

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**THE ESTABLISHMENT OF  
CHARACTERIZATION FOR  
TRADITIONAL MALAY  
CULTURAL LANDSCAPE**

**ISMAIL HAFIZ BIN SALLEH**

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## ABSTRACT

The cultural landscape is an important component in exploring and developing the national identity and heritage while the landscape design concept as the prominent element in representing and manifesting the culture and world view of a community. Apart from architecture, art and culture, understanding the culture and tradition of the past community are vital to the present generation. In Malaysia, vast development and rapid urbanization has given an impact on the landscape design development. However, these developments were not thoroughly understood when there was lack of understanding and appreciation of the traditional local culture. This thesis investigates and explores the characteristics of traditional Malay cultural landscape through observation on traditional Malay villages in Peninsular Malaysia by attempting to understand the past traditional community. The search for the characterization was a complicated attempt because of the various changes based on their region as well as the difficulties in obtaining references and accurate documentation about the traditional Malay cultural landscape. From 60 purposive sampling of traditional Malay houses, 24 were chosen to become the case study samples based on three geographical settings and groups of community; *Orang Bukit*, *Orang Sawah* and *Orang Laut* in the qualitative method for 11 states in Peninsular Malaysia. All the field data was collected by using Robert Melnick's Characteristic to conduct cultural landscape inventories, followed by Ian McHarg's Overlay Analysis to correlate the data to understand the preferences and influences within the social and cultural contexts. It was found and concluded that geographical setting has certainly had influence in the landscape characters and activities of the three types of group community that include the nature setting of *Orang Bukit*, *Orang Sawah* and *Orang Laut* respectively. In addition, this thesis also provides an overview and distinction throughout the approach to be used by municipal administrators in creating and adopting the traditional Malay landscape into their design in future. Hence, from this study, the image and the authenticity of the traditional Malay cultural landscape and their design concept can be expanded and will be referred by all landscape architects who are active in promoting the design of the traditional Malay culture due to the increasing awareness of design and the quality of life.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The advances of technology and strongest influence on the landscape development have laid the National Landscape Agenda (2009) on a comprehensive level and gaining its popularity in accommodating the diverse needs and interests of a good surrounding globally. In fact, it is considered as satisfactory and its function has spread as one of the necessities of our daily life. Thus, the design concept of the landscape is seen as one of the major contributions and impetus towards marketing strategies in fostering interest in the buyers (Nur Huzeima & Suriati Ahmad, 2010).

This research intended to create awareness among Malays especially, as Malaysian indigenous, to have a strong identity at all levels, including in the development of gardens in Malaysia as a method to enhance its reputation at the highest level by setting forth the potentials of tourism (National Key Economic Areas | NKEA sector, 2011) and Malay community development in Malaysia. The authenticity of traditional Malay cultural landscape from this study can serve as references and recommendations to landscape architects, developers, project planners, and municipal administration to preserve the authenticity of the traditional Malay landscape design.

The traditional Malay living environment is planned carefully through harmonious interactions between man, nature, and culture translated into the house design and the surroundings (Anisa Ani et al., 2012). The concept of the overall design of traditional Malay house includes the space division of their interior architecture is parallel with the outside areas as well as their house compound (Ahmad Zamil et al.; Noor Aimran, 2014; Zumahiran & Ismail Said, 2011; Abdullah Sani, 2006). These attributes are interconnected and considered as essential ingredients for aesthetic design, form, and function, and fashioned in harmony around traditional Malay house compound.

During the arrival of Islam in the 13th century, the Malays were still strongly animistic in their belief and culture (Ibrahim, 1991). Islam still held, but the customs