



*The role of cultural heritage sites in improving the tourist attractiveness of the territory - case of Algeria-*

*CHAREF Nouredine*

*Hassiba Benbouali University Chlef (Algeria), [n.charef@univ-chlef.dz](mailto:n.charef@univ-chlef.dz)*

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**Abstract:**

*This research aims to highlight the importance of cultural heritage sites in the Algerian territories, and the requirements for their rehabilitation and development, in order to improve their tourist attractiveness, and revitalize the tourism sector in Algeria. In many countries, cultural heritage sites have become an important factor of tourist attraction, when they are rehabilitated and developed as part of an integrated tourism development strategy.*

*The study concluded that Algeria has many cultural heritage sites, and that only a few of them are inscribed on the World Cultural Heritage List. Nevertheless, these sites are not exploited in the revitalization of the tourism sector, due to several factors, which have negatively affected the attractiveness of Algeria as a global tourist destination.*

**Keywords:** *cultural heritage; tourist attractiveness; territory.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

All over the world, people consider the cultural heritage as an important asset. In addition to its role in the protection of the culture and identity of people, it contributes to the attraction of tourists, and promotion of cultural tourism.

Built heritage sites, such as monuments, buildings, castles and ancient towns, are the favorite destinations for many tourists, wishing to familiarize themselves with the culture and history of the host country. This is why many countries work on the rehabilitation of these sites, and their integration into the general planning of development of the territories, in order to increase their contribution to the improvement of tourist attractiveness of the territories, and to provide income that can cover the maintenance and operating costs of these sites.

With its vast territory, Algeria has an important group of geographically dispersed heritage sites. Some of them are inscribed on the World Cultural Heritage List, others are awaiting classification. However, it

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faces major challenges in protecting, developing and exploiting these sites for tourism within the National Tourism Development Plan 2030.

We will try in this research, to show the importance of exploiting these heritage sites, to improve the tourist attractiveness of Algeria, and discuss the requirements for this exploitation, by answering the following main question:

**How can the exploitation of cultural heritage sites improve the tourist attractiveness of Algerian territories and promote the tourism sector in Algeria?**

**Research hypotheses:** To answer the main question, we form the following hypotheses:

- The cultural heritage sites are the basis of tourism products that attract visitors;
- Algeria has a number of world cultural heritage sites, which can be exploited to improve the country's tourism attractiveness.

**The importance of research:**

The tourism sector is a strategic sector in many developing countries, and it is necessary to work for its development, especially in the difficult economic conditions that our country is currently going through. In order to achieve economic diversification and get rid of the strong dependence on the hydrocarbon sector.

**Research objectives:** The research aims to:

- Show the significant contributions of material cultural heritage in improving the tourist attractiveness of the territories;
- Presentation of the World Cultural Heritage sites located in Algeria;
- Proposing mechanisms to promote the national cultural heritage sites, in order to improve the country's tourism attractiveness and revitalize the tourism sector.

**Previous Related studies:**

There are researches that deal with the issue of the exploitation of cultural heritage sites in the development of the tourism sector, and these are some of them:

1) Canale, R. R., De Simone, E., Di Maio, A., & Parenti, B. (2019). **UNESCO World Heritage sites and tourism attractiveness: The case of Italian provinces.** Land Use Policy, 85, 114-120.

This study aimed at investigating whether the inscriptions on the UNESCO World Heritage List (WHL) sites influence tourism attractiveness. An empirical analysis, based on dynamic panel data methodology, was

implemented to study the effect of WHL cultural and natural properties inclusion on international tourist arrivals in Italian provinces in the 2000–2014 time span. Results suggest that being awarded with a World Heritage recognition, together with the province’s wealth, environmental habits and openness to external markets, may influence attractiveness, confirming a tourism-enhancing role of the List, beyond the simple heritage preservation.

2) Bonn, M. A., Joseph-Mathews, S. M., Dai, M., Hayes, S., & Cave, J. (2007). **Heritage/cultural attraction atmospherics: Creating the right environment for the heritage/cultural visitor**. *Journal of Travel Research*, 45(3), 345-354.

This study investigated the effect of some basic environmental elements on visitors to heritage sites, illustrating that the heritage attraction’s physical environment plays an important role in determining both visitors’ attitude toward the heritage sites and future repatronage intentions, as well as their willingness to recommend the experience to friends and relatives. The study findings indicated that environmental cues can be used as a differential tool to perpetuate brand meaning and uniqueness in the minds of the consumer, thereby creating a competitive advantage for the heritage attraction.

3) MacDonald, R., & Jolliffe, L. (2003). **Cultural rural tourism: Evidence from Canada**. *Annals of tourism research*, 30(2), 307-322.

In this paper, the development of cultural rural tourism was examined in a case study of a French Acadian region on an island in eastern Canada. The roles of culture and community-based partnerships are considered in a proposed framework with four evolving development stages. The findings suggested that framework is useful for rural tourism development; that culture, which is often well preserved in rural areas, is a valuable resource to include; and that community-based partnerships such as cooperatives may be very effective.

To answer the problem of this research, we have divided this paper into three parts:

**First:** the concept and importance of cultural heritage.

**Second:** Exploitation of cultural heritage sites to improve the tourist attractiveness of the territories;

**Third:** Cultural heritage sites in Algeria and their role in improving tourist attractiveness.

## **2. The concept and importance of cultural heritage**

Heritage means "all values, literature, arts and beliefs, and all material and immaterial human activities that are inherited by generations, resulting from the accumulation of community experiences, and it is a witness to the 'history and events of the nation'" (UNESCO , 2005, p. 12). It must be noted here that this definition focuses more on the cultural aspects of society, and therefore some see that this definition is specific to cultural heritage and not to heritage in the broad sense, which includes all sites of historical importance, national monuments, wildlife sites, historic sites, buildings and works of art, oral and written heritage, museum collections and other common cultural goods. This is what he comes back to (Nuryanti, 1996, p. 250) when he specifies that "the term" heritage "is linked in its broad sense to the word" heritage ", which is everything that is transmitted from one generation to the next. on the other hand, and because of its role as bearer of historical values from the past, heritage is seen as part of the cultural traditions of society.

We also note that the definition of heritage has seen a significant expansion in UNESCO documents, and in its guide to the management of World Heritage resources, the organization explicitly states that "the scope of the concept of heritage has grown. considerably expanded over the past half century, the tendency has been to define heritage assets as monuments and individual buildings. Like places of worship or fortresses and castles, they were seen as independent places unrelated to the surrounding landscape. today, it is generally accepted that the entire environment has been affected by its interaction with humanity, and can therefore be recognized as heritage " (UNESCO , 2016, p. 15).

After the great devastation caused by wars in the world, it was urgent to protect the heritage and natural sites, symbols of all humanity, because the cultural and natural heritage is always threatened by economic and social activities and natural disasters. In 1972, the General Assembly of UNESCO adopted the World Heritage Convention.

Starting from the "outstanding universal value" of these properties, and that the world would be poor without them, the organization called on the entire international community to participate in the protection of world heritage, and a project was set up to identify these sites under the name of the "World Heritage List" under the Convention, to facilitate recognition and protection, in 2009, the World Heritage List included 890 heritage properties, including 689 cultural properties, 176 natural heritage sites and

25 mixed (cultural and natural) properties located in 148 countries. (Marcotte & Bourdeau, 2010, p. 277).

Referring to the text of the International Convention for the Protection of World Cultural and Natural Heritage, we see that cultural heritage consists of (UNESCO, 1972, p. 6):

- **Antiquities:** architectural works of humanity, sculpture and painting on buildings, elements or formations of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, caves and groups of monuments, all of which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- **Complexes:** sets of connected or isolated buildings which, because of their architecture, symmetry or integration into a landscape, have outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;
- **Sites:** works of man, works in common between man and nature, or archaeological sites of outstanding universal value from a historical, aesthetic or anthropological point of view.

Cultural heritage can be tangible and intangible. The tangible (or material) heritage comprises of monuments, buildings, historical and natural sites. However, the intangible stands for “the signs and symbols passed on by oral transmission, artistic and literary forms of expression, languages, ways of life, myths, beliefs and rituals, value systems and traditional knowledge and know-how. (Boudia & Khalki, 2021, p. 607)

According to article 4 of the International Convention for the Protection of World Cultural Heritage, each state has the duty to identify, protect, repair and transfer the cultural heritage present on its territory to future generations, and it may seek assistance from relevant international and regional parties in this regard. (UNESCO, 1972, p. 11).

According to the text of Article 5 of the International Convention, in order to protect the cultural heritage located on their territory, Member States should endeavor to:

- Adopt a general policy aimed at making the cultural heritage exploitable and useful for the life of the population, and integrate the protection of this heritage into general development programs;
- Establish a department for the protection, preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage, and endow this department with qualified personnel and give it the means to carry out its mission;
- Develop scientific and technical studies and research, and develop working methods enabling the state to face threats to cultural heritage;

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- Take the appropriate legal, technical, administrative and financial measures to identify, protect, preserve, enhance and revive this heritage;
- Support the creation of national and regional training centers in the field of protection, preservation and enhancement of cultural heritage and encourage scientific research in this field.

If we look closely at the first point of this article, we conclude that there is a global consensus on the necessity of valuing cultural heritage, and making it perform a function in society, and there is no doubt that the most important function that this heritage can perform is to exploit it in a studied manner, so that it contributes to the economic and social development of society, Without harming it, and enabling future generations to benefit from it, and linking these generations to the culture and identity of their country, and this is the essence of sustainable economic development.

### **3. Exploitation of cultural heritage sites to improve the tourist attractiveness of the territories**

Territory is defined as "a part of the surface of the land belonging to a state, city or certain administrative district. This word is derived from the ancient Latin word "territorium", which comes from the word "terra", which means land, and which means an area of land subject to a certain authority (Paquot, 2011, p. 24).

As for the term "attractiveness of the territory", it was absent from the dictionary of economists until the end of the 1980s, then has experienced growing interest in recent decades, with growing interest in multinational companies and openness from territories to foreign investment, because countries and territories have become competitors to attract and install these investments, by implementing a set of procedures and measures aimed at attracting them (Hatem, 2004, p. 36). and discussions began to develop significantly on the mechanisms for improving the attractiveness of territories, and increasing their competitiveness compared to competing territories.

(Labosse, 2010, p. 42) defines the attractiveness of the territory as "its capacity to attract new economic activities and new factors of production, as well as its capacity to attract residents with good incomes, whether they are permanent residents or tourists". while (Poirot & Gérardin, 2010, p. 31) sees that the attractiveness of the territory is its capacity to attract movable production factors, or to attract the population ", that is to say the capacity of the territory to be selected by a economic agent as an establishment area (temporary or permanent) for its activities.

Thus, the attractiveness of the territory aims to (Poirot & Gérardin, 2010, p. 33):

- **Attract individuals and families:**

Here, the attractiveness of the territory appears through the desire of individuals and families to choose the territory as a permanent residence (permanent main residence), or as a temporary residence for tourism, studies or work. and in recent years the term residual economy has appeared, which expresses a new form of economy, based on the attraction of foreigners with a good income, to residing in the country or territory, these people can be businessmen, retirees, tourists, etc.

- **Attract investors:**

Here, the attractiveness of the territory appears at two levels: the first concerns companies already established in the territory, by increasing their desire to expand, or to open new projects, and the second concerns companies located outside the territory, whose desire to establish themselves in the territory and locate their activities there. This increases the number of new jobs in the region, thus attracting new residents to the territory, and with the increase in population, government and private service companies are also coming, in order to meet the growing demand for services.

Thus, we can say that attractiveness of territory is of two types: a type linked to investors in general (attractiveness of investments), and a type linked to tourists and visitors in general (tourist attractiveness). According to (GRANDPRÉ, 2007) tourist attractiveness “is made up of all the elements present in a territory, which attract the tourist and push him to leave his domicile or his original residence and to go to this territory”.

These factors which help and support the attractiveness of the territory are numerous, and may concern the economic climate of the territory, the available transport networks, the qualified workforce, the natural and cultural resources, the quality of life, the image and history of the territory... etc. (Labosse, 2010, p. 43). Thus, the natural and cultural heritage resources are a factor in tourist attractiveness.

In the late 1990s, many tourists began to take an interest in travel and tourism in order to rediscover the past. this has led to the emergence of a specialized tourism market known as “cultural or heritage tourism”, where reliving the past has become a unique tourism experience. Moreover, a body of research has indicated that heritage tourism is the fastest growing tourism sector. (Bonn & al, 2007, p. 349), and given that rural communities

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and remote areas face the challenge of economic development, and as its income from fishing and farming activities steadily decreases, tourism is a good tool for help these regions to create jobs and raise the standard of living of the population. and communities in these areas can attract tourists by enhancing their local cultural and heritage resources (MacDonald & Jolliffe, 2003, p. 311).

(Silberberg, 1995, p. 362) defines cultural tourism as “visits by people outside the host community, motivated by an interest in the historical, artistic, scientific or heritage assets of a community or a territory”. While (Chhabra, Healy, & Sills, 2003, p. 705) view cultural tourism as "an economic activity that takes advantage of social and cultural assets to attract tourists", therefore ,local traditions and community heritage, can act like tourist attractions. This is what they say (Alzua, O’Leary, & Morrison, 1998, p. 7), they claim that culture and heritage are major forces in the field of economic and urban revitalization, and that cultural tourism is an important factor for tourist destinations interested in the development and enhancement of the cultural capital , in order to attract tourists.

The theme of cultural tourism became more popular with the creation of the International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in 1965, which plays the role of technical advisor to UNESCO, especially with regard to the development and preparation of the World Heritage List. In its work to draw up this list, the Council relies on the principle of “outstanding universal value” and on the criteria set by the World Heritage Convention, and the theme of cultural tourism was at the center of the work of the Second General Assembly of this International Council, held in Oxford in 1969.

World Heritage protects “exceptional” heritage sites and assets, and also aims to raise awareness of heritage sites for tourists. Therefore, strategies have been developed to promote cultural and natural heritage, to attract tourists to areas that host these sites.

For some communities whose heritage properties or sites are recognized by UNESCO, inclusion on the World Heritage List is an opportunity to attract more tourists to their regions. Given that World Heritage seeks above all to protect these exceptional sites, the question arises of knowing how to promote and enhance these sites, without endangering them, because attracting a large number of tourists to these sites can generate good financial income. But it destabilizes the local population and weakens the integrity of these sites. (Marcotte & Bourdeau,

2010, p. 281). Consequently, the optimal use of cultural heritage sites in the field of cultural tourism requires a clear policy and good planning, taking into account the historical and exceptional character of these sites, and the need to maintain and preserve them, in order to develop them and exploit them rationally in tourism.

#### **4. Cultural heritage sites in Algeria and their role in improving tourist attractiveness.**

Algeria joined UNESCO early, in October 1962, immediately after its independence, ratified the International Convention on World Heritage on June 24, 1974. It was elected as a member of the World Heritage Committee for several terms (1978-1980/1983-1989/2011-2015).

According to what is stated on the website of the Algerian National Committee for Education, Culture and Science, in addition to what is mentioned in the World Heritage Center website, Algeria currently owns seven (7) heritage sites inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, six of them, are considered World Cultural Heritage sites, and one mixed (natural /cultural) site, which are (WHC, 2020) :

**1) Kalâa of Beni Hammad:** It was the first Algerian heritage site inscribed on the UNESCO heritage list in 1980. It is located in the wilaya of M'sila. The Qal'a of Beni Hammad bears exceptional testimony to the Hammadid civilization now disappeared. Founded in 1007 as a military stronghold, it was elevated to the level of metropolis. It has influenced the development of Arab architecture as well as other civilizing influences, including the Maghreb, Andalusia and Sicily. The archaeological and monumental vestiges of the Qal'a of Beni Hammad, among which are included the Great mosque and its minaret as well as a series of palaces, constitute the principal resources that testify to the wealth and influence of this Hammadid civilization.

The attributes that characterize the site were the remains of the 7 km of fortified walls and all the monumental vestiges contained therein. The integrity of this heritage site is assured but the vestiges remain vulnerable to natural degradation and weathering.

**2) Djémila:** It is an ancient Roman city. It is located 50 km north-east of the wilaya of Sétif. The Roman town occupied a singular defensive position. Remarkably adapted to the constraints of the mountainous site, on a rocky spur which spreads at an altitude of 900 m, between the wadi Guergour and the wadi Betame, two mountain torrents, the town has its own Senate and Forum. Around the beginning of the 3rd century, it expanded beyond its

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ramparts with the creation of the Septimius Severus Temple, the Arch of Caracalla, the market and the civil basilica. The site has also been marked by Christianity in the form of several cult buildings: a cathedral, a church and its baptistry are considered among the biggest of the Paleochristian period. The site of Djémila comprises an impressive collection of mosaic pavings, illustrating mythological tales and scenes of daily life.

Djémila bears exceptional testimony to a civilization which has disappeared. It is one of the world's most beautiful Roman ruins. The archaeological vestiges, the well integrated Roman urban planning and the surrounding environment comprise the elements that represent the values attributed to this site.

**3) Timgad:** It is an ancient archaeological site dating from Roman times (1st century AD). Located to the north of the massif of the Aurès in a mountainous site of great beauty, 480 km south-east of Algiers and 110 km to the south of Constantine, is a consummate example of a Roman military colony created ex nihilo. Its plan, laid out with great precision, illustrates Roman urban planning at its height. By the middle of the 2nd century, the rapid growth of the city had ruptured the narrow confines of its original foundation. Timgad spread beyond the perimeters of its ramparts and several major public buildings are built in the new quarters: Capitulum, temples, markets and baths.

A strong and prosperous colony, Timgad must have served as a compelling image of the grandeur of Rome on Numidian soil. Buildings, constructed entirely of stone, were frequently restored during the course of the Empire: The Trajan Arch in the middle of the 2nd century, the Eastern gate in 146, and the Western gate under Marcus-Aurelius. The streets were paved with large rectangular limestone slabs and, as attested by the 14 baths which still may be seen today, particular attention was paid to the disposition of public conveniences. The houses, of varying sizes, dazzle by their sumptuous mosaics, which were intended to offset the absence of precious marbles.

**4) M'Zab valley:** located in the wilaya of Ghardaïa, 600 km south of Algiers. The region of Beni Mzab was classified as a World Heritage Site in 1982. The five ksour (fortified villages) of the M'Zab Valley form an extraordinarily homogenous ensemble constituting, in the desert, the mark of a sedentary and urban civilization possessing an original culture that has, through its own merit, preserved its cohesion throughout the centuries. Comprised of ksour and palm groves of El-Atteuf, Bounoura, Melika,

Ghardaïa and Beni-Isguen (founded between 1012 and 1350), the M'Zab Valley has conserved practically the same way of life and the same building techniques since the 11th century, ordered as much by a specific social and cultural context, as by the need for adaptation to a hostile environment, the choice of which responded to a historic need for withdrawal and a defensive imperative. Each of these miniature citadels, surrounded by walls, is dominated by a mosque, the minaret of which functions as a watchtower. The mosque is conceived as a fortress, the last bastion of resistance in the event of a siege, and comprises an arsenal and a grain store. Around this building, which is essential for communal life, are houses built in concentric circles up to the ramparts. Each house constitutes a cubic cell of standard type, illustrating an egalitarian society founded on the respect for the family structure, aiming at the preservation of its intimacy and autonomy.

**5) Tipaza:** located 70 km west of Algiers. Comprising three sites: two archaeological parks located in the vicinity of the present urban complex and the Royal Mauritanian Mausoleum, on the west Sahel plateau of Algiers.

Tipaza was an ancient Punic trading-post conquered by Rome and turned into a strategic base for the conquest of the kingdoms of Mauritania. It comprises a unique group of Phoenician, Roman, palaeochristian and Byzantine ruins alongside indigenous monuments such as the Kbor er Roumia, the great royal mausoleum of Mauretania.

**6) Tassili n'Ajjer:** located in the wilaya of Illizi. It is a mixed heritage site (cultural/natural). It is a vast plateau in south-east Algeria at the borders of Libya, Niger and Mali, covering an area of 72,000 sq. km. The exceptional density of paintings and engravings, and the presence of many prehistoric vestiges, are remarkable testimonies to Prehistory. From 10,000 BC to the first centuries of our era, successive peoples left many archaeological remains, habitations, burial mounds and enclosures which have yielded abundant lithic and ceramic material. However, it is the rock art (engravings and paintings) that have made Tassili world famous as from 1933, the date of its discovery. 15,000 engravings have been identified to date.

This site is also of great geological and aesthetic interest, the panorama of geological formations with "rock forests" of eroded sandstone resembles a strange lunar landscape.

**7) Kasbah of Algiers:** It was the last site inscribed in 1992, and it is located in the upper part of the capital, the site was inhabited at least from the 6th

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century BC when a Phoenician trading post was established there. The term Kasbah, that originally designated the highest point of the medina during the Zirid era, today applies to the ensemble of the old town of El Djazair, within the boundaries marked by the ramparts and built at the end of the 16th century, dating back to the Ottoman period.

In this living environment where nearly 50,000 people reside, very interesting traditional houses, palaces, hammams, mosques and various souks are still conserved, the urban form of which bears witness to an effect of stratification of several styles in a complex and original system that has adapted remarkably well to a very hilly and uneven site. In this living environment where nearly 50,000 people reside, very interesting traditional houses, palaces, hammams, mosques and various souks are still conserved,

Table (01) presents summary of information about these seven World Heritage sites.

**Table N (01):** Algerians heritage sites inscribed on the UNESCO heritage list

<b>Sites inscribed by UNESCO</b>	<b>Date of inscription</b>	<b>Category</b>	<b>Retained Criteria of inscriptions</b>
<b>Al Qal'a of Beni Hammad</b>	1980	Cultural	<b>Criterion (iii):</b> Bear an exceptional testimony to a civilization which has disappeared
<b>Djémila</b>	1982	Cultural	<b>Criterion (iii):</b> bear exceptional testimony to a civilization which has disappeared.
<b>M'Zab Valley</b>	1982	Cultural	<b>Criterion (ii):</b> bear witness to a model architecture reflecting an important interchange of cultural influences
<b>Timgad</b>	1982	Cultural	<b>Criterion (ii):</b> bear witness to a model architecture reflecting an important interchange of cultural influences
<b>Tipasa</b>	1982	Cultural	<b>Criterion (iii):</b> bear exceptional testimony to the Punic and Roman civilizations now disappeared. <b>Criterion (iv):</b> ) an outstanding example of a type of architectural ensemble
<b>Kasbah of Algiers</b>	1992	Cultural	<b>Criterion (ii):</b> bear witness to a model architecture reflecting an

			important interchange of cultural influences Criterion (v): an outstanding example of a traditional human settlement
<b>Tassili n'Ajjer</b>	1982	Mixed : Cultural / natural	<b>Criterion (i):</b> represent a masterpiece of an aesthetic naturalistic realism . <b>Criterion (iii):</b> bear exceptional testimony to prehistoric periods (about 10,000 years) <b>Criterion (viii):</b> Represent an example of a testimony to life and testify the evolution of humankind.

**Source:** (Boudia & Khalki, 2021, p. 610)

In addition to these seven sites mentioned above, Algeria has proposed six (6) heritage sites to inscribed them as world cultural heritage, and these sites were included from the year 2002, in the Tentative List, which is a list that identifies all the sites, which wish UNESCO Member States to classify it as world cultural heritage, and it is a compulsory procedure within the framework of the procedures of classification and access to the World Heritage List, and these sites are (WHC, 2020):

- 1) The palaces and oases of Fougara in the Great Western Erg;
- 2) Wadi Souf, in the wilaya of El Wadi;
- 3) Nedroma and the Tarara Mountains in the wilaya of Tlemcen;
- 4) The royal tombs of Numidia and Mauritania and the pre-Islamic archaeological sites in the wilaya of Tipasa;
- 5) The Augustinian sites, locations and routes of the Central Maghreb (2002) in Annaba and Tébessa;
- 6) Al-Auras parc and oasis on the grounds of Al-Ghoufi and Al-Qantara in the Wilaya of Biskra.

In addition to these sites, there are many other sites spread across the country and registered nationally as a material cultural heritage on the National Register, here we note that the total number of heritage sites counted and registered is very few given the large area of the country and the heritage assets that exist in it, and the common denominator between all These heritage sites, represented by their weak contribution to improving the tourist attractiveness of the territories in which they are located, due to a wide range of obstacles.

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In 2016, the Algerian Ministry of Culture set up an online portal under the name "The Algerian cultural heritage portal" ([www.patrimoineculturelgerien.com](http://www.patrimoineculturelgerien.com)), for the purposes of statistics, definition and promotion of material and immaterial cultural heritage in Algeria. The visitor to this portal finds it unchanged. It has not been renewed since its creation, and the information it contains is very scarce, and this may be due to the lack of designation of a specialized team within the Ministry to carry out this task. This is very important in the age of digital marketing for cultural and tourism products.

Due to the weakness of the tourism sector in Algeria, these monuments and heritage sites attract only a few tourists from the interior of the country (internal tourism). (Nuryanti, 1996, p. 255) indicates that heritage sites generally attract a mixture of tourists, both local and international, but the majority of them are local tourists, due to their knowledge of their history and culture. This has an important implication for seasonality, marketing, patterns of tourist behavior and site management.

There are many administrative and organizational obstacles that prevent the optimal exploitation of cultural heritage sites in the field of tourism, and the improvement of the tourist attractiveness of the territories in Algeria, in particular:

- Lack of budgets allocated for the management and rehabilitation of these sites compared to real needs;
- Conflict of administrative prerogatives between the public administrative structures linked to these sites (the tourism departments in the wilayas (states)), the cultural departments, and local authorities, has created many organizational problems.
- The absence of active marketing policies for these heritage sites at national and international levels;
- Lack of cooperation with local communities, through cultural associations and civil society associations, in the management of these sites and their exploitation for tourist purposes;
- Infrastructure weakness, such as road networks, hotels, communications and necessary equipment to make these sites a tourist destination.

To exploit these heritage sites in the development of tourist attractiveness, competent authorities should ensure:

- The rehabilitation and maintenance of these archaeological sites by allocating sufficient budgets;

- The inscription of these sites as national cultural heritage and then as world cultural heritage as soon as possible. Out of the dozens of heritage sites, Algeria has only listed seven as World Heritage, and this is a very low number compared to the country's large surface area and the available capacities;
- Pay more attention to the marketing and promotion of these sites, to attract domestic tourists before foreign, and develop a culture of preserving these sites among local residents and tourists;
- Involve all sectors and stakeholders to develop the national cultural tourism sector, in particular tourism agencies and the local community;
- Cooperate with the private sector in preserving and promoting these sites, particularly in the area of tourism investments adjacent to these sites, such as hotels, restaurants, entertainment areas, and rest and leisure centers.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

This paper investigates the role of cultural heritage sites on tourist attractiveness. World cultural heritage sites can greatly contribute to the development of tourist attractiveness, and support the tourism sector in developing countries. Algeria has many cultural heritage sites, however only a minority of sites are inscribed on the UNESCO heritage list. Many barriers prevent rational exploitation of these sites to improve tourist attractiveness of Algerian territories.

The study leads to the following results:

- Cultural heritage sites have a positive impact on the tourist attractiveness of the territory;
- Cultural heritage sites represent irreplaceable resources for the tourism industry so conservation is a vital component of their management;
- From an economic perspective, providing financial resources towards rehabilitation of heritage sites could benefit their exploitation for tourism;
- Algeria has a considerable number of cultural heritage sites, but most of them are not inscribed on UNESCO world heritage list;
- Algerian cultural heritage sites are underexploited compared to their potential, and many have long suffered from neglect, despite their economic and cultural importance.

### **Recommendations and suggestions:**

In order to enhance heritage management in Algeria, and increase heritage sites contributions to tourist attractiveness, we offer a number of recommendations for policymakers:

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- All Algerian cultural heritage sites must be inscribed, protected and restored;
- The Algerian cultural heritage portal must be updated quickly;
- Allocate sufficient budgets for rehabilitation and maintenance of these heritage;
- Encourage the private sector to participate actively in the development of tourist facilities and infrastructure, such as hotels, summer camps, restaurants, rest centers and entertainment;
- Algerian cultural heritage sites must be Integrate on the national plan for tourism development Horizons 2030;
- Develop a global marketing programme for these sites, in order to attract domestic and foreign tourists, with the cooperation of national travel agencies;
- The Algerian cultural heritage is rich, encompassing more intangible aspects than material. Hence, inscribing historical sites and monuments should be extended to inscribe the traditions and customs of local communities.

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