

*Heritage Communication for Territorial Development:  
A Content Analysis of Heritage Studies in Algeria*

الاتصال التراثي لتنمين الأقاليم: تحليل المحتوى للدراسات المنجزة حول التراث في الجزائر

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Date of receipt: 16/04/2025

Date of acceptance: 06/09/2025

Date of publication: 30/09/2025

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**ملخص:**

يهدف هذا المقال إلى تسليط الضوء على التراث الثري للإقليم الجزائري. ونهتم بشكل خاص بالعلاقة بين التراث والاتصال والتنمية الإقليمية. ومن خلال تحليل محتوى نتائج الدراسات الجزائرية، التي تتناول سياقات متنوعة من جميع أنحاء البلاد، نسعى إلى التعرف على الاتصال وتنمين التراث من قبل الجهات الفاعلة الإقليمية التي تسعى إلى إيجاد سبل لاستغلال مختلف موارد الإقليم لضمان تنميته. ويساهم هذا الاستغلال بشكل ملحوظ في رفع جاذبية الإقليم، بما يضمن زيادة الربح الاقتصادي للبلاد. كما يؤكد هذا المقال على ضرورة الاستمرار في رفع الوعي بأهمية التراث والتي تهدف إلى دمجها في استراتيجيات التنمية الإقليمية. لذا، يكمن نجاح التنمية في قدرة المجتمعات على استخدام تراثها بكل أنواعه كأداة لتعزيز النمو والتنمية المستدامة.

**الكلمات المفتاحية:**

الاتصال التراثي، تنمين الأقاليم، التنمية الإقليمية، السياحة، ترويج الإقليم.

**Abstract:**

*The objective of this article is to highlight the Algerian territory rich heritage. This study examines the interplay between heritage, communication, and territorial development. Through a content analysis of the results of Algerian studies, addressing diverse contexts from the four corners of the country, we plan to draw up an inventory of communication and valorization of heritage by territorial actors who seek methods for the exploitation of the various resources of the territory to ensure its development. This valorization significantly enhances the territory's economic potential.*

**Keywords:**

*Heritage communication; valorization of territories; territorial development; tourism; promotion of the territory.*

**INTRODUCTION:**

Communication is an essential element for the territory, and it is through this communication that the actors connect with citizens, collectively seeking a common vision aimed at territorial development. Given Algeria's heavy reliance on oil revenues, diversifying the economy through heritage-based tourism is critical. Therefore, for a region to develop, it must seize the various opportunities it offers. In this context, recent contextual studies have focused on territorial specificities, let's cite some studies Merah and Meyer, (2015); Merah, Meyer and El Mendili, (2021); Aoudia, Meyer and Merah, (2022) in which communication plays a key role in the enhancement and promotion of heritage. Heritage communication represents an invaluable asset for the development and promotion of territories. Among other benefits, it contributes to increasing the region's attractiveness by mobilizing various heritage resources into profitable activities such as handicrafts and tourism. The heritage object plays a significant role in the creation of a tourist destination, ensuring profitability within a given territory. The transition from an object to be communicated to an object to be exhibited and then exploited is part of a process consisting of several steps, as outlined in Jean Davallon, (2006)<sup>1</sup> communication approach to heritage management. Heritage should not be reduced to its commercial value; rather, it fosters synergies between territorial actors for promotional purposes.

Thus, heritage can be seen as a legacy to pass on, "as potential to be managed and a resource to be developed"<sup>2</sup>. As a result, the notion of heritage has taken on the status of a resource and a means to an end, becoming an essential element in projects to enhance the attractiveness and development of territories. A region's heritage potential is measured by the number and value of its heritage sites, and the importance attached to these sites by local players can contribute to their preservation, promotion and valorization. Indeed, the development of a territory is essentially linked to the importance of its heritage, which is considered an economic and social resource for the territory. In economic terms, heritage is a source of income that fosters development. Socially, it is a social symbolism that makes a remarkable contribution to the development of a sense of belonging to the area. As Michel Vernieres, (2015) points out, "The valorization of heritage is now one of the sectors for development cooperation"<sup>3</sup>. With its historical background, climate, geography and Mediterranean coastline, as well as the large number of <sup>4</sup>heritages identified and known, Algeria represents a territory with the potential to become a tourist destination. It's for this reason that research trends in recent years have focused on issues related to territorial development. Indeed, a number of territorial actors, associations and scientific researchers have understood that a territory's success depends on the valorization of its various potentialities it possesses. However, the territory needs communication to mark its own specificities, which make it a space for sharing, of which heritage is an indispensable component. For Daim- Allah and Hammoud, (2015) "heritage, whether it divides or unifies, whether

ISSN : 9577-1112	EISSN : 2602-5388	Volume: (17)	Number : (02)	year: 2025	Pages: 69 - 80
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it is the object of consensus or conflict, is therefore a vector and lever of territorial development”<sup>5</sup>, provided that it is identified as such and that an attempt is made to preserve and promote it within the framework of public communication.

The sustainability of heritage encompasses strategies for preservation, valorization, and particularly communication. Therefore, the valorization of heritage cannot progress without effective communication, which contributes to promotion, improving citizens quality of life, and enhancing the country's economic situation. The triad of heritage, communication and territorial development is a phenomenon that arousing the curiosity of researchers from a variety of scientific disciplines. The complexity that exists between the three concepts makes it an interesting but difficult research object to explore. On the one hand, the multi-dimensionality of heritage offers us a new and rich field of scientific research. On the other hand, communication, through its multiple devices, offers opportunities for a better visibility of heritage. This visibility is necessary to understand the intrinsic value of heritage for regional development. At this point, we can say that communication is a lever for territorial development, echoing Elizabeth Gardere's idea of the importance of communication for territorial development in the Maghreb. The importance of rethinking the link between these three concepts lies in the various points in common they share (heritage needs communication and territory needs both). The emergence of new issues related to public communication in general, and heritage communication in particular, is attracting increasing interest from researchers in the information and communication sciences. This interest is driven by modern societies need for more enlightened visions that will help territorial actors (national, regional and local) to rethink their management methods, integrating communication as an essential component in achieving territorial development objectives. The accumulated results of research into these issues Aoudia, (2022); Baouali, Baziz and Hadjiedj, (2022); Bouhelouf-Berretima, (2022); Saadaoui, (2022) and Idir, (2013) show the importance attached to territorial development as a lever for economic development in Algeria, which is planning to diversify its economic sources. Through this study, we plan to analyze and focus on heritage communication as a means of enhancing the value of Algeria's territories. To do so, we have opted for a content analysis of the results of studies already carried out on this subject, in order to demonstrate the importance of communication for the exploitation of heritage. The main question of this study is as follows: How does heritage communication contribute to the promotion and valorization of the territory in Algeria?

## **1. EXPERIMENTAL**

The choice of method depends fundamentally on the research object and its objectives, given that the primary aim of our study is to analyze and explain the role of heritage communication in the development and promotion of territories in Algeria. To achieve this, we have opted for a content analysis of studies carried out in Algeria on heritage communication for the valorization of territories, in an attempt to demonstrate the contribution of communication to the exploitation and promotion of these territories. The analysis was based on a typical sample of 08 Algerian studies on, the subject. The selection of these studies was based on their strong connection with the variables of our research (heritage communication and territorial development), and for analysis constraints, we limited ourselves to studies written in French, in the format of scientific articles published in journals and conference proceedings. In order to better define theoretical work and then build a content analysis grid containing the indicators (visibility, communication, enhancement, promotion, territorial resources, heritage exploitation) enabling us to categorize the results into themes, we chose Jean Davallon communicational approach to heritagization, (2006) using his three types of operations, namely operations to put into communication, operations to put into exhibition and operations to put into exploitation.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1-Towards heritage communication to serve the territory**

Communication plays a critical role in the preservation and promotion of the territory, and offers many opportunities for its development. For this reason, "it is essential to making the region visible and attractive".<sup>6</sup> For several years, communication has been a major pillar for regions where their rich heritage represents an invaluable asset for development. In this sense, Mouna El Gaied and Vincent Meyer, (2014) specify that "these specific resources correspond in fine to the heritage of a given territory, and the image as well as the imaginary they produce are at the source of communication strategies".<sup>7</sup>

As a result, this communicative perspective has led us to co-construct images and rethink heritage in a different way. Heritage and communication collectively foster shared identity and societal well-being. These two concepts generate a dynamic that enables the reconstruction and development of a territory. For Hugues Francis, Maud Hirczak and Senil Nicolas, (2006) "heritage can thus be approached through the concept of resource".<sup>8</sup> These territorial resources constitute a form of heritage, whose purpose is not purely commercial, but which has different dimensions underlying the process of territorial construction.

Studying heritage from a communicative perspective leads us to rethink communication as a socio-symbolic activity, since it is through this activity that the value of heritage can be known and conveyed. It is important to specify that heritage communication contributes to the construction of a territory's identity, and then

transforms it into a brand. These two elements lead to the development of a sense of belonging among citizens. To quote Syrine Ben Slymen and Vincent Meyer, (2022) “the sense of belonging implies an identity and solidarity with the territory, which enables people to take a stand and, even more, to express an attitude towards a territory.”<sup>9</sup> In this sense, the communicative act is not merely to a technical action, but takes into consideration the different communicational devices and forms of mediation support. Beyond the various communication channels that offer multiple potentialities to territorial actors, ICTs today offer a new perspective for mobilizing and sharing information concerning the aforementioned heritage, but also interactivity around issues linked to the territory. Indeed, the various interactive platforms that makes it possible, on the one hand, to communicate about heritage, and on the other, to make the territory a space for exchange, sharing and mobilization for territorial development. In this sense, Di Meo, (1995) “heritage and territory offer an astonishing correspondence”<sup>10</sup>. Thus, heritage and communication appear to be intimately linked, as they work towards the same goal: to raise the profile of the territory, as well as its economic development. This is why it is necessary to consider these concepts in tandem, in order to achieve a better understanding of the phenomena they generate. In this context, we can say that heritage is an indispensable source of territorial identity and a potential lever for local development. This heritage potential makes a remarkable contribution to the development of the tourism sector, opening the door to the country's economy. In this sense, tourism can become a precursor for both heritage resources and the territory.

## **2.2-Exploiting our heritage for regional development**

Nowadays, heritage has become one of our most important resources, as it allows us to raise the profile of our territory and make it more beneficial and attractive. Today, it is more than ever necessary for local actors to find the best ways of preserving and enhancing their heritage as part of a territorial development project. Heritage is a driving force for reconstruction, and its various dimensions need to be exploited. In this sense, the exploitation of heritage wealth is fundamentally economic, aiming to transform this object into a product that can be a profitable commercial activity for the territory. Indeed, the transformation of heritage objects into products really does require studies and financial efforts to restore the latter so that it can be marketed later on. According to Jean Davallon, (2006) “Putting heritage to work means opening the way to commercialization and the creation of a genuine 'concept-product' based on a marketing strategy”<sup>11</sup>. The quest to promote heritage a major challenge for local players. The intensification of media coverage of the heritage object, through the multiplication of opportunities and the use of various communication tools, leads to a high level of visibility for heritage and transforms the region into a tourist destination. And yet, among the activities that encourage the exploitation of heritage we can cite, for example, the sale of access rights to sites, the sale of souvenirs, guided tours for visitors... and so on. All

these vitalities are part of the process of enhancing, promoting and developing the area. Indeed, the vision of a profitable heritage according to Merah and Bendebili, (2016) “emphasizes the need to preserve, or rather publicize, its symbolic and specific aspect which constitutes its value and potential asset”<sup>12</sup>.

### 3. PRESENTATION OF STUDY DATA

N°	First and last name	Publication title	Journal or Proceedings	Year
01	Adjoutah Tinhinane and Merah Aissa	heritage communication and urban heritage tourism: the case of the heritage of the ancient city of Bejaia	Acte de colloque	2020
02	Hamour Djamila and said Doumane	Cultural heritage and local tourism development in the wilaya of Tizi ouzou	Recherches économiques et managériale	2018
03	Latreche Chafia and Rouag Djamila	Tourism and the staging of heritage landscapes in El Kala National Park. Between preservation, eco development and tourism.	Sciences Humaines	2020
04	Hamani Souad and Mejadhi Mustapha	Tangible and intangible cultural heritage in Algeria between connotations of identity and tourism development	El- ryssala des études et recherches en Sciences Humaines	2022
05	Chirifi Kahina and Doumane Said	Promoting intangible cultural heritage as a factor in territorial dynamics: the case of basketry in the wilaya of Tizi	Afak Ilmia	2019
06	Merah Aissa and Bendebili Ismail	Enhancing architectural heritage: communicating the authenticity of places, the case of the great temacine ksar in south-east Algeria	Acte de colloque	2015
07	Dahmani Mouhand	Enhancing the value of territories through their craft heritage	Tadamsa D- Unegmu	2021
08	Gu Gerroudj Tewfik	Urban and architectural heritage in Algeria	Insinsaniyat	2000

**Table: presentation of study data**  
**The source: accomplished by the researcher**

These are published studies on the various heritages in the Algerian context. The authors have reveal gaps that Algeria is a country full off with a wealth of heritage, and that all territorial players must take it into consideration while preserving it. The wealth of a territory today represents an undeniable asset and a substance of its development. With this in mind, this collection of articles deals with a number of sites and monuments, and we're going to try to draw out the various elements that have emerged from the results of these studies.

#### **4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

##### **4.1- Valuing tangible and intangible heritage in Algeria: between preservation and promotion**

Algeria has a remarkable and diverse heritage potential, representing a wide range of characteristics. In recent years, we have seen a rapid evolution in the way this wealth is exploited. For a heritage to be exploited, it must first be preserved. The so-called tangible heritage includes architecture, town planning, archaeological sites, and so on. As for intangible heritage, it consists mainly of traditions, festive events, crafts, social practices, etc. According to the analysis of the results of the studies, Algeria's wealth of heritage, given its history, culture and geography, offers a wide range of potential to ensure the attractiveness and development of its territory. In this sense, we observe that thanks to the opportunities offered by heritage, the achievement of objectives through these riches can contribute to the economic and social development of the territory. In this context, valorization begins with the knowledge of these assets, followed by promoting the visibility of heritage assets contributes to their acknowledgment by the various stakeholders in the area. To begin with, an inventory must be drawn up (a recurring finding in the studies analyzed), so that the characteristics of each asset can then be highlighted, and their value ascertained.

From this perspective, heritage, whether tangible or intangible, makes a remarkable contribution to the construction of the territory, as indicated in one of the studies analyzed it has become one of the important resources in global development operations and projects"<sup>13</sup>. We can see that the territorial development process is produced by its construction, and that the various communication tools can help to increase the visibility of heritage, valorizing these potentials, and encouraging the involvement of territorial actors in their preservation and promotion as part of the territory's products.

#### **4.2- Heritage and tourism: a sustainable economy for the region:**

The analysis shows that Algeria's public policies reveal significant gaps in leveraging tourism potential. Despite Algeria's promising potential in this sector, the flow of tourists remains very timid compared to neighboring countries such as Morocco and Tunisia. In this case, unexploited heritage remains a real barrier to territorial development in Algeria. Increasing the number of opportunities for the public (tourists in particular) to see our heritage will help to make it more profitable from a marketing and sales point of view. According in a study analyzed, Algeria is a virtually untouched destination compared with its Mediterranean neighbors.

In the blurred vision of public institutions for tourism in Algeria, associative and sometimes citizen initiatives are emerging to make their territory more attractive. We cite as an example the Raconte-Art event that takes place every year in Kabylia, a meeting that aims to be both cultural and social. There are also a number of festivals, such as the jewelry festival, the carpet festival, etc. It's through these events that local actors (particularly associations) and citizens showcase the richness of their heritage. It is in these conditions that the relationship between heritage and tourism must be developed for the benefit and economy of the country.

A region's rich heritage is a key asset for its tourism and economic development. That's why it's becoming necessary to look for the best methods for increasing the visibility of territories by focusing on heritage value, which leads to its valorization. In the same sense, an inventory to publicize the specific features of these assets is the first step in developing a territorial marketing strategy. As the authors state Hamour and Doumane Establishing a genuine process of decentralization enables local authorities to develop territorial projects and promote them as tourist attractions. Adding, Latreche and Rouag heritage and tourism in their various forms make it possible to create value, exploit these resources properly and preserve this wealth. This allows us to say that, in the face of the constraints and factors leading to the deterioration of the heritage situation, the tourism sector needs to be developed to guarantee the future of this wealth, as well as a sustainable economy for the territory. As a result, we note that tourism is a mass activity that consumes heritage but is not profitable, and that is poorly exploited only during the summer months.

Algeria's rich heritage potential is steadily deteriorating, and has not been given the attention it deserves. Moreover, Merah and Bendebili noted there is an absence of local and foreign tourists, the disappearance of craft activities, absence of local know-how practices, scarcity of local products, etc. To achieve this, we need to set up protection, consultation and promotion initiatives to ensure the sustainability of our rich heritage, and to promote the tourism sector as a means of increasing purchasing power for the economic and social development of the region.

### **4.3- The communication approach to the heritagization of Algerian heritage:**

From our analysis of these studies, we can see that Algeria, a country rich in heritage, is suffering from neglect and a failure to take responsibility for its assets. What's more, the three links in the communicative approach proposed by Jean Davallon are not being taken on board by the various territorial players. As a result, a return to these three operations is a necessity for the country's economic future.

#### **4.3.1- The communication of heritage:**

Communication plays a pivotal role in heritage valorization in a given territory, as its promotion requires good communication. According to our analysis of our corpus, most of the researchers noted that there is communication, but that it suffers from a lack of cooperation between the actors in charge of managing, protecting and disseminating heritage. This allows us to note that the achievement of objectives in terms of heritage information, preservation and promotion is very limited. As a result, a return to the various communication mechanisms is essential, as is a good communication strategy to reinforce the preservation of this wealth. It should also be pointed out that the work of local actors needs to be taken on board to enable territories to move from an invisible aspect to one that is visible and attractive.

#### **4.3.2- The exhibition of heritage:**

As for the second component, which is the exhibition of heritage, this serves to propose devices and means to facilitate the visit (the public's encounter with heritage). According to the results obtained, we found a significant lack of heritage exhibitions. In fact, a large part of the heritage that escapes classification remains in a deplorable state due to the absence of safeguarding and enhancement projects.

#### **4.3.3- The exploitation of heritage:**

We observe that the concept of putting heritage to use is virtually absent. Indeed, insufficient human and financial resources hinder heritage exploitation, the use of a territorial marketing strategy is essential to ensure profitability for the country's economy. As a result, the heritage object occupies an important and central place for the development of territories if the territorial actors take into consideration the restoration of this wealth and promote the tourism sector which ensures a commercial dimension for the territory.

## **5. CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, while Algeria possesses rich heritage resources, their underutilization highlights the urgent need for integrated communication strategies. In other words, exploiting this potential requires a territorial marketing strategy to use these assets for territorial development. This strategy makes it possible, on the one hand, to take advantage of the country's potential to turn it into a genuine tourist destination and to create economic benefits for the territories. The analysis of the results of the studies shows that the mobilization of local players in the promotion and exploitation of local heritage assets is very limited. The involvement and participation of citizens in projects to develop these assets will lead to territorial development, resulting in consultation and coordination among them for the future of the territory. It's now clear that these territorial actors need to take advantage of various communication tools and new technologies to co-construct the territory and create tourist attractions.

The preservation and valorization of heritage in all its forms is not only an institutional responsibility, but also a civic duty. Every monument, every tradition, every element of our culture tells a story that deserves to be heard. By actively engaging, each citizen becomes a key actor in the transmission of our shared heritage.

Indeed, participating in local initiatives, supporting restoration projects, or simply sharing knowledge and experiences contributes to building a collective memory. Together, we can build bridges between generations and offer future generations a rich and vibrant heritage.

Consultation between all stakeholders can be an important lever for better management of heritage. The complementary actions of stakeholders to be undertaken will help to establish a strategic and rational management plan focused on the preservation and valorization of heritage. For example, several projects have been launched by institutional stakeholders, namely the master plan for land use planning (SDAT), the national plan for land use planning (SNAT) and the Algerian cultural parks projects (PPCA), whose heritage role is important for the valorization of territories.

It can be said that the participation of all stakeholders in the preservation and valorization of heritage is essential to ensure a holistic and sustainable approach. By involving local communities, associations and institutional stakeholders, we promote a better understanding of the issues related to preservation and can also ensure the sustainability of heritage for future generations.

## **6. Notes:**

<sup>1</sup> Jean, Davallon, (2006), le don du patrimoine, une approche communicationnelle de patrimonialisation, Hermes science, Lavoisier, France, p 35.

<sup>2</sup> Mohamed Sofiane, Idir, valorisation du patrimoine, tourisme et développement territorial en Algérie: cas des régions de Bejaia en Kabylie et de Djanet dans le Tassili N'Ajjer, université de Grenoble, France, 2013, p 40.

<sup>3</sup> Michel, Vémieres (2015), le patrimoine : une ressource pour le développement, Techniques Financières et Développement, France, v 01, n° 118, p8.

<sup>4</sup> A work on this subject is currently being published by Aissa Merah and Ismail Bendebili on the communication of heritage development and tourism promotion of world heritage in Algeria, the case of Casbah of Algiers.

<sup>5</sup> Daim-allah, warda, Hammoud, Leila (2015), Usage des TIC pour la promotion du patrimoine local par le mouvement associatif : le cas des associations du patrimoine de Béjaïa, L'harmattan, France, p100.

<sup>6</sup> Jean, Davallon, Op.cit, p 36.

<sup>7</sup> Mouna El Gaied, Vincent, Meyer (2014), communication, tourisme et développement territorial : l'exemple des GSOORS du sud-est tunisien, revue les enjeux de l'information et de la communication, France, v 01, n° 15, p08.

<sup>8</sup> Francis, Hugues, Hirczak, Maud, Nicolas, Senil (2006), territoire et patrimoine : la co-construction d'une dynamique et de ses ressources, Revue d'économie régionale et d'urbaine, France, v 05, p 690

<sup>9</sup> Syrine, Ben slymen, Vincent, Meyer (2022), le sentiment d'appartenance au territoire entre participation et mobilisation des savoirs, L'harmattan, France, p65.

<sup>10</sup> Guy, Di Meo (1995), méthodes et enjeux spatiaux, espaces et sociétés, France, v 04, n° 78, p 16.

<sup>11</sup> Jean, Davallon, Op.cit, p 43.

<sup>12</sup> Aissa, Merah, Ismail, Bendebili (2016), Communiquer sur l'authenticité d'un patrimoine architectural : le cas du grand Ksar de Temacine dans le Sud-Est algérien, Revue de communication sociale et publique Communiquer, France, v 16, p 04.

<sup>13</sup> Souad, Hamani, Mustapha, Mejadhi (2022), le patrimoine culturel matériel et immatériel en Algérie entre les connotations identitaires et la valorisation touristique approche sur la ville de Constantine, Revue EL-Ryssala des études et recherches en sciences humaines, Tébessa Algérie, v 07, n°02,p 1053.

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ISSN : 9577-1112	EISSN : 2602-5388	Volume: (17)	Number : (02)	year: 2025	Pages: 69 - 80
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