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Islamic Tourism and Sustainable Development: From Utopia to Reality

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Tourism is a key player in development, and an valuable factor of solidarity and dynamism in international exchanges. It is a flourishing sector, and one of the largest industries in the world; in many regions, it is the only major source of investment and employment. It is also one of the main vehicles for the construction and promotion of the image of a country as a whole. In this perspective, it is pertinent to ask what the vision of Islam is and how do the proposed answers link with tourism, development and nature conservation. This Islamic kind of tourism which is aimed at families, which maintains the customs and traditions of Islam, has begun to establish itself firmly on the world stage, although it still remains limited. It seeks to maintain an 'ideal' tourism that looks for entertainment around nature and complex modern infrastructures, without violating the customs and traditions of Islamic 'Shariah' that many families remain attached to. To what extent is this type of tourism consistent with sustainable development? And more importantly, what is the vision of Islam regarding tourism? Through this work, we will attempt to answer these questions and related issues.

We cannot pretend that this work is the ideal proof of the close relationship between Islamic tourism and sustainable development. But this a theoretical contribution to understand this type of tourism, and a demonstration of how it might be manifest in a practical and physical form.

Key Words: Islamic tourism, sustainable development, precepts of Islam, natural environment

Introduction

Humans need in their life pleasure and moral comfort, because daily life generates stress and fatigue and even feelings of boredom and lassitude due to work, and the repetition of the same rhythm of life. Tourism has shown that it reacts in a dynamic symbiosis with modern societies. The development of tourism in national and international stages has generally been considered a positive phenomenon because it puts people in contact with each other (O.I.C, 2008). The most optimistic opinion wants to see it as a vehicle for bringing people together.

Tourism is big business. It is one of the largest industries in the world and in many areas, the only major source of investment and employment and one of the main vectors for the construction and promotion of the image of a country. One can no longer ignore, on a macro scale, the cumulative effects of tourism on sites, regions, habitats, nor can one ignore these effects on the micro scale of individuals and families; thus, this is the engine of sustainable development (Turrent,

2007, Thwaites *et al.*, 2007). This engine is marked by a dual effect: first it creates jobs, wealth and contributes to the well-being and social cohesion, but if it is poorly controlled, it can threaten social, economic and environmental balances. Considering that tourism is a social activity, the sector induces reflexes, attitudes and modes of behaviour that may conflict with Islamic values (Armstrong K., 2002). Arab-Muslim countries have noble ethical, human, moral and family values that surely have significant meaning for the Muslim tourist (Aziz, 2001). The latter is in search of three types of comfort: rest, relaxation and especially intimacy which form precepts of our religion, as Islam is a religion of peace, tolerance and beauty (Raymond A., 1994).

In this paper we discuss the thorny issue of Islamic tourism and how it links with sustainable development and its components, and we set out to highlight the interaction between tourism, faith and sustainable development through the development of a tourism project that is fully in compliance with the concepts of Islam (Al-Hamarneh, 2008). In this sense, Islam

through the Qur'an and Sunnah provides answers to the relevant questions and those relating to environmental management, because God has planned everything for the good of his creatures. The Almighty said: 'We have neglected nothing in the Book' (Surat Al an'am – The Cattle, 38) (Holy Quran 2002).

Islam and Tourism

The verses of the Quran cited below from the chapters named in brackets endorse travelling with a view to achieving spiritual, physical and social goals. (Kadir, 1989, Zamani-Farahani *et al.*, 2009)

Allah says:

Travel in the land and see how (Allah) originated the creation (Surat AlAnkabut – The Spider, 20) (Holy Quran 2002).

Travel has a privileged position in the world of Islamic life, as many Quranic verses and quotes stress its necessity and importance, since travel has crucial implications for various aspects of the perfection of human beings. Among the consequences that accredit the incentive of Islam in the journey, there are the positive effects that the traveller feels as they move through different sites. Indeed, the fact of moving and observing monuments and reflecting on the subjects of ancient civilizations as well as the mysteries of creation, and identifying the signs of Allah Almighty, has a profound impact on the development of intellectual faculties of the human spirit. Travel also helps to acquire knowledge, experience to identify codes of ethics, customs and traditions of other nations, in addition to the contribution of travel to strengthen the integrity of the individual both physically and spiritually (Bogari *et al.*, 2004).

Types of travel according to Islamic classification

Religious travel

This class of travel can be divided into several sections including:

- Travel to visit holy places in Islam (Mecca and Medina) to perform the pilgrimage (Hajj and Umra).
- Family travel: to visit family members or friends and to visit the sick.
- Travel to spread Islamic faith, advise people and help them find the right path.

- Travel to ponder the verses of Allah and to identify natural phenomena and mystery of life.
- Travel to fight evil and save the oppressed or fight against injustice and tyranny.
- Travel and migration of people fearing for their lives or fearing retaliation and injustice against their religion.

Scientific and investigative travel

This type of trip is for the purpose of acquiring and spreading knowledge. These trips that include religious and moral objectives have a sacred purpose, and are considered by Islam as part of the religion. Several Quranic verses and words of the Prophet Mohammed mention these types of trips and make and promise rewards for them.

Business travel

This is a journey which allows one to make a living out of travel.

Tourism travel

This is a journey designed to see historical monuments and get to know the culture of other peoples and their customs, so as to contemplate the beautiful journey and wonders of the world. This trip is to change the pace of life, forget about daily tasks, and, for a person exposed to the monotony and stress of work to reinvigorate himself both spiritually and physically.

Political and diplomatic travel

This trip is intended to strengthen the potential of Muslims and the Muslim community, so as to build political ties between Muslims and other nations.

Illicit trips

Despite the importance it gives to the virtues of travel around the world, Islam bans certain types of travel

Figure 1. Relations between Islam and tourism

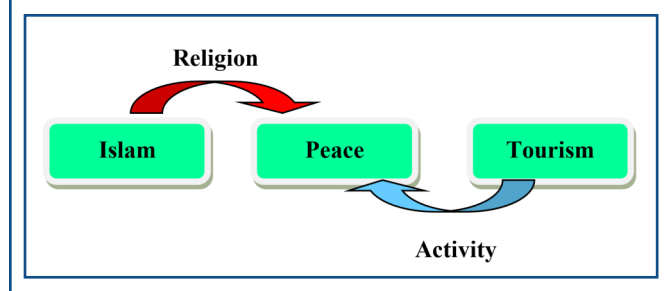
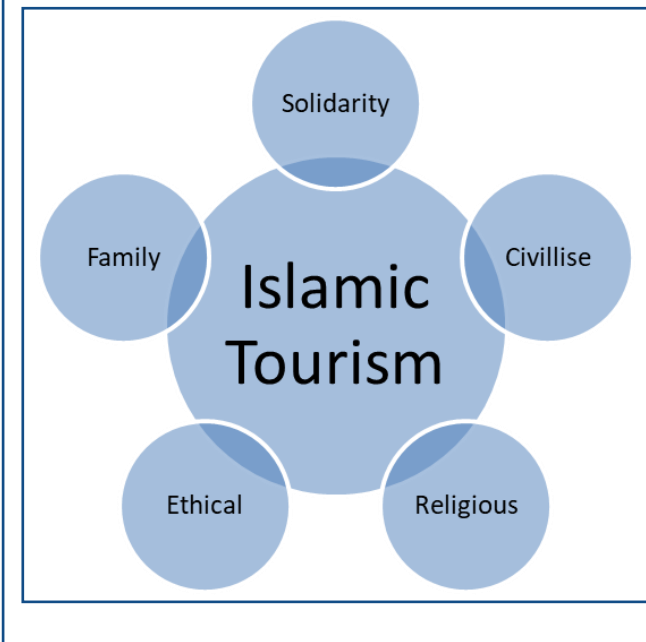


Figure 2. The constituents of Islamic tourism

performed for illicit purposes, as well as those which aim at learning a sin, or those which harm the Muslim faith.

Islamic Tourism

Allah says:

He it is Who has made the earth subservient to you (i.e. easy for you to walk, to live and to do agriculture on it); so walk in the path thereof and eat of His provision. And to Him will be the Resurrection (Surat Al-Mulk-, 15) (Holy Quran 2002).

Islamic tourism is intended for families that maintain the customs and traditions of Islam, and is a trend that has begun to firmly establish itself on the world stage of tourism.

The difference between Islamic and religious tourism

Religious tourism includes visits to holy sites at various specific times throughout the year (Bhardwaj, 2011). On the other hand, Islamic tourism includes all kinds of family tourism which respect religious teachings, as well as tourism aimed at discovery of ancient civilizations and their heritage, cities and countries, to explore sites and monuments, to relax, have fun, health care, sports etc. So Islamic tourism is much broader than religious tourism.

The principles of Islamic Tourism

Tourism from an Islamic point of view fits into the overall vision of civilised tourism, the main foundations of which are:

- Respect for noble and ethical human values that preserve human dignity and pride.
- Respect for the natural environment and society.
- Respect for families of different religions and different people who want to preserve their values and those of their children's education.
- Respect for people observing Islamic values; this may prohibit certain behaviours permitted by other societies that adopt the principles of freedom and democracy, without limits or regulations.
- The support of social solidarity by ensuring local people benefit from tourism.
- The effort to allow all people to benefit from the right to tourism, offering services at reasonable prices to all segments of society.

The requirements of Islamic Tourism

The path leading to the recognition of 'Islamic Tourism' has been long and hard. It required a leap into the unknown. Today there is a gradual recognition of the importance of this type of tourism. The dominant current terminology is 'halal' in relation to aspects such as halal tourism, hotels, airlines and food (Samori *et al.*, 2016). This type of tourism also requires building infrastructure (transportation, hotels, restaurants) in addition to respecting the ethics, morals and values of Islamic and family tourism (Battourab, 2014, Riyad Eid, 2015).

There is awareness that the hospitality industry can easily develop a large number of properties and destinations purely based on Islamic culture. These new brands will deliver all the traditional values and customs to accommodate authentic experiences for Muslims traveling alone or with their families. However, the real challenge is to provide a total environment that is rich enough to afford comfort, luxury, and a new global standard of quality yet conservative enough in taste to maintain the aesthetic and spiritual balances and labels so cherished by Muslims. The Arab world needs sites where Muslims heavily invested in the culture and practice of Islam would be totally at ease, with all aspects of their holiday / stay. It is not simply a matter of creating Islamic hotel brands but also a need to develop an

overall Islam-compatible hospitality and recreation industry.

Islamic Tourism and Sustainable Development

These two concepts, Islamic tourism and sustainable development, join each other to meet the aspirations of human beings while preserving life on earth in all its components. Thus humans should not be selfish but must consider the well-being of others as well as that of future generations.

Definition of sustainable development from an Islamic point of view

From an Islamic point of view, sustainable development is based on the balance that must exist between economic and social development on one hand and environmental development on the other (Saliem, 2002). It aims at good human resource management in the sense that humans have every right to exploit the natural resources bequeathed by God without claiming to own them. Humans need to ensure the needs of the present but not neglect those of future generations. With this definition, it is clear that sustainable development is a process that has multiple dimensions that it is based on good management of resources and takes into account future generations (Sabrina *et al.*, 2009, Thom *et al.*, 2010).

The environment and its components from an Islamic point of view

The environment is a place where humans interact with nature in order to support their livelihood. The interaction can be direct (action of people on their immediate environment) as it may be indirect (natural cycles of water or wind movements). Moreover, the environment is presented in three dimensions: ecological, socio-economic and socio-cultural. Humans interact therefore with three types of environment: the natural or original environments, the artificial environment (created by humans) and the social environment.

Foundations and advantages of sustainable development from an Islamic point of view

The concept of development refers to the establishment of people on earth. Allah says:

He brought you forth from the earth and settled you therein (Surat Hud – Prophet Hud, 61) (Holy Quran 2002).

This means that God encourages us to build on land and to control our environment.

The Islamic view is that humans are the master to whom God gave this land for settlement and work. Indeed, God chose humans over all other living entities and inspired them to reproduce, giving them the necessary strength. Allah has given everything that exists on earth to serve humans. Allah says:

Allah has subjected for you whatsoever is in the heavens and whatsoever is in the earth, and has completed and perfected His Graces upon you, (both) apparent (i.e. Islamic Monotheism, and the lawful pleasures of this world, including health, good looks, etc.) and hidden (Surat Luqman, 20) (Holy Quran 2002).

To humans then comes the task of taking care of this planet and to be responsible for its balance. Humans must not abuse the power that God has given them as natural resources do not belong to us. Rather, it is a person's duty to protect them as long as one exists on earth. Allah says:

Get down, one of you is an enemy to the other. On earth will be a dwelling place for you and an enjoyment for a time (Surat Al-Araf – The Heights (or The Walls with Elevations), 24) (Holy Quran 2002).

Islam recommends the faithful to refer to the Sharia and the principles of justice and consultation. For example, the Prophet Mohammed (may God grant him grace and peace) calls on the sparing use of water for washing and recommends Muslims not to waste water even if it is beside a flowing river. Since water is a shared resource, it should be developed and maintained. Islam warns against the irrational use of all natural resources in order to safeguard the ecological balance of the planet. Thus, Islam calls for restraint. Allah says

Thus We have made you a just nation, that you be witnesses over mankind and the Messenger be a witness over you (Surat Al-Baqarah – The Cow, 143) (Holy Quran 2002).

Islam prohibits squandering of resources. Allah says:

O Children of Adam! Take your adornment, while praying, and eat and drink but waste not by extravagance, certainly He (Allâh) likes not Al-Musrifûn (those who waste by extravagance) (Surat Al-Araf, 31) (Holy Quran 2002).

Furthermore, Islam promotes the idea of shared resources. Allah says

And inform them that the water is to be shared between (her and) them, each one's right to drink being established (Surat Al-Kamar, 28) (Holy Quran 2002).

Also, the Prophet considered it a major sin the act to relieve oneself in shady places frequented by people. He regarded many acts as acts of faith, for the good of humanity. Included in these acts are activities such as removing something harmful from the road, even a thorn, as an act of faith. These, and many other elements of Islam resonate with sustainability such as the sacralization of public goods; the protection of natural reserves and; charitable waqf

The rules of fiqh (the principles of Islamic law) are a sound basis for legislation in relation to sustainable development: the rule of just balance, the rule of precedence of avoiding evil over bringing benefit, the pre-eminence of public interest over private interest, the eradication of the sources of evil, common good.

Application of Islamic Principles in a Resort in Algeria

The work which follows in this paper was performed at the Department of Architecture at the University of Annaba (Algeria). The main objective of this work is to show that Islam is not opposed to tourism but, on the contrary, it encourages it by respecting nature.

The path to the application of Islamic tourism in the true sense of the term is challenging, and our goal is to

reach a kind of tourism that maintains Islamic values and guidelines and is in accordance with the principles of sustainable development. This tourism from the Islamic point of view fits into the overall vision of civilised, solidary, family, ethical and religious tourism.

In this proposed development of tourism, we have adopted a design approach that allows the formal and spatial materialisation of a new project, with modern architecture in a well-defined field. The passage of this approach to its implementation requires a conceptual and theoretical space which consists of three concepts which are:

Background

This includes the potential of the site, the various opportunities which the site presents and also its potential constraints.

Architectural program

This concept includes the critical functions and activities which are required to be included in the available space.

Style

This concept includes the language and architectural engagement with the site. This tourist resort is based on a number of key ideas that influence the style:

Figure 3. Hierarchy of spaces

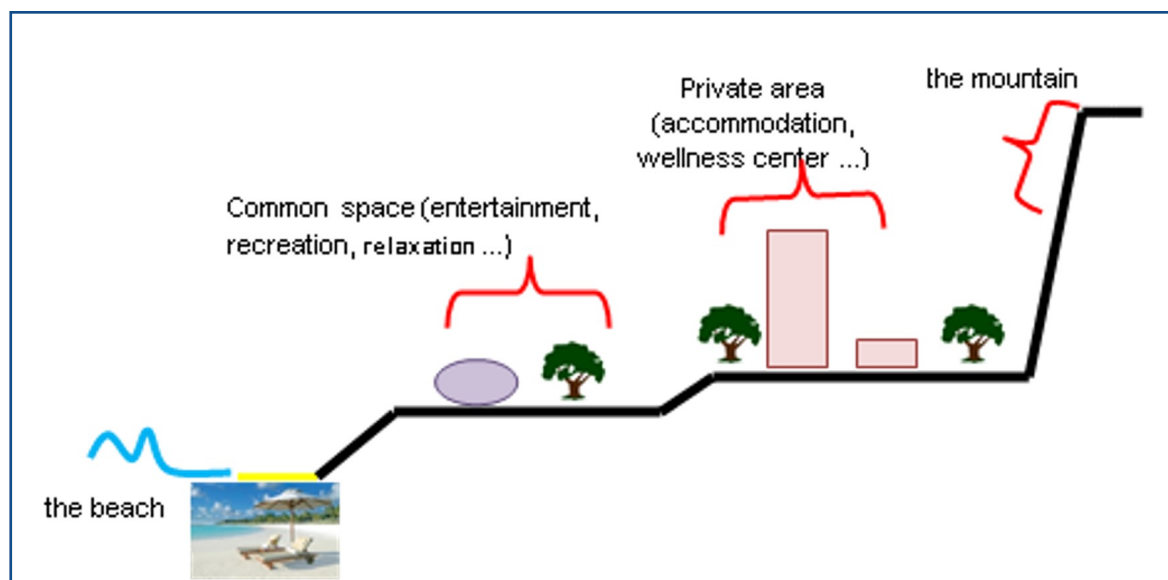
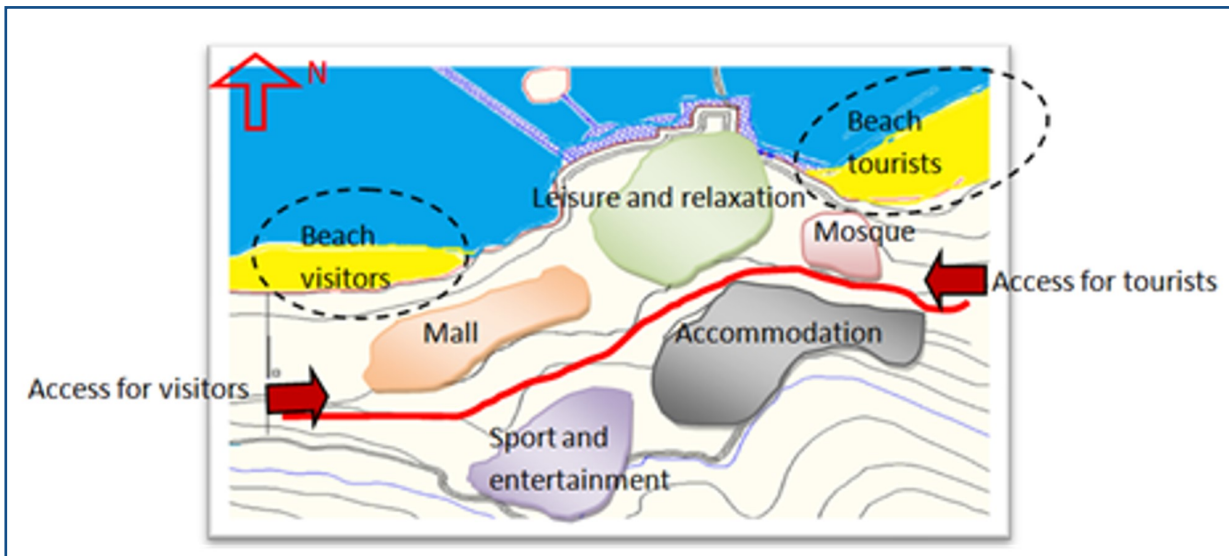


Figure 4. Point representation of the entities along a main axis parallel to the coastal axis



- The physical survey of land, which allows us to display its structural elements such as the line of force and relief, which divides the field into two parts: a lower section, with direct access to two beaches and a higher section,
- The social structure of our resort will take into account the concept of usability, through communication, as our religion is a religion of exchange and communication,
- Islamic tourism which we will highlight in the spatial organization is based on the principles already mentioned.

Design of the ground plane

The first thing that must be available in an Islamic tourist complex is an enclosure that maintains security and control of the complex. In our example, this enclosure is made in the north by the sea and by the mountains from the other sides. This natural boundary is strengthened by a vegetation wall.

The overall project is based on a linear design and punctuated by the spatial organisation of the key entities of the project, along an axis marked by a boulevard. The latter is considered a distribution channel providing access to services and various entities of the complex, while creating animation and activity.

The elements that are common to tourist and visitor entertainment and recreation include leisure and relaxation spaces i.e. space for water games, theatre, swimming pool, shopping centre etc. These are located

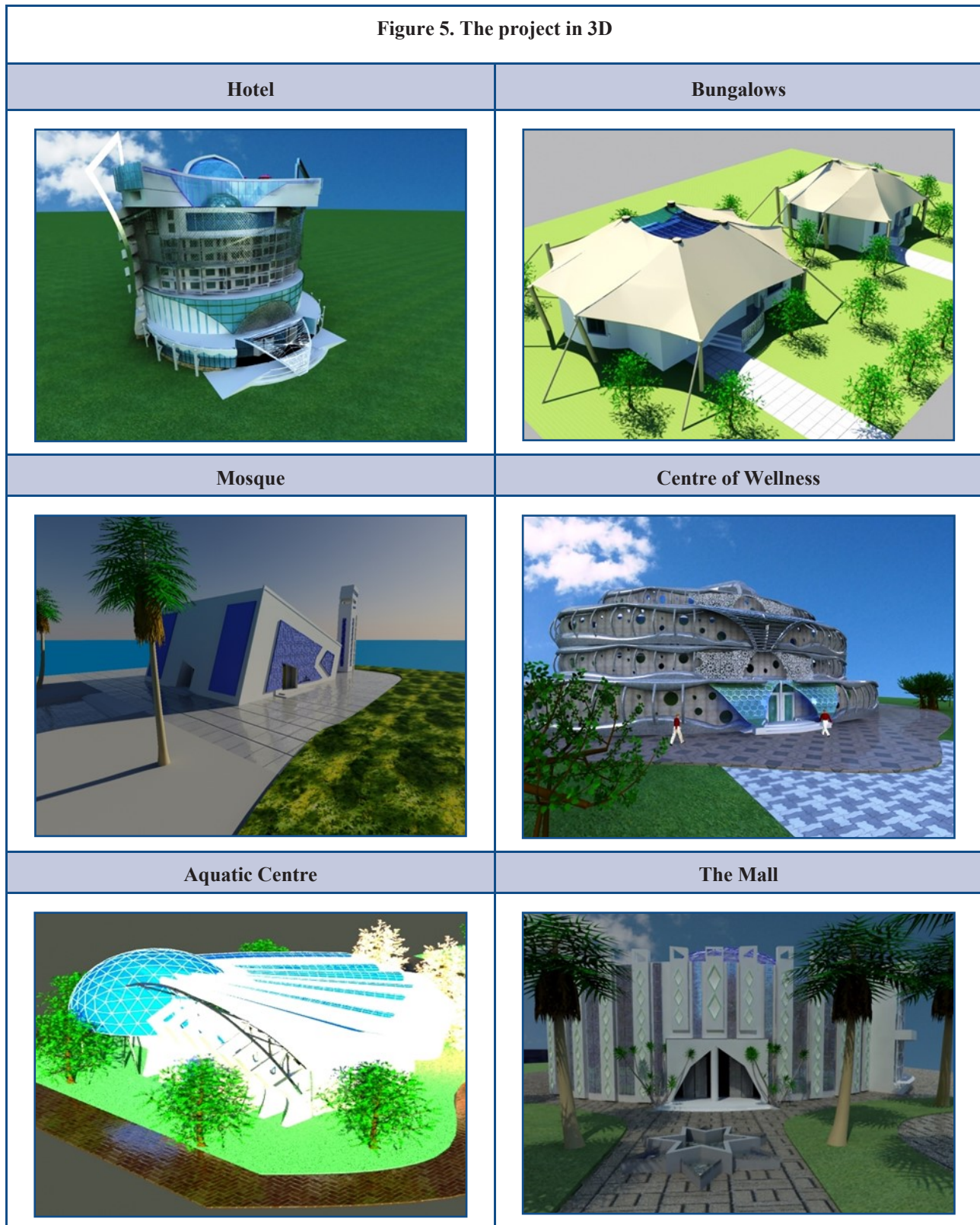
on the lower levels to make the most of the panoramic views and connected to the two beaches by the core pathway - however one beach is reserved for residents of the complex (the tourists) and the other is for use by more casual visitors (See Figures 3 & 4). The central connection between these zones and the various components of the complex is provided by green spaces and pedestrian routes to allow for security and calm, especially due to the presence of children in the complex.

Formal and architectural aspects

To create consistency and harmony between the main entities of the complex we have outline the basic type and forms of each entity (see Figure 5).

Worship: One of the principles of Islamic Tourism is respect for religious teachings and preserving the dignity and pride of Muslim tourists. The mosque is a core element in our project. The shape and volume of the latter have been inspired by the prostration of Muslims, the prayer hall is formed by the body of the Muslim while the Mihrab is formed by their head.

Accommodation: The accommodation is a person's home during their vacation. It is a place of freedom and family life, which extends the role of this facility to include community life. Taking account of this, the hotel and the bungalows must meet the needs of the typical Algerian family, characterised by their family size and traditions. The accommodation is located on the highest section of the site is separated from the daily flow of activity and animated space.

Figure 5. The project in 3D

The Wellness Centre: The wellness centre is located in the upper part of the complex (private), next to the accommodation, to retain the intimacy of Muslim tourists since this Centre is intended for them.

The Mall: This is a common building for both visitors and tourists. It is located on the lower terraces of the site, next to a series of restaurants and cafeterias (dinning section).

Aquatic Centre: The aquatic and leisure structure is located in the lower section and directly overlooks the two beaches and marina, thereby offering enjoyable panoramic views.

Technical approach

In the design we took into account the principles of sustainable development as the choice of structure types, the nature of construction materials, the inclusion of a facility for the desalination of sea water and the recycling of wastewater. This is especially critical because they are fundamental elements in the implementation and realisation of the project.

Conclusions

Islamic tourism is a growing trend, and the Islamic world needs to install new spaces, as it is difficult for a travelling Muslim to find a hotel or a place where Muslims can follow their principles easily.

Most countries, with a Muslim population do not have the infrastructure to meet the needs of these families - with the exception of some countries such as Malaysia and Turkey. Islamic tourism as a product which is experiencing rapid expansion, requires the building of new infrastructure which respects the ethics, morals, family and religious values of potential travellers, while conserving nature and the principles of sustainable development that Islam encourages its followers to respect.

Our thinking in this design project is based on the well-being of Muslim tourist families. We hope to have a favourable response to this type of tourism, and our paper is an attempt to conceptually respond to the needs of these tourists and contribute to the preservation of nature and the dissemination of the concept of sustainable development.

The application of the precepts of Islam in terms of morals and guidance has a direct effect on the relationship of the Muslim and their environment. The dogmatic Islamic laws have encouraged the emergence of environmental values among Muslims, as well as the flourishing of an Islamic architecture which interacts with the environment and its key components.

At a time when sustainable development and respect for nature have become an important element for selling tourism products, Islam requires believers to safeguard the planet through preservation of fauna and flora, and considers this not only as an act of consciousness, civics and marketing, but also as a religious duty which is worthy of divine retribution if disobeyed.

Through the example of the proposed Islamic touristic complex, we want to show the possibility to offer practicing Muslims who are anxious not to override the principles of their religion, a harmonious environment where the foundations of sustainable development are complied with.

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