



***HERITAGE VALUE AND PLACE IDENTITY AMONG LOCAL  
COMMUNITY IN RELATION TO THE ROYAL MAUSOLEUM OF KOTA  
TINGGI, JOHOR, MALAYSIA***

**NUR SHAHIDA NASHA BINTI MOHD NASHIR**

**FH 2019 6**



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By

**NUR SHAHIDA NASHA BINTI MOHD NASHIR**

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia,  
in Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Master of Science**

**April 2018**

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment  
of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science

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**Chairman : Azlizam bin Aziz, PhD**  
**Faculty : Forestry**

The Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah is a small and mundane heritage landmark in Johor. However, it represents the history of Sultan Mahmud Shah II, which his decease remarked the end of the glorious dynasty of Melaka Sultanate in Johor heirs background. It is realized through the inheritance of history of the deceased Sultan Mahmud Shah, the Royal Mausoleum creates an identity among the local community towards the place. Place identity is significantly related to the sense of belongingness shaped from one's memory and perception towards heritage places or objects. The mausoleum has a unique value in term of historical context. However, lack of awareness on heritage building and less in the sense of attachment among the local community towards the Royal Mausoleums may eventually impact on sustainability of the heritage itself as it may not stand as a universal symbolic of pride for the local community and continuity of history may vanished by times. Thus, this research aimed to identify the identity and value of cultural heritage among community in relation to the existence of Royal Mausoleum at Kota Tinggi, Johor using an adopted model by Breakwell's Theory on Identity which emphasized on continuity, distinctiveness, and self-esteem. Questionnaire survey was conducted to 300 respondents in order to measure the dependency of the place and local identity of the community. The results showed that there was an emotion bonding and memory attachment to the Royal Mausoleum among the local community in the village. The Royal Mausoleum seems to bring back the nostalgia especially among the veteran group of local community. The results confirmed that the socio-demographic background such as education, occupation, and age group mostly influenced the significance of items for place identity, which were 'distinctiveness' and 'self-esteem'. This research contributed in identifying the place identity. Hence, it helped in strengthen the criteria of the Royal Mausoleum to be more presentable as tourist attraction.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia  
Sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

**NILAI WARISAN DAN IDENTITI TEMPAT DALAM KALANGAN  
PENDUDUK TEMPATAN BERHUBUNG MAKAM DIRAJA KOTA TINGGI,  
JOHOR, MALAYSIA**

Oleh

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Makam Diraja Sultan Mahmud Shah ialah sebuah tapak warisan yang kecil dan biasa terletak di Johor. Walaubagaimanapun, ia tersebut melambangkan tentang sejarah Sultan Mahmud Shah II dimana kemangkatan baginda menjadi sejarah kepada pengakhiran warisan kesultanan Melayu Melaka yang hebat dalam salahsilah kesultanan Johor. Melalui warisan sejarah kemangkatan Sultan Mahmud Shah, Makam Diraja sebenarnya melahirkan sesuatu 'identiti' dalam kalangan penduduk terhadap tempat tersebut. Identiti tempat berkait rapat dengan rasa berpunya yang terbentuk daripada memori and pendapat tentang tempat warisan atau objek. Makam tersebut mempunyai nilai yang unik dalam konteks sejarah. Walau bagaimanapun, kurangnya kesedaran tentang bangunan warisan dan kurang keterkaitan antara penduduk setempat terhadap makam diraja akhirnya boleh memberi kesan kepada kemapanan warisan itu sendiri kerana ia mungkin tidak berdiri sebagai simbol kebanggaan sejagat untuk masyarakat setempat serta kesinambungan sejarah mungkin hilang dari masa ke semasa. Oleh itu, objektif kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengenal pasti identiti tempat dan nilai warisan budaya dalam kalangan masyarakat berhubung dengan kewujudan Makam Diraja di Kota Tinggi, Johor dengan menggunakan model Theori Identiti Breakwell yang menekankan konsep kesinambungan, kelainan, dan harga diri. Borang kaji selidik yang diedarkan kepada 300 orang responden adalah untuk mengenalpasti hubungan antara tempat dan identiti masyarakat tempatan. Hasil kajian menunjukkan terdapat emosi dan daya ingatan masyarakat setempat terhadap Makam Diraja seperti mengembalikan nostalgia dan cerita-cerita lama terutama dalam kalangan kumpulan masyarakat veteran di kampung tersebut. Selain itu, hasil kajian juga membuktikan bahawa latar belakang sosio-demografi seperti pendidikan, pekerjaan, dan kumpulan umur kebanyakannya mempengaruhi kepentingan item untuk identiti tempat, iaitu item 'Berbeza' dan 'Harga Diri'. Kajian yang dilakukan dipercayai dapat menyumbang dalam mengenal pasti identiti tempat dan membantu menguatkan kriteria Makam

Diraja untuk menjadi lebih rasional untuk dijadikan sebagai tarikan pelancong pada masa akan datang.



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

First and foremost, praise is to Allah, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful; for giving me strength, blessed me with a healthy body and mind, the ability and opportunity to complete this research satisfactorily.

In my journey towards this degree, I was supervised by a great advisor; a supportive mentor; a patient yet firm friend, Dr. Mohd Hafizal bin Ismail. He has been there providing his heartfelt support, invaluable guidance, inspiration and suggestion in my quest for knowledge. Thank you for all the guidance, knowledge and experience I gained throughout this journey, it has been so meaningful to me. Without his able guidance, this thesis would not have possible and I shall be grateful for his assistance. Thank you so much!

I would also like to express my gratitude to the supervisory committee, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Azlizam Aziz and Assoc. Prof. Dr. Muhammad Shahrin Ab Karim for the encouragement and supportive comments on my work.

My gratitude also for my father, Mohd Nashir Karim who always proud of his daughter pursuing study, his motivational advices during the period of struggle makes me want to complete this research. Thank you, *ayah*. Also, to my beloved husband, Hilmi Z for stand up with me and encouraged me to follow my heart desire in completing my study to the highest achievement. You are the best!

Furthermore, I wish to express my gratitude and appreciation to my mother, Junaidah; brother, Nashtain; and sister, Shira for their unconditional support besides the jokes we had together to keep me sane during this research. Finally, thanks to all my friends, especially from the Faculty of Forestry who never let things dull and boring with new ideas and useful comments on my work. This research would not have been possible without their unwavering and unselfish love support given to me at all times.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

Cultural heritage is anything that being inherited from one generation to another and being contemporary practice to date. Cultural heritage from one's view does not stand by itself, either people want to imply it through object or movement; it is truly mnemonic process of the past. There are two types of heritage – namely tangible heritage (the appearance of physical structure, object, or monument that can be see and touch such as building, sculpture, and relics) and intangible heritage (the understanding of culture and tradition that cannot be touched but it can be listened, seen and understood such as ritual, music, dance, art, and folklore stories). In many ways, the word of cultural heritage has been widely used as a selling concept due to the psychology link to the memory and identity of the heritage (MacDowell, 2008).

Nowadays, these three types of heritage have been commoditized as touristic attractions and products. The emergence of heritage tourism had been initiated by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to conceptualize a cultural heritage into sustainable conservation and management. Firstly, monuments such as architectural work and monumental sculpture, secondly groups of buildings such as group of connected buildings; and finally sites such as the work of man or combined work of nature and man (Park, 2014).

Heritage tourism is the subset of tourism that specifically related to the tourism activity of both tangible and intangible heritages. Nowadays, the trend of heritage tourism activity has become popular around the globe. For example, in year 2016, five million people have been reported visiting the famous ancient Angkor Wat Temple in Cambodia (VOA News, 2016); and 1.38 million have been visiting Stonehenge, England (Statista, 2016). The report indicated that the increasing number of tourist visiting these heritage sites every year. This was to say that, the increasing demand of heritage tourism segment is a long term benefit from the greater effort of heritage protection and conservation.

In particular, cultural heritage in Malaysia is also a part of the global trend in heritage tourism destination due to its fruitful assets of cultural heritage. Malaysia has marked its unique cultural heritage on the world map after been recognized by international organization because of the outstanding value of cultural heritage (Malay Mail, 2013). The nomination as World Heritage Sites (WHS) by United Nations Education, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) for Melaka and Georgetown has proven the effort of conservation and protection the heritage assets have been paid off with this international recognition. Obviously this recognition has opened tourism opportunity to the place and to the nation as a whole.



Other than Melaka and Georgetown's cultural heritage, there are plenty more of cultural heritage in Malaysia. Visibly, this has been significantly contributed from other cultural heritage in Malaysia that inter-related to each other. Each states in Malaysia has its unique identity of cultural heritage, ranging from enormous heritage buildings, outstanding architectural design, old trade ports, archaeological sites, ethical socio-culture, traditional cuisine, religious rituals, music and dance, arts, and folklore, to name a few. This has turned Malaysia to become the honey pot among the locals and foreign visitors.

The most popular demand in heritage tourism is about tangible heritage such as building, monuments, and sculpture (Poria, 2008). This is probably because of focus on tangible aspects of the objects (Mydland and Grahn, 2012) such as aesthetics, architectural, age and grandness of the structure attract the visitors. Most of mass tourists would envy to 'capture' the moment with the heritage objects as an evidence they been to such places and as a collective memory and past imagination to be kept (Hawke, 2010; Chabra, Healy & Sills, 2003).

Heritage is about the connection with past imagination and emotional (Lewicka, 2005). Many scholars such as Akcali, (2010); Hawke, (2010); Lewicka, (2005); Proshanky, (1993) believed that visiting heritage assets may bring the visitors to reminisce the memories to the place or event. For example, the National Monument in Malaysia (i.e Tugu Negara) is a man-made sculpture that commemorates the national's heroes in protecting the country during the World War II. The celebration of Warrior's Day received a spectacular attention from many groups of citizen in Malaysia. This is a part of an evident of collective memory among the people who inherited of history and legacy (Mohamed, 2011). Indeed the history has been passed down through generations by various approaches such as education (formal) and event (informal). However, the biggest challenge for the past and present generation is to ensure the same value of appreciation and attachment for the future generation is remaining the same.

Furthermore, in the extend of heritage site regarding paying tribute to the people who has marked a power and influence to the country, there is another monument so called mausoleum that receives less attention among the people (Wein, 2013). This is probably due to the continuity of sharing or inherit, the stories are not really been passed down through the generations. Other than that, this is presumably because of the monument is too 'protected' due to the status of the deceased persons who were from a Royal family. In contrast, in many countries in the South East Asia, the symbolic mausoleum has proudly presented as a shared memory to the people, locally, and internationally. For example, the Ming Tombs in Beijing, the Emperor Qin and the Terracotta Warriors in Xian, Taj Mahal in India, and even the Pyramids in Egypt. These funerary sites has played role in the developing the historical identity for regional and national destinations (Seaton, 2002).

In Malaysia, the funerary sites such as the Memorial Park, Royal Mausoleums and Heroes' Mausoleums are considered to have aesthetic value to be shared as a

heritage identity with the public. This is to emphasize that highlighting the mausoleums is not just remembering the deceased people, but the story that was made by particular person during his/her era should be expanded to sustain the wisdom by converting into attraction place that can create the identities of cultural value among local people.

## 1.2 Problem Statement

The awareness about conserving and protecting the heritage assets has received a great attention from many parties (local community, tourist provider, local government authorities, NGOs and many more) (Gonzalez, 2013; Garcia, 2011). This has shown the growth on sense of attachment from various parties to the heritage place. Thus, a strategic management practice is essential to ensure the heritage asset can be sustained for the future (Mydland and Grahn, 2012). Due to various types of heritage assets that have been identified; some of small or mundane heritage places received less attention for the strategic management practice (Bakri, 2014; Sayuti, 2011). For instance, Mohamed and Salim (2018) in the research has identified a few small and mundane heritage place that contains 'identity' and meaning to the local community has become derelict and loss sense of place. It is suggested identity of the place may be deteriorated and forgotten if awareness on place identity not being emphasized. Furthermore, by Grimwade and Carter (2010) in the research suggested that any small and mundane heritage building should not be neglected for strategic management practice. In addition, Mydland and Grahn (2012) emphasized the success for strategic management practice by active local community participation. From this point of view, small and un-commercial heritage buildings actually represent a strong heritage value and identity for the place and the community of particular area (Del Pazo, 2012).

The Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah is one example of small and un-commercial heritage building. Despite of that, it is also a historical landmark in Kota Tinggi (MDKT, 2017). Retraced back to the history of Sultan Mahmud Shah II, he was the last in line of a dynasty of the Sultanate of Johor (founded by his grandfather, Sultan Alauddin Ri'ayat Shah II) descended from the Sultans of Melaka, Sultan Mahmud Shah (Chronicles of the State of Johor, 1996). Due to that, the Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah can be remarked as a significant heritage asset based on its inheritance of history from the glorious reign of Melaka Sultanate. The death of Sultan Mahmud Shah II, has remarked the end of Melaka Sultanate in Johor heirs background (Chronicles of the State of Johor, 1996). The tragedy happened to Sultan Mahmud Shah II being him entitled as '*Marhum Mangkat Dijulang*' for his deceased (Chronicles of the State of Johor, 1996). Thus, the Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud should represent a significance identity for the place and 'value' for the local community in that particular place. It has also been suggested that the Royal Mausoleum has a potential for cultural heritage tourism segment if this place has been acknowledged the value and identity of the place from many parties (local community, tourist provider, local government authorities, NGOs).

In Malaysia practically, there is lack of research on royal mausoleums although the mausoleums represent a commemorative site for the ancient royal family since centuries (Shamsul, 2011). For example, the Al-Ghufran Royal Mausoleum in Perak, Langgar Royal Mausoleum in Kedah, Pekan Royal Mausoleum in Pahang, and Shah Alam Royal Mausoleum in Selangor. These mausoleums have the unique values in terms of historical context, cultural practices and both tangible and intangible heritage asset (Bakri, 2012; Dixon, 2000). Although the Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah has been marked as significant local heritage asset (MDKT, 2017), the number of visitors visiting this particular place is still considered as low but increasing every year. According to statistical data provided by MDKT, only 5000 visitors were recorded visiting Kota Tinggi since January to October 2016. This is considered as a small number comparing with what Kota Tinggi can offer thru the existence of Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud.

Although the age of the building (The Sultan Mahmud Shah Royal Mausoleum) may be younger compared with world standards (Grimwade and Carter, 2010), like any other heritage, it should reflect the meaning based on the history development of the nation. In the case of the Royal Mausoleum, it reveals the history of Sultan Mahmud Shah II; the last ruler of Johor descended from the Sultans of Malacca; one of the glorious empire back in the 14th century (DBP, 2007). Elements such as prehistoric background (Omar, 2010; Lowenthal, 2005), interpretation on history (McDowell, 2008), and development of society and culture of the local community (Hampton, 2005 & Nuryanti, 1996) should not be neglected as parts of the contribution to create the value of heritage.

As Sullivan (2004) pointed out, the values should have emphasized on the past events and not particularly on the fabric of the place, but what the site signified, why it was relevant to contemporary society, and how past events have affected those that were now living. Furthermore, Hawke (2010) and Grimwade and Carter (2000) suggested that, a small scale heritage sites that directly represented personal lives of local community should contribute a significant value of the heritage and create potential benefit for the local community as well. This is to say that, the understanding of heritage value from the perspective of the local community is essential to integrate both opportunity for tourism product development as well as socio economy impact to local community.

Thus, it was important for this research to identify the values and identity as there is little confirmation about the issuer of determined value towards place identity among local community in Malaysia, particularly on the Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah, Kota Tinggi Johor. The Royal Mausoleum should stand as an 'identity' for the place and become a proud for the local community for the history and it is believed that value of the mausoleum is not achieved solely by conservation activity but by giving the place a meaning within the life of contemporary communities.

The perception and awareness of local community play important roles in implementing the effective management of heritage conservation process particularly in upgrading and improving the physical structure of their places (Ismail, 2008). Thus, this research attempted to assess the values of cultural heritage among local community (Charoenwangsa, 2004) in relation to identify the identity of the site (Seaton, 2002) and its contents of inheritance for the commodification used of future generation.

### **1.3 Research Questions**

Persuading the purpose of the research needs, this research attempted to use the heritage assets in identifying the place identity and the heritage values among the local community towards Royal Mausoleums at Kota Tinggi, Johor. This research was developed by addressing the following research questions:

1. What is the heritage value possessed by Royal Mausoleums among local community?
2. Does Royal Mausoleum significantly represent the place identity to the place and local community?

### **1.4 Objectives**

The overall aim for this research was:

To identify the place identity, represented by Royal Mausoleums and the heritage value among community towards the identity of Royal Mausoleum at Kota Tinggi, Johor.

Therefore, in order to achieve the overall aim of this research, the specific objectives were:

1. To assess the heritage value among local community towards Royal Mausoleum.
2. To assess the place identity among local community towards Royal Mausoleum.

### **1.5 Justification of Study**

It was clear that the priority of this research was to highlight and to identify the heritage value of a small and mundane heritage building in Kota Tinggi, which was the Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah II. It was aware with the limitation of research being conducted in the field of royal mausoleums in Malaysia and practically emphasized on the identity remarked by these buildings. The number of

royal mausoleums in each state in Malaysia is countable, and the history of ‘kingship’ of each of the deceased Sultan (Roslan, 2017) should resembles and identity of the place. Thus, in the case of Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah, the sultan himself was the last line in the dynasty of Melaka Sultans for Johor Sultanate, and making it a reliable source of research on place identity and heritage value. Contemporary problem that being discussed in previous studies are mostly regarding infamous and international heritage sites such as Melaka and Penang (Teo, 2014; Moy, 2014; Said, 2013; Shamsul, 2001) and none so far conducting research about small and mundane heritage building or the royal mausoleums in Malaysia. It was believed that this research will become the ‘eye opener’ for other researchers to look deeper into other elements of heritage in Malaysia and more researches on this particular field will be conducted.

## **1.6 Definition of Key Terms**

### **1.6.1 Heritage Value**

The meaning of heritage value or also called as ‘cultural heritage significance’ (Bakri, 2015) is any intangible and tangible assets of cultural heritage having aesthetic, archaeological, architectural, cultural, historical, scientific, social, spiritual, linguistic or technological value to the place, or local community in particular area (National Heritage Act 2005). Value of heritage building needs to be assessed so that any decision take on the building will consider the priorities of the value pertained by the building and the need to retain and conserve the building.

### **1.6.2 Place Identity**

Place identity is linked to meaning and perception held by the people in relation to their environment (Ujang, 2012). A place should contain ‘attachment’ between the people who are living in the area and the place experience which represent the identity of the place. To create memorable and meaningful places, the experience and the perception of people who use and inhabit places within the city should be identified (Said, 2017).

### **1.6.3 Royal Mausoleum**

Mausoleum is a structured building which is built to keep the tomb of the deceased people above ground (Oxford University Press, 2018). Royal Mausoleum in Malaysia is specifically for keeping the deceases among royal family. The trend of transforming mausoleum and funerary sites into a visitor’s attraction is popular in the western countries (Miller and Gonzalez, 2013), however, it is still a new ‘culture’ in Malaysia. As mentioned by Seaton in 2000, funerary sites have played some roles in the historical identity of national and regional destinations. In this research the focus was on the Royal Mausoleum, entitled as the Royal Mausoleum of Sultan

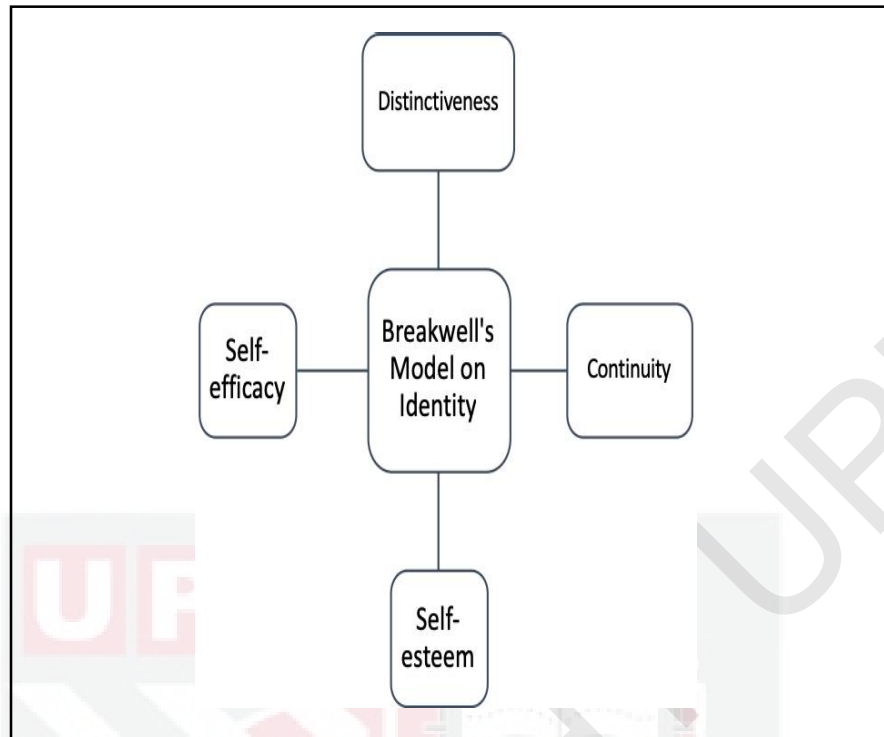
Mahmud Shah in Kota Tinggi, Johor and it has been representing the end of Melaka dynasty in Johor reign.

#### **1.6.4 Local Community**

Local community is a social group of people sharing values and norms in common geographical setting (Macqueen et.al, 2001). The local community remains as one of the stakeholders who play an important role in the 'identity' of their place (Roslan, 2017). The community of Kampung Makam, Kota Tinggi captures the heritage activities towards the Royal Mausoleum and they have their view on the existence of heritage building in the area (Mydland & Grahn, 2012). Thus, it is important to acknowledge their perception towards the Royal Mausoleum of Sultan Mahmud Shah II because they are the 'root' for a heritage building to sustain in the future for commodity use.

#### **1.7 Research Framework**

The Breakwell's Model, used in this research is to demonstrate the identity, possessed by the Royal Mausoleum and exemplifies the heritage value of the site. There are a few principles being used from the model which will lead to the understanding of the value and identity of heritage places as also has been used by Hawke (2010); Dixon (2000) and Twigger-Ross & Uzell (1996).



**Figure 1.1 : Breakwell's Model on Identity**

This model suggests four main elements of identifying heritage value and place identity: distinctiveness, continuity, self-esteem, and self-efficacy. The usefulness of this identity process model in explaining the relationship between a place and identity will signify the attachment between people and the heritage building in common geographical area.

### **1.8 Limitations**

Small number of sample size which was 300 respondents can be a limitation on the analyses of result for this study. The respondents for this study however must fulfill a few criteria such as nationality and residential matters. Thus, it turned out that a small part of Kampung Makam residents were among the Myanmar people and they were not qualified to participate in this survey. Other than that, it was believe if the data collection for this study were obtained using qualitative method (interview), they will able to gather more in-depth information especially among the veterans and old-timers rather than quantitative method (questionnaire survey). Furthermore, limited access to literature and secondary information such as previous research related with mausoleum of Malaysia was one of the challenges for this research. Most research in Malaysia focused on famous and high-impact heritage building, and less research were being done on small and mundane heritage asset especially the mausoleums. The literatures used in this study were based on the researches on western countries and many of them were old data. Thus, it has been a good opportunity to create a 'kick-start' for other researches to conduct researches on the case of royal mausoleums in Malaysia.

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