

Nurturing Nature for Man

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IIUM PRESS
INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA



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Published by:
IIUM Press
International Islamic University Malaysia

First Edition, 2011
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Perpustakaan Negara Malaysia

Cataloguing-in-Publication Data

Mazlina Mansor, Ismawi Hj. Zen, Jamilah Othman and Nor Zalina Harun:
Nurturing Nature For Man

ISBN: 978-967-418-128-4

Member of Majlis Penerbitan Ilmiah Malaysia – MAPIM
(Malaysian Scholarly Publishing Council)

Printed by :

IIUM PRINTING SDN. BHD.

No. 1, Jalan Industri Batu Caves 1/3

Taman Perindustrian Batu Caves

Batu Caves Centre Point

68100 Batu Caves

Selangor Darul Ehsan

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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