

Heritage Landscapes

Policy, Planning and Design Dilemma

Interviewed by: Assoc. Prof. LAr. Dr. Suhardi Maulan



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Since the beginning of human civilisation, landscapes have been admired, planned, and designed to accommodate human population growth and needs. Landscapes had evolved to be very important spaces such as gardens, plazas, parks, housing areas, industrial lands and many more. These landscape spaces are very important for aesthetic, environment, health, and economic growth and often they are interwoven with cultural values. Therefore, in many parts of the world, people are very proud of their own style of landscapes. For example, the Italians are very proud of their renaissance's gardens, villas and urban plazas. We also cannot deny that every time we see parks with undulating landforms and lush greenery, we relate them to English naturalistic parks. In the Far East, Japanese's Ryoan Ji Garden that dated hundreds of years ago speak volumes about Japanese behaviour and wisdom. For the Italians, English and Japanese these landscapes spaces and designs are important. The landscapes are their heritage that imply well with their past, present, and future.

It is believed that Malaysians also have rich heritage landscapes as well. With more than 20 ethnic groups residing in Malaysia, we should have a variety of heritage landscape types but why are they not as famous as the Italian, English and Japanese landscapes. Recognizing the importance of heritage, Malaysian Parliament passed the National Heritage Act in 2005 and Malaysia has a Heritage Department to oversee the policy and management of Malaysian Heritage both as a tangible and non-tangible entity. In general, landscapes are considered tangible items and the discussion about landscape heritage is gaining traction and momentum. Thus, to further understand Malaysian landscape heritage issues, Land.Scape sat down with three personalities that are actively interested with Malaysian's heritage landscapes issues. They are Associate Professor LAr. Dr Nor Atiah Ismail from Universiti Putra Malaysia, Mr Faisal Abdul Rahman, Vice President of ICOMOS Malaysia, LAr. Teng Pe Yang from Permata Green in Pulau Pinang and Mr Moahzam Asari, Director of Landscape Department of Majlis Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah.

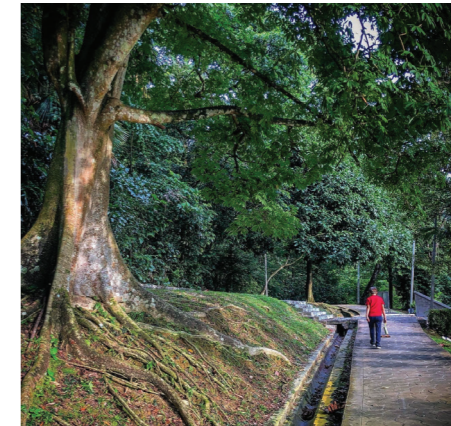
When we talk about Malaysian's heritage landscapes, what is actually the definition, meaning and image that comes across in your mind?



Nor Atiah: Malaysian Heritage Landscape provide a sense of place and identity; they map our relationship with the land over time; and they are part of our national heritage. Cultural heritage landscape painted each of our canvas lives that includes paddy field, farmlands and plantations, coastal landscape and rural villages, public gardens and parks, college campuses, cemeteries, scenic highways, and industrial sites. They are the sites that are associated with a significant event, activity, person or group of people. They range in size; from thousands of acres of rural land to historic homesteads. In other words, cultural heritage landscape is the representation works of art, narratives of cultures, as well as an expression of our regional identity. community.



Faisal: I would define Malaysian's heritage landscapes as the picturesque and significant setting of places which are found in urban or more so in rural areas, be it natural or cultural. This includes urban parks and botanical gardens, traditional kampung settings, fishing villages, highlands and even New Villages. To me, landscape as a cultural heritage, represent the various communities' relationship with nature and its surroundings.



Pe Yang: I think we've been conditioned to interpret heritage landscape as a geographical space that has witnessed human intervention and transformation during a period in the past that merits recognition and attention. It is broad in its temporal composition; from, say, a humble colonial garden, to a civic space celebrating the Merdeka Movement and the pursuit of the Malaysian Identity. Based on this definition, it could even encompass a site as old as the Lembah Bujang archaeological landscape, or something as recent as the highly Instagrammable abandoned quarry at Tasek Gelugor, Penang.



Moahzam: To me, there are various dimensions of the definition, meaning and image of Malaysian's heritage landscape, in Malaysia it is influenced by the way of life and geographical location. It is more difficult to explain due to the history of colonialism, ethnic diversity and regional division indirectly provide diversity and it is unique.

Do you think that Malaysia has strong heritage landscape identity and images?

Nor Atiah: Yes. Malaysia is a multi-ethnic, multicultural, and multilingual society, and the many ethnic groups in Malaysia maintain separate cultural identities while living in harmony. The original culture of the Malaysians stemmed from its indigenous tribes, along with the Malays who have set-up the early life and settlements. Historical substantial cultural heritage influence exists from the Chinese and Indian cultures, dating back to when trade with those countries began in this peninsula. Other cultures that heavily influenced the essence of the Malaysian cultural heritage include Persian, Arabic, and British. With these cultural history and life assimilations embedded in the tangible and intangible way of life, Malaysia has a strong heritage landscape with its own significant identity. In fact, Malaysia has become a great "Potpourri of Asian Culture". In this case, I am happy to say that, Malaysia embodied a strong multicultural heritage landscape identity and never, a representation of a single identity! The people of Malaysia with their cultural significance have signified identities in the natural landscapes and culture is embodied by landscapes. Human landscape perception, cognition, and values directly affect the landscape and are proudly affected by the landscape.

Faisal: Yes, we have a lot of cultural heritage landscapes with the significant heritage features, especially in the rural areas of Malaysia but also in urban areas. Depending on the region, these identities defer. However, I have noticed not many people take notice of their own cultural landscape image. Being involved as an Expert Member in Cultural Tourism under ICOMOS, I have noticed that many tourists and visitors find some of these heritage landscape very attractive and interesting.

Pe Yang: As a nation that has seen and experienced much transformation, I would say our heritage landscapes are plenty and diverse. Some connote a sense of nostalgia, while some will stir and inspire you. You experience and walk away from these spaces a different person.

Moahzam: Yes, Malaysia has a clear landscape heritage, especially if viewed based on specific regions such as the east coast, Sabah and Sarawak. At the state level, it is clearer to the ethics that have been assimilated to local people such as the Baba Nyonya community and the Chetty community in Melaka.



Why it is very important for us to know and recognize Malaysian's heritage landscape?

Nor Atiah: Malaysian cultural heritage landscapes are a legacy for everyone. These special sites reveal aspects of our country's origins and development as well as our evolving relationships with the natural world. They provide scenic, economic, ecological, social, recreational, and educational opportunities helping communities to better understand themselves. Neglect and inappropriate development put our irreplaceable landscape legacy increasingly at risk. Too often today's short-sighted decisions threaten the survival and continuity of our shared heritage. It is everyone's responsibility to safeguard our nation's cultural heritage landscapes. The ongoing care and interpretation of these sites improves our quality of life and deepens a sense of place and identity for future generations.

Pe Yang: Heritage landscapes connect with us on a personal level. It initiates a conversation about the culmination of our national identity. It allows for acknowledgement and healing. Without adequate interventions to safeguard these spaces for future generations, these conversations risk being swept under the tides of rapid expansion and globalisation.

Moahzam: it is important for us to identify and recognize Malaysian's heritage landscape so that it can be highlighted, preserved and developed so that it does not fade and languish.



Faisal: To me, the term "heritage landscape" or "cultural landscape" refers to special places created by human interaction with the environment and their surroundings. This helps define the community's character and at the same time reflect their past. It helps in fostering sense of place to local community while providing visitors and tourists unique and authentic experiences. Therefore, it is important in providing a destination image, especially for the tourism industry.



Can you share with us, one example of Malaysia heritage landscape?
And why you think it is very important in portraying Malaysia heritage landscape?



Nor Atiah: For this case, I am happy to share the idea of a Vernacular Landscape. A landscape that evolved through use by the people whose activities or occupancy shaped that landscape. Through social or cultural attitudes of an individual, family or a community, the landscape reflects the physical, biological, and cultural character of those everyday lives. One of it is the Malay rural cultural heritage landscape.



Malay villages evolve from the settlement of a family or two into a cluster of homes as the family grows into extended families. Inter-marriages between families help to further expand the sizes of these clustered communities as more adjacent lands are cleared to accommodate new family units. With the increase in the population of this clustered community, communal necessity such as burial ground and a home for communal worship or mosque comes into being. The choices of locations for such facilities are the deciding factors that help to map the composition of the cultural landscape. Malay villages are mostly located near the village's sources of livelihood. Fishing villages are found close to the sea while inland villages are usually located near the paddy fields, rubber or oil palm plantations. Man cannot exist independently and must cherish the relationship binding him with the rest. This relationship is expressed usually by the landscape in which we live. This statement supports the landscape evolution which has started during the Romanticism Movement; fundamentally the awakening point in environmental consciousness. It was developed during the eighteenth and nineteenth century where at that time, researchers have established provision of new scientific ideas that made possible a new perspective in rational comprehension, as opposed to the spontaneous enjoyment of the landscape. From this moment, people start to recognize that there was a variety of landscape characters that determined its categories. One of it is known as cultural heritage landscape. The natural landscape as that which surrounds us, where the cultural landscape is the one which man has adopted and shaped to suit his lifestyle and survival. Cultural landscape in Malaysia is predominantly landscapes of the rice fields, coconut groves and rubber plantation.

Nowadays, oil palm plantation has become an added scenery to the cultural landscape of the country since the early 1970's. Rice cultivated landscape is found in the north western region of the peninsular as well as along the foothills of the coastal areas in the east coast. Rubber and palm oil cultivated areas are mostly found along the interior, located at the foothills scattered along the length and breadth of the Malay Peninsula. The natural landscape is predominantly forest covered and coastal areas. One would be amazed with a typical breath - taking cultural landscape that can be experienced as one travels to Sungai Petani, Kedah where the scenic view mainly comprises vast areas of rice-fields with scattered human settlements shaded by palm trees. Waterways criss cross these flat open fields that are dissected by bunds that also act as footpath and small road inter-connecting the scattered homes to the main road. This dynamic cultural landscape epitomizes the sustainable co-existence between man and nature in the Malay cultural landscape setting. To understand the concept of the Malay village with its cultural landscape setting, we have to look at it from both its macro environment as well as its micro setting. The village is viewed as a whole in relation to its surrounding natural landscape and the Malay house in relation to its compounds and garden setting. The evolution of the Malay village is the result of the interrelationship between man and his surroundings, man and his inherent cultural attributes and the need to survive. These influences have helped shape the course of actions taken by the Malays in the design and composition of their habitat into a cultural responsive landscape.



Faisal: One example of heritage landscape in Malaysia is the paddy area of Sabak Bernam and Kuala Selangor. It was an area once a vast mangrove forest which was drained to make way for paddy plantation. The alternating drainage and irrigation channels running across the plain were inhabited by different communities and ethnic groups which brought their cultural practices and lifestyles. Today each irrigation channel manifest how different communities interacted with their surrounding creating unique heritage landscape. Selangor especially has many of this type of heritage landscape. Kuala Langat on the other hand was also a mangrove swamp but planted with coconut plantation. This is an important image that reflects the various communities in Selangor. Image being an important pull factor for cultural tourism, which is a segment now gaining popularity globally and interesting.



Pe Yang: The sheer grandness of Dataran Merdeka, flanked by the Sultan Abdul Samad Building continues to resonate and invoke a sense of national pride and identity. This, to me, is a good example of a relatively "young" but powerful heritage landscape.



Moahzam: Among the examples of hardscape material are the use of timber such as Cengal, Belian, Keruing as a building material as well as the use of carved motifs (ukiran) from local plant motif patterns such as Cempaka, Kiambang, Kemunting patterns and the selection of flowering plants (trees and shrubs) that smell fragrant and often have medicinal value (such as Bunga Raya leaf to cool down high fever). It is very important to highlight these characteristics as this is the uniqueness of the result of the way of life and culture, based on region in Malaysia.



What are the main issues and challenges that we face to enhance the Malaysian landscape heritage?



Nor Atiah: One of the main issues in cultural landscape heritage preservation and conservation is to look on how different forms of cultural or natural heritage impact on human well-being. For instance, it has been argued by many researchers of various disciplinary backgrounds that meaningful encounters with a wide range of different types of heritage can positively enhance a sense of individual and community well-being. On the other hand, damage to heritage can have a demoralizing effect, leading to diminished well-being. Well-being has been defined in many ways but essentially it is a sense of being content, comfortable and happy, something normally associated with physical, mental and emotional health as well as a standard of living that provides the resources to sustain such health, although the nature of this varies across cultures past and present. Do you believe that a cultural heritage landscape can affect one's sense of well-being? Some of the challenges that heritage faces and argue that human well-being is best enhanced by viewing heritage as an essential part of the contemporary world rather than fragments of the past, and that the concept of "living heritage" is useful in this sense. Thus, the overarching issues here is that all cultural landscape heritage; is an important part of contemporary culture, and that threats to heritage impact on individual and community well-being in multiple ways. However, heritage is also contested and one of the biggest challenges is deciding what heritage should or should not be preserved for future generations as well as how this will be undertaken. Today, most of the focus of heritage discourse from one that is primarily place specific or topic driven to instead consider how cultural landscape heritage is more generally used to reinforce, negotiate or suppress contemporary heritage relationships between people, places and identity. People and cultural heritage landscape preservation and conservation is becoming much more important in an increasingly changing political, environmental and cultural world, new and emerging threats to many different aspects of heritage will impact human well-being.



Pe Yang: Conserving, restoring and rejuvenating heritage landscapes require a great deal of momentum, political will and technical expertise. The availability of financial backing to properly execute the works can also be a major challenge. Traditional trades to support the restoration and conservation efforts have also sadly declined over the years. Does the enhancement of Malaysian landscape heritage need to always skew towards tourism, or could it be exclusively local?



Faisal: Misconception, landscape is seldom present in practical management planning especially in Malaysia. There is a need for reference landscape to be able to articulate and should also be covered by long-term decision making. Observations gleaned from global and local issues raised in the discussion worldwide imply the importance of cultural heritage landscape value in preserving the character of the place is an important factor to consider. However, in Malaysia, none of the local issues focused on the importance of historic urban landscape or cultural landscape or the significance of place in the context of the community as the inhabitant of the place, as opposed to the other issues. Instead, they have discussed the influence of development pressure, which is assumed to intervene in the city's growth. However, enforcement from the government or authorities is still lacking, which will indirectly destroy the value of the area in question. Interestingly, the authorities acknowledged many weaknesses in the existing government institutional and administrative setup and a lack of an adequate method for assessing the heritage impact of the proposed new developments.



Moahzam: The main issues and challenges are cultural and historical diversity. In fact, in Malaysia it is estimated that there are about 80 ethnic groups with their own culture. From a historical point of view, it went through the glory of the kingdom of Melaka until 1511 and various phases from before independence, when it was colonized for 446 years by the Portuguese, Dutch, British and Japanese until independence in 1957. The variety is too wide. Thus, to determine Malaysia heritage landscape, it is necessary to do the selection of these characteristics at the district, state and then national level by a professional and recognized.

Do you think that Akta Warisan Nasional 2005 is comprehensive enough to address the issue about Malaysia landscape heritage?



Nor Atiah: It is good to have our Akta Warisan Nasional (Act 645, 2005) in place. It is a big move to secure our tangible and intangible cultural landscape heritage and our traditional legacy. Section 67 (a) in particular, presents the criteria for a "heritage tree preservation". I am very happy to be one of the Malaysia Heritage Landscape and Architecture Committees, together with other panels to discuss and nominate the inscription lists of our architectural and landscape heritage in Malaysia.

But, the question here is that will these newly listed sites have better protection or bring new threats such as mismanaged, inaccurate or inappropriate tourism? And what of the future of heritage sites not on the list? Especially those that are related to natural and cultural landscape. For instance, across the globe, all heritage is threatened by increasingly frequent natural disasters such as earthquakes, volcanoes, hurricanes, wild fires and more general climate change. Climate change is a critical issue for cultural and heritage landscape studies. Sites, objects and ways of life are all coming under threat, requiring alternative management. We are in the midst of requiring specific climate change adaptation. In fact, we are all aware that the heritage sector lacks a thorough engagement with questions concerning the future benefits of cultural heritage and thus concerning the appropriateness of present-day practices and policies in heritage management. To understand and work effectively with the intersections between heritage and well-being we need to begin with individuals and communities in local and regional settings. Personal attachments, community celebrations, private distress and public resistance have their origins in taken-for-granted relations that intensify when they are threatened by change, development or neglect. Often it can be particularly difficult to anticipate where, when and how residents will take action. This unpredictability highlights how locals and visitors are too readily assumed to view heritage in terms of sites and practices of high and deep cultural value – historic, spiritual, aesthetic, architectural, environmental, and popularity.



Faisal: It was the National Heritage Act of 2005 that unified the natural and cultural heritage. Natural, tangible, intangible, and submerged cultural heritage are all protected by this legislation. Treasure troves and related matters are also protected. The public, non-profit, and private sectors have all stepped up their efforts to preserve and integrate the nation's cultural history with the present. Again, it is not. It is about us, how we value our heritage as a whole, and how it is important to be safe-kept for our future generations.



Pe Yang: At the moment the Akta succinctly covers historical sites, monuments and trees; parameters which tie back to our profession. A greater knowledge pool and a better understanding of the Akta should be promoted amongst landscape architectural practitioners. Consider too the various ICOMOS Charters could potentially complement the Akta.



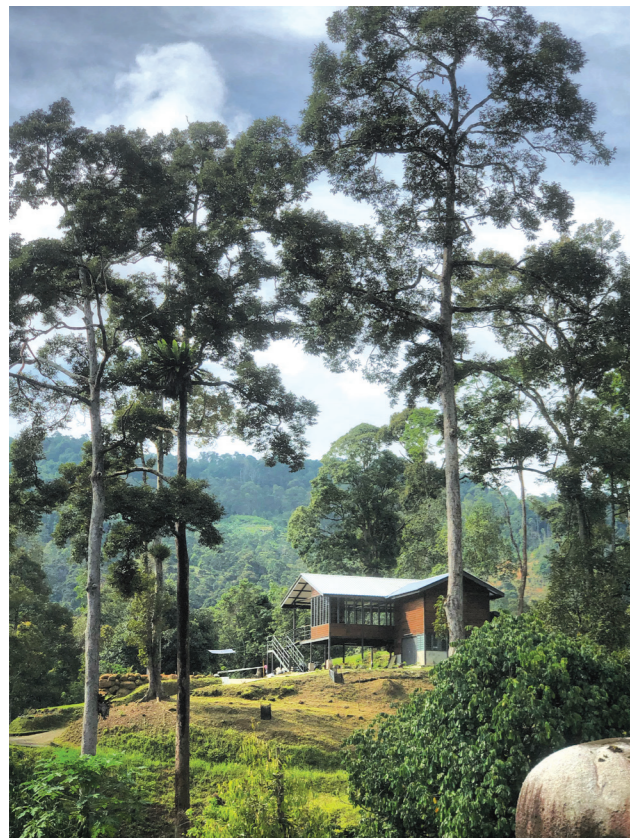
Moahzam: The Akta Warisan Nasional 2005 (Akta 645) has several issues in the implementation and adoption, especially the discrepancies in implementation at the state and federal levels. Although this act has been enacted at the federal level, its implementation is more local at the state and district (local authorities) level. Among the issues that are often faced at the local authority's level is related to the issue of gazetting responsibilities and the determination of heritage priorities at national, state and district level by whom?



In many cases, we see that architects are involve actively in managing and conserving heritage buildings and sites. Do you think landscape architects, who proudly call themselves steward of the lands, should also be actively involved in heritage projects?



Nor Atiah: Yes. Thus, we argue that it is critical for all cultural landscape heritage to be imagined as living heritage “as not being solely of the past, but equally about the present and future” and that this approach to heritage is what will better ensure it will be safeguarded in years to come. For instance, landscape architects who are known as one of the best professionals who deal with environmental elements and people in the macro and micro perspectives, are able to manage and conserve a cultural and heritage landscape. While visiting meaningful places brings a whole host of benefits, landscape architects can broadly have grouped them into three key areas – mental wellbeing, nostalgia and security and survival. We are trained to understand and practice on the mantra that natural places in particular promote greater wellbeing, as well as places from the here and now. This understanding underlies all heritage conservation and preservation work. In this way, landscape architect should be able to not only better address present and new heritage threats and challenges but also maximize the return for individual and community well-being in relation to heritage.



Faisal: There is a gap in National Landscape Policy (2011). They did not indicate in any of its seven thrusts in detail or specific regarding the importance in preserving or maintaining urban landscape heritage but more on emphasizing the effort towards shaping Malaysia into a Garden Nation in 2020. In fact, a quick look at the department’s policies and services shows that they are more concerned with ‘greening the nation’ initiatives and the building of recreational parks. As a result, it is not surprising that the general public believes that landscape refers solely to gardens and plants. I believe that Jabatan Landskap Negara and ILAM have to play an active role in promoting landscape profession as steward of the land.



Pe Yang: Yes, we should! Consider the “in between” spaces of these heritage buildings: back lanes, streetscapes, courtyards, squares; these are spaces that we as landscape architects deal with extensively, albeit in a more modern rendition. Therefore, by further equipping ourselves with some additional layers of skills, the management, conservation, and restoration of these spaces are literally up our alley (no pun intended).

The steward of the lands, when applied within a heritage context, takes on an elevated role. The landscape architect is not merely a guardian of the heritage site; he becomes its mediator and story-teller as well. His training as a landscape architect implores him to initiate conversations with the landscape through extensive research. Journals, postcards and articles shed light on the history of the space. On rare occasions he has the chance encounter with a living person that has experienced the space in the past and record their personal accounts.

The landscape architect then filters, digests and processes this array of information he had gathered. He is able to traverse, portray and reconcile these stories within the space respectfully.



Moahzam: Of course, because the elements in Malaysia landscape heritage will involve the use of carved motifs from floral patterns as well as the selection of fragrant flowers and have medicinal value that requires the design expertise of a Landscape Architect. A Landscape Architect needs to play an active role by providing themselves with the knowledge to understand in depth a context based on the local environment, history, culture, and way of life in order to be sensitive while designing especially those related to heritage projects.

What are the things that urgently needs to be done to improve and protect Malaysia landscape heritage?



Nor Atiah: I will suggest how we might map regional cultural and heritage landscape more productively. The future of cultural landscape heritage, human well-being and healthy societies is something of increasing importance as the world undergoes unprecedented cultural and environmental change fuelled by new digital technology, robotics, shrinking natural resources, human population growth, species extinctions, global warming and shifting political landscapes.

Human well-being and healthy societies are threatened by a multitude of growing factors, and for many people the future seems more uncertain than ever before. The role of heritage in mitigating some of this change and how the loss of heritage compounds the effects of rapid change in terms of contemporary human well-being are important issues that are in need of better discussion. This is because their exploration may allow us to chart a different future, grounded in the past, a future with heritage celebrated as a cornerstone of human identity, accomplishment, dignity and respect. Whether for the social performance of memory, trauma, protest, or uplift, a material past is discursively assembled to serve as a physical conduit between past and present. Since sites and objects bear witness to particular pasts and have those histories woven into their very fabric, they physically embody and instantiate the past in the present in a way that no textual account can fully achieve. That being said, we have increasingly come to see what many indigenous communities have long realized and indeed practiced: that these physical landscapes, monuments, and objects cannot be separated from intangible beliefs and resonances. The artificial separation of these traits is itself a symbolic violence. And when the immaterial connection that people experience disappears, the significance of those same sites and objects may also decline in the public imaginary. With heritage under threat from so many directions, and people’s well-being negatively impacted by the mismanagement, demise and destruction of heritage, the time to find ways to future-proof tangible and intangible heritage is now.



Faisal: Change mindset is the key to preserving the heritage. Because heritage is a social construct, we must be flexible in our thinking about it because it changes through time and changes from one community to the other.



Pe Yang: Increased awareness and also accessibility on the current inventory of heritage landscapes in Malaysia; their current status and condition, and the urgency for intervention. The heritage landscapes of Malaysia are like hidden gems, waiting to be discovered. Consider how modern tools like the Internet of Things could help this cause. Imagine a publicly available App that could curate all of this. Or even VR heritage spaces. The more awareness there is about these sites, the more interest and momentum will be generated to safeguard them.



Moahzam: The priority at present is to define the elements and characteristics of the Malaysian landscape heritage in terms of categories and hierarchies. By doing so, each element that is highlighted can be determined at the national, state or district level and it needs to be gazetted. With a clear definition of this element, it can be maintained and preserved. I think, if not preserved, other elements that are more similar will be used to replace the Malaysian landscape heritage. For example, the industrial concept to heritage buildings architectural.

We believe that landscape heritage is an important subject matter, so do you have any advice for those who want to get involved in heritage works on where to start and what to do?



Nor Atiah: Landscape architects should always practice these 8 principles in their every design and development practices, namely in urban or rural areas. They are:

Principle 1

Work actively to promote arts and culture as a valuable heritage for everyone, and allocate sufficient resources specifically to its future care.

Principle 2

Manage to protect all the intangible and tangible cultural heritage values.

Principle 3

Preserve and manage cultural and heritage as an inherent part of the landscape.

Principle 4

Safeguard cultural rights and practices.

Principle 5

Involve and empower indigenous owners and local communities in decisions about cultural and heritage landscape management and conservation.

Principle 6

Use recognised ethics, protocols and standards for documentation, conservation and interpretation as the basis for management practice.

Principle 7

Give priority to preventive and protective cultural and heritage landscape conservation.

Principle 8

Make effective communication and collaboration with a central part of management and other stakeholders.



Faisal: Heritage belongs to everyone, neither an individual nor a professional body. Is it possible that a shared past might unify individuals through a common heritage? A thing can only be considered cultural heritage if people place significance on it. Traditional monument preservation is not the same as a progressive interpretation of cultural landscapes. All humans share a same cultural background, regardless of where they came from. Regardless of where you go in life, your cultural heritage will always be with you. The more we learn about something, the more we appreciate it; and the more we value something, the more we want to learn about it. Understanding cultural history is essential for people to learn about, as it allows them to connect with and appreciate their own cultural legacy as well as that of others.



Pe Yang: It's a beautiful and rewarding field specialisation, because as you undertake a landscape heritage project, the process itself makes you have a better understanding about the past, the culture; it leaves an impact in you in a positive way. Some hands-on experience would also be great. Back in 2019 I had a Landscape Architecture Student Intern from UIA that also apprenticed under an Italian Master Builder at one of our heritage landscape project sites in George Town. He learned a great deal on the process of mixing, casting and curing breathable flooring slabs which could address rising damp issues in buildings.



Moahzam: An understanding of history, local way of life and regional contexts will provide a clear picture of the ideas and concepts that need to be highlighted in work involving heritage landscapes.

Lastly, looking at the current scenario, what is your hope for the Malaysian landscape heritage?



Nor Atiah: As a reference, I would bring a recent National Trust (UK) study concluded 92% of people "would be upset if their meaningful place was lost". This was recently demonstrated in Paris with the tragic fire at Notre Dame Cathedral and the outpouring of grief across Paris, France and the world more generally. Instantly a commitment to rebuild was made and billions of euros of funding donated. The new Notre Dame will be a mix of new and old materials, perhaps diminishing authenticity but maintaining the sense of wonder produced for its public. Heritage is destroyed all the time. Notre Dame has global value.

Yet, there are lots of other examples that do not have mass appeal to broad international audiences, but which are equally effective at enhancing well-being while extant and negatively affect well-being when damaged or destroyed. It is also important to emphasise the ever-evolving cultural and heritage landscape and well-being has. Cultural and heritage landscape is not just a romantic, nostalgic component of fragmented pasts and memories but rather an essential part of who and what we are, where we have come from and where we are going. Heritage is something that is essential for contemporary and future well-being. But where do we go from here? How can we reframe the debate about heritage futures and priorities? We believe one of the biggest challenges to the future of heritage is what do we do with all of this stuff? How do we best decide what to keep and what to abandon? Whose heritage takes priority and how can we better encourage respect for the heritage of other people and not just our own or what we think is important? How can heritage preservation be more egalitarian? And by declaring something as having high or exceptional heritage value, do we create new threats to that heritage in terms of people desiring access to it? How do we provide more meaningful and more frequent interactions with cultural and heritage landscape? To me personally, landscape architects should embrace the "concept of living heritage" in their each and every design project. We can conclude that unless we take better measures to conserve and interpret natural and cultural heritage landscape in contemporary contexts, the future psychological and even physical health of both individuals and societies will increasingly be at risk.



Pe Yang: That we do enough as landscape architects such that they remain accessible, inspiring and relevant to our future generations to appreciate and reflect upon.



Moahzam: Malaysian's landscape heritage needs to be translated by defining the elements and characteristics in terms of categories and hierarchies. This empowerment can be done with the creation of enactments at the state level and guidelines and manuals to translate the Akta Warisan Nasional 2005 (Akta 645) to all levels, especially those related to physical development (Landscape Architect).



Faisal: We think that JLN and ILAM working together will help establish themselves as land stewards. Some examples from the local newspaper's coverage of the contentious issues surrounding development: It was claimed that the residents of Jalan Cochrane were dismayed to find just stumps of what were previously majestic trees at the site when the LRT contractor was fined RM300,000 by the DBKL in March 2016, for cutting down 16 rain trees (Fined RM300,000 for falling rain trees, 2016) At least 19 trees of more than 30 years old were cut down in Melaka Raya, according to the Malaysian news agency Bernama (2015). As part of the social world, old trees offer a wide range of social and cultural benefits. These trees are a source of beauty, symbolism, religious significance, and historical significance to us.

However, we at ICOMOS Malaysia, through its Committee for Cultural Landscape discovered that their social and cultural values are frequently overlooked when creating conservation policies and management standards. In Malaysia, the Section 35A, Town and Country Planning Act 1976, Act 172, and Section 35, Federal Territory (Planning) Act 1982, both known as the "Tree Preservation Order," have never been amended. As a result, the TPO's execution has to be enhanced and revised. Replanting the trees damaged by the offenders will not be covered by the fines imposed in both statutes. There will be a different impact and influence on the surrounding environment when replanting a different size than what was removed. Older trees compared newly planted ones. As a part of our mission at ICOMOS Malaysia, we think that public participation is critical to preserving a site. But, unfortunately, in Malaysia, the general public's involvement is negligible.

Landscape heritage is an interest of many parties such as historians, sociologists, designers, architects and landscape architects. As we can see in the landscape context, heritage landscapes can be categorized into two; natural and cultural. But often, people are associating heritage landscapes with culture. Even for the natural landscape it has a cultural connotation with it because the meaning is derived from the understanding and perception of people for the landscapes. Cultural landscapes are not only important for aesthetics but also for economic growth and most importantly it tells us who we are. Thus, due to the importance of heritage landscapes, many efforts have been done but according to our interviewees, awareness and cooperation among players, government agencies, professional bodies, NGOs and experts is one of the key factors. There are still many things that need to be done to ensure our heritage landscapes are well managed. Maybe we are 10 or 15 years behind the developed countries in term of managing our landscape heritage, but we must start somewhere. Akta Warisan 2005 is the good start because it gives us legal basis for heritage management, but it should be supported by strong method and schedule especially with regards to landscape subjects. However, the most important thing is the commitment from all of us that care about our heritage landscapes.