

THE GREEN CULTURE OF ISLAM

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CONTENTS

Editors' Preface		v - vi
List of Tables		vii-xi
List of Figures		xii
Abbreviations		xiii
CHAPTER 1	ECOLOGY AS FOUNDATION FOR THE EXECUTION OF MAN'S KHALIFAH ON EARTH : With Special Reference to the Roles of those within Built Environment Professions	1-15
	Ismawi Zen (6560/19800)	
CHAPTER 2	TREES IN THE MAKING OF ISLAMIC ENVIRONMENT (2826/19801)	16-25
	Nurul Aida Salim, Azila Ahmad Sarkawi & Jamilah Othman	
CHAPTER 3	NATURE THAT INSPIRES SPIRITUAL LANDSCAPE (2916/19855)	26-36
	Jamilah Othman, Sharif Ahmad Sharif Hashim	
CHAPTER 4	SELECTIVE PLANT MATERIALS OF MANGROVE ECOSYSTEM	37-41
	Rashidi Othman (3842/19859)	
CHAPTER 5	FERNS AS CARVING MOTIVES IN THE POLYNESIAN COMMUNITY	42-51
	Maheran Yaman (2738/19864)	
CHAPTER 6	ISLAMIC PURIFICATION AND WATER MANAGEMENT	52-58
	Izawati Tukiman (3432/19866)	
CHAPTER 7	NATURALISTIC APPROACH OF SUSTAINABLE RIVER DEVELOPMENT	59-65
	Mohd Ramzi Mohd Hussain (3177/19868)	

CHAPTER 8	ISLAMIC ENVIRONMENTAL PERSPECTIVES OF LEISURE & RECREATION	66-72
	Nurhayati Abdul Malik (3046/19871)	
CHAPTER 9	EVOLVING AMORPHOUS SPACES INTO DEFINED AND BOUNDED PLACES	73-82
	Nor Zalina Harun and Ismail Said (3640/19877)	
CHAPTER 10	CONCLUSION ISLAMIC VIEWPOINTS ON SUSTAINABILITY OF GREENSPACE	83-90
	Mazlina Mansor and Ismail Said (203/19879)	

NATURE THAT INSPIRES SPIRITUAL LANDSCAPE

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ABSTRACT

This research paper discusses about the *spiritual gardens* that are present in Japan. It explores the evolutions of these gardens from the *Heian* period to the *Muromachi* period to the *Momoyama* period in Japanese history. These gardens range from the *garden of paradise* to the *Zen garden* approach up until the *tea garden* design. The author would also explore the design principles, philosophy and design concepts that go into the creation process of these *spiritual gardens*. Lastly, the author would also discuss about the mechanism in these spiritual gardens that evoke the inner psyche (spiritual senses) of the users.

Keywords: spiritual gardens, Heian period, Muromachi period, Momoyama period

INTRODUCTION

One cannot move forward without acknowledging their past. This is why the study of history is very important in shaping how we, as a species progress in the future. This same principle could be applied in the field of Landscape Architecture. The study of the History of Landscape Architecture is often becoming significance reference this field because knowledge from the past helps them determining and shaping the present landscapes. Hence, there is always a strong bond between the past and the present landscape evolutions. Japan is one of those countries with a long and rich history. Furthermore, the Japanese have preserve and record their history very well, allowing the author to conduct an extensive research on the spiritual gardens from different time period in Japanese history. The scope of the study will focus on the eras between the *Heian* (AD 795-1185), *Muromachi* (AD 1333-1573), and *Momoyama* civilisations (AD 1573-1615). The area of the study is based on garden design approach, principles, and philosophy of Japanese spiritual garden during those particular periods. Besides that, it is hoped that the findings from the study may also contribute ideas in the making of Malaysian Landscape.

The Japanese spiritual garden is very unique in terms of its design, setting, purpose of existence, and philosophically approach. These are probably the factors which allow the gardens to sustain its longevity of existence throughout the ancient till modern era.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Japan is one of the most developed and technologically advance country in the world. Ever since the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Tun Dr. Mahathir Mohamad declared his "look east policy", Japan has been the front run modern country for Malaysia to emulate. In contrast to being a developed, industrial country, the Japanese have a strong sense of preservation of their culture in general and their landscape in detail. The Japanese appreciation of nature is expressed in theirs garden design. The elements of nature such as mountain, sea, and rock have been imitated and employed in Japanese spiritual garden. Their