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| Nurdeena Anuar nurdeenaanuar@gmail.com | Masters candidate | Department of South East Asian Studies | Between Preservation and Touristic Development of the Tangible Cultural Heritage of Malaysia: A Case Study of the Lembah Bujang Archaeological Area |

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| <p>Noorfathehah Abdullah Sani & Yahaya Ahmad yahaya@um.edu.my</p> | <p>PhD Candidate & Professor, Dean, Faculty of Built Environment</p> | <p>Centre for Fundamental & Liberal Education, University Malaysia Terengganu (UMT) & Faculty of Built Environment, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia</p> | <p>Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Case of Living Human Treasures in Malaysia</p> |
| <p>Dr Ong Siew Kian & Assoc Prof Dr. Hanafi Husin siewkian@um.edu.my hanafih@um.edu.my</p> | <p>Senior Lecturer & Associate Professor, Dean, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences</p> | <p>Department of Chinese Studies & Department of South East Asian Studies</p> | <p>From Ritual to Festival: The Evolution of the Hungry Ghost Festival as Heritage Practice amongst Malaysian Chinese</p> |

ABSTRACTS AND BIOGRAPHICAL STATEMENTS

1. Jarum Halus (2008) and Shakespeare as Malaysian Heritage

Kok Su Mei
 Department of English
smkok@um.edu.my

Icon of British culture, Shakespeare is seldom regarded as a Malaysian heritage; at best, the Bard is seen as a scion of colonisation, the fetters of which need to be fully cast off. But Shakespeare first arrived on our shores in the form of the popular bangsawan theatre, performances of which eventually included clown characters which mimicked and mocked the white man and his ways. In other words, Shakespeare was indigenized in a popular form to challenge the ideals of colonial powers. This paper considers Jarum Halus (2008) as continuing this heritage of indigenizing Shakespeare. The movie is an adaptation of Othello, Shakespeare's tale of a Moor, or a dark-skinned Muslim, who converts to Christianity but cannot find his place among Venice's Caucasian Christians. Directed by Malaysian Mark Tan and set in twenty-first century Kuala Lumpur, Jarum Halus has as its protagonist a Malaysian-Chinese who converts to Islam and struggles to find acceptance amid a community of urbane Malays. Consequently, Jarum Halus queries what it means to be Malay and analyses attitudes to racial identity in modern Malaysia. Although 'Malay' is popularly thought of as a racial category, the emphasis on religion, language, and culture in the Malaysian Constitution's definition of 'Malay' highlights that it is in fact a cultural marker. Furthermore, scholars have shown that the idea of a Malay race owes much of its existence to the categories used by British administrators in their efforts to govern multi-ethnic Malaya (Reid 2001; Shamsul 2001). Jarum Halus pits one Malaysian heritage against another -

indigenized Shakespeare against inherited ideas of race - to provide a fascinating example of how past practices can be recast and repudiated in contemporary Malaysia.

Biographical Statement

Kok Su Mei is a Senior Lecturer in the Department of English, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, Universiti Malaya. She specializes in Renaissance drama and is interested in the ways local contexts shape the production and reception of plays. Her research looks at how Renaissance culture affected the works of Shakespeare and his contemporaries, as well as at recent adaptations of Shakespeare in Malaysia.

2. A History and Heritage of Western-style Theatres and Concert Halls in Maritime Asia

Dr Akiko Sugiyama
Department of History
a_sugiyama@um.edu.my

This paper examines aspects of the history and heritage of Western-style theatres and concert halls in maritime Asia from the late eighteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries. In particular, the paper focuses on ports and cities along the sea lane between the Indian Ocean and the South China Sea that encompasses much of maritime South and Southeast Asia, as well as southwestern East Asia. Examples include but are not limited to Bombay (Mumbai), Goa, Calcutta (Kolkata), Penang, Singapore, Batavia (Jakarta), Manila, Hong Kong, and Macau. They were also commercial and administrative centers of the Portuguese, Dutch, Spanish and British empires during the period under discussion. A series of transitions and transformations in the course of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries paved the way for the construction of Western-style theatres and concert halls in maritime Asia: a gradual shift in the pattern of cultural consumption from private (domestic) to public; commercialization of performing arts; global transmission of Western opera and music; the advent of steamship travel and a greater circulation of performing artists; the expansion of European and Eurasian communities; and innovations in local theatres. By the 1860s Bombay, Calcutta, Batavia and Macau were already home to music and theatre venues outside private residences, and by the last decades of the nineteenth century such venues were springing up across maritime Asia. While some of these theatres and concert halls have been restored and are in use today (e.g. Singapore, Penang, Macau), others were lost in the course of postcolonial urban planning (e.g. Jakarta, Hong Kong). Building on the aforementioned historical sketches, the paper explores selected issues on postcolonial preservation by examining the cases of the Victoria Theatre and Concert Hall in Singapore (completed by 1862) and the Town Hall in Penang (completed in the 1880s).

Biographical Statement

Akiko Sugiyama is Senior Lecturer in Department of History at the University of Malaya. She previously taught world history, Southeast Asian history, historical theory and practice, women's and gender history at the University of Macau and Missouri State University. She completed her PhD in History with specialization in Southeast Asia at the University of Hawaii at Manoa. She is currently completing projects on history of gender roles and family-state ideologies in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, and cultural production and consumption in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century maritime Asia. Her recent publications include studies of historical etymology of keluarga and maritime transport and travelling performing artists in nineteenth-century Batavia and Macau.

3. The Lost Chapter of Hindu-Buddha in the Malaysian National Historical Narrative

Sivachandralingam Sundara Raja

siva@um.edu.my

Shivalinggam Raymond

shiv_ray11@yahoo.com

This paper explores a recent controversy pertaining to a pre-Islamic chapter in the history of Malaysia, one that is despite of its far-reaching implications has been largely relegated to secondary importance in the historical narrative of the country. This is about the period of the presence of the Hindu-Buddha tradition in the Malay Archipelago from the first millennium CE until prior to the coming of Islam in the second millennium CE. In retrospect, when the term 'Hindu-Buddha' was formulated by Dutch historians to describe the period of civilization before the widespread adoption of Islam in Indonesia it was in time extended to include the whole of Southeast Asia including the Malay peninsula. Although the process admittedly did not take root sweepingly in all Southeast Asian elements, the evidence is striking enough to point out that it had undergone a continuous development. There are sculptures and temple complexes across Southeast Asia to attest to the persistent nature of the cult as well as its high-ranking social and political position among the pre-Islamic elites of Southeast Asia. As far as the Malay Peninsula is concerned, tangible evidence of the Hindu-Buddhist period can be found in the temple complexes of the Bujang Valley and around Merbok. Such realities had been acknowledged in the national historical narrative in the 1960s up until the 1990s. The present tendency to downplay the era especially in government-controlled heritage domains is a rather recent phenomenon, the cause of which has been found to revolve around the nature of political control over heritage domains such as museums, archives, memorials, archeological sites and national history textbooks. In that regard, this paper aims to trace the exact origin of this sidelining and evaluate the extent to which instances of Hindu-Buddhist heritage in government/public domains have been subjected to the politics surrounding the context of heritage in the country.

Biographical Statement

Dr. Sivachandralingam Sundara Raja is Associate Professor of Malaysian Economic History at the Department of History, University of Malaya. Shivalinggam Raymond is a Masters Research candidate at the Department of History, University of Malaya.

4. "The Unmovable Self-situated in the Quicksand of Memory:" Negotiating Nostalgia, Heritage and the Environment in the Poetry and Memoirs of Shirley Geok-lin Lim

Dr Agnes S. K. Yeow

Department of English

agnesyw@um.edu.my

In this paper, I show how, in her poetry and memoirs, Shirley Geok-lin Lim grapples with the myth and politics of nostalgia and, by extension, the myth and politics of heritage. Lim recognizes that her status as an Asian-American female of Malaysian Straits Chinese descent poses a challenge when it comes to representing her past (especially Malaccan *peranakan*) experiences in a way which is not complicit in the heritage industry. Her work reveals an ambivalent attitude toward nostalgia ranging from disdain and suspicion to acceptance and accommodation; nevertheless, the personal and cultural memories on which nostalgia is predicated are portrayed as an unassailable aspect of her identity which remains

buried in her present-day, American persona. Notably, in the autobiographical poems and memoirs, memory events and processes as well as the emotions that are associated with them are anchored in sensory perceptions of space and time. Lim's work highlights environmental memory that evokes a vivid sense of the past regardless of one's location in the world and independent of the staged, inert trappings of heritage, namely the places, artifacts and cultural practices which are relentlessly marketed as 'timeless,' fossilised objects of nostalgic consumption. Lim's treatment of environmental memories (encoded in dynamic material places/landscapes/the biosphere/bodies and the crisis that plagues them) as having the capacity to "trigger strong visceral sensation of identity" can be read within the framework of material ecocriticism and feminism where lived, material agents and their trans-corporeal interactions with the physical environment are foregrounded. In focusing on how memories flow across rather than congeal around bodies, objects and phenomena, Lim offers an alternative concept of heritage while implicitly questioning the kind of nostalgia that constricts rather than expands the self.

Biographical Statement

Agnes S. K. Yeow teaches at the English Department, Faculty of Arts and Social Sciences, University of Malaya. Her research interests are in fiction, literary nonfiction and ecocritical theory and practice.

5. From Ritual to Festival: The Evolution of the Hungry Ghost Festival as Heritage Practice amongst Malaysian Chinese

Ong Siew Kian

Department of Chinese Studies

(siewkian@um.edu.my)

&

Hanafi Hussin

Department of Southeast Asian Studies

(hanafih@um.edu.my)

Balancing both the spiritual world and the physical world is a common norm that translates into practices amongst the traditional believers of a religion. Some Malaysian Chinese practise a feeding ritual to the wandering spirits, traditionally called as Zhongyuan Jie, Gui Jie or Yulan Festival, one which originates from the Chinese culture of venerating one's ancestors. It is one of the important rituals held to stabilize and harmonize the relationship between human beings in the physical world and the spirits in the spiritual world. It is a simple ritual to pacify the spirits believed to be wandering around during the seventh month of the lunar calendar, which is also known as the month of ghosts. Through time, when this ritual became less important in China, yet the Malaysian Chinese kept performing this practice to look after the wandering spirits and to care for the destitute and less fortunate soul, and this ritual came to be known as the Hungry Ghost festival. The ritual has now become a unique local festival which not only involves the Chinese spirits but also the other spirits and deities of the land. It could be said that the feeding ritual has been transformed from being associated with the gaze of an ancestor's spirit gaze to one involving multiple spirits gaze. The Hungry Ghost festival in Malaysia is more akin to a festive celebration, a gathering of spirits, and deities and human beings, and it is more like a carnival today. The ritual now has become an important heritage practice among the Malaysian Chinese community and performing the ceremony enlarges its gaze to even those outside the community the human beings. Using a qualitative approach, this paper discusses the transformation of the Hungry Ghost festival as a traditional heritage practice to a form of living heritage amongst the

Malaysian Chinese. Since the purpose of this ceremony has turned into being a festival that is both sacred and profane, this paper will explore the perception of young Malaysian Chinese and non-Chinese Malaysians on whether the Hungry Ghost Festival can be treated as a sacred ritual or as a shared living heritage.

Biographical Statement

6. Finding Cik Siti Wan Kembang in Serambi Mekah: Heritage, Politics and Gender in Kelantan, Malaysia.

Rusaslina Idrus
Gender Studies Programme
rusaslina@um.edu.my

Kelantan is often referred to as the “the state of Cik Siti Wan Kembang” (negeri Cik Siti Wan Kembang). In the legend of Kelantan there is not one but two warrior queens by the name of Cik Siti Wan Kembang that played important roles in the state’s history. The first Cik Siti Wan Kembang (I), also known as Arduja Wijayamala Singa, was a fierce and skilled warrior who led battles and ruled Kelantan in the 14th Century. The second Cik Siti Wan Kembang (II) who reined in the 17th century was known for her diplomacy skills and for making Kelantan a prosperous trade centre. Both were known for their intelligence, skills, and leadership in ruling the kingdom of Kelantan. In this paper, I explore these extraordinary female role models within the context of contemporary Kelantan. The state of Kelantan is governed by a conservative Islamist party that imposes strict gender controls such as gender segregation in public spaces and dress codes. In Malaysia, the question whether a woman can be leader of a state remains a highly contentious one with conservatives (not only in Kelantan) strongly objecting to the idea. Kelantanese women, however, have a reputation to be strong independent women who excel in the business field. Kelantanese women who excel are said to embody the spirit of Cik Siti Wan Kembang. In this paper, using an anthropological lens, I examine the relevance of these extraordinary heritage figures, whose life histories defy conservative gender norms and roles in society, and their changing meaning within the Kelantanese society over time.

Biographical Statement

7. Safeguarding Intangible Cultural Heritage: The Case of Living Human Treasures in Malaysia

Noorfatkehah Abdullah Sani¹
Centre for Fundamental & Liberal Education, University Malaysia Terengganu (UMT)
&
Yahaya Ahmad
Faculty of Built Environment, University of Malaya
yahaya@um.edu.my

Over the last few decades, the concept of Cultural Heritage has included Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH), mainly due to UNESCO's initiatives. ICH is in danger of disappearance or degradation due to globalization, immigration and urbanization. The people or community play a central role in safeguarding ICH. Moreover, to be kept alive, intangible cultural heritage must be relevant to its community, continuously recreated, and transmitted from one generation to another. The viability of intangible heritage practices relies on the ongoing transmission of the special knowledge and skills of the knowledge holders or the practitioners to be disseminated to the youth. This paper aims to explore to what extent the efforts, issues and challenges play a significant role in safeguarding ICH in Malaysia

by using the Living Human Treasure Program (LHTP) as a case study. The program is meant to conserve the traditional skills and knowledge of Intangible Cultural Heritage owned or practised by such living persons for many years. This paper also examines the perspectives of those recognized as Living Human Treasure (LHT) and their authority on the implementation of the LHTP in Malaysia. An in-depth semi-structured interview with the heritage officers and recognized living persons is applied in order to reveal their views of the implementation and enforcement of LHTP. The findings indicate that although the efforts of the LHTP do provide proper protection to these living persons, there is room for a more comprehensive implementation of this program. This is essential to ensure the living persons or cultural practitioners remain protected as heritage and tourism products that will indirectly generate income for the country.

Biographical Statement

8. Is there a Place for Everyday Heritage Practices in the Museum?

Genevieve Gamache
Visual Art Department
Cultural Centre,
University of Malaya
genevieve@um.edu.my

Recent discourses on Heritage explore the concept of heritage, not as a fixed and essentialising identifier from distant past, but as a continuous process needing to be practiced and valued in our daily lives. Museums on the other hand, often exist outside of our daily lives, fixing knowledge and preserving the past as pristinely as possible. Artefacts in museums are no longer alive through human practices, but preserved, dislocated from contemporary communities. Should we, then, conceive of heritage at the museum only as the 'old fashion' or 'traditional' understanding of the term? Or is there, while questioning heritage, also a need to question museum practices and community engagements with their collections and exhibits? Many in museum studies are currently exploring alternative and changes to this traditional institution so that communities are not only seen as visitors, but also as contributors and participants. The history of imperial appropriation, the creation of a very problematic gaze at the exhibit level, as well as the physical infrastructure of these institutions of knowledge do not make the task an easy one. This becomes even more problematic when heritage is taken into account, as museums' contemporary existences and missions are often based on the preservation of heritage. This paper explores the ways different types of museums can go beyond their institutional walls to reach the communities and engage in practices rather than simply create display, such as community based museum collection, digital experiences and emphasizing practice over display.

Biographical Statement

Dr. Geneviève Gamache received her Bachelor and Master degrees from McGill University, where she studied in the Department of Art History and Communication Studies. She then completed a PhD at the University of Victoria, Canada, with a specialty in Visual Art, where she explored issues of Localism, Nationalism and Globalisation in an Asian context. She then taught in different universities in North America and South Asia. Her current research centres on issues of traditions, or rather the transformation of traditions at the interstice of local and global powers.

9. Between Preservation and Touristic Development of the Tangible Cultural Heritage of Malaysia: A Case Study of the Lembah Bujang Archaeological Area

Nurdeena Anuar
Department of South East Asian Studies
nurdeenaanuar@gmail.com

Tangible cultural heritage such as areas of archaeological interest are often seen as a hindrance to modern development in developing countries. This attitude often leads to the destruction of heritage sites which are important to the nation's identity and history. Some heritage sites in Malaysia face destruction, especially those which are not properly preserved or have not been developed into tourist destinations. This paper explores the Lembah Bujang archaeological area in the Kuala Muda district, in terms of the preservation of the area as tangible cultural heritage, as well as efforts to commercialise the site. Nation states should be able to cater for both modern development and heritage preservation. This can be done by identifying the stakeholders involved in the development process, to obtain information on their expectations, as well as their interest in and demands of the heritage sites. The data from the research shows that stakeholders can collaborate to construct a holistic development plan, especially by implementing and improving the heritage and development policies developed by the Local Authorities. Findings show that the relationship between various stakeholders can be improved through networking, which can be done by organising community-based events. These events can further improve heritage awareness among residents at all levels. At the same time, this research shows that stakeholders have shown interest in commodifying the archaeological area by developing it as a site for heritage tourism, better known as archaeotourism. Archaeotourism promotes sustainable tourism practices that emphasise heritage preservation and conservation, while working together with the local community to develop their socioeconomic status. Such an approach can ensure a commodification process that is not detrimental to heritage sites since this heritage is valuable and irreplaceable. Upgrading the sites can generate economic gain for the country, while proper site development can disseminate knowledge and educate visitors. Therefore, developing the site for both purposes works in tandem. There are various challenges faced by the stakeholders such as site management, limited funding and others, but they continue with their efforts because of the relationships that have been fostered between the private and public sectors. Undoubtedly, the Lembah Bujang archaeological area has the potential to be an established heritage tourism site and the district can achieve sustainable development, but this can only occur when all the stakeholders work together to pursue needed modern development while at the same time preserving a priceless heritage site.

Biographical Statement

Nurdeena received her Bachelor of Arts in International Studies (Majoring in History) from Deakin University, Australia. Her passion is in the arts and culture field as well as youth volunteerism. She did her internship at the Ancient Rome Exhibition in Melbourne and also at the ASEAN University Network in Bangkok during her undergraduate studies. This was followed by a fellowship with the Ministry of Tourism and Culture under the Perdana Fellowship programme organised by the Ministry of Youth and Sports Malaysia in 2015.