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Malay Garden Concept from the Traditional Malay Landscape Design

Ismail Hafiz Salleh^{a*}, Mohd Sabrizaa Abd. Rashid^b, Siti Rasidah Md Sakip^a

^aDepartment of Landscape Architecture, Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perak), 32610 Bandar Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia

^bCentre for Knowledge & Understanding of Tropical Architecture & Interior (KUTAI), Faculty of Architecture, Planning & Surveying, Universiti Teknologi MARA (Perak), 32610 Bandar Seri Iskandar, Perak, Malaysia

Abstract

This study discusses the characteristics of traditional Malay landscape as the main elements for the development of the Malay garden concept using the old Malay manuscripts as well as site observation to the Malay villages along Peninsular Malaysia. The inherited landscape design concept can offer as a guideline to landscape architects and municipal administration to conserve the integrity and the authenticity of the traditional Malay garden design and the strength of these characters will extensively use in developing the concept of landscape design in Malaysia due to the increasing awareness of design and the quality of life.

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* Corresponding author. Tel.: +6-019-732-5753; fax: +6-05-458-2615.
E-mail address: ismailhafiz86@yahoo.com

1. Introduction

The development of landscape design concept in Malaysia is becoming popular and significant due to the increasing awareness of design, the environment and the quality of life. The traditional Malay landscape design concept is a concept for the landscape design that deals with the characteristics of a traditional private garden of the Malay villages along Peninsular Malaysia. This paper discusses about the study of the features of traditional Malay landscape design as the main elements for the development of the Malay garden concept and more importantly to the impact and the response of the global communities regarding traditional Malay landscape garden design. The research also highlights the dependability of the traditional Malay landscape design in generating a sustainable environment and resolve the issues related to the quality of life throughout the decades. Therefore, to support a sustainable landscape design, researchers have focused on the characteristic of the traditional Malay landscape elements including their identity which rarely known by Malaysian especially Malays that have been used either in the gardens in the past, especially the palace garden, the home of the traditional Malays villages and the vicinity at that time.

2. Literature review

Traditional Malay landscape design, which has evolved in harmony with the natural environment and the rhythms of daily life far removed from industrialized society, is currently inspiring an awakening of interest throughout the world. Landscape architecture scenarios in Malaysia were presently more passionate to the contemporary design or mean of modern culture. According to Noor Hanita et al. (2012), the vernacular architecture has resulted from the merging of both social culture and climate of a place that evolved and developed due to the needs of the society. Referring to Bambang et al. (2012), space in a public territory is for all inhabitants, and no one can declare his territory. It is the legal responsibility of the landscape architect, including municipal council to take action that is responsible to the public while fulfilling the requirements of clients when dealing with the design concept.

2.1. The concept of the Malay garden design

The Malay garden design concept is an initiative in establishing the identity of the Malay garden design and the reinstatement of this design concept exclusive to the Malays as the indigenous community of Malaysia. It is not only provides an opportunity to known better but more often for raising and maintain its uniqueness.

The Malay garden design is planned circumspectly through harmonious interactions between man, nature and culture, which translated into the home design and the surroundings (Anisa Ani, 2012). According to Abdul Rahman Al-Ahmadi (2003), Malays is known for their philosophy of manufacturing or construction of something as a symbol of symbolism, means that either implicitly or explicitly based on the relationship with God, their environment as well as the human being. The strength of the Malay garden design is plants (soft landscape) and landscape furniture (hard landscape) as well as their composition and the interaction between internal and external spaces. It is unique because it clearly symbolizes the culture of the Malays in the past and shows the Malays has a substantial knowledge in term of plant functions in the garden or their environment.

2.2. Traditional Malay landscape design

The main compositions of the traditional Malay landscape design consist of the design concept and their two main components that are soft landscape elements and hard landscape elements.

Traditional Malay house compound separated into three main areas that are front compound, side compound, and rear compound. The placements of landscape furniture as well as plant species are dependent on its role on a different compound. Frequently, traditional Malay people develop their garden to meet the synchronization with the environment that is the concept, activities, and function. According to Nur Huzeima Hussain (2010), hard landscape element categories as the artificial components. It is the design of an extra element that complements the design of a garden. Referring to the Ismail Said (2002), the overall design of the traditional Malays garden and its features are

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