

Malay Vernacular Architecture

Traditional and Contemporary Expressions

Norwina Mohd Nawawi

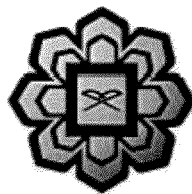


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Malay Vernacular Architecture: *traditional and contemporary expressions*

Norwina Mohd Nawawi



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CHAPTER 4

COMPARATIVE STUDIES OF THE MALAY AND MALAY- MUSLIM TRADITIONAL HOUSES AS ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE BUILT FORMS.

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ABSTRACT

The similarities found in the architectural styles of the Malay and Malay-Muslim traditional houses as architectural heritage built form in the Southeast Asian region have triggered many theories among architectural writers and critics of its origin. This article intends to discuss selected theories and review some examples of architectural forms found in Thailand, Indonesia, Malaysia, Cambodia, Laos PDR and Vietnam as bases of understanding the development of the civilization that is profoundly connected to the architectural establishment in both styles and typologies. Qualitative approach through literature review and observational visits to case studies in the region was adopted for this study. The preliminary findings suggest the pragmatism of approach in the similarities and differences of the architectural forms explains implicitly the origins of the Malay architectural heritage.

Keywords: Malay, Malay-Muslim heritage, traditional house, architectural forms and styles

INTRODUCTION

What is the Malay architecture? What is Malay-Muslim Architectural Heritage? Historians have had in many accounts suggested that the movement of people from the mainland Asia towards the peninsular and islands in the southern region of East Asia. The theory is that the movement had been one of the important governing factors in deciding the architectural style of this region. The similarities are now seen on the surviving architectural heritage of the Muslim – Malay in the form of *masjids*, palaces, houses and etc. However, most discussion on the Malay architecture dwells mainly on the traditional houses. Great buildings such as Chandi Borobudur in Java and Angkor Wat in Cambodia of stone structure had inscriptions that reflected similar vernacular interpretation of these traditional wooden houses. The story told on reliefs and carvings showed similar architecture of houses raised on stilts, which some historians called it “raise on pile”, to belong to the place of origin of those that came either to Java or stayed in the Angkor kingdom. However, due to the climatic