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THE IMPORTANCE OF HISTORIC INTERIOR SCHEME IN PROMOTING HERITAGE MUSEUM BUILDING: CASE STUDY OF STADTHUYS MUSEUM BUILDING

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Abstract

Malaysia has taken wise steps to safeguard heritage building assets by making heritage buildings into heritage museum. This effort shows that Malaysia is looking at the importance of heritage buildings as a way of bringing this historic asset into a medium of continuous historical learning. However, to what extent its interior space can be explored and can be a medium for promoting historic interior schemes. The Stadthuys museum can be promoted through its interior appearances. The Stadthuys museum is a heritage Dutch building that still remains intact although it has gone through several phases of the era; English, Dutch, British and Japanese, even its interior space functions have still been recognised even after being converted into a museum. This museum building promotes the Dutch's office interior with the Dutch's bakery house and Dutch Governor's residence. Four essential components that need to be focused by heritage museums are preserving the building interior history, preserving the authenticity of the historic interior scheme of building, preserving the initial space function, and preserving the historic interior features of space. This paper aims to raise awareness among museum's bodies about the importance of the value of historic interior features in future where the exploring needs to be enhanced. Observation on-site, measured drawings, documents study and site tour, were some of the approaches that have been applied to obtain the data. The historic photograph, sketches, drawings, books, and journals were applied to investigate the origin of the building interior space. The results strengthened that the roles of heritage museum buildings are required not only to display and interpret historical object but also to display and communicate the significance of the historic interior features. In other sense, the interior physical of museum buildings can be a priority when planning heritage museum exhibitions in the future.

Keywords: *Heritage, Historic, Museum Building, Interior, Scheme.*

INTRODUCTION

Museums from heritage buildings are important heritage attractions offering authentic cultural experiences. Nevertheless, some of museums less known because failure to create experiential authenticity for their visitors (Jin et al., 2020). Museums have realised that in order to remain relevant in this modern environment, the experience they offer must evolve in tandem with visitor expectations. But to what standard? As museums rush to keep up with changing contexts, do they risk delivering experiences that are more quotidian and expected, and less the departure from the time to time that many visitors seek? For these visitors, museums are at their best when they surprise, awe and delight, and more exciting when get experiential authenticity in heritage museums. Unfortunately, it has yet to be fully met especially the authenticity of the historical space in heritage museum. Due to that, the aim of this paper is to raise awareness among museum's bodies about the importance of the value of historic interior features in heritage museum building where the exploring needs to be enhanced.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Heritage Museum Building

Heritage buildings have heritage merits that illustrate the aspects of architectural and social history, including the interior space and its associations with people and events in the past. Perceiving this historical importance, it is favored that heritage buildings are preserved by changing them into heritage museums (Karim et al., 2020). Nowadays, museums offer an ideal environment for informal cultural learning on heritage artifacts, in fact sharing the museum space among visitors allows for collective learning experiences and socializing with each other (Nofal et al., 2020).

In the case of heritage museums, a museum is considered a unique carrier of historical and cultural memory. The main tasks of the heritage museum are preserving and communicating some aspects of the past and sharing the past through the context of the site, structure, furnishings, landscape, family or other residents either famous or not, and their possessions. Heritage museums are natural settings for teaching and learning history and can be among the most productive environments for successfully carrying out these tasks (Donnelly, 2002). Therefore, heritage museums are not only meant to display artefacts but also to exhibit the inside and outside of the building itself, and its association with the surrounding. This is an indication that heritage museums are the cultural institutions of a country and have long been associated with intangible and tangible heritage. Donnelly (2002) also stated that heritage museum is a place to view things and observe the activities of life. It is the space in which cultural change happens. It is also material evidence of technological, social and spiritual changes through the way it was built, the way its spaces were arranged and the people who have used them. The heritage museum is needed to remind us about the history and as a responsibility to the future generation (NSW Heritage Museum and Gallery Foundation, 2004).

Therefore, a heritage museum is also seen as a 'living museum' which bears living multi-cultural heritage and tradition (Harun & Ismail, 2011). Utterly, a heritage museum is defined as a building that reinforces its specific sense of history and identity (UNESCO, 2001). Heritage museum buildings also considered as heritage sites, also called as heritage museums in general, nowadays have been considerably favored by museum audiences. The various delivery methods has been used to reveal a new style of engaging museum audiences in the deeper sense-making of the exhibited content. Yet irrelevant collection and demonstrations are sometimes more prominent than the historic physical of the museum building itself. Preferably, the display, storytelling, demonstration and collection should engaging and vivid audiovisual with the museum building itself (Nikolakopoulou et al., 2022).

Historic Interior Scheme Interpretation

Using Historic Interior Scheme Interpretation as a way to promote Heritage Museum Building

Nowadays, interior museum become a tourist attraction. The historical and cultural context of the museum site, the contents of exhibition and personal background in determining potential of heritage museum to become tourist attraction (Christine, 2009). However, this tourist attraction must be reinforced by highlighting prestigious interpretations. Interpretation is connected to sites and objects, artwork, or living things, and can be a way to promote places and events, interpretation communicates what is significant about places, people, or events. (Colquhoun, 2005). Figure 1 shows the AV installation to interpret and illustrated the historic interior scheme of royal palace at the Tower of London.

Figure 1

Using AV installation to interpret and illustrated the historic interior scheme of royal palace at the Tower of London



Note. The historic interpretation of the space to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information.

The Enormous Power of Historic Interior Scheme to Promote Historic Evidence of Spaces Character

The historic interior scheme exemplifies the enormous power to promote the space's character, showing the greatness of the museum building and to indicate a historic event has ever happened inside. The museum should be aware of the importance of this historic interior scheme toward museums' interior, don't be ignored and something that is regrettable if disappeared. According to UNESCO (2001), a heritage house museum is a place for storing thousands of historical stories. A successful heritage museum building is able to return the historic scheme to the original design according to its historic space character. A heritage house building that is converted into a museum takes on a special value and significance. More than any other kind of museum, a heritage building museum has the power to evoke and create links between the visitor and the history present in the building itself, or which it seeks to represent. Figure 2 described and illustrated the historic spaces character.

Figure 2

Bedroom at the Tower of London, her majesty's royal palace and fortress of the tower of London England is labeled as UNESCO World Heritage.



Note. The royal bedchamber inside St Thomas's Tower (Tower of London) has been re-presented as it might have appeared in the time of Edward I. The replica bed was based on one mentioned in medieval accounts, which was made to accommodate the tall, imposing King known as 'Longshanks'.

The Authenticity Criteria for Historic Interior Scheme

The 'Authenticity' also known as 'Integrity' which refers to measure of the wholeness and intactness of the natural and/or cultural heritage and its attributes (from World Heritage Operation Guidelines, II.E.87–89). National Park Service defines 'integrity' as the authenticity of a property's historical identity, evidenced by the survival of physical characteristics that existed during the property's historical or prehistoric period (The Georgia State University World Heritage Initiative, 2017). The National Register defines 'integrity' as the ability of a property to convey its significance (Duncan, 2011). The National Park Service also establishes the definition of 'historic integrity' as follows (The Georgia State University World Heritage Initiative, 2017):

Historic integrity is the ability of a property to convey its historical associations or attributes. While the National Historic Landmarks (NHL) and National Register of Historic Places (NR) programs use the same seven aspects of integrity to evaluate properties (location, setting, design, materials, workmanship, feeling, an association), NHLs must retain them to a higher degree than required for NR listing. If the resource has been more than modestly modified or deteriorated since its period of national significance, it may meet the NR threshold for integrity, but not the higher NHL standard.

The above definition indicates that seven (7) criteria should be looked upon in preserving historical integrity:

- i. **Location:** Location is the place where a historic property is constructed or the place where a historical event had occurred. The actual location of a historic property, complemented by its setting, is important in recapturing the sense of historical events and persons.

- ii. **Setting:** Setting is the physical environment of a historic property. It refers to the historic character of the place in which the property played its historical role. It involves how, not just where, the property is situated and its historical relationship to the surrounding features and open space. The physical features that constitute the historic setting of the historic property can be either natural or manmade and include elements such as topographic features, vegetation, simple manmade paths or fences, and the relationships between buildings and other features or open spaces.
- iii. **Design:** Design is the combination of elements that create the historic form, plan, space, structure, and style of a property. This includes such elements as organization of space, proportion, scale, technology, ornamentation, and materials. Design can also apply to districts and to the historic way in which the buildings, sites, or structures are related. Examples include spatial relationships between major features; visual rhythms in a streetscape or landscape plantings; the layout and materials of walkways and roads; and the relationship of other features, such as statues, water fountains, and archeological sites.
- iv. **Materials:** Materials are the physical elements that were combined or deposited during a particular period of time and in a particular pattern or configuration to form a historic property. If the property has been rehabilitated, the historic materials and significant features must have been preserved. The property must also be an actual historic resource, not a re-creation; a property whose historic features have been lost and then reconstructed is usually not eligible.
- v. **Workmanship:** Workmanship is the physical evidence of the crafts of a particular culture or people during any given period in history. It is the evidence of artisans' labour and skill in constructing or altering a building, structure, object, or site. It may be expressed in vernacular methods of construction and plain finishes or in highly sophisticated configurations and ornamental detailing. Examples of workmanship in historic buildings include tooling, carving, painting, graining, turning, and joinery. Examples of workmanship in pre-contact contexts include Paleo-Indian Clovis points, Archaic period beveled adzes, Hopewellian worked bone pendants, and Iroquoian effigy pipes.
- vi. **Feeling:** Feeling is a property's expression of the aesthetic or historic sense of a particular period of time. It results from the presence of physical features that, taken together, conveys the property's historic character. For example, a rural historic district which retains its original design, materials, workmanship, and setting will relate the feeling of agricultural life in the nineteenth century.
- vii. **Association:** Association is the direct link between an important historic event or person and a historic property. A property retains association if it is the place where the event or activity occurred and is sufficiently intact to convey that relationship to an observer. Therefore, a property where a nationally significant person carried out the action or work for which they are nationally significant is preferable to the place where they returned to only sleep, eat, or spend their leisure time. Like feeling, association requires the presence of physical features that convey a property's historic character.

The National Register 101 also concurred with the seven (7) factors that must be evaluated to determine whether a historic look will survive. These aspects are similar to the following seven criteria of historic integrity given by the National Park Service: location, setting, design, material, workmanship, feeling, and association (Duncan, 2011). The UNESCO and WH committees also believed that these seven (7) authenticities criteria and historic integrity could be used as the world heritage qualifying condition for assessing the quality of historical place (Stovel, 2007). The other committees have also adopted these seven

(7) National Register’s criteria in determining the integrity and authenticity of the world heritage sites in their list. The following bodies are well known throughout the world: ICOMOS, ICCROM, NPS, NSW, ICOM, and ICOM-DEMHIST (Alho et al., 2010a); National Park Service, (1997b); National Park Service, (2005); ICOM DEMHIST (2014); NSW Heritage Museum and Gallery Foundation, (2004); Jokilehto, 2009).

METHODOLOGY

Evaluation Method: HIS Evaluation

This HIS evaluation was conducted on the selected case studies. The researchers were assisted by museum experts and museum staff such as the curators, museum designer, and conservator. An evaluation rubric form was developed based on the evaluation criteria or unit analysis according to the results from the literature review.

Table 1

The authenticity criteria in Historic Interior Scheme (HIS) evaluation

Criteria	SCALE / SEVERITY OF CHANGED				
	5	4	3	2	1
1.Location	No change	Negligible change	Minor change	Moderate change	Major change
2.Design					
3.Material	Exceeds	Meet Expectations	Developing	Below	Very Low
4.Workmanship	Expectations	Scheme	Expectations Scheme	Expectations	Expectation
5.Association	Scheme			Scheme	Scheme
6.Feeling					
7.Setting					

Table 1 was the criteria or unit analysis that were evaluated based on the rubric scale adopted from ICOMOS (2008) and marked in either blue, green, orange, and red.

Data Collection

Case Study: ‘Stadthuys House’ Malacca

The Stadthuys House Museum is also known as the History and Ethnography Museum. The Stadthuys means the ‘city hall’ and is a historical structure situated in the heart of Malacca City, the administrative capital of the state of Malacca, Malaysia, in a place known as the Red Square. The History and Ethnography Museum is a heritage museum which is classified in the office category. The museum is the Stadthuys museum complex consists of the blocks of Dutch Governor’s office, Dutch Governor and Deputy Governor’s residence, Dutch bakery house and warehouse/’Misericordia’. The museum complex is located in Laksamana Road, Malacca Town, Malaca. This building is famous for its Dutch architecture, similar to the Dutch architecture in Jakarta, Indonesia. *Figure 3* shows The Stadthuys Malacca Museum building around 1965, 1982 and until now.

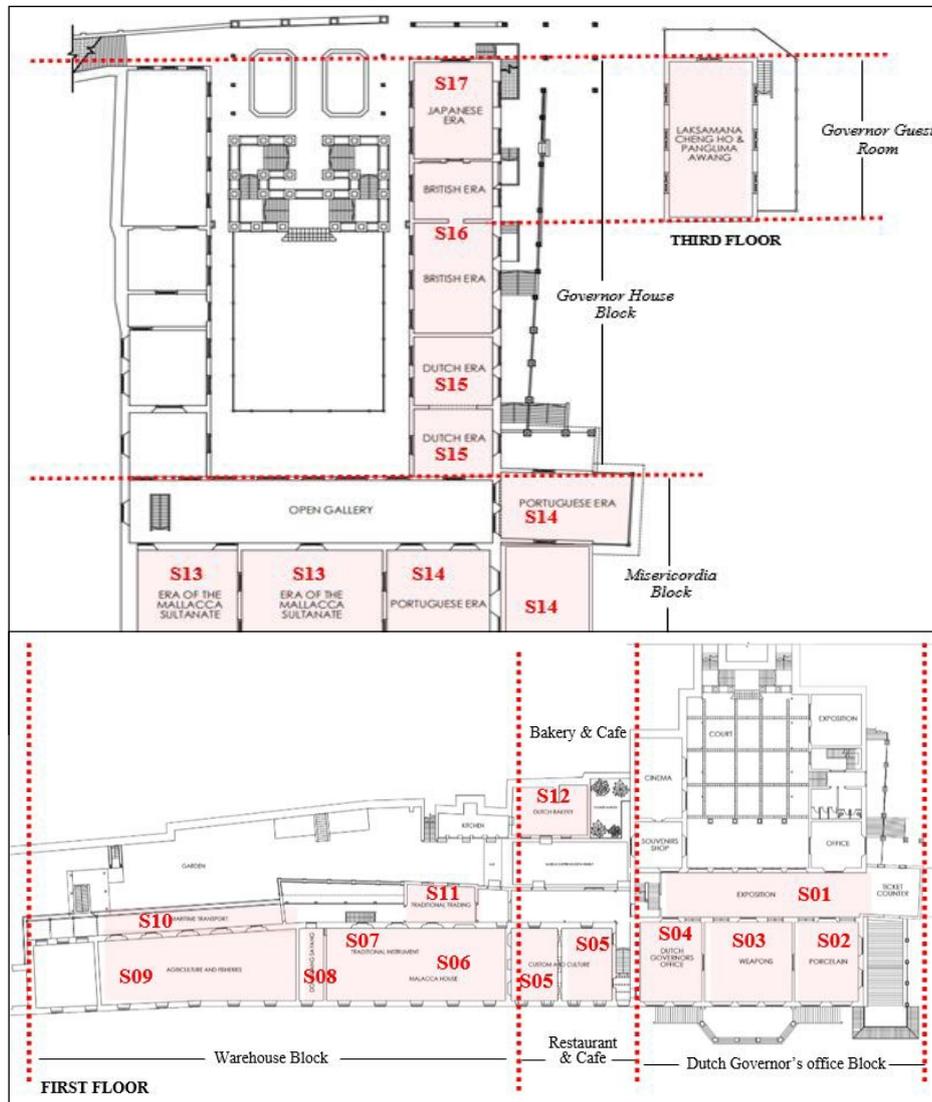
Figure 3

The Stadthuys Malacca Museum building around 1965, 1982 and until now



Note. The Stadthuys Malacca Museum also known as the heritage museum building of History and Ethnography Museum, Malacca Town, Malacca, famous for its Dutch architecture.

Figure 4
The original layout of History and Ethnography Museum



Note. The original layout of Stadthuys Museum Building

The Stadthuys Museum Building is also known as the History and Ethnography Museum. This museum building has a floor area of more than 5000 square meters. From the observation, it can be concluded that the museum building consists four (4) blocks of building: the Dutch governor's office block, including restaurant, cafe and bakery house; the warehouse block; the Misericordia block; and the governor house block, including the governor guest room. *Figure 4* shows that the original layout plan of the History and Ethnography Museum in the Stadthuys Building Complex.

This section explains the original historical character of each space according to the evaluated indicators. Only the spaces involved in exhibition were evaluated (Table 2). The spaces are composed of eighteen spaces of area: the governor's Office block: gallery, secretariat room, large prayer room, governor's private dining room. The next space is the restaurant and café. Beside this space is the warehouse block. This space is a huge warehouse space with a long pathway next to it. In front of the pathway is a bakery house and a cafe. The bakery house and the cafe building block are separate from the warehouse building block.

On the second floor are the Misericordia block and the governor's house block. On the third floor is the governor guest room. (Table 2 provides detailed of these spaces).

Table 2

List of interior spaces in the Stadhuys House Museum

Space No.	Building Division	Original Space	Original Function/Activity	Museum Function/Exhibition
S 01		<i>A gallery</i>	Exhibition area	R1 – Introduction
S 02	<i>Governor's Office Block</i>	<i>Secretariat room</i>	Administrative office	R2 – Porcelain
S 03		<i>Large Prayer Hall</i>	Assembly room for formal or public event (Prayer for wisdom)	R3 – Weapons
S 04		<i>Governor's Private Dining Room</i>	Private dining room for governors having meals with his special guest	R4 - Dutch governor's office
S 05	<i>Restaurant & Cafe</i>	<i>Restaurant with old Dutch interior</i>	Drink and meal area	R5 – Customs & Culture
S 06		<i>Warehouse</i>	Warehouse usage	R6 – Melaka House
S 07		<i>Warehouse</i>	Warehouse usage	R7 – Traditional Instruments
S 08		<i>Warehouse</i>	Warehouse usage	R8 – Malay Music (Dingdongs Sayang)
S 09	<i>Warehouse (first floor)</i>	<i>Gallery (1744)/ Secretariat and Warehouse (1791)/ Supreme Court Hall/court of justice (in the 20th century)</i>	Warehouse usage /Supreme Court	R9 – Agriculture & Fisheries
S 10		<i>Path Walkway</i>	Walkway	R10 – Maritime Transport
S 11		<i>Bakery Café & Coffee Shop</i>	Café/canteen	R11 – Traditional Trading
S 12	<i>Bakery & Cafe</i>	<i>Dutch Bakery House</i>	Baking breads	R12 – Dutch Bakery
S 13	<i>'Misericordia' (second floor)</i>	<i>'Misericordia' with some warehouse</i>	'Misericordia' hospital	R13 – Era of the Melaka Sultanate
S 14		<i>'Misericordia' and Verandah</i>	Area connecting to governor's house block	R14 – Portuguese Era
S 15		<i>Governors rest room</i>	Governors rest area	R15 – Dutch Era
S 16	<i>Governor's House Block</i>	<i>Old fort (Dining)</i>	Governor's dining area	R16 – British Era

S 17	<i>Old fort (kitchen)</i>	Kitchen for serve food	R17 – Japanese Era
S 18	<i>Guest Room Block (Third Floor)</i>	<i>Guest and service room (for visiting officers and civil servants)</i>	Room for guest waiting and discussion area
			R18 – Admiral Cheng Ho & Panglima (Commander Awang)

RESULTS

This section explains the changes evaluation of the HIS for each of the spaces in museum, according to HIS criteria. Only the spaces involved in exhibition were evaluated. *Table 3* shows the result of HIS changes in the Stadthuys Museum Building according to the evaluation Historic Interior Scheme (HIS) criteria.

Table 3

The level of change of the ‘historic interior scheme’ in the Stadthuys Museum/ History and Ethnography Museum

Historic Interior Scheme (HIS) Evaluation for heritage building museum																			
Museum Name:	Code of Space													Notes					
History and Ethnography Museum, Malacca	S 01 – A gallery	S 02 – Secretariat room	S 03 – Large prayer room	S 04 – Governor’s Private Dining Room	S 05 – Restaurant and cafe	S 06 – Warehouse	S 07 – Warehouse	S 08 – Warehouse	S 09 – Gallery/Secretariat and warehouse/Supreme Court	S 10 – Path Walkway	S 11 – Bakery Cafe and coffee shop	S 12 – Dutch bakery house	S 13 – ‘Miscrocordia’ with verandah		S 14 – ‘Miscrocordia’ and verandah	S 15 – Governors rest room	S 16 – Old fort (Governors Dining area)	S 17 – Old fort (Governors Kitchen)	S 18 – Governors Guest room
Original Building: Dutch Office																			
Building category: Office																			
Date: 20 April 2018																			
Historic Interior Scheme (HIS) Criteria / Level of Changed (Loc)																			
Location	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	Negligible
Design	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	Negligible
Material	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	Medium
Workmanship	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	3	Medium
Association	3	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	3	High
Feeling	4	4	3	2	2	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	4	4	4	4	Medium
Setting	4	4	3	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	Very High

Sources: Adapted from (Dunn and Das, 2011), (Museums Association, 2016)

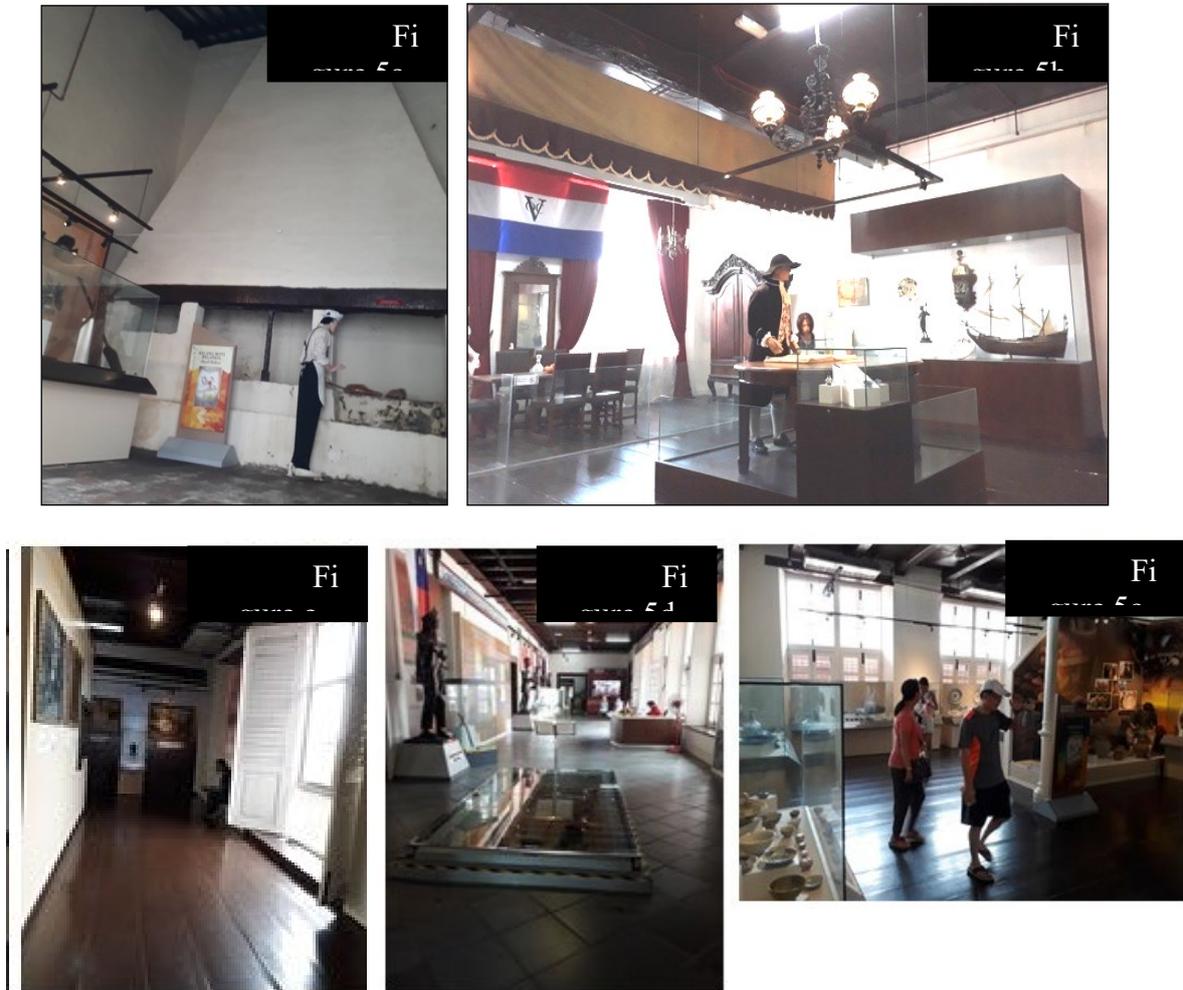
SCALE / SEVERITY OF CHANGED/ LEVEL OF CHANGED					
	5	4	3	2	1
Level of Changed (Loc)	No change	Negligible change	Minor change	Moderate change	Major change
	Exceeds Expectations Scheme	Meet Expectations Scheme	Developing Expectations Scheme	Below Expectations Scheme	Very Low Expectation Scheme

Overall, the changes of historic interior scheme (HIS) for the Stadthuys museum building/ History and Ethnography Museum’s HIS is balanced for each scale, but the strength of the HIS is more prominent, particularly the criteria of design, location, material, workmanship, and feeling. Although the building’s interior has undergone considerable changes of scheme due to function changes, the HIS of the *Dutch Office and Residence* can be preserved despite its new function as an exhibition spaces. The Dutch historic features, fabric skin, and special significance of the Dutch bakery house (Figure 5a), the Dutch governor office (Figure 5b), the large prayer hall (Figure 5c), the secretariat room (Figure 5d), and the

Misericordia hall (Figure 5e) are sufficient to strengthen the historic character of the Stadthuys House Building.

Figure 5

The interior spaces that strengthen the historic character of the Stadthuys museum building



Note. The museums can benefit from these interior features in interpreting the space.

DISCUSSION

As the whole, it can be summarized that the Stadthuys Museum is less able to interpret the heritage spaces of the Dutch's office building. However, its exhibition theme is still associated with the building's history. The findings suggest that most of the exhibition spaces inside the museum were developed to serve as a 'gallery/museum.' To create a gallery/museum space, many panels and partitions have been set up, causing the interior building fabric to be forcibly covered, particularly the doors and windows. This panel and partition construction is permanently attached to the wall. This also causes the historic interior space scheme to be disrupted thus damaging the special significance interior features of the building itself.

CONCLUSION

Overall, it can be concluded that Historic Interior Scheme (HIS) of the Stadthuys Museum building is controlled by the influence of the scheme of Dutch architecture office and residence building. The significance features are the ceiling design, floor design, door design, and the window design. The most important part is the ceiling height and the huge scale of the building size, which depicts the grandeur of Dutch buildings. Due to prominence of the Dutch's historic scheme, the approach applied was to display the museum's spaces using an exhibition theme that conceptualizes the history and ethnography in accordance with the historic character of the spaces in the building. This approach managed to integrate and to promote the HIS of the Dutch building through the exhibition theme. Indirectly, it would benefit the museum because the tourists can enjoy not only the HIS of the Dutch interior of building but also can enjoy the exhibition scheme.

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Surat kami : 700-KPK (PRP.UP.1/20/1)

Tarikh : 20 Januari 2023

Prof. Madya Dr. Nur Hisham Ibrahim
Rektor
Universiti Teknologi MARA
Cawangan Perak



Tuan,

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Kelulusan daripada pihak tuan dalam perkara ini amat dihargai.

Sekian, terima kasih.

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PROF. MADYA DR. NUR HISHAM IBRAHIM
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