

The soil testing as revealed in Sanskrit Architectural Sources

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The soil testing for constructing a new house is a prominent and foremost subject in Vastu, the ancient science of architecture. The ancient architects recommended the fitness of the site after close inspection of the earth's qualities like colour, smell, taste, form, sound etc. They have introduced various types of soil testing techniques to ascertain the durability, solidity and fertility of the soil. Especially they have not constructed any building whether they were house or temples without testing the quality of soil but today the soil testing for a erecting a house is not accepted as an essential subject. Several soil testing methods are being used only in erecting highways and storey. But in antiquity soil testing was compulsive for every construction. It can be substantiated that techniques mentioned in Sanskrit architectural sources are not only scientific but also practical. Therefore the house holder can test quality of soil in his land himself.

On the ground, one and half cubit of land is to be excavated. The pit is to be filled with the excavated earth. If there is more earth left after filling the hole, the construction on the ground is considered excellent. This is one of practical techniques mentioned in Sanskrit architecture.

The soil that is not solid is unsuitable for building construction. Every soil type behaves differently with respect to maximum density and optimum moisture. It can be seen the similar procedures in modern architecture to ascertain the quality of the soil that is to be selected through a series of tests. Specially, four types of soil testing techniques have been introduced in modern architecture. Such as the hand test, Proctor test, Field test, Sand cone test.

It can be seen an enormous equality when compared those techniques with ancient techniques. It is proved that the ancient architects had used a remarkable and practical soil testing procedures.