

## CONSERVATION AND TOURISM DEVELOPMENT OF KENADSA HERITAGE IN THE SAHARA OF ALGERIA

Naima HADJ MOHAMED<sup>1</sup>, Fatima Zahra MAKHLOUFI<sup>2,\*</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Department of Architecture, LMS Laboratory, University of TAHRI Mohamed-Bechar, Rue de l'indépendance B.P 417, 08000 Béchar- Algeria.

<sup>2</sup> Department of Architecture, ARCHIPEL Laboratory, University of TAHRI Mohamed-Bechar, Rue de l'indépendance B.P 417, 08000 Béchar- Algeria.

### Abstract

*In the context of the economic crisis, Algeria develops, in recent decades, new strategies oriented towards the tourism sector in search of new areas of attractiveness. It contributes to the definition and staging of the tourist image of its vast territory, in particular its large part of the Sahara [1]. This fraction of the country full of wealth and values characterizes an apparent contrast between its great tourist possibilities and the weakness of their development: an unavoidable geographical part but unfortunately unappreciated and very little invested. In this perspective, this article proposes the redevelopment of the values of Kenadsa, an example of the Saharan city, by constitution an images of a tourist destination based on its promotional activities and visible landscapes. He determines to what extent the image communicated can contribute to the challenges of the attractiveness of the city and wonders how tourism will be able to register their sustainably to participate in the contemporary transformation of its heritage? The method used inspires by a contemporary approach to tourism development, mobilizing historical documents, speeches by individuals and committed architectural creations. And as the interventions on a historic building reveal as much the identity relation of the society with its history as that with the contemporary world, the methodology then combines the analysis of the speeches, as well as the analysis of the architecture and its representation.*

**Keywords:** *Attractive sites; Heritage conservation; Kenadsa; Perceived images; Tourism development*

### Introduction

Today, tourism represents one of the most profitable and job-creating economic activities in the world. In this context, the vast Saharan regions are unavoidable destinations that concern all types of tourists. The Algerian Sahara, the second largest desert in the world (approximately 2,000,000km<sup>2</sup>), sums up the essential assets of a Saharan tourism and harbors diverse landscapes of the most impressive (Mountains, Tassilis, dunes and Oases). It strongly contributes to the attractiveness of the region and distinguishes by its Neolithic past, its authentic architecture, its hospitable inhabitants, its rich folklore.

For example, Kenadsa, situated in the Saharan region of the southwest of the country, is one of the ancient Saharan cities offering, today, remarkable tourist predispositions. The specificity of this city is firstly its vernacular fabric (the ksar) which distinguishes by its famous "brotherhood" with great religious influence [2]. It is full of important natural potentials (Barga, palm grove, sand dunes...), it expresses striking urban characters and specific spaces with

\* Corresponding author: makhloufi.fatima1993@gmail.com

considerable values: pious visitation space "Zaouia", reception space "Douirias", "Riadhs palm" and gardens.

Having known another economic destiny at the beginning of the 20th century with the discovery of several coalmines, this establishment marks an important moment of development and specifies by a modern patrimony occupying an important place in the cultural heritage of the city. After its decline, it marks the existence of a consistent colonial infrastructure; many of which are currently the subject of visits that arouse the awakening of tourism.

Added to its strategic location next to nature [3], the landscapes inherited from these stories, are now facing the crisis and constitute a heavy charge for communities, making their revaluation one of the most difficult tasks in our time. This is why the objective of this contribution will be to build the most real image possible, helping to orient the various challenges of the development of this historic city, hitherto underdeveloped.

The problematic subject of this work fits into the general theory of the image constituting a tool for differentiating and affirming the identity of the city [4]. This idea reflects in the fact that men choose and estimate a city based on the representations they have of it and which are the result of the various communications of which they have become aware. Applied to Kenadsa, the city reflects the ambiguous image of a locality which has known a past of greatness and which today faces a relative decline: devitalization, deindustrialization, unemployment, population exodus and impoverishment [5]. Faced with this situation, we will start from the hypothesis that tourism, as a factor of animation and attractiveness seems to allow a staging and a revival of the heritage of the city through the exploitation of the image communicated by a key target public.

According to our investigations, the city is, for a majority fraction, a tourist attraction in its own right presenting strong tourist potentials. The results thus obtained highlight the combination of a set of positive and fruitful representations for the benefit of tourism, as an essential element for economic vitality in direct connection with the conservation of the heritage present. From this positive perception of heritage, it is possible to note a constitution of images, which are defined through themes perceived by the various interviewees.

## **Experimental part**

### ***Methods***

The methodology used for the development of this subject is inspired by an ethnographic architectural approach [6] appropriate to life-changing experiences within cities to allow a better understanding of existing social practices in starting from the speeches of individuals and the architectural creations involved.

Initially, work carried out allowed the collection of historical data and the perception of detailed knowledge from key actors in the city represented by its notables. Then, the realization of a certain number of semi-directive interviews [7] near a significant public (citizens, tourists, visitors, excursionists, passers-by), with definition of a corpus of 50 interviewees opted in relation to internal and external actions tourism on the city. This work is accentuated by a restitution of certain lived experiences published on the net.

Through this double work, we sought to determine to what extent the communicated image can contribute to the challenges of the attractiveness of the city and how the tourists and the citizens themselves adhere and consolidate this idea. The contribution of citizens as their city's ambassador translates into being in the best position to welcome foreigners, and to better promote the city by knowing its most beautiful corners and its attractions.

In the research space, the collection of all this data (written, oral, monographic and electronic) thus presents itself as a set of techniques implemented to develop the attraction of the city. In simpler terms, it is staging this region in the desire to attract tourists, residents, investors etc.

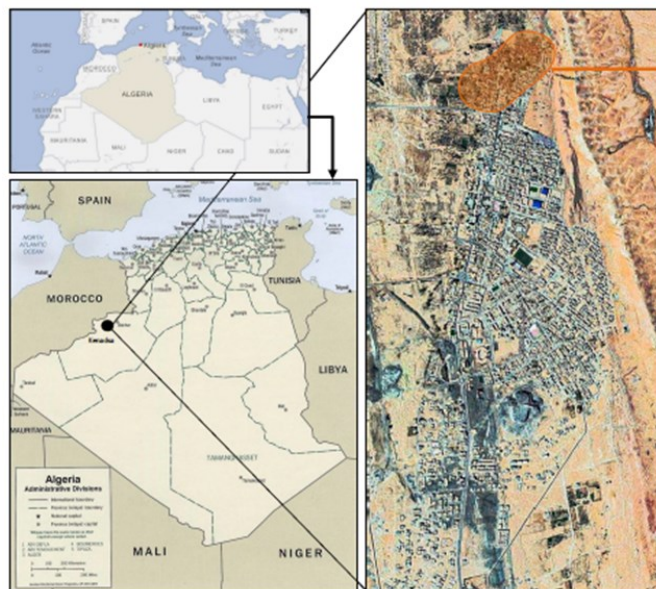
***Situation and physical characteristics***

Located in the southwest of Algeria on the border with Morocco, Kenadsa is one of the main Saharan cities in the wilaya of Bechar, a chief town of daïra, which covers an area of 700,000ha. It has played and continues to play an important role in the economy of the region and in its cultural development [8].

About twenty kilometers from the regional metropolis of Saoura (Bechar), Kenadsa is a small town (oasis) located at the foothills of the Saharan Atlas, which forms part of North Western Sahara. Like Bechar, this city is located at a longitude of 4°6' west and latitude of 31°6' north, its average altitude is 780 meters. Its climate is extremely arid classified as desert: hot, dry in summer, and very cold in winter, with a much-contrasted thermal regime, rare and irregular precipitation and violent winds of sand during the half-seasons (Climate-Data.org Kenadsa, 2013).

Kenadsa is also known for its natural potential and for the fertility of its gardens and palm groves. It has a relief of ridges not exceeding ten meters and its region characterizes by a very flat sandstone reg interspersed with sandbanks. A double slope mountain Barga offers this city optimal protection against the harsh climatic conditions.

The existence of water in this place is a fundamental datum for the creation of this city, it is a determining component in the structuring of the ksar thanks to the foggaras which arise from the Barga to the palm grove by crossing the plateau from north to south and thus creates a hydrographic framework on the ground. Another determining factor of the site is the existence of fertile land, this place of subsistence has induced the delimitation of the platform on which the ksar is built. Indeed, this natural situation shows that Kenadsa (Fig. 1) is one of the Saharan Oases along an offshoot of the Saoura River on the banks of which the ksour are established.



**Fig. 1.** Kenadsa location

***Staging of architectural representations***

The staging of the built heritage consists of a journey of discovery of this heritage set on scene the singular elements that, for various reasons, play a role in the prosperity of the city. These elements highlight, in this work, a set of useful data to identify existing predispositions and develop their coherence with a view to opening up to a tourist environment.

### *The ksar: a singular heritage*

Counted among the most important ancient cities of the region of south-west Algeria, the reality of the ksar of Kenadsa derives from preexisting elements: water, fertile land, caravan tracks that triggered its progressive formation [9]. Originally, a fortress "Casbah" was founded in the 15th century in the position of a commercial crossroads offering optimal protection against harsh climatic and defensive conditions, integrating perfectly with the dunes run along a rocky cliff.

The 16th century brought Kenadsa from a simple Casbah to a seat of an important religious brotherhood the "Ziania", a main Zaouia that became an essential relay of the region and a real space of spirituality, knowledge and exchange: "The city of Kenadsa will henceforth be confused with its Zaouia" [10]. This fact pertaining to a cultural and social dynamic generated an urban dynamic and provoked the specific process of the development of ksar into a set of distinct socio-urban entities (notable, artisans, rural and Jewish) which appear in the form of a harmonious pile of cubic volumes.

The specificity of its urban entities is full of residences of notable cultural value and demonstrates genius and mastery in the use of geometric shapes, arches and ornamental details. The architecture of the ksar keeps, until today, the most interesting examples dictating a typical model in this city. It would be an Arab-Islamic style keeping the oasis character and charm.

The architecture of the Kenadsa ksar has kept to this day some of the most interesting examples dictating a model typical of this city [11] based on:

- Respect for a distribution in all the houses where the square (very dominant architectural element) is well marked by pillars, called in the modern architectural vocabulary either the patio or the central hall.
- In all the houses, the arcature occupies a prominent place and proves the belonging of this architecture to Islamic Art and to a Muslim architectural vocabulary. In Kenadsa there is not a single house where the arch is not present, a type of arc very common in the Maghreb architecture, either of the overridden or polylobe type.
- Kenadsa is characterized by a style of construction very rich in ornaments and sculptures through the residences, the historical and religious monuments, which it contains; these decorations are neat to give a good image of the owner to the visitors under the idea of the hospitality from Islam.
- The use of architectural compositions by different geometric shapes, squares, diamonds and star polygons used in architectural decor, these symbols were strongly assimilated by the genius of Muslim art.

Beyond this undeniable aesthetic quality, this architectural model represents the witness of a knowledge with which the vernacular habitat was conceived and draws its references from Arab Muslim architecture, where we find similar models in the Maghreb and in some Middle Eastern countries.

On the other hand, the relevance of the socio-economic factor of the city reflects the spiritual and hospitable particularity of the Ksar. This is how the Zaouia, the Douiria and the Riadh, which take up a significant part of the built space, are the main elements of the places highlighting an exceptional spiritual model. These last are clearly marked by high places of worship: the two famous "El Atik" and "Sidi Abderrahmène" mosques, the "Khaloua", "Dar Echeikh" (house of the saint), seat of the Zaouia, the mausoleums and the "Douirias". Since 1997, considered an essential entity of the national cultural heritage, the Ksar of Kenadsa (Figs. 2 and 3) has been classified as a national architectural heritage as a living historic center [12].

These spaces appear in the Ksar, as a basic set both physical and socio-economic which depicts a certain hierarchy according to the spiritual importance of their respective masters. Beyond these urban functions, this mode of organization will particularize a slice of society designated by the "Mrabins" or "Shurafas", a higher class represented by noble descendants of

the Saints who have proven, through history, their ability to design a specific built environment that allows the city to grow and rank higher than the rest of the region's ksour.



Fig. 2. General satellite view of the Ksar of Kenadsa



Fig. 3. General view of the Ksar of Kenadsa

***The European city: a modern heritage***

The first installation marking the arrival of the French was military (1887) with the establishment of a fort far from the Ksar in respect of its religious character. At the beginning of the 20th century, the discovery and then the exploitation of coalmines will transform the urban structure with an industrial-type installation and the creation of a modern structure, «The South Oran Coal Mine HSO" [13]. A modern structure [14] composed of a complex, train station, administration and housing camps, creating a new dynamic and a transition to an industrial economy: "the space lived will then exceed the limits of its inhabited space (Ksar ) to integrate a new space (city) perceived by the inhabitants as a space for exchange and openness ” [15].

Subsequently, the creation of a new city according to European experience will mark an important moment in Kenadsa's development. This new location was built between preexisting elements (fort, Barga, palm grove, complex) and structured according to a regulatory route and



a zoning policy at the base of the positioning of the different elements constituting this new European center (residential area, industrial zone, administrative zone). This modern heritage occupies an important place in the cultural heritage of the city with prestigious productions including the most famous: hospital, infirmary, swimming pool, train station, cinema and villas (Fig. 4). Their architecture marks the use of elements that fall under the neo-moorish style, which is expressed by some interpretations of traditional elements of the various architectures and ornamentations of the region [16].



Fig. 4. Old industrial installations in Kenadsa

Currently, industry closings in Kenadsa continue to have negative effects on the city such as loss of jobs, desertion of Ksar and rapid depopulation resulting in an abstract future for the city. Subjected to this accelerated process of degradation, the mining town is in a precarious state where only the public buildings supported and occupied by the local administration keep their original urban and architectural character. Today, near this ancient mining town, the remains of the coalmine still stand in the middle of an expanse of black earth. A replica of a colonial coal wagon decorates the entrance to the city, recalling its industrial history.

### *Staging of natural and cultural elements*

#### *Favorable situation for tourism*

Knowing that the geographical characteristics of the place intervene in its tourism development, the situation of the city of Kenadsa offers positive possibilities:

- A favorable geographical situation compared to a strong urban potential precisely near a Wilaya chief town;
- An advantageous location close to means of transport and access: major transit routes, airport and railway station;
- An optimal situation in other tourist places of the Western Sahara like Taghit, Beni Abbès and up to ksour of Touat.

- A location close to accommodation and essential services to welcome tourists.

On the other hand, like several Saharan ksour with predominantly agricultural function, the one of Kenadsa is considered as an effective urban center [17]. Its fundamental characteristics reside in:

- Its public buildings (mosques with high minarets, Koranic schools, libraries, Zaouia ...)
- Its meeting places.
- The care given to constructions and the concern for the exterior decoration of housing.
- Its economic and commercial function with the presence of “souks” and places of exchange.
- Its spiritual function radiating over the western region of the Maghreb
- Its basic means of subsistence based on its cultural contribution.
- The specificity of its urban entities including residences with significant cultural value.

***Kenadsa near a natural heritage***

Beyond these architectural heritages, Kenadsa owes its reputation in the favor of its strategic location near natural elements and attractive sites [18] made up of sand dunes, a palm grove that stretches along the Oued of the Saoura, a Barga formed by rocky cliffs and sidelines marking the southern limit of the stony plateau. In addition, the entrance to the city is known by natural and restful sites imposing by their size and their family attractiveness.

Likewise, the "Djorf Torba" dam [19], some 40km from the city, stands out in the region both for the size of the site it offers and for the attractive vocation it develops. It is considered a wonderful tourist spot in the region with its diversity of nature, animals, plants, desert birds (Fig. 5). It also has a place reserved for navigation and fishing for locals. Of exceptional interest, this infrastructure no longer remains only a hydraulic structure intended for its primary function, but also forges an attractive and tourist reputation that it would be useful to take into consideration to promote this new status.

The development of this natural tourism can allow the protection of biodiversity, traditional production systems and the quality of landscapes in order to enhance tourism and preserve the main attractions of the oasis.



Fig. 5. Important natural heritage sites near Kenadsa, specific birds and the Sand dunes

***Cultural and artistic heritage***

These own opportunities are, on the places, extremely reinforced by significant traditions and practices, marking a cultural and artistic life exceeding the scale of a small Saharan city (Fig. 6). First, the city abounds art and culture, among which the "Khizana El

Kendoussia Eziania", a library located inside the ksar formerly part of the common places of Zaouïa and the mosque of the Saint Sidi M'Hamed BenBouziane [20]. The building contains a large number of religious, scientific and poetic manuscripts; nearly 200 dating back to several centuries and thousands of other documents, books, works, magazines, with an invaluable batch of artistic and craft objects of definite historical interest. This building continues until today to be a space of cultural influence, through scientific activities and other various events.



Fig. 6. Cultural and academic prestations in Ksar Kenadsa. Abdelaziz Barkani photography

For this intangible heritage, Kenadsa remains one of the most popular tourist and cultural sites in the region, whose reputation has been built up over time, both by its famous artists and by the inevitable celebrations of religious events, that are commemorated in this locality by visitors from several regions of the country. Cultural and artistic life, local troupes of songs and ancestral instruments contribute to the animation of these annual religious festivities.

These assets currently constitute a reference in terms of living heritage enhancement. Popular and festive events are a hallmark of the region’s attractiveness and generate national attendance. The flow of visitors thus expected should greatly benefit the socio-economic actors of the territory to make the modest starting ksar a structuring cultural center and an essential relay center.

## Results and discussion

### *Tourism revival actions*

The concept of tourism development revival of all this heritage, constructed, cultural and natural consist in a course of discoveries of their interest by different means (history, experience...). Its purpose is the improvement of the perception of the city and the creation of a touristic value by identifying its distinctive characters, its assets and its opportunities [21].

### *Images and representations of cities*

The image of the city forged by the society that inhabits it represents an updated interpretation of its resources. This image of the city represents an interpretation of its resources. This image, that is to say the idea of representation of the city has become, for decades, essential in the permanent reconstruction of cities on themselves. A city for example can see its economic activity restarted or its space transformed simply in favor of a change of image.

In our contemporary societies, this image joins, in the field of vision, the notion of landscape: social construction of a look detached from collective practices, which complies with the individual experience of everyone through their own psychology [22]. W.J.T. Mitchell sees this landscape, not as an object to observe or a text to read, but as a process through which social and individual identities are formed [23]. It would therefore be the result of a process which would allow in particular the appropriation of certain spaces by social groups, "In an



increasingly visual society, the image is perceived as a factor of attraction and an added value to the city ” [24].

Based on these theories, the city of Kenadsa is experienced by its inhabitants, its visitors and even its tourists who, through their experiences, their social practices and the daily or occasional use of its spaces, build their own images of the city with regard to their particular (different) perception. Thus, through interviews with these three categories of individuals, images of the city as a tourist destination are created.

**Declared tourist practices**

Kenadsa counts for the interviewed one of the Saharan cities where the tourist image is judged favorable: 90% claiming it as an essential destination with more or less critical speeches relating to the negative consequences on the indigenous population. The types of destinations declared represent short stays, and are summarized as follows:

**Dominant stay of tourist visits to discover the Sahara (South-West in particular):**

Due to its particular characteristics, the Sahara offers favorable terrain for experience and adventure tourism [25]. In the case of the southwestern Algerian Sahara, the city of Kenadsa is judged by all as a compulsory passage and an essential destination for the variety of its landscapes and especially for its unique cultural and industrial history.

« For this destination in the Saharan southwest, tourists inevitably pass through this locality to discover its rich natural and cultural landscapes as well as the Ksar and the mining sites ».

« The trip to this region is the nature trip par excellence. Here, one can find all types of landscapes: dunes, mountains, oases, lakes... ».



« Kenadsa is an unmissable destination for anyone transiting to the southwest wishing to discover the sceneries and the cultural heritage of those spots »

(Statements by residents)

Concentrated by visitors on a national and international scale, the sand dunes, dam, Barga, Palm grove, Ksar, Zaouia and mining sites (galleries, spa, old station and the gigantic mountains of coal residues), are all spaces for:

- Contemplation of landscapes and adventures;
- Visits to ancient sites;
- Camps and small circuits (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Sightseeing tours to discover the Southwestern Sahara

| Sightseeing tours to discover the Southwestern Sahara  |  | Scale                     |
|--|--|---------------------------|
| Specific practices   |  |                           |
|           | <br> | National<br>International |
| Contemplation of landscapes and adventures<br>Visits to ancient sites. Camps and small tours |  |                           |

**Scientific study and discovery stay**

Defined as exploration and research tourism with a scientific dimension [26], This type concerns, in our city, several disciplines and fields for carrying out research, training and study visits. The specialties declared relate to architecture, archeology, biology, history, sociology, literature...:

« Our trips are geared towards natural and cultural capital. And also, towards exchanges and meetings with local populations ».

« This tour is for research, exploration and adventure practices. This city allows us to learn while living a unique experience»


« Kenadsa represents a place of excellence for scientists with its cultural, architectural and engineering buildings ».

(Statements by scientific visitors)

National and international visitors concerned by this type of visit are here for specific practices and services (Table 2):

- Exploration of landscapes, flora and fauna;
- Studie on history, culture, nature;
- Meetings and interviews with the local population.

**Table 2.** Scientific stay of study and exploration

| Scientific stay of study and exploration   | Scale                     |
|--|---------------------------|
| Specific practices   |                           |
|    | National<br>International |
| Exploration of landscapes, fauna and flora<br>Studies on history, culture, nature<br>Meetings and interviews with the local population |                           |

**Stay for participation in religious festivities:**

Attracted to holy places by virtue of the practices of religious tradition, this type of tourism is based primarily on a devotion to memory animated by the burial of a saint. On the other hand, the tourism development of religious heritage is based on several objects (sites, architectural ensembles, works of art, etc.) which express broader cultural values [27]. In Kenadsa, this activity results in important stays within the attractive festivities and occasional celebrations organized by the city. In this case, the religious feast of the birth of the prophet "El Maoulid", and the feast of commemoration of the city's founding saint. The events, festivities and demonstrations that are organized there correspond perfectly to the current expectations of tourists.


«Spiritual practices are emerging everywhere with a subtle blend of authenticity. The two mosques of the ksar are invested by devout devotees of prayer and Koranic reading»  
 «It is an event where you feel a lot of emotion in front of an extraordinary show »  
 « It's a unique cultural event »  
 «The festivities in Kenadsa clearly reflect the identity of the city; it is a way of reading its history».

(Visitors' statements)

Occupying the local, regional, national and Maghrebian scale, the practices and specific services offered to this type of visit are (Table 3):

- Organized route with a succession of stops and stations taking place in the ksar;
- Recitation of the Koran and religious poems;
- Folk songs and dance performances;
- Practicing alms (Sadaqa) and taking charge of visitors' meals.

Table 3. Stay to participate in religious festivities

| Stay to participate in religious festivities (Mawlid festival, and commemoration of the city's founding saint) | Scale  |
|--|--|
| Specific practices   |  |
|                              | Local,<br>Regional,<br>National and<br>Maghrebin |
| Organized route with succession of stops and stations taking place in the ksar.                                |  |
| Recitation of the Koran and religious poems  |  |
| Shows of songs and folkloric dances  |  |
| Practice of the alms (the Sadaqa) and taking care of the meals of the visitors                                 |  |

**Stay as part of pious visits (La Ziyara)**

Stay as part of cultural events because the majority sees the city as a real space of spirituality, Ziyara "pious visit" and knowledge (Table 4). It is the fact of understanding in the context of tourism the holy places of ksar and the visit that people of various origins make for the purpose of religious gatherings and leisure [28].

«It is a practice deeply rooted in the hearts of many visitors to get closer to God through the city saints»


« The Ziyara presents one of the oldest forms of displacement of people remaining considerable and still occurs today»

«The Ziyara is for us the open door on the paths of God»

« The general reason for this stay is the deep conviction that the prayers and the Ziyara are exceptionally effective in this locality linked to a saint ».

(Statements by residents, notables and visitors)


**Table 4.** Stay in the framework of the pious visits (La Ziyara)

| Stay in the framework of the pious visits (La Ziyara)  | Scale  |
|--|--|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Specific practices</p>   | <p>Local,<br/>Regional,<br/>National and<br/>Maghrebin</p> |
| <p>Greeting the holy places of the ksar<br/>Pilgrimage to the tombs of the saints<br/>Visits to the religious places and works of art of the ksar<br/>Religious gatherings of Ziyara or leisure.</p> |  |

***Itinerant tourism for leisure, walks and family détente***

In this type, the landscape, still virgin and little exploited of the city can attract the visitor and suit the tourism of the stay, more favorable to the domestic tourism of weekend (Table 5). These are para-tourism practices, which must have developed with the increase in free time, the evolution of family structures, the number of retirees and the progress of means of transport.

**Table 5.** Itinerant tourism for leisure, walking and family relaxation

| Itinerant tourism for leisure, walking and family relaxation  | Scale                                       |
|---|---|
| <p style="text-align: center;">Specific practices</p>          | <p>Local,<br/>Regional and<br/>National</p> |
| <p>Contemplating natural outdoor landscapes<br/>Explore the city through public spaces and urban and natural events<br/>Picnic, sand games...</p> |   |



These growing leisure activities are among the most important forms of stay that exist and are one of the oldest and most socially significant.

« We are here in search of outdoor places for recreation and moments of relaxation»

« Kenadsa offers us places for walks and activities»

« It is a soothing city of refuge and peace»

«These assets allow us well-being and psychological comfort thanks to its remarkable landscapes of rest and relaxation ».

(Visitors' statements)

Specifically, for these visitors coming from the Béchar region, the following services offered them:

- Contemplate the natural outdoor landscapes;
- Explore the city through public spaces and natural events;
- Picnic, sand games...

### ***Revealed themes***

This positive image of Kenadsa as a tourist destination corresponds to the definition, through the speeches, of a set of themes communicated directly or indirectly by the interviewees in favor of the tourist destination and which can generate huge investment opportunities.

#### ***Theme 1. A multicultural city: image of greatness***

The spiritual, documentary and scientific dimensions present an advantage favorable to tourism development [29]. These cultural practices are the main activities for visiting tourists in this city, which explains why culture remains an essential element of the tourist attractiveness, which manifests itself in places of visit steeped in history:

- A place of religious influence by the various historic and religious buildings, the activity of the Zaouia in the practices of the Ziyara, the explanation of jurisprudential cases and the teaching of the saint Quran. The association "El Kendoussia for the safeguarding of the heritage" organizes monthly conference-debates led by academics and researchers who exchange ideas and opinions there.

- The old and large house of the saint "Sheikh" also represents, for these activities, a real place of welcome, hospitality and conviviality with its large central room, covered with carpets, inviting to meditation.

- The library located in a dependency of Zaouia, generously open to the public, containing a quantity of manuscripts and the most diverse books enriched by other documents: portraits, photos of imams, ulama and personalities that counted the city since centuries.

According to 50% of respondents, all these achievements can aspire to the idea of revitalizing ksar [30] to meet the new physical and cultural needs of citizens and tourists. The revitalization will claim, after conservation of valuable buildings, their reconversion in favor of tourist, socio-educational, scientific and cultural functions in accordance with the results of pre-established studies. Old degraded buildings will therefore be subject to a restoration plan aimed at correcting construction techniques and thereby reducing the risk of collapse.

#### ***Theme 2. A glorious industrial past: quality image***

A second advantage favorable to the tourist development of the city is presented by an economic and industrial dimension marking the history of an important moment of development of the city. These are traces of a lost trade, such as the galleries (exploration seats), the thermal station, the old station and the gigantic mountains of coal residue, which represent the symbols of an activity mining carried out during a historic period of the city. This site, like an open-air museum, occupies a large area and becomes a tourist attraction in its own right, allowing acquiring a new symbolic position in the city.

According to a majority (90%), the reconversion of mining history goes through the need to change and rehabilitate their degraded landscapes in order to modify their particularly negative image. In this context, the different points of view aim to rehabilitate, enhance and

reconvert the mining and industrial heritage of the coalfields in favor of the establishment of new economic, tourist and leisure activities best suited to the specific context of the city.

***Theme 3. A soothing city of refuge: image of peace***

This feeling felt by 60% of subjects directly refers to the mastered size of the city, its detachment from the capital of Bechar and in large part to its proximity to exceptional natural landscapes. These assets allow the well-being and the psychological comfort of the tourists with preexistence of human-sized spaces and remarkably favored landscapes as a high place of rest and relaxation. In addition, everyone agrees that Kenadsa is a safe destination as for people and property security.

This is a new type of tourism, more related to public spaces and urban events (squares, small squares, alleys, walks, green spaces, trails, natural spaces ...), perceived as the main richness of the city drawing attention to a number of recreational uses. A tourism that presents exceptional markers and varied tourist practices combining leisure activities with the more open discovery of the city by way of and through meetings.

This mark of a city of refuge is present in all the inhabitants interviewed who affirm the practice of this activity on weekends and days of vacation by a large number of families. They report the idea of a quiet and peaceful small town, which offers the possibility of strolling in the open air while keeping a simple contact.

***Theme 4. A host city: image of hospitality***

Another advantage favorable to tourism development is the hospitable dimensions. In this city, all subjects recognize the warm welcome and the importance of the reception activity, which take on an increased place and take on broader meanings going beyond the simple act of receiving guests. According to the category of the inhabitants of the city, the reception extends with the presence of important multidisciplinary spaces like the Douirias reserved for the receptions of the hosts and the exclusive and intimate meetings, which seem to take a deep sense of the concept hospitality. For some, conviviality remains the warmth anchored in the social tradition of the city.

The practice of reception and hospitality towards its hosts are the main elements for assessing the civilization level of the inhabitants, and whatever the material level of the family, it strives to offer to its guests the best, the cleanest, the most precious, the most comfortable in terms of expressions of welcome, gastronomy and comfort. Likewise, public tourism operators show similar kindness to their scale of service.

***Theme 5. A city of festivities: image of a spectacle***

The festive and artistic dimensions represent a heritage dedicated to the tourist development of Kenadsa. They appear in the numerous festivities in the artistic, literary, traditional and liturgical music fields, and in other cultural disciplines from all over the region. The most celebrated feast is that of El Mawlid for 12 days during which he is reciting the 60 verses of the Koran, "Hamzia" and "Bardia" take out poems about the prophet may God bless him.

Several other occasions also arise calling upon receptions, gatherings, recreations and moments of collective memories. Among other things, other spiritual festivities, ceremonies in honor of the local saint, as well as the various local parades and processions on national or religious holidays. These occasions, sought more in the Sahara than elsewhere, describe community life and obey ritual logics and coded, symbolic and above all cultural rules of conduct.

## **Conclusion**

This study project on tourism development helped to present a region of the southwest of the Sahara of Algeria mentioned by Kenadsa: one of its most famous cities. It has so many natural and cultural heritages and sites that it is worth preserving and enhancing. The synthesis of the results highlights favorable conditions and strategic themes for a sustainable development of tourism in the Sahara, taking into account socio-economic imperatives and compliance with environmental and ecological requirements [31]. The aptitudes to be converted in tourism are

based on the specific characteristics of these spaces, which offer the possibility of practicing several forms of Saharan tourism: cultural, worship, circuits, etc.

By referring to the themes and images of brands conveyed, certain capacities for tourism development are revealed based on its situation as an attractive place to live. As a result, tourism in Kenadsa has several chances to develop in the favor of:

- Cultural heritage, which is an essential component of the city and a driving force in local development. Today, this heritage can become an economic issue and is at the heart's debate on the development of the city. It is an important element for both the tourism and cultural industries.

- To the legacies of the old mining activity in favor of a possible economic recovery since the dominant sector has run out of steam with the loss of its industrial activity. Tourism therefore becomes possible and well justified to revive these industrial heritages in relation to a major change in use of the place [32]. According to the interviews, the new functions of space are those of the logic of tourist activity, but seasonal as the development of new trades with multiple activity of functions.

- The situation of the city of Kenadsa as a place of life, which has uses close to tourism. In fact, several tourists declare that they find in this city the use of multipurpose spaces, which present favorable conditions for tourism development.

- The geographic characteristics of the place and its strategic and favorable location.

The combination of these different variables then makes it possible to grasp the conditions for bringing tourism to the Saharan city of Kenadsa and for its possible success. As a result, this paper presents an anticipated study to understand the city itself and to further orient the different areas of analysis. In other words, it is a study prior to the development of a social project, which itself represents a preliminary and necessary stage in the establishment of the space project relating to the development of this Saharan city.

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Received: October 22, 2022

Accepted: September 16, 2023