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PROCEEDING OF 3rd INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON REBUILDING PLACE (ICRP) 2018

Towards Safe Cities & Resilient Communities

13 & 14 SEPTEMBER 2018
IMPIANA HOTEL, IPOH, PERAK

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FOURTH INDUSTRIAL REVOLUTION AND ITS IMPACT TOWARDS SHOP HOUSES IMAGE

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Abstract – Conferences and conventions have been organized by the United Nations for Education, Scientific and Culture Organisation (UNESCO) since the early convention in Belgrade. The main aim of the organisation is to create heritage awareness to the participating countries' players in their construction industry especially the multi disciplinarian's urban builders, urban designers and city authorities. These countries have to create principles to uphold local heritage protection, conservation and revitalisation. Otherwise, new modern buildings are constructed without putting priority on the significance of the existing urban context such as heritage shop houses and heritage buildings. The heritage buildings were randomly demolished due to development pressures from various angles since the past industrial revolution until the new Industrial Revolution 4.0. Therefore, this study zoomed on issues of industrial revolution and globalisation towards outdoor ambience in between heritage shop houses. The heritage shop houses in this study were limited to shop houses within the core zone of the historic city of the Straits of Malacca; George Town in Pulau Pinang and Melaka. The current condition of the physical and spiritual attributes of the 'outdoor space in between the heritage street is in conditional feature that requires urgent revitalisation. The spaces have a high potential to be enhanced as 'an urban outdoor living space' with magnetic attraction as "a place" for promoting on-street cultural heritage ambience. The vibrant movement of pedestrian of the observed study area has the regenerative potentials to create an attractive aura with unique, antique and authentic ambience. Thus, the outdoor space quality reflects a generative economic, environmental and social values. With this awareness, the paper discusses the scenario of urban heritage shop houses that require revitalisation. Then, the final section of the discussion presents the constructive attributes to share the setting of our local urban heritage in Malaysia.

Keywords – industrial revolution, heritage shop houses, outdoor space, core zone,

1 INTRODUCTION

This research focused on the existing phenomenon and identification of the revitalisation opportunity on the identification of constructive attributes for the heritage shop houses in the Cities of the Straits of Melaka: Melaka and George Town, Pulau Pinang. The site setting of the study are located within the Malaysian world heritage sites which was inscribed in 2008. The study evaluates an existing cultural phenomenon of selected heritage streets within the core zone of the Historic Cities of the Straits of Melaka. To enhance the valuable sites, a pro-active efforts from the local authorities especially Majlis Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah (MBMB) and Majlis Perbandaran Pulau Pinang (MPPP) provide a significant data source. The directly-involved end users i.e. the shop owners who contributed to the life and death of the shop houses are the valuable data and are considered as significant source of information in this research.

The area of interest in heritage in Malaysia is a norm especially in the millennium age. There are the main actors in the area in which the main heritage researchers, the main heritage conservators and the main protectors are in the re-development of heritage projects. There are the role players who are involved in the built making and built revitalisation process such as heroes, rich and famous people in the 'battle field' in the process of managing and constructing urban built form (Bentley, I. 1985). On the other hand, there are also non-heroic people who care and observe the new image of the space in between heritage shop houses within the Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca: George Town and

Melaka. The major players in the heritage shop houses include the builders, owners, developer and controller of the past, which still remain in the history. The most important players is the inheritance who inherited the shop houses properties from earlier generations. In dealing with the owners of shop houses properties in the recent data collection process in 2018; the researcher acts as “the andragogy-researcher” and the main actors in the heritage field as the ‘heritage expert’. The researcher learns from the most superior, knowledgeable and experienced heritage experts. The findings of this study unveils the constructive attributes with regards to the heritage shop houses valorisation in the study site.

2 THE CHALLENGE OF HERITAGE SHOP HOUSES

The tourism industry has elevated the significance of heritage shop houses and managed to sustain even during the current fourth industrial revolution, globalisation and post millennium challenges. The challenges provide both negative and positive impacts. One of the negative impacts of current challenge is it brings in pressure from global to local levels, including urban layout, image, identity, character and architecture. The worst fourth industrial revolution and globalisation impact is the influence of ‘robotic-touch’ and ‘international style’ which employs a ‘minimalism’ provocation. The industrial revolution style and international style and minimalism promote simplicity, industrialized image and functional of physical external features which would affect the natural aspect of the building.

The second impact of fourth industrial revolution and globalisation is on building physical feature, colour, opening size and composition of the façade treatment. In a new mega-city building is designed in the international style. In this international style, the low and high rise buildings in city have the image and identity of a basic cuboid form such as ‘shoe-boxed’, glazed with curtain walling system and flat reinforced concrete roofing. The external facade treatment or the envelope of the international style which is too simple look like vertical cuboid with non compliance to tropical climate.

The third negative impact of of fourth industrial revolution and globalisation is the ‘minimalist principle’ in façade design (Laurence, P. L., 2006). The international style promotes architectural design feature of glazed curtain walling system which has minimum maintenance cost due to uniformity or flat surfaced façade design. This style however, has caused other problems. The reflected day light cause ‘glare effect’ to end users, higher thermal heat to local climate to surrounding grounds and the adjacent buildings causing discomfort environment. Besides the walling component challenges, the fourth negative impact of internationalisation of building design is the flat roof design. This flat roof design fails to cater all year round high degree of sunny and rainy of the tropical climate. The lacking overhangs that functions to provide shading device to the building facades. Thus, the facade treatment would actually require extra cost for providing shading device to control and reduce the day lighting effects. Besides the lack of overhang, other problems from flat roof design is on the aspect of roof maintenance and roof-top grey water collection and disposals that are storm-water system.

Thus, for the sake of responding to the latest global image and trend, the local natural factor and the richness of local cultural heritage are not considered as prioritised criteria in new urban planning and architectural style development. In terms of planning approval of plot ratio it becomes higher than it used to be (two or three storey height shop houses to high-rise buildings). As a result, the worst impact from globalisation is the creation of ‘mega-cities’ images rather than the “places of solidarity” (Charles, Landry. 2006). Building images in different locations of the globe appear to be similar to each other regardless of where their geographical positioning is, which creates ‘everywhere-ville’ and ‘anywhere ville’(Charles, Landry, 2006).

The fifth negative impact is the introduction of legacy of Modern Movement which is obvious in every city today. A similar image of international style building planning and architecture can also be found in many other cities all over the world as physical impact of globalisation at local level. The current urban development is mainly cultured by building construction’s economic force. The matter

of time and financial factors are translated into functional built form that is as modern movement projects. Non appreciative attitudes on decorative details rejected 'simplicity' and strictly 'functional' as compared to heritage buildings (Choi, A. S., Ritchie, B. W., Papandrea, F., & Bennett, J. 2010). However, with this stand in mind what will then happen to the quality of outdoor space left for end users if the environment surrounding them is left as basic form?

The impact of globalisation is further discussed in this sub-section. There are positive and negative impacts on globalisation especially towards the heritage shop houses. Within the negative impacts of globalisation, the researcher found that there are also positive impacts of globalisation. From the review analysis done on the World Heritage Committee (WHC) of the UNESCO conferences and meetings since 1972 to recent meetings, it is found that the WHC has never given up protecting and conserving heritage sites all over the world. Therefore, in handling the challenges of fourth industrial revolution, globalisation, the WHC has their methods through various approaches to safeguard the heritage sites.

3 PREINSCRIPTION 2008

The shop houses in heritage streets were considered as 'old and ugly buildings' by many urban modern lovers. Without any social or historical value before the UNESCO World Heritage Sites inscription in 2008 they were left as no man's property. Those architectural heritage streets with rows of heritage shop houses which block the front of the building were left to individual efforts by the shop owners to maintain heritage properties. Based on the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) and Special Area Plan (SAP) in 2011, it was recommended to conserve the heritage shop houses in Melaka and Pulau Pinang. The façade feature was left to natural deterioration. On the other hand, the space in between heritage buildings that functioned for pedestrian and vehicular linkages were left without revitalisation efforts. The physical condition and her façade treatment were highly depended on shop owners' creativity and affordability. They have two choices either to enhance their shop front or to bear with the natural deterioration. Generally, the physical façades were fairly repaired and maintained to keep the business operating actively. Unfortunately, not all shop owners have the affordability to maintain their property, some just remained as visual nuisance.

4 OPERATION OF WORLD HERITAGE OFFICES TO THE SURVIVAL OF HERITAGE SHOP HOUSES

Pulau Pinang and Melaka are well known as Twin Cities and are responsible in enhancing the UNESCO World Heritage Sites in 2008 to ensure they remain in the best physical condition. Both cities have set up their own World Heritage Office locally with the intention to manage and maintain the policy, and to include high focus on the Special Area Plan (SAP) within their vision and management. In the year of 2017, the World Heritage Office (WHO) in both locations are enhanced continuously under the Conservation Management Plan (CMP) in guiding the enhancement of WHS. The aim is to guide the promotion of conservation, preservation, rehabilitation and reconstruction of WHS. In Pulau Pinang, the World Heritage Office i.e. the non-statutory body office for managing WHS is known as George Town World Heritage Incorporation (GTWHI) which was established in 2010 whereas in Melaka, it is known as Melaka World Heritage Sendirian Berhad (MWHBS) which was established in 2011.

5 APPRECIATIVE VALUE ON HERITAGE OF SHOP HOUSES

Within the heritage site of Pulau Pinang there are four thousand, six hundred and sixty five (4665) number of listed buildings and the majority component are shop houses. On the other hand, there are more than three thousand (>3000) number of heritage shop houses from the Dutch era are found in Melaka (Raja Nafida Raja Shahminan., 2008). Historical style and period of construction of a building is traceable based on its authentic feature of facades. Part of the process of conservation from the Jabatan Warisan Negara (Department of Heritage, Malaysia) is the documentation of existing shop

houses before and after the conservation process. The following Table 1 reflects the constructive physical attributes and spiritual attributes for revitalising heritage shop houses.

Table 1 Physical and Spiritual Attributes of Shop houses Outdoor

| Physical Attributes | Spiritual Attributes |
|--|---|
| 1. Façade Attractiveness | 1. Visually Appealing |
| 2. Cultural Heritage Components | 2. Cultural Heritage Identity |
| 3. Signboard Display | 3. Self-Positioning for Way Finding |
| 4. Decorative Culture | 4. Contemporary Style |
| 5. Resilience Outlook | 5. Resilient Materials, Pattern and Texture |
| 6. Lively Accessibility | 6. Robust Intensity |
| 7. Vehicular Friendly | 7. Traffic Calming |
| 8. Green Interactive Outdoor | 8. Urban Friendly Furniture |
| 9. Innovative Landmark | 9. Reflective Art and Cultural Artwork |
| 10. Interactive Roofing | 10. Tropical Universal and Passive Design |
| 11. Healthy amenity | 11. Sense of Relief and Hygiene |
| 12. Heritage Festive Elements | 12. Heritage Value |
| 13. Interactive Info | 13. Sense of Locality |
| 14. Aura, Flexibility Adaptability | 14. Self-Healing and Therapeutic Approach |
| 15. Surveillance and Controlled Programmed | 15. Safe and Self-Experiential Learning |

(Sources: Author, 2018)

6 DISCUSSION OF RESULT

Based on George Town World Heritage Incorporation and Think City publication on Pulau Pinang Historic Shop Houses Style, Pulau Pinang Historic Shop Houses Style is classified into six main styles following a chronological order. The styles are: “Early Penang Style” (1790s-1850s); “South Chinese” Eclectic Style” (1840s-1900s); “Early Straits” Eclectic Style (1890s-1910s); “Late Straits” Eclectic Style (1910s-1930s); Art Deco Style (1930s-1960s) and Early Modern Style (1950-1970s). The identified style shall be conserved by the shop owners. If there are any new changes made towards the existing heritage shop house within WHS, the owner shall undergo: Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA), Dilapidation Survey (DS) and Heritage Impact Assessment (HIA) approvals. The documentations provide a quick reference for new use and function in the development. The conservation principles are applicable towards individual building rather than an application to a row of shop houses. The whole stretch which comprises at least sixteen numbers of shop houses lot shall have an appropriate approach. The current practice has selected conservation rather than any other alternative approach. This scenario happened simply because of the exposure and level of knowledge is limited to conservation only. The inscription of WHS by UNESCO in 2008 up has revitalised the real-estates property to yield in the year 2017, it has imposed a new style of heritage commercialisation for supporting tourism industry. This new heritage status requires a high expectation on high quality heritage-commercial typology. The shop houses trend is expected to reflect an appreciation beyond our normal socio-economic level but to maintain the Malaysian pride in terms of image and identity. The aim is to share shop owners’ reflection in facing a great impact due to new heritage regulations. They are now setting up a new business strategy to remain competitive with the current demand of globalised heritage tourism and marketing strategy. In order to remain relevant to the current market, a proper retail and shop front design that suit heritage theme is necessary as to create idea of heritage sustainability and revitalisation.

7 CONCLUSIONS

The awareness on current issues of urban architectural heritage is considered high among multi-disciplinarians and public. Conservation, as the most commonly practised approaches in most heritage development in many heritage cities, is no longer the most appropriate tool to manage heritage city. On the other hand heritage revitalisation is considered as the strategic planning to handle the generalisation due to globalisation in the early decade of the millennium. Industrial revolution 4.0 and globalisation have compounded heritage awareness towards particularization of local heritage among the role players that are collectively agreed by B. Oktay a, M. Faslı a, N. Paşaoğulları, (2011) in attracting the tourism activities. This paper is limited to cover shop houses in the Core Zone selected streets within the Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca: George Town in Pinang and Melaka only. The environment of the space is purely composed by the heritage shop houses as the setting of the background. The revitalisation of heritage shop houses of the outdoor space depends so much on the degree of the urban controller's awareness and knowledge on urban design. The ambience place acts as the 'lobby' for the public to refer to before they decide engaging into any business or activity that occupies their time, energy and money. Each of heritage shop house lot acts as the "urban-accommodation" when the shop lot offers accommodation or bed and breakfast (bnb). On the other hand, the shop lot that offers food outlet can function as "urban-kitchen". Therefore, the construct attributes for shop houses revitalisation benefits urban public space which functions as "urban outdoor living room" provide a high level of comfort of amenity and entertainment to serve public (Lees, L., & Demeritt, D. (2010). The longer they stay within the outdoor space provides inwards investment to the heritage shop houses. Most of the heritage shop houses offer basic needs for tourists. Any of the product and service may bring in investment to leverage the heritage street. One of the objectives of urban tourism is to create a "memorable experience" to encourage future revisits to a specific place or destiny. Therefore, with the above stated advantages and opportunities of the urban heritage shop houses; the urban heritage's outdoor space is supposedly designated for 'urban heritage recreation. Thus, the space in between heritage building is not meant for leftover space. This critical evaluation of the space as the 'unintended' and 'no man's land' due to individual shop owners' greediness and limited budget for public comfort is highlighted by researchers on this aspect of urban place (Samadi, Z. and Hasbullah, M.N., 2008).

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