



A STUDY OF GARDEN LANDSCAPE OF TAJ MAHAL

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Abstract

Landscape architecture is the art of manipulating the surrounding interacting with natural features by the man for his own interest to meet various requirements. Of these man-made landscapes, the Taj Mahal garden which was built by the great Mughal Emperor Shah Jahan in India (1628-1658 AC) can be highlighted as a remarkable garden landscape. The Research problem of this study is ‘what are the landscape features of Taj Mahal?’ and the objective is to identify how the Taj Mahal creator has manipulated the surrounding to satisfy his demands. Hence, the methodology adopted was the analysis of data collected from secondary literary sources including research papers and books of researchers who have conducted methodological excavations and field observations of the historical Mughal imperial gardens. These sources were studied focusing primarily on prominent landscape features of the relevant garden concerning the main elements including geographical features, man-made structures, garden layout, hydraulics, vegetation arrangements, and cultural and religious implications of the landscape. Data derived from the analysis indicates that the Taj Mahal garden landscape is comprised of a significant garden layout known as the ‘Fourfold layout’ laid through the vicinity of the landscape interacting with the natural surroundings, skilful hydraulic techniques built encompassing natural water sources, a selected geographical location ideal for a garden landscape, vegetation arrangements which add extra beauty to the landscape, various structures in the vicinity of the garden built for the usage of the man and the cultural and religious implications manifested along with the landscape features. So, it is clear that this prodigy of garden landscape embraces exquisite features highlighting the connection between the man and the nature.

Keywords: Mughal Imperial gardens, Fourfold layout, Mughal hydraulics, garden landscape