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Heritage Trail as a Method to Maintain the Historical Area

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Abstract

This paper is part of the results of a literature study about heritage trails and their implementation of it as a method to maintain historical areas. The research aimed to examine a heritage trail and how it is applied in some precedent studies. As a reference, a guide on heritage trails is used to explore each trail presented for analysis. The study used qualitative methods with a descriptive narrative approach. This study describes the precedent studies and reviews them through an exploratory approach, direct observation, and architectural spatial experience. This paper is expected to provide a broader discourse for all people so that they can better understand that heritage trail activities are not only related to the fields of history or culture. Heritage trails also can intersect with the field of architecture, especially those related to architectural spatial experience.

Keywords

Historic Area, Heritage Trail, Architecture, Cultural Heritage

Introduction

The activities to preserve, manage and conserve historic areas have always been a significant matter for discussion. There are various methods in these activities within historical areas with many historical heritage buildings that have also been widely discussed in non-formal and formal activities such as research, studies, and conferences. All matters relating to the management and preservation of historical areas are not only the responsibility of one country or a few specific communities; this is an essential issue for all countries worldwide. Historical areas with historical heritage buildings with these characters exist in all corners of the

world. Of course, this is a significant problem for the world, not only for specific countries or cities.

Currently, one of the activities that are also considered an effort to manage and preserve historic areas is the application of the heritage trail concept in every city or area with a historic site with its unique character. Although the term heritage trail is considered a general term and can be adopted in several regions or places, its implementation still has certain stages. It must be adapted to the character of the region, city, or historical area of each. According to the heritage trails' guidelines (NSWHO, 1995), the activities of heritage trails are an increasingly popular means of promoting an area's heritage.

Some researchers explain what a heritage trail is, how to design it and how to implement it successfully. Referring to the heritage trails' guidelines (NSWHO, 1995), heritage trails are basically established routes linking significant items of an area's heritage. They are usually promoted in tourist pamphlets and are often supplemented by interpretive pamphlets or cassette tapes. Some trails incorporate plaques or signs on structures to provide additional information. A similar definition has been mentioned by Shamsuddin (2018) in Nayan (2021), who explained that, in general, the word "trail" refers to a linear trail that has significant characteristics and can distinguish it from other areas and has a particular theme. As a unique route or path, heritage trails are a path that connects one historical building with other historic buildings and tourist activities with one another by providing information and stories related to the history of the cultural heritage along the journey of tracing the heritage trail. Nayan (2021) also mentioned the explanation from Macleod (2016), NSWHO (1995), and Timothy (2015), that it is hoped that by carrying out heritage trail activities, the spatial experience of each actor will certainly vary from one person to another, this depends on each person's interpretation of the historical buildings that are displayed or explored.

Meanwhile, quoting from Patria's explanation (2019), according to the NSW Heritage Office in Australia, a heritage trail is a path that connects significant objects in an area that has specific cultural heritage values. Heritage trails can be made alone, either by the community or visitors or with the guidance of a guide or interpreter. In his interview with Santoso (2021), Patria explained that, generally, heritage trails have broad benefits, especially those related to heritage or cultural heritage. The heritage trail can also be an educational tool for the community about the importance of appreciating and knowing the local heritage or cultural heritage and its history. In addition, the heritage trail can foster a sense of community ownership of the local heritage or cultural heritage by understanding its history and figure. Heritage trails can also increase and encourage insight and interest in maintaining and preserving historic areas with historic buildings, promote the existence of the historical regions and their cultural heritage buildings, and facilitate the community with various recreational and educational activities.

Studies on heritage trails as a method of managing and preserving historic areas have been carried out by researchers in many countries because this is

important for all countries with historical sites. Several researchers from Malaysia raised the topic of this heritage trail in their study with case studies of several historical areas in Malaysia. Nayan (2021) has presented the historical area in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, as a research case study to reveal the essential values and experiences visitors get in carrying out heritage trail activities. Suaidah et al. (2019) have conducted a similar study to Nayan (2021), namely in the historical area of Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, and aims to reveal the experience of visitors traveling on a heritage trail. Still, Suaidah et al. (2019) have also revealed the behavior of heritage trail actors in the context of their relationship to the context city, especially regarding historical and cultural values. Still in Malaysia, Yunus et al. (2021) have researched the heritage trail with a case study in Kuala Kangsar, Negeri Perak, Malaysia, focusing only on the identification and classification of Cultural Heritage in Kuala Kangsar. Sieng and Eboy carried out other research from the case study in Malaysia (2021), namely in Tambunan, Malaysia, focusing on the identification and mapping of Cultural Conservation in Tambunan, Malaysia, for heritage trail purposes.

Meanwhile, a study on the policy of implementing the heritage trail in Europe was carried out by Fienieg et al. (2008), where the focus was on looking at the implementation of the heritage trail in ex-colonial countries or Dutch colonies and juxtaposing it with the heritage trail policy in Europe. Several other studies with case studies in Europe were also found, namely research conducted by Laberschek (2019) regarding the obstacles encountered by visitors when carrying out heritage trail activities in Malopolska Voivodeship, Poland. Koscak (2016) has focused his research on the role of stakeholders in heritage trail activities in Dolenjska and Bela Krajina in Slovenia. A similar study to Koscak (2016) was conducted by Cheung (1999) but took a case study in Hong Kong. Cheung (1990) revealed how the roles and interests of stakeholders in heritage trail activities in Hong Kong. At least four parties play a role in heritage trail activities. The four are the Antiquities Advisory Board, the Hong Kong Tourist Association, various domestic tour operators, and the local community.

Referring to the exposure of the previous research, this research is very different from the research that has been done. This research focuses on how to apply the heritage trail in the historical area in some countries as well as our hands-on experience. We have tried to interpret in a descriptive narrative on each description. This research will also reveal how this heritage trail activity can be an educational venue for the community to understand Cultural Heritage and its historical, cultural, and architectural values. The research aimed to examine a heritage trail and how it is applied in some precedent studies. As a reference, a guide on heritage trails is used to explore each trail presented for analysis.

Method

Since this research is qualitative, the method to obtain the aim of this research is by analyzing the existing heritage trail from some precedent studies.

Many countries have cultural heritages, with the historic area full of historical and significant architectural values. Some precedent studies of heritage trails were chosen as the object of precedent study because this area is considered successful in implementing Heritage Trail activities within its historic area for tourists. The research, which was conducted for eight months, used a qualitative method through a descriptive narrative approach. The data source is secondary data by making direct literature studies from some precedent studies. For some precedent studies, data collection techniques are carried out by taking and perpetuating several conditions of historical areas through visual recordings. Some of those precedent studies have been observed by us since a few years ago. Three historical areas with heritage trails were chosen to represent the many heritage trails in some countries. The six routes are three precedent studies from Singapore, two from Malaysia and one from Thailand. The six trail of historic areas were chosen because they are six trails that are considered significant to represent the heritage trails in Southeast Asia. Primary data is supported by secondary data in the form of theory and literature related to the theory and principles of the heritage trail issued by the New South Wales Heritage Office in 1995. The narrative description of each path is then concluded with an analysis that refers to the heritage trail guide, which contains principles of planning a heritage trail.

Literature review

What is Heritage Trail?

The term heritage trail is currently being discussed a lot in Indonesia and throughout the world. The concept of this term is basically to manage the existence of historical areas in a city worldwide. The concepts introduced are then applied and adapted according to the conditions of each historical site in all the countries with their respective characteristics.

As previously explained, this heritage trail activity is always associated with the presence of historic buildings in a historic area, so this heritage trail activity is always associated with the management and preservation of historic buildings in a historic site.

In addition, one of the heritage trail benefits is developing tourism in a particular area. Patria (2013), in his article, states that tourist attractions in a destination are the most vital component of tourism. If the market (tourists) is a push factor, the attraction is a pull factor. There is a service business that functions as a facilitator between the market and the tourist attraction. Tourist attractions have two functions' first, they entity and stimulate interest in travel. Second, attractions provide visitor satisfaction, the rewards from a trip – the authentic travel "product."

In the book *Guidelines of Heritage Trails*, issued by the NSW Heritage Office (1995) basically, heritage trails can be interpreted as:

"... established routes linking significant items of an area's heritage. They are usually promoted in tourist pamphlets and are often supplemented by interpretive pamphlets or cassette tapes. Some trails incorporate plaques or signs on particular structures to provide additional information."

Meanwhile, Timothy (2003) in Patria (2013) provides another understanding of heritage trails, where heritage trails are defined as:

"In all cases, the primary physical characteristic of heritage trails is their linear and nodal properties. In most cases, they are a composition of specific individual attractions connected by walking, cycling, or driving route."

Preserving Historical Area

Purwantiasning (2022), in her research, has explained that conservation itself can be interpreted as an exhalation into an old building or old area, especially those that have historical character and meaning for a city. The word conservation itself is a word that comes from "conservation," namely "con" (together) and "servare" (keep/save), which has an understanding of efforts to maintain what we have (keep/save what you have), but wisely (wise use).

Purwantiasning (2022) has explained that conservation has a goal to manage a "place" or "historic area" by applying a particular treatment, where the values in it can be preserved and cared for according to conservation rules. In this case, Budihardjo (1997) also explained that "place" could be interpreted as land, area, buildings, groups of buildings, and the surrounding environment. This statement underscores that conservation is usually defined in an area that has a unique and special character and becomes the identity of a city or even a country.

In previous research, Purwantiasning (2018) in Purwantiasning (2021) mentioned that the designation of certain areas as conservation areas, as well as heritage areas in Indonesia, is encouraged by global concern about the protection of the world's cultural and natural heritage. Since then, Indonesia, which has many heritage areas, has attempted to protect its cultural and natural heritage by designating some regions of the country as conservation or heritage areas. Ancho et al. (2021) also stated that preserving heritage buildings can be seen as an aspect of knowledge generation rooted in the historical past. It provides contemporary perspectives to visualize the future. Studies such as these are platforms that celebrate cultural experiences for continuity and a sustainable future. Social development during efforts to value the past requires commitment and sound policy attempts to ensure cultural resources are valued and given attention.

Furthermore, Purwantiasning (2022) has explained that many researchers are trying to define a conservation area as a distinct area with historical characteristics, as presented by Worskett (1969) below.

'a conservation area is the area of a significant historical and social relationship compared to the rest of the town, which must be seen in the context of the whole town both for historical and visual reasons and to provide a proper context in which to plan for conservation.'

Worskett, 1969, p.46

This area is not intended solely to be maintained but also to be conserved and is likely to get a little development in it.

Conservation will be concerned not only with historic buildings or areas containing historic buildings but also with their setting and character, standing by itself. A building has no meaning other than which comes from the intrinsic quality of its architecture.'

Worskett, 1969

Methods in the management and preservation of historic areas vary widely. However, they must still refer to the basic principles of preserving historic buildings and regions that are agreed upon at the world level and adapted according to the geographical conditions of each location.

One of the methods of managing and preserving historic buildings in the historical area that is adopted in this research is heritage trails. As stated in Galt (1995), the benefits of the heritage trail include:

1. Increasing awareness of specific cultural heritages or cultural heritages and stimulating understanding and interest in the preservation of buildings and historical areas
2. Promoting historical areas or historical buildings and both their historical, cultural, and architectural values to visitors
3. Significant publication of conservation activities
4. Provide activities that are easy to make or carry out, either in the form of recreational or educational excursions

Discussion and Findings

Singapore Heritage Trail

Singapore is one of the well-known South-East Asia countries with many historical areas and has successfully maintained its historical areas. Some historical areas in Singapore have been designated as conservation areas because of their significant character. Since Singapore is one of the commonwealth countries, many historic buildings represent the colonial era of England.

The conservation activities in Singapore's historical areas are based on conservation considerations from the Urban Redevelopment Authority (URA), which has specific criteria and conditions for establishing buildings from suitable areas for preservation or preservation. An area can be designated as a conservation area if the area has criteria such as unique character and historical value. The area can contribute to improving and improving the quality of the buildings and the environment around the area (see Figure 1).

One of the most significant activities in maintaining the historical areas in Singapore is implementing the activities of heritage trails for domestic and international tourists. The government has provided the activities of the heritage

trail to encourage visitors to do the heritage walk by themselves using the mobile application and the provided map from the tourist information center.

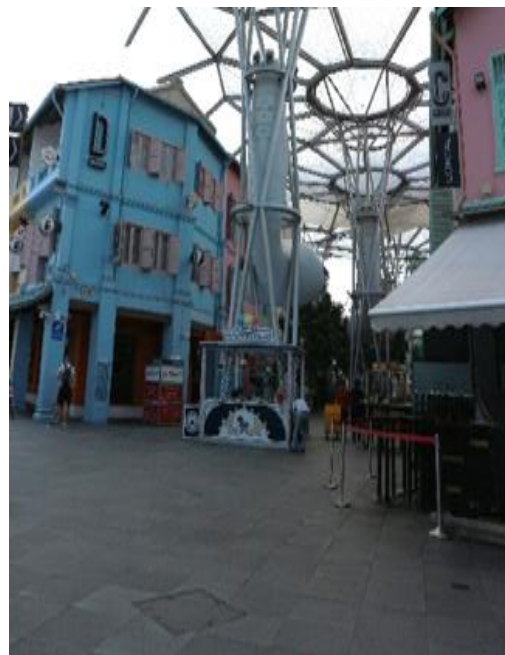


Fig. 1 and 2. Left: Traditional Chinese Architecture as one of historical building in Singapore. Source: private documentation, 2018. Right: One of historical building in Clarke Quay, Singapore. Source: private documentation, 2018

Figure 3 shows one of the trails in Singapore, known as My Queenstown Heritage Trail, which contains five trails within this area. Those five trails are Princess Trail, Duchess Trail, Mei Ling, Alexandra Trail, Wessex and Tanglin Halt Trail, and Commonwealth Trail. These trails were launched in 2010 by a civic group, My Community, to promote Queenstown's heritage, local culture, and architectural styles.

The activities of these heritage trails aim to encourage the local community to understand and appreciate all the historical buildings within historical areas in Singapore. The activities also aim to encourage the local community to demonstrate a sense of belonging and commitment to a place or territory through active participation in community activities and activism projects, conservation planning processes, and socio-political discourse (<https://mycommunity.org.sg/>, has been accessed 14th August 2022).

Another trail to remember the colonial era in Singapore is represented as Fort Canning Trail, as shown in Figure 4. This trail is well-known as Singapore's Colonial History Walking Trail at Fort Canning Park. Fort Canning Park is one of Singapore's most historical landmarks, known as Forbidden Hill. The Hill was converted into a fort in 1860 and renamed Fort Canning by Viscount Charles John Canning. The trail consists of some historical objects, such as Fort Canning Center, 9-Pound Cannon and South Battery, Old Townscape, Heritage Tress, Government House, Fort Canning, Bond Terrace, Raffles House, Lighthouse, Flagstaff, First

Christian Cemetery, Memorial to James Brooke Napier, and many more (<https://www.nparks.gov.sg/>, has been accessed 14th August 2022). There are about 28 historical objects on this trail, and it takes about 3-4 hours to walk within this area of Fort Canning Park.

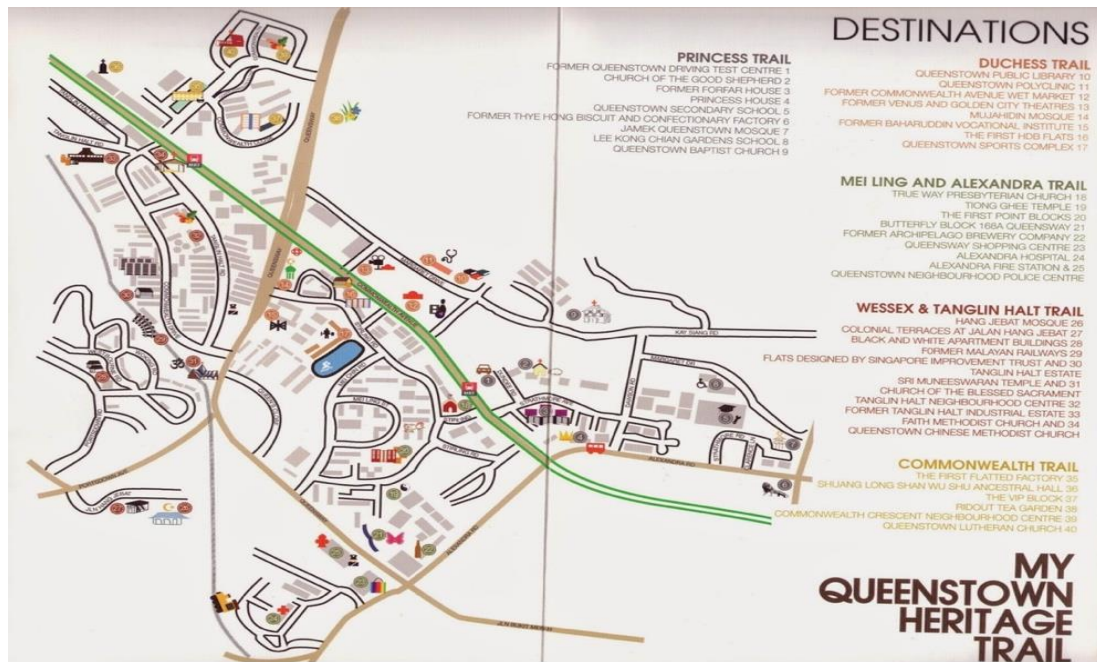


Fig. 3. One of trail in Singapore Heritage Trail namely My Queenstown Heritage Trail. Source: <https://mycommunity.org.sg/>, has been accessed 14th August 2022



Fig. 4. One of trail in Singapore Heritage Trail namely Fort Canning Trail nearby the area of Clarke Quay MRT. Source: <https://www.nparks.gov.sg/>, has been accessed 14th August 2022

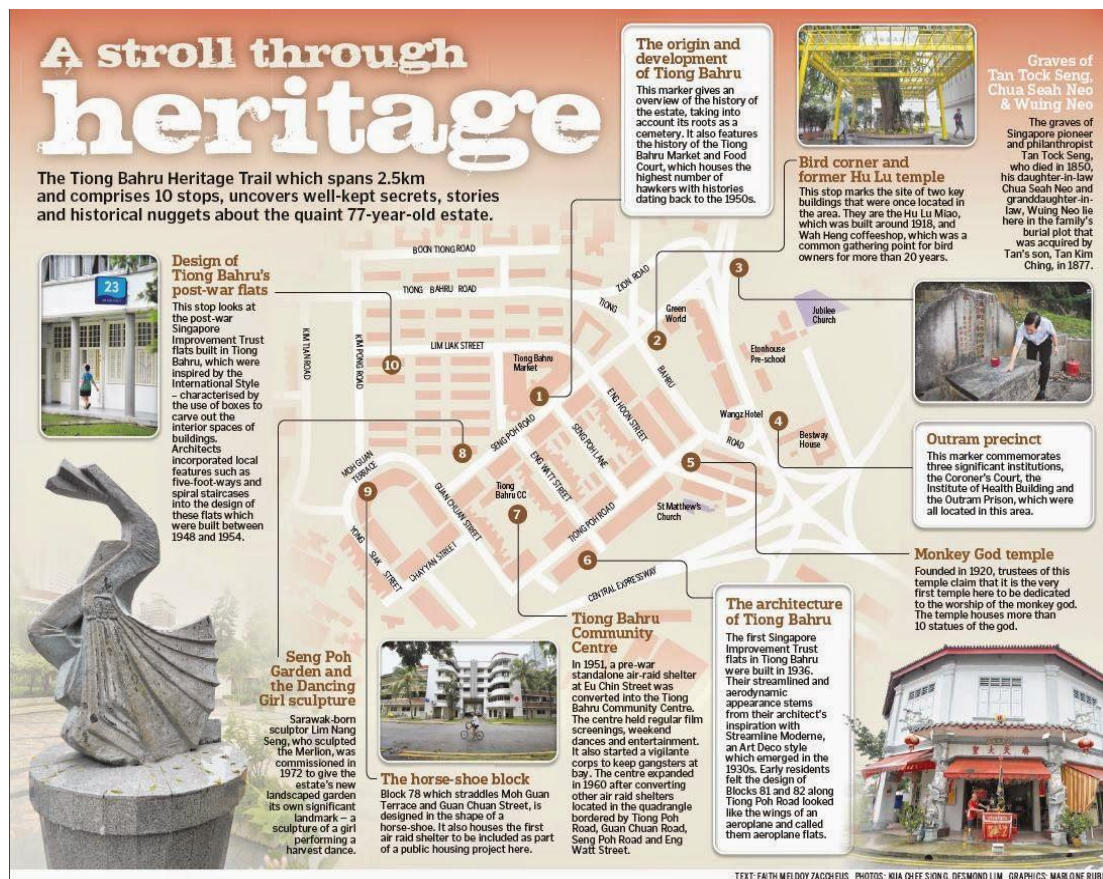


Fig. 5. One of trail in Singapore Heritage Trail namely Tiong Bahru Trail nearby the area of China Town. Source: <https://mycommunity.org.sg/>, has been accessed 14th August 2022

The last precedent study is the Tiong Bahru Trail (see Fig. 5), which represents the conservation area of the first communal civilian air raid shelter in Singapore. Tiong Bahru is known as an area of a conservation housing estate, and its pre-war and post-war architecture can be explored. The trail consists of the origin and development of Tiong Bahru, Bird Corner and Former Hu Lu Temple, Grave of Tan Tock Seng, Chua Seah Neo, and Wuing Neo, Outram Precinct, Monkey God Temple, Architecture of Tiong Bahru, which represents Art Deco buildings, Tiong Bahru Community Center, Seng Poh Garden, and Dancing Girl Statue, The Horseshoe Block, and the last one is Design of Tiong Bahru Flat. The trail takes about three to four hours to walk, depending on the individual's condition.

As explained in the Guidelines of Heritage Trail (Galt, 1995) that in planning a Heritage Trail, it must go through four important stages, namely:

Establish the focus or theme of the trail to be planned as well as identify its target market or user group

Group multiple objects that have similar characters

Prepare routes or paths that connect one object with another that has similarities or similarities in historical value

Assess and group the results of studies from stages 1 to 3.

Of the four heritage trails, it can be studied in more depth using the principles of heritage trails extracted from the Guidelines for Heritage Trails (Galt, 1995). The study can be seen in Table 5 below:

By using principles from Heritage Trails Guidelines, those above three trails could be studied and explained in more depth, as seen in the following Table 1:

Table 1: the analyze of three heritage trails in Singapore, using the principle of Heritage Trail Guidelines.

No	Name of the Trail	Focus of trail	Group of Objects	Route	Similarity
1	Queenstown Trail	History, Architectural Building	Monument, plaza and buildings with the same character	5 routes with different group objects- 1-2 walks per routes	Located in one area with different route and can be chosen by the visitors
2	Fort Canning Trail	History of Colonial Era	Monument, plaza, fort and buildings with the same history era	28 objects- 4-5 hours walk	Located in one area and one trail
3	Tiong Bahru Trail	Conservation area	Buildings with the same character	10 objects- 2-3 hours walk	Located in one area and one trail

Table 1 shows the three precedent studies of the heritage trail in Singapore per what is outlined in the Guidelines of Heritage Trails. Thus, it is quite understandable that Heritage Trails in Singapore are considered successful in their application. This is, of course, also due to the support of various parties, especially the private sector, in providing related information for tourists domestically and internationally. This will make it easier for tourists to access information related to heritage trails in Singapore. An important note in planning a heritage trail is that the grouping of tourist objects that will be included in the heritage trail must have similarities regarding a theme, focus, location, and type of object.

Malaysia Heritage Trail

Malaysia as one of commonwealth country in Southeast Asia, just like Singapore, has been regarded as one of the countries in Southeast Asia that successfully applied the conservation concept to historical sites. There are many historical sites in Malaysia, two of which have become a popular city to be visited by tourists. Two of them are Malacca and George Town, Penang. Furthermore, both historical sites have been designated as conservation areas and world heritage by UNESCO since 2008.

A different country should have a different ambiance and environment. Malacca, which has been known very well for the red square, has many historical buildings within the area. Exploring and experiencing the architectural heritage within this area is always interesting. The value of the history and the character of the building could become an educational benefit for the visitors. Figures 6 and 7 show some views of Malacca.



Fig. 6 and 7. Left: Colonial Building with a specific character in Architecture as one of historical building in Malacca. Source: private documentation, 2018. Right: One of Chinese Architecture in Malacca. Source: private documentation, 2018

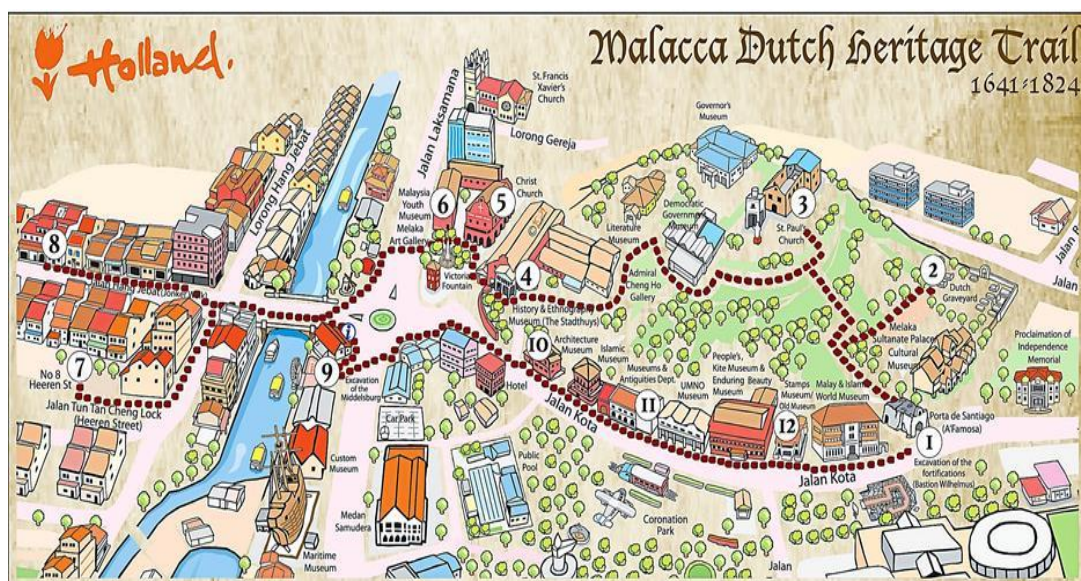


Fig. 8. One of trail in Malaysia Heritage Trail namely Malacca Heritage Trail.

Source:

https://library.icym.my/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=19110:kembara-sejarah-rehlah-minda&catid=9&Itemid=172/, has been accessed 20th October 2022

Figure 8 shows the Heritage Trail of Malacca, which contains about 12 objects with a similar history and architectural character. As shown in Figure 6, the red building can be seen in numbers 5 and 6, with a red square in front of the buildings. The route itself takes about 3-4 hours by walking, depending on the condition of the weather as well as the condition of the pedestrian. The trail will be started at number 1 (Porta de Santiago A Famosa) and will be ended at number 12 (Stamps Museum).

Another conservation area in Malaysia that was designated as a World Heritage by UNESCO in 2008 is George Town, Penang. Figures 9 and 10 show some buildings within the City of George Town, Penang. The heritage trail in George Town, Penang, explores and experiences the existence of colonial buildings in this city. While Malacca presents the architecture of the Dutch, Portuguese, British, and early Chinese, George Town specifically presents the British colonial era. Just like an area of conservation with many historical buildings, George Town presents the existence of British History. The character of the building has a specific one and could be explored easily by tourists independently.



Fig. 9 and 10. Left: Mosque in George Town as a heritage within the city with a specific character in Architecture as one of historical building in Malacca. Source: private documentation, 2018. Right: One of corridor of Heritage Building in George Town. Source: private documentation, 2018



Fig. 11. One of trail in Malaysia Heritage Trail namely George Town Heritage Trail. Source: <https://palmansion.com.my/georgetown-heritage-map/>, has been accessed 20th October 2022

There are about 36 objects which can be explored within George Town independently, and it takes about 4-5 hours by walk. But usually, visitors will separate the objects differently per day by grouping the area of exploration. Since the trails could be completed by visitors independently, thus the above map, as shown in Figure 11, can be used only as guidance.

By exploring these trails, tourists have their own experiences, particularly spatial experiences as well as architectural experiences. Many historic buildings represent an old era in this city. Tourists have also experienced a different ambiance, significantly different from the city. Malacca and George Town also provide a trail for culinary since Malaysian foods have a specific taste for international tourists.

Table 2: the analyze of three heritage trails in Malaysia, using the principle of Heritage Trail Guidelines.

No	Name of the Trail	Focus of trail	Group of Objects	Route	Similarity
1	Malacca Heritage Trail	History, Architectural Building from Dutch, British, Portuguese, Early Chinese	Monument, plaza and buildings with the same character	12 objects-3-4 walks	Located in one area in same route
2	George Town Heritage Trail	History of British Colonial Era	Monument, plaza and buildings with the same history era	36 objects which could be explored separately into groups-4-5 hours per groups	Located in one area with different route and can be chosen by the visitors

Table 2 shows that the two precedent studies of the heritage trail in Malaysia have accordance with what is outlined in the Guidelines of Heritage Trails. Thus, it is understandable that Heritage Trails in Malaysia are also considered successful in their application. An important note in planning a heritage trail is that the grouping of tourist objects that will be included in the heritage trail must have similarities regarding a theme, focus, location, and type of object.

Thailand Heritage Trail

The last precedent study of the heritage trail is shown in Figure 14. Figure 14 shows the Old City of Phuket Heritage Trails, which consists of 25 objects of historic buildings within historical sites of Old City of Phuket. Referring to Figure 14, Dibuk Road and Krabi Road are the most famous and favourite place for tourist. The existence of shophouses similar in Singapore (Clarke Quay and Boat Quay) which have been shown in Figures 12 and 13, giving a special character of the Old City of Phuket.



Fig. 12 and 13. Left: Old City of Phuket at night. Source: private documentation, 2018. Right: The shophouses at Krabi Road, Old City of Phuket. Source: private documentation, 2018

Figure 14 shows that there are many street within this Old Town of Phuket, thus the trails usually have been provided and separated by street. Although there are many street, but the most famous streets are Dibuk Road and Krabi Road. By exploring these two road, visitors can get many things within the area. The character of architectural heritage within this area is representing the Chinese architecture, with the specific ornament of the doors and windows, as well as the column of the buildings. Some buildings within this area of conservation have been adopted into new function as shops, cafes, restaurants, gallery, hotels and museums.

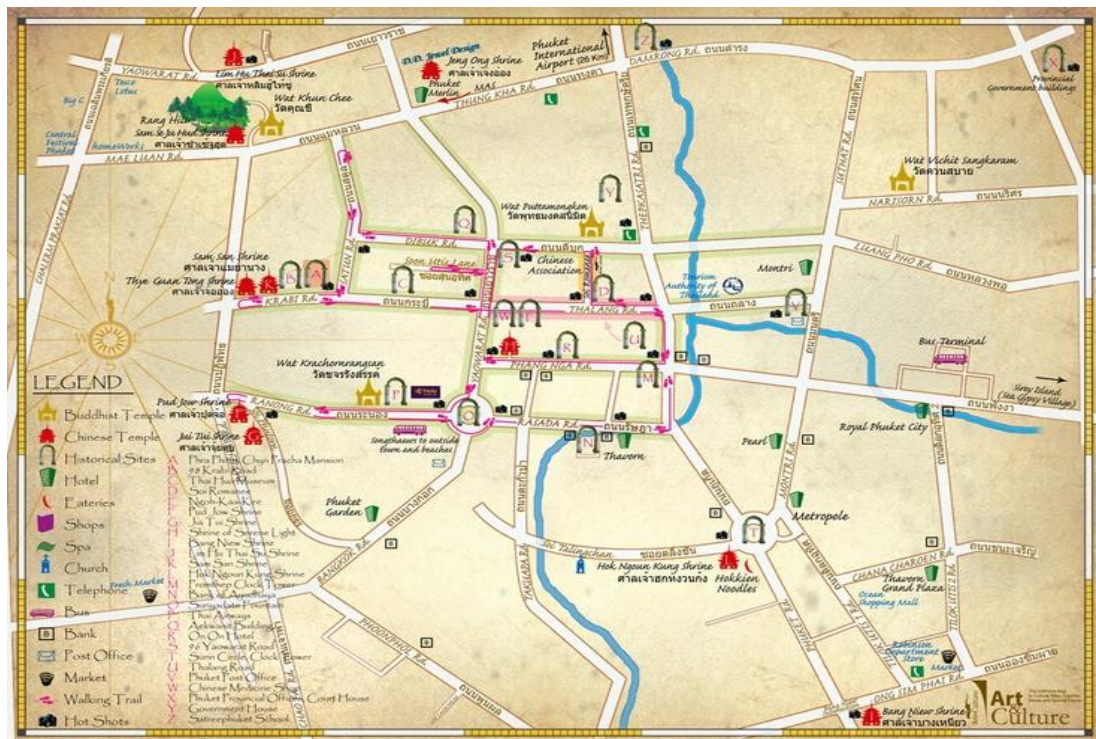


Fig. 14. One of trail in Thailand Heritage Trail namely Old City of Phuket Heritage Trail. Source: <https://palmmansion.com.my/georgetown-heritage-map/>, has been accessed 20th October 2022

While Singapore and Malaysia have strong support from the government and private sector in implementing the activity of heritage trail in the conservation area, we have found that the support in Old Town of Phuket is not strong enough. We have said this because we have our own experience while exploring the Old Town of Phuket. We found the Old Town of Phuket trail accidentally, not because of the promotion via the airport or hotels. Since that Phuket is known very well by tourists as a city of beaches also known with the place of Big Buddha, then the existence of the Old Town of Phuket is not very well-known by international tourists. Although, the presence of the conservation area within the Old Town of Phuket is very interesting to be explored and experienced.

From the above discussion of the six trails, there is a similarity. They have a particular theme about history, architectural experience, spatial experience, and the significant character of the historical sites and buildings. Every trail has its

character and specific character; thus, it makes the trails very special. By implementing the activities of heritage trails, the historical sites can be maintained appropriately.

Conclusion

The study discussed in this paper has at least provided an overview of applying the heritage trail in a historical area. Planning and delivering heritage trail facilities or activities for tourists will encourage domestic and international tourists or even the local community to better know the historic site with its objects. The purpose of learning about history and civilization, especially architecture and culture, becomes very important when the main target of this heritage trail activity is achieved. The six heritage trails described in this paper shows how the history, civilization, architecture, and culture of those historic areas can be explored. The public or tourists will be more familiar with, understand, and appreciate the existence of these historical heritage objects. Of course, each object can be studied from its historical value, culture, and architecturally and spatially. The experience of the architectural space of each person who explores this history or heritage trail will also certainly vary depending on everyone's understanding and interpretation.

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