NURTURING NATURE FOR MAN

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CONTENTS

Editor’s Preface ii - iv
Abbreviations v

CHAPTER 1: OBJECTIVIST PARADIGM IN SCENIC BEAUTY ASSESSMENT 1 - 9
Jamilah Othman

CHAPTER 2: TAMING THE FLOOD IN URBAN MALAYSIA 10 - 21
Izawati Tukiman

CHAPTER 3: MALAY MIDWIFERY AND PLANT SPECIES IN SOUTHEAST PAHANG 22 - 30
Rashidi Othman, Noriszai Ishak

CHAPTER 4: MANAGING HISTORIC CULTURAL LANDSCAPE RESOURCES FOR TOURISM: CASE OF SUNGAI LEMBING AND MERSING IN MALAYSIA 31 – 40
Ismawi Zen

CHAPTER 5: THE EVOLUTION AND MORPHOLOGY OF KUALA LUMPUR: A CASE FOR THE CONSERVATION OF A COLONIAL URBAN FORM 41 - 63
Ismawi Zen

CHAPTER 6: PUBLIC SPACES IN HISTORIC CITIES OF MALAYSIA 64 - 72
Nor Zalina Harun

CHAPTER 7: HARD AND SOFT INFRASTRUCTURES OF TEMPORARY MARKETS 73 - 83
Khalilah Zakariya

CHAPTER 8: LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTURE AND THE CREATION OF A COMMUNITY 84 – 94
Mazlina Mansor

CHAPTER 9: CREATING QUALITY GREEN OPEN SPACE IN MALAYSIA 95 - 102
Nurhayati Abdul Malek

CHAPTER 10: TOTAL PLANNING DOCTRINE: AN ANSWER? 103 - 115
Ismawi Zen
CHAPTER 7

HARD AND SOFT INFRASTRUCTURES OF TEMPORARY MARKETS

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ABSTRACT

Places and cities are not static, nor do they operate in isolation. An example of this can be seen in how temporary markets occupy streets and parking lots. They temporarily transform a street space into a festive marketplace, contributed by the agglomeration of vendors, visitors, products and the surrounding setting. Since temporary markets are mobile, they occupy different spaces in the city. In these spaces, visitors and vendors from different parts of the city gather, and products and services of different kinds convene. Hence, the operation of a temporary market cannot be detached from a larger system. There are hard and soft infrastructures that enable a place like temporary markets to operate. From looking at temporary markets as a case study, this section demonstrates how the market and the city work as a system.

Keywords: temporary market, system, infrastructures, Asian urbanism, city

INTRODUCTION

Temporary markets a type of public market and public space. They serve as places where goods are traded, while at the same time acting as a public or communal space (Tangires, 2008). They can come in the form of street markets, night markets, farmer’s markets, art markets and others. Their nature of operation is temporary, usually periodic or occasional (Yeung, 1974). They operate by borrowing existing public space such as the streets, sidewalks and other vacant spaces in towns and cities.

In Asia, temporary markets function primarily as a source of income for small-scale entrepreneurs. The markets gradually become assimilated into the city’s culture as a social and commercial space. They contribute to the city’s street life because most temporary markets operate outdoors, although there are also markets held indoors. In Malaysia, night markets started to operate formally in late seventies and eighties as a result of specific economic conditions caused by the New Economic Policy. They were used to revive the economic conditions of Malaysians through providing business opportunities for small entrepreneurs (Ishak, 2007). Gradually, night markets become assimilated into the culture of