

## Chapter 2

### Research Methodology

#### 2.1 Research Method

The research will be approached through interpretative research which is, according to Groat and Wang (2002:136) investigations into social-physical<sup>1</sup> observable occurrences within complex contexts, with a view toward explaining those occurrences in a narrative form and in a holistic<sup>2</sup> fashion. The occurrence took place in the past. That's why it is called interpretive-historical research.

Very similar, according to Groat and Wang (2002:137), to qualitative inquiries in general is historical inquiry is. In each case the researcher attempts to collect as much evidence as possible concerning a complex social occurrence and seeks to provide an account of that occurrence. This requires searching for evidence, collecting and organizing that evidence, evaluating it and constructing a narrative from the evidence that is holistic and believable. Throughout the process, interpretation is the key. Evidence to construct a narrative is gathered in the following way through the first step: *Data evidence*. Data evidence is manuscripts (published/unpublished), autobiographies, newspapers, unpublished records (government/church), deeds, liens<sup>3</sup>, minutes, etc., corporate and organization documents, correspondence (official/private letters), diaries, personal materials (eg<sup>4</sup>., shoppinglists, etc), photographs, artifacts, 'landscape patterns', buildings, artwork and crafts. The second step is *Identification/organization*. Identification/organization is: identifying sources, fact gathering, filing/organizing the

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<sup>1</sup> Historical-human. Settlements.

<sup>2</sup> Holistic: includes everything.

<sup>3</sup> The legal claim of one person upon the property of another person to secure the payment of a debt or the satisfaction of an obligation.

<sup>4</sup> Abbreviation of Latin Exempli gratia = for example.

data, note-taking, observation. The third step is *Evaluation*. Evaluation is: description, analysis, assessment, evaluation of truth (truth value (verification), triangulation<sup>5</sup>). The fourth step is *Narration*. Narration is description, the assembly of a series of historical events into a narrative with a plot and an account or recital of an event or a series of events. Either true or fictitious.

Interpretation is active whether the task is: evidence gathering, evaluation or narration. Components of interpretive research keep moving and go parallel. Even as the narrative is nearing completion. "You must keep an eye on events and publications for the latest relevant facts". (Barzun and Graff, 1992).

The interpretive researcher must eventually, according to Groat and Wang (2002:138), report what she/he finds in a narrative; even when the research is in progress. The validity of a historical account starts a demonstration that the events described occurred in the actual flow of time.

Qualitative research broadly defined: "Any kind of research that produces findings not arrived at by means of statistical procedures or other means of quantification". (Strauss and Corbin, 1990).

The aim of qualitative research is, as mentioned by Miles & Huberman (1994:40), a complete detailed description. A researcher may only know roughly in advance what he/she is looking for. This method is recommended during earlier phases of research projects. The design emerges as the study unfolds. The researcher is the data gathering instrument. Data is in the form of words, pictures or objects. Subjective - individuals interpretation of events is important, e.g., uses participant observation, in-depth

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<sup>5</sup> Triangulation is a technique that establishes the soundness of data through verification or confirmation of something using alternative sources of information. Specifically to the application and combination of several research methodologies in the study of the same occurrence.

interviews etc. Qualitative data is more 'rich', time consuming, and less able to be generalized.

There are several considerations, as Hoepfl (1997:48/49) mentions, when deciding to adopt a qualitative research methodology. "Qualitative methods can be used to better understand any phenomenon about which little is yet known. They can also be used to gain new perspectives on things about which much is already known, or to gain more in-depth information that may be difficult to convey quantitatively". (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The ability of qualitative data, as Hoepfl (1997:49) mentions, to more fully describe an occurrence is an important consideration not only from the researcher's perspective but from the reader's perspective as well. "If you want people to understand better than they otherwise might, provide them information in the form in which they usually experience it". (Lincoln and Guba, 1985). Qualitative research reports, as Hoepfl (1997:49) mentions, are typically rich with detail and insights into participants' experiences of the world, "Maybe epistemologically<sup>6</sup> in harmony with the reader's experience and thus more meaningful" (Stake, 1978).

A source of information, as Hoepfl (1997:54) mentions, that can be invaluable to qualitative researchers is analysis of documents. Such documents might include official records, letters, newspaper accounts, diaries, and reports, as well as the published data used in a review of literature.

Qualitative research will give a base to the study through the study of the historical background and planning of settlements in the Netherlands, East Indies, Sri Lanka and India but more specific of the town of Melaka (Malaya) and through the study of the development Dutch architecture through the ages. The data gathering instrument with

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<sup>6</sup> Epistemology from Greek (episteme), meaning "knowledge, science", and *logos*, meaning "study of" Is the branch of philosophy concerned with the nature and scope (limitations) of knowledge.

concern to qualitative research used in this thesis is: Archival research.

## 2.2 Methodology

The first step was to inventorize what kind of literature would contribute and give a base to the study. The literature is on: Historical Background, Trade, Architecture, Previous Research, Simon Stevin, Treatises, Translation, Influence of the ideas of Simon Stevin, Characteristics of VOC Settlements, Application of the ideas of Simon Stevin and a Summary of literature to support the research gap.

The second step was to find material in archives which would support the study. Since the study concentrates on the principles or treatises written by Simon Stevin (1548-1620) according to which Dutch settlements were designed and the application of Stevin's principles. The intent of the study is to show if these principles had any influence on the construction of settlements in Asia and specifically on the settlement of Melaka. The original documents are to be found in the archives of the Royal Library, the Hague, the Netherlands. Due to a lack of time it was only possible to study secondary sources, Van Oers (2000), De Mare (2003) and Van den Heuvel (1995B), (2004) and (2005), since I was in the Netherlands for only a couple of weeks every year.

It would also to contribute to the study, to show that Stevin's ideas had any influence outside the Netherlands. Otherwise how did the knowledge about Simon Stevin's principles spread? The question there for was if there was any translation of Simon Stevin's principles. There is the translation of one of Stevin's most important principle: *De Stercktenbouwing* as mentioned by Schukking (1964). This translation of 1604 is to found in James Catalogue at Trinity College Library, Cambridge, United Kingdom. I have tried to get a digitised version of the document on CD or PDF, of James Catalogue at Trinity College Library through the Main Library of University Malaya but I never

got any reply to my request. So again I had to rely on secondary sources. Schukking (1964).

Archival records were also looked into where decisions were taken about Melaka concerning any changes made on the town and the fort during the Dutch era. And if these were according to the ideas of Simon Stevin. With regard to these the same problem, a lack of time, occurred. So I can only give a summary of the archives without concentrating on the contents.

The record looked at was the Tanap Database. This database is to be found in the National Archives, the Hague, the Netherlands. It holds documents on political, economic, cultural, religious, and social circumstances that circulated between hundreds of VOC officials and dozens of establishments around the world and the administrative centres in the Netherlands and Batavia, now the city of Jakarta.

The Tanap database holds twenty-five million pages of VOC records concentrated in cities like Jakarta, Colombo, Chennai, Cape Town, and the Hague. This collection is the most complete and extensive source on early modern World History anywhere: the Archives of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) (1602-1796).

VOC files were looked at and specifically resolutions taken concerning the settlements. Resolutions concerning expenditures, on renovations or changes to the architecture of the settlement. Letters with instructions from the *Heeren XVII* to the respective governors of the settlements and letters with reports or requests from these to the *Heeren XVII*. Documents on ships and their contents and expeditions. As well as the Register on premiums about Melaka, law, balance sheets or accounts of the settlement

calculations and other. Also manifestos and lists of cargo which had any importance to this study.

To give a few examples of the files looked into:

Table 2.1: Files of the VOC.

Compagnieën op Oost-Indië ("voorcompagniën")	
1594-1603 archival numbers 163	
Contains resolutions, letters, material regarding ships and expeditions	
Verenigde Oostindische Compagnie	
1777 NA. 1.04.02 3495 Melakka 9 1-256	
Copie gemeene resolutien gehouden in raade van politie der stad en fortresse Malacca sedert primo Januari tot ultimo November 1777 [met voorafgaand een bijbehorend ongefolieerd register].	
1777 NA. 1.04.02 3525 Malakka 2 1-59	
Copie gemeene resolutien genomen in raade van politie der stad en fortresse Malacca sedert primo December 1777 tot ultimo Februarij 1778 [voorafgegaan door een ongefolieerd register].	
8 NA. 1.04.02 3554 Malakka 2 1-293	
Copie gemeene resolutien genomen in raade van politie in de stad en fortresse Malacca sedert 12 Maart 1778 tot 12 Januarij 1779 [met voorafgaand een ongefolieerd register der papieren naar Nederland, gedateerd 15 Februarij 1779 en een ongefolieerd register der marginalen op de resolutien.	
1779 NA. 1.04.02 8660 Malakka 1-306	
Copie gemeene resolutien genomen in raade van politie dezer stad en fortresse sedert primo Maart 1778 tot medio Januari 1779, met daarvoor een register, apart genummerd 1 - 13 (verzonden naar Batavia 15 Februari 1779 per het schip 't Huis ter Meije).	
1779 NA 1.04.02 3554 Malakka 1-85	
Copie gemeene resolutien genomen in raade van politie dezer stad en fortresse Malacca sedert 6 April tot 11 Augustus 1779 [met voorafgaand, ongefolieerd register der marginalen].	
1779 NA 1.04.02 3554 Malakka 1-93	
Copie gemeene resolutien genomen in raade van politie der stad en fortresse Malacca sedert 23 Januarij tot 25 Maart 1779	
1779 NA 1.04.02 3582 Malakka 1-207 [met een voorafgaand, ongefolieerd register].	
Copie gemeene resolutien genomen in raade van politie der stad en fortresse Malacca sedert 17 Augustus tot 31 December 1779 [voorafgegaan door twee ongefolieerde registers der papieren aan Batavia].	
Till 1792	
The Register on premiums about Meleka, manifestos and lists of cargo, which had any importance to this study	
Law	
Balance sheets or accounts of the settlement calculations and other specifications	
Remaining calculations and specifications	
1704 NA 1.04.02 8685 Melaka 2 35-37	
Memorie van het gene na het depart van den heer Phoonsen tot nodige reparatie aen de fortificatien tot Malacca is verbruikt geworden (ontfangen primo April 1704 per borger vaertuijg).	

The third step was to make a general inventory, in the Core and Buffer Zone of Melaka, of the public buildings and shop houses. From this inventory 37 shop houses, 9 public buildings and the fort were chosen as case studies.

Table 2.2: Number of Dutch shophouses according to streets.

Dutch shop houses		
Street	Numbers	Quantity
Jalan Bukit Cina	75,95	2
Jalan Hang Jebat	29c	1
Jalan Hang Kasturi	2,6,10,16	4
Jalan Kubu	8,12,16c.	3

Jalan Tun Tan Cheng Lock	6,8,24,26,34,38,46,54,56,66,68,72,120. 7,61,163,183.	13 4
Jalan Tengker	142 83, 177, 217, 219, 251, 255, 257, 259, 263	1 9

The criteria of these shop houses were that they had to have specific Dutch elements like a door and a rectangular window in two half's or a door in one part and a rectangular window in one part. Also they had to have one or two windows on the first floor. Some even have three windows on the first floor. Other criteria were Dutch elements like air vents, wall anchors, hinges, hardwood framing, louvered windows, supports, tile roofing and terra cotta floor tiles. All of these have been visualised through graphics. Measurements of the *facades*, of the selected public buildings and shop houses, and doors and windows were taken. All this information was gathered in tables.

In 2007 five site visits were made. A, general, inventory was made of the shop houses and public buildings in the Core and Buffer Zone. Based on numbers, design, lay-out, usage and materials.

With Iesnordin Hj. Malan (Former Curator Architecture Museum) lay-out plans of the Architecture Museum and literature of Melaka were discussed. With Puan Erne Binti Hamsah (MBMB) individual public buildings and shop houses in the Core and Buffer Zone on conservation plans of Melaka, as well as publications of MBMB, were discussed.

In 2008, 6 site visits were made. Work on the inventory of all the public buildings and shop houses in the Core and Buffer Zone continued.

With drs Mohd Nasruddin Abd Rahman, (Curator of the *Stadthuys*) lay-out plans of the *Stadthuys* were discussed.

With Azmi Bin Mohd Yusof (Director Department of Museums Malaysia) lay-out plans of the Museum & Department of Antiquities Southern Malaysia were discussed.

In 2009, 5 site visits were made. The general inventory was narrowed down to one with case studies. This inventory included 9 public buildings, the fort and 37 shop houses.

With Mohd Syahrin Bin Abdullah and Mohd Muda. B. Bahadin (Heritage Officers, Department of National Heritage) construction, lay-out and design of the fort were discussed.

In 2010, 4 site visits were made. Measurements of the *facades* and doors and windows were taken of the case studies (public buildings and shop houses). This information was gathered in tables.

1. The problem is how to determine that 37 shop houses in Melaka have elements which are of Dutch origin.

This has been done through understanding the development of Dutch Architecture. Also through an analysis of building styles, a comparative analysis and a data analysis of the typology of Dutch shop houses. These can be achieved through studying literature and doing fieldwork.

2. The importance of this study will be that it describes Dutch settlement principles and the implementation of these principles on settlements in Asia.

The purpose is to expand on the historical background and planning of forts in the Netherlands and forts and settlements in East Indies, Sri Lanka and India but more specific of the town of Melaka (Malaya). VOC architecture and town planning, in the settlements in Asia, is similar in design, clear and straight forward. Regulations for



settlements during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries are not only confined to architectural principles and technical aspects of planning and construction. They also cover all aspects of life: on a social, economic and cultural level from trading and warfare to everyday living and working. It seems that this is deliberately planned in such a way.

3. Comparative analysis. To refine the study about the Dutch Architecture in Melaka a comparison is made with other studies on Dutch shop houses.

The other studies are divided in Existing Inventories by Area: Raja Nafida (2008), NUS/UM (2005), and MBMB (2006), and Existing Inventories by Street: Department of Architecture University of Seoul (2007) and Measured Drawing, Department of Architecture (2001)

4. The gain of this study is that there will be a better understanding of the *facade* analysis of Dutch shop houses in Melaka.

The part of this study which is on shop houses will cover the period 1641-1895. It is not placed in the historical context of the Dutch era 1641-1795 and 1815-1824. This part of the study will be about the *facade* analysis of 37 Dutch shop houses in Melaka. It will concentrate on doors and windows of 37 shop houses. Also Dutch influences will be discussed in these case studies.

In previous studies only the period of the Dutch era has been covered. An analysis of *facades* but not specifically on doors and windows has been done. Raja Nafida (2008) mentions that the terra cotta tiles and big hinges are part of the Dutch characteristics of the shop house. Kohl (1986) describes that Dutch features are the decorated gable walls, curvilinear *espadanas* (arcaded belfries), heavy hardwood framing and beam work, tile

roofing, castellated walls, balconies, louvered windows and Palladian ornamentation such as balustrades, *festoons* and elegant wainscoted interiors. Jaziah (2010) mentions that Dutch features are wall-anchors, brick and clay roof tiles, doors and windows, consoles, bricks, roof tiles and gable ends.

Table 2.3: Objectives of the research.

