

Tourism attraction sites: Boasting the booming tourism of Saudi Arabia



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ABSTRACT

The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has great potentiality for the international tourism industry that remains predominantly under-developed. The Kingdom's attempt to diversify its economic dependence on fossil fuels focusing on its tourism potentials by continuing to create and implement proactive steps to diversify from an oil-based economy which is already globally diminishing, making the tourism industry a very wise option, especially as supported by the political, economic and social will via The Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH) and this is what made the researchers look into how tourism contributes in this paradigm shift. This paper is shedding light on the tourism industry in different sites in the Hail region necessary to support the tourism industry in the Saudi Arabia Kingdom. This research is among the unique proofs that the Hail region is having diversified and various tourism attractions compared to the other Kingdom's 12 regions. Ha'il region is one of the richest tourism attraction sites in the whole of the Kingdom. It has a somewhat milder climate than other Saudi regions due to its higher altitude. The paper is exploring and investigating Hails' sites as well as adopting analytical descriptive and documentation of the invented sites that can support The Kingdom to help to succeed in boasting the booming tourism planning to become an excellent tourist destination and a tourist hotspot. This paper is concluded with the steps to be adopted to improve the tourism industry.

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1. Introduction

1.1. Tourism

Tourism is the act and process of spending time away from home seeking recreation, relaxation, and pleasure. It includes activities such as sightseeing and camping (Beaver, 2002). Tourists travel for fun. There are many reasons why people travel for fun. Others travel to learn about the history or culture of a city or country or learn about the people who live there or their ancestors. People from cold places sometimes like to relax in the sun and warmer places and visit beaches. Some people travel to do an activity, which they cannot do at home. People sometimes visit friends and family in another city or country. Finally, some people enjoy a change in scenery. City people go to forests or deserts, and vice

versa. Tourism began in Western Europe in the 17th century. It is distinguished from exploration in that tourists are pleasure-seekers, whereas exploration faces difficulty, danger, and embarrassment. Tourism, however, overlaps with other activities, interests, and processes, including, for example, pilgrimage. This gives rise to shared categories, such as "business tourism," "sports tourism," and "medical tourism."

A tourist is known to be someone who is vacationing somewhere far from home, but the technical definition of a tourist is anyone who travels to a place outside of his usual residential environment and stays away for at least a night, but no more than one year (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2007). The motivation for the trip is irrelevant as the trip could be for business reasons, to visit friends and family, for education, or simply for pleasure. This definition is used to compare tourist arrivals among countries internationally by organizations such as the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Different definitions are sometimes used within a country and within local destinations. China, for example, counts day visitors those not staying overnight in its total tourist numbers, although they

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also provide standardized numbers to the UNWTO. Many countries separate business travelers from leisure travelers. For international travel overall, leisure travelers generally outnumber business travelers two to one. This, however, varies considerably among destinations. At the opposite end of the tourist, a trip is a recreation activity. The clearest form of a non-tourism recreation activity is any leisure activity that occurs within someone's residential home place. The exception would be planning a vacation trip. As recreationists travel further away from home, the same activity might transform into tourism (McLean and Hurd, 2011). In general, recreation activities become tourists' activities or tourism products when they are provided by private sector companies who mostly serve non-resident visitors. They consider recreation products when visiting tourists comprise a minority of the clients served. The mission according to their website: "the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, as the land of Islam, seeks for variable and distinguished tourism development, with social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits in the framework of its Islamic values and genuine traditional hospitality."

1.2. The importance of opening foreign tourism in Saudi Arabia

The tourism industry can benefit Saudi Arabia in a different way. For example, it can boost the economy by creating new jobs for Saudis all over the country, as well as improving service quality and infrastructure in addition to helping to establish a more efficient public transportation system (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010). Another benefit it will help Saudis reconnect with their roots and increase national pride, more over it give the Kingdom a more open and accommodating image worldwide. In term of environment tourism increase environmental awareness and nature conservation (Lew et al., 2008). In addition, it spread cultural awareness among Saudis and help to establish a more efficient public transportation system.

1.3. The problems of tourism in Hail

The biggest obstacle for tourists concerned with traveling to the Kingdom was the difficulty in obtaining an entry visa. Visas were mostly issued for business travel, family visits, and religious tourism, such as Umrah and Hajj visas. Nowadays, there are only five companies licensed to sponsor tourism visas (McLean and Hurd, 2011). They are issued to certain nationalities only, and tourists must arrive in groups of a minimum of four persons. Another problem is travelers who are simply not aware of the rich cultural heritage the Kingdom could offer. One more problem is some western media paints a very negative, one-sided image of the treatment of women in the Kingdom, which can be off-putting for both female and male travelers (Lois-González et al., 2014).

2. Tourism in Saudi Arabia

Saudi-Arabia boasts incredibly diverse scenery, colorful culture, and pristine nature. There are places of interest that match many international destinations, but the ones in Saudi are not ruined by mass tourism. Some sites can still be explored without disturbance from a single tourist group. One of the cities that is famous for its rich tourism site is Hail (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010). Ha'il is divided into four administrative provinces: Ha'il Province, Baqaa province Al-Shenan Province, Al-Ghazala province (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010). Each region is divided into governorates and the regional capital, which has the status of the municipality (Amanah) headed by mayors (Umana) (Long, 1997). There are 118 entities combined. The governorates are further subdivided into sub governorates (Marakiz). Saudi Arabia has 5 administrative provinces and 13 regions, Fig. 1a and Fig. 1b. Fig. 2 shows a view of Ha'il, a city in northwestern Saudi Arabia. It is the capital of the Ha'il Region.



Fig. 1: a) Five administrative provinces of Saudi Arabia; b) 13 regions of Saudi Arabia



Fig. 2: View of Ha'il, a city in northwestern Saudi Arabia, the capital of Ha'il Region

2.1. Tourism in Ha'il

Ha'il, Hai, Ha'yel, or Hayil, as differently spelled sometimes, is a city in northwestern Saudi Arabia. View of Ha'il, a city in northwestern Saudi Arabia. It is the capital of the Ha'il Region, Fig. 2. Ha'il is largely agricultural, with significant grain, date, and fruit production (Long, 1997). A large percentage of the Kingdom's wheat production comes from the Ha'il Region, where the area to the northeast, 60 to 100 away, consists of irrigated gardens. Historically, Ha'il derived its wealth from being on the camel caravan route of the Hajj (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010). Ha'il has a continental desert climate, with hot summers and cool winters (MCC, 2007). It has a somewhat milder climate than other Saudi cities due to its higher altitude. Ha'il is famous for its ancient civilization that thrived, vivid through the city's monuments, heritage, ancient culture, and Arabic traditions of the local population (Lois-González et al., 2014). It has a vibrant atmosphere where the locals and residents surge with great enthusiasm to explore the surrounding desert and valleys when the weather is cool and temperate.

In addition to the climate merit, which distinguishes Hail from other regions. Hail region also has rich tourist sites that make it compete with other regions in Saudi Arabia (Lois-González et al., 2014). The various Ha'il Region's tourism attraction sites include; Jabal Umm Sinman at Jubbah and the Jabal al-Manjor and Raat at Shuwaymis, Hatim al-



a



b

Fig. 3: a) Visit of urban tourism heritage and vestiges sites at Jubbah made by the first author as part of the data collection efforts; b) Al Naif Archeological Palace Museum at Jubbah, Ha'il province, Hail region

2.2.2. Hatim al-Tai's place, tomb, and campfire

These famous Ha'il tourism attraction sites are found in Ha'il, the heart of authentic Arab hospitality and generosity, well known by the generosity of its people in Saudi Arabia and the Arab world. It is in this place where Hatim al-Tai, the poet, lived, whose extreme generosity dot the entire Arab world and the Asia region.

He was the ruler of his tribe who lived before Prophet Mohammad's (Peace Be upon Him) preaching of Islam, and the father of the Prophet's companion Adi ibn Hatim and Safana bint Hatim. After Hatim's death, his son Adi became the ruler of Tayy, who also became a Muslim in 628 after a meeting with the Prophet Muhammad (Peace Be Upon Him) (Winder, 2008). Ha'il region is associated with the generosity of Hatim al-Tai, who was a

Tai's place, tomb and campfire, Al Qishlah Historical castle, Mashar National Park, The Al-Maghawah amusement park, Ha'il Summer Festival, Rea'a Resort, Faid urban heritage, A'irif Castle, Barzan Palace Towers and the historical Great Barzan Mosque. Tourism attraction sites as well includes Al-Hait, The Popular Market, Ha'il Regional Museum, the museum of "I found traces of the past", Al Dhuwaili Heritage, Al Naif Archeological Palace and Al Rajhi Mosque. In this paper, the author tried to document the invented sites that can support the tourism industry (McLean and Hurd, 2011).

2.2. The various Ha'il Region's tourism attraction sites

2.2.1. Jabal Umm Sinman at Jubbah

Heritage referred to something that is handed down from the past or something that comes or belongs to one due to birth (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2007); it could as well refer to inherited lot or portion. A visit to this urban tourism heritage and vestiges sites at Jubbah was made by the first author as part of the data collection efforts, Fig. 3a. Rock drawings of Jabal Umm Sinman at Jubbah, Ha'il province, Hail region are exemplars of urban heritage, whereas rock drawings cut displayed on walls at Al Naif Archeological Palace Museum at Jubbah, Ha'il province, Hail region, Fig. 3b.

famous Arabian poet who belonged to the Tayy Arabian tribe who lived in the sixth century CE died 578 CE. Stories about his extreme generosity have made him an icon to Arabs up until the present day (Winder, 2008), as in the proverbial phrase "more generous than Hatem." Hatim al-Tai from the people of Banu Saad who lived in the houses of Tunqa, located near the mountain of Azayf west of Tunqa. It is located in Tawaran located northwest of the city of Ha'il, and about 48 km away, where Hatim's palace is located within a group of his people's houses. In the area of Tawaran, there are the remains of the ruins of al-Tai's palace and his tomb, but his famous campfire positioned at the summit of As-Samra Mountains, as this repeatedly mentioned in his poetry (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010), Fig. 4a and Fig. 4b.

Hatim al-Tai's famous campfire, a natural gas-powered fire, is located in the middle of As-Samra Mountains overlooking the city of Ha'il (Peters, 1994), which has a reproduction of the campfire lit to welcome his guests (Goeldner and Ritchie, 2007), which is turned on every night and can be seen from the center of the town.



a



b

Fig. 4: a) Tawaran located northwest of the city of Ha'il and about 48 km away; b) The remains of the ruins of al-Tai's palace and his tomb

This is where Hatim al-Tai lit a fire on the summit to welcome guests, Fig. 5a and Fig. 5b. Today an asphalted road goes to the summit where campfire lit at night and where as well the Ha'il Rally starts, Fig. 6a and Fig. 6b. There is a park with a lake at the bottom of the mountain called As-Samra park (McLean and Hurd, 2011), and on the side of the mountain is the Emblem of Saudi Arabia (date palm and crossed swords) made from electric lights which are turned on at night (Hoiberg, 2010). Aja Mountain (Jebel Aja) is on the opposite side of Ha'il city from As-Samra. A huge Saudi flag made of electric lights turned on at night is located on the side of the mountain. Tunqa refers to a lower water-fetching place at the middle of Ha'il called the Adayra Valley that runs roughly along a north-south axis, dividing central Ha'il in two (Lew et al., 2008).



a



b

Fig. 5: a) Hatim al-Tai's famous campfire, a natural gas-powered fire, is located in the middle of As-Samra Mountains overlooking the city of Ha'il; b) Hatim al-Tai lit a fire on the summit to welcome guests



a

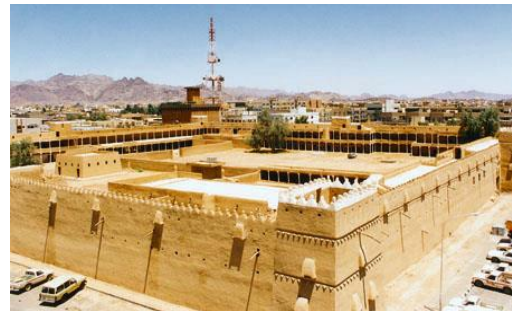


b

Fig. 6: a) An asphalted road goes to the summit where campfire lit at night; b) Where campfire lit at night the Ha'il Rally starts

2.2.3. Qishlah historical castle

Al Qishlah Historical castle located in the heart of the city of Ha'il to become an important tourist and historical attraction site. Al Qishlah Historical castle built in 1941 during the reign of Prince Abdul-Aziz bin Musa'ad Al Saud of Ha'il province, Fig. 7a], Fig. 7b and Fig. 7c. It is one of the region's significant forts, distinct from its marvelous style and architecture, which captivate the visitors. Qishlah comes from the Turkish word for fort or barracks. It took only two years to construct a rectangular building consisting of two floors, with an area of 20,000 square meters. The area is 142.8 by 141.2 meters with about 391 columns and 8.5m high surrounding walls, with eight watchtowers along with the walls (Lew et al., 2008).



a



b



c

Fig. 7: a) Al Qishlah Historical castle located in the heart of the city of Ha'il; b) Al Qishlah Historical castle to become an important tourist and historical attraction site; c) Al Qishlah Historical castle built in 1941 during the reign of Prince Abdul-Aziz bin Musa'ad Al Saud of Ha'il province

The overall height of the towers is more than 21 meters. It has 95 rooms on the ground floor and 38 rooms on the first floor. Foursquare towers, which are called "supporting towers," are located in the middle of the eastern facade of the building.

The palace has two entrances, one of which is located in the south, currently used for visitors and guests. Historians in the Ha'il region confirm that the "archeological" building was designed in the style of the "Najdah" school (Al-Zahrani, 2001), which was prevalent in the Islamic architecture at the time. Built in the Ottoman era, as a castle of soldiers for their residence in the city of Ha'il, therefore was a military barracks to train soldiers for training and accommodation purposes to maintain security and stability, because the main objective of building the Qishla Palace was to secure accommodation and shelter for members of the military army under the reigning King Abdulaziz to establish security after the country united, the palace used for the same purpose until 1975.

2.2.4. The Al-Maghawah amusement park

Ha'il International annual Rally celebrations accompanied by events that take place commencing at the opening of the Rally to continue for all the Rally days (McLean and Hurd, 2011), which may last for almost ten days, Fig. 8a (Taher, 1998) and Fig. 8b (Taher, 1998).



Fig. 8: a) Ha'il International annual Rally celebrations (Taher, 1998); b) Ha'il International annual Rally celebrations accompanied by events that take place commencing at the opening of the Rally to continue for all the Rally days (Taher, 1998)

The park is located on a highland Northwestern side of the Ha'il city at the Southwestern corner of Mashar National Park. Around forty different "youth and family" activities are frequented by a large number of visitors from different regions of the Kingdom. On these occasions, Saudi Commission for Tourism and National Heritage (SCTH) (Mackey, 2002) normally offers a wide variety of events and activities, including the "Oasis of the Arena" area, which includes a games area and family gatherings at Al-Maghawah Park (Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010), usually last for nine days throughout the days of the rally. The Authority also offers "Family and Children's Theater," which contains many programs and entertainment paragraphs, competitions, various games, and plays. All this aimed at the child and the family and many different sessions as well as a number of games of challenge, as the SCTH as well participate in the

popular meeting to receive visitors, which called "added to the oasis." The SCTH continues its participation in the Rally and its daily shows on the "Rally Avenue," which will feature daily folkloric displays for visitors at the Family Events site at Al Maghawah Park. Documentaries are also shown on the "Documentary Cinema." For horses and equestrian lovers, a number of these events were held. The Authority also dedicated a corner for art and photography, which is an exhibition of photographs of the tourist sites in the region to identify it and next to this exhibition, there is "Display wall" dedicated to free drawing, a workshop that includes all drawing tools and coloring of the Kingdom and the region. The SCTH concludes its activities with "People's Market and Productive Families," a market for handicrafts, popular cuisine, and productive families. The activities are part of a competition of the best folk eaters and competition in textile and embroidery. A number of programs and events are offered by around 20 participants targeting families and youth presented by the success partners. The Department of Education in Ha'il will provide animation and theater for children as well as a number of competitions and prizes for visitors. The University of Ha'il offers popular arts throughout the days of the rally as well as training and practical workshops, electronic games championship, as well as a number of free tours. The Ministry of Environment, Water and Agriculture Branch will also offer children's theater and entertainment shows. Children's attention will continue its provisions, as the Human Rights Commission will provide a children's corner as well as a human rights advisory center and the distribution of awareness-raising publications and a hospitality section. While the Social Development Bank offers an awareness and guidance exhibition and great prizes for visitors. The various civil defense activities are held on a daily basis on the stage, competitions, and various programs, during which prizes and gifts are presented. The pavilion of the Ministry of Labor and Social Development Branch aims at a number of programs, including public seminars, children's theater, opera, entertainment, and a number of wings for development committees and associations. The Civil Status Pavilion will also attend by visitors who will provide a number of services through a mobile vehicle to serve the beneficiaries, as well as providing services through the displays. The Islamic Affairs will host daily competitions and prizes as well as a guided exhibition. The thrill will be the address of the General Authority for Sport (McLean and Hurd, 2011; Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010), which will provide sports and cultural events as well as competitions, arts, and popular games throughout the nine days of the rally. The exhibition will feature one of the most important awareness exhibitions, Educational aspects, and military presentations. The Red Crescent camp will have a remarkable presence, which includes a photo exhibition of the history of the Red Crescent, its

journey and its stages of development, and the services it provides to citizens in different regions of the Kingdom, as well as educational and awareness campaigns for visitors to the events. Used. The Saudi German Hospital will offer a children's workshop and the young intellectual competition (McLean and Hurd, 2011; Zamani-Farahani and Henderson, 2010). The Producer Families Association and the Aja Women's Association also offer a variety of activities, including competitions and prizes, as well as daily training and workshops. They also offer a children's theater and Ha'il local food show. The passport pavilion also features presentations on visitors' services, as well as activation of the Abshar device and gifts to visitors. The Ministry of Health camp welcomes visitors for camp services, including health and awareness, therapeutic and counseling for visitors that continue throughout the days of the rally. Ha'il Public Library participates in a pavilion containing a number of books and free versions distributed to visitors and interested participants. Visitors to the Al-Maghawah amusement park Family Events site see a number of pavilions, including the wings of the Human Resources Development Fund (HDF), as well as the Leadership Institute Pavilion. Visitors visit the pavilion of the General Authority for Culture, which will provide a number of cultural events, including literary and poetry sessions, workshops and interactive arts, children's studio, children's bands' performance, Ha'il Rally in the eyes of children, popular bands performance. All these events continue throughout the rally for nine days. The Al-Maghawah amusement park also features a number of activities targeting the youth. The Al-Ibrahim stall offers interesting horse shows for equestrian enthusiasts for a period of 9 days. The park offers the "Sand Acceleration," a car sand race that takes place on the park's square. The tracking challenge, another car race that takes place on a rugged and muddy track, usually witness the presence of a very large number of young people. There are various youth events in the park as the best overland gathering contest. The 15 km Jubba road becomes a camel and hygienic arena, offering folklore, camels, and a number of popular arts performances, turning it into a track of performances. The Challenge of the Chass performed as well on the 15 km Jubba road, the activity of the rise of sand bites and break the time barrier. The event will also feature a number of special events. The different participants offer a daily draw at valuable visitors' awards. There are also many interesting celebrations, entertaining shows, challenging contests, and entertainment accompanying the Ha'il International Annual Rally.

2.2.5. Ha'il summer festival

This is a popular summer festival offering a range of fun activities such as live performances and games. Visitors can also check out the wide range of arts and crafts displays, business-networking facilities, cafes, and restaurants (Beaver, 2002;

Goeldner and Ritchie, 2007; McLean and Hurd, 2011). It is a one-month-long festival aimed at all the segments of the society featuring a number of cultural, social, entertainment activities, heritage, and sporting events. The festival takes place at various social centers such as the Al-Maghawah amusement park, Rowshan Exhibition Center, Assamra resort and park, Salama Mall, and Samah Center, in addition, public parks, which started from the second day of Eid al-Fitr until the end of Shawwal. All these events were organized by the secretariat of the Ha'il region during the summer. Ha'il region has seen for years having a huge turnout by residents of Ha'il and visitors from Other Saudi regions and abroad (McLean and Hurd, 2011). The Ha'il summer program includes a number of different events, which are dedicated to families, including the families of local products given well-equipped shops free of charge with all the services for their support and encouragement, as well as sports completions such as cycling, Fig. 9a, and Fig. 9b. The shops varied between handicrafts and popular dishes and women's photography studios, earning them a handsome amount of money. The activities of the festival host a number of celebrities, artists, and poets participate in the summer nights attracting a great number of visitors. The activities include diversified and multiple children's activities. These activities vary from children's theater, water, aerobic and electric games, in addition to photography. Those who are interested in heritage antiques and collections go for where they are displayed. Activities extend to include amusement parks, shopping centers, entertainment places, and hotels. The region hosts a large number of visitors who annually come to the festival.

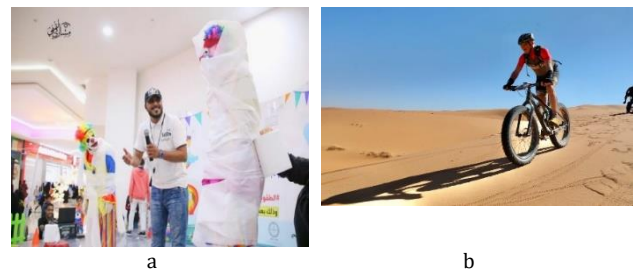


Fig. 9: a) The Ha'il summer program includes a number of different events as equipped shops free of charge with all the services for their support and encouragement; b) The Ha'il summer program includes a number of different events as sports completions such as cycling

2.2.6. Rea'a resort

One of the most luxurious resorts in the Kingdom, where all the requirements for conferences, weddings, and forums are available. The resort is located on the first road from the western side of Ha'il. The VIP Resort is of an elegant design, stunning ideas owned by the businessman Mohammed al-Amim. The resort is a convenient place for meetings of companies, banks, and government departments' personnel as the dining hall, which can

accommodate 100 people, is enough for each one of them, Fig. 10a and Fig. 10b.

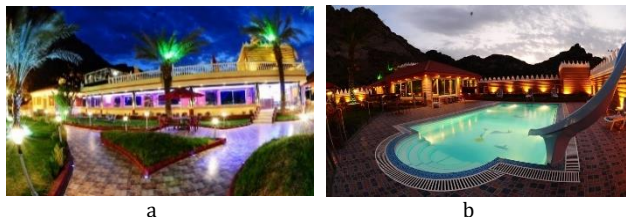


Fig. 10: a) Rea'a Resort is one of the most luxurious resorts in the Kingdom; b) The resort is a convenient place for meetings of companies, banks, and government departments' personnel

2.2.7. Faid urban heritage

Faid urban heritage site located in the southeast of Ha'il, 130 km from the city of Ha'il, the oldest settlement in the Arabian Peninsula (Lew et al., 2008). It is the home of Assad and Tayy tribes in the pre-Islamic era. It is a tourism, archaeological and historical site 1300 years ago, covering an area of about 1.5 km long and 1.5 km in width. The archaeological remains of the different Islamic heritage and vestiges, such as Kharash Palace, Zubaidah ponds, old houses, and the giant mill for grinding grains, wells, and fort walls, are still there, Fig. 11a and Fig. 11b. The reasons for the destruction of this city and its destruction, despite its historical importance, dates back to the ninth century AD by the Qarmatians. Faid was previously one of the states of the Abbasid Caliphate and considered the most important pilgrim stations along the Zubaida route named after the wife of the Caliph Harun al-Rashid to be a route to the Haj from Kufa to Mecca to facilitate the path of pilgrims. Kharash Archaeological Palace is one of the most important archeological discoveries in the city of Faid. The palace was built for the city's governor on an area of 80 meters by 130 meters out of black stones with a defensive fortress. The remains of the castle located at the northeastern end of the Faid archeological fortress. The entrance is probably located on the southern side, where many rooms, the old city mosque, traces of two wells, and visitors residents. Faid archeological fortress surrounded by a wall from the south side of the fortress extending 115 meters from east to west. The thickness of the walls is two meters and two meters deep. There are three semi-circular towers supporting the wall from the outside. Adjacent to the wall and on the northern side of the western part of the fence, there are two rooms with a courtyard and an entrance. Vestiges of old houses located on top of hills on the north side of the valley of Faid, which are a collection of old houses with simple designs, along with a collection of old architectural foundations, of which only parts remain as a historical landmark of the place. The Islamic urban heritage of the city of Faid along the Zubaydah route is among the most significant sites of the Abbasid Caliphate. Not far from Faid, the town of Shannan, from which a road branched eastward to

Jabal Salma. It is a large volcanic crater. Locals believe that the tomb of Anatra Ibn Shaddad is located in the middle of Jabal Salma and on the same road to the west.



Fig. 11: a) The archaeological remains of the different Islamic heritage and vestiges, such as Kharash Palace; b) The archaeological remains of the different Islamic heritage and vestiges, such as old houses

2.2.8. A'irif castle

A'irif Castle is an ancient fortress located in the heart of the Ha'il region of northern Saudi Arabia above the top of a 650-meter high mountain known as A'irif Mountain overlooking the city from the southern side, after which the castle named Fig. 12a and Fig. 12b. The castle built for monitoring whoever is coming towards the castle considered as one of the most important cultural monuments in the region of Ha'il. The castle was constructed out of stone, mud bricks, and clay during the reign of the Al Ali Dynasty in 1260 AH to undergo reforms to come out of additions and annexes during the era of the Rashid family until it reached its current form during the reign of the modern Saudi Kingdom regime. The castle was used for the sighting of the Ramadan moon and for the firing of the Iftar gun. Built on a mountain peak, the castle is seen from anywhere in Ha'il. Local visits and tourism delegations to the fortress are organized, especially during the month of Ramadan. The castle was built on an area of 40 meters by 11 meters. A'irif Castle nowadays becomes a historical museum known as the A'irif Castle surrounded by towers. Its significance lies in its distinct architectural style.

It consists of an entrance on the southern side, then the mosque in the center of the castle. The castle consists of prayer places, toilets, warehouses, and other facilities that enabled citizens to stay for long periods.

2.2.9. Barzan palace towers and the historical great Barzan Mosque

It was the governance palace for Al Ali and then Al Rashid dynasties located in the northern Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's city of Ha'il. Barzan means "prominent" as the Palace was the tallest among other surrounded buildings at that time. The elegant Barzan Palace two towers surrounding it that stand adjacent to the historical Great Barzan Mosque. The Palace was built in 1808 CE by Prince Mohamed ibn Abdel Mohsen Al Ali, the second ruler from Al Ali, Fig. 13a and Fig. 13b.



Fig. 12: a) A'irif Castle is an ancient fortress located in the heart of Ha'il region of northern Saudi Arabia; b) A'irif Mountain overlooking the city from the southern side, after which the castle named

Dynasty in Ha'il. The Palace was built in the eighteenth century AD and was the origin of the Ali family; later on, the family of Rashid removed them from power to become the center of government and became a home for them under the reign of Abdullah Ali al-Rasheed. The height of the Barzan Palace in Ha'il could reach a height of seventy feet with a large area exceeding three hundred thousand square meters. The palace consists of three floors. On the ground floor, there were salons, in addition to gardens and kitchens, and the second floor consisted of guest rooms that continuously visit the Palace and the third floor inhabited by the ruling family. In 1834, Abdullah al-Ali al-Rashid and his brother Obeid succeeded in seizing power decided to take Barzan's palace as the headquarters of their emirate in the city of Ha'il while rebuilding many of its parts to become the main center of government. Later on became a residence for the family of the Rashid family, the ruling family at this time. During the reign of Prince Muhammad bin Abdullah bin Ali Al-Rashid, the fifth ruler from 1873 to 1897, Barzan witnessed the construction of the Barzan Great Mosque in addition to a huge wall around the Ha'il city. The Barzan Great Mosque in Ha'il is historically the oldest in the region, founded in 1318 AH. It dates back to be built nearly 200 years ago of mud bricks to be renewed and rebuilt in 1400 AH by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs nearly 40 years ago, to accommodate more than 4,000 people.



Fig. 13: a) The elegant Barzan Palace two towers surrounding it stands adjacent to the historical Great Barzan Mosque; b) The Palace built in 1808 CE by Prince Mohamed ibn Abdel Mohsen Al Ali, the second ruler from Al Ali

2.2.10. Al-Hait

It is one of the most significant cultural sites in the Ha'il region. It is composed of two types of Urban Heritages and vestiges. The first includes traditional heritage buildings, which consist of a group of houses and palaces; the second includes archeological sites that contain the ruins of the walls or "Al-Hait" of the old Al-Hait town, which was famous for its huge walls, built of stones. Al-Hait is one of the oldest towns in the region of Ha'il, Fig. 14a and Fig. 14b. It dates back to 200 BC. It was known as "Fadak," an ancient town that remains in ruins. The town of Al-Hait is located at the south-west of the city of Ha'il, about 250 km at the middle distance towards Medina. There are many archaeological sites. Al-Hait in Arabic is the name for the wall.

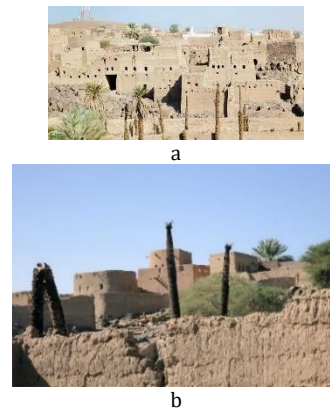


Fig. 14: a) "Al-Hait" of the old Al-Hait town, which was famous for its huge walls, built of stones; b) Al-Hait is one of the oldest towns in the region of Ha'il

2.2.11. The popular market

The popular market in Barzan district, one of the oldest popular markets in Ha'il. The market is located in the heart of the city, where it represents a vital commercial center frequented by visitors from everywhere. Despite being very old, the market is still maintaining its significance in terms of availability of goods of all kinds such as women's and children's traditional clothes, perfumes, and food products by Ha'il women and girls, Fig. 15a and Fig. 15b. The market is one of the most prominent markets in the region, made for visitors and tourists. It has the necessities that families need and enjoy, especially the native Ha'il region. The Barzan market is an integrated market in terms of availability of all the consumer requests goods, with great interest by the Saudi Commission of Tourism and National Heritage (SCTNH) private and the municipality. It is noteworthy that the new market in its present situation was rebuilt in 1434 AH.

2.2.12. Ha'il regional museum

The Ha'il Regional Museum is located in an area of 10,000m² containing various halls with its celebrating and welcoming main entrance, Fig. 16a and Fig. 16b. The Natural and Geological History Hall

displays samples of the region's rocks and focuses on mining sites and environmental heritage in the Ha'il region.



Fig. 15: a) The old popular market in Barzan; b) Despite being very old, the market is still maintaining its significance in terms of availability of goods of all kinds

Pre-Islam Hall displays collections that start from the Stone Age to the Pre-Islamic Age, such as stone tools, pottery, and panels of inscriptions and petroglyphs, in addition to pictures that describe each period of the Pre-Islamic Age. Ha'il through Islamic History Hall displays the stages of Prophet Muhammad's migration to Medina, the Rightly Guided Caliphs era, and the successive periods, in addition to displaying texts, images, and manuscripts dating back to that period. Ha'il Heritage Hall displays the heritage aspect of the region through traditional industries, including clothes, jewelry, housewares, and agriculture tools. Ha'il in the Saudi Era Hall displays the journey of Ha'il in joining the Saudi rule, the region's people participation in unifying the Kingdom, and Hail's successive princes. Education in Ha'il Hall illustrates the start of formal education and the first schools in the region, in addition to displaying a collection of old books, films, and messages. The Museum is enriched with an extensive collection including Stone Age tools and archeological artifacts, weaponry and manuscripts, antique coins, and petroglyphs from the nearby UNESCO World Heritage Site (Winder, 2008).



Fig. 16: a) The Ha'il Regional Museum located on an area of 10,000m² containing various halls; b) The Ha'il Regional Museum located on an area of 10,000 m² containing various halls with its celebrating and welcoming main entrance

2.2.13. The museum of "I found traces of the past"

The museums do not have scientific control and official and formal documentation in most cases, unlike official and governmental museums (McLean and Hurd, 2011); it is rare to use their contents in scientific research and historical documentation unless their holdings have documents that prove their history scientifically correspond to the existing with similar holdings in scientific institutions and

national museums. Some of these museums are materially supported by States, sponsored when they have the seriousness of work and the value of their archaeological holdings. The majority of private museums-especially small ones-are not recognized by the International Council of Museums because those responsible are mostly non-specialists, and their holdings are not scientifically and professionally documented. The Saudi Commission for Tourism and Antiquities (SCTA) is interested in private museums, supporting its owners, granting them licenses to perform their duties under its umbrella without charge, and providing support and marketing services to these museums. The Saudi Shoura Council also approved the draft of the Antiquities, Museums, and Urban Heritage System, which includes organizing the work of these museums, licensing regulations, and means of supporting them, and allowing people to establish cultural heritage, or scientific museums representing cultural and investment projects. The Authority also contributes to the marketing of the private museums and their introduction into tourist paths and routes (Long, 1997), and promotes them in the publications of the Commission and its electronic means; helps museum owners to restore artifacts when they need restoration, to record and document their holdings and to train them in programs and courses. The Commission provides material support to special museums that meet the conditions of support, as well as support their claims with government and private funding sources for subsidies or loans for the development of museums (McLean and Hurd, 2011). Hail has a good number of amateur collectors, most notably Mr. Hamoud bin Mubarak al-Mu'aيلي, who maintains a weekly market for the exchange of heritage holdings. Hail region also has a relatively large number of private museums to 25 private museums. All these Museums are licensed by the General Commission for Tourism and Antiquities in Ha'il, whereas there are many awaiting licensing. There are seven of them containing hundreds of diversified collections (Long, 1997); The Museum of "I found traces of the past," Al Dhuwaili Heritage, Al Naif ArcheologicalPalace, Aja and Salma Museum, Al-Thuwaini Museum, Museum of the Bride of the North and Shannan Governorate Museum. The research will only consider 3 as exemplars out of the seven museums due to their diversified collections.

This first private Museum owned by Mr. Khalid bin Homoud Al-matrod to contain many artifacts and traditional tools such as house tools, weapons, and some clothes, used in those days. It was built more than 70 years ago and represented the typical traditional design of old Ha'il homes with a total area of 1,300 square meters. The museum consists of various halls such as the Natural and Geological History Hall, the Old Ages Hall, the Ha'il through Islamic History Hall (McLean and Hurd, 2011), the Ha'il Heritage Hall, Ha'il in the Saudi Era Hall, and Education in Ha'il Hall. Al-matrod is a visual artist, a photographer, a professional in the field of heritage, and a museum owner who is influenced by the past.

This museum is located in the south of A'irif Castle. It contains unique exhibits of specific heritage quality, each of which takes you to the history and events of the time that have remained in this museum to acquaint the coming generations with the glory of the history and splendors of Ha'il. The museum is a heritage building estimated to be more than 100 years old (Lew et al., 2008). It consists of more than 10 rooms, two guest houses, and a large courtyard. It has a shop for sale and purchase of vestige pieces. The museum displays more than 2,000 rare vestige pieces, which are distributed throughout the museum's corridors. The museum of "I found traces of the past" is participating in the tourist activism that serves the region. The museum also reminds the present generation of the status and value of the ancestors, Fig. 17a and Fig. 17b.

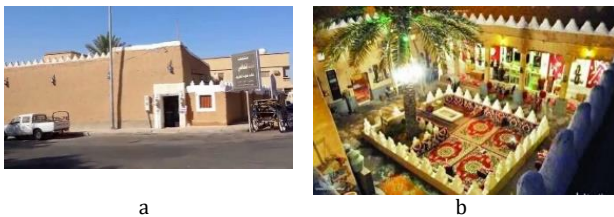


Fig. 17: a) The museum of "I found traces of the past" is participating in the tourist activism that serves the region; b) The museum also remind the present generation of the status and value of the ancestors

2.2.14. Al Dhuwaili heritage

The second private Al Dhuwaili Heritage museum is located inside a two-story modern building with an area of 500m² owned by Hamid bin Mohammed Al-Ghafili Alshammry. The museum contains a hall for Ha'il kitchen and halls for agricultural tools, weapons, coins, blacksmith and carpentry tools; a hall for Ha'il local textiles and handicrafts; a courtyard where some of Hail's famous crops are cultivated; a shack; a well; and some old cars, Fig. 18a and Fig. 18b. The museum contains a rare and precious exhibition hall, as well as several sections with vaulted roofs, where all objects displayed under these domes as the water cauldrons, leather bags, and vases of pottery to cool the water to drink. There are some seats reserved for the elderly, women, and the handicapped, as well as a buffet room to provide some Ha'ili local drinks and food for visitors. There is also a Ha'ili local settee for the official reception of the guests, which includes coffee tools, a set of weapons, and tools of war. This local settee served with ancient and valuable heritage carpets.

2.2.15. Al Naif archeological palace

The third museum is the Al Naif Archeological Palace private museum, comprised of a spacious ground floor that is divided into seven sections of various areas. The museum houses approximately 2165 items. The collections include some old clothes, ornaments, and women's toiletries, as well as sewing

tools, leather goods such as leatherware, and many copper tools such as coffee tools for drinking water.

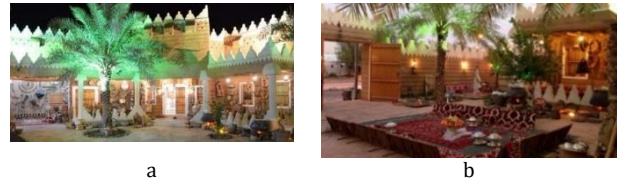


Fig. 18: a) The second private Al Dhuwaili Heritage museum is located inside a two-story modern building with an area of 500m² owned by Hamid bin Mohammed Al-Ghafili Alshammry; b) The museum contains a hall for Ha'il kitchen and halls

The museum's display system is varied with glass display cabinets, stands, shelves, and cupboards. Heavy lizard and zebra copper pieces were displayed on the ground. The pieces are displayed and distributed according to function and material. The Al Naif Palace Museum was founded by Saud bin Naif bin Ateeq al-Ramali Al-Shammry. The museum collections are displayed in glass cabinets, racks, shelves, and cupboards. The researchers had the opportunity to visit the Museum to see all the displayed collections in the seven sections (Long, 1997), Fig. 19a, and Fig. 19b.



Fig. 19: a) The Al Naif Palace Museum founded by Saud bin Naif bin Ateeq al-Ramali Al-Shammry; b) The researchers had the opportunity to visit the Museum to see all the displayed collections in the seven sections

2.2.16. Al Rajhi mosque

The Sheikh Sulaiman Al Rajhi Mosque in Hail is the largest and only mosque of its kind in the northern region, Fig. 20a and Fig. 20b. It was built in the famous Turkish Islamic style on an area of 17,300 square meters. This mosque has a 7500 square meter vault and more than 120 indoor parking spaces. The mosque has four minarets that reach a height of about eighty meters each. It has an interpretation room for Friday prayers in several different languages. It has a section for women in the northern part that can accommodate more than 1,000 women. There is a public library rich in Islamic books. There are a number of cultural and social activities necessary for people of different ages and sex. It is an integrated cultural center and a landmark of the city of Hail. As the privacy required, the design took into account the complete separation between pedestrian circulation and car traffic. Therefore underground parking spaces were provided to accommodate about 600 cars. The building complex also houses the Imam and Muazzin residences, with separate and isolated entrances

with a total area of 500 square meters on two floors to achieve maximum privacy. The Sheikh Sulaiman Al Rajhi Mosque in Hail is the largest and only mosque of its kind in the northern region.

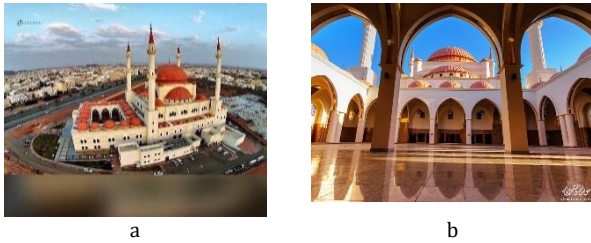


Fig. 20: a) The Sheikh Sulaiman Al Rajhi Mosque in Hail is the largest and only mosque of its kind in the northern region; b) It was built in the famous Turkish Islamic style on an area of 17,300 square meters

3. Conclusions and Recommendation

Saudi Arabia has great potential for the international tourism industry not only restricted to Hajj and Umrah as religious tourism making up the bulk of visitors to the country.

There are many sites (17 sites, some of them are new sites) in Hail city that can be considered as tourist sites that should be added to the map of Saudi kingdom tourism map, e.g., Al Naif Archeological Palace and Al Rajhi Mosque, etc.

The need to adopt a plan that would be backed by law making Hail a hotspot for the attraction of both international tourist

Promoting tourism would also help in diversifying from the oil-based economy that is already seen as declining due to the crash in oil prices and the need for a sustainable economy that really take action against climate change. This could be clearly seen as the vision 2030 shows support for such a sustainable industry.

Encouraging the stakeholders in the tourist industry through collaboration and holding various sessions that would see local, national, and international come together and see how the industry can prosper by sharing knowledge on pros and cons via experience gained over the years.

People working to develop the tourism industry should be focused on the media by creating TV, Radio, and all other Social Media tourism programs, especially those managed, directed and followed by the government.

The culture and significance of tourism should be incorporated in school curricula as early as the nursery, primary, intermediate and secondary level reaching to university level where tourism programs should be encouraged and career opportunities for graduates should be abundantly provided in SCTH,

Research papers shedding light on the tourism industry and on the different ways and means to boost the industry should be encouraged and most significantly seeks the implementation of their

realistic and practical recommendations at the various aspects ranging from religious to cultural and recreational focusing on the entertainment attraction that the Kingdom so much lacking.

Football and other contest at a local, national, and international level should be held in tourist sites.

An increment inbound tourism spending should be made to meet the flow of tourists and to motivate them.

Compliance with ethical standards

Conflict of interest

The author(s) declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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