LANDSCAPING FOR THE POOR
A STUDY OF
AL-HARIFA ISLAND (AL-GHALABA RESORT)
AL-QNATER AL-KHAIRYA, EGYPT

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“The architect is an expensive luxury; so he is found only where there is money. Because he works for fairly prosperous clients, the architect is not always concerned to cut down the costs of his buildings.”

Hassan Fathy

Since land is one of the basic commodities of the world, its planning for use and conservation is a central political, environmental
and social issue. Land becomes landscape when it is described or seen in terms of its physiographic and environmental characters. Landscape varies according to these characteristics and the impact of man on it. Thus landscape is a reflection of dynamic, natural and social systems.

Landscape architecture is a professional design discipline that, in the broadest sense, deals with integrating people and their outdoor environment, in a manner beneficial to both. Landscape design is an extension of site planning, it is concerned with the selection of design components, materials and plants and their combination as solutions to limited but well defined problems within the landscape planning process. It is also a process through which specific quality is given to the diagrammatic spaces of the site plan.

In Egypt landscape design has been booming in the last two decades. Its main concerns were the tourism resorts, private villas and compounds, and recently city waterfronts and squares. But, still landscaping is commonly regarded in one of two ways: as a luxury for the wealthy, or as a cosmetic for masking mediocre architecture. (Figure 1)

In our research we shall demonstrate Al-Harifa Island which is located near the barrages of Al-Qanater. The island is considered as the solo and most popular recreation area for the local people in the area. The Island is even called the “Ghalaba Resort” or the Poor and Needy Resort. The study is aiming to produce a set of guidelines in addition to a conceptual design model for landscaping the area, which will fulfill the user requirements and needs, easy to maintain, as well as being a visually interesting landscaping scheme.

What Are the Landscape Architect Tools?

The landscape architecture is the design and planning profession that applies both science and art to achieve the best use of the land. Using available lands to provide the best natural and built environment requires a special understanding of the natural resources and ecology, human
needs and design, as well as construction and environmental management.

The landscape architects formulate the master plan for all the elements on the site, including plants and hard surfaces. They create the landscape character by selecting plant materials, manipulating landforms, and siting different activities to create useful and enjoyable outdoor spaces. Their tasks include designing roadways, walkways, outdoor lighting, outdoor seating, water features, railings, signs, grates, retaining walls, steps, ramps, play areas, public parks and sports areas.

There are three levels of involvement for the landscape Architect. The first is the site planning where he studies the natural potentials of the site & combines it with the client desires or the design programme to produce what we call a site plan.

The second level is the landscape planning where he gets involved in the choice of sites suitable for activities after studying the regional potentials to produce a land suitability plan.

The third level is the level we are concerned with in this study which is the landscape design where he starts to use & co-ordinate the versions elements together to form a pleasant outdoor environment.

Within this broad context, the profession of landscape architecture has been and will continue to be a design discipline, combining art and science, whose primary focus is the sensitive joining of people and their outdoor activities with the land. Even though the professional boundaries will expand in the future into new areas of knowledge and skills. Landscape architects will also maintain their traditional expertise in the imaginative creation of out-door environments that sensitively deal with the ecological, social, economic, and aesthetic issues of the site and client while also being visually and emotionally appealing. Ultimately, it is the task of the landscape architect to give birth to outdoor experiences that are profitable, stimulating, and enjoyable from day to day, month to month, and year to year.
What to Consider, And How to Start the Landscaping Process?

The landscape architect must fully understand and come to terms with the fact that understanding the potentials of the project settings (environment) is the point of start at any design project. What ever these conditions are, limitations, however severe, this should not alter the client’s wish to establish landscapes appropriate to the image he wants to create, either for his private home, his office, his Ministry, the grounds of his hotel, the park or urban greenbelt. In the Egyptian context, the appropriate landscapes are more likely to be images of western urban landscape architecture.

In order to reach an understanding of the surrounding environment the landscape architect should investigate the past and present conditions of the landscape, while projecting it into the future. Also, determining what is to be attempted and accomplished, in addition to programming the actions to be taken.

This process may also be called landscape evaluation. Which is the mental process of attaching or allocating value to different landscapes, or different elements of the landscape. This value is a perception of importance related to physical or conceptual entity. It is a characteristic of that entity which an individual or society considers worth acquiring, protecting, keeping or preserving. Landscape evaluation need not to be expressed in real terms or universal measures but may be expressed in relative domestic terms.

The landscape architects searches for several types of data in order to read the natural landscape. This information should be about the plant sciences, wild life management, soils, landforms, climatology, hydrology and geology as well as the systems ecology of the site.

In addition to the natural and physical factors mentioned earlier, the landscape assessment may also include socioeconomic and cultural values. The level of detail required in the landscape assessment depends on its purpose. If the study is of a broad nature, dealing with capability
and suitability of land for different uses, then a comprehensive assessment of natural, socioeconomic and cultural factors is required.

The Landscape Design, the Elements and the Process

The landscape design is the search for the forms that satisfy the projects program. It deals with three elements: the pattern of outdoor activities, the pattern of outdoor circulation, and the sensible forms that support both the activities and the circulation. A good landscape design is a product of intimate understanding of the project, creativity, and showing in an innovated way the outdoor activities, hard surface areas, circulation systems, ground forms, and general planting design scheme.

Hardscape or Paved Areas

Pavement is any hard natural or artificial surface material consciously placed on the ground plane of an outdoor space to establish a durable surface while also satisfying design objectives. Examples of pavement include gravel, brick, tile, stone, concrete, and asphalt and, in some cases, wood decking. Pavement has several characteristics that set it apart from other ground surface materials. First, as has been pointed out, a pavement is a hard, comparatively non-pliable surface material. As such, it is relatively fixed and non-changing. Plant material and water, on the other hand, are quite variable over time. Because of pavement’s rather permanent quality. It is a good structural material to support intense uses on the ground plane and establish fixed ground areas over time. Besides its permanence, Pavement is able to define exact edges of shapes and forms on the ground plane while lawn and ground cover edges must be constantly trimmed or contained with another material to achieve similar results.

A number of design guidelines should be considered when using pavement in the landscape. This should be weighed with the overall objectives of a design and utilized accordingly. As with any other design element, the number of materials used in a given area of a design should be simplified to help insure unity. Too much variation in a pavement material and or pattern can easily create visual chaos and disorder. One pavement material should dominate in a design, as in with other materials
added for visual contrast and variety as well as suggesting other uses on the ground plane. The one dominant material can be used throughout different locations of a design in order to establish unity and recall.

The selection of pavement material and the design of the pavement pattern should be undertaken simultaneously with the selection and organization of the other elements of a design to help insure that the pavement is visually and functionally integrated into the entire scheme. It is not a desirable procedure to select and design the pavement as an afterthought late in the development of a design solution.

While selecting a paving pattern, one should study it in both plan and eye-level perspective. In plan, attention should be given to creating a visually attractive pattern and to coordinating it with other elements of the design. Including adjoining pavement materials, buildings, planters, lighting, drop inlets, tree wells, and benches, as shown in if treated correctly, the pavement should appear to relate strongly to all these design elements in a thoughtful, planned manner. When adjoining areas of pavement change pattern without a third transitional material, the patterns and lines of the two should match and align with each other. This is especially true when dealing with the scoring lines and expansion joints of concrete or the lines and mortar joints found in stone and tile pavement. The lines and pattern of one material should carry on into those of adjoining pavements, as in similarly, the edges and lines of a building should be coordinated with the pavement next to the building so that it visually connects to the pavement. (Figure 2)

The pavement pattern should be studied in eye-level perspective in addition to the plan itself because this is how most people will actually perceive it. From eye level, the pattern often appears quite different than it does in plan. Lines parallel to the line of sight converge, while lines perpendicular to the line of sight “pile up” on one another as they become farther from the viewer, as in moreover, the observed pattern may change as one moves through a space gaining varying vantage points. Unfortunately, most designers rely too heavily on the plan alone, failing to use a perspective study. Without the study, the designer may on
occasion be surprised that the pattern does not appear as intended after it has been constructed.

The pavement selected for a particular space should also be suitable for the type of intended use, anticipated intensity of use, and desired character. Cost usually has some bearing on what pavement is selected. From a practical standpoint, no pavement material lends itself equally well to all possible functions and activities.

In conclusion, hard surface areas fulfill both utilitarian and aesthetic functions in landscape design. It is important to understand the different types and characteristics of the pavement materials so the right one is selected for the intended use and appearance. Whatever pavement materials are used, it must be coordinated with all other elements of the site.

**Planting or Softscape Element**

“The common thread that links us, as landscape designers, to the environments we create is plant materials. Our repertoire of trees, shrubs, ground covers and grasses provides an extensive and complex base for selecting the ingredients that manipulate the spaces around us. We improve living conditions, protect the balance of wildlife, and prevent the deterioration of environment with proper placement of plants.”

Plants are among the most important and complex landscape design elements. The very different cultural and climatic conditions have a profound effect on planting design and it is necessary for a landscape designer to adjust his thinking and acquire new insights into the way people and plants behave in the various conditions. Plants play an important role in improving climatic conditions of the outdoor environment as well as, improving the scenic value of the surrounding landscapes.

The fundamental principle running through all planting design is the adequate creation of a more favorable outdoor environment for people: adequate shade, cooler temperatures, light breezes, protection from glare.
and wind blown sand. In temperatures where handling cars left in the sun can cause first degree burns, the adoption of the principle that all usable outdoor space should have at least some shade have at least some shade is simply common sense. The importance of tempering the local microclimate in hot regions by thoughtful plant design cannot be over estimated; nor can the use of planting design to modify temperatures in buildings – particularly in housing areas, thus reducing cooling costs.\(^7\)

A first in many large-scale schemes is to create an overall framework with plants adapted to the climatic conditions, especially in climates like ours in Egypt. This will provide shelter, shade and screening to ameliorate the harsh environment and build up a favorable microclimate into which the more delicate plants can be set. (Figure \(^\star\))

In the regions where rainfall is rare, low rainfall means that little moisture is available to plants thus necessitating irrigation for all but the most adapted species. However, when the rain does come it is usually torrential causing soil panning, quick run-off, and wadi bores, all of which contribute to severe erosion. Planting on even gentle slopes should be handled with extreme caution and is best avoided. Terraced planting provides a sounder solution. Dense. Mass planting including ground cover reduces the adverse effects of heavy rain.

Plants are an architecture element, which plays an extremely important role in the design process. They can be used to give privacy, to screen, to reveal a view progressively, or to define a space. Singly or in-groups, they form walls, canopies, or floors of varying heights and densities. Also, plants can be used to blend various unrelated elements, such as, utility structures, buildings, parking lots and any other inharmonious activities.

The success of a landscape scheme depends not only on careful implementation but on adequate maintenance. In the Middle East expertise in this field is very limited and trained labor nonexistent. Simplicity should be the keynote the total design. It is preferable to select a small range of proven species and to group and combine with careful regard for respective habits, growth rates and maintenance requirements.
The best hope of success is perhaps to persuade the clients to allow the landscape architect a continuing management association with the designs he prepares and in turn supervises.

Site Structures

Steps, ramp, walls, fences, and seating are elements that enhance the spatial quality and livability of the outdoor environment. In the context of larger, more dominant elements such as landform, plant materials, and buildings, site structures can be thought of as smaller-scale detail element that reinforce and complement the more substantial aspects of the outdoor environment. Steps and ramp facilitate movement from one ground elevation to another, walls and fences subdivide space and provide structural detail, and seating makes outdoor spaces seem more human by furnishing places to rest and observe. The sensitive use of site structures makes the landscape more inhabitable and responsive to human needs. Steps may be used to separate outdoor spaces & create transitional points. In addition it may be used as focal points at the end of path walks. Retaining walls can be used to visually link groups of plant materials. Walls & fences may be used as shade providers, and most of all in creating privacy. Also, they may be used in screening the site for climatic factors, such as winds, sandstorms or flooding. (Figure 4)

Water as a Dominant Element in Landscape Design

Water is an extremely varied element whose character and appearance depend on several external factors. To design with water, one must first study the shape, size, height, and bottom slope of the containing element. Even then, uncontrollable elements such as sun, wind, and temperature can influence the visual quality of a body of water. Visually, water may be used in the outdoor environment as a flat, reflective element to suggest tranquility and contemplation; as a moving, flowing element to provide activity and sound; as falling water to express the forces of gravity, or as vertical fountain jets as accents and exclamation points. Used in any of these capacities, water is a specialty element that adds meaning and a sense of life to outdoor spaces.
Water is yet another physical design element used by landscape architects in the design and management of the exterior environment. Water is a highly varied design element and may take on such diverse forms as flat, quiet pools, falling water, and jets of water. Water may be used in the landscape as a purely aesthetic element or it may be employed for such utilitarian functions as cooling the air, buffering sound, irrigating the soil, or providing a means of recreation. (Figure 9)

Water has a number of unique, distinguishing qualities compared with the other design elements previously discussed. Water is one of the most magnetizing and compelling of all design elements. Few people can ignore fail to react to its presence in the outdoor environment. Humans seem to be instinctively drawn toward water for both utilitarian and visual reasons. From a very practical viewpoint, people need water for survival just as they require air, food, and shelter.

Water as a Landscape Design Source of Life

There is no ideal form of irrigation for every installation. The method of irrigation used on any installation will be decided by several investigations, such as, of the particular plant requirements. Also, soil types and water quality and quantity and the architect’s basic concept of that installation. However, the following comparisons between the different irrigation techniques can be made.

**Water use:** The most efficient form of landscape irrigation is drip irrigation followed closely by nighttime sprinkler irrigation. Flood techniques use far greater quantities of water than both of these do.

**Water quality:** Where the water source is saline, the use of drip irrigation will allow greater freedom on design and make for easier management of the soil salinity levels. The use of sprinklers is limited to ground cover areas where leaf scorch will not be a problem and to under-tree irrigation where wind drift will not occur.
Plant growth: Both drip irrigation and landscape sprinkler irrigation creates a better growth environment for plants than is available with flood techniques.

Installation: All forms of irrigation require careful installation, though the requirements are different. With flood techniques, great care must be taken to ensure that land grading is accurate to avoid erosion and ponding. Drip irrigation requires careful cleaning of the mains and feed lines. Sprinkler irrigation is perhaps the easiest to install.

Maintenance: All types of irrigation require careful maintenance though the requirements of flood irrigation and the more technological techniques are at different ends of the scale. Flood irrigation requires a high input of manually skilled labor to operate and maintain the system and the effectiveness of the system will depend entirely on the skill of these men. On the other hand, drip and sprinkler irrigation installations are usually automated and will require the services of a technical man, or men on very large installations, with a degree of manual labor back up. So the choice lies between a larger number of skilled manual workers or a single, qualified technical man. In either case, no installation contractor should be allowed to move off site, until he has trained the people left behind in the use and maintenance of the system. There are too many irrigation installations, of all types, which have failed through lack of proper training and failure of the supply companies to provide a proper spared back up.

Design considerations: Both sprinkler and drip irrigation place few constraints on the architect. They can be made to fit almost any shape and not affected, if designed properly, by changes in elevation. They should not require open drainage channels and the supply lines be all buried. Flood irrigation requires careful selection of land gradients, which can pose an immediate problem to the architect. There is also a requirement for proper drainage channels and the supply is usually open as well. Whatever system of irrigation is used, the design of that system requires careful consideration as the plans for the landscape are developed.
Cost: It is difficult to compare costs of irrigation systems. The costs incurred in flood irrigation are, mostly, local costs incurred in land preparation and grading, channel and drainage construction, etc. channels often require lining. A large proportion of the costs incurred with sprinkler and drip irrigation is, in the Middle East on imported materials. However, taken as overall costs and, taking into account the cost of water, it is unlikely that there will be much difference between the two systems and flood irrigation. It will, of course depend on suitability of the site for a particular method of irrigation and also, with imported materials, on how the purchase and import of those materials is arranged.

Signs and Parking

Planning and designing signage systems should not be treated lightly or in a piecemeal approach. The landscape designer should aim at clarifying, regulating and amplifying the flow of information conveyed throughout the site. It is a matter of great concern for the image and quality of the entire landscape design project, the safety and enjoyment of all visitors, and the integrity of its architecture and site design. (Figure 6)

Parking of cars is a major site-planning problem. Parking may be provided in various ways such as, on the street, in small parking bays along the road, in large parking lots, underground below main buildings and in multi—story garages. Each type has its advantages and disadvantages; however, large parking lots are the most economical.

Many techniques may be used to improve the landscape quality of the parking lots, such as, reducing their visual impact by dividing them into several clusters. Improving their microclimate by integrating different kinds of plant materials. Using berms, evergreen hedges, or combination of both to screen the large scale parking lots. Separating the rows of cars by using planting boxes. (Figure 7)

Outdoor Lighting, All day round Landscape

Outdoor lighting represent a resource that is rarely used effectively. A sensitive artistic scheme of artificial lights can add a
remarkable dimension to the users visual experience. Landscape lighting is not just a beautiful exterior decoration; it is an essential element in the design concept as the scene changes completely by sunset. What we visualize by daylight is totally different by sunset. We may summarize the important functions of outdoor lighting in landscape design as follows. Provision of security. Allowance of longer nighttime use of the outdoor landscape. Providing a safe guidance for people through the designed circulation system. Focusing on significant landscape design elements to enhance its visual character. (Figure \(^8\))

In order to fulfill such design objectives some considerations must be done. These may be, ensuring adequate functional light, for security and safety purposes. Allocating the correct amount of light, by providing brighter illumination for dark surfaces and less intensity for lighter surfaces. Using light to produce pleasant visual effects in planted areas. Placing the source of light either above or below eye level, to avoid direct lights on people’s eyes. This will lead to a total visual loss of the scenic value of the designed landscape.

Al-Harifa Island is it the Needy People’s Resort?

Al-Harifa Island is located at the Greater Cairo Governorat, at Al-Qliobya in particular. It is situated at the city of Al-Qanatter. The city is at the entrance of the famous Nile Delta. It gets its importance from the Mohammad Ali Barrages and the Qanatter Gardens (Figure \(^8\)). The Island was transformed from a peninsula to a complete island in 1970 after the construction of a water canal to irrigate the island. The island is formed of a dominant piece of land of a total area of \(320\) feddans (Figure \(9\)) and a group of headlands. The headlands are very famous for the cultivation of watermelons of a total area of \(4\) feddans. While the main Island is composed of private ownership, with several housing schemes and under construction developments. The rest is about \(80\) feddans, a public area, which is used by the local people as their resort, what they call the Needy or Poor people’s resort. The island is well connected with the electricity, sewage and potable water networks.
The island gets its importance not only from its function as a public resort for people, but also from its scenic value. The island overlooks, the Mohammad Ali Barrages, the one and only Submerged Rasheed Dam and the watermelon headlands. (Figures 10, 11)

Since 1971 the island has been used as an informal resort. Especially in summer and at the public holidays, such as Sham El-Neseem (Spring Holiday). As it has direct access to the Nile, people use it for swimming and over day use, also, due to the fact that it is free of charge.

Landscaping Scheme

A proper design may be reached either by consulting tradition or by logical reasoning and scientific analysis. Both processes should yield the same result. In order to succeed in developing a landscape design concept for the area. We had to carry out a questionnaire to come out with the design program. A random sample was taken and we came out with the following requirements.

1. The entrance needs to be redesigned, as it is very narrow, not well defined, also there is no separation between pedestrians and vehicles.

2. Accessibility to the island needs to be enhanced, in the form of, adding a simple sailing boats (faloka) deck for people coming by boats from the riverbanks. The submerged Rasheed Dam retaining wall needs to be preserved, as it is used by most of the site’s users.

3. A temporary parking is needed for mini cabs, which brings the families and groups to the island.
Privacy among families is a very important issue, each and every family needs its own private place for spending the day.

Playgrounds in the form of football pitches are required, as there are no recreational services in the area.

A coast path is required, as the island has no walkways.

Shaded areas are needed, services in the form of restaurants is not needed.

Signs and landmarks are very essential as due to its vast area people get lost.

Public services in the form of toilets and changing rooms are needed.

An outdoor lighting scheme is required as the area after sunset is not safe, it hosts thieves, smugglers and drug addicts.

To overcome these deficiencies and to fulfill the users requirements the following design concept was developed (Figure 12).

The design depended on two main pillars, trying to produce a landscape design scheme with minimum costs and a durable, long lasting and easy to maintain scheme.

The following criteria form the main concepts of developing the main landscape scheme.

One) The choice of the site has to be accessible by several modes of transportation, also, it has to be cheap. The site should have the minimum amount
of infrastructure, as it should be connected to the electricity, sewage and potable water networks. Having all the minimum natural potentials for a normal recreation area, for example waterfront, good weather conditions and minimum services.

Two) Hardscape or the pavement may be minimum, using the natural ground as the hardscape, just mark the path walks for circulation. If hardscape is needed the use of native low cost durable materials is a must.

Three) Softscape or the planting should be used only in the form of evergreen trees, that are of low maintenance, as they do not produce fallen leaves which needs to be collected. They have to be native species of low cost value, and most of all provide shade. As they can act as a shelter area if they are gathered in-groups. Shrubs may be used to mark entrances as well as walkways should be durable and non-flowering. As for the green lawns the island is covered with natural grass which may be trimmed and used as ground cover.

Four) Site structures are minimum in the landscape design scheme. Seats are not required, as the visitors prefer to sit on the natural ground but some non-movable stools made of a low cost durable material such as steel may be of use. What is needed most is not tents but, we can provide the four pillars of the tent fixed in the ground and each family brings its own mattress and fix it around the pillars to mark its own territory and providing its private space. As for the public services such as toilets, could be made of light structures as wood.
Five) There is no need for making a water feature, as the site is surrounded by water. Any feature will be out of scale compared to the surrounding water body in addition to the unnecessary costs.

Six) Outdoor lighting is a must for safety and security measures. It is recommended to use, low cost, operating on low voltage system for the main pedestrian walkway. To the contrary, we may use poles for spreading the light among the vast green patch of the island.

How can we Implement the Idea?

In order to apply the landscaping concept for the poor or needy people, we need to pinpoint on who would be in charge in proceeding with such concept. The government on its own can not take the burden of doing so although it is a social obligatory. The non-governmental organizations also, can maneuver solo in such an area. Hand in hand, the public participation, in the form of the non-governmental organizations, with the government can amalgamate and do it. The government can supply the land the public spaces for such activities as well as, supplying the minimum infra structure required. While, the people can donate the plant materials, the furniture required, lighting equipment and all landscape elements needed. The non-governmental organization can form a body to supervise and maintain such a public place in order to guarantee its long lasting and keeping it in shape for a maximum period of time.

The Outlook and Views

Landscape architecture has expanded its professional boundaries over the last century, and as a result, it became well-known and well-recognized profession in our everyday context. Due to the increase of genuine concern for resources conservation and stewardship, the aim of landscape architects should be targeting that their resultant schemes
serves to achieve integration with the surrounding environment, as well as, producing a pleasant and enjoyable scenery.

Landscape architects should change their vision, to understand that everybody has the right to have a proper well-designed landscape, which can fulfill his requirements and needs what ever his social standard in the society. Especially, in the underdeveloped societies, where the majority of people can not afford the luxury of having their own private recreation area or resorts.

Modern technology should play an important role in producing landscape design elements such as, hardscape and site structure materials, which are less expansive and of a long life span. A new branch of landscape architecture should be invented which deals with the design and manufacture of these elements.

“The boundaries of knowledge will continue to expand, creating new fields of research, new educational programs, new books for our library shelves, new equipment for our laboratories, and new careers for which our students must be trained.”

John O. Simonds
**Figure 1**: Pavement may be used in many materials, colours & textures to enhance landscape design concept.

**Figure 2**: Plants used to create privacy, screening & space subdivision.

**Figure 3**: Site structures integrate with landscape elements for creation of spaces.

**Figure 4**: Water may be used as a reflective body for artworks to enhance visual image.
**FIGURE 5:** Signs play an important role in the image quality. It has to be visually studied, its location, colour size and amount of information.

**FIGURE 6:** Many techniques may be used to improve the parking lots landscape quality. Such as using trees to provide shade and berms and ground covers as separators.

**FIGURE 7:** Outdoor lighting change the perception of the landscape scheme. As you may focus on elements and hide others.
Figure 10: Al Harifa Island & Its Headlands
A vast green landscape. The headlands are cultivated with watermelons.

Figure 11: Rasheed Submerged Dam. A unique visual scene, as people use it for crossing the river.
Abstract

Since land is one of the basic commodities of the world, its planning for use and conservation is a central political, environmental and social issue. Land becomes landscape when it is described or seen in terms of its physiographic and environmental characters. Landscape varies according to these characteristics and the impact of man on it. Thus landscape is a reflection of dynamic, natural and social systems.

Landscape architecture is a professional design discipline that, in the broadest sense, deals with integrating people and their outdoor environment, in a manner beneficial to both. Landscape design is an extension of site planning, it is concerned with the selection of design components, materials and plants and their combination as solutions to limited but well defined problems within the landscape planning process. It is also a process through which specific quality is given to the diagrammatic spaces of the site plan.

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In our research we shall demonstrate Al-Harifa Island which is located near the barrages of Al-Qanater. The island is considered as the solo and most popular recreation area for the local people in the area. The Island is even called the “Ghalaba Resort” or the Poor and Needy Resort. The study is aiming to produce a set of guidelines in addition to a conceptual design model for landscaping the area, which will fulfill the user requirements and needs, easy to maintain, as well as being a visually interesting landscaping scheme.
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'Al-Qanatter Al-Khayria Gardens are among the most famous public outlets, recreation area in Egypt. They were gardens created by Mohammad Ali at the early 19th century, of a total area of 500 feddans. It is very famous for its planting, various types of ancient Egyptian species of trees. The number of visitors reaches over than 5 million per year, according to the ministry of Irrigation and Land Reclamation statistics.
The Author is indebted to Mr. Tarek Al-Sayed for his invaluable contribution to the research.

Hassan Fathy, “Architectures For the Poor”, University of Chicago Press, 1977

The questionnaire depended on personal interviews with the users and visitors of the site, as illiteracy is very common in the area.

The island is adjacent to several Ministry of Agriculture plant nurseries. During our survey the local people were willing to buy all the plants required for the landscape scheme, as well as, the nurseries were willing to donate several plants to the island.