

## Exploring the Characteristics of Three Elements of the Mountainous Cultural Landscape in Yemen: Mountainous Cities, Mountainous Villages, and Cultivated Terraces

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**Abstract :** Cultural landscapes enhance the spiritual relationship between people and their environment. They represent civilized evidence of peoples' interaction with nature and the exploitation of its resources to build their civilization. Yemeni urban and rural environments are rich in many cultural landscape elements that reflect the ingenuity of Yemeni people in interacting with nature. Yemen's mountain cities and villages appear in harmony with mountains, with vertical tower building patterns, local building materials, and unique architectural and urban elements and features. Such cities and villages are still full of life today, such as the cities of Taiz, Ibb, Lahj, and historical Jableh and hundreds of mountain villages in the provinces of the mountainous highlands. The cultivated mountain terraces reflect the ability of Yemenis to create arable areas in the tall mountains and to use successful means of irrigation and rainwater drainage. Unfortunately, there is a severe shortage of research studies that discuss the cultural landscapes in Yemen and the mechanisms for their preservation. Therefore, this study aimed to shed light on the types of mountain cultural landscapes in Yemen and discuss the means of their preservation. The study achieved its objectives through a theoretical review of available studies and field visits to some sites in Ibb, Jableh, and Taiz cities. The study highlighted the human contribution to these sites and elements and showed the Yemenis' skills in adapting to nature and benefiting from it ideally. This study can guide the competent authorities to assess, develop, and protect cultural landscape sites in Yemen.

**Keywords :** civilization, urban environment, Yemeni mountain architecture, human heritage conservation, cultural identity

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