

How to Cite:

Sabah, A., Reguia, K., & Tarek, M. (2024). Components of religious tourism in Biskra. *International Journal of Economic Perspectives*, 18(8), 1235–1253. Retrieved from <https://ijeponline.org/index.php/journal/article/view/630>

Components of religious tourism in Biskra

Adjlane Sabah

Scientific and Technical Research Center on Arid Regions CRSTRA, Algeria

Email: sabah_economie@hotmail.fr

Khiari Reguia

Scientific and Technical Research Center on Arid Regions CRSTRA, Algeria

Email: khiar_rouka@yahoo.com

Mokhnane Tarek

Scientific and Technical Research Center on Arid Regions CRSTRA, Algeria

Email: Tarekamin07@yahoo.com

Abstract---Religious tourism plays a major role in increasing the state's hard currency income, as it can contribute more than \$2 billion annually as hard currency income to the national economy. And Algeria, which possesses, in addition to the picturesque natural tourist places classified within the world heritage, it abounds with a cultural heritage and important historical religious monuments, such as the shrines of saints, scholars, and leaders of the Islamic conquest, and religious archaeological corners and mosques that attract thousands of visitors from different countries. We aim through this study to shed light on the religious monuments and establishments that abound in the state of Biskra and represent a cultural heritage that represents part of the history of Algeria and to stand on the strategy of activating and developing religious tourism in the state.

Keywords---Tourism, Religious Tourism, Elements of Tourism, Activating Tourism.

1. Introduction

Tourism, in all its forms and types, is one of the most important economic sectors in the world. It serves as a source of hard currency, provides employment opportunities, and is a goal for achieving development programs. Among the significant types of tourism is religious tourism, which contributes to preserving cultural heritage, such as ancient mosques, shrines, and historical monuments that commemorate

individuals or notable historical events. Additionally, religious tourism encompasses religious occasions, festivals, vows, and religious rituals, which are considered important destinations for visitors seeking pilgrimage, seeking spiritual fulfillment, and performing religious duties. Algeria, like many other Arab countries, is rich in cities with numerous tourist elements and religious landmarks, including palaces, religious centers (zaouias), and ancient mosques. The tourism potentials in the state of Biskra play a vital role in attracting religious visitors.

Therefore, through this discussion, we will attempt to shed light on the state of Biskra, as it is one of the Algerian cities with attractive local and regional tourism potentials and resources. Based on this premise, the following problem statement arises: **What are the most significant religious tourism landmarks in the Algerian state of Biskra, and how can they be activated?**

This central question leads us to the following sub-questions:

1. What do we mean by religious tourism, and what is its significance?
2. What are the most important religious landmarks and establishments in the state of Biskra?
3. How can the religious landmarks and establishments in the state of Biskra be employed to develop and activate religious tourism?

Study Objectives:

Based on the main question and the sub-questions posed, the study's objectives are centered around the following points:

1. Defining religious tourism as one of the most important types of tourism.
2. Highlighting the key elements of religious tourism in the state of Biskra.
3. Presenting important strategies that can contribute to the activation and development of religious tourism in the state of Biskra.

Methodology

To accomplish the study and address the central research question and sub-questions, we have employed a descriptive methodology, which is suitable for providing data, information, and facts about the research topic.

Previous Studies:

Among the studies that have addressed the topic of religious tourism are:

The First Study: "Religious Tourism in the City of Najaf and its Development Prospects (A Study in Tourism Geography)" by Samer Hadi Kazem Al-Jashami, University of Kufa, Faculty of Urban Planning, 2020.

This research focused on studying the components of tourism in the city of Najaf, highlighting the significance of its religious shrines and monuments, with a particular emphasis on the shrine of Imam Ali. The study also examined the infrastructure that contributes to the establishment and development of tourism in this city, covering everything a tourist needs from the moment of arrival until

departure. Additionally, the research provided a set of proposals aimed at developing religious tourism, including upgrading the infrastructure of religious institutions and raising awareness in the community about the importance of religious tourism.

The Second Study: "Religious Tourism in Iraq: Reality and Expectations - A Descriptive Study" by Mohsen Hassan, 2018.

This study attempts to describe the current state of religious tourism economics in Iraq and assess its actual contribution to the national economy. It also examines the interaction between the elements of religious tourism supply and religious tourism demand, evaluating it in the peak tourism areas for this type of tourism. Furthermore, the study addresses the most significant obstacles and indicators hindering the ideal development of religious tourism, aiming to maximize its economic benefits for the national income and general budget in Iraq.

The Third Study: "Religious Tourism as an Option for Diversifying the Tourism Sector in Algeria" by Bilal Shatrah and Abdelkader Bormana, 2020.

The study aimed to promote tourism development and investment in the field of religious tourism as one of the criteria for diversification alongside regular tourism. It sought to generate effective proposals to enrich tourism in general through a comprehensive survey of all the components and resources of religious tourism attraction. The study also examined the national strategy for developing this sector to preserve the tourism outlook in Algeria and explore expansion into other areas of tourism. The study concluded that there is a lack of attention to religious tourism in Algeria, despite its potential, compared to other countries.

2. Religious Tourism (its concept, significance, and foundations):

Religious tourism is rooted in human faith, seen as an act of worship. Religious motivation is one of the strongest, deepest, and most ingrained human incentives. Before discussing the concept of religious tourism, let's first examine the concept of tourism in general

2.1 Definition of Tourism:

Tourism is one of the rapidly growing industries worldwide and is highly labor-intensive. It is an essential source of development and employment, especially for those with limited access to the job market. Tourism is also a vital industry for women, youth, migrant workers, and rural residents. (International Labour office, 2013, p. 03)

Tourism is a human social phenomenon that has been known since the beginning of human existence on Earth. The first definition of tourism by the German researcher Johann Gottfried Herder in 1950 considered it a phenomenon stemming from the increasing need for relaxation, a change of air, an appreciation of nature's beauty, a sense of joy, and pleasure derived from staying in areas with distinctive natural features. It is also linked to the growth of communication, especially between different human groups, a type of communication that resulted from the expansion of trade and industry. (Al-jallad, 2000, p. 13)

Tourism is culturally, economically, and socially significant, representing a dynamic movement associated with various aspects of human life. It serves as a civilizational message and a bridge of communication between cultures and human knowledge of nations and peoples (Mahacis, 2012, p. 25). It is a natural station for the development of tourist communities and the improvement of individuals' living standards. (kafi, 2014, p. 22)

Tourism is also ecologically attractive to tourists, satisfying their desires to visit various natural sites, explore landscapes, and observe plants and wildlife. Additionally, it involves visits to local communities to learn about their customs and traditions. (kafi, 2014, p. 23)

2.2 Definition of Religious Tourism:

Religious tourism is one of the oldest and most significant types of tourism, characterized by its widespread nature. Religious motivation is considered one of the driving forces that compel people to travel, and religious tourism, whether domestic or international, is based on religious devotion and the desire to satisfy this devotion.

The religious tourism has emerged in recent times as an economically viable pattern that significantly impacts the budgets of countries and societies. It has become worthy of official and societal attention (Al-Qadir). Tourism has evolved into a comprehensive and diverse industry that interacts with other sectors of the economy.

Religious tourism is defined as a form of tourism where travelers move from their usual places of residence to other locations for the purpose of conducting religious visits and journeys, either within or outside their country, during a specific time period, with the aim of satisfying spiritual and psychological needs. It can also involve participating in religious rituals, such as Muslims visiting holy places like the Kaaba in Mecca or the Prophet's Mosque in Medina. Religious tourism is characterized by several key features:

1. It is non-seasonal and can occur year-round.
2. It is primarily motivated by spiritual and emotional needs.
3. Travelers are drawn to destinations with religious and historical significance.
4. It plays a significant role in urban growth and development, requiring infrastructure and tourism services.

The importance of religious tourism: is evident in various social, economic, religious, cultural, and civilizational aspects. It has gained global significance due to its deep connection to the spiritual aspects and religious rituals of various communities, in addition to its economic utilization as a tourist attraction and an economic development factor.

In developed countries, including religious tourism, the tourism sector as a whole constitutes a significant portion of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), with religious tourism accounting for a substantial share. In contrast, Middle Eastern countries have a lower contribution from tourism, accounting for only 9.5% of GDP. (Baalid Ashur, 2012, p. 13).

Religious tourism is a collective and global phenomenon, attracting millions of tourists annually worldwide. It has economic and social repercussions on cities and regions hosting religious landmarks. Therefore, effective management and organization of this type of tourism require the stimulation of various economic sectors, including transportation and communication, as well as its integration with other forms of tourism, such as environmental, cultural, and recreational tourism.

- The importance of religious tourism lies not only in generating financial income but also in bridging the connection between the believer and the spirituality and historical value of a place, providing lessons and solace in life. This enhances the spiritual connection between the visitor and the sacred site.
- Religious tourism focuses more on the spiritual aspect of a person than anything else, and its importance lies in visiting sacred places and enjoying these visits, driven by faith or an interest in history and heritage preservation.
- Religious tourism stimulates various industries, especially traditional ones that are directly related to tourism and tourists.
- Domestic tourism provides the necessary funding to preserve heritage sites and historical and archaeological sites in the region, promoting a culture of environmental preservation.
- Domestic tourism serves as a tool for cultural exchange and the sharing of customs and traditions among different regions of the country.
- Investment in domestic tourism leads to the revitalization of development in regions with tourism potential, including natural environmental landmarks, historical and heritage sites, which should be protected and maintained for further development and presentation.

2.3.Pillars of Religious Tourism: (Obaidat, 2005).

The success of religious tourism in any region in the world depends on the availability of a set of pillars and factors related primarily to the religious tourist site, as well as the infrastructure, services, and activities that contribute to its activation and success. Among the most important of these pillars and factors are the following:

- Religious Sites: These must be continuously cared for and prepared to receive religious tourists, requiring dedicated financial budgets for their care and maintenance to achieve the desired goals.
- Actual Religious Significance of the Religious Site: This is determined by the recognition of tourists of its religious value and the frequent and repeated visits to the religious tourist site, such as the year-round visits to Mecca for Muslims for Umrah or during the Hajj season.
- Providing a high-level network of transportation and communication in religious sites, in addition to providing essential services such as restaurants, hotels, and public facilities.
- The link between religious tourism and traditional industries, through the availability of tourism products that express the spiritual value of religious sites, which tourists purchase when they return to their countries.

3. Religious Assets in the State of Biskra:

The state of Biskra is considered an important tourist destination due to its

Vandals, Byzantines, Arabs, Persians, Berbers, and others from Europe. During the Islamic conquests, the Ziban region, which includes Biskra, became a significant center of Islamic leadership. One of its villages is still named after the great conqueror Uqba ibn Nafi, and it is known as Sidi Uqba to this day. Subsequently, the region witnessed the rule of the Rustamids, Zirids, Hammadids, Almoravids, Almohads, Zianids, and the colonial era (Boumezah, 2016).

3.2 Religious landmarks: the ancient face of Biskra

Biskra boasts distinctive religious establishments that set it apart from other cities. These religious structures are integral to Islamic identity and serve as more than just places of prayer. They also function as centers of governance, administration, and consultation. These religious establishments include mosques, zawiyas (Islamic religious schools), and mausoleums, among others, all of which play a role in the religious life of Muslims. (Dayf, 2015, p. 90)

3.2.1 Mosques:

Mosques hold a special place in the Islamic city, symbolizing its essence and serving as centers for the spread of Islamic teachings and the practice of worship. The first thing that the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) did upon arriving in a new city was to build a mosque. To firmly establish the foundations of the Islamic religion, Muslims built mosques in every region they conquered. After the Islamic conquests, the Islamic civilization spread, including its beliefs, language, morals, and culture, among the local populations. Mosques, in particular, became prominent in Morocco. (Council, 2008, p. 09) .

Biskra's Historical Mosques: Biskra enjoyed a prominent status and significant prosperity under Islamic rule. Mosques were constructed with architectural simplicity but elegance, and they are among the most important religious buildings in Algeria in terms of architectural design and aesthetic value. Some of the notable mosques in Biskra include the Sidi Uqba Mosque.

- **Sidi Uqba Mosque**

The mosque of Uqba ibn Nafi, along with his shrine, represents an architectural masterpiece in the style of Islamic engineering. It is located in the city of Sidi Uqba, approximately 18 kilometers southeast of Biskra city, along National Road 38 to the east. The historical records do not definitively confirm the exact date of its construction due to successive renovations. However, it is believed to have been built between 82 AH/701 CE and 140 AH/758 CE during the rule of the Umayyads in North Africa, as they sought to commemorate the great conqueror and inspiration, Uqba ibn Nafi²⁷ . (Khalil, 2017)

The Minaret of Sidi Uqba Mosque: The minaret of the Sidi Uqba Mosque is considered one of the oldest minarets in North Africa. Despite its age, it has maintained its integrity and solidity. It consists of eight balconies and a cylindrical, pointed finial. The famous traveler Al-Iyashi described it, saying that the mosque had a large minaret with exquisite construction, featuring a column

and a distinctive shape.

The text provides insights into the rich history and religious heritage of Biskra, highlighting the importance of religious landmarks such as mosques in the region's cultural and architectural identity.

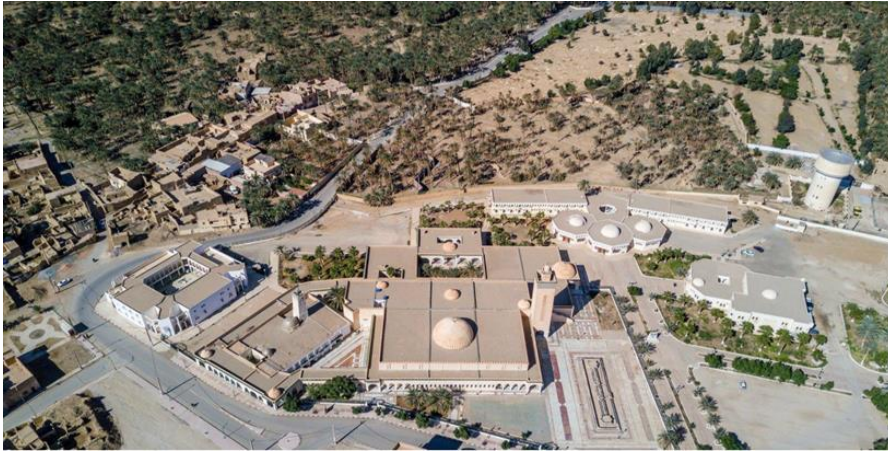


Figure 2: Mosque and Minaret Sidi Uqba

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023.

- **El Ateek Mosque:**

Located in the heart of the old town of Tolga, approximately 50 kilometers from the Biskra province, this mosque is situated in the southwestern part of Tolga. Researchers believe it dates back to the Byzantine occupation era when it was a church. During the Islamic conquest in the 7th century CE, Uqba ibn Nafi converted the church into a mosque and held his third Friday prayer there, indicating that he spent three weeks in the area.

The minaret of El Ateek Mosque is considered one of the ancient minarets and is located in the southeast corner of the fortress. It belongs to the minarets with a square base, standing at a height of 14 meters. The minaret features simple decorations along its facade. (Council, 2008, p. 15)



Figure 3: El Ateek Mosque

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Sidi Mausoud Mosque:

Situated in the Dashra area, which is about 8 kilometers east of the provincial headquarters, the historical sources do not provide a specific explanation for its name. However, it is believed that Sidi Mausoud was a leader in the Arab army during the campaign of the Muslim conqueror Uqba ibn Nafi. After his martyrdom in the battle of Tahuda in 63 AH/683 CE, local forces pursued the remaining Muslim conquerors, and Sidi Mausoud was martyred in this region. After some time, the locals built a shrine around his tomb, and a mosque bearing his name was added to it. (Council, 2008)

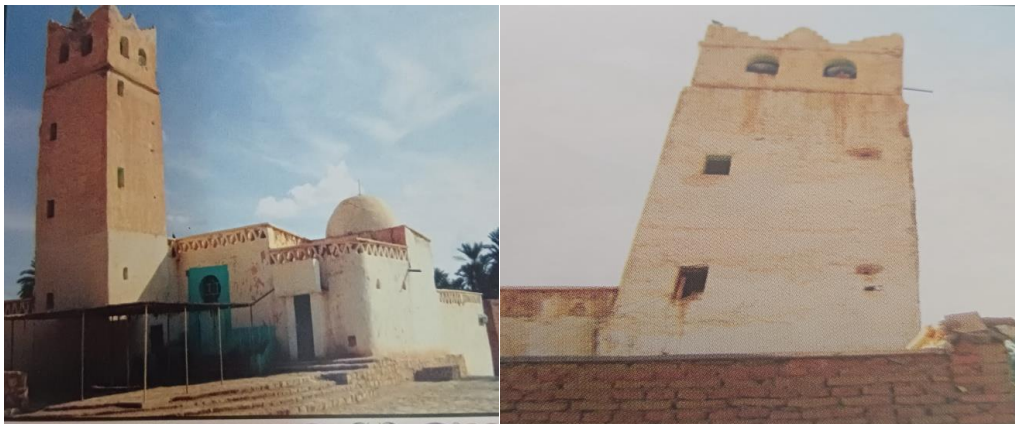


Figure 4: Sidi Mausoud Mosque

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Abi Al-Fadl Mosque:

Located in the Qadasha neighborhood of old Biskra, (Council, 2008) ‘17this

mosque is described as having a magnificent minaret with intricate details. It has a unique design with a cylindrical and pointed structure. The city of Biskra is one of the most significant cities with many benefits, but the mosque did not have an Imam or Quran reciter at the time of the description, possibly due to political reasons such as wars and conflicts.

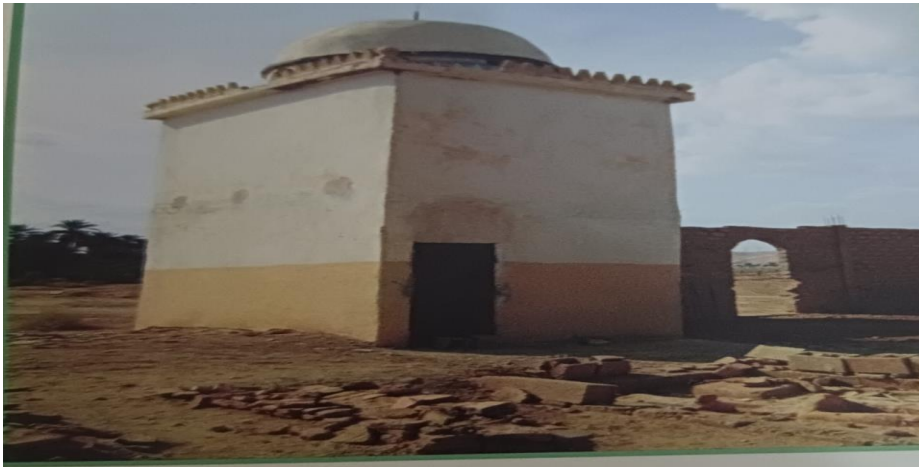


Figure 5: Abi Al-Fadl Mosque

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Sidi Mabrouk Mosque:

Located in Khankat Sidi Naji, about 100 kilometers east of Biskra, this mosque is known as the Grand Mosque or Friday Mosque. It is one of the region's most important religious and educational centers. Its foundation dates back to 1147 AH/1734 CE, as indicated by an inscription on the left side of the mihrab (prayer niche), attributing its construction to Mohamed ibn Mohamed At-Tayyib (Attiyab, 2009, p. 98)

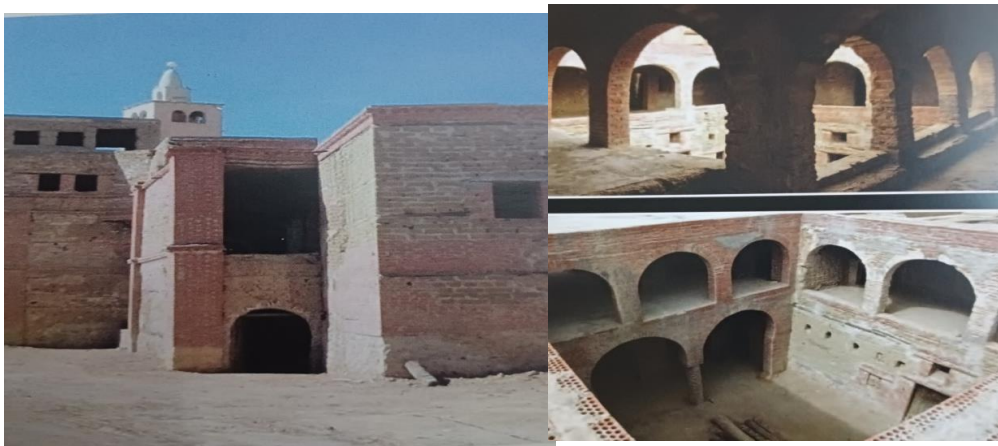


Figure 6: Sidi Mabrouk Mosque

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023.

Sidi Moussa Al-Khadhri Mosque:

This mosque is situated in the Lemsid neighborhood within the palm groves of the southeastern part of Biskra (Shalouq, Architectural and Archaeological Study of Sidi Moussa Al-Khadri Mosque - Biskra, 2009). It is considered one of the oldest mosques in Biskra and the second-oldest in the Ziban region ‘ (Dayf, 2015, p. 95) after the Sidi Uqba Mosque. Historical records do not provide a specific date for its construction, but various material and historical clues suggest it was built between the 2nd and 3rd centuries of the Islamic calendar (8th and 9th centuries CE) (Shalouq, Architectural and Archaeological Study of Sidi Moussa Al-Khadri Mosque - Biskra, 2009, pp. 2-3). These clues include architectural style, building materials, and the use of palm wood in the construction, similar to the Sidi Uqba Mosque.

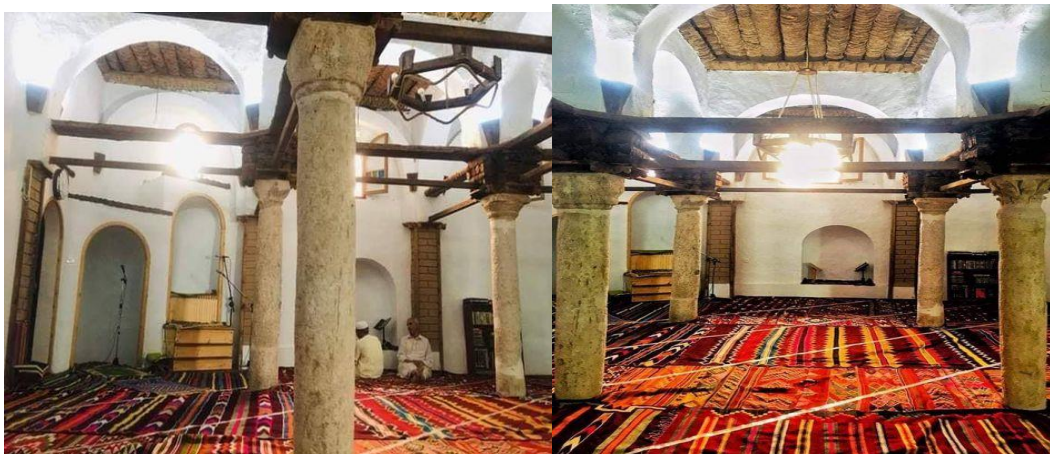


Figure 7: Sidi Moussa Al-Khadhri Mosque

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Khaled ibn Sinan Mosque (Zaid N. &., 2010, p. 33)

Named after the city it is located in, Sidi Khaled, this mosque is known for its architectural significance and is classified as national heritage. It was extensively renovated between 1917 and 1923 due to severe damage caused by floods. These renovations transformed it into a cultural and educational beacon for the city.



Figure 8: Khaled ibn Sinan Mosque

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

3.1.2 Mausoleums (Ardhah):

Mausoleums are ornate buildings designed for the burial of esteemed individuals, scholars, or saints in the Islamic tradition. They often have square structures with domes and are decorated with architectural elements. The construction of mausoleums can vary in different Islamic regions ‘ (Tari'a, 2018). These religious landmarks and mosques are an integral part of the cultural and historical heritage of Biskra, reflecting the rich Islamic history and architectural diversity of the region. (Dayf, 2015, p. 100)

Uqba ibn Nafi Shrin:

Located 18 kilometers southeast of Biskra city, near the mosque named after him, the shrine was renovated in the 9th century using mud bricks. Its walls are now covered with lower sections made of ceramic tiles and upper sections made of gypsum tiles, with a dome roof measuring 4 meters in diameter. The shrine is decorated in a style similar to the cabinet gifted by Prince Ziri to the Kairouan Mosque. An inscription on the shrine's grave, similar in script to funerary inscriptions dating to around 1025 CE, is the only one of its kind in Algeria from the Zirid period. (Khalil, 2017, p. 60).



Figure 9: Uqba ibn Nafi Shrin

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Abu Al-Muhajir Dinar Shrine:

Abu Al-Muhajir Dinar, originally from the Tabi'in (the generation after the Companions of Prophet Muhammad), served as a Mawla (freedman) for the Banu Makhzum tribe. He migrated to Africa in 55 AH (675 CE) after the removal of Uqba ibn Nafi. His shrine is located south of the Sidi Uqba area and was previously known as Tihouda (Shalouq, Religious Architecture in the Zab Region An Archaeological and Architectural Study, 2008). There are no material or historical records specifying the exact date of its construction. However, given historical events in the region, it is likely to have been established during the Islamic reconquest of the area led by figures such as Zuhayr ibn Qais al-Balawi and Hassan ibn al-Nu'man in the late 7th century CE or during the rule of the Fihri dynasty in Africa between 127 AH and 140 AH (744 CE - 758 CE). (Shalouq, Religious Architecture in the Zab Region An Archaeological and Architectural Study, 2008, pp. 78-79) .



Figure 10: Abu Al-Muhajir Dinar Shrine

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Sidi Slimane Shrine:

Sidi Slimane was a pious man who is linked to the Prophet's lineage through Ahmad ibn Idris and Sharaf al-Bawazid. His shrine is located in the Doucen area, about 100 kilometers from the provincial headquarters. It is considered a pilgrimage site where people seek blessings. **Invalid source specified.** (Council, 2008, p. 21)

Khaled ibn Sinan Al-Abssi Shrine:

This shrine is located on a high ground between Wadi Jdi and Wadi Al-Qulis in close proximity to the ancient city of Sidi Khaled. The shrine forms the central nucleus around which a complex was built, including a mosque, student rooms, guest rooms, the tomb of Abd al-Rahman ibn Khalifa, and the residence of the superintendent and his family. Originally, it was a zawiyah known as the Sidi Khaled Zawiyah, according to the description by the traveler Al-Ayashi. Historical records do not provide a specific date for its construction. (Karim, 2018)



Figure 11: Khaled ibn Sinan Al-Abssi Shrine

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

3.2.3 Zawiya (Sufi Lodges):

Zawiyas are religious buildings where Sufis dedicate themselves to worship, contemplation, and teaching various religious and spiritual sciences. They also often provide lodging for the poor and travelers. The zawiyas play an important role in religious and educational activities. (Dahdouh, 2019)

Zawiya of Sheikh Al-Mukhtar:

Located in the old city of Ouled Djellal, this zawiya was founded by Sheikh Al-Mukhtar Al-Jilali in 1815 CE. It has a stunning architectural design and has been a place of worship, remembrance of God, and a center for Islamic education. These shrines and zawiyas are significant religious and cultural landmarks in Biskra, representing the historical and spiritual heritage of the region. They continue (Zaid N. &., 2010, p. 32) to attract visitors and serve as centers for religious and educational activities.



Figure 12: Zawiya of Sheikh Al-Mukhtar

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Ottoman Zawiya (Sufi Lodge):

The Ottoman Zawiya in Batna is considered a valuable cultural and educational landmark. It is associated with the founder of the Rahmaniya Sufi order, Sheikh Muhammad ibn Abd al-Rahman al-Azhar. The zawiya was established in 1780 CE by Sheikh Ali ibn Omar when he was just 28 years old (Zaid N. &, 2010, p. 31) . 2010Its primary role has been education, teaching the Quran, spreading the teachings of the tolerant Islamic faith, and fostering belief in the hearts. It also includes a library containing rare books, publications, and manuscripts in various fields, making it one of the most important cultural landmarks in Algeria. (Bouzina, 2021, p. 59) .



Figure 3: Ottoman Zawiya (Sufi Lodge)

Source: Directorate of Tourism and Handicrafts of the State of Biskra, 2023

Nasiriya Zawiya: Founded by the righteous scholar Ben Kassem Ben Naji, the Nasiriya Zawiya in Sidi Naji was established in 1602 CE for prayer, teaching both religious and intellectual sciences, and transmitting the Nasiriya Shadhili Sufi path. Many scholars have emerged from this zawiya. Unfortunately, its activities were suspended during the 20th century due to French colonialism (Basha, 2016, p. 19).

Strategies for Developing Religious Tourism in State of Biskra

In the Wilaya of Biskra, there are various religious buildings, including mosques, zawiya, and shrines, all of which can be harnessed to promote religious tourism and make Biskra a religious tourism attraction (Bin Qirba, 2014, p. 444). To achieve this, the authorities responsible need to undertake the following:

1. **Preservation and Maintenance:** The responsible authorities should prioritize the preservation, cleanliness, and upkeep of religious heritage sites, ensuring their sanctity and religious significance.
2. **Information Dissemination:** Create informative brochures and publications about religious heritage, different religious landmarks, and their historical significance. This can attract tourists and pilgrims who are interested in the

religious history of the region.

3. Utilizing Technology: Leverage modern technologies and the internet for advertising and marketing religious tourism. Websites, apps, and social media can be used to reach a wider audience.
4. Educational Visits: Organize regular field trips to various religious landmarks and sites for students in schools and high schools to introduce them to the region's history and develop awareness of its material heritage. Include the study of archaeology in the curriculum.
5. Collaboration: Collaborate with all relevant authorities and institutions to promote religious tourism. Cooperation among these entities is crucial for the success of this type of tourism.
6. Guided Tours: Establish guided tours that provide visitors with a comprehensive understanding of the historical and cultural significance of these religious sites. Interpretive signage and informative plaques should also be installed.
7. Showcasing Features: Highlight the historical, cultural, and aesthetic features that distinguish these religious sites to attract tourists.
8. Souvenirs: Create and sell small-scale replicas or souvenirs of various religious landmarks to allow tourists to take home a piece of the region's heritage.
9. Craftsmen Workshops: Establish workshops near these heritage sites where artisans can showcase traditional crafts and products, giving tourists a chance to experience local culture.
10. Infrastructure and Services: Ensure that necessary infrastructure and services, such as roads, transportation, water supply, sewage systems, electricity, hotels, and restaurants, are in place. These facilities should blend in with the desert landscape and not detract from the historical sites.
11. Specialized Team: Appoint a specialized team responsible for preparing these heritage sites for tourism and overseeing their management.

By implementing these strategies, Biskra can further develop its religious tourism potential and become a significant religious and cultural destination, attracting tourists interested in its rich religious heritage.

Conclusion

The province of Biskra is rich in numerous religious landmarks and facilities that have emerged from the interaction between humans and their environment. These include mosques, shrines, and Sufi lodges (zawiya) that date back to various historical periods, particularly during the Islamic conquests. Some of these sites continue to be places of worship, pilgrimage, and spiritual and emotional fulfillment. They can be harnessed to promote religious tourism, turning Biskra into a significant tourist attraction. To achieve this goal, we recommend the following:

- Focus on religious tourism as a vital tourism activity, with an emphasis on advertising and tourism marketing, and collaboration among all responsible authorities involved in promoting this type of tourism.
- Publish and distribute informational brochures containing detailed information about religious heritage and various religious landmarks that capture the interest and attention of tourists.
- Ensure the preservation, cleanliness, and sanctity of Islamic heritage sites by

- relevant authorities responsible for religious monuments.
- The Ministry of Transportation and Communications should provide suitable transportation options to religious and heritage sites, making it easier for tourists to visit them.

References

- Bouzina, S. & Cherif, M. (2021). Religious Cultural Landmarks and Aspects in Algeria: Zawiyas and Shrines as Models. *Human and Society Journal*, 8(2). <https://biskra.mta.gov.dz> (June 21, 2023).
- International Labour Office. (2013). *Toolkit on Poverty Reduction Through Tourism*. Geneva.
- Ibrahim, M. A. (2014). *Religious Tourism*. Cairo: Al-Ward Library.
- Al-Imami, R. (2013). *Tourism Development in Iraq and Its Economic Implications*. The Arab Academy Denmark.
- Al-Jalad, A. (2000). *Continuous Tourism Development*. Cairo: Al-Alam Al-Kutub.
- Attiyah, K. (2009). *Islamic Heritage Sites in the Eastern Zab Region: A Historical and Archaeological Study*. Master's Thesis, Faculty of Literature and Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Mohamed Khider.
- Al-Qadir, B. B. (n.d.). *Religious Tourism as an Option for Diversifying the Tourism Sector in Algeria*. *Journal of Economic Research*.
- Al-Kazwini, M. H. (2017). *Religious Tourism and Strategies for Organizing It: A Case Study of Karbala Province*. Al-Qadisiya University.
- Wilaya People's Council (2008). *The Religious Landmarks of Biskra's Ancient Destination*. Sada Al-Ziban (Special Issue for the First Maghreb Meeting on Religious Tourism, Sidi Aqba, October 29-31, 2008).
- Al-Muhannak, H. H. (1995). *Religious Tourism and the Reality of Hotel Services and Development Methods in Al-Najaf Governorate*. Iraq: Al-Anbaa Printing and Publishing, Al-Najaf.
- Basha, F. (2016). *Religious Zawiyas as a Tourist Destination in the Algerian Sahara: A Case Study of Some Religious Zawiyas in Biskra Province*. The National Meeting on Sahara Tourism in Algeria: Between Factors and Constraints. University of El-Oued.
- Kazhugu, A. (2020). *Tourism Panorama*. Iraq : Dar Baroudi Scientific.
- Baalid Ashur, J.T. (2012). *Religious Tourism and Its Impact on the Iraqi National Income*. *Al-Kut Journal of Economic and Administrative Sciences*.
- Bin Qirba, S., & Shalouq, F. (2014). *Historical Religious Architecture in the Zab Region and Requirements for Using it in Religious Tourism Development*. *Journal of Human Sciences* (34/35).
- Bouhaddid, S.A. (2017). *The Role of Domestic Tourism in Achieving Economic Development in Algeria under the Guidance Plan*. *Economic Perspectives*, p. 290.
- Boumezah, A.A. (2016). *Biskra in the Eyes of Western Travelers (Vol. 1)*. Biskra: Dar Ali Ben Zaid for Printing and Publishing.
- Tari'a, S., & Haji, Y.R. (2018). *Civilization in the Eastern Zab Region: Badess and Tehoudah, and Sidi Aqba as Models*. El Goua: Research Center for Islamic Studies.
- Harzi, F. (2018-2019). *Zawiyas and Their Role in Confronting French Colonial Policy in Algeria (1830-1945)*. Master's Thesis. Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences: Mohamed Khider University, Biskra.

- Hassanat, A.A. (2018). The Impact of Tourism Planning on Tourism Development from the Perspective of Tourism Directors. Al-Manhal Publishing House.
- Khalil, R., & Khaysha, S. (2017). The Mosque of Uqba ibn Nafi in Biskra (An Archaeological Study). Master's Thesis in Medieval and Modern History, University of El-Shahid Hama Lakhder - El-Oued.
- Dahdouh, A.A. (2019). Zawiyas in Algeria during the Ottoman Period, Studies in Arab Homeland Heritage. Arab Archaeologists' Annals, Studies in Arab Homeland Heritage (19).
- Zaid, N, & Amoukarane, S (2010) Biskra: The Fruitful Magic. El Rouiba, Algeria: Dar Al-Hikma.
- Shalouq, F. (2008). Religious Architecture in the Zab Region-An Archaeological and Architectural Study. Master's Thesis. Biskra: Mohamed Khider University.
- Shalouq, F. (2009). Architectural and Archaeological Study of Sidi Moussa Al-Khadri Mosque - Biskra. Journal of the Faculty of Arts, Humanities, and Social Sciences (Issue 04).
- Dayf, K. (2015). Biskra in the Medieval Era: A Historical and Civilizational Study. A Master's Thesis to Fulfill Academic Requirements. University of Ghardaia.
- Obaidat, M. (2005). Tourism Marketing: A Behavioral Approach. Jordan: Dar Wael Publishing.
- Qadri, M.Z. (2013). Marketing the Religious Spiritual Tourism Industry and Its Potential in Algeria. Journal of Economic Studies.
- Qura'id, N. (2022, February 28). The Qualifications of Tourism and Their Role in Activating Religious Tourism: The Case of Tébessa City. The Arab Journal of Tourism, Hospitality, and Antiquities.
- Kazim, S.D. (2017). The Impact of Religious Shrines on the Growth of Religious Tourism. Al-Emad Journal, Ibn Rushd College of Humanities.
- Kafi, M.Y. (2014). Sustainable Ecotourism, Challenges and Future Prospects. Syria: Dar Raslan.
- Karim, A. (2018). The Evolution of Islamic Urbanization in Biskra Province, 2018. Doctoral Thesis. University of Algeria - Abu Al-Qasim Saadallah.
- Muhases, N.S. (No date). Tourism in Jordan. Jordan: Zahran Publishing.
- Directorate of Tourism and Traditional Industries (2022). The Outcome of the Desert Tourism Season in Biskra Province. Biskra Province.
- Yahia, B.A. (2023). The Role of Religious Tourism in Algeria's Development Strategy. Journal of Literature, Languages, and Humanities.