

The Involvement of State Government, Agencies and Local Authority Policies on the Conservation of Heritage Spots in Malaysia

JURNAL
STUDI PEMERINTAHAN
(JOURNAL OF
GOVERNMENT & POLITICS)

327

Received: April 4, 2017
Revised: August 28, 2017
Accepted: August 29, 2017

MOHD HIRIY GHAZALI, MOHD JANI, ABDULLAH SUMRAHADI AND BAHTIAR MOHAMAD

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), mohdhiriy52@gmail.com, abdullahsumrahadi@gmail.com and mbahtiar@uum.edu.my

ABSTRACT

This paper analyzes the local policy implementation by the state authorities at two historical cities, namely Melaka (Malacca) and George Town, Penang. Both cities are awarded as the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage Sites. One of the most prominent components of tangible cultural heritage is historic buildings. Thus, it is essential to ensure the sustainability of those buildings so that they will keep attracting more domestic and international travelers. Lack of awareness from the local residents is one main issue that arises due to some policies imposed by the local government concerning the historic buildings. This paper is based on previous literature and findings of a study. The findings were obtained from content analysis of local daily bilingual print newspapers namely *The Star* and *Berita Harian (BH)* on the portrayal of cultural heritage in Malaysia. The result of this paper would shed some light, especially on the conservation of historical buildings to both historical cities through the role of the state government and agencies in implementing and enforcing the formulated policies.

Keywords: Melaka, George Town, historic buildings conservation, state government policy, agency.

ABSTRAK

Analisis pada paper ini berkaitan dengan implementasi kebijakan daerah pada otoritas negara di dua kota bersejarah, yaitu Melaka (Malaka) dan George Town, Penang. Kedua kota tersebut mendapatkan penghargaan sebagai Warisan situs dunia oleh United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). Salah satu komponen terpenting dari warisan budaya yang dibentuk dalam bangunan bersejarah. Dengan demikian, penting untuk memastikan keberlanjutan bangunan tersebut sehingga mereka tetap dapat menarik lebih banyak lagi pelancong domestik dan internasional. Kurangnya kesadaran dari warga

seksdsditar merupakan salah satu isu utama yang muncul karena beberapa kebijakan yang dilakukan oleh pemerintah daerah mengenai bangunan bersejarah tersebut. Paper ini berdasarkan pada tinjauan pustaka dan dari temuan sebuah penelitian. Temuan ini di dapat dari analisis isi surat kabar, cetak harian, dwibahasa harian yaitu The Star dan Berita Harian (BH) tentang penggambaran warisan budaya di Malaysia. Hasil dari makalah ini mengenai beberapa hal, terutama mengenai konservasi bangunan bersejarah pada kedua kota bersejarah tersebut melalui peran pemerintah bagian dan lembaga dalam menerapkan

dan menegakkan kebijakan yang dirumuskan.

Kata Kunci: Melaka, George Town, konservasi bangunan bersejarah, kebijakan pemerintah negara bagian, agensi.

INTRODUCTION

According to United Nations Conference on Trade and Development ([UNCTAD \(2004; 2008, pp. 12-13\)](#)) generally classifies creative industries into four areas such as Heritage- traditional cultural expressions and cultural sites; Arts- visual arts and performing arts; Media (not include new media)- publishing and printed media and audiovisuals; and Functional Creations- new media, design and creative services. It is obvious to say that this classification appears the intersections between culture, tourism and creative industries sectors that lead this paper's exploration of cultural heritage in Malaysia. Thus, before the paper elaborates more on cultural heritage, it is imperative to look first the tourism perspective in general view.

The tourism sector has grown remarkably in the past few decades. In line with the progress in tourism, there is a high interest in heritage, culture and history. Not just domestic but also international tourists are interested in visiting historical sites, museums, and culture events ([Cook, 2000](#)). Recently, the new trends of tourism emerged so-called cultural heritage tourism. Indeed, this trend is evident in the rise of the capacity of tourists who seek adventure, culture, history, archeology and interaction with local people ([Chourasia, 2012](#)).

Interestingly to note that, cultural and heritage are two inter-related forms of tourism. [Faulkner \(et al., 2000\)](#) explained that heritage focus on the past, while culture focus on the present way of life of a visited community. Next, is to know what actually the meaning of cultural heritage, and one of the most exact defi-

nitions comes from the Virginia Department of Historic Resources ([Real, 2000, p. 291](#)); “Cultural or heritage tourism is travel directed towards experiencing the heritage, arts and special character of a place in an exciting, and informative way.” In short, this definition actually express several of the main points of cultural heritage tourism.

Cultural heritage tourism is essential for various reasons such as; it has a positive economic and social impact, it establishes and reinforces identity, and it helps preserve the cultural heritage, with culture as an instrument, it facilitates harmony and understanding among people, and it supports culture and helps renew tourism ([Richards, 1996](#)). Besides that, in general thus, cultural heritage can be divided by two forms which are tangible as well as intangible. For tangibles heritage encompasses historic buildings and structures, monuments and architectural remnants, and next intangibles includes values, tradition, philosophies, ceremonies and art forms ([Nuryanti, 1996](#); [Prentice, 1993](#)).

The purpose of this study is to analyze on previous literatures and the role of print media in highlighting the issue of conservation on the historic buildings especially in World Heritage Site and policies implemented by the state and local authorities upon the local residents. Hence, the research may further help us to give an idea whether print media playing significant role in covering those issues as mentioned earlier and most importantly, through its impact in creating awareness especially among the local readers.

LITERATUREREVIEW

Conservation is indeed given much attention especially by developed countries. On the other hand, the sad condition of historic conservation in Malaysia was long left untold and ignored until the Federal government recently realized the importance of historic buildings as living evidence of the national success and growth ([Shahrul Yani et al., 2013](#)). In parallel with that, the conservation matter becomes even more pivotal mainly when

Melaka and George Town are recognized as World Heritage Site by [UNESCO in year 2008](#) (BH/Berita Minggu, 2008, November 23; The Star, 2008, July 9 & November 23). Since then, conservation appears to be an important topic in the field of cultural heritage and there are several previous studies can be highlighted as next.

Basically, conservation has been regarded as a tool to safeguard the historic buildings. [Wan Hashimah \(2012\)](#) explained the historic buildings differ from most other cultural properties in that they generally have to be used, able to bear live and dead loadings and also be able to resist all the causes of decay. In addition, conservation of historic buildings includes maintenance and also may relation to circumstances include preservation, restoration, adaption and reconstruction or a combination of these approaches. While in the context of Malaysia, urban or city conservation is categorized into three general groups, which are the building conservation, area conservation and cultural conservation ([Mohamed et al., 2001](#)). Moreover, the policies and guidelines on urban conservation have been implemented together by the State and Federal governments, local authorities, Department of Museums and Antiquity, heritage trusts and other professional bodies.

In line with above, a similar study by [Mohamed et al. \(2001, pp. 7-9\)](#) acquired in major historic cities in Malaysia for instance George Town, Melaka, Kota Bharu, Taiping and Ipoh has identified challenges facing by these heritage cities as follow; design of new township development, depopulation of inner city, intensive and uncontrolled development pressures, insufficient legislations and enforcement, changing lifestyles and consumption patterns of city dwellers, expectation of new tourists, public awareness, and environmental degradation. Next, is a study of the old town centers in Malaysia began in 1992 and disclosed some worrying trends that threaten the survival of the historic cities ([Shamsuddin & Sulaiman, 2002](#)). The subsequent threats are classified into five groups which are; the disruption of the

urban pattern, disappearing townscape, changing activity pattern, visual monotony and absolescence, and gentrification.

At the same vein, the disruption of the urban pattern expands when the historic core's unique pattern is slowly interrupted by the invasion of office tower blocks as well as huge blocks of shopping complexes which altering the existing skyline of the area, for instance in Penang ([Shahrul Yani et al., 2013](#)). Apart from that, large-scale modern developments such as hotels and service apartments were introduced in the redevelopment scheme of George Town, that could have been located elsewhere if there had been a more suitable development policy which identified the importance of the unique urban pattern. The risk of allowing large scale commercial development, if not designed sensitively within the historic core thus, an ability to 'act as a cancer that could spread' ([Shamsuddin & Sulaiman, 2002, p. 8](#)) and eventually destroy the whole fabric of the historic environment. Furthermore, the impacts are not just for the insensitive speculative growth and inflate the land values, but later also will make the historic buildings not any more economically viable as well as abandoned of dilapidation due to the scarcity of financial capabilities.

Other study like [Kamal et al. \(2008\)](#) found that many heritage buildings in Malaysia still remain in poor conditions with signs of critical building defects, which threatening their survival. Actually, this is evident from a survey of 209 heritage buildings at four historical cities and towns such as George Town, Ipoh, and Kuala Lumpur, in order to recognize the current conditions of the heritage buildings as well as the level of building defects that occur at those buildings. [Kamal et al. \(2008\)](#) revealed the one of the significant findings is that 39 percent of the buildings surveyed were poorly maintained. Besides that, the study also showed that 83 percent of the buildings surveyed had signs of serious buildings defects; 74 percent of the buildings were not properly conserved; and the last one, 84 percent of the buildings were in terrible condition and require of urgent conservation

tasks.

While, according to [A. Ghafar \(2009\)](#), most of the heritage buildings in the country were not conserved well and many of them were in a dilapidated condition that caused by damage factor to the building. The worst part is, when some of the heritage buildings were being threatened by destruction due to ignored by the real owners and demolished at the insistence of development as well as lack of concerns of the community in efforts to conserve heritage buildings ([Hamilton & Zuraini, 2002](#)). Therefore, conservation is very important to ensure the continuity of the culture and tradition of the city itself.

CULTURAL HERITAGE IN MALAYSIA

Malaysia's heritage is totally a unique expression of our history and national identity. Malaysia consists of three major ethnics such as Malays, Chinese and Indian and follows by other indigenous groups including Orang Asli, Melanau, Dayaks, Kadazan and many more. In addition, there are also joining groups of mixed descent for instance Euroasians of Portuguese, Baba and Nyonyas and other European ancestry and also other immigrant of Asian ethnicities. Besides that, the country also has owned several amazing cultural heritage resources that are readily accessible to be explored for instance historical buildings, friendly atmosphere and colourful lifestyles.

Realizing the potential of cultural heritage thus, Malaysia now taking this matter more seriously as it later will generate the national economic growth particularly in the tourism sector. With UNESCO's recognition of Melaka and George Town on July, 2008, consequently, the country is aim to utilize this kind of resources in order to generate more tourism activities. Needless to say, the World Heritage Site status by UNESCO is a great potential, especially for 'culture-heritage tourism' sector ([Shida et al., 2013, p. 89](#)).

In the same parallel, the World Tourism Organization (WTO) (2004) revealed that Malaysia as one of the most popular desti-

nations in Southeast Asia as well as Asia, for international tourists arrivals. Therefore, Melaka and George Town has been registered by United Nations, Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as world heritage sites in terms of to give experience and knowledge to the visitors in particular. In fact, the [WTO \(2004\)](#) identified Malaysia as one of the most popular destinations in Asia for international tourists, and in Southeast Asia thus, Malaysia captured around eleven per cent (11%) of international tourist arrivals ([WTO, 2010](#)). In addition, [Khalifah & Tahir \(1997, p. 178\)](#) revealed that the cultural tourism products are spotted as one of the major assets for this country.

Currently, there are two types of cultural heritage exists in the country, known as tangible and intangible. According to [Safinaz et al., \(2001\)](#) explained that tangible can be found in the form of buildings or artifacts, while on the other hand intangible was in terms of people's values, attitudes and way of life, that may have existed or exist in relation to the heritage of Malaysia or any part of Malaysia or in relation to the heritage of a Malaysian community. Hence, in the context of this paper it is obvious to note that, its shall emphasize just on the tangible cultural heritage which is historical buildings within a UNESCO World Heritage Sites in the country.

WORLDHERITAGE SITE ANDITSIMPACT

Generally, a World Heritage Site is a place or an area which has outstanding universal value and is listed by the UNESCO ([UNESCO, 2008](#)). It is globally accepted that heritage sites with significant importance should be protected in order to prevent the loss of cultural and natural heritage all over the world. As a result, Convention concerning the protection of the World's Cultural and Natural Heritage, which has articles about selection and protection of the world heritage sites, was accepted in the General Conference of UNESCO in 1972. Indeed, the world heritage sites selected according to this convention, obtains not

only a high prestige for the countries but also physical, social and economical benefits and as a result, high amounts of hard worked applications prepared by state parties to enter the World Heritage List (WHL) are handed in to World Heritage Centre ([Ertan & Egercioglu, 2016](#)).

Every countries are always ambitious about entering the WHL with their cultural heritage zones. While application process is a difficult and long journey but of course, it is worth it for striving onto it. Being on World Heritage Site doesn't bring regular funding however it brings recognition, status and thus easy accessibility to conservation funds from UNESCO or other associations ([Shackley, 2000](#)).

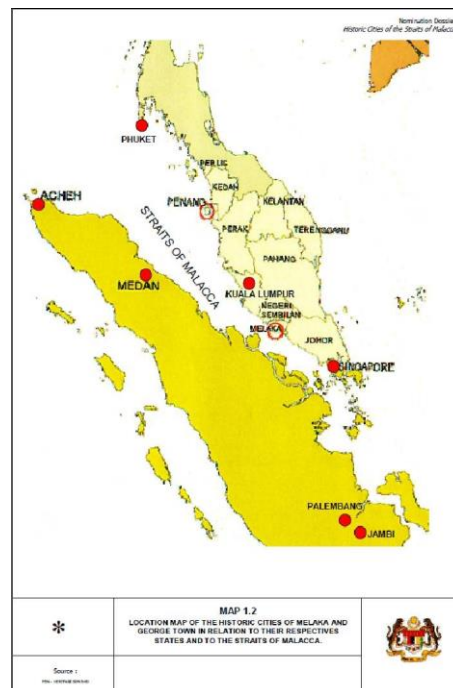
Once a heritage site makes it to the UNESCO list, it becomes a world tourist attraction spot. With the increasing of curiosity of people for different cultures thus, a consequence is the growing numbers of visitors to world heritage sites and this leads to a substantial contribution to the country's economy. In fact, with improved quality standards and better advertisement opportunities, tourist number increases even more and they tend to stay longer ([Cros, 2007](#)). In addition, this tourist flood and acknowledging ease the process of sponsor seeking for the site once required.

Despite the difficulties in getting listed, there are some advantages has been identified. One of them, for instance the World Heritage (WH) brands opens up many possibilities for sites, particularly in tourism ([Hall & Piggin, 2002, 2003](#)). Next, the site will attract more tourists ([Buckley, 2004; Huang et al., 2012; Yang et al., 2010](#)) and the recognition will shape tourists' perceptions as well as evaluation of the place ([Porja et al., 2011](#)). In fact, [Timothy and Boyd \(2006\)](#) added that the status also will give new opportunities for destination marketing. This scenario actually in line with the statement made by the Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi that "The heritage status put us on the world tourism map" ([The Star, 2008, November 23](#)).

MELAKA AND GEORGE TOWN, PENANG

In general, Melaka and George Town were located in different position and geography (Refer Figure 1). Melaka city located in mainland of southern part, and on the other side, George Town located in Penang, on northern part of peninsular. The two historic cities were located on trail trade the Straits of Malacca, are renowned for their multicultural heritage ([Siti Norlizaiba & Izzamir, 2011](#)). Thus, the reason behind for selecting both historic cities is because they both were inscribed as World Heritage Sites in the same date and year (July 7, 2008). Besides that, so far in Malaysia, for the category of 'Historic City' under the recognition by the UNESCO, there is no single city except Melaka and George Town that possesses this title of privilege.

FIGURE 1: LOCATION MAP OF MELAKA AND GEORGE TOWN



Source: Nomination Dossier, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca: Melaka and George Town

Meanwhile, heritage draw attention to the history of a place and thus asserts the place's uniqueness. In this situation, the UNESCO World Heritage Scheme recognizes places of unique and valuable heritages. Interestingly to point out that, since the formulation and adoption of the convention concerning the protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage, 1972 by UNESCO, more than 1000 sites are recognized and salient outcome of the convention is the the introduction of the World Heritage List ([Lai & Ooi, 2015, p. 1](#)).

In parallel with above thus, each 'World Heritage Site' has a responsibility to conserve and manage its heritage in ways stipulated in the Operational Guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention ([World Heritage Convention, UNESCO 2013](#)). Indeed, getting listed is not an easy task. There are certain criterias and set of rules comprises of several stages need to be follow in order to apply it. In Malaysia's cases of Melaka and George Town, the process started in year 1986 and went through many consultations as well as preparation processes before final approval by the World Heritage Committee was given on July, 7, 2008 ([Lai & ooi, 2015, p. 2](#); The Star, 2008, July 13).

ISSUE ON THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORICBUILDINGS

Although, there are several potential and advantageous of cultural heritage tourism towards theeconomic development in the country thus, there are some issue arises and need to be addressed. The paper discusses only on the issue of lack of awareness from previous literature and it shall elaborated on three subdivision. First and foremost is a lack of awareness by the public generally and local residents specifically. [Nor Zalina \(2007\)](#) claimed that one of the factor that lead to the destruction of historic buildings is lack of awareness by the public. Therefore, people seems to be not realize that the essence of historical buildings, till then later became destroyed, damaged, or removed from its context.

Second, with the recent development, indeed it also bring

some impact to local people to make wise decision whether to choose between the modern event or heritage conservation. In fact, [Teo \(2003\)](#) revealed that many local people even opposed heritage conservation because it is regarded to slow down economic development. Needless to say, instead of select the heritage buildings thus, majority of the people prefer the fast track of economic growth with dealing the latest development in the country. Moreover, the valuable cultural heritage is under threat from new developments mainly due to lack awareness of its historical and architectural importance ([Norhasimah et al., 2014, p. 4](#)).

Third, lack of awareness among the local residents on some policies imposed by the local government regarding the historic buildings also has been identified by [Wan Hashimah \(2012, p. 67\)](#). Actually these policies implemented with regard to ensure the sustainability of historic buildings, for instance Control of Rent (repeal) Act 1997 (Act 572) and the requirement to get an approval from MBMB before any renovation is executed and furthermore this research has been conducted specifically in the case of Melaka Historic City. In short, the conservation are thus put in one way or the other to assure the historic buildings are managed to retain its originality ([Wan Hashimah, 2012](#); [The Star, 2009, December 15](#)). Even Though this study focuses in Melaka, but it also can be implemented as well in George Town as they both under the same root of local government's administration.

Underlying the points of issue raised above thus, it is imperative to note that lack of awareness is the major problems that has been identified that will affect the sustainability of historic buildings both of Melaka and George Town. Not just the effect to historic buildings only, but also the afraid of that sooner or later these both historic cities will be excluded from the status of World Heritage Sites. Therefore, to tackle this issue, the paper shall used the role of newspaper, since it regarded as a powerful tool to influence the people. This particular actually align with what has been explained by [Soroka \(2002\)](#) that newspaper coverage

has an influence on how the public and policy makers come to be aware of, and think about, an issue.

METHOD

To explain the importance of historic buildings conservation and the impact of World Heritage Site as well as the issue arises, a literature review was undertaken that includes an analysis of texts on the background, concepts, an advantageous, local policies, and the role of the state government especially on both historic cities of Melaka and George Town. In addition, content analysis also has been utilized from the two local dailies newspaper in bilingual (English and Malay) were selected and the time frame of July, 2003 to July, 2013. Content analysis is normally used in communication studies. In this paper, the aim of content analysis is to explore (qualitatively) the portrayal of those both newspaper articles regarding the role of the state and local government and some policies implemented upon the local residents, which has a connection on the conservation of historic buildings within a World Heritage Site, in particular.

TABLE 1: POLICIES REGARDING CONSERVATION IN MELAKA AND GEORGE TOWN

State	Policies
Melaka	1. Melaka Enactment no. 6, 1988 2. Control of Rent (repeal) Act 1997 (Act 572) 3. Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Amendments up to 2001) (Act 172) 4. National Heritage Act 2005 (Act 645)
George Town,	1. Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172)
Penang	2. Street, Building and Drainage Act 1974 (Act 133) 3. Uniform Building By-Laws (1986)

Source: Wan Hashimah, 2012; State Government of Penang, 2008

STATE POLICIES RELATED TO THE CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS

There are several type of policies implemented to both historic cities. In general, these conservation policies are formulated to ensure that the heritage or historic buildings are handled to retain its originality. Based on the literature review thus, it

showed some policies of both historic cities and the details are in the following Table 1:

Table 1 shows policies in both historic cities, with regard to their historical buildings conservation. In the context of Melaka thus, underlying the policies encompasses of the Melaka Enactment no. 6 of 1988. This Act give permission to local government to obtain its revenue from taxes, fees, rates and fines from the rate payers within its area. It also receives grants and contributions both from federal and state governments. The Enactment too placed Melaka Historic City Council or *Majlis Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah* (MBMB) to be in-charge of the conservation of old buildings. Apart from that, the Enactment ensured that no new building is built within the historic town and no old building to be demolished. In addition, the height of new building had to be no higher than the existing lower adjacent building and also the interior after the first block, however, is left to to the discretion of the owner. Next, is the Control of Rent (repeal) Act 1997 (Act 572). This Act prevented the eviction of tenants of all pre-war rented properties without compensation and also for purposes of demolishing for development. In fact, the Act as well ensures this building type to be in its original condition. Meanwhile, the Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Amendments 2001) (Act 172) ensures proper control and regulation of town and country planning in local authority areas. Generally, it particularizes the planning powers of the local government and enables it to be a development agent authorized with the role of a catalyst for development of the area under its jurisdiction. The last one is National Heritage Act 2005 (Act 645). Actually, this act provides for the conservation and preservation of National Heritage, natural heritage, tangible and intangible cultural heritage, underwater cultural heritage, treasure trove and for related matters. At present, the state's local authority uses two policies of Melaka Enactment no. 6, 1988 and National Heritage Act, 2005. For instance, in the case of removing old buildings, the fine under the Melaka Enactment no. 6 1988

was only Ringgit Malaysia (RM) 10,000. On the other hand, under the National Heritage Act 2005 (Act 645), the fine has increased to RM500,000. Hence, this rate is still much cheaper if compared to the value of heritage buildings.

Secondly is George Town, and one of its policy that has similarity with Melaka is Town and Country Planning Act 1976 (Act 172). Basically, this Act sets the framework for local authorities to formulate structure plans- policies on economic, social and physical characters within their boundaries, and; use the same guidelines for the preparation of local plans, which are set to control the use of land and buildings as well as property developments. Besides that, is policies under the local authority's jurisdiction for instance Street, Building and Drainage Act 1974 (Act 133). In terms of street, the Act covers maintenance, repair, extension and widening of streets, whereas the streets could be made by either local authorities or private with permission from local authorities. In addition, the Act stipulates that local authority is under the obligation to construct and maintain drains and water-courses, as well as back-lanes. Furthermore, the Act prescribes rules on building activities in Part V, which including but not limited to reviewing safety and stability of erection building, demolition of unauthorized building, and so on. Finally, is Uniform Building By-Laws 1986. Terms in the Uniform Building By-Law is the basis for investigating compliance by the local authority (e.g. minimum floor area for bedrooms, thickness of party walls, etc.). Moreover, this plan actually stipulated all the necessary requirements to be complied with the purpose of erecting building by the developer and the local authority uses them as the basis for discharging their roles under building approval application.

Overall, both states of Melaka and Penang have taken a very positive action plans to handle the problem of conservation of their historic buildings through some of policies implementation. It is essential to point out that this efforts need to be done consistently and also the important of to up-date this strategy's

oftenly, so that it should be in line with the changing of current development. Therefore, by doing this, it is hope that both cities would be able to maintain the status of World Heritage Site and thus can be passed on to next young generations in the country.

INVOLVEMENT OF STATE AGENCIES AND THE LOCAL AUTHORITY

Apart from those policies, it is also imperative to have an agency (especially the government agencies) which could support the state government effort on preserving its historic buildings. In this segment, the author utilizing the data findings from the local newspaper articles (The Star and Berita Harian) regarding the conservation of historic buildings in both historic cities. Consequently, to look further on this part thus, refer the particulars in Table 2 as follows:

TABLE 2: THE ROLES OF STATE AGENCIES ON CONSERVATION OF HISTORIC BUILDINGS IN MELAKA AND GEORGE TOWN

Level	Melaka	George Town
State	1. Chief Minister Department (Jabatan Ketua Menteri/JKM) 2. Melaka State Conservation Centre (Pusat Konservasi Negeri Melaka)	1. George Town World Heritage Incorporated (GTWHI)
Local Authority	1. MBMB	1. MPPP

Source: Adapted from Data Findings

Table 2 illustrates about the agencies involvement on conservation matter to both historic cities of Melaka and George Town. Before that, it is important to understand that all of the agencies actually are controlled by the the federal government through the *Jabatan Warisan Negara* (JWN) (National Heritage Department). JWN shall act accordingly to what has been set up by the National Heritage Act 2005 (ACT 645) [Akta Warisan Kebangsaan 2005 (Akta 645)]. Actually, JWN play a significant role of to be in charge on the subject related with conserving, preserving, protecting and promoting the rich treasures of Ma-

laysian heritage (*Jabatan Warisan Negara*, 2016).

First, is for Melaka historic city. There are two level of power, and it consisting of the state and local governments. Under the state government, it has two agencies such as JKM and also Melaka State Conservation Centre. JKM, through its agency of the Tourism Promotion Division (Bahagian Promosi Pelancongan/BPP) alongside the vision towards Melaka as a premier tourist destination in Asia with the theme “UNESCO World Heritage City of Melaka” and also with their mission encompassing of by developing the tourism industry to become a major contributor to economic growth (GDP) and employment generation of Melaka; extend the stay in Melaka to three (3) nights target towards 2020; and attractive half of the tourists visiting Malaysia for a visit to Melaka by year 2020 ([BPP, 2017](#)). Second, is Melaka State Conservation Centre, with the objective to conserve and maintain the historic buildings within the Melaka Historic City (BH, 2013, June 18). In addition, this centre was established on June 2013, acts as a reference center on building conservation as well as historical artefacts related to the state. Apart from that, the centre also could assist visitors as well as building owners to obtain information and advisory services on the work and conservation plans of old buildings. As for the Local Government, MBMB is functioning on planning city development continuously and also strengthen city functions as cultural center, commercial, education and administration ([MBMB, 2016](#)). Established on January, 1977 and later upgraded on April 2003 (from municipal into city council) and since then, MBMB will continue to improve its quality of service towards people of Melaka and tourists.

Second, is for George Town historic city. The State Government had set up GTWHI in 2010, to lead the efforts of ensuring the George Town’s heritage will not be extinct. GTWHI is an organization dedicated to protecting, promoting and preserving George Town as a sustainable city. Moreover, this organization whos main objective was to manage the site by working with all

stakeholders (including federal, state and local government as well as several Non-Governmental Organizations or NGO) (GTWHI, 2016). While, in the level of Local Government thus, City Council of Penang or *Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang* (MPPP) is also plays a significant role to support the state government regarding the conservation matter. It was founded on December, 1976 under the Local Government Act 1976 and committed to ensure service delivery complies with quality standard and stated client charter. One of its main objective is to improve the quality of living culture, preserve the heritage and encourage community participation in achieving sustainable development ([MPPP, 2016](#)).

From the above discussion, it is clear to say that indeed both states of Melaka and Penang taking the conservation matter seriously through its proper strategic plans definitely. The establishment of these agencies are a real proof of the fact that the state government really cares for the preservation of historic buildings especially in the area of World Heritage Site. In short, conservation task should not be considered trivial, because if we lose sight thus, one day it will may disappear. Next is the discussion for comparison with other countries and the details are as follows.

COMPARISON WITH OTHER COUNTRIES

The findings of the study too revealed other country with regard to their conservation plans of the heritage spots, as comparison purposes. Firstly, between Melaka, Malaysia and Tire, Turkey. This study was carry out by [Ertan & Egercioglu \(2016\)](#) regarding the impact of UNESCO World Heritage list on historic urban city centers and its place in urban regeneration. In general, Tire is a small town in Izmir, with significant historical background and it has many similarities with Melaka. The aims is to learn from the experience of Melaka in terms of urban regeneration process and how they being listed, so that Tire shall follows this path and perhaps later it would be eligible for

UNESCO World Heritage Site list. Hence, most of the buildings that are under conservation or needs to be preserved are about 700 years old. Although there are some conservation efforts of local authorities and they are still going on, but still there is not a wholesome approach of urban regeneration to the historic center. In fact, a few restoration projects did more damage than appropriate such as in the case of Tahtakale Bath. In this project, irrelevant material were used and also the new functions were not fitting with the historically significant structure. Actually, there is a huge conservation plan for Tire that is approved by Tire municipality with the objective of getting registered historic structures repaired and regenerated, but it limited on the area of historic city center only. Besides that, it is imperative for local residents in here, actively getting involved with this urban revitalization process since it is their own town and they will be the real users of the outcome. This is because, even though local residents seem to be involved in the decision making process on paper, yet they individually did not participate.

Secondly, apart from the conservation, there is also collaboration between Melaka historic city with other countries. Starting first with neighboring country, Indonesia. Research by [Habibah et al. \(2013\)](#) whose examined of city to city tourism collaboration in the Straits of Melaka Development Region, which are Melaka and Riau Provincials. It actually focussing on Banda Hilir in Melaka and Dumai, Pekan Baru and Bengkalis in Riau. Findings showed that there are significant key factors who contributed to increasing collaboration between both cities. The key success factors are refer to the macro and at the micro level of the individuals, community and the businesses. At the governance level thus, leadership commitment and managerial skills are principal to support these initiatives. Dissimilar from nearly all examples in the existing literature that stress upon the unbalance benefits between collaborations, the results disclosed a vice versa in the case throughout the Melaka Strait development region. The pertinent government stakeholders have

had mutual benefits in these undertakings. Next, within the business entities, sharing of possibilities in generating tourism businesses serve a solid support for both areas, especially in exploring the Malay or Melayuness as a taste maker. Third, within the context of community regional entity, the inclusiveness of the Malay community acts as a strong pillar for travelling in both regions. Fourth, within the spatial development areas, optimizing the consumers, resources and physical closeness have provided prospects to meet with the pressing globalization business challenges as well as tourist changing scenario. On the other hand, the importance of relationship between both cities also identified from BH newspaper, where the Melaka government made a statement that they will continue to support federal government regarding the bridge project across straits of Melaka, which connects both cities in future (BH, 2015, September 09). This shows that the potential of these two historic cities to be developed on the basis of one cluster (Nusantara) is very significant.

Next collaboration are between Melaka and China as well as Scandinavian countries like Sweden, Norway and Denmark (BH, 2014, September 15; BH, 2015, October 28). Since the Guangdong Provincial Governor's visit, Zhu Xiaodan with his entourage to Melaka thus establishing bilateral ties between the two parties especially for the benefit of the tourism sector. Besides that, through the work visit and trade mission of Melaka's top leaders led by the Yang di Pertuan Negeri and the Chief Minister along with his entourage are expected to open up more cooperation opportunities with Scandinavian countries visited. In addition, Melaka also would shares their experience in the aspect of conservation historic buildings, this in parallel with its status as UNESCO World Heritage Site. In fact, the role Melaka government in conservation attempts, especially in the World Heritage Site was also admired by Thailand's Deputy Prime Minister, Trairong Suwankiri who had brief visits to this state (BH, 2010, July 28). By looking at this point, it is very clear to state that indeed the status of World Heritage Site had give a signifi-

cant impact not only to both historic cities, but also in Malaysia as a whole as well as to other countries by practicing the concept of a win-win situation. The challenge now is how the state government could continuously conducting conservation efforts in line with the regulations set by UNESCO, so that it would retain the title perpetually.

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

This paper covers on the historic buildings conservation of both Melaka and George Town, Penang. Other cities in Malaysia which have not yet recognized as a world heritage sites are not included. Further, the paper also focuses on the role of both's state government encompasses of the policies as well as the institutions which related to the conservation of heritage buildings. The role of federal government in this study is excluded and vice versa, it just added the role of local government since it is under the state government's jurisdiction. In addition, the paper does not deal with intangible and also natural heritage, instead it just emphasizes on the tangible heritage vis a vis historic buildings.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Preserving the world's Heritage Sites for the learning as well as advancement of present and future generations is pivotal. [Mohamed et al. \(2001, p.10\)](#) stated 'more concerted efforts are needed to navigate problems experienced in the heritage cities, which should be geared at various levels'. This paper has highlighted the importance of how to sustain the world heritage sites in both Melaka and George Town, by focussing on the conservation of historic buildings. Besides taking into account the role of the state government and through its agencies as well as the local authority, with regard to their policies implementation upon local residents.

Although this study emphasizes on the state and local level, it would also suggest that the state and federal government need to have persistently good relationships, so that it is easier to man-

age the heritage buildings with more efficient and effectively. This is because the conservation involves great amount of money and at the same time, the state government often do not have a sufficient fund and by referring on this conditions thus, it is the role of federal to assists its. Second, is to improve the quality of public facilities especially in the area of World Heritage Site for instance an easy accessible transportation, provision of adequate trash, spacious parking lot, clean public toilet and many others (BH, 2013, September 14). In line with that, it may refers to public facilities who should enhance the values of the world heritage site and at the same time should be useful; public facilities should also be beneficial to both local community and tourists; and public facilities should be easy to maintain it and should be check regularly ([Shida et al., 2013, p. 95](#)). Once again, the state government of both historic cities should play the role in order to make sure the tourists are always feel comfortable and satisfy with those services and as a result, hopefully they will continue to visit this sites again in another time.

Next, is continuous monitoring. The state government and local authority thus, both of them need to enforce these policies as mentioned earlier, so that the related parties would be able to obey it. The conservation of historic buildings require constant effort and this is being the case, whereby the state government again need to execute their task at their best certainly. Besides that, the staff of MBMB and MPPP too, need often monitoring to the owner of historic buildings and the publics to ensure that they are always follow the rules and if not, a penalty will be charged on them. Apart from that thus, [Pickard \(2009\)](#) revealed the government can encourage conservation, restoration and rehabilitation through one of the way called the dynamis approach, which involves policies and standards to stimulate the private business to invest in architectural heritage.

Finally, is for collaborative planning. [Gunton et al., \(2006\)](#) explained the key advantages of collaboration comprises of increased likelihood of developing a plan that is in the public in-

terest because it incorporates the interests of all affected parties; growth likelihood of implementation because all affected affairs support the plan; and generation of social capital, such as improved stakeholder relations and enhanced stakeholder knowledge that provide long-term benefits to society. In this case, certainly a good collaboration from both state and local government with the local residents are very much expected, so that it would ensure the success of the historic buildings conservation efforts as been elucidated in above.

REFERENCES

- A Ghafar Ahmad. (2009). Celebrating Malaysia's world heritage sites: The historic cities of Melaka and George Town. ACCU Nara International Correspondent: The second and the Third Regular Report. Cultural Heritage Protection Cooperation Office, Asia/Pacific Cultural Centre for UNESCO (ACCU), Nara, Japan, pp. 8-9.
- Bahagian promosi pelancongan (BPP), Jabatan Ketua Menteri Melaka. (2017). <http://www.melaka.gov.my/ms/kerajaan/jabatan-ketua-menteri-melaka/sektor-pembangunan/bahagian-promosi-pelancongan-bpp> (accessed on 15 July 2017).
- Berita Harian. (09 September 2015). Melaka sokong projek jambatan hubungkan Riau.
- Berita Harian. (14 September 2013). *Perluas produk pelancongan waktu malam di Melaka*.
- Berita Harian. (15 September 2014). *Peluang peringkat kerjasama 3 negara*.
- Berita Harian. (18 June 2013). *Pulihara bangunan lama*.
- Berita Harian. (28 July 2010). *TPM Thailand kagum usaha pulihara Melaka*.
- Berita Harian. (28 October 2015). *Hubungan dua hala rancak sektor pelancongan, pelaburan di Melaka*.
- Berita Minggu. (23 November 2008). *Pemuliharaan warisan secara terancang, teliti*.
- Buckley, R. (2004). The effects of world heritage listing on tourism to Australian national parks. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, Vol. 12(1), pp. 70-84.
- Chourasia, B. & Chourasia, A. (2012). *Prospects of heritage tourism management in Bokaro of Jharkhand*. VSRD International journal of business and management research, Vol. 2(10).
- Cook, S. (2000). 2001 outlook on US tourism: An overview. 2000 TIA marketing outlook forum. Anaheim, CA.
- Cros, H. D. (2007). Toomuch of a good thing? Visitor congestion management issues for popular world heritage tourist attractions. *Journal of heritage tourism*, Vol. 2(3), pp. 225-238.
- Ertan, T. & Egercioglu, Y. (2016). The impact of UNESCO world heritage list on historic urban city centers and its place in urban regeneration: The case of Melaka, Malaysia and Tire, Turkey. *Procedia-social and behavioral sciences*, 216: 591-602. [Doi:10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.12.031](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.12.031)
- Faulkner, B., Moscardo, G. & Laws, E. (Eds.). (2000). *Tourism in the 21st century: Lessons from experience*. London: Continurm.
- George Town world heritage incorporated. (2016). <http://www.gtwhi.com.my/introduction/what-we-do.html> (accessed on 25 November 2016).
- Gunton, T. I., Peter, T., & Day, J. C. (2006). Evaluating collaborative planning: A case study of a land and resource management planning process. *Business and trade journals*.

- <http://www.entrepreneur.com/tradejournals/pub/OJXO.html>
- Habibah, A., Hamzah, J., Er, A. C., Buang, A., Selvadurai, S., & Mushrifah, I. (2013). City-city tourism collaboration in the straits of Malacca development region: Key success factors. *Asian social science*, Vol. 9(13), pp. 40-52. [Doi: 10.5539/ass.v9n13p40](https://doi.org/10.5539/ass.v9n13p40)
- Hall, C. M. & Piggini, R. (2002). Tourism business knowledge of world heritage sites: A New Zealand case study. *International journal of tourism research*, Vol. 4, pp. 401-411. [Doi: 10.1002/jtr.391](https://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.391)
- Hamilton & Zuraini. (2002). In Solihah, M., Mazdi, M., Ruzanna Syamimi, R., Jabil, M., Mohammad Kadir, Z. A., & Mohamad Pirdaus, Y., 2015, *Pengurusan bandar warisan UNESCO dan penglibatan komuniti tempatan: Kajian kes di George Town, Pulau Pinang*, p. 91. GEOGRAFIA [Online™ Malaysian journal of society and space](https://doi.org/10.1177/0014180112451121). 11(12), pp. 87-99.
- Huang, C.-H., Tsaur, J.-R., & Yang, C.-H. (2012). Does world heritage list really induce more tourists more tourists? Evidence from Macau. *Tourism management*, Vol. 33(6), pp. 1450- 1457.
- Jabatan warisan negara, Kementerian Pelancongan dan Kebudayaan*. (2016). <http://www.heritage.gov.my/en/about-us/grp-about-us-introduction/about-us-back-ground> (accessed on 23 November 2016).
- Kamal, S. K., Wahab, A. L., & Ahmad, G. A. (2008). Pilot survey on the conservation of historical buildings in Malaysia. *Proceedings of the 2nd International Conference on Built Environment in Developing Countries*, Penang.
- Khalifah, Z. & S. Tahir. (1997). Malaysia: Tourism in perspective. In *tourism and economic development in Asia and Australasia*, edited by F.M. Go & C. L. Jenkins, pp. 176- 196. London: A Cassell Imprint.
- Lai, S. & Ooi, C. S. (2015). Experiences of two UNESCO World heritage cities: National and local politics in branding the past. *CLCS Working paper series*, April, pp. 1- 21. *Majlis perbandaran Pulau Pinang*. (2016). <http://www.mppp.gov.my/en/mhpp/profile/background> (accessed on 25 November 2016).
- Melaka bandaraya bersejarah (MBMB). (2016). <http://www.mmbb.gov.my/en/mmbb/profile/background> (accessed on 25 November 2016).
- Mohamed, B., Ahmad, A. G., & Badarulzaman, N. (2001). Challenges of historic cities in the new millennium: Lessons from Malaysia. In: *International symposium on future cities*. Riyadh: Saudi Arabia.
- Nomination Dossier, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca: Melaka and George Town. <http://www.gtwhi.com.my/images/stories/files/dossier.pdf> (accessed on 17 January 2017).
- Nor Zalina, H. (2007). Problems involved in the conservation of historic settlements in Malaysia: Case study of Kuala Selangor. *Jurnal alam bina*, Jilid 9(3), pp. 83- 89.
- Norhasimah, I., Tamiji, M., & Azizul, A. (2014). Cultural heritage tourism in Malaysia: Issues and challenges. *SHS web of conferences*, 12, 01059: EDP Sciences, pp. 1-8.
- Nuryanti, W. (1996). [Heritage and postmodern tourism](https://doi.org/10.1080/09669609608839511). *Annals of tourism research*, Vol. 23(2), pp. 249-260.
- Pickard, R. (2009). *Funding the architectural heritage: A guide to policies and examples*. Strasbourg Cedex: Council of Europe Publishing.
- Poria, Y., Reichel, A., & Cohen, R. (2011). [World heritage sites: Is it an effective brand name?: A case study of a religious heritage site](https://doi.org/10.1080/10907019.2011.588888). *Journal of travel research*, Vol. 50(5), pp. 482-495.
- Prentice, R. C. (1993). *Tourism and heritage attractions*. London: Routledge.
- Real, T. (2000). Tourism, culture, heritage, and shopping in the US: Fruitful new linkages at the downing of the 21st century. In M. Robinson, P. Long, N. Evans, R. Sharpley &

- J. Swarbrooke (Eds.). Reflections on international tourism: Expressions of culture, identity and meaning in tourism, pp. 291- 305. Newcastle: University of Northumbria.
- Richards, G. (1996). The scope and significance of cultural tourism. In G. Richards (Ed.), Culture tourism in Europe, pp. 19-46. Oxon, UK: CAB International Publication.
- Safinaz, M. H., Mahmud Zuhdi, M. N., & Nazura, A. M. (2001). Bringing life to folklore: Problem of definition. *Jurnal undang-undang dan Masyarakat*, 15.
- Shackley, M. (2000). Visitor management: Case studies from world heritage sites. Butterworth-Heinemann: Oxford, 1-3, pp. 200-201.
- Shahrul Yani, Z., Hasnizan, A., & Elma Dewiyana, I. (2013). Heritage conservation and regeneration of historic areas in Malaysia. Asia Pacific international conference on environment-behaviour studies, university of Westminster, London. *Procedia- Social and behavioural sciences*, 105, pp. 418-428.
- Shamsuddin, S. & Sulaiman, A. B. (2002). The importance of conserving the old town centre in achieving a sustainable built environment of the future. In, National seminar on built environment: Sustainability through management and technology.
- Shida, I. O., Masitah Muhibudin, Izatul, Y., Mohd Fauzi, S., & Badaruddin, M. (2013). George Town, Penang as a World Heritage Site: The stakeholders' perceptions. PSU-USM international conference on humanities and social sciences. *Procedia- Social and behavioral science*, Vol. 91, pp. 88-96.
- Siti Norlizaiha, H. & Izzamir, I. (2011). The conservation plan for world heritage site: George Town, Penang and Malacca, Malaysia. The 1st International Conference on Rebuilding Place: From Culture to Art and Architecture, University Kuala Syiah, Banda Aceh, Indonesia, 4 October. <http://www.academia.edu/603594/> (accessed on 17 January 2017).
- Soroka, S. N. (2002). Issue attributes and agenda-setting by media, the public, and policymakers in Canada. *International journal of public opinion research*, 14, pp. 264-285.
- State government of Penang. (2008). Heritage management plan: Historic city of George Town.
- Teo, P. (2003). The limits of engineering: A case study of Penang. *International journal of urban and regional research*, Vol. 27(3), pp. 545-563.
- The Star. (09 July 2008). Conservation is top priority: George Town, Malacca have job to do.
- The Star. (13 July 2008). The long journey to world heritage status.
- The Star. (15 December 2009). Dept: Protect heritage sites, 'Structures must undergo proper renovation.'
- The Star. (23 November 2008). George Town and Malacca receive world heritage site award.
- Timothy, D. J. & Boyd, S. W. (2006). Heritage tourism in the 21st century: Valued traditions and new perspectives. *Journal of heritage tourism*, Vol. 1(1), pp. 1-16.
- United nations conference on trade and development (UNCTAD). (2004). Creative industries and development, 11th session, Sao Paulo, Geneva.
- United nations conference on trade and development (UNCTAD). (2008). Creative economy report 2008: The challenge of assessing the creative economy, Towards informed policy-making. United Nations.
- UNESCO. (2008). Decisions adopted at the 32nd session of the World Heritage Committee (Quebec City, 2008). <http://whc.unesco.org/en/decisions/1486> (accessed on 17 January, 2017).
- UNESCO. (2013). Operational guidelines for the implementation of the world heritage convention. <http://whc.unesco.org/en/guidelines> (accessed on 25 June, 2015).
- WanHashimah, W.I. (2012). Sustainability of buildings in historic city of Malacca. *ASIAN Journal of Environment-Behaviour Studies*, Vol. 3, No. 10, October, pp. 57- 69.

World Tourism Organization (WTO). (2004). Tourism market trends 2003 edition: World overview and tourism topics. WTO: Madrid. In Siti Suriawati Isa. (2012). Development issues for the creative economy in Malaysia. PhD thesis, Queensland University of Technology.

World Tourism Organization (WTO). (2010). World tourism rankings- world tourism barometer report 2009. In Siti Suriawati Isa. (2012). Development issues for the creative economy in Malaysia. PhD thesis, Queensland University of Technology.

Yang, C., Lin, H., & Han, C. (2010). Analysis of international tourist arrivals in China: The role of world heritage sites. *Tourism management*, Vol. 31(6), pp. 827-837.