

Research article

## The functional migration of tertiary establishments located on the northern shores of Lake Tunis

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### Abstract

Several factors combine to make the urbanization of the northern shores of Lake Tunis an urban product that has been completely consumed by Tunisians. This consumption was related to the appearance of other places more attractive than the lake. In this paper, we will try to study the migration of tertiary establishments through the turnover achieved.

**Key words:** Lake Tunis, urbanization, migration of tertiary establishments, Tunisia.

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### 1. Introduction

Following the completion of the sanitation and restoration works of the North Lake of Tunis and the appearance of a whole area suitable for urban use, many ideas have appeared to put the land reclaimed by rectification of the banks for the benefit of urbanization. The only problem encountered was the inability of the state to take charge of the development of an entire area that greatly exceeds 1000 hectares.

Towards the end of the 1970s following the adoption of new measures and the opening of the economy to the outside world, that the State was able to open the door to foreign investors so that they could invest in Tunisia and especially in urban projects. At that time, Tunisia was able to attract significant capital mainly from the outside world to promote its national territory on all levels, social, spatial and economic. On the urban level, the fruit of this extroverted economy has given rise to several public, private and parastatal organizations, which have taken charge of the urban problems of cities and especially those linked to the spatial distortion between regions.

For the capital, this new experience gave rise to several organizations that took charge of the urban phenomenon and the problems of the city. The most important of these are those who have tried to incorporate new traditions into urban planning action. Among these organizations: the “*Société Promotion du*

*lac de Tunis (SPLT)*”, which emerged through an association between the Tunisian State and Saudi investors to develop the northern shores of Lake Tunis. In the early 1980s, the SPLT entrusted the task of developing a design concept for this water body to a Danish architect well known in the field of lake area planning. It was not until 1987 that the development of the lake shores was developed on the basis of the worrying urban situation in the city of Tunis.

Today, the banks are almost urbanized. A simple comparison between the urbanization foreseen by the various planning documents, and that carried out, can be convincing that the general conception of the development of this body of water has been pulverized. In fact, with specifications prohibiting all constructions for commercial use from exceeding an R + 1, several constructions have escaped this standard. Also, it is interesting to say that the areas dedicated to housing individual dwellings and which are subject to a ban on any type of change of vocation, several of them have been reassigned by the tertiary sector.

Through these specific cases, it was interesting to focus the analysis on the achievements obtained in order to identify the new distribution of activities within this space reclaimed from the sea and to see the current state of this new planned urbanization.

## 2. Material and methods

### 2.1. A "new Tunis" on Lake: the case of "Venice ! "

Today and following the urbanization of the northern sector of the banks of the lake, some believe that the lake is in the presence of a city district and others think that the urbanization of the banks, in the north-eastern sectors / south-east, is intended to create a "new city" (Hagui A. 2012).

With the development program and the desire to settle more than 220,000 inhabitants, the lake of Tunis will occupy the third rank after the city of Tunis and that of Sfax. It is a real "new city" which is being born on this space reclaimed from the sea. (See Table)

It seems interesting to us to proceed to a simple comparison between the development program planned on its banks and that of the "new towns" in the world, while taking the French example which was largely inspired by the British model, so that we can verify the adequacy between the term "new town" and this new urbanization.

In fact, we can see that with a population concentration rate clearly exceeding the average of French "new towns" which is around 200,000 inhabitants, the weight of the lake appears much more in terms of housing and the creation of employment.

Practically a new city integrated with development and real estate construction programs of a residential, tourist and commercial nature which will lead to a total transformation of the urban landscape of the entire capital. It is a very advanced space on the water with a panoramic view, a functional center which houses all the activities and a modern architecture with an Arab-Muslim aspect for the creation of a "modern medina".

### 2.2. Epistemological positioning

Before discussing the paradigmatic assumptions of this study, it is important to begin with a discussion of paradigms by defining the concept of paradigm, its components, as well as various perspectives. Rocco et al, (2003) define a paradigm as a vision of the world. It is a fundamental set of beliefs or assumptions that guides the researcher's investigation. This implies that every researcher will approach research with a plethora of nested and sometimes contradictory assumptions and philosophical viewpoints. Creswell (2007) states that the research design process begins with the philosophical assumptions made by applicants when deciding to undertake a study. Researchers bring their own world views, paradigms or sets of beliefs to the research project, which inform the conduct and writing of the study. Together with Creswell (2007) and Mason

(2002) indicate that in defining his paradigmatic perspective as a researcher, the interplay between ontological and epistemological assumptions, metatheoretical foundations, research questions and research methodology takes on greater importance.

The researcher's ontological beliefs relate to the nature of reality, which is explored through the researcher's responses to problems such as the nature of the world, including social phenomena. Whether the reality is ordered or legal; the existence of the natural social order; whether reality is fixed and stable or constantly evolving and whether it is unitary or multiple; and if reality can be constructed by the individuals involved in the research situation (Creswell, 1998, p76). The epistemological beliefs of the researcher relate to what it is possible to know about the relationship between the researcher and what is being researched. Fayolle et al, (2005, p136) state that by examining the concepts of ontology and epistemology, we find that it is a kind of rules of the game and that we have different rules ... these rules are interconnected within each game. If we assume that knowledge is not one entity but several and that it changes, it is reasonable to assume that we have different ways of studying it...

The constructivist perspective is based on the participatory paradigm, which proposes that at the end of the constructivist social program, there is an action program for reform capable of changing the lives of the participants, the institutions in which they live and work, and even the lives of researchers (Heron and Reason, 1997). Hussey and Hussey (1997, p54) indicate that positivism and interpretivism are the two poles of the same continuum.

### 2.3. Data collection method

Leedy (1997: 195) defines the research model as a study design providing a general framework for data collection. MacMillan and Schumacher (2001, p166) define it as a scheme for the selection of subjects, research sites and data collection procedures to answer research questions. They further indicate that the goal of a sound research design is to deliver results that are considered credible. For Durrheim (2004, p29), research design is a strategic framework for action that acts as a bridge between research questions and the execution, or implementation, of research strategy. Petter S. (2008) defines research methodology as a theory of how an investigation unfolds. This involves an analysis of the assumptions, principles and procedures of a particular approach to investigation. According to Schwardt (2007), Seddon P.B et al (1999) and Sethi V., King W. (1994), methodologies explain and define the types of problems that merit consideration; What constitutes a problem that can be

investigated? Testable hypotheses; how do you define a problem so that it can be investigated using particular designs and procedures? and how do you select and develop appropriate means of collecting data? As indicated in the analysis of different research definitions, after identifying the research problem or an area of interest, the researcher must identify the appropriate methods to approach the problem. In order to give direction to this study, the onion research process of Saunders et al. (2003) was adopted. This onion illustrates the range of choices, paradigms, strategies, and steps followed by researchers during the research process.

The research process provides a summary of important questions to consider and consider before any research. The different layers of the onion serve as a basis for taking into account the following elements: the philosophical orientation of the researcher; the research approach adopted; appropriate search strategies and data collection techniques employed by the researcher.

In our research we will do a quantitative research. Indeed, quantitative research, according to Van de Ven A.H (1996), is a research approach aimed at testing theories, determining facts, demonstrating relationships between variables and predicting results. Quantitative research uses methods from the natural sciences designed to ensure objectivity, generalizability and reliability (Weinreich, 2009).

Techniques used in quantitative research include the random selection of research participants from the study population, the standardized questionnaire or intervention they receive, as well as the statistical methods used to test predetermined hypotheses about the relationship between specific variables. The researcher in quantitative research, unlike the qualitative paradigm in which he is considered an excellent research instrument due to his active participation in the research process, is considered to be external to the research itself and the results should be reproducible, it doesn't matter who is doing the research.

It is within the framework of this reflection that it seems interesting to say that we use a random sampling method and it is for this reason that we should not be faced with setbacks related to the sampling. When random sampling is used, each element in the population has an equal chance of being selected (simple random sampling) or a known probability of being selected (stratified random sampling). The sample is called representative because the characteristics of a correctly selected sample represent the parent population in all ways. In the context of this research we will opt for simple random sampling.

Out of a total of 200 business establishments surveyed, only 122, or 61%, clearly answered our questionnaire. Representativeness refers to the extent to which the sample drawn for questionnaire research compares (representative) to the population of interest (Fincham, 2014). Can the reader assess the results of the study with confidence that the respondent sample reflects the

broad and in-depth components of the population? Failure to respond to the questionnaire by potential respondents in a sample or population leads to what is known as non-response bias. Non-response bias is a fatal blow to the reliability and validity of survey results (Fincham, 2014). If a survey only achieves a response rate of 30%, the study suffers from a non-response bias of 70%. If the response rate to a survey is 20%, the non-response bias is 80%. Brique and Kalton (1996) suggest that one way to remedy the lack of representativeness is to weight the segments of the study to reflect the larger attributes of the population.

### 3. Results and discussion

#### 3.1. The lake of the 1990s and the lake of the 2000s: the mirror of crisis situations

What drew attention throughout our investigation was the fairly large number of closed rooms in the lake area. Are they premises that have not yet dedicated to an urban activity? Or are they open until recently and their closures dictated by business issues? These questions will make it possible to see whether the lake space is well exploited or not and the closure of the premises is for economic reasons specific to the establishments or the opposite.

##### 3.1.1. The lake of the 1990s: the "success"

###### 3.1.1.1. The lake land market: a lake at low prices to guarantee success

When the land reclaimed from the lake began to be marketed and in order to attract the attention of customers who did not "agree" with this type of development, the SPLT adopted a strategy which consisted in offering lots of serviced land at a low price that did not exceed 50 dinars / m<sup>2</sup>.

A project of great investment value presenting land at 50 dinars per m<sup>2</sup> at a time when the m<sup>2</sup> greatly exceeded 100 dinars in several places in the city. The SPLT sought to make "seduction" a means of attracting attention to this space.

###### 3.1.1.2. Unexpected profits and unexpected turnover

To be able to know the importance of the lake site from an economic point of view, we did not dare to question the various heads of establishments on the turnover achieved for the last months, or even the last years. . Despite a partial refusal to answer the question concerning turnover, the analysis of the results made it possible to distinguish between the lake of the 1990s and that of today. Out of a total of 200 business

establishments surveyed, only 122, or 61%, assessed their actual turnover and even gave forecasts. As for office and service activity, 35.71% of the total of establishments surveyed agreed to assess their turnover, which means 25 establishments out of a total of 70. The information collected was invaluable and of great value. large value as shown in the table below: Out of a total of 147 establishments, 59.18%, or 87 establishments, achieved monthly turnover exceeding 2000 D, reaching, sometimes even, 3000 D. Indeed, reading the table above allows us to draw the following conclusions: For the commercial activity, only general food recorded a turnover which did not exceed 1500 D/month, of which 66%, or 8 of a total of 12 establishments, achieved a figure which is included between 500 and 1000D. As for the clothing trade, the variety of figures is related to the variety and quality of items offered for sale. Generally, their figures varied between 1000 and more than 3000 D /month, of which more than 44% (47 establishments of 105 respondents) reached more than 2500D. Finally for the 5 restaurants surveyed, the turnover did not exceed 2500 D/month. Generally, they are between 1500 and 2000 D/month.

Regarding office activity, estimates were between 1500 and over 3000 D/month. Certainly, 44% achieved turnover that exceeded 3000D against 20% for figures between 2500 and 3000D. For healthcare services, mainly represented by analysis laboratories and free practice doctors' offices, only 26.66% declared having turnover between 2000 and 3000 D. This decrease compared to other services is mainly explained by the effect of attendance. These are services that are rarely used by patients for reasons linked mainly to specialization. Take the example of the veterinary service here, which only works with specific clients from the upper class. Finally, the financial department encompassing accounting, expertise, and other activities, their turnover did not exceed 3000D / month, of which 70% achieved figures having crossed 2000 and the remaining 30% less than 2000D.

### 3.1.2- The lake of the 2000s: the "crisis"

#### 3.1.2.1. Declining turnover and a worrying situation

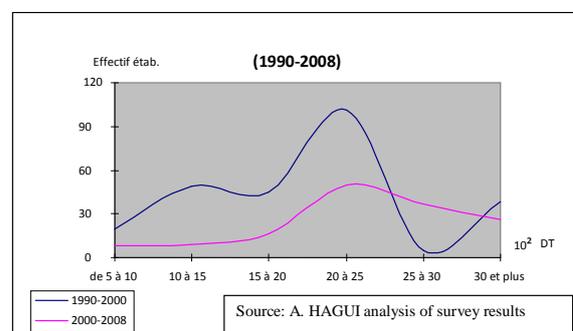
It should be remembered that the shores of the lake in its northern sector have been a success which has been at the origin of a great demand for building land. However, the current situation differs from the one which followed, owing to the fact that 37.20% of activities, in particular commercial activities, were transferred to other areas for strictly economic reasons

linked to the economic "non-profitability" of this area. Mainly resulting from a turnover which is in decline. From a lake where more than 76% of the activities achieved turnover which exceeded 2000 D/month, or even more than 3000 D, to another where more than 56% of establishments recorded figures which did not exceed 2500 D/month until sometimes even reaching 500 D, that the economic situation of this space has become, at the present time, a constraint in front of the entire development of the banks of the lake (See Table 1).

**Table 1.** Turnover of the different activities (Hagui A., 2008)

Type of activities	Turnover in 102 dinars / month						Total
	15-10	10-15	15-20	20-25	25-30	>30	
Food general	12	-	-	-	-	-	12
Trade clothing	5	47	40	13	-	-	105
Restoration	4	1	-	-	-	-	5
Health care	-	-	-	1	4	10	15
Financial service	-	-	6	4	-	-	10
Total	8	9	16	50	37	26	147

**Fig. 1.** Variation in turnover



The immediate consequences of this situation, which encompassed all urban functions, revealed "functional migration" following "transfer of activity". From speculation and competition between activities to achieve a better location in order to achieve optimal profitability, to the migration of activities to other places in the capital that are more profitable and more eventful, than "urban history" of the lake, in its northern sector, was marked by the "escape" and "migration" of settlements.

#### 3.1.2.2. From conquest to "escape": the countdown

In what has preceded, we have shown the passage of the lake from a place of high investment value to one

of less economic profitability. In what follows, the analysis will focus on the degree of resistance of activities to this degradation, which is increasing day by day. It is through this reflection, which seeks to verify the current trend of activities as well as through the analysis of the survey data, that we were able to identify the following table (Table 2).

**Table 2.** the current state of the lake's activities: migration by activity segment (2000-2008)

Division by type of activity	Activities				Total	
	Existing		Transferred		Effectif	%
	Effectif	%	Effectif	%		
Food general	25	9.25	10	6	35	8.13
Trade clothing	155	57.4	116	72.5	271	63.02
Restoration	20	7.4	6	3.75	26	6.04
Health care	37	13.7	13	8.12	50	11.62
Financial service	33	12.22	15	9.37	48	11.16
Total	270	62.27	160	37.2	430	100

Out of a total of 430 establishments, 160, or 37.20%, were transferred to places other than the lake. This transfer was explained by the turnover achieved in the 2000s. The analysis of the migration of establishments by activity segment showed the preponderance of premises in the clothing trade, whose share of transferred activities exceeded the 42%, or 116 of 271 establishments. This transfer affected all the activities investigated. For general food, out of a total of 31 establishments, 6 activities have changed location, or 19.35% of the total. As for healthcare and financial services, this transfer affected 26% and 31% of activities respectively. Finally, for the catering activity and even if the sample was reduced, 23.07% were affected by this transfer, or 6 activities transferred out of a total of 26 counted.

**Table 3.** the current trend of urban activities in Lake Tunis

Type of activity	Transferred		Existing		With a tendency to relocate		Total
	Effective	%	Effective	%	With a tendency to relocate		
					Effective	%	
General food	10	6.25	20	10.36	5	6.49	31
Clothing trade	116	72.5	99	51.29	56	72.72	271
Restoration	6	3.75	17	8.8	3	3.89	26
Health care	13	8.12	29	15.02	8	10.38	50
Financial service	15	9.37	28	14.5	5	6.49	48
Total	160	100	193	100	77	100	430

What is impressive in the context of this survey is that the share of activities which declare, according to their heads of establishments, to be ready to transfer to other areas, corresponds to 28.51% of the total activities. Existing and which is of the order of 270, or 77 establishments (See Table 3).

In recent years, the lake area has provided increasingly unfavorable conditions for the establishment of urban activities, especially commercial ones. The passage from a place where all the urban functions want to be established there to another characterized by a functional migration, puts the future of all the urbanization of the northern shores in question, especially when one realizes that there is still two more sectors in progress. Conclusion The project of the century has radically transformed to be a landlocked space which requires the intervention of the Tunisian State in order to bring it out of the setbacks designed through the appearance of new spaces which have been able to drain such a large volume of investments. . It should be remembered that Lake Tunis was a place of great attractiveness that was exercised not only on the territory of Grant Tunis, but also on the national territory.

Today the banks have experienced the emergence of a phenomenon linked to functional migration. This migration can only be the result of a turnover which was in permanent decline.

Our analysis of the situation, linked to this decline, has shown us the weakness of the attractiveness of the lake due to the appearance of other more attractive places for the flow of attractions, goods and people.

It is to say that the fact of planning requires a retrospective vision which includes the participation of various actors ranging from the public and arriving to the private while passing by the citizens. All this in order to produce a sustainable space with rational and equitable development.

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