

INTERETHNIC PERCEPTIONS OF ETHNIC BOUNDARIES

IN PENANG, MALAYSIA

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE GRADUATE DIVISION OF
THE UNIVERSITY OF HAWAI‘I MĀNOA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF
THE REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEGREE OF

MASTER OF ARTS

IN

ASIAN STUDIES

AUGUST 2012

By

Saiful Anwar Matondang

Thesis Committee:

Cathryn Clayton, Chair Person

Barbara Watson Andaya

Uli Kozok

Keywords: Ethnic Boundaries, Urban Enclaves, Global Culture Space, Official Ethnic
Categories

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Graduate Division
Student Academic Services
Records Office

Master's Plan A – Thesis Evaluation (Form III)

Part I. To be completed by the student

Name Matondang, Saiful Anwar UH ID No. 20852113
LAST, FIRST, MI.
Graduate Program Asian Studies/Ethnicity -Urban Enclaves Degree Objective MA
INCLUDE SPECIALIZATION IF APPLICABLE
Date of Final Oral Exam / Defense 05/09/12
REQUIRED

I certify that I have read and understand the policies and instructions for this form.

Saiful Anwar 05/07/12
Signature of Student Date

Obtain signatures from the thesis committee:

We certify that we have read and understand the policies and instructions for this form.

Name (Print or type)	Signature	Passed	Failed
Chair Cathryn Clayton	<i>Cathryn Clayton</i>	✓	
Member Barbara W Andaya	<i>Barbara W Andaya (proxy)</i>	✓	
Member Uli Kozok	<i>Uli Kozok</i>	✓	
Member Michael Aung-Thwin (proxy)	<i>Michael Aung-Thwin</i>	✓	

Part II. To be completed by the graduate chair

Approved Not Approved

Michael Aung-Thwin 05-23-2012
Signature of Graduate Chair Date

GRADUATE DIVISION ACTION

Approved Not Approved By _____ Date _____

Remarks

C: Graduate Program / Student

2610 Māhā Nui, Steading Hall 320, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Telephone: (808) 206-8600

A-1: Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

UNIVERSITY OF HAWAII AT MĀNOA

Graduate Division
Student Academic Services
Records Office

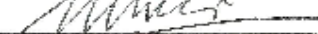
Master's Plan A – Thesis Submission (Form IV)

Part I. To be completed by the student

Name Matondang, Saiful Anwar UH ID No. 20852113
LAST, FIRST, MI

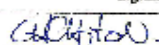
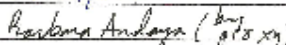
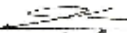

Graduate Program Asian Studies/Ethnicity -Urban Enclaves Degree Objective MA
INCLUDE SPECIALIZATION IF APPLICABLE

I certify that I have read and understand the policies and instructions for this form.

Signature of Student  Date 05/09/12

Obtain signatures from the thesis committee:

We certify that we have read and understand the policies and instructions for this form. We hereby approve both the content and the form of this thesis.

Name (Print or Type)	Signature	Date
Chair: Cathryn Clayton		05/16/2012
Member: Barbara Watson Andaya		05/16/2012
Member: Uli Kozok		05/16/2012
Member: Michael Aung-Thwin (proxy)		05/16/2012

GRADUATE DIVISION ACTION

Approved Not Approved By _____ Date _____

Remarks _____

Or Graduate Program

2040 Mole Hwy, Spalding Hall 602, Honolulu, Hawaii 96822
Telephone: (808) 955-0570

An Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Institution

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge funding from the Ford Foundation International Fellowship Program (IFP) New York and the East West Center Honolulu (June 2010 – August 2012).

I am deeply grateful to many people who already assisted me to complete my study in Graduate Program of Asian Studies at the University of Hawaii and finish this thesis. I owe a special debt to Prof Barbara Watson Andaya as the chair of my thesis committee when I wrote a proposal until the first draft. Prof Andaya as the former Director of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies at the University of Hawai'i introduced me to the Scope and Methods in Asian Studies. I thank to Dr Cathryn Clayton who was acting as the chair person of my thesis committee when I defended and finalized this thesis. Dr Clayton taught me about the Chinese Diasporas in Southeast Asian cities and the ethnographical analysis of Chinese and local (host) communities. I am grateful to Dr Uli Kozok, who often explained the Malay culture in Southeast Asia and this region relationship to India. Dr Uli spent hours to check the language use of this thesis. I also acknowledge that Prof Charles Blake of Anthropology Department at the University of Hawai'i has given me an insightful comment about plural societies and showed me how to do an ethnographic study. Here I also appreciated the ideas of Dr Terrance Bigalke (Director of Education Program at East West Center Honolulu), which opened my mind to thinking about plural societies in the Indo-Malay Archipelago.

It would not have been possible for me to know much about Penang, Malaysia without the assistance of Khoo Salma Nasution and A R Lubis. I would like to express my gratitude to them and to the Penang Heritage Trust. I also acknowledge that Dr Irid Agoes, Ms Mira Sambada, Mbak Nurwening, and Marni have facilitated and supported me as an IFP

fellow of Indonesia. Finally I am indebted to my own family, especially my wife Syafianna Simbolon and my two beloved sons Mahendra and Ramdhany who have encouraged me to study abroad.

I dedicate this thesis to the Department of National Education and Culture Indonesia, the Indonesian International Education Foundation (IIEF) Jakarta and other institutions which serve people who are interested in the cultural development of the Malay World within the Globalization Studies.

Hale Manoa, Honolulu, 23 May 2012

Saiful A Matondang

Abstract

Interethnic Perceptions of Ethnic Boundaries in Penang Malaysia

Saiful Anwar Matondang

This case study was conducted to address questions of ethnic boundaries and the dynamics of urban communities in Penang, Malaysia. An ethnic boundary study is based on a systematic set of rules that governs a person's behavior and actions in interethnic relations: it generates and maintains ethnic groups (Barth, 1969:10). It also emphasizes the processes and situational conditions in order to identify boundaries in social interaction. The members of a given society are divided on grounds of race, religion, language, culture, ethnicity, history, ecology and social organization, separately or together (Furnivall, 1956). Culture includes and subsumes language, religion, conceptions of race, ethnicity, kinship, ecology, community and normative models of social organization and conduct (Smith, 1991).

The research questions are formulated: How do people with ideological preconceptions interact within and among different ethnic groups? How do the people in Penang perceive and exhibit their ethnic identity based on beliefs, house-forms, and social associations? How do contemporary ethnic groups in Penang perceive the social life in terms of interethnic relations? How do the people of Penang retain their ethnic identity in response to the new formation of such communities? How do the people of outside official ethnic categories perceive their identities?

An anthropological ethno-history (Sturtevant, 1966:14) was conducted to highlight and understand the earlier situations experienced by the first and second generations of Penangites. The use of collective and self-identity of Penangites in contemporary context is also examined. This research finds that the urban enclaves, the names of streets, religious buildings and cultural events reflect a poly-ethnic of Penangites. Then, the hybrid culture and cross cut the conceived ethnic boundaries occur when the awareness of social class and attachment to global culture are mingled. The upper class of different ethnic groups could live in a modern neighborhood. Moreover, identities of the Penang Baba, Penang Jawi Pekan, Jawi Arab and Penang Eurasians are not static, but more dynamic because of education, professions, and globalism. The next generation of Peranakan groups does not strictly follow the identities of previous one. However, those Peranakan fall outside the official categories of the 2010 census, and are categorized as Chinese, India or simply "Other". Since the official categories of the 2010 census do not acknowledge the realities of ethnic identities, the civil rights in terms of politics, economic, and education opportunities as Malaysians might be ignored.

TABLE OF CONTENTS	page
Thesis Evaluation (Form III)	1
Thesis Submission (Form IV)	2
Acknowledgements	3
Abstract	4
Table of Contents	5
List of Plates (Maps and Pictures)	8
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	9
1.1. The Background of the Research	9
1.2. Organization of the Thesis	14
1.3. The Creation of Penang as an Entrepôt	17
1.4. Ethnic Identity and Urbanizing Penang	19
1.5. Research Questions	23
1.6. Research Method	24
CHAPTER 2: THEORIES OF A PLURAL SOCIETY AND ETHNIC BOUNDARIES IN PENANG	28
2.1. Theorizing a Plural Society	28
2.2. Emerging Plural Society in Penang	31
2.3. Grouping Jawi Pekan and Arab Descendants in Penang	32
2.4. Characterizing Penang Chinese Identity and Associations	34
2.5. The Nanyang Connections of Penang Chinese with the Capitalist System	37
2.6. Making Boundaries: Belief Systems and Cultural Identities	39
CHAPTER 3: URBAN ENCLAVES OF PENANG: PERCEIVED CULTURAL SPACE	47
3.1. Urban Ethnic Enclaves of Penang	47
3.2. A Grid Pattern of Colonial Urban Penang and Its Spatial Impacts	53

3.3. Penang as a Port City Penang within Local and International Communities	58
3.4. Penang Cultural Boundaries and the Spatial Analysis	61
3.5. The Boundaries of Socio-religious Buildings	66
3.6. Perceived Symbolic Meaning of Chinese Shires and Shophouses	70
3.7. Perceived Cultural Identity of Indian Muslims	77
3.8. Global Culture Space and Dispersal of Ethnic Communities in Penang	84
3.9. Final Remark	94
CHAPTER 4: THE STATE AND PEOPLE OUTSIDE OF OFFICIAL ETHNIC CATEGORIES	98
4.1. The State, Census and Ethnic Categories	98
4.2. Problematizing Ethnic Classifications	103
4.3. The Jawi Peranakan (Pekan)	109
4.4. The Penang Baba or Straits Born Chinese	110
4.5. The Jawi (Mixed Arab and Malay)	116
4.6. The Penang Eurasians	118
4.7. Concluding Remarks	119
CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS	121
5.1. Urban Enclaves and Penangites	121
5.2. Ethnic Identities and Boundaries	123
5.3. The Metamorphosis of Ethnicity within Global Culture	123
5.4. The Consequences of Religious and Race-Based Boundaries	124
References	126
Glossary	135
Appendixes	137

LIST OF PLATES (Maps and Pictures)	page
Plate 1 Map of Penang Island	10
Plate 2 Plan of Fort Cornwallis with the Town on the East Point of the Island	56
Plate 3 Map of Penang Urban Development in 1840	66
Plate 4 Map of George Town	80
Plate 5 Nagore Shire in Chulia Street	84
Plate 6 Map of Penang Development from 1960 until 1970	90
Plate 7 Sungai Dua Desa Airmas Condominium	140

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Research

As the oldest British settlement¹ in Malaya, Penang is an important location in which to carry out a study of interethnic perceptions of ethnic boundaries because of its urban setting and ethnic diversity. My interest in conducting research in Penang was motivated by the unique diversity of ethnic groups that exists there. Penang is simultaneously an island that is home to immigrants from the East and West and a state that is experiencing the dynamics of urban development. The transformation of Penang from a British colonial port into a post-colonial industrial and tourist-oriented cosmopolitan city has seen the continuation of ethnic identity formation which results in a mosaic of cultural expressions. Moreover, the contemporary emerging culture that shapes urban enclaves of Penang has a symbiotic nexus to transnational and global cultures. As a result, I focus on and analyze the dynamic changes of ethnic identities from the early formation of township until presently cityscape.

Penang is situated on the north-west coast of Peninsula Malaysia, and has been a major growth center in the country. According to the Municipal Council of Penang Island (MPPP, 1987), Penang is an island of about 293 sq. km (113 sq. miles). The population of Penang in the 2010 census was 1,526,324. The total number of households was 387,180. The 2010 Census of Malaysia officially divides the population of Pulau Penang into six categories;

¹ Penang was ceded to Captain Francis Light (the East India Company) in 1786 by Sultan Abdullah of Kedah Kingdom. In relation to British Settlement, Matthew Lange et al (2006: 1427) divide four types of British Colonies. The most extensive form is the British *settler colonialism*, where permanent residents transplanted a broad range of institutions from Britain into the colonies without preserving pre-colonial arrangements. In Malaya British settlements include Penang, Melaka and Singapore. Penang became British Settlement since 1786 until the Independent of Malaysia 1957. I consider Penang also represents this type.

1. Malay (622.578)
 2. Other Bumi Putra (599)
 3. Chinese (654.828)
 4. Indians (149.905)
 5. Others (5.243)
 6. Non Citizens (87.771)
- (From the 2010 Census of Malaysia, p.355)



Plate 1: Map of Penang and Seberang Perai (main land) – copied from www.map.com.my.

Unlike modern cities in Europe and the U S which tend to form an assimilation model in the frame of multiculturalism, Penang’s communal life of ethnic groups, in contrast, still

use the ethnic enclaves and racial-based occupations as the markers of pluralism². A clear grid of ethnic enclaves in city spaces is still found. The rapid development of Penang's township especially in the capital (George Town), an area which stretches from Fort Cornwallis³ to Pulau Tikus in the north east and Bayan Bay in the southeast has---resulted in ethnic groups continuously redefining and remaking their ethnic identities. In Penang, the ongoing association between ethnic groups shows a range of adaptations; spanning five or more generations of "Penangites"⁴ who evolved under the British polity, have accessed education and expanded divisions of labor, which have changed their occupations from coolies to officers, from petty traders to industrialists or government officers. The urban setting has been transformed from the wooden shop-houses to shopping malls and from the ethnic enclave settlements to gated communities and condominiums. More importantly, in contrast to the majority of the rest of the Malaysian population, Penang is dominated by *Baba-Nyonya* (Straits-born Chinese) and *Jawi Peranakan* (mixed blood of an Indian Muslim father and a local woman).⁵ In the British colonial era, both the Baba Nyonya and Jawi

² I differentiate the concept of multiculturalism from the pluralism of Southeast Asia. Multiculturalism is a state policy intended to include ethnic minorities within the national culture (Ang, 2001:95-99). On the other hand, a plural society in Southeast Asia is developed as a result of Western colonization, and refers to a society in which the people from various ethnic groups and races live under the one polity – European, but are less mixed and are settled in separate areas (Furnivall, 1956). For Furnivall, a plural society develops to accommodate the expansion of Western economic interests in tropical countries.

³ Fort Cornwallis is an old star-shaped fort located on the northeastern coast of Penang, Malaysia. It is named after the Governor-General of Bengal, India, Charles Cornwallis. Fort Cornwallis is the largest standing fort in Malaysia.

⁴ See Glossary, Penangites (Penang folks) and it is a collective identity which exhibits the different characteristics of people of Penang from other states in Malaysia.

⁵ See Glossary, the *Babas* or *Peranakan* were not pure Chinese by blood, but children of a Chinese male and a local woman descendant (Purcell, 1964:61). Felix Chia (1994) shows that wealthy Chinese men often married slaves from Sumatra, typically Batak. Lubis argues that some slaves were traded in Penang originally from a slave market of Tongging near Danau Toba area in North Sumatra; from there the slaves were brought to Langkat on the east coast of Sumatra. Some accounts report that the Bataks and Nias people were brought to Penang from North Sumatra as slaves and became wives of respectable Chinese (Lubis, 2009:152). Unlike Tamil and Arab men who married local Malay women because they were Muslim, the Chinese had to find non-Muslim women.

Peranakan were subjects of the British who went to English schools, preferred British identity, and, for many second-generation people, worked for the British or businesses which operated under the colonial umbrella. On the other hand, the Malays were employed by the Malay rulers or Sultans, and worked as fishermen and peasants. Exceptions are the descendants of Acehnese-Arab merchants of the northern Sumatra who had business contacts with the British (e.g., the East India Company) and the Madras Council on the coast of Coromandel.

Because of the unique features of urban communities in Penang, I carried out an interdisciplinary case study of urban communities which combined ethno-history and an urban development case study as well as a field observation. Specifically, this research is based on an area study that follows the development of Penang from the tenure of Superintendent Francis Light (1786) to the current Chief Minister of Pulau Penang, Lim Guan Eng. In other words, I explored the dynamics of urban communities of Penang by searching for identity markers. I focused on the perceptions of ethnic boundaries in the plural society of Penang, Malaysia. Ethnicity as “a self- perceived group of people” (De Vos and Romanucci-Ross, 1975:8) describes the special characteristics of people still found in urban communities. Ethnicity, as Clammer explains, is “the self-labeling process employed by groups of people to identify themselves socially, [which] frequently contains a religious component” (1980:56). Specifically, the ethnic identity of urban communities in the capital city of George Town was used as a starting point for data collection. Because in this area, I can trace the changes of cityscapes from British colonial to global eras and those have the potential factors which intervene ethnic identities and boundaries.

The transformation of Penang from a British colonial free port into a modern industrial city not only motivated me to trace back the type of ethnic classification during the

tenure of Francis Light and the British Administration during the early growth of diverse communities in George Town, but also led me to analyze ethnic groups. The official categories of ethnic groups not only show the percept of government but also the recognition of each ethnic group in the eyes of government and other groups. Tracing the ethnic identities and official categories of ethnic groups gives a deeply understanding of the characteristics of population in Penang. From the assumption that ethnic groups are culture-bearing units (Barth, 1969)⁶, I confined my research into two sub-topics that address the construction of ethnic perceptions: (1) the correlation between ethnic identity and spatial development based on the ethno-historical background and (2) the identity and position of the descendants of mixed blood in the official categories of ethnic groups. I presumed that those two aspects affected ethnic groups in defining their boundaries. Their values met new cultures when they came to a new place; the new urban spaces eventually become shapely by ethno-genesis and their environment.

My visit⁷ to Penang, Malaysia, in summer 2011 enabled me to conduct a study of ethnic groups and to find the relationship between ethnicity and location, as Penang has been a strategic location in the route of international commerce since the late eighteenth century. Although the traders of China and India have a long history of trade with people in the Straits of Melaka, the presence of the British in Penang transformed its social structure. The formation of ethnic groups in the Straits of Melaka as a dynamic process, as discussed in

⁶ Fredrik Barth proposes a method of studying ethnic boundaries based on a systematic set of rules that governs a person's behavior and actions in interethnic relations. Barth states: "we attempt to explore the different processes that seem to be involved in generating and maintaining ethnic groups (1969:10)". In his study, Barth (1969) emphasizes the processes and situational conditions to identify boundaries in social interaction.

⁷ I express my gratitude to Khoo Salma Nasution (Penang Heritage Trust), who introduced me to some important Penangites (Penang folks) and invited me to attend the cultural events in Penang, and her husband, Abdur-Razzaq Lubis (Areca books), who provided a detailed explanation of the historical background of ethnicity in Penang. Their assistance was very helpful to me, as when I arrived in Penang, I did not know much about ethnicity in the area. Gradually, I began to understand the ethnic identity of Penangites.

Andaya (2008), *Leaves of the Same Tree: Ethnicity and Trade in the Straits of Melaka*, which inspired me to explore the very foundations of ethnic groups in Penang. The processes of making and remaking ethnic identity have a number of aspects that relate to a social system and the specific historical background of ethnic groups. Although Penang and Singapore are British settlements, Evers and Rüdiger Korff (2000:48) find that Penang is different from Singapore, because the immigrants that came to Penang were mostly from Kedah and southern Thailand. In spite of the recruitment patterns that shaped the ethnic enclave settlements of Penang, the foundations of towns and urbanization process of Penang, to Evers and Korff, are somewhat less clear (2000). In short, I assume that Penang has a specific urban development that could be understood from tracing the creation and recreation of social groups in responding to government policy and economic intervention.

1.2. Organization of the Thesis

This thesis consists of five (5) chapters. The chapters are organized as follows:

Chapter 1: This chapter elaborates the rationale of a study of ethnicity, based on the evolutionary process of colonial and global settings. The cityscapes are used to find ethnic boundaries in Penang. Together with urban development, the evolutionary process of ethnic groups and the position of Penang as the first British settlement in the Malay Peninsula are explored. The historical background of ethnic groups, the modern development and the influences of globality in the cityscape of Penang are used as variables. Those factors shape the neighborhoods and communities as well as social organizations. The presentation of the pioneers of Penang communities and the diversity of ethnic groups is intended to show relations between the city and the descendants of Chinese Babas, Tamils or Chulias, Malays, Acehnese, Arabs and Eurasians. This part also discusses an interdisciplinary research method

(ethnohistory, ethnology and spatial analysis of settlements) to collect the data of the social groups, physical buildings and ethnic categories that show boundaries.

Chapter 2: This chapter traces the conceptions and the meaning of a plural society. Theories of a plural society explain the conceptual frames of pluralism and plural society since the expansion of Western mercantilism and capitalism in colonial countries. It explores the plural society theories of Furnivall and Smith which contribute to studying the ways of dividing people in one place under a single polity (European). The creation of the structure of Penang as a plural society is seen from the political and economic interests of British colonialism. The positions of Chinese and Indian immigrants under the British colonial regime in the Malay lands fundamentally shaped the structure of society in Penang and post colonial Malaysia. The elaboration of the socially constructed ethnic groups and social organizations, like the kongsi or Chinese cooperative endeavor which displays the boundaries is presented. In addition to those two majority groups, other ethnic groups are analyzed within a plural society. Here Malaysia still faces the complexity of ethnic and race relationships. The divisions of people based on the occupations, networks, and cultural differences are elaborated to understand the barriers of interethnic relations in Penang.

Chapter 3: In this chapter the urban ethnic enclaves and perceived cultural spaces of Penang are explored to find the reflection of ethnic boundaries. Ethnic groups perceive their identities in the cityscapes by creating their settlements, religious and social buildings based on cultural preconceptions which adapt the state policies. It then shows the power relations, ethnic enclaves and cityscapes in the urban setting. It is hoped to show the complexity of many factors in the contestations of identity. This chapter also includes subtopics that focus on the urban development and redevelopment from Superintendent Francis Light until Chief Minister of Pulau Penang Lim Eng Guan. The data obtained are presented to identify the

divisions of ethnic and racially-based settlements. I discuss the policies that regulate locations of government offices, market, harbors, religious buildings, ethnic physical buildings, and the grid of ethnic enclaves. The architectural differences of the religious, territorial and clan Temples of the Penang Chinese and the mosques of Tamils and Malay Acehnese are analyzed to indicate the images and symbolic meanings that demarcate these ethnic groups. The settlement developments of Penang are explored from the early urban form of Penang and the contemporary urban development to describe the ethnic boundaries. The presentation of popular disappointment with the modern dreams of developers and elites which embrace global housing models like apartments, gated communities, and condominiums show the internal conflicts with ethnic communities.

Chapter 4: This chapter focuses on a discussion of ethnic categories. British colonial and post independent Malaysia administered censuses many times and they show changes in official ethnic classifications. Labeling ethnic identity in Malaysia since British colonial times until the present has disappointed the mixed blood descendants and the people who cross ethnic and race boundaries. Based on that problem, this chapter problematizes state policy in regard to the Malaysian censuses and people outside of official ethnic categories. It problematizes the official concept of ethnicity and race in Malaysia. Specifically, it deals with ethnic identity of the Jawi Peranakan (Pekan), the Chinese Peranakan, the Mixed Arab and Malay and the Eurasians in Penang.

Chapter 5: This chapter presents the conclusions based on the interethnic perceptions of ethnic boundaries in Penang. The study reveals that the government policy, the spatial aspects and symbolic meanings incorporated by social groups significantly contributes to perceptions of ethnic boundaries. Cultural preconceptions help determine the demarcations of ethnic groups that are reflected in spaces, cityscapes, ethnic enclaves, and official censuses.

1.3. The Creation of Penang as an Entrepôt

The failure of the East India Company to establish a British settlement in Aceh, Sumatra under the mission of Kinloch in 1763 (Clodd, 1948:2) motivated Francis Light to find a post in Kedah. When Light brought his new idea to the Madras Council in which he proposed Poolo⁸ Penang as a settlement, it took a long time to get a response but the reasons of the East India Company, for Light, were not clear. Captain Light who worked for Jourdain & Co⁹ sent a letter to Warren Hasting, a member of the Madras Council and the Governor of Bengal, and in his letter, recommended Penang as a convenient trade post in the East (Clodd, 1984:7). At that time the Dutch Company had two strategic ports in Melaka and Batavia, but the East India Company had no post in the Straits. Indeed, “[p]rior to the close of [the] last century, Great Britain had no settlement in the Straits” (Newbold, 1971:4).

The desire of the East India Company to acquire a station in the Straits of Melaka was obvious. Clodd (1948) argues that although the Company held a practical monopoly of the silk trade, “voyages of the vessels engaged in the trade were seriously hampered by the lack of any re-fitting station under the English control between India and China” (1948:1). Additionally, Jessy (1961:75) notes that “[t]he East India Company had no port between India and China, a distance of nearly 3.000 miles [which] left them at the mercy of the Dutch for repairs and supplies.” Francis Light, at the same time, knew the Kedah ruler needed English protection from the aggressive kingdom of Siam, and from a group of Bugis. The

⁸ Poolo or Pulau (Malay) is an island. Pinang means Betel nut (Areca-Palm), so Pulau Pinang is “Betel Palm Island”.

⁹ Jourdain & Co operated under the East India Company. Laurence Sullivan and Jourdain appointed Francis Light to command the Company’s vessels. Sullivan was also the Deputy Chairman of the Court of Directors of the East India Company. Light was engaged in the trading route in the “eastern seas”, that is, from India, Aceh and Phuket and with the “country” trade (port to port trade within Asia)

Siam expanded their territory to south and the Bugis from Selangor wanted to take commercial coastline up to the Kedah. According to Purcell:

[The East India Company] wanted a base in the Straits of Malacca to defend its growing trade with China, and a place where it could grow spices to compete with the Dutch monopoly. Penang, the first British settlement in the Straits, was obtained by the Company from the Sultan of Kedah in return for an annual rent (\$10,000 including Province Wellesley the strip on the mainland added in 1800); and the undertaking to protect Kedah against aggressive Siamese (Purcell, 1945:2).

Enhancing trade with China and protecting the sea-trade lanes from India to China were the main interests of the East India Company. Francis Light believed that the strategic position of Penang as a trading post between India and China was very important for the trading networks and commercial links. The wealthy merchants of the East India Company (EIC) in Madras India wanted a location that was able to connect the EIC to the Malay-Indonesia archipelago, the Straits of Melaka, and to China. Such a situation eventually brought Francis Light to propose a plan to the Sultan of Kedah. Although it took a significant amount of time, Captain Francis Light was successfully able to convince both the Sultan of Kedah and the Company in Madras to acquire Penang as a port. Light assured them that Penang was the best location to replace the East India Company's station in Bengkulen, western coast of Sumatra (Hussin, 2007:69). Penang was built as *entrepôt* and became a British post in Southeast Asia after the agreement between Captain Francis Light of the EIC and Sultan Abdullah of Kedah was signed on the 11th of August 1786. Since that time, Penang, which only was inhabited by a small group of Malay fishermen, was developed as a major colonial port city, and the influence of the British presence created pluralistic societies

in Penang. Francis Light named the new settlement George Town, and Pulau Pinang (Betel Palm Island) was dubbed Prince of Wales Island. The newfound importance of the region subsequently attracted numerous immigrants and settlers, including many Chinese (DeBernardi, 2004:20).

1.4. Ethnic Identity and Urbanizing Penang

Ethnic identity is not only concerned with a status claim and recognition, but also ethnic group's behavior in various interethnic interactions. The markers of ethnic identity such as language, kinship, territory, and religion clearly separate "one group of people from one another" (Brass, 1991:18). For political and economic purposes in urban communities, those markers not only build communal solidarity but also "serve as an instrument" (Brass, 1991:35) to reach prominent positions. The shared dialects, practices of religion and historical background, according to Brass (1991), determine one ethnic group established or emerged to another group. In analyzing ethnic identity of urban Penang, I follow Brass' idea that considers both linguistic symbols and a system of beliefs "are potential bases for differentiating one ethnic group from another" (30).

Penang as a new colonial port city in the Straits was the destination of "traders and settlers [who] came from far and wide and created a patch-work of ethnic villages throughout George Town" (Jenkins, 1997:36) by the end eighteenth until twentieth century. The presence of a "cosmopolitan mix of Asian immigrants" (Hoyt, 1991:20) was facilitated by Light's open door policy. According to Leith (cited in Jenkins, 1997:37-39), the Chinese, Tamil Muslim (Chulias), and Arab merchants settled in urban areas, while the Muslims from Kedah and Sumatran Arabs from Aceh set up villages in less localized patterns. The Malays lived in kampongs around the rice farms along the rivers and in coastal villages. The literature detailing the ethnic history of the area mentions a number of leaders who, during

emigration, brought their ethnic groups with them to Penang, such as Dato Kuala Muda, Tuanku Syed Hussain Idid (descent of Acehnese and Arab Muslims) from Aceh, Koh Lay Huan, and Kader Mydin Merican, head of the Chulias has been in Kedah before the Penang becomes a new town¹⁰.

Urban communities in the early settlement of George Town were described in Francis Light's report (Clodd, 1948:98-100), where he listed the characteristics of people who lived there. Two years after Penang became a British settlement, Light notes that the Chinese, Chulias, Siamese, Burmans, Arabs, Bugis, Malays and Europeans were among those who populated the area. According to Clodd's report the Chinese were a particularly valuable acquisition in the eyes of Light because, "they were the only people from the East from whom revenue might be raised without expense and extraordinary efforts on the part of the government" (Clodd, 1948:98-99). It seems that, for Light, the Chinese who were traders, shopkeepers, and planters, could facilitate the economic growth of Penang and generate profits for the EIC. The second class of Penang inhabitants in Light's categorization was the Chulias who were mainly shopkeepers and coolies originally from the Coromandel Coast and Kedah. The third class consisted of the Siamese and Burmans, who spoke different languages but had the similar cultures, and were expected to be moderately industrious cultivators of the plantations. Arab traders made the fourth class, described by Light as both good friends and dangerous enemies (Clodd, 1948). The fifth class was the Bugis traders who were Muslims and, in Light's words, "were a proud, warlike [belligerent], independent people, easily irritated and prone to revenge" (Clodd, 1948:100). The sixth was the Malays of Kedah, Sumatra and Java. Light divides the Malays into two different characters; the husbandmen

¹⁰ Each ethnic group has a leader (Kapitan) who might bring their relatives and countrymen as migrants to Penang, settling in different areas that the British designated. A Kapitan was in charge of his community, taking responsibility for security and collection of revenues.

who were described as quiet, inoffensive and easily ruled, and fisherman. Without exception, the Malays are described in less than favorable terms. The last group noted in Light's ethnic groups was the European settlers who worked in shipping or for the government.

The majority of the early population of Penang was Chinese and Chulias or Tamils of Kedah and Southern Thailand (Sandhu, 1969; Nagata, 1979; Evers and Korff, 2000:48). When Sandhu traced the migration of Indians to Malay Peninsula, he found that the Chulias of Penang originally migrated from Kedah and Perlis (1969:118). The descendants of an Indian Muslim man and a local Malay woman are categorized as Jawi Peranakan or Pekan in Malaysia (Roff, 1967). Research conducted by Said and Majid revealed that before the mass arrival of the Chinese migrants in Penang in the middle of the 19th century, the Indian Muslims and Jawi Peranakan¹¹ were the most dominant commercial groups. They controlled "the textile trade from India and the pepper trade from Sumatra as well as the opium, rice and areca nut trade" (Said and Majid, 2004:47). According to Roff, "the bulk of Malaysia's Jawi Pekan community" still lives in Penang (1967:48).

The shortage of a labor force is another factor that resulted in the migration of Indian Hindus to Penang. Francis Light, after living in Penang for three months, requested one hundred coolies from India, and in July of 1787, twenty-five skilled workers from Bombay landed in Penang (Sandhu, 1969:47). Sandhu also notes that when Francis Light came to Penang, he brought Indian 'sepoys', lascars (native Indian soldiers), domestic servants, and 'camp-followers' (1969:47). Furthermore, in 1789 the 700 freed convicts from Andaman arrived in Penang (Morson, 1993:91), and were employed to construct port, public facilities

¹¹ See Glossary, Said and Majid say that the intermarriage between the Indian Muslims and local Malay women, which was facilitated by a common belief in Islam, produced offspring "who were brought up in the language and domestic customs of their Malay mothers and the activity and diligence of their commercially-inclined Indian Muslim fathers (2004:4)".

and administration offices. The coming of those convicts to Penang meant the Penang communities had another ethnic group.

The 1788 and 1810 census recorded the changes in the demographic composition of Penang. According to the first survey in 1788 shows that the percentage of population of Chinese and Jawi Pekan or Malays is almost equal (41.85 and 41.30 respectively) (Hussin, 2007). The Chulias and mixed Indian-Malay descendants dominated other groups in the 1818 census (45%) the Chulias and Malays were the majority groups in the early years of Penang's development (Hussin, 2007:189-1991). By 1860, however, the Chinese immigrants had outnumbered all other ethnic groups (Nagata, 1979:22), constituting half of the population of Penang (Hoyt, 1991:31). DeBernardi (2004) argues that the mass migration of Chinese from Southern China to Penang was due to economic difficulties in China and political conditions, while at the same time the British needed a labor force. Also, the new migrants from South China came to Penang to avoid [as subjects of the Qing dynasty], poverty, famine and hardship (DeBernardi, 2004:20). At the same time, some of the Babas¹² left Melaka to escape the trade monopoly of the Dutch.

The creation of Penang for British economic expansion attracted various ethnic groups, whose migration to Penang resulted in the complexity of urban communities. All of this evidence points to the fact that Penang is both a historical and contemporaneous example of a plural society. The theories of ethnicity include the culture, linguistic, geography and social organization factors which affect ethnic identities. Fellmann and Getis argue, the notion of "plural societies" suggests that ethnic groups are bound by a common origin and

¹² The Babas or China Peranakan of the Straits of Melaka identify themselves as different from Chinese or other groups. According to the 19th century observer Vaughan, after 1824 when Melaka became British the Melaka Babas preferred to identify themselves as British subjects ("Orang Putih" in Malay Language) and did not regard China as their homeland (1971:2-3).

culture, race, religion, language and nationality (Fellmann, Getis and Getis, 1990:166). Based on the pluralism perspective, an exploration of ethnic enclaves in Penang can offer a significant contribution for social sciences and humanities because this urban area has the most diverse population in Southeast Asia. Carstens (2005: 64-65) argues that in Malaysia all ethnic groups cooperate to maintain and retain their own economic and political interests. Despite British colonial policy which regulates the urban enclaves, there is a tendency of ethnic groups to reside within their own ethnic settlement. In Penang, certain labels and stereotypes have been attached to ethnic identity, and the “subjective perceptions of ethnic differences [continue] to structure behavior between and among ethnic groups” (Carstens, 2005:65). The nineteenth-century construction of ethnic stereotypes in colonial settings that paint the “Malay people as lazy, the Keling Indians as docile, and the Chinese [as] industrious but crafty “ (Hoyt, 1991:8) could create a problem of interethnic relationships.

1.5. Research Questions

This case study was conducted to address questions of ethnic boundaries and the dynamics of urban communities of Penang, Malaysia, following research questions were formulated:

1. The policies which regulated the settlements and ethnic groups from the time of Captain Francis Light and his successors shaped the urban communities of Penang as the first British settlement. How do people with such as ethnic divisions interact within and among different ethnic groups?
2. As a plural society Penang follows the official categories which classify the population into Malays, Other Bumiputra, Chinese, India, and Others. People live within religious and “racial” boundaries. How do the people in Penang perceive and exhibit their ethnic identities?

3. The development of Penang from an entrepôt to an industrialized area changed human relations and settlements. The growth of shopping malls, apartments, gated communities, and condominiums in new areas has changed the features of Penang. How do the contemporary ethnic groups in Penang perceive the social life in terms of interethnic relations? How do the people of Penang retain their ethnic identity in response to the new formation of such communities?

4. The censuses of British colonial administration classified the population into many ethnic groups based on languages, beliefs, races, origins, while the 2010 Malaysian census applies racial-based categories. The descendants of mixed- blood groups and the Straits-born (peranakan) Chinese, Tamils, Arab and European are excluded from official categories. How do the people outside official ethnic categories perceive their identities?

1.6. Research Method

This case study was designed to explore the perceptions of ethnic boundaries based on cultural identity. I used the settlement histories and formation of ethnic categories to explore the constitution of ethnic groups in Penang. In my study of the urban communities of Penang where interethnic perceptions of ethnic boundaries played a major role I use a qualitative method.¹³ Specifically, the approaches of ethnohistory, ethnology and urban development were applied to collect data; an ethnographical technique was implemented to establish the cultural identity of social groups. In order to answer my research questions, I relied on the documentary data and conducted ethnographic field work to identify and analyze the dynamics of the urban communities. I worked on the basis of anthropological ethno-history,

¹³ Following this technique, I observe and analyze the human relationships based on the spaces and instruments that people use in Penang. People can use many kinds of instruments such as language, beliefs, blood relation, and origin of hometown, associations, behaviors, fashions, and physical buildings to incorporate social groups and social status (Barth, 1969; Nagata, 1979 and King, 1976).

in which fieldwork is focused on the modern descendants of the immigrants or original peoples (Sturtevant, 1966:14).

Seeking to highlight and understand the earlier situation experienced by the first and second generations of Penangites in terms of inter-ethnic relationships, I reconstructed ethnic identity from documentary evidence, examined documents of inter-ethnic perspectives, and supplemented this research with data obtained from my own ethnographic fieldwork. To enrich the obtained data, in the field research I interviewed (eight) informants to obtain data relating to their opinions, experiences, and hopes. They were selected from different ethnic groups and social status. In order to deal with the complexity of ethnographic research, I accepted Raymond Firth's (1989) recommendation that advises modern social anthropologists to craft the ethnographic text based on interpretation. Firth says: "[a] systematic record, based upon observation of the institutions, behavior, patterns and the concept of a society or community is looked upon in a sophisticated way, not given authority but seen as a reflection...of the situation observed" (1989:28). For a case study of the further development in colonial cities, I use an urban development approach. Anthony D. King (1976) argues that colonial cities leave many things unknown because only a limited amount of research has been conducted in the post independence era in urban communities. According to King, only a few studies reveal the relationships between physical buildings and ethnic identity in the urban communities of colonial cities. I observed the urban structure and interaction between human and environment in terms of physical and spatial processes. King's suggestion to explore the meanings of physical buildings to ethnic groups (King, 1976:2-3) inspired me to analyze the nature of ethnicity in urban areas during my observations in Penang

Based on the recommendations of Raymond Firth and Anthony King, I collected sources to trace ethnic identity and the ways that social groups perceive the boundaries. The

historical records of symbolic meaning of cultural units from the past until the contemporary period were cross checked. I used my interpretations of symbolic meanings to capture ethnic boundaries and I explored cultural preconceptions which continue to survive within a plural society. King's recommendation directed my investigation: the features of ethnicity and urban development were studied by using morphological analysis (viewing the state policies of an urban plan). In other words, I explore the ways in which the British colonial and post-independence governments in Malaysia regulate settlements. I analyzed the shape of buildings which reflect the boundaries of social groups. The interaction of the Malay-Indonesian Archipelago, India, South China and European architectures during the British period have shaped cityscapes because the EIC applies an open door policy to attract immigrants and traders. The growth and development of ethnic groups is not only a result of the colonial legacy or state policy but also a "complex nexus between political economy forces and the negotiation of identity in every day practices (Goh, 2001:161)". Paying more attention to the local historical and contemporary records of sub-ethnic or dialect identities is therefore invaluable to understanding ethnic dynamics in Penang. For example, Vale (1992:48) posits that national identity must be cultivated for a long time and the political and the national unit should be based on a collective ethnic identity.

During the observation period, I paid attention to the contemporary spatial development of urban communities in Penang. In this part, I followed the study of Penang cityscape conducted by Beng-Lan Goh (2002). Her research reflects the complex interrelations between the economic and cultural dynamic of contemporary urban communities in Penang. This research shows how to locate a great variety of factions within the state, capitalists, urban elites, communities, and ethnic groups. It also helped me to understand the ways in which ethnic groups strive to realize their cultural and spatial

meanings in the modern urban society of Penang, Malaysia. The fast-changing Penang cityscape which constantly creates spatial contestations was also considered as a vital factor for ethnic identity. It indicates that the strong spatial contestations, the global culture of consumerism and the domination of the state all help to shape urban life. A new development in Penang which promotes the power of capital and state, Goh (2002) argues, has ignored an integrative ethnic policy in favor of *Penang into the 21st Century*,¹⁴ and has led to intensification of new construction since November 1990 (Goh, 2002:154). In discussing the alternative futures of city life, I used what has been termed the “globopolis analysis” (Douglass, 2009). Douglass argues that Neo-Development City Planning tends to follow the globopolis model. Under the globopolis model, a state employs a top-down model to regulate city planning and collaborate with corporations to enhance economic growth (2009:5). In my observation of the changing cityscape of Penang in a globalized world, I combine a locality-based case study and the globopolis model (Douglass, 2009; Goh, 2002). I analyze the process of gentrification and dispersal of ethnic groups which could be clearly seen after the 1993 state government plans in Penang.

¹⁴ It seems the global cityscapes of Penang have been welcome by investors and the urban policy.

CHAPTER 2

THEORIES OF A PLURAL SOCIETY AND ETHNIC BOUNDARIES IN PENANG

2.1. Theorizing a Plural Society

This section sets out to address the specific circumstances that facilitate the development of a plural society in a colonial era and theories which attempt to describe the characteristics of plural societies, because this paradigm helps to understand British settlements. By understanding the characteristics of a plural society under the British polity, I could use it as theoretical foundation when I analyze ethnic diversity in Penang. In the social sciences, plural societies are often used as sites of research to examine the dynamic changes of groups in colonial and post colonial settings. Plural societies have been investigated from the perspective of economic and sociocultural interests and I emphasize those interests to observe the poly-ethnic society of Penang. The concept of a plural society classically first begins from J.S. Furnivall's (1956) theory, where he characterizes pluralism as:

[d]ifferent sections of the community living side by side, but separately, within the same political unit. Even in the economic spheres there is a division of labor alongside racial lines. Natives, Chinese, Indians, and Europeans all have different functions, and within each major group subsections have particular occupations (Furnivall, 1956:304-305).

That pluralism theory is based on the Furnivall's comparison (1956) of British policy in Burma to Netherlands India. Eventually this theory was further developed in the Caribbean context by Smith (1991). Premdas (1995:79) further argues that in understanding interethnic relations in a plural society, it should be noted that there is constant competition over the colonial "pie" that relegates each ethnic group to their own respective communal lives and prevents one group from associating with others. The divide and rule system, according to Premdas's summary of the pluralism posited by both Furnivall and Smith, creates ethnic

segmentation in the society. To successfully maintain order, colonial policy creates “preferential treatment breeding inter-group jealousy and a history of communal resentment” (Premdas, 2005:79). Additionally, Chappell’s (1990) study reveals that the colonialism in Fiji, New Caledonia and Malaysia has not only created plural societies, but has also systematically alienated the indigenous peoples from immigrant groups (171-198).

British colonialism had a specific system to divide the immigrants from the native people in which ethnic or race-based settlements and occupations applied. The study of immigrants’ relationship to native people under British colonialism in Fiji, Malaysia and New Caledonia conducted by Chappell reveals that the immigrants (Chinese and Indians) had little social interaction with native people (1990). What was found by Chappell might be the result of an interdependency of state policy and social interaction among ethnic groups. From Chappell’s analysis, it is evident that the different functions of ethnic groups and the separation of immigrants from China and India from natives create ethnic groups and boundaries. Smith (1991 quoted in Malaki, 2001) states that: “[P]luralism in any mode denotes contexts in which institutionally distinct collectivities are incorporated together to form societies. Cultural pluralism occurs when universalistically incorporated collectivities differ in basic institutions, of the private domain, without affecting their members’ status in the societal public domain” (2001:105).

Pluralism can be analyzed from the start of the global expansion of the European economy. Based on research which analyzes pluralism and ethnic identity in the Caribbean under the influence of the British, Smith (1991) argues that pluralism “[d]enotes those conditions in which the members of a given society are divided on grounds of race, religion, language, culture, ethnicity, history, ecology and social organization, separately or together “6-7). Pluralism then is applied to various social settings and situations that might “differ significantly from one another”, argues Smith (7). Thus, Smith (1991) emphasizes the

cultural differences of social groups which are seen in the public domain and the distinctive cultures suggest the incorporation and segregation of ethnic group. Smith furthermore elaborates the characteristics of a plural society as follows:

Many plural societies combine hierarchies of differentially incorporated social sections with structures of equivalent or complementary segments. For example, South Africa combines a hierarchic order of white, Indian, colored and black social sections with segmental divisions among whites between Boers, Britons and Jews, among Indians between Hindus and others, and among blacks between Zulu, Sotho, Swazi, Xhosa and others. Among independent contemporary states such combinations of hierarchic and segmental plural organization may well outnumber pure instances of either type together (1991:9).

The theories of pluralism and the divisions of ethnic groups, like those Furnivall presented in *Netherlands India* and which he elaborated in *Colonial Policy and Practice* in order to explain the nature of ethnicity in colonial societies, is relevant for analyzing the situation in the rest of Southeast Asia (Vickers, 2004). Starting from the idea of a plural society which comprises two or more elements of social order (e.g., two or more different ethnicities) that live side by side without mingling in one political unit is used to analyze the condition of British Malaya; this pluralism would show the relationships between ethnic groups. An example of this societal stratification can be found in Malaysia and is part of the British legacy because the British showed “favoritism toward Bumiputera (sons of the soil) Malays in the Malayan government establishment on the one hand” and encouraged “Chinese and Indian entrepreneurship in the economic sphere” on the other (Snider 1968:960). This type of stratification, Snider argues, both strengthens and reinforces ethnic, linguistic and religious divisions already present in society.

Furnivall’s conception of a plural society states that the members of a given society are divided on grounds of race, religion, language, culture, ethnicity, history, ecology and social organization, separately or together (Furnivall, 1956). Thus the term applies to various

social situations and conditions that may differ significantly from one another. Smith (1991) explains that:

Cultural pluralism expressed in institutional differences is the most general basis and mode of plural division. This is so since culture includes and subsumes language, religion, conceptions of race, ethnicity, kinship, ecology, community and normative models of social organization and conduct. It thus pervades all spheres of social life that exhibit differences of institution organization. Just how significant such differences or commonalities of culture may be in structuring collective relations depends primarily on whether they are relevant criteria for participation in the public domain (7).

The theories of a plural society are used to guide the current research on the social composition and plural structures in Penang societies. By beginning with a brief discussion of the concepts of pluralism and plural society and providing the description of the plural society in Penang with a sketch of the constructed ethnic boundaries of Penangites, this section explores the process of ethnic identity formation. Penangites with the icon of *Anak Tanjong* (the sons of Penanga Cape) underwent the process of making and unmaking identity. It is followed by an analysis of the attributes that relate to the perceived uniqueness of Penangites.

2.2. Emerging Plural Society in Penang

People who came to the plural society of Penang from different backgrounds, religions and cultures tended to look to their respective homelands in following their own ways of life. As C. M. Turnbull notes, the colonial administration did not provide a proper foundation for independent democratic government, nor was the plural society a promising base for nation building (Turnbull, 2009:15). In Penang, as soon as this island became a center of British trade, traders from various regions gathered and settled down. The number of Penang inhabitants grew quickly when the Company connected with regional traders and Chinese and Indian merchants. The development of Penang from an entrepôt into the center of regional

towns of the northern part of the Malay Peninsula resulted in fast-growing urban communities.

The Chinese communities have historically dominated the economic sector and political power in Penang. In the Central Business Area (CBA) of George Town Penang, the Chinese control the trade and commercial activities. The Gerakan Party, which is dominated by the Chinese, ran the state from 1969 to 1972, then the coalition of Gerakan-UMNO and in 2008 the Democratic Action Party (DAP) took power. The Chinese population is a majority on Penang Island and the Malays mostly live on the mainland.

According to Nagata (1979), there was a British policy that applied to regulate and divide Penang's ethnic communities into ethnic and racial groups. Borrowing a headman system (Kapitan) from the Dutch in Batavia, the British policy segregated people and appointed Chinese, Indian, and Malay Kapitans. Nagata (1979) also reports that the British administered all Muslims ("Mussulmans" or "Mohammedans") as a single category. At the same time there were Chinese kongsi and secret societies, and eventually the associations of Arab, Tamil, Jawi Pekan communities, and some ethnic groups that came from the Dutch East Indies began to emerge. Roff (1967, 40-48) discusses the Arab connection to the Malay World which created an ethnically mixed population. Buiskool (2004) notes the Chinese associations' linkages in the towns of the Straits of Melaka. In addition to those associations, the ethnic boundaries of the Hindu and Muslim settlers from India encouraged avoidance of intermarriage, while the Chinese followed their own customs such as ancestor veneration.

2.3. Grouping Jawi Pekan and Arab Descendants in Penang

Penang's plural society has left the area with a patchwork legacy of racial and linguistic differences. Ethnic boundaries in Penang can be related to the formation of ethnic identity that the anthropologist Eric Wolf proposes. For Wolf (1984), "the creation and

abrogation of cultural markers” (83) and cultural activities are defined by an internal group to see other groups in “the process of incorporation” (Wolf, 1984:82). In the formation of ethnic groups, Wolf sees “the two sets of processes as relational and interdependent” (1984:83). The process of incorporation arranges and rearranges people in a society and governs the social relations. The anthropological perspective that Wolf uses to look at a plural society views “the cultural activities and markers” (1984: 83) as involved in the process of identity formation just as in technological practices and performance of rituals (Wolf, 1984:82-89).

Penangites’ attitudes about their group membership affect their cultural identity; they form their ethnic identity based on various considerations. Mohammad’s (2010) study addressing the attitudes of Indian Muslims in Penang demonstrates how Penang Tamil Muslims construct their ethnic identities. They might identify their ethnic groups based on language, friendship, social organizations, religion, cultural traditions and politics. In the case of Arabs’ ethnic identity in Penang, Lubis states that the adoption of local culture by the Arab Diaspora leads to a change of identity. Blending the customs, religious obligations and Arab identity with Malay culture in Penang, according to Lubis (2010), the Jawi Arab have developed a mixed Arab Malay culture. This means the plural society of Penang facilitates the creation of a hybrid culture. Mohammed (2010) furthermore found that there is a high occurrence of “ethnic switching” (81) of the descendants of Indian Muslims to be Malays. In this study, when respondents were asked to choose an identity if given the option, only 50.4 percent of the respondents chose to be Indian Muslim, the remaining respondents chose Malay (14.2%), Bumiputera (13.2 %) and Malaysian (17%). In contrast Lubis (2010) shows that the Penang Arabs exhibit persistent adherence to an Arab ethnicity and identity or collective consciousness by using the Arab mosque in Seang Teik Road. They maintain their practice of patrilineal lineage and communal celebrations of Islamic festivals, the Hadhrami folk dance, and exclusive residential quarters in Kampung Syed, Burma Road (Lubis, 2010).

Research findings from the Jawi Pekan¹⁵ community can be used as an example of the identity-marking of Indian Muslims and how they construct their ethnic identity in interethnic relations (Mohammad, 2010: 72). Consequently, the constructed identity of Tamil Muslims experiences a dynamic process when the ethnic identity of Jawi Peranakan from first to present generations is observed. The result of a plural society which creates another identity among the Muslim communities brings the complexity in terms of the situational and the official classifications like the descendants of Acehnese Arab –Malays¹⁶. The Acehnese Arab –Malay settlement and identity in Penang might be categorized as hybrid and there would be two choices for a possible hybrid descent. The migration of Penang Arabs “did not come directly but via Aceh upon the establishment of a British trading post on Penang Island” (Lubis, 2010:3-4) and “the first wave was drawn primarily from Aceh” (4). Wazir (2009 as quoted by Lubis, 2010) also mentions the Arabs from South Sumatra to Kedah “were married off to local noble women” (2).

2.4. Characterizing Penang Chinese Identity and Associations

In this section, I elaborate upon the Penang Chinese identity and associations which form the characters of the Babas and other Chinese sub-ethnic descendants. The Chinese kongsi and huys¹⁷ played important role in the Southeast Asia trade. Huy, according to Wang (1994), “in Chinese means union” (67) and it could be “a form of miner brotherhood government emerged from the combination of small partnerships” (1994:67). DeBernardi (2004) describes Penang Chinese associations as “the Secret Sworn Brotherhoods” (55), and according to DeBernardi’s close reading to the Colonial Perspective, which was posited by

¹⁵ Penang is known as the hometown of the descendants of Jawi Pekan in Malaysia.

¹⁶ See Glossary

¹⁷ Kongsi is typically for business and clan associations. Huy means brotherhood, but Huy often is regarded as “the vehicle of Chinese self-government...secret society” (Wang, 1994: 2) in Southeast Asia.

Cohen (1996), the Chinese kongsi was originally “formed for charitable purposes and self-defense—including protection from a potentially vindictive spirit world--inducted new members with an impressive initiation ritual and a ritual oath” (56). DeBernardi also reports that “in nineteenth-century Penang, a diversity of these so-called secret societies existed, including three groups organized in much the same way as the Heaven and Earth Society (or Triad): the Ghee Hin (Yixing)” (2004:55). McKeown’s study on the institutionalized networks of some kongsi and huys finds:

[T]hey called upon a variety of symbols, such as ritual oaths and bonds of kinship based on distant, mythical ancestors, to legitimize themselves and create lines of trust and control among their members. In turn, the very institutionalization of these symbols reinforced their significance as concrete concerns shaping the lives and culture of migrants (McKeown, 1999:306-337).

The functions of a Chinese association or kongsi are to provide assistance to its members and also to retain their cultural identity. The protection of a kongsi is given when its members face external threats. Kongsi serve as business mediators between the Western economic interests and local products. Many Chinese temples in Penang were built as dedication to deities like Mazu and Tua Pek Kong, which helped reinforce a sense of cultural identity. The Hokkien, Teochew, Hakka, and Cantonese communities have their respective deities¹⁸ that are worshiped in their respective temples. These places of worship are important markers of ethnic identity within Chinese communities.

Throughout the history of the colonization of Penang, ethnic communities have lived in their suggested settlements. The first generation of Chinese communities in Penang tended

¹⁸ For example, DeBernardi (2004: 298) lists the Chinese Gods like Te Koan (Lord of the Earth), Toa Peh (Elder Uncle), and Hok Lok Sui (Gods of Prosperity).

to retain their cultural identity by establishing social groups or institutions. Embedded religious solidarity and communal treasury, for example, through Chinese *huy* and *kongsi*, formed ethnic boundaries in Penang. In their religious and clan associations, the Chinese sub-ethnic groups¹⁹ maintained an annual round of rituals.²⁰ In the beginning of the development of colonial Penang, Barber found that “for the larger and stronger communities the pressures of living surrounded by diverse and competitive communities accentuated a desire to recreate the culture and norms of ‘home’ ” (Barber, 2009:100). Even the more affluent members of communities had an opportunity to donate food and drink as the symbol of solidarity to their ethnic cohorts. By the end of the 1800s, the number of Chinese in Penang was about 3,000 (Fong, 1989:262). Demographically there has been a great amount of fluctuation in the growth of the Chinese population from the second half of the nineteenth century. Even today Poston et al. reveal that in 1990 the majority of overseas Chinese emigrants live in the Southeast Asia region, and the large Chinese population still comprises around 15 percent of the whole (1994:635).

The second and third generations of Chinese immigrants or people of mixed blood²¹ in the Malay Peninsula are known as the Straits born Chinese, or the *Baba*. This term originally referred to Chinese in Melaka in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, and generally in Southeast Asia region, people refer to them as *Peranakan* (Chia, 1994). The Chinese Diaspora as identified in the *peranakan* communities are found in the big port cities of Indonesia, Malaysia and Thailand. However, the Malaysians prefer to label them as Straits-born Chinese or *Baba*. The term *Tionghoa* is mostly used in Indonesia. The Chinese of

¹⁹ The Chinese groups based on territorial clans such as Hokkien, Cantonese, Hakkas, Teochew and Hainan and they observe their local traditions.

²⁰ DeBernardi (2004:139-158) reports that the Penang Chinese celebrate the Goddess of Mercy or Kuan Yin in the first day of the first moon, the Lord of Heaven in the ninth day of the first moon, and the Hungry Ghosts Festival.

²¹ See Glossary. For ethnic identity research, it is important to trace the descendants of the intermarriage between emigrants and local women in the Straits of Melaka.

second or third generation have gradually lost their cultural characteristics and eventually in Southeast Asia the Chinese descendants have acculturated and adapted themselves to the indigenous languages of the Malay or other host societies. They sometimes use a creolized local language (like Hokkien Penang). Some observers see a very old set of Chinese customs and ceremonies alongside acquired indigenous ones that have been hybridized, however, the first generation which was regarded as the unassimilated Chinese migrants (*the totok*) might be found in the nineteenth century, but would no longer be found today. Moreover David Wu (1991:159-160) raises some questions about “the nature of being Chinese and the formation of Chinese identity” in China and other nations.

Under the British colonial policy which regulated ethnic groups, the Chinese kongsi in the Straits of Melaka eventually created a blending of traditional Chinese ethic into “an emerging bourgeois ideal” (Godley, 1981:251).²² The tendency of merging Chinese tradition and modern values, according Godley, was found among the compradors, and this model has become known as headman system (Kapitan China). Interestingly, capitalist Chinese, especially the Babas, in the Straits of Melaka gradually, although technically part of a separate administrative scheme, followed virtually the same pattern of business associations that embraced the members in the *kongsi*.

2.5. The Nanyang Connections of the Penang Chinese within the Capitalist System

The Penang Chinese affected Penang’s pluralism with their dedication to the trade and commercial activities in the Straits of Melaka. The Chinese networks appeared because the Chinese traders or *hausang*²³ who travelled overseas from the southern part of China to

²² Although the Chinese merchants have their own initiative to run their business style but it seems Godley points out that Chinese follows the British colonial capitalist system in the Straits of Melaka (Godley, 1981).

²³ For a more complete definition of *hausang* or the Chinese traders in Southeast Asia, see Tonio Andrade (2004).

Nanyang (South Seas) to the Straits of Melaka developed cooperative businesses within their own clans and with outsiders (Andrade, 2004:415-444).

The international networks of Chinese immigrants in the Southeast Asian port cities were very important for exchange and to provide essential commodities. The history of the Chinese Diaspora and the recent condition of second and third generation of Chinese immigrants has spawned a growing body of the research in international studies. Khoo (2009) says that the Penang connection, as a gateway for Chinese immigrants in Southeast Asia in the nineteenth century, resulted in a strong historical link for the Chinese to the island of Phuket (Khoo, 2009:83). Hoyt (1991:20) argues that the British East India Company decision to construct Penang as a connection between India and China in Southeast Asia lured a mix of multi-lingual Chinese and Indians from Kedah, Siamese ports like Junk Ceylon (now Phuket), and Burma. The Penang Chinese connection to Deli in North Sumatra in the nineteenth century was driven by a need for cheap labor on tobacco plantations and it helped strengthen the Chinese networks between Penang and Deli (Buiskool, 2004).

The growth of Chinese enterprises in the nineteenth century, especially of the Hokkien Cantonese, encouraged Penang-based businessmen to expand their economic linkages. Under the endorsement of the British, the kongsi of Penang capitalists enhanced the economic, educational, and cultural relations of Penang with Phuket and the eastern coast of Sumatra. This newfound seaborne connectivity and mobility supported Chinese enterprises in Southeast Asia. An increasing number of Chinese enterprises in British Malay which had linkages to Phuket, Siam, and the Netherlands Indies then developed transnational economic activities. The need for Chinese merchants and coolies to support Western economic expansion in Southeast Asia created new business interconnections in Straits of Melaka. Moreover, a businessman

from Europe could not operate without a Chinese comprador because the Chinese, before the coming of Europeans, had long trade contacts with people in Southeast Asia. The Chinese were responsible for financing the plantations and businesses.

2.6. Making Boundaries: Belief Systems and Cultural Identities

Religious and ethnic issues involve a number of symbols. The symbols can be seen as the embodiment of religion, language and education, culture, and population composition. In the colonial period, Islam was used to unify Malays and assert their identity. Barbara Andaya and Leonard Andaya look at the important role of Islam in the colonial era by saying, “Malay Moslems returning from Cairo or the Hejaz brought reformist ideas which saw the renovation of Islam as a means of providing Malays with the means to respond effectively to the radical changes brought by the Europeans, Chinese and Indians” (Andaya and Andaya, 1982:248-249). Ali notes that Malaysia in 1980s saw “each ethnic group holds its own religions, its own culture and language, its own ideas and its own way” (Ali, 1984:14). By 1990 the association of Islam with Malays has grown stronger. Describing Malaysia’s situation in the 1990’s, Harold Crouch reports that “religion constituted another key element in ethnic identity and was a source of communal suspicion” (Crouch, 1996:168), but what I found in Penang during my fieldwork in 2010 was that religious divisions only became salient in political contests between Gerakan/UMNO and DAP. The present plural society of Penang is relatively supportive of harmonious interethnic relations.

Ethnic and cultural patterns in modern Penang society can be analyzed based on the interaction between the cultural politics of nationalism and global economic processes. Recent studies have stressed that these aspects have already brought “a series of conflicting cultural representations shaped by the tensions emerging from the interplay of Malay communalism, Islam, class differentiation, anti-colonial sentiments, gender, and global

modernity” (Goh, 2002:49). The validity of the recent rhetoric about how the Malaysian cultural landscape spurs a great number of Malaysians to put Malay first,²⁴ about which Surin (2010) complains²⁵ will also create tensions and ethnic boundaries. Surin implies that postcolonial Malaysia has public policy that strengthens the “Malay Domination” and it could neglect other ethnic groups such as Cantonese, Hakkas, and Hokkiens, Indians, and aboriginals (Dusuns and Ibans).

Although Malaysian Chinese originally came from many sub-ethnic groups of Southern China and embraced a great variety of religious values, the stereotype that Chinese are Communists²⁶ might be perpetuated in Southeast Asia. Some Muslims might think of these people as *kaffir* (non believers), and the Malays find that the Chinese are very fluid in terms of their beliefs. This presumption presents a boundary of Chinese political viewpoints, and subsequently shows the Malaysian Chinese in a different culture. In the past Sharma (1987) contended that Malay elites perceived some Chinese as having Communist proxies all over the world: “[T]he fear of communism stems from the three years of guerilla warfare that the newly-independent Malaysian government had to fight in the late fifties” (Sharma, 1987:2204).

The assimilation process at the national level, from the viewpoint of the Chinese, forces Malay-ness as a national culture and has made the Chinese second-class citizens in Malaysia. From 1980’s situation, Lee writes that “the remaining avenue for the discharge of

²⁴ I hear that some Malaysian Chinese and Indians feel uncomfortable with “the Malay First.” They feel that the state should treat all Malaysians equal. Pressure groups like Perkasa (Malay rights) seem to irritate the Malaysia Kini (a pro democracy group which operates a political news website in Kuala Lumpur).

²⁵ A few Malaysian writers in online media discuss the worsening political situation and resurgence of religion radicalism. This phenomenon affects the interethnic relations that tend to create some tension and religious conflicts in Malaysia. For an example, see Surin’s (2010) article “The benefit of being Malay” in *The Nut Graph*.

²⁶ The presence of Partai Komunis Indonesia (PKI) and Malaysia Communist Party (MCP) after the surrender of Japan was a big issue for Southeast Asia. Lai Tek and Chin Peng are two famous communist leaders in Malaysia and “through the early months of 1947 there was a marked increase in communist propaganda and violence associated with industrial disputes” (Andaya and Andaya, 2001: 271)

ethnic dissatisfactions is found within the confines of the status structure” (Lee, 1986:44). To some members of the Chinese sub ethnic groups, Chinese traditional language and culture is perceived as superior to that of the Malays, which leads the Chinese to preserve their culture.

The traditional beliefs of Islam and the Chinese are two influential factors in Malaysian society. Islam is the official religion in Malaysia, but this country is not an Islamic state, and being Malay is to be a Muslim, Malay-speaking individual. In contrast, the Malaysian Chinese still regard themselves as Chinese who practice many traditional Chinese customs. Even the Chinese Muslims who have married Malays show little desire to adapt Malay customs, thus serving to halt the process of assimilation at both an individual or community level. The study carried out by Embong reveals “resentment of the Islamic resurgence movements, which many non-Muslims blame for inhibiting interethnic and interreligious interaction” (2001:75).

The revival of Islam through the Dakwah Movement (Spreading Islam Values), like Anwar Ibrahim’s ABIM group²⁷ and the politicization of Islam in the public policy under Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad, further tightens social boundaries. Some observers believe that the growing tendency among political parties (the ruling party UMNO and the opposition party PAS) to invoke Islam exacerbates inter-ethnic hostility. Two Chinese political parties (MCA and DAP) try to accommodate Chinese constituents by promoting Chinese festivals. This is because “to ordinary Chinese in Malaysia, the most important teaching of Confucius which is meaningful to them is that relating to filial piety, respect for elders and ancestor worship” (Beng, 1988:8). Leo Suryadinata emphasizes that “as followers of Confucianism, Chinese work hard in order to glorify their family and ancestors”

²⁷Shamsul A.B reports that the Malaysian Islamic Youth Movement (ABIM) “ is a powerful and well-organized group consisting mainly of modernist Malay Muslim ex-student leaders originally led by Anwar Ibrahim” (2001: 220).

(Suryadinata, 2001:67). In other words, the Chinese tradition has the Chinese relate to filial piety, respect for elders and pay homage to (ancestor worship).

The growth of radical Muslim groups is a growing concern in Malaysia. A group of Muslim communities is using religion as an ethnic marker, which could create an ethnocentric feeling in interethnic relations. Some scholars pay attention to the radicalization of Islam, and Lee (1986) views this as a serious issue in Malaysia. The insecure feeling of non-Bumiputra and non-Muslims toward Islamization threatens the unity of Malaysian communities. According to some scholars, there is a need for pluralism management. Chen, for example, says: “It is the duty of those who are truly committed to the spirituality and principles of democracy, freedom, justice, equity and rule of law, irrespective of ethnic religious backgrounds, to be united and through concerted efforts, to find a solution acceptable to both Muslims and non-Muslims, for the well-being of our people” (Chen, 2002:160).

The religious issues are often used in political competition. When politicians try to get constituents' votes, they play on religion and ethnic sentiments. Nagata's (1970) study researches the positive and negative effects of Islamization in Malaysia. She finds that “whereas on the one hand the Islamic religion seems to serve as an institutional link capable of reducing some ethnic cleavages, it does not have the power to span the deepest cleavage of all, namely between the Chinese and other Muslims” (Nagata, 1976:346). Malaysia under Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad tended “to appropriate and incorporate Islam into their national vision by flexibility and pragmatically interpreting and rationalizing the religious doctrine” (Hamayotsu, 2006:356). Mahathir Muhammad also made the controversial statement that Malaysia is already an Islamic state in the opening of the Gerakan Annual Conference in September 2001. In relation to religious tolerance, Kheng finds a very strange

development of parochialism in Malaysia. The tension occurs not only between Muslims and non-Muslims, but also among Muslims. Kheng writes that the “Islamisation contestations were not only confined to the usual UMNO-PAS fisticuffs, [they are] also spilled over into the domain of civil society. In the early part of 2002, the Persatuan Ulama Malaysia (PUM) or Muslim Scholars Association of Malaysia accused several writers and social activists of disparaging Islam” (Kheng, 2004:106).

The revival of ‘Chineseness’ in Malaysia has also reshaped ethnic identity. The Chinese festival involving the lighting of firecrackers, the beating of gongs and theatrical performances is often misunderstood by the Malays. Chua’s comparative research on Islam and Chinese traditional beliefs concludes the following:

Certain religious values do have implications for interethnic interaction, for example, it is hard to find a Muslim who would go to a temple. Similarly, most of the Chinese would seldom go to a mosque and participate in its activities as the Malay value system is different from the Chinese. Islam is monotheistic and exclusive whereas the Chinese religious beliefs are polytheistic and rather tolerant of others (Chua, 2001:90).

Some tensions between the Chinese and Malay communities in Penang have arisen due to religious symbolism and miscommunication, such as when Muslim leaders rejected the plan of the Chinese to build a symbol of a Chinese Goddess in Penang. In October 1979, the construction of the 118 feet (35 meters) Chinese Goddess of Mercy, *Kuan Yin*, in Penang was opposed by the Penang Ulama because it would have been taller than the minarets of the Penang mosque (Lee, 1986:38). The two communities eventually compromised.

The descendants of Malaysian Indians are inclined to different religions such as Hindus, Sikhs, Christians and Muslims. The majority of Indian Muslims belongs to the

Penang Tamil Muslim ethnic identity and it is the second most prominent group after the Penang Babas. Although some of the Hindus and Muslims originally migrated from India, Malaysia has seen tension between these two groups. For example, Indian communities of Hindus and Muslims in Penang were involved in a conflict on March 27, 1998. This was due to a Hindu temple ringing its bells three times a day which began in January 1998. Muslims at a nearby mosque complained that the bells loudly sounded, and in late March, tensions had reached a point where hundreds of Hindus and Indian Muslims rioted in the normally peaceful streets of Penang. Media reported four people were injured, other Hindu temples and Muslim mosques were attacked, and police arrested rioters. In 1998, there was another ethnic clash at Kampung Rawa in Penang. On the 24th of March 1998, it was reported that the State Government had decided to cordon off a Hindu temple in Jalan Kampung Rawa following tension amongst residents. On the 27th of March 1998, the *New Straits Times* reported the Penang Chief Police Officer as saying the issue concerned the proximity of a Hindu temple to the Kampung Rawa mosque in Jalan Petani (Isa, 2010:2). The conflicts between Hindu and Muslim Indians in Penang show that, when social awareness weakens, the cultural identity of those social groups can result in hostility.

Currently some Malaysians see that Malaysia still experiences inequalities in power and wealth; all of ethnic groups include individuals who are economically or socially disadvantaged. But many scholars, both from Malays and non Malay perspectives, find the weakness of the New Economic Policy (NEP) is that it focuses on poverty among Malays. Indeed, in the past this was certainly an issue. In the 1980s the Malays' economic inferiority in the face of the non-Malays was a fact of life (Chua, 2001). The implementation of Affirmative Action within the New Economic Policy (NEP) showed that the most prominent issues of independent Malaysia were education and the disparity of economic power among the ethnic communities. The Malays lagged behind and some of them felt inferior to the

comparative wealth of the Chinese community. Malay political movements emerged based on this. The Malays distrusted the Chinese, because of a stereotype commonly used to incite local people: most urban Chinese are able to afford material goods. Horowitz reports that on the eve of independence, “Malays felt much less secure in the economy” (2007:28). Today, the political hegemony of the UMNO already exists in a variety of ways.²⁸ However, less affluent Chinese and Indians consider unfair the Affirmative Action (Bumiputra Privileges) of the New Economic Policy (NEP) that gives special privileges to the Malays. As a result, it excludes the non-Bumiputra such the lower classes of Chinese and Indian descendants.

Malaysia’s efforts to stabilize the interethnic relationships have, since the 1969 ethnic conflicts, been based on the economic inequality issue, and which has created public policy that favors urbanization²⁹ or the shifting of Malays’ occupations from rural to urban areas. This policy transforms the occupations of Malays from the rural-based or agricultural oriented to manufacture and business in new urban areas. The waves of migration of Malays from rural to urban areas and the transformation of social structures through which the Malays are creating a new Malay middle class have not successfully eliminated the tensions among ethnic groups. A few educated middle class Malays live in urban and cosmopolitan environments. Choi agrees that “the presumption here was that since social and economic disparities between the Malays and Chinese communities were responsible for tensions, a redistributive policy could aid in ensuring against or in preventing future outbreaks that may threaten the nation’s well-being” (Choi, 2005:81).

The plural society of Malaysia still needs more state policies to reduce ethnic tensions among the ethnic groups. The evaluation of the NEP and the creation of other sociocultural

²⁸ The hegemony of UMNO in the Political and Economic sectors shapes the public policies.

²⁹ This program has been implemented in many agendas such as state-led corporate, scholarship, privileges of Bumiputra for government projects.

programs to eliminate disunity among ethnic groups are an important future agenda intended to sustain harmonious relationships among the ethnic communities in Malaysia. The politicians and government officials need to work with scholars of the humanities, planners, artisans and educators to identify the factors which will help sustain Malaysia's plural society. There is a need to create a policy which embraces all of ethnic groups in a plural society and facilitates sociocultural instruments to ensure the harmonious multiethnic relationships. The privileging of the Bumiputra, in practice, frequently ignores the lower classes of descent of orang Asli (indigenous), Chinese, Indians and Eurasians, and can cause interethnic conflict which leads to disunity.

CHAPTER 3

URBAN ENCLAVES OF PENANG: PERCEIVED CULTURAL BOUNDARIES

3.1. Urban Enclaves of Penang

This chapter aims to explore the urban enclaves of Penang as they reflect ethnic boundaries in urban communities. Following the current paradigm of the cityscape which focuses on socio-cultural space, I use the symbolic meaning of early and contemporary urban forms of Penang to interpret ethnic groups and boundaries. This paradigm is put forth by King (1976 and 1990; Logan, 2002; Jenkins, 2008; King, 2008). The use of urban forms of Penang as the site of this research was adopted to find the ethnic boundaries. The principle factors such as beliefs, neighborhoods, house forms and social associations that have entangled individuals in specific constructed cultural identities reflect ethnic boundaries. By analyzing the socio-spatial realities of urban enclaves, I am testing the statements of DeBernardi (2004), to the effect that “many Penangites express pride in their cultural traditions and a desire to maintain aspects of a Chinese lifestyle” (220), and of Said and Majid (2004), who argue that “Jawi Peranakan commercial traders are perceived to display qualities of being opportunistic, assertive, and self-confident, selfish, and even unscrupulous” (109). I presume the combination of ethnogenesis and urban studies would be an appropriate way of tracing the prototype, type and stereotype of ethnic groups.

Before exploring the conceived ethnic boundaries, I trace the foundation of the urban areas of George Town as the capital of Penang. Francis Light simply designed the layout of Penang for economic and defensive purposes of the East Indian Company (EIC). The MPPP also states that:

[T]he township was laid out by Light between Lebu Light, Lebu Pantai, Lebu Chulia and Lebu Pitt, and was named George Town after King George III. George Town was essentially a mercantile town, thriving on the port harbour activities as the port served chiefly as depot for British trade with Malay states, through voyages of Chinese, India and Europeans, or the visits of native traders. The entrepôt trade.... was to account for much of the prosperity the island (1987:10).

Within the growing British colonial port of Penang there was a grid plan which divided the population into different settlements. Penang as a hybrid city embraced the cultures of British and Malays as well as immigrants. Anthony D. King argues that socio-cultural, political and psychological features of the British and local cultures shaped a British settlement (King, 1976:157). Urban Penang as a British settlement was developed based on the economic and defensive purposes which designed the locations of fort, cantonment, state offices, harbor administration, market and settlement according to ethnicity and race. It reflects that a British settlement was developed by non-indigenous population with adaptations to a local setting. For Logan (2002), the 'Asian-ness' of Asian cities is conceptualized as the interrelationships between cultural identity and the impression created by a series of globalizing waves. The interrelation between ethnicity and space in the city therefore creates the dynamic process of settlement during a city's development. There is an interactive process between cultural identity processes and spatial transformations in urban enclaves. New urban studies have added cross cultural and historical analysis to explore bounded spaces in the research (King, 1990:101-103).

The cityscape created urban enclaves after communities negotiated the British policy which regulated settlements. Ethnic groups adjusted their cultural identities within the British colonial port city.³⁰ Colonial policy, economic activities and ethnic enclaves interactively

³⁰The diversity of ethnic groups and mosaic of cultural identities in colonial port cities were due to the migration of people to coastal areas for economic activities. Carolyn Cartier (1999) contends "[m]any of the world's great cities are coastal settlements, places at the literal and metaphorical edge, where all the complexities

shaped the construction of towns and cities while in post-independence Malaysia the city is more affected by global forces. Cartier's (1999) exploration into the significance of the effects of the urban maritime cultural economy from a geographical viewpoint demonstrates the evolutionary process behind the development of colonial port cities with the rise of a global economy. She tracks the transition from entrepôt into colonial port cities and global cities. Furthermore, modern theories of power relations and the urban environment argue that city space involves the contestations of state policy, business interests, and the ethnic identities of residents (Yeoh, 1996; Jenkins, 2008; King, 2008; Goh, 2001).

In contemporary Malaysia, Ross King argues that the interstices and collisions of ethnic spaces, cyberspace and the spaces of formal and informal economic activities should be approached using a multiple spatial analysis (King, 2008:2-4). When I conducted field research in Penang, I observed that the ethnic boundaries of social groups correlated with a system of beliefs, dialect groups, social classes and the present contestations of spaces. As a result, ethnic boundaries are best understood within interethnic relationships, and when global trends or "Western preconceptions of cityscape" (King, 2008) are applied to explore the evolutionary process of urban enclaves in Penang, it inevitably introduces new characteristics of the urban.

Penang has been shaped by a great variety of cultures and traditions that settlers brought with them. The great world religions combined with traditions and eventually formed the profile of social life in Penang. From all over the world, the diversity of people who settled in Penang created a multiethnic society. Every ethnic group influenced the other, and each was affected by the policies of the British East India Company (Clodd, 1948; 95-100;

of culture and economy arising from historic patterns of migration and diverse forms of economic exchange have been possible and desirable"(1999:278)"

Hussin, 2007:185-187). I studied the mutual relations of Penangites³¹ in terms of social integration, commercial activities, government policies, and educational institutions. The poly-ethnic communities in Penang could rightly be called societies within larger societies. This mutual relationship has already created a dynamic relationship between each of these ethnic groups. Khoo (2001), for example, states that “Penangites abroad nostalgically refer to George Town as their *kampung*—their overgrown village” (21). Some scholars (Nagata, 1979; Evers, 2000 and King, 2008) report specific patterns of urbanization in the Indo-Malay cities; there is what can be termed an urban village.³² The migration process to Penang and its urbanization did not stop the proliferation of *kampung* but brought a “bewildering diversity” (King, 2008:22). Not only did this result in a fast-growing urban village, but “the ethnically differentiated ecologies and their distinctive architectures might have given a powerful sense of differentiated identities to the communities” (King, 2008:21).

The fast-growing urban village of Penang is mediated by the presence of people with technological skills, economic interests and diverse cultures. Despite a great variety of cultures brought by the immigrants from South China, India, Arabia and the archipelago, Western influence also shaped the forms of the urban such as architecture and social organization. Those factors were reflected in the recreation of urban forms and townscapes (Santos, 1977, quoted in Peet, 1998:127). Urban village development not only shows the reflection of mental images, by naming streets like Kapitan Keling, Chulia, China, and Armenian but it provides divisions for ethnic groups. The perceptions of boundaries by ethnic

³¹ It commonly said that people who have ancestors that originally come from Penang identify their specific characteristic as Penangites in Malaysia. It does not matter whether someone is the descendant of Peranakan Chinese, Tamils/Jawi Pekan, Arabs or Eurasians as long as his/her grandparents are from Penang. Penangites are different from other Malays in terms of behaviors and cultural identity. In Malay they call it *Anak Tanjong* or the islanders. In my observation, I captured different senses behind the word. Penangites may refer to the meaning of solidarity of Penang people, the British educated people, who are frugal, more democratic and independent.

³² The word *Kampung* (village) becomes urban village within the urbanization process in the Indo-Malaysian cities. This process creates urban ethnic enclaves with a communal feeling.

groups can be found in the creation of communities like *Kampung* Aceh, Deli, Arab, Malabar, and Serani. There are contestations of space; physical buildings (e.g. the Chinese shophouses, Khoo Kongsi Temple and Mosques of Acehnese) are used to solidify ethnic identities or to show the existence of a group to others. The symbolic meanings are rooted deeply in the structures of ideology and traditions which are reflected in architecture and social attachments. The complexity of relationships between social formations and environment modifies and transforms the spaces (Peet, 1998:128). Considering the study of urban forms which looks at the official and socially functions of buildings and spaces, which is commonly called the morphology of a city, I investigated the sense of cultural difference. King sees that cultural difference is partially reflected in “the spatial morphologies and forms of architecture” (King, 2008:28).

The urban environment is flooded with a great variety of human values because urban areas are where the space of government and people from different ethnic groups come together. It is reasonable when the study of urban settlements of Jawi Peranakan, Babas and Eurasians deal with the distribution of ethnic groups. Each of them lives in one urban setting and they enjoy similar public facilities like buildings, roads, and lands, but still maintain boundaries and negotiate their identities in relation to the state policies and other groups. Aziz and Kaloko have suggested (1999) that the distribution of urban communities is an indication of the cityscape. Moreover, an urban environment provides a historical record of changing political ideologies and a stage for national political events (Zhu & Kwok, 1997:127). Development and re-development of urban areas changes local cultural conditions and identities. It is therefore reasonable to expect that the built environment could be used to determine the demarcation of social groups. For instance, the Penang Eurasians who migrated from Kedah and Phuket built their *kampung* in Pulau Tikus on the northeast

side and this area became associated with Catholicism. The Tamil Muslims and Jawi Pekan lived in Chulia Street. The Malays of Sumatra dwelt in Lebuah Aceh.

Following Harvey's critique of modern cities, Karen Umemoto (2001) argues that pluralism and multiculturalism in cities has led planners to consider the sensitivity of culture and cultural difference. Pluralism and the development of cities have led to the interpretation of cultural history and collective memories (Umemoto, 2001:20). It suggests that affiliations with belief associations, political ideologies, clans, dialects, business and profession clubs and networking are mixed. The mixed identities of a plural society are reflected in the forms of the buildings and monuments of the city. In relation to cultural identity, Zhu and Kwok (1997) argue that urban space and the built environment reflect a city's history and tradition. There is also the pervasive feeling of communality and solidarity among ethnic groups that could exert an influence on their perceptions of others. Beside the suggestion to view present actions and events from past memory, Umemoto states that:

The stronger the racial or ethnic identification within a geographic community, the more likely residents share collective memory that is marked by the relevance of race or ethnicity.... [f]or communities that have faced oppressive or discriminatory treatment and feel they have done so due to the racial or ethnic identification, the memory of past experiences with outside institutions is often saddled with ambivalence toward those whom they identify with dominating groups (2001:21).

Since the very beginning, Penang has been the site of permanent and temporary settlements. Lee (1991: 23) argues that the influx of migrants from China and India to new colonial towns in Malaysia was due to the penetration of Western capital into two sectors (agriculture and mining) which resulted in the movement of the Malays to rural areas. In this pattern, Lee (1991) sees that racially-based occupations drove the Malays to rice fields and rural fishing areas, while a new phase of industrial life in the Malay Peninsula with

considerable capital investment created the networks of the Chinese, Indians and a few Europeans who dwelt in urban areas.

3.2. A Grid Plan of Colonial Urban Penang and Its Spatial Impacts

Following a spatial analysis of the urban environment and the evolution of the Penang cityscape, this research seeks to explore the evolution of Penang by analyzing the grid patterns of early George Town and their subsequent development. As I said above, the grid divided people based on ethnicity, race and occupation, and the contemporary culture has been influenced by the global cityscape. In order to see the current ethnic identity of social groups, the exploration of global culture is extremely important. The penetration of global culture into the Penang cityscape contributes to the metamorphosis of these ethnic boundaries. Global development offers the city new settlements with apartments, gated communities, and condominiums.

What was planned by Francis Light during the early stages of government affected the subsequent pattern and structure of Penang urban development (Lee, 1991:57). The morphology of urban settlements in Penang that started from the era of Superintendent Francis Light provided very important information about the development of ethnic enclaves and boundaries³³. Zhu and Kwok (1997) contend that the urban form of the various periods should be analyzed from a functional perspective. The way that state and civil society interact institutionally in the city can be viewed as similar to the ways in which space is utilized in the city. This concept brings the roles of identity and symbolic meaning into the foreground when discussing early Penang settlements. Not only did permanent settlements contribute to

³³ The urban morphology of Penang is viewed from British policy (1786-1957). In discussing the morphology of British colonial cities, King (1976) shows that a spatial analysis stems from a historically-conscious effort to construct the social functions of the built environment based on state policy and ethnic enclaves' interactions. He suggests exploring the geographical origin of inhabitants, their religion and particular languages, civil lanes and cantonments, residential sections, and urban-rural functions (1976:6-7).

ethnic diversity, but so also did the temporary settlements. The transient settlements of merchants and sailors also brought in their cultural values. New settlers and the seafarers who came seasonally to Penang affected interactions among the people. Based on the report of Francis Light, Clodd (1948) describes the interaction between permanent and temporary settlements. According to contemporary accounts, “they (Chinese) employ small vessels and prows and send adventurers to the surrounding country” (98), while, with regard to the Bugis, “though few inhabit here at present...they come annually to trade and remain two or three months on shore to the number of one or two thousand” (100).

The legacies of ethnic architecture are found the Penang vernacular buildings. The styles of urban Penang vernacular buildings are the concrete manifestations of ethnic identities. The Penang Hokkien and Cantonese communities jointly built the Kuan Yin Temple, the Kapitan Keling Mosque was sponsored by the Penang Tamil community and the Malay Mosque organized by the mixed-Acehnese and Arab descendants. Moreover, the shophouses of Penang Chinese and Tamils in the commercial areas and their settlements also reveal ethnic boundaries. Despite reflecting the ethnic identities, the urban Penang vernacular buildings adapted to the local environment and British policy. The main architectural forms of urban Penang vernacular buildings were imported from the places of origin of ethnic groups, but the use of Malay styles of ventilation and wooden doors for temperature adjustment, as well as government policies which regulated settlements, affected the Penang Chinese and Tamil architecture. In sum, their identities were coping with the interethnic dynamic interactions and uneven changes in state policy. For example, the British colonial government eventually regulated the sanitation and walkways of Chinese shophouses.

Historically, as has been mentioned above, the commercial and defensive functions of Penang reflected the general pattern of a colonial port-city as well as the local identity.

Penang was not only a node for collecting commodities from the hinterland of the Peninsula, but it was also a place for merchants, seamen and coolies to encounter each other in international markets. De Bierre (2006) describes the early township features of Penang, showing the condition of Penang under Francis Light. She states that “Francis Light assigned a street in George Town to each community; the Europeans clustered together in makeshift bungalows around the north beach area of Light Street where the proximity of the public well was no doubt considered an advantage “ (22). Lee (1991) furthermore contends that “the lukewarm attitude of the Directors of the East India Company about the settlement in Penang [meant that] no technical officers were sent to Penang to ensure the proper development of the Island” (59). The Penang settlement plan was not well designed, and the financial problems of Francis Light as the pioneer also contributed to the slow development of the very flat, and swampy area of Tanjong Penaga, the north part of the cape.

Though it was known as a coastal area plagued with flooding and an unhealthy environment, Francis Light nevertheless decided this area should be the base point of urban settlement. The weakness of Penang as a port city in a colonial era was often ascribed to the less organized and minimal support of the East India Company during the tenure of Francis Light as Superintendent. Lee (1991) contends that “no town plans were prepared before the settlement attracted many settlers. The only thing which could be seen as Light’s attempt to guide the proper growth of settlement was his delineations of four roads which formed a quadrangle at the tip of the promontory at the Northeast corner of the island” (56). The four historical roads that Francis Light designed were Light Street, Beach Street (close to the seashore), Malabar Street, and Pitt Street (in the middle of grid). Below, Plate 2 shows the urban design of Penang in the formative years of Francis Light’s era.

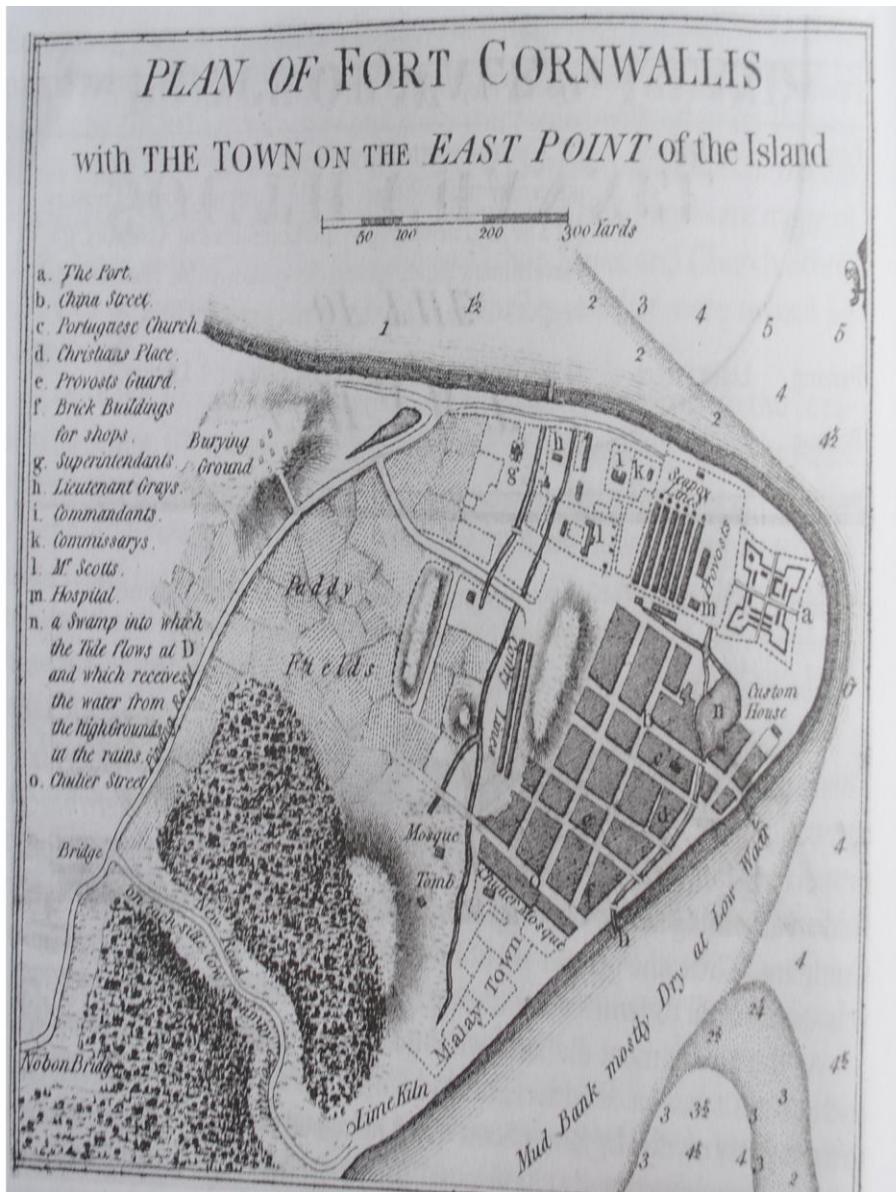


Plate 2 Plan of Fort Cornwallis with the Town on the East Point of the Island (Source: Hussin, 2007:148)

As soon as Penang was built as an entrepôt it had regional and international connections. In the first circle, there were regional links to the eastern coast of Sumatra, the Malay Peninsula and South Thailand. These connections helped shape the local identity of Penang whenever people from Sumatra, Malay Peninsula and Phuket crossed over to Penang. With the arrival of merchants from different ethnic groups: the mixed-blood Chulia and

Malay Kedah descendants, the Babas of Phuket and Kedah, and the Acehnese Arab form Sumatra urban enclaves emerged in the nineteenth century. The development also saw Sumatrans, Javanese, and Bugis flocking into Penang and encouraged connections to the entry-port of the Straits of Melaka, such as Phuket and Medan, North Sumatra. Other than Kampung Malay Aceh, Khoo (2001:20) notes there were migrants from Patani, Deli, Bertam, Java, Siam, and Burma.

The second circle was the international connections which integrated the Europeans, Arabs, Chinese, and South Asians. It made the sea connection between China and Southeast Asia more intense. From places in South China like Fujian, Guangdong, and Hainan provinces, Chinese of various occupations (e.g., merchants, monks, middlemen, seamen and cheap labors or *coolies*) sailed or traveled a few weeks through the China seas to Southeast Asia. As the Chinese immigrants were placed by colonialism in the middle position, they could establish networks in Southeast Asia through their connections to international markets. In terms of international trade, Andaya and Andaya (2001) explain the presence of British in the Straits of Melaka as follows:

The Malay archipelago, always sensitive to the shifts of international trade, was now caught up by far-reaching economic and political forces which were drawing Europe and Asia ever closer. Developments such as the expansion of Western technology, the tightening relationship between Europe government and commerce, and the shrinking of distance through improved communications began to transform the nature of Malay society. International agreements saw the establishment of political boundaries which became the basis of modern Malaysia; the growing association with industrializing Britain strengthened the role of Malay Peninsula as a supplier of raw materials; unprecedented Chinese and India migration encouraged the growing socioeconomic distinctions between the major ethnic groups” (117-118).

Trader migration has been the dominant pattern in the growth of Chinese emigration to Southeast Asian countries, particularly before 1850 (Poston, Mao & Yu, 1994:61). Penang,

a home port, could act as a vital intermediary between major ports of trade and communities on the adjacent river mouths and in their upstream hinterlands. As an entrepôt Penang had a function linking urban and rural areas, as well as the regional towns in the north part of the Malay Peninsula³⁴. By the means of transport lines which shipped and received goods through that port, the Chinese Diaspora existed in a littoral society in Southeast Asia and Penang.

3.3. Penang as a Port City within Local and International Communities

A port in the Straits of Melaka was needed to break the journey of the East India Company ships from India to China by the end of eighteenth century (Hussin, 2007:69). As a colonial port city Penang represented an urbanized area distinctively developing ethnic, 'racial', and religious pluralism. The functional features of Penang reflect a colonial system, and the very distinctive ethnic groups individually, collectively as well as institutionally constructed social relations within the city. Theoretically some scholars mention the function of ports as the node linking land and maritime transportation (Cartier, 1999; Hall, 2004; Hussin, 2007). Many aspects link Penang as a port city, but the most important aspect is the people with international connections who helped create the diversity of what are now known as Penangites. The connections of Chinese Diasporics to British economic networks have been a major factor in developing the cityscape of Penang. Although some Chulias and Indian Chettiars³⁵ owned land in the areas around the port and inner downtown of Penang, the factors related to economic activities and the functions of Penang as a point of economic exchange and articulation for Chinese are highlighted in several studies (e.g., Clodd, 1948, Lee, 1975; Leith, 1804 in Jenkins, 2007:39). The Chinese as the middlemen between the local

³⁴ The States of Kedah and Perlis bordered by Southern Thailand Provinces.

³⁵ Chettiars in Malay are Indian money lenders and owners of foreign-exchange currency shops. In my observation, I found that some Indian shops sell textiles, gold, diamond and other goods.

resource in the frontier region and port city of British rule were actively generating city development. They were also linked to the distant resource-consuming regions of the industrialized world.

Throughout the nineteenth-century colonial period, Southeast Asian colonial port cities experienced structural changes in response to dramatic transformations of the surrounding areas. In order to understand the function of a colonial port city, the historical explanation that Cartier (1999) mentions is important. Cartier contends that: “In the mercantile and industrial eras, the port was the functional economic node of the maritime world city, serving as a gateway for both people and things. In the postindustrial period that functions has split: Ports still transport things, but airports more commonly transport people” (1999:284). In Penang, this transformation was aided by the development of a plantation economy, mining, and an influx of dwellers from various social groups. The complexity of Penang’s urban communities indicates that the dynamic process of transformation itself distinguished this city. As a free port to help the East India Company to compete with the Dutch (VOC) in Straits of Melaka, Penang was used to serve the tin mining exports of Perak and to support the British navy should there be any occasion to contest the French expansion in the mainland of Southeast Asia (De Bierre, 2006:10).

The establishment of an international settlement by the British in Penang created a multi-racial, multi-religious and multi-cultural state (Keong, 2002:36). Yeoh (1996) rightly divides the three functional features of colonial cities when she discusses the British colonial power in the Malay Peninsula. The British built the harbor to serve export process of commodities. Colonial cities including Penang were characterized by a colonial social stratification system, asymmetrical power relations, and a transition from tradition to modernism that followed the model of a Western cityscape (Yeoh, 1996:1-3). As an entrepôt

in the Straits of Melaka which has the most diverse ethnic groups in Malay Peninsula, Penang under the British policy followed the three characteristics of colonial port cities. When the British policy was implemented, it assigned the Penang population into different occupations by ethnicity. For instance, the urban merchants mostly were the Babas and Chulias or Tamils, and their better situation helped them to survive. Those three features of colonial cities have been identified in accordance with the concept of a plural society as put forth by Furnivall (1956). It is clearly seen that Penang as a colonial port city was a place where the concentration of colonial, social, economic and political power shaped the structure of urban space.

The pluralism of port cities in the Malay World is associated with the bazaar sector³⁶. Ports as the marketplace for both local products and foreign ones have helped create these urban communities. This kind of township appeared in colonial cities “in the inner city areas of mixed, high-density land use in which industrial and retailing functions are combined with residential” (Yeoh, 1996:4-5). Penang’s built environment inevitably reflects the “transition toward modernity, cultural contact, and capitalism peripheral in colonial territory” (Yeoh, 1996:5), since the British needed a port in the Straits of Melaka to support the economic power which linked them to China.³⁷ In relation to those three morphological types (Yeoh, 1996:4-5) that formed the urban of port cities, I explored the spatial patterns of Penang, and enclaves of the Chinese, Tamil, and Malay communities. I observed the spatial grid of settlements and the styles of socio-religious buildings. I explored the Chinese, Indian Malay, and Western architecture which show ethnic boundaries. The Goddess of Mercy Temple, the *Tau Pek Kong Temple* of the Penang Baba Hokkien, Kapitan Kling and Malay Acehnese

³⁶ See Glossary, It is a creole word which means not merely market, but refers to the locus of transaction between local people and foreign traders from India, Arab and China.

³⁷ Sea power was important in the colonial era. Philip E Steinberg (2001:150) explains that the “[p]olitical economy development depend on controlling trade, which in turn was facilitated by exercising power over specific ocean routes. The sea was constructed as a ‘force field’ in the deep sea”.

Mosques as well as the Nagore Shrine are the best places to observe ethnic identities. Finally I explored new developments within Penang that are a result of the global culture by looking at features like apartment construction, condominiums, and gated communities. The next subtopics summarize the characteristics of Penang and ethnic boundaries.

3.4. Penang Cultural Boundaries and the Spatial Analysis

Modern urban studies discuss spaces and ethnic enclaves. State policy regulates the use of spaces but ethnic groups also influence the ways in which spaces are used for socio-religious and economic purposes. Here I analyze the functions of a grid which manages diverse ethnic groups. Captain Francis Light who was appointed as Superintendent of Penang designed the spatial grid for land use, with street lines to differentiate the various settlements of Penang's pioneers. Regarding land use, Penang has "(t)he gridiron street structure bordered by Light Street, Beach Street, Chulia Street, and Pitt Street"(Widodo, 2004:113), and except in Light Street, along those streets the urban enclaves grew. The description of an influx of settlers in the early development of Penang was reconstructed chronologically by Tan Liok Ee:

The first flows came from Kedah and other Malay states in the Peninsula, from Aceh and other parts of Sumatra as well as the Malay Archipelago and neighbouring Siam and Burma, followed by those from distant lands- Hadramaut, India and China (2009:10).

Kader Mydin Merican, the first Kapitan Kling, is reputed to have come to Penang from Kedah in 1786. Koh Lay Huan, the first Kapitan Cina, also from Kedah, is believed to have arrived a few days after Light. There were European traders and adventurers such as James Scott, who was Light's business partner, and David Brown, who become the biggest landowner on the island in his time. At the other end of the social scale were convicts from India, coolies and craftsmen from China, and Malay peasants who flooded in from Kedah after Siamese attacks on the state began in 1821 (2009:11).

After the Siamese conquest of Kedah, sufis³⁸ sought refuge in Penang...Catholic led by Bishop Garnault had come to Kuala Kedah, where the congregation had first taken refuge from Siamese persecution in Ligor and Phuket³⁹. Similarly, the Portuguese Eurasians were Catholic who left Melaka, then still under the Dutch, to come to Penang (2009:11).

Culturally and demographically the original makeup of Penang was less dominated by the Malays, but more by Tamils. Eventually, the English and Chinese presence in Penang became more apparent. The creation of ethnic groups and boundaries in George Town is similar to the characteristics of British colonial port cities that also experienced an ethnicized process. Trading routes and the formation of ethnic groups are correlated; there is a long evolutionary process of ethnic identities. It started from the Sumatrans, Siam, Burmese, Chinese and Tamils who travelled to Kedah and the contact of those Asian merchants with the Portuguese, Dutch and British along the Melaka Straits. Before the agreement signed by Francis Light and Sultan Abdullah of Kedah, some scholars argue that a few Minangkabau⁴⁰ and Chinese had been on the island prior to Francis Light's landing (e.g., Widodo, 2004:112; Nagata, 1979:19-20)

Despite modern claims about earlier settlers, the unique characteristic of early Penang was the emptiness of the island. Clodd reports that "when Francis Light landed in 1786 he found only a small remnant of Malays at Dato' Kramat. In 1795 a grant of this clearing was given to Maharaja Setia who claimed that he was the descendant of Dato' Kramat" (Clodd,

³⁸ Sufism, according to the *Dictionary of Religion* (1995:1029), is a term that is generally applied to mystical currents in Islam; "the word is derived from *suf* (Arab, "wool"), pointing the woolen frocks of Middle Eastern ascetic".

³⁹ Ligor is Nakorn Si Thammarat in Siam. Francis Light is often associated with the connection of Phuket Island in South Thailand to Kedah. In Malay, people call this Island *Ujung Selang/Thalang*, rendered by 18th century British as Junk Ceylon Island (Ian Morrison, 1993:13).

⁴⁰ Following Vaughan's report, Nagata (1979) cites that there were 23 souls of four families of itinerant fishermen in Penang when Francis Light arrived: the three Nakhodas from Minangkabau-Intan, Bayan, and Kecil. Nagata also explains that the word Nakhoda is from Persia which means 'sea captain' (19-20), additional information argues that the pioneer of Penang was Chinese community in *Tua Kay village* or China Street now (Widodo, 2004)

1948:46).⁴¹ It became the desired destination of immigrants from India and China which resulted in the dominance of urban communities by Chulias and Chinese. When it was built as a port city, as Wang (2001) postulates, the colonial power created the boundaries of ethnic groups in the island communities of Southeast Asia. Wang states “different peoples, indigenous or not, forming distinct tribes and linguistic or ethnic communities that have never lived under a single polity before, were put into new all-embracing political unit” (Wang, 2001:22).

For better analysis of ethnic enclaves and perceived ethnic boundaries of Penang, I referred to the basic premise of urban enclaves given by Zhu and Kwok (1997). The basic urban space has two types of function, and urban forms are intended to satisfy the social and economic needs of the civil society (Zhu and Kwok, 1997, 125-127). The built environment also serves a symbolic function, and guides public behavior and expressions. From the historical record, Penang in the period of early development was divided into two zones for commercial and residential areas (Widodo, 2004; Jenkins, 2007). The simple grid of streets that Francis Light planned was laid out from Light Street, Beach Street, Chulia Street, and Pitt Street or Jalan Mesjid Kapitan Keling (De Beirre, 2006:21). Widodo (2004) reports that the commercial area was assigned to the Eurasian, Chinese, and Indian Muslim communities, and the northern part was chiefly assigned to British and other Europeans to settle. This left the southern part of the city for the Malays to populate, and although there was no strict segregation of different communities, “the British built a fort and connected the old city with the new European area by extending grid structure of the city” (Widodo, 2004:113).

The early morphology of Penang was divided into a port, fort, government office, business market, a graveyard, and settlements based on ethnic groups. The patterns of built

⁴¹ See Glossary

construction, according to Lee (1991:58) show that the surrounding area of Fort Cornwallis (north part of the island of Penang) functioned as the Admiral's House, Government House, and across from Light Street, there were government officers and warehouse. Moving from north side, close to the middle of the town, the public offices and court house were laid out on Pitt Street near the commercial area. Toward the south along Beach Street, the Master Attendant's office, rice godown, and the fish and fowl market were constructed. The two grounds reserved for religious buildings were designed separately, for a church near the Public Offices and a Mosque positioned near the southern portion of the Malay settlement. Widodo (2004) reports that "a concentration of Muslim community was formed around the mosque in Acheen Street [, and a] row of Muslim shop-houses....were from Aceh, Malays, Arabs, and Jawi Peranakan" (113). The policy regulated the position of the Chinese in urban areas, and the "Malay kampongs" of the Muslims from Kedah and Aceh in the edge of the grid (Jenkins, 2007:37) up to the Perangin River.

During the spatial development from 1786 until 1858, Penang saw the expansion of the town from the original structure (Barber, 2009). In observing the development of urban communities in Penang, by taking a look to southward of George Town, Clodd (1948) says; "the various styles of building used in the construction of habitations of this small town have a strange effect—the European house, the Hindoo [sic] bungalow, the Malay cottage, the Chinese dwelling and Burman hut are mingled together" (120). Based on the historical development, Jenkins (2007:37) notes the growth of the population of George Town and the appearance of a new settlement beyond the early gridiron, and she says that these communities were "either pushed out to the parameters, overlaid by rows of terraced shophouses, or absorbed completely into urban landscape, identifiable only by street name or remaining the places of worship" (2007: 37). For example, the record of the Municipal

Council of Penang Island (MPPP) reveals that “in 1890, the spatial growth of the urbanization areas resulted in three tentacles of growth extending from George Town to Ayer Hitam, Tanjung Bunga and Glugor” (MPPP, 1987:12). The Chinese moved to Ayer Itam and a Glugor Estate financed by British investors not only recruited Indians immigrants but also brought the expansion of urban areas to the south. The next development in 1900 saw the construction of commercial buildings, mansions, towns, and the access from Tanjung Bunga to Batu Feringgi and Telok Bahang (MPPP, 1987: 12). The map of Penang (figure 2) shows the web of roads which made up the new settlements located in Ayer Itam. Then Tanjung Tokong, Tanjung Bunga, Bayan Lepas have access to George Town and port areas in 1840. Reading the Map development (Plate 3) of the early development of Penang (1786 -1900), according to the MPPP, could be ordered as follows:

1. Clearing the land from Tanjung Penanga (northern point), where the British Fort Cornwallis stands.
2. Encouraging the all settlers of nations to clear and occupy the eastern side.
3. Laying out the site of township between Light Street, Beach Street, Chulia Street, and Pitt Street.
4. Building George Town, after King George III, as a mercantile town
5. Developing an entrepôt trade to connect India and China.
6. Improving a network of roads in 1800.
7. Setting Residency facilities in 1805.
8. Extending three tentacles of growth from George Town to Ayer Item, Tanjung Bunga, and Glugor in 1817.
9. Emerging of commercial buildings, townhouses, and mansions by 1900.
10. Building roads to connect downtown to Batu Feringgi and Telok Bahang in 1900.

(MPPP, 1987:11-12)

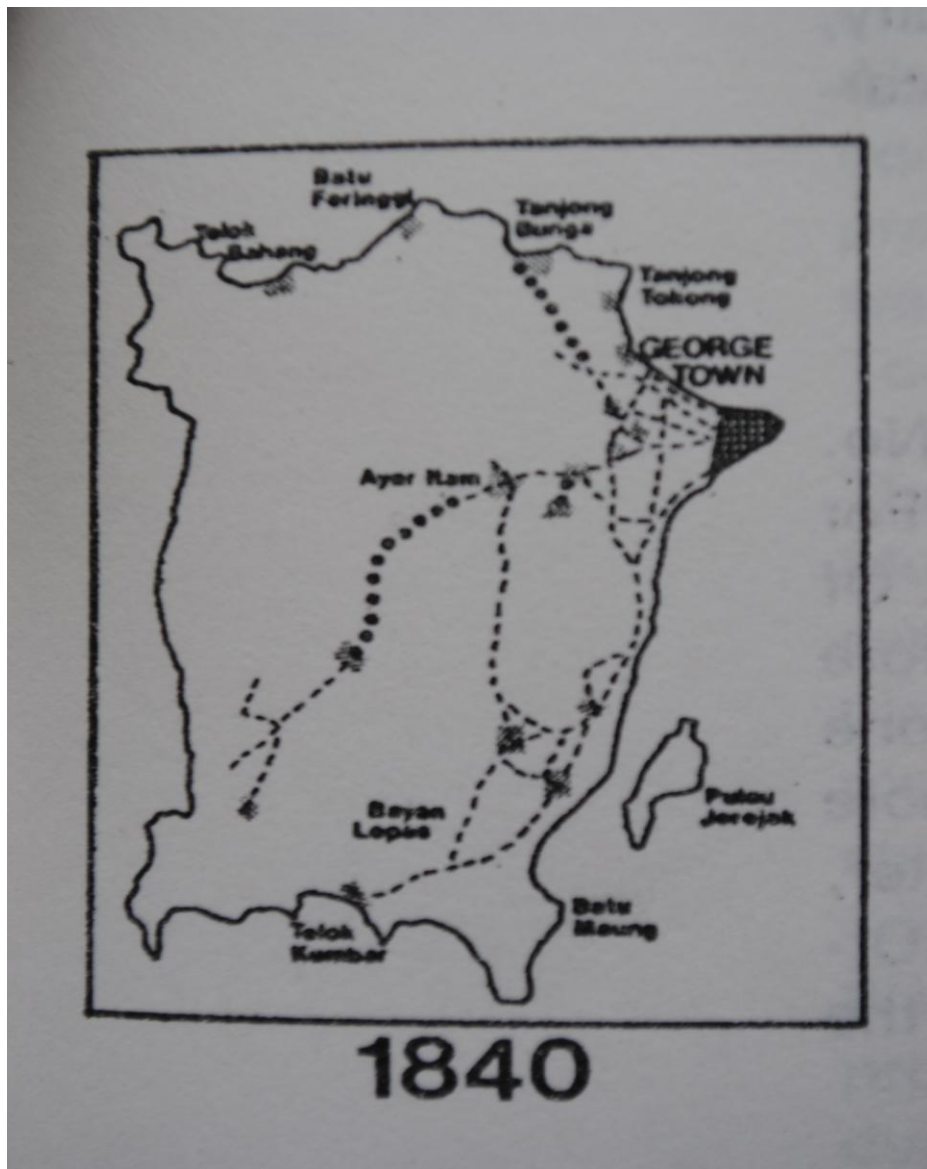


Plate 3 Map of Penang Urban Development in 1840(source: MPPP, 1987)

3.5. The Boundaries of Socio-religious Buildings.

Urban Studies and urban anthropology recommend studying city neighborhoods, social organizations, and occupations of people who migrate from the uplands to urban areas in the lowlands (Bruner, 1961; Eames and Goode, 1977; O'Connor, 1983; Pelly, 1999).

Logan (2002) also argues that the impact of colonialization in Southeast Asia is evident in

immigration, pluralism, and the ethnic division of labor and the cities as the center of modernity (71). Urban forms display government policy and the beliefs of ethnic groups in the cities. Based on geographical analysis, Rapoport (1969) further conceptualizes a framework for analyzing the forms of primitive and vernacular buildings by considering the cosmology and social forces that affect them. Rapoport argues that the specific characteristics of culture need to be considered since they affect housing, settlement forms, and utilitarian features (47). These cultural aspects are addressed in the following paragraphs.

In an architecture book (*Vastu Sastra*) of Indian tradition, the practice of *Mandala*⁴² cosmology was implemented in constructing temples and government buildings, while the Chinese apply Geomancy (*Feng Shui*).⁴³ Additionally, the Malay's *Tajul Muluk* describes the mythical process of land selection by the Malays in building a settlement (Al-Ahmadi, 2000). Champakalakshmi explains that the *Vastu* signifies residence, the *Mandala* denotes a closed polygon enumerated in a progressive series of squares, 64 and 81. *Vastumandala* (the planned site) suggests following *purusha*, the cosmic man (Champakalakshmi, 2001:13-15) that is also practiced by the descendants of Indians in Penang. They brought this architectural practice which basically reflected the Hindu belief system. I obtained information that the Tamil *Nagore Shrine* on Chulia Street and Chinese's *Mazu Shrine* in the Goddess of Mercy Temple on Pitt Street (now Kapitan Kling Street) could have similar functions for people who crossed the ocean or those who depended for their livelihood on the coastal areas. Those shrines are believed to aid in protecting and bestowing prosperity and are protectors for seafarers. Since the Tamils and Chinese dominate Penang, the *Mandala* Cosmology and the Chinese Geomancy (*Feng Shui*) probably mixed and adjusted to state policy in constructing

⁴² See Glossary, The mountain area corresponds to the head, the places of temple, ancestors grave and chief's house. Like the position of foot, a river and coastal area is low for waste disposal, and dirt (Widodo, 2004:4).

⁴³ See Glossary. In *Feng Shui*, physical build is viewed as a living body which supports and nurtures the inhabitants (Collins, 1996:7-8).

religious and social buildings. Although *Mandala* cosmology regulates the hierarchy of human settlements based on the Veda, some people might practice this concept in Indonesia and Malaysia. The process of Indianization in Southeast Asia (cf. Winzeler, 2011:42) might have spread Indian culture, which became acculturated to archipelago traditions; as a result, there are a few people who practice the Mandala cosmology in Indo-Malayan communities.

The development of the cityscape of Penang is related to the construction and transformation of individuals, communities, and institutions in landscape. Traditions relating to Mahayana Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism among the descendants of Chinese interacted with the Malays and British policy. The Tamils and Jawi Peranakan who moved from Kedah adjusted to the township system under a colonial system. The Malays who were very loyal to *Penghulu* (headmen) and royal families had to deal with a new environment in Penang; the Malays came from the mainland of the Malay Peninsula, Sumatra, and Borneo to Penang and faced the diversity of urban communities. In the next development, the religious buildings in Penang, like the Goddess of Mercy Temple and Khoo Kongsi, Kapitan Keling Mosque, Malay Mosque and Sri Mahamariamman Temple show the cultural identity of people who reside around and are affiliated to them. Penang's architecture represents the Malay-Arab, Chinese, Jawi Peranakan and Anglo-India styles as well as a European colonial style.

Identifying ethnic boundaries from a psycho-cultural point of view in which the ethnic groups show their self-identity contributes to the study of symbols and associations. In relation to the house forms of Tamil Muslims, they also built housing which reflected the identity of their original hometowns and villages. According to Said and Majid (2004) report, the wealthy Tamil merchants and traders lived in the "large compound houses built according to Anglo-Indian architectural influence" (138) and "the Straits bungalows of half-masonry

timber” (139). The study of Said and Majid also reports that the Tamil merchants mostly lived in Hutten Lane, Perak Road, and York Road (2004:139). Interestingly, some of the Jawi Peranakan houses adopted the Indo-Malay style.⁴⁴

The tendency to choose to live with the neighbors of same ethnic group can be seen in Penang. Ethnic and social groups are salient for settlements and economic needs, although the contemporary development also shows ethnic enclaves mingled together with social class. O’Connor’s (1983) case study of urban growth in Southeast Asia shows that the city is pervaded by community spheres in which communal idioms (shared locality, ethnicity, and fictive kin) culturally play an important role (5). Furthermore, Pelly (1999:158) explains that “each of the ethnic settlements tended to bring their home village house style (architecture) and their cultural sphere. It is understood that their spatial arrangement around the city was quite different from the one in the center of the city center (Western).” Urban development has been characterized by the kaleidoscope of smaller communities and urban networks that we can find in religious affiliations, schools, ethnic groups and quarters (O’Connor, 1983:84). In addition to those institutions, key festivals celebrated by urban communities of Malaysian cities such as Prophet Muhammad’s birthday (Maulid), the birthday of the Sultan and a Buddha image or relic strengthen perceived ethnic identities (1983:86-87). However, the future challenges of urban enclaves in Penang are gentrification and new development. Penang’s ethnic settlements have changed. Some Penangites feel concerned that George Town, which was a collection of urban villages that made the Penangites proud of the traditional neighborhoods, will disappear.

⁴⁴ The one of legacies of Penang wealthy Jawi Peranakan is the hybrid architecture of Indian masonry Bungalow and Malay tradition.

3.6. Perceived Symbolic Meaning of Chinese Shrines and Shophouses

In this section I focus on the Chinese communities that dominate the city area of Penang.⁴⁵ I explore the localized religious culture and behavior in business. This analysis is limited to the Chinese enclaves that are characterized by temples and shophouses. Temples which are dedicated to the Buddha, Kuan Yin and territorial deities show the spirituality of the Chinese and their economic activities are reflected in the dynamic styles of Chinese shophouses. Chinese clan associations built temples and shophouses to serve their belief practices and business. The old temples and shophouses of Chinese communities are the icons of Penang as a colonial city, based on the Chinese concept of *Feng Shui*, the Chinese practice *wu fu lin mei*, or ‘all happiness come into the house’ (Cai, 2006). *Feng Shui* and the Eight Trigrams are used to make nature harmonious for inhabitants; the *bagua*⁴⁶ and the symbolism of each trigram must be considered for a given site. The perception of reality based on the fundamental interconnectedness of events across time and space. For both security reasons and to adjust to the flow of wind, climate, and seasons the Chinese follow the rule. The south is suggested for the entrance and the north is the back yard, while internal spaces also regulated based on the hierarchy of the family members (Cai, 2006; Collins, 1996). Cai (2006) explains the vernacular architecture of the Chinese:

In accordance to principles of Feng Shui and the Eight Trigrams, upon the entering the house, one is greeted by an exquisitely crafted screen wall, which, in the past, carried out the function of warding off evils spirits. It is also helps in creating space and maintaining privacy (112).

A turn to the west of the main gate would be a small and narrow front yard. To south of the courtyard are the living room, study, accounts room and storage room. To the north of the yard is the second and inner gate of the compound, which is also situated along the axis. The two festoon pillars at its sides are exquisitely carved with elaborate floral designs, making it the most prominent

⁴⁵ The Penang Chinese Communities vary in terms of dialect groups, education, social class, and occupations. However the Penang Baba Hokkiens who speak English and Malay dominate the urban area.

⁴⁶ See Glossary

design element in the entire courtyard compound. The festoon gate acts as a divider between the outer and inner courtyards. Behind the festoon gate is the main living compound of the courtyard house (112).

I analyzed the functions of Chinese temples and shophouses to determine the extent to which they reflect ethnic boundaries. The Penang Chinese practice *Feng Shui* (Geomancy) and the Eight Trigrams⁴⁷ to show their perceptions of ethnic groups and boundaries. I carried out my observation in Penang to note the degree of functional meanings behind temples and shophouses. At first, in my survey I found two types of temple: one based on beliefs and the other on territorial association.⁴⁸ Chinese temples in Penang have many shrines such as Amitabha Buddha, Queen of Heaven, Kuan Yin (Goddess of Mercy), Goddess of Earth, and Mazu. They pay homage to many deities. Additionally, Tong (2002) argues that Chinese culture encourages paying homage to deities in order to attain a harmonious life. Tong states: “The cult⁴⁹ movement hinges upon the devotees’ attempts to attain harmony with the environment in which they carve out a niche for themselves and at the same time maintain a sense of continuity between past and present, present and future” (1996:70). Chinese cultural identities are reflected when the Chinese use the temples and space to observe their sacred days which revive rituals, myths and symbols (Tong, 1996:70).

The Chinese communities have different dialects, cults and clans. Hallgren’s (1986) study in Penang reveals that there are fifty-three Chinese clan and territorial associations that

⁴⁷ Bruun (2008) argues that the practice of planning sites in the Chinese architecture follow the Eight Trigrams.

⁴⁸ Despite Buddhist Temples, each of Penang kongsi built territorial or clan worship places as dedication to local tradition of South China. For example, the grandest clan temple in Malaysia is located in Cannon Square, Penang organized by Khoo Kongsi.

⁴⁹ Tong elaborates the meaning of procession in rituals. It is believed that those rituals integrating present situation and past situations, and the rituals annually are organized by territorial kongsi within Malaysian Chinese community.

emanate from local social ties, state order in China, and customs in confined areas in China (46-47). Based on the functions of Chinese temples, I traced the boundaries of territorial and clan associations. In my observation I compared the religious buildings to clan association temples. I explored Chinese affiliations with Buddhism, Taoism, and Confucianism as religious markers and local deities to find which temples were used to mark territory. Two important buildings of the Chinese-Buddhist tradition are the Goddess of Mercy temple in Kapitan Keling Street and the Kek Lok Si Temple in Ayer Itam. I observed Chinese ritual in the Goddess of Mercy temple. I did not choose the Kek Lok Si (Jile Si) Temple because my focus was on the George Town area and Kek Lok Si Temple is located in the suburb of Ayer Itam which leads to Penang Hill, while the Goddess of Mercy is in George Town itself. The Mazu shrine is located in the Penang Goddess of Mercy (the Kuan Yin) Temple as well.⁵⁰ For a clan temple, I chose the Hokkien community's temple, Tau Pek Kong, in downtown. This Tau Pek Kong Temple is the traditional site of the descendants of the Baba Hokkien community; the latter dominates the Chinese groups in Penang.

For a better understanding of internal Chinese boundaries, I first visited two temples: the Penang Goddess of Mercy (The Kuan Yin) on Pitt Street and Tua Pek Kong (Hock Teik Cheng Sin) of the Hokkien clan on Armenian Street. The Goddess of Mercy Temple is founded on the basis of Buddhism while the Tau Pek Kong Temple is dedicated to local deities of the Hokkien community. The Penang Goddess of Mercy Temple is located in the central position of inner city George Town facing the sea. It has excellent geomantic influences (Wong, 1999 as cited in DeBernardi, 2004: 27; Widodo, 2004:113-115). The Hokkien and Cantonese communities built the Goddess of Mercy Temple (De Bierre, 2006;

⁵⁰ The Chinese Hall and the Penang Goddess of Mercy Temple are in one compound. The Southern Chinese merchants who travel to Southeast Asia respect the Mazu shrine. In their ships they use this shrine to bless their journey and to protect them from evil.

Khoo, 2001), and it is believed to be dedicated to Ma Chor Po, the patron of seafarers.⁵¹ Other sources say Kuan Yin is a Bodhisattva, “the personification of compassion and selfness...[who] remains in this world to guide fellow beings out of suffering and towards the path of enlightenment” (De Bierre, 2006:44). Cheah (1983 quoted in DeBernardi, 2004, 32) explains that the Chinese provide altars for Kuan Yin and other deities--the Heavenly Mother, the God of Agriculture, the Life–Preserving God, and the God of War--in Kong Hok Palace (in Hokkien), and in the Goddess of Mercy Temple (in English).

The characteristics and the functions of the Penang Goddess of Mercy Temple which is attached to a forty-foot-square Chinese Hall on Pitt Street bears meaning for the Chinese. The Goddess of Mercy Temple, Penang’s foremost Chinese Temple, was erected in 1800. There are some religious processions that are held based on the lunar calendar in the Goddess of Mercy Temple. Khoo says that the feast days that Penang Chinese celebrate in the Goddess of Mercy Temple fall on the 19th day of the second, sixth, and ninth months of Chinese lunar calendar which mark the birthday, initiation, and attaining of Nirvana (Khoo, 2001:150). For further understanding of the Penang Goddess of Mercy Temple, the following items, reported by Vaughan (1971:59-60), are very useful: (1) two lions painted green, red, and black, as well as an urn in which sacrificial papers are burnt; (2) The images of Kuan Yin (the Goddess of Mercy and the virgin of the lotus flower), *Ma Chow Poh* (the patroness of virgins), the Queen of Heaven and four different attendants; (3) a five-foot-square hole which enables the idols to command a view of the sea; (4) An altar which has an oblong metal urn to hold incense sticks that is placed three feet from the idols’ house; (5) a wooden stand for candles on each side of the altar; and (6) one hundred slips of bamboo bearing Chinese characters. In addition to the Chinese decorations in this temple, such as the

⁵¹ Mazu or Ma Chor Po (in Hokkien)

dragons that decorate the roof, there is some borrowing from British culture. De Bierre (2006:44) reports that Western-style chandeliers as well as Chinese lanterns illuminate the rapt faces of the worshippers in the Penang Goddess of Mercy Temple

The second temple is the clan and territorial temple of the Hokkien. As I said before, I chose this temple because the Hokkien are the majority group of the Chinese; although other subgroups such as the Hakkas, Teochews, and Cantonese also built many temples in Penang. The Khoo is one of the big five clans. Chen's (2002) case study in Penang shows that Khoo Kongsì Temple has three shrines which are dedicated to local deities and Earth Gods of China:

Hock Teik Cheng Sin, now being the local territorial god, can be in relativity to Tua Sai Yah, as we come to regard territoriality. Tua Sai Yah, one of the patron saints of Chiang Chew prefecture back in southern Fujian, is here enshrined in the central hall in the temple.we may label this type of territoriality 'historical' (of the surname clan), while Tua Pek Kong (alias Hock Teik Cheng Sin) may be 'geographical' (of the indigene), Tua Sai Yah, following this proposition, may be categorized as historical-geographical in territoriality terms, this 'both-and' characterizes its central positions in the Khoo Temple. This could be what kongsì territory is all illuminating, it encompasses both historical and geographical dimension of territoriality. 'Kongsì temple', while serving for symbolizing complicated implications of territoriality, is a proper term relative to 'clan temple' (9).

Despite some adaptation⁵² of Anglo and Malay styles in parts of the Chinese settlements, the Chinese communities in Penang also preserve boundaries based on beliefs, territorial deities and social class. At the very least, the Chinese use Malay doors⁵³ and obey the British regulations such as providing space for pedestrians. Some Chinese also visit the Malay shrine (Dato Kong).⁵⁴ In an effort to retain Chinese tradition, the Penang Chinese

⁵² The Sothern Chinese (Fujian and Guangdong Provinces) architecture adapted to the Penang condition was due to the environment adjustment and building material supplies. Despite following the Feng Shui, the tropical characteristics of this island like climate, wind and rain among factors that considered.

⁵³ The size of a Malay timber door is 33" X 83".

⁵⁴ See Glossary

associations solidify their communities. Cai (2006) explains that the symbolic meaning of ornamentation in Chinese architecture. Designs of roof and ornaments are placed in the curved ends of the roof ridge. These take the form of ornamental pottery, like animal mouths and owl's tails which serve as totems guarding against fire, a mythical dragon which symbolizes the emperor, a lion as symbol of strength, and the green dragon, white tiger, red bird, black union of tortoise and snake which are representative of the four points of the compass cardinal directions, east, south, west, and north (136-137). With respect to Buddhist influence, Cai says that the typical Buddhist temple is symmetrically oriented and all the buildings in the temple such as the bell and drum tower, the main hall, and library are all situated along the axis (67-68).

Kongsi (Chinese associations) temples not only preserve local shrines and ancestor tablets, but also maintain territorial solidarity. The ethnic identities of the Penang Chinese are inclined to a great variety of beliefs, cults and territorial shrines. If one tried to define the Chinese in one identity, there would be a complexity of ethnic identities of Penang Chinese due to religions, dialects, and localities of their origin. Religious institutions, which have always had a significant place for Chinese in Penang, and the clans and territorial institutions often occupy an important intermediary position between the ethnic groups and the state and other groups in terms of economic and social purposes. One might expect that Chinese who maintain a close link with clan and territorial associations would have a better feeling of solidarity.

In terms of temple buildings, Chinese ownership of land for places of worship and associations highlights the domination of Chinese over the other social groups in George Town (Lee, 1973). Of the 17.5% of the land used for religious and community organizations in George Town, Lee (1973:30-40) reports that Chinese temples and Kongsi take up over half

of that (9.5%) in comparison to churches (6.04%), the Hindu Endowment Board (5.1%) and the Muslim Endowment or Wakaf (1.8%), demonstrating a clear majority for Chinese temples.

The Chinese domination over other ethnic groups is also apparent in Chinese shophouses. Fels (1994) contends that the shophouse neighborhoods of Penang characterize the urban form, especially in George Town. Shophouses create the uniqueness of urban Penang. Fels (1994) reveals that the Chinese, who have had a long urban tradition since arriving in Penang, began building in areas attached to the mercantile zone. They constructed shophouses responding to the strength of the sun and force of the rains. Although they adopted the Chinese design, the Chinese shop houses borrowed the Malay porch and from this created the continuous, covered verandah-type walkway. Along with the Indian immigrants, the Chinese were the shopkeepers of Penang. The growing Chinese wealth was reflected in the commercial sector and the increase in the number of Chinese shophouses in twentieth century. I also used shophouses as a marker of ethnic identity for the Chinese communities in Penang. The styles of Chinese shophouses in Penang have experienced changes. According to an official brochure (George Town World Heritage), the Chinese shophouses continuously change in styles. There are six styles of Chinese shophouses from 1790 to 1950. The Chinese shophouses can be classified into:

1. Early Penang [Chinese] Style (1790-1850's) has 1-2 stories (low); simple façade.
2. Southern Chinese Style (1840s-1990) is 2-3 stories which combined Chinese, Indian, and European styles. The Chinese influence included a carved timber door, air vents, gable end, and air-well; the European and Indian influence included louvered shutters and U [and] V-shaped terracotta roof tiles.

3. Early Straits [Chinese] Eclectic Style (1890s-1910s) is characterized by the adoption of full-length windows and geometrically patterned floor tiles of Europe.
4. Late Straits [Chinese] Eclectic Style (1910s-1930) adopts more European architecture elements such as projecting columns, arches, brackets, plaster relief, [and] embossed tiles below the windows.
5. Art Deco Style (1930s-1960s) has Shanghai plaster wall finishing combined with Art Deco Façade and geometric design highlighting vertical and horizontal lines.
6. Early Modern Style (1950s-1970) uses modern technology and engineering developments. It has sunshade fins [and] metal framed glass windows.

3.7 Perceived Cultural Identity of Indian Muslims

Before the coming of the British to Malaya, Indian merchants and traders already sailed to the Indo-Malay islands. Some Tamils of South India even married Malay women and lived in the Malay Peninsula and Sumatra. In the present context, the sense of identity of descendants of people from the Coromandel Coastal areas of Southern India depends on the situation. Francis Light labels them as Chulias. The descendants can be identified as Chulias (Chola Kingdom of South India), the *Darah Keturunan Keling* (Kalinga of India), Tamil Muslims, Bengalis and Jawi Peranakans/Pekan as well as *Mamak* (Tamil street hawkers)⁵⁵. Tamil Muslims live in Chulia Street and Kapitan Kling Street. In Penang Street, they dwell in a two-story shophouses around that neighborhood. Along those streets, affluent Tamils or Chulias run the businesses.

⁵⁵ Urban Penang has street food vendors which mostly owned by Tamils.

The mixing of Indian curry and Malay food that is characteristic of the Tamil Muslims now dominates restaurants not only in Penang but also in Malaysia. Tamil Muslims and Jawi Peranakan are known as owners of small and big *Kandar*⁵⁶ Restaurants. In my observation, other business activities that Tamils control in Penang are trading in textiles, money changing, and grocery stores. The prominence of Tamils and Jawi Peranakan businesses shows the Tamil economic power in business, and the affluent Tamils or Chulias are attached to the middle and upper class. Houses styles also affect family behavior. Said and Majid (2004) explain that this means “communal living with two or three generations [of Penang Jawi Peranakan] under one roof in the large brick compound houses” (179).

Although Jawi Pekan speak Malay fluently, Said and Majid also report that Jawi Peranakan speak louder than Malays. The Malays speak softly. The Malay dialect of Jawi Peranakan that Said and Majid identify might reflect nothing more than a stereotype of the Jawi Peranakan, but this needs further study. According to Nagata (1974), “the term, Jawi Peranakan, literally means a half-breed” (348). Intermarriage gives Tamil Muslims a stronger tie to the Malays. Crossing the cultural boundaries of Tamil Muslims in Penang might have shifted the locus of identification ethnic Tamils and Jawi Pekan towards Malay (Nagata, 1974; Mohammed, 2010). The Tamil enclaves in Penang, like those in Little India (Market Street), Chulia Street, Kapitan Kling Street and Penang Street, help create the images of Indian identity. Tamil and Jawi Peranakan live in two-story shophouses around that neighborhood, where affluent Tamils or Chulias run the businesses.

Outside Little India, Chulia Street, and Kapitan Keling Street, some Tamils and Hindus have settled in the southern part. Jawi Peranakan families live around Kampong Kolam and along Aceh Street. In relation to the Jawi Pekan community, the descendants of Tamils in Penang have ethnic boundaries that differentiate them from the Penang Babas and

⁵⁶ See Glossary

Acehnese. They actively practice their tradition and this is manifest in the styles of their mosques, tombs, and houses. Tamils live on the ethnic boundaries, and Indians' cultural identity suggests a demarcation among them. These cultural identities are represented in the different architectural styles. Their boundaries are reflected in the structures of mosques, temples, churches, tombs, mausoleums, and deities or cults of South India. Grouping the descendants of Indians into one category, as in the columns of the official Malaysian census, does not indicate differences. This grouping technique misses the socio-cultural realities of different social classes and ethnicities of Madras, Bengal, Malabar, Gujarat, Sri Lanka and Punjab, together with their great variety of cultural identities. The differences of dialects, belief systems, traditions and places of origin are the main factors that make it unrealistic to categorize the people who migrated to Malaysia from the Indian subcontinent as a single entity.

Along Chulia Street and Kapitan Kling Street, during the British colonial era, the descendants of immigrants from the Indian subcontinent built many important religious and cultural buildings such as the Kapitan Kling Mosque, the Bengali Mosque, the Alimsah Waley Mosques, the Nagore (Durgha) Shrine, the tomb of Noordin Merican and the Sri Mahariamman Temple. Except for the Hindu temple, the styles of architecture mentioned above mark the boundaries of Tamil Muslims and other Muslim communities. Despite practicing Islamic values, like the Malays and Arabs do, the practice of Tamil Muslim religious customs further highlights their boundaries. Among the Muslim communities of Penang, there are perceived cultural identities that indicate ethnic boundaries such as language, clothes, and house forms, and style of mosques. For example, the Thirukural⁵⁷

⁵⁷ This event is to praise the greatness of the enlightened one of South India (Thiruvalluvar). Thirukural is the magnum opus from the writings of Saint Poet Thiruvalluvar (Squiddo.com).

tradition of Southern India, which officially began to be celebrated in Penang in 1952, is a specific marker of Tamilness (Pakirnathan, 2002).



Plate 4 Map of George Town Penang (google.com)

Before comparing the Tamils' identity with that of the Malay-Acehnese, in terms of religious and cultural buildings, the discussion of the symbolic meaning of architectural forms of the Indian Muslim (Indo Islamic) tradition is very informative. The religious and secular buildings in the Indian Muslim tradition in India, according to Merklinger (2005), are mosques, tombs, schools, shrines, monasteries, and palaces. In explaining the types of mosque structures in the Indian Muslim tradition, Merklinger states that three different models can be found: (1) early mosques in the Indian tradition have a hypostyle plan, a large open court surrounded by colonnades, and a prayer hall facing Ka'ba of Mecca; (2) the mosques are surrounded by high walls around courts and have a number of domes, and the interior is surrounded by arcades of arches, but they do not have minarets, and are instead roofed by square bays with a dome; (3) the mosques which form the cross-axial plan have

simple prayer halls with one or two projecting arcades partially enclosing an open yard (2005: 10-12).

The architectural tradition of Indian Muslims shows the functions of mosques and cultural identity, and here it is used to determine the ethnic boundary of Tamil Muslims. I compared the mosques of Tamils to those of the Malays based on the differences and similarities. I chose two famous mosques in George Town: the Kapitan Keling Mosque and the Aceh Malay Mosque. The Kapitan Keling Mosque, which was built by Tamils, is situated along Jalan Masjid Kapitan Keling, and reflects Tamil architecture, while the Aceh Street Mosque reflects an Aceh Malay style. These two mosques will be compared.

The characteristics of Southern Indian architecture in the built form of Kapitan Keling Mosque are found in its prayer hall, courtyard, domes, arcades and arches. De Bierre (2009:53) reports that the Kapitan Keling Mosque which was built in 1801 represents the Moghul Revival in George Town. Khoo and Wade (2003) report that the Kapitan Keling Mosque “could be described as Moghul or ‘Indo Saracenic’, with a fancy roof of domes and turrets, and the walls elaborately stuccoed and coloured to stimulate the Moghul monuments of India, which employed differently coloured stone and marble” (214). The façade of the Kapitan Keling Mosque is also decorated with a geometric design of South Indian style. It reflects the cultural identity of South Indians who migrated to Penang; in my observation I noted it has a vast yard, and an arcade entrance facing to Kapitan Keling Street, surrounded by an iron fence.

After identifying the cultural identity of Tamil Muslims which is reflected in the built form of the Kapitan Keling Mosque, I observed the differences of the architecture of the Malay Aceh Mosques. I used Yuan’s explanation about Malay architecture. He says that the Malay style uses climate control features like east-west orientation, roof overhangs, long

windows, grilles and panels and ground landscape (Yuan, 1987 quoted in Seri Perdana Putrajaya, 2002:33). The Malay Acehnese Mosque is not similar to the Moghul architectural style of India but has a mixed Malay-Moorish Architecture.⁵⁸ When I examined the Malay Acehnese Mosque I traced climate control features and the different styles of roof that are characteristic of Malay architecture. For instance, it has traditional long roof, without domes, not a hipped roof or pyramid roof. It also has a tall octagonal-shaped minaret like a Chinese Buddhist Pagoda; the minaret is at one of the corners of the mosque structure. The verandah has a number of large pillars like those found in mosques in Indonesia and elsewhere in Malaysia. The top of the minaret, always the highest point in mosques, can be seen in the Malay Acehnese Mosque, and it is the highest point in the immediate area. The Melayu Acehnese Mosque adapts the shape of the bell tower minaret. It also functions as the place for the *Bilal*, the person who calls Muslims to pray (*shalat*) five times a day.

Returning to the functions of cultural identity of Tamil Muslims reflected in the architecture of the Kapitan Keling Mosque, there are several cultural nodes. In my observation, I found three images of Tamil Muslim identity around this mosque, which is the religious-cultural center of Tamil Muslims from Penang and other places. Here they share the identity of the Tamil Muslim community while the Tamil Muslim business revolves around the Kapitan Keling Street. In sum, firstly, the Muslims who come there for prayers share southern Indian culture, judging by their physical appearances and fashion. Secondly, many Tamils locate their businesses near this mosque. Thirdly, it is a center for religion and cultural tradition or celebration like those during Ramadhan (The Ninth or Fasting Month of Islamic calendar). In the past, De Bierre (2006) also pointed out that the mosque recalls the solidarity of Tamils who were not only within Penang but also friends of Cauder Mydin

⁵⁸ Wealthy merchants of Acehnese-Arabs together with Malay community built a Malay Moorish Mosque. I found the Malay Mosque is characterized by a terrace style which is similar to Andalusia Spain style.

Merican (the captain of the Keling community) who traded from Southern India to Malaysia. This kind of cultural solidarity among the Tamils is also reported by Hall (1999). Hall specifically states that donations for religious buildings indicate cultural identity attachment; “they were not fully integrated members of the local society, but they were committed enough during their varying residential presence that they funded” mosques (1999: 246).

Besides the Kapitan Keling Mosque, I was informed that there is another building which demonstrates Tamil identity—the Nagore Durgha Sheriff on Chulia Street. It reflects the preservation of the Southern Indian Durgha (shrine) tradition (see picture in Plate 4). When I visited it, the informant explained that the Nagore Durgha (shrine) was constructed in the early 1880s by the Maricans in Penang. A famous Muslim saint of Tamil Nadu is Sharul Hameed Qadirvoh in the 13th century. I found the Tamil Muslims dedicated to Durghas and the Chinese communities to their Tokongs (deities). The Durgha shrine of the Tamils and Tau Pek Kong of the Baba Hokkiens thus mark ethnic boundaries that are found in religious and social interactions. Like Barth’s (1969) conceptualization, the maintenance of the cultural identity of ethnic groups when their members interact with others becomes a criterion for signaling membership and exclusion. Local shrines (Tamil Durghas, Chinese Tokongs or Malay Keramat) have implications for the ethnic boundaries which help determine social life. Perceptions of ethnic boundaries within cultural traditions here entail a quite complex organization of behavior and social relations. Accordingly, members of the ethnic groups of the Tamils and the Babas may identify another person as a fellow member of the group, implying a shared criterion for evaluation and judgment. Temples and local shrines therefore contribute to defining ethnic group boundaries among the Tamils, Chinese and Malays in Penang. For Tamils, it is not exclusively based on ethnicity, but different religious cultures as well.



Plate 5 Nagore Shrine in Chulia Street (source: www.travelmalaysiaguide.com)

3.8. Global Culture Space and Dispersal of Ethnic Communities in Penang

Ethnic boundaries and the dispersal of ethnic communities in Penang can be seen within social groups and social class. Perceived cultural identities among the people who belong to one ethnic group have a relative variation. Not only do education and economic achievements differentiate social classes; global culture also alters the interaction. If the interaction between lower and high classes implies a boundary, here I would analyze the

contemporary global phenomenon which is also responsible for the dispersal of ethnic communities in Penang. Penang's spatial image might be defined with reference to contemporary globalization interests. A shared experience of post independence Malaysia since 1957 and external forces of globalism have made a web that generates links to spatial, territorial, and cultural intersections. The modern Penang dreams of elites and developers (Goh, 2002) and global systemic dynamics (Scholte, 1997) also involve contestations that take place in the developments of the city.

The external forces of globalization and housing realtors in Penang which are responsible for the changes of landscape have also significantly altered the cultural identity of social groups. Those forces eventually affect ethnic settlements. The expansion of a global economy to Penang has already resulted in the new development of settlements. Ghazali (2003) explains:

[The state introduced its industrialization strategy in order to foster economic growth. Since then, industrial estates and free trade zones have been established in rural areas on the fringe of existing towns: Georgetown on the island and Butterworth on the mainland.... Two new townships were created in these areas in the early 1980s, and this resulted in the speedy expansion of the conurbation of Georgetown and Butterworth into industrial areas. This was the beginning of a massive acquisition of land by the state to establish industrial estates and new towns - since 1970 more than 500 000 acres of land have been acquired. An extensive area of rice fields and villages has been turned into urban complexes, consisting of industrial sites, new towns and housing estates. Many rural villages have been absorbed by this urban expansion and have now become older urban villages (185).

A new urban expansion within globalization is seen by many as an affront to the symbolic meanings of Chinese, Tamils, and Malay cultural practices. They have encountered the global forces in terms of urban spaces and cultural preservation. The hybrid vernacular buildings face with modern forms. Each ethnic group constructed the vernacular buildings which could represent its ethnic identity to others. The growing global culture brings the new housing models to Penang such as apartments, condominiums, and *Taman* housing (*real*

estates). Moreover, the pro-global housing policy without any control in the Malay Peninsula leads the inhabitants of lower classes vulnerable to rising prices, rents and economic downturns. Ross King (2008) notes “because it is a land of immigrants and ever-contested identities nowhere are the assumptions of classical political economy more problematic. Material struggles over socially created wealth are at multiple levels intersected by contestations over identity and, authenticity and both physical and conceptual space” (8). Like other colonial port cities, the history of Penang has seen disputes over land and economic resources. As the site of a plural society, for Tan Liok Ee, Penang has “different kinds of and levels of contestations—from schisms that have set one branch or generation of a family against another and intense verbal contests between rivals in newspapers or magazines to fierce contests for leadership and political power” (2009:9).

Some scholars like Jenkins (2008) and Goh (2002) criticize the Repeal of Rent Control Act⁵⁹ and state policies that facilitate a cosmopolitan life style and assist developers. The policy has resulted in the dispersion of working class of Chinese, Chulias, Jawi Pekan and Malays to suburban settlements. In my observation, the global housing model exponentially tends to increase the velocity and scale of the transnational movement of people as well as the coming of foreigners to buy houses, apartments and condominiums in Penang. Combined with urban development in Penang, globalization brings a flow of transnational finance. The Indian- Eurasian informant whom I interviewed explained that many working class people had already moved from George Town to rent cheap flats in new suburban areas or to across the island to Seberang (the mainland). The extensive construction of apartments and shopping centers affects ethnic enclaves. In my observation, it also affects the traditional markets and local shops in George Town; the shops compete with new

⁵⁹ The protection of pre-war buildings regulated by Akta Kawalan Sewa (Control Rent ACT) 1996 applied to all buildings built before February 1, 1948, but on January 1, 2000, the AKS Repeal came into effect. This policy resulted in changes to the Penang inner city.

shopping malls. Because of losing costumers, some of the shopping streets have become the preserve of backpackers.

Global culture brings the power of money to the urban ethnic enclaves of Penang. Exploring the anthropological conception of the power of money, Shalins (1990) argues that “money gives rise to a particular world view--the unsociable, impersonal, and contractual one we associate with it” (XVI). In relation to the power of money in Penang, the potential revenues of tourism and the coming of new malls hikes up the price of the land. The serial remaking of landscape and gentrification (Khoo and Jenkins 2002:219-221; Ooi, 2009:55) are contradictory to the community realities and identities. The logic of a global tourism market has generally marginalized the local identities of Penang (Ooi, 2009: 55). Jenkins (2008) further argues that the rents in George Town are increased recently because the Government does not control the land prices anymore. The Repeal Control of Act of Rent (AKS) resulted in the disappearance of people’s interest to rent in downtown George Town. Currently, the increasing price of land and rate of rental housing is a big issue. The result of economic developments in Penang is that the land is very expensive and that the old settlements become highly gentrified. New buildings follow the pattern of high technology construction which changes the housing models. Sahlins also emphasizes the structural position of money. Following the famous statements of Marx and Simmel about the destructive effects of markets and money on the community, Sahlins also contends that there is an “amoral sphere of transaction separated from the generousities of kith and kin” (1990: XVII).

Goh (2002) in her study finds the weakness of this urban policy has fragmented the society and created polarized ethnic spaces while largely overlooking the large variety of human cultures and expressions that exist within Penang. The federal government, as Beng-Lan Goh argues, lacked a developmental policy and the 1996 policy which repealed the Act

of Rent Control in George Town did not capture a number of aspects necessary for creating a livable global city. In her study Goh argues that the government ignored the fact that the city possessed different values, discourses, and local peculiarities. Some scholars, like Goh and Jenkins, reported the weaknesses of urban plan and the changes of cityscape; they found the strong will of government in city remaking failed to embrace the participation of Penangites (Goh, 2002, Khoo and Jenkins, 2002).

Penangites have been living in different phases of economic timeline since 1970, but a new phenomenon of land use and settlements impacts them significantly. Ghazali (2003:185) states that Penang has undergone drastic changes since the 1970s. In early 1970, a new township and industrial Free Trade Zone in Bayan Baru⁶⁰ was established (MPPP, 1987:12). In many respects, comparing past experiences to global shifts occurring throughout the world, interviewees have noted that transnational linkages between widespread nodes of globalization are accelerating city development. Additionally, three informants (a Baba, Tamil, and mixed Malay Siam) that I interviewed in George Town reacted negatively to the changes of Penang and housing availability. They think it has brought housing problems, although modernity brings technological advances.

Focusing on the current problems of the city development such as space contestations, Jenkins (2008) shows a dispersal of the communities to find more affordable housing outside of George Town. The contemporary phenomenon sees the emergence of urban high-rises that have attuned themselves to a livable globopolis model and attract tourists, as suggested by the federal government policy. The fast-changing cityscape seriously impacts the communal

⁶⁰ Currently nearly 700 multinational factories operate the four industrial complexes in this area. When the global electronic players such as Intel, Dell, Sony and Hewlett- Packet began their centers in 1980's, the Malaysians eventually started to call Penang as Silicon Island. *Business Week* reports that "officials asked companies such as Intel, Hewlett-Packard (HWP), and Robert Bosch Group to help it tailor training programs to their needs" (November 6 2000).

feeling and solidarity of ethnic groups. When I interviewed a professional Baba Hokkien descendant, I was told that the mere intrusion of apartments and condominiums changes the ethnic settlements. From the viewpoint of Baba descendants, I noted the transformation of Baba identity in terms of settlement. My informant said that in childhood, his parents and relatives lived in traditional houses where most of their neighbors were from the same ethnic group and areas of origin. The Chinese used to live the shophouses, and the Malays lived together in wooden kampung constructions. On the other hand, although modern construction provides condominiums, apartments, flats (*pangsa* in Malay) and minimalized two-story terrace houses, these benefit the middle to upper classes, while working class people who have been living in the ethnic enclaves are often forced to move away

The consequences of modernizing Penang; the rising land prices, the elimination of Rent Control and the increase in foreign investment for apartments are gradually pushing the Penangites out to Balik Pulau and Seberang Perai (mainland)⁶¹ or out of downtown. For some, renting cheap flats provides the only solution because land is so expensive. I also looked at the effect of the *Malaysia as my Second Home* program which facilitates foreigners owning property in Penang. The interviewee agreed that development in Penang has contributed to changes in cultural identities, traditional houses and intra-ethnic associations. A new formation of ethnic identity is developing through hybridizing cultures. British [Western] education, Christianity and professional status need to be highlighted as new markers for some Penang Babas. For example, a Penang Baba Hokkien informant said that he does not join a Chinese kongsi, but he actively participates in a church organization. The membership of this church organization, according to him, is not confined to the Penang Babas but includes other ethnic groups as well. This kind of organization allows the crossing

⁶¹ Price of the land in these areas is relatively cheaper than that of urban Penang.

of ethnic boundaries, but I have not done a further survey to find their interethnic relations outside religious activities. The data of my field study only reveal that education has transformed him (informant) into a professional. He also found an apartment after one of his friends in Church told him. He tends to work with foreign partners and does not network with Chinese companies because his linkages and profession are mostly related to multinational companies in which he has less contact with the Babas community in his profession.

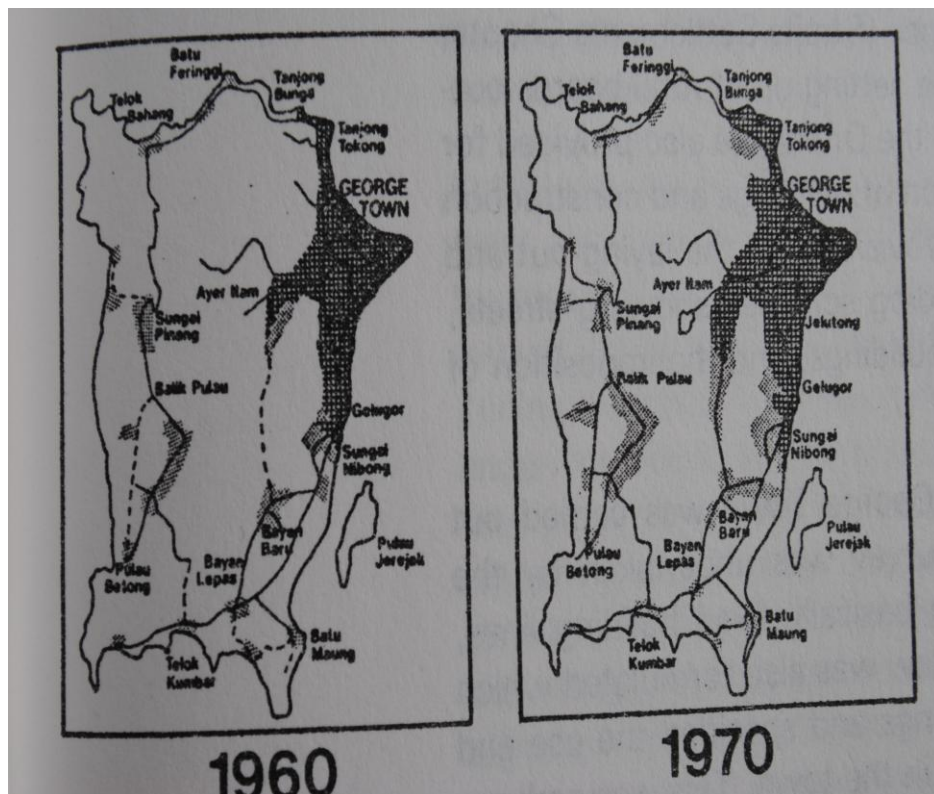


Plate 6 Map of Penang Development from 1960 until 1970 (source, Municipal Council of Penang Island 1987)

There has also been a change of middle class life style. Some people of the middle to upper classes prefer to live in an apartment. Living with inhabitants of various ethnic groups, the upper class tends to have less contact with their own ethnic groups and interact with

others. In my observation in Sungai Dua neighborhood (East South part of Penang),⁶² it is not only the affluent Penangites who live in the fast-growing apartments, but also some expatriates and students from Middle East and Africa. Jenkins reports, “Whilst middle class and elites suburbs are also mixed in ethnic composition, the lower income housing estates have become segregated” (2008:167). The strategic location of Sungai Dua has changed this area. It is now flooded with global housing neighborhoods. Easy access to the industrial complexes in Bayan area, towards the south, supports the development of apartments, condominiums, and shopping malls between Sungai Dua and Bayan. In contrast to the rapid development of global culture, the few Malay government officers live in humble public housing. More convenient facilities and security that global housing promotes have attracted the present generation of Penangites.

Analyzing the ethnographic data of my observation in George Town and Sungai Dua, I focused on the transformation of urban communities as it is occurring through globalism. From the 1990s to the present the changes had particularly affected the middle to upper classes. These social classes follow the global trend which is evident in all Southeast Asian cities. The promotion of new apartments, condominiums, and gated communities has brought the professionals to live in the new global housings offered. The imported global housing model promotes the security and new ‘distinctive’ community. In discussion of flows of people and hybrid culture in global culture, Hannerz (1997) states:

In the late twentieth century phase of globalization, many people have increasing experiential access to flows of cultural form which used to be localized elsewhere, as well as to that which we think of as belonging to our own locality. And some currents of culture are perhaps hardly identifiable as belonging to any particular place at all. As they engage with these varied currents of culture present in their habitats, individuals as cultural beings are probable now shaped, and shape themselves, to an increasing degree by peculiarities of autobiography, taste and the cultivation of competences (8).

⁶² Fortunately I could stay in my friend’s condominium when I observed the Sungai Dua area. It is Desa Airmas Condominium Sungai Dua (picture attached in appendix 4). The Sungai Dua neighborhood has been growing as a global cityscape (multi-story apartment complexes and mega shopping malls).

Beside housing factors, the change of city images at the same time results in a change of ethnic entitlements. A professional of Indian Eurasian descent that I interviewed in George Town explained that some of her friends have already moved to cheaper places for living, but are renting shops or offices around George Town. Previously, her friends used to live in a communal settlement, but now they live separately due to the fast-growing global house complexes. They cannot afford to rent apartments. Jenkins (2008) who identifies the diversity of ethnic groups in Penang by analyzing architectural symbolism, the use of space, and reconfirmation of cultural identity, finds that the creation of massive global housing affects the ethnic group's economic, political and cultural interests. Structurally, Jenkins analyzes the effect of the Repeal Control of Rent Act (Pemansuhan Akta Kawalan Sewa or AKS)⁶³ and the forces of the global economy as the variables which brought about the destruction or unacceptable conversion of many historical and cultural buildings.

Structurally, some scholars point out the weakness of state policy which lets the market force changes the settlements (Goh, 2002, Khoo & Jenkins, 2002). This policy is quickly and systemically changing George Town into a city of condominiums (*The Star*, June 25, 1993 quoted in Goh, 2002:156). For ethnic solidarity, Lim G Siang (2002) shows the internal problems of sub-ethnic groups of Penang Chinese in reaction to global economic forces:

[W]ith the imposition of Rent Control Act and the emigration of the clan members from the enclave, some of the clan dwellings originally resided by the Khoo clansmen had been sublet to outsiders. Because of this, and because of the uxori-local practice not uncommon among the Chinese community, many residents who came to stay in the clan dwellings are no longer from the original Khoo clan. Nevertheless, since the Rent Control Act had constrained the change of ownerships and the mobility of the residents was low, despite its

⁶³ Jenkins says that in George Town, development and gentrification projects continued to take place amongst the burned-out and abandoned buildings (Jenkins, 2008: xi).

being no longer exclusively of the Khoo clan, the residents still formed a slow-growing but stable living community. Regretfully with the repeal of the Rent Control Act which took effect on 1 January 2000, this community encountered a strong shock which resulted in its complete disintegration. Although its spatial character remains intact, with the disintegration of historical connections and kinship relations as well as the moving out of residents of other surnames, the socio-cultural fabric has been destroyed (Lim, 2002:2).

Lim's (2002) analysis above shows that the city development has fragmented the Khoo kongsi. The Khoo clan imposes regulations that exclude members who are not related to original Khoo clan. The Chinese who used to identify with the Khoo clan are not able to maintain their membership privileges to the Khoo clan settlement. My interpretation of Sing's analysis indicates that the Khoo clan settlement tends to be more exclusive to the tenants who basically have a blood tie to the Khoos. The tenants who only have a 'brotherhood relationship' do not have the privilege of living in the clan settlement. The historical study of Chinese communities in terms of property and social class which was carried out by Yen (1987) provides information about the functions of clan property for the working class. It reveals that the Chinese fall into any of the following six categories: 1) The Chinese workers who own nothing and their accommodation is provided by their employers; 2) The shop assistants who live in the shops helping to look after the security of the shops; 3) The agricultural workers who live in wooden houses with *atap* (grass thatched) roofing in the plantations; 4) The workers who also live in 'Kongsi houses' which are made of timber or split bamboo; 5) Some artisans and shopkeepers who own shops, and many probably rent their places for business; 6) The capitalists who invest in property and reap handsome profits (Yen, 1987:422-423). Studying the urban enclaves of Penang within a global context together with the cases of the Khoo clan and the Eurasians of Pulau Tikus, we may see a new pattern emerging in the relationship between the middle and lower classes. Gradually the extended family system or 'fictive' kinship which unified the clan brotherhood between

middle and lower class since nineteenth century might be disappearing in present situation. The city development with a global economy may be resulting in a new pattern in which the combination of ethnicity and social class is becoming more dominant. On the other hand, a future group (a hybrid ethnic-social class) would change the previous one (an ethnic group), because the people of lower classes who used to live in the houses or shops that the kongsi facilitated in which the wealthy merchants⁶⁴ often acting as the leaders. The ethnic group is culturally important among the people of lower class when they seek assistance in terms of the economy, job information and residence. As a result, segregation appears between middle and lower classes within their own ethnic group when the limited residence of a clan is not enough to accommodate the members.

3.8. Final Remarks

The effort to maintain ethnic groups amid the changes of the cityscape and the embrace of global culture are affecting the social relations of urban communities in Penang. The city is experiencing new and fast-growing housing models that are promoted by realtors. The market drives the transformation of ethnic enclaves into a new phase of globalism within local settings. The change of ethnic enclaves in Penang due to the introduction of a global market which seeks the benefits from redevelopment of settlements is clear. The advertisements about Penang real estate companies and housing developments on local and national media have heavily promoted global housing styles. They may dismantle the ethnic enclaves and thwart families from residing in older, ethnically and locally-based housing. Like the case of the Eurasian enclave in Pulau Tikus, Goh (2002) argues that the contestation over the land between the Penang Eurasian Community and the Church exists because of

⁶⁴ I consider wealthy merchants as representative of middle class from nineteenth to twentieth century.

different of viewpoints towards global development. Penang Eurasian Association (PEA) “demands for low-cost housing and persuade the developer of the Church to include a Eurasian ‘heritage house’ as part of the redeveloped kampung site” (Goh, 2002: 123).

The contemporary urban development of Penang shows that developers have embraced global housing models like apartments, gated communities, and condominiums. The working class, street hawkers, and petty traders can only rent a limited number of low-priced housing units that are provided by the state or individuals. The promotions by developers such as South Bay, Island of International (Gated Community), The Light Water Front World Class Destination, and One Ritz Residence offer Penang dreams of the future globalized world. The shops around Market Street, Chulia Street, and Penang Street compete with the growing shopping malls like Gurney and Bukit Jambul. In sum, Penang does reflect the fact that “plural societies will exhibit differentiation in the levels of social capital in that the cultural traditions of one ethnic group could very well be compatible with associational life as opposed to that of another” (Farouk and Bakri (1997:46-47). Because an ethnic group is more likely to be poor if its members do not have capital, the gap in social class will become more visible. Looking at the current urban phenomena of Penang, the statement of Dieter Evers and Korff is significant: “residential quarters in which residence is determined not by race but by social class reflects a new principle of social and spatial organization in Malaysia” (2000:61).

There is an urgent need to explore the new transformation of identities within ethnic groups which falls into three different social classes: the lower class of Chinese, Tamils, and Malays; the middle class of Chinese, Tamils, and Malays; the high class of Chinese, Tamils, and Malays. In the global context, the lower social classes of all ethnic groups in Penang’s urban communities find it difficult to rent affordable housing. In short, the availability problem of low cost housing affects not only the Malays but also the Chinese, Tamils, Hindus, and Eurasians of low class.

Besides modern education and professions, the coming of global culture to Penang gradually intervenes in the social phenomenon where a new social transition reshapes cultural identities. There is a metamorphosis of ethnic identity from the first or second generation to the next ones. The first or second generation of Penang Babas and Jawi Peranakan in nineteenth century was actively trading textiles, pepper, and fish and communicating in their local dialects but eventually, greater access to education and professions already transformed them, by the fourth generation, into a more cosmopolitan culture. Reading the influential intervention of global culture on present-day ethnic identities, I find the factors of education and profession make it possible for a few Penangites to live in regions based solely on their social classes. The modern apartments, gated communities and condominiums cross cut ethnicities and belief systems where the Penang upper classes reside. It would be more complicated if a professional Penang Baba lived in a condominium and worked for a multinational company in which most of his time was spent interacting with international communities. Except for certain celebrations of Chinese culture, this type of Penang Baba would be less exposed to the Chinese community.

Cross cutting of the ethnic boundaries of the upper class could occur when people of this class use collective identity of Penangites or social class. Modern apartments have created the multi-ethnic neighborhoods where the communality of ethnic groups is less important. The new middle class of urban Penang is in the midst of a different transition.⁶⁵ This new middle class might try to cross cut the ethnic identities, but their education and links are not as strong as those of the upper class. In short, the middle class actually is more dependent on linkages within their own ethnic groups.

⁶⁵ I don't have a fixed measurement to define middle class, I am using a professional educated Penangite and range of income (RM 6000 – 10.000/ converted to US dollar around 2.000-3500) as indicators.

Interestingly, I also found that both the collective identity of Penangites and the ethnic identities claimed by members of the middle class to gain access to education and professions are important as both identities are instrumentally used as pathways to enter better educational institutions and occupations. With regard to urban Penang and the national context, the personal connectivity to collective and ethnic identities within equal social classes frequently serves as vehicle for social, economic and political claims. Although majority of current Penagites is from the middle class who are workers and professionals within the state owned and multinational companies, their attachment to collective and ethnic identities within their social class is obviously felt. In other words, the linkages to collective and ethnic identities enable Penangites to gain access to better education and positions.

CHAPTER 4

THE STATE AND PEOPLE OUTSIDE OFFICIAL ETHNIC CATEGORIES

4.1. The State, Census and Ethnic Categories

This chapter focuses on the ethnic categories used in censuses in Penang. A census categorizes the population in terms of predetermined social categories and is meant to be a way of quantifying general demographic information (e.g., socioeconomic class, ethnicity, gender, etc.). The statistical processes such as collecting, organizing, and deciding on the realities of ethnic groups in a census are debatable. Although some scholars might think that the ethnic groups and boundaries may or may not be directly shaped by a census, here I assume that state categories of ethnicity do affect lived ethnic identities. The ways in which census takers classify the population reflects government policy. In this chapter I consider how both the construction of ethnic categories in the census, and the responses of individuals who are not included in official classifications, contribute to the perceived ethnic groups in Penang.

The legacy of colonialism in administering the censuses of Southeast Asian people is obvious. The British introduced methods of administering and classifying the categories of population those appear in the census, in which Malaysians and foreigners were categorized based on language, religion, origin and kinship. Ideological viewpoints also influenced the divisions of ethnic groups based on religion, languages, and social attachments. As a result, certain ethnic categories might have been excluded from the census that otherwise would have been included because of British biases in the original construction of the census. Scott (2009) states that “the census was the instrument for enumerating the people inherited through conquest” (238). Moreover, Brubaker (2004:167:168) argues that the institutional

forms and political projects can affect the ethnicization or racialization because the official categories designate whether one is included in or excluded from a community.

The British perceived ethnic realities and applied the policy in a census which already met the complexity of cultural identities. Peterson (1969, cited in Hirschman, 1987) explains that “the classification of ethnicity in a census may be arbitrary, but it is not accidental” (557). According to Noor (2005), “race, ethnicity and religious differences remain the internal frontiers that demarcate the contours of Malaysia social, cultural, and political life” (17) and in reality, Noor further indicates that racial divisions in modern Malaysia (166) tighten communality among the ethnic groups. The characteristics of ethnic relationships and official ethnic categories show differences between how people experience their ethnicity and how ethnic categories are constructed. Because selection is always involved, the criteria used to differentiate ethnic groups are essential to understand ethnic identity (Hirschman, 1987: 557). This selection can also apply outside official categorization as ethnic self-definition shifts. In ordinary experience, for instance, Andaya (2008) argues:

[I]n the process of ethnic re-formation, the group adjusts the ‘contents’ and ‘boundary’ to enable its members to be ideally placed to benefit from new circumstances. The ‘middle’ stance therefore acknowledges the ongoing, active role of the group in redefining the cultural elements constituting its identity, as well as the desire of a group to believe in an essential core that distinguishes it from others (8).

In a close reading of the official ethnic categories in British Malaya and the changes in classifications that have taken place, Hirschman (1987) reports that the ethnic categories in the census reflect British mentalities and perceptions of ethnic divisions in Malaysian

society.⁶⁶ According to Anderson (1991), the changes of ethnic categories present a continuous agglomeration, disaggregation, recombination, intermixing, and reordering of ethnic and racial classifications (164). Kahn (2006:46) argues that the British Malayan census reflects the particular concerns of officialdom; census takers might classify populations based on place of origin, ethnic characteristics, points of departure, and identity. The appearance and disappearance of identities based on religion, language, ethnicity, race, and places of origin that Malaysia census takers used from 1871 to 1980 were “superficially arbitrary” (Anderson, 1991:164) and to Hirschman (1987) they did have specific intentions: both the British colonial and Malaysian postcolonial states bolstered domination by the rulers and the privileges of Malays. Benedict Anderson (1991) criticized the “exclusively racial” (164) British policy which divided the British Malayan population based on racial terms and put Europeans in the first place, other foreign groups in the second place, and below them the Malays and Orang Asli.

In line with ethnic and racial identities of urban life, the British government of Penang in 1835 classified thirteen ethnic groups (Low, 1972, cited in Nagata, 1979:21). The profile of ethnic groups shows that people from Southeast Asia origin are Malays, Acehnese, Battas/Bataks, Siamese, Burmese, and native Christians; from South and West Asia there were Chulias, Bangalese, Arabs, and Parsees. But the Chinese, Europeans, Armenians, and Caffrees of Africa are distinctively differentiated based on a ‘racial category.’ Here the administrative system of the census mixed ethnic and racial groups. The classifications of population in Penang, according to Nagata (1979), use ethnicity and racial factors (190-191). Although Penang in general followed the patterns of ethnic formation within the development

⁶⁶ The British followed European scholars who interpreted ethnic differences in Malaya by mixing the genetic and cultural as well as ecological factors (Hirschman, 1986:341).

of the Malay world after the presence of British, the current study intends to elucidate the specific characteristics of “Penangites.”

There are socially and politically constructed ethnic groups and boundaries in George Town which might vary in the censuses. The British colonial administration divided the population of George Town into many groups,⁶⁷ but the census currently classifies Penangites into Malays, other Bumiputra, Chinese, Indians and other groups. Thus the colonial government used many different markers (religion, language, race, and origin) when grouping the population, while the 2010 Malaysian census divides the population by using a racial categories.⁶⁸ The 2010 census uses the term “Malays” for all ethnic groups of Malay Indonesian descent, but groups the Orang Asli or indigenous people into “other Bumiputra” and does not even recognize the descendants of Babas and Eurasians. The Jawi Peranakan and Jawi Arabs are not labeled; they might be inclined to identify with Malays because they are Muslims. Kahn (2006) problematizes the divisions of Malaysian plural society and the meaning of a new identity, Bangsa Melayu (Malay race). For Kahn, Malaysia has failed to explain the reasons for classifying the diverse people into only three main racial groups-- Malay, Chinese and Indian (Kahn, 2006, 173). Because, since the end of the 19th century, British Malaya “had become the site of greatly increased immigration” (Kahn, 174), Malaysia as a modern state should have recognized the plurality of its population by eliminating its racial-based categories. Without managing the diversity of Malaysian population, according to Kahn (2006; 173-174), the process of nation building cannot take place well.

After discussing the state policy in dividing the ethnic categories, I will take a look at population of Penang. The Penang population is distributed unevenly among five

⁶⁷ The British Colonial first conducted a census by listing the background of inhabitants of British Settlements of Malaya in 1871.

⁶⁸ [www/ The 2010 Malaysian census/ my.govt.com](http://www.my.govt.com)

administrative districts. The most densely populated area is the Timur Laut (Northeast) district, 60% of which constitutes metropolitan George Town. On the mainland, generally referred to as Seberang Perai, the most urbanized district is Seberang Perai Tengah (central) district. For recording the data of population in those districts, the censuses in Penang after the independence of Malaysia were integrated into the policy of the Federal Government.

After the May 13 1969 Riots, the Malaysia census was conducted in 1970 when the racial issue had become an important consideration in deciding state policy. The Department of Statistics in Malaysia in the 1970 census reveals something of the history of the methodology that has been applied to define ethnicity. For better understanding of how ethnicity in Malaysia was defined in the 1970 census, it is invaluable to read Hirschman's report which states that "[t]he term "community" was dropped with the 1957 census when "race" was again used, but the 1970 census returned to the use of the "community," as a more neutral term" (Hirschman, 1987:562); "[a] complete break was made in 1970 when respondents were asked the question: 'To what community do you belong?' No reference to 'race' was made in any of the documentation" (Department of Statistics 1977, 1:287 in Hirschman, 1987:562).

Dividing people based on race and ethnicity in a British colonial system indicates that colonialism had already sharpened "the communal identity" (Noor, 2005) but the current census applies a more simplistic grouping technique, ignoring the variety of cultural identities. It seems the policy reclaims the privileges of Malay race as the owner of the Malay land and denies "processes of ethnogenesis and community formation" (Kahn, 2006:173). Without acknowledging Malaysia as "a plural society" (Furnivall, 1956), the census takers use the pan-ethnic grouping model in which Malaysians are inclined into Malay, Other Bumiputra, Chinese, Indian, and Others. In sum, contemporary ethnic problems in the Malay

Peninsula, like ethnic divisions and inter-ethnic antagonisms, which have existed since the colonial era, have become more complicated and threaten nation building. Hirschman (1986) asserts that “the past has an important influence upon the present [...] however, [there has been] little agreement on what it was about the colonial era that contributed to the troubled relations between Malay and Chinese” (331). When viewing the effects of political and economic powers of British Colonial in Malaysia, Stockwell (1998) emphasizes traditionalism and the revival of racial solidarity as a means of reasserting political power. He states:

[P]eoples redefined their identities according to a spectrum of values associated with traditional authority, religious revivalism, racial solidarity, and modernity. First of all, in society after society the colonial take-over provoked a defense of vested interests and a reassertion of traditional authority by monarchs, princes and chiefs who had been deposed or had their authority severely cut (314).

4.2. Problematizing Ethnic Classifications

To problematize a census in which differences of race and religion are highlighted is not only to question the definitions of specific ethnic groups and boundaries, but it is also to criticize “an imaginary classification” (Brubaker, 2004:167). This technique uses the imaginary divisions of officials to design group affiliation (Brubaker, 2004:167). Malaysian Malays carry the connotation of being Muslim, while other Bumiputra are inclined to be non-Muslim; Malaysian Indians refers to Hindu and Eurasians are identified as Catholic. The present census does not recognize the particular historical background of each group, local languages, or the great variety of cultural influences that are supposed to be ethnicity markers. Rethinking ethnicity in Penang, Malaysia, involves tracing the ethnogenesis and

official categories of ethnic groups and finding the ways by which ethnicities are formally constructed in the censuses.

In the censuses conducted in Malaysia from 1871 to the post-Independence era, “the changes in the measurement of ethnicity have reflected shifts in ideology and the political economy across the past century” (Hirschman, 1987:557). Hirschman emphasizes the changes of labels in those censuses. Anderson says, “[y]et anomalies continued up into the 1980s. In the 1980 census ‘Sikh’ still appeared nervously as a pseudo ethnic subcategory- alongside ‘Malayali’ and ‘Telegu’, ‘Pakistani’ and Bangladeshi” (Anderson,1991:165). Carstens (2005:218) resolves the apparent contradiction between ethnic flexibility in lived lives and at the official level by explaining that the crafting of personal identities “takes place in the interstices between official pronouncements and the material and social realities of individual life.” Seeking to understand the constructed personal identities in Malaysia and following Shamsul’s (1996) idea of constructing the meaning of Malayness, Carstens also argues that the process of identity formation in everyday realities tends to be less well articulated and more diverse than those of authority defined identities or the published statements of officialdom have (Carstens, 2005: 218).

Changes in ethnic categories are found in the censuses conducted in Malaysia. Official categories might eliminate the social identities of ethnic groups that have a close relation to civil rights, and political and economic powers. The recognition of ethnic identities affects both symbolic meanings and the quotas of government projects and scholarships.⁶⁹ Although “through official eyes, there would be the evolution of an ethnic

⁶⁹ The Malaysian Government acknowledges the Bumiputra (Sons of Soils) domination or Malay privileges in economic and education sectors through the New Economic Policy (NEP) after the Racial Riots on May 13 1969. The Affirmative Action provides as much as 60% of quotas of scholarship and national corporate shares to the Bumiputra. When the Malaysian Prime Minister Mahathir Muhammad promoted the transformation of the Malays from rural to urban areas, he pushed professional Malays to move to new urban communities. His campaign to promote the New Malay was maintained throughout his 22-year tenure as Prime Minister. In the

classification” (Hirschman, 1987:557), the simplistic official categories deny the indigenous rights of the Jawi Peranakan, Babas, and Eurasians. Two contradictory theories of personal identities are relevant for the purposes of this analysis. In constructing personal identities, scholars have proposed the ideas of primordial attachment and instrumental manipulation. Scholars like Geertz and Keyes argue for primordial attachment, but Cohen and Smith highlight the instrumental model (Carstens, 1985:218). The symbolic meanings, in a primordialist perspective, that people share are the fabric of a community either in rural or urban areas. There is a cultural order that governs community members in their interactions. On the other hand, the instrumentalist views ethnicity as vehicle for civil rights, educational, political and economic purposes. Carstens seeks the meaning of ethnic identities in economic and political benefits. Charles Hirschman (1987) contends that measuring ethnicity using population censuses and other official or semiofficial inquiries facilitates the invention of classifications (556). Studies about the ethnicity of Malay Peninsula (e.g., the research conducted by Stockwell, 1998), shows that “colonial societies assumed a hierarchy, homogeneity and ideology that marked them off as distinct communities” (Stockwell, 1998: 345).

As discussed in chapter 1, the cosmopolitan city of Penang is a unique multiethnic town distinguished by its richness of ethnic groups. Skinner (1983) explains that the Penang Charter of Justice of 1807 regulated ethnic identity based on a primordial essence, which links Malayness to an “Islamic community” while the Babas were encouraged to seek “Chinese religion as essential to their identity and to resist convention to Islam” (70). In a further development, the two censuses conducted in 1871 and 1881 in the Straits Settlements “contain only tabular information, with no discussion of the rationale behind the

distribution of government projects, seats in public universities and scholarship the quota system respectively assigns the Malays having 60%, 30 % is for Malaysian Chinese and 10 % is given to Malaysian Indians.

classifications” (Hirschman, 1987:561). The population censuses that have been administered many times in Malaysia demonstrate an inconsistent system in categorizing and labeling people. The British colonial and post-colonial Malaysian governments changed the official categories of ethnic groups between 1881 and 1847. The 1947 census does not follow the 1881 census which uses the origin of populations to categorize ethnicity. Instead, Hirschman reports that the 1947 census reports “coined” the word “Perkauman” (community), thus asking respondents to demonstrate membership in a group, which suggests that individuals were tied to specific communities. The enumerators provided ethnic boundaries based on language, religion, custom, and allegiance to other groups. The use of word community gives an opportunity to each person to decide his own ethnic identity. British Malaya seemingly considered that the race-based categories were not relevant. It is a good example that the census takers applied before the creation of postcolonial Malaysia. British Malaya recognized ten Chinese tribes and fourteen ethnic groups of immigrants from the Indian subcontinent. But this changed in the 1957 Malaysian census, in which the word “community” was dropped and the word “race” was used (Hirschman, 1987:562). Similar to the early form of political parties (UMNO, MCA, and MIC)⁷⁰, in the beginning of Malay independence, the census takers categorize the Malaysians into three main race groups.

The creation of “racial” and ethnic groups in the British censuses results in the consciousness of communal identity. The Straits-born Chinese, Indian, and Europeans established the communities which showcased specific group characteristics, like the Baba, Jawi, and Eurasian. In addition to the fact that the Penangites feel “different,” they believe they have a specific culture (Tao, 2009). In their view, with a total population of 1.5 million people, Penang is “the Pearl of the Orient,” where the archipelago, South and East Asian

⁷⁰ United Malay National Organization (UMNO) as representative of Malays, Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) stands for the Chinese, and Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) represent the Indian community.

cultures are mixed. From this perspective, Penang also represents the great traditions of the East (India, Arab, China, and Malay) that adopted Western traditions. It became the place of a new hybrid culture that boosted Penang's unique development. Languages that are commonly spoken for daily interaction in Penang are mostly Bahasa Melayu, English, and Hokkien (Chinese). Bahasa Melayu has been a *lingua franca* on the Archipelago (Nusantara), but for those of Chinese descent, Hokkien is recognized as a *lingua franca* in the Straits of Melaka. The availability of English education, like the Free School⁷¹ in Penang and its connection to social status and economic benefits, has led to a growing middle class that speaks English. In the nineteenth century, established Jawi Peranakan and Arab elites played important roles when Penang was under British power, and are still influential today (Ee, 2009:15). Although English education enabled the middle class to gain prominence, some vernacular schools educated the Chinese Malaysians, Indians and Malays. Many English-educated Chinese continued to speak Hokkien and Cantonese with their parents and relatives.

The dynamics of the political perceptions of ethnicity in Malaysia have affected the Government's intention of revising the methods of categorizing people in censuses. These changes can be seen in how censuses aim to categorize individuals. Hirschman argues that there can be greater flexibility in government thinking, as in the 1980 census when "neutrality and sensitivity and awareness" was reflected in the use of words like "ethnic group, community, dialect group" (Hirschman, 1987:562).

Regardless of the official category of ethnic groups in Penang, some interviewees found difficulties tracing back their grandparents' cultural background. They explained that they are simply Penangites. "It is a mixed-race town," said one of the informants who were of mixed Malay Tamil parentage. As the third or fourth generation in Penang, she explained that

⁷¹ It is the first Anglo School in Penang

she did not know where her grandparents' villages were. Two interviewees (a mixed Malay Tamil and mixed Malay-Thai Muslim) could not identify their villages, and instead said that they are classified as Malays. A professionally educated descendant of a Penang Baba Hokkien added that, based on his government birth certificate, he is Chinese. Most of them do realize ethnicity as a fixed marker, but it seems that they agree that "[ethnicity] is a Government classification." Without ignoring the ethnic identity, it reflects that the collective identity of Penangites in public sphere more important. The collective identity creates the specific characteristics. The Penangites are the pioneers of modernization, because they believe that Penang is the centers of the English education institution, hybrid culture, intellectual and entrepreneurship and information technology.

Both collective and ethnic identities play an important role in social interactions among the Penangites. Despite many Penangites' experiences, their collective identity characterizes their interaction at the state and national levels. As mentioned before, the government divides Malaysians into different categories based on the 'race' of their parents. In personal interactions, however, Penang residents tend to show their local pride as real Penangites because they were born and raised in Penang, and it is local birth that becomes more important than the birthplace of their parents.

Comparing official categories to social realities, there is a specific need to address a set of Malaysian identities beyond the current racial-based census; the Peranakan Chinese (Babas), Anglo-Chinese, Jawi Pekan, Jawi Arab and Portuguese Eurasians have 'unique' identities. When religion is used as an identity marker, like Islam for the descendants of Tamils, their ethnicity might become less important, identified as Malay or *orang kampung*. The education and professions which brought Penangites to encounter Europe and modernity did not entirely reinforce racially-based classifications. An individual of mixed Tamil-Malay

descent may never think outside official categories if he feels being Malay is more comfortable.

4.3. The Jawi Peranakan (Pekan)

The Jawi Pekan or Peranakan, or the Straits-born children of Indian Muslims, formed a new community in Penang nineteenth century. They had accumulated considerable wealth and status and contributed to the economy as merchants and land dealers. They were also literate and English-educated, easily qualifying for government jobs. British education transformed the Jawi Peranakan from the first generation of traders and merchants into professionals and officers in the next generation. This group played an important role in Penang because of their substantial wealth and high social standing. The ethnic identity of the descendants of Tamil Muslims or Jawi Pekan is explained by Roff (1967), Sadka (1954) and Nagata (1974) as follows:

The assimilation of many Indian Muslims with Malays seems to have progressed even further. The Jawi Peranakan (identified as Jawi Pekan in the nineteenth century censuses of the Straits Settlements) community is a product of Indian-Malay intermarriages in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Often speaking Malay as their mother tongue, Jawi Peranakans were employed by the British as clerks and interpreters (Roff, 1967:48-49).

An early British administrator in the Malay states, describing his experiences in his journal, observes “a dark girl of about eighteen, certainly not pure Malay” (Sadka, 1954:97).

Many Muslim Indians in Malaysia seem to partake of two ethnic worlds, including participation in the institutions and activities of both communities, such as the Malay and Indian Chambers of Commerce for example. With minor variations, Muslim Indians also share the common Hindu-based adat heritage and the majority commonly speaks the Malay language and wears Malay dress (Nagata, 1974: 336).

Even at present, there are fairly loose boundaries between Indian Muslims and Malays (Nagata, 1974) and few barriers exist to intermarriage (Hirschman, 1986:338). The growing population of Malay-Tamil descendants tends to be identified as Malay although they are not by birth pure Malay. Better economic conditions and declining contact with the original hometowns of Tamil Muslim descendants are the main factors of their cultural affiliation with the Malays. Many third or fourth generations Jawi Peranakan, like two of my informants, did not know where their grandparents' villages were. These two informants said people were just classified as Malays or Chinese based on the administration which issued the birth certificate. Most of them did not see ethnicity as a fixed marker. It seemed that these Tamil-Malays agreed that ethnicity was largely a government construct, and many of them felt their identity was situational. They feel their grandparents were real Penangites because they had been raised in Penang. One interviewee called herself Malay, although she knew that her father was not pure Malay (Jati). She is a Muslim so she associates herself with the Malay group. She does not feel she is a Tamil, although she is a fourth generation Tamil, and her father is of Tamil Nadu and Arab descent. She emphasized that her culture and tradition is Malay from Penang.

4.4. The Penang Babas or Straits Born Chinese

Many scholars agree that the Straits-born (*Peranakan*) Chinese, the people of Chinese descent who are born and bred in Southeast Asia, have a somewhat ambiguous status (Clammer, 1980; Ang, 2001:26). Regarded as the descendants of "foreign orientals," the Peranakan Chinese in Indonesia or the Babas in the Malay Peninsula have experienced exclusion both throughout colonial and post-colonial governments as well as afterwards, partly as a result of the fact that the Baba are viewed as 'hybrid Chinese' (Clammer, 1980:4).

Basically, the Peranakan or Babas encountered the ethnic or ‘racial’ classifications which prevented them from establishing ethnic proximity to either the European or indigenous groups. Ang (2001) argues that “most *Peranakans* lost their command over the Chinese language a long time ago and actually spoke their own brand of Malay, a sign of their intensive mixing, at least partially, with the locals” (26). In part this was because, as Clammer (1980) says, in Malaysia, “the Baba community has never been clearly defined” (80). In the later development of business linkages in the British patronage structure, the Babas sought out the Chinese communities as allies, and tended to be associated with the cultural elements of Hokkien (Skinner, 1983:83).

Although Malaysian Chinese might speak Bahasa Malaysia, English and Mandarin within their communities, within the family milieu, command of one of the Chinese dialects (Hokkien, Hakka, Teochew or Cantonese) is a kind of norm (Carstens, 1985:219). This indicates that language use is one of components of personal identity that reflects ancestral ties and can be employed when making strategic choices to the advantage of the individual. One of the reasons why it is better for the younger generation to learn a Chinese dialect for use in family contexts is to maintain a positive relationship with the elderly. The possibility of using a series of mixed codes arises, because Malaysian Chinese learn one of the Chinese dialects in the family context, as well as Malay, English and Mandarin in schools. When I observed the language use of the Chief Minister of Pulau Penang, Lim Guan Eng, I found that he spoke Malay and English when conversing with the media, but for the Chinese constituency, he primarily speaks in Mandarin; as to what dialect that Chief Minister of Penang Lim Guan Eng uses in his family, yet I have no any information about his sub-dialect.

Unlike first generation of Babas Nyonyas who used Chinese culture as a marker of their identity, some of the fourth-fifth generation at present do not speak Chinese dialects or

observe ancestor worship or pray to a wide range of Chinese deities. Additionally, many of them are followers of other religions, such as Christianity (Tan, 1982:50). By contrast, however, Chinese culture is one of the identity markers that commonly unify the descendants of Chinese in the Straits. Although their English education might make some Babas identify themselves as British subjects, in fact the British colonial state recognized them as the descendants of Chinese immigrants. It motivates the Babas to combine the Chinese dialect with some of Malay words. Some of parents eventually hope their children learn Mandarin and Chinese traditions in which the descent of Babas preserves their ancestral culture. This tradition serves as a concrete marker for the Babas. Clammer states that “Penang Babas retained the Hokkien language and a wide range of mainstream Chinese customs” (1980:93). Although Europeans saw the descendants of Chinese as superior and aloof from other ethnic groups (among the British subjects) in Penang, Tan Chee-Beng reports that under certain circumstances, the Babas become a sub-ethnic group of Chinese, regarded as being more like Malays and not as hardworking as other Chinese (1982:50). In the nineteenth century, according to James Low, negative stereotypes of the Chinese as opium smokers, dishonest, cunning, and treacherous prevailed; though muted, some of these perceptions still linger among non-Chinese (Baber, 2009:106).

Unlike Malays who use Islam to mobilize Muslim communities, the Babas and Chinese cannot use Buddhism. A contrasting analysis employed by Tan Chee-Beng (1982) also shows that Chinese religious beliefs are polytheistic and tolerant of other beliefs, but Malays regard polytheism as incompatible with the Malays’ conception as Malay group views the world religion institutions as references. For example, Malaysia constitutionally recognizes Islam as the official religion and intermarriage between a Muslim and non-Muslim is forbidden. Clammer (1980:24-25) said that the Baba tradition in wedding

ceremonies has a unique procession and features like “the payment of bride-price (Baba Pien Kim, Hokkien Pheng -Kim) ... worship before the San Kia to (Hokkien Sam-kai to) table” (25). Freedman (cited in Clammer, 1980) also notes that the Baba have “Chin Choe (Chin tsoe), a uxori-local marriage” (24). The Babas know their ethnic boundaries not only from the Chinese but also from the others. Even though the Babas speak Malay, like other non-Muslim groups they see the Islamic practices of circumcision and the avoidance of pork as cultural features pertaining to the Malays (Tan, 1982:50).

Using this kind of identity make up, the Babas will differentiate their social boundaries from other groups and the Chinese, especially Chinese migrants or *singkeh*. They embrace both English education and Malay culture, but simultaneously see their boundaries in a Chinese community. In terms of culture the Babas also feel close to the Straits of Melaka (Malay) culture. Chia (1994) shows that the Babas are identified with the creole culture of the Malay through food, fashion, and spoken Malay. For instance, the Babas intermarry with non-Muslims in Southeast Asia, as Skinner (1983) also found among Chinese communities in Thailand. The self-ethnic perception of Babas, however, creates boundaries like the possession of Western education, and middle class affiliation, and possible conversion to Christianity. In Malaysia, interfaith relationships are constitutionally forbidden. The Babas know that a non-Muslim must convert to Islam before he or she marries a Muslim. Whenever religion is used as a marker of boundaries for the Babas and Malays, differences between the groups are heightened. Then, the instrumental model of ethnic divisions used by the government reflects the privileges of the Malays and strongly favors an ‘Islamic ethic’ in the public sphere; as to what census takers apply in the field that basically would create an uncomfortable situation. The social interaction based on religious practices would prevent the Babas from identifying as Malay. Boundaries are also manifested in terms of differences

between the culinary practices of Malays and Babas. During field study in Penang, a Baba Catholic informant said that he often enjoys Indian Muslim and Malay cuisine, but his Muslim fellows do not go to Chinese restaurants because of “Pantang” (not Halal food)⁷².

The Babas who were born in the Straits of Melaka exhibit a great variety of cultural differences from the newly arrived Chinese immigrants (Singkeh) in the nineteenth century. The Babas know their physical appearance, British education and an early advantage of affluence (Chia, 1994:12) distinguish them from the new migrant Chinese.⁷³ Clammer (1980:58) says that Straits Chinese can be divided into four main categories on the basis of religion: those who are Buddhists; those who are Chinese Religionists (but with admixture of non-Islamic religious practices, divinatory techniques, etc); those who are Christians; and those who claim “no religion.” The Penang Babas have their own characteristic, different from the Babas of Singapore or Melaka. Penang Babas use a unique Hokkien as the *lingua franca*, and have been known as frugal in their spending habits (Tao, 2009: 18). Tao also contends that the Penangites’ Hokkien is distinct from that spoken in the states in the southern part of West Malaysia (20). The differences between the Baba Hokkiens of Penang and Singapore have been identified by Maurice Freedmen (quoted in Skinner, 1983:59). Skinner also argues that the settlement of Baba Hokkien of Penang and their relationships with North Sumatra and the island of Phuket have shaped their new creolized characteristics. Carstens (1985: 219) finds that a teacher of a Hokkien family in Penang “described Ipoh Cantonese as loud and ill-mannered compared with Penang.”

The Babas officially fall into the ethnic category of Chinese, though they do not always follow and are not necessarily similar to the Chinese. The state’s cultural policy

⁷² In a single three-hour period of observation in such a Chinese restaurant, no Malays came to have dinner. Most patrons were Chinese, tourists, as well as Hindus (Indians). But when an Indian Muslim restaurant was observed, it was seen that three Chinese and one Hindu had breakfast there.

⁷³ The Penang Babas have been able to access English Education in the Penang Free School since 1816.

classifies the Penang Babas into the Chinese group, although the Penang Babas have specific characteristics. The Babas have created a blend between Malay culture and English education. Linguistically the Babas combine Malay and Hokkien. This creole dialect helps define the Penang Babas' ethnic boundary. A "Baba speaks his Baba Malay in a manner that suits him, paying no attention to grammar and mispronouncing words which invariably leads him to distort the spelling when he writes [in Malay]. As the pronunciation of the Baba Malay words is so adulterated and slipshod, even phonetic English cannot help to spell them correctly...." (Chia, 1994:47).

Identifying the role of Hokkien and Malay in forming the Baba identity is related to the sub-ethnic Chinese influences in downtown George Town. The Chinese communities in Penang comprise five big clans: Cheah, Khoo, Yeoh, Lim and Tan. These clans have institutions which are located in the same neighborhood, and they make up the Hokkien Kongsis. Four trustees from each of the five clans are selected to represent the Hokkien Kongsis and are put in charge of five temples as well as Victoria Green or the Penang Chinese Recreation Club (Teong, 2002). One of these sub-ethnic Chinese social institutions, Khoo Kongsis, has contributed to the formation of Penang Baba identity. The Kongsis helped modernize Baba culture by encouraging the adoption of British customs but also the localism of Malay culture. Since the nineteenth century, the Khoo Kongsis has formed social, spiritual, and business sub-organizations to help its members, and has been the place its community could go to have clan protection. Another such group is the Cheah Kongsis; it is one of the main clans in Penang. Wong (2007) focuses on merchants and capitalists of the Hokkien kongsis who conduct business in this region, and build up networks with business partners in other cities in Sumatra and Southern Thailand. He mentions well-known families like the

Khaw of Ranong, the Choong in Kedah, or the Wu in Songkla, who operated on more on a local basis.

4.5. The Jawi (Mixed Arab and Malay)

The Jawi or Jawi Arab (Darah Keturunan Arab/DKA) is a specific entity among urban communities of Penang. The Arabs have long lived in Penang and married Malay women, and because of their high status have also married into the royal families of Kedah and Aceh. Like Tamil Muslims and Jawi Pekan, the descendants of mixed Malay-Aceh Arabs maintained trading routes around ports of Aceh, Penang, and Kedah before Malaysia's independence. Socially, Jawi Arabs were culturally compatible with Malays because of Islam. The shared Muslim values created a strong solidarity between the descendants of Acehnese Malay Arabs and the Malays. Nagata argues that the Arabs who originated from the Hadramaut and other places in the Middle East (2002:5) embraced Malayness through intermarriage with Malay royal families.

In some ways, the position of mixed Arab Malay descendants is problematic in Penang, for if the ethnicized grouping "Bumiputra" is understood to refer to "pure Malay," the Jawi Arabs might be excluded. The Bumiputra might feel the Jawi Arabs could politically and economically gain benefits⁷⁴ from Islamic solidarity and from claiming a Malay identity. The descendants of Arab-Malays could shift their identity from Arab to Malay or vice versa (Nagata, 1974). Many of them have been inclined to associate themselves with Malays, but rejection by the pro-pure Malay group can be heard.

The best known Arab immigrants in the Indian Ocean trade routes are the Hadramis of Yemen, who not only traded with the Indians and Malays but also married local women.

⁷⁴ It should be noted that the benefits from political position in political party like UMNO and government projects are very important.

After marrying local women, Ho (2002) states that the Hadramis and their offspring became Swahilis, Gujaratis, Malabaris, Malays, Javanese, and Filipinos. This pattern also applied in Penang: when the Arabs married Malay women, their descendants were inclined to identify as Malay. In Penang the Jawi Arabs, according to Roff (1967), established Malay associations not only for religious but also economic, intellectual and political activities. Some of the descendants of Hadramis became attached to local identity although they maintained the physical appearance of Arabs. According to Kahn, Arab descendants were included in the Malay group in the Kedah Sultanate (2006:17). Tuanku Syed Hussain Al-Aidid, a descendant of an Arab trader and a woman from Aceh's royal family, was appointed by the British as the first Malay Headman (Kapitan) in George Town. Keong (2002) reports that a descendant of Arab Malays from Kepala Batas in Province Wellesley Penang, Haji Abdullah Ibrahim (Pak Him), who taught Islam in Kedah, was born in the holy city Mecca. Pak Him's son, an UMNO member, was an Acting Chief Minister of Penang and his grandson is the former Prime Minister of Malaysia, Datuk Seri Abdullah Ahmad Badawi (Keong, 2002:125)

In regard to the Jawi Arab or mixed Arab Malay descendants, Ho (2002) also argues that "at the same time, the men and their offspring continued to move throughout this oceanic space, for reasons of trade, study, family, pilgrimage and politics" (15). After the promotion of the Bumiputra (the Sons of the Soil) privileges of the Malays and the domination of Malays in Malaysia, the national ethnic meaning of Malayness tended to exclude mixed blood Malay-Arabs; the descendants of mixed blood Malay-Arabs were to be categorized as non-Malay. Thus there is a problem of identity for Arab-Malay descendants. If the pure Malays have first names like Awang, Long, Muhammad, Abdullah and Wan, the sons and daughters of Arabs who married Malay women would use names like Syed and Sharifah,

because the Jawi Arabs tend to preserve their grandparent's names. Their identity as Jawi can thus show ethnic boundaries.

4.6. The Penang Eurasians

Although the Penang Eurasians came from Phuket and Kedah, the history of Eurasians is largely associated with Melaka. The Portuguese victory over the Melaka Kingdom in 1511 (Andaya & Andaya, 2001:60) marked the coming of the descendants of Europeans, especially the Portuguese, to Malaya. Portuguese descendants established the Eurasian community. Originally the Eurasian Community lived in Melaka and migrated to other states in the Malay Peninsula. The “surface” identity of Eurasians in the past was that they were Catholics, fishermen, and musicians, but their contemporary image is one of being clerks and professionals. In the past, Jessy notes that the Portuguese freely married local women in Melaka (1961:40). By the time the British colonial government was established, the Eurasians had already lived in Malaya for many years. Sibert states that “the history of the Penang Eurasian Community began long before they were ethnically classified as ‘Eurasians’ by the British in the 1920s—thus the blurring of their heritage. Before being called Eurasians, they were popularly referred to, invariably, as Portuguese or Portuguese descendants or Roman Catholics or Serani by local Malays” (Sibert, 2002:1). The Malays called the descendants of Portuguese and Dutch Eurasians or Kristang. The word Kristang refers to Christian, a term meant to describe the mostly Catholic Eurasians.

The present awakening of a Eurasian identity in Malaysia is allowing the Penang Eurasian community to retain their cultural heritage. Eurasians who migrated from Phuket Southern Thailand to George Town in 1778 to avoid the religious persecution⁷⁵ settled around

⁷⁵ James Augustine (cited in Goh 2002) reports that the Eurasians flight from Phuket “was due to religious persecution when a usurper of the Thai throne by the name of “Phya Tak” conquered Ligor in 1778 and ordered the massacre of all Christian” (127). They moved to Kuala Kedah 1781 and they “were well treated by the

Pulau Tikus. They established Christian educational institutions and Kampung Serani in Penang (Goh, 2002:127-129). The descendants of Eurasians have founded the Penang Eurasian Association (PEA) and through this association have tried to revive their unique character and the legacy of Eurasians in Penang, inspired by the memories of Martina Rozells, the wife of Captain Francis Light. However, in Malaysia's census we have no column for a Eurasian group. The Eurasians may claim their great grandparents contributed to the development of Malaysia, but the official categories do not provide a Eurasian space. Sibert states: "The Pulau Tikus 'Kampung Serani' community, yet to get out of the declining Portuguese Catholic Mission, were and still are indifferent about what they were called but had no choice but to adapt with officialdom and convenience" (Sibert, 2002:4).

4.7. Concluding Remarks

The Peranakan, as people outside the official classifications of the 2010 census, are categorized as Chinese, Indians and Others. The census does not acknowledge the Peranakan—descendants of mixed blood of Chinese, Tamils, Arabs, and Eurasian in Malaysia. In Penang they are known as Penang Baba, Penang Jawi Pekan, Jawi Arab and Penang Eurasians. In reality, because of their education and adoption of Straits culture, the Peranakan or Straits-born people do not strictly follow their grandparents' identities. Rather, they follow a British educational system and speak Penang creole, English and Malay. They profess diverse religions, but are proud of the fact that they have resided in Penang for a significant period of time. In contrast to British censuses which combine language, origin of places, ethnicity and race to categorize the population, the present religious and racial-based census excludes the ethnic identity and rights of the Penang Peranakan communities. They

Sultan of Kedah and even were given a church....They moved to Penang in 1786 when Francis Light took over the island "(127-128).

cannot claim their position as Bumiputra and their legacy has been undermined or in some cases has vanished.

Public policy that follows the Affirmative Action in which Bumiputra could claim their position as the owners of Malay land has heightened the sense of ethnic boundaries and exclusiveness. Although they were born in Malaya before independence and became British subjects, descendants of the Jawi, Baba, and Eurasians do not have the same rights as Bumiputra. Unlike Bumiputra, the lower classes and uneducated Peranakan cannot claim more quotas in education and economic assistance. In the education sector, Malaysian public universities reserve 60% of seats for Bumiputra, 10% for the descendants of Indians, and 30% for the Chinese.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS

This thesis concludes with a discussion of the research findings relating to perceived ethnic boundaries in Penang. The interpretation of data (belief systems, state policy, social networks and censuses) provides the basis for examining the evolutionary process of ethnic boundaries. The interpretation of the data obtained reveals that ethnic boundaries are reflected in religious buildings and the sites of territorial shrines, the realities of social groups and the nature of census-taking. The conclusions of the study are summarized in the following sections.

5.1. Urban Enclaves and Penangites: Historically, a clear gridiron of settlements in George Town and the government's regulation of land use divided Penang residents into clear ethnic groups based on the ideological perceptions of the British. The grid plan divided people along ethnicities and the hierarchy of land titles ranged from Europeans at the top, through Armenians, Middle Easterners, Chinese, and Chulias to Malays at the bottom. These processes resulted in the demographic division of people into different races and occupations. Racially-based settlements imposed divisions between ethnic groups. The Europeans dwelt near the state offices, the Chinese and Indians near the market place, and the Malays lived in the south by the Perangin River. Cultural preconceptions led the Penangites to perceive the Chinese as traders who live in urban areas, are polytheists, and work hard to run their family businesses. The Penang Babas (Peranakan) are perceived as professionals and rich businessmen, because they adopted the Anglo and Malay cultures. The Tamil Muslims have undergone a transformation of occupations from traders to government officers. The Tamil

Muslims and Jawi enjoy English education and have political and economic power. The Hindu Indians became rubber tappers and police officers. The descendants of the Arab Malay (Jawi) are known as educators and officers who participate in governing Penang and also in the national level. Jawi Peranakan and Arabs tend to have doubled identities, because they could also identify as Malay due to their belief in Islam and their mixed ancestry. They might, however, not be regarded as pure Malay (Jati).

The present-day interethnic relationships in Penang are also shaped by social classes and modernization, in what is a dynamic process of ethnic identification. Although in small proportion, some cross-cutting of the rigid ethnic boundaries has begun to occur, because of the awareness of social class and ethnicity as a new identity. The growth of urban areas and modern housing complexes has created a new pattern in which affluent families prefer to live in “modern” neighborhoods. It reveals a new pattern of urban settlement, in which the segregation of population does not merely depend on race but the combination of social class, profession and ethnicity.

The use of the term “Penangites” to denote a collective identity reinforces the notion of Penang as a home of immigrants from East and West. Besides the Anglo urban setting which has combined with various ethnic cultures, Penangites see themselves as characterized by English-language education, industriousness, democratization and thriftiness. The increasing ‘exploitation’ of religious issues in political campaigns does affect a small part of population, but for the most part is a situational issue that arises only when political maneuvering is needed before a general election. It could be argued that the collective identity is a form of sociocultural ‘capital’ which differentiates those folks from mainland Malaysians at both the local and national levels.

5.2. Ethnic Identities and Boundaries: Besides collective identity of Penangites, the legacies of Eastern and Western civilizations and world religions form ethnic identities. Systems of belief, cultural backgrounds, house-forms and social associations shape ethnic identities and boundaries. The ethnic enclaves that are linked to the symbolic meanings of cultural identities of the Chinese, Tamils, and Malays as the social reflection of nineteenth- and twentieth-century history can be clearly seen even today. The members of Tamil and the Baba ethnic groups may identify another person as a fellow member of the group, which assigns a shared criterion for inclusion and exclusion. This type of identification therefore strongly reinforces ethnic group boundaries among the Tamils, Chinese and Malays of the first and second generations. For Tamils, group affiliation is not exclusively based on ethnicity, but also on different cultural practices, due to religious and regional differences among the Indian community. In the later phase, British and Malay cultures were adopted and affected the cultural practices which formed the hybridized Penang. Ethnic groups introduced a vernacular architecture with additional borrowed decorations from British and Malay traditions. The legacies of the eighteenth and nineteenth-century urban enclaves include the settlements and vernacular architecture such as the Goddess of Mercy Temple, the Tau Pek Kong Temple of the Baba Hokkien, the Kapitan Kling Mosque, the Acehese (Malay) Mosque and the Nagore Shrine, which are manifestations of the cultures of the Malaysian Chinese, Tamil, and Malay communities.

5.3. The Metamorphosis of Ethnicity within Global Culture: Penang's experiences exhibit the unevenness of the process of ethnic identity adjustment from the first to the fourth or fifth generations. Education, profession, social classes and modernization have affected the ethnic identities and boundaries of Penangites. Contemporary urban Penangites see global cityscapes and housing developers as responsible for the changes in landscape that have also

significantly altered cultural identities and ethnic settlements. Furthermore, starting about ten years ago, the expansion of a global economy to Penang has already resulted in the development of new settlements. The global housing model tends to exponentially increase the velocity and scale of the global movement of people as well as the arrival of foreigners to buy houses, apartments and condominiums. Residence in the upscale Sungai Dua neighborhood is not determined by ethnicity but by social class, and here multiracial inhabitants live in global housing complexes. For the George Town area, the repealing of the Rent Control Act in year 2000 has increased the land prices and has created a market-oriented urban development. The policy of the coalition Gerakan Party and UMNO from 2000-2008 to provide low cost housing was not able to satisfy public demand. Affordable housing for the working class has been a major issue in Penang since 2000. It has pushed some of the working class people out of city. Modernizing the neighborhoods results in people of lower socioeconomic class being unable to live in their communities; there is a mass movement of the working class from the inner city to suburban areas or the mainland. The extensive construction of apartments and shopping centers disperses ethnic communities, resulting, for instance, in the exclusion of some Chinese from their own associations. Weak state policies allowed the global culture to separate the lower classes from their ethnic communities. Now the residential quarters not only depend on ethnicity but social class. Global culture has led to the metamorphosis of ethnicities.

5.4. The Consequences of Religious and Race-Based Censuses: The 2010 Malaysian census applies a religious and racial approach that simplifies classifications of the population but excludes Peranakan groups. The discussion of the consequences of official ethnic categories opens a line of debate. The 2010 census which classifies the Malaysians into five boxes (the Malays, other Bumiputra, Chinese, Indians, and other) not only demonstrates the

exclusion of the realities of Peranakan groups (the Baba, Jawi Pekan, Jawi Arab and Eurasian), but also it deprives the Peranakan groups of any opportunity to claim their identities. The 1810 census recognizes the Jawi Peranakan and “half-caste” and the 1822 census also records Chulias and Arabs. In contrast to contemporary official categories, there is no box for a hybrid perspective which views the descendants of Peranakan groups, Straits-born and mixed blood, as “real” Malaysians with rights equal to those of the Bumiputra. In other words, the policy puts them outside the proverbial box in the census. Unfortunately, the descendants of peranakan are classified only as Chinese, Indian and Other. Highlighting Malayness (Islam, speaking Malay and practicing Malay customs) as national culture in a post-independence without paying pluralism would ignore the diversity and unity of ethnic groups in Malaysia. There is a specific need to address a set of Malaysian identities by recognizing the Peranakan Chinese (Babas), Anglo-Chinese, Jawi Pekan, Jawi Arabs and Eurasians. Although the censuses of the British in Malaya display an arbitrary technique and inconsistent changes, we could learn from them the technique of the self-identification, because British colonial administration did recognize the diversity of its population in terms of languages, ethnicity, race and origin. As a concluding remark, I argue that the 2010 Malaysian census tends to neglect the diversity of the population. The census categories of the Malaysian government should be expanded to better fit the urban communities of Penang. The disjuncture between census categories and perceived ethnic divisions in Penang, however, does show that the everyday reality of ethnic groups tends to be less well articulated and more diverse than those authority-defined identities recognized by officialdom.

References

- Al-Ahmadi, Abdul Rahman. 2000. *Petra Pembina Rumah Melayu Dari Sadat Etnas Anthropology*. Kuala Lumpur: Pustaka Negara Malaysia.
- Ali, S. Husin. 1984. *Kaum, Kelas dan Pembangunan Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Persatuan Sain Sosial Malaysia.
- Andaya, Barbara Watson and Leonard Y. Andaya. 1982. *A History of Malaysia*. New York: St Martin.
- Andaya, Barbara W and Leonard Y. Andaya. 2001. *A History of Malaysia, Second Edition*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Andaya, Leonard. 2008. *Leaves of the Same Tree: Ethnicity and Trade in the Straits of Melaka*. Honolulu: The University of Hawai'i Press.
- Anderson, Benedict. 1991. *Imagined Communities*. London and New York: Verso.
- Andrade, Tonio. 2004. "The Company's Chinese Pirates: How the Dutch East India Company tried to lead a coalition of pirates to war against China, 1621-1662." *Journal of World History* 15(4):415-444.
- Ang, Ien. 2001. *On Not Speaking Chinese Living between Asia and the West*, London and New York: Routledge.
- Aziz, Abdul and Franklyn Kaloko. 1997. *A New Geography of Settlements*. Brunei Darussalam: Education Technology Center.
- Barber, Andrew. *Penang under the East India Company 1786-1858*. Kuala Lumpur: Publisher AB&A.
- Barth, Fredrik. 1969. *Ethnic Groups and Boundaries the Social Organization of Culture Difference*. Boston: Little Brown and Company.
- Brass, Paul R. 1991. *Ethnicity and Nationalism Theory and Comparison*. California: Sage Publications.
- Brubaker, Rogers. 2004. *Ethnicity without Groups*. Cambridge: Harvard.
- Bruner, Edward M. 1963. "Urbanization and Ethnic Identity in North Sumatra." *American Anthropologist, New Series*, 63(3):508-521.
- Bruun, Ole. 2008. *An Introduction to Feng Shui*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Buiskool, Dirk A. 2004. "Medan: A plantation city on the east coast of Sumatra 1870-1942 (Planters, the Sultan, Chinese and the Indian)." *The 1st International Urban Conference*; Surabaya, Nov 10 2010.
- Business Week. 2000. "Penang's Secret". November 6.

- Cai, Yanxin and Lu Bingjie. 2006. *Chinese Architecture*, (Trans by Andrea Lee and Selina Lim), Beijing: China Intercontinental Press.
- Carstens, Sharon A. 2005. *Histories, Cultures, Identities, Studies in Malaysian Chinese Worlds*. Singapore: NUS.
- Cartier, Carolyn. 1999. "Society Cosmopolitics and the Maritime World City." *Geographical Review*, 89(2) pp.277-290
- Champakalakshmi, R. 2001. *The Hindu Temple*. New Delhi: Roli Books.
- Chappell, David Chappell. 1990. "The Crisis of bipolar ethnicity on the Great Frontier: Nativist "Democracy" in Fiji, Malaysia, and New Caledonia." *Journal of World History* 1(2):171-198.
- Chen, Kuo-Wei. 2002. "Meaning in architectural and urban space of the Penang Kongsi enclave." *The Penang Story – International Conference 2002 18-21 April 2002*. Penang: The Penang Heritage Trust & STAR Publications.
- Chen, Lee Ban. 2002. *Bumi Pijak*. Kuala Lumpur: Oriengroup.
- Ching-Hwang, Yen. 1987. "Class Structure and Social Mobility in the Chinese Community in Singapore and Malaya 1800-1911." *Modern Asian Studies*, 21(3): 417-445.
- Chia, Felix. 1994. *The Babas Revisited*. Singapore: Heinemann Asia.
- Choi, Vanessa C. M. 2005. *Malaysia and the Development Process: Globalization, Knowledge transfers and Postcolonial Dilemmas*. New York: Routledge.
- Chua, Osman. 2001. *Chinese Muslims in Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: International Islamic University Malaysia.
- Clammer, John R. 1980. *Straits Chinese Society*. Singapore: Singapore University Press.
- Clodd, H. P. 1948. *Malay's First British Pioneer: the Life of Francis Light*. London: Luzac & Company Ltd.
- Collins, Tarah Kathryn. 1996. *The Western Guide to Feng Shui, Creating Balance, Harmony and Prosperity in Your Environment*. Carlsbad California: Hay House Inc
- Crouch, Harold. 1996. *Government and Society in Malaysia*. Cornell University Press: New York.
- De Davos, George and Lola Romanucci-Ross. 1975. *Ethnic Identity Cultural Continuities and Change*. Palo Alto California: Mayfield Publishing Company.
- DeBernardi, Jean. 2004. *Rites of Belonging Memory, Modernity, and Identity in a Malaysian Chinese Community*. California: Stanford University.
- De Bierre, Julia. 2006. *Penang Through Gilded Doors*. Penang: Areca Book.

- Douglass, Mike. 2009. "Globopolis or Cosmopolis? - Alternative Futures of City Life in East Asia." *Journal of Urban Humanities*, Vol 2, pp. 67-115
- Eames, Edwin and Judith G. Goode. 1977. *Anthropology of the City An Introduction to Urban Anthropology*. Prentice Hall: New Jersey.
- Embong, Abdul Rahman. 1991. "The Culture and Practice of Pluralism in Postcolonial Malaysia". In Robert W Hefner, *The Politics of Multiculturalism Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia*, Honolulu: The University of Hawai'i Press.
- Engseng Ho. 2002. "Names beyond Nations: The Making of Local Cosmopolitans." *Études Rurales*, 163/164:215-231.
- Evers, Hans-Dieter and Rüdiger Korff. 2000. *Southeast Asia Urbanism: The Meaning and Power of Social Space*. New York: St Martin's Press.
- Farouk, Azeem Fazwan Ahmad and Mohamad Zaini Abu Bakar. 1997. "State –induced Social Capital and Ethnic Integration: The Case of Rukun Tetangga in Penang, Malaysia." *Kajian Malaysia*, 25(1):45-55.
- Fellmann, Jerome, Arthur Getis and Judith Getis. 1990. *Human Geography Landscapes of Human Activities*, 2nd edition. Dubuque, IA: WCB Publishers
- Fels, Patricia Tusa. 1994. "Penang's Shophouse Culture." *Places*, 9(1):46-55.
- Fong, Mau Lau. 1989. "The Social alignment patterns of the Chinese in nineteenth-century Penang." *Modern Asian Studies* 23(2):262.
- Furnivall, S. J. 1956. *Colonial Policy and Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- George Town. 2010. *Value Your Built Heritage*. Penang: World Heritage Inc Office
- Ghazali, Surat. 2003. "Kut (Informal Rotating Credit) in the Livelihood Strategies of Urban Households in Penang, Malaysia." *The Royal Geographical Society, the Institute of British Geographers*, 35(2): 183-194.
- Godley, Michael R. 1981. "The Treaty Port Connection: An essay." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*.
- Goh, Beng- Lan. 2001. "Rethinking Urban In Malaysia: Power, Space, and Identity." In Maznah Mohamad and Wong S Koon, *Risking Malaysia Culture, Politics and Identity*. Bangi Malaysia: Penerbit UKM.
- Goh, Beng- Lan. 2002. *Modern Dreams: An inquiry to Power, Cultural Production, and the Cityscape in Contemporary Urban Penang*. Malaysia, Ithaca New York: Cornell University Press.
- Hallgren, Cleas. 1986. *Morally United and Politically Divided: The Chinese Community of Penang*. Stockholm: University of Stockholm.
- Hall, Kenneth R. 2004. "Local and International Trade and Traders in the Straits of Melaka Region: 600-1500." *Journal of the Economic and Social History of the Orient*, 47(2):213-260.

- Hamayotsu, Kikue. 2006. "Islam and nation building in Southeast Asia: Malaysia and Indonesia in comparative perspective." *Pacific Affairs* 75(2):356.
- Hannerz, Ulf. 1997. "Fluxos, fronteiras, híbridos: palavras-chave da antropologia transnacional." *Mana* (Rio de Janeiro), 3(1): 7-39.
- Hirschman, Charles. 1987. "The Meaning and measurement of Ethnicity in Malaysia: An Analysis of Census Classifications." *Journal of Asian Studies*, 46(3):555-582.
- Hirschman, Charles. 1986. "Making of Race in Colonial Malaya: Political Economy and Racial Ideology." *Sociological Forum*, 1(2):330-361.
- Horowitz, Donald. 2007. "Approaches to inter-ethnic accommodation: a comparative perspective." In Abdul Rahman Embong (Ed), *Rethinking Ethnicity & National Building: Malaysia, Sri Lanka & Fiji Comparative Perspective*. Selangor Malaysia: Persatuan Sains Sosial Malaysia.
- Hoyt, Sarnia Hayes. 1991. *Images of Asia: Old Penang*. Singapore: Oxford University Press
- Hussin, Nordin. 2007. *Trade and Society in the Straits of Melaka Dutch Melaka and English Penang, 1780-1830*. Singapore: NIAS Press.
- Isa, Noor Hashimah. 2010. "Post-independence Malaysian short stories: A depiction of racial inflicted pain." *Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris Malaysia*, accessed from www.interdiscipline.net on Jan 31 2012
- Jenkins, Gwynn. 1997. *Contested Space Cultural Heritage and Identity Reconstructions Conservation Strategies with a Developing Asian City*. Zurich: Lit Verlag GmbH & Co.
- Jessy, Jogider Singh. 1961. *History of Malaya 1400-1959*. Singapore: Shing Loong Press.
- Keong, Neil K. J. 2002. *Glimpses of Old Penang*. Selangor Malaysia: Star Publication
- Kahn, Joel S. 2006. *Other Malays Nationalism and Cosmopolitanism in the Modern Malay World*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Kheng, Cheah Boon. 2004. *The Challenge of Ethnicity: Building a nation in Malaysia*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish Academic.
- Khoo, Salma Nasution and Malcolm Wade. 2003. *Penang Postcard Collection 1899-1993s*. Penang: Janus Print & Resources.
- Khoo Salma Nasution. 2009. "Hokkiens Chinese on the Phuket Mining Frontier: the Penang Connection and the Emergence of the Phuket Baba Community." *The Journal of the Malaysia Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* 82(2):83-89.
- Khoo, Sui Nin. 2001. *Streets of George Town Penang*, 4th edition. Areca Books: Penang.
- Khoo, Salma Nasution and Gwynn Jenkins. 2002. "George Town, Pulau Pinang, Malaysia: Development Strategies and Community Realities." in William Logan, *The Disappearing of Asian City Protecting Asia's Urban Heritage in a Globalizing World*. New York: Oxford University Pre

- King, Anthony D. 1976. *Colonial Urban Development*. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.
- King, Anthony D. 1990. *Urbanism, Colonialism, and the World-Economy*, London & New York: Routledge.
- King, Ross. 2008. *Kuala Lumpur and Putrajaya Negotiating Urban Space in Malaysia*. Honolulu: The University of Hawaii Press.
- Lange, Matthew, James Mahoney, Matthias vom Hau. 2006. "Colonialism and Development: A Comparative Analysis of Spanish and British Colonies." *Review: American Journal of Sociology* 111(5):1412-1462.
- Lee, Goh Ban. 1975. *The Pattern of Landownership in Central Georgetown*. Center for Policy Research, Pulau Pinang: USM.
- Lee, Goh Ban. 1991. *Urban Planning in Malaysia, History, Assumptions and Issues*. Selangor Malaysia: Tempo Publishing (M) Sdn Bhd.
- Lee, Raymond. 1986. *Ethnicity and Ethnic Relations in Malaysia*. Northern Illinois University.
- Lim, Siang, Lim Gaik. 2002. "Khoo Kongsi Clan house and Community: Transformation of Social and Spatial Relationships." *The Penang Story*, Penang: The Penang Heritage Trust and Star Publication.
- Logan, William. 2002. *The Disappearing of Asian City Protecting Asia's Urban Heritage in a Globalizing World*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Lubis, Abdur-Razzaq. 2009. "Perceptions of Penang: views from across the Straits." Pp. 150-179 in Guan, Yeoh Seng, Loh Wei Leng, Khoo Salma Nasution and Neil Khor (ed), *Penang and its Region The Story of an Asian entrepôt*. Singapore: NUS.
- Lubis, Abdur-Razzaq. 2010. "Traders, teachers, Pressmen and pilgrim brokers: Penang Arabs in the regional network." rihlah.nl.sg/subpage/conference.htm, April 11 2010.
- Malaki, Achill. 2001. "A Push – Pull Model of Ethnic Reconfiguration in a Plural Society: Trinidad and Tobago." *Iberoamericana. Nordic Journal of Latin American and Caribbean Studies* 31(2):103-117.
- Malaysia Statistics. 2010. *Penduduk, the 2010 Census*, [www. //gov/my](http://www.gov.my)
- McKeown, Adam. 1990. "Conceptualizing Chinese Diasporas 1842 to 1949." *The Journal of Asian Studies* 58(2):306-337.
- Merklinger, Elizabeth Schotten. 2005. *Sultanate Architecture of Pre-Mughal India*. New Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal Publisher Pvt.Ltd. Mohammad, Saidatulakmal. 2010. "Ethnic identity dilemma – A case study of the Indian Muslims in Penang, Malaysia." *International Review of Business Research Papers* 6(3): 70 -82.
- Morson, Ian. 1993. *The Connection Phuket Penang and Adelaide*. Bangkok: The Siam Society.
- Municipal Council of Penang Island (MPPP). 1987. *Structure Plan 1987*. Penang, Malaysia

- Nagata, Judith. 1974. "What is a Malay? Situational selection of ethnic identity in a plural society." *American Anthropologist* 1(2): 346-360.
- Nagata, Judith. 1979. *The Malaysian Mosaic, Perspective from a Poly-ethnic Society*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.
- Nagata, Judith A. 2002. *Heritage as History*. Singapore: ARI.
- New Bold, T. J. 1971. *Political and Statistical Account of the British Settlements in the Straits of Malacca*. London New York: Oxford University Press.
- Noor Farish A. 2005. *From Majapahit to Putrajaya searching for another Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Silver book.
- Ooi, Giok Ling. 2009. "Paradise Lost? Islands, Global Tourism and Heritage Erasure in Malaysia and Singapore." In Rahil Ismail, Brian Shaw, and Ooi Giok Ling, *Southeast Asia Culture and Heritage in a Globalizing World, Diverging Identities in a Dynamic Region*, England: Mixed Sources
- Pakirathan, Paul G. 2002. *The Tamil Festival in Penang: Tamil Cultural Identity and Development*. The Penang Story, Penang Heritage Trust & Star Publication.
- Peet, Richard. 1998. *Modern Geographical Thought*. Malden, MA: Blackwell Publisher, Ltd.
- Pelly, Usman. 1999. "Social Institutions and Ethnic Cohesion in Medan." In Ferrer, Miriam Coronel, Sama-Sama, *Facets of Ethnic Relations in Southeast Asia*. Quezon City: University of the Philippines Dilliman.
- Penang State Government. 2010. *Penang Statistics, Quarter 2, 2010*, Penang: SERI.
- Poston, Dudley L, Jr., Michael Xinxiang Mao, and Mei-Yu Yu. 1994. "The Global Distribution of the Overseas Chinese Around 1990." *Population and Development Review* 20(3):631-635.
- Premdas, Ralph R. 1995. "Ethnic Domination and Reconciliation in Multi-ethnic Societies: A Re-consideration and an Alternative to J. Furnivall and M.G. Smith." *Caribbean Quarterly* 41(1):76-86.
- Purcell, Victor. 1948. *Chinese in Malaya*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Roff, William R. 1967. *The Origins of Malay Nationalism*, New Heaven & London: Yale University Press.
- Rapoport, Amos. 1969. *House Form and Culture*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Sahlins, Marshall. 1999. "What is Anthropological Enlightenment? Some Lessons of the Twentieth Century." *Annual Review of Anthropology*, 28: i-xxii.
- Said, Halimah Mohd and Zainab A Majid. 2004. *Images of the Jawi Penakan of Penang*. Kuala Lumpur: Penerbitan Pendidikan Sultan Indris.
- Sandhu, Kernial Singh. 1969. *Indians in Malaya Immigration & Settlement 1786-1957*. London: Cambridge University Press.

- Scholte, Jan Aart. 1997. "Identifying Indonesia." In Michael Hitchcock and Victor T King, (ed.) *Images of Malay-Indonesian Identity*, Kuala Lumpur: Oxford.
- Scott, James. 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Shamsul, AB. 2001. "Transformation of Malaysia Pluralism". In Robert W Hefner, *The Politics of Multiculturalism Pluralism and Citizenship in Malaysia, Singapore, and Indonesia*, Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Sharma, Kalpana. 1987. "Malaysia: Bogey of Racial Tension." *Economic and Political Weekly* 22(51):2203-2204.
- Sibert, E. Anthony. 2002. "The History of Penang Eurasians." Colloquium on "Penang's Historical Minorities." Organised by: Penang Heritage Trust Co-organised by: Penang Eurasian Association, 2nd February.
- Skinner, G M. 1983. "Creolized Chinese Societies in Asia." In Anthony Reid (2001) *Sojourners and Settlers Histories of Southeast Asia and the Chinese*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- Smith, M. G. 1991. *Pluralism, Politics and Ideology in the Creole Caribbean*. New York: Research Institute for the Study of Man.
- Snider, Nancy L. 1968. "What happened in Penang?" *Asian Survey* 8(12):960-975.
- Stockwell, A. J. 1998. "Conceptions of Community in Colonial Southeast Asia." *Transactions of the Royal Historical Society, Sixth Series*, 8:pp-pp.
- Steinberg, Philip E. 2001. *The Social Construction of the Ocean*. Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Sturtevant, William C. 1966. "Anthropology, History, and Ethnohistory." *Ethnohistory* 13(1/2) 1-51.
- Surin, Jacqueline Ann. 2010. "The benefit of being Malay first." *The nut graph*. Accessed on Oct 4, 2010, <http://www.thenutgraph.com>.
- Suryadinata, Leo. 2001. "Ethnic Chinese in Southeast Asia and their economic rule." In M. Jocelyn Armstrong, R. Warwick Armstrong, and Kent Muller, *Chinese Population in Contemporary Southeast Asia Societies*. Richmond Surrey: Curzon.
- Tan, Chee-Beng. 1982. "Ethnic Relations in Malaysia". In David Y. H. Wu and Brian Loster (eds.), *Ethnicity and Interpersonal Interaction*. Singapore: Maruzen Asia.
- Tan, Liok Ee, 2009. "Conjectures, Confluence, Contestations." Pp. 7-29 in Yeoh Seng Guan, Loh Wei Leng, Khoo Salma Nasution, and Neil Khor (eds.), *Penang and its region, The Story of an Asian Entrepôt*. Singapore: NUS Press.
- Tao, Peggy Tan Pek. 2009. *Life the Malaysian Style*. Selangor Malaysia: Pelanduk Publications.

- Teik, Tan Teik Beng. 1988. *Beliefs and Practices among Malaysian Chinese Buddhists*. Buddhists Missionary Society: Kuala Lumpur.
- Teong, Cheah Jin. 2002. "History of Cheah Clan of Sek Tong Seah Penang." *Colloquium on History of Chinese Communities in Penang*, Penang Heritage Trust
- Tong, Hock Cheu. 1996. "The Festival of the Nine Emperor Gods in Malaysia: Myth, Ritual, and Symbol." *Asian Folklore Studies*, 55(1):49-72.
- Turnbull, C. M. 2009. "Penang's changing role in the Straits Settlements." in Yeoh Seng Guan, et al (ed), *Penang and it's region, The story of an Asian Entrepôt*. NUS Press: Singapore.
- Umemoto, Karen. 2001. "Walking in Another's Shoes Epistemological Challenges in Participatory Planning." *Journal of Planning Education and Research*, 21:17-31.
- Vale, Lawrence J. 1992. *Architecture, Power, and National Identity*. New York: Routledge.
- Vaughan, J. D. 1971. *The Manners and Customs of the Chinese of Straits Settlements*. Singapore: Oxford University Press.
- Vickers, Adrian. 2004. "The Classics in Indonesian Studies: J.S Furnivall's Netherlands India." Paper presented at the 15th Biennial conference of the Asian Studies Association of Australia. In Canberra June 29-July 2.
- Walter, Stephan, Oscar Ybraa and Kimberly. 2009. "Intergroup Threat Theory." In Todd D Nelson, *Handbook of Prejudice, Stereotyping, and Discrimination*. New York: Taylor & Francis Group.
- Wang, Gungwu. 2001. "Continuities in Island Southeast Asia." In Jomo K. S., *Reinventing Malaysia Reflections on its Past and Future*. Bangi Selangor: University Kebangsaan Malaysia.
- Wang, Tai Peng. 1994. *The Origins of Chinese Kongsis*. Petaling Jaya: Pelanduk Publications.
- Widodo, Johannes. 2004. *The Boat and the City, Chinese Diaspora and the Architecture of Southeast Asian Coastal Cities*. Singapore: Marshall Cavendish International.
- Winzeler, Robert L. 2011. *The Peoples of Southeast Asia Today, Ethnography, Ethnology, and Change in Complex Region*. New York: Altaramira Press.
- Wolf, Eric R. 1984. "Incorporation and Identity in the making the Modern World." *Soumen Antropologi* 3:82-92.
- Wu, Yen-ho, David. 1991. "The construction of Chinese and non-Chinese identities." *Daedalus* 120 (2) *The living tree: The changing meaning of Being Chinese today* (spring, 1991), p. 159 -165.
- Wong, Yeetuan. 2007. "The Big Five Hokkien Families in Penang, 1830s–1890s." *Chinese Southern Diaspora Studies*, 1:1-5.
- Yeoh, Brenda S. 1996. *Contesting Space Power Relations and the Urban Built Environment in Colonial Singapore*. Kuala Lumpur, Singapore, New York: Oxford University Press.

Yuan, Lim Jee. 2002. "The Malay House Rediscovering Malay's Indigenous Shelter System." *Inn Seri Perdana Putrajaya Suatu Penghayatan Kerja Seni Bina, Landskap & Hias Dalam Kediaman Rasmi Perdana Menteri Malaysia*. Kuala Lumpur: Putrajaya Holdings Sdn. Bhd.

Zhu, Zixuan and Reginald Y W Kwok. 1997. "Beijing: The Expression of National Political Ideology." *In Wan Kim, Mike Douglass and Kong Ching Ho, Culture and City in the East Asia*. Clarendon Press: Oxford.

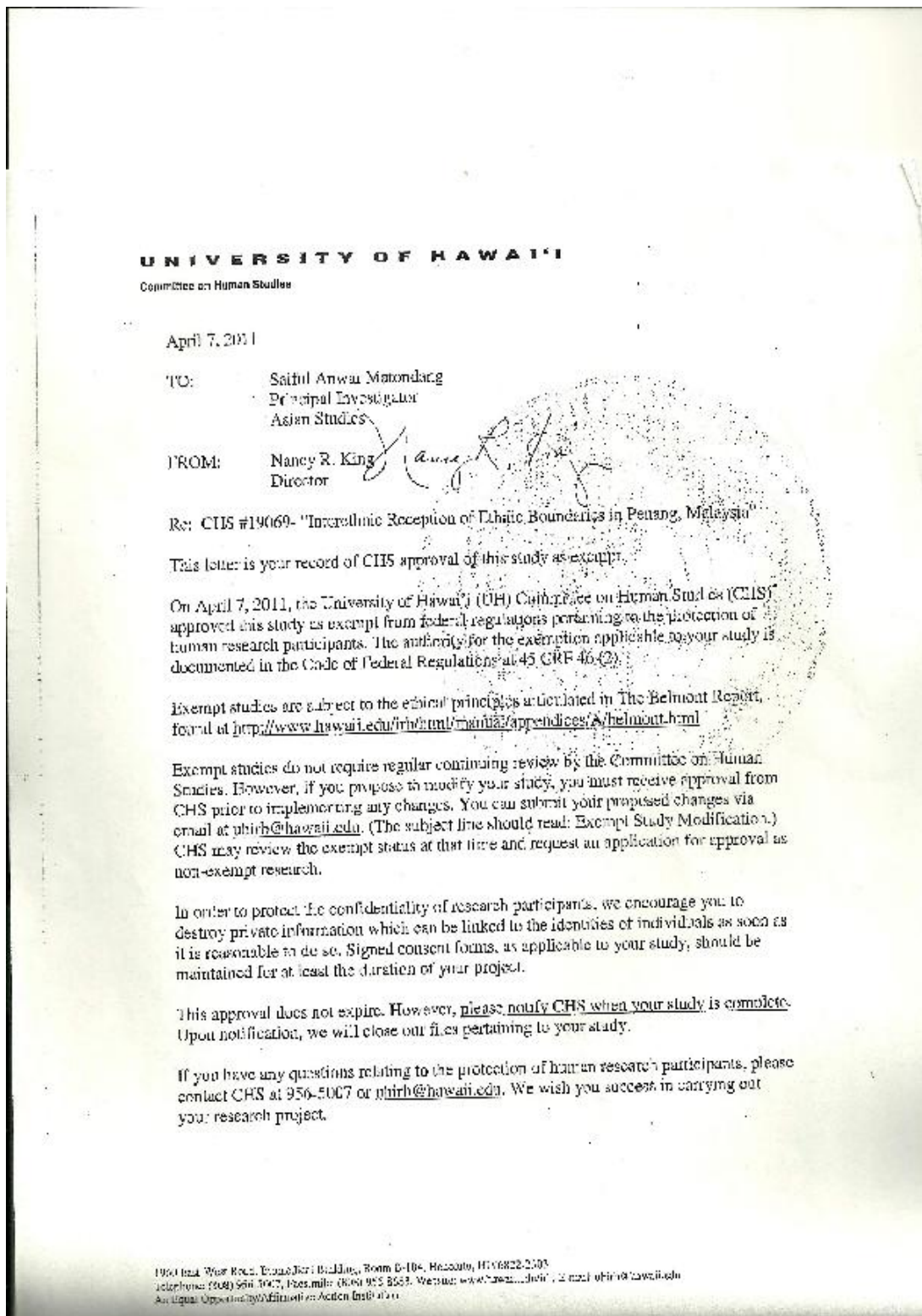
Glossary

Acehnese-Arab Malays	= the mixed Arab–Aceh descendants who migrated to Penang
Baba	= the Straits born Chinese
Bagua	= each of trigram of the Chinese Eight Trigrams
British settlement	= a place outside England where British settled its institutions
Ch'i	=the vital energy; the ch'i animates the cycles of life.
Chin Choe	=Chin tsoe- a uxori-local marriage of Baba
Chief Minister	= the head of state in Malaysia who is elected by people
Chulias	= the descent of Tamil Muslims in North Malaysia
Company	= the East India Company (EIC)
DAP	= Democratic Action Party
DKK	=Darah Keturunan Keling / the descent of Kalinga of India
Dato'	= is a respected person Kramat in Malay means a place of sanctuary
Eurasian	= the descent of Portuguese
Feng Shui	= wind and water; the Chinese Geomancy
Fort Cornwallis	= British Defensive Basis in the Northern part of George Town
Francis Light	= the first superintendent of Penang appointed by the EIC
Free School	= the first Anglo School in Penang
George Town	= capital of Penang Malaysia
Gerakan	= the local Chinese Political Party of Penang
Hausang	= the Chinese trader
Hokkien	= a southern Chinese dialect/ Fukkien; a lingua franca in Penang
Huy	= a clan association of Chinese
Kapitan	= a headman/captain of ethnic group in Indo-Malay
Kapitan Keling	= the head man of Tamils; the name of a Mosque in Penang
Kongsi	= a business association of Chinese
Kuan Yin	= the goddess of Mercy
Kramat	= a place of sanctuary in Malay
Kristang	= a Christian or the descent of Portuguese

Mamak	=Tamil street hawkers
Mandala (middle) & foot (low)	= the structure of settlements; symbolic meanings of head (high), belly (middle) & foot (low)
Mazu	= a protector god of sea fearers /Ma Cho Po (Hokkien)
Nasi Kandar	= a dish of mixed Tamil-Malay, yellow rice with vegetables
NEP	= New Economic Policy of Malaysia
Nyonya	= a madam in Malay; the women of Chinese Straits
Jawi Java	= a geographical and ethnological word which refers to Sumatra and Java
Jawi Peranakan	= a descent of Tamil and local woman of Malay
PAS	= Parti Islam Se -Malaysia
Pekan	= a bazaar/market in Malay word; a nodal point
Penang	= betel tree (nut) Island; an ex-British settlement and a state in post Independence Malaysia
Penangites	=the distinguished collective identity of Penang folks (industrious, hybrid, democratic, British –educated and thrift persons),
Pien Kim	= the payment of bride-price (Baba Pien Kim, Hokkien Pheng -Kim)
Peranakan	= Straits born of the descent of Chinese, India and Arab
Perangin River	= the name of a river at the edge of south George Town
San Kai	= a worship table in Baba dialect (Hokkien Sam –kai)
Shinkeh	= a newly arrival migrant of South Chinese
Sultan Abdullah	= the King of Kedah who signed an agreement with Francis Light
Sungai Dua	= a new cosmopolitan area in the southeast of Penang Island
Tanjong	= Penang Island
Tionghoa	= the descendant of Chinese in Indo- Malay word
Totok	= a Chinese who lacks of host language in Javanese word
Tau Pek Kong	= God of Prosperity
UMNO	=United Malay National Organization/a political party
Vastu Sastra	= an architecture book of India

Appendixes:

Appendix 1 Permit of Committee on Human Subject of UH Manoa



Appendix: 2. the Censuses and Population of Penang

A. The 1810 Census: Total 13.885

Ethnic Groups	Number of People	Percentage
European (not in the Company Service)	95	0.6%
Portuguese -Eurasians	790	5.6%
Chulias and Bengalis	5.604	40%
Chinese	5.088	36.6%
Malays, Jawi-Pekan and Arab	2.069	15 %
Armenians	70	0.5 %
Parsians	21	0.1%
Half-Cast	36	0.2%

Source: Hussin, 2007:187

B. The 1822 Census: Total Population 13.781

Ethnic Groups	Number of People	Percentage
European (incl. settlers and the Company Service)	400	2.9%
Malays	3.367	24.43%
Chinese	3.313	24.4%
Chulias	4.996	36.25%
Native Christians	763	5.53 %
Achinese	60	0.43 %
Bataks	294	2.13%
Bengalis	411	2.98%
Arabs	145	1.05 %
Armenians	15	0.11%
Persians	11	0.07%
Cafferes (or Kafirs)	4	0.02 %

Source: Hussin, 2007:190

C. The 2010 Census: Total Population 1.561.383

Groups	Seberang Perai	Penang
Bumiputra (Malays & Orang Asli)	52,3 %	33.7 %
Chinese	36.1 %	56.4 %
Indians	11.2 %	9.5 %
Others	0.3 %	0.5 %

Source: Malay Statistics 2010, p.3 -8, www.gov.my.

Appendix 3: The Interviewees

No	Descendants of	Census Classification	Education	Profession
1.	Mixed Bayon-Java, Siam (50)	Malay	Junior high	office boy and musician
2.	Mixed Tamil-Malay (40)	Malay	Senior High	a cook in a hotel
3.	Mixed Malay Aceh- Siam (50)	Malay	University	nurse in a hospital
4.	Mixed Hokkien-Hakka (35)	Chinese	University	consultant
5.	Mixed Hokkien – Cantonese (36)	Chinese	University	officer
6.	Mixed Malay-other (40)	Malay	Graduate	event organizer
7.	Malay (25)	Malay	University	officer
8.	Mixed India-Eurasian (55)	India	Graduate	social movement

Appendix: 7 Sungai Dua Desa Airmas Condominium



Source: Advertisement

http://www.iproperty.com.my/property/listing_gallery.aspx?pid=1295889&s=R&t=Condominium+for+Sale%09in+Desa+Airmas+condo%2c+Sungai+Dua%2c+Penang%2c+Malaysia+for+RM+470%2c000

