ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ELEMENTS IN THE HOTEL AND RESORT: COMPARISON BETWEEN CAMBODIA, LAO PDR, VIETNAM AND MALAYSIA (CLVM)

Assoc. Prof. Ar. Dr. Mariam Jamaludin
Department of Architecture
Universiti Teknologi MARA (Malaysia)
mar.ja@btinternet.com

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Mohd Sabrizaa Abdul Rashid
Head
Centre for Knowledge & Understanding of Tropical Architecture & Interior (KUTAI)
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Perak
mohds637@perak.uitm.edu.my

PhD. Siti Rohamini Yusoff
Department of Interior Architecture
Universiti Teknologi MARA (Malaysia)
minnyusoff@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Architectural Heritage elements have been used as part of design and decoration to a hotel and resort. These elements have been used as part and parcel of the hotel image not just as decoration but also from certain functions and also an integral part of the building structure. This paper looks in general at the three areas where heritage and cultural elements are used in domestic houses, hotel and resort especially on, spatial, decorative element, materials and method of construction used. Research method employed base on initial comparison from field survey, photograph observation and document on the Cambodia, Lao PDR, Vietnam, Malaysia that reflect the Malays architecture. A few types of hotels are chosen to represent the area under study, including the luxury hotels and the medium priced hotel. From initial observation the architectural heritage elements used in the hotel and resort have similarity between the construction, decorative element and material from Cambodia, Laos, Vietnam and Malaysia (CLVM) that reflects the Malays in Southeast Asia.

Keywords: Heritage elements, hotel, resort, Malay
INTRODUCTION

According to the old text between the Cambodia, Lao, Vietnam and Malaysia (CLVM), there is trade and inter-government relationships between these countries and also some similarities in terms of architecture and culture Mohamad Zain (1992).

According to Paul M Munoz (2006), stone tools found in the Malay Archipelago and from central of South East Asia show that these countries shared a common custom. Some of the Malay words have its origin from the hill of Cambodia and along the Mekong River.

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE AND SIMILARITY

Cambodia, Lao, Vietnam and Malaysia (CLVM), are geographically situated in South East Asia. Most of the vernacular architectural are made of timber, and unlikely to last above two hundred year. The architectural heritage is a unique and exceptional resource. Structures and places that have acquired character and special interest over time and have cultural significance in a changing world. All of their parts have been tested by our climate, and those that have survived the process of decay, and the interventions of their users, have acquired economic, environmental and aesthetic value.

According to Sue Millar (1999), heritage is known as a dynamic concept, it is a springboard for future action as catalyst for nostalgia. Continuities can be maintained only through discovery and rediscovery, invention and reinvention, positioning and repositioning. Ana Pareira Roders (2004) noted that built heritage represent past traditions of architectural design, craftsmanship and ways of living and building, and someway can contribute for the development of future incoming generations, even if not it is totality, as an existing resource of structures, element and materials.

The similarity between those architectural heritage, as well as domestic architecture being studied by the Norwegian explorer, Carl Bock (as cited in Waterson, 1997) while he went to a Lao village called Chow Huang describe the type of Lao architecture and domestic arrangement. The house of prince and peasant are the same in general plan and mode of construction, but the size and quality of material and workmanship were different with a few bits of extra carving on the gables and better house sometimes using roof ‘tiles’ made of teak. They were normally built only one story high and always built on post, with five to eight feet height above the ground. Under the floor the elephant howdahs or oxen-packsaddles are piled, while the fowls and duck assemble here even cattle are very commonly sheltered for the night. The house also has a platform or balcony, the flooring commonly made from split of bamboo and teak for a wealthier people. At the ends of balcony covered with the thatch roof, stand several large unglazed water jars and a spoon, made of the half of a cocoanut shell with wooden handle, used for any person entering the house ladles out some water from the jar, and pour it in his feet to cleanse them. The platform used by Prince and Princess to have a bath, because it took a few minute walk to the river. Sometimes the lady would finish up by having a huge silver basin mixture of tamarind water and lime juices to wash hair.
The entrance of platform is generally ornamented by pots of orchids or other flowering plants. The floor of the house is raised about a foot above this platform. They also have a room with covered roof on each side, one is for slave/servant and the other is for family member. Each of these dwelling is divided by wall planks or plaited bamboo (interlaced) and surrounded by a garden, grown in natural setting, cocoa palms, betel nut-palms capsicum and some vegetables. The compound enclosed with a tall bamboo fence with spike on top, the entrance of this compound is guarded by a sliding door, made of teak, fitted at the bottom with a wheel which enables it to be easily open and closed. Bock (as cited in Waterson 1997)

The description by Bock (as cited in Waterson, 1997) shows the similarity with Traditional Malay house especially at Kelantan and Terengganu. As noted in R. N Hilton (1956) that the house fulfills the admirably the following requirements: 1) the protection against climate heat and tropical rain, 2) to be built of readily available materials and therefore cheap (at that time), 3) adapted to the social customs of hospitality yet with seclusion of the woman, 4) protection against animals and floods, 5) attractive appearance 6) clean, 7) well ventilated, 8) can be enlarge readily, 9) removable place to place, 10) utilisable space kolong underneath.
Figure 3a: Open balcony and panel wall shows at location house in Vietnam.
Source: Luca Invernizzi Tettoni, 2008

Figure 3b: Stilt house shows the full height window and thatch roof, house of Muong ethnic minorities in Vietnam.
Source: Luca Invernizzi Tettoni, 2008

Figure 4a: Kelantan house full’s of domestic animal around 1920-50s.
Source: http://towardsmardhatillah.wordpress

Figure 4b: Kelantan wealthier house using wall panel called janda berhias
Source: Author 2010

Figure 5: A few type of traditional Malay house in Terengganu built on stilt and have an open and covered balcony/platform beside the decorative elements on the roof, wall and opening.
Source: Author, 2010
Many historians argue that the modern concept of travel and tourism originated with medieval Christian pilgrimages to Rome and Holy land. However, Hinduism and Buddhism are the forerunners to modern mass tourism (Timothy J. Dallen, 2009). Hinduism, commonly referred to as the world’s oldest religion, may have originated as long ago as 4000 years B.C, although claims range from 4000 to 1500 B.C, depending on how its origin is defined. What we do know is that already more than 2000 years ago, Hindu pilgrims were travelling through South East Asia to bathe in holy rivers and participate in sacred rituals associated with temples built to worship diverse deity. Buddhist pilgrims were said to have traveled in great numbers more than 2000 years ago to be enlightened by visit to the locations in Nepal and India where Lord Buddha was born (between 600-400 BC) and received enlightenment, preached and died. Today these locations are connected via a pilgrimage circuit and still function as important destinations for pilgrims and cultural tourists.

According to him, following the death of Jesus Christ, Christian pilgrimage to Jerusalem, and later to Rome, was the basis of an important circulation between Europe and Roman land of today’s Middle East. Long distance travel waned with fall of the Eastern roman Byzantine Empire in the 13th Century but intra-regional travel flourished in the medieval period with the Grand Tour in southern Europe. Global explorations characterized the middle ages, resulting in the colonialisation of most of the world’s territory by European superpowers.

Towards the end of 17th century the industrial revolution took hold and inspired hotels and resorts development not only in the United States but also throughout Europe (Rutes, et.al., 2001). The Industrial Revolution of the early 19th Century and the subsequent invention and widespread adoption of steam trains and steam ships, automobiles and airplanes characterized the early modern era from 1820’s until the Second World War (WWII). The end of WWII unleashed the speediest phase of global and extra terrestrial exploration and travel of any period of time before in human history.

A Mediterranean-style Architecture for hotels, such as Flamingo, Pan Coast and Roney Plaza Hotels were developed in Miami Beach during the 20th century economic prosperity. Whilst the mixed used hotels were introduced in Statler Hotel in Boston, followed by Casino Hotel in Vegas in 1950s. Resorts were developed in the Caribbean whilst the concepts of vacation village were introduced by Club Med and the Hyatt Regency in New York catering for business travelers. Meanwhile the Holiday Inn comes with the larger rooms, the Hilton hotel introduce multi resort complexes at Cancun, Mexico and Maui, Hawaii.

This was followed by Boutique hotel flourishing, with developer rapidly converting and building new properties as well as new chains by the originators, over 250 luxury and upscale hotels announced for development worldwide, the ultra high-rise mixed use hotels on rise in Bangkok, Shanghai, Dubai etc. (Rutes, W. A. 2001, pp.7-11). The rapid growth of tourism in Asia in recent years has generated concern about the socio-culture, economic and environmental impact. Singh. S .P (2005) notes that ethnicity and culture tourism has play a major role in the imaging and recreation of nation cultures and ethnicity in many Asia Countries. There is a natural kinship between tourism and the nation-state in the sense that both have profound interest in presenting the place as differentiated and unique, with boundaries around both geographical and socio-cultural space to suite with architecture and heritage tourism especially in South East Asia.
RESORT DEVELOPMENT AT CAMBODIA, LAO, VIETNAM AND MALAYSIA (CLVM)

Resort in Cambodia, Lao, Vietnam and Malaysia (CLVM) style of architectural design language can generally be summarized into five categories which are:

i. Colonialism
ii. Modern/International
iii. Traditionalism/Vernacularism/Regionalism.
iv. Tropical Contemporary
v. Eclecticism

Colonialism
In Malaysia many colonial building resorts are still in demand as a tourist accommodation even though they may not be such a popular choice. Carcosa Seri Negara\(^1\) in Kuala Lumpur plays the role as the country’s VIP reception whilst the Ye Olde Smoke House in Cameron Highland, Pahang is regularly occupied throughout the year. British architects introduced the English architectural styles locally but with several modification to suit the local climates. Hence the use of timber louvers for wall openings, deep verandahs, overhangs and sunshades. Despite the many use of the above local architectural elements the chimney was still retained to represent the British vernacular architecture. Perhaps compared to Cambodia, Lao and Vietnam the colonial resort are originated from Europe style and perhaps from French, the resort building can be seen on The Raffles Hotel, Victoria Angkor resort, and Sokha Sihanouk Resort, The Apsara, Laos PDR. (http://www.tripadvisor.com, 2010)

Modern International
Initially most Modern International architectural styles hotels were located in urban areas to cater for the business communities. Curtain walling and high rise glass box were clearly intended to represent images of big cities such as the Golden Sand Beach Resort, Holiday Villa and Prince D’Angkor and etc.

Traditionalism/Vernacularism/Regionalism.
The vernacular/traditional and regional style took a certain extent from the integration of the cultural and tropical climate by introduce of tempayan (pots), carvings, textile, crafts as decorations representing particular ethnic (i.e Malay) features, by using a landscape elements such as water-, stream, timber bridge, exposed kerosene lamps, the roofs, the decorative elements and local material creates sense of place such as kampong or Malay and fishing village ambience all over as can be seen on La residence D’Angkor, Cambodia and Tg. Jara Resort, Terengganu, Malaysia.

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\(^1\) Carcosa Seri Negara was the seat of Frank Swettenham, the Resident General of the Federal Malay States. It was built in 1898, located at Bukit Carcosa in Kuala Lumpur; has been renovated and fully refurnished into a boutique hotel.
Tropical Contemporary

Typical characteristic of tropical climate include in Tropical Contemporary styles stated by Gianni Francione (as cited in Tettioni, 2009) was “an achieve true symbiosis between architecture and the natural environment” with the principles of sustainability and affords a communion with nature that was previously deemed undesirable using the sloping roof with an open space for living, incorporate the old and new material into a new building. Gillian Beal (2003) argues that used both indigenous cultural forms and cross-cultural influences in new and exciting ways, the resort can be seen on Evasion Hideaway, Vietnam, The Datai, Langkawi, Malaysia.

Eclectic

An Eclecticism styles as an assorted, diverse, free, and miscellaneous which is a made up of or a combining elements from a variety of sources. The mixed of architecture element can be found in CLVM.

ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE ELEMENTS OF (CLVM)

Roof

The roof form consists of a few decorative element to enhance the appearance of the resort. The element that can be seen was the roof finial Tunjuk langit, with pointed tip and scissor cross silang gunting. Sulo Bayong/Naga/Kala located at the end of the roof eaves, Dragon fin sisik naga locate along top roof ridge, Fascia board ande-ande/anda-/andam locate along the roof eaves and kepala Cicak.

![Figure 6a](http://www.tripadvisor.com)
Figure 6a: Luang Say Lodge, Lao PDR using the scissor cross a roof finial and gable End.
Source: [http://www.tripadvisor.com](http://www.tripadvisor.com)

![Figure 6b](http://www.sokhahotel.com)
Figure 6b: Sokha Hotel, Sihanouk Ville, and Cambodia using a pointed tip finial (Tunjuk Langit) and Sulo Bayong
Source: [http://www.sokhahotel.com](http://www.sokhahotel.com)

![Figure 6c](http://www.victoriachoudocresort.com)
Figure 6c: Victoria Chau Doc Resort, Mekong Delta, and Vietnam using a pointed tip roof finial(Tunjuk Langit)
Source: [http://www.victoriachoudocresort.com](http://www.victoriachoudocresort.com)

Resort was design to follow traditional roof form of the local architecture. These element is used on any type of resort to suite with local climate and architecture even on colonial style either or the international. In the case of Bon Ton Resort, Langkawi (Figure 7b), the approach of incorporating the traditional architecture is through sub-planting the old traditional houses into the new layout. The spaces are adapted to suit the hotel requirement e.g. the traditional houses are erected without the kitchen and one of the houses is recreated to suit a spa building. In Bon Ton Resort (Figure 7b) and use a thatch -roof to give the traditional look to the buildings.
Wall

The purpose as a protection from the climate and wild animal and its surrounding, also known as a physical boundaries its occupant for privacy. In this research there are element such as ventilation panel *kekisi angin* and corbel. There are a few type of wall arrangement construction, there are called *dinding bertindih kasih/sisik mengkuang*, *dinding janda berhias* and *dinding kelarai*, this type bertindih kasih of wall is stack on top of another(lapped) to allow the excellent weatherproofing, while the janda berhias wall are made of timber panels that are arranged vertically and horizontally in a criss-cross, separated by timber lining forming rectangular segment or panel, kelarai is made of weaved bamboos in various design in a fine interlacing process using a slice of bamboos. (Sabrizaa, 2008)

Door/Entrances

Door is design as part of the house as an entrance for the guest from internal and external world. Normally the traditional houses there a few decorative element placed on top of the door known as *kepala pintu, gerbang pintu, pintu gerbang, kepala pintu gerbang*. These element can be found on the CLVM resort in different type of design motive such as geometric form, carving and combination of both.

Window

The decorative windows of kampong houses frame the view to the scenery outside, be it the paddy field, forest, the beach and sea in CLVM. The ventilation panels on top of the windows are carved to depict the rising sun. This design is typically used in Bon Ton Resort, Langkawi and The Apsara, Cambodia. The railing *pagar musang* is also made of carved wood (Figure 8b).
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the observation we can conclude that the architectural heritage and traditional elements from some part of the resort design CLVM such as Luang Say Lodge, Lao PDR, La residence D’Angkor, Cambodia, Pilgrimage Village Hue Resort and spa, Vietnam and Bon Ton resort in Malaysia.

In Malaysian resort the decorated form is not “elaborate” because the coming of Islam and until recently this form of decoration has taken less than obvious shape, but the imaginary of shape such as figurative motif can be seen on floral and plant motives and full with embellishment. However in Cambodia, Lao PDR and Vietnam is using less decorative element and mixed of flora and fauna figurative on the Door Gate, end of roof eave as naga, kala, makara for aesthetic purposes and symbolism in South East Asia for example “naga”(serpent) can be found along the bank of Mekong river and believe that the serpent is a creator of nature and life that nourishes human being, beside assisted people in establishing the state cities, the citadel, and bestowing prosperity and richness. It’s very popular among the ethnicity communities in Thailand, Burma, Lao PDR, and Northwest Vietnam. Phan Anh Tu (2010) However Cambodia, Vietnam and Lao PDR resort most of it go for tropical climate in term of open and covered balcony/veranda, High ceiling, pitch roof with a thatch and construction material base on language and ethnicity character of the placed, for example the bamboo, timber, concrete and glass were incorporate with new and old material. Resort landscape base on local climate with cocoanuts palm, frangipani and etc.

Popular heritage elements such as stream, small bridge, water jar, pot, built on post resort using split bamboo, and thatch roof with mixed of ethnic characteristic was the image of South East Asia. The architectural heritage is used to suite with the local climate, architecture and ethnic based in each country of South East Asia.

The architectural elements are derived from the tropical climatic conditions as well as the customary habit of the occupants. These evolved through the centuries and evidence show that there are not many changes to the basic elements for examples, the use of wall panelling, ventilations, doors and windows in these countries. Some of the resort hotels derived their concept and used decorative elements that are derived from the traditional architecture. Thus the similarity could also be observed in these hotels although they located in different countries.

Further research is recommended to study the internal spaces that may give some indication of the sizes of spaces and the volumes of space in the traditional houses between CVLM, to see if there is any similarity or differences.

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