TOURISM MOBILITY
THE VISUAL JOURNEY TO MALAYSIAN
UNESCO WORLD HERITAGE SITES

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Preface

The research project entitled “Tourism Mobility: The Visual Journey to Malaysian UNESCO World Heritage Sites” aims to evaluate reliability of signages of selected Malaysian UNESCO World Heritage Sites. In the process of fulfilling the research objectives, a collection of images showcasing the beauty and diversity of the sites is produced. It is also the aim of this research to analyze the signages at UNESCO sites and the outcomes are documented in the responses of the tourists visited the sites. Hence, the production of this book that signifies the reliability of tourism mobility through signages, is presented as a source of information for tourists, local or international in planning and organising their journey to Malaysian UNESCO World Heritage Sites. It is hoped that the outcome of this research not only be used in establishing the ‘UNESCO’ brand in Malaysia but also providing a guide to the travellers in their plan for a memorable journey.

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry has boost up the economic progress and gained widespread recognition (Mazumder, Ahmed & Al-Amin, 2009). The mobilities of people, objects, images and brands, data systems and satellites are considered “doing tourism”. In the contemporary tourism, rapid development of infrastructure, cultural production, and agricultural food importation have reshaped the urbanization patterns (Sheller & Urry, 2004).

People travel from one place to another for different purposes. In Malaysia, there are variety of cities, beaches, rainforests, villages and mountains sites to be visited. In addition, we should be proud that part of the cities and sites in Malaysia have been recognized and listed by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) as World Heritage site. One of the listed site, Georgetown, Penang was selected by Los Angeles Times as one of the “16 must-see destinations in 2016”. The UNESCO World Heritage Sites encourages protection and preservation of cultural and natural heritage of the places around the globe that contributes to humanity.

Malaysia is lucky to be one of the country that is embodied under the Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage:

(i) Cultural Sites:
- Archaeological Heritage of the Lenggong Valley (2012)
- Melaka City and George Town, Historic Cities of the Straits of Malacca (2008)

(ii) Natural Sites:
- Gunung Mulu National Park (2000)
- Kinabalu Park (2000)

This research employed qualitative methods of investigations through elicitation techniques such as visual method and onsite interviews. The outcome of this research is this coffee table book that document and showcase various selected heritage sites. One of the variables that are considered important in measuring the tourist mobility towards signages at UNESCO World Heritage sites’ is the identity of the place in urban spaces. According to Mac an Bhréithiúin (2012), Amsterdam's current street signage system emphasized on the Dutch typographic and graphic design which reflects the place identity branding of Amsterdam city. Thus, this research project is intended to evaluate the reliability of signages in terms of the visual graphics and the tourist experience through empirical investigations that relates with the identity/image of the place at the selected Malaysian World Heritage sites.
The World Heritage emblem represents the interdependence of the world's natural and cultural diversity. It is used to identify properties protected by the World Heritage Convention and inscribed on the official World Heritage List, and represents the universal values for which the Convention stands.

In a recent research on brand awareness by King & Halpenny (2014), the authors seek to bridge the gap between WH brand (World Heritage) image and the identity in World Heritage areas in Australia. The existence of the gap is due to lack of adequate uniformity of signage and the WH emblem communicated from one site to another. In addition, based on the 9th Malaysian Plan and the National Physical Plan agenda (2009), Malaysian towns are found to be lacking in character and identity due to the rapid growth of urban development.

In this research project, the selected Malaysian World Heritage Sites are:
(i) Melaka city, Melaka
(ii) George Town city, Penang
(iii) Kinabalu Park, Sabah
(iv) Gunung Mulu National Park, Sarawak

The researchers have conducted visual documentation of the sites based on the surroundings and visual representations that reflect the WHS brand. The emblem of WHS was designed by a Belgian artist, Michel Olyff and was adopted as the official emblem of the World Heritage Convention in 1978.

References

Source: https://whc.unesco.org/en/emblem/#operationalguidelines
RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

This research project looks into specific research OBJECTIVES that were used to develop the research process.

1. To investigate the reliability of current signages to tourists’ directional mobility

2. To analyse the relevant signages or visual information that are available at the UNESCO sites using visual method and on-site interviews

3. To suggest the visual graphics of signages that direct the tourists in UNESCO sites to local authorities or UNESCO in order to enhance the properties of UNESCO sites
In the streetscape framework, community engagement is an important aspect especially in designing communication device such as the signages. This is because signages need feedback from the targeted users such as travelers, pedestrians and road users. Thus, the feedbacks and site documentation are the vital aspects that need to be considered when planning an efficient city development. This streetscape framework is adapted from Melbourne Streetscape Framework which was used by the city council of Melbourne city’s vision of ‘City for People’. In our research, the streetscape framework adapted is used in the Research Stage and the elements for future planning will be used as a guideline for future research with the relevant State/Federal Agencies.

The finding of this research in the form of this visual documentation is intended to be used by; tourists as a reference to plan their journey; UNESCO World Heritage Centres for developing an efficient city development plan and establishing the ‘UNESCO’ brand, and lastly by researchers for future research in the similar topic.

This research that adopts the approach of exploratory method looks into the tourists/travellers expectations and experiences towards signages at the UNESCO World Heritage sites based on the Tourist Expectation model. The model is used as a guide in conducting the empirical investigations. Through this model, the research takes into account the relevant variables from each segment of visual attributes from signages that will be investigated.
Based on the findings of the interviews, several characteristics of tourist behaviour were identified and listed below. In the interviews, apart from describing their experiences when visiting Malaysian WHS, they were also expressing their interpretation of WHS from their previous experiences. The adapted model highlighted tourist behaviour when visiting the UNESCO sites.

**CHARACTERISTICS OF TOURIST BEHAVIOR**

![Characteristics of Tourist Behaviour based on Model of Tourist Expectation](image)

References:
Melaka and George Town, historic cities of the Straits of Malacca have developed over 500 years of trading and cultural exchanges between East and West in the Straits of Malacca. The influences of Asia and Europe have endowed the towns with a specific multicultural heritage that is both tangible and intangible.

(www.unesco.com)

“Visiting UNESCO gazetted places bring expectations as to get a UNESCO brand, the site must go through certain criteria and evaluation. However, I did not pay much attention on the signs or symbols other than the signages of building, remnant, or sites that I am visiting. I have not noticed any sign UNESCO on those places I have visited. Yes, it is necessary to label those gazetted sites with UNESCO sign or logo so we as the public wouldaware and appreciate more those places.”

(Anonymous, Sarawak, 2017)
The sites for data collection were selected according to the frequencies of visitors at the locations in Melaka City and George Town, Penang. There are two main zones which were outlined by UNESCO as to maintain the sustainable use of resource through collaborative management. The zones are divided into Core and Buffer zones (UNESCO, 2017):

i. **Core area(s)**: securely protected sites for conserving biological diversity, monitoring minimally disturbed ecosystems, and undertaking non-destructive research and other low-impact uses [such as education].

ii. **Buffer zone(s)**: which usually surrounds or adjoins the core areas, and is used for cooperative activities compatible with sound ecological practices, including environmental education, recreation, ecotourism, and applied and basic research.

In the case of the WHS in Kinabalu Park and Gunung Mulu National Park, the locations for data collection are focused on the places that are easily accessible due to the restrictions of the parks. In the next chapter, the visual data presented are based on the locations of the World Heritage Sites selected for this study.
MELAKA CITY

Melaka city signifies the history of 15th to 16th Century of Malay Sultanate, Portuguese and Dutch periods. Melaka was inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage site as it endows multicultural heritage buildings. During the journey of documenting the visual representations of signages around the Melaka city, there are several key findings that can be outlined:
1. The colours and typefaces used for signages are inconsistent.  
2. The WH emblem is placed at the bottom of signages which minimizes the legibility and readability of the UNESCO World Heritage Site symbol.  
3. The Red Square is a significant zone that represents the UNESCO World Heritage site as it has been the centre of tourist attractions.
UNESCO directional street signages for pedestrians.
Walking from here

Places of interest are listed in the table & shown on the maps above, within the walking distance radius as indicated.

Legend

- Parks
- Museum
- Food Court
- Post Office
- Cafeteria
- Swimming Pool
- Park
- Hospital
- Hotel
- ATM Machine
- Money Changer
- Information Counter
- Observation Deck
- Car Park
- Retail
- Church
- Mosque
- Temple
- Ticket Counter

Places of interest & legends for informational signage
Historical information around A Famosa area

Melaka Fortress map near A Famosa

The Porta de Santiago (Remains of A Famosa Fortress)

Historical information around A Famosa area
Welcoming entrance of Melaka UNESCO World Heritage Site near Jalan Laksamana
The entrance of Jonker Walk World Heritage Park.

Illustrative map of Melaka Heritage City UNESCO.

The illustration and font style used in this map is different from other signages found in Melaka city.
Information signage near Kampung Kling Mosque

The streetview of Jonker Walk entrance

The streetview of Jonker Street Night Market main entrance

The streetview of Jonker Street Night Market main entrance

The streetview of Jonker Street Night Market main entrance
Kampung Kling Mosque, situated at Jalan Tukang Emas (Goldsmith Street)
A Chinese residence within the UNESCO WHS in Melaka city (with an emblem of UNESCO WH on the residence signboard)

Melaka City Council Notice

Jalan Di Sepanjang Jonker Walk Akan Ditutup Rada Setiap Jumaat, Sabtu Dan Ahad Dari Masa Pukul 6.00 Petang Hingga 12.00 Malam.

Jonker Walk Will Be Closed On Every Friday, Saturday And Sunday From 6:00 P.M. To 12:00 A.M.


No Vehicles Shall Be Permitted To Enter And Park in Jonker Walk. Violators Will Be Fined.

Informational signage near Kampung Kling Mosque (a different street view)
Directional signage near Jalan Hang Kasturi

Heritage Enclave signage to guide visitors
Ruins of St. Paul's Church originally built in 1521 with tombs stones & a statue of St. Francis Xavier.
Exit route from St. Paul's Church to other museums
Exit from St. Paul's Church to Jalan Kota