

Title: Colonial garden characters of hill stations : A case study of Penang Hill, Malaysia

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Abstract:

The importance of the study is to establish the colonial garden characters which was the most prominent features of Penang Hill. Penang Hill was built by the British for sanatoria and resort that portrayed and symbolized the cultural and social image of the Europeans. Picturesque and romantic atmosphere harmonized with natural surroundings were setting of Penang Hill during the colonial days. A garden compound was an important element in every bungalow where cultural activities and social interaction occurred. The garden elements are attributed to the cultural and historical heritage of Penang. It gave symbolic meaning with specific design, arrangement, appearance and content of cultural meaning for Penang Hill. The garden of Penang Hill whether appreciated for aesthetic qualities or cultural meaning is a valuable component in the heritage. The precedent studies on the English garden were adequate to convey its gardens' characters. The studies on the garden restoration principles and procedures served as the precedents studies in establishing methodology for the research. The outline of research methodology includes historical research/literature review, oral history interview and site observation. This research will look at landscape as historical artifact that evokes nostalgia, character and identity of colonial garden at Penang Hill. The data will describe and define the character and establishment of the colonial garden. Historical research and site observation are set, in order to describe condition and appearance of the site with clear concept, character, elements and garden features. The historical records from various sources are used to find the past condition, particular past events and changing pattern of Penang Hill's garden. The findings are categorized into two attributes that contribute to garden characters: physical and non-physical. There are five main findings can be drawn from this research : views and topography; garden design; plant materials; architecture and the memories.