



**SYMBOLISM OF CULTURAL LANDSCAPE IN URBAN WATERFRONT
DESIGN OF PANTAI LIDO, JOHOR BAHRU, MALAYSIA**

By

MOHD AMIRUL BIN HUSSAIN

**Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in
Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy**

December 2021

FRSB 2022 6

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Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfilment of the requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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Pantai Lido of Johor Bahru has a diversity of cultures, beautiful landscapes, and unique nature along its waterfront. This diversity, at one time, has made Pantai Lido a tourist option for domestic as well as international visits. After more than fifty decades of being a landmark of magnificent landscape for Johor Bahru, Pantai Lido is now experiencing an alteration which has resulted in the de-territorialisation of its cultural landscape. This has inevitably eroded the identity and symbolism of the place. Thus, the main objective of this study is to explore and understand the symbolism of the cultural landscape in the waterfront design at Pantai Lido, as well as to preserve Pantai Lido from the de-territorialisation through four sub-objectives: 1) To discover the meaning of cultural landscape at Pantai Lido, 2) To explore the symbolism of cultural landscape at Pantai Lido, 3) To investigate the challenges that are faced in designing the cultural landscape at Pantai Lido, and 4) To determine the essential considerations that are needed to design an emblematic cultural landscape at Pantai Lido. To achieve the objectives of the study, the qualitative research method using a case study approach was conducted to explore the symbolism of the cultural landscape, where Pantai Lido was selected as the location for data collection. A total of 22 informants comprising 16 local communities were involved in this study via in-depth semi-structured interviews and six local authorities participated in a focus group discussion (FGD). Accordingly, the primary data gathered from the in-depth, semi-structured interviews were thus supported by relevant information from the FGD. Additional data were derived from participant observations, document analysis, and audio-visual materials. This study has significantly contributed to the body of knowledge. It enhances the conceptual understanding in the use of cultural landscape characteristics as design strategies to develop cultural landscape symbolism at Pantai Lido's urban waterfront. Consequently, the findings of this study can assist the state government and related parties in developing a cultural landscape design strategies framework for the urban waterfront at Pantai Lido, and thus mitigate the de-territorialisation of the cultural landscape at the said location. Thus, the contributions of this study are not only beneficial to assist in the planning of the cultural landscape at Pantai Lido, but can also be applied to other similar regions throughout Malaysia.

Moreover, the contribution of the design framework is not limited to only mitigating the de-territorialisation of the cultural landscape in Malaysia, but also for the management of sustaining the urban waterfront landscape.

Keywords: Symbolism of place, cultural landscape, urban waterfront, Pantai Lido



Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Doktor Falsafah

SIMBOLISME LANDSKAP BUDAYA DALAM REKABENTUK PERSISIRAN AIR BANDAR PANTAI LIDO, JOHOR BAHRU, MALAYSIA

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Pantai Lido di Johor Bahru mempunyai budaya yang pelbagai, landskap indah, dan alam semula jadi yang unik di sepanjang persisiran airnya. Kepelbagaian ini pernah menjadikan Pantai Lido sebagai suatu pilihan pelancongan domestik dan juga antarabangsa pada masa lalu. Setelah lebih dari lima puluh dekad menjadi mercu tanda pemandangan yang indah untuk Johor Bahru, Pantai Lido kini menghadapi perubahan yang mengancam kepada de-teritorialisasi landskap budaya. Pada masa yang sama, ia juga melunturkan identiti dan simbolisme tempat untuk lokasi tersebut. Oleh itu, objektif utama kajian ini adalah untuk memahami dan meneroka simbolisme landskap budaya dalam reka bentuk persisiran air bandar di Pantai Lido untuk pemeliharaan dari de-teritorialisasi, melalui empat pecahan objektif: 1) Untuk mendalami makna landskap budaya di Pantai Lido, 2) Untuk meneroka simbolisme landskap budaya di Pantai Lido, 3) Untuk menyelidik cabaran yang dihadapi dalam merancang landskap budaya di Pantai Lido, dan 4) Untuk menentukan pertimbangan penting yang diperlukan untuk membentuk perlambangan landskap budaya di Pantai Lido. Untuk mencapai objektif kajian, kaedah kualitatif menggunakan pendekatan kajian kes dilaksanakan untuk meneroka simbolisme landskap budaya, dan Pantai Lido telah dipilih sebagai lokasi pengumpulan data. Seramai 22 informan terdiri daripada 16 komuniti tempatan terlibat dalam kajian ini melalui temubual mendalam semi berstruktur dan enam pihak berkuasa tempatan mengambil bahagian dalam perbincangan kumpulan berfokus (FGD). Oleh yang demikian, data utama dikumpul menerusi temubual mendalam semi berstruktur dan disokong oleh maklumat yang relevan dari FGD. Data tambahan diperoleh daripada pemerhatian peserta, analisis dokumen, dan bahan audio-visual. Kajian ini menyumbang secara signifikan kepada badan ilmu. Ia meningkatkan pemahaman konsep dalam penggunaan ciri-ciri landskap budaya sebagai strategi reka bentuk untuk membangunkan simbolisme landskap budaya di kawasan persisiran air bandar Pantai Lido. Seterusnya, dapatan kajian ini dapat membantu badan kerajaan negeri dan pihak berkaitan dalam mengembangkan kerangka strategi reka bentuk lanskap budaya untuk persisiran air bandar di Pantai Lido sehingga dapat mengatasi de-teritorialisasi kawasan landskap budaya di lokasi tersebut. Sumbangan kajian ini bukan sahaja bermanfaat untuk

membantu dalam perancangan landskap budaya di Pantai Lido, tetapi juga dapat diterapkan di kawasan lain seumpamanya di seluruh Malaysia. Selain itu, sumbangan kerangka reka bentuk dari kajian ini juga tidak hanya terhad pada menyelesaikan keperluan dalam mengatasi de-teritorialisasi landskap budaya di Malaysia, tetapi juga untuk pengurusan dalam melestarikan landskap persisiran air bandar.

Kata Kunci: Symbolisme tempat, lanskap budaya, persisiran air bandar, Pantai Lido



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

Above all, alhamdulillah, my greatest gratitude to Dear Allah subhanahu wa ta'ala (SWT) for the abundance of blessings being poured over me. I wish to express my deepest gratitude and appreciation to my main supervisor, Prof. Madya Ts. Dr. Mohd Yazid Mohd Yunos, for the consistent support, patience, motivation and immense knowledge through my PhD journey, especially in the unexpected times of turbulence. His wealth of expertise, advice, and encouragement, made my doctoral involvement achievable. Besides my main advisor, I wish to thank the rest of my research committee for millions of lessons, Prof. Madya LAr Dr. Nor Atiah Ismail, Prof. Madya Dr. Sumarni Ismail and Dr. Noor Fazamimah Md. Ariffin. With the additional supports of their insightful comments and guidance to strengthen my research from different perspectives I could have never seen by myself.

I would also like to thank Universiti Putra Malaysia, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris, and Ministry of Higher Education for the scholarship, which has supported me throughout my PhD journey. Thank you to En. Hishammuddin Hamdan from the Ministry of Education Malaysia for his professional support and advice that have kept me maintained my momentum in finishing my PhD journey. I also extend my thank you to all of my colleagues, Dr. Yusfarina, Dr. Abu Bakar, Dr. Nazri, En. Yusof for being the dearest of friends for their valuable insights, fruitful advice and emotional supports. Finally, my sincere gratitude to my lovely family, to my darling mother, Pn. Jamilah Haji Ibrahim who blessed me with her affection, prayers, encouragements and understanding in completing this journey. Thank you to my siblings, Ruby, Noor, Az, and Faridatul, for always be understanding and believing in me to complete my PhD. To my beloved late-father Haji Hussain Haji Hambali, I love you, and I miss your presence in my life. He was, is, will always stay alive in my heart forever. Memories of you give me the strength to move forward.

This thesis was submitted to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfilment of the requirement for the degree of Doctoral of Philosophy. The members of the Supervisory Committee were as follows:

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DBJB	Dataran Bandaraya Johor Bahru
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
IRDA	Iskandar Regional Development Authority
JB	Johor Bahru
JPBD	The Department of Town and Country Planning
YWJ	Yayasan Warisan Johor
LTSL	Laman Tun Sri Lanang
LC	Local Community
LA	Local Authorities
LAr	Landscape Architects
MTT	Medan Tepian Tebrau
MDID	Malaysia Department of Irrigation and Drainage
MBJB	Johor Bahru City Council
PSG	Padang Sri Gelam
UW	Urban waterfront
UCL	Urban Cultural Landscape

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the research background, the description of the problem, the research question, the significance of the study, the scope and limitations, the definitions of specific terminology, and the chapter summary.

1.2 Research Background

One of the most remarkable characteristics of an old town centre is its riverfront or waterfront. The importance of the river or water edge is that it determines the allocation of old town locations in Malaysia (Shamsuddin, 2011). Accordingly, Yassin, Eves, and McDonagh (2009) explained that the waterfront is the most important and valuable natural resource for living creatures to ensure the sustainable development of human civilisation, which has great potential for a country's environmental balance and advancement. Hence, urban waterfront development as a part of the coastal zone development has become a very attractive area because of the views that face towards the water bodies (Woo, Omran, Lee, & Hanafi, 2017). Aimran (2017) has added that in the past, waterways have been used as transportation channels that have resulted in many buildings and settlements being built near the water edge facing the river, which gradually have formed the identity and character of the place. From that, Gonawan (2012) has insisted that the urban waterfront can provide high-quality spaces for human activities that can act towards being a centre of all kinds of activities. For this reason, Shams, Ngah, Zakaria, and Sawal (2013) have denoted that the urban waterfront may become a promising place for economic, cultural, social, and nature development. It may as well be a symbol and an identity for the town that faces the river or sea (Gonawan, 2012). According to Kostopoulou (2013), the role of an urban waterfront has a huge potential as a social and cultural hub, as well as in attracting tourism activities. For example, the urban waterfront area of Spike Island in Bristol serves as a catalyst for continuous social and cultural activities and is a centre for the community. Moreover, social and cultural activities enhance a city's quality of place, helps to revitalise derelict urban areas, and shapes the city's identity in an increasingly competitive urban environment (Evans, Foord, Gertler, & Tesolin, 2006). This subsequently creates economic potential and generates a dynamic urban culture, attracting a new wave of creative tourism (Breuer, 2006).

Based on the above statement, Kostof (1992) and Kostopoulou (2013) have argued that in order to attract a new form of tourism, cities need a creative urban space that is characterised by three main points of human activity which are form, place, and identity which encompass physical elements, socio-cultural, and aspects of symbolic activity. Physical elements include place settings, urban structures, buildings, streets, landscape,

and natural elements (Moughtin, 1992). On the other hand, Henrich (2015) has denoted that the socio-culture refers to the behaviour that is the manifestation of a cultural value. This is reflected by the direct human response to the environment where behaviours are practiced in response to the physical setting, which consequently has created the character of the place. Next, human activity is the symbolic behavioural manifestations of one's response to the environment, such as sleeping, eating, reading and many more (Basri & Shamsuddin, 2008; Shamsuddin, 2011; Ujang, 2012). Thus, the influences of human activities in urban waterfront areas are not limited to the physical landscape only, but also the cultural landscape factor in the place, whether tangible or intangible (Zhu & Duan, 2011). Denevan and Mathewson (2009) stated that a tangible cultural landscape is a characteristic of a complex interaction between human and natural environments such as the remains of a landmark, nodes, monuments, and their spatial arrangements or structures compared to an intangible cultural landscape which involve practice, knowledge, skills or traditions. Although human activities and traditions are intangible, they are also important components of heritage, as they reflect the interactions between the people and their surrounding landscape (Stephenson, 2008; Stupariu, Pascu, & Bürgi, 2019). As a useful cultural landscape object that forms the cultural identity of a place, the waterfront region depicts a city's deep cultural accumulation and rich civilisation of materials in terms of its distinctive characteristics (Huang, 2008). According to Gonawan (2012), each urban waterfront must have its own distinctive characteristics that affect the formation of the place's symbol. As such, it is used as a point of attraction for local and tourism development. The same author has also added that socio-cultural activities and cultural landscape elements such as the relationship between physical elements and human activities have an influence in the morphology of urban waterfront development; in this circumstance, there are many benefits of creating linkages between cultural landscape and urban waterfront (Rasal, 2012). For example, cultural landscapes are places that help in creating the symbol of a place, which thus heightens the destination's identity through either tangible or intangible properties (Refaat, 2015). This is because the cultural landscape of the urban waterfront covers artistic function, visual aesthetic landscape, regional culture, and many more as has been denoted by Zhu and Duan (2011). This statement is also supported by other authors who state that within the urban waterfront and cultural landscape, the harmonious interaction between people and the landscape is achieved through the clever interplay of the positioning of the physical and social activities (Xu & Ma, 2017). Furthermore, according to Huang (2008), the cultural landscape brings vibrancy and charm of the arts to the urban waterfront with various functions and positive benefits as a reflection of the background and identity of the destination. Correspondingly, Mohamed and Salim (2018) stated that the identity of a place shows a harmonious balance between people and the interconnected urban events, which can help create the symbol of the place as well as make it unique and mutually attached to its people.

In addition, Stevens (1969) has denoted that the symbolism and its associations such as the identity of the place, sense of place, and the image of place are the factors that make the urban waterfront more noticeably different from one to the other, and that makes it memorable for the people. Rapoport (1990) states that the connection between cultural landscape and the urban environment will form the symbolism of place from the physical elements, socio-culture, and human activities, whereby the cultural landscape is a manifestation of cultural values and reflects the direct human response to the environment that results from the influence of physical, socio-cultural characteristics,

and human activities (Ismail & Ariffin, 2015). Smith (1974) has argued that the cultural landscape is the scene of a particular social-cultural activity, where the particular environment engages with the mind and thus, creates the symbol of activity which is translated as the sense of place accordingly. Shamsuddin (2011) denotes that there is a symbiotic relationship between socio-cultural and the environment (physical and activities) in which both affect a symbolism of place. With that in mind, the symbolism of the particular place is capable of conveying meanings to one, without one having to establish a prior relationship with the situation. In other words, symbolism impresses alien but pleasurable perceptions upon a person when it is comprehended successfully. An urban area that possesses a physical element, for example the symbol of time, makes the historic element easily recognisable and is further emblematically associated to the identity of the place (Shamsuddin, *Townscape revisited: Unravelling the character of the historic townscape in Malaysia*, 2011).

In another context, Monnet (2011) has explained that symbolism may also be of a specific element or events, exuding a semiotic character that has been derived from real-life experiences that are formed and practiced in the area. Therefore, symbolism is important because the environment is portrayed by the physical behaviour, socio-culture and human activities. Thus, Lester and Margaret (1980) have stated that symbolisation must be seen as a social process, because environmental symbolism is one of the methods by which the social identity and reality are created. In other words, the cultural landscape is created and transformed by the symbolic actions of the citizen who is inculcating strong associations with a place (Lester & Conkey, 1980). Bor (1967) has further explained that the best kind of environment for a cultural landscape comprising a sense of identity and place symbolism is any place with a combination of the basic socio-cultural and environmental structures (physical and activity). These socio-cultural and environmental structures enrich the cultural significance and bring a sense of life into the place (Shamsuddin, Sulaiman, & Amat, 2018). The symbolism of the place increases the importance of the cultural landscape characteristics with an increase in a socio-cultural variable, the image of the city, the identity of the place, and a sense of place to make a good townscape in the city (Krupat, 1985). An urban environment with a clear image identity and sense of place tends to have a townscape that exudes certain qualities, enriching the experiential value of being in the place (Bende, et al., 2006). Thus, according to Pendlebury, Erten, and Peter (2014), a townscape is the art of the relationship between elements of the physical, socio-cultural, and human activities that have created the symbolism of the place which is deemed to be important in contributing success to a town in acquiring its identity. Indeed, a townscape would come to life where it is enriched with sensory experiences through an assortment of physical, socio-cultural, and human activities elements including the intangible senses of smell, sound, and sight that elude the sense of that place (Shamsuddin, 2011). Explained in a situation, the tourist attraction along the Amphawa riverfront in Thailand has successfully formed the identity of the place. The special characteristics of its physical and unique cultural element are bounded in the context of Thai cultural history (Luekveerawattana, 2012). The unique physical elements and its cultural characteristic would include single houses along the riverfront, houses with double emblematic Thai style roof, traditional floating houses, contemporary Thai houses and a river-side life. The Amphawa community has an enculturated social significance because the riversides settings are accumulated with spiritual and cultural sentiments (Angsunantawiwat & Samutsongkhram, 2001; Luekveerawattana, 2012). Ahmad, Jamil, and Ibrahim (2006) explain that cultural

landscape is a process of social formation and subjective identity, which would depend on the environment and lifestyle of the local society because the cultural landscape in this world has its own unique individual character. From a positive angle, the richness of this cultural landscape has resulted in the developing and developed countries to emphasise the roles of cultural landscape in tourism activities (physical, socio-cultural and human activities), in order to increase the local economic sector (Luekveerawattana, 2012). Promoting local culture in the tourism marketing and design strategy can enhance the destination image, the diversity of travelling experiences, and enhance the destination competitiveness (Suntikul, 2017). Base on the proposed idea, the implementation of the cultural landscape design strategy is believed to have positive impacts on the local economic growth besides empowering the cultural landscape at the said location to withstand for the future generations.

1.3 Background of Problem

Over the years, with rapid development and globalisation, the urban waterfront areas in Malaysia have experienced developmental effects that lead to place attachments crisis (Abu, Ujang, & Aziz, 2016). This situation has resulted in the overlapping urban identity crisis, where cities, places, customs, and behavioural patterns resemble one another (Sepe, 2013). At the same time, this aspect is often overlooked and consequently has deteriorated the symbolism values of the place in the developments, which is related to the de-territorialisation of cultural landscape areas at the urban waterfront (Mohamed & Salim, 2018). Take Central Market waterfront in Kuala Lumpur for example, a series of regeneration projects have been executed and is believed to bring socio-cultural activities to the waterfront. This has been envisioned to strengthen the place attachments through its vibrant ambiance of the cultural heritage waterfront identity (Iqbal, Rani, & Wahab, 2020). According to a C40 Cities Annual Report 2019, the main focus for these projects has been to regenerate the identity of the culture heritage waterfront in Kuala Lumpur. Despite the intention, the study that has been conducted by Iqbal, Rani, and Wahab (2020) has shown a different scene, in which the Central Market waterfront has failed to showcase its cultural identity as the completed physical setting is more modern and is not in compliance to the C40 Cities vision.

Another urban waterfront facing the same situation as the Central Market waterfront is the Kangar Waterfront. According to Abu, Ujang, and Aziz (2016), Kangar Waterfront has revealed its deteriorating condition, and that it does not function as a place attachment for socio-cultural and recreational public places. As a result of those impacts, the urban waterfront has been deserted, the sense of place has been lost, and the locals have finally turned to other places (Mohamed & Salim, 2018). Poli (2020) and Mohamed and Salim (2018), have explained that the de-territorialisation of cultural landscape areas is a situation when such a place is adulterated by uncontrolled urbanisation, globalisation and rapid development, which slowly but surely deteriorate the symbolism and place identity. This de-territorialisation of the cultural landscape area at the urban waterfront landscape will lead to monotonous content, alienated design, and the lack of cultural characteristics in its roles to enliven the historical and human spirit on the basis of functions due to the designers' insensitivity toward the locals' need (Huang, 2008; Xu-wei., 2011).

1.4 Problem Statement

When referring to culture, anthropologists use the term de-territorialisation to refer to a weakening of ties between culture and place (Olivier, 2013). The same author has denoted that this means the removal of cultural subjects and objects from a certain location in space and time, leading to the loss of symbolism of place. The de-territorialisation of cultural landscape area can be seen in the rapid development of the urban waterfront that is located in Johor Bahru under the five flagships of Iskandar Malaysia development, chasing its vision to become an international and sustainable metropolitan region in 2025 in Johor Bahru (Gonawan, 2012; Salisu, 2015; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016). The Iskandar Malaysia flagships plan is a regional development corridor that is located in the southernmost part of Peninsula Malaysia that has resulted in massive land use development, particularly in Johor Bahru (Salisu, 2015; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016). The whole landscape of Johor Bahru which geographically includes Pantai Lido (Lido Boulevard) is now transformed dramatically, thus worrying the locals, the environmentalists, and surprisingly including the Singaporeans as well (Othman, 2014; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016; Rizzo & Khan, 2013). According to the written report by Muhamad (2019), the Sultan of Johor, Sultan Ibrahim Ismail had once expressed his disagreement at the aggressive development that was made to Pantai Lido. In the same report, Sultan Ibrahim Ismail has also mentioned to have addressed the utter needlessness of the Pantai Lido's change, considering that such unpleasant changes have also been made to the Danga Bay. In addition, Nor et al. (2009), Rizzo and Khan (2013), and Sultan, Arifin, and Tahira (2016), have denoted that the new land is reclaimed from the coastal area in Danga Bay up to Pantai Lido, Johor Bahru, while lands and homes of the local people are taken to make way for multi-billion dollars' worth of skyscrapers development and other mega developments in Iskandar Malaysia.

This situation has witnessed the widespread of new urban and suburban projects which resulted in distinct differences in physical, socio-cultural, daily activities and socio-economic changes to that of the symbolism that has been attached to the prior cultural waterfront (Ibrahim, 2014; Raman, Fazal, Sangaralingam, Ramswamy, & Yuan, 2019; Salisu, 2015; Shepard, 2018). As has been reported by the New Straits Times (2010), after the phase one development is completed Lido Boulevard is believed to be able to accommodate high-end condominiums, hotels, office suites, shopping malls, an indoor snow park, and an esplanade centre on the 50 hectares site along the Tebrau Straits. The development of Iskandar Malaysia, especially the development of Lido Boulevard in Johor Bahru city has become controversial in environmental issues as well as the concern for social-cultural inequality issues that have been raised by the locals (Ahmad, 2019; Salisu, 2015; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016; Woo et al. 2017). Speaking to Yayasan Warisan Johor, Prof. Dr. Kassim Thukiman, a special member of the *Ahli Penasihat Jumaah Majlis Diraja Johor*, the development that took place in Johor Bahru was not in line with the Sultan of Johor mandate, as the Sultan of Johor had ordered that Johor Bahru be developed as a city of character, highlighting its local culture and having a Johor identity as a source of cultural development of *Bangsa Johor* (Yayasan Warisan Johor [Personal communication], 2021). According to Yayasan Warisan Johor (2020), Johor is the only region in Malaysia that is using the term *Bangsa Johor* as a reference to the title of the citizenship of Johor at the state level, which encompasses all the races in Johor such as the Malays, Indians and Chinese as well as the minorities. The same

author has also noted, that this entitlement is traditionally and historically introduced by the late Sultan Ibrahim in the 1920s, which has aimed to foster a consensus among the various residents in Johor in order to nurture a family spirit, belonging, and harmony among the people. From that, the people of Johor have this tremendous pride when it comes to their traditional culture, because the term *Bangsa Johor* represents its peoples and their heritage lines (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020).

In light of this, there was a previously famous place in Johor Bahru that had once captured the attentions of tourists and local residents, i.e., Lido Beach or was locally known as Pantai Lido. This has been a beautiful sandy beach that stretches 3.5km out from the Tambak Johor to Teluk Danga (Danga Bay), and is located close to the centre of Johor Bahru City Centre and among the nodes and landmark of Tebrau Strait. It used to be an ideal place for the urbanites to relax, stroll around, enjoy the breeze, and even a great spot for fishing and sometimes the playing of traditional games along its bank (Danial, 2019). Moreover, in days long past, Pantai Lido was vibrant during the festive seasons with stalls selling local scrumptious delicacies lining along the coastal sidewalk (Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016; Thukiman, 2011). Aside from that, at an earlier time, along Tebrau Strait which geographically includes Pantai Lido there has been the depiction of the early Malay villages in front of the Istana Besar Johor, namely, Kampung Kereta Asap, Kampung Dock, and Kampung Tambatan, representing the humble Malay community lifestyle (Aimran, 2013; Arham, 2011; Laim, 2009; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). The same villages have been built on the sea-water which is known as *kampung air* (water settlements) by the locals as depicted in Figure 1.1. As have been stated by Arham (2011), Yayasan Warisan Johor (2020) and Laim (2009), all the villages are interconnected with timber bridges and wooden walkways. In additions, each house represents the efforts of a community to carve a style of its own that can embody its culture, customs, and identity, and have a typical roof ornament that is made from *Nipah* (Nipa palm) and timber. All of these contribute to the existential symbolism of the place, the old charm of Pantai Lido which has been rified with symbolism. According to Shamsuddin (2011), such appreciation requires an eye of gratitude due to the abstract value of meanings that have developed over time through the physical structure, culture and particular social activity, and thereby becomes symbols of such a place.

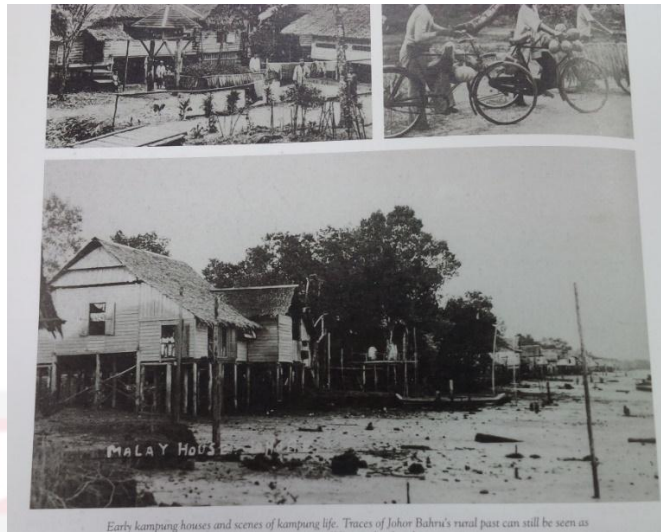


Figure 1.1 : Early Malay kampung at Johor Bahru circa 1860
(Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020)

However, in the current situation the entire beach has been reclaimed for a multi-billion-dollar worth of developments, and Pantai Lido has lost its old charm (Azzaro, 2020; Mohamad, 2010; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016). In 1997, the socio-cultural activities settings, natural landscape, and coastal ecosystems, have been demolished to make way for the expansion of Iskandar Malaysia where this development geographically and indefinitely has included Pantai Lido (Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016). The result of the development and modernisation at the said location have disrupted the cultural landscape areas, leaving it with eroded cultural values by the ill-conceived projects, insensitivity towards the locale antiquities, and the demolition or dislocation of the traditional physical settings. These settings unfortunately have been moved to new locations jeopardising the locals' significance (Aimran, 2013; Ahmad, 2019; Rostam et al., 2011; Sultan et al., 2016; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Gonawan (2012) revealed that the Pantai Lido waterfront has become dull, failed to function as a socio-cultural place and has lost its image as a cultural waterfront and its vitality due to rapid development, urbanisation and environmental degradation. Figure 1.2. depicted the chronological evolution of the Pantai Lido circa 50's through to the year 2020.

In addition, the design guidelines that are issued by the relevant parties still lack focus on the importance of the cultural landscape characteristic. This is a part of the development and design guideline in the coastal areas or waterfront that is related to any kind of development and planning at the space where land and water meet. Yassin, Masrom, Razali, and Adnan (2018), have stated that most of the waterfront guidelines in Malaysia are more focused on the punishment for misconducts on river or water pollution, and that the guidelines that are introduced are very general, they also less specifically monitor the importance of the waterfront area for the public, nature, and culture. This statement is also supported by Teh, Ghani, Abdullah, and Pugi (2020), as most of the guidelines that are issued by the relevant parties also insufficient provide

the detail on aspects of the cultural and landscape characteristics, but are more on the administration, management, development, and protection of land, physical type, and biological life. The same authors have stated that the landscape characteristics are a source of national pride that is so precious, and that it includes a unique and great natural and cultural heritage.

According to Teh, Ghani, Abdullah, and Pugi (2020), in Malaysia there are no specific guidelines that have directly mentioned the elements of cultural landscape characteristic. Therefore, the existing guidelines that have been provided are in dire need of improvements and they need to incorporate cultural landscape factors, especially the influence of cultural landscape characteristic, in order to control the changes in the cultural landscape through action and enforcement. This is because when the guideline is issued, and is adapted to the current situation, any changes on the existing or the protected cultural landscape characteristics are to be securely monitored by the authorities. Furthermore, if there is a violation of laws and regulations, an enforcement action can be taken against the defaulting party. At the same time, an appropriate design strategy and guideline is believed to be able to preserve the urban waterfront from facing de-territorialisation. However, the lack of implementation of the antiquities of the past environment on the new urban waterfront. As have been stated by Sakdiyakorn and Sivarak (2016), an outstanding cultural landscape in any waterfront community and surrounding area is a good attraction to many tourists as well as to mark the place as an identity of the place for the waterfront. For example, in the Amphawan waterfront, the distinctive cultural landscapes characteristics such as the unique physical elements of place setting, the riverside socio-cultural life, and the wisdom of the local's activities in cultivating vegetation along the river have helped in the blooming of tourism activities in Amphawan, Thailand (Luekveerawattana, 2012). However, such a thing did not happen at Pantai Lido, the lack of focus on the cultural landscape characteristics as part of Pantai Lido development and the design guideline has caused the de-territorialisation of the various values of its natural and cultural landscape area.

Nevertheless, Pantai Lido consists of various unique cultural landscape characteristics which could be developed as the symbolism of cultural landscape in urban waterfront design, and to strengthen the tourism destination. Hence, a good solution to keep the cultural landscape at Pantai Lido in order for it to thrive is that the strategies and design guideline that are related to urban waterfront development need to be improved, by emphasising the importance of the cultural landscape at the said location. This strategies and design guideline will conserve the cultural heritage that demonstrates the heritage to the next generations. At the same time, it will strengthen the symbolism of the cultural landscape in urban waterfront design to preserve it from de-territorialisation. This justifies the importance of this study in developing the cultural landscape strategies and design guideline for the urban waterfront. Understanding the importance of the cultural landscape must be rooted from its holistic perspective, systematically. In doing so, the cultural landscape resources that form the symbolism of the local landscapes can be conserved, preserved, and protected accordingly.

In short, this study explores the symbolism of cultural landscape in urban waterfront design. Notably, the regeneration in the urban waterfront areas in Malaysia lacks the focus on the importance of cultural landscape as part of its development and design guideline. Nonetheless, the linkage between the cultural landscape and urban waterfront design strategy might potentially be implemented in the urban waterfront design development in Malaysia so as to exude the symbolism of place as well as to mitigate the de-territorialisation of cultural landscape areas at the urban waterfront.

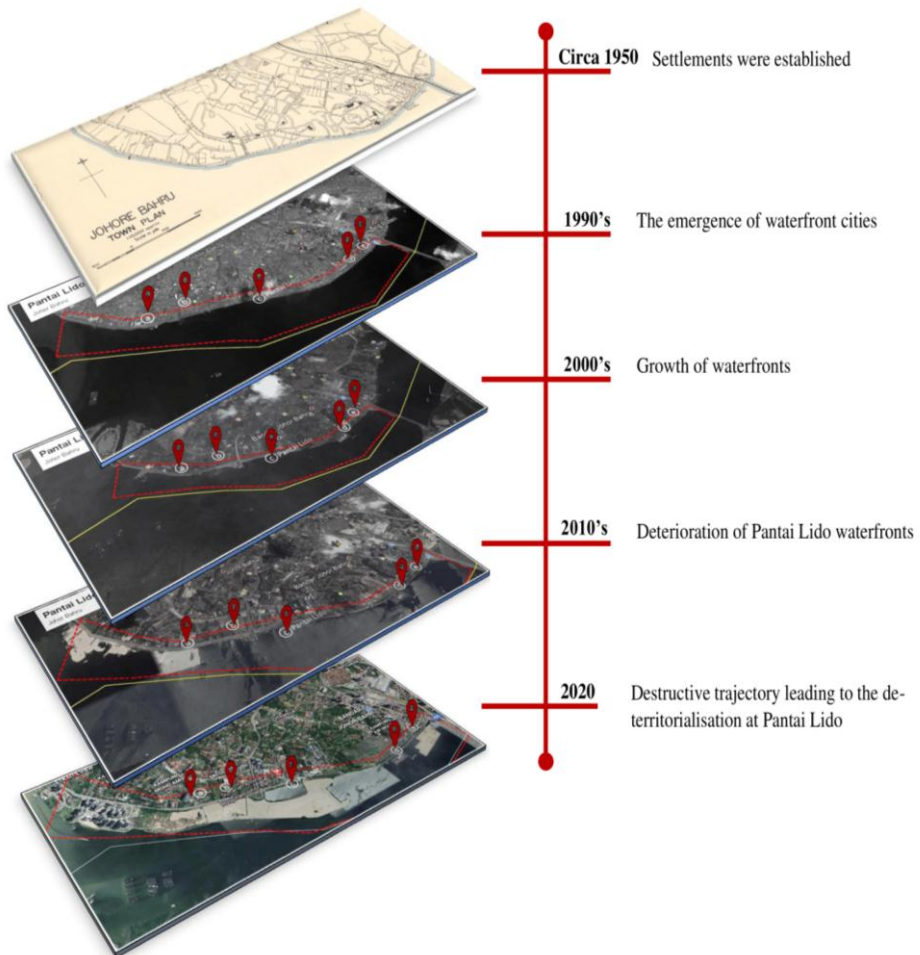


Figure 1.2 : Evolution map of Pantai Lido

1.4.1 Context Study

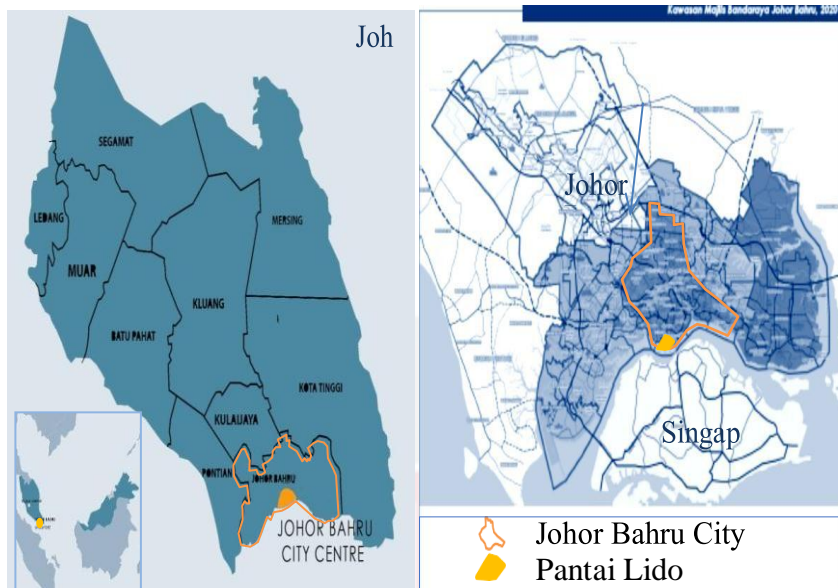


Figure 1.3 : Pantai Lido location map at Johor Bahru
(Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru, 2020)

Pantai Lido is located in the southern part of Johor Bahru (JB) of Peninsula Malaysia. It is located approximately 350km away from Kuala Lumpur City Centre. Referring to other known city, Singapore City Centre is located at the south of Johor and it is located about 40km from JB. Pantai Lido at JB can be reached by various types of transportations such as airways, waterways, railways and land roads. JB is known as the southern gateway to Malaysia and acts as the international gateway linking Singapore to Malaysia. From the historical perspective, JB was once known as Iskandar Puteri with Tanjung Puteri as the centre of governance, which started in the beginning of 1855. This was an event that had happened after the officiated agreement of understanding between Sultan Ali and Temenggung Daeng Ibrahim (Husain, 1995; Thukiman, 2011). In addition, according to Thukiman (2011), JB is a southern gateway for the development of civilisation, culture, and intellectuals. The same author has also pointed out that this phenomenon has created a complex, unique and diverse society culture that is known as *Bangsa Johor*.

But now, JB is better known as the capital for the state of Johor which is located in the district of Johor Bahru. Basically, JB is under the administration of three different local authorities which are divided into three- the administrative zone that consists of Johor Bahru City Council (MBJB), Johor Bahru Tengah Municipal Council (MPJBT), and Pasir Gudang Municipal Council (MPPG), covering up a total area of 107 077 hectares. The city of JB continues to grow into a great metropolitan area in the south of Peninsula Malaysia, and is administered by MBJB. The population of the JB metropolitan area is

now increasing rapidly, from 1.5 million in 2015 to around 1.7 million in 2019, as has been reported in the Data Asas Negeri Johor: 2015-2019 (Bahagian Perancang Ekonomi Negeri Johor, 2020). According to the Bahagian Perancang Ekonomi Negeri Johor (2020) socially, the majority of the population is Malays and Bumiputera's, accounting for around 60 percent of the population, while 30 percent are Chinese, and 10 percent are Indians.

With the differing ethnicities living harmoniously, there used to be a famous gathering and tourism area. It was synonymous with the local community as well as with foreign tourists- this was Pantai Lido. Its beautiful position stretches along the banks of the Tebrau Strait covering various interesting socio and cultural landscape characteristic locations from Danga Bay towards the JB city centre. Pantai Lido used to be an ideal place for the locals to relax, take a bath, take a walk, enjoy the beautiful scenery, and also a great place for fishing. According to the local folklore, the name of Pantai Lido is believed to have originated from the incident of a British who resides in the area, a British Officer is also known as a British Resident during the British protectorate in 1885 in Johor Bahru. The British Resident had repeatedly uttered the word 'lido' as he headed to the beach for a picnic when riding in a *lanca* (referred to as a human-pulled traditional rickshaw) (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Eventually, the word 'lido' became synonymous with that particular beach, thus, Pantai Lido has been given that name ever since. It is called Pantai Lido, for according to the Cambridge Dictionary 'lido' relates to a public outdoor swimming pool or part of a beach where people can swim, lay in the sun, or do water sports. According to Thukiman (2011), from a historical point of view, in the old days, the royal family of Johor used to picnic at Pantai Lido on the weekends and thus, had stayed at their holiday palace that was known as Istana Hinggap which was facing the Tebrau Strait. Previous researchers have also stated that in every festive seasons, Pantai Lido will be so lively along its length, with various local food stalls serving delicious local cuisine while the youngsters are running around happily playing on the beach, catching a native molluscs, i.e., the *kupang* (mussels), *lokak* (Mangrove clams), *kijang* (glaucomyas), and *kepah* (clams), together with other crustaceans such as *belangkak* (horseshoe crabs), and *ketam ragi* (common moon crabs) (Thukiman, 2011; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020; Zue, 2010).

In this recent study, the region that has been selected is located at the sea edge area at Pantai Lido, facing up to the Tebrau Strait. It is under the district of MJB which covers almost 800 hectares and consists of 3.5km length of waterfront, where more than 75% of the area is covered by the water (Tebrau Strait). The site is surrounded by some remarkable cultural landscape characteristics (physical, socio-cultural and human activities) within the Pantai Lido boundary such as Pantai Lido waterfront, Dataran Bandaraya Johor Bahru, Laman Tun Sri Lanang, Jalan Dhoby, and Medan Tepian Tebrau. Due to the development and construction of the coastal highways to widen the existing roads, the cultural landscape characteristics at Pantai Lido has been ignored and reclaimed (Gonawan, 2012; Mohamad, 2010). As a result, where once it has the most nostalgic and remarkable cultural landscape, Pantai Lido has now lost its old charm and has surrendered to development. Gonawan (2012), Mohamad, (2010), Salisu, (2015), and Woo et al. (2017) has also added, that the changes by the development have blocked the open view towards Tebrau Strait, gentrification of ecological resources, and have eroded the local's socio-cultural activities such as harvesting native molluscs and other

crustaceans, street hawkers; the changes have also put a limitation between the interaction and intimacy of the people with nature. Figure 1.4 illustrates the changes that have happened at Pantai Lido from the 1990s to the year 2018. The same figure also shows the transition of socio activities and land uses up to the time when the beach has been closed for the land reclamation.



Figure 1.4 : The process of urbanisation that took place at Pantai Lido
(Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru, 2019)

1.4.2 An Evolution of the Waterfront Development (Pantai Lido morphology)

Malaysia is undoubtedly blessed with natural resources that are widely spread across its waterfront that provide great potential to the economic and tourism sectors (Hussein, 2006). As such, waterfront development is seen as a development point in most of the cities in Malaysia (Yassin, Eves, & McDonagh, 2010). However, due to aggressive

development and rapid modernisation processes most of the cultural landscape (physical elements, socio-cultural and human activities) areas around the waterfront have experienced a declining sense of place (Mohamed & Salim, 2018), consequently, turning the place into a modern urban waterfront. Development and modernisation have slowly deteriorated the identity of the place in this area. Moreover, according to Shams et al. (2013), most of the developments in the Malaysian waterfront are more focused on economic and commercial purposes, with little focus on the needs of the locals such as recreation, historical site, ecological function, physical landscape, socio-cultural and human activities. Adding to that, Atan (2010), IRDA (2015), and Yusof and Hassan (2018), have also mentioned that the strategic position of JB waterfront that is neighbouring Singapore is up for development because it provides great advantages and opportunities for the country's economic sector. With the inevitable benefits of the developments, one should be aware of the consequences on the socio-cultural and environmental structures (physical and activity) of the locals at this place? The elements of nature and former traditional activities (seashells and native mollusc harvesting, agricultural activities and street food vending) near the waters of the Tebrau Strait to Pantai Lido have long been destroyed due to the sea-reclamation project that has been carried out in 1997 (Azzaro, 2020; Mohamad, 2010; Salisu, 2015; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Since then, the tracks of traditional uniqueness and activities of the local's around Pantai Lido are diminishing due to the changes of the surrounding environment that has been subjected to the sea-reclamation for modern development along the Tebrau Strait (Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). According to Gonawan (2012) the poorly planned infrastructure development has decreased public utilisation, thus destroying the character of the original cultural landscape on the current urban waterfront. It is not only affecting the socio-culture but is also affecting the environment's sustainability (Gonawan, 2012; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016). Meanwhile, from the morphological development perspective, the present urban waterfront around Pantai Lido has faced some significant changes in terms of its land use, as well as in its plan and layout, where the functions can be divided into three phases and are discussed below:

a Phase 1: The Emergence of Waterfront Cities



Figure 1.5 : Pantai Lido morphology map circa 1950
(Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020)



Figure 1.6 : Pantai Lido morphology map in 1990

(Source : Google Earth Pro, 2020)

At this point, settlements along the waterfront of Pantai Lido began to grow circa 1990. Pantai Lido which is so close to the Tebrau Strait and Johor Bahru city central plays an important role in the needs of the locals in terms of trade and water transportations. From that stated period, there is no major significant change in Pantai Lido's morphology circa 50's until 90's. At this said era there are jetties which are known as 'Pebian' that are located at Jalan Terus, and wet markets that are used by the local fishermen to gather their catches from the surrounding waters to the Pasar Besar Johor Bahru which is located on the banks of Tebrau, near Legaran Sungai Segget (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). According to Hamid (2016), Pasar Besar Johor Bahru has a very dominant cultural landscape characteristic due to its strategic location and the spill over trading activities around the market place. However, around 1990 the market was demolished to make way for a more modern and sophisticated shopping mall, known as City Square (Hamid, 2016). Thus, the former hawkers in the former market have been relocated to a new area that is quite far from the JB city centre which is in Medan Tepian Tebrau. This new location is near Jalan Sungai Chat at Pantai Lido. According to Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru (2020) and Yayasan Warisan Johor (2020), at the beginning of the transfer which has taken place in the early 90's, only temporary stalls have been opened for the market activities around the open space as can be referred in Figure 1.7. Thereafter, a permanent construction of the market site has been built for the convenience of the traders and buyers, who enliven the Medan Tepian Tebrau with socio-cultural activities starting at dawn and continue until midnight, accentuating the sense of festival in the district (Fazly, 2019; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2021).



Figure 1.7 : Left: A temporary stall at Medan Tepian Tebrau in the 90's (Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru, 2019). Right: Scenery at Medan Tepian Tebrau in 2018

The next cultural landscape characteristic of Pantai Lido is Dataran Bandaraya Johor Bahru. According to Yayasan Warisan Johor (2020), before the existence of Dataran Bandaraya Johor Bahru, this place has been known as Padang Seri Gelam (PSG) where many social activities of the locals have taken place, one such festival is the *Sanggar Budaya*; the name *Sanggar* in Malay refers to the courtyard in front of the house, while *budaya* is translated as culture in English. The cultural instances in this, are from any cultural related activities such as the Maulidur Rasul parade, and the celebration of Independence Day (Figure 1.8). Shamsuddin (2011) has denoted that any cultural or tradition activities that are conducted on the *padang* (open space) will render the space more memorable and contribute significantly to the sensory experience of the townscape. In 1992, part of the Padang Sri Gelam site has been upgraded to Dataran Bandaraya Johor Bahru (DBJB) as can be referred to in Figure 1.9, and is officially opened on 1st. January 1994 in conjunction with the declaration of Johor Bahru as a metropolitan city on the same date (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020).



Figure 1.8 : Left: Maulidur Rasul parade in 1962 (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Right: the celebration of Independence Day at Padang Seri Gelam in 1972 (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020)



Figure 1.9 : Landscape views around Dataran Bandaraya Johor Bahru in 2018

Correspondingly, another exciting cultural landscape characteristic at Pantai Lido in discussion, is the Pantai Lido waterfront itself. Around 1960-1990, Pantai Lido was considerably famous for its family recreational grounds that were close to the JB city centre. According to Danial (2013), Pantai Lido is a beach for all and looking back into the year 1990, the water is clean and it has a very peaceful environment. The charm and ravishing nature of Pantai Lido have also been immortalised in the lyrics of the Malay folksong entitled *Tanjung Puteri* (Life Record Malaysia, 1970). For example, the clause *Selat Tebrau airnya biru, Di Pantai Lido tepian mandi, Sepanjang masa di hari minggu*, has been dedicated in the lyrics of the song *Tanjung Puteri*. This clause conveys the crystal-clear seawater in the Tebrau Strait where many locals have come to Pantai Lido for picnics and to swim on the weekends (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Hence, in earlier times many locals came to Pantai Lido to fish in the evenings until night falls. By evening, food hawkers can be seen pushing their *warong tolak* (traditional sales carts) as referred in Figure 1.10 (left) along Pantai Lido selling the various delicacies of Johor heritage such as *Burasak* (a wrapped glutinous rice dumplings), *Botok-botok* (banana leaf enveloped fish dish that is flavoured with grated coconut and other spices), *Kacang pool* (foul medames gravy served with sunny side up and toasts) and *Barongko* (firm banana and coconut milk custard wrapped in banana leaf) (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Ferry, Frida, and Ismiyati (2018) have expressed that the presence of traditional trading activities will strengthen the sense of place and gives meaning to the townscape. Apart from the heritage food specialties, Pantai Lido is also famous for the uniqueness of traditional games. For example, there was at one time a game that had been synonymous to Pantai Lido, namely, *Perahu Jong* (Jong boat) which was only played in its namesake festival– *Perahu Jong Festival* as referred to in Figure 1.10 (right) (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). The Jong boat is a traditional game within the Malay fishermen community at Pantai Lido. Besides the festival, it is played on the beach every year during the Northeast monsoon season from November to March as well as to celebrate in conjunction with the coronation of the Sultan of Johor (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). The Jong boats are made from a block of special wood, i.e., *kayu pulai* (Blackboard tree),

which is crafted into three different toy-sized boats- small Jong, medium Jong, and large Jong (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). According to Yayasan Warisan Johor (2020) it is a relatively simple game to play. The participants need to take the Jong boats to the open sea and release them there. Then, with the help of the wind, the Jong boat will be sailed off to the shore and the first Jong boat to reached the shore is announced as the winner.

Besides being famous for the above elements, in the old days at Pantai Lido was well established for its *Pesta Sukan Air* (Water Sports Festival) celebration. The *Pesta Sukan Air* was a water sports tournament have taken place at the Pantai Lido beach since the end of the 19th century around 1897, during the reign of Sultan Sir Ibrahim (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018; Johor Southern Tigers, 2018). The *Pesta Sukan Air* is usually done when it is time to celebrate the Sultan of Johor's birthday. According to Yayasan Warisan Johor (2020), when the month of water sports festival arrives, the residents of local community, especially those living near the Pantai Lido and JB will flock to the beach to go through this festival. The same author has also denoted that apart from being attended by the residents from the local community, it is also welcomed for international to participate in this festival, because it is believed that the *Pesta Sukan Air* is a meeting day among the communities, to strengthen the relationship between friends and relatives. Apart from the water sports tournaments during the *Pesta Sukan Air*, this festival also presents the cultural activities of the local community such as dance, performances art, and traditional games activities. While the festival is on its way, they will play the Malay traditional musical instruments like *kompang*, and *gendang kerbau*, as well as hold sing-alongs as they are on their way to the beach. They will sing while exchanging verses of poetry in various poem patterns (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Nowadays, along with modernisation and restricted of sea space, this festival is no longer celebrated at Pantai Lido.



Figure 1.10 : Left: The traditional sales carts along the Pantai Lido (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Right: The Perahu Jong Festival in circa 50's (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020)

Moving to the other cultural landscape characteristic at Pantai Lido's boundary, there is Laman Tun Sri Lanang (formerly known as Persiaran Tun Sri Lanang) as shown in the figure below. In the mid 70's to the 90's, the area around the Laman Tun Sri Lanang promenade was truly famous for its landmark, the Menara Mahkota or was locally known as Menara Pintu Air, which was completed in the early 70's (Figure 1.11). Fazly (2019) has also added, that around this landmark, there are traditional food stalls and recreational areas for the locals. The same author denoted that the visitors who came here were allowed to gain access to the top of the Menara Mahkota for the breath-taking scenery- around the JB landscape through to the skyline of Singapore. Apart from that, the Laman Tun Sri Lanang promenade is also a site for other festivals, namely the Chingay Parade. Chingay parade is a Chinese festivity parading Chinese cultural art performances along the promenade beginning from Johor Ancient Temple through to Laman Tun Sri Lanang road, Jalan Ngee Heng which is connected with Jalan Terus, as referred in Figure 1.11. This parade is joined by all races which has now become largely normalise as a multi-cultural activity, as a character in Johor Bahru (Loh, 2016). However, in 1994, Menara Mahkota that has once been a prominent landmark at the promenade has been put to sleep forever, just as the food stalls there have to give way for modern development to build a shopping mall which is the current JB Waterfront Lots 1 (Channel News Asia, 2018; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). Despite that, there are still remnants of cultural activities from the past that are being practiced, making the remaining space a major activity setting for the night market and thrift bazaar activity in the evening during the weekends, as referred in Figure 1.12 (Fazly, 2019; Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru, 2016; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). In other word, it's featuring local food and beverages, and all sorts of merchandise. According to Shamsuddin (2011), the presence of a night market and local bazaar is one of the best places to discover the diversity and uniqueness of the old town charm. This shows the continuity of persistent cultural activities that has been further explained by Worskett (1969) and Kropf (1996), that any traditional activities that happened on the street will contribute to the sense of vitality in the townscape.



Figure 1.11 : Left: The location of Menara Mahkota at Persiaran Tun Sri Lanang in 1970 (Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru, 2020). Right: The Chingay Parade in 1960 (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020)



Figure 1.12 : Thrift bazaar at Laman Tun Sri Lanang in 2018

The next cultural landscape characteristic in Pantai Lido is Dhoby Road or is much more recognised by the locals as just Jalan Dhoby. The name of the street is pronounced as ‘doh-bee’ (Maketab, 2018). From a historical point of view, Jalan Dhoby is old colonial shophouses that have been built around the 20’s by the third former Menteri Besar of Johor, Abdullah Jaafar, as a gift to the Chinese and Indian immigrants in Malaysia (formerly known as Tanah Melayu) whose work is in the gambier and black pepper farms at Tanjung Puteri (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018; Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru, 2019; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). According to Yayasan Warisan Johor (2020), the word ‘Dhoby’ was taken in conjunction with the Hindi word ‘dhobis’ meaning washing area or washerman, referring to a person who does laundry (Figure 1.13). In those days, the Jalan Dhoby trail was very active with laundry activities by immigrant workers from India where some of them had worked as laundrymen at Johor Hotel which had been located in front of Tebrau Strait near Jalan Dhoby, and was very popular among visitors and the royal families from Tanah Melayu and Singapore back in the 20th century before the Tambak Johor (Johor-Singapore Causeway) was built (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018; Majlis Bandaraya Johor Bahru, 2019; Seng, 2018). Following the trend of naming the place, Yassin, Eves, and McDonagh (2010) reported that some of the other places were named after the rivers or any socio-activities that ran through them such as Sungai Kapal getting the term *kapal* when translated meant ship in English, from the ship-related activities; Sungai Rengit from the infestation of gnat (*rengit*), and Sungai Mati from two different folklores that it was a burial place for deceased (*mati*) traders and that the place happened to be the meet of two rivers which created an oxbow lake with still waters (*mati* denoting still waters) in Johor. Along the same lines, the same authors also mentioned that some parts of the waterfront (along the riverbank or water edges) characteristics informed us what the socio-cultural and environmental structures (physical and activity) were like in the previous era (Yassin, Eves, & McDonagh, 2010). However, after Malaysia’s independence, most of the businesses along Jalan Dhoby were no longer laundry related apart from the diversion of the Sungai Segget waterway as well as the closure of the sea-gate and Johor Hotel for new development purposes (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). In that said era,

the shophouses on Jalan Dhoby were very close to the sea-gate between Sungai Segget and the Tebrau Strait. Due to its positioned proximity to the water edges it eases the economic activities to thrive, for instance traders reload their supplies before leaving towards their destination (Arkib Negara Malaysia, Johor, 2018). To this fact, Shamsuddin (2011) denoted that in the past, the water way was the main communication route and thus goods that arrived through the ships and boats were uploaded and stored in the nearby buildings. After more than 40 years of independence and the loss of laundry activities, Jalan Dhoby is still active with local community businesses. Thus, the spill over is still apparent along the trail or *kaki lima* (five-foot walkways) at Jalan Dhoby, of the traditional market activities such as the exclusivity of Salahuddin Bakery's that is located at one of the old shophouses in Jalan Dhoby which has been operating since 1937. This bakery still uses the olden methods of bread making, and this represents the strong traditional culture of the local people in the culinary system (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). As has been stated by Shamsuddin (2011), the five-foot walkways are one of the most unique activity settings in Malaysian old town centres that have a blend of the public, human activities, and commercial space, and it injects a sense of life into the old town centres.

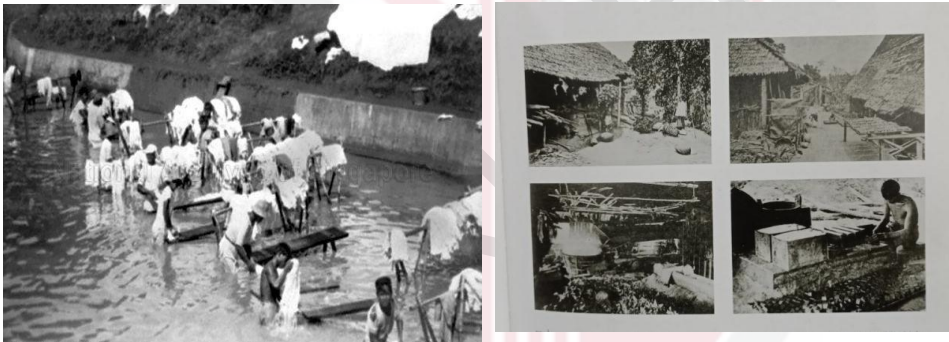


Figure 1.13 : Left: Depiction of laundry activity by dobies at river 1900 (Persatuan Bangsa Johor, 2020). Right: Indian washmen, or “dobies” (laundrymen), would routinely move around the JB town picking up clothes to wash in the Jalan Dhoby area (Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020)



Figure 1.14 : Street and five-foot walkways at Jalan Dhoby

b Phase 2: Growth of Waterfronts

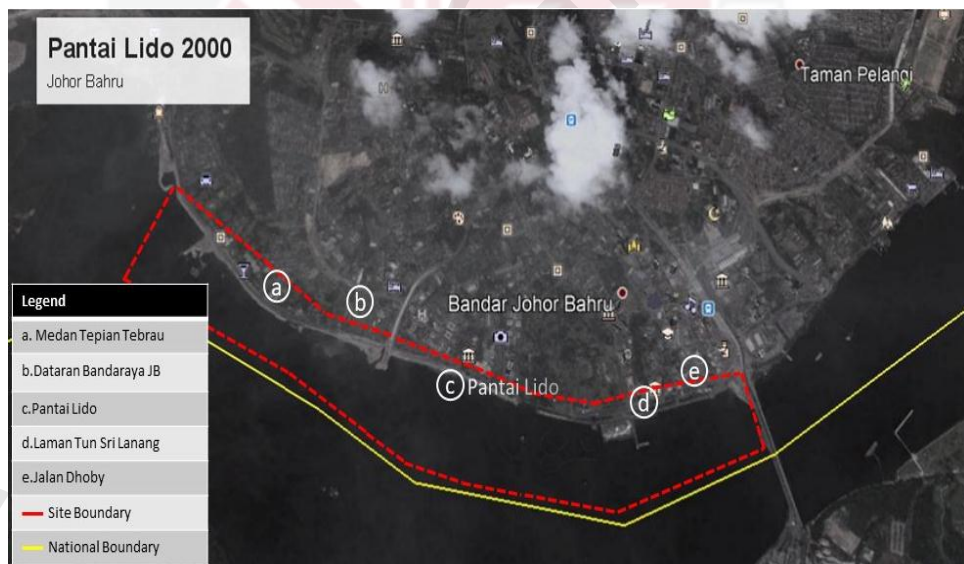


Figure 1.15 : Pantai Lido morphology map in 2000
(Source : Google Earth Pro, 2020)

According to Yassin, Eves, and McDonagh (2010), at this time which was referred to as the 'Growth of Waterfront', the settlements along the waterfront in Malaysia began to change and increased, changing into a waterfront city. Pantai Lido began to experience the process of the 'Growth of Waterfronts' circa 2000. The area around Pantai Lido

began to get development attention and became a busy area with commercial activities. This reclamation has started since the early 90's in the Johor Bahru planning plan, as a waterfront city that was launched by the former Menteri Besar Johor, Muhyiddin Yassin in 1993 (Channel News Asia, 2018). In the planning plan, the coastal area along 3.5km from the Tambak Johor up to the Harbour Master's office complex, at Pantai Lido will be reclaimed to host offices, commercial and residential properties, plus three hotels and a convention centre (Iskandar Malaysia, 2010; Musa, 2009). While Gonawan (2012), Raman et al. (2019), and Wahab (1991) have expressed that due to the reclamation of the sea, the sociological and cultural landscape characteristic of the original space around the water edge will become increasingly distant from the water along with the other environmental destruction impact. Moreover, the development of larger and taller mega spaces in front of the original site of the cultural landscape characteristics will limit the view that is facing the sea (Wahab, 1991). Apart from land-use changes, the waterfront environment is also polluted due to reclamation activities (Kili, 2014). The water becomes murky and the waterfront environment begins to lose its natural and socio-cultural appeal due to the developmental effects. Thus, this situation has affected the livelihoods of certain fishing villages around the Tebrau Strait (Salisu, 2015).

c Phase 3: Deterioration of Pantai Lido Waterfronts



Figure 1.16 : Pantai Lido morphology map in 2010
(Source : Google Earth Pro, 2020)

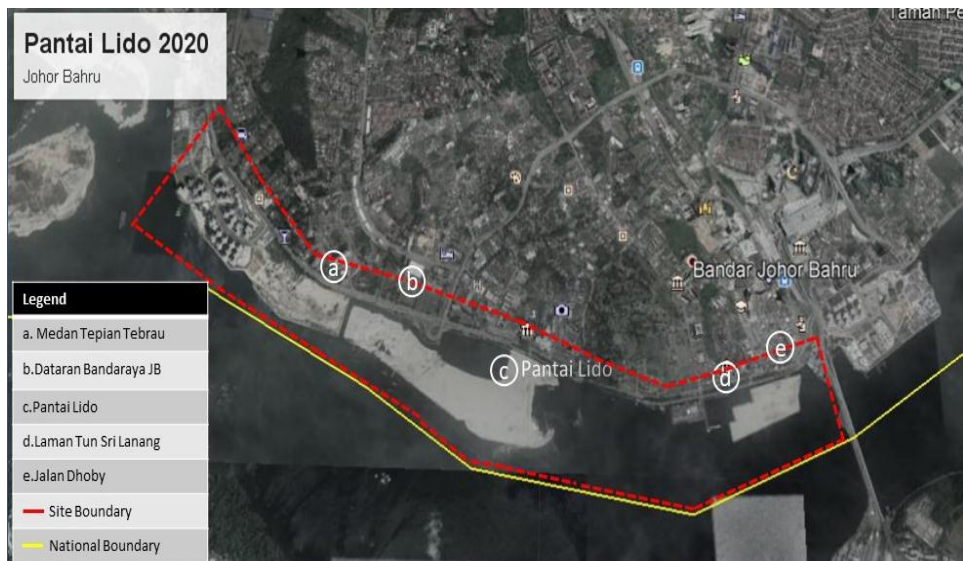


Figure 1.17 : Pantai Lido morphology map in 2020
(Source : Google Earth Pro, 2020)

One of the mega development projects at Pantai Lido is Lido Boulevard by the Berjaya Group properties that comprises two phases of luxury urban residential development, involving the reclamation of 450 acres of coastal land at Pantai Lido coastal, as referred in Figure 1.18, 1.19 (Musa, 2009; Iskandar Malaysia, 2010). The project, Lido Boulevard, stretches from the now-defunct Lot 1 shopping complex to the Harbour Master's office complex at Danga Bay (Musa, 2009). According to Managing director of Central Malaysia Properties Sdn. Bhd. (CMP) Datuk Chan Tien Ghee, the Lido Boulevard project is one of the largest reclamation projects in Malaysia with luxury condominiums, waterfront office suites, a hotel, and a shopping mall which has dual frontage, in the development plan (CMP, 2010). Meanwhile, former Menteri Besar Johor Datuk Abdul Ghani Othman believes that the development of Lido Boulevard along the shores of Pantai Lido will make Pantai Lido exactly as Sydney Harbour in Australia (Zuhrin, 2005). According to Atan (2010) and CMP (2010), this development is believed to have a positive impact on the economic sector of the country, but other authors have debated on the character of the original socio-cultural, traditions, and landscape, as well as the natural environment on the urban waterfront (Ahmad, 2019; Azzaro, 2020; Danial, 2013; Fazly, 2019; Salisu, 2015; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016; Yayasan Warisan Johor, 2020). They have also questioned whether it still maintains the local socio-culture and traditional activities along the coast after the sea reclamation is carried out? Has the natural environment of the mangrove forest along the strait been preserved? They have said that these will never happen and that what is happening at this place is just aggressive sea reclamation for luxury development. After the completion of this development which is expected to be completed by 2025, this row of mega-scale buildings will block the beautiful view of the Tebrau Strait. Visitor who is using the coastal route from JB city centre to Danga Bay will not be able to enjoy the beach scenery anymore. According to Wahab (1991), most tourists want to enjoy the

beautiful scenery while traveling to their destination to explore the beautiful and interesting places. Shamsuddin (2011), has denoted that the breath-taking view towards the open seas will give a meaningful impact to the townscape. Moreover, the view-blocking development has also become a 'barrier' to physical facilities in the area in terms of the basic tourism facilities such as food and entertainment which are also included aspects that are related to the environment (Wahab, 1991). In addition, this coastal reclamation has also caused the character of the original cultural landscape at Pantai Lido to move further away from the water edge; its cultural landscape characteristic of being located close to the water edge had lost the sense of place factor due to the development project. For example, at a previous time Pantai Lido beach had been a place for all to gather and bathe, but now these waters are owned by the elitists (Danial, 2013). Thus, the local fishermen cannot fish anymore due to the limitation of sea space and destruction of fish habitat from the reclamation project (Nor et al., 2009; Salisu, 2015). The development plan at Pantai Lido waterfront has changed the socio-spatial structure of the traditional society there, and the view was blocked from the sea (Gonawan, 2012; Mohamad, 2010). This reclamation project has created border disputes between Malaysia and Singapore as well as concerns over the destruction of natural ecology and the loss of our generation's cultural heritage which is authentically synonymous with Pantai Lido (Channel News Asia, 2018; Danial, 2019; Sultan, Arifin, & Tahira, 2016; Wakeup Malaya, 2017). According to Zhu and Duan (2011), the waterfront has plenty of functions in the townscape system such as recreation, historical site, ecological function, cultural landscape (physical, socio-cultural, human activities) and many more. They have also added that the rivers of each town or the waterfront area possesses their own characteristic elements and cultural elements that are distinctive from other places.



Figure 1.18 : The development plan illustration from CMP, consist of eight office blocks, 16 to 18 storeys high, a 296-room hotel-cum-serviced residences, and a 3-storey dual frontage retail mall are at Pantai Lido (CMP, 2010)



Figure 1.19 : A controversial development project between developers with the locals and the environmentalist where the first phase was completed on the reclaimed beach at Pantai Lido (Iskandar Malaysia, 2016)

1.5 Research Question and Research Objective

This study's main purpose is to investigate the symbolism of cultural landscape in urban waterfront design at Pantai Lido as a potential cultural landscape design strategy to mitigate the de-territorialisation of cultural landscape areas at the said location. The main research questions in this research are:

1. What is the meaning of cultural landscape at Pantai Lido?
2. How does cultural landscape portray symbolism at Pantai Lido?
3. What are the challenges that are faced in designing a cultural landscape at Pantai Lido?
4. What are the essential considerations that are needed to design emblematic cultural landscape at Pantai Lido?

Accordingly, the research objectives are:

1. To discover the meaning of cultural landscape at Pantai Lido;
2. To explore the symbolism of cultural landscape at Pantai Lido
3. To investigate the challenges that are faced in designing cultural landscape at Pantai Lido
4. To determine the essential considerations that are needed to design emblematic cultural landscape at Pantai Lido.

1.6 Significance of Study

Past studies have explored on the advantages and importance of the role of cultural landscape to a country, and to offer a positive socio-cultural experience for travellers and the locals (Angsunantawiwat & Samutsongkhram, 2001; Hussein, 2006; Huang, 2008; Luekveerawattana, 2012). In addition, many studies have also examined how the cultural landscape characteristic can contribute to the sustainable urban waterfront development to harness the potential of the cultural landscape to promote their history, culture and heritage as unique products in attracting visitors (Dong, 2004; Huang, 2008; Isa, 2017; Luekveerawattana, 2012; Zhu & Duan, 2011). Based on the perspective of past studies, it can be said that the ideas and strategies that are explored can be used as sources of reference for the purpose of strengthening the character of the cultural landscape for an urban waterfront design strategy. However, most of these studies are based on the views of scholars who are foreign to the Malaysian culture (Ahmad, Bakar, & Ibrahim, 2006). Empirical studies on the cultural landscape in Malaysia are quite limited, particularly in the cultural landscape characteristics context. Hence, this study filled the gap on the lack of urban waterfront design strategies through the constructed conceptual framework, which is essential in the context of cultural landscape characteristics in Malaysia. This resulting conceptual framework then, can be implemented as the strategy in designing urban waterfront. Accordingly, it is presented in a framework entitled framework in designing the cultural landscape for Pantai Lido. In doing so, the case study of Pantai Lido, Johor was implemented. From a theoretical perspective, this study will contribute in the field of cultural landscape studies by exploring the characteristics and its potential to link urban waterfront design and tourism. This further developed a cultural landscape tourism destination which implied the mitigation of the de-territorialisation of cultural landscape areas at the said location. In addition, the dissemination of knowledge and understanding of the character of the local cultural landscape is part of the effort in the development of the Malaysian identity. Therefore, an effective design guideline needs to be designed and implemented in order to continue the maintenance of this cultural landscape characteristics, to increase competitiveness, promote the development of cultural tourism, as well as to enhance the economy of the locals' well-being.

In terms of the practical contribution, the findings of this study can assist in the planning and development of a design guideline for urban waterfront design by emphasising the character of the cultural landscape in particular. This study also provides information on the potential to create a relationship between the character of the local cultural landscape and tourism as a cultural attraction at Pantai Lido. It is important for the authorities in the government sector and local councils, especially the heritage and cultural tourism sector, to understand these matters should the cultural landscape characteristics and cultural tourism experience promise beneficial improvements in the economy and to bring real benefits to the local community. Therefore, there is a need to know about the cultural landscape characteristics of Pantai Lido in advance, assessing the strengths and weaknesses in the challenges to sustain the cultural landscape characteristics as well as to identify and choose a design guideline for the expansion of the cultural landscape in urban waterfront design. Research that combines the local cultural landscape characteristics and urban waterfront design in shaping the symbolism of the place can contribute to the sustainable development of cultural tourism at Pantai Lido. Findings from the results of this study, and more specifically the development of the cultural

landscape framework for Pantai Lido, can also be applied to other locations in Malaysia that have similar potential and characteristics. Moreover, this study can also address the gaps and limitations on the importance of cultural landscape in a more holistic approach through physical, socio-cultural, and human activities that are related to the local cultural landscape.

1.7 Research Scope and Limitation

In this study, it is important for the researchers to explain the scope and limitations of the study that is conducted. This aims to ensure the parameters and boundaries of the study being conducted and to understand the extent to which this study can be adapted. The scope of this study is to explore and understand the symbolism of cultural landscape in the urban waterfront design strategy at Pantai Lido so as to mitigate the de-territorialisation of cultural landscape areas at the said location. This study focuses on the local community in Pantai Lido who have lived in Pantai Lido for over 40 years as they have strong ties to Pantai Lido, and have witnessed the changes that have occurred, and are knowledgeable about what other informants may think, feel, and believe about the cultural landscape in Pantai Lido. In addition, the researcher did not place restrictions only on informants from the local community, but also on the involved informants' representatives from the local authorities such as YWJ and MBBB who have experiences and in-depth knowledge about the cultural landscape and a better perspective towards the development at Pantai Lido. This is because the researcher needs a view on the cultural landscape in Pantai Lido in detail in order to differentiate the cultural landscape of Pantai Lido with other urban waterfront areas in Malaysia. This is very important in the process of developing the competitive advantage of the cultural landscape design strategy for urban waterfront design at Pantai Lido.

Therefore, the point of view of the informants is very valuable in this study to ensure that the researcher is more focused on the cultural landscape in the urban waterfront at Pantai Lido as its role in exuding the symbolism of place. The data collection process for this study involved close engagement between the researchers and informants. In forming a positive relationship with the informant, the researcher used in-depth, semi-structured interviews, focused group discussion and participant observation as the data collection methods of the study. A qualitative case study approach involving local informants and local authorities with different backgrounds was adopted as the primary means of data collection. From this point of view, the researchers seek information and descriptions of studies on specific phenomena through the opinions and views of the informants.

1.8 Terminology Definition

Urban Waterfront

Urban waterfronts are the interface between water and land (Wrenn et al., 1983). An urban waterfront indicates a waterfront that is generally defined as the area of interaction between urban development and the water (Hou, 2009).

Cultural Landscape Characteristic

McGilvray (2018) has denoted that the cultural landscape characteristics refer to the process and physical form of the landscape in helping to understand its cultural values. The cultural landscape characteristic is defined by: i) physical elements that support the activities such as nodes, landmark, edges, walls, and vegetation, ii) socio-cultural behaviour that is a manifestation of cultural value and reflects the direct human response to the environment such as the custom, tradition, culture and religion, and iii) human activities or types of unique activity pattern that are engaged by people such as making beads, weaving and carving and also by the use of reflecting cultural values and traditions (Abdullah, 2011; McGilvray, 2018; Shamsuddin, 2011).

Symbolism

According to the Merriam-Webster definition a symbol is, “something that means, represents or signifies something else”. As such, the cultural landscape that is created and altered by human action will form the symbolism of the place (Lester & Conkey, 1980). Symbolism of the place is a method by which social identity and reality are formed. Hence, symbolisation must be seen as a social process; it acts as a vehicle to gain access to deep-rooted memories about that place. The relationship between the physical, socio-cultural elements and human activities will form the identity of the place, which is indirectly mediated as a symbol. Shamsuddin (2011), has suggested that the different cultures understand different symbols or attach importance to different type of symbols.

Tradition

Tradition which is something customary, includes beliefs and behaviours that are maintained in a culture for generations to come and things that have become a routine or a norm (Kamus Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka, 2020). Tylor (1871) has defined that tradition usually refers to a culture, which is a sophisticated understanding of knowledge, belief, art, morality, law, customs, and behaviours that are required by an individual as part of the community. According to Taylor (1871) culture should be shared in building a good relationship in society, which has to be learned as part of a community’s norms and can be exaggerated and diversified in solving life problems. Hence, tradition gives a community its history, civilisation, and heritage.

Culture

Culture refers to the storage of knowledge, experience, beliefs, values, attitudes, meanings, hierarchies, religions, meanings of time, roles, spatial relationships, concepts of the universe, and material objects and possessions that are acquired by a group of people in the course of generations through individual efforts and as a group (Tamu, 2019). For example, culture is the characteristics and knowledge of a particular group of people, encompassing language, religion, cuisine, social habits, music and arts. Culture consists of patterns, explicit and implicit, from and for behaviours that are acquired and transmitted by symbols, which are the special achievements of human groups, including

their embodiment in artifacts; an important core of culture consists of traditional ideas, namely the inherent values. While cultural systems can be considered a product of action, they can also be considered as conditioning that affect further action (Schultz & Robert , 2009).

De-territorialisation

De-territorialisation in the context of cultural spaces is described as the removal of cultural subjects and things from a specific site in space and time, resulting in the loss of place symbolism (Olivier , 2013).

1.9 Thesis Structure

This thesis consists of five chapters, it begins with the introduction, followed by review of the literatures, the research methodology, findings and discussion, and ends with a concluding summary of the findings.

Chapter one discusses the background of the study, on the characteristics of the cultural landscape and its relationship to the urban waterfront. The discussions continue with the problems that are faced by the cultural landscape to remain relevant in the urban waterfront development. The issues and problems that are being discussed provide the justification on the importance of conducting this study.

Chapter two provides reviews of previous literatures with an explanation on the theories of the waterfront, the cultural landscape, and the symbolism of place from past researchers; these are used as a lens to understand the waterfront and the connection with the term ‘cultural landscape’ in relation to the current use in Malaysia. Furthermore, it also discusses the background and the waterfront design guidelines in Malaysia in relation to the cultural landscape and sets up the theoretical framework of this study.

Chapter three discusses the methods and data collection for the fieldwork. Scientific research is used to obtain an initial overview of the cultural landscape characteristics. Through this approach, it is possible to clearly outline the research’s scope and framework so as to prevent them from straying beyond the research aim. Thus, a suitable case study will be discussed to begin a review of the pilot study.

Chapter four presents the analysis of the fieldwork involving a case study that is undertaken in the urban waterfront in Malaysia, as well as gives the findings of this study.

Chapter five summarises the findings of the study and several urban waterfront design suggestions are given to keep the cultural landscape characteristics at Pantai Lido, which is to be sustained as a role in exuding the symbolism of the place. The chapter also gives the conclusions of this study, in relation to theoretical and practical contributions, and the recommendations for further research.

1.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter displays the background of the study, the background of the study problem, the problem statement, the research question, the importance of the study, the scope and limitations of the study, and the definition of terms. The purpose of this chapter is to give an overview of the study. This chapter also explains the justification for conducting the study.



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