The Built Environment

Selected Writings

MARIANA MOHAMED OSMAN
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AZILA AHMAD SARKAWI

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SIGNIFICANCE OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN SAFEGUARDING INTANGIBLE CULTURAL HERITAGE

Mariana Mohamed Osman[1], Syahriah Bachok[2], Aisyah Abu Bakar[3]

ABSTRACT

This paper reviews the theory and significance of community involvement in safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage. The main concern addressed on Intangible Cultural Heritage is the fears of cultural homogeneity around the world likely caused by globalization processes. In 2003, UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage Convention has proposed five broad domains of Intangible Cultural Heritage which are Oral traditions and expressions, Performing arts; Social practices, rituals and festive events; Knowledge and practices concerning nature and the universe; and Traditional craftsmanship. Four characters of Intangible cultural Heritage have also been addressed acknowledging the role of individuals and community in protecting and manifesting the cultural heritages. This paper discusses significances of community involvement in protecting Intangible Cultural Heritage in the built environment and how they are inculcated into universal understanding and manifestations.

Keywords: Community Involvement, Intangible Cultural Heritage

INTRODUCTION

A community of a place is involved in shaping the cultural identity or significance of the place (Crang, 1998; Hough; 1990). Cultural identity is categorized under two elements which are behavior and achievement of the people. The behavior is specified into behavioral patterns at different times and situations, inherent or simulation behavior, morals, traditions and way of life. Alternatively, achievement is identified under belief and judgments, cultural events, historical personification, and enriching cultural products. The cultural activities adopted from the predecessor of a certain community are termed as intangible cultural heritage (Hough, 1990; Norberg-Schulz, 1980; Day, 2002; Lewicka, 2008: ICHC, 2003).

The term heritage has a broad meaning. It is understood that heritage is anything handed down from the past which ranges from natural to manmade elements. The entities of heritage are often categorized into two which are Tangible and Intangible Heritages. The realization of the importance of intangible heritage began when disappearing traditions persisted due to failure in cultural reproduction (ICHC, 2003; Saleh, Mat Said, Hairy Ibrahim, Nayan, Che Leh, 2007; Canizaro, 2007). It is not until 1952 that UNESCO began the effort to

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