Urbanism and Cultural Heritage:

How to maintain history and forge into modernity in a fast growing Yangon

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Abstract

This report is about urbanism and historical heritage preservation in Yangon, Myanmar. When we look at urbanism, we are as well to view from the perspectives of urban development along with urban planning. The buildings are merely the physical infrastructures for the citizens of Yangon but also the cultural landscape and the history of the place. They have been changing throughout the time along with social and culture values of the local people. To be able to understand fully about the urban development of a certain area, attentive investigation on urban planning is mandatory. Thus, decent urban planning is vital for the positive development. This research report is based on the theories of urbanism, cultural diversity and tangible and intangible cultural heritage but focus mainly on tangible historic architectural buildings conservation. The case study is in the city of Yangon, Myanmar and critical analysis is centered on the Yangon Heritage Trust, the local NGO working on preserving the heritage of the city. The analysis themes are made upon the benefit and wellbeing of the city dwellers.
I. Introduction

This paper is about urbanism and historical heritage preservation and Yangon as a case study. The main purpose is to gain clear understanding of why the city, Yangon needs to preserve its historic infrastructures and how culture preservation is important for the local people daily lifestyle in every possible aspect. There will be four major chapters and in the first chapter, background of the report, conceptualization and remained structure of the report. In the second chapter we study on the concepts in general about the significance of cultural development along with Yangon, its’ significant role in the history of Myanmar and the history it holds in contemporary days. Continue with the organization called Yangon Heritage Trust which aims to be assuring of the better livelihood by reserving the culture. In chapter three, we will analyze about what is written in the previous chapter and by doing preservation how inhabitants can benefit in many ways from their livelihood to wellbeing. For the last chapter, there are summary and recommendations.

1.1 Background of the study

I have decided to write about this topic particularly because of my personal interest for the topic, cultural heritage and preservation. I am always fascinated by all pre-colonial and colonial buildings in Yangon. I think it would be interesting and entertaining at the same time to do secondary research on this issue. I am also highly inspired by Yangon Heritage Trust with their work, which I will describe their work in later parts. This issue of preserving culture heritage is striking most of the cities on the brink of immense development around the world, Yangon has the unique opportunity to take advantage of the new, tested techniques from the urban planners. To earn the positive growth we need proper urban planning from the cultural aspect while protecting our national landscapes. When urbanism becomes a way of life, some significant changes occur to inhabitants’ livelihoods. Heritage preservation is more than preserving the visible infrastructure and history because by doing so in the correct way, it will benefit the local people and the government.

1.2 Conceptualization and Operationalization

The main concept for this report would be urbanism and cultural development and the dimensions are cultural heritage and its meaning to city’s citizen. Yangon is currently under the process of rapid economic and political development and we must remember to put in the account of cultural development as well. First, we need to fully understand the meaning of
urbanism. According to Louis Wirth (1938), urbanism is a way of life and simultaneously, we need to have the concrete knowledge of what is cultural development and why is that important. The Director-General of UNESCO, Irina Bokova (2011) addressed that culture is a bridge to development and by assuring the cultural development and it will bring sustainable development, economic revenues and wellbeing of the host community. Heritage preservation may seem not directly related with urbanism but it is highly concerned with cultural development. A country or a city can be recognized more or less with physical buildings which are the symbolic culture. Dr. Thant Myint-U (2013), the founder of Yangon Heritage Trust stated in one of his interviews that places and buildings are not just physical structures but they are rather the artifacts, the history of the people and the country. Those buildings also affect the daily life style of the inhabitants.

With all the rapid changes, the dwellers face the enormous transformation in their social life as well. The city, Yangon owns quite fascinating Landscapes such as Shwedagon Pagoda, Inya Lake and many colonial buildings both pre-colonial and colonial periods. When talking about preservation, it does not necessarily only about visible infrastructures but it takes large amount of concentration on the livelihood and wellbeing of the inhabitants. In preservation of cultural heritage we must consider what it means for the citizens of Yangon. To ensure them we need to have proper urban planning to maintain the historic cultural buildings of the city but also thoroughly looking at the aspects of environmental issues, tourism, exchanging culture and creating decent jobs. Regarding to Culture and Sustainable Development in the Post-2015 Development Agenda, culture is not a luxury but a powerful resource for poverty eradication and, according to the World Bank, helps meet the ambitious goals to reduce the percentage of people living on less than US$ 1.25 a day to three percent by 2030, and to foster income growth for the bottom forty percent of the population in every country by creating jobs.
1.3 Conceptual Framework Figure
Framework of Yangon Heritage Trust work on the Yangon to become the most livable city of Asia

Urbanism and Sustainable Development

Cultural Heritage

Wellbeing of the citizen

Work of Yangon Heritage Trust

Possible Outcomes
1.4 Research Question

Research question for this report will be why it is crucial to preserve the culture heritage by having proper sustained urban planning so that dwellers of Yangon can have better livelihood and enjoy their daily life.

1.5 Overview of the Report

There will three parts for remain of the report; chapter two explores the available literature on concepts and dimensions and to give a picture of the historic city of Yangon, Myanmar. Chapter three will discuss the themes that arise from literature review, with specific analysis of current and future issues. Chapter four concludes with the recommendations for the future study.
II. Literature Review of the Urbanism, cultural heritage, Yangon and Yangon Heritage Trust

In this chapter, the main discussion is about the overall concept of urbanism, and the meaning of cultural development and why it entails as an important aspect for this modern days’ urbanism. Culture and concerned definitions on cultural development are used from UNESCO’s available reports and definitions since UNESCO is the world largest leading international organization for this issue and best known for its heritage preservation across the world. Since the dimensions are about cultural heritage we as well essential to fully understand the meaning of cultural heritage. Then we will draw our focus on Yangon and there will be a brief history of Yangon and its historic buildings. Introduction to Yangon Heritage Trust will be followed and their admitted work on preserving the cultural heritage of Yangon. We will study on the later part on the possible outcomes of preserving the culture and the effects on people of Yangon.

2.1 Louis Wirth: Urbanism is a way of life

Louis Wirth (1938) stated that for the city is not only in ever larger degrees the dwelling-place and the workshop of modern man, but it is the initiating and controlling center of economic, political, and cultural life that has drawn most remote parts of the world into its orbit and woven diverse areas, peoples, and activities into a Cosmo. Wirth’s essay made many sociologists to pay attention on the cities and the dwellers. What he pointed out was the cities host the immense amount of individuals while they interact with one another so that the differentiation among them must be huge as well. His theory can be summarized into three As and they are anonymity, anomie and alienation. Unlike in rural areas where people know one another, the city dwellers mainly contact with complete strangers in their daily life and become anonymous individuals. Due to the numerous contacts with unknown people frequently, it creates normlessness, isolation and unauthentic relationships and the chances of being exploited are higher and need of policy and law enforcements. The city environment, said, Wirth, overloads its inhabitants with profuse and varied stimuli- traffic, blaring horns, flashing signs, and strange looking and strangely behaving persons- and this produces alienation. To cope in this environment, city dwellers become aloof and impersonal in their dealings with others. (Zenner & Gmelch, 1994) Since the cities have been serving as the multicultural coexistence community for so long, it is to believe that the more densely populated and the more heterogeneous a community, the more accentuated the characteristics associated with urbanism will be.
2.2 Cities

Cities can be defined as permanence, high density of people, large size and high social heterogeneity. Since the report topic is about urbanism, the possible definition of cities need to be brought up. Malcolm Miles (2007) defines, the words city and urban both derive from Latin: city from civis (citizen), and urban from urbs (city). One implies an act of dwelling, the other a site. He as well varies the nature of social classes between privileged and poor in the cities. While the first group entails freedom in politics, economics and social aspects, the other group is being oppressed. On the other hand, cities hold diverse culture since people from different ethnicities and background come to reside in cities.

2.3 Culture

In the preamble of the Universal Declaration of Cultural Diversity (2001), culture is defined as “…the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses, in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of living together, value systems, traditions and beliefs.”. According to John Hawkes (2001), culture is the social production and transmission of identities, meanings, knowledge, beliefs, values, aspirations, memories, purposes, attitudes and understanding. He as well stated that the culture is the basic need and it is the bedrock of society. Without culture, we are, quite literally, not humans because it affirms our existence and the environment we inhabit.

2.4 Culture Diversity

Simultaneously, UNESCO (1988) is promoting the idea of culture diversity is a mechanism that binds the people. The immense wave of modernization and globalization leaves local culture existence at the risk. The homogenization of local and biological diversity is being imposed by flows of good, idea and services in daily basic. At the same time, the societies are bonded together and as well torn apart by modernization. The loss of own culture can be the same meaning of losing one’s identity and origin, thus it becomes essential to protect the exceptionality of local culture. On the other hand, the culture diversity is believed to have the power of bringing unity among individuals, communities and people. It is as well the fundamental part of human behavior to embrace the differences and appreciate the similarities of various cultures. Cultural diversity gives the values to the societies, creativity and dignity. Since values are the foundation of human development, without them one society cannot direct to the proper development.
Culture has the power to ensure the development and it plays the role of driver. Culture diversity also plays as an important mechanism of social cohesion and inclusion since it nurtures the ownership of individuals and communities. This can lead not only to broader participation but also to empower while strengthening the basic and equal rights of the certain groups. It means including the vulnerable groups such as youth, women, rural dwellers, indigenous people, disables and ethnic minorities in order to alleviate the marginalization acts of discrimination, social and physical segregation and all forms inequalities. On the next level, by promoting and respecting the culture identity under human rights approach, societies can build peace and later reconcile with one another. Culture-led development means regarding people as the center of the development and hand them the permission to build up their own destiny without interfering. By doing this people gain more effective roles in their communities and ensure the sustainable development. (UNESCO, 2014).

2.5 Culture Identity

In the earlier part, the meaning of urbanism, cities and cultural as a mode of development is mentioned and in this paragraph is to look for the meaningful definition on cultural identity. As mentioned above, culture produces identity and is the major platform of development for the society. Culture identity includes pretty much of what people practice in everyday life and it can be seen under many forms as in language, dress codes, the form of relationship between family members, government or religious institutions and arts. Through these modes of culture identity, people express their belongings, preferences, life styles to certain community or society. Culture identity simply means the way people act upon how they want to be recognized. In some cases such as creating art forms, culture identity can be the biggest inspiration for many people. As it lies under many forms, identity is plural and individuals express their loyalty, ethic and social behaviors to their people surround them through those forms of identity. (UNESCO, 2014)

2.6 Culture Heritage

We have learned about cultural development and culture identity above, this passage looks upon cultural heritage. Cultural Heritage is an expression of the ways of living developed by a community and passed on from generation to generation, including customs, practices, places, objects, artistic expressions and values. Cultural Heritage is often expressed as either Intangible or Tangible Cultural Heritage (ICOMOS, 2002). The tangible culture heritage can be divided into three groups which are built environment such as buildings, townscapes and
archaeological remains, natural environment such as rural landscapes, coasts and shorelines and agricultural heritage and lastly artifacts which include books and documents, objects and pictures. The oral history, beliefs, traditions, value systems, norms and customs that are produced, practiced and passed from generation to generation by certain community is regarded as intangible culture heritage. Heritage, tangible and intangible, provides the basis of humanity’s rich cultural diversity. (Logan, 2007) According to John Feather (2006), Culture Heritage, it is a human creating intended to inform. UNESCO (2002) has been putting the culture as vital aspect that leads to sustainable development. Cultural Heritage or cultural infrastructure such as monuments, historic buildings, ancient infrastructures and museums can be the birth places of social cohesion. According to UN (2014), cultural heritage assets can improve the livability and living conditions for poor communities and make cities more competitive at the same time. Culture-led redevelopment of urban areas, and public spaces in particular, should thus be promoted to preserve the social fabric, improve economic returns and increase competitiveness, giving impetus to a diversity of intangible cultural heritage practices as well as other creative expressions, thereby creating sustainable urban spaces.

2.7 Yangon

Yangon, once being as a former capital of Myanmar needs to pay much attention. Yangon is an inhabited place of four to five million individuals that come from different ethnicities and background. Although, the local government moved the capital city to Nay Pyi Taw, nonetheless, Yangon still serves as a commercial and financial capital. The city is the main gateway of Myanmar and Shwedagon Pagoda is on the must-visit list of Myanmar. During the colonial era, serving as the sea port of the British Government, Yangon owns the colonial architecture infrastructures from 100 to 150 years old. The country is currently under the reform process of political, economic and ethnic minorities’ peace reconciliation. Since these take place in rapid pace, the government holds the responsibility to work closely with Community Based Organizations (CBOs), NGOs, academics and experts. According to the concept and dimension of this paper, Yangon dwellers are being affected directly or indirectly by recent changes. If government fails to provide the necessities policies, the local people will be the victims of this new urbanism entail by reforms. To address this issue, the next passage is about the local organization in Yangon called Yangon Heritage Trust.
2.8 Yangon Heritage Trust and their work

Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) is a local Non-Profit Organization in Yangon, Myanmar. The organization aims to protect and promote Yangon’s rich urban heritage and the city to become the most livable city in Asia. YHT is founded by Dr. Thant Myint-U who is now serves as chairman and YHT team consists of experts, historians and architects. The organization obliges to advocate for heritage protection, to develop policy options, to advise the government, to present the ideas to the public, to make specific conservation projects, to facilitate training and to organize studies and conferences. (Yangon Heritage Trust, 2014)

The organization insists to develop in a right direction, the city needs proper planning to avoid the notorious mistakes of many Southeast Asia countries. When a city fails to provide basic necessities to the dwellers, there will be crises and struggles just to survive. International donors and agencies need to think about combating urban poverty as well as rural poverty; the right urban planning processes will be essential in preventing greater inequalities and the social tensions that will inevitably result. (Thant Myint-U, 2013) Estimation makes that Yangon may host ten million by 2020. If there is no proper planning that can nurture and protect the citizens, the city will be a home for crimes and immense conflicts. Since Myanmar is under reform process and speedy economic development, modernization and globalization come in to the country with their highest speed. But rather than resisting the modernization, Yangon can go along with that but with preserving the heritage. Nowadays, cheap and fast buildings are built across the city and it makes almost no guarantee of lasting for natural disasters. New buildings seem not to go parallel with the historic buildings or with modernization which they are built upon bad and ugly architecture. The crucial thing to note here is the city only has a few years to save those ancient buildings and infrastructures.

By doing the conservation-led development, the new countless buildings and ancient infrastructures can take the pride on modernization. The development has the power to protect and promote the structures by turning the old buildings into unique modern ones, for instance to luxury hotels or restaurants. Yangon is to become a green city that is enjoyable to live in for ordinary people, an economic metropolitan area and splendid and attractive place for tourists. A twenty-first century green city has 6 characteristics, the first is to be green with small and large parks and green squares, the second is the city to be walkable and being pedestrian friendly place, third is having iconic buildings such as Shwedagon Pagoda and it’s important that modern buildings would not block the view since those buildings are the face of the city.
The fourth thing is being unique from other countries and the fifth the diversity that would bring together the people of various ethnic, religious and cultural backgrounds. The last and sixth characteristic is to become timeless with a collection of the most beautiful urban spaces from the past combined with new modern buildings.

Yangon’s heritages are divided into four main categories, pre-colonial, colonial, independent and green space for the citizens of Yangon. There are buildings from pre-colonial period such as, Shwedagon and countless monasteries. During the colonial period, British Government built the Yangon as a port city and the infrastructures were Myanmar climate friendly. After 1948, in independent period with the help of International society, some unique architectural building as College of Engineering was built. In contemporary days, Yangon needs to be greener with relaxation environment so that lakes, parks and waterfront will be the main green social space for inhabitants. There is a need of appropriate conservation management plan is necessary to recruit, renovate and preserve the old buildings. Dr. Thant Myint-U (2013) mentioned, many old buildings are already fallen into decay and only a few years left to save them. Yangon is one of the most tolerated spaces for various religions to practice, it is not a common thing in many cities in the world where one can see the different religious buildings in the same road. In downtown Yangon, religious buildings such as Sule and Botatuang Pagodas, Anglican and Roman Catholic Cathedrals, Baptist, Armenian and many other churches, Mosques, Hindu and Chinese temples, Jewish synagogue and Jain, Parsi and Sikh temples. To highlight, the diversity is even higher than in New York and London.

Along with colonial buildings, most of the religious buildings are centuries-old. The organization’s conservation framework includes making statutory list, defining conservation zones and potential conservation zones are Shwedagon Pagoda and its vicinity, Sule Pagoda and downtown Yangon, public recreation areas on waterfront, Inya Lake and Yangon University Compound, Ambassador Quarter and its neighbor. Yangon Heritage Trust has the strategic framework which is intertwined with three parts and called Downtown Yangon Master Plan. Downtown Yangon is tremendous tourist attraction sport for tourists and as well important for Myanmar history. First and foremost, the city needs to solve the challenges are to turn the new and old infrastructures well to go along with modernization, to improve the public transportation and traffic congestion problem and to develop the waterfront. Simultaneously, the plan is aiming for the better livelihoods of the inhabitants which is to have thoughtful plan on the future of service industry especially tourism and making familiar citizens with government buildings. The second is to cooperate with international organizations,
philanthropic organizations, foreign direct investment and local community interest to draw sufficient support. The third pillar is to protect and celebrate the cultural diversity and history.

One crucial aspect of cultural heritage in the whole plan is to benefit the citizens of Yangon especially who live in downtown areas. But these cannot be done without local government active involvement. The government needs to act and follow up on proper laws and regulations. YHT already got involved with local authorities with different levels from different ministries such the President of Myanmar, the minister of tourism, the minister of transportation and such. More than that, it is collaborating with the municipal authority Yangon City Development Committee (YCDS), the Department of Human Settlements and Housing Development (DHSHD), the Ministry of Science and Technology, and the Association of Myanmar Architects (AMA) to undertake new policies to extend heritage preservation. From the government side, the President is very encouraging on the framework and they have been working with JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) for city planning but mainly for infrastructures such as roads, sky bridges and sanitation facilities, sewage and transport. YCDC announced recently that there will no longer be entrance fee system in most of public parks. In Yangon, there are sixty three parks and the new system works for fifty nine parks at the moment. The inhabitants are now able to access more on public spaces. The next chapter is to analyze the literature review on the current chapter and to answer the research questions with possible themes.
III. Analysis on the on-going situation of Conservation work from Yangon Heritage Trust

This specific chapter is about analyzing the literature review and themes from the previous chapter. Yangon is currently under the rapid shifting formation of urbanization. With the flow of modernization, the way of Yangon dwellers daily life changes. This phenomenon is absolutely compatible with Louis Wirth’s theory of urbanism where different individuals interact mostly with unknown strangers, higher chances of being vulnerable and exploited and in need of law enforcements. In contemporary days Yangon, there are many example cases. Nonetheless, as a city Yangon is a unique center for inspired Myanmar artists to freely express their arts in different forms and celebrates the culture diversity. Nonetheless, to become sustainable and sufficient city, it is necessary to consider the culture as one of the pillars of positive and sustainable development. Sustainable Development is the development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. (Brutland Report, WCED, 1987)

When developing a framework and implementing, the very first thing to consider are the people affecting doing the project. The Yangon Heritage Trust (YHT) makes some clear point of doing this heritage preservation to be people-centered which is to benefit the people. The organization is to conduct the survey of how communities can benefit by conservation in down town area and also to include the cultural diversity aspect. The place itself is authentic where people from various culture backgrounds reside for centuries. (Kyaw Phyo Tha, 2014) By coining all these terms and concepts, there are themes coming up out of this.

3.1 Culture diversity and Nation Building

Firstly, it is about the inclusion and desegregation of culture diversity through preserving the heritage. Difference is not just to be tolerated, but valorized, given value by the dominant culture. Difference addresses the powerful, asserting specific needs, claims and rights. Difference speaks to us with a collective voice. (Sandercock, L. 1998; Hawkes John. 2001) YHT (2014) does mention about nation building which is to reconnect the citizens with their rich culture by realizing and appreciating the existed culture of the city. This is not just about Burmese culture but about the whole nation. Myanmar is an ethnically diverse country compromised with debatable number of 135 ethnic groups. Nonetheless, the country is entitled
of having the longest civil war. Due to these facts, ethnic minorities and their culture diversity need to be included in the pillar of development. UN (2014) indicated that the recognition of heritage and promotion and respect of cultural diversity within a human rights bases approach are key elements in reconciliation and peace-building processes and recreating social links in post-crisis and post-disaster responses, within communities and between communities. John Hawkes (2001) argued that just as biodiversity is an essential component of ecological sustainability, so is cultural diversity essential to social sustainability. Diverse values should not be respected just because we are tolerant folks, but because we must have a pool of diverse perspectives in order to survive, to adapt to changing conditions, to embrace the future.

3.2 Sustainable Development and cultural diversity

The key factor for bringing up together the cultural diversity and sustainable development is the wellbeing of the people. Although the organization do not mention about sustainable development in their work, it is hugely related for a project since it is about preserving culture heritage and better wellbeing of the citizens. YHT as well notes the uttermost factor of people participation and celebrating the culture diversity. A jointly convened UNESCO and UNEP high-level Roundtable held on 2002, in the preamble stated that, sustainable development requires the moral vision of human beings be harnessed in as much harmony with local cultural aspirations as possible. Cultural diversity guarantees sustainability because it binds universal developmental goals to plausible and specific moral visions. Human beings are the key movers in such balances, and if their diversity is gradually reduced, so is the archive of moral visions linking moral and material well-being. Thus cultural diversity is a powerful guarantee of biodiversity.

3.3 Future Tourism

Yangon’s heritage is the main attraction for tourism. The city owns the largest number of colonial buildings in Southeast Asia. Dr. Thant Myint-U (2013) argued that this is not preserving aspect of our colonial past but preserving the history and tourism is the best chance for Yangon to complete successfully. Further, tourism is a major sector of economic growth for Myanmar and can generate income for local communities. YHT (2014) indicated that it can create thousands of jobs quickly, boosts the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and as well tax revenues. Experts and individuals from different areas such carpenters, artisans, interior
decorators, architects, engineers, conservation specialists, airport staff, tour guides, hotel staffs, museum staffs and so on. (YHT, 2014) With one billion travelers moving around the globe in 2012 alone, the nexus between tourism and culture offers an immense opportunity to contribute to inclusive economic growth, social development and stability. (UN, 2014)

3.4 The role of local Government

The future of Yangon seems bright since YHT is already collaborating with Myanmar government officials even the President. According to YHT’s framework, by the late of 2015, the organization will monitor the down town revitalization plan and by 2015, Yangon to become one of the greatest cities and it can be regarded as current President’s success and will be one of his greatest legacies in the future. Local government should also engage with individual citizens and civil society. Dr. Thant Myint-U (2013) mentioned that the government is very much willing to participate and do not have many confrontations. On the other hand, Laetitia Millois, Researcher of the Yangon Heritage Trust (2014) said that people participation is at the worst state and not so positive since they do not understand why they need the space that is livable and walkable. To convince them that these buildings can be nice to preserve and live in is a hard work. The government intervention would require on this issue to advocate the local residents through mass media and such kind of media forms.

Myanmar has the history of misused the heritage preservation since military junta once used against heritage conservation projects, especially religious monuments as a way of legitimizing its own position, strengthening the dominance of the majority ethnic group and marginalize the cultures of the Karen and Mon minorities so as to force these groups to assimilate. (Philp, 2004; Logan, 2007) S.W. Logan (2007) stated that Myanmar military government used selective versions of the “national cultural heritage” to force minority groups to adopt the dominant culture, effectively wiping out their own cultural identity. Culture Heritage should only go with democracy and human rights.

As stated earlier in above paragraphs, the local residents’ participation and interest must take a serious account because only that way, people will gain benefits and enjoy the true democracy out of economic and culture development from the city. The first step would be raising awareness of the dwellers and the local government to work on this issue. The authority still fails to bring the attention towards Moreover, the role of government is to implement the
clear and effective laws on lands and infrastructures; be sure to enforce the laws. To review back the Wirth’s theory, due to the lifestyle and characteristics of urban areas, city residents are prone to exploit in terms of social, economic and culture spheres. On one hand, Host Forum on Sustainable Development of Yangon hosted by YHT on January 2015, Dr. Thant Myint-U, stated that the local authority has been doing good progress on the heritage preservation. The latest spark issue of Dagon City Project, that could affect hugely to Shwedagon Pagoda. The Government made official announcement that the project was stopped on July 7, 2015. The project was boycott by various organizations, NGOs, academics and experts including YHT.

On the bright side, YHT was successful unveiled the first heritage blue plaque in front of the City Hall. At the moment, the sixth and the latest blue plaque is already installed in the Myanmar Agricultural Bank on Pansodan road. The buildings namely General Post Office, Central Fire Station, The Armenian Apostolic Church of St. John the Baptist and the headquarters of AVA Bank on Mahabandoola Road. In this chapter, discussion focus on the YHT work during the past three years along with subtopics that are hugely interconnected. YHT as well released about the community engagement project which will seek Yangon dwellers anticipation on their neighborhoods. The project will be assisted by the New Zealand Government. The next, last chapter is about the recommendations of the future study and the conclusion.
IV. Recommendation and Conclusion of the Report

The project YHT is implementing at the moment somehow derived from the approach of focusing on the inclusion of culture of ethnic minorities but collaborating with the local government, these are the factors need to put consideration what the previous government used to do and not to repeat the mistakes but to learn from that.

UN (2014) stated that the respect of cultural diversity and the promotion of intercultural dialogue favour a wider participation in public life, on the basis of human rights and equality. It is thus crucial to ensure the participation of civil society in the formulation and promotion of cultural policies and to ensure access for all in decision-making processes as well as equal access to cultural resources and the enhancement of opportunities for all to participate and contribute in cultural life. With the on-going conflicts and civil wars, social cohesion and inclusion through culture can be the right step of the solution that lead to reconciliation of the nation. Moreover, to become a cosmopolitan city that benefits to the inhabitants Yangon must be livable and attractive place. Cosmopolitanism is first of all an orientation, a willingness to engage with the other. It is an intellectual and aesthetic stance of openness towards divergent cultural experiences, a search for contrasts rather than uniformity (Hannerz, quoted Incirlioglu and Tandogan, 1999: 135; Neil, 2004). Government cannot work alone on this but only by engaging with the organization like Yangon Heritage Trust and put more efforts on advocating the people’s participation on this sparking issue.

This report is about the urbanism and sustainable development and how it is important to develop in the right direction by conserving culture heritage since it can assure the wellbeing of the city citizens. The first part is the background of the research, conceptualization and operationalization, conceptual framework, research question and follow by the structure of the remaining report. The second part is the available literature review on urbanism, culture, culture identity, cultural diversity and culture heritage. In order to be able to understand the current situation and plans doing by Yangon Heritage Trust, it is crucial to understand the concepts of what are stated. In the later part of the chapter is on the short description of Yangon and in depth information of the current work from YHT. In the third session is analyzing the literature from the second part to answer the research question and it comes up with four themes such as culture diversity and nation building, sustainable development and cultural diversity,
future tourism and the role of local government. For the future reference, some suggestions are made on the top of this last session of the report. Many researches on this topic are needed especially that center the participation and awareness of Yangon dwellers.
References


