



SPEAKER 2: DR GOH HSIAO MEI

THE PITFALLS AND PROSPECTS OF  
COMMUNITY HERITAGE ENGAGEMENT IN MALAYSIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Hsiao Mei Goh

Centre for Global Archaeological Research, Universiti Sains Malaysia

*hmgoh@usm.my*

**WORKSHOP ON  
THE HERITAGE OF ANCIENT AND URBAN SITES:  
GIVING VOICE TO LOCAL PRIORITIES  
14-15 MARCH 2016  
SINGAPORE**

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the contemporary community heritage engagement in Malaysian archaeology, with a special focus on Gua Tambun - a national heritage site containing one of the most pristine prehistoric rock art collections in the country. It argues that the existing community heritage engagement practice and policy often disenfranchise the community knowledge, more to serve as an act of tokenism and highly conform to a top-down model. The examination into the heritage engagement of Gua Tambun pointed out a pattern of exclusion, in which the consultation with and inclusion of the local community on management planning is fairly low. In response to these issues, a community-driven engagement project known as Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project (GTHAP) has been developed, aiming at encouraging community engagement in rock art conservation through promotion of heritage awareness and local capacity building. Thus far, GTHAP is the first community heritage engagement project in Peninsula Malaysia, which is fully funded through public crowd-fund, and it gives way to the local community to invest and foster a sustainable heritage conservation program through capacity building and long-term partnership. Under the initiatives of GTHAP, a public archaeology program known as “Embracing Tambun Rock Art” and a heritage volunteer program known as “TRA-Rangers” which anticipate running for a cycle of one year, have been successfully launched. Given that the community-driven approach is a relatively new alternative in heritage management, GTHAP serves as a new benchmark to reflect the pitfalls and prospects in the future delivery of a sustainable conservation management of archaeological heritage in Malaysia.

## BIODATA

Hsiao Mei Goh is an archaeologist affiliated to the Centre for Global Archaeological Research, Universiti Sains Malaysia. Over the past 8 years, she has been actively engaged in many archaeological and heritage projects and majority of her works focus on the public archaeology and cultural heritage management of archaeological sites.

## CONFERENCE PAPER

### THE PITFALLS AND PROSPECTS OF

#### COMMUNITY HERITAGE ENGAGEMENT IN MALAYSIAN ARCHAEOLOGY

Hsiao Mei Goh

Centre for Global Archaeological Research, Universiti Sains Malaysia

*hmgoh@usm.my*

This paper explores the contemporary community heritage engagement in Malaysian archaeology, with a special focus on Gua Tambun - a national heritage site containing one of the most pristine prehistoric rock art collections in the country. It argues that the existing community heritage engagement practice and policy often disenfranchise the community knowledge, more to serve as an act of tokenism and highly conform to a top-down model. The examination into the heritage engagement of Gua Tambun pointed out a pattern of exclusion, in which the consultation with and inclusion of the local community on management planning is fairly low. In response to these issues, a community-driven engagement project known as Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project (GTHAP) has been developed, aiming at encouraging community engagement in rock art conservation through promotion of heritage awareness and local capacity building. Thus far, GTHAP is the first community heritage engagement project in Peninsula Malaysia, which is fully funded through public crowd-fund, and it gives way to the local community to invest and foster a sustainable heritage conservation program through capacity building and long-term partnership. Under the initiatives of GTHAP, a public archaeology program known as "Embracing Tambun Rock Art" and a heritage volunteer program known as "TRA-Rangers" which anticipate running for a cycle of one year, have been successfully launched. Given that the community-driven approach is a relatively new alternative in heritage management, GTHAP serves as a new benchmark to reflect the pitfalls and prospects in the future delivery of a sustainable conservation management of archaeological heritage in Malaysia.

#### 1.0 Introduction

Over the past decade, community involvement in heritage has increasingly become a subject of debate in heritage studies following by the increasing criticisms into the contemporary heritage management practice which oftentimes, disenfranchise the voice of community in heritage management planning (Chirikure and Pwiti, 2008; Marshall, 2002; Ismail 2013; Goh, 2014). In Malaysia, years of research indicate that the community involvement in heritage is still fairly sporadic, mainly due to the lack of mutual trust between the authority and local stakeholders (Ismail, 2013; Goh, 2014).

According to Ismail (2013), the investigation into the community heritage involvement in UNESCO World Heritage City of Melaka suggested that majority of the local stakeholders do not explicitly express their interest in heritage engagement and therefore, the authority has no baseline data to identify and approach the potential community stakeholders. On the other hand, Goh (2015), through her study on the heritage management of UNESCO World Heritage

Site of Lenggong Valley, pointed out that the contemporary Conservation Management Plan (CMP) of Lenggong Valley fails to acknowledge community values and attitudes as well as encourage stakeholder's participation in the conservation planning. A more in depth community survey conducted by Goh (2014) in Lenggong Valley revealed that there is a divergence between *how* the official (authority) and community ascribed value to the cave sites across the valley, and the social significance of these cave sites are still underrepresented. Further examination into the community involvement in Lenggong's heritage pointed out that the concept of "heritage" is relatively new to certain social groups, in which "heritage" is often treated as a "dispensable luxury" as they prefer to allocate their time and energy for income-generating activities (Goh, 2014). These scenarios reflect a huge challenge for the future delivery of heritage management in Malaysia, particularly in relates to the inclusion of community stakeholders in the long-term conservation management planning.

## 2.0 Community Heritage in Malaysia: A brief background

In retrospect, Malaysian government was one of the forerunners among the ASEAN countries in the development of heritage conservation in this region. Under the initiative of the First Malaysia Plan (1966-1970), Malaysian government, in collaboration with UNESCO, proposed a mission to conduct an extensive survey in 1968-1969 and a masterplan for Bujang Valley and Kuala Kedah Fort has been successfully drafted in 1987 (see Sanday, 1987). However, Sanday's report only detailed the technical aspects of the conservation and management of historical Bujang Valley and Kuala Kedah Fort, and the inclusion of community stakeholders in the conservation planning was absent in their masterplan. In 1988, Malaysia government rectified the World Heritage Convention and later endorsed the ASEAN Declaration on Cultural Heritage in 2000. However, it is ironic to point out that none of these documents explicitly elaborate on the importance of community engagement as a means to empower the local community as one of the key stakeholders in long-term heritage management.

It was only until the very end of 20<sup>th</sup> century that community heritage engagement becomes a new subject of interest in Malaysian heritage where the grassroots heritage campaigning began to gain some political and social attentions with the establishment of several heritage-oriented NGOs such as Badan Warisan Malaysia Penang Heritage Trust. In parallel with the international heritage movement and in attempt to make heritage management and conservation more social relevant, the authority (heritage practitioners) began to take initiatives to acknowledge the importance of social voices in heritage management planning through policy and law making. For instance, Article 46 (c) in National Heritage Act 2005 urges the authority to promote the inclusion of community in decision-making (National Heritage Act, 2005). These initiatives seem extremely motivating. However, the validity of these mechanisms has always been questioned (Ismail, 2013; Goh, 2014). Many have argued that the lack of community engagement in Malaysian heritage is highly due to the existing "pattern of exclusion" as the result of the adoption of typical "top-down" model in Malaysian heritage management practice (Ismail, 2013). Chirikure and Pwiti (2008), on the other hand, pointed to the "unwillingness of heritage practitioners to give up some of their power and always view local community as

passive partners” as the key factor that contributed to the lower rate of community engagement in heritage in general. Byrne, Brayshaw and Ireland (2001) argue that there is always a divergence between how heritage practitioners and local community interprets a heritage place, object or monument and thus a lot of heritage project failed to generate mutual benefits which led to the fall-out of local community from the heritage discourse. Of course, all of these arguments and suggestions are valid to a certain extent. However, Goh (2014) suggested a key of a successful community heritage project is to explicitly explore every political, social and economic agenda associated with the project. It has to move beyond rhetorical strategies and implement these approaches from the grassroots level, it requires an in depth investigation into the agendas behind every aspect, that includes the examination into the politics of the local heritage sectors; the community needs and motivations; the local capacity; the prospects and limitations of community- driven project; the issue of sustainability and etcetera.

Knowing that a good heritage management planning should consider all strands of cultural and social factors (DuCros et al., 2007) and the nature of every heritage engagement project is subjected to different agendas and motivations; therefore, it is too subjective to dispraise the current approach which is more conform to a “top-down” model. As such, this paper tends to present an alternative facet of community heritage engagement in Malaysia through an in-depth discussion into a community-driven approach that has been recently adopted in Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project – a community engagement project initiated by the author to explore the pros and cons of grassroots campaigning compared to the conventional community heritage engagement practice.

### 3.0 The Prehistoric Rock Art Site of Gua Tambun: A background

Gua Tambun, or Tambun Cave is a prehistoric rock art site situated in Gunong Panjang limestone hill, approximately 15km from the capital of the state of Perak (Figure 1). Gua Tambun is approximately 80 metres long and best described as a rock shelter as it is a ledge located approximately 50 metres above the floor (Figure 2).

Thus far, this cave has been known for its archaeological importance as one of the most profound ancient red and purple painting caves in the country (Faulstich, 1984; Matthew, 1960; Tan and Chia, 2011; Tan, 2014). To date, more than 600 forms of rock art motives found at the site (Tan and Chia, 2011; Tan, 2014) and these depictions of local fauna, anthropomorphs and abstract shades of red, purple and orange are attributed to Neolithic period, relatively dated to between 2,500 and 500 B.C. (Before Century) (Tan and Chia,2011.)

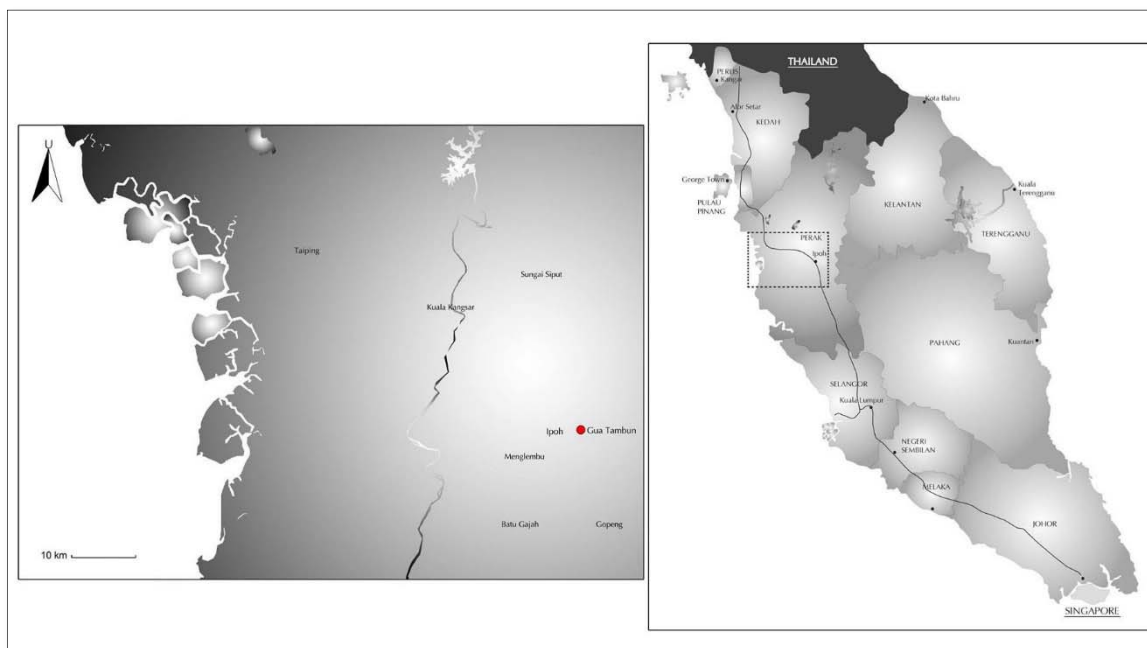


Figure1: The location of Gua Tambun in Peninsula Malaysia

Prior to 2009, the literature dedicated to Tambun Cave is relatively limited and most of them are the field reports produced by Matthew (1959, 1960) and Faulstich (1984, 1985). The former investigation identified approximately 80 forms of rock art and unearthed 49 stone implements, said to have been attributed to "Hoabihnian" culture (approximately 10,000- 5,000 years ago and varies across different region in Southeast Asia) whereas the latter recorded more rock art and reported the discovery of Neolithic cord-marked pottery sherds.

In 2009, Tan and Chia (2011) conducted an extensive archaeological research and a total of more than 600 forms of rock art scattered through 11 panels across the wall were documented. Recognising its cultural importance, this site was gazetted as National Heritage Site in January 2010.

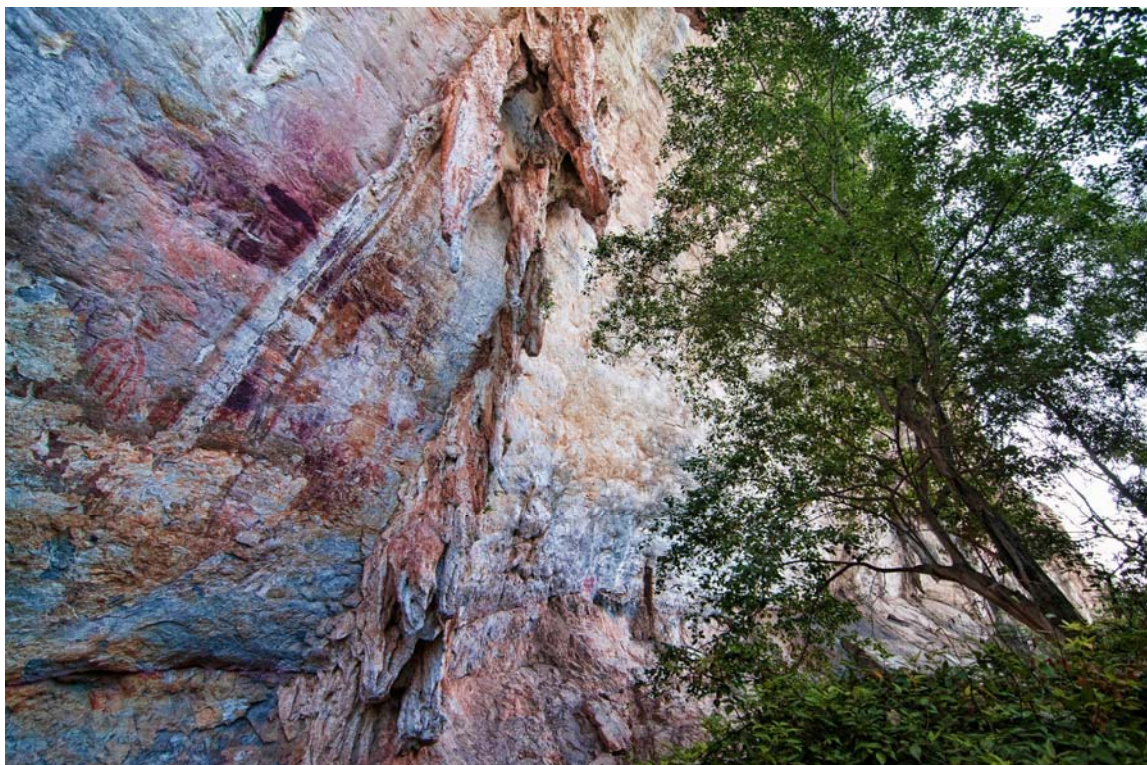


Figure 2: The major panel of prehistoric rock art of the cave wall of Gua Tambun.

In early 2015, the author of this paper conducted a preliminary heritage assessment of Gua Tambun, mainly through archival research and community survey. The archival research shows that many of the artefacts recovered from Matthew's excavation in 1969 went missing, with the record of only two stone implements can be retrieved from National Museum of Kuala Lumpur. The findings of Faulstich's (1984) excavation in Gua Tambun are somehow remaining unknown. The lack of comprehensive date and records of previous archaeological findings, to some extent, compromise the archaeological interpretation of the Tambun's heritage. The community survey, on the other hand, shows that this cave is not only archaeologically important but also socially significant to the local community. However, up until present, the heritage interpretation of Gua Tambun is solely focused on its archaeological value, and the social and historical importance of this rock art site is still underrepresented. This scenario suggests a more comprehensive study and research into Gua Tambun to produce a more concrete and broad-gauge heritage interpretation of this precious rock art site.

Another noted challenge to the conservation and management of Tambun Rock Art is the vandalism activities that spiraled out of control in Gua Tambun (Ahmad, 2014; Goh, 2015; Singh, 2015; Tan and Chia, 2011; Yap, 2015) and this is due in part to the unawareness of this valuable and fragile cultural heritage among the local community. A survey among a pool of 100 local residents, 78 percent are unaware of the existence of this prehistoric rock art site in Ipoh. What worrying is that out of 51 respondents who age between 18-25 years old, only 2 local respondents are aware of the prehistoric rock art of Tambun. This scenario indicates that the local heritage awareness among the Tambun community, especially among the young, is

extremely low.

#### 4.1 Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project

In response to these issues, a community-driven engagement project known as Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project (GTHAP) has been developed and launched in June 2015. Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project (#GTHAP) is a heritage initiative driven by a group of heritage researchers and students from Universiti Sains Malaysia. This project was launched in partnership with local NGOs and local community of Perak. Considering the increasing conservation and management issues of Gua Tambun, this project aims to save the Tambun Rock Art through local conservation effort. To date, GTHAP is the first community-driven heritage project being launched in Tambun, Ipoh between the collaboration of USM and local community.

The primary objectives of the collaborative Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project (GTHAP) are:

- i. To create momentum for rock art preservation and conservation in Gua Tambun and Peninsular Malaysia through the promotion of heritage awareness;
- ii. To encourage local involvement and channel local effort in rock art conservation;
- iii. To offer opportunities for local capacity building through public education and outreach, that include:
  - a) Rock art interpretation and presentation
  - b) Rock art site management and conservation
  - c) Specialized tourist guiding in rock art site
- iv. To connect people to Tambun's rich prehistoric past; and to create a long-term partnership and collaboration among heritage professionals, authorities, local NGOs and local community.
- v.

#### 4.2 Identification of Stakeholders and Local Partnerships

Prior to the commencement of GTHAP, a thorough study into previous research in related to Gua Tambun and Tambun Rock Art has been conducted to assist in the identification of potential local stakeholders. As the primary goal of GTHAP is to promote local heritage awareness and appreciation through public educational program, the development of local partnership is highly essential to ensure the sustainability of the program. The process of identification of stakeholders was fairly straight forward, in which several local heritage-oriented NGOs have been approached. The team members of GTHAP approached each NGO and conducted few sessions of consultations in order to identify the motivations of each NGO and assessed the capacity and limitation of each partner. This is extremely vital to ensure that the project can provides mutual benefits to all stakeholders who being involved in the project management process.

Over a course of 6 months, a partnership with 9 NGOs included a local press has been established (Figure 3). These NGOs are actively involved in every single management



planning process ever since, from fundraising, publicity, logistics planning, monitoring to volunteering and etc. This mutual understanding and partnership stimulate the development of a mutual trust among the local stakeholders, and at the same time, expedite a more meaningful project outcome of mutual benefits and community relevance.

Your Voice In The Community **IPOH ECHO** November 1-15, 2015 15

### Personality

## Ngdawiyah's Art

**B**orn in 1975 in Grik, Ngdawiyah Ismail (known as Gie), knew that when she grew up she wanted to be a painter and a storyteller. It all started when she saw her mom's handwriting in Jawi (an old Malay-style of spelling and handwriting) and she wanted to interpret it in painting.

"My mom has the best and the most beautiful Jawi-writing I've ever seen. I love the calligraphy and also painting," said the 40-year-old lady.

She started her work as a painter at the early age of 15 when she won first prize in a portrait drawing competition (state level), drawing portraits for her friends and teachers. Together with Darul Ridzuan Society of Painters, her paintings have been shown in numerous events and art exhibitions.

In 2014, Ngdawiyah joined Fai Zakaria, another established painter and entered the Europe Art Tour where she managed to sell three of her paintings. Through the strong support she received from various clubs including Perak state, Ngdawiyah has traveled to Austria, Switzerland, England and France. When asked about her most memorable trip, without hesitation, she would love to visit Austria again.

"Austria is a country that appreciates art. One of my favourite musician, Beethoven was born here. I had an opportunity to visit his house and the whole trip gave me chills," said Gie who planned one day to hold her own art/music tour with other legendary musicians such as Kenny G and Maksim Mrvica.



Interested to see Ngdawiyah's work? Be sure to visit her first solo exhibition at Impiana Hotel which began on October 1 and ends November 30.

Ili Aqilah

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### Conservation

## Interpreting Tambun Rock Art: A Local Dialogue

**T**he stunning red-paintings of Tambun, which is better known as Tambun Rock Art, is given due care and attention lately, following the commencement of "Embracing Tambun Rock Art" heritage workshop at Gua Tambun earlier this month.

Two series of heritage workshops at Gua Tambun were greatly cheered on by approximately 80 participants, who gathered together to be inspired, engaged and get immersed into the heart of ancient Tambun Man. These workshops not only introduced the participants (particularly fellow Ipohites) to the essence of ancient Tambun life but also provided an excellent opportunity for a local dialogue that shed new light into the future interpretation and conservation of Tambun Rock Art.

"I love such a dialogue, it allows me to understand the past interpretation of these paintings and at the same time, we (participants) get to provide an alternative way of establishing new cultural meaning for Tambun Rock Art and that means a lot to the locals", said Erica Yee, 23.

There are a total of 11 panels of rock art found scattered across the cave wall of Gua Tambun. The majority of these panels demonstrate the hunting-gathering activities of early Tambun Man. Interestingly enough, many of the participants have ascribed different meanings to these paintings, some corresponding to the old interpretations, but some interpretations were totally new and intriguing. In this article, I would like to start with the "hunting-scene" panel, discussing the old interpretation and draw attention to how contemporary Ipoh derives meanings from these paintings.

This panel (pic) is the highest panel in Gua Tambun and previously identified as a typical hunting scene – a giant "wild boar" surrounded by three men with upraised hands, with one holding a "pot" or "fruit". However, the dialogue with local Ipohites urged a need to rethink the old interpretation – some suggested that these "men" appear to be more like Orangutan, given that the limbs are not proportional to the human body size; some suggested that the so-called "pot" or "fruits" could be "bells" and the whole panel shows that hunters were using bells and hands to direct the animal (maybe) towards an enclosure.



So, what do you think?  
If these paintings show different meanings or tell a different story from your point of view, please feel free to share us your thoughts by dropping us an email at [tambunrockart@gmail.com](mailto:tambunrockart@gmail.com)

Hsiao-Mei Goh

Figure 3: The conservation column on Ipoh Echo is dedicated to Tambun Rock Art since August 2015

### 4.3 Crowd-funding

One of the many challenges of community heritage engagement is the issue of funding. Oftentimes, community is perceived as "passive partners". From economic perspective, they are the beneficiaries of the project. These "passive partners" always tend to benefit from the project instead of giving in. In the case of Gua Tambun, GTHAP work closely with Give.my - a crowd-funding platform that aims to pioneer better alternative education for Malaysian, to source a decent amount of fund to run the weekly public archaeology workshop (Figure 4). This made GTHAP the very first public archaeological project in Malaysia that has been funded by the general public community. The rationale behind this is to get the community to invest in this project in order to create social appreciation and attachment towards this project. This example contested the conventional way of funding a community heritage engagement project and it definitely set a new benchmark for the future delivery of community engagement in the country.

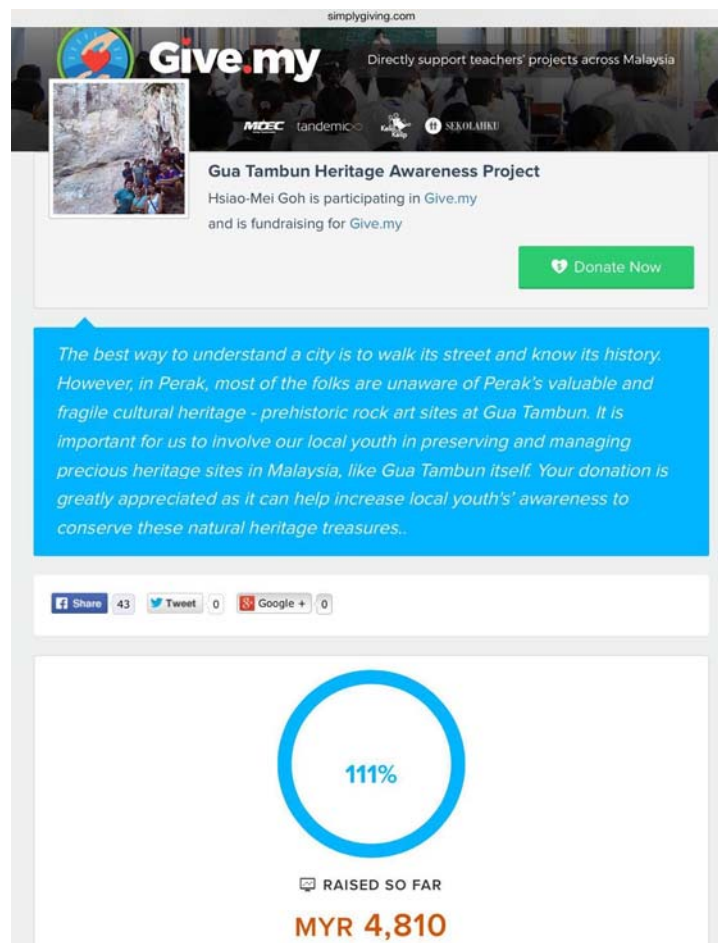


Figure 4: The crowd-funding campaign for Gua Tambun Heritage Awareness Project

#### 4.4 Embracing Tambun Rock Art Public Archaeology Workshop

“Embracing Tambun Rock Art” is a public archaeology workshop introduces to the public especially the local community of Tambun as a means to promote public awareness towards the cultural importance of this significant site. This 3-hour workshop is running on a weekly basis and comprises of a mixed of educational and hands-on activities. It introduces the participants to ancient rock arts, highlight the rarity and importance of Tambun Rock Art as well as initiate a dialogue into the future of Tambun Rock Art. This workshop is currently co-managed by a group of local volunteers. To date, this workshop is well received and more than 300 local residents have joined the workshop. The workshop participants comprise of community members from different age groups, ranging from primary school kids to senior citizens (Figure 5,6).

  
 GUA TAMBUN HERITAGE AWARENESS PROJECT

# embracing TAMBUN ROCK ART 4.0

A Heritage initiative by GTHAP



## Get hands-on to unveil the ancient life of Tambun!

 24 October 2015 (Saturday)  
 0900 - 1300  
 Caltex Tambun, Ipoh, Perak  
 Gua Tambun, Ipoh, Perak

### HIGHLIGHTS

- Tambun Rock Art Poster Exhibition

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### ACTIVITIES

- Rock Art Hunting
- Rock Art Interpretation
- Rock Art Puzzle
- Homemade Drawing

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### CONVERSATION

- The Future of Tambun Rock Art
- Tambun Rock Art Rangers

 TAMBUNROCKART  
 GUA TAMBUN HERITAGE AWARENESS PROJECT  
[www.tambunrockart.com](http://www.tambunrockart.com)  
 #GTHAP  
 #GUATAMBUNHERITAGEAWARENESSPROJECT





Figure 5: Embracing Tambun Rock Art workshop is running on a weekly basis.

As aforementioned, this project sets to explore the weaknesses and strengths of community-driven heritage engagement and thus a short interview is conducted among the local participants on a weekly basis. Out of the 120 short interviews we conducted, more than 70% (N=87) of participants were previously unaware of the existence of the sites, and all participants (100%, N=120) stated that they will promote the site to their friends, family and acquaintances.

During the interviews, participants were requested to share their personal perception in related to one big question: "Whose heritage for whom"? Majority of the response are extremely positive, with 94% (N=113) express their appreciation and "claimed" their social ownership towards these ancient rock arts. In response to the public tendency to get involve in the future conservation and management program of Gua Tambun, 38% (N=46) stated that they are keen and committed to be part of the project in long run; 52.5% (N=63) of the participants stated that they would join if they have time whereas the rest of 9.5% (N=11) showed no interest to get involve in the heritage management planning of Gua Tambun.




Figure 6: Participants are actively engaged at the workshop

#### 4.5 Tambun Rock Art Rangers (TRA-Rangers) – a local capacity building program

Tambun Rock Art Rangers is a volunteer program that has been launched as part of the initiatives of GTHAP to develop local capacity as a means to transform GTHAP as a sustainable project in long run. Apart from raising local awareness about issues related to the conservation and management of Tambun Rock Art, this program also integrates hands-on skills training activities and sets to establish cooperative relations and partnerships among the local stakeholders.


The TRA-Rangers volunteer program comprises of 4 major categories, namely: site ranger, heritage tour guiding, conservation and research, and community heritage education and outreach. Each of the volunteer is required to commit 4 to 8 hours per week, and they have full-flexibility when it comes to their involvement. They can enroll in more than one category as long as their time is permitted. The TRA-Rangers are required to assist in the weekly workshop and at the same time, highly involve in the research and outreach of Tambun Rock Art project.

To date, we have a group of TRA-Rangers, which consists of 7 volunteers, and we anticipate more individuals to join in as volunteer in the future.



## Volunteer Opportunity Tambun Rock Art Rangers

A Heritage initiative by GHAP



This volunteer program aims to promote the prehistoric rock art site of Gua Tambun and channel local effort into the long term conservation and management of Tambun Rock Art.

To express your interest in becoming a TRA-Ranger, please complete the online form at:  
<http://freeonlinesurveys.com/s/FivzDKGH>

OR


 [tambunrockart@gmail.com](mailto:tambunrockart@gmail.com)

Figure 7: Tambun Rock Art Rangers Volunteer Program



Figure 8: A local volunteer works with the archaeologist in the rock art documentation project.

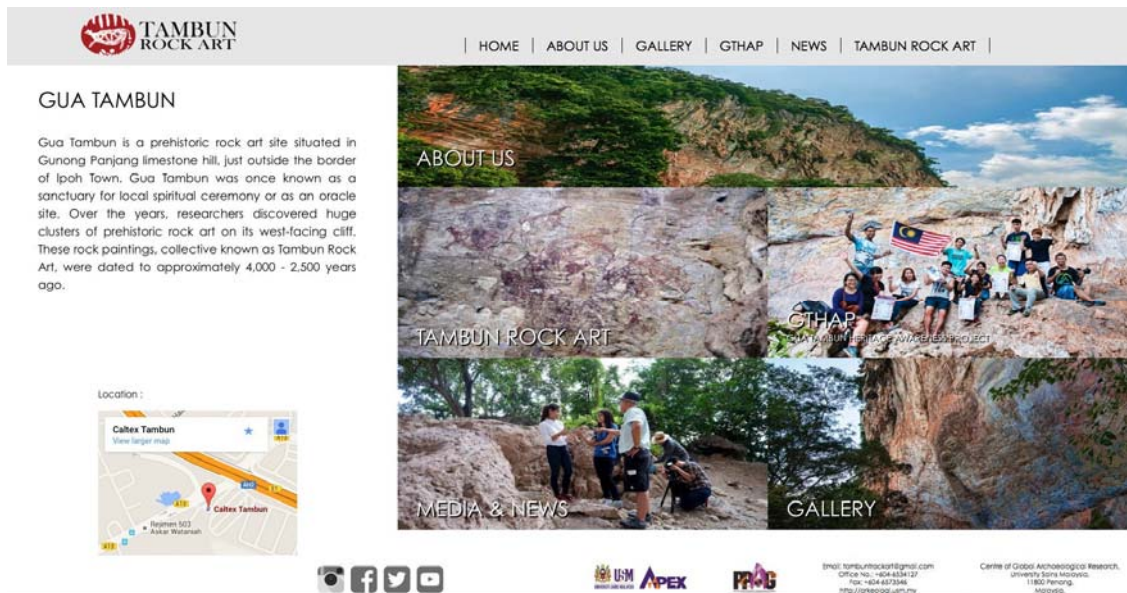


Figure 9: tambunrock.com has been developed by a group of volunteers.

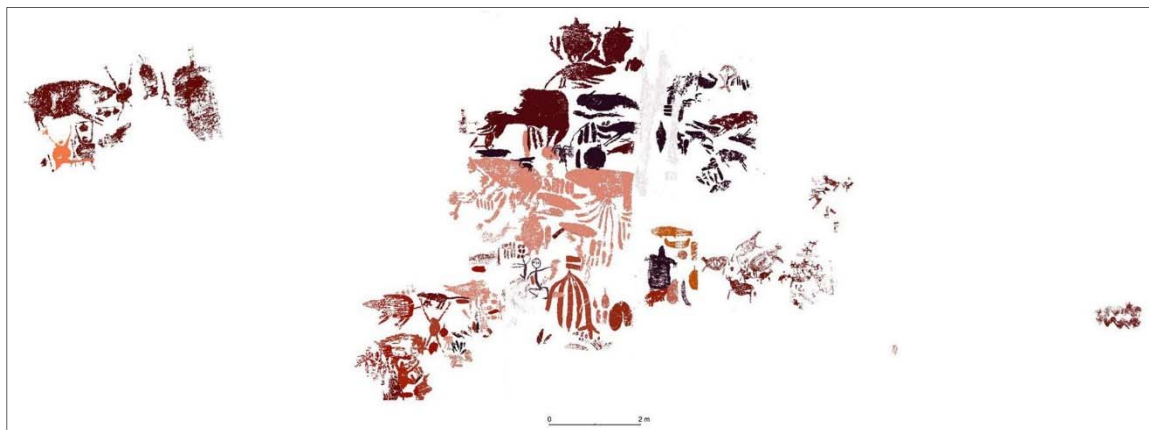


Figure 10: The outcome of Tambun Rock Art Documentation project.

### 5.0 Conclusion: The Pitfalls and Prospects of community heritage engagement

Traditionally, the authority and heritage professionals across a range of sectors in Malaysia are being assigned with responsibility to promote and initiate the community heritage engagement across the country. As it turns out, many of the previous attempts in developing the community engagement in heritage were unable to achieve the desirable outcomes (see, Hamid et.al, 2014). This is due in part to the current heritage management system that highly conforms to bureaucracy system, which involves a wide range of stakeholders at the top level. Oftentimes, organizations develop and launch the community-based project just to fulfill their own prescribed political agendas and once the agendas is justified, such initiative will eventually subsided. This scenario reflects the tokenistic nature of majority of the community heritage

engagement project in Malaysia and this will result in a lack of support from the community for future initiatives.

In the context of heritage management in Malaysia, Goh (2014; 2015) argues that the consultation with the local community is not only useful, but it is a crucial process to create partnership with the community to manage the site in long run. When there is a close interaction between the local values and the conservation management, it reflects back to the local community that their heritage is being recognized. However, in many cases, the contemporary heritage management practice tends to prioritize the "professionalism" instead of acknowledging the local community as the indigenous owner of these heritage assets or traditions. This creates an on-going tension between the authority and the local community and at the same time, illustrates the imbalance of focus of the contemporary heritage management in Malaysia.

In contrary, the case of Gua Tambun sets to explore a possibility of developing a community-driven heritage project from grassroots level, aiming at adopting a bottom-up approach to create momentum for community involvement in rock art conservation. It provides a platform that encourages local stakeholders to channel their input and stimulate cooperative efforts among the "equally important" stakeholders. The key here is the acknowledgment.

In Malaysia, it is so common that the community stakeholders are lack of motivation to campaigning from grassroots level, given their mindsets are hard wired to the fact that "heritage is government's responsibility" and the notion of "it's yours, not mine" is still deeply rooted among the local community (Goh, 2014). As such, even though a bottom-up approach is adopted in the case of Gua Tambun, a "shadow" top-down model (in this case, the project management team from Universiti Sains Malaysia) is always in place to oversee and encourage the development and sustainability of the project in long run through social empowerment and capacity building. The cornerstone to establish a long-term partnership is the mutual trust and understanding. In such situation, the success of a community heritage engagement is not solely depend on which models or approaches that has been adopted; the key is to move beyond the rhetoric of community engagement and making the heritage engagement more social relevant through long term understanding into the issues and politics arising within the community heritage discourse.

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