1 | Pelabuhan yang membina tamadun

A port that shaped a civilisation



Ilustrasi / Illustration — suasana pelabuhan silam / an imagined historic harbour

Kesultanan Melayu Melaka: sekitar 1400-1511

The Melaka Sultanate: around 1400-1511

Kesultanan Melayu Melaka diasaskan sekitar tahun 1400 oleh Parameswara dari Palembang. Sepanjang abad ke-15, Melaka berkembang sebagai pelabuhan antarabangsa dan pusat penyebaran Islam serta budaya Melayu. Muara sungai menghubungkan pedalaman dengan Selat Melaka, manakala kapal dagang membawa barangan, manusia dan idea dari pelbagai wilayah.

Founded around 1400 by Parameswara from Palembang, the Melaka Sultanate grew during the fifteenth century into an international port and a centre of Islam and Malay culture. Its river mouth linked the interior with the Strait of Malacca, while trading ships brought goods, people and ideas from many regions.

Mengapa perdagangan turut mengubah budaya?

How did trade also transform culture?

Pedagang yang tinggal sementara atau menetap membina hubungan dengan masyarakat setempat. Pertuturan, cara berpakaian, makanan dan adat saling mempengaruhi. Bahasa Melayu menjadi bahasa perhubungan penting. Kekuatan Melaka bukan hanya pada kedudukannya, tetapi juga pada jaringan manusia yang menghidupkan pelabuhan.

Merchants staying temporarily or settling formed ties with local communities. Language, clothing, food and customs influenced one another. Malay became an important language of communication. Melaka's strength rested on both its location and the human networks sustaining its port.

2 | 1511: kota berubah, warisan berterusan

1511: a city changes, its legacy continues



Ilustrasi / Illustration — binaan batu laterit / laterite masonry

Penaklukan Portugis dan kesinambungan kesultanan

Portuguese conquest and the Sultanate's continuing legacy

Pada 1511, angkatan Portugis pimpinan Afonso de Albuquerque menawan Melaka. Sultan Mahmud Shah meneruskan tentangan selepas berundur dari kota. Serangan Portugis ke atas pusat baginda di Bintan pada 1526 diikuti pengunduran ke Kampar, Sumatera. Kejatuhan kota tidak memadamkan tradisi politik dan budaya Melayu yang diteruskan oleh kerajaan-kerajaan penggantinya.

In 1511, Portuguese forces led by Afonso de Albuquerque captured Melaka. Sultan Mahmud Shah continued resistance after leaving the city. A Portuguese attack on his base in Bintan in 1526 was followed by his retreat to Kampar, Sumatra. The city's fall did not erase Malay political and cultural traditions, which continued through successor states.

Dari batuan tempatan kepada kubu

From local rock to fortifications

Portugis membina kota pertahanan; Porta de Santiago ialah tinggalan gerbang yang terkenal hari ini. Dossier mengaitkan kuari laterit Pulau Upeh dengan sumber bahan binaan kota. Batu merah-perang ini menghubungkan proses luluhawa tropika dengan sejarah pertahanan, tenaga pertukangan dan penggunaan sumber tempatan.

The Portuguese built fortifications, with Porta de Santiago surviving as a well-known gateway. The dossier links Pulau Upeh's laterite quarries with building material for the fortress. This reddish-brown stone connects tropical weathering with military history, craftsmanship and the use of local resources.

3 | Bukit dan bangunan menyimpan sejarah

Hills and buildings preserve history



Bukit Melaka. Foto daripada dossier / Photograph from the dossier

Bukit Melaka dan jaringan keagamaan

Bukit Melaka and religious networks

Gereja di Bukit Melaka, yang turut dikenali sebagai Bukit St. Paul, bermula pada zaman Portugis pada 1521. Francis Xavier singgah di Melaka beberapa kali pada abad ke-16; jenazahnya juga pernah ditempatkan sementara di sini sebelum dipindahkan ke Goa. Kisah ini menghubungkan Melaka dengan jaringan pelayaran dan keagamaan merentas Asia.

The church on Bukit Melaka, also known as St. Paul's Hill, originated in the Portuguese period in 1521. Francis Xavier visited Melaka several times in the sixteenth century; his remains were also temporarily kept here before being transferred to Goa. This connects Melaka with maritime and religious networks across Asia.

1641: Belanda dan Johor menewaskan Portugis

1641: the Dutch and Johor defeat the Portuguese

Penawanan Melaka oleh Belanda dibantu oleh Johor. Dalam jaringan perdagangan Belanda, Batavia menjadi pusat yang lebih utama. Melaka terus mempunyai fungsi pentadbiran dan pertahanan. Bangunan seperti Stadthuys dan tinggalan kubu menunjukkan bagaimana ruang bandar digunakan semula apabila kuasa pemerintahan bertukar.

The Dutch capture of Melaka was supported by Johor. Batavia held the leading position in the Dutch trading network, while Melaka retained administrative and defensive roles. Buildings such as the Stadthuys and surviving fortifications show how urban spaces were reused as rulers changed.

4 | Daripada Belanda kepada British

From Dutch to British rule



Christ Church dan kawasan dataran bersejarah. / Christ Church and the historic square. Foto daripada dossier / Photograph from the dossier

Bangunan yang melalui beberapa zaman

Buildings that span several eras

Stadthuys dibina pada abad ke-17 sebagai pusat pentadbiran Belanda. Christ Church pula disiapkan pada 1753. Perjanjian Inggeris-Belanda 1824 membawa Melaka ke bawah British; pada 1826, Melaka digabungkan dengan Pulau Pinang dan Singapura dalam Negeri-Negeri Selat. Bangunan lama terus digunakan, walaupun pentadbiran dan fungsinya berubah.

The Stadthuys was built in the seventeenth century as a Dutch administrative centre. Christ Church was completed in 1753. The Anglo-Dutch Treaty of 1824 brought Melaka under British rule; in 1826 it joined Penang and Singapore in the Straits Settlements. Older buildings remained in use as administrations and functions changed.

Perang dan perubahan politik abad ke-20

War and political change in the twentieth century

Pendudukan Jepun pada 1942-1945 memutuskan pemerintahan British sebelum British kembali selepas perang. Selepas pembubaran Negeri-Negeri Selat pada 1946, Melaka menjadi sebahagian Malayan Union, kemudian Persekutuan Tanah Melayu pada 1948. Perubahan ini menjadi latar kepada perjuangan menuju pemerintahan sendiri dan kemerdekaan.

Japanese occupation in 1942-1945 interrupted British rule, which resumed after the war. After the Straits Settlements were dissolved in 1946, Melaka joined the Malayan Union and then the Federation of Malaya in 1948. These changes formed the background to the movement towards self-government and independence.

5 | Melaka menyambut berita Merdeka

Melaka welcomes the news of independence



Rombongan kemerdekaan, 20 Februari 1956. / Independence delegation, 20 February 1956. Foto: Arkib Negara Malaysia.

20 Februari 1956: tarikh kemerdekaan diumumkan

20 February 1956: the independence date is announced

Selepas rundingan di London, Tunku Abdul Rahman dan rombongan tiba di Batu Berendam lalu disambut sepanjang perjalanan ke Padang Bandar Hilir. Di Melaka, Tunku mengumumkan bahawa Persekutuan Tanah Melayu akan merdeka pada 31 Ogos 1957. Tempat perhimpunan ini menjadikan Melaka sebahagian penting dalam ingatan kebangsaan.

After negotiations in London, Tunku Abdul Rahman and the delegation arrived at Batu Berendam and were welcomed along the route to Padang Bandar Hilir. In Melaka, Tunku announced that the Federation of Malaya would become independent on 31 August 1957. This gathering made Melaka an important place in national memory.

Dua tarikh, dua peristiwa

Two dates, two events

20 Februari 1956 ialah hari pengumuman tarikh kemerdekaan di Melaka. Kemerdekaan Persekutuan Tanah Melayu dicapai pada 31 Ogos 1957. Pembentukan Malaysia pula berlaku pada 16 September 1963. Urutan ini membantu kita memahami peralihan daripada tanah jajahan kepada negara merdeka dan seterusnya Malaysia.

20 February 1956 marks the announcement of the independence date in Melaka. The Federation of Malaya achieved independence on 31 August 1957. Malaysia was formed on 16 September 1963. This sequence explains the transition from colonial rule to an independent nation and subsequently Malaysia.

6 | Kepelbagaian pada satu jalan

Diversity along a shared street



Masjid Kampung Kling. Foto daripada dossier / Photograph from the dossier

Rumah ibadat sebagai rekod kehidupan bandar

Places of worship as records of urban life

Masjid Kampung Kling, Tokong Cheng Hoon Teng dan Kuil Sri Poyyatha Vinayagar Moorthy berada dalam kawasan bandar lama yang berdekatan. Kehadirannya memperlihatkan komuniti berlainan agama yang membina kehidupan di sebuah pelabuhan yang sama. Rumah ibadat turut menjadi tempat pertemuan, sokongan sosial dan pewarisan tradisi.

Kampung Kling Mosque, Cheng Hoon Teng Temple and Sri Poyyatha Vinayagar Moorthy Temple stand close to one another in the old town. They reflect communities of different faiths building lives in the same port. Places of worship also supported gatherings, social networks and the transmission of traditions.

Seni bina memperlihatkan pertukaran kemahiran

Architecture reveals an exchange of skills

Bumbung bertingkat, menara, ukiran kayu, jubin dan hiasan seramik memperlihatkan pelbagai pengaruh pertukangan. Masjid Kampung Hulu juga mengekalkan ciri seni bina serantau. Bahan dan rupa bentuk bangunan membantu pengunjung memahami bagaimana budaya tempatan berkembang melalui pertemuan dengan tradisi luar.

Tiered roofs, towers, woodcarving, tiles and ceramic decoration reveal varied craft influences. Kampung Hulu Mosque also preserves regional architectural features. Building materials and forms help visitors understand how local culture developed through contact with other traditions.

7 | Baba Nyonya dan Chetti Melaka

Baba Nyonya and Melaka Chetti



Kampung Chetti, Melaka. Foto daripada dossier / Photograph from the dossier

Baba Nyonya: pertemuan budaya dalam kehidupan harian

Baba Nyonya: cultural encounters in daily life

Komuniti Peranakan Cina di Melaka memperlihatkan pertemuan tradisi Cina dan budaya tempatan. Bahasa Baba Melayu, kebaya, kasut manik, adat keluarga dan masakan menjadi sebahagian identitinya. Rumah warisan di Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock serta Muzium Warisan Baba Nyonya menyimpan perabot, tekstil dan barangan keluarga yang menceritakan kehidupan masyarakat pedagang.

Melaka's Chinese Peranakan community reflects encounters between Chinese and local traditions. Baba Malay, kebaya, beaded shoes, family customs and cuisine form part of its identity. Heritage houses on Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock and the Baba Nyonya Heritage Museum preserve furnishings, textiles and family objects that tell the story of merchant society.

Chetti: warisan India Peranakan

Chetti: Indian Peranakan heritage

Komuniti Chetti berkembang melalui hubungan pendatang India Selatan dengan masyarakat setempat. Kepercayaan Hindu diteruskan bersama penggunaan bahasa dan adat tempatan dalam kehidupan harian. Kampung Chetti memperlihatkan bahawa pertukaran budaya boleh menghasilkan identiti tersendiri sambil mengekalkan tradisi keagamaan dan kekeluargaan.

The Chetti community developed through connections between South Indian migrants and local society. Hindu beliefs continued alongside local language and customs in everyday life. Kampung Chetti illustrates how cultural exchange can create a distinctive identity while preserving religious and family traditions.

8 | Kristang dan ingatan terhadap laut

Kristang and memories of the sea



Ilustrasi / Illustration — pelayaran di Selat Melaka / sailing in the Strait of Malacca

Warisan Portugis yang terus hidup

A Portuguese legacy that remains alive

Komuniti Kristang berkembang daripada pertemuan masyarakat Portugis dan tempatan. Kampung Portugis di Ujong Pasir menjadi pusat penting kehidupan komuniti ini. Bahasa Kristang, tarian Branyo, lagu, masakan dan perayaan San Pedro memperlihatkan kesinambungan budaya yang bertahan melangkaui perubahan pemerintah.

The Kristang community developed from encounters between Portuguese and local populations. The Portuguese Settlement at Ujong Pasir became an important community centre. The Kristang language, Branyo dance, songs, cuisine and San Pedro celebrations reflect cultural continuity across changes of government.

Ilmu laut juga merupakan warisan

Knowledge of the sea is also heritage

Dossier merekodkan pengetahuan tradisional tentang pelayaran, pembinaan perahu dan perikanan. Pemahaman musim monsun, arus serta pasang surut membantu komuniti menyesuaikan kegiatan dengan alam. Warisan maritim merangkumi bukan sahaja kapal atau peralatan, tetapi juga kemahiran yang dipelajari melalui pengalaman dan diwariskan antara generasi.

The dossier records traditional knowledge of navigation, boatbuilding and fishing. Understanding monsoons, currents and tides helps communities adapt activities to their environment. Maritime heritage includes not only boats and tools, but also skills learned through experience and passed between generations.

9 | Pantun yang dinyanyikan

Poetry brought to song



Ilustrasi / Illustration — persembahan Dondang Sayang / a Dondang Sayang performance

Dondang Sayang: berbicara melalui irama

Dondang Sayang: conversation through melody

Dondang Sayang menggabungkan nyanyian pantun dengan iringan biola, gong dan rebana. Penyanyi berbalas kata untuk menyampaikan nasihat, kasih sayang atau jenaka secara bersopan. Kesenian ini dikongsi oleh komuniti Melayu, Baba Nyonya, Chetti dan Portugis di Melaka, serta disenaraikan UNESCO sebagai Warisan Budaya Tidak Ketara pada 2018.

Dondang Sayang combines sung pantun with violin, gong and frame-drum accompaniment. Singers exchange verses to express advice, affection or humour with courtesy. Practised by Malay, Baba Nyonya, Chetti and Portuguese communities in Melaka, it was inscribed by UNESCO as intangible cultural heritage in 2018.

Mengapa pantun dekat dengan alam?

Why is pantun closely connected to nature?

Pantun lazimnya menggunakan pembayang sebelum menyampaikan maksud. Sungai, laut, tumbuhan dan kegiatan harian menjadi bahan bahasa yang mudah dikenali pendengar. Keindahannya terletak pada pilihan kata, bunyi dan kebijaksanaan membalas secara spontan. Warisan ini hidup melalui penutur, pendengar dan ruang pertemuan masyarakat.

Pantun commonly introduces imagery before conveying its meaning. Rivers, the sea, plants and daily activities provide familiar language for listeners. Its artistry lies in word choice, sound and the ability to respond spontaneously. This heritage lives through speakers, listeners and community gatherings.

10 | Upacara dan cerita menyatukan komuniti

Rituals and stories connect communities



Rumah ibadat dalam dossier: contoh ruang kegiatan komuniti. / A place of worship in the dossier: a setting for community life. Foto daripada dossier / Photograph from the dossier

Wangkang: warisan yang berkait dengan lautan

Wangkang: heritage connected to the ocean

Upacara Wangkang dalam komuniti Hokkien Melaka melibatkan pembinaan kapal ritual, perarakan dan amalan keagamaan untuk memohon kesejahteraan. Persediaannya menghimpunkan kemahiran pertukangan, seni hiasan dan kerjasama komuniti. Hubungannya dengan pelayaran mencerminkan sejarah masyarakat yang tiba melalui laluan laut.

The Wangkang ceremony among Melaka's Hokkien community involves constructing a ritual boat, processions and religious practices seeking well-being. Preparations bring together craftsmanship, decorative arts and community cooperation. Its maritime connections reflect the history of communities arriving by sea.

Hikayat, silat dan nilai masyarakat

Literature, silat and community values

Hikayat Hang Tuah dan kisah-kisah Melaka menyampaikan gagasan kesetiaan, keberanian dan tanggungjawab. Sebagai warisan sastera dan tradisi lisan, kisah ini terus mengilhamkan persembahan serta identiti setempat. Silat pula menggabungkan kemahiran gerak, disiplin dan adab; nilainya diteruskan melalui pengajaran, upacara dan persembahan.

Hikayat Hang Tuah and Melaka's stories convey ideas of loyalty, courage and responsibility. As literary and oral heritage, they continue to inspire performances and local identity. Silat combines movement skills, discipline and courtesy, passing its values on through teaching, ceremonies and performance.

11 | Rumah, ukiran dan permainan

Houses, carving and games



Ilustrasi / Illustration — pertukangan kayu dan permainan tradisional / woodcraft and traditional games

Rumah menyimpan cara hidup

Houses preserve ways of living

Kampung Morten memperlihatkan warisan perkampungan Melayu di tebing Sungai Melaka. Di Merlimau, Galeri Demang Abdul Ghani menghubungkan seni bina kediaman dengan sejarah kepimpinan tempatan. Serambi, ruang keluarga dan ukiran menunjukkan hubungan antara bentuk rumah, adat menerima tetamu serta kehidupan masyarakat.

Kampung Morten illustrates Malay village heritage beside the Melaka River. In Merlimau, the Demang Abdul Ghani Gallery connects domestic architecture with local leadership history. Verandas, family spaces and carvings reveal relationships between house form, hospitality and community life.

Sumber alam menjadi kemahiran budaya

Natural materials become cultural skills

Ukiran bermotif flora mengolah pemerhatian terhadap alam menjadi hiasan dan panel pengudaraan. Kayu turut menjadi bahan congkak dan gasing. Permainan ini melatih pengiraan, strategi atau ketangkasan, sambil menyediakan ruang bergaul. Nilai warisannya terletak pada objek, cara membuat dan cara menggunakannya bersama.

Floral carving transforms observations of nature into decoration and ventilation panels. Wood also becomes congkak boards and spinning tops. These games develop counting, strategy or dexterity while creating opportunities to socialise. Their heritage lies in the objects, the skills of making them and their shared use.

12 | Sejarah yang boleh dirasai

History through food



Ilustrasi / Illustration — hidangan dan bahan masakan / dishes and culinary ingredients

Satu negeri, pelbagai tradisi makanan

One state, many food traditions

Dossier mengetengahkan asam pedas dan cencaluk, ayam pongteh serta laksa Nyonya, kari Kristang dan kari Chetti. Setiap hidangan membawa kisah keluarga dan komuniti. Hasil laut, bahan pertanian dan rempah menghubungkan masakan dengan persekitaran tempatan serta sejarah perdagangan.

The dossier highlights asam pedas and cencaluk, ayam pongteh and Nyonya laksa, Kristang curry and Chetti curry. Each dish carries family and community stories. Seafood, agricultural produce and spices connect cooking with the local environment and the history of trade.

Warisan bukan sekadar resipi

Heritage goes beyond a recipe

Cara memilih bahan, mengawet makanan, mengisar rempah dan menyediakan jamuan merupakan pengetahuan yang dipelajari melalui amalan. Makanan juga hadir dalam perayaan, perkahwinan dan kunjungan keluarga. Apabila kemahiran ini diteruskan, sejarah Melaka kekal hidup di dapur dan meja makan.

Selecting ingredients, preserving food, grinding spices and preparing feasts are forms of knowledge learned through practice. Food also features in festivals, weddings and family visits. As these skills continue, Melaka's history remains alive in kitchens and at dining tables.

13 | Warisan kota dan warisan hidup

Built heritage and living heritage



Jonker Street. Foto daripada dossier / Photograph from the dossier

Mengapa Melaka diiktiraf UNESCO?

Why is Melaka recognised by UNESCO?

Melaka dan George Town disenaraikan bersama sebagai Tapak Warisan Dunia pada 2008. Nilainya merangkumi pertukaran perdagangan dan budaya, bangunan bersejarah serta kehidupan masyarakat pelbagai budaya. Di Melaka, kota, rumah kedai, rumah ibadat, bahasa, makanan dan persembahan saling melengkapi cerita ini.

Melaka and George Town were jointly inscribed as a World Heritage Site in 2008. Their value encompasses trading and cultural exchanges, historic buildings and multicultural community life. In Melaka, fortifications, shophouses, places of worship, languages, food and performances together tell this story.

Warisan ketara ialah tinggalan fizikal seperti bangunan dan artifak. Warisan tidak ketara ialah amalan, pengetahuan serta kemahiran yang terus diwariskan. Memahami kedua-duanya membantu kita melihat tamadun Melaka melalui tempat dan manusia yang menghidupkannya.

Tangible heritage comprises physical remains such as buildings and artefacts. Intangible heritage consists of practices, knowledge and skills passed on through generations. Together, they reveal Melaka's civilisation through places and the people who give them life.

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