© Sunset in Kotu, The Gambia. Taken by the author on April 8, 2017

The Smiling Coast of Africa

Is the smile more than a façade in The New Gambia?

Martijn van Dongen

Master Thesis
Human Geography: Conflicts, Territories & Identities
School of Management
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Foreword

Dear reader,

On April 3rd, 2017, I landed in Banjul, The Gambia. On that day I began three months of fieldwork that culminated in the thesis that is now before you. The fieldwork challenged me: it put me in situations I had never been in before and had no idea how to handle. But I managed, thanks to those that supported me. I could tell you much about myself in this foreword. About my fascination with the world abroad and my academic interests in inequality and development. But space is far too limited, and there are many people that I must thank for making this thesis possible.

Firstly, I thank Fatou, mister Yabo and the rest of the TANGO organization for their hospitality and helpfulness. They received me and my two peers upon arrival, showed us around during the first week and even let us join with the official election observation mission during the parliamentary elections in The Gambia on April 6. They helped us find our internships and provided us with a place to live.

Next, Yadicon deserves a special mention, for she offered me an internship at her NGO FAWEGAM. Thank you to all colleagues at FAWEGAM for your hospitality, sage advice and the opportunities you gave me to learn. Thank you Yadicon, Saffiatou, Martin, Ousman, Olli, Sainabou, Joanna and Sali. Also for the good times, laughter and amazing food.

Because I have promised my fifteen respondents anonymity, I cannot give them the full praise they deserve. However I will still say thanks to all of them, for their helpful answers without which this thesis would not have been possible. I thank them also for their openness and their courage to share personal stories about corruption, doubts and poverty.

I shared my time in The Gambia with three peers who also travelled from the Netherlands to The Gambia for their master theses. Three of us shared a home in Kanifing, while the fourth lived in Brikama. The many conversations we shared were a source of inspiration and motivation. They also provided a live peer review and helped me improve my interviewing and put my thoughts in order. Thank you Hannah, Remco and Veerle.

Last, but most certainly not least, two members of CICAM deserve my thanks. Despite no longer working at the Radboud University, Lotje de Vries was an invaluable component of this thesis, because it was her invitation and her connections that allowed me to go to The Gambia in the first place. Secondly, to my supervisor Bert Bomert: thank you for your compassion, patience, directions, advice and keen eye. While I tested your patience with months of absence, your responses were always rapid, clear and enlightening.

Without the contributions of all these people, the advice they gave me and the opportunities they provided me, I could not have written this thesis. Without further ado, I wish you much enjoyment as you read my Master thesis.

Martijn van Dongen

Nijmegen, June 2018

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Summary

The Gambia is a small country enveloped on three sides by Senegal, and by the Atlantic Ocean on the fourth side. In December 2016 The Gambia held elections with a surprising result. After 22 years of rule, Yahya Jammeh was democratically voted out of office. His opponent? A businessman with no prior political experience, by the name of Adama Barrow. After a troublesome, but peaceful transfer of power, Barrow took office in a country faced with many challenges. Among these challenges: a stagnant economy reliant on small scale agriculture and tourism.

The tourism sector of The Gambia has grown immensely since its emergence in the 1960's. As international travel has become more accessible and affordable for people in Western Europe, tourists from Scandinavia, Great Britain and The Netherlands have flocked to the winter sun on The Gambia's tropical beaches. Tourist arrivals have been as high as 170.000 in a year, in contrast to the Gambian population of barely two million.

The Gambia's tourism sector has been highly concentrated on a small segment of its Atlantic coast since the beginning. This coastline has been the most developed part of the country ever since a British governor settled the town of Bathurst (now Banjul) on an island in the Gambia river delta in 1820. While the British 'owned' a piece of territory surrounding the Gambia river up to 400 kilometers inland, they rarely intervened outside the small colony in the river delta. Inequality between the coastal area and the interior remains stark to this day.

The question many Gambians ask themselves is whether Adama Barrow can succeed his promise of creating a New Gambia. To do so, he must tackle inequality, take away the incentives for emigration and build a more stable economy. His predecessor has not made this task easy for him: human rights deteriorated under Jammeh and few of Jammeh's economic policies were successfully executed. Instead, Jammeh invested in hospitals and schools, without providing the medicines and teachers needed.

Meanwhile the tourism sector developed independently. Foreign private investors provided their own electricity and water infrastructure and international tour operators brought in flights and tourists. This allowed the tourism sector to grow despite Jammeh, not because of him. However, while the tourism sector provides employment opportunities for Gambians and an enjoyable time for tourists, it is far from a win-win situation. Tourism reinforces existing inequality, and the urbanization trend that results from that inequality. Foreign leakage means that a potentially large segment of tourist's spending does not remain in the Gambian economy long, before flowing back to foreign investors. Lastly, The Gambia does not hold the success of the tourism sector in its own hands, instead it has become dependent on foreign interests.

To combat these weaknesses, the Gambia Tourism Board has invested in sustainable tourism projects. These projects aim to transform the tourism sector to become more economically sustainable and increase its positive impacts on the Gambian people. However, successes remain limited. This can be ascribed to both theoretical weaknesses in sustainable tourism theory and poor policy execution as a result of neopatrimonial tendencies.

The first year of Barrow's presidency provides some indicators of change. The assignment of his new tourism minister and the writing process of his National Development Plan are a turn away from traditional neopatrimonialism. However, the economic targets for the tourism sector in his plan remain focused on growth. It is unclear whether these targets can be achieved in an economically sustainable way, without increasing dependence of the Gambian economy on foreign interests.

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1. Introduction

Hidden deep within Francophone West Africa, is a small Anglophone country called The Gambia. As a result of its awkward position on the map, it is occasionally described as a reflection of the "accidents of colonial history" (Golub & Mbaye, 2008, p. 597). The Gambia has developed a unique culture and its political elite has always refused to merge with the surrounding country of Senegal. An attempt was made for a Senegambia confederation during the period of 1982 to 1989, following a failed coup d'état in The Gambia and a military intervention by Senegal. This confederation fell apart following political instability in Senegal in 1989, among other reasons (Golub & Mbaye, 2008). Five years later, Yahya Jammeh took power in The Gambia through a bloodless military coup d'état. The 2016 elections in Gambia were a shocking end to Jammeh's twenty-two years of largely uncontested rule, as his opponent Adama Barrow (leader of a coalition of opposition parties) surprisingly won with 45% of the popular vote (BBC, 2016).

Initially, Jammeh did not accept the election results and refused to give up his seat to the newcomer Barrow. It took pressure from neighbors through mediation and eventually a brief military presence for Jammeh to step down. When Barrow returned to the country on January 26, 2017, he did so amidst the celebration of the Gambian people (Hultin, 2017). The start of Barrow's presidency, while perhaps a reason to celebrate, also came with many challenges. After twenty-two years of Jammeh's regime, The Gambia found itself faced with a road filled with obstacles. Locals were hopeful of the changes Barrow might bring, some have gone so far as to speak of 'The New Gambia' already (Hultin, 2017).

Niklas Hultin outlines several of the challenges that The Gambia and Barrow will likely run into during the next years (Hultin, 2017). These challenges are varied: Should Jammeh be prosecuted? How should political and legal reform look like? What should be the role of (armed) security services? Jammeh not only left the country's institutions in shambles, The Gambia finds itself internationally isolated in the donor-community and with near empty state coffers (BBC, 2017). These two issues are interrelated, as much of The Gambia's economy relies heavily on its international relations. This interrelation has three different, albeit connected, aspects.

Firstly, The Gambia, like many African countries, receives development aid. The long term effects of aid are hard to measure and as a result regularly debated by academics (Dzionek-Kozlowska & Matera, 2016; Gibson, Hoffman, & Jablonski, 2015). Independently of whether or not aid packages are successful in creating economic development, what we have seen is that some countries have become worryingly dependent on foreign aid. In analysis by the international NGO ActionAid, The Gambia takes the 8th place in the "table of 20 most aid dependent countries in 2009" (ActionAid, 2011, p. 20). In 2014 however, the European Union (EU) blocked €13 million of aid in response to controversial human rights abuses of President Jammeh (Euractiv, 2014). The U.S. simultaneously dropped The Gambia from a trade deal (Hultin, 2017). Jammeh was then left to find alternative aid partners, such as Middle Eastern benefactors that more easily turned a blind eye to human rights controversies (Hultin, 2017). The challenge for Barrow is either to restore previously existing aid relations or reduce Gambia's dependency on foreign aid, or both.

The second economic challenge for The Gambia's new government is migration. The Gambia suffers from a large brain drain. Many young Gambians decide to leave the country out of a combination of fear, hopelessness and lack of economic opportunity. Job opportunities are rare and under Jammeh chances of future economic development were considered very low. However, as EU migration policies hardened over the past five years, many Gambian refugees were refused access as

they are defined as economic migrants, in contrast to political refugees from Mali, Eritrea or Syria (Embiricos, 2016). Preventing or at least limiting the flow of sub-Saharan migrants was one of the counterarguments by the Southern-European countries still in favor of providing aid to Gambia in 2014 (Euractiv, 2014). The prevention of (economic) migration is not just a key theme for populists in Italy or Hungary, it has been a major theme in Barrow's campaign. The departure of a large segment of the young male population has major economic consequences for The Gambia's hope for growth. Barrow's challenge is to create more jobs and transform the economic system to take away incentives to leave (Hultin, 2017).

Tourism brings the third challenge for The Gambia's new government. Regional news network Jollof News reported in 2015 that the tourism sector was responsible for approximately 16 to 20 percent of The Gambia's Gross Domestic Product (GDP) (Jollof Media Network, 2015). Only agriculture provides a larger segment of Gambia's GDP. Tourists, mostly from Western Europe (the UK, the Netherlands, Germany and Sweden are named by Hultin), are an important source of foreign currency and exchange for the Gambian economy. However, two crises have recently impacted the flow of European tourists. First, the 2014-2015 Ebola crisis in the regional neighborhood in Guinea, Sierra Leone and Liberia. Confusing reports about the potential risks of the disease spreading resulted in a decline of the number of tourists to Gambia, although the disease never actually spread to Gambia (Jollof Media Network, 2015). Secondly, the emergency situation and resulting evacuations after Jammeh refused to leave office have also significantly harmed the short term prospects of Gambia's tourism sector. The challenge for Barrow is either to recover growth in The Gambia's tourism sector or to transform the country's economy to reduce reliance on this volatile sector. Or perhaps, again, both are possible simultaneously.

The last of the three challenges is central in this study: will Barrow be able to either recover growth in the tourism sector or transform the country's economy. The following sections address the research goal and research questions with which this thesis will tackle Barrow's challenge. After the research objectives are made clear, their relevance is discussed in two separate sections for societal and academic relevance.

Chapter 2 constructs a theoretical framework. A multidisciplinary approach is used to introduce the reader to tourism theory and challenges that come with tourism in developing contexts. Chapter 3 discusses the research methods, it particularly explains the qualitative approach of this study.

Following the three introductory chapters, the case description starts off with a history of The Gambia and its tourism sector. The case description also sets the scene of the fieldwork conducted for the purpose of this study. Chapter 5 then provides analysis of the data gathered during fieldwork and in official documents. By the end of the data analysis, all sub-questions of the research have been discussed, so the last chapter answers the main research question in the form of a conclusion.

1.1. Research Goals

This study focuses on the potential and importance of The Gambia's tourism sector for the country's development, specifically after Barrow's inauguration as president. Due to its central role in the country's economy it may hold the key to the economic challenges Barrow faces. These ideas build on earlier debates on the role the Gambian government should take in its tourist sector (Dieke, 1993; Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995; Davidson & Sahli, 2014). A better understanding of the tourism sector's role and potential under the new regime can not only help The Gambia with its economic challenges, but it can also contribute to the academic understanding of tourism's role in

development. Section 1.4 on academic relevance elaborates on this statement. Based on the above considerations, the research goal is formulated as:

> *To create a deeper understanding of the interrelationships between tourism and development policy after the regime change in the Gambia, through interviews in both the private and the public sphere.*

When this goal is reached, this Master thesis can be a contribution to the academic debate on developmental tourism, but it will mostly contribute to the understanding of the Gambian context specifically.

1.2. Research Questions

To complete the research goal, the following research question needs to be answered. The research question is further separated into various sub-questions. These sub-questions are of a smaller and more operational nature. The research will directly answer the sub-questions and their answers will be combined to formulate an overall conclusion of the central research question. The main research question is as follows:

> *How will the tourism sector contribute to the economic development of The Gambia after the 2016 elections, compared to past trends in The Gambia's economic development?*

There are different types of research questions: "A basic categorization scheme for the types of questions is the familiar series: 'who', 'what', 'where', 'how' and 'why'." (Yin, 2009, p. 5). Using these basic categorizations, it seems obvious that this question is a typical 'how' question. However, there is also a 'what' element in the question. To figure out how tourism contributes to development in the future, the question 'what was the role of tourism in The Gambia's previous economic development?', is important and relevant to address as well. The dual nature of the 'what' and 'how' research question is also reflected in the sub-questions, with the first two dealing primarily with the 'what' element and the next three with the 'how' element.

Another categorization of research questions is between descriptive, analytical and explorative questions. This research question is explorative, as it aims to predict what will happen based on past trends. This is in contrast to an analytical question that would look more like 'what caused the outcome of the 2016 elections in the Gambia?', for example. There is however also a descriptive element to the research question. The explorative and descriptive elements are split similarly to the 'what' and 'how' elements, and are also visible in respectively the first two and last three sub-questions.

The various sub-questions are the following:

1. *What is the history of The Gambia's tourism sector?*
2. *To what extent is tourism a significant contributor to The Gambia's national development?*
3. *What was the position of tourism as a political priority in The Gambia under President Jammeh?*
4. *What is the socio-economic impact of tourism in The Gambia?*
5. *To what extent do the first months of Barrow's presidency indicate any changes in the tourism sector?*

1.3. Societal Relevance

This section discusses the societal relevance of the thesis. To do so, it first discusses some of the dominant narratives on African development, from economic as well as policy perspectives. It then places The Gambia in the context of the wider development debate. Next, it looks at the geographic relevance of research into tourism's role in development. Finally, it places this thesis within those wider societal debates.

The 2010s have been marked by an increased optimism for the development of Africa. *The Economist* writes of "Africa's Hopeful Economies" (The Economist, 2011) and a year later a *TIME Magazine* article is titled "Africa Rising" (Perry, 2012). This was a new narrative for a continent that had been plagued by genocide and wars and was named "The hopeless continent" just a decade earlier (The Economist, 2000). The main arguments for this new narrative are: GDP growth, a rising number of African millionaires (and even billionaires) and a growing middle class. However, the rise of Africa looks different than development on other continents, and stands on shaky foundations.

Africa's growing middle class is defined by the African Development Bank (AfDB) as those with a daily consumption between $2 and $20 (Ncube, Lufumpa, & Kayizzi-Mugerwa, 2011). However, the bottom segment of that scale, which is where most of the growth takes place, is not at all a comfortable financial situation. Many Africans may have more to spend than their ancestors that lived off the land, but they also deal with higher costs of living in urban environments.

Most of the GDP growth that many take as a proof of Africa's rising is found in sectors such as banking, retail, telecom and tourism. In other words, African economies are skipping the steps that laid the foundation of European and Asian economic development: modernized agriculture and manufacturing (Rowden, 2013; Vlasblom, 2012). This issue has been mentioned in recent reports, such as the AfDB *2018 Economic Outlook*: "challenges remain, especially for the structural transformations that would create more jobs and reduce poverty by deepening investment in agriculture and developing agricultural value chains to spur modern manufacturing and services." (African Development Bank, 2018, p. 1).

The AfDB quote touches upon a third challenge to the Africa Rising narrative: employment. Due to the large demographic growth in Africa, and concentration of economic growth in urban service industries, (youth) unemployment has become one of the primary issues for many African countries. The impact of Africa's unemployment reaches beyond the continent's borders, as unemployed African youths regularly attempt illegal migration to Europe. Due to a lack of opportunities in their home country, the life threatening journey through the Sahara and over the Mediterranean has become the only escape for many. Development aid policy in many European countries is increasingly targeting 'the root causes of migration', by stimulation of employment and economic opportunities in Africa, a trend that is visible as well in the new Dutch development policy (Ministerie van Buitenlandse Zaken, 2018).

Many of these trends are also visible in The Gambia: high rates of urbanization, youth unemployment, emigration and an economy that relies on the service industry for growth. Tourism is one of the primary branches of that urban service economy and has become a reliance.

Hotels provide job opportunities and tourists bring new currency (whether they pay a tour guide, a market stall or a restaurant) into the economy. Tourists have been the reason for new economic activities, such as the souvenir stalls in Bakau or the clubs and bars in Kololi. However, these impacts of tourists are rather hard to measure, due to their indirect and often informal nature. Official statistics on global tourism trends often speak in terms of tourist arrivals or nights stayed (World Tourism Organization, 2005), while such a statistic does not show how much those tourists

spent in their destination's economy. Additionally, tourism is highly seasonal and all employment and profit gained by tourism is highly concentrated in the touristic season, from December to February in Gambia's case, or October to April at best. This has been the modus operandi since the industry's inception in The Gambia (Dieke, 1993).

With the empty state coffers that Barrow is left with, tourism becomes potentially more important to the economy than before. Many Gambian locals shop in the large marketplaces, where goods are exchanged in market stalls, with no interference of the government. Taxis are a widely used transportation method, their yellow and green presence on the road is impossible to miss, but again most payments in a taxi take place informally (although the driver was possibly taxed when purchasing the taxi). These are just two examples of the large informal economy in The Gambia and many other African countries. The tourism sector however is formalized and more easily taxed, making this a lonely source of government income. With The Gambia's limited industrial and agricultural export, few other sources exist as of now. The taxes paid by hotels are an important asset to the national government (Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995).

Considering the trends in international development discourse, research on the potential for economic transformation in The Gambia is important now more than ever. The 2016 elections, along with the international momentum of the 'root causes agenda', provide an opportunity to transform the Gambian economy and build a foundation of modern agriculture that the urban service industry and an emerging manufacturing industry can flourish on.

This section so far has discussed societal relevance from the perspective of economic development. However, there is also an important geographic relevance of research in The Gambia's tourism sector. Tourism in The Gambia is an enabler and enforcer of inequality on two different scales.

Firstly, inequality at the international scale. As a result of globalization and affordable transport possibilities, more and more people (specifically parts of the Western upper class) wish to travel the world with two goals: to visit places for their natural beauty and for their 'authenticity'. The market for such international tourism is marked by inequalities: between the multinational tourism industry and the destination economy, and between the wealthy tourist and the destination community. These inequalities have an economic aspect and a spatial one. Economically speaking, the unequal relationship between international tourism and a developing destination creates a power position for Western businesses and tourists. The tourism sector is a volatile playing field and a destination's popularity can change drastically after political or social instability. Consider for example the attack in Nice on Quatorze Julliet in 2016, usually a popular summer destination for countless European tourists. Tourists will similarly consider the unrest in Gambia in December 2016 and January 2017 before choosing their destination and perhaps choose a different beach destination instead. The tourist's choice has significant impacts on the destination's economy, which relies on tourist arrivals without being able to control them.

Secondly, spatial inequality is created and reinforced on the national scale through tourism. Popular destinations attract tourists and become economic hubs as a result. The economic success of that region allows it to further develop its tourism infrastructure, further solidifying its position over other parts of the country that receive less benefits from tourist arrivals. These effects are strengthened by the urbanization trend, as the emigration of youths further deprives peripheral areas of economic activity. While tourism is not the sole cause of spatial inequality, it can act as both a trigger for it and as a reinforcing factor.

Based on the dominant narratives in development policy and the effects of tourism in developing countries, a study of tourism in The Gambia has a high degree of societal relevance. With the increasing possibilities of international (air) travel in a globalizing world, tourism shows no signs of

stopping, with all the effects that come with that. The inequalities that tourism reinforces can further strengthen the vicious circle of youth unemployment and migration in developing countries. This thesis therefore contributes to the policy discussions on economic transformation in Africa, youth unemployment and root causes of migration. Additionally, it contributes to an understanding of tourism's role in the economic and spatial inequality within The Gambia.

1.4. Academic Relevance

Tourism has been a part of the academic discussion on development since the late 1960s and early 1970s, as part of a greater trend from inward-oriented development strategies to outward-oriented strategies (Brohman, 1996). Since tourism became a viable development strategy, the academic world has seen several discourses on its importance and proper application. This section discusses the academic relevance of the present research project, by analyzing the evolution of the academic discussion on tourism and discussing the lacunae of knowledge still open today. This section focuses purely on the academic discussion, leaving open some of the details of the mentioned theories. In Chapter 2, the theoretical framework will go further in depth on the relevant theories, describing the full frame of theories used for this research.

In the late 1960s, development studies transitioned to a primarily outward-oriented development strategy. This outward orientation entails several shifts in the strategies of developing countries, among others: an increase in development funds by organizations like the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank (Abbot, 1993); an increased focus on international trade; and an export-oriented industry, following the example of East Asian countries that found success this way. Tourism was a natural addition to this list, as tourists would bring foreign exchange and capital and increase overall production and employment of the country (Brohman, 1996).

Following the rapid technological development in the transport industry, mass travel and commercial flying became realities from the late 1960s and early 1970s on. The initial growth of the industry was a game changer, as the international tourist arrivals increased from 25 million in 1950 to 443 million in 1990 (Brohman, 1996, p. 52), this trend was clearly reflected as well in the tourism expenditures which during the same period grew from $2 billion to $254 billion (Brohman, 1996, p. 52). In his 1997 article, John Brohman mentions that projections at that time put the amount of international tourist arrivals up to 600 million in 2000 (Brohman, 1996, p. 52). This prediction proved no exaggeration, as in 2007 there were over 700 million tourist arrivals, generating up to $850 billion in revenue (Bowman, 2011). The initial burst of growth slowed down in the 1980s, but a steady annual growth continued. By 1988, Edward Inskeep cites the World Tourism Organization (WTO) as follows:

> "Tourism has comprised about 5 percent of world trade for several years and is second only to oil and oil products as the largest item of international trade (World Tourism Organization 1986a)" (Inskeep, 1988, p. 361)

In addition to the international tourist movements, a huge sector of domestic tourism had also emerged, including business trips and other non-holiday purposes (Inskeep, 1988). By the 1980s it was clear that tourism was here to stay and would have a clear impact on the world.

However, the global share in this growing industry was not evenly spread throughout the world, with the global North hosting a large share of the growth (Brohman, 1996). It was not until the 1990s and 2000s that the South's share of the growth began to increase. In 1990 the global South was responsible for approximately 20% of international tourist arrivals (Brohman, 1996). However,

within the global South the tourism sector has historically been monopolized by only several destinations. For Africa, which was responsible for 11% of international tourist arrivals in 1990, seven of Africa's fifty-four countries were the destination for 80% of these travelers. The primary destinations were, and still are (despite an interruption caused by the Arab Spring): Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, Kenya and South Africa (Brohman, 1996). If we further differentiate between developing countries and the Least Developed Countries (LDCs), the WTO data shows that LDCs only have a share of approximately 3% of international tourist arrivals (World Tourism Organization, 2005). From 2001 onward, the growth in LDCs has however overtaken the growth in developing countries, which spells hope for the LDCs.

Since the emergence of global tourism, various scientific fields have become increasingly interested in this sector. Works on tourism are now regularly found in development studies (Brohman, 1996; Davidson & Sahli, 2014; Novelli, Morgan, Mitchell, & Ivanov, 2015), spatial planning (Inskeep, 1988; Timothy, 1998), sociology (Rid, Ezeuduji, & Probst-Haider, 2014), business administration (Carlisle, Kunc, Jones, & Tiffin, 2013) and geography (Carlisle & Jones, 2012; Cohen & Cohen, 2015). The interdisciplinary nature of tourism studies has forged a dynamic academic field.

In the 1980s and 1990s several authors recognized a worrying trend in the growing tourism sector. Already in 1982 Stephen Britton was among the first to warn for a great dependency problem in developing country tourism. Countries of the global South had begun to use tourism as a legitimate strategy for development, but in doing so they became part of a global playing field in which multinational and Western-based companies were dominant (Britton, 1982). As a result, the construction, coordination, operation and profits of (mass) tourism industries were monopolized by transnational corporations (Britton, 1982, p. 335; Brohman, 1996, p. 54).

To combat this external dependency, which greatly decreases the potential growth and development in the destination country, a variety of solutions has been formulated over the following decades. There came calls for alternative tourism (Butler, 1990), sustainable tourism (Bramwell, 2011), pro-poor tourism (Scheyvens, 2009), rural tourism (Rid, Ezeuduji, & Probst-Haider, 2014) and any other form of tourism that varied from the Western-dominated mass tourism that Britton, Brohman and others were so critical of.

However, the translation of sustainable development theories into comprehensive tourism policy for developing countries and LDCs specifically has proven to be a challenge. Different authors have proposed methods of planning tourism, which sum up guidelines and best practices for local, regional and national governments (Inskeep, 1988; Timothy, 1998; Liu & Wall, 2006). Empirical work of Lee Davidson and Mondher Sahli shows that the national policy framework plays a key role in determining the way foreign investments in tourism pay off in the form of local, regional and national development (Davidson & Sahli, 2014). Many foreign investments, however, take place in the mass tourism segment (i.e. hotels and beach resorts), limiting potential for local entrepreneurship (Pinfold, 2001; Carlisle, Kunc, Jones, & Tiffin, 2013). In the very place where this national policy framework is most often lacking, tourism planning studies fall short, as its proposals are often too idealistic or one-dimensional for implementation in developing contexts (Liu & Wall, 2006).

With the recent political transition in The Gambia, new challenges emerged for the country, but there is also a new space of opportunities (Hultin, 2017). In the dawn of what the locals optimistically call 'The New Gambia', the country's economy is in dire need of revival. The country relies on a declining groundnut export and highly seasonal agriculture, alongside the tourism industry. Tourism has the potential to play a crucial role in the country's short and medium term development. The political environment of 'The New Gambia' is open to change and (perhaps unrealistically) optimistic following the peaceful transition from Jammeh to Barrow. Therefore, The Gambia is now, of all times, a valuable case to study tourism in developing countries. By looking at

the potential changes in the sector following the transition of January 2017 as they are happening, this research can contribute to the literature on the relationship between development and tourism, the potential of sustainable tourism in LDCs and most of all the role of government policy in tourism development. The latter fills a gap in the present knowledge of tourism planning, which as a field has shied away from the developing world more so than other disciplines interested in tourism developments.

2. Discussion of theory

Before delving into the academic discussion on tourism in developing contexts, several key terms and concepts are operationalized. Section 2.2 then picks up the thread that Section 1.4 on academic relevance began. Some of the key authors return, but more perspectives are added to form two competing theoretical frameworks. Using the framework of theory that Section 2.2 provides, preliminary answers to the sub-questions of this research are given. These result in four competing hypotheses in Section 2.3.

2.1. Operationalization

Before moving on to discuss the theoretical framework, some concepts require further definition. These are concepts that are the subject of active academic discussions, so they are up for interpretation. This section provides the definitions that are used in this thesis. The following terms are discussed here: 'political economy', 'neopatrimonialism' and 'dependency'. Additionally, some attention is given to the definitions of the terms 'tourism sector' (or -industry) and 'development', because they play a crucial role throughout this study.

Tourism in developing contexts is less institutionalized than the ideal situation sketched in theory; instead the political, economic and social spheres are highly interrelated. Therefore, Bill Bramwell suggests using a political economy approach to study tourism in developing destinations (Bramwell, 2011, p. 460). The political economy approach is a form of social theory that considers the social system as a whole, acknowledging that political, economic and social spheres can be highly interrelated. This approach was also pioneered by Britton in his theory of tourism and dependency (Britton, 1982).

The distinction between the economic interests of tourism businesses and the political interests of governance is key. Bramwell cites Mowforth and Munt (2009, p. 297), who state that previous studies of tourism governance in developing context were characterized by "a failure to set policy and action in a broader and more critical framework which acknowledges that there are competing interests" (Bramwell, 2011, p. 462). To create such a framework, a relational approach is useful to describe the political, economic and social spheres. The basic idea of a relational approach is that the political sphere, in which governance occurs, is interdependent with other existing institutions (be they cultural or economic or other) and therefore socially embedded in a nation's society. The example of Bramwell is followed, by using a political economy approach in this thesis, and emphasizing relations between the political, institutional and economic spheres when possible.

However, in addition to the interrelation between political, economic and social spheres, there is another characteristic that sets African governance apart from what we are used to in the West. African regimes are regularly described as neo-patrimonial, an institutional format in which "the chief executive maintains authority through personal patronage, rather than through ideology or law." (Bratton & Van de Walle, 1994, p. 458). What differentiates the modern African state system from pre-colonial systems, which can be considered 'patrimonial'? The formal structure of neopatrimonialism resembles that of an internationally recognized form of government, such as parliamentary, presidential or other democracy, with legal checks and balances and constitutional arrangements in place. However, the web of patron-client relations that is characteristic of patrimonial ruling exists within that formal structure (Englebert & Dunn, 2013). Ministers are clients

to the president, but maintain their own clientele as well. Because clients owe their patron loyalty and would-be clients are always looking to prove themselves, neopatrimonialism is vulnerable to factionalism and political instability. Due to the secondary nature of ideology and law for a personal ruler, many scholars are critical of the system as a facilitator of development: "African states float, but do not navigate. State institutions are hollowed out by neopatrimonialism." (Hyden, 2006, cited in Englebert & Dunn, 2013, p. 140).

Neopatrimonialism is used as an argument for Africa's troublesome development by some. Another popular argument is found in dependency theory. In its most classic form, the dependency argument is based on Marxist theory. Marx considered the state as the executive of the (capitalist) bourgeoisie and argued that the bourgeoisie's influence does harm to the proletariat, because its only priority is the maximization of profit. This theory is used as an argument for Africa's lack of development, despite the capitalist bourgeoisie being exceptionally small on the continent. Instead, external economic actors are the influencers that (sub-Saharan) African countries are dependent on (Amin, 1972). Amin argues that African societies are shaped according to the needs of dominant, capitalist Western societies. This fundamental idea has since been translated into various forms of dependency, one of which is used in the next section. Dependency theory is clearly related to postcolonial thinking, because it argues that colonial power relations persist after independence. This process is described by Englebert and Dunn: "Ultimately, decolonization was a transfer of power within an enduring institutional arrangement. It modified the relationship between the colony and the colonial power, but it did not destroy the colonial project per se." (Englebert & Dunn, 2013, p. 39).

With this, three key concepts have been defined: the political-economy approach, Africa's neo-patrimonialist ruling systems, and dependency theory. These terms will be used regularly throughout the thesis and are key to understanding The Gambia's struggle with inequality, tourism and underdevelopment. Some additional terms require attention, due to their regular usage in the thesis. Firstly, tourism sector and tourism industry will be used mostly interchangeably throughout the thesis. As a general rule of thumb, when talking about tourism as a part of the greater system that is the Gambian economy, it will be referred to as a sector. When tourism is referred to as an employer or an association of private businesses, it will be referred to as an industry. Secondly, development is a regularly returning theme in the thesis. The author attempts to look beyond development as simply a factor of economic growth (measured in GDP growth), but also look towards factors such as human rights, equality and sustainability. The United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) offer a framework to achieve this with.

2.2. Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework consists of three sub-sections. These sections can be considered chronological, as they start with the foundation of the theoretical field: the first pushback against the rise of mass-tourism. These theories consider the dependency international tourism creates for small and developing countries. Next, tourism planning theories are discussed. These theories focus on government policies for tourism, a crucial element in the present research on the relation between the Gambian government and tourism. Thirdly, recent theories of sustainable tourism are discussed, as they are used to assess the degree of sustainability in current developments in Gambian tourism. Overall, this section sketches two competing frameworks: tourism as a cause of dependency versus tourism as a sustainable development strategy. Tourism planning theory can be considered a tool to steer a country's tourism sector between these competing frames.

2.2.1. Mass tourism and dependency theory

Tourism's benefits have never been taken for granted. Even in the early days of the tourism market's explosive growth, there was a general awareness of the cultural clashes, the litter, the overcrowding and other negative effects a large influx of tourists would bring to a destination (Butler, 1990). These downsides were then compared with the positive effects, such as the money that tourists pump into the destination's economy or the potential for entrepreneurship in the emerging market. What was lacking in such studies, according to Stephen Britton, was a comprehensive look at economic and political structures in relation to tourism development, which was beginning to emerge in the developing world as well (Britton, 1982). Using a political economy perspective, Britton wrote a foundational piece on inequality, dependency and tourism development in developing countries.

By entering the international tourism market, a developing country enters a global market and becomes part of the greater globalizing forces and spheres of influence in the world. This was a target of those development policies that were becoming increasingly outward-oriented at the time (Brohman, 1996). However, by entering into this global market, a dependency develops for the developing country. This dependency is visible in two ways: firstly, the indigenous economy disintegrates to varying extents; secondly, a reorientation towards the international market occurs (Britton, 1982). These two layers are greatly interrelated. The international market pushes the indigenous economy into disintegration through its superior capital and scale advantages, while on the other hand the very same disintegration makes it easier for the international market to take over aspects of the indigenous economy. Britton's definition of dependency is as folows:

> "In summary, 'dependency' involves the subordination of national economic autonomy to meet the interests of foreign pressure groups and privileged local classes rather than those development priorities arising from a broader political consensus." (Britton, 1982, p. 334)

What this means for tourism in a developing country context, is that the coordination, construction, operation and profit-generation in the sector are handled by a select group of privileged locals and foreign parties (Britton, 1982). This issue is not unique to tourism, but a common trait of emerging industries in dependent economies. For tourism, these effects are easily proven empirically. Consider for example the construction and ownership of resorts and hotels. Combining a foreign air carrier and foreign owned hotel, with several facilities and services already prepaid as part of the package deal, Jo Ann Farver argues that only 23% of tourist expenditure found its way into the Gambian economy at the time of her fieldwork (Farver, 1984). That part of tourist expenditure that does not enter the Gambian economy, but instead rotates back into Western hands, is often called 'foreign leakage' in tourism literature (Brohman, 1996). As a result of both the dependency and foreign leakage that tourism creates for developing countries, it has been considered an extended form of imperialism, contributing to the dominating position of the Western world over the developing countries (Butler, 1990).

In addition to international dependency, tourism development has also contributed to spatial inequalities. The establishment of tourist enclaves enforces existing spatial disparities (Brohman, 1996). Tourism development sponsored by transnational capital and often enabled by national policy, has contributed to these inequalities (Brohman, 1996). The dichotomy between tourist enclaves and spaces of poverty traditionally occurs along coastlines, as much of the tourists are interested specifically in coastal areas. The Caribbean islands are an example where a clear distinction can be made between the privileged space along the coast and an underprivileged space in the interior (Brohman, 1996). The arrival of tourists is rarely the sole reason for this inequality, but

it strengthens a previously existing difference between the elites in specific (coastal) areas versus the poverty of the rest of the land. The differences between the elite and the poor increase after the arrival of tourists, as the elite now has a chance to interact with Western capital and Western consumers.

The dependency described above is a result of market forces more so than bad intent. In the political economy perspective, it is crucial to understand both supply and demand. The theory described above can be rephrased in supply and demand terms: Western investors are supplying hotels, air travel and package tours. They do this because they recognize a demand from Western tourists for such products. The introduction of packaged vacations was triggered by two conflicting needs (demands) of tourists. On the one hand, tourists look for novelty and authentic experiences, on the other hand tourists desire the same safety and comfort they are used to at home.

Authenticity, according to Erik Cohen, is a modern value that emerged in the past decades, when travelers began to search for those areas and those people that remained untouched by modernity (Cohen, 1988). However, the difficulty for tourists was that spaces untouched by modernity had no infrastructure to receive them. These places were strange environments that offered no guarantee of safety. The packaged tour could "[bring] together the conflicting psychological needs of tourists for novelty as well as security in strange environments." (Britton, 1982, p. 336). In doing so, Western tourism suppliers could easily control a growing market, and with that the tourists' spending.

Yet the market went beyond the provision of flights and beds for those tourists that seek authenticity. Cohen argues that authenticity is not primordial, it is negotiable and malleable (Cohen, 1988). The arrival of tourists, and indirectly the international market as a whole, changed the very nature of that authenticity that tourists hoped was untouched by modernity. Cohen argues that over time, anything can become authentic:

> "A cultural product, or a trait thereof, which is at one point generally judged as contrived or inauthentic may, in the course of time, become generally recognized as authentic, even by experts." (Cohen, 1988, p. 379)

Should we be worried about the changing nature of what is and is not authentic? Should we preserve cultures in isolated spaces instead of allowing them to be renegotiated by an international market? These are difficult questions to answer, but Cohen still warns us for several negative effects that tourist arrivals can have on the destination's culture.

The process described above can be considered a commoditization of traditional cultures. Commoditization "is a process by which things (and activities) come to be evaluated primarily by their exchange value, in a context of trade" (Cohen, 1988, p. 380). Through the commoditization of cultural traits, they risk losing their traditional cultural, religious and social values. Ceremonies that once held cultural value may become performances valued by their ticket sales instead. However, Cohen does not over-generalize this statement, as counter-examples can also be found. The emergence of a tourist market can also preserve cultural traditions that would otherwise disappear due to industrial goods entering the developing markets. The example Cohen uses is that of the folk crafts, such as woodcarving, which are now rarely demanded by local population, but survive because of the tourist's demand for these *authentic* crafts (Cohen, 1988).

There is an intriguing academic debate on the value of authenticity. Some are of the opinion that tourism means a destruction of a traditional way of life, through for example market competition or government regulations adapted to the needs of the Western traveler (Dahles, 1999). Others argue that adaptation to a changing system is a "desirable and inevitable consequence of economic progress" (Pinfold, 2001, p. 571). Change is a necessity to keep up with reality and one

cannot always stay exactly as pure authenticity might desire. While interesting, the deeper end of this debate is better left to the anthropologist, as this thesis focuses on the relation between tourism and economic development more so than between tourism and culture. While issues of commoditization and authenticity will return throughout the research, the issue of dependency is more relevant.

Based on the theories of Britton, Brohman, Cohen and others mentioned above, there is much space for improvement in the realm of tourism development. Brohman calls for tourism development not to be measured simply by arrival numbers or tourist expenditures, but in the broader frame of development goals of the destination country (Brohman, 1996, p. 60). There is therefore a space for more government planning and where necessary state intervention in tourism development. The following section discusses several theories on what such interventions may look like.

2.2.2. Tourism planning theory

After acknowledging that international tourism has negative side effects, which are more present in developing countries, it becomes clear that government intervention is required to regulate the market. During the late 1980s the field of tourism planning emerged to fill this gap. Its goal is to create a "systemic technical approach" to plan tourism related activities (Inskeep, 1988, p. 360).

Edward Inskeep recognizes the same desire of tourists for continually novel experiences. Tourism became increasingly varied and global in nature in the 1980s, creating a need for tourism planning on all scale levels. On the international scale tourism planning exists in the forms of, for example, the WTO or regional organizations for tourism and travel research and development, yet most tourism planning happens on a (sub-)national scale. On the national scale a tourism development policy should be in place for the planning and implementation of a physical infrastructure, preferably based on several key attractions and destination regions (Inskeep, 1988). Implementation mostly takes place on the regional and local levels, the scales of which are naturally dependent on the size of the country. Planning of specific facilities in and around a resort area happens at the smallest scale, but is still reliant on national level policy and regulations.

Tourism planning should always be treated as a multi-sector field. According to Inskeep, the basic components required for proper tourism development are: attractions and activities; accommodation facilities and services; other tourist facilities and services (including tours, information provision, retail, banks, medical care and public safety); transportation; other infrastructure (including water, electricity, sewage, waste disposal and telecom services); and lastly an institutional framework for marketing, education, legislation and investment policies (Inskeep, 1988). Due to the multi-sector nature of tourism development, these components are best realized by a (Inskeep, 1988).

Inskeep considers cooperation the key to successful tourism development. Dallen Timothy agrees with this sentiment and considers cooperative planning the key to a sustainable long-term development of the tourism industry in developing country contexts (Timothy, 1998). Four types of cooperation are necessary to achieve the basic components mentioned above: between government agencies, between levels of government, between same level polities (e.g. between two municipalities), and private-public cooperation.

Yet, it is exactly in developing countries that such cooperation struggles to get off the ground. The cooperative form of tourism planning aims for a comprehensive strategy, but the levels of communication and cooperation in the planning traditions of developing countries make this a faraway target (Timothy, 1998). Based on this conclusion, Timothy calls for more research on tourism

planning in developing contexts, by stating that those contexts lead to significantly different challenges than those in developed societies (Timothy, 1998, p. 66).

2.2.3. Sustainable tourism alternatives

The solutions offered by tourism planning are successful in preventing several of the negative externalities of tourism in many developed contexts; however, tourism planning as described in Section 2.2.2 remains largely untested in developing countries. Either way, many agree that governance is the key to success when tackling the negative externalities of tourism. Bill Bramwell argues that governance is the tool with which destinations can adapt to the international system and its changing markets (Bramwell, 2011). His argument is part of a new theoretical framework that has emerged in response to the dependency frame as outlined before. Many authors have taken up the challenge of designing a tourism sector as a healthy component of a sustainable development strategy.

Sustainable tourism theory is a meandering field that has been developing for several decades by now. In fact, Stephen Britton himself laid the basis for it when discussing how developing countries could overcome the international dependency that tourism created. However, since his 1980s work, the term 'sustainable tourism' has become a buzzword applied into nearly all tourism contexts. Some argued for sustainable development in tourism, others for sustainable tourism. The different interpretations of this popular concept lead to the interesting conclusion of the WTO that sustainable tourism can not be defined, because "it is a site specific or destination-specific concept and therefore should be defined on a case-by-case basis" (Hardy, Beeton, & Peason, 2002, p. 484).

In an effort to properly position sustainable tourism theory within the broader spectrum of tourism theory, Hardy and colleagues define three different but compatible visions that form the basis of the concept of sustainable tourism: the conservation vision (alternatively called the ecological vision), the economic vision, and the community vision (Hardy, Beeton, & Peason, 2002).

The oldest of the three visions is the conservation vision, which dates back far beyond modern day sustainability debates. Environmental conservation can be traced back to Mesopotamian and Greek societies and has fluctuated in importance in European society since then. It came back prominently in the romantic era in the nineteenth century and in 1960s environmental protection took center stage again. This revival of environmental protection was marked by several key events such as the foundation of the WWF (1961) and the publication of *Silent Spring* (1962, by Rachel Carson) and *Tragedy of the Commons* (1968, by Garrett Hardin).

As a result of the rising prominence of the conservation vision, the ecological consequences of economic expansion gained increased attention. Key publications that influenced the vision of sustainable economic development include *Limits to Growth* (1972, by the Club of Rome) and *Our Common Future* (1987, by the World Commission on Environment and Development, also known as the 'Brundtland Report'). Tourism was one of many sectors that wished to link its name to this increasingly popular sustainable economic vision (Hardy, Beeton, & Peason, 2002).

The third vision that contributed to the formation of sustainable tourism theory is the increased importance of socio-cultural factors. The key premise of the community vision is that peripheral communities should benefit from globalization and tourism. For tourism studies this meant a change in attitudes towards the host community in tourist destinations. While previously the sector was defined by the supply and demand relationship between tourists and hotels, residents of the destination became an integrated part (or resource) in the 'hospitality atmosphere' (Hardy, Beeton, & Peason, 2002). Many argue that this is an important change in discourse that helps tackle

dependency issues. Key authors include Regina Scheyvens (Douglas, 2006; Scheyvens, 2009) and Bill Bramwell (Bramwell, 2011; Bramwell, 2015).

Because the concept of sustainable tourism covers such a broad range of interests and has a normative nature, it has been argued by some to be closer to an ideology than to an operational definition. One definition that is used by Finnish scholar Jarrko Saarinen is: "tourism which is economically viable but does not destroy the resources on which the future of tourism will depend, notably the physical environment and the social fabric of the host community" (Swarbrooke, 1999, as cited in Saarinen, 2006, p. 1124). However, as a result of the various visions that form the foundation of the term, different traditions have formed in sustainable tourism theory. Saarinen recognizes three significant ones: the resource-based tradition, the activity-based tradition, and the community-based tradition.

The resource-based tradition assumes the existence of a measurable limit to the amount of tourists a specific destination can facilitate: "The limits to the growth and impacts [of tourism] are evaluated in relation to the resources used in tourism and the assumed or known natural or original (non-tourism) conditions" (Saarinen, 2006, p. 1127). The resource-based tradition focuses mostly on the ecological impact of tourism, partly because it is easier to measure ecological limits to tourism than societal or economic limits.

The activity-based tradition denies the deterministic nature of limits to tourism's growth. Instead, it believes in a more dynamic interaction between tourism, the economy and the environment. Authors in this tradition look at tourism mostly as an economic activity, with the environment playing a role as a malleable structure: "In order to grow and develop, the [tourism] industry and other related actors will modify the environment, the resources, for their needs." (Saarinen, 2006, p. 1128). Product development and marketing efforts play a crucial role, as they allow destination governments to alter the limits to their tourism sector's growth, and thus keeping it economically sustainable. A situation of non-growth simply means that further alterations are needed, not that a deterministic limit is reached.

The last tradition is the community-based tradition. This tradition does believe in the existence of limits to tourism, but does not consider them to be deterministic like the resource-based limits. Instead, limits to tourism are considered a negotiable factor between the tourists and the destination. Limits to tourism are in other words a social construct:

> "Sustainability [in community-based tourism] refers to the maximum levels of the known or perceived impacts of tourism that are permissible in a certain time-space context before the negative impacts are considered to be too disturbing from the perspectives of specific social, cultural, political, or economic actors who possess sufficient power over the chosen indicators and criteria." (Saarinen, 2006, p. 1130)

Participation by the destination community is the key characteristic of this tradition. However, because host communities are often plural and with competing interests, community-based sustainable tourism does not automatically lead to a situation of equal representation, equal benefits or the abolishment of dependency.

Two basic assumptions underlie the three different traditions in sustainable tourism theory. The first is that there is such a thing as a 'carrying capacity': a limit to the amount of tourists that can sustainably travel to any given destination. A generally accepted definition of carrying capacity is:

> "the maximum number of people who can use a site without any unacceptable alteration in the physical environment and without any unacceptable decline in the quality of the experience gained by tourists" (Saarinen, 2006, p. 1125)

However, between the different traditions and different authors, there are varying applications of the term. It appears as if there are at least six different types of carrying capacities: physical, economic, perceptual, social, ecological, and political (Saarinen, 2006). Variations also exists when it comes to the response to limited capacity. The resource-based tradition is in favor of stopping the growth of tourism when capacity is reached. The activity-based tradition believes a destination can expand or overcome limits to carrying capacity through economic policy, using product development and marketing. The community-based tradition argues that carrying capacity is a social construct that must be negotiated with destination communities.

A second base assumption of tourism theory is that private actors in tourism are chasing commercial interests: "Businesses [referring to the tourism sector] are in existence to make profits, not to serve the poor." (Scheyvens, 2009, p. 193). To prevent negative externalities (environmental, social or other) of their actions is not the primary objective of tourism businesses, only limited voluntary actions or self-regulation will work towards the prevention of externalities (Bramwell, 2011). David Harrison responds that businesses' primary priority is actually not profit, but survival of the business and therefore there are sometimes "strong pragmatic reasons for having destination residents on your side." (Harrison, 2009, p. 2). All three cited authors can be considered part of the community-based tradition in sustainable tourism theory, despite different responses to the question of private versus public interests.

Despite the difficulty in defining sustainable tourism theory and the broadness of the various theories, the next section portrays the three different approaches in a conceptual model.

2.2.4. Conceptual Model

Dependency theory and sustainable tourism theory both provide theoretical insights in the impact of tourism. To better understand the differences and similarities between the different theoretical approaches, this section provides a conceptual base model and applies the two different theories to that base.

The base model is simple. In essence, all tourism theories mentioned agree on the following relation of tourism with the economy: more tourists leads to more consumption in the destination economy, more consumption means economic growth, or at the very least to a change in the economic situation. That change in the economic situation impacts the tourism sector, in the case of growth it would mean new investments for example. This basic economic model forms a small closed triangle:

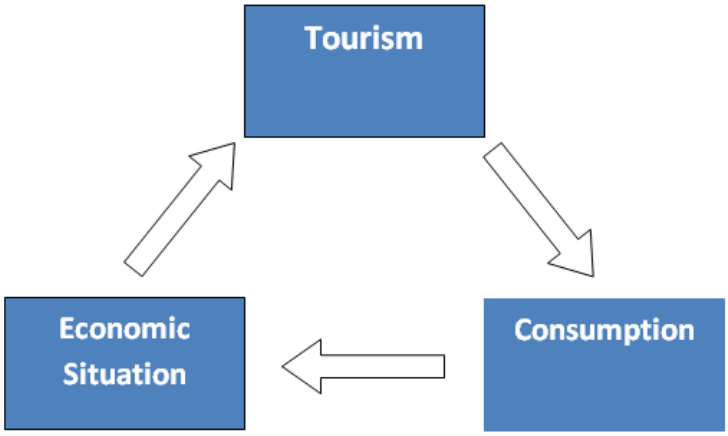


Figure 1 The base relation between tourism and the economy before application of theories.

When the dependency theory of Britton and Brohman is applied to this simplified base, a new variable enters the model: foreign interest. This foreign interest has two relations with the existing model. Firstly, Britton makes us aware of the major influence that foreign interest has on the presence of tourism in a third world destination. This influence becomes a dependency when the relation between foreign interests and tourism becomes more important than the relation between the domestic economic situation and tourism. In the words of Briton's definition of dependency, when the development of tourism is determined by the interests of foreign pressure groups instead of domestic development priorities arising from political consensus, we may speak of a dependency. Secondly, foreign leakages also go towards foreign interest groups. Because the consumption by tourists is a finite source of income, each unit of consumption that goes towards foreign interests groups, does not go to the domestic economic situation. It might be invested back into tourism, but if the resulting consumption 'leaks' again, the domestic economy is still not better off. These two roles of foreign interests enter the model as following:

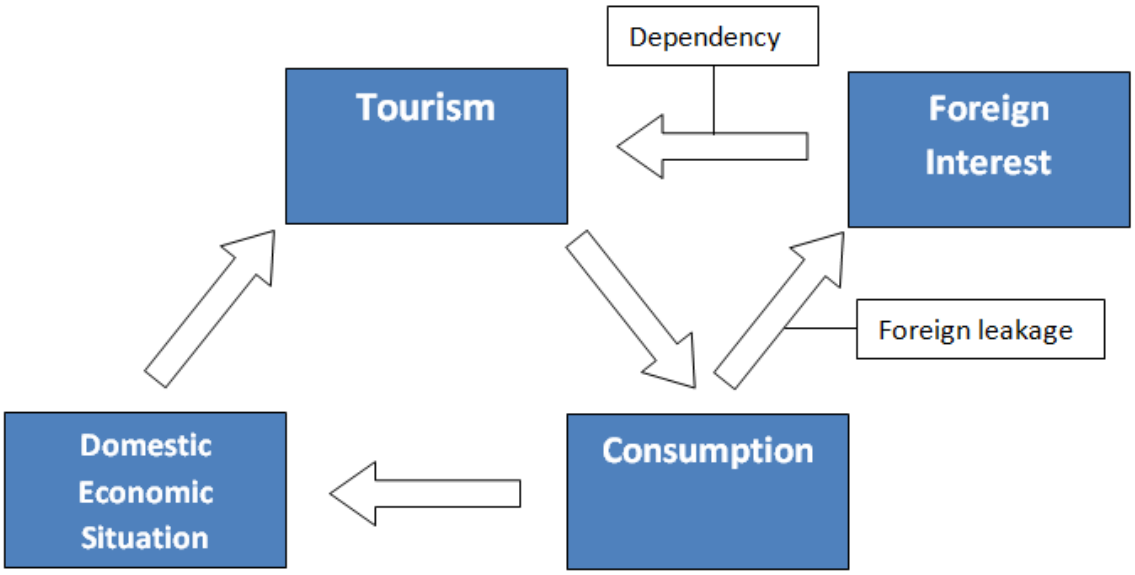


Figure 2 Dependency theory applied to the conceptual base model.

Sustainable tourism theories provide a different vision on the base conceptual model. For the sake of clarity, the next model excludes the foreign interest variable introduced above, but that does not mean that the two models are incompatible.

The primary addition of sustainable tourism theory is that there is a carrying capacity in every destination. This capacity determines the amount of consumption possible in that destination. Limits to the consumption create a feedback loop back to tourism: more tourism leads to more consumption, but because of carrying capacity more consumption may actually limit the attractiveness of the destination. Or at least limit the growth of tourism that would be the regular result of the base model, in which more consumption would lead to economic growth which can be reinvested into tourism.

The deterministic limitation that carrying capacity puts onto consumption fits the resource-based tradition of sustainable tourism. The model also includes the activity-based and community-based tradition. To the left is the activity-based model: economic growth can be used to fund tourism planning (including product development and marketing) which can expand the carrying capacity. To the right is the community-based model: the carrying capacity is a social construct that can be negotiated with the destination community.

Just like the sustainable tourism model and the dependency model can co-exist, so too all three traditions of sustainable tourism theory can co-exist.

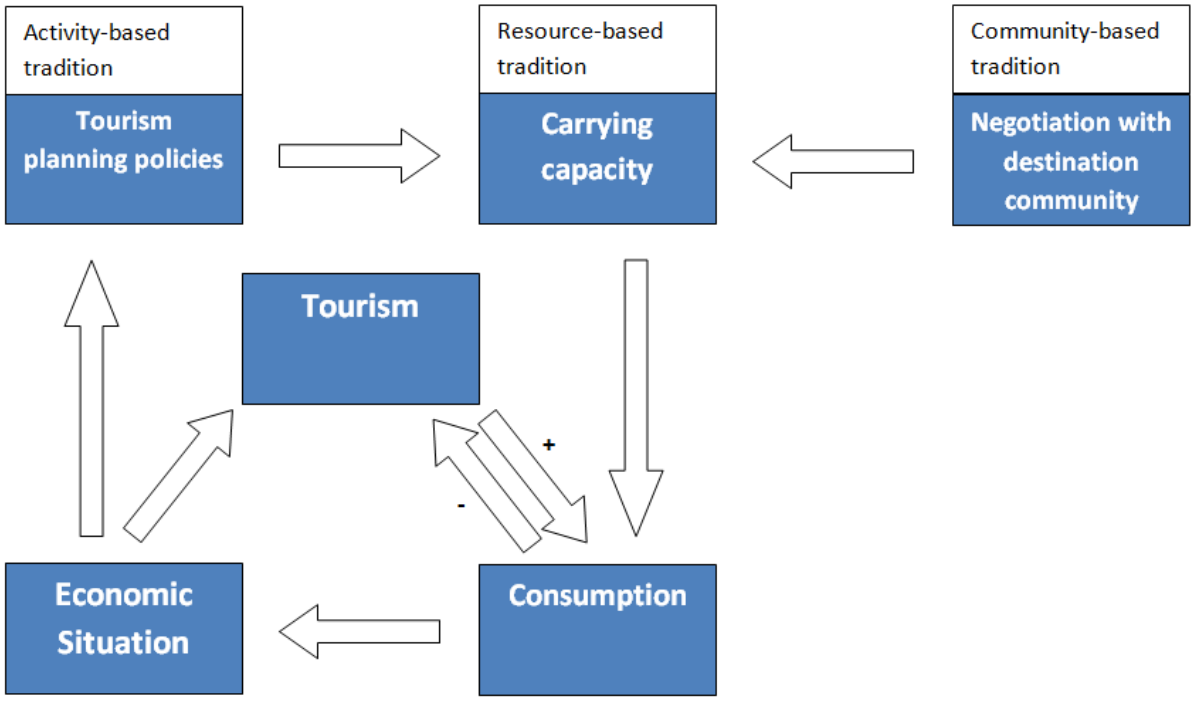


Figure 3 Sustainable tourism theory applied to the conceptual base model.

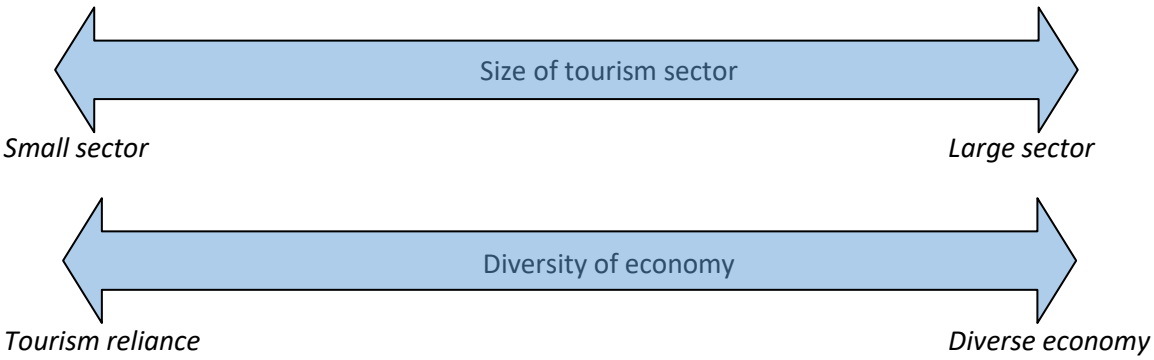
For the sake of simplicity and readability, the three models used above exclude some of the externalities that have featured in the theoretical framework. Most notably are neopatrimonialism and commoditization. Neopatrimonialism could be implemented at two points in the model: as a leakage after consumption due to corruption and as an interaction variable affecting the degree to which an improved economic situation is translated into growth of tourism. The presence of neopatrimonialism impacts the effectiveness of policymaking for tourism growth negatively. Commoditization can be implemented into the model as an externality that consumption by tourists causes and foreign interests contribute to.

2.3. Hypotheses

The theory allows a provisional answering to the research questions of Section 1.1. and 1.2. There is however no clear cut prediction of how tourism will contribute to The Gambia's development. There is critical work on the role of tourism on the one hand and optimism for sustainable tourism on the other. Similarly, there is doubt over the effectiveness of African governance on the one hand and optimism for The New Gambia on the other. To risk pigeonholing the research into a single direction, the choices has been made to define four contrasting hypotheses.

As a reminder to the reader, the research question central to this research is: *How will the tourism sector contribute to the economic development of The Gambia after the 2016 election, compared to past trends in The Gambia's economic development?*

The theory in Section 2.2 provides several handholds to answer this question. Some authors were very critical of tourism as a primary strategy for national development, because of several clear downsides: economic dependency, commoditization, and foreign leakage. While there are definite upsides too, even authors that write about a potential bright future of more sustainable forms of tourism, acknowledge that an economy is unlikely to develop purely based on tourism. There is then not a clear objective answer to the research question, such as: 'growth in the tourism sector is good, because it leads to more economic development'. Because tourism on its own is unlikely to create sustainable economic growth, a growing tourism sector is only beneficial if it comes combined with growth in other sectors. Therefore we need two axes: size of the tourism sector and diversity of the economy. Diversity in this context refers to an economy where agriculture, industry and services are all present and different sectors (e.g. telecom, agri-food, car manufacturing or others) contribute to the GDP in a competitive way.



These two axes are unrelated to each other on paper: a diverse economy does not necessarily mean giving up the tourism sector, nor does a large tourism sector lead to a lack of diversity in all cases. In reality though, there might be difficult choices between diversifying the economy on the one hand and growth of the tourism sector on the other. So, in the case of a developing country, these two axes may potentially be inversely related.

Sub-questions (1) and (2) delve into the Gambia's current position when it comes to the size of the tourism sector and the diversity of its economy respectively. The next three sub-questions delve into the question of how the Gambia will develop on these axes after the elections.

Considering both axes have two extremes, we can create a matrix of the four potential extremes that the Gambia could reach. It is unlikely that the Gambia will move perfectly along the axes towards either of their (undefined) ends. The purpose of the matrix is not to predict the future, but to provide four contrasting hypotheses, which we can consider as four scenario's that help identify trends and directions in the current economic development. The matrix can be found on the next page.

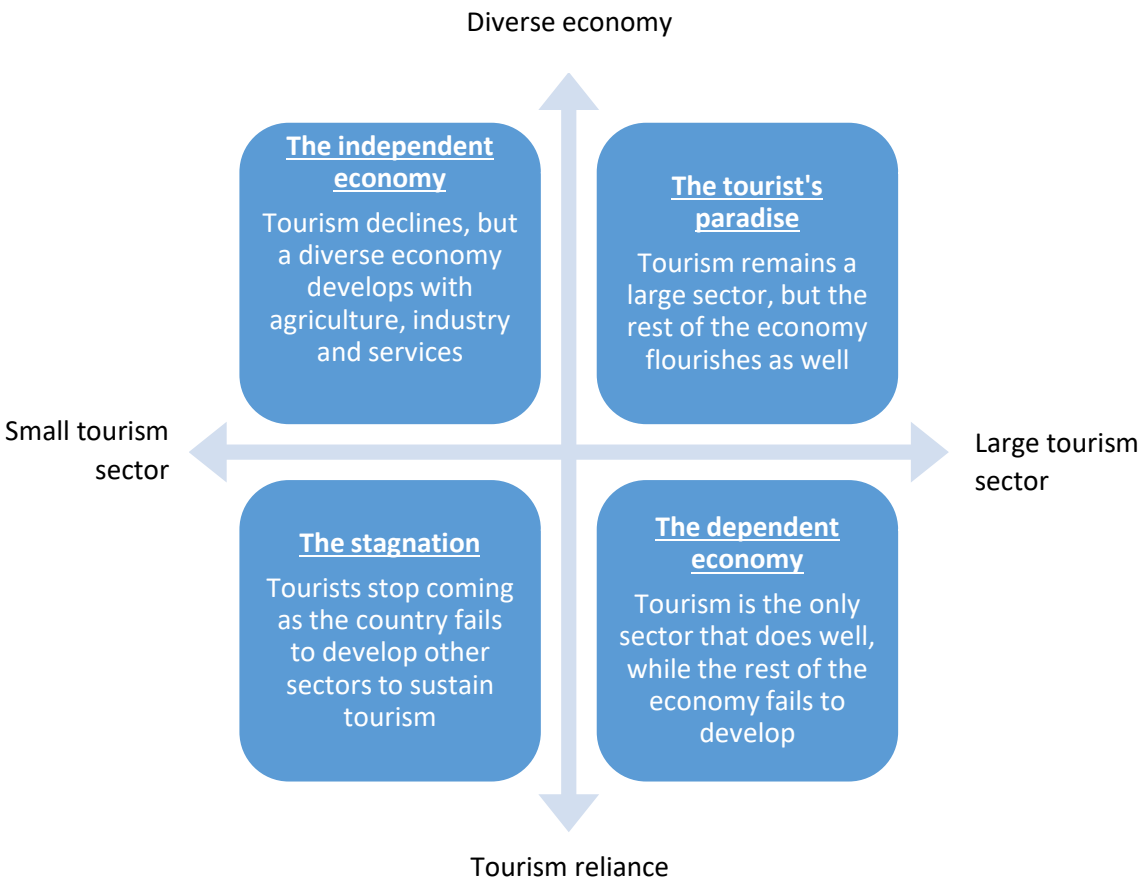


Figure 4 Four scenario's for tourism and the Gambian economy

The matrix provides four scenario's. If we rewrite them, they can be considered four hypothetical answers to the research question: *How will the tourism sector contribute to the economic development of the Gambia after the 2016 election, compared to past trends in the Gambia's economic development?* Rotating clockwise from top left these hypothesis are:

1. The tourism sector will contribute little to the Gambia's economic development compared to past trends, because the new policy will diversify the Gambian economy.
2. The tourism sector will significantly contribute to the Gambia's economic development, but less than compared to past trends, because the new policy will diversify the Gambian economy.
3. The tourism sector will significantly contribute to the Gambia's economic development, even more so than compared to past trends, because new policy will either fail or not attempt to diversify the Gambian economy.
4. The tourism sector will similarly contribute to the Gambian economic development, compared to past trends, because the new policy will either fail or not attempt to either grow the tourism sector or diversify the economy.

As mentioned before, Chapter 3 will delve deeper into the methods the research will use to match the data to these hypotheses. However, at this point we can already define several indicators that can be used to determine where on the axes a country is. The operationalization and theoretical framework of Sections 2.1 and 2.2 provide these handholds. While the theory provides some

indicators, the fieldwork might also lead to unexpected or new conclusions, so the table below does not intend to be an exhaustive list. The indicators are not placed in an order of importance.

Indicator	Explanation
Foreign investors	The presence of foreign investors and the type of investments they make, provide insights in the potential growth of the tourism sector and other parts of the economy
Domestic investors	The type of investing domestic actors make shows whether other sectors are being developed
Domestic products	The presence of domestic (consumption) products shows the presence and potential growth of other industries and sectors in the country
Quality of tourism infrastructure	Well-kept infrastructure indicates an active and growing sector, while abandoned infrastructure indicates stagnation or decline
Diversity of tourism experiences	Diversity within the tourism sector indicates the long-term sustainability of the sector
Geographic concentration	Geographic concentration of tourism activities may indicate regional inequalities
Price levels	Prices are an indicator for the supply and demand within the tourism sector and of the level of commoditization that has taken place
Presence of certification	Certification indicates presence of and adherence to official tourism planning
Cultural artifacts	The presence of local culture within the tourism experience indicates commoditization and indirectly the importance of tourism
Small enterprises	The amount of small enterprises in tourism indicates long term sustainability in tourism and potentially reduces foreign leakage
Tourism education	Proper education is required for the long term health of the sector and allows Gambians to make a career in tourism

Figure 5 Indicators of tourism reliance and size of tourism sector.

3. Methods

Now that the problem and research question have been defined and framed in a larger body of theory, we turn to methodology. There are multiple possible routes to take in a research, but not all of them lead to proper and valid answers to the research question. This chapter discusses which turns the author has taken and why. This chapter determines the route, but the metaphorical destination is not reached until the case description, data analysis and conclusions in the next three chapters.

Several different things are discussed in this chapter regarding research methods. First of all, the research strategy. Section 3.1 lays out the strategic choices made for the purpose of this research, such as between a desk research or an empirical research or between qualitative or quantitative data. Based on these choices a research design is developed for both the data collection and its analysis, which is discussed separately in Section 3.2. Additionally, the validity and reliability of the chosen strategy are discussed in sub-Section 3.2.1. Finally, Section 3.3 introduces the reader to the research material: the case and the interviewees. With that, the research methods have been comprehensively described throughout the chapter.

Because the research question is again central to this chapter, it is repeated here as a reminder to the reader:

How will the tourism sector contribute to the economic development of the Gambia after the 2016 election, compared to past trends in the Gambia's economic development?

3.1. Research Strategy

To lay the foundations of the research strategy, several core decisions are discussed based on the work of Piet Verschuren and Hans Doorewaard (2007). A research strategy will flow naturally from these three core decisions.

The first core decision is whether research aims to broaden or deepen existing knowledge (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). In the context of this research, broadening existing knowledge would imply a search for generally applicable conclusions about tourism in developing contexts. That is not the goal of this research. Instead, the research goal defined in Section 1.1. aims to deepen knowledge on a specific case demarcated in time and space: to better understand the relations between tourism and development in The Gambia after its political transition in late 2016.

The second core decision is whether quantitative or qualitative data is most fit for the research (Verschuren & Doorewaard, 2007). Quantitative data is usually laid out in tables, charts and graphs. It is useful for generalizing statements or types of research where large sample sizes are used. Qualitative research is of an interpretative nature, and is more useful in normative contexts and can allow for deeper conclusions using a smaller sample size. Research on economic development often benefits a quantitative approach using statistics on income, trade or other indicators.

However, there are strong arguments for a qualitative research on development too. Firstly, there is a lack of reliable data on many African economies. Because data is lacking, many African countries calculate official statistics such as their Gross Domestic Product (GDP) or GDP per capita using assumptions based on a base year, sometimes over a decade ago. This can lead to inaccurate data and occasional (potentially huge) revisions in official statistics, such as the example of Ghana's

GDP revision from $15,7 billion to $25,6 billion in 2010 (Moss, 2010). This phenomenon has been coined Africa's statistical tragedy (Devarajan, 2011; Jerven, 2012). Official statistics on the national economy are not the only method for quantitative research; why not use self-made surveys? Many of the weaknesses of GDP statistics can be avoided by using a broader set of indicators, such as manufacturing value added or employment data (Rowden, 2013). However, the next argument explains why that is not preferred.

Secondly, such quantitative indicators rarely answer the questions asked in this research. There is only a limited and hard to reach group of people that are insiders to the tourism development policy of the Gambia. One can imagine the different perspectives one gets when asking, about airport tax for example, a travel agency on the one hand and a government official on the other. Both are relevant parties to answer the research question; however, their roles, and therefore stakes, are so different that quantitative analysis of their answers becomes unreliable. Since insiders in different spheres (private or public in this case) have clear personal or organizational stakes in the subject matter, the interpretative nature of qualitative research is useful to filter that bias. In conclusion, the lack of reliable data and the ineffectiveness of quantitative indicators for this research, make a qualitative approach the preferred method.

The third core decision defined by Verschuren and Doorewaard (2007) is between empirical research and desk research. While there is a good body of research on tourism in the Gambia and relations between development and tourism, there is a clear argument for empirical research: the actuality of the December 2016 elections. Due to the fact that the elections only took place recently, the available data for a desk research is either outdated or too limited. That is however not the only argument for an empirical research. The context in the Gambia is so different to the Dutch background of the author that a research from the desk would risk falling into familiar clichés and stereotypes. Stereotypes are especially common in writing about Africa, as illustrated in a satirical blog post by Binyavanga Wainaina: "The Starving African, who wanders the refugee camp nearly naked, and waits for the benevolence of the West. Her children have flies on their eyelids and pot bellies, and her breasts are flat and empty. She must look utterly helpless. She can have no past, no history; such diversions ruin the dramatic moment." (Wainaina, 2006). Empirical research is therefore beneficial, both for the quality of the data and in hope of preventing stereotypical representations, by being present and making personal connections.

Based on the core decisions made above, a fitting research strategy can be chosen. John Creswell's comprehensive work on *Qualitative Inquiry and Research Design* is a good guide to different qualitative research strategies (Creswell, 2013). He names the following five qualitative approaches: narrative research, phenomenological research, grounded theory research, ethnographic research, and case study research. Each design has a different purpose and is best fit to a specific context.

Narrative research is best fit when dealing with stories and experiences. Phenomenological research is best fit when dealing with the causes or impact of a single event. Grounded theory research aims to establish a general theory on a subject. Ethnographic research is used to study a demarcated group and their culture and behavior. Case study research is a type of research in which a single subject is studied from multiple angles involving different sources of information. This list is, of course, not exhaustive, but chosen by Creswell for their consistent presence throughout social sciences. It excludes such methods as participant observation or archival research.

Not every approach fits the core decisions just made. The grounded theory approach aligns more with a research that aims to broaden knowledge. While ethnographic research and narrative research are both fit for empirical research that deepens knowledge, they do not align with the research question. This research primarily aims to make systematic statements about economy and

politics, largely ignoring people's personal actions or experiences. That leaves phenomenology and case study research as the most fitting approaches. Creswell defines the two methods as follows:

> Phenomenology: "a phenomenological study describes the meaning for several individuals of their lived experiences of a concept or a phenomenon." (Creswell, 2013, p. 76).
>
> Case study research: "[…] is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a real-life, contemporary bounded system over time, through detailed, in-depth data collection involving multiple sources of information." (Creswell, 2013, p. 97)

From these definitions it becomes clear that case study research is best fit for the research question. This study is not looking to describe or deepen the knowledge on the Gambian people's experience of the elections, rather to better understand the potential impacts of the elections on the country's development. This can be rephrased to fit Creswell's terminology as exploring a contemporary bounded system over time: the political economy of The Gambia is a bounded system. This research explores its potential development based on the last decades and the recent changes.

The case study as a research strategy is still debated within social sciences. Its definition can be confusing, as case studies are regularly used *within* other methods, such as ethnographic research or participant observation, but not all ethnographic studies are a case study and not all case studies are ethnographic. Robert Yin offers a more detailed technical definition in his book *Case Study Research: Design and Methods*:

> "1. A case study is an empirical inquiry that
>
> - investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context, especially when
> - the boundaries between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident
>
> 2. The case study inquiry
>
> - copes with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
> - relies on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
> - benefits from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis." (Yin, 2009, p. 13)

Now that the optimal research method has been chosen and defined, the next section will use these definitions to formulate the research design.

3.2. Research Design

This section explains how data have been collected and analyzed in this case study. The works of Yin (2009) and Creswell (2013) provide the academic background to many of the choices made. Yin warns us of the disdain that still commonly exists for case study research in academic circles, citing a lack of rigor in case studies as a primary concern. Proper design of both the data collection and analysis phase is the safeguard of a case study's rigor (Yin, 2009). As an additional insurance, Section 3.2.1. delves into the validity and reliability of the design based on works by Brink (1993) and Creswell (2013).

Firstly, there is the decision between a single and a multiple case study. Due to the unique circumstances in The Gambia in early 2017 and this research's goal to deepen knowledge on it, this will be a single case study. The intent of the study is important as it defines the type of case we are dealing with. For studies attempting to broaden knowledge, an *instrumental* case should be selected. Instrumental cases are used to better understand a specific issue based on a case that can be generalized, so conclusions can be made on the issue at large. *Intrinsic* cases however are studied for their unusual characteristics (Creswell, 2013), as is the case with The Gambia's current events.

Next, Yin offers five elements of a successful research design: the research question, hypotheses, the unit of analysis, the logic linking of the data to the propositions, and the criteria for interpreting the findings (Yin, 2009, p. 20). The first of these has been discussed before in Section 1.2. The question has been described there as containing a 'what' and a 'how' component. Section 2.3. then used the existing body of literature to form several hypotheses, also named propositions by Yin. These could be the answers to the research question in an ideal-type situation. Components four and five of Yin's list are the way to figure out whether that is true. They are therefore the crucial, and most often controversial, elements. Before we get to those, let us define the unit of analysis. Because without a well-defined unit of analysis, data risks being too broad to determine any patterns, effects or relationships.

The fundamental question here is what the case is and what it is not. Without delving into a full-blown case description, which will follow in Chapter 4, we can describe its demarcations here. Firstly, the research question seeks further understanding of the workings of a system and the decision-making that led to them. This system has clear demarcations: it is Gambian, within the geographical borders of The Gambia; it is time-bound between 1996 (the year Jammeh officially became president) and the moment of writing, June 2018. This includes the first 18 months of Barrow's presidency. However, despite the limited timeframe, the study portrays trends which continue well beyond 2018, to the end of Adama Barrow's term in 2021 and perhaps beyond. The reason the regime of Jammeh is also included, despite the research mostly looking forward, is that no change or impact can be described without proper understanding of the base situation. We cannot analyze the change needed or possible, without describing first the starting situation. Other demarcations are less clear: it is the political economy. But by that definition the system would also include such things as international trade in The Gambia or perhaps even private sector taxation. We therefore have to limit ourselves to strictly the parts of the system that have a distinct link to the tourism industry.

The system described above – the political economy of tourism in the Gambia in a specific timeframe – has stakeholders in the private and public sector. These include but are not limited to such things as hotels, restaurants, the Ministry of Tourism and executive government institutions. Some stakeholders hover around the edge of the system, such as hotel schools or workers' unions. To answer the 'how' question in this study, it is important to specify that the most interesting actors are those in a decision-making position. The role of a cook is smaller in shaping the political economy than that of a hotel owner or a civil servant.

It was impossible to collect data on the entirety of the political economy of tourism, as there was only limited time for the empirical fieldwork. Therefore a combination of three sources of information has been used to gather relevant and representative data within the available timeframe: semi-structured interviews, observations, and official documents. The triangulation of data using different sources is a common characteristic of case study research that sets it apart from other research strategies (Creswell, 2013). Section 3.3 goes into detail about the exact individuals that have been interviewed, the type of questions asked, the methods of observation and the types of official documents obtainable. For now, it suffices to know that three sources of data were used and the section moves on from the unit of analysis to the question of data analysis.

Yin's fourth and fifth components of research design represent that step: linking the data to the propositions and the criteria for interpreting the findings (Yin, 2009). One method he names for linking data to propositions aligns with our research goal and the four scenarios sketched in Section 2.3:

> "One promising approach for case studies is the idea of 'pattern-matching' described by Donald Campbell (1975), whereby several pieces of information from the same case may be related to some theoretical proposition." (Yin, 2009, p. 25)

This method can be used with a single theoretical proposition like in the quote, but also with multiple 'rival propositions'. The hypotheses as formulated reflect that second approach. It is also the method used by Campbell, a researcher studying the effects a piece of regulation has on the amount of traffic fatalities, in the example Yin uses: "What Campbell did was describe two potential patterns and then show that the data matched one better than the other." (Yin, 2009, p. 25)

It is however hard to define exactly what makes a match between the data pattern and the proposition. In other words: the criteria for interpreting the findings (Yin, 2009). No perfect match exists. And because each data point (an interview, a policy paper or an observation) is standalone, statistical analysis is not a reliable method either. It is important therefore that "the different patterns are sufficiently contrasting that (as in Campbell's case) the findings can be interpreted in terms of comparing at least two rival propositions." (Yin, 2009, p. 26). The hypotheses in Section 2.3 have been formulated with that in mind, using two clear-cut criteria that the data can be tested on. Unlike much quantitative analysis, however, there is no formula to determine the extent to which a criterion is reached. Therefore a lot of the pattern-matching that leads to the research conclusions relies on the data provided by interviewees and the interpretation by the author.

The next sub-section goes further in depth on the inherent weaknesses in this particular qualitative research design. It does so by defining the validity and reliability of the design. Additionally, it lays bare several of the biases that have been present from the start.

3.2.1. Validity and reliability

Validation is an important aspect of qualitative research. Due to the inherently interpretative nature of its methods, the rigidity of its conclusions is regularly put to question. Several concepts are used to measure the rigidity of the research design. This subsection uses the terms *internal validity*, *external validity* and *reliability*, though these are not the only terms used in the field (Creswell, 2013; Brink, 1993). Others may instead use terms such as *credibility*, *transferability*, *dependability* or *confirmability* (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). While we cannot use the same statistical analysis to confirm validity that quantitative research might use, the goal of the exercise is the same: to ensure the quality and truthfulness of the research. Therefore the commonly used terms of validity and reliability are used over the specifically qualitative ones proposed by Lincoln and Guba.

Generally speaking, validity is the extent to which the research accurately represents reality. It measures whether the research demonstrates what it intends to demonstrate or measures what it intends to measure. Brink defines two different types of validity:

> "Internal validity is the term used to refer to the extent to which research findings are a true reflection or representation of reality rather than being the effects of extraneous variables. External validity addresses the degree or extent to which such representations or reflections of reality are legitimately applicable across groups." (Brink, 1993, p. 35)

Internal validity is most crucial for this study of an intrinsic case, so it is discussed first. There are different elements that may put the internal validity of this research at risk. We will discuss three here: the author, the subjects, and the context. After the discussion of the risks, several methods will be described that were utilized to limit the effect of the risks on the validity of the final piece. The research methods in general are an important safeguard to the internal validity of qualitative research. One could consider them a fourth risk and the comprehensive explanation of the methods in this chapter as the discussion of that risk.

Firstly, the author or the researcher is also the instrument for data gathering in this, and many other, qualitative research designs. This exposes the data to several biases and risks (Brink, 1993). First of all, the appearance of the researcher may influence outcomes. In this case, the researcher is a young white man in The Gambia. Quite clearly an outsider, not a native (indicated by his language, cultural heritage and arguably skin color) and not someone with stakes in the tourism industry (indicated by his tone, choice of words and arguably his youth). If not for the formal dress, one might confuse him for a tourist. Being an outsider has downsides: subjects might not trust him enough to tell the full story, or keep it simple because he may not understand. However, there are upsides too: being an outsider means having no stakes in either side of the story. So hotels might be more willing to truthfully share their experiences than they would to a government institution or a travel agency, both of whom they rely on for certification and customers among other things. It is important to be aware of the position of the researcher in relation to the group, for "what the researcher sees and reports is a function of the position he occupies within the participant group." (Brink, 1993, p. 36).

Secondly, the participating subjects influence the validity of the research outcomes. The primary concern is of course the truthfulness of their answers. Their position might lead to bias in their answers or unwillingness to share certain information (Brink, 1993). Both of these can be the case in this research. Considering the stakes many subjects have in the tourism industry, they will lean towards pro-tourism development strategies in their answers and may overstate the importance of the sector in the Gambia. The next section goes further in depth about the research subjects and their potential biases. Additionally, because of the elections only taking place recently there might be developments behind the scenes that government officials are unable or unwilling to openly speak about.

Lastly, the context can be a risk to the internal validity of this study. Brink speaks about the social context of the interview, such as the circumstances in which the interview was taken (Brink, 1993). All interviews in this study were taken during working days in the office of the subject. Specifically for this research the socio-political context also has a sizeable influence. Due to the surprising election results, there was a wave of optimism throughout the Gambia. People spoke of *The New Gambia*, where many problems of the past would be gone forever. This optimism wavered already throughout the three months of fieldwork, as people became impatient for election promises to be kept rather sooner than later. The socio-political context is described in further detail in Section 4.4 as part of the case description.

There are a variety of measures the researcher can put in place to safeguard the internal validity. However, due to certain limitations not all measures were possible for this research. Prolonged engagement, persistent observation and member checking (taking data and its analysis back to

respondents) are reliable measures to ensure that the data accurately portrays reality (Creswell, 2013). However, these measures were not possible due to the limited time for fieldwork and the costs of a potential return trip.

Several other methods were used to ensure the validity of the research though. First of all, triangulation. It has been mentioned before that three types of sources were used to validate each other's data. This is a core characteristic of the case study research design chosen (Creswell, 2013). However, a second layer of triangulation can be built to combat the potential stakes and biases that may influence subjects and their answers. Subjects are chosen from three parts of the tourism industry: government, the hotel sector, and several relevant outsiders. In this way opposing biases may cancel each other out. This method is also mentioned by Brink: "The researcher can build in safeguards against this bias by good planning of selection of informants, by looking purposefully for contrasting cases." (Brink, 1993, p. 36). Again, the next section will go further in depth on the specific biases that subjects may have and how different subjects have a different purpose in the research.

Additionally, it is important that research biases are clarified at an early stage (Creswell, 2013). An earlier part of this sub-section has already described several influences the researcher has on the internal validity of the research, but there are several biases that must be clarified too. Firstly, as a Western European and a foreigner in the Gambia, there are some inherent biases present. There are some general biases of Africa as a continent of poverty, famine and even failure still present, despite the efforts of the researcher to limit them. These can be attributed in some part to the popular imaginings of Africa in daily life and television (Wainaina, 2006). Because the fieldwork for this research is the first time the researcher travels to The Gambia and Africa in general, he has had no previous personal experiences to build his expectations on. Additionally, the researcher has a background in postcolonial studies from his previous bachelor thesis research, so there is a certain incline present towards dependency theories and the (benign) influence of Western European powers in Africa. The researcher is aware of these biases and has actively tried to limit these tendencies throughout the research.

A third method to protect the internal validity is through peer reviewing or debriefing (Creswell, 2013). While a formal peer reviewing process was beyond the scope of this research, regular debriefings with colleagues helped the researcher to adapt his data collection. The fieldwork period was done together with three other Dutch students, two of which lived together with the researcher over the duration. Through comparing each other's experiences with data collection, we could improve our interview skills and find new ways to gather valid data. One thing all three of us noticed, for example, was the folklore that was developing around the elections of 2016, making them seem perhaps more *heroic* or *mythical* than the facts on paper appear. That showed one potential influence of the socio-political context on the data.

That leaves external validity and reliability to be discussed. Because this research is of an intrinsic case, researched not to be generalized but to create a deeper understanding of a single case, the external validity is small. It is not the intent of this research to make broad conclusions that can be applicable across all tourist destinations in developing states. It is therefore more important that the internal validity is high and that the data accurately represents the situation in The Gambia.

Reliability is also defined by Brink, as: "Reliability is concerned with the consistency, stability and repeatability of the informant's accounts as well as the investigators' ability to collect and record information accurately" (Brink, 1993, p. 35). The reliability of this research is limited by the unique socio-political context of post-election The Gambia that makes repetition of the same results challenging. However, some basic measures can be taken to increase the reliability of a research (Creswell, 2013). First of all, the interview guides and observation formats are included in the appendix. Secondly, all interviews were recorded using a mobile phone and then transcribed.

Recordings were only made when the interviewee agreed to it, and in two cases the researcher was not given permission to record. In those cases the researcher made more detailed notes and sat down the same afternoon or evening to transcribe from memory as much of the interview as possible. Potential interruptions or silences were also included in transcripts for a more accurate representation of the proceedings.

In the end we can conclude there are several limits to the validity and reliability of this research. Because of the limited scope and timeframe of this thesis, no prolonged engagement was possible. And the unique circumstances following the elections may influence the research with excessive optimism, leading to results that are hard to replicate. Within these limits several measures were taken to safeguard the internal validity and reliability of the research. This chapter as a whole serves to inform the reader of these safeguards through a detailed description of the methods. The next section, the last of this chapter, goes further into detail on the subjects and research material available.

3.3. Research Material

After the comprehensive description of the research strategy and design in the sections above, it is now time to move on to the research material. This section describes the process of data selection and collection, and the data itself. It will first discuss official documents and literature used and then, for the largest part, focus on the fieldwork. The fieldwork had two different elements: observations and interviews. This section not only describes who has been interviewed and what was observed, but also how interviews and observations have been conducted.

The subject of the study has already been described as a bounded system, the case: the political-economy of the tourism industry in The Gambia after the elections of 2016. Three types of information have been used to study it: official documents, observations, and interviews. The most relevant official documents are the tourism policy and laws of the Gambia. Most of these can be found online; however, some have also been obtained in hardcopy or booklet-form during the fieldwork. Their role in the triangulation of sources is to confirm whether the experienced reality of actors in the tourism industry equals the paper reality of policy. The official language of policy does not always accurately reflect reality, but neither does an individual experience reflect the national state of things. This discrepancy is often much larger in African contexts than in the very institutionalized societies of Western Europe. Due to the neo-patrimonial nature of many African states, there is a certain arbitrariness to their policy: “As formal rules are bent, the behavior of public agencies [in neo-patrimonial regimes] is unpredictable and often abusive.” (Englebert & Dunn, 2013, p. 134).

However arbitrary, official documents remain an important source of information, as they show the intent, if not the reality, of Gambian tourism officials. Like the academic literature used throughout this thesis, they are referenced to in APA style (Poelmans & Severijnen, 2013). The official documents are listed in a separate list before the list of literature at the end of the thesis. Some official documents from international organizations, such as the World Bank, are used in different parts, but because their role is sometimes more similar to literature, they may not all be present in the separate list of official documents.

Interviews form the backbone of this research, it is therefore important to thoroughly explain how they have been conducted. There are different ways of arranging and conducting interviews. They can be one-on-one or in a focus group. Focus groups can provide additional information if the

interaction between interviewees is of relevant value (Creswell, 2013). Because that is not the case in this research, one-on-one interviews were held. This allowed interviewees to be more open about their experiences and opinions, which they would not share when a competing hotel is at the other side of the table. Additionally, interviews can be structured, semi-structured or open. A structured interview provides a strict interview guide that is to be followed independently of the subject's answers. An open interview is a conversation between interviewer and interviewee, in which no or few questions were prepared beforehand. Both methods have situational strengths, for example when you want to compare many interviews of similar people or when dealing with very personally sensitive information respectively. For this research a semi-structured method has been used. The interview guide offers several questions, but there was space for the researcher to adapt based on the answers of the interviewee. The broad questions often resemble the research questions in accessible language (Creswell, 2013). The interview guide for this research was adapted slightly, based on whether the interviewee worked for a government institution or not. Other than that, the broad format allowed much space for the researcher to listen actively and go in depth on those subjects that the interviewee has most relevant information on. Both versions of the interview guide can be found in the Appendices B and C.

Knowing the style of the interviews, a selection of a sample of subjects to interview could be made. Due to obvious limitations in time and access, it was not possible to interview the entire tourism industry, so instead a purposeful sampling strategy was used. Purposeful sampling is the conscious selection of participants in the sample, size of the sample and types of sampling (Creswell, 2013). To safeguard the internal validity of the research, maximum variation sampling was used. Respondents varied across several axes, but the primary difference was between the three sectors: government – hotel – other. One exception to the maximum variation sampling in this research was the following: the researcher purposefully chose to interview only the hotel sector and not all private actors of the tourism industry (such as taxi services, restaurants or others). While this gives an incomplete image of the tourism industry, the hotel industry is an important hub in the tourism industry where many small businesses such as the taxis and catering services and larger businesses like international travel agencies meet. Their spatial and societal impact is also arguably the largest, compared to small service enterprises and the external role of travel agencies. This degree of selectiveness allowed for higher comparability of the interviews and thus more valid data, despite still adhering to (maximum) variation sampling.

Two more axes for variation were relevant, especially for the hotel sector, to ensure the data represents reality: native – foreign and large enterprise – small enterprise. These variations are important, because the interactions of the government with the largest hotel in the country are likely different than those with small lodges or apartments. Additionally, native entrepreneurs often have different experiences, stakes and perspective than foreign owners that the Gambian hotel sector is infamous for.

The nativity of the interviewee speaks for itself, some were of Gambian descent and others came from foreign countries. The distinction between large and small for hotels was made at approximately 50 available rooms. For governments both the Gambia Tourism Board and the Ministry of Tourism can be considered large enterprises given the national impact of their policy and the amount of employees they have, so that distinction is less relevant to them. The three subjects in the 'other' sector will be individually discussed later. The respondents were spread along these axes as follows:

	Native + small	Native + large	Foreign + small	Foreign + large	Total
Government		4			4
Hotel	3	2	1	2	8
Other	2	1			3
Total	5	7	1	2	15

Figure 6 Interviewees by type of organization

All interviews have been handled anonymously. It was not the wish of the author to put anyone at risk for their words or opinions on the businesses they work for or the policy of their country. Considering the sensitive information some interviewees shared, we ask the reader to respect their right to privacy and trust the author's categorization above. Throughout the research interviewees will be referred to and quoted regularly, by using the categorization above. For example: "a native owner of a small hotel shared […]" or "a Gambian government official explained […]". Additionally, the list of interviews at the end of the thesis refers to each interview by categorization as well as by date, so those statements whose source is in an interview will have a reference to a personal communication on a specific date. This allows the reader to trace what the position of a specifically cited respondent was.

Continuing to respect the anonymity of the subjects, it is still possible to provide some additional detail on the interviewees. First of all, it is relevant to know the functions of the government officials and the people from the hotel sector. The four interviewees that are labeled as ´government´ are one representative of the Ministry of Tourism, two managers at the Gambia Tourism Board and one employee at the Gambia Tourism board. The three representatives of the Gambia Tourism Board represent three of the four departments of the board: Product Development, Marketing, and Quality Control. The fourth and unrepresented department is Finance. The eight interviewees working in the hotel sector all had a role in the management team of their respective hotel as either operational manager (1), general manager (3) or owner (4).

Next, additional information is needed on what exactly the category 'other' entails. The three interviews categorized as 'other' here are not directly employed at a hotel or government institute, yet they have important insights to offer from their independent viewing points. Two of them are categorized as 'small'. The first is an independent consultant who worked for decades as an employee and later a director at the predecessors of the Gambia Tourism Board (National Tourist Office and Gambia Tourist Authority) and for one year at the Ministry of Tourism, before branching off as an independent consultant for hotels. The second is a representative of the Association of Small Scale Enterprises in Tourism (ASSET), a local union for any small enterprise from the local crafts salesman on the beach to small restaurants or tour operators. By including ASSET, the research includes some perspective from the private sector outside of hotels, although they can of course not represent all the individual views of the rest of the private sector at once. The last interviewee categorized as 'other' and 'large' represents the Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute, the largest hotel school in the country. It is a semi-public institute, funded by the Ministry of Tourism but operating on its own. By educating young Gambians to make a living in the tourism industry, it plays a crucial role in the sector's, and perhaps even the country's, development.

That concludes the sections on interviewing. The last part of the source triangulation is observation. Fieldwork includes far more than the approximately 15 hours spent in offices doing interviews. Throughout the three month period in the Gambia, the author also gathered enough experience to conclude certain things or confirm statements by interviewees by having been there himself. Additionally, the conversations with tour guides, taxi drivers, colleagues and other Gambians all contribute to a better understanding of the tourism sector as a whole. While these conversations were not semi-structured through an interview guide, nor recorded and transcribed, they are still indirect sources of information that helped shape the researcher's thoughts.

To ensure these observations gain a structural nature and become a more integral part of the research, an observation format or schedule is needed (Creswell, 2013). The observation schedule designed for this research focuses on the physical and visible parts of the tourism industry: infrastructure, buildings and people. Through several indicators the physical environment can inform the observer of the relationship between government and tourism, and of the role of tourism in the country. Such indicators include: is there official certification present? Are the products visible local or imported? The full observation schedule can be found in Appendix D.

One major limitation to the observations is that they were done in a specific period from April to June 2017. When speaking of the validity of the fieldwork, we have already described the socio-political context of those times; however, an additional piece of context is helpful to properly understand the scope of the observations: April is the start of the offseason for tourism in the Gambia. Therefore many hotels were temporarily closing down, were renovating or had only the barebones staff present. This was especially the case in June, when the rainy season was about to start. More about the specific context of The Gambia can be found in Chapter 4.

That concludes the discussion of methods. This chapter first addressed the research strategy, in which the arguments for a case study research were laid out. Next, the design of the case study was detailed: a single case study of an intrinsic case using a triangulation of methods. The pattern-matching method for data analysis was also described there. In a separate sub-section additional attention was put on the various limitations and risks to the validity of the research. Lastly, the research material was described in Section 3.3. This section also introduced the interviewees and their roles within the Gambian tourism industry.

4. Case Description

This chapter provides a description of the case that is central to this research. To do so, it first introduces the reader to The Gambia beyond what has already been shared in Chapter 1. After a brief presentation of physical characteristics, the history of The Gambia is described in societal, political and economic terms. Building on that description, the next section delves into the history of tourism in The Gambia. Lastly, a description of the present situation is given. While the first three sections are primarily based on literature and official documents, the fourth section is also based on the fieldwork. By the end of this chapter the first and second sub-questions of the research will be answered: 1. *What is the history of The Gambia's tourism sector? 2. To what extent is tourism a significant contributor to The Gambia's national development?* The former will be primarily answered in the third section, the latter in both the third and fourth section. The first two sections of this chapter serve as general descriptive context that is helpful for understanding the latter sections and the rest of the case study.

4.1. Physical characteristics

Before the case description truly begins in Section 0, this section lists some key figures on The Gambia. This physical description provides a first introduction to the country, without going in depth on any of its characteristics.

Figure 7 Map of The Gambia, retrieved from https://www.ezilon.com/maps/africa/gambia-road-maps.html on June 15, 2018

Figure 7 shows a map of The Gambia as of 2009. It includes several key landmarks. First of which is Banjul, the capital of The Gambia since colonial times, it is an island off the coast in the Gambia river's delta. It is connected to the road system by a bridge near Bakau. Serekunda (also spelled Serrekunda or Ser(r)e Kunda) is the biggest city, its slums have all but swallowed the surrounding towns between Bakau, Sukuta and Lamin. Brikama is the first major urban center that is considered part of the interior. While Serekunda is thought to have over 500,000 inhabitants now, Brikama is far smaller with between 100,000 and 200,000 inhabitants. The other urban centers in the interior are smaller; the most important ones are Soma, Georgetown (now called by its local name Janjanbureh), Farafenni and Basse Santa Su.

The official website of the Gambia Tourism Board includes an overview of the administrative regions of The Gambia.

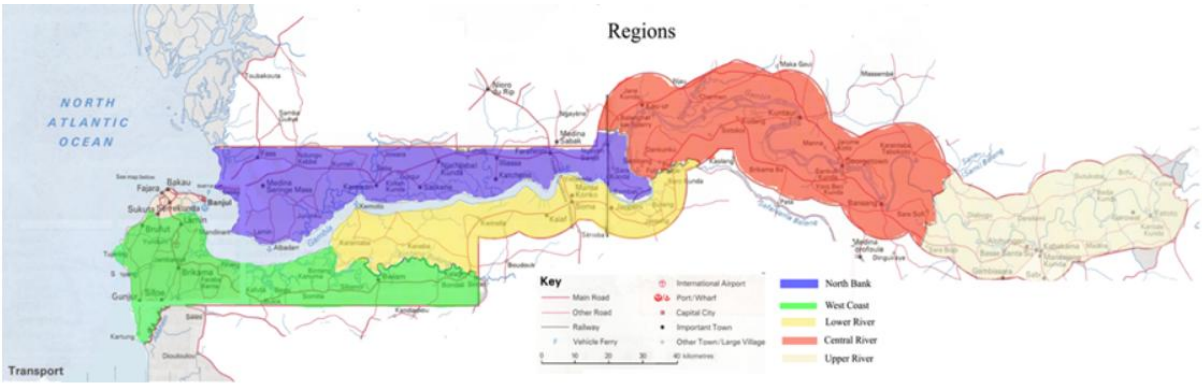


Figure 8 Administrative regions of The Gambia: West Coast, North Bank, Lower River, Central River and Upper River. Retrieved from http://www.visitthegambia.gm/map-and-regions on June 15, 2018.

The urban centers of Banjul and Serekunda form their own administrative region, which is usually referred to as the Kanifing Municipality but sometimes simply as Banjul or Banjul Municipality. The administrative regions and their names do not always correspond with historic regional divisions, and many Gambians refer to their region in historic context instead of administrative context. As a result, the far western part of the West Bank division is regularly called the Kombo, while the eastern part of the West Bank division is referred to as Foni, or the Fonis (as there are distinct differences between East and West Foni). The Upper River Region is usually referred to simply as Basse, after its biggest town.

Nearly all tourism activities described throughout this thesis take place on the coast between Bakau and Sukuta, with some exceptions to the south (such as Tanji, Sanyang and Gunjur) and some towards Serrekunda and Brikama (such as Abuko National Park and Lamin). There are three major cultural heritage sites in the other districts. Firstly, James Island which is located in the middle of the Gambia river in the wide part north of the town of Faraba Banta (Figure 7), can only be reached from the North Bank using a local ferry service from Jufureh, or private boats. Second is MacCarthy Island, also known as Georgetown or Janjanbureh. Both islands were home to slave trade fortifications built by the British. Janjanbureh is now the largest town and the capital of the Central River Region. The Stone Circles in Wassu are the third heritage site, just north of Janjanbureh, also in the Central River Region.

Overall the coastline is approximately sixty kilometers, with The Gambia's total surface area being around 10,689 sq. kilometer. With a population of 1.9 million inhabitants (though it has likely surpassed two million by now), it is the smallest and one of the most densely populated countries in Africa (World Bank, 2018). The Gambia's GDP is hard to measure due to an outdated base year in national statistics, but the World Bank reports a 3.5% growth in 2017 (World Bank, 2018). Despite its growth, The Gambia suffers from large foreign debts, which the World Bank estimates at 123.6% of GDP. In 2015, just under half of the population lived in poverty, the World Bank reporting 48.6% of the population. Taking only the rural areas, this percentage rises to 70% (World Bank, 2018).

4.2. History of The Gambia

This section on the history of The Gambia serves primarily as context and is mostly unrelated to tourism. However, it is still valuable to know the history of The Gambia, as it serves as an introduction to the case and shows some of its unique traits. There is still a clear heritage of the past visible in present day The Gambia. Without proper knowledge of the region's history, we may be

inclined to prescribe certain inequalities to tourism when they could have deeper historic origins instead. In the end, this section remains a ten-page summary, for space is too limited to do justice to the full history. For some of the most extensive work on The Gambia's history, the reader can be referred to *A Political History of the Gambia, 1816-1994* by Arnold Hughes and David Perfect (Hughes & Perfect, 2006) and *Historical Dictionary of The Gambia* by David Perfect (Perfect, 2016).

4.2.1. Before 1950

The Gambia as an independent state dates only to its independence in 1965, it is therefore easy to begin describing its history from 1965 or starting with the establishment of its modern borders in an Anglo-French Convention in 1889 (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). But to understand the ethnic diversity and the true impact of colonization, we must also know the pre-colonial situation. So, in the following summary of pre-colonial and colonial history the focus is on the origins of the four largest ethnic groups in The Gambia: Mandinka, Wolof, Fula, and Jola (Hughes & Perfect, 2006).

There are, however, no primary written sources to share the early history of the region around the Gambia river, as the inhabitants were not literate. Arab travelers and writers rarely traveled along the coast, as they were more interested in the predominantly Muslim area of modern-day Mali. So for much of what we know about the early history of that region we rely on the notes of Portuguese explorers that first travelled the Gambia and Casamance rivers in the fifteenth century (Person, 1984).

At the arrival of the Portuguese, the Senegambia area was part of the great empire of Mali, that stretched from modern-day Mali all the way to the coast. The Malian empire likely reached the Senegambia area around the twelfth century. Its arrival brought the Mandinka people, part of the greater family of Mande peoples in the Malian empire. The Malian empire maintained an impressive trading network that evolved over its existence. Initially it revolved around trans-Saharan trade routes from Jenne and Timbuktu. However, when the empire began to lose control over the trans-Saharan routes to the Tuareg and Songhai peoples, its eyes turned westward (Ly-Tall, 1984). The province of The Gambia became an important commercial hub where salt was gathered and traded for gold upriver in the Futa Jallon highlands, in modern-day Guinea.

That economic shift within the Malian empire took place around the fifteenth century, just before the Portuguese explorers entered the scene. Their arrival changed the economic landscape once more. The Malian empire by that time had lost much of its power in the Saharan trade, but still traded heavily on the Gambia river. Trade relations with the Portuguese quickly turned sour. African chiefs were willing to trade upwards of 10 to 15 slaves for a horse, as horses gave them a great military advantage in battles with rival tribes (Person, 1984). Throughout the history of European imperialism, the Gambia river remained an important center of the Atlantic slave trade.

The province of The Gambia remained loyal to the Malian 'mansa', or king, until the sixteenth century. However, many of its chiefdoms already had some degree of independence before that time, especially because not all of them consisted of Mandinka people. The Mandinka chiefdom of Kaabu still remained dominant in the Senegambia region due to a new influx of people from Mali, potentially fleeing Songhai and Tuareg invasions in the Malian homeland (Ly-Tall, 1984). Kaabu remained a large state with differing levels of cohesion all the way into the nineteenth century (Person, 1984). One of the other chiefdoms was Salum, which expanded greatly in the sixteenth century from modern-day Senegal up to the northern river banks of the Gambia river. It freed itself from Malian tutelage relatively early (Ly-Tall, 1984). The people of Salum were primarily of Serer and Wolof ethnicity, although neither of these groups had a large presence in modern-day The Gambia at that time. In contrast to the animist Mandinka, Salum was predominantly Muslim.

As the Malian empire lost its grasp over the area, nomadic cattle herders from the Futa Toro, a semi-arid desert land around the borders of today's Mauritania and Senegal, also penetrated further south. They roamed the upper river region of the Gambia river in modern-day Guinea and The Gambia (Person, 1984). These herders were the Fula. Like the Serer and Wolof, the Fula were also Muslim.

South of the Gambia river and the Kaabu chiefdom lies the Casamance river. While the area has been part of several kingdoms and chiefs, including the Malian empire, the Jola are said to be the oldest inhabitants of the area (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). It is unclear where the Jola originated, but most agree that they lived in the area even before the Malian empire. They are characterized by fragmented governance with little structure above the village level, but villages form very tight-knit and conservative communities (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). They sustained mostly on agriculture. The Jola followed an animist religion, and were influenced by European missionaries more than the Arab influences that reached the Fula, Wolof and Serer.

One last minority group that is worth mentioning are the Serahuli, who are likely to have migrated to the Senegambia area after the collapse of the Ghanaian empire. They were a commercial people with significant influence in gold trade (Ly-Tall, 1984).

That sets the scene of the area we now know as The Gambia when two significant events coincided in the nineteenth century. First, the Soninke-Marabout wars. The marabouts are important spiritual leaders in the Sufi style of Islam, popular in Western Africa and the Sahel. They intended to spread their religion southwards into the Gambia, where the Mandinka majority was still animist. They gained control over the Kaabu kingdom along the coast and southern bank of the Gambia river between 1855 and 1875, forcing all chiefs into surrender and conversion to Islam (Perfect, 2016). After that, border conflicts with the Fula to the east were frequent, primarily for territorial or other secular gains.

A second event of that period was the scramble for Africa by the European imperialists. By the seventeenth century the French had settled in Saint Louis, the Dutch in Goree (an island off the coast of Dakar) and the British on James Island, a small island in the Gambia river. The fort on James Island dates to 1661 (Perfect, 2016). However, after the French conquered Goree and moved further south, control over James Island was heavily contested over the next century.

When the British governor of Sierra Leone was tasked to patrol the coastlines for illegal slave trade after the 1807 abolishment of slave trade, he chose not to rebuild the repeatedly destroyed fort on James Island. Instead, he negotiated control over Banjul Island from a Kaabu chief. By 1820 the first buildings of the new town of Bathurst were built by Wolof employees that the British had recruited in (French) Goree (Perfect, 2016). It became the British Crown Colony of (The) Gambia in 1821, but was not administratively separate from Sierra Leone until 1843 (temporarily) and permanently in 1888. The colony remained very small, covering only Bathurst, James Island and small strips of land along the river, because: "the continuing disturbances of the Soninke-Marabout Wars interfered with trade and led successive British governments and Parliaments to come to view The Gambia as worthless." (Perfect, 2016, p. 6). A year after The Gambia became administratively separate in 1888, the French and British met in Paris to "allocate spheres of influence in West Africa" (Perfect, 2016, p. 7). The French had taken firm control of most Wolof states north of the river and the British were not very heavily invested in The Gambia, so they were willing to cede it, if the French would prove flexible elsewhere. Because the French were not, the British demanded control over a strip of land around the Gambia river, which the French accepted (Perfect, 2016). It was thus that The Gambia became known as one of the "accidents of colonial history" (Golub & Mbaye, 2008, p. 597).

This new British protectorate covered different chiefdoms: the old Mandinka kingdom that had been plagued by marabout warfare, some of the Fula chiefdoms in the east and several Jola chiefdoms in the south. The British had also brought Wolof artisans with them when settling Bathurst. Because of the indirect rule that the British used in many of their colonies, 35 recognized chiefs remained relatively independent under the supervision of no more than five travelling commissioners (Perfect, 2016). Slave trade was abolished and the Gambia river trade network was separated between the British and French, so many Mandinka chiefs had lost their primary livelihoods and returned to agriculture for sustenance.

Such was the situation for the next seventy-five years of British colonial rule. This sub-section has shed light on the origins of the various ethnic groups of The Gambia and how they came to be in a single country along the Gambia river. This history also sets the historic background for three important characteristics of The Gambia:

Firstly, the Gambia's ethnic diversity: the Mandinka are the largest group throughout the country, the Wolof are still primarily present in the coastal urban area of the Gambia, the Fula remain mostly in the eastern parts of the country and the Jola in the southern Foni provinces. It also shows the Jola as the historical inhabitants of the area that were disturbed by a variety of invading forces, a discourse that is still present in their folklore. The Serer and Serahuli are still present as minority groups in Senegal and The Gambia.

Secondly, the historic differences between the coastal area and the interior: the history shows a lack of control and interest by the 'central government' in Banjul (Bathurst was renamed back to Banjul after independence) over the interior regions. Official regulation still has trouble reaching interior villages and there is little political activity in the interior (FAWEGAM, 2015).

Thirdly, there is a broken trend as well: the active trade on the Gambia river has died down. While groundnuts are The Gambia's primary export item, many farmers in the interior are actually sustenance farmers and any trade that still travels by road now. The river is only used by ferries and small tour boats.

4.2.2. After 1950

The previous sub-section provided background to the ethnic composition of The Gambia and touched slightly on the religious and economic situation. This sub-section will focus more on the political aspects of The Gambia's history, while also touching on its economic development. To do so, this section starts just before independence, showing first how Dawda Jawara became The Gambia's first president and then how Yahya Jammeh became the second. The section ends with a brief analysis of how Adama Barrow was elected. The Gambia's political history shows similarities to other African states, but has several distinct characteristics that will be highlighted throughout the section. The growing importance of tourism in the country, while a significant trend throughout its history, will be discussed separately in the next section.

Party politics in The Gambia developed after World War II. There was already some opposition against the British ruling class and the elite of liberated Africans (from Sierra Leone, of which the Gambian Crown Colony was a part until 1888) before there were well-defined political parties. This opposition remained limited though. The Protectorate, consisting of the interior provinces, was not represented nor involved in national politics at all until party politics developed (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). The first political parties were formed in the urban coastal areas: the Gambia Democratic Party (GDP), the Gambia Muslim Congress (GMC) and the United Party (UP). While GMC is Muslim, Gambian politics have been surprisingly secular. The Christian minority in The Gambia is spread

throughout different parties and there have been few voices for political Islam until Jammeh ventured into that direction at the beginning of the 21st century. We will, however, see that ethnicity is a far more important denominator in Gambian politics.

The first political party that became active outside of the coastal Crown Colony was the People's Progressive Party (PPP) "which was specifically founded to give a voice to rural society in national affairs" (Hughes & Perfect, 2006, p. 134). This was made possible by a constitutional change in 1959, which designated twelve out of nineteen seats in the legislative council to the Protectorate. In the elections of 1960 the PPP secured eight of those twelve protectorate seats. This meant that the UP, the largest party in the urban area, suffered a major loss in the overall division of seats. The British governor at that time, Sir Edward Henry Windley, was still above national politics and he was the one that assigned the ministerial posts and portfolios. Because there was no overall majority, he spread the ministers evenly across the different parties. This left all of them unsatisfied and calling for further constitutional reform and independence. Governor Windley was hesitant to change a constitution that had only been revised so recently, but could not resist the pressure of the political parties, so further constitutional changes were called for (Hughes & Perfect, 2006).

An important actor to introduce now is the new leader of the PPP in 1959: Dawda Kairaba Jawara (born 1924). He was born in a prosperous working class family of Muslim Mandinka (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). Jawara was one of the first Mandinka's to obtain a university degree when he graduated as a veterinarian at the Universities of Glasgow and Liverpool. When he came back to The Gambia in 1953 he worked as a veterinarian and within five years became the principal veterinary officer; according to Hughes and Perfect it was the highest position in civil service obtained by a Mandinka up to that point (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). His reputation as a successful veterinarian gave him great status in the largely agricultural society of the Protectorate. Additionally, he was part of the Mandinka majority that had barely had any representation in the civil and political sphere thus far. Jawara converted to Christianity to marry a Christian Mandinka woman.

Additionally, Jawara understood something about the Protectorate society that gave him a political edge. Many youths were unhappy with the economic situation in the provinces (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). They felt unrepresented by the traditional and conservative chiefs and had no voice in that system. Jawara and the PPP realized that many chiefs were losing popularity and selected various Protectorate-born civil servants or school teachers to run for office instead. The party was not ethnically homogeneous, so they chose Jola and Fula representatives in areas where those groups were the majority. Overall eleven of their fourteen candidates were Mandinka, however. The only seats the PPP did not win in the protectorate were won by traditional chiefs.

After the 1959 elections ended in a coalition drafted by governor Windley, all major parties pressured the Governor into another constitutional reform. Different pressures included various influential representatives stepping out of the executive council and a general unwillingness to work with each other (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). One of the major changes in the constitutional reform drafted in 1961 was a further expansion and redistribution of seats in the House of Representatives. The Protectorate now had 25 out of 32 seats and the representation by traditional chiefs was limited to four (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). Additionally, the leader of the majority party in the House would be appointed to the premiership by the governor and new elections were to be held in 1962.

The expansion of the House of Representatives meant that many more seats were now up for grabs for the PPP which dominated the political field in the Protectorate, especially considering many of the seats were in areas with a Mandinka majority. The PPP won an absolute majority with 18 out of 32 seats, with 12 of the remaining seats going to their main opponent, the UP, and the other two to an independent candidate and the Democratic Congress Alliance (DCA), the last minor party still represented. The PPP spent the following years further cementing its position in power. Many chiefs were dismissed or forced to retire, for traditional chiefs were still their primary political rivals

in the Protectorate. This move had the desired effect: “Perhaps not surprisingly, their [the retired chiefs] successors were quick to declare their allegiance to the PPP.” (Hughes & Perfect, 2006, p. 157). Secondly, several UP members of parliament also defected to the PPP, for the UP leader spent a lot of time in London and was blamed for ineffective leadership. Defectors hoped they had a bigger chance at a position of power in the PPP, realizing that the UP might lose further ground in upcoming elections (Hughes & Perfect, 2006).

1965 marked the year of The Gambia’s independence from Britain. The repeated constitutional reforms had already given a great degree internal governance and greatly shifted the balance of power from the colonial elite in Bathurst to the new rural-based movement of the PPP. Within the first months of independence Jawara proposed another constitutional change to turn The Gambia from a monarchy (with Elizabeth II being its queen) to a republic. The constitution, however, contained a special clause stating that changing the form of government required a two-third majority, in both Parliament and a national referendum. While a majority in parliament was obtained, the opposition actively lobbied against the change, arguing that it was an attempt by Jawara to obtain more power for himself (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). Their lobbying was successful enough to prevent a two-third majority in the referendum. However, Jawara was successful in establishing The Gambia as a republic in a second attempt in 1970, becoming The Gambia’s first president.

The UP was still strong enough as a political party in the more populated urban area of The Gambia; however, any attempts to challenge the PPP in the rest of the country failed. Both parties are described as having a patron-structure, relying on the personal appeal, network and finances of the party leader. In the UP’s case this was Pierre Sarr N’Jie, a Christian Wolof from Bathurst (by this time renamed to Banjul). Because there was very little ideological differentiation between the parties, the UP had little ground to stand on outside Bathurst and the coastal areas. In the first post-independence elections in 1966 it remained a legitimate contender and continued to offer opposition to Jawara and the PPP. Thanks to this two-party system, The Gambia was actually seen as a relatively successful democracy for African standards for a long time (Englebert & Dunn, 2013).

Meanwhile the PPP used its rapid growth and the acquired independence as signs of its success, attaching great importance to national unity, representing the provinces and strengthening democracy in its official discourse (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). This narrative proved successful, as it won the election with 65.3% of the vote (Hughes & Perfect, 2006, p. 167)

Given the patron-structure of the PPP, its primary challenge after independence was to bring development. For the provinces (clients) it was time that their loyalty would be rewarded with the long-promised economic development that that part of the country so greatly lacked. The main cash crop for commercial farmers in the provinces was groundnut.

Due to high output and high world prices of groundnut this was a successful business model in the 1960s and early 1970s; however, four different trends laid bare the risky nature of this monoculture (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). Firstly, there was prolonged drought in the Sahel region in the 1970s, leading to decreased export and the need to import food. Secondly, global groundnut prices dropped as palm oil became more and more dominant as an alternative for the use of groundnut oil in many consumer goods such as soaps. Thirdly, the oil crisis of 1973 increased prices for many imports that The Gambia’s economy relied on. And finally, Hughes and Perfect describe how poor governance was also partly to blame for the collapse of the groundnut export.

In response, Jawara introduced a Five Year Plan and dramatically increased government spending on development projects and expanded civil service employment to combat unemployment (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). However, Jawara used the Five Year Plan and its

development projects to strengthen his patronage network in the urban areas (Radelet, 1992), instead of rewarding the provinces' loyalty. Because the civil apparatus was limited in the Protectorate, the expansion of the civil service appeased primarily the young men in the urban areas. This could have been done to prevent dissent, because by including young unemployed men into the government, they are less likely to rebel against it (Englebert & Dunn, 2013). Additionally, the investments in development projects mainly offered cheap loans and tax breaks to urban projects (Radelet, 1992). They played a big role in the growth of tourism as we will discuss in the next section. For these two reasons, and due to large-scale corruption and theft in the civil service (Hughes & Perfect, 2006), the Five Year Plan solved none of the economic issues The Gambia was facing.

Economic troubles coincided with greater opposition to Jawara's regime in the urban areas. The lack of opportunities in rural areas had caused urbanization. The corruption in the enlarged civil service and the lack of opportunities for the growing population of the urban areas were the basis for dissent and radical opposition. Meanwhile Jawara and the PPP continued to have an absolute majority in all elections, due to their strong rural power basis. Despite efforts by Jawara and the PPP to strengthen their position in urban areas, there was a violent coup-d'état in 1981. Senegalese soldiers defended the regime and allowed the government to hold, despite approximately 1,000 casualties (Hughes & Perfect, 2006). After this coup and the resulting Senegalese intervention, The Gambia joined in a Senegalese confederation for eight years.

In a surprising twist of events, Jawara recovered surprisingly well from the blows. In 1985, under pressure from international donors threatening to stop aid flows and from his Minister of Finance who had gathered a task force of domestic economic experts to present a proposal for reform, Jawara initiated reforms (Radelet, 1992). They were effective in increasing the domestic production and export, especially because they coincided with increased rainfall. The economic reforms resembled the structural adjustment programs commonly designed by the IMF in those days: floating the currency, layoff of government personnel, increased interest rates and increased prices of transport and petroleum (Abbot, 1993; White, 1996). Steven Radelet argues that these measures may have gotten more support in The Gambia than elsewhere, because they were designed domestically by a Ministry of Finance task force instead of international organizations (Radelet, 1992). Another possible explanation for the success and support for these measures was the political context in which they were implemented. The public feared further integration into Senegal if the country destabilized any further, which allowed Jawara to strengthen his position as Father of the Nation, the one who had brought independence.

As late as 1992, Radelet described Jawara's regime as: "The Gambia's democratic institutions and strong human rights record since independence have enhanced his stature both domestically and internationally." (Radelet, 1992, p. 1093). Jawara highly valued the discourse of national unity. While his efforts to appease both the urban and rural electorate can be seen as a personal power-grab and the strengthening of his own position, they also strengthened national unity. Despite the ethnic variety in the country, differences did not lead to interethnic violence. Despite Jawara's long reign, there were multiparty elections every five years and a variety of new opposition parties had formed over the years (Wiseman & Vidler, 1995).The Gambia was long regarded as an example of tolerance and democracy in Africa (Radelet, 1992; Wiseman & Vidler, 1995; Englebert & Dunn, 2013).

The 1994 coup d'état therefore came as a surprise. The (relatively young and small) Gambian military held several grievances of bad living conditions and late payments when four lieutenants rather spontaneously staged a coup in July of 1994. The initial theory was that the coup was an already planned protest over late payments that got out of hand. Later, most believe that the coup was a spontaneous response to an incident at Banjul Airport earlier that week. Several soldiers went to greet Jawara after a visit to London, where they were accused by the presidential guard of plotting

against the president (Wiseman & Vidler, 1995). This lack of trust in the army was then the seed that quickly grew into a successful coup d'état.

Why was the 1994 coup, despite its spontaneity, successful when the 1981 coup was not? Two reasons seem most likely: firstly, a planned military training with US soldiers in the harbor of Banjul meant easy and inconspicuous access to the armory and transport for the army (Wiseman & Vidler, 1995). Secondly, there was no foreign intervention to protect the president this time, as relations with Senegal had worsened after the Senegalese Confederation broke up in 1989 over economic disagreement and excessive smuggling activities (Wiseman & Vidler, 1995; Golub & Mbaye, 2008). The US navy ship present for the military training was ordered to remain neutral and only played a role insofar as to provide Jawara with safe travel to Dakar.

The 1994 coup installed lieutenant Yahya Jammeh as the new president of The Gambia. Claudia Sadowski-Smith describes three ways in which Jammeh reversed the progress of Jawara in the first years of his reign (Sadowski-Smith, 2002). First, he limited access of political parties to state media and banned specific parties and individuals through presidential decree. Secondly, elections under Jammeh were distinctly undemocratic. Many Senegalese Jola from the Casamance province were given Gambian voter cards, leading to voter turnouts of over a hundred percent in some districts. Thirdly, ineffective economic policy caused renewed decline in the groundnut export. Jammeh invested heavily in physical infrastructure, such as schools and hospitals, arguing that they were proof of economic progress, while GDP in fact declined.

However, Jammeh also gained public popularity through his prestigious infrastructure projects (Perfect, 2010). Additionally, his promises to root out corruption and his representation of the Jola's, a minority that had had little influence in Gambian politics thus far, also gave him a solid constituency (Wiseman & Vidler, 1995; Perfect, 2010). That is not to say that his party, the Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction (APRC), was exclusively Jola. While Jammeh maintained personal popularity in the Jola community, political divisions were still rarely made along ethnic, religious or ideological lines. Like his predecessor, and many other African leaders, Jammeh built a patron-structure around him with loyal subjects (Englebert & Dunn, 2013).

Through a combination of unfair elections, personal popularity and fragmented opposition, Jammeh continued to win elections, in 1996, 2001, 2006 and 2011. His economic 'Vision 2020' strategy however failed to turn The Gambia from an agricultural economy reliant on slowly declining groundnut export into a manufacturing and service economy. Meanwhile many Western donors imposed economic sanctions in response to the coup and the undemocratic elections that followed. So, the Gambian economy became dependent on new aid donors willing to look away from human rights offenses, which Jammeh found in countries such as Libya, Iran, Cuba and Venezuela (Perfect, 2010), and a rapidly growing tourism sector in the early 21st century.

Before we move on to discuss the growing tourism sector, there are two interrelated issues worth discussing about The Gambia's recent political development. Firstly, the deterioration of human rights under Yahya Jammeh and, secondly, the election of Adama Barrow in December 2016.

Dawda Jawara was an active defender of human rights; his reputation was reflected in the establishment of the African Commission of Human and Peoples' Rights in Banjul in 1989. However, under Jammeh freedom of association and press were quickly limited as he smacked down on several opposition parties and individuals after 1994 (Sadowski-Smith, 2002). This proved to be only the beginning of Jammeh's disregard for human rights. In 2009 the Africa Research Bulletin cited several researchers and local sources describing the deterioration of human rights in The Gambia: "Severe freedom of speech constraints affect all journalists in the country, including those working on government-endorsed newspapers" and "Speaking on Gambia Radio and Television Service on July

22nd President Jammeh said he would deal ruthlessly with individuals or groups planning any coup against him" (African Research Bulletin, 2009, p. 18042). In addition to limited freedom of press and (political) association, he was very intolerant and hostile against LGBT people, including a public announcement in 2008 stating he would kill any gay or lesbian in The Gambia (Perfect, 2010).

Jammeh's electoral victory in 2011 would be his last. That begs the question: what was different about the 2016 elections? While it is still recent and extensive academic research has not been done or published yet, some initial reactions offer enough insights for a preliminary answer (Kora & Darboe, 2017). It has been mentioned earlier that Jammeh won all his elections through a combination of voter fraud, personal popularity and fragmented opposition. 2016 proved to be different on all three fronts.

Firstly, another crackdown on civil society by Jammeh after a failed coup in 2014 had further worsened the degree of corruption and repression in the country. By 2016 The Gambia was ranked 145th in both the Corruption Perception Index and a Reporters Without Borders rating on press freedom (Kora & Darboe, 2017). The situation reached a breaking point as 'peaceful marches' by opposition parties were violently put down and there were reports of demonstrators being tortured. The excessive use of violence by Jammeh and his secret police, combined with abundant spending of state funds on personal purchases such as a Rolls Royce or a private airplane (BBC, 2017), greatly decreased his popularity.

Secondly, Jammeh tried to keep his opposition fragmented with attempts to ignite ethnic and religious conflict, but these attempts backfired (Kora & Darboe, 2017). We have mentioned before that there was little ethnic and religious conflict in The Gambia, despite different historic origins. Although many people still voted along ethnic lines, Jawara had at least succeeded in creating a tolerant society. Jammeh's attempt at further fragmenting the opposition therefore failed, whilst several of the old guard of political opponents retired. These factors combined, allowed a new generation of political opposition to form a coalition, freed from the personal conflicts of the old generation. Out of five potential opposition leaders, the new leader of the United Democratic Party (UDP, a continuation of Jawara's primary opposition, the UP), Adama Barrow, was elected as the flag bearer of the coalition. A native small hotel owner shared in his interview with the author that the coalition meeting where the vote was held, was in his hotel, as it held symbolic value as the first Gambian owned hotel (personal communication, 19-05-2017). Gambian newspaper *The Point*, however, in their coverage of the coalition forming does not go into more detail than "a hotel in Kololi" (Jahateh & Kaddijatou, 2016).

A third factor contributing to Barrow's victory over Jammeh was the relative fairness of the elections. After violently putting down protests for new election laws, Jammeh signed a law that installed on-the-spot vote counting. He did so because he felt his position was sufficiently secured now that the primary opposition leaders had either been captured after the protests, or retired (Kora & Darboe, 2017). The forming of the opposition coalition five months after the new election law proved him wrong, but the law had already passed. And voting counts were considerably more accurate in the 2016 elections (Kora & Darboe, 2017). During the fieldwork time, folklore stories had developed that the warehouse where additional voter cards for Senegalese Jola's were stored had been burned down by opposition activists, but the truth of such stories is not currently confirmed by other sources.

One additional factor potentially played a major role in the 2016 election upset. Kora and Darboe hint at the importance of social media and access to internet for the public campaigning of the opposition coalition. The campaigners used Whatsapp groups, Facebook live sessions and virtual private networks (VPN) to spread their message (Kora & Darboe, 2017). Considering the major role of social media in the Arab Spring (Brand, 2014), this factor is worthy of additional research.

This concludes the summary of political and economic history of post-independence The Gambia. Several important trends are visible in this segment of The Gambia's history. While the pre-independence history illustrates how The Gambia's coastal-interior and ethnic divisions came to be, this sub-section introduces three political and economic trends.

First of all, Jawara's legacy of multiparty elections and his national unity discourse laid the basis for a peaceful and democratic country. While Jammeh actively worked to tear down that basis, recent developments have shown that that basis still exists. The only violence mentioned in the modern history was instigated by Jammeh's regime, as inter-ethnic conflict is non-existent on a structural scale in The Gambia.

Secondly, however, the Gambian economy's reliance on groundnut export has proven fickle. While Jawara's economic reforms in the 1980s were successful in keeping the agricultural economy above collapse, Jammeh's attempts to diversify the economy failed as the groundnut economy further deteriorated. These factors combined allowed tourism to become a vital part and even a reliance for the Gambian economy. The next section discusses this development from the perspectives of policy and the private sector.

Lastly, while the legal difference between the Crown Colony and the Protectorate no longer exists, differences between the coastal urban part and the interior rural part of the country remain. Jawara never quite succeeded in building a strong urban following. However, when Jammeh failed to make good on any of his anti-corruption promises, nor solved unemployment issues, the urban areas proved to be the soil of opposition again. Economically speaking, when groundnut exports decline, Jawara and Jammeh both looked for diversification of the economy through urban development, infrastructure or manufacturing projects, leaving the interior's economy in a state of decline and hopelessness.

4.3. Tourism development in The Gambia

Now that the case has been introduced in Sections 4.1 and 4.2, Section 4.3 begins the descriptive element of the research question by addressing the history of The Gambia's tourism sector. The social, political and economic context as sketched in the previous section provides ample background to describe and explain the growth of the tourism sector. While literature remains an important source for this section, official documents have also been used for accurate information on The Gambia's tourism policy. Interviews and observations are also cited, because even when they were done in 2017 they do provide relevant insights into the history of the sector.

Development of the tourism sector in any country is influenced by two spheres. On the one hand there is the international sphere, in which the sector competes with other comparable destinations to pull as many tourists towards themselves as possible. On the other hand there is the domestic sphere, in which the tourism sector competes with other economic sectors for economic priority. Both of these spheres are relevant in the case of the Gambia and feature in this section.

The kick-start of The Gambia's tourism sector came early in The Gambia's history, when a Swedish investor named Bertil Hardings first brought Swedish tourists to The Gambia in the 1960s. Initially they came in the form of organized cruises, making a stop in Banjul's harbor. Throughout the 1970s the first hotels were founded, including Wadner Beach Hotel, Palm Grove Hotel, Sunwing Hotel and Fajara Hotel (Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995, p. 573). What followed was a fast growth from the first few hundreds of visitors in the 1966-1967 winter season to 26,000 just over a decade later in 1978-1979 and a steady growth since then (Dieke, 1993, pp. 425-426).

The winter season, from approximately October to March, quickly became the tourist season for The Gambia for two reasons. Firstly, the climate in The Gambia is most attractive in the dry season, when it offers pretty much guaranteed 30+ degrees Celsius and sunshine. The dry season begins in October and lasts until June, when the first rains usually fall. While the Gambian climate is a domestic factor, the second and international factor is the competition with other sunny beach destinations. Once the weather in the Mediterranean begins to rival that of The Gambia in (European) spring and summer, The Gambia is simply too expensive for most tour operators and tourists. This is mostly due to the shorter flight distances to destinations such as the Algarve (Portugal), Mallorca (Spain) or Tuscany (Italy).

Tourist Arrivals, Bed Capacity and Hotel Occupancy in The Gambia (1979/1980 to 1990/1991)

	Arrivals			
Year	Air	Sea	Land	Total
1979/1980	36,570	2,466	3,716	42,752
1980/1981	29,838	1,767	5,665	37,270
1981/1982	23,068	1,958	7,812	32,838
1982/1983	41,100	1,019	7,522	49,641
1983/1984	54,933	1,039	8,136	64,108
1984/1985	64,365	1,234	8,254	73,853
1985/1986	67,863	1,499	8,906	78,268
1986/1987	66,551	1,727	9,355	77,633
1987/1988	86,074	1,310	9,129	96,513
1988/1989	89,898	2,460	9,246	101,604
1989/1990	77,075	479	8,306	85,860
1990/1991	93,945	1,718	5,756	101,419

Figure 9 Tourist arrivals in The Gambia in the winter seasons of the 1980's (Dieke, 1993, p. 426)

There are external and internal reasons for the large growth in tourism arrivals to the Gambia in the 1970s and 1980s. The external ones are discussed first this time.

The Gambia was relatively early in capturing the winter sun market, before potential competitors like Egypt and the Canary Islands turned towards that market segment (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006). The Swedish market was the first to offer holiday packages to The Gambia, but their market share was quickly eclipsed by the British tourists. Throughout the 1980s the British constituted the majority of air arrivals, between 50% and 60% during the winter season and up to 72% of arrivals during the off season (Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995, p. 578). The use of the English language, which is taught in the whole country and fairly actively spoken in the coastal area, helped. The easy communication contributed to a feeling of security and comfort in a new and exciting context, echoing the two rivaling desires of tourists Cohen described: authenticity and security (Cohen, 1988). British tour operator The Gambia Experience remains one of the largest operators in The Gambia and the only one offering year-round charter flights. However, the share of Dutch tourists has also increased massively, securing the second largest market share (Goodwin & Bah, 2006), perhaps for similar reasons as the British. Corendon and TUI are the two large tour operators offering charter flights between Schiphol and Banjul Airport.

Internal factors were also important in facilitating the growth of tourism. First of all because of the tolerant nature of The Gambia and a general laid-back welcoming attitude to outsiders of its inhabitants. These characteristics quickly gave The Gambia a reputation as 'The Smiling Coast' (Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995). Interviews at the Gambia Tourism Board confirmed that it has

embraced the nickname of The Smiling Coast of Africa and has no intent of changing its marketing slogan, mainly due to failed experiments in the past ten years to do so (personal communication, 13-06-2017).

In addition to the welcoming culture of The Gambia, the economic policies of Jawara also contributed to tourism's growth in the 1970s and 1980s. Both the development projects of the 1970s and the successful economic reform of 1985 impacted the tourism industry heavily. It has already been described that Jawara used investments in development projects in the 1970s as an instrument to create goodwill in the urban areas. The beneficiaries for many of these projects were tourism investors: British, Scandinavian and Dutch investors bought land and received loans cheaply to develop hotels and restaurants (Dieke, 1993; Hughes & Perfect, 2006).

The 1985 reforms reduced the reliance of the tourism market on the government, however. Dieke distinguishes four significant effects: firstly, floating the currency "had the effect of enhancing the country's foreign exchange environment on a more realistic setting" (Dieke, 1993, p. 424), making foreign direct investment much safer. Secondly, the government could use its scarce resources on other things without sacrificing growth in tourism. Thirdly, increased private sector influence meant a more profit-oriented development of the sector, which is crucial in the highly competitive tourism market. Fourthly, the government's role was redefined from operational to enabling (Dieke, 1993). Again, these effects are in line with the goals of the structural adjustment programs common at that time.

This variety of internal and external factors contributed to the growth of the tourism sector from a few hundred in 1966-67 to over 40,000 in 1979-80 and up to 100,000 in 1988-89. At the beginning of the 1990s, the tourism sector is the second largest contributor to the Gambian GDP behind agriculture and the fastest growing sector (Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995). Employment statistics are unreliable, but the available ones vary from around 3,000 directly employed (Dieke, 1993, p. 429) to 16,000 in official documents (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006, p. 2). Figure 10 shows the hotels along the Gambian coast in 1993.

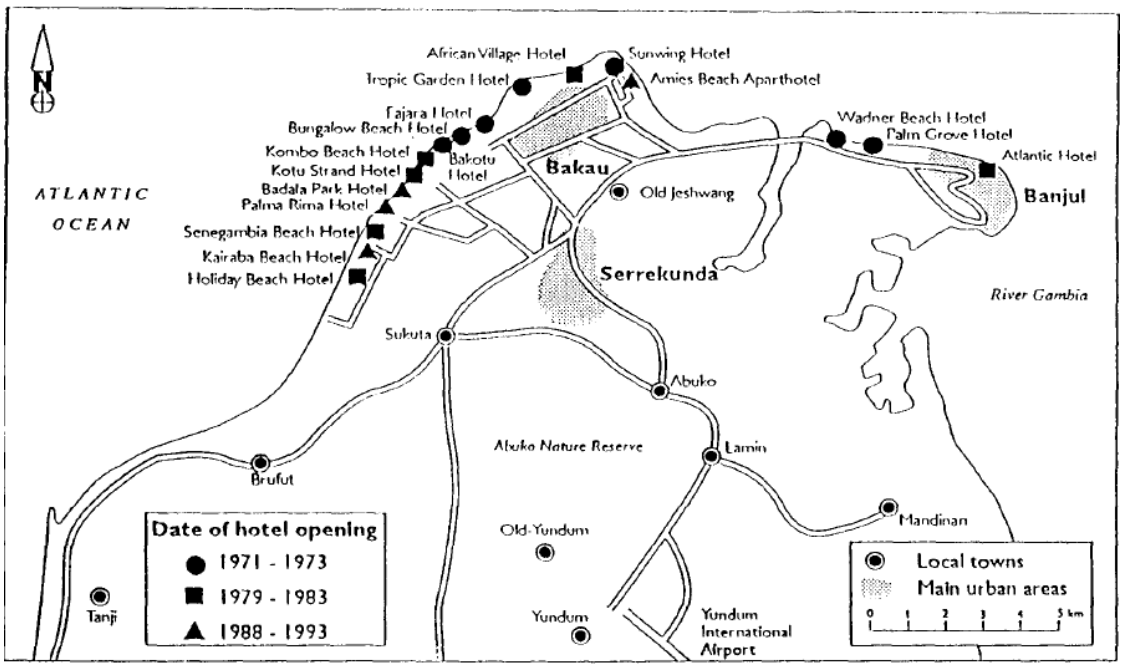


Figure 10 Map of hotels in The Gambia in 1993 (Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995, p. 574)

The geographical spread of hotels is no coincidence. In 1972, a one mile wide strip along the coast from Cape Point to Sukuta was designated as the 'Tourism Development Area' (TDA) (Thompson, O'Hare, & Evans, 1995). A highway road was later built along the TDA named after the first investor in Gambian tourism: the Bertil Harding Highway. Tourism has since then always been acknowledged in Gambian development plans as an important contributor to national development (Dieke, 1993). The geographical spread would remain limited to that specific strip of coast until at least 2006. The 2006 Tourism Master Plan and its context will be described below.

After reaching 100,000 tourist arrivals in 1988-89 for the first time, growth stagnated in the 1990's. Britain and the Netherlands remained the most important markets, but The Gambia's relative share in their departures decreased. Interestingly enough, the 1981 coup attempt and the 1994 coup d'état do not seem to have had lasting impacts despite a temporary dip in arrivals in those seasons. One potential reason is a general decline in the type of tourism that The Gambia offers. The winter holiday to The Gambia is mostly offered in the form of packaged tours, where a tour operator like Thomas Cook (British) or Corendon (Dutch) offers both flight and hotel arranged in a single deal. This way the tour operator can negotiate a cheaper price with hotels based on their economy of scale. All large hotel owners shared in the interviews that they work with multiple tour operators to offer such packages (various personal communications, 2017); only two of the small hotel owners did not work at all with foreign tour operators (personal communication, 04-05-2017; 09-06-2017b).

The Gambia's Tourism Development Master Plan of 2006 offers four potential reasons for the declining interest in such packaged deals. All of these reasons are external: (1) expansion of low-cost travel within Europe; (2) easier access to direct booking on the internet removes the relative benefits of security and comfort of the pre-packaged tours; (3) growth of foreign home ownership by UK residents; (4) increased familiarity with foreign travel. In other words, The Gambia has not adapted to changing possibilities and demands abroad.

There are internal factors for stagnation too, that go unnamed in the 2006 Master Plan. Richard Sharpley names four challenges for tourism in developing contexts (Sharpley, 2009). All four of these are present in The Gambia. Firstly, geographical characteristics: the semi-arid climate of The Gambia and the high temperatures throughout the year make diversification of the tourism sector away from beach tourism challenging. Secondly, vulnerability to shocks: while the tourism arrivals recovered from the shocks of the two coups in 1981 and 1994, continued shocks remain a risk for foreign investors. The tourism sector saw two more shocks in 2010-11 due to the Ebola crisis in West Africa (despite zero contaminations in The Gambia itself) and in 2016-17 due to the emergency situation Jammeh declared after the elections. A tourism consultant discussed this issue in his interview. While individual instances such as a coup attempt crisis have little long-term impact by themselves, the erratic nature of Jammeh's regime made The Gambia seem vulnerable and risky to invest in. For this interviewee, that was the primary reason for the stagnation of the tourism sector (personal communication, 06-06-2017).

However, Sharpley offers two more factors. Thirdly, structural handicaps like limited transport, accommodation, telecommunication, et cetera. There are some structural weaknesses in The Gambia; infrastructure and public transport are underdeveloped and access to water, electricity and telecommunication is limited in the interior. However, this factor likely had the least impact, because the type of tourism that The Gambia offers requires little intra-destination travel and the beach enclave presents a sort of bubble in which all facilities are at a higher level than the rest of the country. Fourthly, the policy environment can be a limiting factor to tourism growth. This was also the case in The Gambia, according to the previously cited tourism consultant. We will further dive into Jammeh's relationship to tourism in the next chapter. One example of the limitations by the policy environment is reported by several foreign hotel owners: erratic taxation of the tourism

sector. They felt treated like a milking cow and experienced such taxes as if they were thought of on the spot when money was needed (personal communication, 04-05-2017; 09-05-2017). Whether that experience is an accurate representation of the policy environment is questionable, but it is an indicator of an unhealthy relationship between (foreign-owned) hotels and the government.

One possible cause for stagnation is not discussed in the official documents or literature. A native small hotel owner shares his worry that the aging tourist population will be the cause of declining arrivals soon. This process is visible as an observant too: a large proportion of tourists toward the end of the season seems to be over fifty years of age. Over the years, The Gambia has developed a high percentage of return visitors. Goodwin and Bah report 44% of visitors in one winter season had visited before (Goodwin & Bah, 2006, p. 2).

The Tourism Development Master Plan of 2006 offers a vision for the tourism sector in 2020:

> "to make The Gambia a tourist paradise and a major tourist destination through product innovation, quality improvement, improvement of investment returns and diversification of The Gambia's tourism product." (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006, p. 3)

This vision has several elements. On the one hand quality improvement and larger investment returns require the existing beach enclave to evolve. On the other hand, innovation and diversification require branching out with new projects in the coastal area and in the interior. The Gambia Tourism Authority (GTA) was the operational agency responsible for implementation. The GTA replaced the National Tourist Office (1970-2001) and is the predecessor to the Gambia Tourism Board (2011-present).

Following the 2006 Master Plan, there was a recovery in arrival numbers, reaching a peak of 147,000 arrivals in 2008 (Davidson & Sahli, 2014). Davidson and Sahli's analysis of this number in 2015 is similar to that of Goodwin and Bah nine years before and Dieke and Thompson and colleagues in the 1990s: "Tourism is concentrated in a 10-km coastal strip, known as the Tourism Development Area (TDA), and 90% of the tourist capacity is concentrated in 20 large hotels." (Davidson & Sahli, 2014, p. 174). After 2009 tourism arrivals dipped due to Ebola reports in West Africa, but the sector actually recovered so well that a new peak in arrivals of 171,000 was reached in 2013, according to World Tourism Organization statistics available online (Index Mundi, 2015). The years after were less successful, breaking the short and fast upward trend after the 2010 Ebola dip. The online statistics show a decline to 135,000 in 2015 and the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) confirms that the statistics hovered around 140,000-150,000 arrivals since then (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018). Two foreign owners of large hotels speculated that the growth of the early 2010s was hampered by Jammeh's human rights violations and his worsening reputation (personal communication, 09-05-2017; 08-06-2017), as we have discussed in the previous section.

The WTTC estimated that in 2017 the contribution of tourism to the GDP of The Gambia is 8.2% (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018, p. 3). It is still the second largest contributor behind agriculture, especially considering the 'indirect contributions' the WTTC defines, which include, for example, such issues as the impact of purchases from suppliers. Including indirect effects, the WTTC calculates a 20.1% indirect contribution to GDP (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018, p. 1). Most hotel owners and Tourism Board employees estimate similar numbers when asked about the contribution of tourism to GDP. In 2017 the sector employed 42,000 people, equaling 6.7% of The Gambia's total employment (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018, p. 4).

Two interesting trends are visible in these statistics. While arrival numbers have risen, relative contribution to GDP has only increased slightly from an estimated 6% to 8.2% during the past two decades. This can imply two things: either the rest of the Gambian economy grew equally as fast

as the tourism sector, or the profit per tourist arrival has gone down. Considering the GDP has risen by 13.7% between 1996 and 2016 (World Bank, 2018), the first option is a plausible explanation. The second trend is that employment numbers have increased exponentially since the 1990s. This could be because the WTTC defines tourism employment more broadly than previously used sources – promoting the importance of tourism is its raison d'être after all. This sentiment is, however, echoed in the interview at the Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute and by the Gambian head chef of a foreign-owned large hotel when he joined in one of the interviews (personal communication, 08-06-2017; 28-06-2017).

Twelve years after the Tourism Development Master Plan, the new government of The Gambia includes tourism challenges in the National Development Plan 2018-2021:

> "Tourism: this sector is challenged by poor destination recognition/attractiveness; dwindling product quality; undiversified products; limited air access and reliance on tour operators; security; and environmental degradation." (Office of the President, 2018, p. 6)

There are striking similarities between the problems of 2006 and 2018. Those similarities imply that some of the problems The Gambia's tourism sector faced twelve years ago still exist today, such as a lack of diversity and reliance on foreign operators. Or, in the case of product quality, they may be getting worse. The next section will describe the situation in the tourism sector at the time of the fieldwork and the next chapter will analyze Jammeh's relationship with and policy for the tourism sector. A preliminary conclusion could be that increased arrivals despite similar problems between 2006 and 2018 signify a lack of agency: structural market forces may be more influential than The Gambia's own tourism policy.

This section has contributed to answering the first two sub-questions of this research: 1. *What is the history of the Gambia's tourism sector? 2. What is the position of tourism as an economic and political priority in the Gambia?*

Building upon the Gambian history in Section 4.2, we can say that tourism emerged in The Gambia both because of foreign demands (recall Bertill Harding and the Swedish cruises) and national policies by Jawara. After heavy public involvement in the early years, the tourism sector privatized during the 1985 economic reforms and has grown privately. The growth was fast in the early decades, but stagnated in the 1990s. A return to growth took place in 2005-06, which made a permanent impact in tourism arrival numbers despite difficult years as a result of Ebola and the 2016 election aftermath. Throughout tourism's growth, it has contributed around six to eight percent to The Gambia's GDP, while employing a growing number of Gambians.

To answer the second question, this section provides some indicators of tourism's contribution to The Gambia's development. Tourism first emerged as a vehicle for development in the 1970s, when Jawara used investments in the urban area to expand his patronage network in that part of The Gambia. As tourism developed and the TDA was defined, it remained a priority in all development strategies afterwards. As a result the sector cemented itself as the second largest contributor to GDP. However, when it comes to employment, the few thousands that are employed in tourism directly or indirectly fade in comparison to the amount of people working in agriculture. So, while tourism is a major contributor to GDP on a national level, it only directly impacts a small and geographically demarcated segment of the Gambian population. The next section will describe this geography in more detail.

It is tempting to consider the third sub-question answered as well by this preliminary conclusion. Is it not obvious that the second largest contributor to GDP is also a large political

priority? The question of priority is of a less descriptive nature, however, and is not clear from simply statistics and numbers. While we can state that tourism is a priority in economic policies, based on investments promised and visions made in official documents, defining the political priority also requires knowledge about the prominence of tourism in such issues as election campaigns, foreign affairs, media and the rest of the political landscape in The Gambia. Section 5.1 will delve further into this question.

4.4. Fieldwork context

Before moving onto the data analysis in Chapter 5, this section provides a summary of observations throughout the three months of fieldwork. This section serves to put the statistics and reasoning of literature and official documents in the previous sections into perspective. Additionally, a detailed description of the situation on the ground during fieldwork is one of the safeguards to validity, as mentioned in Section 3.2.1. Everything described is the situation as the author found it between April 3 and July 3, 2017. To start, the structural elements such as infrastructure are described. Next up is a physical description of the TDA. To close off the section, an interpretation of the national 'mood' is sketched.

To start with road infrastructure: several main roads were the only tarmac roads. These big highway-like roads connect coastal towns from Kartong on the southern border to Banjul in the river delta. Additionally, a large highway connects Banjul with the interior up to Basse Santa Su. In coastal towns such as Fajara, Bakau or Kololi tarmac roads also formed the main arteries of the towns. These roads are relatively well kept. Moving away from the highways and the coastal towns, however, most roads are dirt roads. The further away from the nearest asphalt road, the more bumpy and unreliable they get. Infrastructure is clearly aimed at cars in the urban areas, while many people are seen walking in the rural area.

The most common cars on the coastal roads are yellow and green taxis, often secondhand Mercedes models. The price you pay for a taxi depends on which taxi you pick and who you are. The cheapest mode of transport that the locals use is called 'eight-to-eight'. For eight dalasi per person (the conversion rate of dalasi to euro in 2017 was 1 dalasi = 0,02 euro) you can share a taxi that rides predetermined routes between important intersections. If you want door to door service instead of utilizing the cheap predetermined routes, you get a service called 'town trip' which starts at 100 dalasi and is likely to go up by around 25-50 dalasi for each segment of the previous eight-to-eight system. Then there are the 'tourist taxis', green instead of the yellow and green of other taxis. They also offer town trips, but are more willing to do long distance trips to touristic attractions such as the Wassu stone circles or Abuko National Park. The tourist taxis are part of the Travel and Tourism Association, so they use standardized fares instead of the traditional bargaining for prices in other taxis. Figure 11 shows the prices of a tourist taxi service in Kololi. To compare: using eight-to-eight taxis from Kololi to Cape Point (700 dalasi round-trip in Figure 11) would cost approximately 32 (64 round-trip) dalasi per person, a town trip could probably be negotiated down to around 200 or 250 single fare. Because most taxi drivers are aware of the standards of the tourist taxis, they will present higher prizes to anyone they think might be a tourist.

Figure 11 Tourist taxi prices in Kololi (taken by the author on June 9, 2017)

Moving from road infrastructure to another type of infrastructure, significant problems arose for The Gambia's electricity network after the appointment of Adama Barrow. Not all of The Gambia is connected to a reliable electricity infrastructure yet. In the interior electricity is available in predetermined time slots. However, during the first months of Barrow's presidency the electricity in the coastal urban areas also became unreliable. In this area there were no predetermined times, but

blackouts in entire neighborhoods lasting for hours were incredibly common in the three months the author spent in The Gambia. There was no official reason for this throughout that timeframe, causing significant grievances in the urban community. The most likely speculation was that due to debt problems and empty state coffers, the public National Water and Electricity Company (NAWEC) was struggling to stay in service. However, various wilder conspiracy-like speculations went round regularly.

Perhaps the most impressive infrastructure in The Gambia, or at least the most surprising to the author, is the telecommunication infrastructure. Nearly all of the country is connected to a telecommunication network. While signal strength is weak in small towns in the interior, people are very aware of which town nearby has better signal and use that knowledge to stay connected to friends and family outside of town. Additionally, there is a 3G network in most of the country. While it does not penetrate all of the interior yet, locals told the author it has been expanding rapidly over the past few years. Telecom companies such as Africell, Qcell and GamTel/GamCell are some of the most present private companies in the country. Their logos rival multinational brands like Coca-Cola and Nike in street presence due to the excessive presence of retailers that sell 'credit'. The credit is sent to your phone by the retailer and is used to buy data, pay telephone bills or buy other services that the companies provide (ranging from custom ringtones to daily prayer reminders).

Having discussed some details of the infrastructures of The Gambia, we move on to a description of the TDA. Initially the TDA began at Banjul and followed the coast southwards to Sukuta (see Figure 7). Nowadays, the hotels around Banjul have either rebranded, shrunk or disappeared altogether. The reason for this is the beach erosion that much of The Gambia's Atlantic coastline suffers from. The strip of coast between Cape Point and Banjul has heavily suffered from this, creating a more mangrove-heavy lagoon. In response, most investments in tourism have been moving further south. Beginning at Cape Point, we find the first big traditional beach hotels: the Sunbeach Hotel and the 5-star Ocean Bay Hotel. The strip of beach that the two hotels share is relatively quiet due to its small size, but all the more attractive for it.

Moving down the Atlantic Boulevard toward Fajara there are several smaller locally owned hotels, the most prominent among them is the African Village Hotel, and the Bakau Craft Market. The small hotels have a larger cultural component, offering 'a real Gambian/African experience', compared to the big beach resorts. This is visible firstly in their names, but also in the style of architecture and the presence of cultural craftsmanship and local cuisine.

Upon exiting Bakau, the Atlantic Boulevard changes from a poorly kept and messy road to a tidy road with large villas on the ocean side. This part of the boulevard houses several foreign embassies and influential Gambians. Between these impressive homes and offices is the Ngala Lodge, another 5-star resort. Despite being owned and managed by foreigners, the Ngala Lodge is built in a more traditional-looking style and prides itself in its Gambian staff. The restaurant menu, however, is almost fully imported. Because the beach at this point is also heavily eroding, it focuses on expats and business travel over beach tourism.

The largest strip of beach starts at the southern end of Fajara and continues for approximately 7 kilometers. This beach is dotted with hotels, small and large, foreign and local. The first segment between Fajara and Kotu is marked by the Kombo Beach Hotel, the second largest hotel of the Gambia, managed and owned by foreigners. Nearly all of this segment is closed during the off-season. The local tour operators and restaurants rely on guests from the Kombo Beach, Bungalow Beach and Sunset Beach hotels, so during the off-season they stay at friends or family or work other jobs. Overall this part has a gloomy deserted look in the off-season, despite the gorgeous beaches and still beautiful weather. The only activities are locals utilizing the empty beaches for sports or social gatherings and the hotels doing renovation work to prepare for next winter.

Figure 12 The Kombo Beach Hotel deserted in off-season (taken by the author on May 9, 2017)

Two things characterize the TDA between Kotu and Kololi: small domestically owned hotels, apartments and beach bars and abandoned projects. The Kotu beach is the most commonly used beach for Gambians and features an interesting mix of tourists and locals. Several hotels here remain open all year, especially locally owned ones such as Kunta Kinteh Apartments, Sand Beach Hotel and Calabash Residence. In an interview the owner of one of these hotels shared that most of the closed hotels were the foreign-owned ones, including Badala Park Hotel, Palm Beach Hotel and Palma Rima. Additionally, this part features a large unfinished construction project from the 1980s that has never been removed and a deserted hotel building inhabited nowadays by a small pack of monkeys. These two ruins are prominently placed near popular intersections and may be a reason why this part of the beach is less popular with foreign investors.

The next landmark is the Senegambia Strip in Kololi. This is the epicenter of The Gambia's tourism industry. The strip is a small street connecting the Kololi Beach Hotel, Kairaba Hotel and Senegambia Beach Hotel to the highway. Every inch of this street is used for tourism purposes, by restaurants, night clubs, a casino, tour guides, supermarkets with imported goods, currency exchange services and ATMs. Many restaurants are foreign-owned and sometimes even foreign-themed, such as the recent addition of *TeJo's Pannenkoekenbar* among other Dutch, German and English themed restaurants. The contrast with the Senegambia crafts market nearby could not be greater. The Senegambia Beach Hotel is the largest hotel in The Gambia with 354 rooms. It is still foreign-owned, but there are several Gambians in management positions and the hotel remains open year-round (personal communication, 11-05-2017). The Senegambia Beach Hotel occupies a large piece of land that houses its own vulture colony, monkeys, two pools and a rotating schedule of permitted local craftsmen.

Many local craftsmen, singers, fruit vendors, guides and so-called bumsters roam the beaches of Kotu and Kololi to provide their services to tourists in exchange for money, food or simply a good time. Bumsters are men that court female tourists in hopes of getting something out of it. They are often muscular men in Rastafarian style, at once distinctly Gambian and completely different from the country behind the beach. They court European women, help them find their way around and as long as the European women pay the hotel an additional fee, they will join them at night. The final goal? Perhaps just to have a good time and enjoy the status that being with Europeans gives them, but for many it is marriage and a ticket to Europe (Ebere & Charles-Ebere, 2018). The bumsters are a controversial topic: a nuisance to many, a pleasure to some. Hotels tolerate them as long as someone (usually the European woman) pays the extra fee, but the Gambia

Tourism Board considers them a stain on the reputation of The Gambia and actively discourages sex tourism.

The beach at Kololi is subject to significant beach erosion, but due to its popularity the hotels and the Gambia Tourism Board have invested in different sand retainers, such as nets and even a large concrete construction on a part of the beach that is now no longer accessible despite the concrete efforts. Most hotels in this part have been here since the 1980s and many buildings are beginning to look aging. When it comes to infrastructure, the hotels have built most of their own infrastructure and all own generators and sometimes even privatized water provision to rely as little as possible on the unreliable Gambian infrastructure. This resembles an old joke about foreign investing in Nigeria, where people would say investments are 'BYOI': Bring Your Own Infrastructure (Englebert & Dunn, 2013).

The Senegambia strip ends at the Bijilo Monkey Park, a popular tourist attraction that interrupts the beach for about a kilometer. Towards Sukuta the first hotel on your right is another 5-star hotel called Coco Ocean Resort & Spa, the only of the 5-star hotels with fully private Gambian ownership. As we move away from the strip, hotels become sparser and mostly locally owned. Brufut provides the exception; this new neighborhood of villas and apartments is home to foreign expats and the Gambian elite and features some foreign hotels such as the recent addition of Sheraton Gambia Hotel Resort and Spa, another 5-star hotel. Along the road beyond Tanji Bird Reserve we find mostly smaller lodges and beaches that are used by a mix of locals and tourists. The focus in hotels is no longer on the beach and the sun, but the Gambian cultural experience. Unlike the Bakau, Fajara and Senegambia craft markets, the cultural experience that these lodges and small hotels market is less commoditized. Features such as the Tanji fish market and pirogue fishing in Sanyang are at once tourist attraction and the local way of life.

When it comes to the interior of The Gambia, tourism mostly exists in the form of organized tours. These can be river tours visiting the historic forts on James Island and MacCarthy Island (Janjanbureh) or safari-like tours to spot monkeys, birds and occasionally hippos and crocodiles in the mangrove forests. Accommodation exists in the form of lodges instead of hotels. While lodges market themselves offering a 'local experience', they are not necessarily locally owned or managed. Around half of the lodges are owned by, usually well-intentioned, foreigners that want to show that The Gambia is more than just beaches. The Gambia Tourism Board has recently sponsored some communities in the interior to set up their own tourism initiatives, such as the eco-village in Ndemban (Figure 13). Such initiatives are meant for tourists to see how native Gambians live and work and are fairly barebones when it comes to facilities. Commoditization is very limited, but coincidentally profits for the community itself are too. Homestays such as in Ndemban are one of the few ways the Gambia Tourism Board has brought innovation of the Gambian tourism product into practice.

Figure 13 A homestay on a compound in Ndemban (taken by the author on June 18, 2017)

In total the Gambia Tourism Board has certified 41 hotels in the TDA, of which eight offer 5-star services (Gambia Tourism Board, 2017). This number does not include apartments, lodges, guest houses or any tourism facilities outside the TDA.

Lastly the socio-political context during the fieldwork deserves attention. Adama Barrow took office in January 2017, nearly two months after he was elected. The delay was caused by Yahya Jammeh's unwillingness to give up his presidential seat. Jammeh proclaimed a national state of emergency,

causing newly elected Barrow to flee to Senegal. A brief intervention by Senegalese troops under ECOWAS banner forced Jammeh into exile in Equatorial Guinea. By January 26 Barrow was back in the Gambia.

The fieldwork period began on April 3, 2017, three days before the parliamentary elections. The new president's party (United Democratic Party, UDP) won an absolute majority with 31 out of 53 seats, despite several of the coalition members running for seats separately. Jammeh's APRC was left with five seats (Independent Electoral Commission, 2017).

Overall the societal mood was very optimistic at the start of the fieldwork period. Many believed that the elections had heralded the start of 'The New Gambia'. In other words: the pressure was on Barrow to bring change. However, this was not made easy for him as we have discussed in the introduction: empty state coffers, international isolation and a stagnating economy form the primary challenges (Hultin, 2017). Barrow's new government announced a National Development Plan to discuss the road forward.

However, over the fieldwork period optimism declined and Barrow lost some of his initial momentum. One reason was controversy over the vice-presidential candidate. Barrow intended to give the post to Fatoumata Jallow-Tambajang, a former Minister of Health under Jammeh's regime, who is said to have had a significant role in the formation of the coalition. She exceeded the age limit for the vice-presidency though and the law had to be changed in order to appoint her. Despite announcing Jallow-Tambajang early, Barrow ruled nearly a year before officially having a vice-president. To some this proved ruling incompetence and the author has heard some critics argue that Barrow is too inexperienced to be the president. The second grievance that developed over the three month fieldwork period was the constant delay of the National Development Plan. This document would form the backbone of the new regime and its promised arrival excited many. However, months after the announcement of the plan, little was heard about it. It was not until February 2018, over a year after taking office, that the plan was officially published (Office of the President, 2018).

Due to the delays in Barrow's first year of presidency, a feeling was developing during the fieldwork period that nothing had changed after all. Old grievances were left unsatisfied: widespread poverty, unemployment and emigration of youths. The latter seems to have a large influence on youths in the interior, where many attempt to 'take the backway', slang for the trans-Saharan migration to Europe. The backway is an interesting topic for further research, but strays off the topic of the present thesis. While grievances existed before and after the elections, they did not lead directly to conflict. During the fieldwork there were reports of a car being burnt for political motivation in the city of Brikama, but other than that the pessimism did not translate into violence. Instead, it is likely that the conceived lack of opportunities is directly related to the emigration problem in the interior.

This concludes the fieldwork context. The fieldwork was done in a dynamic time right after the elections. Over the course of the fieldwork the tourism season ended, leaving The Gambia's coastline quiet and foreign income low. Most local tourism workers, from chefs to tour guides, took other jobs or moved back to family in the interior during the off-season, while foreign managers flew back to Europe.

Meanwhile the first six months of Barrow's presidency were marked by a distinct lack of progress. While the parliamentary elections ensured the new regime had a majority in the General Assembly too, little new legislation passed early on. While understandable from a legal and policy perspective, this reawakened grievances that existed before the election.

5. Case Analysis

Having described the case in detail in Chapter 4, this chapter moves on to the analytical portion of the case study. The last three sub-questions will be answered:

3. *What was the position of tourism as a political priority in the Gambia under Jammeh?*
4. *What is the socio-economic impact of tourism in The Gambia?*
5. *To what extent do the first months of Barrow's presidency indicate changes in the tourism industry?*

To answer the first two, a better understanding of the relationship between Jammeh, his regime and the tourism sector is required. This is achieved through interviews with parties from both sides of that relationship. Actual insights into Jammeh's thinking however is limited to hearsay and official statements, and should therefore be taken with a grain of salt. Despite that, similarities in the experiences of multiple hotels strengthen the discourse and bring it closer to the truth. The nature of Gambian politics is such that large differences may exist between official statements and eventual actions. To confirm that hypothesis and avoid making conclusions based on policy that was never executed, this chapter discusses Jammeh's relationship with the sector first. Based on that discussion, we can better estimate tourism as a political and economic priority. That estimate helps with putting the official policy in perspective, which will be done in Section 5.2.

The last section of this chapter is dedicated to the indicators of change in Barrow's first year of his presidency. While indicators are no proof of change, they offer a necessary guide for answering the research question. This section is mostly explorative and relies on the interviews conducted during the fieldwork.

5.1. Tourism policy in The Gambia

Section 4.2 introduced Yahya Jammeh to the reader as a military lieutenant who rather spontaneously took power in a quick and bloodless coup d'état. Defining the economic and political priorities of someone that did not get voted in based on any policy ideas or priorities is not easy. Jammeh shows many tendencies of the traditional African 'big man' regimes that are characterized by neopatrimonialism (Englebert & Dunn, 2013). His policy position is secondary to his power position, he is willing to change between allies and ideologies if that enables him to retain his power. This was visible, for example, in the shift to political Islam when European donors retracted aid and trade deals over Jammeh's human rights abuses. It is questionable whether this shift was an ideological one, as it seems to be used primarily as a pragmatic way to find new financial partners in the Arab world.

How then does this man whose priority is power first, prioritize tourism? To answer that, we will look at the policy of his government and attempt to determine the degree to which it was successfully executed. Based on the policy goals and their execution, determines whether tourism is a high priority (ambitious goals, enough funding, good execution) or a low priority (insufficient capacity made available to execute goals).

The first place to look is the policy document Jammeh published in 1996: *The Gambia Incorporated: Vision 2020* (Jammeh, 1996). Just like the Tourism Development Master Plan that has been discussed before, it defines a vision for The Gambia:

> "To transform The Gambia into a financial centre, a tourist paradise, a trading, export-oriented agricultural and manufacturing nation, thriving on free market policies and a vibrant private sector, sustained by a well-educated, trained, skilled, healthy, self-reliant and enterprising population and guaranteeing a well-balanced ecosystem and a decent standard of living for one and all under a system of government based on the consent of the citizenry." (Jammeh, 1996, p. 2)

To transform The Gambia into a tourist paradise is a promising start to answer the central question in this section, but there is more; in 1996 Jammeh intends to develop The Gambia into a financial centre, a trading, export-oriented agricultural and manufacturing nation. Ambitious, to be sure. However, it tells us little about tourism's actual priority, when everything is a priority. Further on, part of the section on "Long Term Objectives" is dedicated to tourism as one of the service sectors, after having discussed agriculture and industry. This section introduces some ways in which it aims to achieve the vision of a "tourist paradise". In three short paragraphs product innovation, quality improvement on investment returns, product diversification and attracting high-spending tourists are mentioned. As well as eco-tourism, cultural-, inland-, community-based tourism and conference tourism. Exactly how these ideas will be achieved and how their achievement can be measured is discussed later in the section on "Strategic Issues". Between the six total paragraphs (some no more than three lines long) that the 42-page document dedicates to tourism, the following concrete steps for action are proposed:

> "The attraction of high spending tourists implies major infrastructure developments captured in projects such as a water front trade centre, sea side walkways and parks that make the Gambia a veritable holiday resort." (Jammeh, 1996, p. 12)
>
> "To harness our river resources in order to enrich holiday activities in the rural areas while exploring avenues for business tourism in urban areas." (Jammeh, 1996, p. 35)
>
> "The appropriate institutional and legal framework shall be put in place to ensure the development of the human resource capable of undertaking the marketing, promotional and operational activities that will contribute to continuous improvement in both the diversity and quality of the product." (Jammeh, 1996, p. 35)

The last quote is especially interesting as it is the first time marketing and promotion activities are mentioned separately from operational activities. In practice, these activities were executed by the same institution. First by the National Tourist Office (1970-2001), then by the Gambia Tourism Authority (2001-2011), currently by the Gambia Tourism Board (2011-present). Other African tourist destinations have found success by separating the promotional and operational activities, the independent consultant names Senegal and Kenya as examples (personal communication, 06-06-2017).

When there were disappointing tourist seasons in 2010 and 2011 and the Gambia Tourist Authority (GTA) was deemed not capable enough for its tasks, a similar redesign was planned. The GTA was set up mostly as a promotional institution, but was getting more and more caught up in operational activities. The proposal of the Minister of Tourism for two separate institutions was

however shut down by parliament. There is no archive of meetings of the Gambian parliament available online, but the independent consultant paraphrases it as:

> "The original idea was to have a Tourism Commission, and if you read the mandate, it's like a tourism development corporation, and then the Tourism Board and if you look at the mandate it's about promotion, that's what she [the Minister of Tourism] wanted. But when she took the file to parliament, they looked at it and said: 'Madam, you know our country is poor, how can we have two agencies?'" (Gambian independent consultant, personal communication, 06-06-2017)

This incident in 2011 is indicative of the relationship between Jammeh's government and the tourism sector: there was an understanding of the importance of tourism and the challenges the sector faced visible in official documents; there were, however, no funds, nor a willingness to invest. This statement is looked at in detail in the rest of the section, where the execution of policy ambitions is measured.

Work began on a tourism development master plan in 2004, the first large official document on tourism after Vision 2020. Over the following two years external consultants and the African Development Bank assisted the Ministry of Tourism in the drafting of the master plan, which was finished in 2006. Its vision is a near exact copy of the section on tourism in the 'Long Term Objectives' of Vision 2020 and has been quoted before in Section 4.3. However, this document goes in much further detail of how this vision is to be achieved. It provides the mandate of the GTA, but also involves the National Tourist Training Institute (predecessor of the Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute (GTHI) existing today) and ASSET. It describes a 'three-pronged strategy': broadening the market, enhancing product quality and diversity, and addressing key infrastructure needs (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006). This section measures the success of the master plan along the lines of these three goals.

It has been mentioned before that Jammeh used large infrastructural projects to appease the population, so the infrastructural needs will be discussed first. The following infrastructural needs are named: electricity provision, health services, 'measures at' the Kotu wastewater facility and Kotu power plant and the closure of the Bakoteh waste dump (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006, pp. 9-14). Very little success was achieved on these challenges. The state of the electricity infrastructure after Barrow's election has already been mentioned, but the fact that most hotels and restaurants relied on generators before the elections too, indicates that the electricity provision has never been fully reliable.

Twelve years after the release of the master plan a success was booked on the health aspect, as the interviewee at the GTHI mentioned:

> "And also there is a recent investment in the area of medical tourism [health services for tourists], someone is already allocated a piece of land, a very big area, in the heart of Senegambia, so they are building a medical hospital, where tourists can come for treatments." (representative of GTHI, personal communication, 28-06-2017)

The next infrastructural challenge is the waste disposal; the master plan specifically mentions the Bakoteh waste dump. This large landfill is too close to schools, living quarters and the TDA and forms a health and safety risks due to regular fires and water contamination. The 2006 master plan proposes: "Clean-up and closure of Bakota solid waste dump. This is already designed and will be assisted through World Bank funding." (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006, p. 14). A review by NGO WasteAidUK in 2015 however notes that the only visibly executed component of the

$4.2 million World Bank investment was a fence around the landfill (Webster, 2015). A Gambian newspaper in 2017 reports several members of parliament asked questions about the state of affairs at the Bakoteh waste dump, to which the Minister of Environment, Climate Change and Natural Resources admitted that the Bakoteh waste dump was still a hazard and a nuisance to surrounding communities (Bah, 2017). The last challenge is that of the Kotu wastewater facility and power plant. As far as the author is aware, both are still running but there is not enough information available to report whether the undefined 'measures' have been taken.

Overall, few of the infrastructural challenges of the tourism master plan have been successfully tackled, despite major investments by Jammeh in infrastructural projects throughout the country. The exception is the announcement of a new health facility aimed at tourists in 2017. Before jumping to conclusions, the progress on the rest requires further analysis. The attempts at broadening the market are discussed first, the product development next.

Broadening the market of The Gambia as a tourism destination is defined by the master plan as expansion towards new geographical markets and towards new niche markets. When it comes to geographical expansion, the "recapturing of Germany as a market for The Gambia" is mentioned specifically (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006, p. 10). When it comes to niche market segments, multiple priorities are named: cultural heritage, eco-tourism, bird watching, sport and wildlife activities and MICE (Meetings, Incentives, Conferencing, Exhibitions; also known as business tourism) (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006, pp. 10-11).

Similarly to the infrastructural challenges, not many of the goals of the master plan have made much progress over the past twelve years. When it comes to new geographical markets, the Director of Marketing at the Gambia Tourism Board (GTB) shares that The Gambia actively visits expo's and goes on 'roadshows' in Great Britain, the Netherlands, Belgium, Germany and Scandinavian countries. Great Britain and the Netherlands remain the two largest source markets by far (personal communication, 13-06-2017). One measurable success in broadening the source markets is a new deal with FlyMidAfrica for a new scheduled flight service from Banjul Airport to several regional destinations in West Africa, potentially bringing in regional tourists and business travelers in addition to the European source markets (personal communication, 13-06-2017).

Out of the niche markets mentioned, there are two segments in which progress has been made. Bird watching has become a relatively successful niche market around the Gambian coastline, primarily in the Bijilo Monkey Park and Tanji Nature Reserve. It attracted a decent segment of the tourists that were present during the off-season, the author observed during his fieldwork. Some tour operators, such as The Gambia Experience, have begun offering specific bird watching packages.

The other niche market that has found success is less developed as of now, but may grow in the coming years. For years the GTB has been attempting to attract more business tourism. Recently two deals have been made for the construction of conference centers – one in Senegambia (Saho, 2018) and one in Yundum, near the airport (The Point, 2017). However, both are very controversial and have been the subject of long negotiations in the GTB (personal communication, 09-06-2017a). The former will be built in what is currently the Bijilo Monkey Park, so Gambians are worried that the natural reserve will suffer from pollution and overcrowding as a result (Saho, 2018). The latter is funded by Chinese investors, who hold a controversial position in The Gambia: one the one hand their investments in factories near Sanyang and Gunjur have brought employment, on the other hand the factory owners hold little to no regard for the environment and the pollution they cause (Janneh, 2017).

Other niche markets that the tourism development master plan mentions have remained mostly undeveloped. Small lodges aim to provide a more cultural or ecological experience to tourists, but their efforts remain mostly small scale (personal communications, 04-05-2017; 09-06-2017a).

Sports and wildlife activities have remained largely untouched, to the disdain of a small native hotel owner who fears for the aging population of Gambian tourists (personal communication, 09-06-2017b). However, one unexpected niche market has seen some development. Perhaps due to the turn towards political Islam by Yahya Jammeh during the 2010s, the country has invested in Muslim-friendly tourism (personal communication, 09-06-2017a). A new mosque and hotel will be built in Gunjur. The GTHI is training staff specifically for the Muslim guests and the hotel will have adapted rooms for Muslim guests:

> "In their own rooms they will have the sign of the Qibla, where should they pray, the prayer mat, a kettle to perform [cleaning face and hands]. And for them the men and the women don't use the same swimming pool, you have two swimming pools, one for men one for women. So the concept is completely different, but this is what we are working for in the next five years." (representative of the GTHI, personal communication 28-06-2017)

Overall we can conclude that the efforts to broaden the market for Gambian tourism have been more successful than infrastructural development, despite most concrete successes only taking place during the past year since the elections (FlyMidAfrica deal, MICE tourism, Muslim-friendly tourism). The only earlier success has been the establishment of national parks and the attraction of bird watching tourists.

That leaves the product development and quality aspect of the 'three-pronged strategy'. The indicators in this case are less clear, as the master plan defines the following goals: increased emphasis on cultural heritage, larger community involvement, linkages with the local arts and crafts, the establishment of minimum standards for hotels and researching product improvements required to attract higher spending customers (Department of State for Tourism and Culture, 2006, pp. 9-12).

The primary cultural heritage sites are the two forts in the Gambia river that are relics from the slave trade. In visits to Janjanbureh (McCarthy Island) and Kunta Kinteh Island (James Island) little efforts nor presence of the GTB are visible, however. The same can be said about the Wassu stone circles, ancient man-made rock formations that likely had a religious meaning. All three cultural heritage sites lack reliable infrastructure to reach them (unless one pays the additional fees for tourist taxis that stay with you the entire day), information on-site and upkeep. All three are maintained and serviced by a local tour guide, all three of which have worked on their respective site for decades without much government interference. The difference with Isle de Goree in neighboring Senegal is stark. This island is accessed by a regular ferry service from Dakar, is kept clean and intact and has information signs and a museum to further inform tourists about the site and its history.

Instead, the GTB Product Development team has mostly focused on involving the community. This is done, for example, in Abuko Nature Park, where local schools receive tours to involve the kids with their environment. The primary form of community involvement is the establishment of eco-villages such as Ndemban. These villages cooperate with the GTB to establish locally owned tourism facilities as an alternative to the coastal hotels (personal communication, 09-06-2017a). This approach has garnered local support, but is still in experimental stages in 2017. So again we must conclude that progress since the 2006 master plan has taken very long to get off the ground.

When it comes to minimum standards for hotels and linkages with local arts and crafts, the quality control unit of the GTB has made good progress in establishing certification for hotels and small entrepreneurs in tourism, including craftsmen. The GTB performs yearly checks on hotels in the TDA to ensure that they are up to the standards of their certification or whether they may have to be up- or downgraded (personal communications, 09-05-2017; 08-06-2017). These checks are much less

consistent outside of the TDA, where (corrupt) local civil servants are used as intermediaries (personal communication, 04-05-2017). Most hotels have a good relationship with the quality control unit, especially since obeying the rules is in their own benefit as it may lead to more and happier guests.

This is not always the case for small entrepreneurs, whose career as a fruit vendor, craftsman or artist can be a daily struggle for survival. ASSET formed as an association for these small scale enterprises, but due to its own financial struggles it collapsed around 2010. When ASSET was reformed in 2015, it found that some of its old members had left the country to migrate to Europe (personal communication, 16-06-2017). ASSET is currently rebuilding its membership and actively training small vendors and enterprises to better manage their businesses. Additionally, they represent small enterprises in contacts with the GTB and the ministry.

Whether the last objective (researching product improvements required to attract higher spending customers) was reached is hard to measure. There was no access to enough information to know whether any progress on that front has been made. Overall we can conclude that decent progress has been made in the field of product development and quality control. There are, however, two notes to make here. Firstly, like the progress we discussed on the topic of marketing, the few successful product innovations have only occurred recently and provide little proof that tourism policy was a high priority over the past twelve years. Secondly, the regularity of quality control has downsides too. According to Gambian law, certification must be renewed on a yearly basis (personal communication, 21-06-2017). The result of this is a degree of insecurity for tourism investors, who are never guaranteed long term certificates and are therefore less likely to make long term investments (personal communication, 09-05-2017).

Overall the overview of tourism policy execution shows an image of long stagnation between the 1996 'Vision 2020' document, the 2006 tourism development master plan and today. Many of the problems that were present in 1996, remained present in 2006 and are yet to be sufficiently tackled today. Various interviewees echo this observation that "the industry has stagnated" (personal communication, 06-06-2017) and "what has been here, has been here since the 1980s mainly" (personal communication, 09-06-2017b). This observation raises questions: why is the discrepancy between policy on paper and in practice so large? What is limiting the successful execution of tourism policy? What caused stagnation in an industry that is growing on paper (tourist arrivals)? By answering these questions in the rest of this section, the sub-question '*What was the position of tourism as a political priority in the Gambia under Jammeh?'* will be answered.

Interviewees offer several potential answers to these questions. Firstly, most interviewed civil servants argue that there is a lack of funds (personal communication, 09-06-2017a; 13-06-2017; 21-06-2017), although some say it is a lack of political will instead (personal communication, 06-06-2017; 21-06-2017). In reality, is likely a combination of both. The independent consultant puts it as following: "[the Gambian government] believes tourism will take care of itself." (personal communication, 06-06-2017). When asked to elaborate on that statement it becomes clear that Jammeh did not involve himself very much with the tourism industry. When there was trouble in the sector, his usual solution was to assign a new minister. So while surely there was a lack of funding in a general sense, The Gambia's tax income is limited by its economy after all, there was also a lack of political will to invest it in tourism.

The assignment of new ministers as a solution to problems in the tourism industry, whatever they may be, brings us to a second potential answer. Policy in the Gambia is often personalized. The independent consultant argues that the 2006 master plan was actually a really solid document, but new ministers were unwilling to execute policy that someone else had written. Instead, they created their own projects, such as the renaming of the GTA to the GTB without significantly changing its

mandate (personal communication, 06-06-2017) or the establishment of a Tourism Security Unit alongside traditional police and tourism institutions (personal communication, 21-06-2017). Their goal is likely to attach their names to these projects as a proof of success to their client network.

The third potential answer to the questions raised above is in corruption. Hotels in the TDA have little experiences with corruption, although they lament the amount of fees, certificates and the lack of communication about them (personal communication, 09-05-2017). A small foreign lodge owner outside the TDA has different experiences, however. During the interview she recalls a story about the well they have on their plot of land. It uses a specific technology that is allowed in national law, while other (deeper) wells require an additional fee. One day when her Gambian husband was out of town, a municipal civil servant came and demanded the additional fees to be paid for the well. If she did not pay right there and then, the permits for her lodge would be revoked. Despite knowing that she was not legally obligated to pay fees for the type of well on her plot, there was nothing she could do except pay at that very moment. In this case, she successfully reported the incident to authorities, received her money back a few months later and the civil servant was fired (personal communication, 04-05-2017). While stories as concrete as these are rare, the interviews clearly indicate that small tourism businesses are not treated as fairly by the authorities as the powerful foreign-owned hotels (personal communication, 19-05-2017; 13-06-2017).

So why is the discrepancy between policy on paper and in practice so large? A likely answer is that not enough priority is attached to tourism, because of an inherent believe that it will fix itself. Because of this there was little political will to change legislation, for example by introducing long term certificates to investors that may develop larger scale products on the Gambian coast.

And what is limiting the successful execution of tourism policy? While some ascribe this problem fully to the lack of funds, there are indicators that corruption may also play a role. Additionally, the wish of ministers and directors to pursue personal pet projects is a limiting factor to long term policy visions.

Lastly, what caused stagnation in an industry that is growing on paper? This is a very interesting question, because it implies that Jammeh's lack of interest in tourism may have been harmless. Perhaps it means that the international travel agencies and tour operators may be more influential than The Gambia itself. The stagnation is visible either way, in the poor maintenance of infrastructure, the lack of innovation and the aging tourist population. And the considerations above provide a likely answer: the tourist arrival numbers functioned as an excuse for people in power to argue that no funds were needed (nor political will) and that tourism was doing great (personalized policy).

Overall this section leads to the conclusion that tourism had little priority in Jammeh's regime. The limited or wholly unsuccessful execution of any policy goals formulated in 1996 and 2006 indicates that significant problems went unsolved. Among those problems is the large inequality between the coastal area and the interior tourism contributes to, which is acknowledged in policy papers but very much unsolved in practice. The next section discusses the impact of tourism in The Gambia and provides a stark contrast to the priorities of Jammeh.

5.2. Tourism Impact

Having discussed the priority Jammeh has put on tourism policy, this section turns towards the impact of tourism in The Gambia. Analyzing the impact of tourism puts the political priority and the policy goals discussed in the previous section into perspective. This section looks at socio-economic issues. The descriptive Section 4.3 already looked at the economic impact of tourism, but there may be some overlap in such themes as employment: a societal as well as an economic impact. The socio-

economic dimension is a crucial piece of the thesis, as it has previously been mentioned that tourism has contributed to spatial inequality in The Gambia. This section delves into that inequality in order to better understand what the implication of Barrow's tourism policy could be.

The section starts with an analysis of the native interviewees in the hotel sector: what barriers did they have to surpass? To what extent are they a privileged elite? How does their presence in the sector change tourism's impact in The Gambia? Next, the hospitality and service industries are discussed. While ownership of hotels has been mostly foreign, most of the low income work has historically been done by Gambians, such as cleaning, guarding, cooking and driving. What is the position of these Gambian employees in their respective businesses? What limits them from climbing the professional ladder? And what does the large amount of tourism employment mean for the country?

Each Gambian hotel owner or manager has his/her own story of how he/she arrived in that position. By sharing some of them, this section provides insight into the possibilities for Gambians in the tourism sector.

The first story is that of the owner of a small hotel. The hotel markets itself as a real Gambian experience, where all guests and staff are like a family together. They pride themselves in a weekly free buffet for guests, which offers an insight in the Gambian cuisine: benechin, domoda, fish yassa and other regional specialties. The story, however, begins in Spain. The hotel owner in his youth decided to travel to Europe, where he ended up working in hotels on Mallorca, before landing a job at a cruise ship operator. When he returned from Europe in the 1980s with about ten years of experience abroad, he opened a small restaurant in Senegambia. It was relatively successful and he expanded to various activities alongside the dining service, employing several young Gambian men. But a large foreign investor wanted to build a 4-star hotel, on land including the small plot of the restaurant. He was bought out by the government and the investors together, but in return he was awarded a small plot of land nearby to start his own hotel. When he did so, he kept his team of employees and became the first hotel in The Gambia that was owned and serviced exclusively by Gambians (personal communication, 19-05-2017).

While the first story is unique, it already tells us that the road to success for Gambians in the tourism industry is not always clear and requires a fair bit of luck. The next story is a more recent one. The second owner's story begins in Banjul. After getting a university education on scholarship in Europe, he began working as a trader in his home country's capital. Due to finding success in his career, he built a decent stock of capital and interests in the Gambia's agriculture and natural resource sectors. Recently, he decided to invest some of it by building a hotel. It opened two tourist seasons ago. Again, a hotel owned and serviced by Gambians, but with the allure and style of a Western hotel, and with the exception of the British operational manager who is also his wife (personal communication, 19-06-2017).

Before moving on to basic generalizations about possibilities for Gambians in hotel management, one more story is retold here for another different perspective. So far both owners have been influenced by time spent in Europe. The third owner is from the urban coastal area of The Gambia. He comes from a middle class family and had the funds to buy a small plot of land on the edge of the TDA. In 1997 he began a restaurant there. As he established some popularity over time and was able to employ more staff, he expanded the restaurant to also service as a night club. Ten years later he closed the restaurant and night club to completely revamp: new floors were added for apartments and part of the terrace was sacrificed for a swimming pool. The apartments have now been in service for nine years and the owner continues to run the business with his Gambian wife and a fully Gambian staff (09-06-2017b).

While no story is representative for the entire sector, we can form some preliminary ideas about what the possibilities for Gambians are when it comes to management in the tourism industry.

Firstly, it seems difficult for Gambians to work themselves up to a management position in the large European-style resorts naturally. Those Gambians that are in an owner or management role in large 5-star hotels such as Coco Ocean Resort or Ocean Bay Hotel came from the country's urban middle class or elite and had wealth in the family, so to say. Our second story comes close to a Gambian who worked himself up from the bottom, but he did so in another economic sector. There is currently a trend of hybrid management in many of the larger hotels, however. In Senegambia Hotel and Kombo Beach Hotel, the two largest hotels in the country, the ownership and general manager are both foreign, but Gambians fill many of the other management positions, such as operational manager or front office manager (personal communications, 09-05-2017; 11-05-2017). These positions are where we find Gambians that have accrued managerial roles through experience in the sector. This could be an indicator of a trend in which more Gambians get a hold of managerial positions over time, due to the buildup of experience.

Secondly, two out of three hotel owners in the stories shared above had experience or education in Europe before returning to The Gambia. The prospect of studying abroad remains a primary goal for many university students in the country. Those that do not have the option to reach Europe through a scholarship or otherwise, often choose to take what is called the 'backway': the illegal migration route via Mauritania or Mali, Libya and the Mediterranean sea (Hultin, 2017). Preventing this dangerous illegal migration as well as preventing brain drain (the emigration of educated Gambians) was a major campaigning issue for Barrow and the coalition (Hultin, 2017). The tourism sector remains a major source of employment in the country, but it is utilized mainly by those in the urban areas. The GTHI is attempting to educate more Gambians from all over the country in tourism and is finding success (personal communication, 28-06-2017). Many hotel owners prefer staff that was trained in the GTHI (personal communications, 08-06-2017; 09-06-2017b; 13-06-2017), although experience in Europe is also still valued highly and especially European-owned hotels value European education highly (personal communication, 09-05-2017). There is however no education in hotel management; the GTHI educates its students in service and hospitality, which will be discussed in the next part of this section.

Thirdly, the examples show that the starting capital needed to invest in tourism is rare among Gambians. The second example and the Coco Ocean Resort provide exceptions (Ocean Bay Hotel was partly funded by public funds). Overall, most Gambians starting position is barely enough to make it as a small restaurant. Only the successful manage to grow from that towards a hotel (or apartments complex) (personal communications, 19-05-2016; 13-06-2017; 19-06-2017b).

An additional observation is that the hotel management is largely dominated by men from the urban area. Of the few women in these positions, a large portion is either foreign or direct family of one of the owners (personal communication, 04-05-2017). Another slightly worrying observation made by a foreign large hotel owner is that the opportunity to meet Europeans (and therefore have a better shot at legal migration) is still a major push factor for Gambians to work in tourism (personal communication, 09-05-2017).

Overall these observations lead to the conclusion that there are significant barriers for Gambians in the upper sphere of the tourism sector. These include limited starting wealth, limited education options and insufficient experience. All barriers are higher for Gambian women than they are for men, and the same goes for people in the interior compared to those in urban areas. As a result, a significant chunk of current Gambian owners and managers can be considered a privileged class. The rise of home-trained Gambians in the lower management in large hotels may indicate change, however. These hybrid management teams allow Gambians to gain experience and become an example to others. Considering that last statement, we can conclude that the tourism industry has

a geographically limited, but meaningful impact. Despite only a small and arguably privileged (due to being male, middle class or born in the coastal area) segment of the population finding opportunities, the tourism sector is a rare chance at professional growth for Gambians.

Next, this part of the section discusses the role of the service and hospitality industry. What does the tourism industry mean for the approximately 42,000 Gambians (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018, p. 1) directly or indirectly employed in tourism outside the management functions discussed above? Despite the available data for this thesis being more suited for a discussion on the level of hotel management, the interviews at ASSET and the GTHI provide relevant data points for several useful observations on service and hospitality jobs in the industry.

The GTHI is the most important institute for young people that want to work in tourism. The institute offers a three-year education for those that have finished high school (grade 12) in The Gambia. Those that dropped out before grade 12 have to do a foundation course of six months before enrollment. In total the GTHI enrolls 200 students per year, spread equally over four departments: service, kitchen, housekeeping, and front-office (personal communication, 28-06-2018).

The institute has functioned this way since 2012. Before that the National Tourism Training Institute (NTTI) had a similar curriculum, but at a much smaller scale of around 75 students per year in a two-year course. The author asked whether this change was related to the name change of the GTA to the GTB, which was ascribed to personalized politics and deemed ineffective above (personal communication, 06-06-2017). The answer was different for the redesign of the NTTI to the GTHI. 2012 was around the time illegal migration from The Gambia increased significantly and so did international attention of the topic. This put international pressure on The Gambia to improve employment opportunities at home. But on top of pressure, donors also provided opportunities for the institute to grow:

> "The biggest constraint is funding, because if you see from 1979 up to 2012 [the NTTI], there has not been any development or expansion […], those years it used to be only a maximum of 75 students attending the course for two years. Then the World Bank came in and built the new building, now we can enroll up to 200 new students a year, so it had always to do with capacity and not space." (representative of the GTHI, personal communication, 28-06-2017)

From 1979 to 2012 the NTTI received funding from the Ministry of Tourism, but the yearly sum was only barely enough for paying salaries and electricity. As a result, the World Bank also recommended a change in business model. The GTHI now functions more or less independently, while the government subsidizes a part of each student's tuition. While the expansion was successful, it may however turn out to be only a drop in the ocean. The GTHI receives nearly four applications per position it has available. There is no real alternative for those that do not get a position, as the few private hotel schools are only small scale (10-15 students) and often highly specialized (personal communication, 28-06-2017). While the GTHI has people from the entire country in their classes, there are no statistics kept about where applicants come from, nor where they go after graduation. Perhaps they still migrate, providing cheap tourism labor on Mediterranean cruises for example (personal communication, 28-06-2017).

An additional limitation to the impact of tourism employment is its seasonality. The GTHI representative is very aware of it and the institute works around it by providing education in the off-season and sending the students on internships during the season. Considering the large amount of applicants, the seasonality does not seem to bother the students either. And if it does, there appear to be no better alternatives. In a large hotel, up to 200 of a total of 270 employees are seasonal

(personal communication, 09-05-2017) and you can never be quite sure if the same job is available for you the next season. This seasonality causes both hotel employees and small entrepreneurs in tourism to lose their way of life for five to six months every year. The next part of this section shifts the focus to small entrepreneurs.

One tour guide at Bijilo Monkey Park told the author in April that it was almost time for him to move back to his parents in the interior again, for there were no more tourists to guide and he was running out of cash to buy food. His life choices were severely limited by scarcity. In the rainy season the tour guide must travel back to his family because he can no longer earn enough to survive on the coast, when the next dry season comes he must move back to the coast because the lands no longer produce enough food for the enlarged family. His story is one of many that rely on tourism for their income. Others choose to work as a taxi driver or find other menial work to fill the rainy season with. Some remain in the TDA, where the last few hundreds of guests in the hotels that stay open year-round provide enough foreign exchange to keep a small segment of the market afloat.

ASSET helps small entrepreneurs turn their businesses into a sustainable livelihood (personal communication, 16-06-2017). However, they are limited by various factors. Firstly, most small entrepreneurs (such as fruit vendors, tour guides or arts and craft sellers) are barely educated, while some others (such as lodge owners, ecologists or bird watching guides) may have more education. In theory these groups require different assistance and different representation, but ASSET has only limited means to provide them, leading to an overall level that is adapted to the lowest common denominator.

That introduces the second limitation: ASSET has very little finances. ASSET went bankrupt in 2011, due to being unable to pay rents and provide their services. With its revival in 2016, they have opened a small restaurant to provide some additional revenues. However, the main limitation is the financial situation of its members, who will not join if membership fees reach any meaningful level. Thirdly, ASSET is also limited by the seasonality of the market. It offers trainings and courses on how to manage a business, how to market or how to develop a product. These courses are, however, usually held during the off-season, when trainers are more readily available. The example of the tour guide above showed how difficult it is to reach small entrepreneurs in the off-season (personal communication, 16-06-2017). Additionally, the group of small entrepreneurs is prone to the 'backway syndrome'. ASSET has found that a significant chunk of its old membership had used the funds they earned in tourism to travel illegally to Europe (personal communication, 16-06-2017). This makes it all the more important for ASSET to actively stay in touch with its membership.

Based on what the author learned at GTHI and ASSET, some observations about the social impact of tourism can be made. Firstly: the seasonality of the market is a massive limitation to tourism's potential for sustainable livelihood for Gambians. Due to this seasonality, trained hotel employees live in uncertainty of their jobs every year. For small entrepreneurs the effects are even larger as their income is smaller and less reliable. They have little options to grow and mostly work to sustain, in contrast to the (limited, but existing) career possibilities in tourism. A second observation is that the actors in this section consider funding their biggest limitation, just like the GTB did in Section 5.1. Funding is what prevented the GTHI from expanding before the World Bank donated and a lack of starting capital is what prevents many native investors from entering the competitive tourism industry. A third observation is that many Gambians are limited by a lack of education opportunities, despite the efforts of the GTHI. The supply of labor in tourism is larger than the education GTHI can offer, leading to a highly competitive field of uneducated small entrepreneurs who only barely manage to get by.

Combining these observations with those made after the discussion of Gambians in tourism management functions, an answer to the sub-question forms: *What is the socio-economic impact of tourism in The Gambia?*

Again, it is crucial to understand that this impact remains geographically concentrated to the coastal area. Even those that work in tourism despite not being born in the coastal area, migrate seasonally or permanently for their work.

This section has attempted to define socio-economic impact not through the harms that tourism causes, but through the benefits that it has for people and what limits those benefits from being larger. Those limitations were clear: a lack of starting capital or funding remains a common problem, a lack of education and seasonality are the other two largest barriers to a large positive impact of tourism on Gambian lives.

Despite these limitations, tourism contributes to urbanization: people from all over the country come to the urbanized coast to start a business or get their education. However, tourism does not bring salvation to all those that took the risk of migration. As a result of the limitations above, few are able to grow within the sector and remain limited to menial tasks, from housekeeping in a hotel to selling fruits on the beach. The large amount of applicants to the GTHI and the lack of rival institutes is a worrying trend, as it may indicate a general lack of alternatives for Gambians. It is exactly this lack of economic opportunities that has caused the 'backway syndrome' to take hold of so many young Gambians in the interior and the coastal towns. One might therefore conclude that tourism on its own has made insufficient socio-economic impact, considering the serious problems that The Gambia faces today.

5.3. Indicators of change

Chapter 4 discussed the history of The Gambia and its tourism sector and Sections 5.1 and 5.2 analyzed its priority and impact. Those descriptions and analyses offered meaningful insights that help predict how the tourism sector in The Gambia may develop. However, Adama Barrow has been in office for over a year at the moment of writing. There is then also data available about his person, ideas and his cabinet's policies. This data is available in media, official documents and from the interviews conducted during fieldwork, especially those with government actors.

In this section those three elements (person, ideas, policies) of Barrow's first year in office will be analyzed, with a focus on indicators of change. By the end of the section, the last sub-question is answered: *To what extent do the first months of Barrow's presidency indicate changes in the tourism industry?*

To start the section, an introduction of Barrow's person is helpful. He is the son of a mixed Mandinka-Fula marriage, born in 1965 (coincidentally the same year as The Gambia's independence) (Perfect, 2017). He was born in a town near Basse Sante Su, but moved to Banjul for his education. After several years in Banjul, he migrated to London for further education as a real estate agent, reportedly working as a security guard in London during the early 2000's to fund it (BBC, 2016). Upon his return to The Gambia he began his own business in real estate and became an active member, albeit in the background, of a political party. In 2016 he was the treasurer of the UDP and remained fairly anonymous.

After protests in 2016, party leader Ousainou Darboe and youth leader Ebrima Sandeng were detained, the latter even dying in detention. Barrow was chosen to replace Darboe and was later chosen to represent the coalition of opposition parties, in favor of far more experienced leaders of the other opposition parties. His rise to power has been surprising to many (especially since he had

held no public office before), but party colleagues say he was the perfect candidate because of his humility, kindness and industriousness, and his successful business proved that he could break a deal and negotiate successfully (BBC, 2017).

Experts expect his style of leadership to be far more akin to Jawara than to Jammeh. Barrow is humble and tolerant, and not a fervent public speaker (Perfect, 2017). In contrast to Jammeh, who spoke much and aggressively, openly attacking people for their sexuality, ethnicity or for being a 'Western puppet' (Senegalese president Macky Sall, according to Jammeh) (Perfect, 2016, p. 332).

Barrow has formulated several political ideas during his so far short tenure as a political leader and public figure. First of all, he values tolerance and human rights. He very quickly reversed Jammeh's declaration of an Islamic Republic to reduce tensions between Muslims and Christians (Perfect, 2017). Additionally he has vowed from the start to "restore human rights and true democracy" (Kennedy, 2016). The first proofs of that effort have been the release of Jammeh's political prisoners, the announcement that The Gambia is rejoining the International Criminal Court (ICC) and the relative media freedom after the elections (Perfect, 2017). He has also announced the introduction of a two-term limit on the Gambian presidency, creating a maximum of ten years in power (Chatzaras, 2016).

The rejoining the of the ICC is an indicator of a second political idea that sets Barrow apart from his predecessor. Barrow has proven to be far more open to European and Western influences. He is looking to take The Gambia out of the isolation Jammeh induced. To do this Barrow is looking to rejoin the ICC and the Commonwealth, as well as seek closer cooperation with the EU over The Gambia's migration troubles (Perfect, 2017). This move was welcomed by the European Union, as a February 2017 press release cites Commissioner for International Cooperation and Development, Neven Mimica: "The EU is fully committed to engage with Adama Barrow and his Government", in addition to the announcement of a €75 million aid package and the preparations for a possible €150 package (European Commission, 2017)

Economically speaking, in an Al Jazeera interview Barrow underlined his focus on agricultural development (Chatzaras, 2016). This was also clear in his campaign, where he repeatedly promised support for farmers. He did not go into detail of what this support would entail, however. This was a major criticism of Barrow during the fieldwork months. Gambians had been used to a vocal president who said far more than he really executed, while Barrow proved hesitant to go into detail. A common rebuttal of his was that his government first had to look at it critically and analyze before it makes any more promises. He was very critical of the infrastructural investments Jammeh had made, because they were not thought through: "The hospitals President Jammeh had built had 'no drugs... or quality doctors', the schools 'no teachers, no chairs... no good educational materials', he [Barrow] said." (BBC, 2017).

The analytical approach of Adama Barrow received praise from local experts (personal communications, 06-06-2017; 13-06-2017; 16-06-2017). However, as the promised National Development Plan suffered delay after delay, skeptics were concluding by June 2017 that Barrow was not doing anything, was not delivering on his promises, change was not coming after all. Either way, Barrow's approach was a break with the erratic and vocal nature of Jammeh's regime.

One of the reasons for the delays of the National Development Plan was that several ministers were conducting needs-assessments before contributing their part. The new Tourism Minister, Hamat Bah, was among those (personal communication, 21-06-2017b). Such an assessment was not common among previous ministers of Tourism. Jammeh's cabinet rotated often (Perfect, 2017). As a result, it was important for ministers to commit to personal projects for short term gain.

A long term analytical approach did not protect their position sufficiently, as the president demanded clearly visible results, even if they are hospitals without medicines.

The analytical approach of Minister Bah is not the only thing that differentiates him from previous ministers of Tourism. Unlike previous ministers, Hamat Bah has extensive experience in the tourism sector. Bah worked as a hotel manager at the second largest hotel on the Gambian beach before becoming an opposition politician, striving for a more open and international The Gambia (Perfect, 2016). His predecessors worked in other sectors, such as international relations (Susan Waffa-Ogoo, 2004-2006) or banking (Fatou Jobe-Njie, 2010-2014). The lack of tourism expertise within the ministry has been a lingering problem for years. It has turned its role into a purely administrative one, referring all meaningful work to the GTB (personal communication, 06-06-2017; 09-06-2017a). The ministry remained responsible only as administrator and fundraiser. Funds, including international aid packages such as the World Bank investment in the new GTHI building, remained purely the responsibility of the ministry (personal communication, 28-06-2017).

For its contribution to the National Development Plan it has created a planning unit of experts, who cooperate with a working group of stakeholders from the sector, including the hotel association, international tour operators, but also the GTHI and ASSET (personal communication, 21-06-2017b). The work of the planning unit was previously done by a single Director of Tourism Planning (personal communication, 06-06-2017). Overall, the sector has welcomed its increased involvement (personal communication, 09-06-2017b; 19-06-2017); most acknowledge, however, that progress so far has remained limited to paper and refrain from judgment until it is put into action.

By February 2018, 13 months after Barrow took office, the National Development Plan was released. It starts with a grim sketch of the present economic situation in The Gambia:

> "There is a direct correlation between the denial of fundamental freedoms and the bad governance that existed under the previous regime, and the dire economic and social situation inherited by the new government." (Office of the President, 2018, p. 5)

Additionally, several shock factors contributed to the poor economic performance of The Gambia in the past decade:

> "These include a poor 2016/17 agricultural season, which drastically reduced the groundnut crop; a severe contraction of tourism receipts during the traditional high season, and volatile oil and commodity prices." (Office of the President, 2018, p. 5)

This economic struggles had a geographic dimension: "There is a rising rural poverty and a growing gap between rural and urban Gambia with regards to access to health, education, and basic services." (Office of the President, 2018, p. 6). Because over 90% of the rural poor work in agriculture, the modernization of the agricultural sector is a primary focus for Barrow. Agriculture is one of the eight priorities identified in the document, along with: good governance and human rights; transforming the economy (macro-economic and financial policy); education and health services; infrastructure and energy services; inclusive and culture-centered tourism; youth empowerment; private sector and job creation (Office of the President, 2018). Overall, these priorities are not that different compared with Jammeh's Vision 2020. However, where Barrow aims to make a difference is with his Results Framework and monitoring and evaluations mechanisms, which were not featured in Jammeh's vision. A skeptic would however say that these frameworks and mechanisms are not yet a guarantee that proper execution will follow.

When it comes to tourism, there is a difference in the language used in this document and Jammeh's vision. While Jammeh envisioned the attraction of high spending tourists and the establishment of luxury hotels and projects on the waterfront, the current National Development Plan defines the goal as following: "To make tourism a highly competitive and sustainable industry that is people- and culture-centered that celebrates our cultural heritage and contributes to socio-economic development." (Office of the President, 2018, p. 14).

Several interventions are planned to achieve this, including greater linkages with agriculture and other sections and the promotion of biodiversity and rich culture. An increase in allocated funds from 4 million Dalasi to 10 million Dalasi should enable these interventions. The results framework defines the goals of these interventions as the doubling of tourist arrivals from 165,000 to 350,000 as well as doubling the employment in tourism and the foreign exchange earnings. While the document mentions "policy reforms in aid of competitiveness" (p. 14), it remains unclear how just investing into promotion of culture is going to lead to such unprecedented increases in tourist arrivals and foreign exchange earnings.

Overall Barrow's first year in office provides several indicators of change. First of all, the nomination of his Minister of Tourism shows a break with Jammeh's neo-patrimonial politics. While Jammeh appointed people from his own network, despite a lack of knowledge on tourism, Barrow has chosen a coalition partner from another party, with decades of experience in politics and tourism. Secondly, Hamat Bah's needs assessment could indicate a break with the personalized policies of previous ministers towards long-term policy decisions.

Thirdly, Barrow's National Development Plan offers a new language on tourism, emphasizing the cultural experience. While this is a different approach from Jammeh's pursuit of high spending beach tourists, it is unclear how this tackles some of the primary concerns of tourism stakeholders: a lack of funds for marketing and product development (personal communication, 09-06-2017a; 13-06-2017); poor investment climate due to legal and bureaucratic constraints (personal communication, 09-05-2017; 21-06-2017a); and an aging tourist population (personal communication, 09-06-2017b).

6. Conclusion

The previous five chapters have introduced the reader to the Smiling Coast of Africa. This thesis has presented The Gambia as a country struck simultaneously by poverty and hope. Its tourism sector may be the answer to its economic perils. But despite the smile that the country so happily markets, tourism to a developing country such as The Gambia comes with its own perils too. The geographical concentration of tourism has worsened existing spatial inequality, while the concentration of property in foreign or privileged hands has reinforced economic inequality. Additionally, tourism creates potentially harmful dependencies on foreign and private capital. These various ideas come together in this chapter.

The conclusion answers the five sub-questions first. Most of these answers are sourced directly from the previous two chapters. Next, the case description and data of Chapters 4 and 5 are analysed in light of the theoretical framework of Chapter 2. This part concludes whether The Gambia better fits the theoretical framework of Briton's and Brohman's dependency theories or Bramwell's sustainable tourism theory – or a combination of both. Additionally, the presence and impact of concepts such as 'neopatrimonialism', 'commoditization' and 'tourism planning' is discussed. Having answered the sub-questions and discussed the theory, the conclusion turns to the main research question: *How will the tourism sector contribute to the economic development of The Gambia after the 2016 election, compared to past trends in The Gambia's economic development?* The pattern matching approach discussed in Section 2.3 and Chapter 3 will be used to determine which hypothesis best fits the data. Having done so, the conclusion and with that the thesis as a whole draws to a close.

As a refresher to the reader, the five sub-questions that are answered below are:

1. *What is the history of The Gambia's tourism sector?*
2. *To what extent is tourism a significant contributor to The Gambia's national development?*
3. *What was the position of tourism as a political priority in The Gambia under President Jammeh?*
4. *What is the socio-economic impact of tourism in The Gambia?*
5. *To what extent do the first months of Barrow's presidency indicate any changes in the tourism industry?*

The first of these questions was first discussed in Section 4.2.2 and answered in Section 4.3. The tourism sector of The Gambia began a meteoric rise after a Swedish investor discovered its potential for European travelers around 1965. Over the next two decades economic policies of Dawda Jawara helped establish the tourism sector as an independent and growing sector, attracting over 100,000 tourist arrivals for the first time in the 1988-89 winter season. Despite several shock events (failed and successful coups and the nearby Ebola virus) and a lack of interest in the sector by a new president, the sector grew slowly and steadily to around 160,000 tourist arrivals over time.

The answer to the second question also became clear in Section 4.3. The tourism sector established itself as the second largest contributor to GDP and the second largest employer in The Gambia. In 2017 the sector contributed 8.2% of GDP directly and an estimated total of 20.1% indirectly, additionally it employs up to 42,000 people. It holds a special position to the people that make their living thanks to tourists, but its importance is acknowledged by all. Despite Jammeh's

erratic foreign policy, he has generally shied away from anything that may harm tourism, such as the independence struggle of his ethnic brethren, the Senegalese Jola in the Casamance.

The third question was discussed in Section 5.1. Based on an analysis of policy and its execution, a discrepancy became visible between the ambitions on paper and the effort put in to achieve those. It is not instantly clear whether that discrepancy can be blamed on a lack of political priority, as it could also imply a lack of means to achieve the goals. While elements of both are likely true, the efforts Jammeh put into building hospitals and schools can be used as an argument to say that Jammeh put little priority on tourism development. Either way, this was how respondents from the tourist sector experienced it themselves.

The fourth question asked what the socio-economic impact of tourism is in The Gambia. Section 5.2 concludes that positions in tourism management remain largely in the hands of foreign parties or the Gambian elite, but recognizes some opportunities for Gambians working their way up the economic ladder, in the form of hybrid management teams. The creation of a new middle class could be a major positive socio-economic impact of tourism in The Gambia. Both ASSET and GTHI are facilitating Gambians in these transitions. However, there are still significant barriers for the formation of this middle class, such as the limited amount of Gambians with the proper education and experience at the present moment and the limited capacity of GTHI, despite major expansion in 2012. The biggest limitation to tourism's socio-economic impact however is its geographical confinement to the coastal TDA.

The fifth and last sub-question asked the extent to which the first year of Adama Barrow's presidency has provided indicators for change. While it is still early for definitive conclusions, some indicators do exist: the appointment of Hamat Bah as Minister of Tourism, who is significantly more experienced than his predecessor; the needs-assessment prior to formulation of new policy; and the turn towards culture-oriented tourism development in Barrow's National Development Plan.

While answering the five sub-questions, many similarities became visible between The Gambia and the theoretical frameworks provided in Section 2.2. Additionally, the concepts of neopatrimonialism, commoditization and tourism planning proved useful in analyzing the Gambian tourism sector. The latter statement will be elaborated upon first, before moving on to a discussion of the overall framework that fits The Gambia's present situation best.

Gambian politics portrays several characteristics of neopatrimonialism. While ethnic conflicts are nearly non-existent in the small country, voting patterns still heavily show ethnic lines. Both Jawara and Jammeh utilized the ethnic voting tendencies to strengthen their parliamentary majority, although one did so in fair elections, the other less so. Both also used infrastructural development projects to appease clients where they needed to. Jawara did so with coastal developments, Jammeh used hospitals and schools. Jammeh's cabinet rotated often, including the Minister of Tourism, which is another indicator of his patron-client relationship with ministers. Additionally, Jammeh's style as a ruler had much in common with the traditional African 'big man' politics that Englebert and Dunn describe.

Commoditization of Gambian culture is also very much visible as a result of the tourism sector. Throughout the description of the TDA in Section 4.4, several crafts and arts markets were mentioned. To the knowledge of the author, crafts and arts markets exist in Bakau, Kotu, Serrekunda and Brikama. These markets actually show the positive potential of commoditization processes, as they are one of the last places where traditional crafts are still practiced. However, the products on display are often very generalized 'African' products, instead of typically Gambian ones. The little wooden artifacts regularly display elephants, giraffes and lions, animals of the savannahs of East and South Africa that you will never find in The Gambia. In other fields, however, commoditization is less present. The bars and clubs of the Senegambia strip for example play Westernized music, while

traditional instruments such as the Korra are still practiced and listened to in the interior without much interference from tourists. The new National Development Plan puts more emphasis on the Gambian cultural experience for tourists, but goes into little detail about what that experience entails. It is, however, likely that commoditization processes will continue, which may save declining Gambian traditions such as the Korra, or further flatten the Gambian experience into simply a visit to 'Africa'.

The last concept to discuss before moving on to the discussion of the theoretical framework, is tourism planning. The ideal situation described by Inskeep and Timothy is characterized by cooperative planning, in which national, regional and local agencies cooperate to facilitate tourism and limit its negative side-effects. The story of the well in Section 5.1 proved however that it was exactly in this delegation that corruption prevailed in the Gambian contexts. Local intermediaries bent the national framework of rules for their own profit. The examples of the Bakoteh waste dump and the Chinese factories in Gunjur in the same section also showed local authorities proved insufficient to prevent negative externalities affecting the tourism industry. Overall, the concept of cooperative tourism planning is insufficiently effective in The Gambia, despite efforts by the GTB to implement it.

Elements of both dependency theory and sustainable tourism theory are visible in the case of The Gambia. Many large coastal hotels are still owned and managed by foreign parties and the contribution of tourism to Gambian GDP is relatively large, so the argument for dependency is quickly made. A degree of domestic dependency exists, because tourism provides the primary urban employer and is the source of a large share of tax income. International dependency also exists, because the second most important sector of the Gambian economy relies on foreign tourists' arrivals and their spending patterns. While the GTB actively markets The Gambia as a destination in European markets, their lack of funding delegate such activities to the fringes. Overall, it seems The Gambia has few alternatives when international tour operators such as Ving, Thomas Cook, TUI or Corendon decide to stop their charter services to Banjul Airport. Several interviewees expressed their worries that The Gambia was not keeping up with competitors such as neighboring Senegal and Cape Verde, as well as other African destinations like Egypt, Tunisia and Kenya.

Reading official documents such as Jammeh's Vision 2020 and Barrow's National Development Plan, the primary narrative on tourism is that of growth. More arrival numbers and more tourist spending are the primary targets. The tourism development master plan of 2006 is more comprehensive and shows elements of sustainable tourism theory. It shows that some limits to tourism are already being reached, such as poor waste management and insufficient electricity infrastructure. However, the document follows the activity-based tradition of sustainable tourism strategy and believes in product development and marketing to tackle these barriers. Barrow's National Development Plan shows some hints of community-based sustainable tourism, but his target of doubling tourist arrivals implies that the negotiated societal limits to tourism are still far off, if a belief in such limits even exists.

With all five sub-questions answered and their answers put into perspective using theory, a referral to the four hypotheses of Section 2.3 is due:

1. The tourism sector will contribute little to the Gambia's economic development compared to past trends, because the new policy will diversify the Gambian economy.
2. The tourism sector will significantly contribute to the Gambia's economic development, but less than compared to past trends, because the new policy will diversify the Gambian economy.

3. The tourism sector will significantly contribute to the Gambia's economic development, even more than compared to past trends, because new policy will either fail or not attempt to diversify the Gambian economy.
4. The tourism sector will similarly contribute to the Gambian economic development compared to past trends, because the new policy will either fail or not attempt to either grow the tourism sector or diversify the economy.

There is no clear-cut answer to the research question, as trends towards all four hypotheses are visible. In answering sub-question 5 it became clear that Barrow's goal is, quite obviously, the second hypothesis: a situation in which tourism remains an active and growing economic sector, but alongside a diversified economy with more reliable agricultural and industrial sectors. One could argue that the vision of Jammeh as portrayed in sub-question 3 was actually quite similar, while failed policy execution led to a situation more akin to hypothesis 4 or even hypothesis 3. Overall, the only hypothesis that seems wholly unlikely based on previous economic developments and Barrow's intentions is the first.

However, what will determine whether or not Barrow succeeds in establishing an economy in which tourism is an active contribution to a diversified economy? The answer to sub-questions 3 and 4 heavily imply that an effective civil service and the acquisition of funding are the keys. These keys do not come easy, though. Right now, a vicious circle can be observed: a variety of government actors require funding to further grow the tourism sector; however, to source this funding without foreign assistance the economy actually relies on tax income from tourism for a large part. Obviously, this leads to a stalemate when the sector stagnates, as without a flourishing tourism sector institutes such as the GTHI and GTB will lack the income to recover the sector.

Economic transformation and a more effective civil service are therefore going to prove instrumental if Barrow wants to succeed. However, while he proposes a new community-based direction for tourism, sustainable tourism initiatives in The Gambia remain incidental in nature: an eco-village in Ndemban, three cultural heritage sites managed by locals or arts and crafts markets featuring twenty independent artists. None of these initiatives is going to be capable of competition against international tour operators or the capital of hotels such as Senegambia or Kombo Beach. In practice, sustainable tourism concepts have failed to offer structural solutions to the dependency problem of tourism.

Economic transformation therefore requires looking beyond The Gambia's smiling coast, to the rural poor that work in agriculture in 90% of the cases. Without closing the growing gap between the coast and the interior, there will not be a proper foundation for transformation. And this will be felt in the tourism sector too, as the vicious circle described above will not be broken. In fact, another vicious circle exists because of The Gambia's inequality: as economic opportunities in the interior remain limited, youngsters will migrate to urban areas (if not to Europe) in an effort to find work, further depriving the economic development in the interior. IMF lead economist Jonathan Ostry puts it as follows: "More unequal societies have slower and more fragile economic growth. It would thus be a mistake to imagine that we can focus on economic growth and let inequality take care of itself." (Ostry, 2014).

In other words, it would be a mistake to imagine that The Gambia can focus on its coastal tourism sector and let inequality take care of itself. The smiling coast of Africa needs a healthy body to keep smiling. The Gambia's neighbor Senegal provides a good example. Even though Jammeh considered his Senegalese colleague a Western puppet, Senegal has made serious economic progress on a basis of agricultural development. Through subsidized farmer assistance programs in the 'Rice valley' around Saint Louis, Senegal has managed to combat unemployment, stimulate private sector development and reduce reliance on imports (Vlasblom, 2012).

Barrows policy portrays an understanding of the problems that The Gambia faces. While the civil service became an unreliable and inefficient instrument under Yahya Jammeh, his predecessor Jawara has proven that economic reforms in The Gambia can find success. There is therefore hope for 'The New Gambia' to be more than empty words, but the first hiccups along the way have already happened, in the form of the delayed National Development Plan and the troublesome assignment of a Vice President. Overall, the data matches a future in which The Gambia's economy relies on international tourism, but perhaps less so in ten years than today. The smiling coast keeps on smiling, but its body begins a long due healing process in The New Gambia.

7. Discussion

This thesis criticized the GTB for its sporadic implementation of sustainable tourism. It argued that the incidental sustainable tourism projects were no match for the scale of mass tourism that large coastal hotels generate. Does that imply that the GTB misinterpreted, or failed its execution of, sustainable tourism literature? Or is the GTB's execution an indicator of inherent weaknesses in the literature? This section discusses the position of this thesis with regards to the greater academic discussion on sustainable tourism and development. In doing so, it answers the questions above and makes recommendations for future sustainable tourism research.

The Gambia is a popular case in tourism literature, with recent studies on innovation and entrepreneurship (Carlisle, Kunc, Jones, & Tiffin, 2013), hotel employment (Davidson & Sahli, 2014), philanthropy (Novelli, Morgan, Mitchell, & Ivanov, 2015) and rural tourism (Ezeuduji, 2017) among others. These studies have in common the belief that tourism can contribute to economic development when done sustainably. Each of the examples is aimed at a specific fragment of the tourism sector and usually focuses on the local scale over the (inter)national scale. Has sustainable tourism literature embraced its local scale and the resulting incidental nature of sustainable tourism policy, such as that of the GTB?

Kirk Bowman argued yes to that question. His argument: in a situation of limited state capacity, keeping sustainable tourism initiatives local and adaptable is the key to building a more sustainable future (Bowman, 2011). To the counterargument that more ambitious goals are necessary for progress, he replies: "the program must not start out too ambitiously, because a failed program also reduces state capacity and reduces the likelihood of success in future attempts." (Bowman, 2011, p. 279)

However not all authors agree that 'keeping it local' is the way forward for sustainable tourism. Rid and colleagues wish to look beyond incidental projects and created a long term plan of how small scale tourism investments contribute to long term goals and a sustainable tourism economy in the end (Rid, Ezeuduji, & Probst-Haider, 2014). Their study was specific to The Gambia, but similar studies exist for other cases. Others go against the WTO definition of sustainable tourism as a context-specific concept, and instead attempt an abstract modeling of sustainable tourism (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014; Bianchi, 2017).

The conclusions of these broader articles are however grim. Moscardo and Murphy conclude in their article that "while the management of tourism impacts and the relationship between tourism and sustainability have been paid considerable attention by tourism academics, there is little evidence of any significant change in tourism practice. […] this lack of change reflects problems in the way tourism academics have conceptualized sustainable tourism." (Moscardo & Murphy, 2014, p. 2538). Bianchi argues that the primary conceptual weakness in sustainable tourism studies is the "weak and inconsistent application" of political economy approaches (Bianchi, 2017, p. 1). This is in line with the author's observations when reading tourism literature on The Gambia. There is a lacuna of knowledge on the position of tourism in the political economy of developing states. To solve this, further research is needed on tourism in developing states in the context of economic development and not purely tourism development. The political economy approaches of Bramwell and Bianchi can be used as handholds, but require further research on both theoretical level and applied to cases.

Based on this discussion, we can see that the GTB is not necessarily to blame for a misinterpretation of tourism literature. Instead, limited application of sustainable tourism in The

Gambia is a symptom of the weakness in sustainable tourism literature. But the question *how* sustainable tourism can be applied, is not the only question worth discussing here.
The question 'S*hould* sustainable tourism be applied?' also requires attention. Growth in the African service economy, which includes the tourism sector in many countries, has contributed to the narrative of Africa Rising. As discussed before, several authors have asked the question: do the used indicators actually lead to the conclusion that Africa is Rising (Rowden, 2013)? The question of economic development in Africa is a perpetual debate and has no single answer. However in many answers in the wider development debate, tourism is underrepresented. Future tourism research should look to further integrate into the broader debate of economic development and more focus should be put on the interrelation of tourism with agriculture and industry. There is potential for mass tourism in The Gambia, for example, to be linked more tightly with Gambian agriculture for food supply. This requires investments in modernized agriculture, however official documents fail to link these sectors. Both academia and policy can benefit from more cross-sector analysis.

But the *should*-question is not fully answered simply by linking tourism more with other sectors. There is space in the present academic debate to be more radical: perhaps tourists should be travelling (to (tourism-reliant) developing states) less. This was proposed by an article in BRIGHT magazine "the next trend in travel is… don't", using the example of overcrowded and tourism-reliant Bali, Indonesia (Smith, 2018). Similarly, travel and tourist information publisher Fodor's has begun publishing a 'No-List' with destinations tourists *should not* visit. The inaugural 2017 list included mostly destinations tourists should not visit for their own sake, because of viruses (Miami), smog (New Delhi) or overcrowding (Ibiza; Pisa) for example (Delulio & Butler, 2016). The 2018 list however includes destinations one *should not* visit for the destination's sake, due to the fragile ecosystem (Galapagos Isles), pollution caused by tourists (Thailand) or deterioration of cultural heritage (Great Wall, China) (Fodor's Editors, 2017).

Based on the present research we may be able to add another entry to the No-List: The Gambia, because of economic dependency. While it is too early for such fatalistic statements, there is space for more research into alternative development models for The Gambia and other tourism reliant small states. If not for the economic argument, then for the sustainability argument: how ecologically sustainable is sustainable tourism to The Gambia actually when a return flight between Amsterdam and Banjul emits an average 1.8 metric ton of carbon dioxide per passenger (calculated on http://co2.myclimate.org/en/flight_calculators/new)? For reference: in the most forgiving estimates of the IPCC, the average person should emit only 1,2 metric ton of carbon dioxide to achieve climate stabilization by 2100 (number corrected for expected population growth) (IPCC Working Group III, 2001).

In summary, there is space for further research on sustainable tourism on different levels of abstraction. Firstly, more research is needed for the structural definition and application of sustainable tourism principles in developing states. Secondly, the sustainable tourism literature may strengthen when the political economy approach is utilized more often. Thirdly, sustainable tourism literature should be more integrated in the broader economic development debate and look for linkages with other sectors. Fourthly, the time may soon come for a more existential reflection on sustainable tourism as factors of economic dependency and carbon emissions may be more powerful barriers than sustainable tourism initiatives can overcome.

List of Interviews

Date (dd-mm-yyyy)	Hotel/Government/Other	Native/Foreign	Small/Large
04-05-2017	Hotel	Foreign	Small
09-05-2017	Hotel	Foreign	Large
11-05-2017	Hotel	Native	Large
19-05-2017	Hotel	Native	Small
06-06-2017	Other	Native	Small
08-06-2017	Hotel	Foreign	Large
09-06-2017a	Government	Native	Large
09-06-2017b	Hotel	Native	Small
13-06-2017a	Government	Native	Large
13-06-2017b	Hotel	Native	Small
16-06-2017	Other	Native	Small
19-06-2017	Hotel	Native	Large
21-06-2017a	Government	Native	Large
21-06-2017b	Government	Native	Large
28-06-2017	Other	Native	Small

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Appendix A: Glossary of Terms

Term	Definition
Adama Barrow	President of The Gambia (2017-present). Former businessman in real estate, former treasurer and present head of UDP.
AfDB	African Development Bank, regional development finance institute. Assisted The Gambia with their Tourism Development Master Plan, among other things.
APRC	Alliance for Patriotic Reorientation and Construction, political party that Yahya Jammeh founded after taking power in 1994.
ASSET	Association of Small Scale Enterprises in Tourism. NGO functioning as an unofficial union for small entrepreneurs in The Gambia's tourism sector.
Bertil Harding	Swedish investor credited with founding tourism in The Gambia. The highway between Fajara and Kololi is named after him: Bertil Harding Highway.
Dawda Kairaba Jawara	Former President of The Gambia (1962-1994). Gained his reputation as veterinarian, leader of PPP.
GTA	Gambia Tourism Authority (2001-2011), predecessor of GTB as the executive organization for tourism policy.
GTB	Gambia Tourism Board, successor of GTA as the executive organization for tourism policy.
GTHI	Gambia Tourism and Hospitality Institute. Successor of the National Tourism and Travel Institute as the largest hotel school in The Gambia. Semi-public organization.
Hamat Bah	Minister of Tourism in Barrow's cabinet (2017-present). His political party, National Reconciliation Party, was a member of the coalition of opposition parties in 2016. Former hotel manager.
PPP	People's Progressive Party, the party of President Jawara, founded in 1959. Member of the coalition of opposition parties in 2016.
TDA	Tourism Development Area. A one mile wide strip of land along the Gambian beach between Banjul and Sukuta dedicated to the development of tourism.
UP/UDP	United (Democratic) Party, the largest opposition party of Jawara as UP, then renamed to UDP. As UDP: party of President Barrow, member of the coalition of opposition parties in 2016
WTO	World Tourism Organisation, the official organization for tourism of the United Nations. Not to be confused with the World Trade Organisation, which is never mentioned in this thesis.
WTTC	World Travel and Tourism Council, non-governmental organization that provides a forum and lobby for the global tourism business.
Yahya Jammeh	Former President of The Gambia (1994-2016). Army lieutenant that took power in a bloodless coup d'état, founder of APRC.

Appendix B: Interview Guide Hotels

Interview guide: Tourism in Gambia
Interviewer: Martijn van Dongen
Interviewee:
Time of interview:
Date:
Location:

In this thesis I will analyze the effects of Gambia's 2016 election results on the tourism sector of the country. The tourism sector is an important driver for development in The Gambia, as it is responsible for 15 to 20% of the country's income. To properly understand the role of tourism in The Gambia, several interviews will be done about the importance of tourism to Gambia's economy, the role of the government in tourism, the leakage of foreign funds and the vision for the future. These and related topics will be discussed with stakeholders throughout the tourism sector, ranging from hotels, to tour guides, to NGO's and policy officials.

Questions:

What is your role in Gambia's tourism sector? How did you enter the tourism sector?

What is the interaction between your business and locals like? How many employees are local? How do tourists interact with locals?

What changes have you experienced since you started working in the tourism sector in The Gambia? Are these changes rapid or long-term?

Do you believe tourism is a direct contribution to Gambia's National Development? If so, in what ways?

How did you personally feel or witness the effects of the 2016 elections in the touristic winter season of 2016-2017? What effects did you see for other actors in the tourism sector?

How was your relation with the Gambian government during Jammeh's reign?

What do you believe should be the role of the government in tourism?

What changes do you expect Barrow to bring to the tourism industry? And what changes should he bring?

Thank you for your participation and cooperation. Your answers will be treated as confidential. If you wish to hear the conclusions at the end of the research, please leave your e-mail address here:

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Appendix C: Interview Guide Government

Interview guide: Tourism in Gambia
Interviewer: Martijn van Dongen
Interviewee:
Time of interview:
Date:
Location:

In this thesis I will analyze the effects of Gambia's 2016 election results on the tourism sector of the country. The tourism sector is an important driver for development in The Gambia, as it is responsible for 15 to 20% of the country's income. To properly understand the role of tourism in The Gambia, several interviews will be done about the importance of tourism to Gambia's economy, the role of the government in tourism, the leakage of foreign funds and the vision for the future. These and related topics will be discussed with stakeholders throughout the tourism sector, ranging from hotels, to tour guides, to NGO's and policy officials.

Questions:

What is your role in Gambia's tourism sector? How did you enter the tourism sector?

How do you interact with the private (hotel) sector as part of you job?

What changes have you experienced since you started working in the tourism sector in The Gambia? Are these changes rapid or long-term?

Do you believe tourism is a direct contribution to Gambia's National Development? If so, in what ways?

How did you personally feel or witness the effects of the 2016 elections in the touristic winter season of 2016-2017? What effects did you see for other actors in the tourism sector?

To what extent was Jammeh involved with the work of your institution during his reign?

What do you believe should be the role of the government in tourism?

What changes do you expect Barrow to bring to the tourism industry? And what changes should he bring?

Thank you for your participation and cooperation. Your answers will be treated as confidential. If you wish to hear the conclusions at the end of the research, please leave your e-mail address here:

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Appendix D: Observation schedule

Observation Schedule Tourism in The Gambia

Type of organization: NGO / Tour Guides / Hotel / Government / Other

Name of organization:

Date of visit:

	Present yes / no / NA	Comments
Local Employees		
Government official signage or certification		
Cultural Artifacts		
Local Traditions		
Local Cuisine		
Multi-actor Cooperation		
International Funding		
Bumsters		