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Residents' Preference on Conservation of the Malay Traditional Village in Kampong Morten, Malacca

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Abstract

Rural landscape in Malaysia, face intense development pressures from nearby urban areas. Sustaining rural landscape will continue the traditional village stewardship by local residents. The aim of this paper is to explore the Kampong Morten residents' preference on conservation of the Malay traditional houses. The results show 62% of the resident's concern that the rural landscape should not be over developed that could erode the aesthetic value of their traditional houses. 83% of the resident's value the traditional houses has a heritage. The result also indicated that the declaration of living museum that could benefit to the local people.

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Keywords: Traditional village; living museum; conservation

1. Introduction

Cultural landscape nowadays, can be seen as the only one basic needs in our daily life, but it is have significant economic, social, and demographic changes. Over the centuries, Malaysian cultural landscape changes are due to various anthropogenic activities. In the late 1970s, transformation of Malaysia as a developing country continues to

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grow. The speed of growth towards industrialization has changed the way of life of the Malay population after it is independence. Several numbers of the rubber and oil palm plantations was converted into urban and built-up areas, which include housing areas, new townships, and industrial estates. However, some quite a number of areas in our country still show the characteristics and features of a cultural landscape such as paddy fields, vegetable farms and or orchards are still can be seen until today (Abdullah, 2011). Certain rural areas have maintained their traditional appearance, while development continues to erode the natural environment. The cultural values that embodied in the landscapes that have maintained traditions throughout previous generations continuing are under threat(Nurulhuda Adabiah & Nuraisyah Chua, 2013).

Historically, the Malay Peninsula was the land of immigrants that they came from the regions of Southeast Asia archipelago, India, and China. Early civilization, people in Southeast Asia shared similar linguistic and anthropological traces. They built their houses on t stilts, grew rice and millet, domesticated animals, betel chewing, sailed with outrigger vessels(Thompson, 2004; Wiryomartono, 2013). However, since the British colonial era, each ethnic group runs their own inhabits based on their values and belief system. This could be seen from the socio-cultural and historical habitation system during the colonial era that spatial divides which mutually reinforced ethnic or racial distinctions. For the most part, Malays lived in rural kampongs ('villages'); Indians worked on the British plantation estates; and the Chinese on smaller plantations and in the mines(Bunnell, 2002). Indeed, the practice of colonialism rule has left various ethnic groups elsewhere, then the Malay populations, such as Chinese and Tamil people, in their own worlds(Wiryomartono, 2013). However, multicultural populations have grown significantly during this period. Today, the presence of multicultural populations that they inherit have enriched and enhanced the experience in the Malay world with unique architecture, pottery, culinary, street life, festivals, and celebrations in this region. In Malaysia, Malacca is one of the states that shown a unique example of multicultural populations. Malacca is also a living testimony to the multicultural heritage and tradition of Asia, and European colonial influences. This multicultural tangible and intangible heritage is expressed in the great variety of religious buildings of different faiths, ethnic quarters, the many languages, worship and religious festivals, dances, costumes, art and music, food, and daily life; and criterion. The mixture of multicultural heritage is also reflected through the uniqueness of architecture, culture and townscape without parallel anywhere in East and South Asia(Gullino & Larcher, 2013).

Malacca Historic Cities presented a heritage rooted in a distinctively Malay past, Malay commerce, political power and cultural expansion(Worden, 2003). Thus, the significant of heritage and cultural sites, it is a symbol of the Malaysian cultural experience. Malacca has been declared as a World Heritage Site by United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)(2008). One of the three-selection criteria in the Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) guideline was the variety of multi-cultural activities of the cultural community in Malacca. The cultural community of Malacca resides in the core and buffer zones of the inscribed WHS location, namely Morten Village, Portuguese Village, Heren and Jonker Streets and Chetty Village(Aisyah Abu, Mariana, Syahriah, & Ibrahim, 2014). Since, Malacca Historic Cities represent a symbolizes of a 'golden age' in the development of Malay civilization and in that regard the emphasis on Malay and Islamic culture in the construction of a national identity. During the sultanate rule period, most of the Malay residential dominates along the Melaka River, nevertheless, it was gradually displaced (in what is now the heritage zone) and Kampong Hulu (which was also a district for Arab residents) to such districts as Kampong Morten and Durian Daun Dalam; central Melaka is now the home primarily of Chinese(King, 2012). In aim this paper, is to examine the community understand towards the qualities of the rural landscape that are valuable to local residents.

Kampong Morten has been privileged to become one the cultural heritage sites in the Malacca World Heritage Site by the UNESCO(2008). Kampong Morten has it is their own uniqueness Malay traditional house. This village is situated in the middle of Malacca cities that it still retains their traditional features such as home design, decoration, landscape and others. Most of the houses are built from the local timber and single storey structure. Kampong Morten was given a wonderful experience to the visitors because it has their own unique traditional Malay identity. Hence, the state government gazetted the Kampong Morten as a traditional Malay village of heritage that significant as a tourist destination in Malacca. Kampong Morten is the only rural landscapes of Malay village that still exist in the historic city of Malacca. Despite the years, the people have maintained its customs and traditions that are many unique of traditional house that can be seen today. However, the traditional house structure is often having problem to keep the original materials. Some part of the traditional Malay kampong has been threatened by

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