy one, arising from dominant logics that shape the rules of the game.

This section has sought to review the relationship between institutions and behaviour, and institutional emerging and change, from the perspectives of the three main schools of institutionalism. In doing so, it is identified that sociological institutionalism offers a better conception and analytical tools to identify the impact of the practices of boundary spanners on institutional change. It acknowledges the dialectic relationship between institutions and behaviour, does not sway to either the dominance of structure or the all-heroic, benefit maximising actor, that characterise the historical and rational choice perspectives. Recognition is also given to the strategic-relational approach of Jessop and Hay, and the morphogenetic model of Archer as providing foundational work for the later developments of sociological institutionalism and the role ideas play in institutional change. The following three section will now explore the conception structure, agency and ideas as explored in the

sociological school, while Section Five will bring these together to propose a conceptional framework for this study.

Section Two: Boundary-spanning in the realm of the organisation and organisational field – a structuralist, sociological perspective

Open System, Contingency and Role Theories

Existing organisational studies literature situated boundary-spanning within the structuralist perspective to start with, but then developed an action perspective based on the social-psychological literature. Whereas the former focuses on the environmental contingencies affecting boundary-spanning, the latter attempts to shift the focus onto the agency of the boundary-spanner (van Meerkerk and Edelenbros, 2018; Keith Baker, 2008). The structuralist perspective, represented by the open systems theory, based on Talcott Parsons' (1951) functional structuralism, that 'form follows function', and developed by James Thompson (1967; 2003) in his important work *Organisations in Action*, recognises the relationship between the organisation and its environment being either homogenous or heterogenous. A homogenous relationship is predictable, in which standardised roles for boundary-spanning can be employed mainly to protect the organisation through transaction management, whereas a heterogenous, less predictable relationship, calls for the role of the boundary-spanner to be more autonomous and responsive to secure information and allow the organisation to adapt, essentially undertaking '*buffering*' activities by which they absorb and manage any turbulence in the environment in order to protect the organisation (Baker, K., 2008, p. 25).

Building on the open systems approach, a typology of boundary-spanning roles was identified by Richard Leifer and Andre Delbecq (1978, p. 44-47), depending on the level of certainty of environmental conditions and the organisation's information need. The four roles identified ranged from conditions where the organisation's environment is more certain and the need for information is regular, to one where the environment is more complex and uncertain and the information needs are unanticipated and irregular. In the former, the role is likely to be regulated and routine, whereas in the latter case, the role is more likely to be nonregulated and nonroutine. Systems theory, driven by functionalist perspective and its use of biological, mechanical and similar metaphors (Gareth Morgan, 1997), offers a simplistic approach to boundary spanning being essentially driven by a stable organisation whose relationship with its environment seems transactional in the main. Importantly, it overlooks the interest and agency of the boundary spanner, and in doing so it fails to account for any impact the actual practices of actors as agents with multiple social interactions may have and what drives them, as will be explored later.

In response to what some scholars saw as the stable nature of the open systems approach to boundary relationships, the contingency theory (Morgan, 1997) was developed within the structuralist perspective, highlighting the mutual interdependency and mutual influence between the organisation and its environment. This further developed the role of the boundary-spanner not just being an information processor, as in the open systems approach, but also being a representative or ambassador for the organisation (Howard E. Aldrich and Diane Herker, 1977, p. 219). This representation role serves the organisation's need to respond and adapt to its environment, a critical function in the maintenance of legitimacy.

The key role played here by boundary-spanners is to, "filter, interpret and translate information," both to the organisation and back to its environment, according to van Meerkerk and Edelenbros (2018 p, 44). The point to draw from the above brief reflections about both the open system and contingency theories, is that they focus on the role of the environment and the organisation in shaping the role and behaviour of boundary-spanners. There is no consideration for any agency or relative autonomy to the boundary-spanners and how they might shape and influence the role they play- a manifestation of the structuralist perspective. This led to consideration of the role perspective (Bruce J. Biddle, 1986), where roles are taken to mean the 'socially defined behaviour' - such as teacher, manager, mother, etc. Consideration of role gives a stronger connection to micro-level behaviour of boundary-spanners because boundary-spanners are recognised as playing a significant advocacy role within their organisation and its environment (Leifer and Delbecq, 1978, p. 41).

Boundary-spanners, according to role theory, are individuals interacting with other individuals within and outside their organisations and where behaviour is influenced by all those with whom interaction is made. However, given the differing values and motivations driving individuals and groups within and outside the organisation, the boundary-spanner is likely to experience conflicting expectations about their role. This source of conflict is due to different expectations arising from the home organisation on the one hand, and from its environment on the other. J. S. Adams (1976), for example, identifies the relative distance of the boundary-spanners from both the home organisation and environment as potentially raising the issue of suspicion and trust, with the need to maintain strong links to both. Simply put, role theory highlights the different pressures upon boundary-spanners due to potentially conflicting

demands. Role theory, however, still suffers from a lack of depth in exploring the agency that can be attributed to boundary-spanners – despite highlighting important social factors affecting them. This, however, could be due to the fact that it is an extension of developments based on the contingency approach and, therefore, is of a structuralist orientation. One can attribute, though, to the structuralist consideration of organisations the credit of identifying boundaries being defined by membership, or perhaps the bounds within which authority of the hierarchy applies.

Consideration of boundaries, the interaction between the organisation and its environment and the role of boundary spanners, necessitates a greater focus on the interaction space, also defined by DiMaggio and Powell (1983) as the *organisational field*. Being the arena in which boundary-spanners operate and in which institutional rules and norms are enacted, the organisational field has been conceptualised to consist of organisations that share a common meaning system and the site most relevant to the study of institutional process and change (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983; Scott, 2014). The following paragraphs will explore in some depth this crucial concept put forward by sociological institutionalists and which will form an important element in the conceptual framework for this study.

Organisational Fields – the interaction space

In order to address the core agenda of institutional change at the heart of the research question, it is necessary to address the concept of the organisational field; one of the most powerful constructs in social theory. The thread of the concept of the organisational field is

based on Bourdieu's (1977) discussion of *habitus*, the, "socially acquired and culturally embodied systems of predispositions, tendencies and inclinations" (Marsh, 2018, p. 208), which developed in what he terms a *field*, the social sphere or space, in which the individual acts. Fields, for Bourdieu, are arenas of conflict, "in which some are able… to impose their conception of "rules of the game" on others" (Scott, 2014, p. 221). Bourdieu's description provided the basis for DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) founding concept of the organisational field as "those organisations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognized area of institutional life: key suppliers, resource and product consumers, regulatory agencies, and other organizations that produce similar services or products" (p. 148). According to Selznick (1957, p. 7) institutionalisation sets in for an organisation when it becomes profoundly aware of its dependence on its external environment; the external environment being the domain of a community of organisations.

Introduced by scholars as a meso-level social order (Neil Fligstein and Doug McAdam, 2011), the organisational field can be in the form of a sector (Scott and Meyer, 1983) or a network (Powell et al., 1995) and is sometimes referred to as an institutional field (Melissa Wooten & Andrew Hoffman, 2008) and a strategic action field (Fligstein and McAdam, 2011). The most important manifestation of the concept of the organisational field is the view that the, "organisation's environment was itself organised" (Scott, 2014, p. 221), unlike in the open system discussed earlier. The purpose served by the organisational field can be to fulfil market exchange (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983), facilitate collective cognition (Scott, 1994b), to resolve complex issues (Andrew J. Hoffman, 1999), or simply due to spatial proximity (Christopher Marquis, Gerald F. Davis and May Ann Glynn, 2013). While these definitions and categories

are helpful, in order to explore the power of the concept as, *a recognised area of institutional life*, however, Charlene Zietsma, Peter Groenewegen, Danielle Logue and Bob Hinings (2017) propose a useful categorisation that is likely to serve the study of institutional change. They argue that fields can either be an *exchange or issue* type. In exchange fields, "the shared objective of the field is to stabilize and coordinate exchange," (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 396) such as in market-exchange fields where there is likely to be a shared logic. In issue fields, however, "the focal interest is an issue that carries different meanings to different populations, multiple and conflicting logics may be more the norm," (Zietsma et al., 2017, p. 400). Exchange fields are more in line with DiMaggio and Powell's conception, while issue fields are reflective of Bourdieu's view of the field as being arenas of conflict. The relationship between these two conceptions and their relationship with institutional logics – to be discussed later - serve the purpose of this study and form part of the understanding of institutions as scaffolds rather than cages for actors. However, before going further, it is important to look at the actual make up of organisational fields.

Key components of organisational fields – indicators of institutionalisation

In exploring organisational fields, and the conception of the strategic action field, Fligstein and McAdam (2011) proposed four components: a shared account of the terrain of the field, actors, rules, and a shared interpretive frame. Later, Scott (2014) advises, for empirical purposes, a focus on four key components that vary among fields: Institutional logics, actors, relational systems and field boundaries. In essence, 'logics' can be taken to serve similar purposes to 'rules' and 'shared interpretive frames' in Fligstein and McAdam's conception.

However, extant studies seem to overlook an important factor which gives rise to the very existence of the field. In order for organisations to come together and organise into a field, there has to be a c*ause* where, in the case of exchange fields, this could be the product or service of shared interest and, in the case of issue fields, it is the issue of concern to the different stakeholder comprising the field. Simply put, no field can exist without *a cause*. The following paragraphs will elaborate each of the four components suggested by Scott (2014), and the proposed fifth component by this study, the cause.

Being the rules and conventions of a particular organisational field, *logics* are, "most influential when they are consistent and easily taken for granted," (Owen-Smith and Powell, in Greenwood et al., 2008, p. 602) shaping and creating the rules of the game, the means-ends relationships by which power is gained and lost (Thornton and Ocasio, in Greenwood et al. 2008, p. 112). Thornton and Ocasio (2008, p. 101) define institutional logics as, "the socially constructed historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence." However, when competing logics are in the same setting, conflict can be triggered, resulting in change dynamics promoted by actors committed to contrasting institutional logics. Due to the centrality of their role, logics will be discussed in detail in Section Four.

Actors, whether individual or collective, are a critical component in an organisational field; they serve as, "the creators and carriers of institutional elements, including logics as well as ways of thinking and working" (Scott 2014, p. 229). The position, power, and type of actor are of central concern to the study of organisational fields; Fligstein and McAdam (2011), in their emphasis on fields as competitive arenas, offer the distinction between incumbents and

challengers. Where incumbents wield dominant influence within the field, challengers are less privileged, generally conforming, but waiting for their opportunity to challenge prevailing logics. The role of actors, such as boundary spanners, in field formation will be discussed in Section Three.

The third defining factor of the organisational field is the _relational arrangements_ at work between the organisation and its environment. McAdam et al. (2001, p. 22) sees the relational perspective in terms of, "social interaction, social ties, communication, and conversation not merely as expressions of structure, rationality, consciousness, or culture but as active sites of creation and change." The institutional development within an organisational field is seen by Owen-Smith and Powell (2008) to hinge on: "(1) increased interaction among participants; (2) the development of well-defined status order and patterns of coalition; (3) heightened information sharing; and (4) mutual awareness and responsiveness," (Greenwood et al., 2008, p. 597). Such relational systems, no matter the driver – whether power, governance or information sharing, can be signs of boundary-spanning behaviour. This defining factor of the organisation field is key, as it is an expression of the practice being undertaken by entrepreneurial agents, such as a boundary-spanner, the content of which is informed by the dominant and conflicting logics, and the struggle among actors committed to contrasting logics, as well as the issues being confronted by such agents (Scott, 2014, p.91).

Boundaries are perhaps the most complex to define. Given the nature of such social systems being open systems, any attempt to define their boundaries is more of, "an art than a science," (Scott 2014). To add to the complexity, Edward O. Laumann, Peter Marsden and David Pransky (1983) suggest two approaches to boundary construction, a "realist" or a "nominalist"

approach, where, in the former actors themselves define their boundaries, as opposed to the latter where a framework is imposed by the researcher. Scott (2014) further advises that, in addition, both spatial and temporal boundaries must be established. In spatial boundaries, proximity and co-location of actors is considered significant in understanding the functioning of organisations (Marquis et al., 2011). This, however, can be problematic in today's interconnected world; in fact, the power of the field concept is in the very notion that regardless of distance, cultural and relational connections are significant. Communities of practice (Tom Wenger, 1991) are also an example where members share interest in a common area or domain. With this in mind, boundary drawing can be problematic and needs to serve the researcher's primary question that is being investigated. However, boundaries are best defined by membership of the field, since fields consist of stakeholders sharing an interest in an issue, product or service, or indeed geography.

It follows, therefore, that the fifth component of the organisational field has to be *the cause.* The criticality of the cause as the fifth key component is, in many ways, self-evident, given that there has to be a reason for field participants interacting, "more frequently and fatefully with one another than with actors outside the field," (Scott, 1995, p. 56). In a way, this makes it a surprising omission by Scott. Further, the previously mentioned categorisation of fields by Zietsma et al (2017) into exchange and issue fields, also indicates that such categorisation is mainly due to the nature of the cause that led to their formations. In the case of exchange fields, the cause was, "to stabilize and coordinate exchange" of products or services, while in the case of issue fields, "the focal interest is an issue" that is being contested by different stakeholders within the field (Wooten and Hoffman, 2008).

Taking Scott's definition of institutions, together with DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) often quoted definition of fields, given earlier, it becomes clear that the strength of the concept of the organisational field lies in the fact that it is the arena in which institutionalisation takes place. For institutional change, we look for evident change in rules, norms and mental models/narratives. Changes in key components of the organisational field: membership (rules), logic (norms/mental models), boundaries (rules), relational arrangement (norms and narratives) (Scott, 2014; McAdam et al., 2001; Thornton, et al. 2012), are therefore strong indicators of institutional change. Institutionalisation is, therefore, best explored first by looking at the formation and change within organisational fields; where, institutionalisation is represented by changes to the, "institutional life," or the, "common meaning system," enshrined in *rules*, *norms* and *mental models* governing behaviour within the field (Scott, 1995, 2014). Care needs to be taken though, not to conflate the process of 'diffusion' of rules, norms and mental models within an organisational field with institutionalisation because judging the success or otherwise of the institutionalisation process rests on what Skelcher et al., (2013) and Scott (2014) call the 'stickiness' test – that is the resilience and continuity of introduced rules and norms.

Evidencing change and stability within local institutions in Sfax and Kairouan will be undertaken through the examination of changes or otherwise of the key components of the organisational fields in both localities. The focus of the research question, however, is on the role played by actors, that is boundary spanners in this case, which will be discussed in more depth in the following section. Logics , as the source of ideas and shapers of institutional rules and norms will be the subject of expanded discussion on Section Four.

Section Three: The role of boundary-spanners in creating, disrupting and maintaining institutions - sociological institutionalist approach to agency

Central to this study addressing the research question, is understanding the role boundary spanners play influencing institutional change, and whether such change means creating new institutions, or maintaining existing ones. To do this, the following paragraphs will explore the work of sociological institutionalist scholars on institutional entrepreneurship, institutional work and boundary-spanning. It will be found that such scholarship owes much to the foundational work on the structure-agency debate explored earlier in Section One.

Institutional Entrepreneurship

The initial focus by sociological institutionalists was on similarities between organisations within an organisational field, and the development of the concept of isomorphism to explain the phenomena. It is timely now to explore institutional change, where the term institutional entrepreneurship was introduced by DiMaggio in 1988 to explain the role of actors in such processes. The task in this section is to explore the role played by actors within the field in the 'structuration' process, that is institutionalisation, where, according to Scott (2014, pp. 93-94)

> Structuration theory views actors as creating and following rules and utilising resources as they engage in the ongoing production and reproduction of social structures. Actors are viewed as knowledgeable and reflexive, capable of understanding and taking account of everyday situations and routinely monitoring the results for their own and others' actions.

Most of the studies on institutional entrepreneurship have focused on the process of field development and, therefore, on institutionalisation as an outcome, which is attributed to the

focus on one type of actor, the organisation. In order to study the role of individuals in the process of institutional change, that is their institutional work, Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) advise a focus on 'practice' that lies at the heart of the process that achieves the 'stickiness' test. However, before this, it is important to explore the literature further in order to bring institutional entrepreneurship into sharper focus.

Much of the literature on institutional entrepreneurship (e.g., DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Greenwood and Hinings, 1995; Hirsh and Lounsbury, 1997) sought to address the gap between 'old' and 'new' institutionalism, "by introducing consideration of agency, power and interest into analysis of institutional fields" (Cynthia Hardy and Steve Maguire, 2008, p. 198). However, scholars were then confronted with what became known as the 'paradox of embedded agency' (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Friedland and Alford, 1991; Petter Holm, 1995), which generated much of the later literature on institutional entrepreneurship (e.g. Silvia Dorado, 2005; Battilana, 2006; Hardy and Maguire 2008). The one central criticism that is often levelled at such scholarship is that it endowed actors with *heroic* characteristics. Take for example the argument that "new institutions arise when organised actors with sufficient resources see in them an opportunity to realise interest that they value highly" (DiMaggio, 1988, p. 14). Such definition gives the impression that institutions can be available almost by design or at will. This is far from reality due to many factors, including unintended consequences of action (Micelotta et al., 2017; Khan, Munir and Willmott, 2007), or the fact that change usually comes about as a result of coalitions of actors rather than a single 'heroic' actor (Andrews, 2016). So, as with the previously discussed debate about the relationship between agency and structure, the 'holy grail' of institutional studies over the last two decades seems to have become the

endeavour to find that elusive 'balance point' that explains the role of actors as change agents, without ignoring the role of institutions as constraining and guiding the action of such actors.

Hardy and Maguire (2008) identify that, while the institutional entrepreneurship literature, in the majority, has developed around the notion of process being 'actor-centric', a different approach has also been identified that is more 'process-centric'. It is this latter approach that is then explored as offering an account of agency that, "does not swing too far in the opposite direction to the over-emphasis on the constraining effects of institutions" (Hardy and Maguire, 2008, p.199).

The process-centric approach starts by: (a) identifying who social entrepreneurs are, and their characteristics; (b) the conditions that facilitate field formations; (c) the interpretative struggles among field actors; and (d) the intervention strategies adopted by actors. This approach reflects and complements Scott's model of field formation and key components discussed earlier, where here (a) is about the actor, (b) is about the catalysing events, that is the cause, and role of logics, relational systems and boundaries, and (c) and (d) are, again, about actors and their access to alternative/competing logics. The model offered by Hardy and Maguire is one which takes account of who is, or can be, an institutional entrepreneur; that is, an actor identifiable as exhibiting two characteristics: properties of '*envisioning*' and '*reflexivity*', and occupying certain social positions (Bickert, 1999, p. 786). The position social actors occupy is also critical, where such actors can be in an 'embedded' or 'peripheral' position from which they can take action (Hardy and Maguire, 2008: p.201).

Drivers and role of institutional entrepreneurship

For social entrepreneurs to be able to intervene, there has to be particular field 'initiating' conditions, which can be internal and/or external. Examples of internal conditions include the existence of contradictions (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Myeong-Gu Seo and W. E. Douglas Creed, 2002) and even the results of disruptive behaviour of some actors – particularly new entrants to the field. External factors include 'stimuli' to reduce uncertainty of future states, or the impact of external events on a field (Clemens and Cook, 1999). The state of the field can also be another stimuli; whether the field is 'emerging', 'mature and stable' or 'in crisis' (Hardy and Maguire, 2008, p. 264), where fields that are emerging or in-crisis offer greater opportunity for institutional entrepreneurship, as is expected in post-conflict environments. Such stimuli establish favourable conditions for actors to furnish ideas for change (Hardy and Maguire, 2008, p. 204), and where new ideas contribute to the struggle over meaning; institutions, therefore, are essentially formed as new meanings are formed and embedded.

The role institutional entrepreneurs play, as is becoming clear, is essentially to dislodge established practices and logics and replace them with new ones. The success of achieving this, in other words the 'how?', has come to dominate the literature, with a focus broadly reflecting the strategies and skills adopted and employed by institutional entrepreneurs. Hardy and Maguire (2008) identify three themes: resource mobilisation – these are 'material resources mobilised as levers against other actors (DiMaggio, 1988); construction of rationale – the articulation of ideas and effective communication of reasons for the change, and persuading others to accept them; these become the means to coalition-building, or "the ability to induce cooperation among others" (Fligstein, 2001a, p. 112). Other scholars have

also reported intervention strategies such as technical and market leadership and lobbying for regulatory change (Fligstein, 1997; Hoffman 1999; Maguire et al., 2004). Hardy and Maguire's process-model, however, exhibits two main deficiencies when explaining the action of institutional entrepreneurs: the failure to identify the source of the 'envisioning' process that is critical in realising change within organisational fields; and they also fail to adequately explain the actual practice of individual actors, that is the intentional effort they expend to achieve results.

As well as seeking to better understand the role actors, such as boundary-spanners, play in the institutional change process, scholars have become increasingly interested in understanding the *type* of change that results. A second model, *institutional work*, was explored initially by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006), and developed further by Lawrence, Suddaby and Leca (2009) and Tammar B. Zilber (2013), better articulated the different practices of institutional entrepreneurship, and identified three types of potential change: institutional creation, maintenance and disruption, which will be discussed in the following paragraphs.

Institutional work

The second model of the actor's role in bringing about change to organisational fields is that of *institutional work*, introduced by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006). A model that is likely to help address the research question more so than the institutional entrepreneurship perspective alone. Among the criticisms levelled at the institutional entrepreneurship literature is that the focus of the processes-centric approach (e.g. Greenwood and Hinings

1996; Tolbert and Zucker 1996), "has been on the institutions: what happens to them, how they are transformed, what state they take on and in what order", and relatively little on "the world inside the processes" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006, p. 219). So, although they acknowledge their indebtedness to the foundational work of DiMaggio (1988) and Oliver (1991; 1992), Lawrence and Suddaby (2006, p. 219) identify their point of departure, within the dialectic relationship between structure and agency (Figure 2.1), as their focus on the practice of actors, "as they attempt to shape those processes," and so creating, maintaining, and disrupting institutions.

In adopting a practice theory, inspired by the work of Bourdieu (1997; 1993), Lawrence and Suddaby reviewed empirical work spanning 15 years and identified institutional work as highlighting three key elements: (a) actors being aware, skilled and reflexive; (b) institutions as being constituted in the conscious action of actors; and (c) the notion of 'action as practice' "intelligent, situated institutional action" (Lawrence and Suddaby, 2006, pp. 219 – 220). Table 2.1 summarises the relevant, but not exhaustive, practices under the three categories of institutional work: creating, maintaining and disrupting institutions, in the context of practices associated with agency, institutional entrepreneurship and boundary spanning practices.

Institutional work approach is seen to overcome two main tensions with respect to the role of agency, "one concerned with the degree of agency attributable to organisational actors, and one concerned with the degree to which a practice approach can adequately describe the relationship between agency and institutions" (Lawrence et al., 2009, p. 6). This relationship is illustrated by Lawrence and colleagues in Figure 2.1, where the recursive relationship between institutions and action is acknowledged – action being the exercise of agency; where

institutions provide templates and regulative mechanisms for action, while action in turn affects those very templates and enforcement mechanisms. Although they do not reference the work of Jessop (1990; 2001) and Hay (1995; 2002), Lawrence and Suddaby do acknowledge the work of Giddens (1979; 1984) and Archer (1995) as critical in identifying the dialectic relationship between structure and agency. It is clear however, that institutional work owes much more to the strategic relational approach, particularly the later work by Jessop (2001). So, given this recursive relationship, it is the role of actors which is the central concern of institutional work: the practice actors undertake in their actions to *create*, *maintain* and *disrupt* institutions. In carrying out action to create new institutions, actors engage in overtly political work, reconfiguring belief systems, and altering meanings. Maintaining institutions is carried out through rule enforcement, as well as reproducing established norms and beliefs, while disrupting institutions involves disconnecting rewards and sanctions from practice, undermining core assumptions and beliefs, as well as disassociating practice from its moral foundation (Lawrence et al., 2009).
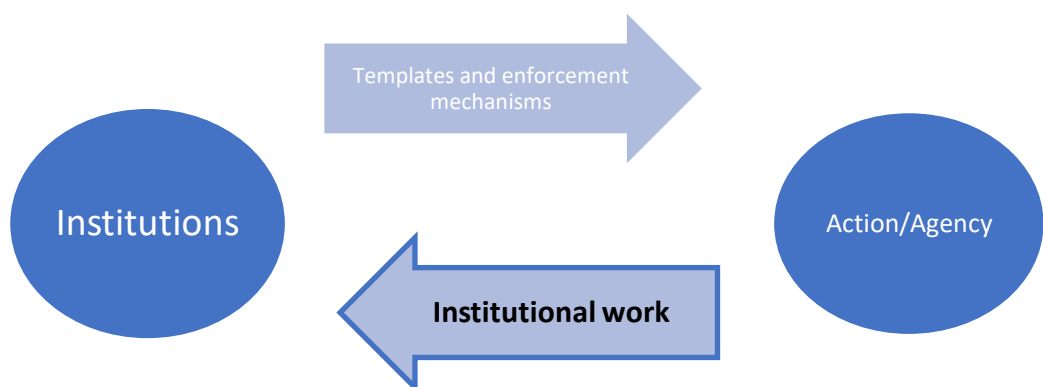
Figure 2.1: Institutional work (adapted from Lawrence et al., 2009)

In this study's quest to identify the role of boundary spanners and how they influence institutional change, the work of Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) and Lawrence and colleagues (2009) takes us an important step forward. The focus on the practices of actors and distinguishing between maintenance, disruptive and creative practices is especially helpful. However, what is still lacking is a clearer link to the realm of ideas that drive such practices.

Boundary-spanning

Following the discussion in Section Two, where boundary-spanning was looked at from the open systems perspective, how can such role and practice now be located in the context of new institutionalist literature? In their synthesis of past literature on boundary-spanning, from structuralist and action perspectives researchers, such as Michael L. Tushman and Thomas J. Scanlan (1981), Deborah G. Ancona and David F. Caldwell (1992), K. Baker (2008) and William (2012), van Meerkerk and Edelenbros (2018) organised these studies into three categories or points of view: an organisational point of view, and inter-organisational point of view and a public management and governance point view. In the organisational perspective, boundary spanners mainly focus on managing their organisation's environment, where the roles, according to Ancona and Caldwell's study (1992, p. 659) are: *ambassadorial*, *scouting*, *task coordinating* and *guarding*. The interorganisational perspective is more complicated and usually based on developing a competitive advantage – at least from the private sector perspective, through securing resources and establishing collaboration; hence, boundary-spanning's core task is to ensure adaptation and alignment of processes resulting in contracts and alliances, and calls for skills in *negotiation*, *knowledge and conflict management* (see Ronald J. Ferguson, Michele Paulin, and Jasmin Bergeron, 2005 for examples) as core

competencies, but still within the broader information transfer and ambassadorial roles. These two categories fit the role of boundary spanners operating in transactional fields, rather than issue fields.

The role of boundary-spanners within public management and governance is of particular interest for this study, due to the arena in which the multi-sectoral stakeholders are expected to be active, in the pursuit of resolutions to complex issues. The goal from such collaboration remains, "the creation of public value, to deal with issues of fragmentation and coordination and/or to enhance legitimacy of public governance" (Williams, 2012; van Meerkerk and Edelenbros, 2018). Here, the role of boundary-spanners has been identified as including activities that are significantly more demanding than those identified under the organisational and interorganisational perspectives. Research reviewed by Williams (2012, p. 56) led to the identification of four roles: that of *reticulist, interpreter/communicator, coordinator,* and *entrepreneur*, where the first three roles are common to those previously identified by Ancona and Caldwell's study and deal with information transfer, coordination, representation and negotiation. The role of the boundary spanner as *entrepreneur*, which Williams describes as reflecting the imperatives of, "innovation, creativity and new ideas in the formulation of effective solutions to complex problems" (Williams, 2012, p. 59), is of relevance to this study. This is a significant departure in the role of the boundary-spanner, from that of an assigned role of ambassador, scout, task coordinator and guard, and strongly indicates significant autonomy, power and influence on both the home organisation and its sphere of interaction, the 'organisational field', which will be considered in the following section.

Table 2.1 Agency, Institutional Work, Institutional Entrepreneurship and Boundary Spanning Practices (Adapted from sources given in the table)

Concept	Institutional impact		
	Maintenance	Disruption	Creation
Agency **(Emirbayer and Mische, 1998)**	**Iteration**	**Projectivity** **Practical evaluation**	
Institutional Entrepreneur (Hardy and Maguire, 2008;		**Visionary** **Mobiliser** **Motivator** **Construction of rationale** **Forging inter-actor relations**	
Institutional Work (Lawrence et al., 2009)	Rule enforcement (Enabling work, policing, deterring); reproducing established norms and beliefs (valorising and demonising, mythologizing) embedding and routinising.	Disconnecting sanctions, disassociating moral foundations, **undermining assumptions and beliefs.**	**Political work (Advocacy, defining,** vesting); Reconfiguring belief systems (**constructing identities**, **changing normative associations, constructing normative networks); altering meaning (mimicry, theorising**, educating)
Boundary spanning (Ancona and Caldwell, 1992; van Meerkerk and Edelenbros, 2018; Williams, 2012)	Buffering Coordinating Representing **Information exchange** ambassadorial, **Horizon scanner** task coordinating Conflict management Fixer Bridger Broker Knowledge management Negotiator Reticulist	**Information processing ad exchange Scouting and horizon scanner**	**Information processing and exchange** Ambassadorial Advocacy **Scouting and horizon scanner Entrepreneurship** Knowledge management Negotiator Coordinating

This section has revealed the range of possible practices undertaken by individual actors in exercising their agency to create, maintain and disrupt institutions. What is becoming clear, as can be seen in Table 2.1, is that boundary-spanners can be legitimately seen as institutional entrepreneurs undertaking institutional work. There is considerable overlap in the practices,

which is largely based on the entrepreneurship role; in fact, if the information in table 2.1 was to be presented as a Venn diagram, boundary spanning would wholly incorporate institutional entrepreneurship. It is also acknowledged that Lawrence and Suddaby (2006) have taken us an important step forward in understanding the role of boundary-spanners - as social actors - in changing, maintain and disrupting institutions by introducing the notion of 'action as practice'; however, there remains an important gap. Lack of adequate explanation of the role of individuals and the sources of ideas and tools for the exercise of agency is not yet adequately addressed; in other words, the building blocks for the 'advocacy', the 'defining', and 'vesting' work, are not identified. This may be in part due to one of the shortcomings of institutional theory; that is, until recently, it's focus on field-level and organisation-level enabling conditions of agency, and its neglect of agency at the individual level. Whilst field-level conditions have been identified to include for example: jolts or crisis; complex problems and heterogeneity; and organisational-level conditions identified to include positions within fields, whether peripheral or embedded; the question of how individual actors are enabled to engage in institutional work remains largely unanswered. This will now be taken up in the following section.

Section Four: Sociological Institutionalist's Treatment of the Ideational - Boundary-Spanners in the Realm of Societal Logics

Institutional logics as a development on new institutionalism

The one defining feature of the reviewed literature so far is its focus on the organisation and the organisational field, even as it sought to take account of the role of individual agents and

duality of institutions. When it did so, the literature of both institutional entrepreneurship and institutional work could not escape the criticism of being actor-centric. Even though Emirbayer and Mische (1999) see iteration, that is looking at past experiences, as a source of ideas, a crucial deficit still persists, in terms of the neglect of, "the origins of new ideas and practices as well as the sources of disruption" (Marc Schneiberg and Michael Lounsbury, 2017). The purpose of this section, therefore, is to bring ideas and their sources into play by giving consideration to the role of institutional logics, which facilitates a better understanding of the relationships between the agency of individuals, institutions and ideas. Essentially, the institutional logics perspective serves to shift the actor, through socialisation, from an established logic domain and the realm of familiar ideas, to the realm of new logic domains and new ideas.

The new path-breaking concept, which took time to be picked up by scholars, was put forward by Friedland and Alford (1991); they suggested that scholars should raise their horizon towards an, "institutional conception of society" (Lounsbury et al., 2021, p. 262). Unlike DiMaggio and Powell's (1983; 1991) conception of the organisational field as a site for 'isomorphism' rather than one of contradiction and conflict, Friedland and Alford's concept highlighted the exteriority of culture and its role in providing actors with alternative views of rationality and, therefore, a source of autonomy of practice. They argued that Western society comprised institutional orders and that each, "has a central logic – a set of material practices and symbolic constructions – which constitutes its organising principles, and which is available to organisations and individuals to elaborate" (Friedland and Alford, 1991, p. 248). Friedland and Alford suggested that Western society comprised five institutional orders: the *capitalist*

market, *bureaucratic state*, *democracy*, *nuclear family*, and *Christian religion*; it is then suggested that the potentially contradictory nature of these logics is what drives actors to exploit such contradiction in order to theorise new pathways (Thornton, 2004).

Thornton and colleagues (Thornton, 1999; 2004; Thornton et al., 2012) picked up the baton and elaborated seven ideal typical logics. These are: *state, family, religion, market, corporation, community* and *profession*, where ideal types serve to provide tools for empirical analysis, and as abstract models they are, "used to gauge distance of the observations from the pure form or ideal type" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 54). It is perhaps important to the assertion by Thornton and colleagues (2012, Chapter 2) of the difference between new institutional theory, as covered in the previous sections, and the institutional logics perspective. So, to Thornton and colleagues, while neo-institutionalism represents theories of how the environment is a cause of organisational homogeneity, the institutional logics perspective is capable of explaining both, organisational homogeneity and heterogeneity (2012, pp. 20-49). In our view, however, the institutional logics perspective is based on the foundations laid by new institutionalists. For, the identification of institutional orders is based on DiMaggio and Powell's recognition of the state, professions and competition (taken to mean the market) as forcing conformity.

So, each of the seven logics consist of elements identified across nine categories, or dimensions, such as *root metaphor*, *source of legitimacy*, *source of identify*, etc., as detailed in Appendix (2.1). Thornton and colleagues (2012, p. 60) justify the list of categories on the basis of being concepts established in the social sciences. However, Campbell (2004) advises that dimensions or categories can emanate from a number of considerations: (1) the

researcher's theoretical perspective, (2) the issues of, "salience" to the actors, and (3), "the level of analysis," that is society, field, organisation and individual (pp. 37-38). Once changes in dimensions or categories that are relevant to the case being studied are evident, change in institutional logics can then be ascertained.

The source of ideas and rationality

Arguably the most powerful addition provided by the institutional logics perspective is the conception of institutions as being exterior to the individual and organisation, and as a, "socially constructed, historical pattern of cultural symbols and practices", where rationality varies across the institutional orders. By experiencing different rationalities, individual actors are exposed to different ideas. So, for example, within the market logic, sense-making takes place, "through the lens of self-interest", and for the profession, this takes place, "through concern for professional reputation" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 5). However, Lounsbury and colleagues (2021) remain concerned by the trend in the literature that logics can be treated as, "stable and given, rather than vibrant, unfolding and contingent," a critique that is attributed to its association with ideal types. This challenge was, however, revisited by Friedland (2021) in his proposal that logics are anchored by a core purpose, "the god of religious logic,… or the will of the people in a democratic logic" (Lounsbury et al., 2021, p.268). This supports our view that logics must have anchor *rationalities* that help define the particular logic whilst other categories or dimensions can vary.

Based on this reading, we suggest here that each institutional order has a central driving *anchor rationality*, which is based on the two categories of 'source of legitimacy' and 'basis

of norms'(see Appendix 2.1); so, for the logic of <u>market</u>, this is profit maximisation and self-interest, for <u>professions</u> it is professional reputation and self-expertise, for <u>religion</u> it is the importance of faith and association with God, and for the <u>state</u> it is democratic participation and citizenship in nation – although democracy can be problematic considering prevalence of autocracy in the non-Western world, for the <u>family</u> it is 'unconditional loyalty' – or, "other interest" as Vern Glaser, Nathanael Fast, Derek Harman and Sandy Green Jr. (2017) call it, for the <u>corporation</u> it is market position, and for <u>community</u> logic it is reciprocity and group membership.

The power of Thornton and colleagues' (2012) typology of seven institutional orders and suggested differentiation between them through the unique categories associated with each, can be combined with Campbell's case-specific approach to defining categories. This can be achieved by remaining true to the seven institutional orders - by recognising the anchor-rationality for each as discussed in the above paragraph - but also by elaborating on further categories on the basis of Campbell's suggestion. This approach will allow researchers to deal with one of the key criticisms of the institutional logics perspective; that of being too Western-centric. Ali Aslan Gumusay (2020), for example, recognises this potential limitation of the institutional logics perspective; where, for example, Thornton and colleagues suggest that the source of authority under the religious logic is *priesthood charisma*, in Appendix 2.1. Gumusay argues that this is not compatible with Islam, where source of authority is *Qur'an and Sunnah*. This is just one example, of how the system of categories can be adapted along the lines suggested by Campbell (2004). In their study of public accountability organisations in Zambia, James Hathaway and Steinar Akvik's (2021) provide another example, where they used the

categories of *collective identity, core values, operational mode and source of authority*, among others, to distinguish between the logics identified.

The paradigm-shift that the institutional logics perspective has provided in institutional studies, made it the dominant perspective within the field over the last decade. It's impact on actors can be transformative, depending on the intensity and extent of exposure and socialisation, and likely to deliver the "stickiness" test (Scott, 2014) of institutionalisation. Most embedded individual actors are likely to generate ideas to deal with novel situations by being iterative in order to be projective (Emirbayer and Mische, 1999), and in doing so perpetuate existing dominant logics. For, the ideas they are likely to deploy are ones recovered through reflecting on past experience. Boundary-spanning actors, however, are likely to be much more widely socialised and, therefore, more likely to be exposed to ideas generated under different logics, and where their peripheral position makes them less invested in past practices within their home organisation. More on the *'how?'* in the following paragraphs.

The key questions here is what do institutional logics provide actors, especially individual actors, and how do they influence their 'entrepreneurship'? The foundational work by Thornton and colleagues (2012) and the later work of Glaser and colleagues (2017), shed important light in this regard, which is relevant for this study. Whilst the former are utilising social-psychology, where they explored macrolevel cultural understandings with micro-level behaviour, the latter identified how individual action is shaped by 'frame switching' when individuals internalise institutional logics. This concept lies at the heart of the institutional logics perspective, in that the core agenda of "bringing society back in" (Friedland and Alford,

1991) is to demonstrate that institutional logics focus the attention of individual actors to influence macro-level outcomes. In other words, the suggestion here is that to study institutional change, it is important to understand how such change is brought about by individuals due to being influenced by ideas emanating from the realms of different institutional logics. The central thesis of the institutional logics perspective, then, is that *identities*, *goals* and *schemas*, are the three mechanisms that connect macro-level constructs with micro level activities (Thornton et al., 2012). The relationship between logics and individual action, therefore, is that, "situational cues make different logics more or less accessible, available, and salient, thereby focusing attention of individual actors during social interaction" (Ocasio 1997, in Glaser et al., 2017).

The breakthrough in the elaboration provided by Thornton and colleagues (2012) stems from the suggestion that individuals have a number of social identities when they become associated with a group. They can, at the same time, be members of a number of different groups in their work environment, professional association, religious affiliation, ethnicity and age group, and so have a number of social identities. Building on social-psychological theories, such as those developed by Robert S. Wyer and Thomas K. Srull (1986) and Edward T. Higgins (1996), Thornton and colleagues predicted that individuals' actions depended on, "the availability, accessibility and activation of cultural knowledge" – or ideas - provided by different institutional logics. This process is made possible by the fact that individuals are members of different social groups that are arenas for interaction and socialisation (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 84).

The *availability* of different logics makes it possible for individuals to choose the one most suited for the situation encountered, yet *accessibility*, that is the knowledge that comes to mind, is influenced by the level of embeddedness unless the situation at hand forces the individual to look at alternative 'available' knowledge. The *activation*, or use, of 'available' and 'accessible' knowledge relies on the focus of attention. So, in routine situations this is taken for granted and undertaken with limited agency. However, where the situation at hand is non-routine, and where tried and tested approaches do not work, then the salient features of such situation that are different from past experiences drive the attention process, and is where individuals start to look at alternative available logics. Boundary-spanners, being more socialised relative to more embedded actors, have more opportunities to be aware of different experiences and ideas.

Continuing to draw on dynamic constructivism and empirical work by Ocasio (1997), Thornton and Ocasio (1999) and Thornton (2004) and others, Thornton and colleagues (2012) put forward the model of microfoundations of institutional logics, outlining how institutional logics focus the attention of actors. They posit that social interactions are guided by institutional logics' activation of actors' *identities*, *goals* and *schemas*. Identities, as already elaborated, are due to both, group identity gained through group membership, of say profession or political party, or role identity by virtue of the role performed such as CEO, volunteer, etc. *Goals* can be a manifestation of identity commitments, or dictated by accountability commitments, while *schemas* are mental models that help to process information and guide decisions, where different logics call for different schemas driven by rationality commitment, such as self-interest (market), religious commitment (religion), etc.

Crucially, institutional logics, "guide the allocation of attention by shaping what problems and issues get attended to and what solutions are likely to be considered" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 91).

The purpose of this study is to explore the practices of boundary-spanners; in other words, there is a need to explain not only how multiple institutional logics are available, accessible, and activated, but also how negotiation and interaction between different social actors take place. For this purpose, Thornton and colleagues (2012) invoke the theories of dynamic constructivism (Hong et al., 2000; Hong and Mallorie 2004; Morris and Gelfand, 2004 – in Thornton et. al., 2012), and symbolic interactionism (Mead, 1934). On this basis, the microfoundations model is proposed by Thornton and colleagues (2012) to explain how the effects of institutional logics are mediated through focus of attentions and social interaction, as well as the mechanisms of *decision making*, *sense-making* and *mobilisation* through which practices are generated, reproduced or transformed. The following paragraphs will elaborate these mechanisms.

An individual confronted by routine, or non-routine situations, while accessing and activating available knowledge, is also engaged in social interaction with other social actors in the field. Thornton and colleagues (2012) draw on symbolic interactionism to explain the second element of the microfoundations model, recognising that, "actors reproduce and transform organisational and institutional structures not as solitary individuals, but as social actors interacting with other social actors" (Thornton, 2012, p. 93). This marks a shift from the heroic model presented by much of the institutional entrepreneurship literature. The importance of social interaction to the process of creation, reproduction/maintenance and transformation

of institutions and practice is in the suggestion that, "the interaction process itself generates changes in the focus and content of attention" of participating actors, where a vocabulary of practice is developed, and informed by institutional logics (Thornton, 2012, p. 94); each logic, "presupposes a common and distinct language" (Jeffery Loewenstein and William Ocasio, 2003). Action and meaning, then, become contextually moderated by the process of interaction rituals; however, more importantly, any adjustment negotiated will be based on power difference (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 94). Social actors referencing different institutional logics are expected to demonstrate conflicting identities, goals and schemas, that create barriers in the social interaction process, which lead to conflict and power struggles.

The third element in the microfoundations model follows as a result of the attention activation process and the power struggle arising from the social interaction process, where the mechanisms of 'decision-making', 'sensemaking' and 'mobilisation' are deployed in the process of creating, reproducing and transforming institutions and practices. Decision making is influenced by institutional logics in so far as the attentional focus is keyed by specific identities, goals and schemas (Ocasio 1997, Thornton, 2004), and allows the examination of actions and behaviours beyond the immediate social interaction. However, decision making is only one factor in the transformation of institutions and practices. Sensemaking, both retrospective and prospective, being the, "process by which social actors turn circumstances into situations that are comprehended in words" serves as a, "way station on the road to a…constructed, coordinated system of action" (James R. Taylor and Elizabeth J. Van Every, 2000, p. 275). Sensemaking and sense-giving are recognised by Thornton and colleagues as being the result of the building blocks provided by institutional logics, as well as the

mechanisms by which they are transformed (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 96). Sensemaking is, therefore, expressed when social actors invoke specialised vocabulary that reflects a particular institutional logic, where shifts in vocabulary signify changes in the prevailing logic (Suddaby and Greenwood 2005). Mobilisation is the third mechanism identified by Thornton and colleagues, which is deployed by social actors to affect change. Defined as, "the process by which collective actors acquire symbolic and material resources and motivate people towards the accomplishment of group and collective goals" (2012, p. 97), mobilisation can serve other purposes. Resource mobilisation can also be used, "as a lever against other actors to negotiate support for the change," both to reward supporters and punish opponents (Hardy and Maguire, 2008, p. 207).

In summary, this section has provided an important piece of the jigsaw puzzle that has been missing in the structure-agency-ideas debate, as well as institutional studies. Most importantly it has provided a conception of how actors become aware of, have access to, and are able to mobilise new innovative ideas when confronted by novel and complex issues. Section Five will now build on the discussion of the literature so far and bring together a novel framework to answer this study's research questions.

Section Five: Conclusion and Conceptual Framework

Despite the attempt of institutional logics scholars to differentiate the institutional logics perspective from new institutionalism, the above review demonstrates that the former complements and builds on the latter. Sociological institutionalism, sought in the beginning to explain conformity and similarity of organisational structures and practices within a given

organisational field in order to achieve legitimacy and efficiency, due to normative, mimetic, and coercive pressures. These pressures are seen to be arising, for example, from the state's coercive powers, the normative and sometimes coercive pressures of the professions or the market. Confronted with the phenomena of institutional change, new institutionalists then began to address the issue of institutional change through the activities of actors as institutional entrepreneurs; and, finally, tackling the problem of 'embedded agency' by developing the concept of institutional work.

The challenge confronting theory developers throughout has been to explain the duality of institutions, as both constraining and enabling of agency. In other words, whether the institution acts as a restricting cage, even if conferring legitimacy on organisations and organisational fields, or a scaffold that can constrain, but at the same time enables and supports the growth and change within such fields, and by implication the institutions themselves. The novel framework to be presented in this section, which will guide this study, is to see institutions as scaffolds, where contradictions between institutional logics are being accessed and mobilised by boundary-spanning individuals in the course of their social interactions.

The literature on institutional theory is vast, contested, and multidisciplinary, and not possible to cover in the cause of the development of a single thesis. It is hoped, however, that enough has been covered in this review to highlight a few recognised areas that call for further study and examination, and where this study will make a contribution. The first of these areas is the need to further examine the institutionalisation process at the micro level by looking at the role and practices of individual actors, since the majority of studies in new institutionalism

have focused on the organisation and the organisational field (Powell & Rerup, 2017; Haack, Sieweke and Wessel, 2020), the reason given by some critics, such as Tolbert and Zucker (2020) and Haak and colleagues (2020), as stemming from the reductionist approach pitfalls. The second area, is the study of institutional change in the here and now, rather than in retrospect, as tends to be the norm in institutional studies, due to the argument that institutionalisation is a long-term process. Thirdly, to make a contribution by applying the institutional logics perspective to a non-Western society, and, finally, by looking at institutional change at local level in the midst of societal change. Combining Lawrence and colleagues' (2009) framework for institutional work with the institutional logics perspective developed by Thornton and colleagues (2012), a novel conceptual framework is proposed for this study.

A conceptual framework: Logics, practices, and impact, of boundary-spanners

In order to identify institutional change, the methodology adopted has to identify change in logics, being defined as, "the socially constructed historical patterns of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules" (Thornton and Ocasio, 2008, p. 101), logics become the very essence of institutions – shaping the rules of the game. The diagram in Figure 2.2 brings together the various elements of the conceptual framework, and the relationships involved. The discussion in this chapter has highlighted the power of the institutional logics perspective, which lies in its dual role of providing the templates and enforcement mechanisms arising from established logics, yet being the source of alternative ideas at the

same time. This dual role lies in the breakthrough conception of culture as external to the organisation and individual (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Archer 1996).

The conceptual framework diagram in Figure (2.2) shows the relationship between institutions that are shaped by particular dominant or competing logics within a given society that are dominant and competing and accessible through social interaction as sources of ideas (1), the agency of boundary spanners in the context of social interaction and dealing with salient issues (2), and the wider range of potential societal logics (3), that can be accessible to actors through their wider socialisation and interaction. The organisational field, represented by the broken line, is the interaction space, and the site most relevant to the study of institutional processes where institutional change and maintenance takes place, as evidenced by changes to its key components. So, addressing the research question, involves identifying the nature of the institutionalisation process, whether transformational or maintenance, by studying changes to key components of the organisational field (Chapter Six), and exploring the role of boundary spanning practices in such change (Chapter Seven). Institutionalisation and institutional change, as discussed in this chapter, is predicated on assessing changes in societal logics (Chapter Five), and their impact on the practices of boundary spanning actors, as they attempt to tackle wicked issues of interest to them. A stable institutional structure with a dominant institutional logic, furnishes actors with templates and enforcement mechanisms (A), that guide and inform their boundary spanning practices (B), where such practices serve to re-enforce and maintain established institutional structures. However, it is important to note that logics get promoted and embedded in stable institutional structures by the activities and practices of actors; so, the arrow with broken borders linking societal logics (3) to

institutional structures (1) is a recognition of the legacy of this stable condition, where a dominant logic is shaping 'rules of the game' in the institutional structure.
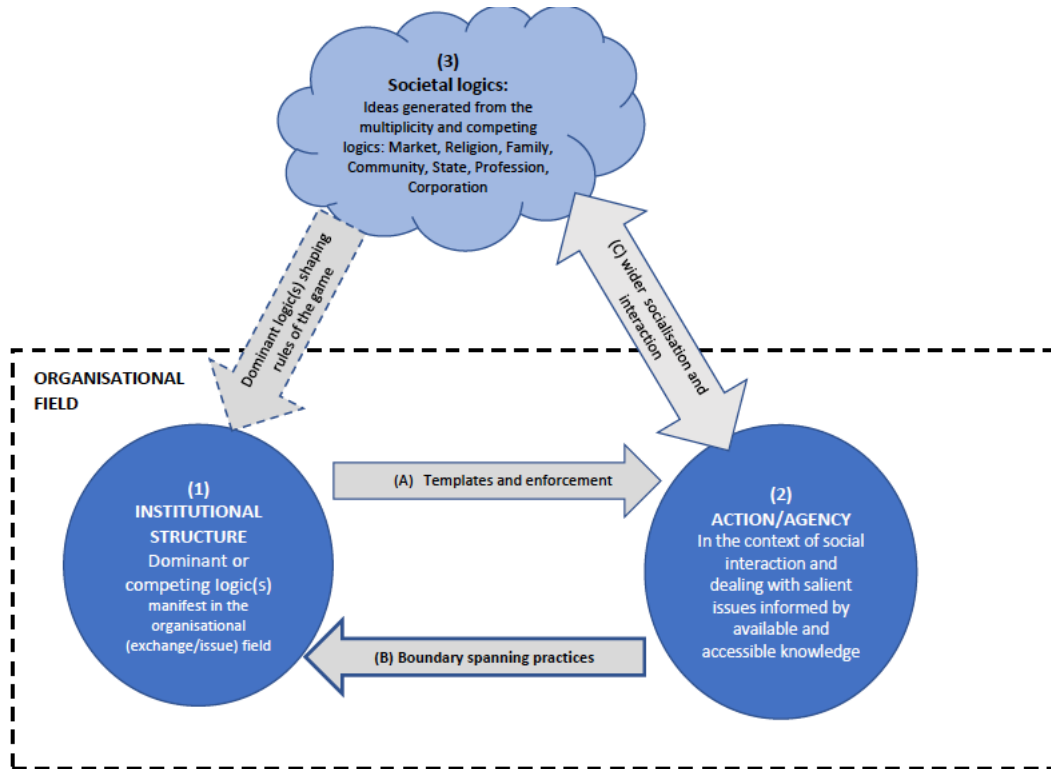
Figure 2.2 Conceptual framework, adapted from Williams' (2012, p. 26), Lawrence et al., (2009, p. 7), Micelotta et al., (2017) and incorporating institutions as external to the individual and organisation (Friedland and Alford, 1991; Thornton et al., 2012)

Actors, boundary-spanners in this case, however, can face one or both, of two potential scenarios. They can operate in an organisational field characterised by more than one competing logic; and, at the same time, they can be confronted by complex and recurring issues not amenable to established logic(s). It is in such scenarios that boundary-spanners have to reconcile the multiplicity of logics on the one hand and the complexity of the issues they face on the other. Due to the advantage of their wider socialising beyond their 'home' organisational field, and their multiple identities, boundary-spanners are best positioned to

access and activate appropriate logics to solve the issues they face; and, in doing so, can instantiate the process of institutional change. In this scenario, the practices of boundary spanners (B) is no longer just informed by the templates and enforcement mechanisms of the extant institutional structure (A), but also the ideas and templates gained from wider social interaction (C). Most importantly, in this role, the institutional logics perspective offers a theoretical mechanism that explains the partial autonomy of actors from institutional structures, thereby shifting such structures from being cages to being scaffolds.

Dominant logics within institutional structures, labelled (1) in Figure 2.2, are established within a given organisational field due to extant isomorphic pressures arising from state policies and/or other forces, such as, for example, the profession or the market, as listed in Appendix 2.1. In the case of Tunisia, for example, a country under autocratic rule for many decades and subjected to liberal market policies as well as being in a historical and geographic juncture, as will be discussed in Chapter Four, organisational fields are likely to operate under certain dominant logics. Such logics will provide templates and enforcement mechanisms that guide the actions of actors within the field, as indicated by arrow (A) going from left to right. However, as a result of the 2011 Jasmin Revolution, new competing logics are likely to be emerging. Research sub-question (TQ1) is designed to explore the competing societal logics in Tunisia resulting from the legacy autocratic state, conflict and revolutionary change and the extent to which one or more logics dominate – as the analysis in Chapter Five will demonstrate.

Should the issues and challenges be complex and recurring, however, then the actors can face a dilemma; here, the templates and enforcement mechanisms of extant logics may prove

unsuitable in such situations. Where the issues call for innovation, embedded actors within their home organisation and organisational field continue to be iterative and look for solutions from tried and tested frames; in such situations, prevailing institutional logics can be more like cages, restricting the available menu of potential solutions. However, in the cause of undertaking institutional work, entrepreneurial and innovative boundary-spanners look for opportunities arising from their wider social interactions, arrows (C) in Figure 2.2, within and outside their field. Arenas outside their home organisation or organisational field offer boundary-spanners the opportunity of being aware of, and being able to access templates and enforcement mechanisms associated with alternative logics. Boundary spanners are best placed to experience such wider social interactions and the resulting awareness, and accessing and mobilising, of alternative templates and ideas. In other words, boundary-spanners practice institutional entrepreneurship to introduce change that challenges prevailing logics, and if successful can result in institutional change, what Micelotta and colleagues (2017) call institutional displacement, and what Andrews (2013) calls logic shift.

The resulting institutional change can be assessed on the basis of the extent of changes to the key components of the organisational field, which are in turn indicators of changes in the three pillars of institutions identified by Scott (2014); where, changes in *membership* and *boundaries* will be due changes in rules, changes in *logic* will mean changes to norms and mental models or narratives, and changes in *relational arrangement* will signify changes in norms and narratives, as discussed in Section Two. Of all these components, however, a special focus needs to be made on the most important manifestation of field development, that of *the relational arrangement* which indicates the structuring and cohesion of the field.

This can be tested for by exploring *increasing interaction among field members*, *development of coalitions*, *heightened information sharing* and *mutual awareness*. Research sub-question (TQ2) is, therefore, aimed at identifying the nature of structural changes within the organisational field and the resulting institutional change, whether transformation or maintenance, and will be the subject of analysis in Chapter Six.

The boundary spanning practices, indicated by arrows (B) going from right to left in Figure 2.2, represent the practice of *sensemaking and sense-giving*, *decision making* and *mobilisation*. These are boundary-spanning entrepreneurial practices that should be informed by the dominant or competing logics and the encounters with salient issues. Such practices take place within the context of social interaction among field members, leading to institutional *transformation or continuity* (Micelotta et al., 2017), as will be discussed in the analysis Chapter Seven, which responds to research sub-question (TQ3).

Overall, the conceptual framework proposed, is in line with position that later sociological institutionalist adopted (DiMaggio and Powell, 1991; Friedland and Alford, 1991; Scott, 2004; 2014; Lawrence, et al, 2009; Thornton et al., 2012), that of the duality between structure and agency, which owes much to the development of the strategic-relational approach of Jessop (1990) and Hay (1996), but more importantly the later work of Jessop (2001), as well as Archer's (1996) morphogentic approach and the treatment of the ideational, as later acknowledged by Hay (2002). Institutional change is recognised as being undertaken through socialisation overtime, and where such socialisation, through boundary spanning, exposes actors to alternative logics. What the proposed conceptual framework adds is that the

selectivity of ideas can only take place due to exposure to the multiplicity of logics, which neither Hay (2002), nor Archer (1996) references.

The proposed conceptual framework will test whether the institutional change in the Tunisian localities of Sfax and Kairouan is *transformation, or continuity/maintenance* (Micelotta et al., 2017); Andrews (2013). While this outcome in Tunisia is to be investigated using the conceptual framework outlined, given the revolutionary changes in Tunisian society, however, it expected that the change is transformational, or one of logic shift. For this reason, the research questions for this study are in line with a research agenda proposed by Micelotta and colleagues (2017), and explore:

- How the multiplicity of logics affects responses to revolutionary changes? Which is what the first research question (TQ1) in this study asks.
- How field pluralism influences the actions of change agents and, in particular, the institutionalisation of transformative change? Which is also aligned with the second research question (TQ2).
- How individuals, depending on the experience of complexity, respond to revolutionary change? Which is aligned with the third research question (TQ3).

The discussion in this chapter, and the resulting conceptual framework, has been focused on core aspects of institutional theory, Chapter Three will now detail the methodology to operationalise this framework. Chapter Four, in providing background to the case, will help contextualise it.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to set out the research methodology adopted to operationalise the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter Two, which will ultimately be used to explore the nature of institutional change in Sfax and Kairouan. To do this, a novel methodological approach is adopted where, rather than exploring changes within the organisational field by studying a single issue or theme, this study adopts a unique approach by looking into multiple issues within the organisational field. Considering multiple, overlapping issues within a locality offers greater opportunity to understand the practices of individuals, as well as greater visibility of boundary-spanning and social interaction - as represented in Figure 3.2. This is achieved by extracting the right information from the field through semi-structured interviews and by generating thick description, which then allows analysis to ascertain boundary-spanning practices indicative of development within fields, including logic activation and organisational field densification as indicators of the institutionalisation process - shown in Table (3.3).

The chapter will detail the research design, the specific methods used, case selection, research integrity, in terms of validity and reliability, the positionality of the researcher, as well as identifying indicators of institutional change, and approach to data analysis. However, in reality, conducting research in the real world is far more involved than that; for, as a

researcher one is reminded of the military truism that the 'first casualty of war is the plan.'[1]

In other words, a well-crafted qualitative research design has to offer the flexibility to allow the researcher to navigate the reality of the situation encountered in the field.

Research may have a number of possible purposes – "to explore, to describe and/or to explain" a phenomenon (Colin Robson and Kieran McCartan, 2014, p 39). The research question in this study is of the "What's going on here?" type (Gary Thomas, 2009, p3) – and why? - and in order to answer this type of question, we must try to interpret what is going on; we do so by *illuminating* the case being studied (Thomas, 2009). The process of illuminating the case is the research process itself, which is a systematic investigation where data are collected, analysed, and interpreted (Donna Mertens, 2005). The research question being investigated in this study is: ***Why and how do boundary-spanners influence institutional change in post-revolution Tunisia?*** To respond to this question, a novel theoretical framework was developed in Chapter Two, which is now operationalised here through the adoption of an embedded case design and the consideration of multiple issues within the organisational field. This approach will allow in depth exploration of the practices and the resulting field and institutional change in post-conflict Tunisia.

The **first section** of this chapter takes forward the conceptual framework developed in the previous chapter and describes the research paradigm or the theoretical framework that influenced the way this study is being undertaken. The **second section** presents the research design, critically examines the case study approach adopted, and the reasons for opting for

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[1] Attributed to Helmuth von Moltke - Head of the Prussian Army in the 19th Century.

the embedded-case. The reasons for the selection of the two localities of Sfax and Kairouan for the case-study are discussed in **Section Three**, highlighting their criticality in terms of representing two contrasting parts of the country and how they epitomise the prevalent socio-economic inequalities in Tunisia. The **fourth** covers the operationalisation of the research, including issue and participant selection, the adoption of snowball sampling and semi-structured interviews. **Section Five** is a reflection on the validity, reliability and generalisability of the research. The final section, **Conclusion, Accounting for Institutional Change and Analysis**, draws attention to how institutional change is assessed by looking at changes to core components of the organisational field, especially indicators of field densification. Approach to data analysis is also given, as being undertaken on a thematic approach, where themes are based on those identified in the literature review; that is, identity and logic association, the role of boundary-spanners in accessing and activating societal logics, and the resulting field densification.

Section One: Operationalising the conceptual framework

Research in institutional theory employs diverse methods, including multivariate, interpretive, historical, and dialectical. While dominated by multivariate methods that are mostly used to identify diffusion of practice across a population or organisational field, their limitation has been recognised in describing outcomes rather than, "identify[ing] the motivation and process by which change is precipitated and unfolded" (Roy Suddaby and Royston Greenwood, 2009, p. 181, in David A. Buchanan and Alan Bryman ed., 2009). In other words, multivariate analysis addresses the 'whether' and 'when' questions, rather than the 'why' and 'how'. For the latter

type of questions, researchers draw on interpretative, historical and dialectical explanations (Suddaby and Greenwood, 2009).

The operationalisation of the research, however, calls for clarification of the underlying ontological and epistemological position upon which the work is founded. This study develops an interpretivist position, which impacts on its methodological development. Jackson (2006, p.278) explains that:

> "methodology is enacted philosophy; it is "philosophical" in that it embodies and stands upon ontological and epistemological commitments. It is "enacted" in that it is not satisfied with simply thinking these commitments, but endeavours to apply (them)… to concrete questions of how research is to be conducted."

This study has been driven by interpretivism's ontologically constructivist component, where human experience and social interaction are expected to shape social reality. It is, therefore, pursued by reconciling the subjective interpretations of its various participants, within its social-historic context. What this means is that the objective extraction of social action from an actor cannot be achieved; the role of the researcher when conducting a social enquiry, therefore, is to capture such action in all its richness so as to understand its meaning.

Defining the organisational field

A critical first step in this chapter is clarity on the delineation of the site of investigation, the organisational field. As discussed in Chapter Two, boundaries of organisational fields can be the most complex to define. Laumann and colleagues (1983) suggested two approaches to boundary construction, a "realist" or a "nominalist" approach where, in the former, actors themselves define their boundaries, as opposed to the latter, where a framework is imposed

by the investigator. A further consideration needed to be given to the spatial and temporal boundaries. With this in mind, boundary drawing can be problematic and needs to serve the researcher's primary question being investigated, as well as being true to DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) definition of the organisational field. A useful methodological frame was identified to serve this purpose, in the form of the accountable relationship, discussed in the *World Development Report 2004: Making Services Work for Poor People*, which will be referred to here as the *WDR triad*, involving citizens, policy makers and service deliverers (WBG, 2003). At various levels of the governance process: local, regional or national, the purpose of such triadic organisational field is the common concern, or cause, for the production of equitable public goods and services, and accords with DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) definition of the field. A criticism, and a risk, that can be levelled at this approach is the potential to preclude other legitimate stakeholders in the field, such as national actors with a local interest and the media, for example. The adoption of case study design, snowball sampling, and use of media sources and informal players, however, are among the means to mitigate such risk. In reality, therefore, the organisational field boundaries are drawn using a nominalist-realist hybrid (Laumann et al., 1983).

Many studies have considered single issues in studying relevant organisational fields, such as healthcare (Reay and Hinings, 2005), corporate environmentalism (Hoffman, 1999), and education research (Zapp and Powell, 2016); such studies were driven by considerations at organisation and organisational field levels of analysis. This study, however, aims to focus on the level of the individual boundary-spanner; where considerations of multiple overlapping issues within a locality should allow for greater visibility of overlapping boundary-spanning

practices and social interaction. Different members of the local organisational field, representing service users, policy makers and service deliverers, will be engaged in one or more of these issues within each of the localities. This issue-based engagement effectively leads to the existence of mini, or issue, fields where interaction, contestations and the logic-driven practices can be investigated and ascertained.

The research trail, therefore, starts by following the advice of Eric Trist (1983), Hoffman (1999) and Mike Zapp and Justine J. W. Powell (2016), searching for "problem domains or issues too complex to be dealt with by any single organisation" (Zapp and Powell 2016, p.540) or where established institutional arrangement has not proved helpful. Issues such as environmental pollution caused by the Société Industrielle d'Acide Phosphorique et d'Engrais (SIAPE) phosphate works in Sfax, where the campaign to achieve its closure had been going on for years preceding the Revolution, or the issue of refuse collection workers employed under private contracts who were campaigning to be taken on by the Kairouan Municipality. Through pilot interviews, supplemented by media reports and other contacts, 12 issues of varying complexity (eight in Sfax and four in Kairouan) were identified, as listed in Table 3.2.

Section Two: Research Design - Case study

The interpretive epistemology adopted is driven by the relativist ontological frame; a position that recognises that multiple realities exist in any given situation, "the researcher, those individuals being investigated and the reader or audience interpreting the study" (John W. Creswell, 1994). Such an ontological and epistemological position calls for the, "faithful reporting of realities" relying on the voices and interpretation of informants and allows the exploration of what they *do, think, feel and believe*. The research design adopted enabled the

investigation of the research question, helping to identify boundary-spanners in the two cities of Sfax and Kairouan and to explore the objectives and the structural context in which these situated agents work.

Given the possible range of research methods available, Robert K. Yin (2009, p. 8) advises consideration of several critical factors. These include: (a) the type of research question posed, (b) the extent of control an investigator has over actual behavioural event, and (c) the degree of focus on contemporary, as opposed to historical, events. Given that, as already stated, the research question being explored in this study is of a "how" and "why" nature, or "what's going on here?" type (Thomas 2009, p3), this provides the first important indicator as to the methodology to be adopted. Such questions often call for the development of detailed, intensive knowledge about a single case, or a small number of cases. However, this is not enough to justify the adoption of case study methodology; Yin (2016) advises that experiment and history methods can also be adopted to answer such questions. Control over variables is another important distinguishing factor, where a lack of control, as is the case in this study, means experiments should not be preferred. The third factor reflects the contemporary nature of the events being studied, which is the case in this study. Case study methodology is, therefore, suitable for this study, since the research question is of the 'how' and 'why' type - the researcher has no control over behavioural events, and the focus is on contemporary, rather than historical, events. The selection of case study method also meets Flyvbjerg's (2011, p. 301) four conditions; the study is 'bounded' and 'cased', that it is intensive, it explores developmental factors, and that it facilitates a focus on the environment of the unit being studied.

Case studies have been identified to serve different purposes; they can be descriptive, illustrative, experimental, exploratory, or explanatory (Robert W. Scapens, 2008). While the first three have been identified to serve primarily practical, rather than theoretical utilities, and exploratory case studies tend to serve as a subservient part of a research strategy, it is thus, "only the explanatory case study that appears as having conventional academic merit of a theoretical contribution" (Bill Lee and Mark N. K. Saunders, 2019, p. 3). This case study deals with a "how?" and "why?" type question, and is, therefore, *explanatory* in nature, and will involve mapping and explaining the existing interactions between the various individuals, groups and sectors within the organisational fields, influenced by the dominant and competing logics, and the resulting institutional change.

This methodology, however, suffers from major criticism, with some going as far as to question its validity as a scientific method. Flyvbjerg (2006) lists what he calls five "misunderstandings" about case-study research. These are (i) the role of case study in knowledge generation, (ii) ability to generalise on the basis of an individual case, (iii) suitability for hypothesis testing and theory building, (iv) bias towards verification, and (v) difficulty to develop general propositions and theories on the basis of specific case studies. In terms of contribution to knowledge, case studies play a vital role in the development of human learning; Jaan Valsiner (1986) and Dennis Bromley (1986) maintain that case studies have always been a major part of the advancement of knowledge and are a bedrock for scientific investigations. Case studies allow for rich, context-specific knowledge that provides research with a "nuanced view of reality" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 6).

In terms of knowledge generation, this study seeks to make a contribution in several areas, as mentioned in the conclusion to Chapter Two. These include an understanding of boundary-spanning practices in a post-conflict environment, which has not been covered by extant literature. The case study method allows the generation of thick description that allows for an understanding of hidden meanings held by actors, and is, therefore, a robust design for knowledge generation.

The issue of generalisability, and, therefore, theory building, has been seen by some as the 'major flaw' of the approach; however, using the type of test that Karl Popper (1959) called 'falsification', case study is ideal for generalising and one of the most rigorous tests for proving or disproving a scientific proposition. The example of "one black swan is enough to prove that not all swans are white" is Popper's famous example. Case studies rely on theoretical generalisation. In theoretical generalisation, as is the case of this study, the aim is to generalise the set of results to a broader theory, where such a theory can then be tested in other localities experiencing institutional change.

Embedded single-case design

Multiple-case designs represent the second main variant of the case study design, and can also be holistic or embedded. Evidence from multiple-case study design has often been considered more compelling and robust, but unlike a single-case design, it is not suited to the 'rare' or critical case. The advice given by Robson and McCartan (2014), is to consider multiple cases as one would consider multiple experiments and follow the 'replication' design where,

"each case…either (a) predicts similar results (a lateral replication), or (b) predicts contrasting results but for anticipatable reasons (a theoretical replication)" (Robert Yin, 2009, p 54).

In pursuing an investigation into the role boundary-spanners play in local institutional change, this study had the option between adopting an embedded single-case design or a holistic multi-case design, although it seemed obvious at the start to adopt the latter given the focus on two localities. Using Thomas's (2013) definition of case study, however, was helpful in confirming the most suitable design. Thomas defines the case study as having a subject and an object, where the subject is the analytical frame, which in this study means *the influence of boundary-spanners on institutional change*, and the object being the Tunisian localities of Sfax and Kairouan. The choice is then between treating Sfax and Kairouan as two separate cases, where the aim is to seek literal or theoretical replication, or as an embedded single case design, where Sfax and Kairouan are sub-units of the broader case.

In this study, the criticality is not only in terms of why Tunisia and the two localities are selected, as already stated and will be further discussed in Section Three, it is also in the way boundary-spanners responded, in the aftermath of the Revolution, to influence local institutional change in the two localities of Sfax and Kairouan. No other study is known to have looked into the role boundary-spanners play in a post-conflict society. Therefore, as the field work progressed it became clear that an embedded single-case design was emerging as better suited for this study. The justification for adopting this, is that the broader case can only be justified if both localities were to be treated as an example of what can be described as critical examples of *grievance localities*, and as such can be collectively a single-case with two sub-units.

Positionality: Subjectivity and relationships

This researcher acknowledges that, being the son of immigrants from the region, he has established interest in the change taking place as a result of the so-called Arab Spring, leading to many visits to Tunisia and other countries affected. This drive to witness, experience and understand the change taking place, following the events of 2011, is a contributory factor to undertaking this research study. Informal visits can be selective in terms of who to see, meet and who to hear from, for example, which no doubt can lead to the formation of biased opinions. The issue of subjectivity bias, therefore, can be another criticism of the proposed design, where case study is seen to have a tendency, "to confirm the researchers' preconceived notion" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 17). This criticism is usually levelled by those who already ascribe to the belief that it does not apply 'scientific methods' (Jared Diamond, 1996). Case study method proponents put this criticism down to a lack of understanding of the method; where they (including Flyvbjerg 2006, Charles Ragin and Howard Becker 1992) demonstrate through their work that it is falsification and not verification that characterises case study. The research methods described here, and the ethical standards followed, have tested any opinions this researcher may have held prior to undertaking this study.

Building on the introduction to the case covered in Chapter One, qualitative fieldwork has been described as a "body contact sport" (Bosk (1979, p. ix) – Cited in Maxwell, 2012), where the researcher needs to interact with his/her participants as well as others in the setting of the study. There is no doubt, therefore, that this researcher's position as 'interpreter' – or prior perception - was informed by his perspective on developments in Tunisia through the

many interactions and familiarity with the country prior to the study, as briefly explained in Chapter One. Such subjectivity can run the risk of the researcher attempting to fit observations to held preconceptions. This subjectivity can be viewed as a potential bias in that, "the researcher's personal motives, beliefs and theories have important consequences for the validity of their conclusions" (Maxwell, 2012, p. 98). However, it is this researcher's experience that his interpretation was subject to revision as it interacted with the phenomena being studied, and where any bias was exposed and evaluated. Indeed, prior assumptions of the unbridgeable dichotomy of Tunisians' political divide was found to be wanting; where it was found that Tunisians can be pragmatic and accommodating, and boundary-spanners were able to boundary-span for this reason.

Another pre-conception, due to the prevailing national debate, was the strength of the religious-secular divide, that proved much less of an issue at local level as people experienced everyday issues. Local identity was found to be stronger than originally perceived by this researcher, as will be shown later. Another area of potential positionality bias, in this regard, is the researcher's perceived religiosity; including closely cropped beard and performing the five-daily prayers on time. This however proved to be much less of an issue due to the way the research was operationalised, and the systematic analysis undertaken. Indeed, apart from one incident, the fact that the researcher was seen as an 'Arab' living in the West, still speaking the language, proved an advantage. A check on positionality was addressed and can also be attributed to the extensive attempt at triangulation of evidence, with participants representing a range of backgrounds and sectors and use of media and documentary sources;

issue identification and sampling method adopted, as will be explained below, where also critical in this regard.

On a more practical note, however, the advice of Stephen Tollman (2001) and Maxwell (2012) was particularly helpful, in that the researcher needs to be an active listener, "learning from (one's) own thoughts and feelings in response to what (the informant) is saying" (Tollman, 2001, p. 132). As well as voice-recording the interviews, this researcher kept notes, which proved useful for later reflection. One of the many powerful moments that will always be associated with this study was when a participant broke down sobbing when he started recounting some of his experiences, and how lonely boundary-spanning work can be. Such emotional encounters can be a challenge though, risking sympathy with the narrative being heard and clouding the picture being painted about the issue being studied.

In addition to the challenge of subjectivity, the researcher's relationship with participants is recognised as, "shap[ing] the context within which the research is conducted and [has] a profound influence on the research and its results" (Maxwell, 2012, p. 100). More than just the, often stated, concepts of *entry*, *access* and *rapport*, the relationship between the researcher and participant is more complex and fluid, where the ongoing development of the research relationship can get obfuscated. Three elements in this research are worth mentioning here: the use of a local research assistant, snowball sampling method and the strict adherence to the ethical standards adopted. Despite the researcher's already stated knowledge of Tunisia, it was still important to have a local assistant who proved to be of great value to help establish entry and access which, in some cases – given the suspicious nature of

a post-conflict society – proved to be a further reassurance of the authenticity of the academic nature of the study, especially in Sfax.

Snowball sampling, as well as being an effective method in identifying participants, proved to be a valuable, legitimising and referencing process. In all cases, following initial contact, introduction or identification of a potential participant, the ethical process adopted provided for absolute clarity on expectations. A Letter of Invitation was sent, usually by email, in very few cases this was handed over just before the start of the interview – but in all cases time was allowed for the participant to read it, ask any questions about its content and sign it. The letter included a detailed Participant Information Sheet, a Consent Form and the Interview Topic Guide.

It has to be said, though, that the power dynamic between the researcher and participant can be most challenging; a point well recognised by Lyn Brown and Carol Gilligan (1992), especially, "when a conversation has different meanings for the people engaged in it, and especially when one of the two has the power to structure the meeting (p. 25)." A more challenging position in almost all meetings is dealing with the expectation of the participants for a sympathetic hearing; in such cases, body language and what can be called 'play back' - useful when turn-taking during a conversation. That is, when possible, this researcher would start the next turn in the conversation by building on what the participant has said last; a simple example of which can be: "it is interesting that you should say…, do you think …?" This proved to demonstrate active listening, respect for what the participant is saying and his/her views, and enables a process of building a mutually productive and ethically acceptable relationship.

Awareness of cultural subtleties can also be effective. So, approaches that respect a participant's standing in society as one of the reasons they have been identified as participants in the first place. Use of the ward '*Ma'ali*' (your excellency) if talking to a Minister, ex-Minister, Governor, or Head of Municipality, or *Sayed Arraees* when addressing the chair of an organisation, etc. are good examples. The relationship does not of course end here; societies such as Tunisia are immensely active on social media. It is often the case that the researcher will find participants are interested in prolonging the conversation about the topic, so, for example, a request for friendship immediately arrives on the relevant social media timeline, and has the potential to prolong the conversation and interest in the research.

Section Three: A tale of two cities: Kairouan and Sfax

The two case study localities selected, Kairouan and Sfax, represent two contrasting parts of the country and epitomise the inequality of economic opportunity that was at the heart of the Jasmine Revolution of January 2011, as the information listed in Table 3.1 shows. In Tunisia, economic inequality between different parts of the country was an important factor in the Revolution as there was – and still is - a large divide between the interior and the coast. The interior regions were noticeably poorer and had higher levels of unemployment, while the coast (and Tunis in particular) was better off with a relatively better quality of life – leading to resentment among those in the interior. While Sfax was identified among the coastal cities, and Kairouan among the interior ones, as indicated in the map in Figure 3.1, there is, however, more to each that can justify both being 'critical' cases.

Table 3.1 Socio-economic indicators for Sfax and Kairouan (Sources: WBG, 2014; Tunisian National Institute of Statistics, 2012)

Indicator	Sfax	Kairouan
Population	955,421 (2nd largest)	570,599 (7th)
Civil Society Organisations - 2010 - 2012 - 2016 Source: The World Bank 2014)	 346 1366 1601 (2nd)	 117 463 557 (14th)
Unemployment 2010 2012 Source: The World Bank 2014	 7% 10%	 11% 17%
Extreme Poverty in 2010 (Source: National Institute of Statistics, Tunisia, 2012)	1.6% (part of the Central West Region)	14.3% (part of the Central East Region)

The two embedded cases selected for this study can be described as 'critical cases' within the information-oriented strategy, in that they represent, "strategic importance in relation to the general problem" (Flyvbjerg, 2006, p. 14). The choice of Sfax and Kairouan, in many ways can be likened to the choice of lead and feather, in the famous experiment for testing gravity, two cases of contrast to facilitate the study. Tunisia, as will be explained later in Chapter Four, experiences two contrasting conditions in terms of development and poverty associated with the coastal-interior divide. Sfax is a critical coastal city and region since it is historically seen as a 'self-made' city; it is neither the capital, nor associated with favouritism, as Sousse and Monastir were, being both the hometowns of former presidents, Ben Ali and Bourguiba, respectively. Kairouan's criticality is due to being representative of the deprived interior regions, being at the vanguard of the Revolution and exhibiting exceptional potential for developments compared to all other interior areas.

Figure 3.1: Map of Tunisia showing location of Sfax and Kairouan. (Credits: Main map, Ontheworldmap.com; insert map, Wikimedia Commons)

Kairouan

Located in the centre of Tunisia, as indicated on the map in Figure 3.1, in a plain at an almost

equal distance from the sea and the mountains, Kairouan is the most ancient Arabo-Muslim

base of the Maghreb, built in 670 AD. Kairouan today refers to both the ancient city as well as the wider governorate of which it is the capital, and consists of a population of over half a million inhabitants. Among its unique features, Kairouan has six neighboring governorates, and is considered the intersection of routes running from north to south and east to west of the country. Thirty per cent of the population live in urban centres, while the rest remain in the rural parts of the governorate. Thanks to the abundance of water resources, agriculture remains the most important sector for the local economy; it employs 40% of the workforce. Due to its rich historical and cultural heritage, Kairouan today attracts more tourists who visit Tunisia than any other region (Brown, 2021). Perhaps more than any other region in Tunisia, Kairouan represents the potential post-revolution success story, given it's historic cultural value and location, if the aspiration of equitable social and economic development is to be achieved in the country.

Having said this, however, Kairouan represents somewhat of a contradiction. Despite its unique features, the area has some of the highest indicators of deprivation. In 2016, unemployment was 15.2%, compared to 9.8 in Sfax, while telephone and internet service provider per 10,000 population was at 0.41 compared to 3.67 in Sfax. The provision of public hospitals per 10,000 population in Kairouan was at 0.42, compared to 2.58 in Sfax. The 2015-2020 Development Plan acknowledges that, "the region is at the tail end of social indicators, especially quality of life of inhabitants" (ESCWA, 2016).

Sfax

Founded in AD 849 on the ruins of the old Phoenician and Roman settlements of Taparura and Thaenae, Sfax is located 270 km southeast of Tunis, as indicated on the map in Figure 3.1, and

is the capital of the Sfax Governorate with a total population of about 900,000, of which 350,000 live in the city. The main economic activity of Sfax are industries, mainly phosphate processing, agriculture, fishing and trade. The city is considered to be Tunisia's second city after the capital Tunis and is relatively more prosperous compared to Kairouan, where Sfax contributes 20% of the country's exports (ESCWA, 2016). However, Sfax is a region with huge grievances; its inhabitants feel left behind and penalised by previous regimes despite its historic contribution to national prosperity. Many indicators point to a complex socio-economic condition, not least due to three main factors: low level of public sector investment leading to poor and deteriorating infrastructure; considerable environmental challenges due to polluting industries; and unregulated use of natural resources such as ground water. Two nationally significant projects exemplify this socio-economic picture: SIAPE phosphate works, which is located in the heart of the city and is considered to be the centre of all environmental ills facing the city and the governorate, and the ambitious 420-hectare Taparura Development, which has been stalled since before the Revolution.

Among the reasons Sfax was seen as neglected by central governments, despite its historic economic importance, is its role as a hotbed of activism, both politically and in terms of the labour movement. Famously, it was the mass protests in Sfax on 12th and 13th January 2011 that finally led to the downfall of the Ben Ali dictatorship. Sfaxians continue to complain about their area suffering from a lack of public investment which is critical for the infrastructure, and which, according to one member of Parliament (SA11), is due to the fact that the central government bureaucracy continues to be influenced by the two dominant regions of Tunis and Sousse.

Section Four: Operationalising the Research

This section will address the operationalisation of the research design. This includes the prioritisation of logics relevant to Tunisia, use of snowball sampling to identify issues and participants, the adoption of semi-structured interviews, design and structure of the interviews and the relationship between the interview question and research question are also addressed. Importantly, especially given that Tunisia is a post-revolution country and site of ongoing contestation, risks associated with such environments are identified as well as mitigation methods.

Prioritising societal logics relevant to Tunisia

Research on institutional logics "often uses typologies of logic as a systematic way of viewing the interinstitutional system" (James Hathaway and Steinar Askvik, 2021, p. 270), where the use of such typologies in social research serves the purpose of firing the "theoretical imagination… [and] ordering one's observations and analysis" (Derek Layder, 1998). The ideal types of logics can be derived in different ways, depending on the research question and methodological approach for answering them. Trish Reay and Candice Jones (2016, p. 447) elaborate some of the different approaches, which include deductive approaches where studies are grounded in empirical data, studies that begin with established literature, while others combine both approaches.

As discussed in Chapter Two, Thornton and colleagues (2012), building on the foundational work of Friedland and Alford (1991), identified seven societal logics: *state, family, religion, market, corporation, community* and *profession*. In this study, therefore, the process of identifying dominant and competing societal logics relevant to Tunisia is based on the ideal types identified by Thornton and colleagues. Then, following the advice of Campbell (2004), where he suggests considerations of (1) the researchers theoretical perspective, (2) issues of salience to the researcher, and (3) level of analysis -whether, society or field, and using secondary data and supported by participant interviews, salient societal logics are identified. Secondary data references were selected due to a number of reasons: they are either eyewitness accounts – such as Beji Kaid Essebsi (2012) and Yadh Ben Achour (2018); research work – such as Beatrice Hibou (2011), Azmi Bishara (2012) and Anne Wolf (2018); or historical documents - such as the Constitutions; and as such they provide exceptional insight in this regard to identify the most relevant salient logics. The scholarly coverage of Tunisia has proved to be exceptionally rich, signifying the historical importance of developments, as researchers sought to draw lessons in what has and has not worked in the democratic transition. The results of successive general elections in 2011, 2014 and 2019, proved to be equally insightful in terms dominant and competing logics, given the various coalitions and their ideological affiliations. This process allowed for the prioritisation of societal logics relevant to Tunisia, and will be discussed in Chapter Five.

Identifying issues and participants

As already mentioned above, under defining the organisational field, following the advice of Trist (1983), Hoffman (1999) and Zapp and Powell (2016), through pilot interviews,

supplemented by media reports and other contacts, from a longer list of issues, 12 issues of varying complexity (eight in Sfax and four in Kairouan) were identified, as listed in Table 3.2. The pilot interviews were designed to be held with leading individuals, who were easily identified by virtue of their position, and who had an overview of the locality, such as current or former presidents of municipalities, leaders of political parties or civil society organisations. These issues, as described by participants during the pilot interviews phase, demonstrated the criteria of being of interest to a wide range of stakeholders, and most were still live issues. Once the main interviews started, it was clear that some of the issues where of greater scale, complexity and interest than others, especially those of SIAPE in Sfax and Refuse Collectors in Kairouan.

The process of identifying participants for interviews followed methods identified in the literature, where the advice is to start by identifying the issues that attract the interest or concern of a wide range of stakeholders, as mentioned in the previous paragraph. The next stage in the process, using snowball sampling method, was identifying individuals who fit the description of boundary-spanners and conducting interviews. The most important starting attribute of a boundary-spanner is the direct involvement in the interaction with individuals representing other stakeholders to resolve the issue of concern. Table 3.2 lists the names of the various issues identified in both case study areas and number of interviews undertaken. Details of the issues are given in Appendix 3.1, while a list of participants with brief profile is provided in Appendix 3.2.

Table 3.2: List of complex issues in each locality and the number of related interviews. A more detailed description of issues is provided in Appendix 3.1.

Sfax		Kairouan	
Issue	Number of participants interviewed linked to issue	Issue	Number of participants interviewed linked to issue
SIAPE	14	Waste Collection Service	4
Casino Beach	8	Old Town Renovation	5
Agareb District (*Maneesh Masab*)	4	New Hospital	3
Participatory Budgeting	3	Hajeb Eleyoon District	2
Gremda District	2		
Pavement Campaign - *Seep Tortoir*	1		
Neighbourhood Clean-up	2		
Old Town	2		
Total	**38**	**Total**	**14**

The snowball sampling method adopted – discussed in the following paragraphs - to identify participants, also served to further identify and confirm complex issues of interest. A good example of this in Sfax was when it became clear that SIAPE was the main issue for the locality but, once interviewing started, other issues started to be revealed, such as Casino Beach, and Participatory Budgeting. An important point to note is that, due to the relatively limited geographic extent of each of the areas, most of the participants were found to know of each other. A related point also, was the fact that, while an interview might be focused on one of the eight issues in Sfax, or the four in Kairouan, it was found that the participant concerned was involved in one or more of the other issues. So, for example, the participant whose interview related to Seep Tritoir in Sfax, was also a key player in SIAPE and Casino Beech. As powerfully represented in Figure 3.2, the network of relationship between participants and the issues of interest can also be an indicator for aspects of boundary-spanning activity, and

reflective of the various issue fields being subsets of the wider exchange governance field within both localities, especially in Sfax.
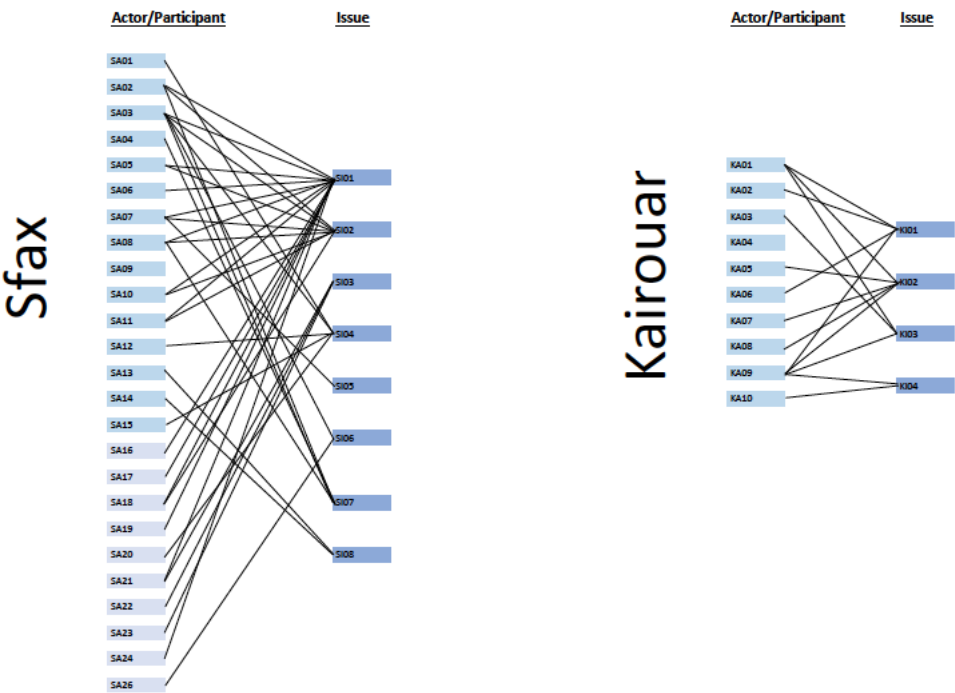
Figure 3.2: Network of relationships between participants and the issues of interest

There were a number of important factors associated with the post-conflict nature of Tunisia, which needed to be considered by this researcher in the selection of issues and participants. Not least amongst these are distrust and suspicion, but at worst threat of harm to researcher and participants. While the Tunisian Revolution has not led to an open armed conflict and the state did maintain a monopoly on the tools of violence to a large extent, nevertheless more than 300 Tunisians were killed, mostly at the hands of the security forces. The well-documented fractures of Tunisian society include: the Islamist/secular, marginalised/developed, unemployed/employed, interior/coastal. Further, the country

continues to experience political high drama from time to time, usually following spikes of violence such as that following the assassination of two prominent secular politicians, Shokri Bal'eed and Mohamed Al-Brahmi, in February and July of 2013 respectively. These two events led to the downfall of the first elected government after the Revolution, when the country was teetering on the precipice of an all-out armed violence. Indeed, one reason for the delay in starting the fieldwork for this study was the need to identify a suitable moment where the political temperature was cooler. These periods of high political tension and the need to generate thick description from the case studies informed the research tools deployed; snowball sampling method and semi-structured interviews. The time spent in the field totalled more than 36 days, and was undertaken during three separate periods: 16-27th July 2018; 23rd October – November 5th 2018; and 23rd December 2018 – 1st January 2019. The researcher's wider knowledge of Tunisia was also informed by at least five previous visits, for different reasons, before the fieldwork visits.

Snowball Sampling

Sometimes described as a type of purposive sampling, snowball sampling method (SSM) was particular suited to conflict and post conflict environments where, "locating, accessing and involving hard to reach populations," is usually the case (Cohen and Arieli, 2010, p. 428). In SSM, the researcher identifies initial individuals from the population that are of particular interest to the study, where, at the end of the interview, "they are used as informants to identify other members of the population" (Robson and McCartan, 2014, p. 281). SSM has the advantage of addressing the fears and mistrust of participants in such environments and increases their confidence to participate in the research as they have been reached through

trusted networks, but equally important is the actual identification of informants in the first place. For the purpose of locating boundary-spanners, the logic in this case is, once a boundary-spanner is identified, he or she can then identify the boundary-spanner(s) they work with from different organisations and sectors.

If there was one aspect of the field work that worked as intended, it is this process of sampling – it was almost natural. Once an interview was underway, and due the nature of the issues and questions, further potential participants were being revealed as a matter of course. An example would be, when a respondent might say: "…XY were really helpful, or obstructive, and were keen/not keen on issue Z being resolved." It was then obvious that X and Y were potential participants. However, there was always a question at the end of the interview asking: "Can you give any recommendation on who I can talk to about this topic in Sfax/Kairouan?". Once participants have been identified, they are usually well known in the locality and it is known what their political outlook is – they may state it explicitly, or the participant making the referral will even 'alert' the researcher to such information, or through their Facebook posts. This process facilitated the extent and type of participant interviewees, where all sectors where represented: political (16), civil society (20), Private (3), Public Sector (4). Interviewees representing the political and civil society sectors were very diverse and represented the main groups and coalitions of Tunisian society. This included participants who identify as religious (16), while the rest are broadly secular; other affiliations include professions of the respondents, such as teachers (6), lawyers (4), engineers (5), lecturers (4), union workers (5), and other professions and occupations. The very nature of SSM is that it allowed the participants to be identified by virtue of their relationship and activism on the

issue concerned; so, a participant interviewee will identify others whether they share the same view or hold contrary positions on the issues concerned. This way, the researcher was confident that, overall, the range and balance of participants interviewed reached beyond the initial contacts. This will be subject to later analysis in Chapters Six and Seven.

There is a potential risk associated with SSM though, where the study could suffer from the 'echo chamber' effect; this happens when an interviewee introduces another participant who, although trusted, has the potential of being of similar perspective, group or political party. This was of particular concern in this study of boundary-spanning behaviour; for it was necessary to reach across divides. So, in some cases, the introductions were no more than identification of individuals by name and location, and it was then left to the researcher to make the approach. In many cases, however, the personal introduction was vital in securing interviews as was the case, for example, in Kairouan when a businessman was identified as being a critical boundary-spanner in the city but was reluctant to be interviewed. The most significant mitigator of the echo-chamber effect however, as described above, was the SSM method adopted and the nature of this investigation. The fact that the interview questions allowed interviewees to identify other participants, whether they were supportive or in opposition to their position on the issue of concern, meant that it was possible for this researcher to ascertain a wide range and balanced group of participants, and so avoid the echo-chamber effect. During field work, a lot of time was spent reflecting on the information gathered and identification of any gaps, sometimes leading to long distance travel to interview a participant who might have moved on, such as the occasion when interviewing in Kairouan and needing to travel to Djerba to meet and interview a participant, or the constant shuttle

between Kairouan or Sfax and Tunis the capital. Media sources were also valuable in this regard, as media platforms tended to be fairly free during the period covered by the study, and often presented critical and balanced views on issues.

An additional measure to support triangulation of data sources, and secure the thick description so important for a case study design, the media has proved to be an important source of data. Given the nature of the issues of contestation, where the researcher was unable at times to reach certain participants, or looked for additional corroboration of sources, the media proved to be a rich seem to exploit; for, Tunisia, famously recognised to be a revolution made possible by the new media, specifically Facebook. Almost 70 different media sources - identified due to their coverage of the issues, boundary spanners, or other actors associated with the issues - proved useful; these included Facebook, blogs, and YouTube sources, as well as the traditional print and television media.

Semi-structured interviews

As discussed earlier, the ontological and epistemological position adopted calls for the, faithful reporting of realities relying on the voices and interpretation of informants and allows the exploration of what they *do, think, feel and believe*. This means that the role of the researcher, when conducting social enquiry, is to capture such action in all its richness so as to understand its meaning. Interview method, therefore, provides the possibility of collecting detailed information about research questions, and where the researcher has direct control over the flow of process and opportunity to clarify certain issues during the process, if needed. A commonly used typology distinguishes between structured, semi-structured and

unstructured interviews (Robson and McCartan, 2014). For this study, semi-structured interviews were adopted as they offered the benefit of a structure of a list of issues to be covered and the freedom to follow-up on a point as necessary and, depending on what the interviewee says, the possibility of asking unplanned additional questions. The experience in this study concurs with Tom Wengraf's observation that:

> "most of the informant's responses can't be predicted in advance and where the interviewer therefore have to *improvise* probably half – and may be 80% or more – of your responses to what they say in response to your *initial prepared* question or questions" (Wengraf, 2001, p. 5).

Questions seeking to explore beliefs and attitudes, compared to ones about facts and behaviour, are recognised to be more of a challenge, and the advice in the literature is the construction of appropriate scales. However, in semi-structured interviews, this can be a challenge. Lack of standardisation is also flagged as a potential source of bias in semi or unstructured interviews. This, however, calls for a degree of professionalism that this researcher can demonstrate due to prior training, a vast experience of interviewing in a professional career as well as through other academic projects. A systematic approach to the design also goes a long way in terms of assurance in this regard; in this study, Wengraf's Pyramid Model in Figure 3.3 was adopted. It represents the relationship between the Central Research Question (CRQ), Theory Questions (TQ) which are the CRQ sub-questions, and Interview Questions (IQs).
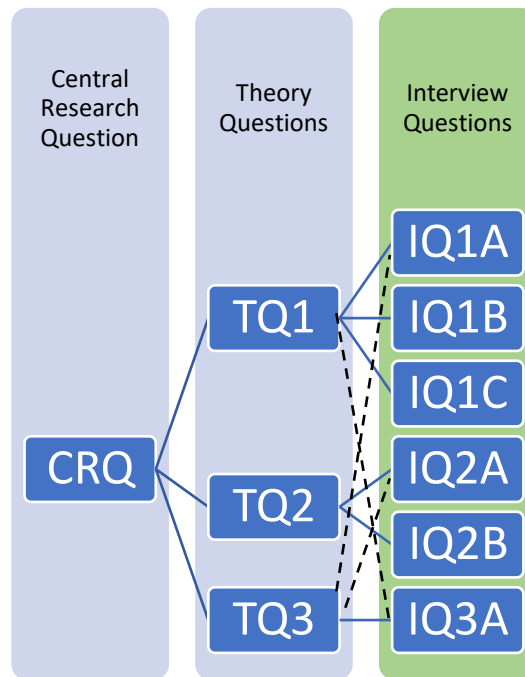
Figure 3.3: Pyramid Model showing relationship between research questions and interview question (Adapted from Wengaf (2001, p. 63)).

For this study, the Pyramid Model is as follows:

(CRQ) Why and how do boundary-spanners influence institutional change in post-revolution Tunisia? The case of Sfax and Kairouan.

Sub questions:

(TQ1) What are the post-revolution logic changes affecting Tunisian society, and why?

(TQ2) How do fields emerge in which boundary-spanners operate? Accounting for institutional change.

(TQ3) How do boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan access and mobilise competing logics to affect institutional change?

Interview Questions:

(IQ1A) Can you please tell me about your role in bringing about this project/service/issue and how you came to do so? [understanding the character, background and journey of boundary spanners]

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.

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(IQ3A) How was accountability demonstrated and to whom? [information, reporting, approval, sanctions]

The hierarchy suggested by Wengraf is helpful in the design process and to ensure that there are enough IQs to cover the theoretical questions. In reality though, and from the experience in this study, any IQ can potentially provide data that addresses any TQ, especially through follow-up questions – as represented by the broken lines in Figure 3.3. So, a response to IQ1A from one respondent might contain data that is relevant to TQ1 as well as TQ3; and this is where innovation and agility needs to be exercised by the interviewer.

The original ambition was to identify up to 60 potential informants in both localities to be interviewed. While this was possible, the actual number was eventually determined by what Barney Glaser and Anslem Strauss (1967) and Janice Morse (1994) describe as the principle of 'saturation'; a stage where the researcher ascertains that to hold more interviews will no longer add value to the data already collected. In this research study, saturation point was

reached at about 39 interviews where, by that stage, interviewees were starting to repeat very much what had already been ascertained in previous interviews.

Location of interviews was always a challenge in this research, as it was identified early on, in the pilot interview stage, that many prefer to be interviewed in their work location, where disruption is highly likely. In one planned pilot interview, with the Leader of a municipality, although welcoming and supportive of the research project, it was clear that the setting which allowed for others to walk into the office and listen to the interview was not conducive to continuing with the interview. In another situation, arrangements were made with the leader of the Trade Union movement in the region who chose to involve two other colleagues in the dialogue which, while very useful, did not allow for the exploration of his role as the boundary-spanner. This early experience allowed for later locations to be agreed ahead of the interview, which included work locations, participants' homes, hotels, cafes and restaurants.

With the exception of two interviews being conducted on Zoom due to difficulty gaining access during fieldwork visits, all other interviews were held face-to-face. Conducting interviews face-to-face was found to be extremely useful for a number of reasons. There were occasions when body language was as important as the actual conversation; opportunities also arose to look at relevant artifacts, such as maps and documents, which the interviewee was keen to share. It would have simply been a poor set of data had it not been contextualised by physical presence witnessing and visiting people, events and locations. In most cases, as already mentioned, careful preparations were made where most participants were identified during the pilot interview stage and, with the help of the research assistant, a schedule was agreed to make most of the limited time of about 10 days in each of the three visits.

Recording interviews also proved critical because, no matter what planning is taken to secure the interview, with whomever it may be, if no proper record is kept then the entire project may collapse. In the case of this study, almost all participants gave consent for interviews to be voice-recorded, which proved to be very helpful and time efficient; not only for the obvious advantage of playback at a later date, but the bilingual nature of the interviews - Arabic with Tunisian dialect - can be challenging in the moment to ascertain meaning. Accompanied by note taking during interviews, it was possible to make the notes reflective of the interview scenario as a whole, rather than focus on taking verbatim notes of what was said.

The site in practice: Managing risks and opportunities

In the introduction to this chapter applying research design in reality was likened to war plans, in that they become first casualties of the encounter, in this case with the research site. The pilot interview period coincided with heightened tension and intense security, due to being in the immediate aftermath of a major terrorist attack on the Tunisian Police, only days before my arrival, which made the situation apprehensive. However, following Foreign and Commonwealth Office advice indicating that Sfax and Kairouan were in the 'green/yellow' zone, a decision was made to go ahead.

While conducting pilot interviews, it became clear that during this phase every opportunity had to be taken to meet any individual, or group, who might be able to help to identify relevant issues and people. The very first interview for this study was with the, then, newly elected leader of a municipality in one of Sfax's suburbs. While fruitful in itself, it had the

added bonus of an encounter with the husband of the municipality leader, who himself had led the same municipality during the most turbulent phase following the revolution. It was evident that he was a primary boundary-spanner that I needed to interview – for he served during most of the period of 'extraordinary politics.' An example of this, was an evening meeting over coffee with a group belonging to a civil society coalition called *Ghusn Azzaitoun*, a development-oriented group. The meeting turned into a brainstorming session, mapping out issues and politics of Sfax and led to identifying at least three participants. This encounter was not planned, but came as a result of the first pilot interview, which gave an early indication of how the snowballing method could work.

Political, ideological and practical considerations: All is not what it seems!

While most of the people encountered professed to be 'revolutionaries' to one degree or another, they did belong to a spectrum of political views and ideologies. Most visible were the religious/conservative, leftist, secular, unionised, public sector and civil society; all of whom, however, overlapped in some shape or form. For example, a historic figure in the trade union movement, who became a Member of Parliament representing a leftist party, was clearly on the opposing side of the union when it came to the case of SIAPE. The young members of the Islamic Ennahda Party were to be found among their secular counterpart when it came to street-level environmental and civic activism. While there was clearly much overlap at street level campaigns, the differences between secular and religious was quite discernible within civil society organisations, particularly coalitions. CEDS, for example, is a bastion of secular leaning organisations and individuals, while the much more service-rendering coalitions, such as Ghusn Azzaytoon – a relatively new coalition - was of the traditional/religious persuasion.

Yet, a fascinating feature of the Tunisian political party scene is the inclusion of independents on party lists for municipal elections, such as participants SA04[2] and KA06, which tells a tale of shrewdness to widen their appeal beyond their traditional constituencies. This was most prominent within Ennahda Party, and a great example of boundary-spanning activities.

As a researcher, it was, therefore, important to tread carefully; appearance and language mattered. To give an example, one of the challenges faced was access to the trade union leader in Sfax. It was not easy to secure an appointment and, in the end, I just had to turn up to the Union's regional Head Quarters and waiting until I could introduce myself to him in the corridor, when he was moving between functions, and securing a promise to meet the following day. The union HQ gave the clear impression of being a significant power-base in the region just by the sheer buzz and number of people coming and going, a scene not observed even in the main municipal building. However, turning up as agreed, and after a long wait he was polite but referred me to his Deputy and one of his policy advisors. Clearly this was not going to work as planned and, at the same time, it was an opportunity to understand the position of, what to many is, the most powerful actor in Sfax, and belonged to the most powerful organisation outside the state. Having shared with them the purpose of my visit and research, handing over copies of my Letter to Participants, the focus of my discussion was about SIAPE. The reaction was stronger than I expected and highly political; where, after the pleasantries of introductions, I was asked quite bluntly by the Policy Advisor if I was associated with the Ennahda Islamic Party – I think this was to do with my appearance - a closely cropped beard, and my greetings more couched in the standard traditional Muslim greeting of

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[2] Each participant in this study is given a reference code, as no names are used. SA04, for example, refers to an actor (A) from Sfax (S), number 4. Later in the analysis chapters, each participant will also be identified by the sector and affiliation to aid the process of triangulation.

'*Assalamu alaikum wa rahmatullah*' (meaning 'peace and mercy of Allah be upon you'), rather than the everyday 'Sabah Alkhair' (Good morning). Strangely, the Policy Advisor herself was dressed in traditional Islamic dress with head scarf, rather than the more prevalent Western-style dress. So, in Tunisia, everything may not be what it seems.

Among the early decisions, was the shift from pilot to main interviews during the pilot phase, where an assessment was made that key potential informants might not be around or easily accessible during the planned main interview visits to follow. This is an example of decisions, amongst many and on different issues, that had to be made based on growing confidence in recognising the emerging evidence from the data and field experience. Indeed, the concern was that, should the security situation deteriorate then another visit might not be possible; however, the broad plan was maintained.

Section Five: Logical tests - validity and reliability

Real world flexible research, with all its richness, risks, and reliance on the researcher 'as instrument', has to importantly evidence the quality of the research design. This can be demonstrated through the application of logical tests, which, in the case of social sciences, have been identified by various authors (Louise Kidder and Charles Judd, 1986, Yin, 2009) as: *construct validity*, *internal validity*, *external validity*, and *reliability*. It is important at this stage to say that case studies, as has already been discussed in a previous section, suffer from a number of misunderstandings, however, as Valsiner (1986) and Bromley (1986) maintain, case studies have always been a major part of the advancement of knowledge and bedrock of scientific investigations. Where criticism can be valid though, is in the practice of doing case study research, due to such practice being conducted in a, "sloppy, perfunctory, and

incompetent manner and sometimes even in a corrupt, dishonest way" (Bromley, 1986, p. xiii - in Robson and McCartan 2014, p. 151). In such circumstances, therefore, the four logical tests assume primacy. The critical concept of generalisability is treated differently in qualitative research, as has already been addressed in this chapter, since the design does not allow generalisation to the wider population.

Returning to the issue of logical tests to ensure trustworthiness of research design for this study, the literature is replete with historic arguments about the applicability of the validity and reliability tests, which are more embedded in fixed designs (Egon Guba and Yvonna Lincoln, 1989; Bloor, 1997; Robson and McCartan, 2014; Yin, 2009; Thomas, 2009). In this study however, validity and reliability, operationalised through more suitable ways, are recognised as appropriate to flexible research design. In simple terms, validity is a measure of how, "accurate, or correct, or true," (Robson and McCartan, 2014, p. 169) something is, while reliability is a measure of the consistency of the results produced by the research instrument, in this case the researcher.

Construct validity

Defined as, "identifying the correct operational measures for the concept being studied" (Yin, 2012; p. 40), construct validity can be a challenge due to the risk of subjective judgements being used to collect the data. In this study, the focus is to identify the correct operational measures for studying 'how?' and 'Why?' boundary-spanners influence institutional change. In doing so, we need to define institutional change, "in specific concepts [and] identify operational measures that match the concepts" (Yin, 2012, p. 42). In the conceptual

framework discussed in Chapter Two, both DiMaggio and Powell (1983) and Scott and Meyer (1983b) identified the organisational field as being a level of analysis suited to the study of institutionalisation, which is best explored first by looking at the formation and change within organisational fields. Therefore, a measure of construct validity in this study is to identify change in the organisational field as the operational measure of institutionalisation; that is the extent of 'field densification' and 'logic activation' practices, as shown in the example in Table 3.3. Even though the case is defined by virtue of the geographies of Sfax and Kairouan, there are still challenges in defining the boundaries both in terms of time and space. In terms of time, this study takes the period immediately before the January 2011 Revolution as the starting point for the focus of the research to the time just after the first democratic municipal elections in May 2018, while also continuing to be open-minded about any relevant data that might emerge later. Spatial considerations are rather two dimensional: they represent the political boundaries of each of the governorates as well as the stakeholders in the issues investigated – no matter where they are located.

External validity

External validity is often identified as being a major problem in case study research (Yin, 2012), and is based on the implicit contrast to sample survey research, where a sample is generalised to a larger population. As has already been discussed, when considering criticism of case study design, under generalisation, this is an incorrect application to case studies; survey research applies statistical generalisation, whilst case studies rely on theoretical generalisation. In theoretical generalisation, as in the case of this study, the aim is to generalise the set of results

to a broader theory, where such a theory can then be tested in other localities experiencing institutional change.

Reliability

A systematic process that is capable of being audited, and where documentation and protocols are explicitly stated and evidenced, should enable the study, if repeated using the same procedures, to reproduce the same results. The objective of this test is to ensure that errors and biases are minimised. In this study, the basic components of the process included the following:

- Ethical standards produced ahead of the study and agreed with each participant before every interview.

- An interview topic guide ensured the operationalisation of the concepts and the identification of specific measures for those concepts.

- Pilot interviews where undertaken, with participants mainly consisting of high-ranking boundary-spanners who can both identify the complex issues within the locality and some of the key boundary-spanners.

- The boundaries of both cases, although emerging during the fieldwork, were well defined.

Critical in ensuring reliability is evidence of the audit trail, which in this study included full audio recording of all interviews (with only one exception), a diary and notes for each field visit, and additional notes from each interview.

Section Six: Conclusion, accounting for institutional change and data analysis

The purpose of this chapter, as stated in the introduction, was to set out the research methodology to operationalise the conceptual framework discussed in Chapter Two. Having adopted an approach of looking at multiple issues within an organisational field, it was clarified that the focus will be on the issue fields as clear sites of conflict and struggle, with different field members being likely to champion competing institutional logics. The competition and conflict in the process of resolving the complex issues is expected to lead to an impact on the organisational field for the locality. The most important function of the suggested research design and methods is that they allow the capture of rich descriptions from the perspective of participant boundary-spanners, revealing the entrepreneurial practices undertaken by them.

The selection of Tunisia, representing a critical case, and the adoption of a case study design were also clarified, as being suited to the study of such cases, particularly in that it allows the generation of thick description and the exploration of hidden meaning. Familiarity of the researcher with Tunisia, its language, relative stability and encouraging democratic development following the Jasmine Revolution of January 2011, as well as close proximity to the UK for practical purposes made it an obvious choice. The choice of case study methodology was adopted as it was seen to be suitable, because the research question is of the 'how' and 'why' type, the researcher has no control over behavioural events, and the focus is on contemporary, rather than historical, events.

Indicators of institutional change and maintenance and boundary spanning practices

On the basis of the literature and discussion in Chapter Two, the main arena to test for institutional change or otherwise in Sfax and Kairouan, will be to explore changes to key components of the organisational field and, critically, the extent of densification of the field. The level of densification can be a key indicator of institutional transformation or maintenance.

Changes to components of the field indicators of institutional change:

(1) **Change in logics**: to what extent is there evident change in logics, which will be tested by exploring prevailing *anchor rationalities*, as well as relevant *logic dimensions*. This will be explored in Chapter Five, in terms of changes to societal logics, and later in Chapter Seven in terms of their manifestation in the two localities.

(2) **Field membership and boundaries**: Adopting the WDR triad (WBG, 2003) as a methodological tool, boundaries and membership of each of the two fields, comprising service users, policy makers and service deliverers, will be looked at to ascertain the extent to which change has taken place. Maintenance of the triad will be seen as an indicator of institutional maintenance, whereas radical shift can be an indicator of field and institutional transformation. This will be the subject of analysis in Chapter Six, building on the background developed in Chapter Four.

(3) **The nature of issues advocated:** The extent to which issues advocated (eight in Sfax and four in Kairouan) are in line with the core rationalities associated with the shift in logics identified in Chapter Five.

(4) **Relational arrangements:** This is a critical component and factor, which will be the main point of analysis in Chapter Six, as it will indicate the level of densification within the field, and therefore the 'stickability' test (Scott, 2014, Skelcher, 2013). This will provide another strong indicator whether the level of change within institutions is transformational or not. Relational arrangements will be explored through the four dimensions suggested by Owen-Smith and Powell (2008):

a. **Increased interaction and networkin**g: looking for evidence of intensity, frequency and type of interaction at three levels: organisation and group level, coalition level, and organisational field level. These include meetings, campaign planning, lobbying, direct action, mass communication, etc.

b. **Coalition building –** looking at clear indication of new and sustained coalitions among organisational field members. These can be formal and informal coalitions. The more formal and durable such coalitions are, especially among new members of the organisational field, the more likely it is to lead to institutional transformation.

c. **Information exchange and flow:** the increased tempo of information production, availability and exchange is one of the indicators of field formation and necessarily complements increased interaction and coalition building. This can include production of reports, media interaction and statements, as well as campaign material. Information exchange is critical in the battle for narrative. Looking to see the extent to which new field members are able to change prevailing narrative about the issues of concern.

d. **Mutual awareness among field members**: Field members become aware of each other by virtue of their interest in the issue(s) being addressed and through a process of 'referencing' (Wooten and Hoffman, 2008). Awareness, however, should not be understood as the mere acknowledgement of the existence of an actor, it is awareness of the interest or concern of an actor in the issue(s) that needs resolving or the question that needs addressing; and, in this respect it requires acknowledgement of the actor as 'stakeholder' and the development of a shared identity. Looking to explore the extent to which new field members are accepted by powerful incumbents.

Assessing boundary-spanning practices: explaining institutional change

Having assessed the indicators and level of institutional change, through examination of changes to key components of the organisational field, the final analytical chapter, Chapter Seven, will seek to explore the specific entrepreneurial practices of boundary spanners that can explain such changes. As discussed in Chapter Two, Sections Three and Four, the nature and extent of the practices of *sensemaking, decision making* and *mobilisation* will give indication on how and why boundary spanners influence institutional change, and further indicate whether such change is transformational or maintenance in nature.

a) **Sensemaking and sense-giving:** The practice of sense-making is the process by which, "social actors turn circumstance into situations that are comprehended explicitly in words and that serve as a springboard for action" (Thornton e al., 2021, p. 96). This is the most powerful practice by social actors, whereby the power of

language is deployed not just for diagnostic and prognostic purposes, but to also motivate other actors towards the achievement of desired goals. The analysis will look for indications of new narratives associated with the shift in logics and associated anchor rationalities, and where new members are able to pursue and secure acceptance for such narrative – an indicator of institutional transformation.

b) **Decision making:** Examining key decisions of boundary spanners associated with the issues of concern. Decisions can be of personal nature, tactical or transformational. While decisions of personal nature are expected to be prevalent among all boundary spanners, it is the prevalence and balance of the tactical and transformational decisions that will further indicate the reason behind institutional transformation, for the latter have consequences beyond the issue of concern.

c) **The practice of mobilisation:** Here, the researcher would look for indicators of boundary spanners acquiring symbolic and material resources and motivating people towards the accomplishment of group or collective goals (Thornton et al., 2012, Ch 4). This will be carried out by identifying the extent to which mobilisation is achieved on the basis of personal or collective identity (Rogers et al., 2017). The practice of identity-based mobilisation is expected to support institutional transformation.

The above indicators of the process of new organisational field development and institutional emerging, will then be discussed in Chapter Eight, Conclusion, to assess whether the institutional change process in Kairouan and Sfax is one of transformation or maintenance, and the extent and role boundary spanning practice played in such change.

Analysis

The analysis of qualitative data is an engagement with words; where there is no, "universally accepted set of conventions for analysis…[however] there are ways in which qualitative data can be dealt with systematically" (Robson and McCartan, 2014, p. 460). The three methods most in common for the systematic analysis of qualitative data are quasi-statistical approaches, thematic coding approach, or grounded theory approach. The approach of this study is to adopt the thematic coding approach, where themes or codes occurring in the data are identified inductively from the reviewing of the data and their relevance to the research question. This method is also referred to by Thomas (2013) as the "constant comparison method," because it allows the adoption of assumptions of interpretivism, seeking insight and understating of the data, through a process of repeated interrogation of the data. So, from the repeated, constant comparisons, the data element is marked with 'codes' or 'labels', that can be assessed in a meaningful way regarding the phenomenon (Boyritz, 1998).

While most of the evidence of this study arises from the participant interviews, it was also found important to utilise relevant secondary data based on eyewitness or research accounts of relevant events and issues. This is especially true in the case of understanding the dominant pre-revolution and post-revolution societal logics, which dominated the conflict, and post-conflict bargaining and negotiation that led to the adoption of the 2014 Constitution. Such accounts inform the discussion and analysis given in Chapter Five.

Based on the literature review and the developed conceptual framework, three themes for analysis were identified for each boundary-spanner: identity and logic association (Thornton

et al., 2012); role in organisational field densification (Owen-Smith and Powell, 2008); and role in accessing and activation of societal logics (Thornton et al., 2012). An example of the summary of analysis of the transcript of an interview for one boundary spanner, along these three themes, is given in Table 3.3.

Table 3 3: Example summary of the coding and analysis of an interview script. The tally against each code/label gives an indication of the existence and strength of a particular practice by the boundary spanner, and not used for statistical analysis.

Participant SA08 (CHECK)					
Identity and logic association (Chapter 5)		Field densification (Chapter 6)		Logics access and activation (Chapter 7)	
Category	Private Sector	Coalition-building/ networking	卌 卌 IIII	Decision-making	卌 IIII
Role	PR	Information flow	卌II	Sense-making	卌 卌
Politics	Secular - left	Mutual awareness	III	Sense-giving	卌 III
		Shared agenda	卌 卌 I	Mobilisation	卌 卌 卌
Logic association (Actual terms used by participants that have to be mapped back to relevant logic category)	Human Rights YCE **Quality of life**	Discrediting *(counter indicator)*	卌II		

The role of boundary-spanners in influencing institutional change stems from the extent to which they are active in two dimensions: formation and densification of the organisational field as the site in which institutionalisation is demonstrated, and the extent to which their practices are informed by the dominant logics. The three analysis and discussion chapters (Five, Six and Seven) are arranged to reflect the three domains of interest: society, organisational field, and individual, and build on the analysis shown in the example in Table

(3.3). Chapter Five ascertains the dominant or competing logics during the period of extraordinary politics at societal level. Chapter Six demonstrates the resulting organisational field densification and evidence of institutional change, and Chapter Seven explores the boundary spanning practices and resulting activation of relevant dominant societal logics at the individual level. However, before proceeding to main analytical chapters, it is important to set the context of Tunisia, Sfax and Kairouan, during the period investigated - a period of extraordinary politics. This is the role of the following, Chapter Four.

CHAPTER FOUR

TUNISIA'S PERIOD OF EXTRAORDINARY POLITICS: A FERTILE GROUND FOR BOUNDARY-SPANNING

Introduction

Consideration of institutional change in Tunisia necessitates an understanding of temporal and contextual factors in which such change takes place. The purpose of this chapter is to set the background to the case, to shine a light on a period referred to by some as one of, "extraordinary politics" (Andreas Kalyvas, 2008, Sami Zemni, 2015). Specifically, the period starting at the collapse of the authoritarian order and during which new rules of the game were being negotiated and agreed. Although the period in question starts in late 2010, and for the purpose of this study runs to late 2018, it is necessary to often look into the 'rear view mirror' to appreciate the journey being travelled – hence the historical perspective given in some sections. The discussion in Chapter Two identified boundary-spanners as entrepreneurial actors operating within the duality of structure governed by competing and conflicting logics. The Chapter concluded with the development of a conceptual framework based on sociological institutionalist perspective, utilising Lawrence and colleagues' (2009) institutional work model, and Friedland and Alford's (1991) conception of culture as being external to the individual and organisation, but very much within the realm of, and

relationship between, structure, agency and ideas of Jessop (1990; 2001) and Hay (1995; 2002). The role of this chapter, then, is to explore the temporal and place dimensions of the structure-agency-ideas relationship during this period.

Societies transitioning from autocracy often experience continuation of autocratic rule, by different leader or group, and so perpetuation of structural violence and absence of accountability. Alternatively, in some cases, complete breakdown and absence of security. In the minority of cases, the transition from autocracy can be to democracy (Milan Svolik, 2012; Andrea Kendall-Taylor and Eric Frantz, 2014). For decades preceding the 2011 Jasmine Revolution, especially in the period immediately preceding it, structural violence was the norm in Tunisia. Given that the function of the state is, "to secure life and limb of its citizens," (Harry Blair, 2007, p. 161) then the main objective for the transition in Tunisia has to be to fulfil the revolutionary slogan marking the dawn of this significant period, namely *work, freedom and national dignity*. In order to fulfil this objective, the new way of doing things – the new institutional life – has to be based on an accountable relationship between citizens, policy makers and service deliverers (WBG, 2003); these are the three constituencies of the organisational field at the national and local levels. These constituencies are identified as sharing a concern for the production of equitable public goods and services and are in accord with DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) definition of the organisational field.

In this chapter, **Section One** will explore the national flux and the contestation taking place in the run-up to, and during this period – a period of logic and institutional change. In order to set the context for the case study, this section charts the journey of transition in Tunisia using Adam Curle's (1971) Stages of Transition matrix (Figure 4.1), as well as reflecting on Matt

Andrews' (2013) typologies of logic change. **Section Two** explores the state of the local organisational field at the sub-national level in Tunisia which will include the breakdown in, and attempt at rebuilding, accountability through a decentralised governance structure. The relationship between service users and policy makers is the main focus, showing how the vacuum created by the collapse of the autocratic order was being addressed by local actors working in the absence of clear rules of the game. **Section Three** considers the local in the context of such absence of clear rules of the game and the pressing range of complex socio-economic issues in need of solutions. The period marked by intense political contestation and breakdown of accountability mechanisms has also shown signs of active boundary-spanning and entrepreneurial work, giving strong evidence that it is a rich area of institutional development and where new 'rules of the game' are being negotiated. **Section Four** discusses the central role played by civil society. Given the breakdown of accountability relationship, as evidenced by the revolution, civil society becomes an expression and voice of citizens, especially during periods of transition, and explores the historic and rich growth of CSOs in Tunisia. In this regard, civil society actors are found to be uniquely placed to undertake boundary-spanning roles, as has been demonstrated nationally by the Quartet[3] and locally in the setting up of Special Municipal Councils (SMCs). Finally, **Section Five** concludes by recognising this period of extraordinary politics in Tunisia which is, by definition, a period of uncertainty, weak accountability and contestation, created circumstance of negotiation and conflict, as well as a period of progress in rule-setting at the national level. Yet, the pace of progress at local level has been lagging, creating a vacuum of governance as well as continuity

[3]The Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet (The Quartet) consist of Tunisian General Labour Union (UGTT), Tunisian League for the Defence of Human Rights (LTDH), Tunisian Union of Industry, Trades and Crafts (UTICA), National Order of Lawyers (ONAT)

of many complex and pressing issues that need to be tackled. The space and opportunities for boundary-spanning activities and institutional change at all levels is, therefore, extensive.

Section One: A period of extraordinary politics

In order to set the context for the case study of this research, this section will chart the journey of transition in Tunisia using Curle's (1971) Stages of Transition matrix (Figure 4.1), as well as reflecting on Matt Andrew's (2013) typologies of logic change. Curle suggests that, "conflict moves along a continuum from unpeaceful to peaceful relations … by comparing the level of power between the parties in conflict and the level of awareness of conflicting interests" (Lederach, 1997, p.64). The stages of Transition Matrix is particularly helpful as a pre-curser to the analysis and discussion of societal structural changes to be undertaken in Chapter Five and the response to the first research question: (TQ1) *What are the post-revolution logic changes affecting Tunisian society?* The Stages of Transition matrix charts the journey taking a country from pre-conflict or revolutionary period of prevailing structural violence, defined as the uneven distribution of resources and uneven distribution of power (Galtung 1969a), and through education and awareness raising process leading to the second stage of confrontation that can take a violent form. Confrontation, as defined by Curle (1971), is the process, "through which the weaker party to an unbalanced relationship asserts itself in the hope of gaining a position of parity" (p 20). The process of confrontation may lead to parties of the conflict moving to the next stage of negotiation and bargaining where new relationships are agreed and a level of parity is achieved; success at this stage can lead to sustainable peace. The period of negotiation, spanning the formal end of the extant regime and a new agreement on the 'rules of the game' is referred to as the period of, "extraordinary politics" (Kalyvas,

2008; Zemni, 2015). Failure in any of the latter two stages can, however, lead back to confrontation; a position that has been well documented, where almost 40% of post-conflict countries relapse into violent conflict within a decade after reaching a peace agreement (Paul Collier, Anke Hoeffler and Mans Soderbom, 2008, p.465). So, in the following sub-sections a picture will be painted of the stages of transition taking place in Tunisia.
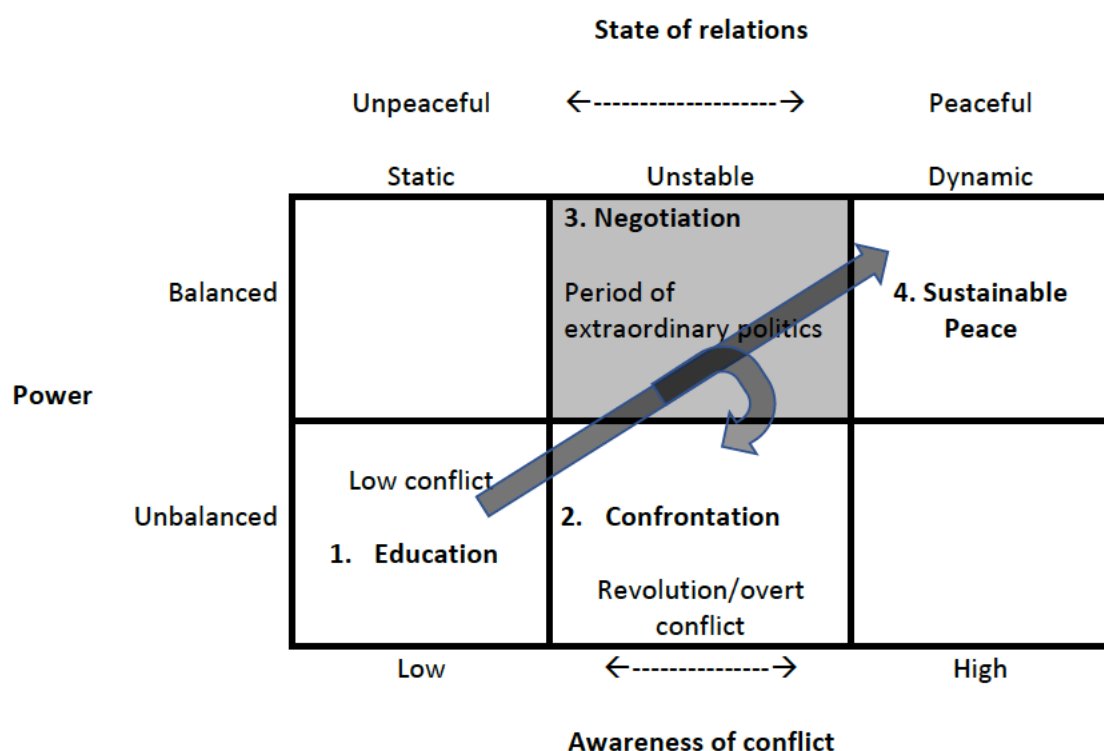
Figure 4.1: Stages of Transition (Adapted from: Adam Curle, 1971)

Looking into the 'rear view mirror': Post-independence to pre-Revolution - Modernity, structural violence and the Security Pact.

Tunisia is a relatively small country of around 11 million inhabitants with few natural resources, whose economy is largely dependent on foreign investment and tourism. A significant feature of Tunisian society and a recurring theme, that became more pronounced

since independence, is the coastal-interior split. The independence movement against French colonial rule, which lasted from 1881-1956, was made up of two factions of the Neo-Destour Party, one led by Habib Bourguiba and one by Saleh Ben Youssef. While Bourguiba, as leader of the party, went on to become the President of post-independence Tunisia, drawing most of his support from the coastal urban class, Ben Youssef who drew his support mostly from the interior rural regions, lost the battle for direction of the new state and fled to exile in Egypt, then assassinated in 1961 (Kenneth Perkins, 1986; 2004).

Modernisation in Tunisia started indigenously in the 19th century in pre-colonial period, and most notably led by Kairuddin Pasha (Salama, 2021), the Bay's[4] *Al Wazir Al A'adam,* meaning Prime Minister. Putting his reformist ideas in the famous publication of 1867, *The Surest Path to Knowledge Concerning the Condition of Countries*, Pasha went on to establish many modern institutions. These included the first constitution in the Arab World, establishing a consultative council, reformist schools, encouraging publications and combatting corruption (Jeremy Kleidosty, 2012). The colonial rule that followed introduced the most dramatic and long lasting 'modernising' impact in the form of French schools (Alexandra Blackman, 2019) for European settlers that were accessible to some Tunisians, such as Bourguiba, who later went on to be in the vanguard of society. The profound impact of these schools was the creation of a two-tier society, one tending to be more secular and Westernised, and the other more traditional.

Bourguiba's Tunisia was initially marked by his 'state-building project' that rested on modernisation and Westernisation. This was to be achieved through a presidential system of

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[4] The Bay in Tunisia means The King – The Bays ruled Tunisia from 1705 to 1957. Although started as governors within the Ottoman Empire, they later ruled independently, and remained figure heads during the French colonial period (1881-1956), until independence in in 1956, when the system was changed by Bourguiba to a republican one in 1957.

government, one-party state, and the dismantling of the traditional Islamic establishment, shedding the most significant representations of traditionality within society (Anne Wolf, 2017; Tchaïcha and Arfaoui, 2012). Most significant among these was the adoption of the 1956 Code of Personal Status (CPS), which created a judicial procedure for divorce, abolished polygamy and introduced the requirement that marriage be made only by mutual consent. However, Bourguiba's rule grew more dictatorial in later years, witnessing a number of unrests; especially the 1978 trade union demonstrations and national strike that were supressed with lethal force, and the 1984 bread riots that followed the imposition of price rises on bread and semolina due to IMF-dictated policies.

A constitutional coup in 1987 against the aging and ailing Bourguiba brought Zein El Abdin Ben Ali, the then Prime Minster, to power (New York Times, 1987). As part of measures to consolidate his grip on power, Ben Ali released up to 8,000 political prisoners and national elections were held, ushering in what Wolf (2018) describes as a popular political force in the form of the *Rassemblement Constitutionnel De´mocratique* (RCD) party. In the 1990s, however, the RCD morphed into a repressive group and later developed, "a quasi-mafiosi structure that profited the Ben Ali family, which increasingly monopolised economic and political power" (Wolf, 2018, p. 245). As an indication of the extent of the regime's intrusion into the economy, it is estimated that 114 family members, including Ben Ali himself, his relatives and his in-laws, controlled more than one-quarter of Tunisian GDP in 2011 (World Bank Group, 2014).

Many societies exhibit, to some degree, what Galtung (1969) describes as the condition of structural violence, or social injustice. Structural violence becomes manifest in the way, "the

power to distribute resources is unevenly distributed," (Galtung 1969, p 171) within a given society. Lederach (1997) describes such period of latent conflict as "hidden" – where people are not even aware of such injustice being afflicted on them. Such lack of awareness may be attributed to what Steven Lukes (1974; 2005) describes as the second and third dimensions of power. This is when a regime deploys not only the coercive force of the state, but also the softer power of the media to paint a narrative of conditions that then become accepted as better than the available worse alternatives. Such situations have often been labelled as the *authoritarian bargain*, a model of equilibrium, "based on the presumption that non-democratic states secure regime support through the allocation of two substitutable "goods" to the public: economic benefits and political rights (Raj M. Desai, Anders Olofsgard, and Tarik M. Yousef, 2009).

The camouflage of the security pact and its collapse

In Ben Ali's Tunisia, the autocratic bargain took the form of what Beatrice Hibou (2011) calls the *Security Pact*, more formally known as The Tunisian National Pact of 1988 (Lisa Anderson, 1991). Opposition signatories to the pact hoped that, "the device…would be a transition from a single party regime to a more pluralistic democracy" (Anderson, 1991, p. 244). Yet, Ben Ali's regime worked to ceaselessly reactivate the, "veritable political culture of danger"; danger from Islamisation, globalisation, unemployment, and so on (Hibou, p. 182). In Tunisia's case this has resulted in inequity and inequality, most starkly exemplified in the allocation of resources to municipalities. In the period just before the 2011 revolution where, "in the Ben Ali regime's final budget before it fell, 82 percent of state funds were dedicated to coastal

areas, compared to only 18 percent for the interior" (Sarah Yerkes and Marwan Muasher, 2018), it created a climate of structural violence, as described by Galtung (1969).

According to many observers, such as Azmi Bishara (2012) and Sami Zemni (2014), two parallel processes were gradually taking place within Tunisian society that led to the breakdown of the 'authoritarian bargain': socio-economic disparities and an increase in the pace of political education. With growth in population, corruption, decreasing revenues, and the impact of structural reform programmes, especially on the already marginalised sections of the population, countries such as Tunisia were unable to manage such challenges thereby resorting even more to repression and coercion. A policy that only fed increasing resentment among the population, especially the highly educated, and unemployed, young people. The second process is the gradual increase in the pace of political 'education' and awareness-raising campaigns within society, where many people and groups – educators - made huge sacrifices and suffered imprisonment, exile and even torture and death, in their pursuit of awakening the masses and erasing ignorance of the prevailing injustices. Educators are movements, which include political parties, trade unions and other civil society organisations and groups (Lederach 1997, p 64).

Among the three examples that stand out in particular, is the political campaign and resistance by Ennahda party for over twenty years of Ben Ali's rule; even while it was being crushed and its cadres exiled, imprisoned or silenced (Hibou, 2011). The second example is the six-month long campaign in 2008, in the mining basin of Gafsa/Redeyef, which started as a protest against the unfair hiring practices by the state-owned *Compagnie Phosphate de Gafsa* (Gafsa Phosphate Company or CPG) in an area experiencing up to 40% unemployment rate.

According to Laryssa Chomiak (2011, p. 72), while beginning as anti-CPG demonstrations, the protests, "swiftly culminated in a loosely organized social movement across the Gafsa region, rebelling against unemployment, social injustice, repression and neglect on part of the Ben Ali regime." A third example demonstrates more powerfully how, during the period marked by structural violence immediately before the Revolution, the very tools of oppression that the regime had increasingly adopted back-fired spectacularly.

Uncoordinated youth mobilization made it difficult for Ben Ali's regime to maintain control, as it had no recourse to alternative mediatory mechanisms since it had either crushed or co-opted all alternative organized political forces (Mehdi Mabrouk 2011, Chomiak 2011, Freedom House 2012). An example of such mobilization that proved to be beyond the reach of the regime and political elites was that of cyberactivists. Campaigning for freedom of the internet in 2010, *Tunisie en Blanc* (Tunisia in White), for example, was able to reach thousands in a short space of time, mobilising many to do simple actions, such as dressing in white and going to sit in coffee shops in main areas of the capital. Such a movement proved to be the backbone of the information network of the revolution that was about to unfold later that year.

Conflict – Reducing the power imbalance

The regime of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali managed to sell, or 'signal' (Matt Andrews, 2013), Tunisia to the outside world as an oasis of stability and economic development, boasting the highest level of education in the Arab world and comparatively high per capita income. Even the World Bank later admitted to misreading the 4.5% average annual growth rate in the ten years preceding the revolution (WBG, 2015). This came at a price because stability came through

violent repression, and economic growth hid the stark inequality, especially between the regions and the large number of unemployed educated youth. While many observers were surprised by the violent escalation, others had been predicting the revolutionary turn of events (Mabrouk, 2011). In an article written shortly after the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions, Goldstone (2011) described such regimes as *sultanistic*; they arise, "when a national leader expands his personal power at the expense of formal institutions … appeal to no ideology and have no purpose other than maintaining their personal authority" (Goldstone 2011, p 8).

The success of change in any society – from conflict to stability, and from autocracy to democratic accountability - such as the one initiated by the Tunisian Revolution, can take one of three trajectories and relates to the change in societal logics, according to Andrews (2013). Whether the change takes the form of, "Logic Shift/Switch", "Coexistence/Hybridisation", "Layering/Conversion", as represented in Figure 4.2, depends on a number of factors including severity of disruption, the extent to which it tests the prevailing dominant logics, the existence of alternative logics, and readiness of agents to challenge and facilitate transition (Andrews, 2013, p.50). Among the agents identified by Goldstone (2011) facilitating such changes are: 1) The government itself being viewed as a threat to the country's future; (2) Alienated elites no longer willing to defend it; (3) A broad-based section of the population mobilized; and (4) International powers refusing to defend the regime. Andrews' typology of logic change requires reflection, and at this stage we need to discuss the scenario that most likely reflects the change taking place in Tunisia.
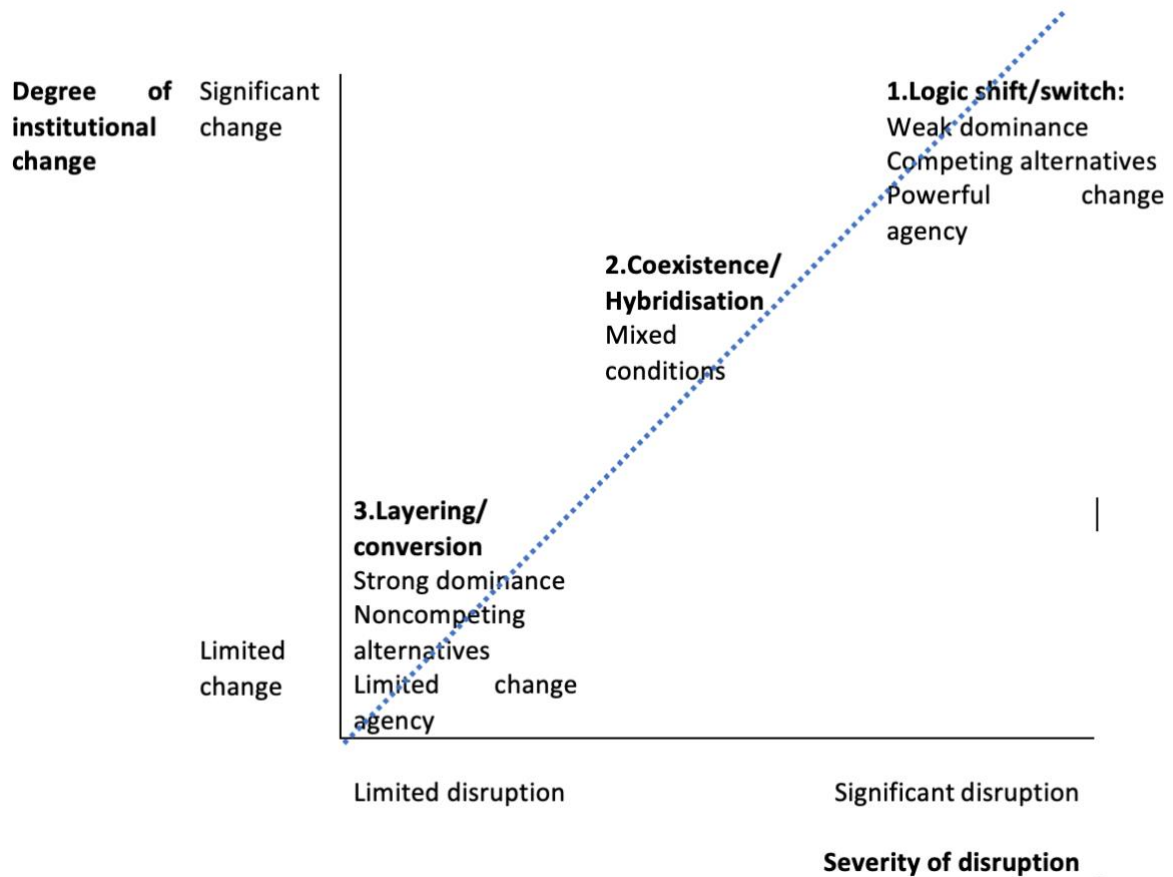
Figure 4.2: How contextual factors shape opportunities for institutional change (Adapted from Andrews 2013)

The change taking place in Tunisia reflects the logic shift/switch scenario described by Andrews, and represented by position (1) in Figure 4.2. It is evident that the dominant logic associated with the autocratic bargain or 'security pact' became weak, whilst the alternative logic associated with '*freedom, work, and dignity*' became captivating, and revolutionary actors were capable of introducing the new logic and were empowered to champion the logic. However, in the second scenario where one or another conditions of the logic shift scenario is not met, a hybrid order can emerge in which combinations of the old and emerging orders coexist, as indicated by position (2). Such coexistence may cause uncertainty about 'rules of the game', encouraging different forms of behaviour, a position associated with issue-based

organisational fields. For the duration of the Jasmine Revolution, starting on the 10th of December 2010 and especially towards the climax on 14th January 2011, all the above four factors associated with logic switch were at play. Ultimately, however, it was the fact that more than 300 Tunisians gave their lives during 27 days of revolution. As discussed in the following sub-section with the ousting of Ben Ali from power, the stage was set for political conflict of a different kind between the new political and social forces emerging in the aftermath of the dictatorship.

Negotiations – the period of extraordinary politics.

Transition negotiation takes place in a society during periods of extraordinary politics, a term derived from liberal democratic experience, which reflects a period spanning the fall of the autocratic regime until "when new institutions and procedures to solve conflict become regularised" (Zemni, 2015, p. 2). A negotiating environment can be established in a country going through conflict when no side, "can simply impose their will on, nor eliminate the other side, but rather must work with each other to achieve their goal" (Lederach, 1997, p 65). The neutrality of the Tunisian armed forces meant none of the emerging political forces enjoyed an undue power advantage, apart from their organised movements and popular appeal (Noureddin Jebnoun, 2014). However, the Chair of the Higher Authority, Yadh Ben Achour, admits that in the early days the 'administration' – some may call the deep state (Bishara, 2018; Hanibal Ferhat, 2013a; 2013b) – was flexing its muscle to influence transition arrangements. This period of extraordinary politics, more specifically starting on January 14th 2011, the day Ben Ali fled the country, until the time of writing this thesis (2022), can be organised into three phases, all part of a process to reach an end point of settled 'rules of the

game'. The first phase was when Tunisian stakeholders worked out the rules to set-up the National Constituent Assembly (NCA), and were charged with writing and agreeing a new social contract between the state and citizens, led by the Higher Authority[5] which was chaired by Yadh Ben Achour. The second phase followed the election of the NCA, on 21st October 2011, to the time of adoption of the new Constitution on 27th January 2014. The third phase, which is meant to consolidate the new rules and develop associated norms is still in progress at the time of writing this thesis.

These three phases of negotiation, stated above, identified broadly four coalitions. These were Islamists represented mainly by Ennahda Party, a hard left coalition, represented by the Popular Front, the centre left parties, and a liberal coalition that was not initially organised and is largely made up of people from the disbanded RCD and would later become *Nida Tounes*. Appendix 4.1 provides a list of the parties represented in the NCA of 2011 and People's Assemblies of 2014 and 2019, their share of the seats and indication of relevant affiliation. Phase one proved to be a critical phase because it established key 'rules of the game', mainly guarding against the domination of politics by a single political actor, especially Ennahda Party, as stated by Ben Achour, Chair of the Higher Authority, (Ben Achour, 2018). During this phase, key debates started to surface that would dominate much of the NCA's deliberations, namely the struggle over identity. While agreement and rules have been established to sever links with the autocracy of the past, the place of religion and its relationship within the state started to dominate.

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[5] The Higher Authority for Realisation of the Objectives of the Revolution, Political Reform and Democratic Transition (The Higher Authority). This body comprised 155 members representing 12 political parties, 19 associations and trade unions, 11 of the 24 Governorates, as well as 62 lawyers, legal specialists and "national figures" (Yousfi, 2018, p. 524).

Leftist and liberal actors championed the retention of the secular character of the state and the safeguarding of what they saw as modernising gains, such as the 1956 Code of Personal Status (CSP). Islamists, however, were keen to see their election gains as indications of people's yearning for traditions and a role for Islam in politics. The compromise between the secular and Islamic parties was reached through what Ben Achour (2018, p. 252) describes as the concept of *al-Dowlah al-Madaniyyah*[6] – meaning civil state. This concept translates to, "strong links to democracy" (Julian Erhardt, Steffen Wamsler, Markus Freitag, 2020, p. 61) and importantly, for Ben Achour (2018), it allowed each coalition to draw its own acceptable meaning from the concept. This has had major implications for the development of new institutions and the establishment of new ways for society to operate.

While the differences around the wording of the Constitution were settled, the battle for identity and power was far from over, and the differences between the two camps were proving to be deep rooted, with both quite entrenched in their position. This is surprising, given that some observers, such as Pietro Marzo (2018) and Stepan and Lintz (2013), see Ennahda as becoming far more pragmatic and inclusive in its approach than the secular parties. Marzo (2018), employing critical junctures in Tunisia's transition to study the transformation of Ennahda, concludes that the gradual accumulation of democratic capital, has, "provided the party with the freedom to adopt new political outlook[s]" (p. 914). However, on the secular side, figures such as Hamma Hammami, leader of the Tunisian Workers Party (Communist) and the Popular Front coalition remain doubtful of Ennahda's transformation. In an interview with Al-Jazeera, Hammami rejects any compromise with Ennahda since it, "does not represent a civil movement, due to its rejection of policies that

[6] Sometimes also written as pronounced in Arabic: addawlah almadaneyyah.

support equality between men and women and the position of some of its leadership on issues related to religious rituals" (Aljazeera.net, 2019). Should these entrenched positions translate to the everyday, they can hamper collaboration to deal with the legacy of structural violence and would call for exceptionally innovative forms of boundary-spanning practices.

Progress through negotiation, nevertheless, continued to be made, most significantly with the agreement on the new constitution. The organisation of second free and fair elections in 2014 heralded another coalition government which incorporated the two largest parties, and some would argue archenemies, Ennahda and *Nidaa Tounes*[7]. While further stabilising the political transition in the country, such development continued to face very entrenched challenges, though. These challenges have been identified by Roisin Hinds (2014) to have manifested themselves in divisions between Islamic and secular communities, socio-economic factors, Islamic radicalisation, marginalisation of young people, and geographic economic disparities. Despite such challenges, and while teetering on the abyss at times, Tunisia has always managed to stay the course (Raphael Lefèvre, 2015).

The above overview highlights the fault lines that dominate Tunisian society, represented on the one hand by ideological differences between Islamically inspired forces, such as Ennahda, the far left represented by the Popular Front, and the centre right liberal parties of whom Nida Tounes was the most prominent. Despite such differences, there has also been the usual party politics where successive pragmatic coalitions have formed across the political divides - developments suggesting that post-revolution Tunisia can compromise and safeguard its

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[7] Lefèvre (2015) describes *Nidaa Tounes* as comprising a coalition of politicians opposed to Islamism in all its forms, yet the differences among its trade unionists, leftists and liberals are intense, when it comes to the economy.

democratic gains. What such demarcations among the political actors can be an indicator of

is logic conflict; that of the secular (represented by the left and liberal forces) and the religious,

represented by Ennahda. The expectation is, according to Thornton et al., (2012), for the

secular to be aligned with the logics of state, profession and market, while the religious would

be aligned with logics of religion, family and community.

An indicator of the possible direction of the logic switch may be ascertained from the actual

popular base and power of the various actors. As indicated in Appendix 4.1, where the results

of three consecutive general elections are given, it can be seen that there is a sizable majority

in favour of the secular coalition and associated logics. Data in Appendix 4.1 shows that the

Islamist parties gained 35.5%, the liberals 40.1% and the leftists 17.5% in the most recent 2019

elections. What is important to recognise here, is that without boundary-spanning activities

between mainly political, but also civil society actors, it would have been impossible to put

together the Higher Authority and then launch the democratic process. The discussion has

also highlighted the critical boundary-spanning role of the civil society Quartet which brokered

the political impasse in late 2013 and led to the second successful 2014 general election and

the adoption of the acclaimed 2014 Constitution. Boundary-spanning at a national level,

therefore, sets the scene of likely similar work at subnational levels.

Section Two: The local organisational field in times of extraordinary politics.

The national societal context discussed in Section One is expected to have direct implications

for developments at local levels - which is the arena of interest in this study. Not only in terms

of the various ideological and party tensions, but also in terms of broader governance and boundary-spanning work. The aspirations of the new political class, through the local, decentralised governance system includes empowering local actors, introducing a new political class including women and young people, and improving services, amongst other objectives (Yerkes and Muasher, 2018). This section will describe the local institutional landscape, that is the organisational field, and discuss the nature of the changes at subnational levels in the post-revolution era. The clamour for decentralisation as a perceived solution for re-establishing accountability will be discussed, as well as identifying the key actors and the role they played, showing the link between local and national development.

The literature reviewed in Chapter Two, identified organisational fields as consisting of organisations sharing common interest in a cause, be this a product, a service, or solving complex problems and issues. In terms of the state and local governance, the common interest is the commissioning and delivery of public services. As discussed in Chapter Three, for this study, the local organisational field is conceptualised as consisting of the triad of *service users, policy makers* and *service providers* (WBG, 2003), in that it sets a clear relationship between the parties, and identifies the breakdown of the field and the role of boundary-spanners in later chapters. The focus of this section, and in the context of the overall aim of the chapter, is to set the scene of the local condition, especially in terms of the lack of 'voice' for service users due to the autocratic nature of the regime and the early days of transition following the Revolution. In terms of the organisational field, and the triangulated relationship between service users, policy makers and service deliverers, it is the breakdown in the relationship between the service users on one hand, and policy makers and service deliverers on the other,

that will be of particular interest due to the democratisation process and the likely new entrants to the field.

The local organisational field: state of play

About half-way through Ben Ali's rule, decentralisation was introduced as a means of strengthening citizen's voice and where local governance was exercised through twin administrative and political structures. This is illustrated in Figure 4.3, where the *Wali*, or governor, sits at the nexus between local and national structures (Volpi et al., 2016). Tunisia was, and still is, divided into 24 *wilaya* (Governorates), each led by a *wali* (Governor) reporting to the Minister of Interior, and chairing the Regional Council comprising local members of parliament, mayors and rural council chairs. Below the governorate level, there were 264 *baladiyyat* (municipalities), which increased after the Revolution to 350, with local councils elected every five years, each headed by a mayor who is elected by council members. Parallel to the political structure, the Governor also has reporting to him or her, a *Mu'tamad* (Delegate) for each of the 264 (now 350) municipalities within the governorate, below each Delegate there are a number of Districts, each headed by a *Umda* (Chief) – in total there were 2,083 districts across the country. What remains ambiguous, and despite there being no such position stipulated in Section 7 of the 2014 Constitution nor in the Local Government Act of 2018, is that the role of a *Mu'tamad* (Delegate) continues to exist. This is despite the Constitution and the Act incorporating all the duties previously under the *Mu'tamad* within the newly organised municipalities.
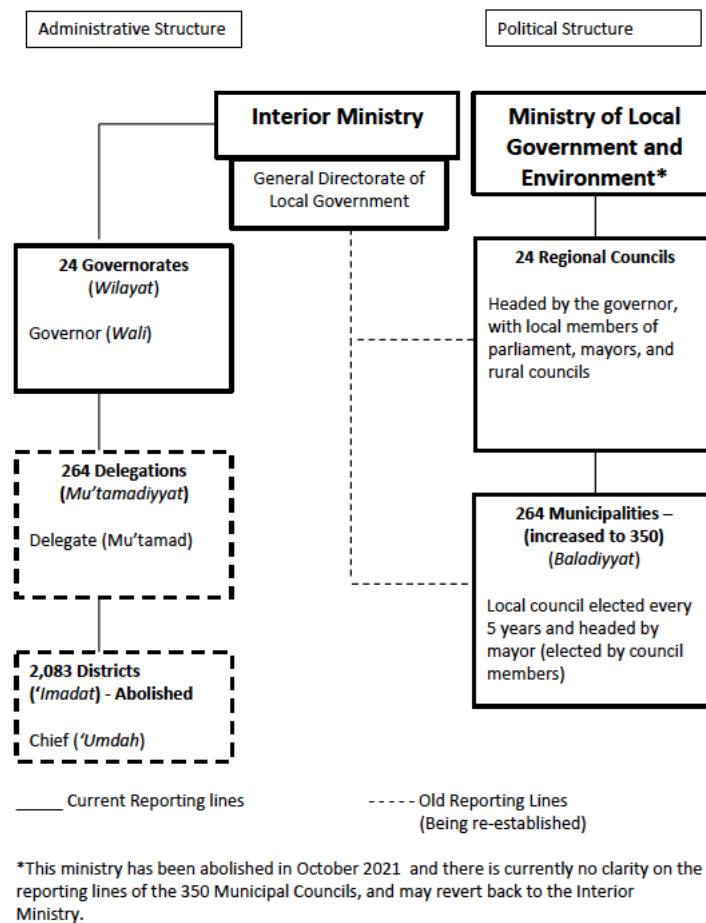
Figure 4.3: Local Government Reporting Structure (Adapted from Volpi et al., 2016)

The most important point to recognise at this stage, and one to have significance later in the thesis, is that the collapse of Ben Ali's constituency of coercion governing localities, detailed in Table 4.1 – that is policy makers - created the space for new actors to enter the organisational field. While the bureaucracy remained largely the same, apart from the upper tiers associated with the regime, and the service delivery organisations also remained the same, the dramatic change was in the shape of the new political and civil society actors and the role they played in populating the policy-making forums and giving voice to service users and citizens.

Table 4.1: The constituency of coercion: Members of the local governance organisational field during the autocratic-state logic era indicating the constituency of coercion facilitated by the RCD.

Field	Users of public services	Policy makers:	Service delivery:
Extant Field – Membership of extant exchange organisational field in a locality such as Sfax or Kairouan, in the period immediately preceding the 2011 Revolution.	**Residents** – *behaving within security pact.* **Organisations and Groups** – *only RCD and security sanctioned groups* **Businesses** – *compliant and co-opted.*	**Municipalities** - *part of the state and RCD machinery* **Regional governors** – *Part of RCD and security apparatus.* **Central Government** – *Part of RCD and security apparatus.*	**Public bodies and agencies** – Reflecting autocratic bias towards specific (coastal) constituencies. **Private sector** - *compliant and co-opted.* **Civil society** - *only RCD and security sanctioned groups*

The 'New' Change Makers – How local actors filled the governance vacuum.

Despite the revolution, Tunisia did not witness the complete collapse of the state, and as discussed in Section One, continuity of government was maintained, the security apparatus did not collapse and continued to function, even when the Police momentarily withdrew from the streets, as did the state bureaucracy. However, the revolution did sweep away the political authority that was enshrined in Ben Ali and his apparatus of control, namely the RCD and senior officials, political appointees and platforms, such as Parliament, Regional Councils, Municipal Councils, governors, mayors, delegates and chiefs. In other words, what was swept away by the revolution were the organs through which the Security Pact was enforced and

served as the "quasi-mafiosi structure" (Wolf, 2018). New political and civil society forces at national and local level sought to rebuild the legitimacy of political governance that guides decision making.

While at national level, political and civil society organisations moved quickly to establish the Higher Authority followed by the elected NCA and then the People's Assembly, at the local level there were no rules in place to fill places on municipal or regional councils. Such rules had to be based on the constitution and applicable laws that were taking time to be developed and agreed by the NCA and subsequent People's Assembly. As well as the governance vacuum this created, taxes were no longer being collected, many sectors were demanding redress, strikes were frequent and some disorder started to take place in some localities (Noha Aboueldahab, 2018). These challenges were in addition to many complex social and economic issues that were kept under control during the period of autocracy and were now beginning to surface. These conditions created the arena for local actors, mainly in the shape of local civil society and political party branches, to rise to the challenge and address the issues and, in doing so, exercised entrepreneurial boundary-spanning practices.

For the first seven years of Tunisia's transition, representative democracy was not applicable to local politics as no local elections were held; rather, it was a claim to revolutionary and semi-democratic legitimacy that shaped the involvement of local actors in the process. Within municipalities, such as Ariana or Ettadhamen (Frederic Volpi, Fabio Merone, and Chiara Loschi, 2016) for example, the vacuum created by the disappearance of the RCD-dominated councils began the challenge of what to do, who to do it, and under what authority things could be done. No guidance was coming from central government, who were focused on developing

laws and processes for national elections. It is at this critical juncture that the role of local actors, who in many cases were affiliated to different movements, came to the forefront, "and compromised in ways that reflected their movements' varied strengths at the local level" (Volpi et al., 2016, p. 273). Volpi and colleagues highlight the role played by established and emerging civil society and political actors, where success was dependant on factors such as organisation, mobilisation of resources, and dialogue with the state administration.

Governance vacuums create contested sovereignties

As well as political and civil society actors taking the initiative immediately following the fall of Ben Ali's regime, it was becoming apparent that issues of multiple sovereignties, typical of post conflict scenarios, were coming to the surface and were starting to impact the formation of local councils. During the short-lived government of Prime Minister Mohammad Ghannouchi, during February 2011, when the Police retreated from the streets for a short period following the revolution, and due to general concern about neighbourhood safety, ministers gave the greenlight for citizens to mobilize and organise to protect their properties. Some of these committees, often in the form of local Leagues for The Protection of The Revolution (for more on the League, see Safa Belghith and Ian Patel, 2013) continued to operate in many neighbourhoods long after the election of the NCA, and became platforms for filling local governance gaps (Volpi et al., 2017, Gorman 2017). However, the process of identifying and nominating members to fill the vacuum on local councils was mainly a process involving local actors through dialogue between governors and local activists, which reflected

the political weight of such actors. It is relevant here to quote Volpi and colleagues in full to highlight some of the local contestations:

> "In Ettadhamen, where Islamist activists were more prominent, the city council was "conquered" in August 2011, after several large demonstrations and sit-ins. The mayor, who had been appointed in March, was forced to resign. After the parliamentary elections and the nomination of the Ennahda led government, the new Ariana governor accepted the Islamists' seizing of power in Ettadhamen as a fait accompli." (Volpi et al., 2017, p.376)

An often-raised complaint recorded by researchers such as Volpi and colleagues (2016), is the advantage enjoyed by secular civil society that was tolerated by Ben Ali's regime, in establishing, or re-establishing relationships with the administration, to the exclusion of new actors, such as Ennahda. A second quote from Volpi and colleagues' work in Ariana sheds further light on this:

> "…in the relatively well-off Ariana municipality, … as actors from an established middle class and often secularized civil society were well implanted before the revolution, they "naturally" led the process of transition locally after the revolution since they had experience in dealing with the central administration." (Volpi et. al., 2016, p. 374)

This situation was prevalent before the elections to the NCA however, following the October 2011 elections, a new political reality took shape at the national level when Ennahda won the largest number of seats and went on to form a coalition government. Later, in early 2012 following the NCA elections, and in the absence of local elections, the new government decided to invoke a law from Ben Ali's era. In extraordinary circumstances, the law gave authority to the Minister of Interior to establish *SMCs*[8] in place of the elected ones. Given the

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[8] Before the revolution, local elections were tightly controlled to ensure monopolization by the ruling party. Following the revolution, the government replaced municipal councils with temporary appointed councils called Special Municipal Councils which contained a mixture of representatives of political parties, independents and civil society activists.

new power configuration nationally, and the new Foundation Law Number 6 for 2011, issued by the newly elected NCA (DCAF, 2021), attempts were made to rebalance local councils to reflect the NCA electoral map within each municipality accordingly. While this worked in some areas, it also met resistance in others where local activists in power were better organised, such as in the case recorded by Volpie et al., (20117), in Ariana.

The discussion so far highlights the nature of the local organisational field as an arena of contestation where local actors are playing the crucial role of putting together governance structures and filling the vacuum created by the collapse of the old order in anticipation of a new one to materialise. However, divisions in Tunisian society, especially ideological and political ones, have a different slant at local level, as can be seen from the following discussion.

The local is not necessarily reflective of the national

In a revealing study of the grassroot constituencies, *The Myth of the secular-Islamist divide in Muslim politics: Evidence from Tunisia*, Brandon Gorman (2017) concludes that, "findings provide little evidence of attitudinal polarisation along the so-called secular-Islamist divide" (p. 145). This conclusion seems to run counter to the prevailing theory that in Muslim-majority countries, the polarisation between the two ideologically-opposed and warring sides is irreconcilable (Juergensmeyer, 2008; Lawrence, B., 1995). Gorman attributes this to the fact that such conclusions are usually made by studies, "that focus on Islamist organisations and parties rather than their constituencies" (Gorman, 2018, p. 146). Using mixed method design, involving survey data and in-depth interviews, Gorman investigated the attitudinal polarisation between the two groups, arriving at different conclusions to the accepted theory.

In arriving at such a conclusion, Gorman endorses similar studies, undertaken in different countries, where it was found that agreement among the masses on most socio-economic issues is usually obscured by division among political elites (See Baldassari and Bearman, 2007). This study's detailed vocabulary analysis of the transcripts of interviews of eight key boundary spanners, shown in Appendix 5.1, does not reveal any noticeable divide between the two identities when considering the twelve local complex issues being addresses in both localities. This finding supports and strengthens earlier conclusions by Gorman (2018) and Delia Baldassari and Peter Bearman, (2007).

The literature points to certain 'take-off issues' that highlight polarisation between Islamist and secular organisations and parties, such as the establishment of an Islamic state, women's rights and gender equality, and implementation of Sharia'a law (Francesco Cavatorta, 2009; Cavatorta and Rekke Haugbølle, 2012). Gorman's (2017) study of the likelihood of such polarisation reflected among the constituents of both camps comes to a different conclusion. On the usual 'signature' issue of the establishment of an Islamic state, Gorman concludes that:

> "…47% of those who prefer an Islamic state and 64% of those who prefer a civil state define their ideal system as one in which the people are the source of power, the state is governed by the constitution and the law with citizenship being the highest value, and Islam constitutes its cultural and civilisational background. There is no evidence of bimodality: most Islamist respondents appear united in their preference for a modern state that represents their identities as Muslim" (Gorman, 2018, p. 151).

The findings of Volpi and colleagues (2017) and Gorman (2018) seem contradictory, given the evidence of contestations to control municipal councils, which points to strong divisions and antagonism; yet, on the 'take-off issues', such as the establishment of Islamic State, there doesn't seem to be much divergence among local actors. A possible explanation may be one

where the local contestation for control is primarily to do with normal party politics, and not necessarily one driven by a fundamental ideological divide; this explanation could provide a way to accommodate Gorman's findings. However, the history of antagonism between the two camps runs deep, as evidenced by the continuing failure to establish 'normal politics' in the country, even with the recurring machination of the democratic process – as evidenced by recent developments since July 2021 (The Washington Post, 2022; Monica Marks, 2022).

As well as the main, and well recognised, ideological polarisation, actors within localities are also split by sector, such as private, civil society, public, and political. While the public sector, as represented by the administration, has seen little change as a result of the revolution, apart from some very senior ex-regime affiliated individuals which is similar to the private sector, most of the dramatic change is observed in the political and civil society sectors, as evidenced in the growth of each in Appendix 4.1 and Figure 4.4. Having explored the dynamics and make-up of the political sector in Section One, that of the civil society sector will be studied in Section Four. Because of the significance of the civil society sector's growth and evident dynamism, it has secured its place constitutionally within the organisational field. Article 139 of the 2014 Constitution clearly states the principles of participatory democracy and open governance, and states that:

> "local authorities shall adopt the mechanisms of participatory democracy and the principles of open governance to ensure broader participation by citizens and civil society in the preparation of development programs and land management and monitoring of their implementation, in accordance with the law." (Cited in Intissar Kherigi, 2016).

In summary, the discussion undertaken in this section sheds light on how local governance was 'under construction' during this period of extraordinary politics. During this period,

citizens and organisations within localities had to set-up temporary structures, such as the SMCs, and continue to deal with the exceptional and complex issues, a task that can only indicate considerable boundary-spanning activity. However, before considering what is likely to be the most dynamic boundary-spanning actor within the organisational field, it is important to identify the issues driving the practice in such localities.

Section Three: The state of the local – A host of complex issues

This study is about the micro and the local, that is individuals and organisations operating within localities such as Kairouan and Sfax, and how the practices of individuals impact institutions. Such locations are seen as typical places where socio-economic development and equality of service delivery needs to materialise, and where there are complex local issues confronting the local population. The discussion in the above two sections about the machinations of government begs the question of 'then what?' The purpose of this section is to look into the box of 'structural violence' and the nature of the resulting complex issues confronting stakeholders, and how amenable they may be to the skills of boundary-spanning actors as innovators and entrepreneurs.

To identify these issues, it is important to begin by highlighting the structural and institutional nature of regional socio-economic disparities, where some observers attribute this back to the 75 years-long, pre1956 independence, French Mandate (Alexandra Blackman, 2019). They are structural in the sense that the geography and demography of the country creates an environment that encouraged previous regimes to give priority to the coastal regions through the development of tourism and other export-oriented industries facilitated by easy access to

seaports. Regional disparities are also institutional in that the historic power-base of the Bourguiba and Ben Ali regimes have always been in the coastal regions and so the bias in resource allocation and services has been at the expense of interior rural regions (Wolf, 2017). As far back as the 1980s it was observed that, "[T]here is a distinct regional flavour to Tunisian politics, and circumstantial evidence suggests that disparities have been tolerated because of the political weakness of interior regions" (Marie Thourson Jones, 1986, p 201). This structural and persistent disparity of development, driven by history and deliberate policies of successive regimes, led to the revolution in early 2011.

Local service delivery in societies transitioning from autocracy and coming out of conflict, exhibit many complex problems by their very nature. Highlighting the case of Tunisia, Table 4.2 presents indicators that exemplify the disparities between coastal and interior areas of the country.

Table 4.2: Development indicators for coastal and interior areas (Source: World Bank, 2014 - The Unfinished Revolution)

Indicator	Coastal areas	Interior areas
Poverty	8%	32%
Welfare Gap between leading and lagging regions	56%	
Unemployment (2013)	12.5%	23.5%
Access to piped water (2005)	97%	40%
Sanitation (2004)	93%	12%
Maternal Mortality per 100,000	20	70

The World Bank country report for 2012, presents the regional disparities, giving life to the figures of Table 4.2, in the case of a typical child born in a rural town compared to one in a

coastal area:

> "A young girl from seaside Nabeul will likely be reasonably well-educated, have her health needs largely met, travel over good roadways on her way to school, and have access on par with parts of Europe to technologies... Her peer in the rural town of Thala is less likely to attend school past the age of 10, will not expect any response in cases of health emergency, let alone regular health screenings." (Zack Brisson and Kate Krontiris, 2012, p. 22).

Accountable relationships between any government and its citizens usually consists of broadly three elements or stages (Mark Bovens, 2005, p 184): the government as policy makers must feel obliged to inform the public about its conduct and policies; the information provided by the government can allow the public to scrutinise the government; and the public can hold judgement on the conduct of the government, withdrawing consent if necessary. However, this is easier said than done. Holding governments accountable, even in a fully functioning democracy, is complicated and there are many mechanisms that come into play, such as partisanship, free press, professional bureaucracy, and civil society. Tunisia had very few of these under Ben Ali's regime.

Given the period of extraordinary politics, although attempts during the period were being made to fix the relationship between service users and policy makers through decentralisation and strengthening citizens voice on the *Special Municipal Councils*, evidence has shown that such solutions are not sufficient to tackle the myriad complex local issues. At the national level, when the entire system of governance was overthrown following Ben Ali's departure, the novel solution agreed at the time was the establishment of the Higher Authority. Then in late 2013, when the entire new political system was running the risk of collapse, it was the boundary-spanning work of major civil society organisations - The Quartet - that brokered a political solution. In the same way that local civil and political society representatives have

come together and negotiated with the administration on setting up the SMCs, similar coming together must have taken place to start tackling some of the more pressing complex issues. The question is who came together and how?

The literature on these types of issues recognises that, due to their complexity, they require, "multi-stakeholder, multidisciplinary and multi sectoral solutions" (Stephen Brammer, Layla Branicki, Martina Linnenlueke, and Tom Smith, 2019, p. 518; Brian W. Head, 2019). The interest of this study is focused on issues pertaining to localities on the level of municipality or region. Identified in extant studies discussed above, are complex societal issues such as the Islamic-secular divide, the regional disparities, youth marginalisation, and poverty levels. While these are national in nature, they are expected to create the context for localised complex issues that might relate to localised hotspots, such as unemployment, environmental challenges and infrastructure projects. Given their nature, as public service-related issues, it is expected that the stakeholders involved in tackling these issues would be representing users, policy makers and service delivery organisations – all members of the local organisational field. The key point to conclude here, is that in the context of institutional change, and the vacuum created due to the breakdown in the governance organisational field, it is expected that entrepreneurial boundary-spanners will play a critical role in overcoming such challenges.

Section Four: Civil Society - The change makers?

The three main constituents of the organisational field are: policy makers, comprising of elected politicians; service deliverers, comprising of private, public and not-for-profit agencies; and users comprising of citizens and the groups and organisations they may form.

In Sections One and Two, consideration was given to the existence of the causes, or issues, which are effectively the arenas of boundary-spanning activities. The purpose of this section is to explore the role played by the new actors in the field, mostly in the shape of civil society organisations and their members. However, the civil society concept is one of the most debated and contested in the literature (Michael Edwards, 2011) and still requires clarity in terms of definition.

Michael Walzer (1998) provides the often-quoted definition that, "civil society is the sphere of uncoerced human association between the individual and the state, in which people undertake collective action for normative and substantive purposes, relatively independent of government and the market" (quoted in Edwards, 2011, p. 4). Walzer provides a clear demarcation of the civil society space as being relatively independent from the government and the private sector, but the more critical point made is the 'uncoerced' nature of human association. Uncoerced associations develop and thrive within a democratic environment; in the words of a former UN Secretary General, they are, "the oxygen of democracy" (Jenik Radon and Lidia Pecharroman, 2017). This belief led to some of the debates about the existence of civil society space in countries such as Tunisia, due to the historic democratic deficit. This is also the reason behind their importance to this study; because, an uncoerced civil society can be critical in solving complex issues – as the Quartet has proved nationally - and a source of less-politically-invested boundary-spanners.

What is often missing in Western literature is any consideration of civil society in the non-Western world[9]. Samuel Huntington (1993), Bernard Lewis (1990) and Sean L. Yom (2005)

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[9] The list of contributors to the *Oxford Handbook of Civil Society (2011)* is testimony to such oversight, where the list is dominated by North American and European perspectives.

have argued that there is no compatibility between Islam and democracy, and that such an environment cannot be conducive to the emergence of civil society. The major problem with such a belief is the fact that (a) it transposes Islam for entire Muslim societies, and (b) it lacks appropriate reading of history where contestation for power across the Muslim world is replete with reform and revolutionary movements that emerge from outside the space occupied by the state. This is an issue which Bishara (2012) covers at length in the introduction to the 6th edition of *Civil Society: A Critical Study (2012)*. Bishara timed the 6th edition almost as a celebration of the fact that civil society, as an arena or space for the furtherance of democratic practice, was being amply demonstrated across a number of key countries in the Middle East through what was then called the '2011 Arab Spring'.

The purpose of this discussion is to highlight an issue that is central to this thesis. Countries like Tunisia are developing post-conflict settlements and social contracts in a global context of growth in democratisation and the creation of civil space for citizens to participate in such development. Perceived barriers to such development that are uniquely cultural or religious do not seem to be insurmountable. In an overview of the rich and early development of civil society in Tunisia, almost on par with that in Western Europe, Mohamed Rami Abdelmawla (2019) attributes the origin of modern civil society in the country to the modernising reforms introduced by the pre-colonialism rulers in the mid-nineteenth century. In order to appreciate the current vibrancy of Tunisian civil society, and the unique boundary-spanning role it can play in today's changing institutional landscape, a brief 'rear view mirror' observation is called for, followed by discussion of the impact the sector is already making.

Many significant civil society organisations developed during the colonial period are listed by Abdulmawla (2019), including Khaldoonya Society in 1896, the Sadiqyyah School Graduates Society, then the Tunisian Youth Movement (TYM) in 1907. Most of today's main civil society organisations were also founded in the late 1940s, including the Tunisian General Labour Union (*Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail)* UGTT in 1947, Tunisian Confederation of Industry, Trade and Handicrafts (*Union tunisienne de l'industrie, du commerce et de l'artisanat)* UTICA (1948) and the Tunisian Student Union (*Union Générale des Etudiants de la Tunisie)* UGET in 1952. The post-independence period saw the initial coalition of the Distourain Party with the main civil society organisations, winning all seats in the People's Assembly, but only for the same period to yield a situation of "paternal suffocation" under Bourguiba, through the co-optation of all the main organisations, under the guise of serving the nation-building project. Following the palace coup of 1987, Ben Ali's rule promised to usher in democratic reforms, as signified by permission for more political parties and the registration of thousands of new civil society organisations, mostly in the cultural and sporting fields (see Figure 4.4), it was short-lived, and gave way to the most draconian form of authoritarian rule under the guise of the Security Pact – the more '*sultanistic'* character of the regime, to use Goldstone's (2011) term.

While in Section One, the circumstances that led to the Jasmin Revolution of 2010-2011 were discussed, here we explore the 'explosion' that lead to Tunisia turning into a huge 'workshop' – of discussions, conferences and seminars everywhere and about every issue - as witnessed by this researcher during repeated visits to the country between 2011 and 2019. During this period more than 200 political parties were registered, and thousands of new civil society organisations were also established, as can be seen in Figure 4.4 (Hudáková, 2021). Ranging

in their areas of interest, civil society organisations covered cultural, artistic, intellectual domains, "with clear ideological affiliations," as well as trade unions and charitable/rights organisations. Many marginal and previously disenfranchised groups found a voice and established their organisations and associations, including minority communities, LGBT and other equality campaigns. This vibrancy and activism also led to civil society activists not shying from attempts to hold governments to account during a period where new institutions were still in their formative stages of development.
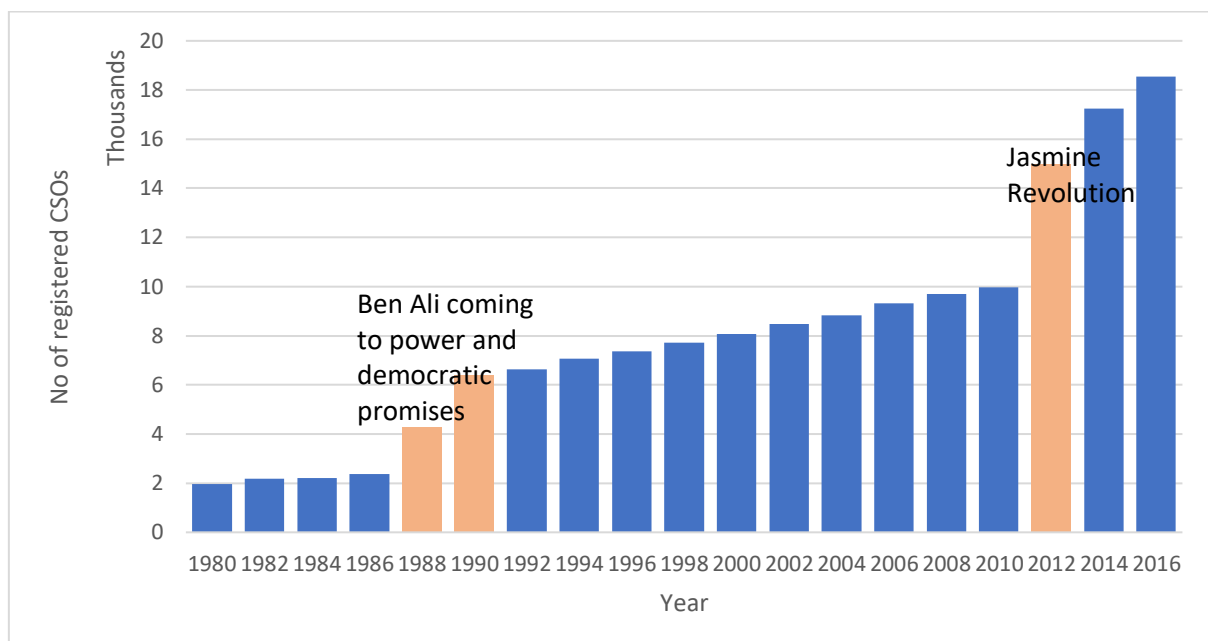
Figure 4.4: Growth of civil society organisation in Tunisia (Source: Adapted from Hudáková, 2021)

In the decade since the revolution, Tunisian civil society significantly contributed to the democratic development in the country; examples include pushing successive governments to advance human rights, such as the 2013 Law on Transitional Justice, the 2017 Law for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, and the 2018 Law Against Racial Discrimination

(Chaker, 2021). Such developments required considerable boundary-spanning work that bridged many organisational, ideological, political and cultural divides. The most significant contribution made by civil society actors is the resolution to the political impasse in late 2013, when the country was teetering on the precipice of violence. The Quartet were able to broker a deal between political parties that led to the adoption of one of the most progressive constitutions which was, "hailed internationally for its progressive focus on human rights and civil liberties," (Veronica Baker, 2015), the appointment of a technocratic government and the organisation of the second free and fair elections in 2014. This led to international recognition in the form of the award by the Norwegian Nobel Committee of the 2015 Nobel Prize to the Quartet for their role in the democratic transition.

Just as the political-party landscape is shaped by the four broad categories of affiliation and division, mainly Islamist, hard left, Socialist and liberal, civil society can also manifest conflict and division. Edwige Fortier (2019) suggests that Tunisian civil society experiences conflict due to four factors: residue of authoritarian rule, emergence of multiplicity of views in the new expanded space, political mirroring of national political debates, and the conceptual understanding of the sector as indicated by the Gramscian and neo-liberal views. Yet, strong evidence suggests that individuals and organisations from the civil society sector are playing significant boundary-spanning roles at national (role of the Quartet) and local levels. In fact, what we might have witnessed in Tunisia, mainly due such rich and vibrant civil society space is "the restructuring of the field of power to which state functionaries respond," to use Ronald Herring's reflection on the impact of agrarian reforms in some developing countries (Herring, 2003, p. 78).

Section Five: Conclusion

The discussion in this chapter elaborated on the context of the period of extraordinary politics in Tunisia, a country transitioning from autocratic rule to a democratic one. The literature covering countries going through transition, like Tunisia, highlight the possibilities of what Andrews (2013) describes in terms of 'logic switch', 'logic hybrid' or 'layering'. The emerging transition route depends on the extent to which three factors converge: the severity of disruption and the extent to which it tests the prevailing dominant logics, the existence of alternative logics, and the readiness of agents to challenge and facilitate transition. It was suggested that, during the 2011 Tunisian Revolution, there was evidence of all these factors and, therefore, were most likely to lead to the scenario of a complete logic switch, leading to significant institutional changes as new 'rules of the game' are adopted.

This chapter also explored the nature of the boundary-spanning terrain at a local level. It was demonstrated that the period of extraordinary politics remains more vigorous than at the national level. Whilst, nationally, the 'rules of the game' have largely been agreed to, through the adoption of the 2014 Constitution and the enactment of democratic practices through regular elections and peaceful transfers of power, sub-national governance is far from settled. As localities continue to experience the impact of complex challenges resulting from the legacy of structural violence, local actors have collaborated to put in place SMCs in order to fill the governance vacuum created by the collapse of the old regime.

Evidence from the boundary-spanning roles undertaken by civil society at a national level to solve some of the most intractable political issues, as well as evidence from other studies (Volpi et. al., 2017; Gorman, 2017) where local civil society and political actors worked to fill

the governance vacuum, suggests that widespread boundary-spanning work is being undertaken to tackle other complex issues. Using the Framework of Accountability Relationship (WBG, 2003), it was possible to identify membership of the local organisational field that are involved in the production of public services as service users, policy makers and service deliverers. Given, therefore, that complex issues by their very nature require multistakeholder intervention, which in a time of institutional uncertainty requires proactive boundary-spanning work, the local organisational field then becomes the terrain of both boundary-spanning activities and institutional change. This is in line with the discussion in Chapter Two.

Even though boundary-spanners can come from any sector, it is civil society that is likely to play a more active boundary-spanning role. This is due to the fact that, during the period of extraordinary politics, while political parties are more heavily engaged in national politics, and may even be more invested in the Islamist-secular split, it is civil society that is in a better position to undertake the brokering and entrepreneurial role required to solve complex challenges. Revolutionary periods are expected to generate a civil society culture that is focused on holding power centres, whether political or private, to account for and generate new ideas and policy positions, as has been demonstrated at the national level in Tunisia. This is not to overlook, however, that new democratic openings and the associated access to international funding is likely to generate service-oriented, single issue CSOs that might be slightly averse to challenging authority, as evidence from elsewhere suggests (Naila Kabeer, Simeen Mahmud, and Jairo J. I. Castro, 2010).

The period of extraordinary politics in Tunisia, which is by definition a period of uncertainty and a shift from the previous autocratic norms and transitions, has created circumstances of negotiation and conflict, as well as progress in rule-setting at national level. Yet, the pace of progress at local level has been lagging, creating a vacuum of governance and weak accountability, as well as continuity of many complex and pressing issues that need to be tackled. The space and opportunities for boundary-spanning activity in Tunisia, at all levels, is, therefore, extensive for two reasons. First, the socio-economic needs and expectations are high, and, as the polls mentioned in this chapter indicate, have remained largely unaddressed. The second reason is the fact that Tunisian society is riven by ideological, political, regional and sectoral divisions. This situation, together with some of the recognised work at the national level, makes the environment within localities ideal for boundary-spanning activities. There may, however, be consequences for this boundary-spanning activism by such actors due to their ideological and sectoral affiliations in terms of the nature of the logic shift, which will be explored in the following chapter.

CHAPTER FIVE

SOCIETAL LOGICS: DOMINANCE, CONFLICT AND STRUCTURAL CHANGE IN TUNISIA

'al-sha'b yurid isqat al-nizam'
('People want the downfall of the regime' –
revolutionary slogan)

Introduction

Societies work to the rhythm of their dominant institutional orders, described as the family, religion, community, state, professions, market, and corporation (Thornton et al, 2012). These institutional orders form the interinstitutional system of society, where some orders are more dominant than others, and work to influence and shape the environment in which individuals and organisations operate. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the dominant and competing institutional logics operating at societal level in Tunisia, and how they impact the practices of individuals working to affect institutional change in the two localities of Sfax and Kairouan, both by constraining and empowering change. In doing so, this chapter seeks to answer the research sub-question: **(TQ1) What are the post-revolution logic changes affecting Tunisian society, and why?,** which will provide the information required to identify the dominant and competing societal logics.

Changes in organisational fields and, therefore, institutions, "can be fruitfully examined by considering competition and struggle among various categories of actors, committed to contrasting institutional logics" (Scott, 2014, p. 91). In the literature review, we have seen how institutional logics are defined as systems of cultural elements, in that their elements are coherently connected in a detectible pattern, and they are cultural because they consist of values, beliefs and normative expectations (Heather Haveman and Gillian Gualtieri, 2017) and are used by actors, individuals and organisations, to make sense of, as well as to evaluate, their activities. In addition to sense-making and evaluating, actors, who are nested in higher order levels, organisational, field, and societal, use institutional logics to organise their activities in time and space; but it must also be accepted that logics are historically contingent and can vary depending on the power and objectives of actors.

In this chapter, **Section One** sets out how societal logics are identified as well as the global and regional historical context that are likely to have influence in defining the dominant societal logics in Tunisia. **Section Two** describes the prevailing autocratic-state logic in the run-up to the Jasmin Revolution when the modus operandi was the *suffocating paternalism* of Habib Bourguiba and then the *security pact* under Ben Ali. In societies dominated by the autocracy logic, people are treated as subjects, and trade off rights for security. This arrangement, which is also described as the autocratic bargain reached an end point with the revolutionary moment of 17th December 2010-14th January 2011.

The emergence of the 'democracy logic', which is set out in **Section Three**, was triggered by the combination of three factors that become the Revolution: discredited extant autocratic logic, available alternative 'democracy logic' and agents capable of challenging the old order.

The logic of democracy, "exalts the autonomous rights of the individual to participate as a citizen in public life," (Friedland and Alford, 1991) but it is not the only logic available to actors. Religion, a third competing societal logic, is discussed in **Section Four**, because it was found to play a major part in the national discourse and was reflected in the political divide that characterises society throughout Tunisia's modern history. The conclusion in **Section Five** then discusses the competition taking place between these three logics and the resulting shift in logics. As summarised in Table 5.1, when comparing the dimensions of the logics, it can be evidenced that a major shift has taken place in terms of the sources of identity, legitimacy, authority, and basis of norms and attention from the previously dominant autocratic logic to mainly the democracy logic and, to a lesser extent, the religious logic, while the basis of strategy and control mechanisms remain contested between the autocratic and democracy logics.

Section One: Dominant Logics – The Global and Regional Context

First, on definitions and approach

The role of institutional logics is to focus the attention of individual actors through the activation of their social identities, in terms of their affiliations and roles, their goals, whether defined by identities or accountability, as well as their action schemas- that is their mental models of the world. The actor's identities, goals and schemas work to shape their social interactions which, in turn, generate communication, resource flow and interdependencies, resulting in social practices including institutional work, and structures, such as organisations and organisational fields (Thornton et al, 2012). In other words, institutional logics focus the

attention and resources of decision makers on issues and solutions that are in line with the dominant logic.

This study aims to identify the impact of the work of boundary-spanners on institutional change in the two localities of Sfax and Kairouan; it will do so by studying changes to the organisational field in both localities (Chapter Six), then seek to explain such change by examining the practices and actions of actors (Chapter Seven). The organisational field, defined as, "those organisations that, in the aggregate, constitute a recognised area of institutional life," (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983, p. 148) is shaped by dominant or competing institutional logics, because they give collective meaning to social behaviour. As identified in Chapters Three and Four, in terms of membership, the organisational field at locality level consists of service users, policy makers and service providers (WBG, 2003); where service users include: the general public, groups and organisations; policy makers are mainly politicians at various levels of government; and service providers can be public, private and non-profit organisations. Given this set-up, or 'marketplace' to use DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) terminology, how can we identify the typology of extant and emerging institutional logics that are shaping the organisational field, and how are they accessed and operationalised by actors?

Building on the discussion in Chapter Two, and the methodology identified in Chapter Three, the identification and prioritisation of dominant and competing societal logics relevant to Tunisia is based on the ideal types identified by Thornton and colleagues (2012), as well as comparing the categorical elements of the relevant logics (Appendix 2.1). Then, following the advice of Campbell (2004), where he suggests considerations of (1) the researchers theoretical

perspective, (2) issues of salience to the researcher, and (3) level of analysis -whether, society or field, and using secondary sources, supported by participant interviews, salient societal logics are identified.

In their study of the influence of funding partners on young firms, Emily Pahnke, Riitta Katila, and Kathleen Eisenhardt (2015) suggested a simplification of the dimensions/categories. They suggest that organisations develop a basis of norms which encompasses underlying rules about membership, authority and legitimacy, basis of strategy (how actors view their identity and strengths), and basis of attention, which relates to assumptions actors make about how to succeed and which issues require attention. Whereas Pahnke and colleagues compared the logics of different funders, that is venture capitalists; corporate venture capitalists; and the state; and how they affect young firms, this study is ascertaining the competing logics at societal level that impact local actors in the two localities of Sfax and Kairouan. Studies that are closer to this study include Hathaway and Askvikb (2021), who looked into the typology of logics applying to public accountability organisations in Zambia, where ideal types were identified through relevant extant literature and then ascertained, or changed, through the study findings offered useful insight.

For this study, on the basis of extant literature as well as participant interviews, the dominant and competing societal logics were found to be the *autocratic state logic*, *democratic state logic* and *religion logic*, as will be detailed in this chapter. Evidence of logic shift will be ascertained by identifying shift in 'anchor rationalities', whether it is, for example, that of self-interest associated with market logic, or the importance of God associated with the religious logic, etc., as discussed in Chapter Two. Once these anchor-rationalities are recognised, then

the remaining categories can be ascertained on the basis of Campbell's suggestion. In essence, based on the main research question, the study is about 'why?' and 'how?' actors influence change. In order to investigate the 'why?' we need to look at the anchor rationality, legitimacy and authority; in order to understand the 'how?' we need to look into the basis of strategy and attention.

Situating Tunisia

As stated in Chapter Three (Methodology), the process of identifying dominant and competing societal logics in Tunisia is based on secondary data as well as participant interviews. Such rich and insight into the country and its history recognises that, mainly due to its location at the middle of the African Mediterranean coast (see map in Figure 3.3), Tunisia's exposure to Arab, African and European cultures was inevitable; however, it is the European and Arab-Islamic cultures that have exerted the most influence, and which are often in competition (Perkins, 1986; Achour, 2018). Modern Tunisian history is witness to this competition and, often, conflict. Starting from the early nineteenth century, either willingly, in an attempt to modernise through, for example, the abolition of slavery in 1846 and the adoption of a constitution in 1861, or because of external pressure, due to the encroachment of European colonial powers, Tunisian society has been subject to ongoing tension between its historic Arbo-Islamic identity and European-Western influence, or as Rachid Ghannouchi describes it, between '*Attaghreeb* and *Atta'areeb*', meaning Westernisation and Arabisation (Perkins, 1987; Ghannouchi, 2011; Ben Achour, 2018; Hela Yousfi, 2018). In more recent times, the leadership of the Tunisian independence movement was also split between a Westernised and a nationalist-Arabised elites (Ben Achour, 2018), with the former succeeding and leading

the newly independent state. This resulted in a secularisation drive that curtailed the role of religion – including closure of 'awkaf/hobus' (Islamic endowments) and religious schools, a new personal code that replaced religious codes, and climaxed in the banning of the hijab in 1981. The suppression of religiosity culminated in a growing suspicion, even of people who frequented mosques under Ben Ali (Hibou, 2011; Wolf, 2017).

The acceleration of secularisation and Westernisation during the autocratic, post-independence regimes of Bourguiba and Ben Ali, spanning a period from 1956 to 2011, created major cultural, social and political divisions in Tunisian society. It also demonstrated the unmistakable ascendancy for the Westernising, secularising forces. However, when the Islamist Ennahda Party gained 37% of the popular vote compared to 35% for the next most successful eight parties (Hibou, 2017, p. 2), in the 2011 elections to the NCA, many in the secular camp saw this as a setback, a reversion and backwardness (Ben Achour, 2018; Kamal Saleh, 2013).

> "Habib Bourguiba, the first president, was portrayed as the most radical cultural moderniser of the Arab world (Moore 1965; Zghal 1991; Alexander 2010), who opposed any revival of religion and sought 'to shape Tunisia along the lines of nineteenth-century positivist ideals and of triumphant laicity".
>
> (Rory McCarthy, 2014, p. 734).

There is, however, another critical dimension to add; the regimes of Bourguiba and Ben Ali, 1957-2011, which have been identified as autocratic and dictatorial, to Goldstone (2011) and Stepan and Linz (2013), may have even displayed some *sultanistic* tendencies. Among the most Sultanistic features of Ben Ali's regime was letting his wife and her family, "treat the Tunisian economy as their personal property" (Stepan and Linz, 2013, p.28; World Bank,

2014). The most consistent feature in terms of the relationship between the regime and society throughout the Bourguiba and Ben Ali's period, is what is known as the 'authoritarian bargain', an arrangement between citizens and the ruling class, "whereby citizens relinquish political influence in exchange for public spending" (Desai et al., 2009, p. 93). The combination of Tunisia's unique societal tensions, due to the hybrid nature of the Arabisation and Westernisation process over more than a century, and the more recent half a century of autocracy, it is safe to say that the dominant pre-Revolution logic was that of the 'autocratic logic', dressed in, and even legitimised by, its claim of modernisation, which permeated all levels of society.

Section Two: The dominant autocratic-state logic in Pre-Revolution Tunisia

The foundation of post-independence Tunisia is based on the paternalistic position adopted by the founder, Habib Bourguiba – and later by Ben Ali- and was signified by three landmark developments. The first is a presidential system of government which gives primacy to the leader, the President; secondly, a one-party state in the shape of the Neo Destour Party, and later the dominant RCD. The third, and most fundamental of all reforms, was the dismantling of the traditional Islamic establishment, including the enactment of the Code of Personal Status of 1956 (Wolf, 2017; Jane Tchaïcha and Kedija Arfaoui, 2012). In commenting on the presidential system adopted by Tunisia, the Middle East Journal (1959) recognised the *jinni* (genie) being let out of the bottle. As if there was a need to prove this point, Bourguiba, in a speech in Benzert on 20th October 1964, was crystal clear in his objectives and motives in

quickly moving to establish the one-party system. Others (McCarthy, 2013) observed that

Bourguiba wanted a clean break with religion and an embrace of laicity.

> "In providing for a presidential executive authority (particularly against the background of an already established strong political leadership), the makers of the Constitution let loose from the political bottle the jinni of arbitrary rule."

> (Middle East Journal, 1959, p. 447)

> "…it is difficult in a country that is enthusiastic and where the (ruling) party undertakes the best of services and carry out its duties and responsibilities in a perfect way, and so successfully, such that there is no one among the Tunisians that disagrees with it's aims and objectives to the degree that calls for the establishment of another party with a different philosophy, aims and different ways of working."

> (Extract from Bourguiba's speech in Benzert, cited in Abdellatif Alhinashi, 2011, p. 28)

These three steps, the presidential system, one-party rule and the dismantling of the traditional Islamic establishment, signified more than anything the hegemonic nature of the regime, that sought to deliver modernity to Tunisian Society almost by any means necessary. So, it is in this context that the Ben Ali regime built on Bourguiba's legacy and, from 1987 onwards, especially from the early 1990s, turned the 'suffocating paternalism' (Abdelmawla, 2019) of Bourguiba into the "security pact" (Hibou, 2011, p. 181), which manifested in the now infamous Tunisian, "economic miracle" (World Bank, 2014). There is no doubt among scholars that Bourguiba belonged to a tradition of Tunisian leaders that stretched back to the late Nineteenth Century, which saw modernisation being associated with Westernisation and secularism (Wolfe, 2017; Hibou, 2011; Perkins, 1986), and he used his dictatorial powers to create "modern Tunisia" (Wolf, 2017, p. 31). However, as far as Ben Ali's rule is concerned, autocracy was more personalised and sultanistic than paternalistic. The following paragraphs

will provide detail of the manifestation of the autocratic logic on Tunisian society using the dimensions identified by Thornton et al. (2012).

In an autocratic environment, actors see their **source of legitimacy** as stemming from a visible association with the regime. The fact that a fifth of the Tunisian population, which is about a third of the adult population – over two million - sought membership of the ruling party, the RCD, says a great deal about the benefit of such association. Hibou (2011), Yousfi (2014) and others list the barriers that can be overcome in everyday living from such an association, including access to employment, permits to run a business or to secure loans and children's access to top courses at university. Recognising that authority lies at the top of the autocracy, in Ben Ali himself and his family, enables business to be transacted. The World Bank Study (2014) *All in The Family,* details how the Tunisian Investment Incentives Code 1994, *Code d'Incitations aux Investissements,* created entry barriers to the Tunisian market and facilitated state/family capture of economic activity, by requiring government approval at the highest level.

Affiliation with autocracy took many forms and at many levels, but it takes its basis from the slogan of 'stability, security and development.' Bourguiba's post-independence autocracy was justified by his place as the leader of the independence movement and the drive for state building, with the stated aim of economic development and modernisation. Meanwhile, Ben Ali's deal was described by Hibou (2011) as the 'security pact', where the regime works to ceaselessly reactivate the, "veritable political culture of danger" - danger of Islamisation, globalisation, unemployment, and so on (p. 182). So, **identification with autocracy** means being associated with continuous improvement and being shielded from risks.

In both, Sfax and Kairouan, several participants confirmed how associating with the regime meant getting things done. In Sfax, civil society participant SA18 confirmed that it was the Society for Protection of Nature and the Environment (SPNE) 'being accommodating with the regime' that delivered two important rulings, closure of Taparura Works and Presidential Order in 2008 for closure of SIAPE – the latter was never implemented in the end. Similarly, in Kairouan, KA08 testifies that it was possible for the Society for the Protection of the City of Kairouan CSO to get earlier restoration work of the Old Town carried out to specification because of their affiliations. The prevalent **norms** in autocratic Tunisia seem to have been transactional, where individuals and organisations recognise that demonstrating loyalty reaps material and social rewards, but importantly removes risks of exclusion, and worse suspicion and surveillance.

Living within a society governed by an autocratic logic means that the basis of **securing attention** and recognition depends on status within the hierarchy of relevant institutions, especially the RCD, security apparatus or bureaucracy which, in turn, depends on the visible signs of loyalty to the President such as RCD membership, displaying Ben Ali's portrait, and even becoming a police informer (Hibou, 2011). Recognition through RCD membership means, for example, "in six or seven years, the president of a district cell could become a town worthy and build himself a prestigious house or a profitable business" (Hibou, 2017, p. xix). However, it is also the case that a lack of recognition and attention is also possible, such as forgetfulness of those less important who live within the interior regions. Autocratic regimes suffered from an extreme form of what the late Uruguayan author Eduardo Galeano once described as "system amnesia"; which is "a system of power that is always deciding…who

deserves to be remembered and who deserves to be forgotten" (Younge, 2013). Participant

KA04 provides a good, if sad, example, of such amnesia, where complete communities in rural

Tunisia, such as Kairouan, are often not recognised by the system:

> "Through our relief of poverty work after the Revolution, we came across families that are not on any official register, and do not receive any state services. So, when we brought this to the attention of the authorities there was complete denial that such cases existed; they would say: "this is Tunisia, such things are not possible". We had to take them there to prove such communities existed".
>
> (CSO participant KA04)

The autocratic logic entails formal and informal **control mechanisms**. Again, during Ben Ali's

rule, this comprised both actual surveillance using police, party and bureaucracy, but as part

of the 'security pact' – or the autocratic-bargain. Hibou (2011) argues that this is not enough

to explain the powerful informal controls resulting from the "desire for the state," which has

been nurtured ever since independence. This desire can only stem from the mobilisation of

what Lukes (2004) describes as the second and third dimensions of power; basically, belief in

the shelter of autocracy from risks. The strategy then becomes self-preservation, as well as

forever looking for gains from the Tunisian 'economic miracle.'

This autocratic logic, so prevalent in Tunisia throughout its modern history but being more

aggressively dominant in post-independence Tunisia, ran its course by late 2010. The 'security

pact' no longer delivered the shelter from the complex issues of unemployment, lack of

dignity, and marginalisation. To use Eduardo Galeano's explanation those who deserved to be

remembered became too few, and those whom the regime forgot became too numerous; a

condition that led to the Jasmine Revolution, and the quest for alternative logic. One that

delivers the revolutionary demand of 'employment, freedom, national dignity.' As seen in

Andrews' (2013) scenarios, discussed in Chapter Four, and being self-evident due to the revolution, the legitimacy of the prevailing institutional logic has been challenged, the logic of democracy is an available alternative, while change agents in the shape of revolutionaries have proved capable agents challenging the old order. Such change in logic is also supported by the presence of factors identified by Haveman and Rao (2006), such as new political processes becoming more democratic, new views of legitimacy based on rights, and new technologies making access to information and networking much more prevalent and democratic. To boundary-spanners, such as Private sector participant KA05, living within a democracy means inclusion and self-expression, without fear.

> *Like so many others who wished to see their country develop, I wanted to be in a position to be able to suggest and put forward ideas. It is my duty as a citizen and a Muslim. However, before the revolution it was not possible unless you were part of the regime – and this was not possible. So, we had to stay low, we talk privately but that is it. This situation changed after the revolution.*

(KA05)

Section Three: The alternative democratic-state logic

As discussed in Chapter Four, accountable relationship between any government and its citizens in a democracy, requires the government to feel obliged to inform the public about its conduct and policies, so that the public can scrutinise the government, and withdraw consent from the Government if necessary (Boven, 2005). Tunisia had very few of the mechanisms necessary to be able to do so under Ben Ali's regime (Hibou, 2011; Wolf, 2017) – such as free press, professional bureaucracy, and civil society. This should not be a surprise, though, due to the nature of legitimacy derived by such regimes, which is largely based on the perceived performance by its narrow constituency (Bueno de Mesquita, Smith, Siverson, and

Morrow, 2003), where the focus of such regimes becomes the provision of private goods rather than public goods.

Nothing brings together the three-factor indicators of logic-shift mentioned by Andrews (2013) more than the two most unifying slogans of the Jasmin revolution, one in Arabic *'al-sha'b yurid isqat al-nizam'* (the people want to bring down the regime), and one in French *'degage'* (leave) – see Figure (5.1). Using only language as their weapon, Tunisians toppled one of the harshest dictatorships (Nabiha Jerad, 2013, p. 238); whether it achieved the dramatic switch in logics predicted by Andrews (2013), will be discussed in the remaining chapters. Stating their vision for the new era, Tunisians also spelt out what that was to look like in another slogan, that of *Shughl, hurriyya, karama wataniyya* (employment, freedom, national dignity); a slogan that was free from ideological connotation, and an emphasis of universal values" (Jerad, 2013). The Tunisian revolutionary moment, from 17th December 2012 to 14th January 2011, demonstrated quite clearly that the non-ideological, popular and society-wide movement, on top of the 338 martyrs and 2,147 injuries (Ben Achour, 2018, p. 103), 'mobilised the power of language and sent it into battle', to paraphrase the famous World War Two American journalist Edward Munroe's comments on Winston Churchill. The battle in the new Tunisia, or the period of extraordinary politics to be precise, was to be fought away from the streets and through interim governments, elections and through the drafting of a new constitution and laws. So, to what extent was the switch from autocracy and associated structural violence to 'employment, freedom and national dignity' achieved and what then, are the characteristics or domains of the new logic?

Figure 5. 1: Typical scenes from the days of the Jasmine Revolution 'al-sha'b yurid isqat al-nizam' - the people demand the downfall of the regime. (Source: VOA Photo/L. Bryant and C. Mend)

Slogans such as 'The people want' … 'freedom and dignity' can only mean the demand to shift from being *subjects* to being *citizens* in the nation. One of the key strengths of the Tunisian revolution is its emphasis on the civic identity through the adoption of the universal values of 'work, freedom and dignity'. In a society known for its historic division between secular and Islamist tendencies; the battles fought over identity and character of the state; and through the drafting of the new 2014 Constitution, both tendencies agreed on the civic conception of the state, or what is termed "*addawlah almadanyyah*" (Achour, 2018, p. 252). Such conception translates to, "strong links to democracy" (Erhardt et al., 2020, p. 61). To Friedland and Alford (1991), the institutional logic of democracy means, "participation and the extension of popular control over human activity," in other words it is what *'al-sha'b yurid'*, or what the people want.

It is important to also note here that Thornton et al (2012) question whether, "the concept of democracy holds its own as a separate institutional order… [as it is] a particular ideology distinct from an institutional order" (p. 68). In a later paper, Ocasio et al (2017), continue to

question whether ideologies, "which provide an espoused normative ideal that guides mobilisation," can be treated as logics. In this study, both the democratic-state and autocratic-state logics can be both an ideology and a logic. The justification for consideration as logic is based on the fact they provide operating principles that guide actual democratic or autocratic practices, which is not too dissimilar to the argument put forward for the market being an ideology and a logic by the same authors, Ocasio et al. (2017, p. 513). Furthermore, Roger Friedland, one of the co-authors of the seminal article (Friedland and Alford, 1991) on the subject, supports the approach of treating democracy as a logic:

> "I agree with you about democracy being an institutional logic and not an ideology, which implies that the state is the real and democracy is some kind of window dressing or legitimation. That is not only wrong it is politically dangerous in that it theoretically voids the world-making capacity of democracy."
> (Friedland, 2021 - From an email exchange between this researcher and Roger Friedland, 7th October 2021)

Perhaps the most important and significant shift from the pre-Revolution autocratic logic to the new democracy logic is the **source of legitimacy** enjoyed by actors, one that is based on 'rights' and which is clearly demonstrated in almost all interviews as the absence of fear manifested in their freedom of expression; whether it was newly elected members of parliament (KA07 and SA11) representing their constituents' concerns and aspirations; public service administrators (KA01 and SA01) feeling free to engage and to be transparent in their dealings with the public; civil society participants (KA03, KA05, SA07, SA02, SA23) feeling empowered to lobby, challenge, and take direct action.

> "…it was an honour that history will recall that a woman member of Ennahda played a leading role in setting the rights and freedoms enshrined in the Constitution to protect against the return to authoritarianism. The parliamentary political system has been designed in such a way that authority cannot be manipulated by any single party."
> (MPA participant KA07)

> "We decided to reclaim the beach. So as SCOs we occupied it, used some of our resources and pressured the Municipality to support us… This has enabled the CEDS becoming able to tackle such projects that resonate with aspirations of the people of Sfax."
>
> (Civil society participant SA08)

The **source of authority** in a democracy logic is the people, *'al-sha'b yurid'* (the people want); if the Tunisian revolution was to mean anything, it would be through the clear and unified slogan of expecting the source of authority to be the people. In addition to being the source of legitimacy, by electing their representatives to develop the new constitution, as well as by enshrining laws, such as the new 2018 Local Government Act, there is the lived experience of participative democracy. Many participants, if not most, demonstrated the expectation that their right to shape their destiny stemmed from their authority enshrined in the Constitution and law. As a representative of the people, MPA KA07 felt empowered and able to pursue the complex issue of the contracts of the Refuse Collectors in Kairouan and secure their rights, KA05 was also able to secure accountability for the delivery of the contract for the restoration of Kairouan Old Town. The perception of authority by the average person was such that a person felt so empowered as to bring his/her family to the Governor's office and demand that they were either offered employment or they would threaten to leave their entire family to the responsibility of the Governor to feed and look after (Kairouan Governor KA09).

> In a technical meeting to discuss the project progress, we turned up. However, the contractor and the Municipality staff were not used to civil society attending and taking part. They refused to allow us to participate. We then raised the issue with the press and started to apply pressure, which led to others joining our campaign.
>
> (Private sector participant KA05)

> I used to get individuals who would bring their family and say look I cannot feed my family, here they are, it is your responsibility.
>
> (KA09)

This feeling of empowerment and authority is a complete contrast to the situation during the previous autocratic regime. The experience of the non- boundary spanner teacher and CSO participant KA04 testifies to this, when she highlighted swathes of the rural population who were not even acknowledged to exist by the system, under the autocratic rule. She says, "Through our relief of poverty work after the Revolution, we came across families that are not on any official register, and do not receive any state services." This relates to what Eduardo Galeano once described as "system amnesia" of such regimes; which is "a system of power that is always deciding…who deserves to be remembered and who deserves to be forgotten" (Younge, 2013). What is more, is that these examples are from Kairouan, a locality that was among the forgotten voiceless of the interior regions. There is evidence, however, that autocratic behaviour still lingers on in some respect. Take for example the introduction of Participatory Budgeting, which was led on by civil society, specifically Action Associative (AA) (Civil society SA20, Member of Municipality SA15 and Director of Finance SA01), and is based on citizen participation in the control of certain local budgets, design of projects and monitoring of their delivery. In this regard, senior civil servants in the Ministry of Environment and Local Government and relevant agencies intervened to curtail the level of citizen participation with an amended version called Participatory Investment, which removed citizen participation in the designing and monitoring of the delivery of projects[10]. Likewise, there are complaints levelled by many participants in Sfax (SA02, SA08, SA04, SA10) that the locality continues to be thwarted in its ambition due to the control of the agenda within the state

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[10] This is extensively covered in a detailed article by Hayfa Dhouib (2017), which includes primary documents and comments by concerned parties, which demonstrates the power, and autocratic tendencies, of the bureaucracy. 'Loans Fund: The Government's tool to restrict participatory democracy', 23rd June. Available at: https://nawaat.org/2017/06/23/ا-على-للتضييق-الدولة-أداة-القروض-صندوق/

bureaucracy by the two historically dominant regions. Participant SA11 gives the example of the Regional Development Plan that, after proper consultation and input by the region, became diluted by the powers that be, the still two dominant regions within the administration, Sousse and Monastir.

Perhaps the most contentious and often debated issue within Tunisian society is in relation to identity, more precisely **the source of identity**. Observers, researchers and commentators on modern Tunisia have always found this a rich source for debate (Perkins, 1986, Ben Achour, 2018; Hibou, 2011; Essebsi, 2012; Ghannouchi, 2011). This mainly stems from the fact that Tunisia seems to have been dragged both willingly and unwillingly, at times, towards modernity, while the centre of gravity of society remains wedded to it's Arabic-Islamic roots, as discussed earlier in this chapter and in Chapter Four. The dichotomy is evident where society sometimes sways in favour of secularism and modernity, as under Bourguiba and Ben Ali and is especially evidenced through the recent multi-party elections, which demonstrates strongly return to conservatism.

Locality and community before party and ideology

The identity battle, as Ben Achour (2018) describes it, was exemplified in the elected 2011 NCA and the process of drafting the new Constitution, which seemed to link identity to either 'commitment to modernity' or 'commitment to Islam'. The flag bearers of the former being all the secular forces, and the latter being Ennahda Party. However, what transpired in the end, as stated in the 2014 Constitution, is a shared commitment to *addawlah almadanyyah* – the civil state, and to the nation – Tunisia, which is seen by observers like Ben Achour (2018) and Wolf (2014) as being a compromise. One of the main findings of this study, however, is

that identity conflict has been found to have some resonance within localities, but is not dominant. The clear source of identity that is expected and valued is a sense of localism – association with, and belonging to, the locality, or community. This can be clearly seen in quotations from, for example, Municipality Finance Director SA01 crediting Ennahda leadership of working across such divides, or SA11, a far-left MPA identifying with the locality more than the party he represents, and the most visible sign in Sfax, during the SIAPE rally, where all political affiliations were backgrounded in favour of the locality.

> The leader of the Municipality, while affiliated to Ennahda, worked to portray in his words and action that he is willing to work with all and that his party is not inclined to let party politics interfere with the work of the Municipality.
>
> (SA01)

> As an MPA, if you choose to seek a national role, then you have to overlook the constituency interest. Personally, I have no national aspiration"
>
> (SA11)

In the emerging democratic logic, **the basis of attention** is found to be similar to that identified by Thornton et al (2012) in the community logic, which is that status is derived from personal investment in tackling the issues of the locality. Participants constantly referenced who is, and who is not, making a visible effort, as evidenced, for example, in KA01's selection of members of the SMC for Kairouan, or SA18 acknowledging that the reclamation of Casino Beach gave CEDS credit for action and legitimacy to tackle other issues such as SIAPE. This categorical element is proving to be contentious though, and there is a marked difference between Sfax and Kairouan; because, in Sfax the basis of attention is linked to category and role, that is social identities, much more than Kairouan. For example, SA18 clearly states that, due to his role as chair of the Doctors' Syndicate and his established network with other professions, he was able to quickly mobilise such networks. This contrasts with Kairouan where it was much

more likely to be just the role, for example, KA03's activities were directly associated with his role as Head of the Tunisian Human Rights League in the area. The same was true for KA05 and KA08, with the former being a businessman and recognised for his ability to give support financially, and the latter as a heritage expert, which led to both being involved in the issue of Kairouan's Old Town Restoration contract.

> "…when special councils were being set up to run the municipalities, due to my previous role as president of the Doctors Syndicate and my relationship with other civil society organisations – such as the lawyers, architects, engineers, etc., I was in a position to call these around to help select the first interim council for Sfax."
>
> (Civil society participant SA18)

> "As a businessman, before this consultation, the Leader of Kairouan SMC contacted to me to support the campaign to clean the city, to which I made a financial contribution. So, when the consultation process started, Si Alasaad contacted me personally to attend the first public meeting held to inaugurate the consultation."
>
> (Private sector participant KA05)

One of the main distinctions between the autocracy and democracy logics is the **system of informal control**. Whilst in the former, as we have seen, control can be on the basis of fear in response to a 'stick and carrot' approach, which is at the heart of the autocratic bargain, in democracy informal control mechanisms are based on a commitment to the cause and a sense of obligation. So, for politicians (KA07, SA11 and KA09) it was accountability to the locality, political pressure to deliver on promises to local people, for administrators (SA01 and KA01) it was professional standing, and for CSO members it was hope and commitment to the locality. The overriding theme and source of informal control was the feeling of, 'we dare not let our area down now, that we have the opportunity.'

> "After the Revolution, we were satisfied that it was possible for the region to develop vision and programmes… So, pollution, quality of life, and development in all its facets, remain the big concern…This raised the hope that we, in civil society, can also revisit the environmental concerns and the city, and put forward a vision for the city."

"Here the role of the MPA becomes really frustrating. So, you find your constituents looking over the border to see development taking place, while they are not receiving any attention. So, my role, given all the above, is restricted to exposing these unfair practices."

(MPA SA11)

The above analysis demonstrates the strong emergence of the democracy logic, but what evidence is there about the presence or emergence of other logics? The following section builds on some of the evidence in Section One and explores the emergence of a religion logic.

Section Four: Religion – 'rooting Tunisia's Islamic identity'

There is near unanimity in the literature that the predictions by secularisation theory of religion being pushed out of the public sphere and back to the secluded surroundings of the private sphere is premature to say the least (Paul Tracy, 2012). A comprehensive study by the Pew Research Centre (PRC) (2012) estimates that, "there are 5.8 billion religiously affiliated adults and children around the globe, representing 84% of the 2010 world population of 6.9 billion." In a more recent report, *A Changing World: Global Views on Diversity, Gender Equality, Family Life and the Importance of Religion* (PRC, 2019), it was found that, "more favour an increased role for religion in their countries than oppose it" (p. 25). Specifically for Tunisia, this latter report gives an important indicator on religiosity in the country; it reports that 69% of Tunisians are in favour of an increasing role for religion in their society. This finding concurs with previously cited literature describing the political debate in Tunisia (Ben Achour, 2018; Hibou, 2011; Wolf, 2017), giving the impression that religiosity and secularism dominate every conversation, whether in parliament, media, around dinner tables or during taxi rides.

To this researcher's surprise, however, in all the interviews conducted, such themes rarely came up explicitly but were definitely detectable in the background; so, it is only when one digs deeper, and within certain intellectual circles, that such issues come up in both localities of Sfax and Kairouan. Even though following snowball sampling method, this study's methodology was sensitive to include a range of political views more reflective of the political divide as much as practicable. As described in Chapter Three, the method adopted in identifying participants was based on the issues of concern within each of the localities that are the focus of activity of a group of stakeholders. Once participants have been identified, they are usually well known in the locality and it is known what their political outlook is – through, for example, their Facebook posts, or they may state it explicitly, or the participant making the referral will even 'alert' the researcher to such information. This section will seek to identify the prevalence of the religious logic at the societal level first and will then explore its categories as evidenced in the participant interviews.

The definition of religion is in line with that of the institutional logics, and explains the reason behind its incorporation by Friedland and Alford (1991) and Thornton, Ocasio and Lounsbury (2012) as one of the seven societal institutional orders. Thornton and Ocasio (1999) define institutional logics as, "the socially constructed, historical pattern of material practices, assumptions, values, beliefs and rules by which individuals produce and reproduce their material subsistence, organise time and space, and provide meaning to their social reality" (p. 804). S. Worden (2005, p. 221) defines religion as, "a particular institutionalised or personal system of beliefs [in Islam it is more personal], values, and practices relating to the divine [God as Being in Islam]" While there has been an explosion of research on institutional logics over

the last decade (Ocasio et al, 2017), there has been a dearth of consideration of the religion and family logics, which some attribute to the fact that the logics perspective has developed as a Western-centric context driven by market capitalism. Most of the limited literature studying the religious logic, so far, has focused on Christianity, and very little relates to Islam, exceptions include Ali Gumusay's (2015; 2020) study of Islamic finance and entrepreneurship.

The observation to be made here is that the unique Western experience and the place of Christianity within Western societies, is one where, as observed by Steve Bruce and Roy Wallis (1992), religion has lost its influence at a macrolevel in relation to other systems, such as education, family, economy, etc. It is, therefore, confined, "in modern, functionally differentiated societies to a subsystem, alongside other subsystems" (Dobbelaere, 2009, in Gumusay, 2020, p. 858). This is, however, a unique Western experience and conforms to the overall reading that within Western countries, there is less religiosity, and that the role of religion in society is seen as static at best, if not declining (PRC, 2012, 2019). The above discussion leads to one important question, in non-Western societies, such as Tunisia, which are, "as furiously religious" as they ever were (Peter Berger, 1999): what role does religion play?

Here, it is important to refer to the charter and programme of the leading, and some would say dominant (Wolf, 2017), political force in Tunisia, and an advocate of the Islamic perspective within Tunisian society; for, Ennahda's charter clearly states the objective of working towards, "rooting Tunisia's Islamic identity" (Ennahda.net, 2016). The party was founded as a movement in the 1960s under the name of *Jamaah Islamyyah*, then later as *Ittijah al-Islami*, to settle on the current name *of Ennahdah* in 1981. According to Wolf (2017,

p. 132), "no other opposition force had faced the scale of fierce repression and harassment," under the staunchly secular regimes of Bourguiba and Ben Ali than Ennahda did. Yet, following the 2011 elections, the party found itself leading the government and the drafting of the new constitution. So, what did the objective of 'rooting Tunisia's Islamic identity' mean, now that the party was in power?

Despite the general sentiment of the public towards an increasing role for religion in the public sphere (PRC, 2017), and the 37% of the popular vote secured by Ennahda in the 2011 NCA election, secular opposition was very strong. This reality led to Ennahda agreeing to drop any reference to *Shari'ah* (Islamic law) in the new constitution, and not seeking to change the Personal Status Code introduced by Bourguiba. In one significant effort in 2011-2013 Ennahdah attempted to re-introduce aspects of Islamic institutions, that of *hubus* (endowments), also known as *awqaf* in other Muslim countries, which was dissolved by Bourguiba in 1957. The system of awqaf is used to manage assets that are donated or bequeathed and are held in perpetual trust for specific charitable causes, such as schools, hospitals, scholarships, etc., and is a similar concept to endowment in the West.

Due to fierce opposition in the Constituent Assembly, however, the proposal did not secure the support required. Shown in Figure 5.2 are copies of the motion to introduce a law on hubus, and a statement of opposition by two secular parties. Despite this, however, Ennahda included the proposal again in its 2019 Election Manifesto. The system of *hubus or awqaf* is more than an act of personal religious commitment, it is an economic system of wealth creation that addresses socio-economic needs in society. Wherever it exists, it often has its own ministry within government and may even have banks and other financial institutions,

which in turn are usually tied to specific other social institutions that it supports, such as schools, universities and hospitals. The observation of Ben Achour (2018) is relevant here, as he was the former Chair of the Higher Authority and was also involved in drafting the 2014 Constitution. He points to the introduction of the concept of *Addawlah Almadanyyah,* meaning the 'civil state', which provided both camps - the secular and the religious - with a form of words that is satisfactory, and which has the flexibility to be understood by each as satisfying their objectives. Since the concept, as stipulated in the 2014 Constitution, commits to: "building a republican, democratic and participatory system, in the framework of a *civil state* founded on the sovereignty of the people, exercised through the peaceful alternation of power through free elections." (Constituteproject.org, 2016).

The above example from Tunisia, gives but an indication of the extent of the impact that religion can have on Muslim societies. In addition to *hubus/awqaf*, and in societies where shari'ah is recognised as a source of legislation, Gumusay (2020) adds the issue of Islamic finance and Islamic entrepreneurship which, "consist[s] of three interconnected pillars: value creation, values enactment, and a metaphysical pursuit towards God" (p. 868). Quoting references from the Muslim scriptures, Quran[11] and Hadith[12], Gumusay (2020) demonstrates how in the Islamic faith the purposes of Shariah (*maqasid al-shariah*), stipulates the, "preservation of faith, life, progeny, intellect, and wealth" (p. 868). In Muslim societies, therefore, all forms of religious and social affairs are affected; so, when such a logic enters the interinstitutional system of societal logics it, "does not simply interact with, but has an

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[11] Quran is the Muslim scripture, Muslims believe to be revealed by God direct to Prophet Mohammad, and is the main source of guidance.
[12] A Hadith is a confirmed saying of Prophet Mohammad, and is held as a second source of guidance by Muslims.

extensive reach that can percolate and transform the core ontology of other logics" (Gumusay, p. 867). The key question then is, to what extent does the religion logic, which is clearly competing with those of the autocracy and democracy logics at societal level, manifest at local level? Recognising the existence of the religion logic at societal level in Tunisia, this section will follow the same process of assessing the categorical elements as was carried out for the autocratic-state and democratic-state logics above.
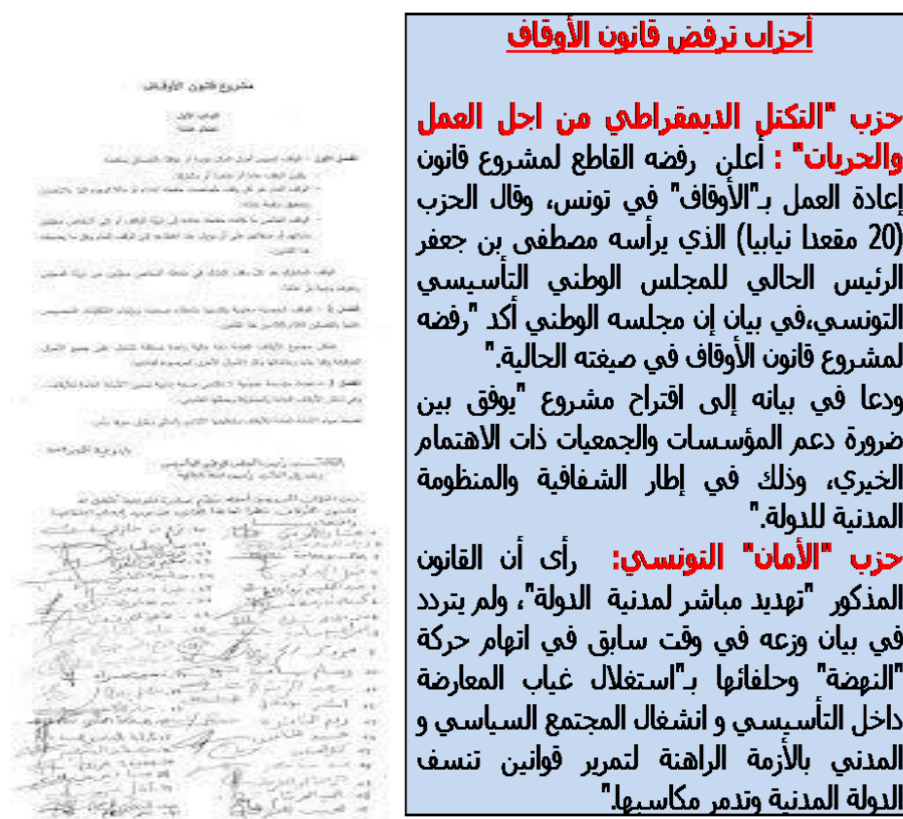
Figure 5.2: Copy of original proposal signed by 40 Members of the Constituent Assembly to re-establish hubus/awqaf, in February 2013. Also copy of the opposition from two secular parties.

To start this analysis, a survey of the words used by eight of the most prolific boundary spanners from across the religious-secular divide (See Annex 5.1), and which are associated with religion or ideology, such as 'Islam', 'religion', 'secular', 'Ennahda' indicate that amongst

these participants there was rarely reference to any such term. The only recurring mention was the name 'Ennahda', and mainly by participants who were linked to the party. However, the limited context in which Ennahda was mentioned by participants who were not affiliated to it, was always in reference to its dominance as a political party, or to its Islamically-inspired programme, which may allow inference that the religious logic had some presence at local level but was not dominant. A good example of where religious affiliation was an issue, is on the occasion of the largest anti SIAPE rally in Sfax on 14th January 2016. On that occasion, the leaders of CEDS decided that all those taking part must not show affiliation to any party – so much so that the Imams of mosques were asked not to wear their distinctive attire. There was clear concern among the secular organisers that they did not want the success of the rally to be attributed to any political party, especially those religiously inspired.

> "As far as the Imams of mosques are concerned, there was an CEDS meeting days before the march, when we decided no political affiliation will be on display. I personally spoke directly at the meeting to the representative of a large religious-based party and said that Imams should not attend wearing their formal dress. They should attend in civilian dress. He [party rep], asked why? My position was if they wear formal dress that will signify political affiliation. And so, it was agreed, despite resistance."
>
> (SA08)

In fact, the CEDS leadership had earlier not wanted to allow anyone associated with mosques to participate in the march. The coordinator of CEDS at the time was the director of the Tunisian Human Rights League in the locality, known to be staunchly secular, and resigned her position as coordinator as a result! This incident apart, comments from some participants who were not affiliated to Ennahda were few, but positive. A senior executive of Sfax municipality (SA01) paid tribute to the previous leader of Sfax Special Council, who was a member of Ennahda but was able to work across political divides. Similarly, one of the leaders of CEDS

(SA08) acknowledges that Ennahda leadership in Sfax is much more understanding of the needs of the city.

The situation in Kairouan was mixed with the then Governor of Kairouan (KA09) and a member of Ennahda, for example, complaining bitterly about the way the media treated some of his decisions. He gave the example when he was invited by the local University to give awards to the highest achieving students, one of whom happened of be a member of a controversial group, called *Ansar Alshariah*; which, to the Governor, indicates the media being hostile to anything religious. Yet, in Kairouan, it was the Ennahda Member of Parliament (KA07) who worked to liaise between the Municipality, UGTT and Central Government departments to resolve the complex issue of the Refuse Collectors.

> "The Leader of the Municipality then gave me the scope to continue this role. You have to understand that the Municipality then was led by a solicitor who represented Ennahda Party (religiously inclined), while civil society which engaged with PB was from a different ideological side. Ideological conflict in Tunisia was intense then, less so now."
>
> (Municipality Finance Director SA01)

> "On the day of the award ceremony, the student who came highest in Arabic Language was the spokesman for Ansar Elshariaah. He was nominated by his university faculty for the award. So, the media took my photo when handing the award, and said I was awarding the spokesman of Ansar Elshariaah."
>
> (Kairouan Governor KA09)

The above analysis clearly indicates the considerable presence of the religion logic at society level, in addition to those of autocracy and democracy; locally however, the picture so far is mixed at best which, to some extent, indicates sensitivity to 'religion' among key actors in both Sfax and Kairouan but that religion is backgrounded in the main. Looking for evidence of

the presence of ideal type dimensions for the religion logic, as identified by Thornton and colleagues (2012), may help provide evidence of the prevalence of the religious logic in both localities. In terms of the **source of legitimacy**, rather than the invocation of the importance of faith behind their involvement, most respondents often mention their duty to their locality and country (Municipality Leader KA01, civil society SA08, private sector SA05), or from their role as elected representatives (private sector KA05, MPA KA07, MPA SA11, Municipality Leaders SA03, University professor SA16); however, in both cases all attribute ultimately the revolution and the freedoms secured therefrom.

> The January 2011 Revolution took place, and BK was founded which I joined – I was not among the founders. The main objective of BK is the creation of lobby for Sfax from the CSOs, to challenge authority in a very constructive way, to put forward a vision and ideas for projects.
>
> (civil society SA02)

> As a party, Ennahda is famous as being the main party that always gives concessions in negotiations – both at national and regional levels. This is OK, we can live with that as long as it is for the national interest. CEDS requested that all parties, large and small, new and old, get represented by one person. No recognition for size or presence in Parliament. But we agreed. They requested that we mobilise for them our supporters [for the anti-SIAP rally] and not to be visible, and we agreed.
>
> (Regional Party Leader SA10)

In Sfax and Kairouan, the **source of authority** that participants seem to identify most with is the rights and freedoms secured as a result of the revolution, not from scriptures or bureaucracy. The Jasmin Revolution seems to endow Tunisians with the power to show their loyalty to Sfax or Kairouan. While some might secure their authority as a result of their role, for example being Members of Parliament or Municipality – in other words legal and formal position, but, when considering most of the twelve issues in both localities, in most cases participants reference the Revolution as the source of authority. Civil society participant SA18,

for example clearly dates their start of involvement as the second day of the revolution, private sector participant SA21, in a similar way, dates the ability to participate in action to improve Agareb as a consequence of the revolution. However, what the revolution has also allowed is a sense of expectation that authority can accumulate to those who deliver change; a great example of this is CEDS. Their success in reclaiming Casino Beach gave them the credit to attract wider participation and take on the issue of SIAPE. Another example is the success of the SMC in Kairouan, especially its leader KA01, in resolving the contracts of the Refuse Collectors, which strengthened his authority to try and put together a development plan for Kairouan. The success of Sfax El Mezyena (civil society SA05) in supporting the delivery of Sfax Arab Capital of Culture is also a good example, which allowed them to move on to tackle other issues, such as parks and other amenities. In preparation for the SIAPE rally, civil society participant SA08 and others exercised their boundary spanning skills to best effect not to allow any participant to show their religious or political affiliation.

> On 14th June 2015, BK led a movement to reclaim Casino Beach – a day before the fasting month of Ramadhan. Huge civil society work to clean and reclaim that shoreline. We put forward alternative plans for the development and reassignment of the existing port. This was a huge success that led to a resolution by the Ministry of Transport to stop the original plan.
>
> (Civil society SA18)

> After the Revolution, we were satisfied that it was possible for the region to develop vision and programmes to achieve, and to serve it. Several initiatives were brought forward: the first being to host the Mediterranean Games 2021, but this did not succeed due to lack of support from the central government. The second initiative was for Sfax to become the Arab Capital City of Culture, which was successfully held – despite again lack of support from central government.
>
> (civil society SA08)

Complication in identifying the **source of identity** stems from the fact that almost everyone, secular or otherwise, will invoke the relationship with 'God'; one will often hear the words

'*inshaAllah*' when committing to something, meaning God-willing, or '*alhamdulillah*' when reflecting on success, meaning praise be to God. Anyone who is not familiar with the cultural context will be forgiven for assuming significant religious connotations; for, everyday religious terms are widespread in almost all Muslim societies, but they do not necessarily indicate a level of religiosity. However, when probing further with participants who are affiliated to Ennahda, it becomes clear that they do what they do because it is a '*calling*' and a manifestation of their belief. This is not often shared in their discourse with others, they seem to focus on the language of the 'common good', goodness for the locality. In response to the question of 'what motivates you to be involved in the issue(s)?', the response from most Ennahda affiliates almost always involved a form of 'as a Muslim, it is my duty to…'.

> "*It is my duty as a Muslim*, and it is why I joined Ennahda"

> (civil society KA04)

> "We were suppressed. I spent 16 years in prison *for my beliefs* and membership of Ennahda. All our members were either imprisoned, exiled, or in hiding.
> (Party Leader SA10)

Basis of norms in societies dominated by the religious logic is membership of congregation (Thornton et al., 2012), an indicator absent within Islam, due to the fact that relationship with God is personal and not through the institution of the 'church', as in Christianity. However, affinity and membership are, nevertheless, the basis of norms, but it is membership of the *Ummah*, meaning community whether local, national or global, where Quran stipulates, "And hold fast collectively to the Covenant of God, and do not be disunited" (Qur'an, Chapter 3, Verse 103); moreover, the identity battle over the drafting of the new Constitution led to

reaffirmation of the same clause within the old 1957 Constitution expressing a, "commitment to the teaching of Islam" (Constituteproject.org, 2022). Yet, within both localities, almost all participants expressed their 'citizenship in nation' and identification with locality as the basis of norm. This is clearly demonstrated in the way issues are identified and worked on; take SIAPE for example, it is identified as the, "death factory" threatening the whole community (SMC leader SA03, civil society participants SA07 and SA05), of the poor delivery of the Old Town Restoration in Kairouan, seen as a waste of public resources (private sector KA05, heritage experts KA08), or *Seep Tortoir* campaign to reclaim the pavement as a public space.

> "In the Name of God, the Merciful, the Compassionate. We, the representatives of the Tunisian people, members of the National Constituent Assembly, …Expressing our people's commitment to the teachings of Islam and its aims…"
>
> (The opening statement of the 2014 Constitution, Constituteproject.org, 2022)

The basis of attention, or claim to status, is expected to be 'relationship to supernatural' (Thornton et al., 2012), or in the case of Islam claim to *piety*, or claim to knowledge, such as Imam or scholar, yet the status in both localities bears no relation to this. What is recognised is the professional standing (SMC Leader KA01; heritage expert KA08), the status of the interest group, such as UGTT or CEDS, or the role, such as with SMC leaders KA01 and SA03, or Regional Governor KA09. When religion came to be an issue it was deliberately backgrounded, as in the case of the famous anti-SIAPE rally in Sfax when Imams of mosques were asked to attend without their formal attire.

A key distinguishing category for comparison between logics is that of the strategy adopted by actors. The **basis of strategy** adopted by all participants was that of increasing community

good, and not increase in religiosity. Increase in community good is evidenced in terms of, for example, MPA KA07 aiming to resolve an issue that, "touches many aspects of local life", or KA01 feeling a sense of responsibility to bring stability to the municipality where, "revenues were falling, services were declining or not delivered, and salaries were not being paid." The motive mentioned by private sector and SMC member SA04 is another example, where he sees clean neighbourhoods as being a, "central tenet of development…(where) investors are also looking for clean places to invest in." The type of complex issues identified is important in this regard; because, nearly all issues considered in this study are led by secular leaning actors.

Those actors that can be described as traditionalist or even religious play a supporting role, which in the opinion of this researcher is mainly due to three reasons. The first is the fact that they are relative late comers to activism due to persecution by Ben Ali, which prevented them from engaging in socio-economic issues. Party Leader participant SA10, who is the leader of Ennahda in Sfax, for example, spent 18 years in prison. The second, equally strong reason, is the fact that many Islamists are affiliated with the ruling party, Ennahda, and can't be seen to be in opposition to it, so participants such as teacher and CSO KA04 and civil society participant SA39 prefer to be leading mainly relief of poverty type work. This latter type of activity also resonates with religious commitments - as stipulated in the *Hadith* scriptures that, "The most beloved of people to Allah [God] is the one who brings most benefit to people" (Al-Albani, 2002, p. 906).

Informal control mechanisms observed in the field and ascertained through interviews is based on visibility of action - who is doing what for the cause of the locality. There is no

indication of religiosity playing any part in ascertaining who is serving the cause or not. Interviews with participants indicates this expectation and how it manifests itself in commentary about such commitment and participation for the local common good.

Section Five: Conclusion

The purpose of this chapter was to identify the structural changes affecting Tunisian society, by identifying the shifts in societal logics, on the basis of two main sources of evidence, secondary sources and participant interviews. Followers of political development in Tunisia during the 2011 Revolution will be justified in concluding that the shift from dictatorship to democracy was self-evident. This analysis, however, while confirming such shift, has highlighted a more complex change; while the democratic-state logic is clearly ascendant, the religion logic exercises strong presence, with the autocratic-state logic also maintaining noticeable legacy, and some other challenges. The first is pretty fundamental and is a disagreement with some of the foundational literature (Thornton et al., 2012, Ocasio et al., 2017) about considering whether democracy is a logic or not; in this study, and in agreement with the seminal work of Friedland and Alford (1991), we consider both the democratic-state and the autocratic-state as valid logics for the reasons given in Section Two. The second complication, more of a challenge for later chapters, is the seemingly absent religious logic at the local level despite its strong presence at the societal level, as exemplified in the debates around the new 2014 Constitution, and Ennahda's attempt to bring laws to re-establish the 'Hubus' system of endowment, and 'Sukuk' – Islamic bonds. Lastly, there is some evidence of aspects of the community logic as well, such as the basis of attention under the democratic-state logic.

The shift in logic has been clearly demonstrated, due to the fact that, as Andrews (2013) predicted, there was a clear loss of legitimacy for the autocratic-state logic, actors who were yearning for the alternative democracy logic and capable of challenging the old order. The post-revolution period, however, is proving to be somewhat less of a fertile ground for the democracy logic for two reasons. The first is due to what Ben Achour (2018) and Hibou (2011) acknowledge: the existence of a still somewhat autocratic state bureaucracy, as in the case of resistance to Participatory Budgeting, as well as other institutions like UGTT that still exhibit strong autocratic tendencies. This latter observation is described by some (Hibou, 2011) as an unfinished business of modernity.

Further evidence of the expected dominance of the democratic-state logic is due to the shift in at least two of the three pillars of institutions (Scott, 2014) at national level. Firstly, the clear development of rules to support the democracy logic, including the new 2014 Constitution, Local Government Act 2018, and many other legislations and tools of the democratic state. Secondly, the development of societal norms as evidenced by the regularity of national elections of 2011, 2014 and 2019, as well as the local elections of 2019, the peaceful transfer of power on several occasions, the processes of development of legislation and many other indicators. What cannot be ascertained for sure yet, however, is any change in the cultural-cognitive pillar, that is the mindset of actors, and remains to be explored. The change in logic domain, however, should be a strong indicator, if it meets the, "stickability" test (Scott, 2014).

Table 5.1: Dominant and competing societal Institutional logic in post-Revolution Tunisia

Dimensions	Logic		
	Autocratic state	Democratic state	Religion - Islam
Anchor Rationality	*Security and self-interest*	*Democratic participation and citizenship in nation*	*Importance of faith and association with God.*
Source of Legitimacy	'The security pact'	Participation based on rights Democratic participation	Importance of faith
Source of authority	Autocratic domination	Delivery of change & bureaucratic domination,	Scriptures
Source of identity	Affiliation to party	Pride in place. Social and economic class	Association with God
Basis of norms	Membership of party; Self-interest	Participation and commitment Citizenship in nation	Membership in *Ummah (community – local and global)*
Basis of attention	Status in party/security apparatus/bureaucracy	Visible effort to support the cause; Status of interest group	Piety (relationship to God)
Basis of strategy	Safety and self-interest Self-preservation	Increase in honor and status of place: "A place where life is good" Increase in community good	Increase in piety through increase in community good.
Informal control mechanisms	"fear" – security pact; Structural violence	Commitment to the cause Backroom politics.	Inner piety

Looking at the Institutional logic dimensions (Table 5.1), there is a clear shift away from the logic of the autocratic-state to the logic of the democratic-state, most importantly signified by a switch in the anchor rationality from that of security and self-interest to one of democratic participation and citizenship. In regards to *sources of legitimacy* and *identity*, there is a shift from the security pact to participation based on rights and from party membership to pride in place, respectively. There is also strong evidence for a shift in the basis of norms, from self-

interest through RCD party membership to citizenship in nation and participation and commitment. The basis of attention and strategy have also witnessed a complete shift, from status in the apparatus of autocracy - RCD party, bureaucracy and security structures, and self-preservation, to an increase in community good and a visible effort to support the cause and status of interest groups.

The dimension where autocracy still competes with democracy is in the source of authority. Here grievance is still evidenced through, for example, the domination of the 'two historical regions' in the bureaucracy influencing the decisions of government, as reported by civil society representative SA02 and MPA SA11, in terms of the dilution of planning strategies for Sfax. A major factor in this area is also the role of UGTT; here, it is possible to see the role of the union thwarting the decisions of the democratically elected government and ministers, as in the case of SIAPE. Due to the history and power of UGTT, it is more than a trade union and is recognised by some as a powerful political force that thwarts and frustrates the democratic transition in many respects, especially in what can be called 'day to day issues', such as SIAPE. However, there is also equally strong evidence that it is facilitating democratic transition – as in the case of its role as one of the Quartet that facilitated the safeguarding of democratic continuity in 2013-14.

Another dimension that is proving to be a competition between the two logics of autocracy and democracy is in the area of informal control. Fear, as a control mechanism prevalent under autocracy, has to a large extent dissipated – as evidenced through the successful direct actions to reclaim Casino Beach and through Sayep Tortoir to reclaim public pavements, or the campaign of Maneesh Masab to bring to an end the pollution and environmental

degradation of Agareb District. However, there is still an undercurrent of fear from the likes of UGTT – in the case of SIAPE (civil society participants SA18, SA02, SA07), or challenging the administration in the case of rolling out of Participatory Budgeting (civil society SA20; Dhouib, 2017) , or the dilution of regional development plans (MPA SA11). Finally, while the religious logic plays a critical role in the national debate, and continues to do so, the concept of *addawlah almadanyyah*, or civil state, has meant that several of the dimensions are 'layered' with those of the democracy logic, particularly the basis of norms and strategy.

CHAPTER SIX

ORGANISATIONAL-FIELD EMERGING AND DENSIFICATION: ACCOUNTING FOR INSTITUTIONAL CHANGE.

Introduction

While at the societal level the post-revolution focus became the transition from the autocratic logic to, in the main, the democratic logic, leading to observers such as Alfred Stepan (2018) and Monica Marks (2017) to acknowledge the success of the transition process, at local level the contestation among local actors was just unfolding, because it was not until 2018 that the first democratic local elections were held. However, the process of institutional change was already well under way. Testing for institutional change can be undertaken through empirical observation of changes within organisational fields, because they are the arenas where institutionalisation takes place (Scott, 2014). Following the method identified in Chapter Three Section Five, as well as tracking changes within other components of the organisational field – logic, membership, boundaries and causes - the central purpose of this chapter is to explore the emergence of, and institutional development within, the organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan, manifest in one key component, the *relational arrangements* among field members. This will be explored by looking at the four relational systems identified by Owen-Smith and Powell (2008): (1) increased interaction among participants; (2) the development of well-

defined status order and patterns of coalition; (3) heightened information sharing; and (4) mutual awareness and responsiveness, (Greenwood et al., 2008, p. 597), discussed in Chapter Two. In so doing, this will help address one of the three research sub-questions of this study:

(TQ2) How do fields emerge in which boundary-spanners operate? Accounting for institutional change.

This study identified two types of organisational fields, the main locality *exchange* organisational field and what can be described as *issue-type* fields – pertaining to each of the 12 issues considered, where the latter is a sub-field of the former, as already identified in Chapter Two. Stability within organisational fields and a sign of the structuration (Giddens, 1979), or institutionalisation process, will depend on the strength of the coercive, normative or memetic pressures experienced by field members (DiMaggio and Powell, 1983). Given the nature of the autocratic-state logic, it can be safely assumed that the extant, pre-2011, organisational fields in Tunisian localities were stabilised by the coercive pressures of the security pact. The constituency of coercion, comprising the ruling RCD party and the security and bureaucratic structures of the pre-revolution autocratic regime were a common thread across all field populations as shown in Table (4.1) in Chapter Four. Under such regimes, everyone is co-opted and coerced.

The role and agency of new field members is fundamental to understanding changes taking place within organisational fields (Battilana and Boxenbaum, 2009). In the context of post-conflict societies, however, this study identifies two different roles at two separate stages: the role of educators in the pre-Revolution period, and the role of new field members post-revolution – who may or may not be the same actors. So, while the main focus of this study is

on the new entrants in the post-revolution period, that is boundary-spanners, it is necessary to not overlook the work of 'educators' – discussed in Chapters Four and Five - who played a crucial role in the time leading up to the Revolution, creating the breach in the boundaries of extant organisational fields.

Section One explores the grievance issues – the causes – identified and pursued as a result of boundary-spanners' attention being influenced by the democratic-sate logic rather than the autocratic state-logic or religion logic. Out of all the complex issues considered, two examples stand out and are highlighted to exemplify how the emergence of such issues as *causes*, with the accompanying contestation and power struggle, lead to the emergence of issue fields: SIAPE in Sfax - by far the most complex, and the Refuse Collectors in Kairouan. **Section Two** addresses the emerging organisational field by identifying (1) patterns of increasing interactions, (2) coalition building, (3) increasing information flow, and (4) mutual awareness among field stakeholders. **Section Three** concludes by reflecting on the extent to which new field formation and densification is taking hold, an indication of the type of institutional change taking place within the two localities, and the differences identified. Strong evidence from participant interviews and media sources suggests a contrast between the two localities; while development in Sfax suggests radical changes, the situation in Kairouan is more of maintenance, or at best an elaboration and development of the established field.

Section One: Making grievances visible and a vehicle for change.

While the Tunisian Revolution can best be described as a 'revolt' rather than a 'great revolution,' to use Charles Tilly's (1993a) typology of revolutions, it has brought about

fundamental changes to Tunisian society. Many observers consider the most prominent change at societal level being the democratisation process, and what Ben Achour (2018) describes as, "revolutions bring down the walls of fear and destroy barriers to the impossible" (p. 53). So, the impact of the Jasmin Revolution at societal level, explored in Chapter Five, is the shift from the autocratic-state logic to the democratic-state logic and religion logic, evidenced most clearly in new rule making, to use Scott's (2014) description. Examples of the rule-making process since the Revolution are in abundance; foremost among these is the new 2014 Constitution, which, for example, includes Article 7 to provide thick description of local government in the new Tunisia and is further developed in the new Local Government Act of 2018.

The receding tide of the autocratic-state logic, in being replaced by the lens of the democratic-state logic, has allowed for previously suppressed issues to become salient and to be recognised and championed. This confirms that the issues identified are as a result of the influence of dominant societal logics on local boundary spanners' focus of attention. Underpinned by the anchor rationality of democratic participation and citizenship, the democratic-sate logic created the freedom to undertake a process of sensemaking, decision making and mobilisation to act on these issues, as will be explored in Chapter Seven. Such mobilisation is proving to be the hallmark of the activism turning local grievance issues into issue fields and leading to developments in the wider governance field in each of the two localities.

A good example is the case of Agareb District in Sfax; an area characterised by many of its residents as suffering from an environmental catastrophe, leading to the launch of the

campaign *Maneesh Masab* (meaning 'we are not a dumping ground'). It is an area dominated

by olive groves, but also, increasingly, by polluting factories, as well as the City of Sfax rubbish

dump, leading to the contamination of nature reserves, the water table and suffocating smoke

from factories. This issue become the subject of extensive political, as well national and

international media interest (Aljazeera.net, 2021; Assabahnews.tn, 2021; Delpuech and

Poletti, 2021[13]), and proved to be a test case in the way regimes operating under autocratic

and democratic logics deal with such issues. In interviews with local municipality members

participant SA22, leaders of Maneesh Masab civil society participant SA23, and private sector

participant and UTAP regional president SA14, all shared the same narrative: a wall of fear to

speak out under the old regime, and the threat of loss of jobs if they were to challenge the

polluting industries now.

Turning grievances to resolvable issues

As described in Chapter Two, and especially Section Three of Chapter Four, an entry point to

identifying organisational fields is the study of 'issues' that became important to the interest

and objectives of a specific collection of actors, organisations and individuals. These issues

could involve, for example, problems too complex for one single actor to address, or ground-

breaking innovation, regulatory transformation or environmental catastrophe; put simply, the

tools available under the old regime proved no longer effective at solving chronic issues, hence

the revolution that opened up new possibilities for the creative minds of various actors.

Chapter Three detailed the methodology adopted to identify the issues for this study, a

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[13] Delpuech and Poletti (2021) provide complete history of the issue in their extensive report in Inkyfada.com on 23rd November 2021, following the death of one protestor.

process that highlighted mainly environmental issues in Sfax, while in Kairouan the issues revolved around basic public services.

Irrespective of the degree of development, Sfax and Kairouan share comparable levels of grievance. In the case of Sfax, one participant interview after another, SMC Leader SA03, private sector and Council members SA04, CSO participant SA05, political party leader SA10, MPA participant SA11, private sector participant SA17, indicated a level of grievance - a feeling of resentment due to being wrongly or unfairly treated - equal to, if not surpassing that heard in Kairouan. The starting point and reason in both localities, however, was rather different. An over-arching cause of grievance among Sfaxians was the perceived political will to frustrate the aspirations and potential of Sfax. This is in line with the autocratic-state logic where the focus of attention was the status in the party, security apparatus and bureaucracy, which placed Sfax – as a hotbed of opposition – outside the favoured regions of Tunis, Sousse and Monastir. A member of the People's Assembly representing Sfax (SA11) describes how, for example, the development planning process 'dilutes' the input of Sfax due to the power and influence of historically dominant groups and lobbies with status within the party and security apparatus. These groups belonged primarily to the competing regions of Tunis the capital, Sousse which is Ben Ali's home region, and Monastir which is Bourguiba's home region. Interestingly, such regions continue to dominate the bureaucracy, a subject explored in some detail by Alwatan newspaper in its issue of 14th September 2019 (Al-watan.com, 2019). A leading private sector boundary spanner activist (SA17) cites how Sfax has been relegated from second position only to the capital Tunis, in all economic indicators, to a current position

of seventh, leading to many local high calibre graduates seeking employment opportunities in

other 'more favoured' regions.

> "So, the process [of local development planning] is one where the Ministry of Development and Investment sets the framework, it goes to the regions who adjust it according to their local needs, then it goes back again to the Ministry. It is at this stage that it becomes problematic; for the higher echelons of central ministries are still dominated by the two historically dominant regions [Sousse and Monastir]. So, the input of the region [of Sfax] gets diluted."
>
> *(MPA participant SA11)*

> "…we noticed there was a political will to curb the position and role of Sfax. While we had the best educational outcomes, our young people could no longer find work in Sfax. While we were 2nd in all economic indicators, we became 7th. The city has the worst equipped public health facilities."
>
> *(CSO participant SA02)*

Sfaxians, generally, seem to never fail to take advantage of opportunities to air their

grievances, even during moments of celebration, such as during the official opening of Sfax

Arab Capital of Culture (Mohammed N. Almolhy, 2016). The grievance Sfaxians express

becomes all the more understandable when looking at the pivotal role the city has played at

key moments of Tunisia's modern history. A leading UGTT leader (SA19), pointed to the fact

that Sfax was home to the founding fathers of the powerful trade union movement, as well as

home to the massive demonstration and strike on the 12th of January 2011, that proved to be

the point of no return in the downfall of the Ben Ali regime. Many also cite the fact that some

of the most prominent business and industrial families operating in the capital and other more

'favoured' regions of the country are Sfaxian in origin but were forced to relocate or grow

their business interests outside Sfax due to the unfavourable policies of successive

Governments towards the city and region. Such grievances are articulated by the like of Sfax

University professor and president of a renewable energy non-profit organisation, participant

SA16, and a lead member of one of the most prominent business families in Sfax but now operating mostly out of Tunis the capital, participant SA17.

Following the Revolution, this calculated suppression of Sfax's potential, led to Sfaxians crystallising their grievances into specific issues, including the ones considered in this study and listed in Appendix (3.1), such as SIAPE (SI01), Casino Beach (SI02), and Agareb District (SI08), as well as Tabaroorah and Sfax Airport. It was these issues that proved to be the route to the on-going process of institutional change and will be discussed later in this chapter. To CSO participant SA08, one of the leaders of CEDS, "the issue is not SIAPE, but the whole development agenda." This narrative expressed by boundary-spanners in Sfax, is in line with the categorical elements in the democratic state logic (Table 5.1 in Chapter 5), specifically pride in place as a *source of identity*, participation and commitment as the *basis of norms*.

While the grievances of Sfax can be described as frustrated aspirations, those of Kairouan seem to be more of the everyday. These include the lack of progress on the new hospital as mentioned by civil society participant KA03 (Nessma TV, 2018) and former Governor KA09, possible corruption in Old Town restoration projects (Al Quds Al Arabi, 2015) as mentioned by private sector participant KA05 and former lead heritage expert KA08, the employment contracts of previously privatised Refuse Collectors as mentioned by most participants in Kairouan, including SMC Leader KA01, CSO participant KA02, MPA participant KA07 and former Governor KA09. In other words, it is about lack of basic public services in an area that has seen significant migration from rural to urban areas, and the lack of employment opportunities being amongst the most pressing issues. In an extensive report by Alchourouk Newspaper on 8th May 2012 (Alchourouk, 2012a), to mark the appointment of the new

Governor of Kairouan, the paper summarises local peoples needs as "jobs, health services and clean drinking water", and later by Takrawan Press on 7th February 2015 (N. Azzaghdoodi, 2015), which corroborates the statement made by the Governor (KA09) to this researcher when he stated the priorities then as:

> "…the most pressing problem was people's request for work and employment. To such an extent I used to get individuals who would bring their family and say look, I cannot feed my family, here they are, it is your responsibility. While others threaten to set themselves on fire unless I find them work. Water supply is another huge issue in Kairouan, where residents would just connect to the water supply without permission and consume water without accountability."
>
> *(Ex-Kairouan Governor KA09)*

Figure 6.1: Headline of a full-page investigation by Alchourouk Newspaper identifying pressing issues for the people of Kairouan in early 2012, as "jobs…health services…clean drinking water". (Alchourouk, 8th May 2012, p. 3).

The situation of Kairouan, historically and in the aftermath of the Revolution, is well described by the most significant figure who, as Leader of the Municipality, brought much stability between 2012 and 2018. Leading the appointed SMC, participant KA01 describes the contradictions inherent in Kairouan; a city that historically has large rural to urban migration with all the accompanying customs and practices of rural living being practiced in the city, such as growing livestock – a practice that contravenes laws but has been accommodated due to its economic value to those residents.

"Residents, as soon as they step out of their houses, find the broken pavements and roads, and scarce street lighting. We needed urgent intervention, but we had no resources for large projects."

(*SMC Leader KA01).*

Even though Kairouan is recognised as the cultural and heritage capital of Tunisia, attracting more than four million visitors a year (Brown, 2021), there was rarely, if any, articulation of a vision that capitalises on this, apart from that by the senior archaeologist and participant KA08, who states that "Kairouan's future lies in its past." As evidenced in Table 3.1, in Chapter Three, this contrast between the two localities is also reflected in, and may be explained by, other indicators, such as the fact that extreme poverty levels in Kairouan are nine times that in Sfax, while the formation of civil society organisations in Sfax is at 1.7 times that of Kairouan, taking account of the size of population in each. The fundamental characteristic of the exchange organisational fields in both localities, under the old regime, is that they no longer served the purpose of meeting basic needs, let alone addressing chronic challenges, a reflection of the then dominant autocratic state logic where the control mechanisms were fear and self-preservation.

Dominant societal-level institutional logics serve to focus the attention of actors on certain issues rather than others, as suggested by Thornton et al., (2012). In response to the question posed earlier in this section, it can be ascertained that the type of issues of concern, environment and basic public services are reflective of the development phase of each locality, where Sfax is more developed and, therefore, the concern is with environmental consequences of such development, while the struggle in Kairouan is still focused on access to basic public services. The championing of such issues has demonstrated, however, the unmistakable change in *anchor rationality*. Before the revolution, security and self-interest,

were associated with the autocratic-state logic, and led individuals to adopting a strategy of, "not to conflict with the regime," (CSO participant SA18), and "disguise my activities and the cover of my formal job by organising school trips to poor rural areas to give then support" (CSO participant KA04). After the revolution, where the anchor rationality became *democratic participation and citizenship,* the relationship between local actors and the issues of concern became radically different. The change in the focus of attention, from that of security and self-interest to one of democratic participation, is a clear demonstration of the influence on the attention of boundary-spanners resulting from logic shift. Out of all the complex issues, two standout and worthy of focus in particular to exemplify the emergence of causes as catalysts for the emergence of fields and the dynamics of change, contestation and power: SIAPE in Sfax, and by far the most complex, and the Refuse Collectors in Kairouan.

Issue-fields – SIAPE in Sfax

Dating back to 1952 and located on the southern beaches of Sfax, as shown on the map in Figure 6.2 in Chapter Six, Société Industrielle d'Acide Phosphorique et d'Engrais (SIAPE) is a phosphate processing plant that belongs to the state owned Groupe Chimique Tunisien (GCT) [Tunisian Chemical Group][14], with another similar plant added and located in the area currently known as Taparura, along the northern beaches – which, together with the activities of the port in-between, led to the contamination of the beach area known as Casino Beach and effectively cut off Sfax from the sea, earning the city the widely used description as "the city that turns its back to the sea" (Sfax SMC leader SA03; CSO participant SA02).

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[14] For brief history and activities of SIAPE, please refer to GCT website (mainly in French)
http://www.gct.com.tn/le-groupe/a-propos/histoire-du-gct/

Figure 6.2: Aerial Image of Sfax showing how the city is separated from the shore by Taparura, SIAPE and the Port (Main image from Google Earth; inset photo of SIAPE courtesy of one of the participants)

While severe contamination led to the closure of the Taparura works in 1991, this was seen by some (CSO participant SA08, former Head of Sfax SMC SA03) as a 'signalling' process (Andrews, 2013) by the old regime to indicate it was serious about the environment and aimed at international funders. SIAPE, however, continues to exist and has become the most complex of issues in Sfax, with national implications. While it is recognised to be part of the national economy and provides considerable revenues and local employment opportunities, it has become a 'death factory' (Figures 7.1 and 7.2)- as many Sfaxians describe it (more than 40,000 residents signed petition demanding closure of SIAPE, according to CSO participants SA02, SA08 and SA18), and part of a wider environmental catastrophe facing the city, including the railway line bisecting the city and carrying phosphate from other regions to the port. The battle for the closure of SIAPE has a history where a decision for its closure in 2008 was

credited to the then President Ben Ali, however, the decision was never implemented. This was followed by further decisions by consecutive post-Revolution Governments, the latest of which is the order by the Minister of Industry and Small and Medium Enterprises on 7th August 2019[15] (to close TSP production in SIAPE, that were also never implemented, highlighting the complexity due to what some participants, such as MPA SA11 and most members of civil society organisations (Alhiwar TV, 2019[16]) see as vested interests, corruption, and power imbalance between the Government (policy makers), UGTT and GCT (Service deliverers) and civil society organisations (service users). Discussions of the issue of SIAPE highlights the nature of the governance challenges, not only in Sfax but the whole country. The complexity of the situation with regards to SIAPE is due to the reality of the situation in Tunisia and the duality of understanding between the Government and UGTT. This situation is confirmed by leading UGTT member participant SA12, as a badge of honour.

> "First: The state is currently based on a duality of understanding – no third party. So, when a third party tries to influence, you are not recognised – 'who are you?'. Authority in the country comprises of the Government and Union [UGTT]… Some of the people in the Union have vested interests – direct and indirect. Direct: some people have companies that supply SIAPE. Indirect: Given that the GCT (SIAPE owners) are giants in the country, some people are given certain privileges."
>
> *(CSO participant SA08)*

> "We continue to be a partner in Government and play a leadership role, we suffer challenges, but we are recognised – as in being awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. With the fragmentation of the political parties, only UGTT and the State remain".
>
> *(UGTT lead member and participant SA12)*

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[15] Copy of which was presented at the hearing held by the People's Assembly Committee on Industry, Energy, Natural Resources, Infrastructure and Environment. Available at:
https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=492579861681120&external_log_id=9e1d27f5-c246-44b0-9dd3-19bac4f23aa8&q= السياب20%مصنع20%موسي20%عبير

[16] This is an example of the many instances where accusations of corruptions are aired publicly on national television: Alhiwar TV's flagship programme, *Tounis Alyaoum,* dated 9th August 2019. Available at:
https://www.facebook.com/collectif.sfax/videos/505615833545086/

In an interview with Tunisia News Network (TNN) on 2nd March 2017 (TNN, 2017), the Assistant Secretary General of UGTT in Sfax at the time, Mohammad Abbas, stated quite clearly the union's strong position against any move to close SIAPE, and accuses all others, especially civil society organisations as being 'insignificant':

> "We stood against Bin Ali's decision in 2008 to close SIAPE, we formed committees. We agreed to replace polluting activities and we found and adopted alternative activities.
> This is a public asset and we need to protect it as it generates foreign currency for the country. Today, insignificant CSOs are calling to close SIAPE, restrict the Port activity, close the railway carrying the phosphate, and so on. What do they want to turn Sfax to? Sousse, Hammamat? No. Sfax is an industrial city, and will remain an industrial city - without pollution."
>
> Mohammad Abbas, Leader of UGTT, 2nd March 2017, TNN

Figure 6.3: A poster of the anti SIAPE campaign – translated: "The Rally for Life"; "We are suffocated"; "Sfax is Rising". (source: Courtesy of BK)

The SIAPE issue-field comprised of UGTT (SA12; SA19), GCT (Alchourouk, 2019), CEDS CSO-coalition (SA02; SA08; SA18), Prime Minister's Office (ShamsFM, 2016; ExpressFM, 2017), Local MPAs (SA11), Sfax Municipality (SA03; SA04); Sfax Governor (Tunisia1 TV, 2016) and others, representing the three primary components of the organisational field: service users, policy makers and service deliverers. Of particular interest to this study is the role individuals play in resolving this ultra-complex issue where, through snowball sampling method, fourteen potential boundary-spanners associated with the issue were identified and interviewed. Figure 3.2, in Chapter 3, shows the relationship between each of the issues – labelled SI01 (SIAPE) and KI01 (Refuse Collectors) for example – and the boundary-spanners. The boundary of such *issue field* was set according to the nominalist rather than the realist approach (Laumann et al., 1983). Under the logic of the autocratic-state, the strategy of actors then was trying, "not to clash with [the Ben Ali] regime," according to CSO participant SA18; a strategy dictated by the anchor rationality of *security and self-interest*. During the subsequent period of the democratic-state logic the strategy was still focused on dialogue – a standard boundary spanning approach, but also readiness to mobilise all material and symbolic resources to bring a closure of the, "death factory", as presented in the campaign poster in Figure 6.3 in Chapter Six, and described by civil society participants SA02 and SA05, as well as Sfax Municipality (MosaiqueFM, 2017); a strategy enabled by the anchor rationality of democratic participation and citizenship.

Issue-fields – Kairouan Refuse Collectors

The Kairouan Refuse Collectors issue field comprised Kairouan Municipality (KA01; KA06), Kairouan Governor's Office (KA09), UGTT (KA02), Prime Minister's Office and Local MPA

(KA07) – there were no CSOs or other user representatives, just the policy makers and service deliverers. This represents one of the features of participation of citizens in Kairouan where, on many issues, citizen's voice, in the main, was left to be represented by policy makers - a key difference with Sfax. Meetings, such as those between civil society organisations and the Leader of the SMC, reported by Attounissia (Khaled Assakni, 2013), and another with local Members of Peoples Assembly on 1st February 2015, reported by Takrawan Press (Nageh Azzaghdoodi, 2015) are good example of such practices. Such meetings nearly always end with recommendations for the authorities, rather than demands and threats of campaigns or any form of direct or indirect action. The boundary-spanners in the case of Refuse Collectors (SMC Leader participant KA01, UGTT participant KA02, Municipality member KA06, local MPA KA07 and Kairouan Governor KA09) revealed that on this issue, like many others, the approach of UGTT and Refuse Collectors was dictated by the rationality of safety, during the autocratic regime of Ben Ali. Privatisation meant that the terms and conditions of refuse collectors employed by private contractors were less favourable than the ones employed by the Municipality, but no record exists of any campaign on the issue, until after the Revolution. The nature of the exploitation and unfair practices became an issue only during the democratic state logic, where participation and citizenship in nation were recognised, resulting in campaigns and strikes.

The previously tame UGTT became vocal, protests and strikes followed, as reported extensively at the time - see for example articles in Almasdar on 21st and 23rd May 2012 (Almasdar.tn, 2012a; 2012b); the private contractors simply took their plants and vehicles and disappeared from the scene, leaving the new SMC to sort out the mess. The new council

leaders needed not only to replace the plant and vehicles, but more importantly to come up with significant funds to pay the salaries of the workers – which one of the Governors promised to secure but never delivered, according to the SMC Leader KA01. This left the Municipality with a problem of having to meet the promise but with no funds, UGTT leading a strike that led to mountains of rubbish in the streets and disruption to daily life (Almasdar, 2012), a Government unwilling to break its budgetary rule of how municipalities should balance their budgets, and a city in paralysis.

> "The city was facing major problems: revenues were falling, services were declining or not delivered, salaries were not being paid… The Government and Governorate, in the aftermath of the Revolution, were facing major social challenges including unemployment. Part of the solution was to place staff [including Refuse Collectors] on tenuous and temporary arrangements within Municipalities. This was being done without reference to the actual need of the municipality or its financial resources."
>
> (SMC Leader KA01)

Under the autocratic-state logic, the management of the issue was legitimised through the 'security pact' of offering employment, not only to the workers but also contracts to the companies that employed them, who were likely to be close associates of the regime, with such privatisation being controlled through fear and patronage (WBG, 2014). Under the emerging democracy logic, workers were empowered through rights-based democratic participation and legitimacy, with source of attention being the power gained as a recognised interest group, as opposed to a political party or security apparatus affiliation. However, the power of UGTT cannot be underestimated; it was no doubt able to mobilise its powerful reach nationally to help secure the deal. To indicate its power, the Kairouan regional UGTT president was later appointed as Governor in a governorate not far from Kairouan, according to UGTT participant KA02. This issue perhaps, like that of Agareb District in Sfax, exemplifies the fact

that nothing is resolved completely, perhaps due to the power dynamics between field members. While members of this issue field, congratulated themselves on seemingly resolving the issue and coming up with a deal in 2012 to absorb the aggrieved refuse collectors within the Municipalities payroll, renewed protests started to breakout in 2017 signifying that such a deal has not been completely honoured (Takrawan, 2017).

These two example issues indicate that while the old regime used its monopoly of coercion and violence to subdue even the powerful UGTT, after the revolution it became clear that the organisational field was increasingly a duality between the Government and UGTT, but civil society organisations also become a force to be reckoned with, especially in Sfax. Recognition of the increasing influence of the growing number of CSOs is acknowledged by several interviewees, including those in important local government positions. Participant KA01, Leader of Kairouan's SMC, is almost thankful for the CSO allies in mobilising pressure on Government Ministers to secure resources, local MPAs in Kairouan were pleading for civil society to support them in making sure the region's voice is heard, as the example of the meeting on 1st February 2015, (Takrawan Press, 2015) demonstrates. In the case of Sfax, the Director of Finance – participant SA01 – credits CSOs with much of the change taking place in local governance. However, there is no greater witness to the power and influence of CSOs than the fact that during the vacuum in local government, in the immediate aftermath of the revolution, it was the CSO nominated SMCs that took over the running of municipalities (Turess.com, 2012).

Given the evident institutional change taking place in Tunisia at the national level, and the extensive influence such shift in logics has made on the focus of attention of local actors in

both Sfax and Kairouan – as discussed in the previous chapters and exemplified in the above two examples, it is now timely to explore the structural changes to the local organisational fields, and to account for institutional change.

Section Two: The emerging organisational field

At this stage in the analysis, it is important to revisit Scott's (2014) description of institutions, where he states that they are, "brought to life in actual human conduct," recognising that we need to treat the rules, norms and cultural-cognitive pillars as a continuum, ranging from those which are legally enforced (rules) to those that are taken for granted (cultural-cognitive). Most importantly, the three pillars, "arise in interaction and they are preserved and modified by human behaviour" (Scott, 2014, p. 57). Given that fields tend to emerge around problem domains, "too difficult to be dealt with by any single organisation," such problem domains serve as litmus tests for human interactions and behaviours, revealing practices, formations and structures in which key participants engage, where rules are applied, and norms are developed and adhered to.

Owen-Smith and Powell (2008, p. 595), building on DiMaggio and Powell's (1983) work, advise four steps to identify institutional development within an emerging organisational field: (1) patterns of increasing interactions, (2) The emergence of structures of domination and coalition; (3) increasing information flow, and (4) mutual awareness among field stakeholders. While these steps are necessary to test for structural formations, such 'hardware' will be further validated by cross-referencing with the practices of sense-making, decision-making and mobilisation, the 'software' informed by the competing logics to be discussed in Chapter

Seven. What they also reveal is the nature of the field-in-formation as a 'battle ground', a place of contestation over meaning and a power struggle over resources and narrative. The study also finds it important to reflect on this by way of recognising that the organisational field is 'nested' within and affected by more dominant national fields. Most importantly, what the totality of the practice of individual boundary-spanners – to be discussed in Chapter Seven – and the four-steps suggested by Owen-Smith and Powell (2008) provide is a demonstration of the densification of the field and the 'stickiness' test of institutional change (Skelcher et al., 2013; Scott, 2014), and not just diffusion of practice. The following subsections will consider the relational arrangements within the organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan, by exploring each of the four factors suggested by Owen-Smith and Powell.

Patterns of increasing interaction

The disbanding of the 'semi-appointed' municipal councils under the old regime, the unshackling of civil society[17] (Manshurat.org, 2011) and the legitimisation of independent political parties has created space to be populated by new entrants from such organisations in all regions, including Sfax and Kairouan. The process started by civil society organisations in each of the localities coming together to put forward interim SMCs (participants: Sfax SMC leader SA03, Civil Society SA02, Kairouan SMC leader KA01). The old legislation provides that in times where sitting Municipal Councils are no longer able to function, Special Municipal Councils (SMC), *niyabat khususiyya*, can be appointed; however, such appointments can only be made by the Minister of Interior, according to the Organic Law of Municipalities of 1975

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[17] Decree 88 issued September 2011 allowed people the right to establish and operate civil society organisations and seek registration retrospectively, unless objection is made by the authorities within 30 days of registration. A marked difference from the process under the autocratic regime, where registration needs to be approved first before the CSO is allowed to operate. Link to copy of Decree 88 https://manshurat.org/node/36847

(Commune-soukra.tn, (not dated)). The period in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution created a lot of flux and uncertainty and led to the disbanding of all local authorities at the local level, including local Municipal Councils. These, "petty dictators," according to Volpi et al. (2016), were usually "RCD members or their associates, who have been in charge until then…[and] disappeared from view, whether of their own accord or because they were driven out by protesters" (p. 372). The new National Constituent Assembly (NCA), in its Founding Law Number 6 for the year 2011, gave the Prime Minister, in consultation with the President, the Chair of the NCA, and members of the NCA for the relevant region, the power to disband existing Municipal Councils and replace them with SMCs (Geneva Centre for Security Governance (DCAF), 2021).

This opportunity proved to be an important entry point for new actors that would dominate the scene, with time. A good example is civil society participant SA18, Chair of BK, and one of the core members of CEDS CSO coalition. He stated that it was a group of CSOs that took the initiative to nominate an interim SMC of 24 members for the City of Sfax (AfricanManager.Com, 2012), which was endorsed by the transitional Government, and ended up running the city for 18 months, a view also supported by Ennahda Leader in Sfax participant SA10, and Sfax Director of Finance SA01. This came about due to the mobilisation of up to 300 activists, mostly well recognised professionals in the city, who were called together for a series of meetings starting on 15th January 2011, Day Two after the Revolution. As an example of boundary spanning work, participant SA18 enjoyed good standing in the City, as Chair of the Doctors' Syndicate, and had excellent networks among key professional bodies for lawyers, engineers, architects, etc. This initial activity proved to be the springboard

for later developments in Sfax and the establishment of CEDS, and provides strong evidence of the practice of sense-making, decision-making and mobilisation.

> "…due to my previous role as president of the Doctors Syndicate and my relationship with other civil society organisations – such as the lawyers, architects, engineers, etc., I was in a position to call these around to help select the first interim council for Sfax. This role by BK was massive, we were able to appoint a 24-member Council, which lasted for 18 months."
>
> *(SA18)*

This represented a major early success for boundary-spanners, such as CSO participant SA18, but it was not easy to achieve, due to the fact that he needed to mobilise established informal low-key networks still reeling from the oppression under the Ben Ali regime. Starting with around 50 friends and professionals from various backgrounds, meetings were organised to discuss the role they could play in post-revolution Sfax, with some opting to get involved in political work, others to set up or join civil society organisations, while others opted to get involved in foundations and think tanks. This intense process of meetings and coalition building resulted in the establishment of one of the main boundary-spanning organisations, Beit elKhibra (BK)[18]. Described by some of its founders as a 'think and do' tank, BK primarily engaged in 'defining' (sense-making) and 'advocacy' – terms used by two leading members of BK, SA18 and SA05 and reflecting the practices, or institutional work, identified by Lawrence and Suddaby (2006). As an indication of the intensity of interaction, networking and coalition building, Figure 3.2 in Chapter Three illustrates the relationships and overlaps of participants and issues in each locality. Many participants were involved in the high frequency of formal and informal meetings at organisation, coalition, and field levels, whether maintenance, campaign planning, actual campaigning or formal boundary-spanning meetings (Table 6.1).

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[18] Beit elKhibra's Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/Beit.ElKhibra/

Table 6.1: Interaction hierarchy and type

Level of Interaction	Interaction activity
• **Field-level** (at locality level, such as Sfax and Kairouan: 14th June 2014 rally against Sfax Port expansion plan and Casino Beach direct action; 14 January 2016 Ani-SIAPE Rally; February 2017 sit-in by CEDS, and counter-sit-in by UGTT)	• **Campaigns** (demos, sit-ins, direct action, etc) • **negotiation meetings** (formal and informal) • **lobbying** (meeting Ministers, other field members, appeals, correspondence) • **mass-communication** (media interviews, petitions, post-cards) • Symbolic associations
• **Coalition-level** (such as CEDS, Maneesh Masab, Mobadarat Alwaseet; KA01, KA02, KA07 coordination to resolve Kairouan Refuse Collectors' problem)	• **campaign planning** • **Coalition building** • **coordination and maintenance meetings**
• **Organisation and group-level** (such as BK, Sfax el-Mizyanah and UGTT, SMC leadership, Kairouan Hospital Campaign Group)	• **Maintenance meetings** • Internal coalition-building

Maintenance meetings tended to be the regular, day to day running of the organisation or immediate coalition, which may have involved all the leadership and/or the critical drivers within the leadership. This type of interaction was vital and became the bedrock for wider engagement and boundary-spanning activities. As an example, Kairouan SMC member KA06 describes how the four leading members of Kairouan's SMC would meet to discuss among themselves, in private meetings, and sometimes disagreed bitterly on certain issues. A similar set-up was reported among the 40+ members of the CEDS coalition, where civil society participant SA08 reports that the nine leading members communicate[d] daily, debated and met frequently. In many cases, social media, especially Facebook, proved to be the preferred platform for interaction; civil society participant SA07, as the founder of Sayeb Trottoir, and

not satisfied with existing arrangements, appealed to his 5000+ followers by establishing a new Facebook page that proved to be the preferred platform of daily interaction as can be seen from the campaign's Facebook page https://www.facebook.com/SayebTrottoir, (JawharaFM, 2015). Municipal Councils themselves, whether special or elected, had their own rhythm of formal meetings at Committee and Full Council levels. Such 'maintenance' interaction was especially critical given that many organisations and coalitions were relatively new and only formed after the Revolution.

Whereas 'maintenance interaction' focused almost exclusively on matters internal to the organisation or immediate coalition, *campaign planning interaction* was focused on the issues that caused coalitions, alliances, lobbying, advocacy and campaigning to take place. Being issues driven, campaign planning interaction varied in intensity; for example, the decision by the Ministry of Transport in 2012 to expand the Port of Sfax into the Casino Beach area, "caused an outcry" according to civil society participants SA05, and SA18. Participant SA02 goes on to say that "around 45 CSOs," later to become 84, "met and decided to confront this decision by organising a demonstration on 14th June 2014," where the actual organisation of demonstration required intense daily interaction and communication (Makni Farid, 2016; DiwanFM, 2016). The adoption of Participatory Budgeting (SI03) in Sfax and Kairouan also required intense consultation to agree the rules of the game according to SA01, one of the leading advocates and Director of Finance in Sfax Municipality. This was followed by nine months of formal consultation and debates among CSOs, municipality, private and public sector organisations to agree specific projects and confirm budgets, according to civil society participant SA20. Due to the developing difference between civil society organisations and the

Ministry of Local Government and Environment, the clashes and interaction was sometimes taking place in the media (H. Dhouib, 2017). In a given locality, especially major ones such as Sfax, many campaign planning interactions were taking place in parallel, and were often overlapping; whilst Casino Beach campaign was taking shape, Participatory Budgeting consultation was starting, the campaign for the closure of SIAPE was starting to be discussed and especially the formation of CEDS. Later, Maneesh Masab campaign would be launched by boundary-spanners in the District of Agareb, which will have huge impact on the City of Sfax and all involved in CEDS.

The outcome of both maintenance and campaign planning stages naturally led to the campaigns themselves. However**, *campaign interaction*** between the coalitions for and those against a particular action, tended to be adversarial in the main. Right from a meeting to assess progress with a project, such as the one concerned with monitoring the renovation of Kairouan Old Town, where private sector and civil society participant KA05 reports that CSO representatives (service users) were barred by contractor (service deliverers) and Municipal staff (policy makers) from participation, resulting in the issue being raised with the press in order to apply pressure and gain more supporters (ARRU, 2015), to the major confrontations between CEDS and UGTT about SIAPE (Alhiwar, 2019). In the latter case, adversarial interactions included the sit-in organised by CEDS outside the Governors' offices to protest lack of implementation of orders to close SIAPE works. Here, the main adversary was UGTT; see for example the report on the sit-in, and interview with the Deputy General Secretary of UGTT by Tunisia News Network (TNN, 2017), who in turn organised a sit-in, in close proximity, to oppose such a move. Such a move, in close proximity, although leading to some altercations

at times, also meant intense informal interactions, including, according to civil society participant SA05 and UGTT participant SA12, members of the opposing sit-ins going for coffee together and continuing the conversation. The sit-in drew attention of the local political parties, MPs and the Governor and led, after a month of discussion, to the first – even if controversial - agreement between representatives of CEDS and UGTT about the future of SIAPE (SA12).

What is clear from such evidence is that the spectrum and results of such interactions are varied and do not fall into neat categories. Is it then possible to delineate patterns of coalitions? The simple answer is yes; the evidence shows that where fields are adversarial in the main, coalition building is fundamental, especially for the new, less dominant actors, in order to increase power and gain leverage, as in the case of CEDS, PB and Sfax El Mezyena (SM), and more recently Mobadarat Alwaseet - meaning 'Mediator Initiative' (Radio Tunisienne, 2019)[19].

Key players can be found to be engaged in several over-lapping issues, as indicated in Figure 3.2 in Chapter Three, for example with actors centred on SIAPE but also Casino Beach, Sfax Port and Municipality; indeed, at a personal level, individuals involved in organisations and coalitions often enjoyed constructive personal relationships regardless of their position on campaign issues.

> "On the personal level our relationship as individuals is quite strong. We continue to support each other on many levels…. We may find we are working together on the

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[19] Mobadarat Alwaseet, a coalition of twelve civil society organisations working to pressure the Government and UGTT to settle a long running high school teachers dispute. At first they tried to mediate the dispute, but this failed, the coalition then instigated legal proceedings against the two parties in order to safeguard the interests of school children and parents in Sfax.

issue of parks or schools... so at some point or other our paths will cross – this is a fact. There are always campaigns and activities in the city that bring some of us together."

(CSO participant SA05)

This reality of regular and intense interaction was observed by the researcher as well. Many of the interviewees were observed attending the same events and functions, such as the Annual General Meeting of BK, or were even observed together in cafes – Tunisia is a café culture.

However, it is at this stage that the difference between the two localities becomes clear; Kairouan was found not to have the equivalent of BK, CEDS or SM. Despite exhibiting a number of pressing issues, significant among these is the higher poverty levels, chronic public service failures, and being in a favourable position in regard to the new positive discrimination development policy - there is just not the required threshold of activism in the City and region. Two examples stand out to support this view, as reported in the media: the meetings organised with the Leader of the SMC on 27th October 2013 (Turess.com, 2013) and with local members of the People's Assembly on 1st February 2015 (Takrawan.wordpress.com, 2015). Both meetings were convened by national civil society organisations and by the Municipality, respectively, not by local civil society actors, and where the concluding message was an appeal to local civil society to support their local MPAs and Kairouan SMC (Attounisia, 2013; Takrawan, 2015).

Well defined patterns of coalitions

Coalition building is a permanent feature for almost all actors in Tunisia from national level down to the very local. Among the drafters of the 2014 Constitution, Ben Achour (2018)

admits to the in-built mechanism that does not allow any political party to dominate, and by implication only rules through coalition; and this has been the story so far of all post-revolution governments[20]. What is heard from many national voices, including Rached Ghannouchi the leader of Ennahda, the largest party in Tunisia (Ghannouchi, 2015) and the late Beji Caid Essebsi, President of Tunisia 2014-2019 (Essebsi, 2019) is that Tunisia can only progress when all Tunisians have an equal stake. This seems to set the tone for all levels of society, including local governance arrangements even though it can be difficult at times because in both municipalities although Ennahda was the largest party it did not secure enough seats to control the councils and the only way forward was through coalition building. Participant SA10, the leader of Ennahda in Sfax, being the key boundary spanner in this political machination explains:

> "We had the municipal elections, where no single party gained a majority. So, we went to the other parties to form coalitions. The response was very positive, due to the fact that all the candidates knew each other well, they belonged to the same neighbourhoods, they thought well of each other. So, other candidates were prepared, for example, to vote for Ennahda candidate to be leader of the Municipality."
>
> (SA10)

Using identified complex issues that are subject to campaigns and contestations, it is possible to observe in certain cases wider – beyond individual sectors – patterns of coalitions. Whether it is the big issues such as SIAPE, Casino Beach, or Agareb District in Sfax; the Refuse Collectors contracts in Kairouan; Participatory Budgeting in both localities; or other less prominent issues such as Sayeb Trottoir and Gremda District in Sfax or New Hospital development and Old Town renovation in Kairouan; cross sector interaction is clearly evident. On top of the increasingly

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[20] At the time of writing the thesis. Appendix 4.1 gives the breakdown of the number of seats in each of the three post-Revolution Assemblies for 2011, 2014 and 2019, showing no party gained a majority to form a government, resulting only in coalitions. Appendix 4.1 shows a similar picture emerging from the 2018 local council elections.

intense interactions on all these issues, evidence can be recorded, for example, in the way Sfax Municipality joined forces with CSOs to support the campaign to reclaim Casino Beach - a joiner rather than lead participant some would say (SA08) - and the way the Ministry of Transport did not go any further with its proposal to expand Sfax Port as was planned, as confirmed by civil society participant SA02, private sector participant SA15, and Sfax SMC leader participant SA03; see also extensive report by Elhiwar Ettounsi TV on its flagship programme Tounis Elyoum, aired on 27th June 2021, highlighting the impact of CEDS coalition with regards to Casino Beach (Elhiwar, 2021). The process of Participatory Budgeting (PB) is one of the clearest examples of patterns of coalition building between the policy makers (Municipality and Ministry of Local Government), service users (citizens and businesses), service delivery organisations (public and private), and CSOs that lobbied for, facilitated and trained all in the process, which Sfax Municipality Director of Finance participant SA01, Sfax SMC leader participant SA03, and civil society participant SA20 confirm as resulting in clear, costed and financed co-produced projects and services. This process received considerable press and public interest, as can be seen from the numerous reports (Leaders Alarabia, 2016; Salahadeen Algorshi, 2016). Participatory Budgeting proved to be a classic example of coercion at work in the formation of the field (DiMaggio and Powell 1983) where, in the case of the reluctant Municipality officials, adherence to the new coalition was only because this was going to be driven by new national laws anyway!

> "The important persuader [for Municipal officials] was the expectation that resident participation will become law in the future, and this was confirmed by the new Local Government Act."
>
> (Municipality Finance Director SA01)

Even though the pattern of coalition building was harder to detect in the case of Kairouan, there is, nevertheless, some evidence for it. The biggest issue to dominate post-revolution Kairouan was street cleaning and refuse collection, or the lack of it, when UGTT decided to strike over the issue. Here, a clear coalition involving local MPAs, UGTT, Municipality, Ministry of Local Government and the Prime Minister's Office were all at work to resolve the issue. MPA participant KA07, Leader Kairouan SMC KA01 and UGTT Leader KA02 all stressed the importance of the collective will that the coalition brought to bear on the issue. Participant KA07 went further by stating that she discounted being an MPA belonging to the governing party and focused on the issue that touched many aspects of local life instead.

> "I totally discounted in that meeting [the final meeting where agreement was reached on the deal to resolve the issue] that I represented the governing party. The meeting was to seek consensus."
>
> (KA07)

What is also clear is the existence of hierarchies among field members; in the case of SIAPE, for example, the mobilisation and negotiation was mostly directed at UGTT. Civil society participant SA08, and UGTT participant SA12, in a quotation above, and many other participants, openly acknowledge that, "the state is currently based on a duality of understanding… Authority in the country comprises of the Government and Union [UGTT]. The Union has always played a political role and wanted to monopolise"; in most cases, power lay in the duality between Government and UGTT, in other cases power was with the private sector, such as in the case of Maneesh Masab in Agareb District (Aida Delpuech and Arianna Poletti, 2021).

Increasing information flow

The increase in information production, availability, and exchange is one of the key indicators of field formation and provides the content around which discourse among field members is contested and shaped. It is also a core boundary-spanning function. The struggle over meaning and narrative during field formation involves a process of sense-making and sense-giving, as identified by Wooten and Hoffman (2008), and will be discussed at length in Chapter Seven, which is clearly at play in most of the issues considered in this study. In the case of SIAPE in Sfax, for example, two sets of narratives are being advanced: on the one hand UGTT and TCG, and a counter view by all other field members. The former argue that the current production lines are no longer a cause for concern and that the campaign for the closure of the factory is a front for private interests and lobbies who seek to profit from the resulting release of land if closure takes place, according to UGTT participant SA19, ex-UGTT participant SA19, as well as the Sfax UGTT Assistant Secretary General, Mohammad Abbas (TNN, 2017). Yet, the counter view is that SIAPE is a, "death factory"; not only is it the source of all major health ailments, but it is the major contributor to the death of the development potential of the city, according to boundary spanners such as Sfax SMC leader SA03, CSO participants SA05 and SA06, and private sector participant SA24. The struggle over narrative has been well documented by many independent sources, including an extensive investigation by Nawat.org, which summarises both narratives, represented by key stakeholders (Yassine Nabli, 2016). The anti-SIAPE coalition effectively employs independent expert information to support its narrative, such as the damning independent report produced by the University of Tunis Elmanar (Samira Melki and Moncef Gueddari, 2017).

In a different, and less confrontational, manner the narrative around the lack of incorporation of Kairouan Refuse Collectors previously employed by private contractors is between justice and fairness on the one hand, and a lack of resources on the other. The former view is adopted by the workers, as they work under poorer terms and conditions compared to their counterparts on the public payroll, and a grievance from pre-revolution era (ShamsFM, 23rd May 2012). The second view is that of the Municipality and Government, one of a lack of resources at the municipality to accommodate such demands (Ettounisia, 2012). In the case of SIAPE, the gap between the two coalitions within the field is proving difficult to bridge so far (CSO participants SA08 and SA18, UGTT participant SA12, and service delivery partners (Tunisia1, 2016)), but in the case of the Refuse Collectors, interaction and dialogue has led to compromise and the adoption of a common narrative, as demonstrated in the interviews with MPA participant KA07, UGTT participant KA02, and SMC Leader KA01. However, despite this agreement and common narrative, the press continues to report lack of closure on this issue, as the report by Takrawan of continuing protests of refuse collectors as late as 2017 indicates (Takrawan.net, 2017).

The key in both cases, is the power differential; in SIAPE's case there is no shared meaning and UGTT – being the most powerful actor - is in opposition to the closure and is, therefore, able to wield its power and coalition in favour of its narrative to leave the factory open. Whereas, in the case of the street cleaning workers in Kairouan, UGTT is in a position of demand and is, therefore, able to work with members of the field on the basis of a shared meaning to make progress on the desired solution by all, but even this does not seem to completely deal with the issue, shedding some light of the limits of the power of UGTT.

Evidence from participant interviews suggest that the intensification of information exchange during field formation can take many forms. These include (a) information and knowledge production, (b) search for and research into information that would otherwise be difficult to access, (c) the employment of formal and informal means to access and share information, (d) the promotion of specific narratives by different groups and coalitions within the same field to serve specific objectives and a desire to promote specific meaning. Boundary-spanners, such as BK and CEDS, realised the opportunity to shape the development prospect of Sfax and worked to research and put forward proposals to relevant authorities in the area. These include the report into the impact of SIAPE on the Sfax water aquifer (Melki and Gueddari, 2017), proposal on eHealth, mechanical engineering and food processing, as stated by the leaders of CEDS, participants SA08 and SA18, and supported by the appointment of participant SA18 to Chair *Initiative Régionale d'Appui au Développement économique durable* (IRADA), as reported by Tunisie Numerique (TN) on 8th October 2020 (TN, 2020). IRADA is a joint initiative between the European Union and the Tunisian Government to support the proposals identified by CEDS. Another shift in the trajectory of an important development project, the proposal for the Sfax Port, was achieved in similar manner according to civil society participant SA07 - and confirmed later in a radio interview with the Port Director (Radio Express FM, 2023).

> "We began to work on projects… We identified that Sfax has an advantage in medical sciences. We presented to the Technopole project proposals to adopt on three ideas: eHealth, mechanical engineering and food processing- focusing on olive oil… We also undertook a study about Sfax Port. We contacted all relevant stakeholders and listened to all their views, their hopes and what they aspire to achieve for the Port. …Once we draft such a vision, we go back to the stakeholders to share with them the draft. The refined draft then gets adopted by all."
>
> (CSO participant SA02)

The employment of formal and informal means to overcome barriers, in both access to and sharing of information is a distinguishing factor of boundary-spanners as excellent communicators (Williams, 2012). Such a skill calls for the building and sustenance of personal relationships, dealing with shifts in the configuration of power and trust, leading ultimately to the development of trust. In the case of Kairouan's Refuse Collectors, actors displayed this in abundance, where one of the region's MPAs (KA07) and a key boundary-spanner invested considerable time trying to understand the issue directly from other field members. This is confirmed by other boundary spanners in the issue, the SMC Leader KA06, UGTT participant KA02, and the Governor of Kairouan (KA09). SMC Leader (KA01) utilised the network of his driver to provide running commentary to affected workers about his effort to resolve their grievance. Another key member of the SMC (KA06) was able to reach beyond the formal Union representatives to informal influencers among the workers, with whom he enjoyed good personal relations, to sell the proposed solution – a clear practice of sense-giving.

> "They used to contact my driver and ask him: where is he today? How is he doing sorting out our issues? The driver was giving them live commentary on my activities on their behalf. Even if I didn't succeed, they knew I was making the effort."
>
> (Leader of SMC, KA01)

> "At the same time, we got into a marathon of meetings with UGTT – utilising a lot of personal relations. We wanted to make sure that if we promise something, we are able to fulfil it."
>
> (Member of the SMC, KA06)

The ultimate aim of the increase in information flow between field members is not just to manage difference and build durable relationships as Williams (2012) suggests, but to also win the battle for narrative. In the case of Kairouan's Refuse Collectors, communication was very

much about managing difference and building durable relationships, given that all stakeholders within the issue-field shared the same objective, whereas the case of Casino Beach and SIAPE in Sfax, was more about winning the battle for narrative. Members of the field in Kairouan entered into many meetings, formal and informal communications, utilising personal relationships that resulted in the aggrieved party, the workers and their union, accepting that there was transparency in the negotiations and ultimately accepting the deal, according to SMC member KA06, and UGTT leader KA02, even though, in the end it proved to take much longer to implement (Takrawan.net, 2017).

The case of the issues of Casino Beach (SI02) and SIAPE(SI01) were of different order and are still seen as a win-lose scenario reflecting the power relations between the main coalitions within the field in Sfax. In the case of Casino Beach, civil society was in a battle with the Ministry of Transport and, to a lesser extent, with the Municipality resulting in direct action to successfully reclaim the beach. In doing so, civil society displayed its newfound powers, which the Government could not afford to challenge – especially since local MPAs decided it was a vote winner and joined the coalition (Alhiwar.tv, 2021). However, in the case of SIAPE, and despite the CSO coalition deploying all the communication skills at its disposal, they were unable to shift UGTT's position. In the case of SIAPE, the CSO coalition resorted to an appeal to constituencies beyond the immediate field, including the Government and wider public opinion. The tools employed included *mass communication* through poster campaigns, petitions through post-cards, mass rallies (HounaTounesTV, 2016), lobbying of Parliament and all branches of Government and sit-ins (Mosaique FM, 2017) While these actions of sense-giving and information flow increased the sympathy with the cause to close SIAPE, and even

with repeated Government promises and decisions to do so, the factory is still operational.

The case of SIAPE may indicate the limitations of boundary-spanning to overcome such issues,

given the power-balance in Tunisia, which many in CEDS acknowledge.

> "In 2012, we asked (UGTT) 'what is the problem?' so in this office we held meetings with the union reps from SIAPE. We asked them what do you want? They said, you cannot close SIAPE or take it outside Sfax. We found, through clandestine and informal dialogue, that we were up against corruption that is not amenable to dialogue."
>
> (CSO participant SA18)

> "…over a whole year. We used to go to their [CEDS] offices and tried hard . During the sit-in [in front of the Governor's Office], for example, we used to have intense dialogue in café's and formally. But the decision makers in CEDS were extreme. For example, following the sit-ins, we signed minutes, where I signed on behalf of UGTT, with representatives of CEDS, the Governor, and even some MPs. As soon as we concluded the agreement, people around CEDS said UGTT won, and we took them for a lough. Following this, we started to talk to the hawks in CEDS and not the people who understand and are reasonable."
>
> (UGATT participant SA12)

Mutual awareness among field stakeholders

Field members become aware of each other by virtue of their interest in the issue(s) being

addressed and through a process of 'referencing' (Wooten and Hoffman, 2008). Awareness,

however, should not be understood as the mere acknowledgement of the existence of an

actor, it is awareness of the interest or concern of an actor in the issue(s) that needs resolving

or the question that needs addressing; and, in this respect it requires acknowledgement of

the actor as 'stakeholder' in the field and can lead to the development of a shared identity.

This however, raises some questions; while stakeholders in an issue field can be expected to

acknowledge each other's stake in the issue as they work to reach desired outcomes, how

does this mutual awareness at the issue level translate into a potential shared identify at the

broader governance field across the locality? The answer to such a question will be one of the contributions of this study to the field of institutional theory development, and will be discussed in Chapters Seven and Eight. For now, however, the rest of the discussion in this subsection will focus on the mutual awareness within the issue fields.

The history of SIAPE has meant that, pre-2011 Revolution, there were only two stakeholders: a tame and co-opted civil society, mainly in the form of the Society for Protection of Nature and Environment (SPNE), and the Government. When concern was expressed to the autocratic ruler, a decision was made to close the factory (Chair of BK participant SA18; Deputy Secretary at Sfax UGTT (TNN, 2017)), but was not implemented, mainly due to the understanding the ruler had with the co-opted UGTT at that time- as part of the autocratic bargain. Following the Revolution, civil society space became populated by independent actors among service users and policy makers, who were 'aware' of the power of the UGTT on the issue, and sought direct dialogue and engagement. When this failed, thanks to the democratic-state logic, civil society could mobilise support from the new political parties, as well as the now free and empowered public opinion, who were also interested and concerned. The number of interested stakeholders kept growing, including the University of Sfax (SA16), the regulator *Agence Nationale de Protection de l'Environnement (*ANPE) (SA09), Sfax Municipality (SA03), and more.

Many of the stakeholders overlap in their interests in the issues identified, such as SIAPE, Casino Beach, Sayeb Trottoir, Sfax el Mizyaneh, Gremda District; this is the case especially in Sfax, where such mutual awareness and overlap of interests can create powerful alliances and can also be problematic. The powerful CEDS coalition admittedly has interests and ambitions that go beyond

SIAPE and Casino Beach, where their declared concern is, "with development of the region or country" (CSO SA02), and that, "the issue is not just SIAPE – it is the whole development agenda" (private sector participant SA17). Among the challenges faced by new entrants – mainly new CSOs – was the reaction of dominant actors who questioned their legitimacy, "who are you?" (SA08), meaning who do you think you are?, or use of the derogatory term '*shu'airat*' [meaning the smallest strand of hair - insignificant] to describe them (TNN, 2nd March 2017), a challenge to their legitimacy as members of the field; a view corroborated by interview with one of the dominant opposing actors (UGTT participant SA19). Such reactions can lead to an impasse, which in the case of Sfax was only breached by the CEDS coalition building strength by appealing to wider civil society and public opinion.

> Just imagine, if we had a religious political reference point; we will end-up with a Taliban-like system. In the same way, if the political or economic policy becomes hostage to a trade union, no matter who it is and how respected it is, this will lead to a different type of dictatorship – with the rule of the proletariat. This is not a refusal for the role of UCATT, but in the post-revolution situation where the state is weak, this role has become dominant.
>
> (Party leader in Sfax, SA10)

Mutual awareness, therefore, can be brought about in a number of ways, including actors being geographically co-located and have history of relationship – which may even go back to same school or neighbourhood (SA10), through being present and sharing interest in the many events that take place in the locality (SA05), or being invited by dominant actors to specially organised consultation and engagement events (SA01, KA09); 'gate-crashing' a meeting (KA05); Facebook campaigns (SA07); or due to recognised expertise (KA08), but is always activated by issues of mutual concern. These are the means that aid the process of

referencing, leading to actors becoming connected within a field, and how a field comes into existence (Wooten and Hoffman, 2008).

There is a clear distinction in how the process of mutual awareness and referencing among actors in Sfax and Kairouan works. Whilst Sfax is a hothouse for activism across society, expressing ambition to regain what members of the field see as their legitimate position as the premier centre for commerce and development, Kairouan is less so. Note the expressed ambition of myriad Sfaxian boundary spanners (Municipality Director of Finance SA01, businessman and member of the Sfax Municipality SA04, civil society participants SA05 and SA08, party leader in Sfax SA10, MPA SA11) in the whole development agenda, and that the specific issues being tackled are only elements of a whole vision. In Sfax, the momentum is dominated by new actors – mainly civil society, pushing for and challenging incumbents, including the Government and UGTT. The story in Kairouan is one of selective addressing of issues to improve public services and injustices to specific groups, and where the initiative is led by both incumbents and new entrants; examples include New Hospital (Nessma TV, 2018), Refuse Collectors, (ShamsFM, 2012), Old Town renovation (private sector participant KA05, heritage expert participant KA08).

The process of escalation in Sfax, in terms of broadening the range of issues of concern, begins with actors becoming involved in realising Sfax Arab Capital of Culture (CSO actors SA05 and SA07) then moving on to campaign for the long-term development of the City's attractiveness. Similar, is the move from securing Casino Beach to the battle for the future of SIAPE (CSO participants SA02, SA07, SA08 and SA18, MPA SA11), and lately that of breaking the deadlock between the Government and UGTT on the crippling high school teachers' strike through

Mobadarat Alwaseet coalition (Radio Tunisienne, 2019), and these actors' declared strategy that these are steps to the greater goal of making Sfax "a place where life is good." The situation in Kairouan, by comparison, is rather more modest. Most of the boundary-spanners interviewed seem to focus on the individual issue of concern – such as resolving the Refuse Collectors' employment dispute and modifying the monitoring arrangements of the contract for the renovation of the Old Town, campaigning to realise the promised new hospital, without any clear pathway of escalation that leads to 'shaking up' the field. In summary, the evidence found in this study is that mutual awareness between field members includes the active engagement with specific named individuals, organisations and coalitions (MPA KA07, Leader of SMC KA01), regularity of contact and engagement with stakeholders (MPA KA07; private sector participant KA05; Municipality Finance Director SA01), creation of opportunities – such as events - to identify stakeholders (Municipality Finance Director SA01; Leader of SMC KA01), awareness of 'behind the scene' influencers and where real power lies (KA08, SA08), awareness of barriers to engage and the 'red lines' of other stakeholders within the field (party leader SA10; UGTT leader SA12; TNN (2017)).

Section Three: Conclusion

Reflecting on the analysis so far, in this chapter and previous ones, it can be claimed that change has taken place in the organisational fields of both, Sfax and Kairouan. This is evidenced most of all in the 2011 Revolution and resulting changes to the 'rules of the game' in terms of the new democratic process and structures. The analysis in Chapter Five, however, demonstrated through Andrew's (2013) three-factor indicators – the severity of revolutionary disruption, existence of alternative logics and actors ready to challenge existing logic and

promote new ones - a more complex logic shift. The new terrain is one of competing logics involving mainly the democratic state logic, yes, but with strong evidence of the religion logic as well as continuing legacy of the autocratic state logic.

Table 6. 2:Members of the emerging local governance organisational field during the democratic-state logic era.

Field	Users of public services	Policy makers:	Service delivery:
Developing Field – Post 2011 Revolution	**Citizens** – *free and seeking democratic rights.* **Organisations and Groups** – *empowered to advocate and participate.* **Businesses** – *free and market oriented.* **Political Parties** – *Free and empowered to advocate and participate.*	**Municipalities** - *inclusive coalitions of various political parties and independents.* **Regional governors** – *Appointed by elected coalition government accountable to citizens.* **Central Government** – *Appointed by governing coalition and accountable.* **Members of Parliament** – diverse political parties and accountable to *citizens*. **Civil Society** – diverse and empowered to advocate and suggest policies and projects, contributing additional citizen voice and supporting social accountability	**Public bodies and agencies** – Democratically accountable and operating within the new 'positive discrimination' policy favouring disadvantaged regions. **Private sector** - *free and market oriented.* **Civil Society** - diverse and empowered to advocate, suggest policies and projects, as well as raise funds and deliver services.

The boundaries of the field were mapped using the WDR triad framework (WBG, 2003) as a methodical tool, discussed in Chapter Three, identifying service users, policy makers, and service deliverers as comprising the local exchange organisational field, whose primary cause is the provision of public service. Exploring field membership through the examination of 12 issue fields – eight in Sfax and four in Kairouan - and importantly the growth and role of new

political and civil society membership, it was possible to identify significant changes to fields in both localities. Strong evidence can be provided demonstrating significant change, from a field held together by the *constituency of coercion* under the autocratic state logic – the RCD, security forces and the bureaucracy – as shown in Table 4.1 in Chapter Four, to a field populated by membership anchored by the rationality of *democratic participation and citizenship in nation,* as shown in Table 6.2.

The structure and membership of the governance organisational field in Kairouan, like that in Sfax, is very much the product of the top-down impact of this shift in logics, as initially evidenced by the powers to set up Special Municipal Councils (SMCs) in the Founding Law Number 6 for the year 2011 (DCAF, 2021), as well as local developments described by Volpi and colleagues (Volpi et al., 2016). Membership and boundaries of the fields were later defined by the rules set in the new 2014 Constitution and 2018 Local Government Act (Constituteproject.org, 2022). It is well recognised by participants, though, that the hierarchy and power remain dominated by UGTT and the Government, and in some cases the private sector.

While the state bureaucracy continued to consist of mostly the same actors, service users became empowered to participate and organise as citizens in nation, policy makers underwent a radical shift where membership became dominated by the democratically elected individuals belonging to newly formed political parties, CSOs and independents (Appendix 4.1). As for service deliverers, although continuing to be the same – especially the public sector ones, there was, nevertheless, an infusion of new members, mainly from non-profit organisations but also private sector organisations that no longer had to be under the

patronship of the regime, according to private sector participants SA17 and KA05, civil society participants SA16 and SA04. More importantly, service deliverers became more accountable for their services to both, service users and policy makers, as evidenced by the many media reports cited in this chapter. This sets the scene for the dynamic in each of the organisational fields to unfold along the lines discussed in Section Two above.

The main analysis in this chapter, is based on one important component of the organisational field, namely the *relational arrangements* among field members, which is critical to identify institutional development. This was discussed in the context of Owen-Smith and Powell's (2008) four factors: (1) increased interaction among participants; (2) the development of well-defined status order and patterns of coalition; (3) heightened information sharing; and (4) mutual awareness and responsiveness. Given the demonstrable change in logic, membership and boundaries of the field, the strength and extent to which Owen-Smith and Powell's four factors are present in a field, gives strong indication whether the result is one of institutional change or maintenance.

In terms of *increased interaction* among participants, all levels of interaction examined where richly evident in Sfax; that is, regular and intense organisational and coalition maintenance meetings and interaction, issue-related meetings and coordination of activities, as well as significant campaign interactions through direct action, sit-ins, rallies, and lobbying. The picture in Kairouan also demonstrated increased interaction, however, the tempo was less than that experienced in Sfax. Within-group, maintenance meetings were evident, such as the small group of members of Kairouan SMC meeting together to plan how they would keep the SMC together as they negotiated with UGTT, or the small group of civil society activists

meeting together to campaign for the new hospital (as described by participant KA03), but campaign interaction among coalitions was not in evident, it was limited to the group concerned with the issue. This is perhaps explained by the lack of civil society coalitions in Kairouan.

So, *patterns of domination and coalition* were much more significant in Sfax than in Kairouan. Apart from the cited coalition to resolve the Refuse Collectors issue, involving the MPA (KA07), Leader of Kairouan SMC (KA01), Governor of Kairouan (KA09) and UGTT representative (KA02), there were no other indications of sector-wide or cross-sector coalitions in Kairouan. Issues considered indicate that stakeholders are working within the 'rules of the game' and power structures in seeking a resolution to the salient issues of concern, as evidenced by the nature of the interactions with authority in all four issues discussed (Nessma TV, 2018; ShamsFM, 2012; Takrawan.net, 2017; Alchourouk, 2012). While in Sfax, actors were less embedded in main structures and exercised a greater degree of agency and autonomy, pursuing solutions to issues within an ambitious overall vision for the locality, and continuing to push the boundaries of the rules of the game, strongly establishing new norms of democratic participation.

So, in Sfax, coalitions and struggle for domination of narrative and action led to direct action by boundary-spanners in the case of Casino Beach (SI02), challenging the narrative of dominant powers in the case of SIAPE (SI01) and Agareb District (SI08), the escalation in the nature of issues pursued contributed to making a difference to development within the organisational field. This resulted in Casino Beach being reclaimed, Maneesh Masab in Agareb District succeeded to extract a court order to stop the district being the dumping ground for

Sfax's waste, even if the major battle to close SIAPE is still ongoing. Further, in Sfax, CSO-based boundary-spanners sought and established structures and coalitions of domination – of narrative at least, such as CEDS and SM, BK, Maneesh Masab, and lately Mobadarat Alwaseet. This has led to CSO coalitions being recognised locally and nationally as the 'fourth' dimension of the new governance organisational field, in addition to service users, policymakers and service deliverers, which makes the field in Sfax more of a quadrangle than the triad suggested in the 2004 WDR (WBG, 2003). This is clearly demonstrated in the way policy makers at all levels take civil society seriously, including: Municipality (municipality participants SA01, SA03 and SA04); Governorate (see interview of Sfax Governor on Tunisia1 TV on 5th January 2016); Government (see interview with Energy Minister on ExpressFM Radio 13th February 2017); service delivery agencies (see interview with SIAPE director on Tunisia1 TV on 5th January 2017, Sfax Port Director on Radio Express FM on 6th October 2023).

In the case of Kairouan, by comparison, boundary-spanners focused on the individual issues and tended to be limited in their boundary-spanning activities and ambition; a fact crystalized by their decisions to resolve the issue at hand, which was very much based on role-position of boundary-spanners. Unlike the situation in Sfax where nine out of twenty-five boundary spanners were each involved in more than one issue, as can be seen in Figure 3.2 in Chapter Three, in Kairouan only two of the 10 participants interviewed were involved in more than one complex issue. This suggests shallower boundary-spanning and social interaction; a good example of this is civil society participant KA03 deciding to build a coalition of individuals unattached to organisations to campaign on the issue of healthcare. Such approach made the wider organisational field relationship weaker, with each issue being dealt with in isolation,

with less opportunity to develop locality-wide mobilisation. The impact of such shallow fields lies in the results: in Sfax, it was possible to influence the Government to cease dumping waste in Agareb District (AssabahNews, 6th October 2021), reclaim Casino Beach and prevent expansion of the Port of Sfax (ALhiwar TV, 2021; Radio Express FM, 2023).

Additional dimensions of relevance were highlighted that may contribute to the marked difference between developments of the two organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan. One of these is historical, where Sfax, compared to Kairouan, has a deep-rooted track record of activism, including the founding of the powerful UGTT, the almost constant lead in education outcomes compared to all other regions, and the general entrepreneurial culture mentioned by almost all participants. Kairouan, in comparison, seems to lack the great unifying issues, has poorer social capital and a lack of CSO infrastructure, all indicative of a low-level of coalition building and networking. Also, in the case of Kairouan, there seems to be a delegation of responsibility to formal institutions with participation limited to channels of political representation (Attounissia, 2013; Takrawan.wordpress.com). In Sfax, however, as well as maximising the utilisation of channels of political representation, the game changer is the development of strong coalitions of influence and on-going participation, where boundary-spanners from all sectors are actively placing themselves around the table to tackle issues of significance, and leading on setting the agenda through the creation and sharing of information.

The answer to the question at the heart of this analysis is to affirm that, the post-Revolution organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan have witnessed developments and change in terms of structure and rules. The change is driven by the shift in societal logics from that of the

autocratic-state logic to the democratic state logic. The densification of the fields, demonstrated by examining the four-factor indicators suggested by Owen-Smith and Powell (2008), is clear indication of institutional change taking place within both fields; however, it can be argued that the more likely scenario is that of institutional transformation in Sfax and institutional elaboration/maintenance in Kairouan. The main indicators of institutional transformation include the strength and sustainability of civil society coalitions as not just new members, but with power to pursue a vision for the locality (reflecting Herring's (2003) restructuring of the field of power thesis) – and in doing so securing not only the formal rules already enshrined by national laws, but establishing new norms within the locality – new way of working (Scott, 2014). By contrast, while the organisational field in Kairouan has benefited from the new rules, particular the infusion of new members into the policy making arena, there are no recognisable new coalitions of domination of narrative to set new norms, and therefore the likely outcome is more of institutional maintenance and 'slow-burn' development at best.

One of the novelties in this study is the attempt to ascertain the extent to which the dynamics of social interaction around multiple issues, taken as sub-fields developing within the broader governance field, can prove or disprove such change. The analysis discussed in Section Three above, suggests that all these indicators are, to varying degrees, present in Sfax, but to a lesser extent in Kairouan. Given the outcome of the above analysis so far, the next and final of the three analysis chapters, Chapter Seven, will take forward the discussion to examine the actual boundary spanning practices. So, by looking at how the practices of sensemaking and sense-giving, decision making and mobilisation are undertaken – or not -   should give us the

opportunity in Chapter Eight to make a fuller assessment of the institutional change in both

localities and the role boundary spanners play in the process – which will respond to the main

research question guiding this study.

CHAPTER SEVEN

ENTREPRENEURIAL BOUNDARY-SPANNING PRACTICES

Introduction

The analysis in the previous three Chapters, have demonstrated the shift in institutional logics as well as changes to core components of the organisational field: logics, actors, boundaries, relational arrangements and causes. The analysis in Chapter Six in particular, sought to identify the extent of the institutionalisation process within each of the two organisational fields by examining the extent of interaction, existence of patterns of domination and coalitions, level of information sharing, and nature and extent of mutual awareness, among field members. Give the clear changes observed within the organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan – although to different extents – what boundary spanning practices can such changes be attributed to? This chapter will address the third research sub-question: ***How do boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan access and mobilise competing logics to affect institutional change?***

This third analytical chapter forms part of the three-level analysis of this study, a societal level (Chapter Five), a field level (Chapter Six), and at individual level (this chapter). Building on the analysis in Chapter Five that has identified the three competing societal logics of autocratic-state, democratic-state and religion, the role of this chapter is to identify how individuals

respond to such revolutionary change, and how logic pluralism influences the actions of entrepreneurial boundary spanners as agents of change that may explain the resulting change observed in both organisational fields in Chapter Six. Institutional logics focus the attention and resources of decision makers on issues and solutions that are in line with the dominant logic(s) with, the literature suggests, a dialectic process involving sense-making, decision-making and mobilisation (Thornton et al., 2012).

The analysis presented here, therefore, is addressing the core contribution of this study, in that it is focused on the micro-level, that is the role of individuals in influencing institutional change. Current insight from the literature (Marquis et al., 2013) suggests that revolutionary changes in institutional environments trickle down to transform fields, organisations and individuals' practices; where entrepreneurial actors mobilise within and outside organisations to push change forward and diffuse it. Particular interest will be kept on the impact of new actors in the political and civil society sectors due to their growth and ambition as observed in Chapter Four.

However, before exploring boundary-spanning practices and their role in the institutional change observed, it is important to set some context. This thesis has been about the local, in the context of state/society-level logic changes. In recognising the explosive growth in political and civil society organisations in Tunisia during this period of *extraordinary politics* (Chapter Four of this thesis), and the increasing pattern of coalition building that are seeking to restructure the field of power (Herring, 2003), we should be alert to important contingencies that may limit the impact of boundary spanning practices. These contingencies include the nature of the political system, where in Tunisia's case is almost a neo-liberal polycentric form

that fragments the state power through adoption of market economy, dilution of executive power by splitting it between the President and Prime Minister, almost full decentralisation (fiscal and administrative), as per the new 2014 constitution. All this in the context of severe contestation among the elites about the basic parameters of the political system, indicated by the collapse of government in January 2014 (Baker, V., 2015), lack of agreement around the make-up and authority of the Constitutional Court (Sharan Grewal, 2018). However, this may be an indication of high intraelite conflict which should be conducive to representatives of local interests, such as grassroot civil society coalitions, to forge alliances with the national elites and achieve better out comes (Houtzager, 2003, pp. 91-92). Such condition is likely to further the change in Sfax, compared to Kairouan, due to powerful coalitions forming, as discussed in the previous chapter.

Section One starts by clarifying the identities and goals of entrepreneurial boundary spanners in Sfax and Kairouan where it is found that identity is multi-layered and where goals can be driven by both identity and accountability commitments. **Sections Two to Four** then discuss the actual practices of sense-making, decision-making and mobilisation undertaken by boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan. In a post-conflict environment, in addition to being interpreters, communicators and coordinators (Williams, 2012), boundary-spanners, who are predominantly in the civil society sectors, can also be described as utilising entrepreneurial skill of reflexivity and innovation, where mobilisation plays a critical role. This is especially so in the case of post-Revolution Tunisia, where politically-based boundary-spanners tend to be constrained by political calculations due to their embeddedness in regional and national hierarchies, as well as governing political coalitions at local and national levels.

The **final section**, **Conclusion**, will assess the extent to which the practices of entrepreneurial boundary-spanners is aligned with dominant and competing logics, as opposed to being the result of encounters with local salient complex issues, and whether facilitating *structural linkages* (Houtzager, 2003) are available to boundary spanners. It will also be possible to assess whether there is any contrast between the practices of boundary-spanners in the two localities.

Section One: Who are the entrepreneurial boundary-spanners?

The organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan have been mapped on the basis of the WDR triad (WBG, 2003), consisting of service users, policy makers and service providers. New entrants to the field were also identified in the form of new and empowered political and civil society organisations, who are now actively involved in all three sectors, as well as continuing to grow and being organised in coalitions and federations seeking to increase their influence, especially in Sfax. Entrepreneurial boundary-spanners populate many of these organisations and play a critical role in navigating dominant societal logics to shape local organisational fields. This section starts the analysis by responding to the questions: who are these institutional entrepreneurs? What are their identities and goals? What role do elites play in boundary spanning compared to general members of the population?

In the 12 issue-fields considered, eight in Sfax and four in Kairouan (Appendix 3.1), all identified participants belonged to elites, that is the, "dominion of organised minority" (Bottomore, 2003, p 3). They belong to the minority of the population who enjoyed higher education, then a further minority of those who are organised in political and/or civil society

organisations in the main, and each enjoys higher social capital than others in the rest of society. The identity of such individuals is key to understanding their goals and motives, especially collective identity – identity of belonging; however, identities are generally multi-layered and formed as a result of membership of different collectives as will be discussed shortly. However, when discussing identity in Tunisia, the big 'elephant in the room' will always be the secular-religious divide; a topic addressed in the following sub-section.

The Secular-Religious divide within Tunisian society

When discussing identity in the Tunisian context, it is a must that two particular orientations are addressed. Many observers (Perkins, 1986, 2004; Hibou, 2006, 2011; Ben Achour's 2018; Essebsi 2012; Yousfi 2014; Bishara 2012; Wolf 2017) acknowledge the divide between the secular and the religious among Tunisia's population. So, what does it mean to be secular or religious, in Tunisia? The analysis of societal logics undertaken in Chapter Five suggests that a person of religious orientation would be expected to state the importance of faith as a source of legitimacy with references to scriptures as a source of authority and, in doing so, will indicate an association with God as the source of their identity. Sayyid (2003) states that, "an Islamist is someone who places her or his Muslim identity at the centre of her or his political practice. That is, Islamists are people who use the language of Islamic metaphors to think through their political destinies" (p. 17) . Yet, if we look at evidence from members of Ennahda Party, being the flag bearer of Islamism, the picture that emerges is somewhat nuanced, as will be discussed below, and demonstrated in the vocabulary analysis in Appendix 5.1.

Take for example Rachid Ghannouchi, the leader, and one of the founders of Ennahda, being identified as, "perhaps one of the most famous examples of those Islamists who have turned towards the idea of democracy" (Sayyid, 2003, p. x). In an Op Ed in the New York Times, in November 2014, Ghannouchi dismisses the prevailing narrative of the dualism between secular and Islamist and paints a picture of a struggle between despotism and democracy. He argues that, in Tunisia, his party's programme was not about the role of Islam in society, but about everyday challenges:

> "…the fundamental choice facing the citizens living through this tumultuous period in Tunisia, …is not between Islamism and secularism, but between democracy and despotism. For my own party, Ennahda (which means renaissance), the Oct. 26 (2014) legislative elections in Tunisia were not about the role of Islam in society. They were an opportunity to address issues of unemployment, more inclusive economic growth, security, regional development and income inequality — in other words, the bread-and-butter issues that matter to ordinary Tunisians."
>
> (Ghannouchi, New York Times, 20th November 2014)

Ghannouchi's narrative of Ennahda Party's programme resonates with the views of participants who are either members of Ennahda or aligned with it. Participant KA07 is clear of her priorities as a member of Parliament representing Ennahda and contributor to the drafting of the 2014 Constitution; she states that "setting the rights and freedoms enshrined in the constitution to protect against the return to authoritarianism," was her most important priority. Likewise, participant SA10 states that, in his capacity as President of Ennahda in Sfax, the priority is, "passing on a Sfax that is in better condition to the next generation." While KA09, former Governor of Kairouan, and SA03, former Leader of Sfax Municipality, both state their objectives as, "re-establishing state authority and the rule of law – this is through dialogue and not use of force," and, "the most pressing issue was an environmental one - in

one sense it is the basic cleanliness of the city, and in another the pollution within the city,"

respectively.

Even though Ennahda's charter defines it as a, "national political party, of *Islamic reference point* …contributing to build a modern, democratic Tunisia that is proud of its *religion* and identity" (Ennahdha.tn, 2014),[21] hardly any interviewee associated with Ennahda states their objective using a religious tone or terminology. Ghannouchi is often at pains to highlight, "parallels with Germany's Christian Democrats, saying that Ennahda saw itself as a conservative democratic party with a religious reference that favoured a liberal, open economy" (Marks 2017, p. 36). Other observers agree that Ennahda's support for the new 2014 Constitution is based on the notion of a civil state, which renounces, "references to sharia and the establishment of a classic Islamic state [which] speaks volumes of the party's post-Islamist evolution" (Houssem Ben Lazreg, 2021).   This approach is further clarified by Rashid Ghannouchi (RN) himself in an interview with Christian Amanpour (CA) of CNN, on 23rd May 2016, following Ennahda's landmark 10th Congress held on 6th January 2016:

> CA: "[Your position]…is 180 degrees from what the Iranian Revolution did in 1997. You have done the complete opposite by separating the mosque from politics. Are you aware of the significance of this, and do you fear a backlash?"
> RG: "We are aware of what we are doing. Th actions of a person should be according to his beliefs. We need to recognise the different spheres of politics and religion. We practice politics; therefore, mosques must not be employed for party politics."
> (CNN, Amanpour, 2016)

As far as those considered to be on the extreme left and are secular are concerned, however, such as Hamma Hammami – Leader of the Workers Party, Ennahda remains committed in both

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[21] There are different spellings of the name due translation for Arabic, including: Ennahda, Ennahda and Ennahdhah. In this thesis the first is used, as it is most common in the literature, unless referencing requires a specific spelling, as in this case here.

identity and strategy to a religious logic. To support their view, they cite the Party's opposition to legislation establishing equality in *meerath* (inheritance) between male and female, and other measures relating to matters associated with religious rituals, such as freedom not to fast during the month of Ramadhan – 'fasting' is one of the five pillars of Islam obligatory to all Muslims. In an interview with Aljazeera.net (2019), Hamma Hammami, responding to the question on whether he recognises that Ennahda has evolved from an Islamist to a civil movement, given the latter's reform, especially following its 10th Congress, he said:

> "Ennahda is not a civil movement, as it claims, which is confirmed on many instances, most prominent of which is its position on equality between men and women on the issue of inheritance, which was fiercely opposed by Ennahda, or its position on freedom not to fast during the month of Ramadhan, as expressed by one of its senior leaders".
>
> (Hammami, 2019)

The view expressed by Hammami is shared by others, even though recognising Ennahda's journey to a more democratic process, including Ben Achour (2018). So, how can the evident development expressed by Ennahda's leadership and its programme in areas such as the new 2014 Constitution, its fierce promotion of democracy and the role of women be reconciled with what it's political opponents accuse it of? This researcher's view is that Ennahda does not subscribe to the *laicite,* the extreme version of secularism where religion has no role in public life and is almost anti-religion, but rather the democratic state – or *addawlah almadaniya* - which is based on diversity and recognition of the role of religion in public life. However, what Ennahda's position on issues such as *meerath, awqaf* and adherence to rituals is indicative of, is the fact that the religious logic remains a dominant logic with strong popular support, given Ennahda's share of the popular votes in succeeding elections despite such issues never coming up in participant interviews.

One of the reflections on the matter of reconciliation between the Islamist and secular forces in post-Revolution Tunisia is provided by Ben Achour (2018), one of the architects of the 2014 Constitution, where he recognised how the term, *addawla almadanīya, 'civil state'* provided the accommodation, because it separated the apparent meaning from the underlying one, and so became a tool for agreement, as now enshrined in Article Two of the new Constitution:

> "Tunisia is a civil state, based on citizenship, popular will, and rule of law" (Ben Achour, 2018, p. 253)

A more detailed consideration on the religious-secular divide in Tunisian society, which reflects the findings in this study, is provided in a mixed method study by Brandon Gorman in 2017, as discussed in Chapter Four. Gorman's findings support the approach taken in this study of focusing on the salient issues that tend to be the main areas of concern, and arenas of collaboration, at local level. This also further highlights the fact that, while personal identities might be forged by ideological affiliation, group identities, "are forged through the erasure of internal differences" (Sayyid, 2003, p. viii), which is the case for local communities such as the ones in Sfax and Kairouan.

Group identities: A strong indicator of boundary-spanning

In this complexity, it is possible to find certain salient group identities of boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan where most primarily belong either to CSOs or political organisations, and most enjoy a professional standing, such as doctors, teachers, lawyers and engineers, as well as reflecting the ideological divide in Tunisian society between the religious and the

secular/modernist[22]. It is further possible to deduce that, in this study, of those identifying primarily as politically active, most tend to have a religious affiliation, whilst those most active in civil society tend to be secular, which is not a surprise due to the fact that both localities are led by municipal councils dominated by Ennahda, which is also a lead partner in the coalition government, nationally. These two identity 'stacks' shall be referred to as *political-professional-religious*, and *civil society-professional-secular*, where the most salient group identities are the *political* and *civil society* affiliations (Figure 7.1). The identities shown in Figure 7.1 are on the basis of self-identification, except that of secular, which was a deduction and ascription by this researcher on the basis of observation, secondary or third-party information, as well as self-identification in some cases.
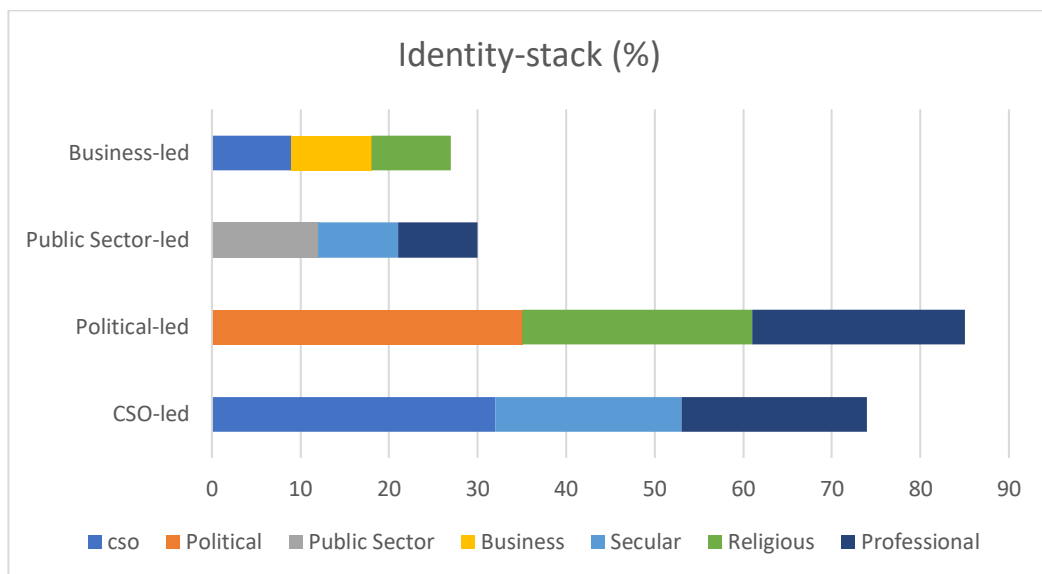
Figure 7.1: Identity stacks, showing the two main pathways, where the (%) on the x-axis indicates the proportion of participants identified with a particular collective identity.

Boundary-spanning, therefore, seems to manifest itself first and foremost in the ability of such actors to be members of different identity collectives. One of the examples of the *political-*

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[22] The terms 'traditionalist' and 'modernist' can be highly contested, where many with religious affiliations see themselves as modernist at the same time – as many discussions between this researcher and participants indicate.

professional-religious identity stack, labelled as *political-led* in Figure 7.1, to be highlighted here is MPA participant KA07; who, like MPA participant SA11, Leader of Ennahda in Sfax SA10, Sfax SMC member SA13, and Kairouan Governor KA09, in the pre-revolution period could be described by Lederach (1997) as educators. Starting her involvement as a student organiser, suffered imprisonment as a result, then developed through the legal profession and being involved in the resistance to dictatorship, only to emerge after the revolution as a senior member of the largest political party and member of the NCA and then Peoples' Assembly, representing Kairouan. Participant KA07's credentials demonstrate the path taken in forging a clear identity through struggle and affiliation to both a profession and political association. Whilst the latter is clearly religious by implication, KA07 does not elaborate on this at all, and is typical of almost all actors interviewed who have similar affiliations.

> "I am a solicitor, member of the NCA, Chair of Freedom and Rights Committee. I had the honour of participating in drafting the 2014 Constitution and associated committees, I also represented my party in the National Dialogue of 2014. I was re-elected as MPA and representing Ennahda Party, and Vice-President with special interest in legislation …This was a unique experience, as the legal profession was one of the main forces of resistance to dictatorship. … my experience in the legal profession, and my role in the regional branch of the lawyers' syndicate, has afforded me the ability in problem management."
>
> (KA07)

This journey, and her subsequent senior political position, meant that, through her leadership position, she was well placed and networked with various actors to act as a boundary-spanner. Participant KA07 had the legitimacy, in other words the role, to be interested and involved in solving the issue of the contracts of Refuse Collectors in Kairouan. She was able to use the legitimacy and power of her position as a Member of the NCA, executive leadership of the governing party, and legal training to bring together all the parties concerned to negotiate a

deal that resolved a long running dispute. What is indicative of KA07's entrepreneurial approach, is that she was able to accomplish this during the Ennahda-led Troika[23] Government (2011-2014). The relationship between Ennahda Party and UGTT then was fraught, with many in Government accusing UGTT of fermenting strikes and industrial disputes to cause political damage[24] . Yet, KA07 was able to navigate this 'minefield' of a relationship to try to bring about closure to a major industrial dispute in Kairouan.

> "As a lawyer, I started from this position [being also member of NCA and the governing party] of trying to accommodate the national ruling on the one hand and the social pressures of workers on the other. Through regular contact between the Director of Local Government within the Ministry, the Leader of the SMC in Kairouan, the Governor of Kairouan and the local UGTT leader, I acted as the go-between to come up with the solution."
>
> (MPA KA07)

The second most common identity stack in this study, is that of the *civil society-professional-secular*, labelled *CSO-led* in Figure 7.1. The case of civil society participant SA02 is a good example of this group of boundary-spanners. He started activism from an early age, while at university and through political affiliation – a common starting point for many, such as the MPAs participant SA11 and KA07, CSO participant KA03, and others, but then quickly moved to the civil society route through the Junior Chamber International (JCI), which he admits helped shape his skills and outlook. Another common trend among many Tunisian activists is spending a period of time outside the country, whether for the purpose of study, tourism, or due to political exile. CSO participant SA02 spent a prolonged period in France to complete his studies, while others such as private sector and Sfax Municipality member SA04 travelled on business, the member of Peoples' Assembly SA11 political exile and CSO participant SA07 was

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[23] The Troika was the first post-revolution democratic Government led by Ennahda Party, with two other secular parties in a coalition.

[24] See for example report by France24 on 6th December 2012, and Khansa Ben Targam's extended article in Assafir Al-Arabi on 16th January 2013

invited to share and learn from the experience of French municipalities. What is telling, however, is that, while nearly all participants in Sfax had experience of foreign travel, only three of the participants in Kairouan may have done so, Kairouan SMC leader KA01, member of Hajeb Oyoon municipality KA10 and Member of People's Assembly KA07; a fact that may reflect on the socialising experience of actors in the locality, and therefore their exposure to wider range of logics.

Participant SA02 relates how his journey started when, as a student, he became politically affiliated but soon ended that affiliation due to his experience of the ideological battles then raging within university campuses in Tunisia. What he stresses most, and had the most impact on his identity formation, is his association with the JCI, following completion of his studies in France and his return to Tunisia.

> "… as a student, I was a political activist… seen as aligned to a particular movement. I then went to complete my studies in France, I carried on in the same way. When I returned to Tunisia I joined the JCI, …it is the JCI that made me what I am."
>
> (SA02)

This grounding at an early age in political activism, and his work with JCI has had the most impact on his identity and encouraged him to commit to work through civil society organisations. However, during the autocratic regime, the space for activism was narrowing, with any civil initiative having to either accept co-optation by the regime or face closure. For many, like CSO participant SA02, however, there was always a way to remain active by joining other initiatives. *Educators* seem to always find a way to keep their activism alive by joining forces with other activists, and in Tunisia, the fields of legal (KA07), human rights (SA02) and environmental (SA18) activism seem to have provided such alternatives.

"Then the regime tried to take over JCI and we had to leave it. I then got involved in the Tunisian Human Rights League, and was active in a few societies and clubs – especially those that had an economic slant. The 14ᵗʰ January 2011 Revolution took place, and BK was founded which I joined. The main objective of BK is the creation of lobby in Sfax from the CSOs, to challenge authority in a very constructive way, to put forward a vision and ideas for projects."

(SA02)

The above two examples of participants KA07 and SA02 indicate the extent to which identity formation, through experience and struggle that often starts at university leading to a profession, and which may include a period of imprisonment and/or exile, followed by civil society activism and/or a political role, is prevalent among boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan, and may especially be the case in post-conflict societies such as Tunisia. What seems to distinguish post-conflict societies from stable democracies is the filtration process imposed by autocratic regimes, where avenues for participation and activism are frequently closed off, unless they accept being co-opted by the autocratic regime. In fact, according to Caroline Schlaufer (2021), authoritarian regimes may allow such activism as popular tools to boost their legitimacy, while in fact such avenues can also lead to activists innovating and resisting at the same time. In doing so, activists can hone their social entrepreneurial skills and creativity, finding paths of least resistance, but if necessary accepting sacrifices such as imprisonment or marginalisation, as was the case for many participants in this study. The key question that arises from this analysis is the impact such identities, forged in the heat of battle – almost literally, have on choices and goals.

Mapping the relationship between individual actors and the issues they are involved in is quite revealing in this regard on at least two levels and can be traced to whether the actor is identified as being of religious or secular outlook, and whether they are primarily involved in

politics or civil society, since most enjoy the same level of higher education and membership of professions. Figure 7.2 brings together the unique position and experience of the entrepreneurial boundary spanner; it shows how CSO participant SA07, in this case, boundary spans not only multiple identities that impact and guide his sense-making, but also his intense social interaction across at least three complex issues in his locality. Other boundary spanners are just as invested in terms of multiple identities (Figure 7.1) as well as being involved in multiple issues and associated social interactions as shown in Figure 3.2 in Chapter Three.
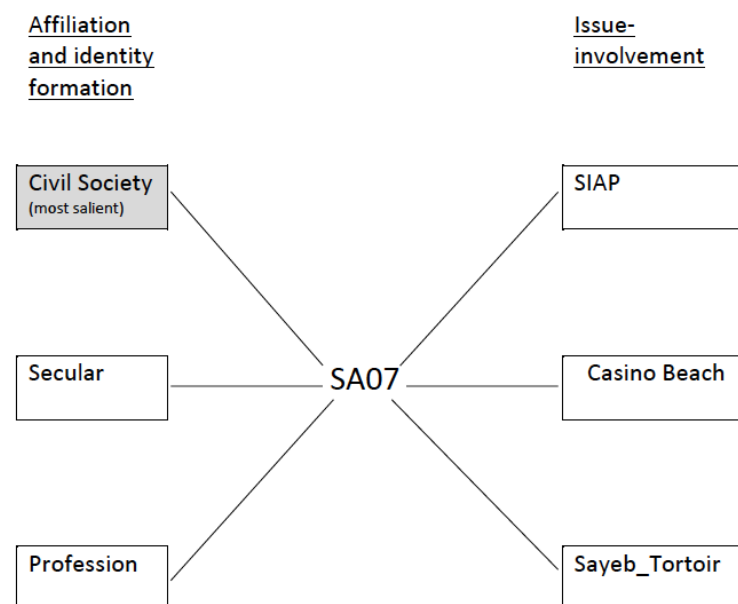
Figure 7.2: CSO participant SA07 – typical boundary spanner's identity formation and issue socialisation in Sfax

Referring to Figure 3.2 in Chapter Three, linking actors to issues, it can be demonstrated that the critical environmental and developmental issues in Sfax, namely SIAPE (SI01), Casino Beach (SI02), Participatory Budgeting (SI03), Sayeb Tortoir (SI04) and Agareb (SI08) are all championed and driven by actors that are secular in the main and who are acting through CSOs that are defined by the issues of environmental concern as a gateway to development.

These actors pretty much set the agenda for change in Sfax, where huge amount of media coverage and statement of persons in authority testify to this (for example ExpressFM, 2017; ShamsFM, 2016; Tunisia1 TV, 2016; Alchourouk, 2019; MosaiqueFM, 2017; Radio Touniesienne, 2020). Actors who are involved in political organisations and who occupy political positions, such as the leader of Sfax SMC SA03, member of Sfax Council SA04, Leader of Ennahda in Sfax SA10, and member of Agareb Municipality SA22, as leaders or members of municipalities or MPA, tend to be more joiners rather than leaders on such issues, and are 'going with the flow' for political purposes. However, this could be explained in the context of the highly contested intraelite relationship at national and local levels, where political actors look to "forge new alliances with subordinate social actors" (Houtzager, 2003), p. 92) – as already mentioned in the Introduction, above. One more important facet to the identity formation of the two groups has to be recognised, especially those in politics with religious affiliation, and relates to activities outside their primary role. In the case of many within this group of actors - including member of Sfax SMC SA13, member of Agareb Council SA22, SA16, Member of Kairouan Council KA06, considerable time was expended in the past, or currently, in relief-of-poverty-type CSOs. Such CSOs tend to create less noise, compared to the campaigning and advocacy CSOs (such as CEDS, SM, BK) in which the more secular actors are involved and which are the subject of this study, due to their complexities.

This broad scenario of affiliation with collectives among actors is an important gateway to understanding goal setting, and likely to be a feature in the relationship between dominant institutional logics and the practice of actors. Recognising that individuals have multiple social identifications, including that of ethnicity, organisation, professional field, as Thornton et. al

(2012, p.80) assert, "specific social situations and interactions shape which of multiple identities and goals get triggered." The golden thread in the identity stacks described earlier is the religious and secular affiliation, some actors are, at the same time, secular, professional and civil society, just as others are religious, professional and political. The major difference between those actors active mainly in the political sphere and those in the civil society sphere, is that the former seem more concerned by wider governance issues and tend to navigate and balance numerous pressures and priorities and, hence, are seen as reactive, as followers and brokers. Those mainly in the civil society sphere tend to be issue-focused, such as SIAPE, Casino Beach, New Hospital, etc., and are, therefore, able to be more entrepreneurial in the pursuit of the cause, and to certain extent set the agenda.

This difference in approach between those boundary-spanners operating in the political sphere and those in the civil society sphere also reflects the difference in their goals. Consider, for example, the position of the Leader of Ennahda in Sfax participant SA10, with regards to the critical issues of SIAPE, who has considerable influence on the Municipality leadership, Ennahda MPA, as well as a direct line to Government Ministers. His position is one of acknowledging SIAPE as an issue that needs resolving, but it is only part of the problem and Sfaxians need to also address other related issues, in his opinion. The goal defined by SA10 can only be explained as being driven by political accountability rather than identity; that is accountability to a wide range of stakeholders, including UGTT, CGP, and SIAPE workers and management. When pressed on the issues, SA10 offers a typical politician's response, which is to defer decision on SIAPE closure until after the coming election where there might be stronger Government and political will, or to hold a referendum in Sfax on the option to close

the works. This is a powerful indicator of wider political considerations from a member of the major ruling party in the national and local coalitions because this is based on electoral and power-balance considerations, given the relationship between Ennahda and UGTT as well as other powerful political entities, such as the coalition partner Nidaa Tounes party.[25]

> "As far as development is concerned, especially in relation to SIAPE, I would like to first comment that, what we suffer in Sfax is the perforation of the environmental set-up/system as a whole. There are a number of parties that want to summarise the environmental issue in the case SIAPE. Yes, we are eager to bring the SIAPE issue to a close, we have issued statements, took part in demonstrations, etc. However, SIAPE is only part of the collapsing environmental system ."
>
> (Leader of Ennahda Party in Sfax SA10)

In comparison, an actor located in the civil society sphere sets his or her goal on the basis of collective identity. Looking at SA02, for example, the choice of SIAPE is dictated by the facts that have been accepted by the CEDS coalition, in that the works are the source of all ailments in the City, social and economic. This goal is shared by other civil society participants SA08, SA05, SA16, SA07 and others within the civil society sphere. Such objectives are based on both collective identity, forged around the issue of SIAPE, as well as accountability to the actors, individuals and organisations, who mobilised around the same cause. Accountability is to the cause, rather than being 'political' to the stakeholders as in the case of the Leader of Ennahda in Sfax SA10. Here, SA02 describes the relationship between identity formation and goal setting, confirming the main reason for the existence of CEDS - a coalition of about 40 CSOs, which caused the work to be intense and frequent.

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[25] The position of SA10 raises an interesting point. Those boundary spanners working to resolve the complex issue of SIAPE, such as SA18, SA02 and SA08, actually find themselves enveloped by boundary spanning activity on the same issue at higher levels. So, not only are participants such as SA11 and those they directly interacts with fighting to achieve their goal of closure with UGTT and TGC, they also have to watch their back from the likes of SA10 who might appear supportive, but are actually working on a different deal at different level.

"And so we started meetings for this purpose. This led to the landmark march of early 2016… a unique event as it was a march solely for an environmental reason. About 8,000 people took part… SIAPE represents all that needs to change in Sfax. Not just from an urban development quality of life perspective, but a demonstration of the political will to change things for the better in Sfax."

(CSO participant SA02)

There is recognition in the literature for the role of institutional logics in focusing the attention of actors in situations such as goal setting. Sections Two, Three and Four below will build on the above evidence linking each of the two identity stacks with a particular driver for goal setting, whether identity or accountability, by first exploring the resulting practice of boundary-spanners and then by establishing the link or otherwise with the dominant and competing logics. The degree to which any of the three logics identified in Chapter Five influence individual actors in Sfax and Kairouan will vary, according to Thornton et al., (2012), depending on the *availability*, *accessibility* and *activation* of the logic. Where availability relates to the knowledge the individual actor has about the logic, accessibility refers to the degree to which that knowledge and information come to the mind of the actor, and activation refers to whether the actor actually uses that available and accessible knowledge and information. The availability and accessibility of the logics of autocracy, democracy and religion should be indicated through the practice of *sense-making and sense-giving*, while the activation of these logics, according to Thornton et al (2012), will be demonstrated through the practice of *decision making* and *mobilisation*. The following three sections will examine each of these practices in light of the research findings, and will compare them to the categorical elements in Table 5.1 in Chapter Five.

Section Two: The practice of sensemaking and sense-giving

The practice of sense-making is the process by which, "social actors turn circumstance into situations that are comprehended explicitly in words and that serve as a springboard for action" (Thornton e al., 2021, p. 96). This is the most powerful practice by social actors, whereby the power of language is deployed not just for diagnostic and prognostic purposes, but to also motivate other actors towards the achievement of desired goals. Sense-making, in practice, depends on the response of the actor to the competing logics, which Pache and Santos (2013) suggest can be *ignorance*, *compliance*, *defiance*, *compartmentalisation* or *blending*. Social actors in Tunisia, as discussed in Chapter Five, have experienced and lived within a dominant logic of the autocratic state, where the associated frames are embedded in the identity of affiliation with the regime- consisting of the ruling party and the associated bureaucracy and security apparatus. In such circumstances, the resulting situations are reflected in the vocabulary of safety, stability, and risk aversion, with an emphasis on self-interest and the associated fear from the identified risks of Islamisation, globalisation and unemployment (Hibou, 2011; Farhat, 2013).

Under the logic of the autocratic state the narrative promoted was the 'preservation of the regime,' using framing language such as that propagated by Bourguiba in his famous speech in the City of Bizerte in 1964: "the ruling party undertakes the best of services and carr[ies] out its duties and responsibilities in a perfect way, and so successfully" (Alhinashi, 2011, p. 28). Ben Ali's 1988 security pact (Hibou, 2011) also emphasised 'safety', 'stability' and 'prosperity', and 'fear' of risk from Islamisation, globalisation and unemployment. The prevalence of the logic of the autocratic state was also supported by evidence emerging from

participant interviews. Private sector participant KA05, for example, when asked to state the reason he got involved in the Old Town project in Kairouan said: "… before the revolution it was not possible [to participate] unless you were part of the regime – and this was not possible. So, we had to stay low, we talk privately, but that is it". Similarly, civil society participant SA18, describing the reason one of the leading pre-revolution environmental campaigners was deemed to be associated with the regime said: "The union (UGTT) used the excuse that the president of SPNE was close to the old regime [in order to discredit him]. This was not true. He merely tried not to clash with it." This fits neatly with Faraht's (2013) explanation of the effect of the 'deep state' on the behaviour of many during the autocratic state regime. In fact, this could not be clearer than in the press conference given by SPNE on 14th November 2010, just days before the Revolution, where a spokesman "stressed his trust in the implementation of the decision [to close SIAPE] as it is a promise from the President to the residents of Sfax" (Mohammed Ridha Assouisi, 2010).

Evidence gathered from participant interviews reflects, in considerable ways, the identity and accountability commitments in both localities; such commitments also reflect the logic struggle taking place, rather than a complete break with the autocracy logic. The analysis presented in Appendix 7.1 summarises the development of the main circumstance identified by social actors, the framing used by these actors in terms of sense giving to guide action, and the key vocabulary indicative of the increasing logic shift in both localities. The circumstances identified through participant interviews provide a contrast between the two localities. In the first example, show in Table 7.1 below, boundary spanners, SMC Leader KA01 and MPA KA07, were faced with the circumstances of strikes and deteriorating environment and government

not willing to bend the financial rules on spending above the budget. They articulated a way

forward of securing increase in local revenue to justify increase in payroll spending.

Table 7.1: Sensemaking in Kairouan – <u>Example (1)</u>

Circumstances – sense-making	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
Strikes and deteriorating environment. (SMC Leader KA01) Concern of Government about escalation in social demands. (MPA KA07) Ministers could not treat Kairouan as a special case. They had 264 municipalities facing the same circumstances. (SMC Leader KA01)	"Increase in revenue to meet increase in payroll cost". Engagement with stakeholders and getting UGTT to appreciate the situation and agree to phased solution. (MPA KA07, SMC memebr KA06)	Fairness, Dialogue, Understanding, Negotiation, Agreement.

Table 7.2: Sensemaking in Kairouan - <u>Example (2)</u>

Circumstances – sense-making	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
Deterioration of historic Old Town and threat of reduction in tourism leading to loss of economic opportunities. (Heritage expert KA08, private sector KA05).	Recognition that "Kairouan's future is it's past", and lobbying, through media and other channels, for better delivery of renovation projects. Supporting property owners through grants to better maintain their properties. (Heritage expert KA08, private sector KA05).	Lobbying, involvement, access to information, support.

Similarly, the example in Table 7.2, the circumstance of deterioration in the condition of the

Old Town and likely impact on the local tourism economy (MPA KA07 and heritage expert

KA08) led to mobilisation to recognition that "Kairouan's future is it's past", and lobbying, through

media and other channels, for better delivery of renovation projects. So, in Kairouan the

circumstances described focus on deterioration in specific public services such as waste

removal; water supply; strikes by public sector workers; pressure to unionise. There is lack of

narrative of an overall grievance beyond that anecdotally mentioned by one of the Governors of Kairouan, participant KA09, around the focus of investment on coastal areas.

In contrast, social actors interviewed in Sfax articulate both a strategic narrative of circumstances that drive the main issues, as well as more specific narratives pertaining to each of those issues. As can be seen in Appendix 7.1, they articulate the circumstances where 'life is no longer as good as it was in the old days', as in Example (3) in Table 7.3 below, and of deliberate marginalisation in recent decades. Sfaxians describe circumstances of 'hope' brought about by the revolution that is conducive for action. They further state the circumstances of limitation of national party politics and the continued domination of the higher echelons of state bureaucracy by the two dominant regions. They call out the 'state within a state' relationship between UGTT and the Government, where the former is seen as the strongest party in the relationship.

Table 7.3: Sensemaking in Sfax - Example (3)

Circumstances - sensemaking	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
History of Sfax of old is one where life was good. Sfax is suffering recently *due to deliberate historical neglect and marginalisation with large percentage of Sfaxian elites leaving Sfax*. (SA02, SA18, SA11, SA08, SA10)	The main objective of BK is the creation of lobbying in Sfax from the CSOs, to challenge authority in a very constructive way, to *put forward a vision and ideas* for projects. We began to work on projects, spending many hours. We started to audit activities in the region, and identify initiatives developed by specialist, until we reached a stage where we have a vision for the development of Sfax: we decided to *focus on the environment above all else*. (SA02, SA08, SA11) Just before the municipal elections, a group of CSOs published a charter to be adopted by all lists taking part in the elections. They all signed it. This gives you an indication on the authority of civil society in the City. We can persuade and influence. (SA08)	Lobby, vision, challenge, CSOs, initiatives, the environment.

In Example (4) Table 7.4 below, Sfaxians recognise the circumstance of absence of local leadership and the risks associated with it, and work to fill the vacuum and demonstrate that the 'administration' is no longer governing on its own, and that, as well as democratic representation, democratic participation is possible.

Table 7.4: Sensemaking in Sfax - Example (4)

Circumstances - sensemaking	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
The *municipality was without leadership,* following dissolution of pre-Revolution Councils dominated by Ben Ali's RCD party. (civil society participant SA18; Volpi et al., 2017)	Before local municipal and national elections, when special councils were being set up to run the municipalities, BK played a massive role, we were able to *appoint a 24-member council, which lasted for 18 months.* (civil society SA18; Sfax SMC Leader SA03; Assabah, 2012) Sfax is also known for its strong civil society culture – arising from the post revolution. This has helped to give life to the fact that *the administration is no longer governing on its own* (no monopoly?). (Sfax Municipality Finance Director SA01) The democratic process which leads to elected representation is complemented with democratic participation (through Participatory Budgeting). *As well as electing their representatives, why not also raise their concerns and opinion through direct means. These are complementary processes.* (Sfax Municipality Finance Director SA01)	Democratic participation, Direct democracy, CSO leadership Participatory budgeting.

Boundary spanners in both localities, as highlighted in the examples given here and detailed in Appendix 7.1, demonstrate a consistent practice of formulating situations, or more

accurately sense-giving, that became the basis of actions. In Kairouan, the circumstance that led to strikes: deteriorating municipality services and social pressure on Government at all levels, the way forward was through identifying pathways to solutions, such as increasing revenue through engagement and campaigns to collect overdue fees and taxes. Similarly, the circumstances of disregard for the law and rise in criminal activity in some deprived neighbourhoods, were addressed by the creation of more favourable situation through increased investment in public services and demonstration of care by the authorities (KA01), together with public awareness campaigns and enforcement. Available audit reports published for 2015 and 2017 show steady increase in public investment between 2013 and 2016, from Tunisian Dinar (TD): TD1,045,733 to TD4,402,671 respectively (Court of Audits, 2015; 2017[26]). The circumstances of private sector workers being denied the right to union membership, and the resulting threat and action to sack those demanding such right is an indicator of autocratic practice within the private sector (Kairouan Governor KA09, CSO participant KA03). A similar example is the case of Agareb District in Sfax region, where opposition by residents to polluting industry was met with threat of closure and job losses, rather than working to control and improve pollution, according to Municipal Council member SA22, CSO participant SA23, and the extensive report by Aida Delpuech and Arianna Poletti (Delpuech and Poletti, 2021). In both these latter cases the state seemed powerless to intervene on the side of the workers or residents, where the language was one of *security* of jobs and employment.

However, despite the evident logic shift, social actors in Kairouan are clearly working along the grain of established institutions. They lobby government to introduce and improve

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[26] The two reports show: TD1,045,733 (2013); TD2,337,844 (2014); TD3,319,399 (2015); and TD4,402,671(2016).

services (Takrawan, 2015; Attounissia, 2013), with individuals and groups working in isolation, each focused on their specific issue; there is no evidence of an overall narrative for the locality. Yet, in Sfax there is a clear overall narrative, where issues are almost always articulated in context, such as, "life used to be good in Sfax" (CSO participant SA05), but in its recent history, "Sfax has been marginalised," (Party Leader SA10); whereas now, the Revolution has given rise to hope where, "conditions were conducive for the region to develop its own vision and to realise it" (CSO participant SA02). A powerful narrative about the journey from the good times, to the decline and the emerging hope is provided by private sector and Municipal Member participant SA04. He describes how households took care of the cleanliness of their neighbourhood in the 1950s and 1960s, but when the state started to encroach more and more into this space, households delegated and then neglected their role in such activity to the state. Their approach is one of, "not my concern" according to private sector and Municipal Council participant SA04, leading to neighbourhoods suffering from poor cleaning services and mounting litter problems. In the aftermath of the revolution, with residents empowered to elect their local representatives and decide their priorities, SA04 – who became Chair of the Environmental Services Committee - started work to empower and motivate residents to take a lead in 'owning' the space outside their homes:

> "I lived in the fifties and sixties when a family took care of the cleanliness outside their home. Every home had a dust and litter sweeper made out of the remains of date-tree branches… Our problem is that in 60 years since independence we have been bombarded with: 'the president did this', 'the minister did that', etc., without any reference to the citizen doing anything. So, the people have recoiled into their own homes without care for public spaces. Now, we are trying to encourage the people to own and care for their public spaces. So, in the forthcoming National Tree Day, we will supply olive tree saplings to households to plant outside their homes. These olive trees will be theirs and hopefully they will take care of it and the space around it."
>
> (Private sector and SMC member SA04)

The above sense-making narrative from SA04 can be applied to a myriad of issues, including SIAPE, Sfax Port, Maneesh Masab, the renovation of Kairouan Old Town, where the state has, by any means necessary, normalised the 'state knows best' frame. Citizens had to comply and accept the 'safety net' of the state to protect them from all risks, whether in the paternalistic approach of Bourguiba or the Security Pact of Ben Ali. So, the shift in such narrative from 'the state knows best' to one of 'we the people' is the most powerful manifestation of the shift from the autocratic state to the democratic state logic, demonstrated most clearly in Sfax. However, this is not the complete picture. Evidence of logic conflict abounds; take for instance the position adopted by UGTT, a continuation of a role of dominance in many aspects of life. Examples of this include its ability to protect its own interests and block wider public interest in the case of SIAPE, dismissing the public and the democratic government's will to bring about closure or change to the 'death factory' (TNN, 2017; UGTT participant SA12). UGTT is not alone in this; the private sector can also exercise 'autocratic' behaviour (CSO participant SA23, private sector participant SA24, Kairouan Governor KA09). This behaviour was experienced in two cases: that of the factory in Kairouan where the workers' demand for union membership was blocked under the threat of closure, and the polluting industrial park in Agareb-Sfax, which used the same tactics to block all calls for introducing pollution control measures (leMaghreb, 2018).

In summary, the practice of sense-making and sense-giving articulated by entrepreneurial boundary-spanners in both Sfax and Kairouan – in the above examples and detailed in Appendix 7.1 - and through the evident change in vocabulary, clearly demonstrate an on-going shift from the autocratic state logic to the democratic state logic. However, the struggle

for dominance is recognised, as evidenced in the autocratic tendencies of powerful actors, such as UGTT, the private sector and at least parts of the state bureaucracy[27]. Within both localities, there is also recognition for the absence of expression of the religious logic, despite its strong evidence at societal level.

Section Three: The practice of decision-making

Decision-making can be a function of top-down institutional logics, "that guide the allocation of attention by shaping what problems and issues get attended to and what solutions are likely to be considered," (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 90); this takes place through the set of identities and goals associated with each logic. Given the dominant pre-Revolution autocratic-state logic, as presented in Table 5.1 in Chapter 5, is characterised by an identity that is based on an affiliation to the RCD party; such affiliation meant being shielded from risk and a route to continuous improvement (Farhat, 2013; Hibou, 211). The strategy and goal of actors from such affiliation through membership of party is stipulated in the security pact; simply put, it is safety, self-interest and self-preservation.

Chapter Five also evidenced the shift in societal logics, from autocratic-state logic to a democratic-state logic and, to a lesser extent, to religion logic. What impact, then, is this having on local actors in Sfax and Kairouan, in terms of their decision-making practice? The democratic state logic stipulates rights-based participation, where the source of identity is based on pride in place, which in turn drives the strategy to be one of increase in status of

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[27] Hanibal Farhat (2013), corroborates this view. In an extensive two-part article in BebNet.net (https://www.babnet.net/rttdetail-69868.asp (Part 1); https://www.babnet.net/festivaldetail-70014.asp (Part 2)) and provides comprehensive discussion on the concept of the 'Deep State' in Tunisia, represented in the interconnected interests of various actors, who see the Revolution as a threat, and therefore become a source of resistance to any change.

place and increase in community good (Table 5.1, Chapter Five). Individuals and organisations, however, can also face situations where top-down established schemas are incongruent with the reality encountered in the environment. The strength of salience of such issues and situations are critical factors contributing to an induced bottom-up attention, which the actor has to reconcile with top-down 'received' – allocated attention. This tension between top-down and bottom-up allocation of attention can be a critical trigger for institutional change.

Looking at the evidence from participant interviews, it is important first to clarify that the type of decision making that is indicative of a shift in logic at the local level is *one with consequence*; that is, one that allows the researcher, "to examine actions and behaviours that have consequences beyond the immediate social interaction" (Thornton et al., 2012, p. 95). Examining all participant interviews, it was possible to identify three types of decision-making scenarios: one being about *personal choices* or early path-defining decisions, such as the decision to be a member of a particular organisation or political party, another type being decisions that are *tactical* in nature, that is decisions that lead to the achievement of goals within the accepted norm; and finally, decisions that are of a *transformative* nature. Significant decisions of transformative nature were found to be few and were mainly found in Sfax, while majority decisions taken by actors in both localities tended to be personal and tactical.
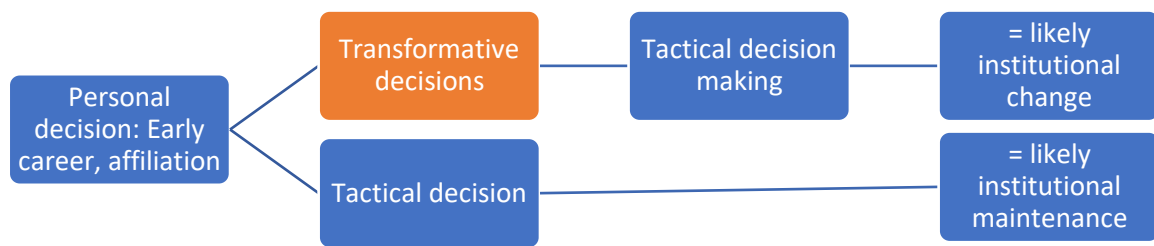
Figure 7.3: Types of decision-making

Early path-defining decision-making

Decision-making that impacts personal choices, such as career paths or affiliation, can be consequential, but may prove difficult to associate with shifts in institutional logics, since they are relatively historic. A decision taken by an actor, for example, to be a member of the Workers Party (SA11), Ennahda Party (SA10), or the UGTT (KA02) does have consequences. The reason being is that these organisations have particular ideological affiliations that do not always align with the autocratic state logic prevalent at the time, which most of the actors grew familiar with. Many actors have paid a heavy price in terms of their careers being disrupted (SA11), or may have suffered imprisonment (KA07), torture or exile. Most actors were the 'educators' that Lederach (1997) describes as instrumental in challenging logic-dominance.

> "Our movement before the revolution was banned and operated underground. We were suppressed. I spent 16 years in prison. All our members were either imprisoned, exiled, or in hiding."
>
> (Leader of Ennahda in Sfax SA10)

> "Since High School and my involvement in the General Union of Tunisian Students (UGET), I got kicked out and had to go into exile in Iraq… I then became a teacher and union representative, and was taken to court in 1989 and sentenced to prison – but I

ran away. I then became a member of the Workers Party, when we protested the 1994 election results. This got me into prison for six months, resulting also in banning from teaching, and I could only earn a living as a construction worker."

(Workers Party Member of the People's Assembly SA11)

This decision-making, sometimes at an early age and usually while at university, is most challenging to consider, yet vital as it is the most formative in identity making. The above two quotes are from key politicians in Sfax, one an Islamist and one from the hard left; where, in those formative years for both participants, the commitment to democratic practices is questioned by some. Yet those early decisions of association and the resulting social interaction is what led to both being the actors they are today.

Early decision-making, therefore, can be revealing as it relates to actors' identity formation at a most profound stage in their development; such as life at university. Serpe and Stryker's (1987) study on identity formation of students upon entering university found that students seek to join, "organisations that provide opportunities to behave in accord with highly salient identities held before entrance," (Stryker and Burke, 2000, p. 286); succeeding in doing so leaves their identities stable. However, salience of their identities changes when they are unable to use such opportunities. In the Tunisia of the late Seventies, Eighties and Nineties, control of university campuses were strongly contested, mainly by the left and by Islamic tendencies, to such an extent that two student bodies were formed. The leftist Union General des Etudiant de Tunisie (UGET), which was suppressed but tolerated by the autocratic authorities, and the Islamist Union General Tunisienne des Etudiants (UGTE), which was suppressed and banned in 1991. In a long article on Noon Post, recalling Tunisian students'

"revolutionary spirit" – whether leftist, nationalist or Islamist, Nabil Riahi (2017)[28] provides extensive discussion of the state of contestation of university campuses in Tunisia, especially in the 1980s, and its impact on wider political development in the country. It is in such an environment that critical identity formation takes place and that might have led to the re-organisation of salience hierarchy of identities within self, leading to a strong commitment from actors to such identities that later informed decisions and choices, such as becoming secular or religious.

It is possible to deduce that the influence of global logics, such as socialism, trade-unionism, and Islamism, provide ideas that impact on identity formation, and where universities proved to be such fertile grounds. Equally important to such organisational and ideological affiliation is the affiliation to higher education that lead most of the actors interviewed to be members of various professions; becoming doctors (SA18), lawyers (KA07, SA03), engineers (KA09, SA04), teachers (KA03, SA07, SA11), journalists (SA08) and interior designers (SA23), to name but some. This early decision making proved to be profound in shaping the trajectory of identify formation, which in turn would lead to group association, as described already in Section One of this chapter.

Tactical decision-making

Having considered the often transformational, early path-defining decision-making in the process of identity formation, we now turn to decision-making during the period of extraordinary politics – the period since January 2011. As already mentioned *tactical* decision making is much more widespread and practiced by almost all the actors interviewed and

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[28] Nabil Riahi (2017) https://www.noonpost.com/19967/

seems to be undertaken to improve the prospect of achieving a desired outcome. Civil society participant KA03, one of the leading actors in Kairouan, works through mobilisation of wide-ranging coalitions to secure the attention of authorities towards particular issues in the locality. In deciding whether to bring together a coalition of organisations or individuals, he opted for the latter. He explains that organisational interests can lead to overly-complex decision making and mobilisation, due to embedded interests, while individuals are much more agile and less calculating.

> "I deliberately chose to deal with individuals rather than representatives of organisations, because the latter are usually constrained by their organisations' policies and politics. I have tried this before. While a coalition of organisations is more powerful, it is also constraining as each member starts to look after his/her organisation's interests and it becomes unwieldy. Here, independent members are better, even though they may need training."
>
> (KA03)

Such decisions rarely have a profound impact beyond the situation at hand, such as mobilisation for a sit-in, a demonstration or a coordination meeting, as in the case of KA03 in the above quotation. All the four issues considered in Kairouan, the resolution of the long running problem of contracts of Refuse Collectors (KI01), the campaign for a new hospital (KI02), the Old Town Restoration project(KI03), and Hajeb Eleyoon (KI04), were the subject of tactical decision making. The decision-making related to the main issue in Kairouan, that of Refuse Collectors' contracts, focused on a strategy to satisfy national policy: not to increase the Municipality's payroll commitments to more than was allowed for, and at the same time meeting the demand of the workers to be incorporated on the City's payroll. This was a major dilemma that has not been resolved for years. All four actors interviewed, Sfax SMC leader KA01, UGTT leader in Kairouan KA02, Member of People's Assembly KA07 and Kairouan

Governor KA09, worked to resolve this dilemma, but once resolved the decision did not have major implications beyond the situation itself. The decision taken, and agreed to by national government, involved the Municipality increasing revenue – an almost impossible task in the economic conditions following the Revolution and thereby justifying an increase in payroll, which was achieved through the Municipality giving special dispensation to defaulters on various local taxes to encourage them to pay outstanding fees and taxes.

> "As we started, a month later, we also gave a special dispensation to residents and businesses to settle their outstanding fees and taxes. This worked very well, and provided further evidence to Ministers that we are making effort to raise revenues to meet our obligations. We also kept extending the special period, until we raised reasonable funds."
>
> (Kairouan SMC leader KA01)

> "As a lawyer, I started from the position of trying to accommodate the national ruling on the one hand and the social pressure of the workers on the other. Through regular contact between the Director of Local Government within the Ministry, the Leader of the Special Council in Kairouan, the Governor of Kairouan and the local UGTT leader, I acted as the go-between to come up with the solution."
>
> (Member of People's Assembly KA07)

Tactical decision making in Sfax was also extensive, but tended to mostly follow transformational decision making, which will be dealt with in the following sub-section. However, what is clear from the range of tactical decision making undertaken in both localities, is that they were all made possible by, and undertaken in the context of, the emerging and dominant logic of the democratic state. This is evidenced through the use of the vocabulary of 'rights', 'negotiations', 'acting within national policy' and 'not outside the law.' What is also important to mention here, is that most tactical decision making was in line with

the role of boundary-spanners mentioned in the literature, in terms of *information transfer*, *coordination* and *representation* (Williams, 2012; van Meerkerk and Edelenbros, 2018).

Transformational decision-making

The experience of Sfax, as already discussed in Chapter Four, is unique; it is a 'change maker' city and region. Not unlike the three factors involved in the degrees of shift in logic, particularly complete logic shift, described by Andrews (2013), in transformational decision making, boundary spanners seem to be opportunistic in taking advantage of the favourable conditions created under to democratic state logic. There are many examples of this in Sfax, as detailed in Table 7.5; these include the issues of SIAPE, Casino Beach, Agareb District and Sayeb Tortoir, where a convergence of factors can be found: visionary boundary-spanners able to articulate a vision, political opportunities in terms of the democratic process to influence change in policy-makers, and readiness to mobilise and create powerful coalitions – as discussed in Chapter Six. So, as will be described in this analysis, the main actors in Sfax often explain their actions and decisions in terms of fulfilling a mandate that has legitimacy anchored by the rationality of *democratic participation and citizenship in nation*.

In the case of the main transformative issue in Sfax, SIAPE (SI01), the foundation was already in place in terms of a number of national decisions to close SIAPE and consisted of the Presidential order of 2008 and Government decisions of 2009, 2012, 2016, 2017. The political opportunity was in the shape of the Revolution and resulting democratic process, especially elections, and the readiness of actors to mobilise to achieve the required results. However, the result that was needed was not just the closure of SIAPE, it was the creation of a

collaborative governance process to see through the transformation and development of Sfax, hence the impact beyond the immediate interaction. Detailed in Table 7.5 are the series of decisions undertaken, building on opportunities, to create a momentum to achieve such goal.

Table 7.5: Transformational decision-making in Sfax

Opportunity	Decision	Consequence/Impact
Freedom resulting from the Revolution, in the shape of scrapping all restrictive laws from the autocratic era, and supporting freedom of speech, assembly and association in the form of Decree 8 issued 24th September 2011 (Legislation-securite.tn, 2011), and the Founding Law Number 6 for the year 2011 (DCAF, 2021).	Creation of Beit el-Khibrah (BK) think tank. "At the dawn of the revolution we got together with various friends/professionals (about 50) from various backgrounds to discuss our role post-revolution… it was decided to establish BK as a think-and-do-tank. To be engaged in all aspects of development" (Civil society participant and one of the founders of BK, SA18)	Development of ideas to influence and shape the locality. These included: (1) proposal to host the Mediterranean Games 2021, but this did not succeed due to lack of support from the central government. (2) Initiative for Sfax to become the Arab Capital City of Culture, which was successfully held. (3) IRADA, a joint initiative between the European Union and the Tunisian Government to support the proposals identified by CEDS. (Civil society participants SA05, SA08; TN, 2020: Ministry of Equipment and Housing, 2015[29]).
Dissolution of old Sfax Municipal Council and lack of mechanism to appoint replacement. (Volpi et al., 2016; DCAF, 2021)	To coordinate CSO proposal to nominate 24-member Council to run Municipality until a formal process is established. "This role by BK was massive, we were able to appoint a 24-member council, which lasted for 18 months." (Civil society participant and one of the founders of BK, SA18). See also report in Assabah daily newspaper dated 6th June 2012 (Turess, 2012)	Government accepting nominated Council to run the city for 18-months, establishing CSO sector as an accepted partner in the governance of the City. (Alchourouk, 2012; African Manager, 2012)

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[29] Ministry of Equipment and Housing acknowledges on its official webpage the role of BK in hosting an international roundtable discussion on the future development of Sfax, attended by the Minister: http://www.mehat.gov.tn/الأخبار/news/-في-صفاقس-المستدامة-والتنمية-الحضري-التخطيط-حول-دولية-ندوة-الثلاثاء-من-بداية أفق-2030/?tx_news_pi1%5Baction%5D=detail&tx_news_pi1%5Bcontroller%5D=News&cHash=dde7bf796d8b3a508cf0453f7d228875

Table 7.5: Transformational decision-making in Sfax (continued)

Opportunity	Decision	Consequence/Impact
Decision by Sfax Port Authority to expand port onto the historic Casino Beach. (civil society participant SA18; SMC Leader SA03; private sector participant SA17; ExpressFM, 2023)	To mobilise Sfaxians to march, occupy and reclaim Casino Beach and prevent Port Authority from expansion of the port. This mobilisation ultimately led to the creation of CEDS. "So as SCOs we occupied it, used some of our resources and pressured the Municipality to support us, and cleared more than 30,000 tonnes of polluted sand and general waste. This led to us being present in the area daily. This has enabled the CEDS to become able to tackle such projects that resonate with aspirations of the people of Sfax." (civil society participant SA08; Alhiwar, 2021)	Successful reclamation of Casino Beach as a leisure outlet for the City. (Farid, Makni, 2016[30]; Elhiwar, 2021) Change of policy of Municipality and Port Authority. (ExpressFM, 2023)

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[30] Farid, Makni. (2016) *Plage Sfax Casino Juillet 2014.* 21 March. Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKvwX-neLKA (Accessed on: 13th October 2022)

Table 7.5: Transformational decision-making in Sfax (continued)

Opportunity	Decision	Consequence/Impact
Identification of environment and pollution as main barrier to the city and region's development. "We (BK) are not an environment organisation, but this issue became critical to development. We then decided to focus on environment above all else. We are all motivated by the necessity to secure an environment conducive to development." (SA18)	Establish Collectif Environnemental et Developpement de Sfax (CEDS) – a coalition of more than 40 CSOs. "The main challenge therefore is not the Casino, or expanding the port or other issue. It is how to return Sfax to its deserved quality of life, that allows the residents of the region to be able to stay in their region, attraction of investment, and a leading role nationally. This was the diagnosis. So, what is the best way to advance this vision? Here it was important to think and put forward ideas and initiatives, but something else was also important – you cannot remain in your ivory tower. A battle has to be fought. The battle has to be on one of the symbols of the deterioration of the situation in Sfax. We chose SIAPE works to be the symbol of this battle. So even while we engaged in the campaign to reclaim the Casino beach, our other important and declared target was SIAPE." (SA02)	CEDS became 'the' platform and voice of CSOs on all major developmental and environmental issues in Sfax at local, regional and national level. See for example, participant SA18 becoming Chair of IRADA regional initiative (TN, 2020), People's Assembly Committee on Industry, Energy, Natural Resources, Infrastructure and Environment visit to Sfax (Musi, 2020)[31], and national television coverage (Elhiwar, 2021).

[31] Moussi, Abir. (2020) *Abir Moussi*. [*Facebook*] 29th January. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?ref=search&v=492579861681120&external_log_id=9e1d2 7f5-c246-44b0-9dd3-19bac4f23aa8&q=السياب20%مصنع20%موسي20%عبير (Accessed: 23rd October 2022)

Table 7.5: Transformational decision-making in Sfax (continued)

Opportunity	Decision	Consequence/Impact
SIAPE being identified as the iconic representation of developmental and environmental barriers facing Sfax, with national Government's decisions: 2008; 2011; 2012; 2014 and 2016, and policies supporting closure. "A battle has to be fought. The battle has to be on one of the symbols of the deterioration of the situation in Sfax. We chose SIAPE works to be the symbol of this battle." (SA02) "There is a pre-revolution presidential decree to close the works. There is agreement to replace polluting industries, with non-polluting ones. When the revolution happened, we thought this is an opportunity to close the works." (SA11) See also interviews of Sfax Governor on	To create dialogue with UGTT, and following failure to mobilise wider support through advocacy, lobbying, and protests. "…over a whole year. We used to go to their [CEDS] offices and tried hard . During the sit-in [in front of the Governor's Office], for example, we used to have intense dialogue in café's and formally." (UGTT participant SA12). (media coverage of 14th January 2016 rally (HounaTounesTV, 2016)	Establishing CEDS as a legitimate voice that is able to reach out to all sectors and branches of government, not only in relation to SIAPE, but to other developmental issues: including the future development of Sfax Port, Techno Port, etc. (TN, 2020) (Elhiwar TV, 2019).

A typical example of transformational decision making is associated with the establishment of

Bait el-Khibrah (BK) think-tank. Entrepreneurial boundary-spanner SA18 describes how he

called a meeting of relevant contacts on the second day of the revolution which led to the

establishment of BK. The decision is proving to have a profound impact on development in

Sfax and had what can be described as a domino-effect, leading to the appointment of the

SMC for Sfax (Turess, 2012), economic development proposal (SlimcssNews.blogspot.com, 2012; BabNet, 2016; DiwanFM, 2020), direct action to reclaim Casino Beach (Alhiwar, 2021), establishment of CEDS (CSO participants SA18, SA02, and SA08), IRADA initiative (TN, 2020) amongst other actions. This is a good example of an 'escalatory' decision making, with far reaching impact. Further examples can be seen in Table 7.5, such as the decision by Sfax Port Authority to expand the port and the resulting transformative decision made by boundary spanners to take direct action, as well as present alternative plans to the Ministry of Transport.

The extent to which transformational decision making can be attributed to shift in societal logics, and the extent to which top-down and bottom-up frames and schemas and their impact on decision making can be reconciled will be considered in Section Five. However, having considered available and accessible knowledge through the sense-making, sense-giving and decision-making process, the following section will consider the extent to which this has led to a mobilisation of both symbolic and material resources.

Section Four: The practice of mobilisation

Mobilisation is the process by which collective actors acquire symbolic and material resources and motivate people towards the accomplishment of group or collective goals (Thornton et al., 2012, Ch 4). Together with critiquing dominant logic(s) - a process of de-institutionalisation, to use William and Suddaby's (2006) term, or a process of education according to Lederach (1997), which includes sense-making and sense-giving; entrepreneurial boundary spanners put forward a mobilising alternative. Therefore, as part of institutional work, and building on sense-making, and decision-making, mobilisation is the practice that ultimately delivers the change in organisational fields and, by implication, leads to institutional

change. Perhaps the fundamental aspect of the practice of mobilisation, and one that highlights the unique characteristics of entrepreneurial boundary-spanners, is the fact that the rewards can only be realised by the collective, and only when enough people are mobilised. There is no reward for individuals going solo, indeed there is often a great cost (Rogers et al., 2018). Mobilisation in this sense is usually around the achievement of public goods: non-excludable and non-rivalrous goods or services. This is perhaps one of the points of departures between entrepreneurial boundary-spanning as practiced in organisational collaboration in stable environments (Williams, 2012) and that in post-conflict environments, as shown in this study.

Some of the actors interviewed are quite clear on their role in this regard, such as CSO Participant SA23 of Maneesh Masab in Agareb, who is leading the struggle to bring an end to the practice of their district continuing to be the dumping ground for Sfax's waste and bringing accountability to the polluting practices of local industry. He believes that, "elites are usually the activists and often the risk takers. Simple people are too busy making ends meet." However, while elites – as defined earlier - do engage in sense-making and sense-giving, mobilisation involves action to influence a large number of people, "for which the cost outweighs the benefit to them and that only help[s] the collective if many people participate" (Rogers et al., 2018, p. 16.1). Examples of such costs abound in Sfax, and some in Kairouan, including physical attacks on key actors involved in mobilisation efforts. CSO participant SA18 recounts the time when he was attacked in front of his own house as a warning in order to get him to stop leading the mobilisation effort to secure closure of SIAPE works. Among the latest example in Sfax, is the death of a protestor involved in the Maneesh Masab campaign

due to police intervention in one of the protests with tear gas (Aljazeera.net, 2021). The same happened to CSO participant SA07 who was also punched to the ground while documenting infringements to public rights of way on Sfax's pavements as part of the Sayep Tortoir campaign. Even the retired heritage expert in the case of Kairouan Old Town, KA08, was aware of the accusation that he was a collaborator with the old autocratic regime and the exclusion that entailed.

These are examples of situations that rational choice theory cannot explain; for individuals should not contribute to the achievement of goals which others can benefit from at no additional cost, and from which they cannot be excluded. It is clear, therefore, that entrepreneurial boundary-spanners, by embarking on such 'irrational' actions of risk taking and unlikely benefit, commit to almost 'altruistic' acts that cannot be explained by simple cost-benefit analysis. Furthermore, these actors work to mobilise more individuals to join such a 'selfless' cause, and, consequently, exposure to negative consequences. To explain such situations, it becomes necessary to fall back on the psychology of collective action. Whilst Thornton and colleagues (2012) focus on identity as the main explainer of such mobilisation, Rogers and colleagues (2017) suggest five elements to explain behavioural principles for more effective social mobilisation. These involve (1) more *personalised* interaction, (2) being *accountable* by being observable by others, (3) being compliant with expected *norms*, (4) are *identity*-aligned with how people actually see themselves, and (5) leverage the *connectedness* in terms of the networks in which people are embedded and which can be levered. These, however, can be viewed to be either identity or role (personalised) driven, with the remaining three being secondary.

Given the evident shift from the logic of the autocratic-state to the democratic-state, how do actors deploy the mobilising principles identified by Rogers and colleagues (2017), and to what effect? The following paragraphs will seek to explore the data to ascertain which of the mobilising principles are practiced. The analysis of participant interviews - detailed in Appendix 7.2 - against each of the eight issues in Sfax and four in Kairouan highlights two very salient mobilising principles, *personal* and *identity*, while the remaining three, accountable, normative and connected appear to be secondary. Furthermore, it appears that there exists a hierarchy relative to whether the mobilisation is at organisation/group, coalition, or field level. Shown in Appendix 7.2 is the contrast between the personalised nature of mobilisation in Kairouan, where the activity is often attributed to self, 'I', and the more identity-based mobilisation effort shown in Sfax and exemplified by the use of "we", often referring to groups, coalitions and initiatives. Most importantly, the analysis shows the impact of the mobilisation effort; whilst in Kairouan this is limited to the specific initiative, such as collection of more waste in the case of Refuse Collectors issue, the case of Sfax is more like, "the administration is no longer governing on its own," – a much more strategic impact (Appendix 7.2).

Personalised interaction

Considerable evidence can be produced from participant interviews to show that personalised interaction was not only critical in mobilising increasing numbers of social actors to the various causes, but it is also at the heart of all mobilisation efforts. In Sfax, CSO participants SA05 and S07, and private sector participant SA04, explicitly attribute the drive for change in the locality being due to a core group of social actors leading CEDS who, "spend many hours" together

developing ideas and initiatives. The group consists of, "various friends and professionals," with about, "10 core members," who have a, "closed group on Facebook," and are, "communicating daily, debating and meeting regularly." Other partners and collaborators who are outside the closed group, such as private sector and Council member SA04, CSO member SA05, and MPA SA11, observe that the core group seem to be, "generally senior in age, they seem to have an understanding and a relationship between themselves," according to SA05. In the case of Sayeb Tortoir, SA07 attributes his mobilising success to the relationship between himself and his students, forged during his tenure as university lecturer; similarly in the case of the introduction of Participatory Budgeting to Sfax which was attributed to the relationship developed between Sfax Municipality Director of Finance SA01 and CSO participant SA20.

The situation in Kairouan was no different because, after false starts in setting up the Kairouan SMC and the mounting problems facing the locality (Kairouan Governor KA09; SMC Leader KA01; Alchourouk, 2012), it was the personal relationship between key newly elected local members of the NCA for the area and Kairouan SMC Leader KA01 that convinced the latter to take over as Leader of the Municipality, and the subsequent condition that KA01 made to recruit 'known' able people to make up the 24-member SMC. Among the 24 members of the Council, four leading members would "discuss among themselves in private meetings… and agree tactics", according to SMC Member KA06. This mobilisation of individuals who know each other and can work together led to KA01 in turn mobilising his network in relevant ministries to resolve the challenges facing Kairouan, including the most complex of issues: the Refuse Collectors' contracts. As the 'hub' for the mobilised actors, participant KA01 was able

to identify and build personal relationships with individuals such as KA05, a businessman who not only mobilised financial support but was also invited to be part of the consultation process to support the development of a strategy for Kairouan.

One of the example given in Appendix 7.2, of the 'personalised' nature of mobilisation in Kairouan and its effect, is demonstrated in the role of one of the leading boundary-spanners, Kairouan SMC Leader KA01. Stating clearly his personal network, he says:

> "I was also fortunate to have a network of relationships, due to my role in local government and within the Ministry, that were valuable in helping me move things forward. The unanimous agreement among the local MPAs, despite belonging to four different parties, to support me and the new council was also of great help…The main parties were the union, members of the Municipal Council, the Government, Ministry of Interior, Prime Minister's Office, and of course the local MPAs who played a role in engaging with relevant Government Ministries…Bearing in mind that CSOs were still in their infancy."

Participant KA01 then goes one to demonstrate the impact the resolution, even if partial, of the Refuse Collectors' issue had on performance of the Municipality:

> "As a result of solving this problem, the amount of refuse collected in 2013 was 150% that of 2012 (29,000 ton to 45,000 ton). We were able to cover new areas, even. This opened a new chapter in the relationship between the Municipality and residents, and the ability to collect the fees and taxes due. Hope was restored."

Mobilisation based on personal relationships and face to face interaction is clearly at the heart of the mobilisation effort in both localities, however, there is a difference in scale and ambition. While mobilisation in Kairouan is tactical to resolve procedural issues to the satisfaction of established policy, in Sfax the objective is the domination of narrative for the entire future of the locality and its role within the national setting, to allow Sfax to regain its leading economic and commercial role in the country.

Identity-based mobilisation

Identity-based mobilisation can be a powerful motivator, whether in relation to self-identity or group identity, and is based on the human need for social connectedness (Baumeister and Leary, 1995), as the basis for self-esteem. Entrepreneurial boundary spanners succeed in their mobilisation efforts when they offer a theory of change that resonates with beliefs people hold about their characters and values, or when they offer an opportunity to belong but, "social identities are especially mobilising when the identity group is threatened," (Rogers et al., 2017, p16.14). Rogers and colleagues also state that mobilisation can be effective when 'identity-labelling' is invoked, this is usually in situations where individuals have previously demonstrated a trait or value and are reminded of the link between the trait or value and the desired behaviour.

Identity based mobilisation was found to be strongest in Sfax during coalition-building and field-level mobilisation, as identified in Chapter Six, where the rallying cry is "we are Sfaxians." CSO participant SA02, one of the prominent leaders in CEDS, was explicit when he conveyed the commonly accepted approach to mobilise for the landmark rally to close SIAPE that, "all will participate as residents. Once citizenship [of the locality] is understood, we can get on and fulfil our ambition," - the rally turned out to be one of the largest in the history of Sfax (HounaTounesTV, 2016; BabNet, 2016). He further demonstrates how, unlike in other situations, even local party branches, "have been able to go against national party approaches," where, "local affiliates have chosen to behave as citizens [of the locality]" citing the example of Ennahda Party (BabNet, 2016). CSO participant SA18, the leader of BK and one of the main leaders of CEDS, justified the successful mobilisation to reclaim Casino Beach,

another example from the many given in Appendix 7.2, when he summed up the reasons by stating that, "this was the area where Sfaxians went to swim and sunbathe." Similarly, CSO participant SA08 explains the reason behind the successful mobilisation when he says:

> "in the cultural memory of Sfaxians, this meant that the beaches of Sfax have been destroyed, and they have been prevented from enjoying their facilities and environment. This gave the issue importance among the public."
>
> (CSO participant SA08)

This mobilisation had a huge impact on the city, and started a domino effect in terms of subsequent and escalating actions. The confidence gained, led to the establishment of CEDS, and the Ministry of Transport and Sfax Port Authorities radically changing their original plan to expand the port at the expense of Casino Beach, as confirmed by the Port Director (ExpressFM, 2023).

Collective identity can be a powerful mobiliser when based on perceived, or real, grievances; SA08 explains how, when CEDS took the decision to include everyone, "we had to make it clear, this is for Sfax, not for anything else. This made it possible for people to come and participate [in the campaign to close SIAPE]". A powerful picture is painted by CSO SA05, when he described the mobilising effect of collective identity in the case of the campaign to close SIAPE:

> "This was also something that surprised us – those of us who organised the demonstration: how did we manage to convince them? The only explanation I have is the nature of the issue of concern – we are all against SIAPE. We are all in the end of the day residents of the city, and our life is at stake – this led to people leaving their political affiliation aside."
>
> (SA05)

Identity based mobilisation was much less in evidence in Kairouan, this is particularly surprising since the grievance that can be expressed is much more evident, and since Kairouan was one of the epicentres of the Revolution, especially on the 10th of January 2011 (Aljazeera.net, 2017). Only one civil society participant, KA03, explained the motivating force for his group of independent activists being, "the interest of the locality and a feeling of grievance, as there is no one raising their voice for health concerns [in Kairouan]."

So, while mobilisation is in much evidence in both localities, the scale and impact are different; whilst in Kairouan personalised mobilisation is the basis of most campaigns and largely in the service of tactical decision making, mobilisation in Sfax is much more sustained and inclusive; drawing on broad coalitions and utilising identity factors at the broadest levels – citizenship of the locality. Furthermore, mobilisation in Kairouan is more in line with, and within, established norms, while in Sfax, mobilisation tends to be a challenge to established norms, and leverages the opportunities of extensive networks that exist within the locality.

Section Five: Conclusion

The literature recognises that institutional logics focus the attention and resources of decision makers on issues and solutions that are in line with the dominant logic(s), suggesting a dialectic process involving sense-making, decision-making and mobilisation (Thornton et al., 2012). It is clear from the above analysis that much sense-making, decision-making and mobilisation is taking place in both localities, even though there is a contrast in areas of practice such as the lack of transformational decision-making or collective identity-based mobilisation in Kairouan. The key question that remains to be answered in this section is: to

what extent are the practices in evidence a result of the dominant societal logics, or are they very much dictated by salient issues that are causing boundary-spanners to innovate? The answer to this can be found in reflecting on how the three practices are aligned with the domains associated with each of the three dominant societal logics listed in Table 5.1, in Chapter Five.

Entrepreneurial boundary-spanners can be identified by the role they play, whether inherent in job design or location within the organisational field, and where identity, especially collective identity, plays a central role in shaping their goals and practices. The division between the secular and the religious, as depicted by the leader of the Workers Party, and some leaders of Ennahda Party, when discussing issues relating to religion, does not translate to the masses at the local levels. This can lead to the conclusion that dominant societal logics do not always lead to, or influence, local practices. This may be the case due to the prominent issues that are of common concern to all within a locality and, in answer to the key questions in the above paragraph, salient local issues are clearly having an impact in aligning the practices of boundary-spanners with the overriding place-based identity, such as 'we are all Sfaxians.' The democratic-state logic though, clearly provides local actors with the opportunity to address issues of most concern to them, underpinned as it is with the rationality of democratic participation and citizenship, and a source of identity of pride in place.

Societal logics and local practices

Sense-making is the deployment of language in the pursuit of a cause, which is practiced through turning circumstances into situations, as evidence in the examples given in Section

Two above and further detailed in Appendix 7.1. This is powerfully demonstrated in Sfax and, to a lesser extent, in Kairouan, where evidence of the shift from the autocratic-state logic to the democratic-state logic abounds. Using Pache and Santos' (2013) five typologies of responses of local actors to societal logics, suggests that the sensemaking practices of boundary-spanners in both localities is one of *defiance* of the autocratic-state logic, *ignorance* of the religious logic, and *compliance* with the democratic-state logic. However, evidence of ongoing conflict also suggests resistance by some local actors to the democratisation process through appeals to power; this includes UGTT's response to popular demands for the closure of SIAPE and the frustration of the series of decisions of the democratic national and local governments and the occasional use of force by unidentified actors to silence opponents, as in the case of SA18 and SA07. Nevertheless, the clear shift in vocabulary from one of 'fear', 'security', 'the state knows best', to one of 'fairness', 'dialogue', 'understanding', 'accountability', 'engagement' and 'inclusion', are indicative of the prominence of the democratic-state logic.

While the process of sensemaking and sense-giving create the powerful argument for change, it is the actors' type of decision-making process that leads to actions and change. The analysis in this chapter identified the three types of decisions that actors go through, early personal-level decisions, tactical decisions, and transformative decisions. All participants engage in decision making at the personal level, which can include embarking on higher level education, association with groups and political parties, as well as deciding on a career path and profession; such decisions often predate the change period of this study, 2011-2018, but nevertheless have huge implications, for they elevate the average citizen to the potential level

of the boundary spanner. Most participants interviewed in this study belong to such a category. What this study establishes is that there is a distinct difference in trajectory between those in Sfax and the ones in Kairouan; while boundary-spanners in Sfax engage in transformative decision making that have consequences beyond the immediate social interaction, in Kairouan decisions of a tactical nature are more common. This difference in types of decision making has consequences, and likely to explain the type of change at field and institutional levels identified in Chapter Six.

It can be argued that one of the unique characteristics of entrepreneurial boundary-spanners is the ability to build on sense-making and decision-making to mobilise for change; it is, therefore, the capacity to mobilise that ultimately delivers the change, and it can be costly. The analysis in this chapter corroborates existing research (Rogers et al., 2018) and demonstrates that, perhaps unlike their role in organisational collaboration settings (Williams, 2012), boundary-spanners operating in post-conflict environments rarely derive reward in going solo, and there is often greater personal cost, as the experiences of CSO participants SA18 and SA07, heritage expert KA08 and Maneesh Masab highlight. The rewards can only be realised by the collective, and only when enough people are mobilised. Applying Rogers and colleagues' (2018) five elements for effective mobilisation it was clear that, whereas in case of Sfax both *personalised* and *identity*-based mobilisation were in evidence, in Kairouan it was mainly personalised-based mobilisation that was in evidence. This is not to discount the existence of the other three elements of mobilisation, which operated in some events, especially the leveraging of *connectedness* to other networks.

Boundary spanning practices and institutional change

The literature suggests that dominant societal logics bring about top-down influence on local actors' attention, which leads to the focus on certain issues rather than others. To what extent then, are the eight issues in Sfax and four in Kairouan identified and pursued as a result of attention directed by the three conflicting societal logics of the autocratic state, the democratic state and religion in Tunisia? There follows the necessary question: to what extent these societal logics also dictate the processes of sensemaking and sense-giving, decision making and mobilisation at local level? In order to respond to these questions, this chapter examined the evidence from participant interviews and other sources and found evident shift from the autocratic logic to the democratic state logic and a surprising absence of role for the religion logic.

The democratic state logic's prominence is evident first and foremast in boundary-spanners' ability to freely identify the issues most important to them and their locality. This is exemplified in the identification of salient issues such as SIAPE, Casino Beach in Sfax, and Refuse Collectors' contracts and the Old Town Renovation in Kairouan. These issues were never a cause of campaign under the autocratic state logic, due to the dominant anchor rationality of *security and self-interest*.

The championing of such issues could only be undertaken under the democratic state logic, where the anchor rationality is one of *democratic participation and citizenship in nation*. Under such a rationality, boundary-spanners demonstrate 'pride in place' as the source of identity, with participation being based on rights and democracy, a strategy to increase

community good, and a mode of participation based on activism and advocacy for the locality. Yet, there is also a distinct legacy of the autocratic-state logic, strangely being exercised by actors other than policy makers – which was the case under the autocratic-state logic. In Kairouan, for example, workers demanding to establish unionised places of work were frustrated by the private sector threatening to withdraw the opportunity to work, leading to actors being forced to adopt a strategy of self-interest and safety. The same was experienced in Sfax, where the UGTT was seen to frustrate the democratic mandate of the Government at national and local levels by effectively blocking the closure of SIAPE works, and in the case of Maneesh Masab in Agareb District where businesses obstruct any attempt to get them to comply with environmental laws. Nationally, the bureaucracy of the administration is also proving to display autocratic tendencies, as in the case of the development of Participatory Budgeting, and the diluting influence on Sfax's regional development plans.

Importantly, however, boundary-spanners who engaged in transformative change clearly excel at capitalising on opportunities. It was evident, in Section Four, that these institutional entrepreneurs utilised the opportunities presented by the logic shift to further their interests in achieving the goals of tackling the issues that matter to their locality. The freedom resulting from the Revolution, and the resulting logic shift, allowed the creation of organisations such as BK and the development of ideas to influence and shape Sfax, the dissolution of the old Sfax Municipal Council allowed the CSOs to nominate the interim SMC and finally, by positioning the environmental challenges as the main barriers to Sfax's development, allowed the boundary-spanners to establish CEDS as the legitimate stakeholder in the locality's governance structure and legitimate voice of the CSO sector.

The analysis undertaken in this chapter has clearly demonstrated that boundary spanners in Sfax and Kairouan, through the process of sense-making, decision making and mobilisation, are informed by the dominant and competing logic of the democratic state and to some extent the legacy of the autocratic state, but not so much the religion logic. The three practices can explain the variation of changes to the organisational fields discussed in Chapter Six. The point of departure and differences between the organisational fields in both localities, is mainly due to the nature of decision making and mobilisation practices – as already stated. Lack of such practices had major implications in Kairouan, and led to the organisational field settling into a state of exchange, rather than contestation. Even though populated by new members who are firmly anchored in the 'rights-based citizen participation' of the democratic state-logic, absence of such practices has not allowed new CSO actors to lead or influence the development of shared meaning or create a challenge to the dominant powers in the established hierarchy of government-UGTT-Private Sector. The situation in Sfax is markedly different, where new members have led on the development of shared meaning by being proactive in the process of sense-making and sense-giving, mainly due to making transformative decisions, and putting together formidable coalitions to challenge the dominant powers in the field. The organisational field in Sfax continues to be dominated by live issues, largely identified and championed by the CSO-based boundary spanners.

CHAPTER EIGHT

CONCLUSION: BOUNDARY-SPANNERS: CARRIERS AND ENFORCERS OF INSTITUTIONAL NORMS

Introduction

In concluding this study, this chapter will respond to the main research question: ***Why and how do boundary-spanners influence institutional change in post-revolution Tunisia*?** It will also identify the main contribution of the study, review its limitations as well as propose opportunities for future research. The essence of this thesis is an exploration of how Tunisian society has moved from a way of doing things under the autocratic-state logic to a new way under the democratic-state logic, due to the impact of the Jasmine Revolution of January 2011, and the role individuals and organisations played in the transition. The role of individuals in institutional change, however, is under reported, and even more so in post-conflict societies. This qualitative case study, anchored in sociological institutionalism, and, more specifically, new institutionalism, examined how individual boundary-spanners influence institutional change across two localities in post-revolution Tunisia: Sfax and Kairouan. Tunisia has proved to be a complex society to study: this research aimed to identify societal level changes in the aftermath of the Revolution, development of organisational fields and evidence of institutional change, and how such changes can be explained by the practices of boundary spanners as they operate within the realm of new and competing logics. A novel framework

was developed to undertake this study, that combined insights from institutional logics, institutional entrepreneurship, and institutional change. The study found that societal level changes represented by the shift from the autocratic-state logic to, mainly, the democratic state logic had a direct impact on the practices of boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan.

This study demonstrates that the role of boundary-spanners in institutionalising change within localities is significant, as demonstrated in the practice of sense-making and sense-giving, decision-making and mobilisation. Although change in societal logics is found to significantly influence boundary-spanners and their practices, the study found that not all competing logics at societal level exert the same influence. Most significantly, the study found that the interplay between structure, agency and ideas, makes institutions more of scaffolds rather than cages, guiding and enabling the agency and relative autonomy of actors.

In outlining the institutional development journey in post-conflict Tunisia, this chapter reflects on the extent to which the three institutional pillars of rules, norms and cultural-cognitive (mental models) (Scott, 2014) are reflected in such a journey, with a particular focus on the role individuals play in the process. Together with the new rules enshrined in the 2014 Constitution and associated laws stipulating the structure of local governance, the practice of boundary-spanners was found to support the development of new norms, further entrenching the new logics and institutional change within the two localities. Entrepreneurial boundary-spanners enjoy unique roles and positions, due to their intense social interaction across boundaries, focused as they are on solving complex salient issues of concern within their localities. These roles and positions increase their awareness, access to and mobilisation of different institutional logics, allowing exposure to new ideas that help in solving the issues of

concern. In the process of doing so, boundary-spanners help to promote and establish new norms within the organisational fields that can lead to institutional change.

The structure of this chapter is set so that it starts by directly addressing the research sub-questions, which are as follows:

> *(TQ1) What are the post-revolution logic changes affecting Tunisian society, and why?*
>
> *(TQ2) How do fields emerge in which boundary-spanners operate? Accounting for institutional change.*
>
> *(TQ3) How do boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan access and mobilise competing logics to affect institutional change?*

Section One: Responding to the research questions

(TQ1) What are the post-revolution logic changes affecting Tunisian society, and why?

Institutions, or the way things are done within a society, are governed by the prevailing institutional logic(s). Individuals and organisations can be constrained, or caged, by institutions whose logics are established and dominant. Within such stable societies, organisational fields exhibit shared rules and norms, which are adhered to by established and new members of a field in order to demonstrate legitimacy. The challenge confronting scholars throughout has been to explain the duality of institutions, as both constraining and enabling of agency. In other words, whether the institution acts as a cage, restricting

organisations and individuals in an organisational field, or a scaffold that may constrain, but which, at the same time, enables and supports the growth and change within such fields, and, by implication, the institutions themselves. Adopting a novel framework, this study demonstrated that institutions act as scaffolds, where alternative institutional logics are available to highly socialised boundary-spanning individuals, where new ideas become accessible and are mobilised to furnish new solutions to recurring complex problems. In the process of doing so, new practices are adopted leading to changes within organisational fields and institutions themselves.

The assessment of whether change is taking place within Tunisian society followed the three-factor assessment suggested by Andrews (2013). The change taking place in Tunisia, until recently, reflected the logic shift, rather than hybridisation or layering - as represented by position (1) in Figure 4.2, Chapter Four. It is evident that the dominant logic associated with the autocratic bargain or 'security pact' became so weak and ran its course, mainly as a result of the challenges faced, culminating in the 2011 Revolution, with alternative logics associated with *'freedom, work, and dignity'* being promoted by revolutionary actors capable of introducing them. Ultimately, it was the fact that more than 300 Tunisians gave their lives during 27 days of revolution that proved to be a major turning point. A note of caution has to be stated though. This study recognises the possibility of a second scenario, where one or another condition of the logic shift scenario is not met, cannot be completely discounted for a couple of reasons. First, logic shift is rarely complete due to the continuing presence of proponents of extant logics – such as the bureaucracy in Tunisia's case. Second, due to

developments since the 2019 General and Presidential elections and subsequent decisions by the current president that is seen as rolling back democratic gains since 2011.

What Andrews' (2013) converging factors are unable to predict, however, is the precise nature of the logic change and their implications for the practices of actors within society, following the initial revolutionary rupture with the past. In order to ascertain this, the study followed the mechanism suggested by Campbell (2004) and Thornton et al (2012), where each logic is associated with certain categories, or dimensions, such as *source of legitimacy*, *source of identity*, *basis of norms*, *basis of strategy*, etc., - see Appendix 2.1 for details. In order to reduce complexity and to focus on the critical dimensions of logics, this study has identified *source of legitimacy* and *basis of norms* as being the most unique to each logic, and combined them to form the *anchor rationalities* for each logic. For the autocratic-state logic, the anchor rationality becomes *safety and self-interest*, for the main reason that the autocratic bargain is based on the 'stick-and-carrot' approach adopted by autocratic regimes – alternating between incentives and forceful coercion. The anchor rationality for the democratic-state logic is based on *democratic participation and citizenship in nation*, while the anchor rationality for religion is identified as the *importance of faith and association with God*. Assessing against these anchor rationalities, using secondary sources and participant interviews provided strong evidence of logic shift from the *autocratic-state logic* to the *democratic-state logic* and *Islamic religion logic* at national level, and some legacy of the autocratic state logic. At local level, however, while this study found clear domination of the democratic-state logic, there is nevertheless evident legacy of the autocratic-state logic. The religion logic was conspicuous by its absence at locality level.

Grievance, evidenced through, for example, the political domination of the two historically dominant regions of Sousse and Monastir in the bureaucracy, as reported by several boundary spanners in Sfax, is evident of the legacy of the autocratic-state logic. A major factor in this area is also the ambiguous role of UGTT; here, it is possible to see the role of the union, described by some participants as a 'state within a state' thwarting the decisions of the democratically elected government and ministers, as in the case of SIAPE. Due to the history and power of UGTT, it is more than a trade union and is recognised by some as a powerful political force that frustrates the democratic transition in many respects, especially in issues such as SIAPE. The finding of this study of continuing legacy of the autocratic-state logic is also supported by a recent study by Wolf (2018), where she reports the claim by a former RCD leader that in the 2018 Municipal elections, more than 80% of the candidates identified with the former RCD. The extent to which this may or may not re-enforce a return to autocratic practices can only be assessed in a future study, but is worth noting at this stage.

In order to explain the absence of any meaningful impact for the religion logic locally, despite a clear presence at the national debate, this study identifies two factors that are likely to explain such absence. The first of these is the adoption of the concept of *addawlah almadanyyah*, or civil state, in the 2014 Constitution. As Head of the Higher Authority that preceded the CNA election and the adoption of the new Constitution, Ben Achour (2018) in his memoirs of the period sees the concept as significant in reconciling, or placating, the secular and the religious currents then. The second reason is a confirmation of other studies of Tunisia during the period (Gorman, 2018) where it was found that societal divisions, such as those between the secular and the religious, as depicted by the leader of the Workers Party,

and some leaders of the Ennahda Party, do not translate to the masses at the local levels. This can lead to the conclusion that dominant societal logics do not always lead to, or influence, local practices. This may be due to the role of salient issues that are of common concern to all within a locality, and may also relate to the overriding place-based identity, such as 'we are all Sfaxians'.

In response to research question (TQ1), therefore, Tunisia has proved to be a complex society to study, due to there being two clear identity formations: secular and religious, yet there are overlaps of such identities with the structural changes identified in the shape of three competing and conflicting logics. This is found to have major implications for the behaviour and practices of actors within localities. The main structural change is the shift from the dominance of the autocratic-state logic, associated with the anchor rationality of *security and self-interest* to the democratic-state as well as the Islamic-religion logics – which were brought together under the concept of *addawlah almadanyyah.* The study found this concept to be very much aligned with the democratic-state logic in all but name. It is explained by Tunisians to mean people are the source of power, constitutional government, equal citizenship, and with Islam recognised as the civilisational basis of society (Gorman, 2017). So, despite the clear evidence of contestation between democratic state logic and religion logic, the anchor rationality governing change at national level is *democratic participation and citizenship in nation*. This is evidenced by the nature of the new rules adopted in the shape of the new 2014 Constitution and other legislations passed by the democratically elected NCA and subsequent People's Assemblies, as well as the rhythm of regular elections and the peaceful transfer of power. Proponents of the religion logic were found to be at pains to stress their democratic

credential, under *addawlah almadanyyah,* even if later they continued to promote religiously-based legislation on a number of issues, such as *hubus* (endowment) and Islamic finance, but they also succumb to the democratic process in doing so, as evident by dropping both proposals when opposition proved to be strong.

(TQ2) How do organisational fields emerge in which boundary-spanners operate? Accounting for institutional change.

The pattern of behaviour of actors and their ways of doing things can be demonstrated in the context of organisational fields, leading to conclusions about the extent of institutional stability and change. This study examined changes to the organisational fields in Sfax and Kairouan manifest in four areas: logics, membership, boundaries and relationships among field members. Given that boundary-spanners bring a unique role due to their high level of interaction, a special focus was given by the study to understand *increase in interaction*, *patterns of coalitions*, *heightened information sharing* and *increase in mutual awareness*.

As already discussed, the change in logics has been ascertained; with the dominance of the democratic-state logic, some continuing legacy of the autocratic logic, and the near absence of the religion logic in both localities. Extant, pre-2011, organisational field boundaries in Sfax and Kairouan where also found to have suffered major breaches, mainly arising from the revolutionary change affecting the whole country where democratisation has resulted in the complete collapse of the constituency of coercion that exerted control until 2011. New field membership, and therefore new boundaries, has essentially meant that free and independent political and civil societies are in control of policy making forums, which in turn means that service users – citizens – are free to organise and vote for representatives to ensure

accountability. In this new arrangement, policy makers are politically-led by independent and democratically-accountable political parties and civil society organisations, where service providers are no longer the public and private organisations under the patronship of autocracy, but accountable to elected policy makers. Tables 4.1 and 6.2, in Chapters Four and Six respectively, provided more detailed contrast between the organisational fields under the autocratic state logic and under the democratic state logic, respectively.

The boundaries and membership of the governance field in Kairouan, like that in Sfax, mapped using the WDR triad (WBG, 2003) have experienced significant change, as per Tables 4.1 in Chapter Four and 6.2 in Chapter Six. This is, however, largely a product of the top-down impact of the shift of logics from autocratic-state logic to democratic-state logic. Membership and boundaries of the fields are defined by the rules set in the new 2014 Constitution and 2018 Local Government Act, but also by the actions of local actors, mainly in the civil society sphere. The discussion in Chapter Four identified the shift in local governance to democratic accountability, spelling out in particular the process by which policy-making members are appointed. It is well recognised by participants though, that the hierarchy and power remain dominated by UGTT and the Government, and in some cases the private sector. However, this study found that boundary-spanners, through their practices, have made significant difference - if to differing scales - in both localities.

Considerable evidence was found of *patterns of increasing interaction* within both fields, exemplified in the relationships between boundary-spanners across multiple issues and other interests (Figure 3.2 in Chapter Three), formally and socially. The range of interaction mechanisms depended on the organising level, whether field level, coalition level or

organisation level, as shown in Table 6.1, Chapter Six. Field-level interaction tended to be campaigns, negotiation meetings, lobbying as well as through mass and virtual communication. At coalition and organisation-levels, the intensity of interaction tended to be through campaign planning, coalition building, and coordination and maintenance meetings. The key distinctions between Sfax and Kairouan in this respect were the near absence of campaign and coalition building efforts in the latter. Social interaction within the locality tended to be issue-specific and led by the limited range of actors, where the use of mass communication and inclusive campaigns were not evidenced. So, in Kairouan, new field members worked 'along the grain' of the triad-field.

Sustained and durable *new coalition* that sought to dominate the narrative were found to be prominent in Sfax. The complexity of the salient issues, their locality-wide impact and the history and capacity to organise in Sfax is demonstrated through the strength of civil-society coalitions. CSO-based boundary spanners sought and established structures and coalitions of domination of narrative, such as EDCS and SM, BK and lately Mobadarat Alwaseet. Working through such coalitions, entrepreneurial boundary spanners tended to adopt transformative as well as tactical decision making that impacted far beyond the issues at hand; as well as identity-based mobilisation – 'we are all Sfaxians'. In the case of Sfax, this has led to CSO coalitions being recognised locally and nationally as the 'fourth' dimension of the new governance organisational field, a radical shift from the WDR-triad of service users, policymakers and service deliverers. The success of these coalitions resulted in, for example, nomination of the first SMC to run the Municipality, the successful reclamation of Casino

Beach, securing a court order to bring to an end the decades old practice of dumping the City of Sfax's waste in Agareb District, organising the successful Sfax Arab City of Culture.

In line with the nature of the contested field typical of a post-conflict society, this study found that *increasing information flow* between field members was carried out by boundary-spanners within the context of the struggle over meaning, involving sense-making, issue interpretation and filtering process. This was found to be the case in most of the issues considered in both localities. In the case of Sfax, boundary spanners were very projective, deploying frames such as 'Sfax el-Mezyena' – meaning Sfax the beautiful, the "death factory" to describe SIAPE, Sfax "the City that turns its back to the sea", and Maneesh Masab – I am not a dump – in the case of Agareb District, as the campaign cries, around which the production and exchange of information took place. Similarly, but more iteratively, in the case of Kairouan, the slogan of "fairness" and "social justice" seem to dominate and drive the information flow. This is exemplified in the exchange of financial and budgetary information between UGTT, the Municipality and the Prime Minister's Office in the case of Refuse Collectors, or the exchange of project information and technical specification in the case of Kairouan Old Town refurbishment. The ultimate aim of the increase in information flow between field members is not just to manage difference and build durable relationships as Williams (2012) suggests, but also to win the battle for narrative.

Mutual awareness among organisational field members was evidenced by virtue of their common interest in the issues being addressed, as well as the many overlaps, as indicated in Figure 3.2 in Chapter Three. In this study, awareness was not found to be the mere acknowledgement of the existence of an actor in the field, it is awareness of the interest or

concern of an actor in the issue(s) that needs resolving or the question that needs addressing; and an acknowledgement of the actor as 'stakeholder' and the development of a shared identity. In the case of the Kairouan Old Town renovation contract, the initial reaction to participant KA05 and his colleagues attending meetings was a rejection by those with power, the contractor and the Governorate Office. However, through media campaigns – only possible due to the democratic-state logic – their right to be stakeholders was eventually acknowledged. The same was also the experience of CEDS, in the case if SIAPE in SFAX; the initial reaction of the powerful UGTT was to question their right to be concerned about the issue, famously with the question: *who are you?* But through escalatory political and public campaigns, they were acknowledged as significant members of the field.

In this study, it was found that the means that aid the process of referencing, leading to actors becoming connected within a field, is more or less how a field comes into existence; It is not just the formal rules that the law may stipulate. What the study found most telling, and which, to a point, differentiates Sfax from Kairouan, are the issues of intense contestation and the practices of sense-giving and mobilisation. When organisational field members, especially new members from the civil and political societies, put forward a new vision, strategy or objective, build coalitions and use escalatory campaigns such as direct action, rallies, and political and media lobbying, it is then that the field becomes truly contested and mutual awareness is increased. The unanswered question though, which has been raised already in Chapter Six is, does mutual awareness lead to shared identity? This is difficult to ascertain for sure, because, as the study has demonstrated, identity will always be multi-layered. However, what is unmistakably clear, is the concern for the locality – *we are all Sfaxians* – which is at

the heart of the successful mobilisation efforts. Such identities are suppressed by autocratic regimes, and come to the fore in the context of democratic-state logic.

In response to question TQ2 of this study, it was found that the organisational fields in both localities have experienced change. The change included the transformation of membership and boundaries from that dominated by the coercive coalition (Table 4.1) to one based on democratic participation and citizenship (Table 6.2). This change was only possible due to the change in societal logics from that of autocratic-state logic to the democratic state logic. Critically for boundary-spanners, change was found to become most manifest in the nature of relationship among field participants, which was investigated by exploring patterns of increasing interactions, coalition building, increasing information flow, and mutual awareness among field stakeholders. Here, the study found some divergence between the two localities. The point of departure and differences between the organisational fields in both localities, was found to be mainly due to two practices: nature of decision making, whether tactical or transformative; and mobilisation practices, whether role or identity based, or both, as will be discussed below.

(TQ3) How do boundary spanners in Sfax and Kairouan access and mobilise competing logics to affect institutional change?

The receding tide of the autocratic-state logic, in being replaced by the lenses of the democratic-state logic, has allowed for salient issues to be recognised by entrepreneurial boundary spanners through the practice of sensemaking, and through decision making and mobilisation to act on these issues. Entrepreneurial boundary spanners are the change-makers working to solve such issues; they can be identified by the role they play, whether

inherent in job design or location within the organisational field, and where identity, especially collective identity, plays a central role in shaping their goals and practices. The two main salient collective identities for boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan were found to be civil-society and political affiliation. However, these salient identities were found to be layered upon other identities, such as profession, Islamic-religion and secularism. A typical boundary-spanner is likely to belong to a profession, such as journalism, be secular in terms of ideology, and a member of a civil society; at the same time, the same boundary spanner – in Sfax for example - could be involved in the issues of SIAPE, Casino Beach and Sayeb Tortoir. High levels of interaction across many such boundaries increases their awareness of different institutional logics, and enables them to access and mobilise ideas associated with such logics in their attempt to find solutions to the complex issues of concern. In the process of doing so, boundary-spanners help to promote and establish the new logic(s) within their organisational field that can further reinforce institutional change.

This study found that, unlike the role played by boundary spanners within the resource-maximising perspective, which is dominant in extant literature, the boundary-spanning roles and practices explored in this study were within a different post-conflict context. The method adopted is based on the identification of issues of contestation involving the provision of public goods, mainly between the general public and organisations and agencies within the public sector, and to a much lesser extent the private sector. The nature of these contestations were found to be a continuation of the political struggle within a post-conflict society, where citizens' grievances were not being addressed due to the continuing legacy of the autocratic logic. Due to the nature of Tunisia's post-conflict environment, where the policy-making

political apparatus completely collapsed and was being replaced in the aftermath of the revolution, boundary spanning was noticed to arise mainly from the new civil-society and political society sectors. Most issues considered, such as the closure of SIAPE, or the expansion of Sfax Port on to Casino Beach or the corruption associated with Kairouan Old Town regeneration, were indicative of this phenomena.

So, unlike boundary spanners that belonged to an identifiable 'home organisation' with a direct stake in the issue and seeking resource maximisation, as per resource-dependency theory, this study found the majority belonged to organisations that did not have a resource maximising strategy, as such, but were rather working for the common good and to add public value. The implication of this finding on the role of the boundary-spanner can be significant. While substantial evidence from participant interviews indicates that boundary-spanners in Sfax and Kairouan do work to facilitate information exchange, coordination and brokering, as indicated in Table 6.1 in Chapter Six, their lack of significant bargaining resource-base, as they are mostly political (often from opposition parties) and newly formed civil society organisations, quickly escalates to entrepreneurial practices, including identity-based mobilisation. The only exception to this, and one that followed the traditional boundary-spanning practice was associated with the issue of Refuse Collectors (KI01) in Kairouan. Understandably, this is due to the issue arising between traditionally structured organisations: UGTT, Kairouan Municipality, Kairouan Governorate, and the Prime Minister's Office.

This study found clear evidence of entrepreneurial practices taking place in both localities, even though there is some contrast in certain areas of practice, such as the lack of transformational decision-making or identity-based mobilisation in Kairouan. In order to

ascertain the extent to which the dominant competing logics identified direct the attention of boundary-spanners, this study explored the alignment of the three practices with the categories associated with each of the three competing societal logics and their unique anchor rationalities, listed in Table 5.1, in Chapter Five.

The democratic state logic's prominence is evident first and foremast in boundary-spanners' ability to freely identify the issues most important to them and their locality. This is exemplified in the identification of the salient issues of SIAPE and Casino Beach in Sfax, Refuse Collectors, the Old Town Renovation in Kairouan and Agareb District, for example. These issues were at best low key, but never a cause of campaign under the autocratic state logic, due to the dominant anchor rationality of *security and self-interest*. The championing of such issues could only be undertaken under the democratic-state logic, where the anchor rationality is one of *democratic participation and citizenship in nation*. Yet, there is also a distinct legacy of the autocratic-state logic, strangely being exercised by actors other than political policy makers – as was the case under the old regime. In Kairouan, for example, workers were frustrated by businesses threatening to withdraw the opportunity to work if unionised. The same was experienced in Sfax, where the UGTT was seen to frustrate the democratic mandate of the Government at national and local levels. Nationally, the bureaucracy of the administration – sometimes labelled the *deep state* - is also proving to display autocratic tendencies (Farhat, 2013), as evidenced in the response to the Participatory Budgeting process (Algourchi, 2016), the experience of the Higher Authority (Achour, 2018) immediately after the revolution, and the experience of regional planning process (MPA participant SA11).

Importantly, however, entrepreneurial boundary spanners engaged in transformative change were found in this study to excel at capitalising on opportunities presented by the logic shift to further their interests in achieving the goals of tackling the issues that matter most to their locality. The freedom resulting from the logic shift allowed the creation of organisations such as Beit el-Khibrah (BK), for example, and the development of ideas to influence and shape Sfax; the dissolution of the old Sfax Municipal Council allowed the CSO's to nominate the interim SMC. The promotion of the environmental challenges as the main barriers to Sfax's development has allowed boundary spanners to establish CEDS as the legitimate stakeholder in the locality's governance structure and legitimate voice of the CSO sector.

In regard to the extent to which the three competing logics influence the practices of boundary spanners in both localities, this study's findings suggest that the sensemaking practices of boundary-spanners in both localities is, in the main, one of *defiance* of the autocratic logic, *ignorance* of the religious logic, and *compliance* with the democratic logic. However, evidence of ongoing resistance by some local actors to the democratisation process through appeal to power is also the case. This includes UGTT's response to popular demands for the closure of SIAPE and the frustration of the series of decisions by the democratic national and local governments, the occasional use of force by unidentified actors to silence opponents, as in the case of participants SA18 and SA07, as well as the more recent development in Agareb District. Nevertheless, the clear shift in vocabulary from one of fear, security, and the-state-knows-best, to one of fairness, dialogue, negotiation, lobbying, vision, direct democracy, engagement and inclusion, are indicative of the prominence of the democratic-state logic (See Tables 7.1, 7.2, 7.3 and 7.4).

In response to the research question (TQ3), this study found that the unique characteristics of entrepreneurial boundary spanners, including multiple identities and multiple interactions, has afforded them a vantage point to act as opportunity seekers. Capitalising on the freedoms and democratic processes associated with the democratic-state logic, boundary-spanners have been able to access and mobilise these opportunities to tackle the issues of most concern to their localities. In doing so, the practices of sense-making, decision making and mobilisation were found, to a large extent, to reinforce the norms of democratic participation and citizenship.

While the process of sensemaking and sense-giving created a powerful argument for change, it is the actors' type of decision-making process that was found to lead to actions and change; the analysis in Chapter Seven identified the three types of decisions that actors go through, early personal-level decisions, tactical decisions, and transformative decisions. What this study establishes though is that there is a distinct difference in trajectory between those in Sfax and the ones in Kairouan; while boundary-spanners in Sfax engage in transformative decision making that have consequences beyond the immediate social interaction, in Kairouan decisions of tactical nature that deal with the issue at hand are more common. This difference in types of decision making was found to have consequences for, and explaining of, institutional change within the organisational field; likewise, in terms of the practice of mobilisation, which can be on the basis of role, identity, or both. The study found that identity-based mobilisation – "we are all Sfaxians" and "Sfax is where living is good" – played significant roles in re-enforcing democratic norms, while in Kairouan mobilisation was mainly based on role.

The point of departure and differences between the organisational fields in both localities, was found to be mainly due to two practices: nature of decision making, whether tactical or transformative; and mobilisation practices, whether role or identity based, or both. There was a lack of demonstrable evidence of transformative decision-making and identity-based mobilisation practices by boundary-spanners in Kairouan. This had major implications for the organisational field in the locality and led to the organisational field settling into a state of exchange, between service users, policy makers and service deliverers rather than contestation. The situation in Sfax is markedly different, where new members have lead on the development of shared meaning by being proactive in the process of sense-making and sense-giving, due mainly to making transformative decisions, and putting together formidable coalitions to challenge the dominant powers in the field, as discussed above. In Sfax, therefore, the organisational field, in addition to service users, policy-makers and service deliverers, has most developed prominent CSO coalitions that provide a unique role, a form of social accountability mechanism – especially during the period when formal accountability mechanisms were still in development.

Section Two: So, what does all this mean for institutional change in Sfax and Kairouan? Reflecting on Scott's Three Pillars.

The main research question essentially asks: What influence do individuals have on institutional change? This section will reflect on the responses given above to the three research sub-questions, to assess institutional change in terms of the three pillars identified by Scott (2014): rules, norms and cultural-cognitive pillars. The study found entrepreneurial boundary spanners to be reflexive, that is iterative and projective, in Emirbayer and Mische's

(1999) conception, or in the terminology of this study engaged in sensemaking and sense-giving. The study also demonstrated that entrepreneurial boundary spanners were innovative, and able to turn ideas generated under the new democratic-state logic into actions. Among the examples here are: the establishment of BK, as the think-and-do tank, which is turning out be a hothouse of new ideas and programmes for the region. Other examples include the establishment of CEDS as a region-wide social movement promoting the development of Sfax through concern for the environment and wellbeing, as well as the setting up of SM to focus on the infrastructure improvement and enhance the attractiveness of the region. Direct action, as in the successful case of Casino Beach, would have been unthinkable under the autocratic-state logic, but this is exactly the kind of strategy only possible due to logic change.

Rules are manifest in symbolic systems such as rules and laws, relational systems in the form of governance structures and power structures, as well as activities such as monitoring and sanctions (Scott, 2014). Rules of the game in Tunisia have been clearly set since the shift in logics following the revolution and is most exemplified in the 2014 Constitution and the subsequent 2018 Local Government Law – *Majallat al-Jama'at al-Mahalleyah.* As well as describing the governance structure - discussed in Chapter Four, and activities, the new rules set the tone inherent in the democratic-state logic, which stipulates, in Article 139 of the 2014 Constitution, that: "local authorities shall adopt the mechanisms of participatory democracy and the principles of open governance to ensure broader participation by citizens and civil society" (Constituteproject.org, 2022). The rules, therefore, are clearly set to translate the anchor rationality of the democratic-state logic, which is *democratic participation and citizenship in nation*. Boundary spanners interviewed have not demonstrated direct impact on

the new rules being set, as these were set at national level. However, the significant early intervention in nominating the interim SMCs in both localities, but most significantly in Sfax, were found to be an opportunity, through formal consultation mechanisms, to influence and shape the laws. The profound impact boundary-spanners made on institutional change, however, is in the development of norms.

Norms development, according to Scott (2014), is most manifest in symbolic systems such as values, expectations and standards, relational systems of regimes and authority systems and activities, such as roles, routines and habits. Under the autocratic-state logic the norm was one of compliance due to fear and the quest for security from the coercive power of the RDC, security services and the bureaucracy – the constituency of coercion, as well as the pursuit of self-interest through membership of the ruling party in order to secure benefits. The norm setting activities under the democratic-state logics was most manifest in the three practices discussed and aligned with the anchor rationality of democratic participation and citizenship in nation; namely, sense-making and sense-giving, decision making and mobilisation. The two localities have been described as not unlike a workshop of democratic participation, as witnessed by this researcher and most clearly evidenced in this study in terms of the number of complex, and sometimes simultaneous issues being addressed. Another example is the regularity and rhythm of demonstrating the democratic values of participation and inclusion, whether through direct action or setting up of coalitions to address the power imbalance - as discussed already under patterns of increasing interaction above. So, unlike in well-established fields where new practices are institutionalised by attaching them to pre-existing organisational routines (Maguire et al., 2004), in this study new practices are institutionalised

through repetitiveness of practices, and backed by the creation of power apparatuses based on identity-based mobilisation and coalition building by new field members.

There is nothing more symbolic of the change in norms than, for example, the shift demonstrated by private sector and CSO participant KA05 when he described the norm under the autocratic-logic, when he said:"… before the revolution it was not possible [to participate] unless you were part of the regime – and this was not possible. So, we had to stay low, we talk privately, but that is it." Whereas under the democratic-state logic, when the norm became one of rights-based participation and commitment (see Table 5.1), KA05 described his action most succinctly as follows:

> "In a technical meeting to discuss the project progress [Kairouan Old Town Renovation], we turned up. However, the contractor and the Municipality staff were not used to civil society attending and taking part. They refused to allow us to participate. We then raised the issue with the press and started to apply pressure, which led to others joining our campaign."

In a similar way, private sector participant and SMC member SA04, in a previous powerful quote, describes the normative behaviour of residents not taking responsibility for the care of their neighbourhoods due to the prevalent norm under the autocratic logics of the 'state knows best and is responsible' to one where boundary spanners are trying to forge a new relationship between citizens and their public spaces based on responsible citizenship. The shift in norms in Sfax has been much more profound than in Kairouan. The establishment of independent structures and coalitions, such as EDCS, BK, SM and Maneesh Masab, has infused the formal – rules based - governance structures and authority system with additional power centres that strengthens the voice of citizens and challenges the dominant powers of the

Government and the UGTT. Boundary-spanners have been able to shift from a position where the rights of civil society has been questioned – the now infamous "who are you? – to one where their sensemaking, sense-giving and mobilisation is making a difference, as this study has demonstrated.

Evidence of changes in the cultural-cognitive pillar, or mental models, though is mixed, for two main reasons. The first relates to the fact that institutional change is a long-term process, mainly due to the long-term nature of changes to norms, and particularly mental models of individual boundary-spanners. Secondly, unlike rules, which are much more tangible to measure and assess, and norms which can be observed through behaviour and practice, the cultural-cognitive pillar is evidenced through symbolic systems such as schemas and frames, and relational systems such as structural isomorphism and identities and predispositions (Scott, 2014). While common language can certainly be increasingly evidenced, for example in the use of phrases such as 'rights', 'democracy', 'fairness', and the near absence of terms associated with the autocratic-state or religion logic, it is difficult to be sure this is evidence of entrenched democratic-logic perspective. The sense-making and sense-giving practice discussed in detail in Chapter Seven, does indicate autonomy of boundary-spanners to set the agenda, especially in Sfax, and put forward a particular vision for the locality unhindered by calculations of how those in formal power might react, and to even take direct action. This would indicate that effort to forge a new collective identity, such as "we are all Sfaxians" is being championed, but there is still considerable antagonism found on critical issues, especially with powerful players such as UGTT and the private sector.

All the above findings on the process of institutional change and the level of influence boundary-spanners have on it is made possible by the unique conceptual framework developed linking structure, agency and ideas, which made it possible to explore the practices of boundary spanners in emerging organisational fields. The case study methodology adopted, using the embedded single-case design has proved effective in exploring contrasts in practices in two areas at different stages of development. This study can therefore suggest that boundary-spanners do influence institutional change in the localities of Sfax and Kairouan, and that their role is more transformational in terms of setting and enforcing the new norms of participation, rights to fair practices, for civil society to be accepted as a member of the local organisational field. In a post-conflict, post-autocratic, environment these are major institutional changes. While the longevity, or "stickiness" of the democratic norms can only be further assessed at some time in the future, there is enough evidence to point to changes already standing the test of Tunisia's turbulent democratic trajectory, and period of extraordinary politics.

Section Three: Contribution to the literature

The literature review identified a number of gaps in the study of institutional change, including the need to further examine the process at the micro level by looking at the roles and practices of individual actors. The second area is the study of institutionalisation in the here and now, rather than in a historical perspective, by exploring the process of emergence of organisational fields. Thirdly, the dearth of studies, addressing the applicability of the institutional logics perspective within non-Western societies. In making contribution to these gaps in the literature, the study adopted the novel framework bringing together the metatheories of

structure, agency and ideas, and importantly by conceptualising the source of ideas as driven by the anchor rationalities of institutional logics. This study, therefore, has contributed a framework and method that can enable researchers to better investigate institutional change at the micro-level, and to operationalise the connection between structure, agency and ideas.

On how individuals contribute to institutional change

The duality of structure and agency is not only mediated by ideas but, importantly, the dialectic process involving actors' multiple identities, salient issues and multiplicity of logics is the generator of ideas, as demonstrated by this study. To unpack this dense theorisation, this study accepts the notion that structure precedes agency, even though structures are the product of agency. Institutions, as structures of how things are done within a community, will be dominated by a logic, or competing logics, that will provide the frames guiding the agency of individual actors. Confronted by novel, complex and recurring issues, however, the available frames based on the dominant institutional logic(s) will not prove satisfactory to resolving the issue of concern to the individual actors. Individual boundary-spanners, who are uniquely positioned at the interstices of organisations, institutions, and logics in this case, enjoy multiple social identities. This privileged position, due to their wide-ranging social interaction, enables them to access alternative logics and become aware of new ideas that can be accessed and mobilised to affect the issues at hand. Abundantly observed in all issue considered, is the demonstrable manifestation of the anchor rationality of *democratic participation and citizenship in nation* through the adoption of ideas, such as 'fairness', 'rights', 'equity', and 'participation'. The fact that these ideas were adopted and promoted,

often at personal cost, by individuals who were highly networked, well-travelled, and enjoy high levels of education, and therefore exposure to new ideas, is no coincidence.

The recurrence of this process, as in this study, enabled practices based on the democratic-state logic perspective, with the anchor rationality of democratic participation and citizenship in nation, to pursue equality of opportunity and social equality and tackle corruption – as is the case of Kairouan. This contrasts with the practice of personal safety and self-interest through compliance under the autocratic-state logic, which allowed the complex and recurring issues of the injustice of the employment contracts of the Refuse Collectors, the poor performance in the Old Town renovation work and the lack of delivery of the new hospital to continue unchallenged. The same impact was also observed in the case of Sfax with the shift from 'safety and self-interest' to maintaining SIAPE works and foregoing the benefit of Casino Beach, and also to a new vision of healthier and prosperous Sfax, 'a place where life is good', leading boundary-spanners to confront such issues.

In fact, boundary-spanning and institutional change became personal. The experiences of boundary-spanners SA18, SA07, SA14 and KA08, shows that sense-making, decision making and mobilisation can lead to being subjected to physical attacks, character assassination and psychological traumas. Yet, it is these practices and individual roles that lead to new democratic norms becoming established and being taken for granted.

On applying the Institutional Logics Perspective in non-Western Societies

In applying the institutional logics perspective as part of the conceptual framework, this study has contributed to advancing its applicability outside Western societies. The original

conception was explicitly stated by Friedland and Alford (1991) to be based on developments within, "the contemporary capitalist West" (p. 232), hence, for example, the logics of Christian Religion and Democracy. The later elaboration of Thornton and colleagues (2012) to the more generic sounding logics of religion, state, market, etc., were also based on Western conception, given the type of categorical elements underpinning each logic; for example, the religion logic had the *root metaphor* as the, "temple as bank", *source authority* as, "priesthood charisma", and for the state logic the *source of legitimacy* was stated to be, "democratic participation" and *basis of norms* as "citizenship in nation" (Appendix 2.1) – all derived from Western society perspectives and experiences.

In reality, however, the world is much more diverse. In their most recent report, *Freedom in The World 2022*, Freedom House states that, "some 38 percent of the global population live in Not Free countries, the highest proportion since 1997…[with only] about 20 percent now live in Free countries." (p. 1). The same goes for religious diversity, where the Pew Research Centre's Report *The Changing Global Religious Landscape* states that non-Christian religions, and no-religion, account for 68.8% of the world's population, with Muslims accounting for 24.1% (PRC, 2017). Recognising that most of the seven institutional logics are now universal, namely the market, the corporation, the profession and possibly the community, this study makes an additional contribution of identifying the *autocratic-state logic*, underpinned by the anchor rationality of *security and self-interest,* and the Muslim-Religion logic, underpinned by the anchor rationality of *importance of faith and membership of Ummah* as additional societal logics that serve empirical studies within societies collectively accounting for the majority, and in some cases substantial, populations in the world (See Table 5.1). This contribution further

strengthens the Institutional Logics Perspective as a viable theoretical tool in understanding the role institutions play in a changing world.

On emerging organisational fields

By looking into the dynamics of the emergence of fields, this study takes up the challenge of looking into the deficit recognised by Scott (2014) and Zapp and Powell (2016), among others, that theorisation and empirical investigation of the emergence of fields is scarce. Post conflict societies are arenas especially suited for the study of emerging organisational fields. This is mainly due to the fact that, by definition, they tend to be sites of conflict and contestation by actors wedded to different institutional logics, which is most apparent in issue-based organisational fields. This study has contributed to the nascent literature concerned with the emergence of fields.

Extant scholarship has identified organisational fields to be in one of three states: *emerging*, *mature and stable* or *in crisis*, where it was further recognised that most of the studies of development and change of organisational fields tended to be a post-hoc affair, when the field has reached maturity stage. Almost all previous studies of changes within institutional studies were either longitudinal in nature or post stabilisation (Hoffman, 1999; Maguire et. al., 2004; Reay and Hining, 2005 and Zapp and Powell, 2016). Using the framework of the four key components of the field suggested by Scott (2014): *institutional logic*, *actors*, *social interaction* and *boundaries*, this study identified a fifth component, the *cause*, and proceeded to analyse the emergence of organisational fields in both localities by analysing the changes in these components. The conclusion reached by looking at this topic somewhat overlaps with that already highlighted at the beginning of this section relating to institutional change. As arenas

of institutional behaviour, emerging organisational fields were found to be conducive sites for studying institutional change, for several reasons. The first is that the emerging fields focus their studies on complex issues where meanings and legitimacy of membership are contested enabling the researcher to better assess the dynamics of social interaction in the 'here and now'; that is, they provide a better opportunity to look at the practices of actors as they are being enacted. Studying organisational fields in development also allows the issue of legitimacy and power to be seen in action in the way membership of the field is legitimised or denied; from a position where powerful embedded actors question the legitimacy of new members – *who are you?* – to the mobilisation and coalition build undertaken by the new actors to challenge such position and secure legitimacy of membership.

The use of multiple issues within each locality has been another unique feature of this study. In order to study changes in organisational fields, extant literature has considered nation-wide, or sector-wide, issues and fields. Such macro-level fields do lend themselves to longitudinal and mixed methods studies due to the availability of relevant historical content, statistics, and where necessary interviews with experts. However, since the interest of this study is in boundary-spanning practices and their influence on institutional change, interview methods with actors still engaged in the process of change provided vivid and rich data to enable assessment of practice and evidence the 'early shoots' of emerging organisational fields. The findings of this study, therefore, complement and extend the literature in this regard.

Section Four: Kairouan and Sfax – a difference in pace of institutional change

Although this was not designed as a comparative case study, the design did contain two localities experiencing contrast in terms of socio-economic development, for the sole purpose of investigating the range of practices of boundary-spanners in a spectrum of critical contexts. This proved to be a useful approach as it further strengthened the case approach and gave a 'cross-section' perspective across the regional divide so prevalent in Tunisia. A number of observations were made on the basis of issue and participant selection, as well as participant interviews. The first observation was the relative scarcity of significantly complex issues mobilising a wide range of actors from different sectors and organisations in Kairouan compared to Sfax. This proved counter to expectation, mainly due to the evident poor socio-economic indicators and level of grievance understood from the literature; the main drivers of the Revolution were found in interior, less developed regions like Kairouan. This initial finding provided some context for interpreting the study's findings in terms of boundary-spanning practices in each locality. It is clear from the analysis that much sensemaking, decision-making and mobilisation is taking place in both localities, even though there is contrast in areas of practice such as the lack of transformational decision-making or identity-based mobilisation in Kairouan.

Following the 'rupture' caused by the Revolution, in the case of Kairouan 'permeability' of the boundaries of the extant field was identified, allowing new members, mainly from civil society and political parties, to 'seep' into the previously closed field, populating the three dimensions of the field: policy makers, service deliverers and service users. In the case of Sfax the change

to the field was much more profound and can confidently be described as a new field formation. For, as well as new members populating the three dimensions of the field, civil society established itself as a fourth dimension of well-formed coalitions sustaining their unique contribution and continuing to hold other stakeholders to account, thereby reinforcing new institutional norms. The following paragraphs will reflect on the way each of the boundary spanning practices developed in both localities.

Sensemaking and sense-giving – While boundary-spanners in Sfax were able to articulate locality-specific grievances: such as the intentional marginalisation by central government due to its history of political and union activism; its role in the country's economic output; and the monopoly of the machinery of Government by Sousse and Monastir regions; no such articulation was found in Kairouan. A lack of ideas-generating capacity by Kairouan – in comparison to Sfax's BK, EDCS and SM – has meant that boundary-spanners were ill-equipped to articulate a vision for the region. Having said this, however, Kairouan-based boundary-spanners were able to infuse policy-making arenas by taking advantage of new rules. In addition to this, another critical factor highlighted is the difference in the level of ambition; whilst in Sfax it is made crystal clear by new actors that the issues being tackled are but milestones on the road of developing a more integrated development agenda, with evidence of proposals around industrial and technological innovation being developed and escalated, there is no evidence in Kairouan of such norms or practice. One actor interviewed in Kairouan was at pains to highlight that a vision of Kairouan can be one where, "Kairouan's future lays in its past," given its historical and cultural significance, however, he was a lone voice: there was no coalition promoting such a vision and no identity-based mobilisation to pursue it.

Decision making – There is a distinct difference in trajectory between those in Sfax and the ones in Kairouan: whilst boundary-spanners in Sfax engage in transformative decision making that have consequences beyond the immediate social interaction, in Kairouan decisions of tactical nature are more common. This difference in types of decision making has consequences for change at field and institutional levels. Because of this, in Sfax the work of boundary-spanners was escalatory – when Sfax Arab Capital of Culture was secured, it was followed by direct action to reclaim Casino Beach, then the creation of CEDS to campaign for the closure of SIAPE, and lately Mobadarat Alwaseet working for a resolution of the crisis in high school education. There was no such stamina in Kairouan. When the issue of Refuse Collectors was thought to be resolved, the concerned boundary-spanners returned to their normal roles, when the issue of Kairouan Old Town contract was resolved the same thing occurred.

Mobilisation - Identity-based mobilisation is another major difference, perhaps the key difference. Democratic norms of participation and citizenship was most manifest in the practice of identity-based mobilisation. On all the significant issues – Sfax Arab Capital of Culture, Casino Beach, SIAPE and Agareb District, boundary-spanners in Sfax were able to demonstrate mobilisation based on the most encompassing identity: "we are all Sfaxians". Furthermore, they were able to mobilise the power of language in slogans such as "death factory" - in the case of SIAPE, and "Maneesh Masab" – meaning, 'I am not a waste dump.' In Kairouan, by comparison, mobilisation was mostly based on role-identity, where, mostly, those in formal boundary spanning roles and those organisations concerned with the issue were involved. In the case of the lack of hospital capacity and the long promised new hospital,

the slogan adopted by activists was, "where is our hospital?," which seemed to fail to attract wider support.

A possible reason for this is history, where Sfax has deep rooted track record of activism, including the founding of the powerful UGTT, the almost constant lead in education outcomes compared to all other regions. Whereas in Kairouan, the lack of great unifying issues, its poor social capital, and its lack of CSO infrastructure are clearly indicative of a low-level of coalition building and networking compared to Sfax. The civil society literature, especially the more recent debate on 'legitimacy' (Suddaby, R., Bitektine, H., and Haak, P. 2017; Egholm, L., Heyes, L., Mourey, D., 2019) provide helpful framing of the differences in institutional change trajectories in the two localities, where legitimacy in Sfax is seen as a process, whereas in Kairouan, it is more of a property. Suddaby et al., (2017), suggest that legitimacy occurs through a "fit" between the attributes of an organisation and the expectation within its organisational field. They suggest three legitimacy configurations: legitimacy as *property*, *process* and *perception* (Suddaby et al., 2017, pp. 451), where legitimacy as property focuses on the "dyadic relationship" (Egholm, et al., 2019, p. 3) between the CSO and its institutional environment, adopting practices that are deemed legitimate by dominant members of the field, the 'owners' of legitimacy. This type of relationship reflects the posture of new members of the field in Kairouan, mainly from civil society, and to some extent local political actors and therefore results in institutional maintenance. Notice the outcome of meetings previously discussed, of local civil society with local Members of the People's Assembly (Azzaghdoodi, 2015), and with the leader of Kairouan SMC (Turess.com, 2013), as well as their negotiations

'within the rules' to resolve the dispute surrounding the contracts of Refuse Collectors (MPA KA07 and SMC Leader SA01).

The second type of legitimacy identified by Suddaby et al., (2017) is legitimacy as a process, which is "a product of interaction of multiple actors…operating at the organisational field [level]" (p. 451). This can be seen as a process of legitimacy-creation, where new members of the field create new coalitions of power to challenge and engage the dominant actors and transform rules and norms, a process demonstrated in abundance in Safax. New rules are being tested to the limit by mainly civil society actors, and where new norms of, for example, direct action, challenging narratives about the future of Sfax, powerfully – and at some personal cost at times – challenging prevailing authority and corruption of established members of the field, as in the issues of SIAPE and Agareb District. This contestation creates a process where legitimacy is no longer the property of dominant actors but is negotiated among all members of the organisational field, leading to transformative change. To conclude, legitimacy in Kairouan's case seems to be recognised to be 'owned' by the incumbent and dominant field members, that is the Government, Governorate, UGTT, private sectors. This leads to new members of the field, whether in civil society or political parties, to work along the grain of the field. In Sfax's case, new members adopt a different approach, they see legitimacy as a shared endeavour to be negotiated and contested by field members, or to use Suddaby et al. (2017) description, it is understood "as a communicative process co-constructed in acts of meaning negotiation" (p. 458).

Section Five: Limitations of the study

The ambition behind this study to explore institutional change at the micro-foundation level, should not obscure from its inherent limitations. Like any study restricted by scope, geography and method, this study has several limitations. For a start, it has become important to re-iterate the almost obligatory, if unfair criticism, and therefore perceived limitation of a qualitative case study, that it cannot claim generalisability in the same way quantitative research claims probabilistic-statistical generalisability. However, probabilistic-statistical generalisability is neither the aim nor is it applicable to qualitative research. Studies such as this are designed to look into a case in depth in order to generate thick description that leads to an understanding which can inform future knowledge generation in two ways. Firstly, this study should prove useful in that it has tested a framework for exploring institutional change at micro-level, and where such framework can be replicated in different cases. Secondly, to use the Carl Popper (1959) 'black swan' example, the study has shown that boundary spanners in post-conflict scenarios are more likely to be engaged in entrepreneurial practices than are demonstrated in organisational collaboration scenarios. In applying the institutional logics perspective, the study has also highlighted that the main Western-society experienced logics are not all applicable to non-Western ones. Adopting a design that provides such a rich description offers the opportunity, therefore, for 'naturalistic' generalisability when compared to similar findings in other contexts. So, as stated in Chapter Three, case studies such as this rely on theoretical generalisation. In theoretical generalisation, the aim is to generalise the set of results to a broader theory, where such a theory can then be tested in other localities experiencing institutional change.

Almost all studies of changes to organisational fields and institutional change tend to be longitudinal and historical, and are, therefore, suitable to a mixed methods approach due to the availability of historical records and statistical data, making the assessment of institutional change more certain. This study was designed to address the gap in the literature by looking into the active practices of boundary spanners in emerging organisational fields and the resulting institutional change. While it was possible to ascertain the practices of boundary-spanners as they engage in reshaping the organisational field and undertake processes pointing strongly to changes in institutional norms, in the context of changes to institutional rules, the results can be further strengthened by a subsequent study at a later stage using mixed method approaches. Such studies in the future may focus more on investigating the, "carriers" of institutionalisation (Scott, 2014) in order to further evidence the stickability of changes to the three pillars of institutions.

Scope: As already discussed in Chapter Three, cases studies such as this, have often been identified as limited in scope, as they are naturally focused on a single case looked at in a specific context and period in time. Tunisia was selected in 2014 due to its unique position among the then so called 'Arab Spring' countries where its democratic transformation seems to have endured and offered the opportunity to understand the institutional transformation within the country beyond the centre, in the regions. While there are important lessons that can be drawn from the study, it cannot be claimed to represent similar lessons that can be drawn from a study conducted in a different society.

Geography: Tunisia's location and history, as discussed in Chapters Four and Five, lent itself to a particular and unique relationship with modernity; where, unlike other neighbouring

countries, modernisation was self-driven to begin with rather than entirely imposed by later colonial experience. Furthermore, the post-independence trajectory continued to be dominated by Westernisation, even though largely imposed through autocratic rule. Although Tunisia's economic geography can be indicative of similar experiences in other societies, namely that of centre and periphery, where the centre enjoys better economic development compared to the periphery. The country does have some unique features which include: the higher rate of urbanisations, where more than 70% of the population live within close proximity of the three main urban population centres, lack of any significant natural resources, and where tourism plays a central role in the economy.

Section Six: Recommendations for future research
Implication for policy development – strengthening social accountability

Many of the practices of boundary-spanners, especially those from the civil society sector, seem to challenge incumbent members of the organisational field, including government at all levels, private sector and powerful organisations such as UGTT. Most, if not all, of the 12 issues considered in this study, essentially point to a process of recovery of accountability for service delivery, due to the lack of 'voice' of service users under the autocratic state logic. The traditional model of the principle-agent framework framing the relationship between service users (principal) and service deliverers (agents) through the mechanism of elected representatives of the users in a democracy does not work during post-conflict periods – not effectively anyway. The role boundary-spanners played in Sfax and Kairouan has, therefore, strengthened accountability of policy makers and service deliverers to citizens. The creation of coalitions, such as CEDS, BK and SM in Sfax is likely to sustain this process and, therefore,

increase calls for further research of the relationship between boundary-spanning and social accountability, beyond resource-based theory.

So, with the jury being out on the effectiveness of decentralisation as a way to strengthen accountability, social accountability becomes all the more important, and this is where boundary-spanners can also play a role (but remember, that boundary spanners can also come from other sectors and organisations). Social accountability is described as taking place when, "citizens themselves more and more hold public officials directly to account through 'new accountability initiatives', such as participatory planning, participatory budgeting or other organised forms of influencing the public sphere and putting public pressure on officials" (Jilke, 2013, p. 389); another definition, which elaborates on 'other organised forms' is provided by Malena and colleagues (2004, p. 1), who define social accountability as, "an approach towards building accountability that relies on civic engagement, i.e., in which it is ordinary citizens and/or civil society organizations who participate directly or indirectly in exacting accountability." Indeed, what has been unmistakably evidenced is the extent to which public officials such as KA01, the Leader of Kairouan SMC, and SA01, the Director of Finance in Sfax Municipality have come to acknowledge and welcome the role of civil society boundary spanners as legitimate voice of citizens. The extensive media coverage cited further demonstrate the growing power and impact civil society coalitions are making, especially in Sfax.

Further development of the Institutional Logics Perspective

The study has highlighted the absence of any significant influence by the religion logic on the practices of boundary spanners in Sfax and Kairouan, given its prominence at societal level

(Chapter Five), and the many surveys evidencing religiosity among the population (PMC 2012; 2019). This, however, might mask an important issue that calls for further investigation; namely, that, unlike in Western society where there is accepted separation between religion as personal and private, and the material world, in Muslim societies, Islam is seen as pervasive in all facets of life, including politics and economy. It is, therefore, suggested here that, further research might be helpful to ascertain whether the seven ideal-typical logics are actually hierarchical, where some logics – such as religion – might have influence over other logics, and should be considered as metalogics.

The concept of *addawlah almadanyyah*, or civil state, was introduced in Chapter Five and is found to be an increasingly used concept in countries where political Islam is a significant political force, such as in Tunisia, as a way of reconciling the identity conflicts between the secular and religious, and has the potential to reflect the *democratic-Islam* logic. In Tunisia, according to participants in the drafting process (Ben Achour, 2018), the adoption of this concept led to the near unanimous agreement to the 2014 Constitution. This concept is worthy of exploration as a potential societal logic unique to countries of the Muslim World, where such conflict exists.

Links to volunteering and altruism

It can be argued that one of the unique characteristics of entrepreneurial boundary-spanners is the ability to build on sensemaking and decision-making to mobilise for change; it is, therefore, the capacity to mobilise that ultimately delivers the change, and it can be costly. The analysis in Chapter Seven corroborates and extends existing research (Rogers et al., 2018)

and demonstrates that, perhaps unlike their role in organisational collaboration settings (Williams, 2012), boundary-spanners operating in post-conflict environments derive no reward in going solo, and there is often greater personal cost, as the experiences of CSO participants SA18, SA07, KA08 and Maneesh Masab highlight. The rewards can only be realised by the collective, and only when enough people are mobilised, with no guarantee of such rewards. Further research could un-pack this observation further by exploring the relationship between boundary-spanning and *altruism* in post conflict societies where resource-based theory or the principal-agent theory do not provide adequate explanation.

Section Seven: Post-script - Reversion to autocracy?

Post-2019 Presidential and parliamentary elections may prove to be a turning point in Tunisia's fought-for path to democracy. There is no question that, until then, the Tunisian transition from autocratic to democratic rule has proved to be relatively resilient, if shaky at times; this is supported by evidence discussed in this study. Many critical milestones have been successfully navigated, including the organisation of successful multi-party elections that are recognised as free and fair; an inclusive 2014 Constitution; free press; and a vibrant civil society. However, many recent developments are overshadowing all the gains made.

Since 25th July 2021, according to many observers, "Tunisia today is an ex-democracy, unmoored from any semblance of constitutional order, hurtling down Saied's freeway in the direction of consolidated authoritarianism" (Marks, 2022). The same observation is made by the US Secretary of state, who said:

"Tunisia has experienced an alarming erosion of democratic norms over the past year and reversed many of the Tunisian people's hard-won gains since 2011," (Antony Blinken, 2022)

Such a conclusion may sound exaggerated to the casual observer – you only have to look at social media to come away thinking that free speech is still alive, and Saied himself was democratically elected. Yet, going down the list of changes introduced by the current President, including the abrogation of the democratically elected Peoples' Assembly on 25th July 2021, rescinding the progressive and democratically agreed 2014 Constitution, will make such conclusions sufficiently alarming for anyone concerned for Tunisia's future. More importantly, is the reality that many Tunisians are getting frustrated by the constant fights among the political class while their socio-economic conditions are worsening. Among the keen observers of Tunisia, Shadi Hamid, in a recent article (DAWN, 25th July 2022) , explained the main reason for the, so far, successful slow reversion to autocracy, where he claims that, "[in] some sense, this is what (many) Tunisians wanted. … They saw parliamentary gridlock, ineffectual coalition governments and economic collapse and were primed for a leader who could promise a radically different vision."

This study identified the evidence of the shift from the autocratic-state logics to the democratic-state logics, following the revolution, as depending on the discrediting of the extant logic, availability of alternative logic, and empowered actors to promote such alternatives (Andrews, 2013). What seems to be happening now is a process in reverse, where effort is being made to discredit the democratic state logic, and a longing for the certainties of the autocratic-state logic (security-pact), promoted by a president who is supported by powerful forces to secure such a reversion.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 2.1: The Interinstitutional System – Ideal Types

Categories/ Dimensions	Institutional orders						
	Family	Community	Religion	State	Market	Profession	Corporation
Anchor Rationality (Based on Source of legitimacy and basis of norms)	*Unconditional loyalty' and "other interest"*	*Reciprocity and group membership*	*Importance of faith and association with god*	*Democratic participation and citizenship in nation*	*Profit maximisation and self-interest*	*Professional reputation and self-expertise*	*Market position*
Root Metaphor	Family as firm	Common boundary	Temple as bank	State as distribution mechanism	Transaction	Profession as relational network	Corporation as hierarchy
Source of Legitimacy	Unconditional loyalty	Unity of will Belief in trust and reciprocity	Importance of faith & sacredness in economy and society	Democratic participation	Share price	Personal expertise	Market position of firm
Source of Authority	Patriarchal domination	Commitment to community values & ideology	Priesthood charisma	Bureaucratic domination	Shareholder activism	Professional association	Board of directors Top management
Source of Identity	Family reputation	Emotional connection Ego-satisfaction & reputation	Association with deities	Social and economic class	Faceless	Association with quality of craft Personal reputation	Bureaucratic roles
Basis of Norms	Membership in household	Group membership	Membership in congregation	Citizenship in nation	Self-interest	Membership in guild and association	Employment in firm
Basis of Attention	Status in household	Personal investment in group	Relation to supernatural	Status of interest group	Status in market	Status in profession	Status in hierarchy
Basis of Strategy	Increase family honour	Increase status and honour of members & practices	Increase religious symbolism of natural events	Increase community good	Increase efficiency profit	Increase personal reputation	Increase size and diversification of firm
Informal Control Mechanisms	Family politics	Visibility of actions	Worship of calling	Backroom politics	Industry analysts	Celebrity professionals	Organisation culture
Economic System	Family capitalism	Cooperative capitalism	Occidental capitalism	Welfare capitalism	Market capitalism	Personal capitalism	Managerial capitalism

(Adapted from Thornton et al., 2012, Ch 3, p. 73)

Appendix 3.1 – Key Issues in Sfax and Kairouan

Locality	Issue	Brief description
Sfax	(SI01) SIAPE	SIAPE is a phosphate processing plant, established in 1948 in Sfax and is owned by the Tunisian Chemical Group. Dominating the city in terms of being a major employer, but most importantly is accused of contributing to major pollution of the city's environment and a source of radio activity. SIAPE is by far the most dominant issue of contestation and campaigning to close it or transfer it outside the city.
Sfax	(SI02) Casino Beach	Casino Beach is located between Sfax Port and the major development site, Tabaroorah. Historically this was the only beach area open to the residents of Sfax and then closed due to contamination. Left with no beach to speak of, and the threat of permanent loss of Casino Beach due to expansion plans for the port, civil society organisations mobilised to reclaim Casino Beach by direct action. Success here opened the way for more ambitious actions to tackle more chronic issues, such as SIAPE.
Sfax	(SI03) Participatory Budgeting	PB is introduced to strengthen relationship between municipalities and citizens by involving residents in decision making and monitoring of expenditure. The process was led by various actors, but mainly الحركة الجمعياتيةCSO Whose aim is to build trust between citizens and state institutions, as dictatorship meant lack of trust. Initial success in getting PB adopted led to a 'rethink' from the Ministry and an attempt to dilute the participatory nature of the process. This resulted in considerable struggle between supporters of PB and the Ministry.
Sfax	(SI04) Pavement Reclaim Campaign Sayeb_Tortoir	A prevalent and complex problem in all Tunisian cities is the encroachment on, and occupation of, pavements by café owners and street traders making it impossible for pedestrians to walk safely. This resulted in pedestrians, including children, women, elderly and the disabled walking on the street among traffic. Sayeb_Tortoir is a movement to reclaim the pavements for pedestrians.
Sfax	(SI05) Gremda District	A district where the appointed post-revolution Special Council Leader, and the later elected Leader, are husband and wife. Two totally different experiences of boundary-spanning, where the main issues included bridging the

Locality	Issue	Brief description
		divide between ideologically opposing parties as well as developing a working relationship with UGTT.
Sfax	(SI06) Old Town Congestion	Sfax, like many Tunisian cities, consists of the old walled town, surrounded by the later sprawling suburbs. Traffic congestion caused by unplanned and unorganised taxi ranks causes choking points that needed resolving but was made impossible by the power of trade unions.
Sfax	(SI07) Neighbourhood Clean-ups	Among the most pressing post Revolution issues is the cleanliness and hygiene of public realm and neighbourhoods. Corruption, lack of resources, lack of awareness raising campaigns led to poor and polluted environment. Elected local authority councillors led campaigns to mobilise residents, CSOs, the private sector to support the public sector in regular neighbourhood clean-ups.
	(SI08) Agareb District (*Maneesh Masab)*	The area dominated by olive groves, but increasingly also by polluting factories as well as the City of Sfax rubbish dump, leading to the contamination of nature reserves, water table and suffocating smoke from factories. Interviewees share the same narrative: a wall of fear to speak out under the old regime, and the threat of loss of jobs if they were to challenge the polluting industries now.
Kairouan	(KI01) Street Cleaning Service	This was the most complex problem facing post-Revolution stakeholders in Kairouan city. During Ben Ali's era, street cleaning service was divided between in-house street cleaning services, with generally better terms and conditions, and areas maintained by private contractors with poor terms and conditions. Following the Revolution, employees of private contractors started campaigning to be absorbed by the Municipality. The problem was a lack of budget to cover such costs. This led to strikes and rubbish mountains over prolonged periods.
	(KI02) New Hospital Development	Kairouan, like many interior regions, lacked basic services, including adequately equipped hospitals. As part of post-Revolution hope, a new hospital was promised but is yet to be built. This promise led to campaigns and lobbying to secure the building of the new hospital.
	(KI03) Old Town Renovation	Kairouan Old Town, a UNESCO World Heritage site, is subject to a French-funded renovation project that was being badly delivered. Leading to campaign by CSOs for greater accountability.
	(KI04) Hajeb Eleyoon District	A district of Kairouan looking for the right Leader of Special Council, which was offered to a returning Tunisian

Locality	Issue	Brief description
		emigrant from Italy. A leadership that bridges many boundaries and dealing with many issues around public investment priorities.

Appendix 3.2 - List of participants interviewed

A total of 45 interviews in total were held with participants, of which 19 were pilot interviews, and 37 main interviews - those with codes beginning with SA and KA in the table below. Some of the pilot interviewees also took part in main interviews. There were also 6 interviews that were later discounted as not demonstrating sufficient boundary spanning role, yet were useful for the study in other ways, such as identifying other boundary spanners and issues.

In addition, two brainstorm sessions where held and proved useful in mapping the issues and participants.

Participant code, type of interview: Pilot (P) or main (M) and locality	Brief profile	Date of Interview
SA13 (P) and (M) Sfax	Newly elected Leader of Gremda Council – a district in Sfax. Prior to current role, she describes herself as an activist in trade unions, human rights and various CSOs. Main activity immediately before current role is that of a local leader in the Free Tunisian Women Society.	19th July 2018
(P) Sfax	Coordinator of Ghusn Ezzaytoon Network (Olive Branch) of CSOs. Works in IT and teacher in higher education. Introduction into issues and civil society landscape in Sfax.	20th July 2018
(P) Sfax	Newly elected leader of Sfax Municipal Council, and member of Ennahda Party. Identified key issues facing locality and as well as suggesting potential participants.	20th July 2018
SA14 (P) and (M) Sfax.	Imprisoned under Ben Ali's regime. Architect by profession, and was appointed Leader of the SMC of Gremda District by the local Council for the Protection of the Revolution, which then represented civil society. He served from August 2011 to April 2017. Describes the position as the toughest he has ever faced, due the many demands and interest and the need to reconcile them during an exceptional period.	20th July 2018
SA15 (P) and (M) Sfax	Professionally works as an archivist with the national petroleum company, but trained as a facilitator in the Participatory Budgeting process. He is also a member of the new elected Municipal Council of Gremda.	20th July 2018
(P) Sfax.	CEO of a CSO concerned with development of collaborative governance in the locality and training of young people in engagement methods. Introduced a number of participants.	20th July 2018

Participant code, type of interview: Pilot (P) or main (M) and locality	Brief profile	Date of Interview
SA16 (P) and (M) Sfax	University lecturer and CEO of two not-for-profit organisation; one concerned with renewable energy and one with supporting orphans. Campaigner for closure of SIAPE – environmental catastrophe in Sfax.	20th July 2018
SA17 (P) and (M) Sfax	Businessman and part of a family with extensive import-export business interest nationwide. Interested in encouraging businesses to re-engage with politics post bin Ali regime, and works to create such networks. Unique experience of coexistence under the old regime	21st July 2018
SA03 (P) and (M) Sfax	Lawyer, former political prisoner, and former Leader of Sfax SMC (2011-2018), and member of Ennahda. Key figure in building bridges between various political and civil society forces during time of extraordinary change. Suffered personal loss due to effect of role with Municipality on his legal practice.	21st July 2018
SA04 (P) and (M) Sfax	An electrical contractor by profession, member of Sfax Municipal Council elected as independent on Ennahda's list. He heads the Environmental Services Committee and leads on the Neighbourhood Clean-up strategy. Proving key in linking Ennahda with other more secular groups.	21st July 2018 And 28th October 2018
SA05 (P) and (M) Sfax	Chairs Sfax el Mezyena coalition working to improve the city's attractiveness and through the promotion of initiatives like Sfax Arab City of Culture. Admits to the fact that the Revolution has changed him from being a passive young man to one who want to improve the lives of its inhabitants. Works across many coalition especially EDCS.	21st July 2018
KA01 (P) and (M) Kairouan	Former Leader of Kairouan SMC, having been asked to form such council after two failures by others to do so in the immediate aftermath of the Revolution. Credited with stabilising the council and sorting out many of the complex issues the locality faced, especially the issue of Refuse Collectors contract.	22nd July 2018
KA02 (P) and (M) Kairouan	Head of UGTT in Kairouan, and the chief union negotiator on the issue of the Refuse Collectors contract.	23rd July 2018
KA03 (P) and (M)	A teacher and leading human rights activists and member of Tunisian Human Rights League. The lead campaigner	23rd July 2018 And

Participant code, type of interview: Pilot (P) or main (M) and locality	Brief profile	Date of Interview
Kairouan	organiser on the Kairouan's planned hospital project and many other social-justice issues.	25th December 2018
(P) Kairouan	Newly elected Leader of Kairouan Municipal Council and member of Ennahda Party.	23rd July 2018
KA04 (P) and (M) Kairouan	Teacher, wife a of a local MPA and long-term organiser of covert relief work during Ben Ali's regime, and continuing to do so.	23rd July 2018
KA10 (P) and (M) Kairouan	Leader of Hajeb el Eyoon's District SMC appointed as a broker between quarrelling political parties. Re-elected to the position following local government elections. Led on sorting out the issues of prioritising neighbourhood investment after conflict within the district.	24th July 2018
(P) Kairouan	Treasurer of Tunisian Women's Society and officer representing an European NGO in Kairouan.	24th July 2018
SA06 (M) Sfax	Lecturer, Deputy President of Sfax Engineers Association, as well five other CSOs and initiatives. Heavily involved in securing neutral assessment of the impact of SIAPE on Sfax's environment.	29th October 2018
SA06 (M) Sfax	A pharmacist by profession, member of the SMC. Led on a critical issue of traffic congestion, private taxi ranks chaos near the Old City wall, who are led by intransigent UGTT. As a woman entering politics for the first time, she undertook considerable boundary spanning to sort out very complex issues.	29th October 2018
SA07 (M) Sfax	University lecturer by profession and lead organiser in the Sayeb_Tortoir initiative. The aim is to reclaim the pavements from café owners and street vendors for the benefit of the pedestrians leading to a nation-wide campaign and international collaboration.	29th October 2018
SA02 (M) Sfax	One of the key movers in Sfax and lead member of BK, CEDS and other initiatives. Played a key role in key events associated with SIAPE.	29th October 2018

Participant code, type of interview: Pilot (P) or main (M) and locality	Brief profile	Date of Interview
N/A	Member of the People's Assembly for Sfax (Ennahda Party). Interview had to be cut short die the MPA's circumstance.	30th October 2018
SA20 (M) Sfax	National organiser for Action Associative promoting Participatory Budgeting and one of two key actors who successfully implemented PB in Sfax and continues to liaise with national ministries in the face of strong push back.	30th October 2018
SA08 (M) Sfax	A journalist, veteran environmental campaigner and lead member of BK and CEDS, and previously with SPNE. Lead communicator on behalf of the CEDS coalition.	1st November 2018
SA22 (M) Sfax	Lecturer and independent member of Agareb district council. Active in relief of poverty type CSOs and the campaign to combat air pollution in the district and what she described as an "environmental catastrophe".	1st November 2018
SA01 (M) Sfax	Director of Finance for Sfax Municipal Council and lead officer working with SA20 and CSOs in the city on design and implementation of PB.	1st November 2018
SA23 (M) Sfax	Young Interior Décor professional and lead coordinator for Maneesh Masab campaign to combat air and environmental pollution in Agareb.	1st November 2018
SA24 (M) Sfax	Director of Operations of Tabaroorah, Sfax's largest development project – previous location of Sfax's second phosphate processing plant. Adjoining Casino Beach. Working across six sectors, including Government Ministries, Municipality, UGTT, CSOs and private sector.	1st November 2018
SA25 (M)	Policy Advisor to the President of Sfax regional UGTT. While the interview proved valuable and a gateway to understand the UGTT, the interviewee was not directly involved in any of the issues.	2nd November 2018
(M) Sfax	Deputy Director of ANPE, and lead liaison on SIAPE, Agareb. ANPE finds itself in an unenviable position of having monitor and enforce environmental standards in the midst of major conflicts, often between various governmental, CSO, UGTT and private sector interests.	2nd November 2018

Participant code, type of interview: Pilot (P) or main (M) and locality	Brief profile	Date of Interview
SA10 (M) Sfax	Following 16 years of imprisonment under Ben Ali's regime, currently a businessman by profession and importantly President of Ennahda in Sfax. Major power broker due to the fact that Sfax is one of the most important regions for Ennahda, as it leads the Municipality and holds majority of the regions seats in the National Assembly.	2nd November 2018
SA21 (M) Sfax	An agricultural engineer, olive groves owner in Agareb and President of the Farming and Fisheries Union in Sfax. Involved in all major environmental issues including Maneesh Masab, SIAPE and others.	2nd November 2018
SA11 (M) Sfax	Member of the Peoples' Assembly for Sfax and member of the Workers Party (Communist). Has been through numerous periods of imprisonment, trade union activism and currently heavily involved in the issue of SIAPE.	3rd November 2018
KA06 (M) Kairouan	As member of Kairouan's SMC he was working closely with KA01 to resolve the issues of the Refuse Collectors' contract, being the main liaison with UGTT. Later he became and elected member of the Municipality.	25th December 2018
KA03 (M) Kairouan	A teacher and leading human rights activists and member of Tunisian Human Rights League. The lead campaigner and organiser on the Kairouan planned hospital project and many other social-justice issues.	25th December 2018
KA05 (P) and (M) Kairouan	Businessman and founder member of Kairouan Culture and Development CSO. Member of the local chamber of commerce, and lead anti-corruption campaigner focused on the Kairouan Old Town renovation contract.	23rd July 2018 and 25th December 2018
KA07 (M) Kairouan	Lawyer by profession, Member of the CNA than Peoples Assembly for Kairouan. Member of Ennahda. Played key role in reconciling position of UGTT, Municipality and Government on the Refuse Collectors' contracts.	26th December 2018
KA08 (M) Kairouan	One of the leading heritage experts nationally and former head of Kairouan the Society for the Protection of the Old City, but see by many as a figure from the old regime. However, he was invited back to help with advice regarding the Old Town renovation contract.	26th December 2018
SA18 (M)	Cosmetic Surgeon and renowned head of the Doctors' Syndicate in Sfax, founder of BK, and main mover to set up	27th December 2018

Participant code, type of interview: Pilot (P) or main (M) and locality	Brief profile	Date of Interview
Sfax	Sfax SMC. One of the key figures in the region and main force behind the creation of CEDS.	
KA09 (M) Kairouan	One of the post revolution Governors of Kairouan. Agricultural Engineer by profession. Dealt with the early days of UGTT strike regarding the Refuse Collectors' contracts and the issue of the new hospital.	28th December 2018
SA19 	UGTT works organiser. The interview was discounted as the interviewee was not directly involved in any of the issues. The interview however, proved valuable to furthering the researchers understanding of UGTT.	24th April 2021
SA12 (M) Sfax	UGTT lead negotiator on the issue of SIAPE and led the liaison with CEDS, Governorate and Municipality.	3rd May 2021

Appendix 4.1- Performance of Tunisian Political Parties in the 2011, 2014 and 2019 General Elections.

Parties	October 2011 NCA		2014 Peoples Assembly		2019 Peoples Assembly		Ideological affiliation
	% of vote	Seats	% of vote	Seats	% of vote	Seats	
Ennahda Party*	37.04	89	27.79	69	19.63	52	Islamist
Congress for the Republic (CPR)	8.71	29	2.05	4			Centre left
Popular Petition	6.74	26	None	None	None	None	Nationalist
Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties (Ettakatol)	7.03	20	None	None	None	None	Centre left
Progressive Democratic Party (PDP)	3.94	16	None	None	None	None	Liberal
The Initiative	3.19	5	None	None	None	None	Liberal
Democratic Modernist Pole (DMP)	2.79	5	None	None	None	None	Centre left
Afek Tounes	1.89	4	3.02	8	1.54	2	Liberal
Tunisian Workers Communist Party (PCOT)	1.57	3	None	None	None	None	communist
People Movement	075	2	1.34	3	4.53	15	Left
Movement of Socialist Democrats	056	2	None	None	None	None	Centre left
Free Patriotic Union	1.26	1	4.13	16			Liberal
Nida Tounes			37.56	86	1.51	3	Liberal
Popular Front			3.64	15	1.13	1	Communist left
Democratic Current			1.95	3	6.42	22	Nationalist

Parties	October 2011 NCA		2014 Peoples Assembly		2019 Peoples Assembly		Ideological affiliation
	% of vote	Seats	% of vote	Seats	% of vote	Seats	
National Destourian Initiative	None	None	1.34	3	None	None	Liberal
Heart of Tunisia	None	None	None	None	14.55	38	Liberal
Free Destourian Party	None	None	None	None	6.63	17	Liberal
Dignity Coalition*	None	None	None	None	5.94	21	Islamist
Tahya Tounes	None	None	None	None	4.08	14	Liberal
Republican Peoples Union	None	None	None	None	2.10	3	Liberal
Aich Tounsi	None	None	None	None	1.62	1	Liberal
Tunisian Alternative	None	None	None	None	1.61	3	Liberal
Machrouu Tounes	None	None	None	None	1.43	4	Liberal
Democratic and Social Union	None	None	None	None	1.04	1	Liberal
Errahma*	None	None	None	None	0.98	4	Islamist
Current of Love					0.62	1	Liberal
Others		15		10		15	
TOTAL		**217**		**217**		**217**	
2019 Assembly	**Islamist = 35.5%**		**Liberal = 40.1%**		**Left = 17.5%**		**Others = 6.9%**

Source: Şebnem Yardımcı-Geyikçi & Özlem Tür (2018); Al-Jazeerah.com, (2011) and Author

Appendix 4.2: 2018 Municipal Election Results in Sfax and Kairouan

Parties	2019 Municipal Elections		Ideological affiliation
	Kairouan	Sfax	
Ennahda Party	15	14	Islamist
Nida Tounes	7	7	Liberal
Popular Front	2	2	Communist left
Democratic Current	3	8	Nationalist
Free Destourian Party	0	3	Liberal
Civic Union	3	2	Liberal
Others	6	6	
TOTAL	**36**	**42**	

% Share of the vote by broader tendencies

2018 Councils	Islamist	Left	Liberal	Other
Sfax	**33.3%**	**23.8%**	**28.6%**	**14.2%**
Kairouan	**41.7%**	**13.9%**	**27.8**	**16.7%**

(Source: Independent High Authority for Elections,

http://www.isie.tn/elections/elections-municipales-2018/resultats/resultats-finals/)

Appendix 5.1 - Vocabulary analysis of the transcript of eight key boundary spanners to indicate prevalence of religious terminology.

(KA07)	(SA01)	(SA18)	(SA04)	(SA10)	(SA07)	(SA02)	(SA08)
Religious	**Secular**	**Secular**	**Religious**	**Religious**	**Secular**	**Secular**	**Secular**
Assembly x 4	AE x 1	Achievement x2	Authority x 1	Challenges x 2	Action x2	(old) regime x2	Action x5
Freedom x3	Ambassador x 1	Advocacy x3	Challenge x 3	Civil society x 6	Arab Capital of Culture x1	Active x6	Activist x2
Ennahdah x 10	Civil society x 5	Agree x4	Civil Society – 6	Coalition x 4	Bullying x2	Affiliation x3	Activities x5
Active x 2	Communicat e x 2	Arrange x2	Cleanliness – 15	Collective x 2	Campaign x23	Articulate x1	Afflicted x3
Dialogue x 4	Consultation x1	BK x11	Communicate x 3	Constitution x 1	Change x2	Aspire x2	Arab Capital City of Culture x1
Prison x 3	Cooperative x1	Campaign x4	Complex – 1	CSO x 1	Corruption x3	Authority x2	Authority x2
Struggle x 1	Corruption x 2	Civil society x9	CSOs – 3	Deal x 5	CSO x2	Battle x3	Beach x10
Profession x 3	Council x 2	Concern x2	Decision x 1	Democratic x 10	Decision x5	BK x8	Beautiful life x1
Lawyer x 4	CSO x8	Confrontation x4	Democracy – 1	Develop(ment) x 11	Demand x1	Campaign x5	BK x1
Rights x 4		Consensus x1	Development – 3	Dictatorship x 2	Disagreemen t x1	Casino x8	Campaign x5
Constitution x 10		Council x5	Ennahdah x 3		Facebook x3	Challenge x4	Casino Beach x5
Consensus x 4		Decision x4	Environment – 3		Government x 2	Change x5	
Election x3		Demonstratio n x2				Chemical Group x1	
Problem x 4						Conflict x2	
						Confront x1	
						Coordinator x3	

(KA07) Religious	(SA01) Secular	(SA18) Secular	(SA04) Religious	(SA10) Religious	(SA07) Secular	(SA02) Secular	(SA08) Secular
Solution x 17	Democratic x	Development	Hafidh Elhintati	Discrimination	Governor x3	Corruption x2	Chemical
Democratic x	2	x15	x 2	x 4	International	Create x2	Group x1
2	Dialogue x1	Dialogue x4	Hasim Kamoun	Elected x 9	x2	CSO x4	Civil society x5
Conflict x 1	Diversity x 1	Discuss x2	x 2	Ennhadah x 12	Law x11	Decide x4	Communicate
Suffer x 1	Elect x 5	Doctors	Ideological x 2	Environment x	Leader x2	Decision x4	daily x1
Revolution x 3	Engage x3	Syndicate x3	Incentive x 2	5	Lobby x2	Demonstration x7	Conflict x1
Compromise x	Ennahdah x 2	Election x4	Independent x	Government x	Media x3	Development x17	CSO x3
1	Facilitator x 2	Ennahdah x1	2	7	Meeting x3	Disagreement x1	Deal of give-
Aspiration x 1	Ideology x 2	Establish x2	Investor – 3	Ideology x 9	Minister x3	Discuss x4	and-take x1
Accommodat	Intransigence	Foundational	Minister x 1	Industrial x 9	Municipal x7	Ennahdah x2	Decide x5
e x 1	x1	Assembly x 2	Mobilise x 1	Left x 4	Objective x1	Environment x1	Decision x4
Regular x 1	Legitimacy x	Government x	Municipal – 3	Lobby x 3	Occupy x3	Facilitate x1	Destroyed x1
Go-between x	2	7	Neighbourhoo	Mobilising x 2	Opportunity	Feel x4	Develop(ment)
1	Messages x2	Initiative x2	d x 8	Municipality x	x1	Fought x1	x9
Negotiation x	Minister x1	Involved x4	Politician – 2	4	Pavement	Government x5	Environment
1	Mokhtar Al-	Law x2	President x 1	Partner x 3	x12	Ideas x6	x12
Deal x 5	Hammami x 3	Meeting x11	Pressure x 1		Police x 11	Identify x4	Facebook x1
							Friendship x2

(KA07) Religious	(SA01) Secular	(SA18) Secular	(SA04) Religious	(SA10) Religious	(SA07) Secular	(SA02) Secular	(SA08) Secular
Meeting x 8	Participation	Motivated x2	Priority – 1	Political	Political x2	Ideology x3	Government
Participate x 3	x 10	Municipal x9	Problem x 2	Parties x 19	President x1	Impact x2	x5
Corrupt x 2	Party x 3	National x2	Relationship x	Priority x 6	Pressure x2	Initiative x3	Indicates x3
Government x	PB x 15	Phosphate x2	2	Prison x 2	Problem x6	Investment x2	Influence x2
12	PIB x 2	Political x5	Resident - 2	Problem x 5	Radio x3	Issue(s) x 9	Initiative x4
	Represent x 5	Pollution x2	Solution x 1	Religious x 2	Rally x2	Join x2	Interests x3
	Respect x1	Position x3	Stakeholder x 1	Revolution x	Relationship	Leadership x4	International
	Trust x2	Post-cards x4	State – 2	12	x1	Lobby x3	Day for
		President x3	TB x 4	SIAP x 14	Revolution x	Media x3	Human Rights
		Project x2	UCATT x 1	Stakeholder x	3	Meet x4	x1
		Reclaim x2		1	Right x1	Movement x3	International
		Relationship		State x 11	State x6	Occupy x3	x3
		x5		TB x 2	Strike x1	Organise x6	Journalist x5
		Revolution x 4		Trade union x	Student x 4	Participate x4	Leadership x3
		Role x4		2	Success x3	Phosphate x3	Lions Club Int
		Security x2		UCATT x 10	Suggest x3	Political party x6	x3
		SIAP x10			Support x4	Political will x2	Local x4

(KA07) Religious	(SA01) Secular	(SA18) Secular	(SA04) Religious	(SA10) Religious	(SA07) Secular	(SA02) Secular	(SA08) Secular
		SNE x4			TB x1	Political x10	March x7
		Social media x3			Team x1	Polluting x2	Mediterranea n Games 2021 x1
		Society for the Protection of the Environment and the Development of Fertilisers x1			Threat x3	President/presidentia l x5	Meet regularly x1
		Strategic x3			Tunisian Society for Interactive Monitoring x 1	Problem x4	Meeting x4
		Success x2			Weapon x1	Project x10	Negotiate x3
		TB x7			World Heritage City x1	Proposals x2	Organise(d) x2
		Technopole x2				Quality of life x2	Parliament x4
		Union x3				Residents x3	Participate x3
						Revolution x1	Participate x4
						Sit-in x5	Party(ies) x12
						Stakeholders	PNE x1
						Struggle x2	Pollutions x10
						Success x8	Post cards x1
						Symbol x3	Power x2
						Tabaroorah x2	
						TB x5	

(KA07) Religious	(SA01) Secular	(SA18) Secular	(SA04) Religious	(SA10) Religious	(SA07) Secular	(SA02) Secular	(SA08) Secular
						Think x3	President x4
						Tunisian Human Rights Society	Problem x1
						Union x5	Project x2
						Vision x4	Quality of life x1
						Youth Economic Chamber	Radio x2
							Reason x4
							Reclaim x2
							Religious x2
							Resources x4
							Revolution x1
							Rights x5
							SEN x5
							SIAP x11
							Sit-in x1

(KA07) Religious	(SA01) Secular	(SA18) Secular	(SA04) Religious	(SA10) Religious	(SA07) Secular	(SA02) Secular	(SA08) Secular
							Special Municipal Council x2 Strength x3 Struggle x2 Tabaroorah x1 TB x12 Trust x2 Tunisian Human Rights Society x2 Turning point x1 Understanding x3 UNDP x1 Union x9

(SA08) Secular	University of Sfax x1 Vision x2
(SA02) Secular	
(SA07) Secular	
(SA10) Religious	
(SA04) Religious	
(SA18) Secular	
(SA01) Secular	
(KA07) Religious	

Appendix 7.1 Evidence of 'sense-making, 'sense-giving' and shift in vocabulary in Sfax and Kairouan

Kairouan		
Circumstances – sense-making	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
Strikes and deteriorating environment. (KA01) Concern of Government about escalation in social demands. (KA07) Ministers could not treat Kairouan as a special case. They had 264 municipalities facing the same circumstances. (KA01)	Increase in revenue to meet increase in payroll cost of municipality. Engagement with stakeholders and getting UGTT to appreciate the situation and agree to phased solution. (KA07, KA06)	Fairness, Dialogue, Understanding, Negotiation, Agreement.
Deprivation in some neighbourhoods and lack of public services, leading to unlawful practices and behaviour – such as growing farm animals in urban areas. (KA01)	Programme of expansion of public services, followed by awareness raising campaigns then law enforcement.	Accountability, Responsibility, Engagement, Sympathy.
Very low level of payment of fees and taxes by residents – lack of trust	Engagement of CSOs and residents in development of solution to increase revenue through phased payment and improvement of services	Engagement and inclusion
Deterioration of historic Old Town and threat of reduction in tourism leading to loss of economic opportunities. (KA08, KA05).	Recognition that 'Kairouan's future is it's past', and lobbying, through media and other channels, for better delivery of renovation projects. Supporting property owners through grants to better maintain their properties. (KA08, KA05).	Lobbying, involvement, access to information, support.

Kairouan		
Circumstances – sense-making	**Situation – sense-giving**	**Messages/ Vocabulary**
Pressure to unionise workplace in private sector. (KA09)	Failed mediation. Foreign investor ultimatum to close factory down with loss of jobs if unionised. Workers backdown. (KA09)	Unbalanced power. Dictation of terms.
Lack of water supply in rural areas leading to roadblocks and detention of public sector workers by angry residents. (KA09)	Visit by Governor and dialogue rather than use security forces, as would have happened before the Revolution. (KA09)	Understanding and dialogue.

Sfax		
Circumstances - sensemaking	**Situation – sense-giving**	**Messages/ Vocabulary**
History of Sfax of old is one where life was good. Sfax is suffering recently *due to deliberate historical neglect and marginalisation with large percentage of Sfaxian elites leaving Sfax*. (SA02, SA18, SA11, SA08, SA10)	The main objective of BK is the creation of lobbying in Sfax from the CSOs, to challenge authority in a very constructive way, to *put forward a vision and ideas* for projects. We began to work on projects, spending many hours. We started to audit activities in the region, and identify initiatives developed by specialist, until we reached a stage where we have a vision for the development of Sfax: we decided to *focus on the environment above all else*. (SA02, SA08, SA11) Just before the municipal elections, a group of CSOs published a charter to be adopted by all lists taking part in the elections. They all signed it. This gives	Lobby, vision, challenge, CSOs, initiatives, the environment.

Sfax		
Circumstances - sensemaking	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
	you an indication on the authority of civil society in the City. We can persuade and influence. (SA08)	
During the Revolution we were satisfied that conditions were conducive for the region to develop its own vision and to realise it. (SA02)	At the dawn of the Revolution, we got together with various friends/ professionals (about 50) from various backgrounds to discuss our role post-revolution. It was decided to establish Beit el-Khibrah (BK), as a think-tank. To be engaged in all aspects of development. (SA18)	Ownership, empowerment, hope.
The region's new Members of Parliament, while known to be sympathetic to Sfax (as in the case of SIAPE), however, when it comes to voting in Parliament they follow party lines, which can cause the opposite. (SA11, SA02) The central ministries are still dominated by the two historically dominate regions – the capital and one other (referring to Sousse – home region of Ben Ali). (SA11) It is clear that UGTT is the strongest party in the Tunisian state. Stronger than the Government. It is able to	It is about the nature of UGTT – It has to choose between being a trade union movement or a political party. (SA02) For us, SIAPE is symbolic. Its closure means return to public will. Once the citizen feels that his voice is heard, we can win. (SA02) In the absence of municipality and MPs that defend the rights of the region, CEDS became a voice for the region, with relationship with high levels of government, and other actors is attempting to put forward a vision for development of Sfax. "We are being invited around the same table as MPs, public and private authorities - a big achievement" (SA18).	Clarity of roles, inclusion, resistance. Solution, voice of citizens. Representation, access to authority, recognition.

Sfax		
Circumstances - sensemaking	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
dictate on the Government the decisions it wants (SA05)		
With the fragmentation of the political parties, only the State and UGTT remain. (SA12) We are not in a collaborative state, we are in an adversarial one. (SA12). The people that are in this, so called civil society are racist, they don't live around the factory. (SA12) The problem that CEDS has is that they raised the expectation of residents through their (unrealistic) promises to shut SIAPE. (SA12). "Authority in the country comprises the Government and Union (UGTT), where the latter has always had a political role and wanted to monopolise it" (SA08).	The objective of UGTT is the protection of SIAPE, removing pollutants, maintaining it as an important contributor to the national economy. (SA12). UGTT was against closure of SIAPE or relocation away from the city. (SA02). I was attacked in front of my house. I asked him what he wants, but he didn't speak. So, he attacked me. But did not take away anything from me. The Police said, Dr please look after yourself. These people are after you personally. (SA18)	Monopoly of representation, exclusion, continuity of practice, 'we know best', dictation of terms. Use of violence.
The municipality was without leadership, following dissolution of pre-Revolution Councils dominated by Ben Ali's RCD party. (SA18)	Before local municipal and national elections, when special councils were being set up to run the municipalities, BK played a massive role, we were able to appoint a 24-member council, which lasted for 18 months. (SA18, SA03)	Democratic participation, Direct democracy, CSO leadership

Sfax		
Circumstances - sensemaking	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
	Sfax is also known for its strong civil society culture – arising from the post revolution. This has helped to give life to the fact that the administration is no longer governing on its own (no monopoly?). (SA01) The democratic process which leads to elected representation is complemented with democratic participation (through Participatory Budgeting). As well as electing their representatives, why not also raise their concerns and opinion through direct means. These are complementary processes. (SA01)	Participatory budgeting.
"Who are you?" Lack of recognition from UGTT of role of new CSOs, such as CEDS. (SA02). Sfax Governor was himself the former head of UGTT in Jendouba Region. (SA02) We found that we are up against corruption that is not amenable to dialogue. (SA18) Previous functionaries and Union ranks have set up their own private enterprises and became suppliers to SIAPE. (SA11)	First, we tried dialogue: we asked, 'what is the problem?' We held meetings with the union reps from SIAPE. We asked them 'what do you want?' They said, 'you cannot close SIAPE or take it outside Sfax.' (SA08) We sat with the leadership of UGTT and unions, we came to the conclusion that the issue is one of interests – more precisely we should use the correct terminology, it is an issue of corruption. (SA02) We looked at 20 tenders for contracts issues by SIAPE for work to	Dialogue, Negotiation, Public campaign, Lobbying, Public opinion, Peaceful action. Compromise – give-and-take.

Sfax		
Circumstances - sensemaking	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
	refurb/repair parts of the work. We then looked further; 16 of these were limited to 4 companies, of which 2 were companies on paper only! The two actual ones, one of which was owned by a former director of SIAPE, and the other was co-owned by a current member of UGTT Central Committee. So, when it gets to this level of conflict of interest, discussion stops. We gave these to the region's MPs to take to the relevant ministers to ask for a suspension of such investment. (SA02)

Then we started a big campaign: *'Sfax moves to transfer SIAPE – Sfax advances,"* on post-cards.
We printed 25,000 post cards, where people read the message and signed it with their name and signature. The post cards were endorsed by 10 civil society organisations. (SA02, SA08).

Then we organised a demonstration, where up to 8,000 people took part under the single slogan of, "Yezzi – close SIAPE" (enough). (SA08)

We approached the Governor to make a decision to implement the Government decision to close SIAPE. When this did not happen, we peacefully organised the sit-in. We collected 45,000 signatures during the sit-in, in favour of closing SIAPE. (SA02) | |

Sfax		
Circumstances - sensemaking	Situation – sense-giving	Messages/ Vocabulary
	The best outcome is for the Government to reach a deal of give-and-take with the Union: they agree to close SIAPE and allow the Union concession somewhere else. But this can only take place when the political situation in the country becomes a bit more certain and predictable – not yet. (SA08)	

Appendix 7.2: Mobilisation analysis

Kairouan		
The Cause	Mobilisation	Effect
KA01	I was also fortunate to have a network of relationships, due to my role in local government and within the Ministry, that were valuable in helping me move things forward. The unanimous agreement among the local MPs, despite belonging to four different parties, to support me and the new council was also of great help. The main parties were the union, members of the Municipal Council, the Government, Ministry of Interior, Prime Minister's Office, and of course the local MPs who played a role in engaging with relevant Government Ministries. Bearing in mind that CSOs were still in their infancy, despite being numerous, they were only established after the revolution. I had to get the CSOs to become part of the development of the vision for the city and its delivery.	As a result of solving this problem, the amount of refuse collected in 2013 was 150% that of 2012 (29,000 ton to 45,000 ton). We were able to cover new areas, even. This opened a new chapter in the relationship between the Municipality and residents, and the ability to raise the fees and taxes due. Hope was restored.
KA05	We then raised the issue with the press and started to apply pressure, which led to others joining our campaign. A number of people from within the Old Town who were known to each other and connected to people of note	The creation by the Governor of Kairouan of a regular forum to receive reports and monitor progress of the renovation project. The forum had a range of stakeholders including CSOs.
KA03	I had an experience in 2015, of setting up the Development Coalition for Kairouan, where 60 organisations signed up to be part of it, we organised 25 activity within a year, and we used to	Less effective pressure is brought to bear than in Sfax, as coalitions don't tend

Kairouan		
The Cause	Mobilisation	Effect
	collect funds for our activities. But later, internal conflict started, led by some who were politically affiliated.

Firstly, we have established many *associatives* [asscoaitions], the current one is volunteer-led and consists of CSOs, focused on health-related issues. Our main focus is the proposed University Hospital in Kairouan. We take part in consultations, and we attend whenever invited by local and regional authorities. This proposal is for a Saudi financed new hospital, with a grant of $85m, where there has been foot-dragging by central ministries in getting it built. | to last. The focus on relatively short-term public-sector improvement works. What it has done is occupied the space for mobilisation and voice – no signs of bridge building, it is demanding coalition. |
| KA06 | In that period, it was civil society that held us to account. We opened the doors for them to meet us and hold us to account. Before our term ended, for example, we invited all civil society representatives to meet us in the Municipal Hall and we accounted for our actions.
Yes, the media is critical, and they were very helpful. We used to always sit with them every week-10 days. Whenever a rumour is spread, we get to address it right away.
Bloggers on social media in the main. SabraFM radio was another important media. There are also key societal figures – such as Imams of mosques, who can use their platforms positively. | Mobilisation is characterised here as local government rallying support, rather than CSOs looking to hold government to account. |

Sfax		
The cause	Mobilisation	Effect
General mobilisation	At the dawn of the revolution, we got together with various friends/professionals (about 50) from various backgrounds to discuss our role post-revolution. Some said they want to get involved in political work, some said they want to be active in civil society, and others want to be involved in foundations. (SA18) Following the election of the NCA, we held a celebration event to welcome them (representatives for Sfax), we got closer to government departments. We agreed to work on projects that have consensus. () Sfax is also known for its strong civil society culture – arising from the post revolution. (22,000 societies in Tunisia). This experiment has helped to give life to the fact that the administration is no longer governing on its own (SA01).	Following the Revolution, there was a huge rise in CSOs who wanted to participate. We, in the Council, wanted to establish collaborative methods and strengthen participation. Sfax is uniquely seen as a city with a history of CSO action. So, CSO influence is strong and largely cooperative. All this has encouraged us to share and consult with CSOs on a number of projects. In fact, we experienced a unique process known as Participatory Budgeting. (SA03) This experiment has helped to give life to the fact that the administration is no longer governing on its own (SA01).
Coalition building	So, when we describe the CEDS, it is about 40 societies of varying professional and SCO interests. This caused the work to be daily. (SA08) We achieved the highest form of action. we marched, we organised sit-ins, we met the	A critical mass of mobilisation and momentum, in the shape of CEDS. We secured trust, and we gave impetus to the initiative without

Sfax		
The cause	Mobilisation	Effect
	President, the president of the Parliament, ministers. We have done all possible peaceful means. What can we do now? What else can we do to secure our rights? (SA08) There are always campaigns and activities in the city that brings some of us together. So, the last time I met two of the core CEDS members was when my society led on a sarcastic campaign regarding the need to activates Sfax Airport. We, in Ennahda, have worked right from 2011 to create such a collective. We formed what was the *Ahrar Safax* [The Free/Revolutionaries of Sfax] This aimed at supporting the legitimate government – when it was threatened, and lobby for development of the region. It lasted until 2014 elections. Following that, the priorities of different groups changed, as some political parties faded and failed to make any gains. (SA10)	resources. It is well worth studying. Its strength come from action, when there is no action, it cools down. (SA08)
Specific Initiatives	**Sfax Port:** First, we undertake a study about the port. We contact all relevant stakeholders and listen to all their views, their hopes and what they aspire to achieve for the port. We collate all opinions, which allows us to formulate a vision for the region as a gateway, by sea, air and land. Once we draft such a vision, we go back to the stakeholders to share with them the draft. The refined draft then gets adopted by all.	This took us 3 years, but it was an inclusive process. So, the preferred option is no longer that of the civil society, but the relevant regional authority. Which gives it a better chance of being adopted

Sfax		
The cause	Mobilisation	Effect
		by the central authorities.
	Maneesh Masab: [Our campaign is led by] individuals and not a coalition of organisations. We came together being from the same district, we knew each other as friends, but we came together for the cause. We are five altogether, who are active. The rest are active in the Facebook Group	The lobbying and effective boundary spanning by SA23 led to the closure of the Sfax's main rubbish dump in Agareb, but the challenge of air pollution due to factories remains work-in-progress.
	SIAPE: We asked for the closure of SIAPE, the "Death Factory", and the implementation of the 2008 Presidential Order – supported by repeated Government decisions in 2011, 2009, 2012, 2016 and 2017. We met the relevant parties, we marched, we organised sit-ins, organised petitions and we lobbied the President, the President of the Parliament, and ministers. (SA11, SA05)	This has enabled the CEDS becoming able to tackle such projects that resonates with aspirations of the people of Sfax.
	Casino Beach: We organised a march that started from the Municipality building to the Casino Beaches. We decided to reclaim the beach. So as SCOs we occupied it, used some of our resources and pressured the Municipality to support us. This led to us being present in the area daily. (SA08)	Sayeb Trottoir is not a replacement of the state but a platform for pressure and lobbying for enforcing the law. we now have now applied to registered SCO (Feb 2018): The Tunisian Society for Interactive Monitoring (TSIM) – it has 11 members.
	Sayeb Trottoir: In 2013, 25 of us walked 300km from Sfax to Tunis – we found the pavements completely occupied by cars and cafes, etc. We	

Sfax		
The cause	Mobilisation	Effect
	had to walk on the road with the traffic. This was followed by a campaign where we used to walk the pavement deliberately and ask cafes to remove their chairs, remove the gas canisters used for cooking and heating. We used to demand our right to walk on the pavement. This has led to a rise in registered supporters from 2,000 to currently 65,000.	