

**SIGNIFICANCE OF A PLACE: THE MALAY CULTURAL HERITAGE OF KERIAN  
DISTRICT, PERAK, MALAYSIA**



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Dengan segala hormatnya perkara di atas adalah dirujuk.

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**"SELAMAT MENJALANKAN PENYELIDIKAN DENGAN JAYANYA"**

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ABR/TS

## **5. Report**

### **5.1 Proposed Executive Summary**

Rapid development that had taken place in most places in Malaysia as a result of favorable economic growth and political stability following the country's independence had encroached into the countryside. The rural countryside environments such as stretches of paddy fields, rustic villages, pristine forest reserves and peaceful coastal areas are slowly being eroded in the name of progress and development. The process of land use change from agriculture to development (housing, commerce and industry) had often ignored the significance and unique character of a place. Malay culture and heritage areas are areas that have Malay characteristics and are influenced by the Malay tradition and values for a long time. The countryside of the Malay heartland represents the transformation of the people, their culture and livelihood over time. However, pressure on land and eagerness for modern development threatens these areas and could destroy the 'sense of place' that has evolved. The study would focus on the existing landscape character that has evolved from the various historical periods that shaped the community, settlements and livelihood of the people living in the district. The landscape character types that will be analyzed include hills and uplands, plains, lakes, dams and settlement patterns. The elements that would be studied include the historical background, physical character, uniqueness of a place, existing use and the importance of the place to the nearby community.

### **5.3 Introduction**

Rapid development that had taken place in most places in Malaysia as a result of favorable economic growth and political stability following the country's independence had encroached into the countryside. The rural countryside environments such as stretches of paddy fields, rustic villages, pristine forest reserves and peaceful coastal areas are slowly being eroded in the name of progress and development. The process of land use change from agriculture to development (housing, commerce and industry) had often ignored the significance and unique character of a place. Pressures on land and eagerness for modern development had threatened these areas and could destroy the 'sense of place' that has evolved since its early history.

The relationship between people and the landscape and the experiences in which they encounter with the landscape needs to be the primary focus in heritage management and not necessarily the specific physical features of the landscape (Stein, 1997). However, as Taylor (1989) argued, the traditional heritage practitioners and managers have focused solely on tangible physical properties and ignored the important social components that make up the cultural and social fabric of rural landscape. As such this study is aimed at portraying significant cultural landscape characteristics of the district of Kerian in the northern state of Perak, Malaysia based on a comprehensive study of the landscape characters in the district. These landscapes, which are characterized by extensive stretches of rice fields and traditional settlements, were shaped by the Malay community, namely the Banjarese who had migrated to Malaya since the early part of the 20th century. The study that had been done focuses on the existing landscape characters that have evolved from the various historical periods that shaped the community, settlements and livelihood of the people living in the district of Kerian. The importance of conserving heritage landscape and the need to understand the significance of these cultural landscape areas calls for a workable and practical action strategy.

### **5.4 Brief Literature Review**

The European Landscape Convention (European Council, 2000) defines landscape as an area

– as perceived by people, whose character is the result of the action and interaction of natural and/or human factors. The term "landscape" is thus defined as a zone or area as