# HERITAGE TRAIL PLANNING IN MELAKA HISTORIC CITY : ITS POTENTIAL OBJECTIVES, THEMES AND TARGET USERS

LAI SIN YEE

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To my dearest father and mother, my family,
brothers and sisters in Dhamma, and all mankind.

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# ABSTRACT

This dissertation concerned on the formation of heritage trail in historic town or city. Heritage trail refers to designated route that brings the trail explorer to learn about an area's history and heritage. It has become a widely accepted way to promote area's history or heritage and to enhance tourism development or local economic. However, there is a tendency that heritage trail design and planning is prior concerned to tourist demands and needs. Consequently, several functions of heritage trail are not fully utilised. From previous researches, rarely research has been done in this area. Thus, the purpose of study is to understand the formation of heritage trail in historic towns based on three points of view: objective, theme and target trail user. Qualitative research was applied in this study to understand the dynamic situation of heritage trail. There are two stages of case study: review of existing heritage trails of various places as to identify potential trail objectives, themes and target group users; and case study of Melaka Historic City as to propose a conceptual proposal for that city. A review of heritage trails was carried out through documentary analysis while case study of Melaka Historic City involved interviews and observations. The important roles of heritage trail in historic town have been identified throughout the literature review; a summary of potential objectives, themes, and target group users was formed from the review. Lastly, themed heritage trails were suggested based on the availability of heritage assets in Melaka Historic City. This study is significance to the domain of urban design framework, heritage management and tourism packaging as it gathers and compiles knowledge of initial decision in the planning of heritage trail, which could be beneficial to the historic town or city.

# ABSTRAK

Laporan ini adalah berkenaan dengan pembentukan jejak warisan di kawasan bandar bersejarah. Jejak warisan merujuk kepada laluan yang direka kepada pengguna bagi belajar mengenai sejarah dan warisan sesuatu kawasan. Ia telah menjadi cara yang diterima ramai untuk mempromosi sejarah dan warisan bandar, serta menggalakkan pembangunan bidang pelancongan atau ekonomi tempatan. Walau bagaimanpun, reka bentuk dan perancangan jejak warisan lebih cenderung kepada memenuhi permintaan dan keperluan pelancong. Akibatnya, fungsi-fungsi jejak warisan tidak dimanfaatkan dengan sewajarnya. Namun, jarang penyelidikan yang dijalankan dalam bidang tersebut. Oleh itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk memahami pembentukan jejak warisan di kawasan bandar bersejarah dari tiga perspektif, iaitu objektif, tema dan sasaran pengguna jejak warisan. Penyelidikan secara kualitatif telah digunapakai dalam kajian ini bagi memahami keadaan jejak warisan yang dinamik. Terdapat dua peringkat kajian kes, iaitu ulasan tentang objektif, tema dan sasaran pengguna jejak warisan sedia ada yang terpilih dari pelbagai lokasi; dan kajian kes di Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah yang bertujuan untuk menghasilkan konsep cadangan pembentukan jejak warisan. Analisis dokumen telah dijalankan di peringkat ulasan, malah kajian kes Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah melibatkan temubual dengan penduduk tempatan dan permerhatian di kawasan kajian. Peranan-peranan utama jejak warisan telah dikenalpasti melalui kajian literature, sementara rumusan berkenaan dengan objektif, tema dan sasaran pengguna jejak warisan telah dihasilkan di peringkat ulasan. Pada peringkat akhir, beberapa jejak warisan yang bertema telah dicadangkan di Bandaraya Melaka Bersejarah berdasarkan kepada sumber-sumber warisan yang sedia ada. Kajian ini adalah bermakna dalam bidang reka bentuk bandar, pengurusan warisan dan pakej pelancongan. Ilmu berkenaan dengen keputusan awal dalam perancangan jejak warisan telah dikumpul dan disusun supaya bermanfaat kepada bandar-bandar bersejarah.

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## GLOSSARY OF TERMS

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| AMC | - | Ahmedabad Municipal Corporation |
| CRUTA | - | Conservation and Research of Urban Traditional Architecture |
| N/A | - | Not Available |
| Q & A | - | Question and Answer |
| UNESCO | - | United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization |

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

A number of towns in England have a range of different (heritage) trails exploring diverse themes and communities within the town's history (Deborah and Nicola, 2007) and hundred of heritage trails have been established in United States as a tool to promote an area's history. There are 2,610,000 results found in Google internet search engine on keyword of 'heritage trail'. In Malaysia, several heritage trails have been produced by local authorities or organization such as Kuala Lumpur Heritage Trails by Malaysia Trust of Heritage, Penang Heritage Trail and Melaka Heritage Trail sponsored by American Express Foundation, and Taiping Heritage Trail by Taiping Municipal Council.

Heritage trail has become a simple and widely accepted way to promote area's history, natural and cultural heritage, and to enhance tourism development or local economic. It is usually formed up by authorities, non-profit organization, local community or even school students. Our society is also in this trend which the Malaysia Trust of Heritage is planning to prepare several heritage trails located in Kuala Lumpur, Klang and Melaka. Volunteers are invited to involve in those heritage trail projects as well.

Generally, heritage trail is a designated trail or route that brings the trail user to understand the history, natural and/or cultural heritage of the area by visiting linked heritage elements. The trail users usually have brochure with them which shows route maps, stop points (of heritage elements) and general information about those locations. Sometimes, heritage trail designer would prepare signposts or way finding facilities along

the route in order to enhance trail users' experience. However, the design and planning of heritage trail in that way seen to be too straight forward. The functions of heritage trail could be fully utilized through careful planning and design.

Heritage trail is typically categorized as one of the tools in tourism promotion and packaging. The formation of heritage trail normally has given prior attention to tourist demands and needs. Despite the potential of heritage trail for other fields or purposes are rarely explored. Thus it is essentially important to understand the functions, abilities and potential interest groups of heritage trail in the planning process.

Previous studies show concerns about the design and planning of heritage trail in several dimensions. Chow (2002) mentioned that trail can be described as merely a route that links all the heritage assets in the area, with signage located at various locations that provide directional and arrival information… but it can be and should be more. Thus, Chow (2002) focused on the urban design opportunity in the planning and design of heritage trail which consisted of orientation, pedestrian movement, existing heritage assets, organization and sense of place. In addition, the framework of this analysis was based on Kevin Lynch's framework of urban image. These aspects mainly aimed to enhance the quality of heritage trail through physical design. However, the selection of heritage assets, heritage trail themes, and target trail users are out of the scope of that research.

On the other hand, Orbasli (2000) discussed about heritage trail in historic towns in the book namely 'Tourists in Historic Towns: Urban Conservation and Heritage Management'. She categorised heritage trail as part of heritage interpretation which seen as an opportunity to present a better and also chosen, view of a place to visitors… to allow the visitors to discover and appreciate other aspects of the town and to ensure attractions in less central locations are also visited. However, Orbasli (2000) stated that heritage trail is designed predominantly for the western market, the heritage trail in some cases will seemingly out of place in other cultural environment. The chosen route has to be carefully considered and should not interfere with local life if this is going to prove unwelcome. Orbasli (2000) pointed out the importance of theme and heritage elements selection in the design of heritage trail and there are worth to and need to be explored.

Sue Galt (1995) produced guidelines for heritage trails under NSW heritage Office on the design of trails and guidance in providing additional information for the trail. In the guidelines, three initial decisions that need to be identified are specific aim, specific user group to be targeted and finally the items (heritage elements) to be included. Aim of the heritage trail such as to promote the area's history to visitors, increase the awareness of the local heritage or to stimulate an interest in conservation, lead to a different type of heritage trails. And the presentation of the trail should be designed to cater the interest of the particular group.

Previous studies have expressed interests in the design of heritage trail, but rarely detail research has been done to understand the objective of heritage trail, heritage trail theme and target trail user or interest group of the trail. Thus, the purpose of this study is to understand the formation of heritage trail in historic towns based on three points of view: objective, theme and target trail user of heritage trail.

Reviews of existing heritage trails from various places were carried out to achieve the purpose of this study. These heritage trails are The Freedom Trail in Boston, Heritage Walk of Ahmedabad in Gujarat, False Creek Urban Heritage Trail in Vancouver, Heritage Trails of Singapore Walkabout, Kuala Lumpur Heritage Trails in Malaysia and Discovery of a Historic City – Cambridge in Britain. The review was conducted based on public and private documents. In addition, a case study was conducted in Melaka Historic City in Malaysia to propose a conceptual proposal for heritage trails of the historic city based on different objectives, themes and target trail users of heritage trail. Interviews were conducted to understand local community and visitor awareness and acceptance of the formation of heritage trails in Melaka Historic City.

## 1.1 Problem Statement

The typical design and planning of heritage trail in historic towns seen to be too simple and straight forward. Well design and considerable heritage trail might bring more advantages to the historic towns and trail user alike. Despite it is a tendency that heritage trail be categorized as one of the tools in tourism promotion and packaging. Heritage trail

design and planning is prior concerned to tourist demands and needs. Consequently the probable functions of heritage trail are not fully utilized. The decisions on objective of heritage trail, heritage trail theme and target trail user or interest group are important as to explore any possible types of heritage trail to cater wider interest groups and objectives. Thus, the purpose of the formation of heritage trail and its expected group of interest need to be clearly defined to avoid the above-mentioned weakness. From previous researches, rarely detail research has been done in this area. Due to the deficiencies of research, the researcher aims to explore the potential in enhancing the quality of heritage trail in historic towns through understanding of the aforesaid aspects.

## 1.2 Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study is to understand the formation of heritage trails in historic towns. Heritage trail here refers to designated trail or route that brings the trail explorer to learn about an area's history, cultural or/and natural heritage through visiting heritage elements along the trail. Previous studies show that interests have been shown to the design of heritage trail, but rarely detail research has been done to understand the objective of heritage trail, heritage trail theme and target trail user or interest group of the trail. Thus, the purpose of this study is to understand the formation of heritage trail in historic towns based on three points of view: aim, theme and target trail user of heritage trail.

## 1.3 Research Questions

The research questions are shown as follows:

1. What are the important roles of heritage trail in historic town?
2. What are the objectives, themes, target trail users and heritage assets of existing heritage trail in historic town?

3. How does heritage trail set up in historic town based on different objectives, themes and target group users?

## 1.4 Aim and Objectives

The aim of this study is 'to propose a conceptual proposal for the formation of heritage trail in Melaka Historic City based on different objectives, themes, and target trail users and heritage assets'. Several objectives are formed to achieve the aim as follows :

1. To identify the important roles of heritage trail in historic town or city;
2. To identify the objectives, themes and target trail users of heritage trails of various places;
3. To propose a conceptual proposal for the formation of heritage trail in Melaka Historic City.

## 1.5 Research Method

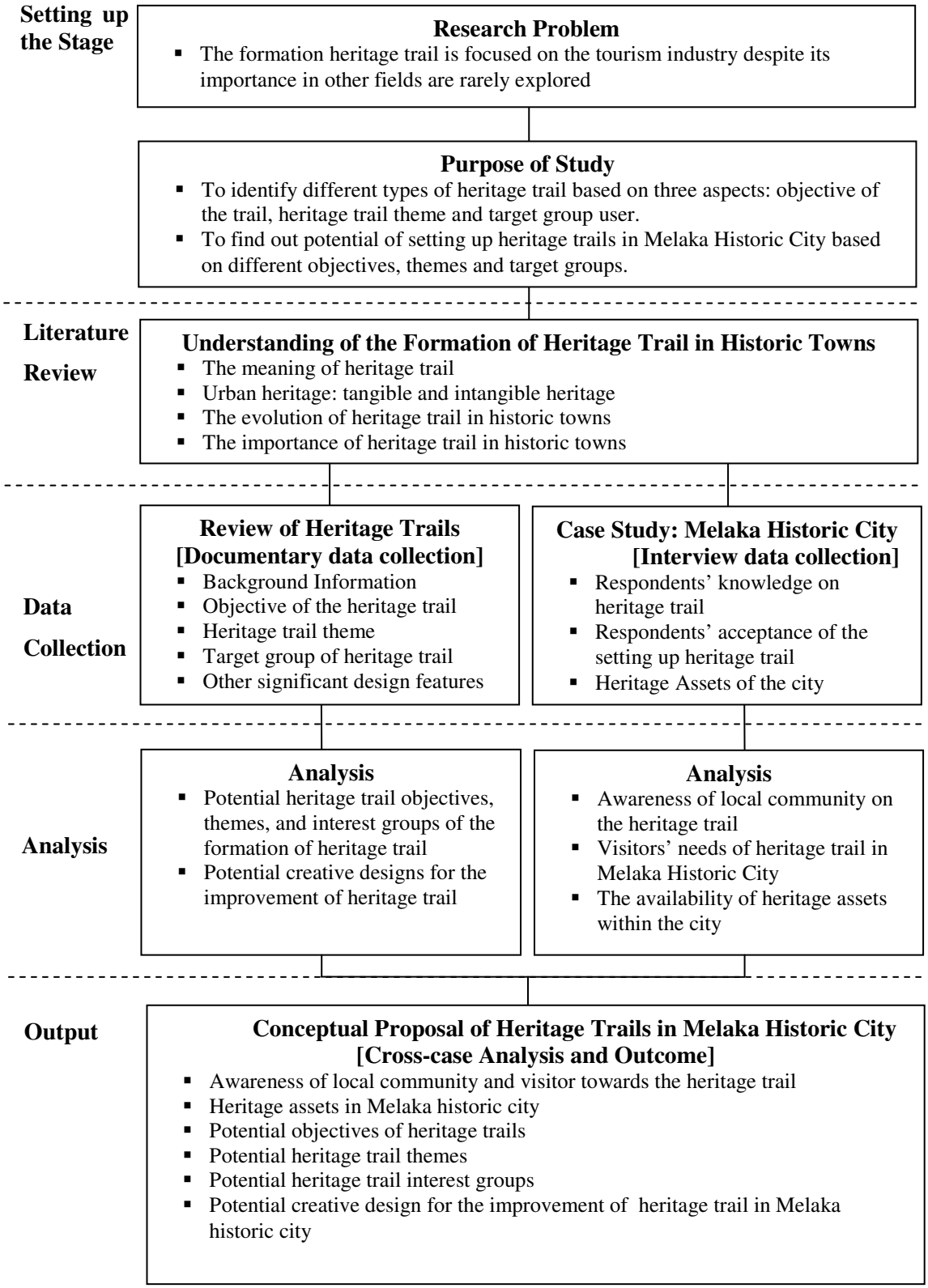
Qualitative research will be applied in this study as the study tended to understand the dynamic situation of heritage trail and how heritage trail have been setting up. The basic procedure in reporting the results of a qualitative study are to develop descriptions and themes from the data, to present these descriptions and themes that convey multiple perspectives from participants and detailed descriptions of the setting or individuals (Creswell, 2009). Descriptive and interpretative research style was better suit to the study.

There are a range of strategies of inquiry or research methodologies in qualitative research. Using a qualitative inquiry, these results may also provide … an in-depth

analysis of one or more cases (case study) (Creswell, 2009). Case study approach was selected in this study for the process of data collections and analysis. Case study is useful to explore and understand the process and dynamics of change. Through closely describing, documenting and interpreting events as they unfold in 'real life' setting, it can determine the factors that were critical in the implementation of a programme of policy and analyse patterns and links between them (Creswell, 2009).

This case study is merely a collective (case study), where several cases are studied to form a collective understanding of the issue or question. (Stake, 1995 and Simons, 2009) Two types of case study were carried out in this study which are: review of existing heritage trails from various places and case study in Melaka Historic City. Understanding of heritage trails from different geographical area and culture are important, as to gain comprehensive views to the study and this application of review's findings on ground would take place in Melaka Historic City.

Two methods were applied in the data collections stage; documentary data collection for existing heritage trails' review and interview with local communities and visitors in Melaka Historic City (Figure 1-1).




Source : the author, November 2009

**Figure 1-1 :** Flow Chart of Research Methodology

### 1.5.1 Document Data Collection and Analysis

Formal document analysis tends to be used less than interview and observation in case study research and its potential for adding depth to a case has not perhaps been fully exploited. However, there are many ways in which documents can be used in case study to portray and enrich the context and contribute to an analysis of issues (Simons, 2009). Document data collection and analysis in this case is the method for existing heritage trails' review. It is due to the limitations of geographical areas, time duration, and also financial availability. However, the document analysis seen to be valid for this study because the required data such as objective, theme and interest group of heritage trails, and selection of heritage assets are available in document formats. During the process of research, qualitative documents would be collected including public documents or private documents (Creswell, 2009). Public documents consist of organization reports, newsletters, public journals, books and academic articles while private documents consist of private journals, online brochures and magazines. In addition, visual materials in form of photographs, video tapes, and sketches would be useful for the study.

### 1.5.2 Interviews Data Collection and Analysis

In qualitative interviews, face-to-face interviews would be conducted with participants. These interviews involve unstructured and generally open-ended questions that are few in number and intended to elicit views and opinions from the participants. According to Simons (2009), in-depth research interview, sometimes so called unstructured or open-ended has four major purposes :

1. To document the interviewee's perspective on the topic or to find out someone's mind;

2. The active engagement and learning it can promote for interviewer and interviewee in identifying and analyzing issues;

3. The inherent flexibility it offers to change direction to pursue emergent issues, to probe a topic or deepen a response, and to engage dialogue with participants;

4. The potential for uncovering and representing unobserved feeling and events that cannot assumed from observing a situation.

Face–to-face interview were conducted with local communities and visitors in Melaka Historic City. The details are shown as below :

**Table 1-1:** Structure of Interviews

| **Participant** | | **Interview Type** | **Content of Interview** |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | Local Communities | Face-to-face | ▪ Knowledge and Aawareness to the heritage trail<br>▪ Acceptance of setting up heritage trail<br>▪ Willingness to involve in the planning and design of heritage trail |
| 2 | Visitors | Face-to-face | ▪ Knowledge and awareness to the heritage trail<br>▪ Personal preference of heritage trail type |

Source: the author, November 2009

## 1.6 Research Outcome

At the end of the study, the research outcomes are:

1. Summary of the important roles of heritage trail in historic town;

2. Potential objectives, themes, and target trail users or interest groups of heritage trail in historic towns; and

3. Conceptual proposal of the formation of heritage trails in Melaka Historic City including heritage trail objectives, themes, interest groups, route types and selection of heritage assets.

## 1.7 Scope and Limitation of the Study

This study is primarily concerned with the initial decisions on objectives, themes and target trail users in the formation of heritage trail in historic towns. Although the design of heritage trail involves physical designs, management policies and other site level planning, however these aspects are beyond the scope of this study.