

An enduring 'touristic miracle' in Tunisia? Coping with old challenges after the revolution

ROSITA DI PERI¹

ABSTRACT By the end of the 1960s Tunisia had developed a very aggressive tourism policy designed to encourage foreign private investment in the sector. In fact tourism became one of the flagships of Tunisian development, strongly contributing to re-invent the international reputation of Tunisia as an open, 'democratic and liberal' country. Even if the political scenario has changed after the 'Jasmine revolution', continuity seems to prevail in the tourism sector. This paper focuses on this continuity, examining two specific dimensions: the persistence of Tunisia's tourist model and the continuity in the representation of Tunisian tourism as the pillar of an everlasting process of change.

Keywords: Tunisia, Tourism, Arab uprisings, Development, Decision-making process

Introduction

Since the 1970s, the tourist industry has been one of the flagships of Tunisian developmental efforts. Crucial to overall economic growth strategy, it also served the purpose of strengthening Tunisia's reputation as an open country, attuned to the values of modernity. However, despite the resilience of the narrative of *grandeur*² Ben Ali deployed to celebrate economic progress linked to tourism, the sector is in crisis.³ Indeed, the decrease in tourism

¹ Department of Culture, Politics and Society, University of Turin. Email: rosita.diperi@unito.it

² Tsourapas advances the notion of 'primisme' to exemplify the narrative of grandeur Ben Ali deployed to picture Tunisia as the first country ('premier' in French) in the region to reach economic and developmental goals. Gerasimos Tsourapas, 'The Other Side of a Neoliberal Miracle: Economic Reform and Political De-Liberalization in Ben Ali's Tunisia,' *Mediterranean Politics* 18, 1 (2013): 23-41.

³ Isabelle Mandraud, 'On Tunisia's tourist coast, frustration lurks behind the tranquil vistas,' *The Guardian Weekly*, 24/6/2014 <http://goo.gl/eHpBLZ> (accessed 29/9/2014). See also the interview with Habib Bouslama,

revenues after regime change and political turmoil between 2010 and 2014⁴ has negative consequences on the national economy as a whole.⁵ Since 2011, Tunisia has been going through significant change, but a closer examination of the tourist industry suggests that dynamics of continuity prevail over change despite the sector's need for reform. This article examines such continuity by considering two *thawabit* (constant, in Arabic). First, the article focuses on the persistence of Tunisia's tourist model, a successful combination of 'Sun, Sand and Sea.' This is particularly interesting considering the fact that, over the years, the resistance of this sector to change has gone hand in hand with the resilience of political power. Second, this article elaborates on the continuity in the representation of Tunisian tourism as the pivot of a continuing process of change, which has been ideally going on since late 1980s. Such change, the article contends, is however a rhetorical instrument as the tourist industry has largely remained untouched over the years, although shrinking economic benefits for investors and persisting territorial problems suggest that new strategies should be implemented. These two dimensions are intertwined and reinforce each other. The persistence of the same touristic model suggests that policy-makers are unable or unwilling to come up with new strategies, despite their rhetorical commitment to reform. As a consequence, such continuity strengthens the model, which also is increasingly isolated from changes because it upholds abroad the idea of a stable and safe Tunisia, able to cope with political crises and adapt to economic reforms⁶ - another element of continuity with Ben Ali's era.

The all-inclusive concept gave the 'coup de grâce' to the Tunisian Hotel sector, Tourmag, 3/3/2014 (<http://goo.gl/A7H1iX>, accessed 21/07/2014).

⁴ 'Menaces sur la reprise du tourisme en Tunisie,' *Maghreb Emergent*, 19/7/2014 (<http://goo.gl/G8AUXm>, accessed 31/08/2014).

⁵ For a critical and exhaustive examination of the connection between political instability and tourism, see Christian Steiner, 'An overestimated relationship? Violent political unrest and tourism Foreign Direct Investments in the Middle East,' *International Journal of Tourism Research* 12, 6 (2010): 726-738.

⁶ The World Bank considers tourism a key sector in Tunisia's development and has suggested over the years a number of reforms (coastal zone management plans, cultural heritage preservation). World Bank, *Country assistance strategy*, 28/3/2000. Available on the World Bank archives: <http://goo.gl/G0DpQC> (accessed 13/08/2014).

The article concludes by observing that although the crisis of the touristic sector has been hidden over the years because the narrative of success had to prevail, political instability has highlighted the contradictions within the sector, stimulating a more open debate on development, democracy and economic growth.

Methodology

The case of Tunisian tourism is relevant to this special issue for three reasons. First is the deep penetration of interests in the tourist sector within the Tunisian ruling elite. Second, the Tunisian case shows how the construction of a fragmented system of governance, characterised by autonomous powerful institutions, created in different periods and with few institutional linkages, has allowed them, at least since the late 1980s, to act for the maximization of interests for the categories that they represented and not for the benefit of the sector as a whole. Third is the negative impact that the chaotic development of the sector has had not only on the territory, but in addressing authoritarianism and a particular model of development.

This article relies on fieldwork and semi-structured interviews carried out in Tunisia between 2013 and 2014. In total 32 in-depth interviews have been conducted, and some of them have been repeated. The research has been realised in two phases. First, in order to reconstruct the historical memory of the tourist sector (how it has developed over the years, to what mechanisms it has responded, which logics prevailed...), former operators, managers and ministries of tourism have been interviewed. During the second phase, the attention was focused on the post-revolutionary period with the goal of grasping the ongoing dynamics within the industry. Therefore former civil servants, tourist operators such as hotel managers, travel agents, trainers, and the managers of the current governing bodies of the sector have been interviewed. In addition, participant observation was carried out during specific

initiatives⁷ to track down the evolving top-down relationship between national bodies and local actors.

Tourism and politics in Tunisia

Tourism is considered a key sector in the world economy. According to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), in the last ten years, the turnover connected to international tourism has increased exponentially and reached, in 2012, \$1,075 billion (against \$1,042 billion in 2011 and \$575 billion in 2000). Similarly, the number of people travelling for tourism has constantly increased exceeding 1 billion in 2012, with 1,035 million tourists crossing borders against 995 million in 2011.⁸ Tourism represents 5 per cent of global GNP and significantly contributes to the global labour market as almost 7 per cent of jobs worldwide are tourism-related.⁹ However, such an increase in tourism-related activities creates problems in terms of territorial management, exploitation of natural resources and poor employment conditions for the local labour force. These critical reflections resonate in the case of developing countries in particular. Documents released by international organisations dealing with tourism, such as the UNWTO and the World Bank, show that tourism-related policies have become more and more normative and prescriptive, *de facto* one of the instruments advancing the neo-liberal economic order.¹⁰

Because of its economic relevance, tourism is a highly sensitive political issue too. Medium and long-term effects of tourism-related policies strongly impact local and national development, affecting the elites as well as ordinary citizens. Thus control over the sector, the policies elaborated for its development and the social and cultural dynamics it originates

⁷ The days of the 'Café du Patrimoine,' Heritage Day celebrations in Kef and other initiatives in the Kef region.

⁸ UNWTO, Tourism Highlights. 2013 Edition (<http://goo.gl/FQ0sYg>, accessed 24/03/2014).

⁹ Estimated from available data. Though tourism is often referred to as the largest sector in the global economy, its exact size is impossible to determine as it has no clear delimitation.

¹⁰ Donald Hawkins and Shaun Mann, 'The World Bank's Role in Tourism Development,' *Annals of Tourism Research* 34, 2 (2007): 348-363.

appeals to a number of state and non-state actors, which take part in complex negotiations related to the governance of tourism. However, despite its politically charged nature, tourism has appealed to scholars mainly for its economic and financial aspects. Consequently, the scholarship has traditionally neglected the political dimension of tourism and the role of the state in it.¹¹ Studies have linked tourism and development, focusing in particular on the role of multinational companies and Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in sustaining growth and stimulating development. Only few scholars and experts have paid attention to the link between tourism and the social, political and economic conditions of the countries under consideration.¹² In other words, while much attention has been paid to tourism as an engine of development, more recent studies question the very notion of development, also touching upon the role tourism plays in it. The questions these studies ask relate to the meaning and the politics of development, its models and objectives, and the way tourism merges with political and economic elites' interests.¹³ Following on from this, scholars have analysed a number of connections existing between tourism and political phenomena.

Consequently, different approaches emerged. Some scholars rely on the positivist view that tourism is a sort of 'magic formula' to bring about and promote virtuous processes of democratisation and development. Elaborating on modernisation theory, this view considers that tourism is not only a tool to promote development, but also an instrument to accelerate economic and political processes stimulating transitions to democracy.¹⁴ Other scholars

¹¹ As also Waleed Hazbun pointed out: 'Globalisation, Reterritorialisation and the Political Economy of Tourism development in the Middle East,' *Geopolitics* 9, 2 (2004): 310-341.

¹² See: Raoul Bianchi, 'Towards a New Political Economy of Global Tourism', in Richard Sharpley and David Telfer (eds.), *Tourism and Development. Concepts and Issues* (Clevedon: Channel View): 271; Colin Hall, *Tourism and Politics: Power, Policy and Place* (London: Chichester, 1994) and Thomas Richter and Christian Steiner, 'Politics, Economics and Tourism Development in Egypt: insights into the sectorial transformations of a neo-patrimonial rentier state,' *Third World Quarterly* 29, 5 (2008): 939-959.

¹³ Frances Brown and Derek Hall, 'Tourism and Development in the Global South: the issues,' *Third World Quarterly* 29, 5 (2008): 839-849.

¹⁴ Telfer, 'The Evolution of Tourism and Development Theory,' in Sharpley and Telfer (eds.), *Tourism and Development*, cit., 35-79.

expose the problematic nature of such claims by elaborating on Goldworthy's¹⁵ critique of development theories and by highlighting that the theoretical link between tourism and development simply may not be consistent with the reality on the ground.¹⁶ Scholars of the Middle East have contributed to the debate by examining the connection between authoritarian resilience and tourism, noting that the transformation of the sector after privatisation and neo-liberal reforms during the 1990s has strengthened authoritarianism, with the ruler's circles benefitting from economic reforms. In the case of Egypt, Richter and Steiner highlighted how revenues originating from tourism were not shared with the wider public but distributed among the members of closed 'networks of privilege.'¹⁷ This finding also speaks to the scholarship examining the causes of the Arab Uprisings, as the outburst of popular discontent is strongly linked to the missing redistribution of wealth and the 'predatory' attitude of elites in the region.¹⁸

The development of the tourist sector in Tunisia has followed a similar trajectory. In particular, during the Ben Ali's era, the predatory attitude of the elites and the president's closest circles, exacerbated by liberalisation policies, was paradoxically accompanied by the strengthening of the regime domestically and internationally.¹⁹ Indeed, pre-2011 Tunisian regime deployed a representation of Tunisia as a successful country gradually moving towards democratisation. Tourism, represented as a 'developmental miracle,' became one of the pivots of such a representation,²⁰ as demonstrated, for example, by the high incidence of Tunisia tourism contribution on GDP from 1990 to 2013 compared to other larger countries in the

¹⁵ David Goldworthy, 'Thinking politically about development,' *Development and Change* 19, 3 (1988): 505–30.

¹⁶ Jennifer Briedenhann and Eugenia Wickens, 'Tourism routes as a tool for the economic development of rural areas. Vibrant hope or impossible dream?,' *Tourism Management* 25, 1 (2004): 71–79.

¹⁷ Richter and Steiner, 'Politics, Economics and Tourism Development in Egypt,' cit.

¹⁸ Gilbert Achcar, *The people want. A radical exploration of the Arab uprisings* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013); Angela Joya, 'The Egyptian revolution: crisis of neoliberalism and the potential for democratic politics,' *Review of African Political Economy* 129 (2011): 367–386.

¹⁹ Beatrice Hibou, 'Domination and control in Tunisia: economic levers for the exercise of authoritarian power,' *Review of African Political Economy* 108 (2006): 185–206.

²⁰ Hazbun, 'Images of Openness, Spaces of Control: The Politics of Tourism Development in Tunisia,' *The Arab Studies Journal* (2007/2008): 10–35. Karen Pfeifer, 'How Tunisia, Morocco, Jordan, and even Egypt Became IMF Success Stories in the 1990s,' *Middle East Report* 29, 1 (1999): 23–27.

Mediterranean Region such as Turkey and Egypt (Table 1). In addition, over time the sector has been the object of several legal initiatives (Table 2) that favoured FDIs and established new governance actors.²¹

TABLE 1 AND TABLE 2 HERE (pages 21 and following)

The dark side of this interventionism is the huge environmental and social costs incurred, as international organisations repeatedly underlined.²² This is exemplified in the uneven development of Tunisian regions, whereby the coastal areas in the North and East benefitted from the promotion of tourism to the detriment of Western areas – a trend that is still continuing, as emerges from Table 3 which summarises the investments in the regions of Tunisia between 2011 and 2012.

TABLE 3 HERE (pages 21 and following)

Furthermore, the growth of the tourist sector led to an overestimation of its potential, resulting in the continuous construction of new accommodation facilities (see Table 4) and in a situation of market saturation.²³ In turn this has led to an increase in the number of hotel owners borrowing money to survive, thus generating a debt crisis in the sector.²⁴ Along with the absence of political will to reform the sector, this explains the lack of resources available to

²¹ Two laws, in particular, were crucial for the gradual process of liberalisation of the sector. The decree 66-339 (approved 2/2/1966) and the law 69-35 (6/6/1969) were aimed to encourage the building of new hotels and had a relevant role in attracting private investments.

²² See, for example, World Bank, Country Assistance Strategy, 28/3/2000, cit. but also World Bank, Country Assistance Strategy Report, 13/8/2007 (<http://goo.gl/743x6R>, accessed 15/06/2014).

²³ Wafa Khelif, 'L'hôtellerie tunisienne: radioscopie d'un secteur en crise,' *L'Année du Maghreb* 1 (2006): 375-394.

²⁴ Frida Dahmani, 'Pourquoi le tourisme ne fait plus recette,' *Jeune Afrique*, 1/10/2010 (<http://goo.gl/zEMJjV>, accessed 30/9/2014) but also Khaled Boumiza, *Tourisme: Endetté et revendicatif*, WebManagerCenter, 21/09/2003 (<http://goo.gl/og0CSi>, accessed 31/08/2014).

diversify Tunisia's tourist model.²⁵

TABLE 4 HERE (pages 21 and following)

Data suggest that the tourist sector in Tunisia has historically been regarded as a pillar of development, with both the state and private actors investing in it. This led to the establishment of a well-equipped industry difficult to be transformed significantly and seemingly able to sustain the country even at turbulent times. Indeed, the overarching hypothesis of this article is that, despite broader changes in national politics with Ben Ali's fall, there is continuity in the model of tourism Tunisia presents. Such continuity is problematic today because of the relative crisis of the sector, caused by political turmoil and economic unsustainability.²⁶ The following section examines two *thawabit* in the tourist industry, contrasting the periods before and after the uprisings: the persistence of the touristic-developmental model and the persistence of tourism as the means to promote the image of a 'new' Tunisia both domestically and abroad. Despite contending that continuity has prevailed over change, the analysis also highlights that some change is taking place. Indeed, continuity is not a homogenous, granitic block and change has to be acknowledged even if it does not question the broader touristic model the Tunisian governments have been enforcing for decades, despite changes in the international tourism market.

***Thawabit* in the persistence of the touristic model**

Tunisia pioneered the industry of tourism in the Arab world.²⁷ Since independence, the tourist

²⁵ This is evident in the classification of beds available per type of tourism. For example in 2010, according to ONTT, 210,508 beds were available for 'seaside' tourism while 15,172 for 'city' tourism. See: ONTT, *Le tourisme en chiffres* (Tunis : ONTT, 2011).

²⁶ Ridha Lahmar, 'La confusion tourisme-hôtellerie persiste!!', *Réalités*, 17/7/2013 (<http://goo.gl/2uUGkZ>, accessed 31/08/2014).

²⁷ Interview with Lofti Belaif, tourist guide, Tunis, 26/04/2013.

industry was considered a priority and the Bourguiba regime established new institutions to strengthen and control the sector,²⁸ giving tourism a crucial role in national development plans.²⁹ Indeed, tourism not only generated revenues by bringing foreign currency into the country and stabilising macro-economic indicators,³⁰ but also realised Bourguiba's postcolonial vision of an 'open country,' more attuned to Western values than other post-colonial Arab republics. Tunisia's touristic model was built upon the so-called '3S' (Sea, Sun and Sand), whose typical representation is the *Tanit*, a seaside accommodation intended for European, middle class mass tourists.³¹

Between 1962 and 1972,³² successive development plans prioritised the development of the sector. Despite indicating the state as responsible for its take-off,³³ the tourist sector could avoid collectivization and benefitted from private investments due to its strategic role in the economy.³⁴ The result was the development of an industry characterised by mass tourism and huge infrastructural investments available for building accommodations; a model that could be labelled 'Fordist.'³⁵ The growth of the sector was impressive. Between 1962 and 1971, the number of beds increased by 372.5 per cent and in 1970, the sector contributed to the GDP with 31.6 million Tunisian Dinar (TD) in foreign receipts, thus covering 48,7 per cent of the national trade deficit.³⁶

²⁸ Ammar Aloui, 'Révolution et tourisme en Tunisie. Le secteur touristique en Tunisie avant et après le 'Printemps arabe', in Di Peri, Raffaella Giordana (eds.), *Revolution without revolutions? The challenges of tourism sector in Tunisia* (Bologna: I Libri di Emil, 2013): 103-168. Interview with Lotfi Rahmouni, Director of the Institut des Hautes Etudes touristiques de Sidi Dhrif, Sidi Dhrif, 26/04/2013; interview with Chantal Khadira, Manager of the Hotel Majestic, Tunis, 27/04/2013. Interview with Yihad Elloumi, economic consultant, Tunis, 19/03/2014.

²⁹ See: Secrétariat d'Etat au Plan et aux finances, *Perspectives décennales de développement 1962-1971* (Tunis: 1961).

³⁰ Jean Mohammed Chapoutot, 'Tourisme, Alternative à l'aménagement en Tunisie,' *Revue d'économie régionale et Urbaine* 4 (1990) : 511-522.

³¹ Maxime Weigert, *Le tourisme en Tunisie. Les défis à l'heure de la transition démocratique*, Les Notes de l'Ipemed, 12 (2012): 8.

³² The 3-year development plans here considered are: 1962-1964, 1965-1968 and 1969-1972.

³³ Aloui, *Le tourisme international en Tunisie: Développement, compétitivité, dans l'espace méditerranéen. Bilan et stratégie alternative* (Université Aix-Marseille III: Centre des Hautes études du Tourisme, 1986).

³⁴ Commission National Sectorielle du Tourisme et du Thermalisme (CNSTT), *L'Evolution du Tourisme en Tunisie, Retrospective (1961-1971)* (Tunis: CNSTT, 1972).

³⁵ Interview to a former manager in the tourism sector, Tunis, 21/04/2013.

³⁶ Robert Poirier, 'Tourism and Development in Tunisia,' *Annals of Tourism Research* 22, 1 (1995): 157-161.

During this phase, few traders' families were leading the sector, such as the Fourati, Khéchine, Allani and Miled from their home region of Kairouan (located inland from the Sousse-Monastir tourism area).³⁷ These families often became involved in the industry by managing state-owned hotels, and later developed the first private hotel chains of Tunisia³⁸ thanks to the quasi-monopoly on the industry they enjoyed.³⁹ However, private ownership did not change the broader model Tunisian tourism was built upon. In fact, the type of tourism the country appealed to, as well as the infrastructures available, concurred in strengthening the existing 'Fordist' model.

Even the enforcement of aggressive privatisation plans, the so-called *infitah*, during the 1970s did not question this model. The influx of Gulf and European capitals resulted in the creation of business partnerships with non-Tunisian partners, which integrated the country into the regional economic environment, weakening state control.⁴⁰ This process resulted in Tunisian tourism becoming dependent on international tour-operators and investors, to the point that the latter began to buy stakes in hotels and created joint consortia, such as the CTKD (Consortium Tuniso-Koweïtien de Développement), or specific credit programs of the African Bank for Development.⁴¹ The presence of private and international capital in the tourist industry however did not stimulate the restructuring of the sector, as it continued to expand by relying on the existing *modus operandi*.

³⁷ Mohamed Bergaoui, *Tourisme et voyages en Tunisie: Le temps des pionniers, 1956-1973* (Tunis: Mohamed Bergaoui, 2003). See also Abdelaziz Barrouhi, 'La grande famille du tourisme', *Jeune Afrique*, 30/03/2009 (<http://goo.gl/0KpLV3>, accessed 11/07/2014).

³⁸ Interview with Ahmed Smaoui, former Ministry of Tourism, Tunis 18/03/2014.

³⁹ Interview with Lotfi Rahmouni, 26/04/2013; Author's discussion with tourist guides during the meeting 'Journée des Associations du Patrimoine, du Tourisme & de l'Environnement', Dar Bach Hamba, Tunis, 27/04/2013.

⁴⁰ According to the Ministry of Planning, from 1962 to 1971, public investments in tourism fell from 88.9 per cent to 9 per cent while private investments grew from 11.1 per cent to 91 per cent. *Rétrospectives décennales 1962-1971*, Publication du Ministère du Plan (Tunis: 1972).

⁴¹ Interview with Abdellatif Taboubi, tourism professional, Tunis, 28/04/2013.

The liberalisation of the tourist industry was encouraged by Ben Ali after his ascent to power in 1987.⁴² It was presented as a means to insert Tunisia in the global market and to attract new foreign capitals and investments. After a period of crisis during the last years of Bourguiba's mandate, due to political instability and severe financial stabilisation plans, the tourist industry recovered during the first years of Ben Ali's rule. The expansion was due to the inclusion of Tunisia in the Structural Adjustment Plans and the full convertibility of the TD.⁴³ This positive development was also facilitated by the flourishing of private investments during the 1990s. Indeed, the 1992 investment code allowed new entrepreneurial actors, the so-called *promoteurs*, to emerge and later, between 1994 and 1996, a newer investment code promoted the *jeunes promoteurs* and further facilitated investment procedures.⁴⁴ This growth helped Ben Ali to promote Tunisia as a regional tourist destination. As one interviewee put it, 'during the 1990s, it seemed that tourism was the only preoccupation of the Prime Minister and his entourage.'⁴⁵ Another interviewee highlighted that, between 1986 and 1992, state investment plans and the 1992 code facilitated the influx of private capitals by nearly 300 million of dollars.⁴⁶ In the period corresponding to the Tenth Economic and Social Development Plan (2000-2006) the growth of investments in the tourist industry was around 5 per cent, amounting to, according to the ONTT, 1.9 billion of euros (Table 5).

TABLE 5 HERE (pages 21 and following)

⁴² See the VII (1987-1991) and VIII (1992-1996) plans of development. Ministère du Plan, *Le VIIème Plan et Ministère du Tourisme et de l'Artisanat, VIIIème Plan*.

⁴³ See Robert King, 'The political logic of economic reform in Tunisia,' in Azzedine Layachi (ed.), *Economic crisis and political change in the North Africa* (Westport: Praeger, 1998): 107-128.

⁴⁴ Interview with Gueddiche Romdhane, tourism consultant, Tunis, 24/04/2013 and 18/03/2014.

⁴⁵ Interview with Gueddiche Romdhane, 24/04/2013.

⁴⁶ Interview with Ahmed Smaoui, former Ministry of Tourism, Tunis 18/03/2014.

The seemingly never-ending growth of investments available for the construction of new facilities⁴⁷ (Table 4), the huge profits for domestic and international investors and the increase in jobs generated by the sector led to the crystallization of the Tunisian touristic and developmental model. Although during Ben Ali's mandates attempts were made to diversify the industry by investing in integrated tourist complexes such as Port el Kantaoui, or in areas with a weaker tourist vocation, as the Sahara region, the touristic model has remained largely unchanged. The model however presented a number of weaknesses such as its dependence on European tourism and investments, which have both suffered from the economic crisis in recent years. In addition, recent political instability in North Africa also discouraged tourists to visit Tunisia.⁴⁸ Finally, the presence of private interests - Ben Ali's family and closest circles' interests - prevented the sector from changing. An evidence of this is the absence of an open sky agreement. While it would have encouraged investments by low cost airlines, as in Morocco and Turkey, it could have damaged the monopoly of TunisAir, known to be part of the business assets of Ben Ali's family.⁴⁹

After Ben Ali's fall, the model has not undergone significant changes. Investments remain unbalanced to the benefit of coastal areas.⁵⁰ The ongoing increase in the number of beds and facilities suggests that the new government still relies on a model characterised by perennial hotel construction, with no consideration for market saturation. Pre-uprisings development plans are still running and, for instance, the XI development plan (2007-2011) foresees investments in facilities for 2.3 billion of TD (1.35 billion of Euros). Its final goal is to build

⁴⁷ As reported by Abdellatif Taboubi, in the coastal area between Nabeul to Mahdia more than two thirds out of the facilities in the country were built in early 2000s (Interview, tourism professional, Tunis, 28/04/2013).

⁴⁸ One interviewee reports that many recently-built facilities were left almost empty. This is the case of Port el Kantaoui (14,000 beds available). Interview with Yiad Elloumi, tourism economic consultant, Tunis, 19/03/2014.

⁴⁹ 'Tunisie: La Véritable Nature Du Régime De Ben Ali,' *Nawaat*, 13/1/2011 (<http://goo.gl/N4qK2G>, accessed 30/9/2014) and also Weigart, *Le tourisme en Tunisie*, cit.

⁵⁰ Author's interviews realised with different tourism professionals at the 19 Salon du Tourisme Tunisien (MIT), el Kram, 24-27/4/2013.

some 25,000 new beds, reaching by the end of 2011 a total of 258,000 beds available.⁵¹ Moreover, the ministers of tourism in charge since 2011 (5 until today), although aware of the difficulties of the sector,⁵² seem to act on the basis of short-term priorities, with the goal of 'saving the summer tourist season.'⁵³ The initiatives they promoted so far are based on old recipes. For example, the campaign 'I Love Tunisia,' launched in the aftermath of the uprisings to save the tourist season of 2011 and developed by a French advertisement company, has been criticised because it proposed again a 'mass tourism recipe,' based on a model of development considered obsolete.⁵⁴ The Ministry of Tourism's plan titled 'La stratégie du tourisme tunisien à l'horizon 2016' does not only lack an overall and comprehensive strategy,⁵⁵ but was issued in 2009, before the revolution. The government has not updated this document yet, and it constitutes the only institutional strategy elaborated in the realm of tourism. As pointed out by the former director of the ONTT Habib Ammar, this plan has at least two weaknesses: it pays no attention to the territory and lacks a strategy that looks at Tunisian tourism as part of the broader regional context.⁵⁶ Political parties also seem to lack long-term perspective. For example, Al-Nahda considers tourism an important factor for the national economy but does not propose any strategy to improve or change the current model. It broadly points to the necessity to elaborate a shared tourism national policy in order to

⁵¹ 'Tourisme intégré, mode d'emploi,' *Jeune Afrique*, 30/09/2007 (<http://goo.gl/h0HW3x>, accessed 13/08/2014).

⁵² See, for example, the declaration of ex-Minister Elyes Fakhfakh who repeatedly stressed the need to revive Tunisian tourism, whose weaknesses date back to the period before the revolution. Oualid Dachraoui, 'Interview de Mr Elyès Fakhfakh, nouveau ministre tunisien du tourisme,' *00216Mag*, 29/12/20011(<http://goo.gl/MmFidv> accessed 11/07/2014).

⁵³ See: Amel Karboul first speech as Minister of Tourism, Youtube, 30/1/2014 (<http://goo.gl/YW3QFmti>, accessed 3/8/2014).

⁵⁴ Ali Gargouri, 'Où sont passés les fonds investis pour promouvoir le tourisme tunisien?', *Nawaat*, 8/10/2011 (<http://goo.gl/dNmDoy>, accessed 12/07/2014).

⁵⁵ The plan establishes the following principles: diversification of tourism; creation of a new communication system useful to advertise tourism; a marketing plan; financing the sector through an ad hoc investment plan. The aim is make of Tunisia one of the main tourist destinations in the world. See also the document on the strategic vision of Tunisian tourism at <http://goo.gl/J6Hjmz> (accessed 10/07/2014).

⁵⁶ 'Interview to Habib Ammar,' *WebManagerCenter*, 14/4/2011 (<http://goo.gl/lnQfTH>, accessed 11/07/2014).

overcome the crisis.⁵⁷ It must be emphasised, however, that Minister Amel Karboul, appointed in January 2014, is attempting to stimulate the public discourse on tourism, debating the extant model and presenting tourism as ‘everyone’s business.’⁵⁸ Despite this, many believe that she will not deliver what she promised.⁵⁹

Beyond the rhetoric of ‘new-ism,’ the first issue to remain unsolved is the diversification of touristic products Tunisia could offer. Despite the construction of the new integrated touristic complexes of Port el Kantaoui and Yasmine Hammamet,⁶⁰ which partially conveyed a novel image of the country, the most common touristic formula for Tunisia remains the all-inclusive package, with international tour operators promoting it almost uniquely.⁶¹ In addition, except for the promotion of Saharan tourism, the bulk of investments focused on the coast.⁶² This not only has had negative consequences on the environment, which had already been heavily exploited, but also created a gap between the official discourse and what happened on the ground.⁶³

Second *thawabit*: tourism as a part of the narrative of the ‘new Tunisia’

The second constant is the continuity in the representation of tourism as a successful economic sector, pivotal to the narrative of the ‘new Tunisia’. In this regard, the year 1987 is a key date for both Tunisian politics and tourism. Indeed, under Ben Ali’s rule, tourism became the showcase of the new, post-1987 Tunisia. He pledged to create a new era based on political

⁵⁷ Interview with Mohammed Khouja, Tunis, 17/04/2014. For Al-Nahda’s electoral programme see <http://goo.gl/NvL6J6> (accessed 21/05/2014).

⁵⁸ See Kamel Bouaouina, ‘Le tourisme, c’est l’affaire de tous !,’ *Le Temps*, 12/6/2014 (<http://goo.gl/mG8ddF> accessed 30/9/2014); ‘Consultation nationale sur le Tourisme,’ WebManagerCenter, 05/04/2004, <http://goo.gl/GB70if>, accessed 12/07/2014).

⁵⁹ Bouaouina, ‘Notre ministère semble avoir...,’ *Le Temps*, 12/6/2014 (<http://goo.gl/T1FwZo>, accessed 20/07/2014).

⁶⁰ Interview with Yihad Elloumi, economic consultant, Tunis, 19/03/2014. On Hammamet see: Mohamed Hellal, ‘La marina de la station touristique intégrée Yasmine-Hammamet (Tunisie). Enjeux, conception et impacts,’ *L’Information géographique* 4, 73 (2009): 6-23.

⁶¹ Interview with Ahmed Trabelsi, President de l’Association Patrimoine & Environnement, Tunis, 14/03/2014.

⁶² Interview with Yihad Elloumi, tourism economic consultant, Tunis, 19/03/2014.

⁶³ Abelala Bounouh, ‘Nouvelles approches en matière de protection et de gestion du littoral en Tunisie,’ *Méditerranée* 115 (2010): 45-53.

pluralism, ending of corruption and economic growth through integration into the global economy. Tourism was a crucial element of his strategy and power consolidation. It is no coincidence that during the first council of ministers, which took place 5 days after the coup, the necessity of launching a new strategy for tourism, was discussed.⁶⁴ Furthermore, in 1988 Ben Ali created the Ministry of tourism choosing personally the first minister, Mohamed Jegham, Ben Ali's friend and expert in the development of big touristic complexes.⁶⁵ Since then, positions in the institutions governing the sector, whose number increased leading to growing bureaucratisation, were highly contested because of the power coming with them.⁶⁶ As an interviewee said, 'Tunisians knew that accessing the tourism bureaucracy under Ben Ali was a way to control the main levers of the economy.'⁶⁷

Ben Ali's attempt at making tourism crucial to his narrative of a new Tunisia was helped by the fact that the sector emerged from a phase of crisis⁶⁸ in timely coincidence with the beginning of his mandate. When Ben Ali ascended to power, a number of contingent factors allowed the sector to grow again. In 1988, a significant recovery took place with the number of tourists' arrivals increasing to 3,468,360, compared to 1,874,734 in 1987. Investments in the sector also increased. However, as Hazbun points out, this growth was not determined by Ben Ali's ability rather by external factors such as the economic recovery in Northern Europe that made Tunisian prices competitive, especially after the 1986 TD devaluation.⁶⁹ In addition, the

⁶⁴ ONTT, *Le VIIème Plan* cit., 14.

⁶⁵ Interview with Gueddiche Romdhane, tourism's consultant, Tunis, 24/04/2013.

⁶⁶ See, for example, the case of Tijani Haddad, Minister of Tourism in 2004, nicknamed 'Mister Tourism' for the numerous positions (and power) he obtained over the years. See: Abdelaziz Barrouhi, 'Monsieur Tourisme,' *Jeune Afrique*, 12/12/2005 (<http://goo.gl/OhvqNI>, accessed 31/08/2014).

⁶⁷ Interview, Tunis, 19/04/2013, anonymous source.

⁶⁸ The crisis was caused by financial and political issues: the gradual worsening of the national balance of payments; decrease in the total amount of investment in tourism (from 64,210 TD 1981 to 3,954 in 1986); the displacement of the PLO in Tunis, followed by the 1985 Israeli bombing; and the escalation of violence between the government and Islamist forces, which led to bombings in Sousse and Monastir few months before the 1987 coup. These factors concur to explain the pre-1987 crisis of the industry. According to the ONTT tourists arrivals dropped from 2,002,997 in 1985 to 1,502,092 in 1986 (-24.9 per cent). See Jean-Marie Miossec, *Le tourisme en Tunisie un pays en développement dans l'espace touristique international* (Thèse de doctorat, Université de Tours 1, 1996): 560.

⁶⁹ Hazbun, *Images of Openness, Spaces of Control*, cit., 14-15.

confidence of the market and international organisations⁷⁰ in the ability of Tunisia to overcome the crisis helped Ben Ali in consolidating his image and reputation as the initiator of a successful, new era for Tunisia. In particular, the 1988 successful summer season helped him to consolidate tourism as a tool of control over the territory and the population, while presenting Tunisia as an open and modern country abroad.⁷¹ One of the key strategies deployed by Ben Ali was diversification, which was substantiated in the construction of new resorts, the permission to film industry to use locations on the territory and the attempt to expand Saharan tourism. Such projects were mediatised thanks to spectacular inauguration's ceremonies and the creation of new brands and new product for tourists.⁷² In the short-term this strategy was successful, as investments in the sector increased (Table 5) along with tourist's arrivals which, according to the ONTT, doubled between 1988 (3,468,360) and 2010 (6,902,749). However, this success story did not solve those issues that have gradually led to the saturation of the Tunisian tourist market and its crisis.

The second unresolved issue is linked to the belief that tourism would have been a driving force for the Tunisian economy as a whole. This did not happen. However, Ben Ali successfully reiterated this belief by, for instance, presenting the growth of jobs in the tourist sector as an example of the good performance of the labour market *tout court*.⁷³ As a consequence, the seemingly never-ending growth of tourism allowed the regime to shift the attention from the bad performance of other macro-economic indicators, hiding the economic difficulties Tunisia

⁷⁰ The signature of a Stand-by Agreement which enacted a series of structural adjustment and stabilisation programs under the guidance of the IMF and WB, played an important role in this. See: Mohamed Bechri and Sonia Naccache, 'The Political Economy of Development Policy in Tunisia,' in Jeffrey Nugent and Hashem Pesaran (eds.), *Explaining Growth in the Middle East. Contributions to Economic Analysis*, Vol. 278 (Bradford: Emerald): 308-334.

⁷¹ Hazbun 'Globalisation, Reterritorialisation and the Political Economy of Tourism', cit.

⁷² See, for example: 'Tijani Haddad, ministre du Tourisme: "Nous avons plusieurs cordes à notre arc!"; *Jeune Afrique*, 10/07/2005 (<http://goo.gl/M4hT74>, accessed 14/08/2014).

⁷³ According to the World Bank in 2005 the unemployment rate among young people (15-24 years) was about the 15 per cent and reaches the 30per cent in 2009. World Bank Reports 2006-2010 (<http://goo.gl/CSWx3f>).

was facing. Despite evidence of the crisis, such as the heavy indebtedness of hotel owners,⁷⁴ the prevailing touristic model remained largely untouched.

In early 2000s, despite the crisis of tourism as evidenced by the decline of the sector's contribution to the national GDP (Table 1), Ben Ali successfully presented the crisis as a short-term phenomenon. He did this by downplaying the lack of a national development strategy for tourism and by blaming external events, namely the outbreak of the second Intifada in 2000, 9/11, the 2003 war in Iraq, and the bombings in Djerba and Casablanca in 2002 and 2003. Although these events did actually contribute to the decline in the tourists' arrivals in the region,⁷⁵ it should be emphasised that the roots of the relative crisis of Tunisian tourism were also linked to a lack of long-term strategy. As pointed out by an interviewee, a former executive of the ONTT, during the 2000s, the doubling of hotel capacity was not accompanied by broader measures, such as effective promotion and training. According to him, the political will to address the weaknesses of the sector was absent, and even some World Bank studies urging the government to diversify the industry, have never been made public.⁷⁶

After the fall of Ben Ali, the crisis seems to have burst out in the open and it is discussed in articles published in the national and international press.⁷⁷ However, although the issue entered the public debate, continuity seems to prevail. The new government in power indeed has not proceeded to diversifying the type of touristic products Tunisia offers, and the same narrative about tourism and 'new-ism' is still present. In post-Ben Ali Tunisia, indeed, tourism is an instrument to promote the political transition, which ideally should navigate the country into a new era of prosperity and democracy. This narrative is also strengthened by the

⁷⁴ On this, see the dossier of the magazine *l'Expression*, 'Gros nuages sur le tourisme tunisien', 39, July 2008 and Khaled Boumiza, 'Tourisme: Endetté et revendicatif,' cit.

⁷⁵ See, for example, 'Journée du tourisme: Conforter la place de la Tunisie sur les marchés mondiaux,' *WebManagerCenter*, 01/01/2004 (<http://goo.gl/sBT4BS>, accessed 3/08/2014).

⁷⁶ Interview, Tunis, 20/02/2014, anonymous source.

⁷⁷ Bouaouina, 'L'ONTT frappe fort: 8 hôtels déclassés et 19 agences de voyages fermées,' *Le Temps*, 9/7/2014 (<http://goo.gl/rUY7R1>, accessed 2/08/2014).

relative success of Tunisia's tourist industry if compared to the other countries that went through turmoil, such as Egypt – a difference that Tunisian authorities emphasise.⁷⁸

The narrative of a new Tunisia is substantiated in the attempt to represent tourism as a 'clean sector,' free from those dynamics of patronage prevalent in the pre-2011 period.⁷⁹ A strategy to make this come true is replacing officers in key-positions. Examples of this are the nomination of Amel Karbel as Minister of Tourism, the first woman to hold this post, and Mohammed Ali Toumi as the new Director of FTAV, the Fédération Tunisienne des Agences de Voyage et de Tourisme. Toumi emphasised the use of new technologies, the deployment of new marketing strategies and innovative training methods to enhance the performance of the sector, thus engendering a feeling of novelty. In his words, 'the federation has experienced a real "revolution" with the goal to make it more competitive on the market and more responsive to the needs of the sector.'⁸⁰ Another attempt to foster this new-ist narrative is constituted by efforts of diversification. They have indeed been presented by authorities and, additionally, take place in the framework of the decentralisation policy, a novelty included in the new constitution itself. Nevertheless, they have many similarities with the efforts for tourism diversification undertaken during Ben Ali's era,⁸¹ as for instance is the case of Saharan⁸² and rural tourism.⁸³

In order to sustain the 'new-ist' rhetoric of a new Tunisia and tourist industry, post-2011 authorities have had the tendency to present the difficulties of the sector as a short-term

⁷⁸ See, 'Tourisme: La Tunisie se redresse plus vite que l'Egypte,' *Milles et une Tunisie*, 03/12/2012 (<http://goo.gl/mnzF7c>, accessed 31/08/2014).

⁷⁹ 'OT de Tunisie: notre modèle touristique n'est pas le fruit d'un régime politique,' *l'Echo Touristique*, 19/01/2011 (<http://goo.gl/5bov3M>, accessed 31/08/2014).

⁸⁰ Interview with Mohamed Ali Toumi, Tunis, 29/04/2013.

⁸¹ Sami Yassine Turki, 'Evolution of Cities and Territories in Tunisia through Parties' Electoral Programmes and Civil Society's Proposal,' *Built Environment* 40, 1 (2014): 85-100.

⁸² On the new Saharian Plan of Development see: 'Tunisie: annonce d'un plan de relance du tourisme saharien,' *Maghreb Emergent*, 21/02/2014 (<http://goo.gl/DQtUnh>, accessed 30/9/2014) and Hamza Marzouk, 'Le tourisme saharien, maillon faible du tourisme tunisien,' *L'Economiste Maghrebin*, 20/12/2013 (<http://goo.gl/Q5qcDA>, accessed 31/08/2014).

⁸³ On rural tourism, see: 'La ministre du Tourisme bientôt en visite au Kef et à Jendouba,' *Réalités*, 19/03/2014 (<http://goo.gl/0vnNh8/>, accessed 30/9/2014). See also Selima Karoui, 'Réaménagement du secteur de l'art dans les régions intérieures par l'investissement de la société civile,' *Nawaat*, 9/1/2014 (<http://goo.gl/r864q8>, accessed 31/08/2014).

phenomenon instead of a structural problem, as it happened in pre-2011 Tunisia, thus absolving themselves from accusations of mismanagement. For instance, the responsibility for the relative crisis the sector is going through is blamed on the Islamists. They are charged with considering tourism a form of 'prostitution,' as Marzouki declared.⁸⁴ This accusation was also helped by violent confrontations between Salafists and the Tunisian army⁸⁵ and by campaigns discouraging tourists to visit areas considered to be in the hands of Salafists.⁸⁶ In a similar vein, the 2013 visit of the Egyptian preacher Mohamed Hassen to the touristic district of Hamammet was considered by professionals of the sector as damaging the image of Tunisia as a safe touristic destination.⁸⁷

Despite the 'thawabit' in presenting tourism as a part of the narrative of a 'new Tunisia,' some elements of rupture exist. For example, a relevant effect of the revolution is that government's performances are questioned publicly. In an article published in the online journal 'Le tourisme Magazine' in 2013, it is stated that data and figures provided the ONTT about tourism-related policies have been manipulated in order to show that the government's diversification strategy is successful.⁸⁸ On the contrary, according to the article, investments in less touristic areas are not paying off considering that, for example, the region of Gafsa-Tozeur lost 70 per cent of its tourists (310,919 versus 998,287 in 2010) and the Tabarka-Ain Drahem region registered a decline of 40 per cent in tourists' arrivals. Another example is the growing citizens' request to participate in the decision-making of public policies that impact on the population and the territory, a request that is openly debated. The opening up of decision-making processes could generate, in the medium or long period, virtuous effects that

⁸⁴ Marzouki Declaration, 12/7/2012. See: <http://goo.gl/OVR5Dp> (accessed 31/08/2014).

⁸⁵ 'Tunisian police arrest 10 Islamists following violent clashes in Kef,' *Albawaba News*, 1/12/2013 (<http://goo.gl/SV5BTj>, accessed 20/08/2014).

⁸⁶ Monia Ghamni, 'Salafist resurgence jeopardises Tunisian tourism,' *Magharebia*, 26/04/2013 (<http://goo.gl/f4ldcU>, accessed 31/08/2014).

⁸⁷ See, for example, Wafa Latik, 'Tunisie: L'arrivée du prédicateur égyptien Mohamed Hassan menace-t-elle le tourisme à Hammamet ?,' *LeMag*, 2/5/2013 (<http://goo.gl/Sr1vCF>, accessed 15/08/2014).

⁸⁸ See : 'Le vrai bilan du tourisme tunisien,' *Le tourisme Magazine*, 02/11/2013 (<http://goo.gl/5BjQi7>, accessed 31/08/2014).

could not only stop the crisis when it comes to tourism, but also accelerate Tunisia's political transition. In addition, citizens increasingly use their visibility to promote sustainable tourism. This is the case for the Association for the safeguard of the Medina of Kef, an area that has not traditionally benefitted from tourism, which promotes sustainable tourism with the goals of re-appropriating the cultural heritage of the region and stimulating local development. However, the activities of the association lack a comprehensive and integrated strategy aimed to reach out to public institutions.⁸⁹ This problem relates to the troubled relationship between the national authorities and local communities, a legacy of state centralisation during the authoritarian period. Another attempt at influencing the decision-making process at the micro-level is the 'Cafè du Patrimoine,' where professionals discuss the creation of new training programs for tourist guides, working conditions as well as challenges to the protection of the national cultural heritage.⁹⁰ Discussions about the preservation of the cultural heritage seem to be promising as they turned out to be the beginning of broader reflections about models of sustainable tourism, strictly connected to social and economic development.⁹¹ Notwithstanding these promising initiatives, the reform of the tourist sector is still one of the biggest challenges of the new Tunisia.⁹²

Conclusion

Tourism is a crucial sector in the Tunisian economy and it has a considerable role in determining economic and political choices. While it is true that, over the years, tourism has been a significant income generator, it is also necessary to consider that such revenues were generated by an aggressive exploitation of the 'Tunisian model' and consequently of the

⁸⁹ Author's participation to the seminar for the preservation of the cultural heritage and author's focus group with the members of the Association pour le sauvegarde de la Medina du Kef, Le Kef, 15/03/2014.

⁹⁰ Author's participation in the first meeting of 'Cafè du patrimoine', Dar Bach Hamba, Tunis, 27/04/2013. Report of the conference 'Le droit au patrimoine' held by Mr. Zoubeir Mouhli, Directeur de l'ASM Tunis, 27/07/2013.

⁹¹ Interview with Ahmed Trabelsi, 14/03/2014.

⁹² Ridha Lahmar, 'La réforme du tourisme toujours en panne!', *Réalités*, 23/6/2014 (<http://goo.gl/L3d1yw>, accessed 31/08/2014).

territory, regardless of the consequences of this exploitation. Despite the tentative promotion of new forms of tourism, continuity has prevailed over the years in the maintenance of a deficient touristic model and in the role assigned to tourism as the pivot of an ongoing, more rhetorical than actual, process of change. Thus, the *thawabit* of Tunisian tourism seem to be very resistant even if, after the revolution, they have become more porous than in the past thanks to a genuine debate about the future of the sector. Nevertheless, before and after the revolution likewise, the tourist sector seems to be led by logic of exploitation and securitisation. Only the claim for a more open and democratic decision-making process might provide a chance to reverse this problematic trend.

Acknowledgements

My gratitude goes to Paola Rivetti for her invaluable input in drafting the second version of this article. I would also like to thank the anonymous reviewers who provided insightful comments. As co-editor of this Special Issue, I also thank the BJMES editorial board, all the anonymous referees and the contributors for their cooperation and professionalism. All mistakes are of my responsibility.

Table 1 **Travel and tourism total contribution to GDP 1990-2013 (%)**

	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2011	2012	2013
Algeria	4.5	4.5	6.2	8.2	8.4	8.1	8.2	8
Egypt	9.6	11.5	14	19	17.5	14.5	14.8	12.6
Israel	8.4	8.7	9.8	7.8	7.5	7.4	7.5	7.3
Jordan	25.3	22.9	20.7	21.8	23.7	20.3	21.4	20.3
Lebanon	5.9	4	1.1	29	27.9	22.5	19.9	19.2
Libya	3.3	3.7	5.2	7.2	4.4	5.5	6.7	6.2
Morocco	9.1	10	12.1	18.5	19.3	19.2	19.2	18.7
Syria	7.5	15.5	13.9	14.4	19.6	18.2	12.9	10.6
Tunisia	12.8	16.1	19.7	19.4	17.5	14.7	15.6	15.1
Turkey	6.8	8.2	10.6	12.2	10.2	11.6	11.9	12,3

Source: Our elaboration on World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)

Table 2 Juridification of touristic sector in Tunisia 1956-2012

Type	Bourguiba (1956-1987)	Ben Ali (1987-2011)	Post Ben Ali until 2012
Laws	18	46	01
Law decrees	05	00	00
Governmental Decrees	36	98	09
Local decrees (ordinances)	23	79	06
Notifications	00	03	00
Total	84	226	16

Source : Our elaboration on CNUDST (www.cnudst.rnrt.tn/) and Journal Officiel de la République Tunisienne (JORT) (www.iort.gov.tn/).

Table 3 Investments per Regions in Tunisia 2011/2012

Period	8 months 2011		8 months 2012		Evol. %
	Amount	%	Amount	%	Total Evol.
East	1444,3 MDT	67,6	2107,4 MDT	79,8	45,9
West	692,5 MDT	32,4	534,3 MDT	20,2	-22,8
Total	2136,8 MDT	100	2641,7 MDT	100	23,6

Source : Our elaboration on Agence de Promotion de l'Industrie et de l'Innovation (Tunis)

Table 4 Evolution of the accommodation capacity (1965-2011)

Years	Number of structures		Bed capacity		Average bed capacity for structure	
	Number	AAGR%	Number	AAGR%	Number	AAGR%
1965	85	-	8726	-	102.6	-
1971	226	165.9	41252	372.5	182.5	78.0
1981	336	48.7	75847	83.9	225.7	23.7
1991	532	58.3	123188	62.4	231.6	2.6
2001	755	41.9	205605	66.9	272.3	17.6
2008	837	10.9	238495	16.0	285.0	4.6
2009	856	02.3	239890	0.05	280.2	-0.01
2010	856	0.0	241528	0.06	282.1	0.06
2011	861	0,58	242146	0,25	281,2	-0,31

Source : ONTT- Office National du Tourism Tunisien. If not otherwise specified, all ONTT data are taken from *Le tourisme Tunisien en chiffres* (Tunis: ONTT), a report the ONTT releases every year.

AAGR: Annual average rate of growth

Table 5 Investments in tourist industry (millions of Tunisian Dinars)

	Tourist investments	Tunisian investments	FDIs
1994	397.8	380.8	17
1995	449.1	421	28.1
1996	416.95	368.55	48.4
1997	353.3	330.3	23
1998	307	282.4	24.6
1999	324.68	287.48	37.2
2000	322.45	280.95	41.5
2001	330.86	229.76	101.1
2002	353.3	333.3	20
2003	282.3	263.8	18.5
2004	288.18	267.18	21
2005	246.21	229.44	16.8
2006	204.55	186.55	18
2007	213.18	141.18	72
2008	253.61	55.01	198.6
2009	309.27	223.77	85.5
TOTAL	5052.74	4281.47	771.27

Source: ONTT, *Le tourisme en chiffres, 2010*