

Assessment of Cultural Heritages in Yangon City

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Abstract

Cultural Heritage is one of Heritages and it is attractive for visitors. The aim is to understand the value of cultural heritage and assess the importance for socio-economic development of our country. Yangon is the attractive city of Myanmar and the center of economics, religion, politics and culture. According to Yangon City Heritage List of [Yangon City Development Committee](#), it consists of 171 structures and is largely made up of mostly religious structures, and [British colonial era](#) buildings. The study is presented by the spatial distribution pattern of heritages within Yangon City, which is analysed into eight groups from the geographic point of view. The total number of heritage in city is 171, and 89 or 52 percent of them are cultural heritages. Most of the heritages are found in Kyauktada township with 39 or 23 percent. This research intends to safeguard the cultural heritage of our country to learn and to promote the cultural heritage sectors, and to help the economic growth in the area.

Keywords: Cultural Heritage, religious, tourists' attraction and economic

Introduction

Nowadays, many countries are trying to promote their heritage sector for their economics and raise the income of their countries by doing systematically. Yangon is Myanmar's most popular and most important commercial center. It is located between 16° 42' and 17° 06' North Latitudes and 96° 0' and 96° 20' East Longitudes. (shown in figure 1) It is known for the highest number of colonial period buildings in Southeast Asia. Century-old buildings with architecture are main tourist attraction in downtown Yangon. As a developing urban center, it is changing quickly and becoming a more international city day by day, but it is still rich in cultural and traditional themes, colonial buildings and a host of other interesting things. It is very multicultural city, made up of people from all the national races of Myanmar. These different cultures come together to add a richness and diversity to Yangon City. Moreover, the kind of attempt is very important for the historical heritage of this area. Therefore, we have made our efforts in order to present the role of Yangon city heritages from the geographical point of view.

Aim and Objectives

The main aim and objectives of selecting urban heritages as the research are as follows:

- To understand the value of cultural heritage in study area.
- To analyze the spatial distribution patterns of cultural heritage and infrastructures for promoting future development of heritage.
- To assess the importance of cultural heritage sites for socio-economic development of our country.

Research Questions

- What would you like to know about this attraction?
- How these are effective for socio-economic development?

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Source of Data and Methodology

Primary and Secondary data are used for this paper. Primary data are obtained from field observation and open talk from native people in the study area. Secondary data are obtained from Yangon City Development Committee (YCDC), Ministry of Hotels and Tourism, Township Administration Office, Libraries and Google Map. Field data and mapping are carried out by applying the GIS application with topographic maps, Google map and analysis by using both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

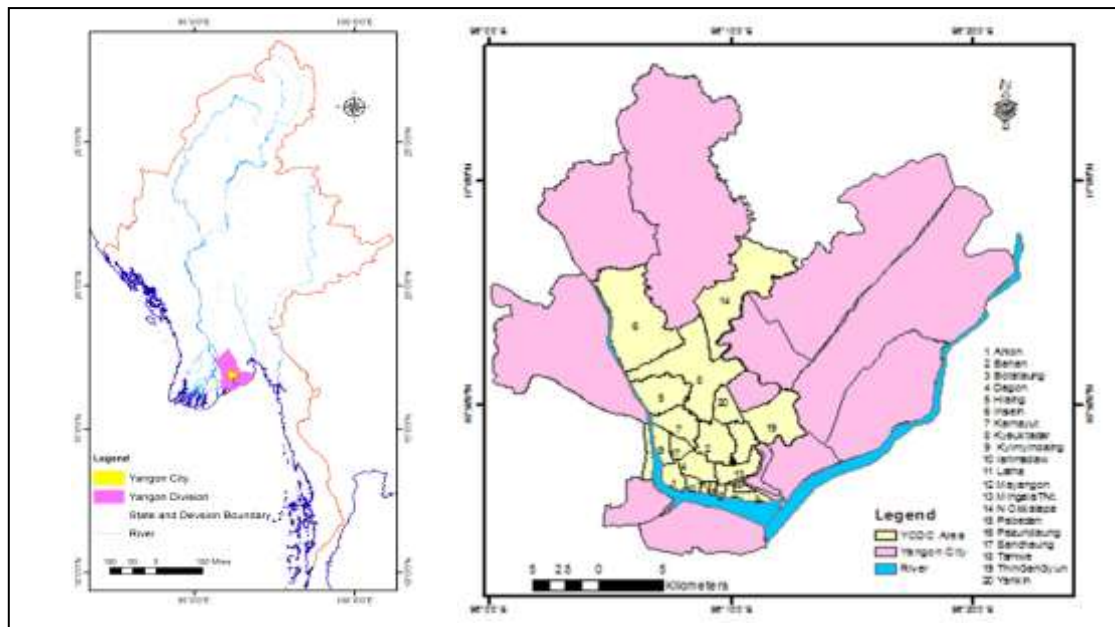


Figure 1 Location Map of Study Area

Findings and Discussion

Yangon City is one of the attractive places in Yangon Region and urban downtown area. Generally, heritages are unevenly distributed in study area. Most of the heritages are found in central part of downtown area. Field surveys are conducted, based on the data available from Yangon City Development Committee and the number of heritages in the Yangon City is 171 including 8 main types. Among them, 23 percent are found in Kyauktadar Township, followed by Latha Township with 13 percent and Dagon Township with 10 percent, which are formerly established by urban area. Among them, the largest number of heritage is 42 percent that are connected to the religion. Secondly, the others are government buildings with 31 percent and pagodas with 11 percent. Distribution and type of heritages are presented in Figure 2.

Among the 171 heritages, cultural heritage is 89 in Yangon City area. Latha Township which has the largest number with 17 percent. Dagon Township is second largest with 10 percent and Mingalar_Taung_Nyunt Township with 9 percent. But Alone and Insein Townships has no cultural heritage because they are outer places of the downtown area. It is shown in figure 3. Religious building is different by size and shape. Generally, they can be divided into eight groups. Of the total number of 89, church ranks first in number among the cultural heritages. Pagoda is the second largest and Mosque is the third largest of cultural heritages. Because of the earliest record, Indians came in Myanmar under the British Colonial Administration, and many become merchants and traders. Distribution of cultural heritages by township and types are presented in Figure 4 and 5.



Figure 2 Type of Heritages in Yangon City.

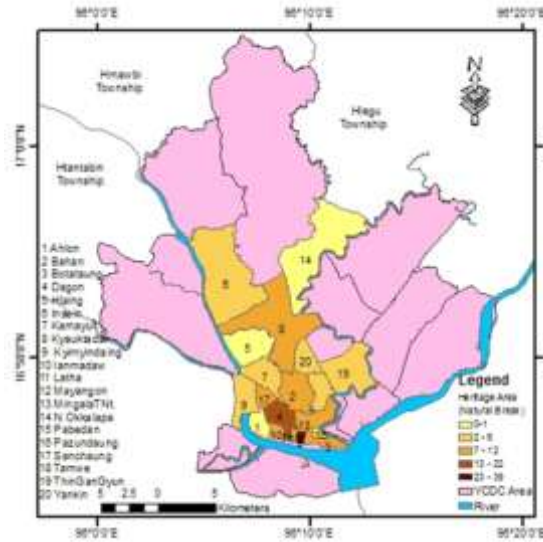


Figure 3 Spatial distribution of Heritage by Township

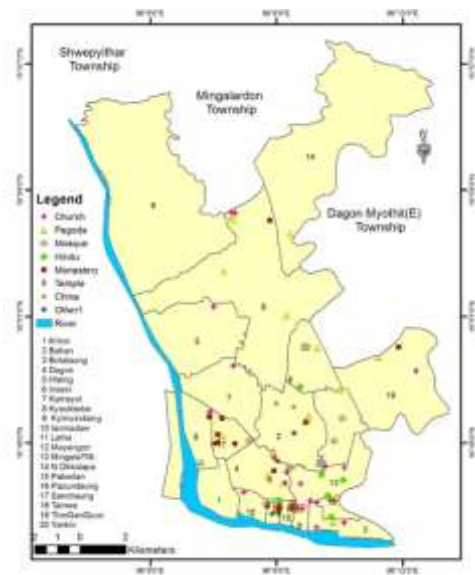


Figure 4 Spatial distribution of Cultural Heritages in Yangon City

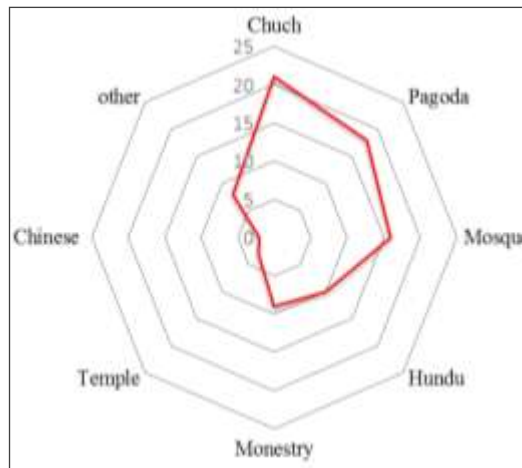


Figure 5 Type of Cultural Heritages by percentage in Study Area

Source: Department of YCDC and Field observations

Table 1. Cultural Heritages and Percentage by Township in 2019

No.	Township	Cultural Heritage	Percentage	No.	Township	Cultural Heritage	Percentage
1	Latha	15	17	10	Yankin	4	5
2	Dagon	10	11	11	Botataung	3	3
3	MingalaTaungNt	8	9	12	Kyimyindaing	3	3
4	Bahan	7	8	13	Tamwe	3	3
5	Mayangon	7	8	14	ThanGyanGyun	3	3
6	Sanchaung	7	8	15	Kamayut	2	2
7	Kyauktadar	5	6	16	Lanmadaw	2	2
8	Pabedan	4	5	17	Hlaing	1	1
9	Pazundaung	4	5	18	North Okkalapa	1	1

Source: Department of Yangon City Development Committee

The total number of cultural heritages in Yangon City is 89. All of the heritages are cultural heritages in Hlaing Township, Pazundaung Township, Yankin Township, North Okalapa Township, Kyimyaindaing Township, Tamwe Township and Thingangyun Township. Comparison of heritages and cultural heritages are shown in table 1 and figure 6. Moreover, the highest number of Churches are found in Dagon Township and Mingalar_Taung_Nyunt Township. Pagodas are found in Dagon Township and Mayangon Township. Mosques are found in Latha Township and Pabedan Township. Hindu temples are found in Latha Township. Chinese temples are found in Bahan Township because of the effect of historical condition.

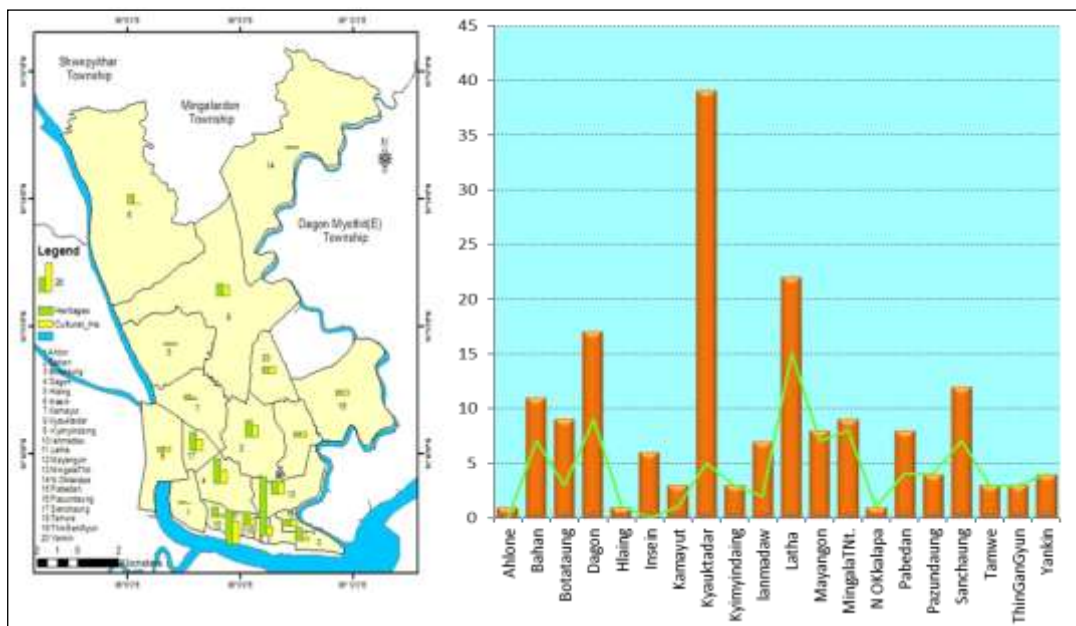


Figure 6 Comparative of Heritages and Cultural Heritages by Township

Another illustration is the role of tourism. Tourism is occupying a very important sector in the development of our country. Yangon city is the most attractive place for visitors.

According to Department of Hotel and Tourism, the number of visitors is increased year by year. Ancient pagodas and century-old buildings with architecture are main tourist attraction in downtown of Yangon City. Most visitors come from Thailand, followed by China and Japan. (Figure 7).

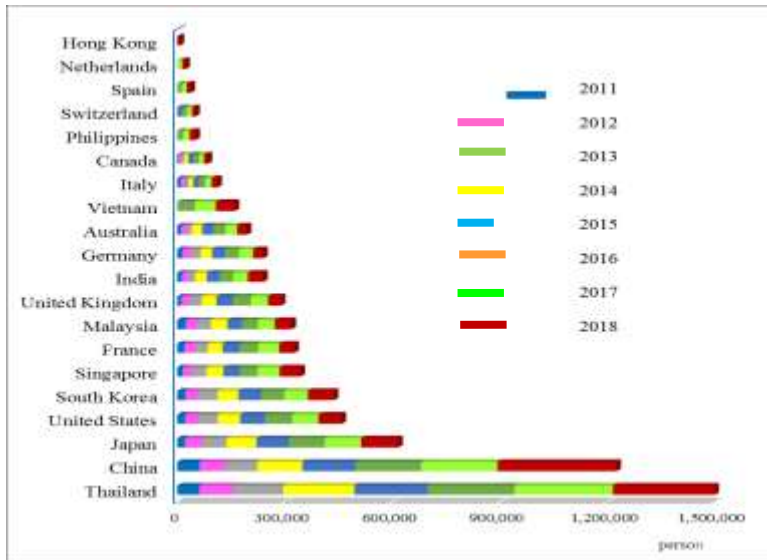


Figure 7 Number of visitors come from by country

Table 2. Assessment of Cultural Heritage by SWOT Analysis

Strength	Weaknesses
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Heritage Region Law(1998) • Ancient Pagodas and buildings • National Museum • Pleasant Climate and Siteseen of Sunset • Availability of local food and products 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understanding of heritage and cultural value • Protect, maintain and raise awareness of heritage site • Limited environmental control
Opportunities	Threats
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Existence of religious structures • Tourist Attraction • Job opportunity with tourism. • Transportation is fairly convenient 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pollution as the heritage buildings are mixed with modern building • Flood can occur due to climate change • Political issues

Source: Field observations and interviews

Conclusion

Yangon is often the first stop for foreigners visiting Myanmar. It is the former capital, the most populous city, and the largest commercial hub in the country. As a developing urban center, it is changing quickly and becoming a more international city day by day, but it is still rich in culture and traditional themes, colonial buildings and a host of other interesting things to see and do.

We would like to point out following remarks to protect and preserve the cultural heritage regions and not to deteriorate cultural heritage because of natural disaster or man-made destruction. Thus, we have to understand heritage value. And then, by valuing, they will want to come from it. By carrying, it will help people enjoy and have a thirst to understand and enhance for the future development. Due to its attached values for these groups or societies, cultural heritage is maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.

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