

# WORLD HERITAGE PERSPECTIVE ON THE THREE HILLS AND FIVE GARDENS AREA IN BEIJING'S WESTERN SUBURBS AS CULTURAL LANDSCAPE

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## 1 ABSTRACT

*The Three Hills and Five Gardens area of Beijing's western suburbs is considered to be one of the masterpieces of Chinese classical gardens, and was previously occupied by royalty. Across this area, man-made constructions show great respect to the surrounding natural landscape and follow the ideas of traditional Chinese philosophy. However, the values of this unique area have not yet been officially recognized, and the area is seldom seen as a cultural landscape heritage. This paper aims to rediscover this royal area via a review of its cultural landscape heritage value. It will first summarize the interactions between landscape entities and spiritual aspects of the area, including typical landscape construction under the guidance of humanistic thought, as well as the spiritual implications of the overall landscape. Next, by comparing the Three Hills and Five Gardens area with similar gardens around the world that are World Heritage listed, as well as with other well-known Chinese classical gardens, this paper seeks to determine the specific values of the area. Then, the paper interprets the criteria for the assessment of Outstanding Universal Value according to the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention by UNESCO, including criteria i—vi, and reviews the area's integrity and authenticity. By comprehensively exploring the situation of this area and its heritage potential, this paper promotes an understanding of its existing resources.*

### 1.1 Keywords

Royal garden; heritage; comparison; value assessment; conservation and management