

Cultural Landscape: A New Paradigm for Landscape Architecture

HAZA HANURHAZA BT MD JANI AND
MOHD RAMZI B. MOHD HUSSAIN
*Department of Landscape Architecture
Kulliyah of Architecture and Environmental Design,
International Islamic University Malaysia.
hanurhaza@gmail.com*

Abstract

This paper presents the review on the important of cultural landscape in the context of landscape architecture's profession. It is crucial to understand the concept of cultural landscape as it offers main contribution in sustaining the heritage value and protecting local identity and original culture of a group of people or place. From Islamic point of view, cultural landscape present the notion of revealing and sustaining the great diversity of the interactions between humans and their environment, to protect living traditional cultures and preserve the traces of those which have disappeared. Therefore cultural landscape must be incalculable with profession of landscape architect and this concept should be perceived as an added value in landscape architecture education in Asia. This paper is based on three fundamental framework of appreciating cultural landscape which is history, heritage and culture which cover the explanation of human root, identity, image, character and values. It is hoped that the output of the paper will contribute to further enrich landscape architecture's profession on ideas, innovations and added values for landscape architect in future generation.

1. Introduction

Cultural landscape expands the notion that unique area may hold thousands of cultural meaning. It is believed that not every place can be categorized as cultural landscape although human intervention may have left their marks in the entire part of the world for instance the effects of pollution and global warming. Loures (2008) suggested that cultural landscape provide a group of people a sense of place and identity. It is also a process to reveal human relationship with land. Sirisrisak and Akagawa (2007) further elaborated that cultural landscape is geographic area that includes cultural and

natural resources associated with an historic event, activity, person, or group of people that share the same identity and meaning. As highlighted by UNESCO-ICOMOS Documentation Centre (2009) and World Heritage Convention (1992) the term cultural landscape derived from the minds of the communities that are bond to the same traditions, customs and beliefs represent by exceptional spiritual relationship between people and nature. The strong relationship of human and nature encourages the communities to preserve traditional culture in order to uphold their history.

The work of many authors has discussed the important of cultural landscape towards enriching people's identity. It develops a sense of place or belonging and protecting the original culture of certain community or place as it is the main key to human legacy (Arntzen, 2003; Loures, 2008; Clement, 1997; Stoffle et al., 2003). In line with the idea of cultural landscape, it has been highlighted by Rapoport (1976) that the interaction between human and nature must be evaluate in a very broad perspectives which includes both cross-cultural and historical studies. Based on the approach it is discovered that the fundamental framework to cultural landscape is the ideas, values and behavior of a culture, protecting the heritage of human legacy and upholding the valuable history. Indeed, Garibaldi and Straker (2010) supported the approach and address that to reclaim cultural landscape high deliberation on the aspect of values and social consideration must be taken acutely. It would appear reasonable to conclude that people in the same area share the same cultural landscape. Human activities on land and the past experiences are the elements that shaped an identity, human root, beliefs, values, norms, image, character and cultural meaning to the place. Therefore cultural landscape is considered as people's legacy hence it must be protected (Rapoport, 1976; Stoffle et al., 2003; Loures, 2008).

The propose of landscape is to serve as an interaction between people and space, particularly, spaces which the group belongs to and shares the same identity and meaning. From Islamic point of view, cultural landscape present the notion of revealing and sustaining the great diversity of the interactions between humans and their environment, to protect living traditional cultures and preserve the traces of those which have disappeared, it is actually an approach to appreciate pure relationship between human and built environment. Islam highlights the important of human relationship with the environment and the associations involving the two assemblages have been emphasized repeatedly in Al-Quran. Surah al-Saff 1 "Whatever is in the heavens and on earth, declares the Praises and Glory of Allah: for He is Exalted in Might, the Wise". Seyyed Hossein Nasr mentioned that nature was like a fountain of joy that was not created for bad intentions but rather it has been formed to cultivate the Islamic civilization (see Omer, 2005:109).

The analysis done by Stoffle et al., (2003) emphasized that the idea of cultural landscape obtains from the opinion that land exist in the mind of people and the knowledge contain from the land is shared and passed from one generation to another. It would be appear that people in the same area share the same cultural landscape. Human activities on land and the past experiences are the elements that shaped an identity, beliefs, values, norms and cultural meaning to the place. Therefore cultural landscape is a heritage for a group of people and it should be protected. A guidelines provided by Clement (1997) verified that historic landscapes contain valuable historic values developed from layers of historical incident and occurrence by human including ethnography and traditional cultural values. Historic landscape can be defined as geographical areas that experience series of past alteration by human or any significant sites with traditional cultural values. Visual character and intangible qualities are the upmost reliable evidences of historical landscape.

Ghafar Ahmad (2004:2) pointed out that culture and heritage are irreplaceable. The features of tangible and intangible qualities are the vital keys of heritage values that are significantly important aspect for human development. It is possible to define that human interventions upon natural environment through time expand and strengthen the cultural values. Jackson (1985) implied that landscape without visible sign of history is a landscape without memory or forethought. Whilst Groth (1997) further elaborated that the proposes of landscape is to serve as an interaction between people and space, particularly, spaces which the group belongs to and shares the same identity and meaning.

Therefore cultural landscape must be in calculated in the profession of landscape architect and this concept must be perceived as an added value in landscape architecture education in Asia.

2. Framework of cultural landscape

Based on the discussion, it would appears reasonable to classify that there are three fundamental framework on the concept of cultural landscape as the new paradigm for landscape architect and added value in the landscape architecture education in Asia which are:

1. History
2. Heritage
3. Culture

It is crucial for landscape architect to be well educated in the idea of cultural landscape. This is not a new ideology, cultural landscape has been recognized by anthropologies, ecologies, and recently in 1992 it has been

adopted in the World Heritage Convention. However, the knowledge of cultural landscape in the education is not been truly appreciated by people specifically landscape architect in Asia.

Region	Number of state parties in region	World	Heritage	Properties *	Cultural	Landscape **	
		Number of world heritage inscription	Average inscription in one state party	Average inscription per average inscription in EN	Number of cultural landscape inscription	Average inscription in one state party	Average inscription per average inscription in EN
AF	26	77	2.96	0.34	6	0.23	0.33
AR	14	57	4.07	0.47	1	0.07	0.10
AP	25	167	6.68	0.77	10	0.40	0.60
EN	48	417	8.69	1.00	33	0.69	1.00
LC	25	112	4.48	0.52	3	0.12	0.17
TOTAL	138	830	6.01	-	53	0.38	-

Figure 1. Cultural landscape listed in the world heritage 2006

(AF = Africa region, AR = Arab States region, AP = Asia and the Pacific region, EN = Europe and North America region and LC = Latin America and the Caribbean region)

Source: T. Siririsak and N. Akagawa (2007)

Malaysia has only two places registered in World Heritage List under the category of cultural landscape which are Malacca and Penang. These places are the only state in Malaysia that has been recognized by UNESCO. This show how cultural landscape is been perceived by other countries especially in Europe and North America region, however in Asia or to be more precisely in Malaysia the appreciation upon cultural landscape is very much lesser. Cultural landscape explains human root, identity, image, character and values. These elements are represents by the three fundamental frameworks.

2.1. History

Slide presentation from Universitas Bergensis (2002) stated that cultural landscapes hold the information about people's history and their relationship with the natural and built environment. Cultural landscapes offers people the sense of belonging, attachment and place. Therefore it becomes the heritage and legacy for people or even the place. Cabral, 1993; Drury, 2002 and Telles, 1956 and 1992 emphasized that this actually reveals the relationship between people with the land over time (*see* Loures, 2008). Antrop, 2000b and Frenchman, 1976 supported that statement by acknowledging cultural landscapes as a unique geographical area that reveals aspects of people's origin and development through their forms, features, and history of use (*see* Loures, 2008). Jackson (1985) stressed out that "*without visible sign of*

history is a landscape without memory or forethought". Clement (1997) highlighted that historic landscapes contain valuable historic values developed from layers of historical incident and occurrence by human including ethnography and traditional cultural values. "*Historic landscape can be defined as geographical areas that experience series of past alteration by human or any significant sites with traditional cultural values*". Visual character and intangible components are the upmost reliable evidence of historical landscape.

2.2. Heritage

UNESCO World Heritage Centre defines, '*Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations*' (see Sirisrisak and Akagawa, 2007). Arntzen (2003) affirmed that cultural landscape is to sustain the heritage value, to protect local identity and to enrich original culture of a group of people or place. It is identified that cultural landscape required both tangible and intangible component to complete the concept of "cultural landscape." Stoffle et al., (2003) emphasized that the notion of cultural landscape obtains from the opinion that land exist in the mind of people and the knowledge contain from the land is shared and passed from one generation to another. Therefore they share the same cultural landscape over time hence it can be classified as precious heritage value. This will eventually become people's legacy. Human activities on land and the past experiences are the elements that shaped an identity, beliefs, values, norms and cultural meaning to the place. For that reason cultural landscape is a heritage for a group of people and it should be protected.

2.3. Culture

Human tend to develop and share the same cultural landscape. However each culture has a core composed of the beliefs, values, and norms and practices the same tradition which is where these nature-culture connections primarily lie (Stoffle et al., 2003). Hartshorne 1959 discussed that geomorphology, climate, or vegetation is not the measurement to evaluate culture rather a wide range of cultural variations could occur in any given place (see Nassauer 1995). Random House (1987) stated that culture as: "*the sum total of ways of living built up by a group of human beings and transmitted from one generation to another*" (see Nassauer 1995). Landscape is modified according to the political, the economic use, aesthetic preferences, and social conventions. All of these are summarized here under the label of

culture (Nassauer, 1995). UNESCO-ICOMOS Documentation Centre (2009) highlighted cultural landscape as:

1. To reveal and sustain the great diversity of the interactions between humans and their environment
2. To protect living traditional cultures
3. Preserve the traces of those which have disappeared

Abhas et al., 2010 provides guidelines for cultural heritage which stated that cultural heritage conservation assist in maintaining economic stability and enrich physical assets, but also protect its practices, history, and environment, and a sense of continuity, belonging and identity. Cultural heritage derived from the layers of historical incident and occurrence by human including ethnography and the series of past modification shaped traditional cultural values. Culture is important for human in order to protect people's identity, character, values and tradition. All these aspect are the collectives characteristic that strengthen the concept of cultural landscape.

3. Case Studies: Why cultural landscape should be sustain and preserve?

Cultural landscape can be considered as a valuable heritage and it is irreplaceable. As cited by Sirisrisak and Akagawa (2007) UNESCO World Heritage Centre defines, '*Heritage is our legacy from the past, what we live with today, and what we pass on to future generations*' There are numbers of threat towards the preservation of cultural landscape, the works of many authors including Loures (2008), Sirisrisak and Akagawa (2007), Clement (1997) and Nassauer (1995) have agreed that civil wars, natural disaster and political and economic stability are the major threat towards the preservation of cultural landscape as valuable heritage to be sustained for the benefits of future generation. Some of the major incident is civil wars; numbers of unfortunate countries are suffering the political conflicts which have caused the series of civil wars for instance, Palestine from 1947-present, war in Iraq from 2003-present, Somalia civil war from 1990-present, first and second Congo wars from 1996-2003, and war in Afghanistan on 2001. The conflicts make it difficult for the countries to identify their national identity and the need to preserve heritage is relatively low, as the priority at that moment is to save people's life. As a result, numbers of cultural landscape features is located in a defenseless position. Palestine is suffering a consistent civil wars occasion starting from 1947 until present, one of the reminders cultural landscape that is taken from the local people is the possession of their own land and therefore, history and heritage.



Figure 2. Loss of Land at Palestine from 1946 until Present
Source: Jemaah Islam Malaysia (2008)

Other than that, social and economic stability suffer a great impact from the unpleasant incident of natural disaster. Natural disaster is another threat towards the preservation of cultural landscape. One of the most recent incidents of natural disaster was the earthquake that happened on 26 December 2004 at northwest coast of Sumatera. Lots of the countries hit by tsunami such as Indonesia, India, Thailand and Sri Lanka have loss a great deal of the heritage and therefore, sense of identity. Under this circumstance, it will be difficult to reestablish the loss and regain back the identity of the place as everything is already gone. According to Arntzen (2003) and Ghafar Ahmad (2004) there is a strong symbiotic relationship between tangible (material) and the intangible (immaterial) component of heritage. Immaterial component is as essential as the material component.

Nonetheless, only material cultural landscape is appreciated by people as they can have strong attachment with the place or things. However, one must not forget the value of immaterial component of heritage. Without proper concern local people will eventually become unaware of the absence of the component thus lead to the ultimate consequence which is the reduction of sense of identity. Nevertheless, the definition is not applicable to the event of natural disaster, as earthquake manages to destroy both material and immaterial component within split second. It shows that as far as heritage is concern, places that were hits by Tsunami will take a huge amount of time, money and effort to reestablish national identity.



Figure 3. Before and After Tsunami at Bandar Aceh

Stoffle et al., (2003) and O'Flaherty (2010) have discussed in their research that cultural landscape must have strong attachment between nature and group of people. The process of learning from environment will forever continues as environment is always changing. Human adaptation towards the changing of natural environment is an interesting development of cultural landscape and the process of it develop a complex history with unique character and identity. Further verified by Nassauer (1995) the history begins when people experience changes of the environment in term of perception, judgment and values. This process had been further developed when people start to modified or altered the environment to suit human evolution together with political, economic, social and nature growth. The scenario between human and nature develop complex, valuable and colorful cultural landscape anchored by layers of important historic events.

Another threat to cultural landscape is uncontrolled and misleading development. Strike (2003) declared that "*Historic areas are progressively coming under threat of new development*" (see Loures, 2007:5). In order for a state parties to sustain their financial and offers stabile, safe and harmonious environment to the local people are by having a strong frame of political and economic foundations. These elements will keep the state activities running smoothly; on the other hand, many of the state parties depend on tourism industry such as Indonesia, India, Thailand and Malaysia. In order to maintain the primary source of income, the government came out with extraordinary ideas of using the name of heritage in development as a key to attract tourist.

Although there are many benefits gain from development, the reasons on the other side are clearer; the name of heritage has been manipulated for the purpose of economic stability. The research conducted by Lee et al., (2008) and Ghafar Ahmad (2004) provides a case example of historical site that undergo many difficulties due to urban challenges in the city of Georgetown, Penang Island. Penang Island for example manages to preserve most of the historical building despite of the disagreement in rapid development and over flowing urbanization. It can be seem that urban challenges are the main issues and challenges facing by Penang Island's heritage conservation.

Further discussed in the research papers is the issue of local identity. Penang was listed on the UNESCO Heritage City list in 2005; however the new township development failed to synchronize the new image or concept of new townships with the existing heritage backdrop of Penang Island. Instead of throwing some efforts to sustain the unique multi-culture characters of Georgetown, the new designs happen to neglect the original character and identity of Penang and therefore, heritage and culture.

4. Significant of cultural landscape

As discussed above, there are three fundamental frameworks of cultural landscape. However there are two components that shaped cultural landscape which are:

1. Tangible cultural landscape (physical)
2. Intangible cultural landscape (spiritual)

There is a strong symbiotic relationship between tangible and the intangible component of heritage. The intangible component is as essential as the tangible component. However, only tangible component is very much appreciated by people as they can have strong attachment with the place or things. Nevertheless, one must not forget the value of intangible component of heritage. Without proper concern local people will eventually become unaware of the absence of the intangible component thus lead to the ultimate consequence which is lost the sense of identity.

Both of these framework and component will cover the explanation of human root, identity, image, character and values. Based on the discussion, it would appear reasonable to conclude that cultural landscape:

1. Is the main key to human legacy and national identity
2. Protecting living traditional culture and character of an ethnicity
3. Sustaining the great diversity of the interactions between humans and their environment
4. Sustaining the heritage value in order to protect local identity and original culture of a group of people or place
5. A new paradigm in landscape architecture and can be promoted as an added value in the profession of landscape architecture in Asia

In the 21st century, globalization occurs almost in every part of the world and with this concept, western or United State has tried to create a global culture. The nature of this new ideology promotes one world with one language, thirst, food, car and one worldview. However this approach tends to destroy human culture as it threat national identity (Bird and Stevens, 2003). Birukou et al., (2009) highlighted that, “*Globalization makes culture no more bound to a geographical area, race or religion*”. Cultural landscape protects

human history, heritage and culture. Therefore the knowledge on the subject matter must be well taught in every education system in Asia. As a landscape architect, the significant of cultural landscape towards people and environment must be seen as a new paradigm and the concept must be promoted in the profession of landscape architecture education in Asia as an added value. The knowledge on cultural landscape can later be part of the landscape architect work field that may assist in term of the idea, innovation and design process.

5. Conclusion

Various studies and research has been conducted in the context of promoting cultural landscape. The notion of upholding cultural landscape as a new paradigm must be highlighted and it should be perceived as an added value in landscape architecture’s education in Asia.

Cultural landscape reflects the story of people who shaped it not only in the past but also at present time. Each culture has unique characteristic that connect man with environment whilst taking high consideration on the aspect of physical and spiritual factor. It is important to preserve cultural landscape as it is a valuable heritage, the key to peoples’ identity and original culture of a group of people or place which cannot be replaced or regained after it has been destroyed. The loss of cultural landscape would imply the absence of human identity. Therefore cultural landscape must be sustained in order for human identity to survive. Thus it is crucial to understand the concept of cultural landscape as to ensure people’s identity is been well preserved.

In the long run, cultural landscape influences will benefits in term of changing human perception on the concept of sustaining the local identity. Human activities and any decisions that man make in the present day will eventually shaped the future generation whether to appreciate the cultural landscape or vice versa because cultural landscape holds knowledge about the landscape from which it is born and nourished. Hence as a landscape architect, it is our duty to calculate cultural landscape in the profession of landscape architect and this concept must be perceived as an added value in landscape architecture education in Asia.

6. References

- [1] **Arntzen, S.** (2003). Cultural landscape and approaches to nature – Ecophilosophical perspectives [online] URL: http://www.eki.ee/km/place/pdf/KP2_03arntzen.pdf
- [2] **Birukou, A., Blanzieri, A., Giorgini, P., & Giunchiglia, F.** (2009). A formal definition of culture. Italy: University of Trento. Retrieved on 1 March 2011 from <http://www.disi.unitn.it>
- [3] **Brown, R. & Capozza, D.** (2006). Social identities: Motivational, emotional and cultural influences, New York, Psychology Press
- [4] **Bird, A., & Stevens, M. J.** (2003). Toward an emergent global culture and the effects of globalization on obsolescing national cultures. USA: College of Business Administration, University of Missouri-St. Louis. Retrieved on 1 March 2011 from <http://www.sciencedirect.com>
- [5] **Clement, D.** (1997). General guidelines for identifying and evaluating historic landscapes. Retrieved on 24 January 2011 from www.dot.ca.gov/ser/downloads/cultural/languide.pdf
- [6] **Ghafar, A.** (2004). Cultural Heritage of Penang. Johor Bharu: Universiti Teknologi Malaysia.
- [7] **Harvey, S., & Fieldhouse, K.** (Eds). (2005). *The Cultured Landscape. Designing the environment in the 21st century*. New York: Routledge.
- [8] **Hall, T.** (1998). *Urban Geography* (2nd ed). London: Routledge.
- [9] **Johnston, H.** (2009). Culture, social movements and protest, USA, Ashgate Publishing Ltd
- [10] **Jackson, J. B.** (1994). *A sense of place, a sense of time*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- [11] **Stoffle, R. W., Toupal, R., & Zederio, N.** (2003). *In Nature Across Cultures: Views of Nature and the Environment in Non-Western Cultures*. Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers
- [12] **O’Flaherty, M.** (2010). Cultural Landscape: Revealing our relationship with the land over time. Cultural Landscape: is the term not redundant. Retrieved on 3 January 2011 from www.culturallandscape.ca
- [13] **Nassauer, J. I.** (1995). *Landscape Ecology*. Amsterdam: SPB Academic Publishing bv, Amsterdam.
- [14] **Sirisrisak, T. & Akagawa, N.** (2007). Cultural landscape in the world heritage list: understanding on the gap and categorisation. *City & Time* 2 (3): 2. Retrieved on 1 January 2011 from <http://www.ct.cecibr.org>
- [15] UNESCO-ICOMOS Documentation Centre. (2009). World Heritage Cultural Landscape. Retrieved on 19 December 2010 from www.international.icomos.org/centre_documentation/.../culturallandscapes.pdf
- [16] **Lee, L. M., Lim, Y. M., & Yusuf, N.** (2008). Strategies for urban conservation: A case examples of George Town, Penang. Pulau Pinang: Universiti Sains Malaysia.
- [17] **Loures, L.** (2008). (Re)-developing post-industrial landscapes: Applying inverted translational research coupled with the case study research method. Politechnic Institute of Portalegre and Centre of Spatial Research and Organizations.
- [18] **Tachimoto, N.** (1998). Touristic Impression of Social Transformation in Melaka.
- [19] **Thompson, I. H.** (1999). *Ecology, Community and Delight. Sources of values in landscape architecture*, New York: Routledge.
- [20] **Omer, S.** (2005). The prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and urbanization of Madinah. Malaysia: Research center, International Islamic University Malaysia
- [21] **Rapoport, A.** (1969). *House form and culture*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall, Englewood Cliffs.