INTERPRETATION MANAGEMENT OF ATROCITY HERITAGE OF THE 'DEATH RAILWAY' OF THE RIVER KWAI AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS

By
Apinya Arrunnapaporn

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
Program of Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism
(Internationnal Program)
Graduate School
SILPAKORN UNIVERSITY
2008

INTERPRETATION MANAGEMENT OF ATROCITY HERITAGE OF THE 'DEATH RAILWAY' OF THE RIVER KWAI AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS

By
Apinya Arrunnapaporn

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
Program of Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism
(International Program)
Graduate School
SILPAKORN UNIVERSITY
2008

The Graduate School, Silpakorn University has approved and accredited the Thesis title “Interpretation Management of Atrocity Heritage, Case Study: The ‘Death Railway’ of the River Kwai and its Associations” submitted by Mrs. Apinya Arrunnapaporn as a partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism.

……..
(Associate Professor Sirichai Chinatungkul, Ph.D.)
Dean of Graduate School
……/……../…….

The Thesis Advisor
Professor Gregory J. Ashworth, Ph.D.

The Thesis Examination Committee

…… Chairman

(Professor Emeritus Trungjai Buranasomphob**,** Ph.D.)

……/ ……../…….

…… Member

(Professor Gregory J. Ashworth, Ph.D.)

……/ ……../……

…… Member

(Assistant Professor Pibul Jinawath, Ph.D.)

……/ ……../…….

48056951:MAJOR: ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE MANAGEMENT AND TOURISM
KEYWORD: ATROCITY HERITAGE, INTERPRETATION, 'DEATH RAILWAY'
APINYA BAGGELAAR ARRUNNAPAPORN: INTERPRETATION MANAGEMENT OF ATROCITY HERITAGE, CASE STUDY: THE 'DEATH RAILWAY' OF THE RIVER KWAI AND ITS ASSOCIATIONS.
THESIS ADVISOR: PROF. GREGORY J. ASHWORTH, Ph.D. 250 pp.

This research aims to study an interpretation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' in which the nature of atrocity heritage is discussed widely as a background. One of the issues is heritage dissonance, which is characteristic in atrocity heritage due to different users: the victims, perpetrators and bystanders. Thus, in the interpretation of atrocity heritage the question 'Whose interpretation?' remains critical. As interpretation is a means to reveal the cultural values and symbolic meanings of the heritage, it plays an essential role in assisting the visitor's learning process. However, we need to be cautious not to allow the interpretation to diminish the visitor's experiences. This process of experiencing heritage is considered of prime importance by the researcher as heritage interpretation.

Several important issues emerge from the study. The first issue is the nature of the heritage as a share-contested heritage and a heritage of dissonance. It is a heritage that shares several contestations from several owners that claim the heritage. The second issue is the political implications of the heritage, both for Thailand as the residence for the heritage, or the bystander, and Japan as the perpetrator. The third is the characteristics of the heritage as a cross-cultural heritage, where different users from different backgrounds interact, exchange ideas, and add meanings and values to this heritage. The fourth is the nature of the heritage as an extra-territoriality; several nations have put a claim of ownership on it. The last issue is the commodification and commercialisation of this atrocity heritage which also involves the issue of heritage authenticity. As regards authenticity, a strong argument is made to challenge the thinking that its existence, or absence, affects the experiences of the tourists.

In the process of atrocity heritage interpretation, there is a rising concern about how certain aspects of marketing and interpreting atrocity heritage tourism products and sites should be managed to meet the visitor's expectation, whilst maintaining the authenticity of the place. In the case of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', if territoriality, sovereignty, nationalism and the state need no longer be inextricable, there are many possibilities for a more inclusive, pluralistic and overlapping structure, identity and sense of place, all of which could be validated through heritage interpretation. As a result of extensive studies and research four alternative approaches for interpretation, to minimise the dissonance and complications of the heritage, are suggested. In conclusion, the establishment of interpretation to use in museums and sites for this atrocity site will help to preserve these memories, and, possibly, through an awareness of the catastrophic effects, help to prevent or at least to minimise other atrocities.

International Program in Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism, Graduate School, Silpakorn University Academic Year 2007
Student's Signature ……
Thesis Advisor's Signature…….

Acknowledgements

The past two years have been a long and tough period in my life, although it has also been a great time for me, and pleasure to be able to do this research and finally complete it. Fortunately, I never had to stand alone during this time. From the beginning, I have received an enormous amount of goodwill, helpfulness and encouragement, from those I love and respect, which was the most important thing to help me succeed. Thus, this page is written in order to express my sincere thanks and gratefulness for their contribution.

The person I owe to most to is my supervisor, Professor Dr. Gregory J. Ashworth, who always gave me the belief that I could produce good work. His advice, opinions, thoughts, encouragement and support were invaluable to me. He sharpened my thoughts, and dedicated his energy to get the best out of this supervised researcher. The higher his expectations of me, the harder I felt compelled to work. I must say it has been a wonderful pleasure to work with him. The second person is my co-advisor, Professor Dr. William S. Logan, who has been extremely helpful and energising. The third person I must mention is Professor Dr. Trungjai Buranasompop, the Programme Director, for her kind assistance and suggestions.

I would also like to mention my husband, Dr. Jacobus W. Baggelaar, who has been the most important source of everyday encouragement and kind understanding. He has always stood beside me and has taken very good care of me, as well as giving me the opportunity to achieve good work. My family and my husband's family have also given me huge support. In addition to those mentioned above, I would like to give my gratitude to some other dear friends. It has been a wonderful experience to discuss my work with Dr. Donald Ellsmore, who never refused to share his thoughts with me. Captain Tavorn Supachokeauychai and Jaray Suwannnachart for being my best friends, helping me and keeping in touch throughout the long period of research. I would like to thank my other classmates on the programme, and a group of my old friends that have stayed in contact with me for more than twenty years.

Indeed, this research would not have been possible without worthy information and opinions from several parties worth mentioning: the managerial team of the TBRC; the JEATH War Museum; the HPMM; all the stakeholders of the place as interviewees; and those who filled out the questionnaire forms. I thank them all for giving their valuable time to help me to fulfil my survey.

Table of Contents

Chapter **Page**

Chapter **Page**

List of Figures

Figures **Page**

Figures **Page**

Figures **Page**

Figures **Page**

List of Tables

Tables **Page**

Chapter 1

Introduction

Statements and significance of the problem

1. Introduction

In a tourism setting, heritage and culture are used for a variety of purposes including; education, preservation for the future, entertainment, profit, and political legitimisation. Atrocity heritage concerns to places of any event that is abnormally bad. The difficulty in distinguishing atrocity from other human suffering derives from the variety of forms it may have, as well as from the popularisation of the term. Atrocity is recognised in two overlapping ways – first, as acts of deliberate cruelty perpetrated by people against people, and second, as occurrences, particularly shocking or horrifying to others. An important element of atrocity is the perceived culpability implicit in these occurrences, which in most cases becomes the primary source of dissonance in the interpretation. From this definition of atrocity, atrocity heritage can be denoted as all associated artefacts, buildings, sites and place associations as well as intangible accounts of the acts of atrocity, as interpreted by the various parties involved - victims, perpetrators, by-standers, and others.

In addition, atrocity heritage clearly can be used for one or more of the purposes mentioned above. Interestingly, atrocity heritage tourism has become one of the major types of tourism, whatever the reason for the visit. Worldwide, there are numerous heritages of atrocities, and these atrocities have happened in different forms.

The attraction of death and disaster has always been, and will continue to be, a powerful motivator for travel. The origins of this fascination can be traced back to antiquity, when pilgrimages were a common form of travel involving a journey to places associated with the death of an individual of special religious and sometimes mystical significance. Nowadays, war sites, battlefields, cemeteries, concentration camps, assassination sites, natural disaster sites, and other man-made disasters, are being packaged and sold to the public, often for more entertainment. Since it is very unlikely

that such tourist motivations will ever disappear, there are efforts that focus on solving or at least softening the controversies generated by the unacceptable interpretation and commodification of atrocity, horror and human tragedy.

The growing volume and popularity of such a form of tourism is rather alarming. It raises anxiety about certain aspects of how marketing and interpreting atrocity heritage tourism products and sites should be managed to meet the visitor's expectation whilst maintaining the authenticity of the place. Seen in the light of a larger global trend – the commodification occurring in all spheres of social life, and culture in particular – museums and heritage sites are as affected as mass media, the arts, the movie industry, music production, literature and drama.

From the beginning of the 1970s, South East Asian countries, principally Thailand and Singapore, received an increasing number of visitors interested in seeing historic sites associated with the experience of the prisoners of war (POWs) captured by the Japanese during the Second World War. This has resulted in the construction of several major museums in the region representing the POW experience – the JEATH War Museum (opened in 1977), the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (opened in 1998) and the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre (opened in 2003) along the 'Death Railway' from Thailand to Burma. In Singapore tourists can visit the Changi Gaol and Chapel (1988), and the newly built Changi Museum and Chapel (2001). Individuals visiting these historic sites have included ex-POWs on personal pilgrimages of commemoration, but most visitors have been tourists drawn to the locations by curiosity about Japanese atrocities committed against the POWs, as well as Japanese tourist themselves.

Their interest has stemmed from the prominence of the POW experience in popular consciousness in the West and East Asia. Stereotypical images from classical films such as '*The Bridge on the River Kwai*' and '*King Rat*' that show POWs as human skeletons toiling under poor conditions, supervised by brutal Japanese guards, became etched in the public imagination during the post-war period and produced a perennial interest in human tragedy. The popular image of 'horror camps' never accurately represented conditions at the POW camps in South East Asia.

This study raises an intriguing question about how the Second World War museums and heritage places of this region have narrated the experiences of the POWs via their interpretation. Have the museums and places commemorated a variety of

individual experiences, or have they produced public stereotypes, or used both as an attempt to commodify the past? In order to investigate how these conflicting interpretations may have shaped the public representation of the POW experience in these museums, it is best to examine the atrocity sites of the 'Death Railway' at the River Kwai in Kanchanaburi, Thailand as a case study.

However, it would not be so complicated if the interpretation and management of atrocity heritage had the same characteristics as other heritages. The specifics of interpreting and managing the so-called 'heritage of atrocity' have not yet been thoroughly examined in the general literature on cultural resource management. Although Tunbridge & Ashworth, two prominent scholars in such fields, have noted that

> "atrocity heritage is in itself a dissonant heritage. Dissonant heritage is a condition in which there is a lack of congruence in time or space between people and their heritage. If all heritage is someone's heritage and therefore logically not someone else's, any creation of heritage from the past disinherits someone completely or partially. Atrocity heritage for various reasons is particularly prone to many types of dissonance" (1996: 21).

In regard to its dissonance, interpretation of atrocity heritage is not a simple issue, but rather highly complex. Therefore, this dissertation attempts to understand the complex nature of the controversies generated by the use of the heritage of atrocity as a tourist attraction, as well as to comprehend the political, social, and cultural forces shaping these controversies. For this reason, interpretations of atrocity heritage at several sites are examined as cases. Atrocity heritage therefore raises some difficult questions of conservation and interpretation for cultural heritage practitioners as follows;

1. How are these places to be remembered?
2. How do people and societies cope with painful memories?
3. Should these aspects of cultural heritage be erased or memorialised?
4. How do political attitudes impact upon this question?
5. Are only those places that reflect the official interpretation of historical events likely to be commemorated?

6. Auschwitz was added to the World Heritage List in 1979 and the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome in 1997; but does Thailand regard its 'Death Railway' in the same light – a place to be memorialised?

7. And how can atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' be remembered and memorialised when the heritage is essentially intangible (oral histories, stories of pain, shame and Japanese's brutality) and disappears with the passing of time and people who embodied the heritage?

It is already difficult to argue for heritage conservation in urban areas when governments give priority to development projects. Does this become more difficult in lesser developed countries, such as Thailand, or when the heritage site is a place of pain and shame and the object of ambiguous public sentiment (Logan, 2002). What happens when other governments and public are agreed that a painful heritage site should be protected but it is located in another country, as in the case of the Australian government establishing a museum and conservation management at one site near the 'Death Railway'?

Thus, this dissertation will not attempt to recite instances of atrocity heritage, although inevitably some incidences will be mentioned, rather, it is an attempt to examine interpretation for such a specific heritage. Therefore, to understand the visitors and the place, the stakeholders background and expectation of interpretation of the place is necessary. Combined with theories in atrocity heritage and theories in interpretation, this study will fill in the literature gap about how to interpret atrocity heritage. The study will be tested on the principal thesis that interpretation is in itself a heritage, as how these sites are interpreted is as how we want to see our heritage. It will also consider the context within which atrocity sites are managed and interpreted. Inevitably, it will discuss all emerging issues from the findings of the survey, and search for a conclusion and recommendation for the interpretation and planning of these atrocity places.

2. Goals and objectives

2.1 To understand the nature and characteristics of atrocity heritage and search for appropriate interpretation and methods to interpret the heritage in the study area.

2.2 To verify the public's opinions about the heritage significance and the importance of the study area. In so doing, this will give more understanding of public perceptions and will provide an interpretation to meet both the visitors' requirements and heritage preservation expertise.

2.3 To establish interpretation proposals for the heritage, with the closer co-operation of the place stakeholders at local, national and international levels, to be used in the future to link those heritage resources with the tourism industry.

3. Hypothesis to be tested

"Interpretation of atrocity heritage is a complex issue as a single concrete idea about how to interpret a site does not really exist; it differs from one place to another. There is a strong relationship between all users of heritage, especially the resident, the provider and visitors and there is a need for a basic understanding of the heritage, in order to create a most conventional means of interpretation of atrocity heritage". Interpretation is in itself a cultural heritage, as how these sites are experienced and interpreted is as how we (globally), want to see our heritage. After all, heritage is a process that is dynamic.

This hypothesis will be tested and verified in association with the outcomes from the qualitative and quantitative researches by which these data will be analysed for interpretation proposal plans for atrocity heritage of 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai.

4. Research Questions

4.1 What is the complex nature of the controversies generated by the use of the heritage of atrocity as tourist attraction?

4.2 How have the political, social, and cultural forces been shaping atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai?

4.3 Should heritage interpretation be affected by so-called 'appropriate interpretation'?

Sub-questions for the research

To find out the answers for the questions above, there are several aspects of interpretation that might not easily be incorporated into the presentation of atrocity heritage. There are more questions that arise as follows;

- How much background should be given to the atrocity depicted?
- How much prior knowledge of the atrocity should we expect our visitors to have?
- Will the places have a 'sense of place' to visitors?
- How do those nations; the victims or perpetrators; deal with this atrocity heritage?
- In which direction do visitors prefer an interpretation of these sites?
- How far can the site's commodification be carried out without disturbing its authenticity - both physical and intangible?

5. Scope of the study

This research focuses on the area of Kanchanaburi province where the Thailand-Burma Railway, later known as the 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai, was ordered to be built. The monuments and sites related in this study are;

5.1 The area of, and around, the Bridge over the River Kwai.

5.2 The two war cemeteries; the Kanchanaburi and the Chongkai War Cemetery.

5.3 The Japanese Memorial Monument.

5.4 The three museums; the JEATH War Museum; the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre; and the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum.

5.5 The tourist vintage train on the original railway.

6. Limitations

There are three major problems in doing this research. The first problem is the limitation of literature on the topic of interpretation and management of atrocity heritage and the topic of the construction of the 'Death Railway' at the River Kwai in Thailand. There are some detailed researches, previously published - in the form of books, case studies and conceptual overviews concerning the history of Second World War in Southeast Asia and in Thailand particularly. But little amount concerning to management of this atrocity heritage. Several pieces of literature, in Thai and Japanese (translated into English), tell the history of the war in more military terms and in a very conservative

way. Most crucial documents in Japanese were burned during the war or destroyed after the war. Documents that survived from the war most of them wrote in Kanji (old Japanese script), which is more difficult to be translated than the present Japanese language. The limitation of language becomes a barrier. Therefore, the research undertaken for this dissertation involved an in-depth review of relevant literature from Europe, the United States, and Australia. This leads to a second problem, which is the limitation of time. To get the documents in Japanese translated into English is not possible within the time schedule. The third limitation of this research is that the national and international policies of the governments involved on such issues are unclear. It becomes a major constraint to get coordination from governmental officers while conducting the field survey with the stakeholders of the place and visitors.

7. Definition of Terms

7.1 Atrocity heritage

Atrocity in its popular usage could mean almost any event that is abnormally bad. The difficulty in distinguishing atrocity from other human suffering derives from the variety of forms it may have, as well as from the popularization of the term. The working definition of atrocity as "the case of deliberately inflicted extreme human suffering", used by Tunbridge & Ashworth is adopted here (1996: 94). Furthermore, atrocity is recognized in two overlapping ways – first, as acts of deliberate cruelty perpetrated by people against people, and second, as occurrences, particularly shocking or horrifying to others. An important element of atrocity is the perceived culpability implicit in these occurrences, which in most cases becomes the primary source of dissonance in the interpretation. From this definition of atrocity, atrocity heritage can be denoted as all associated artefacts, buildings, sites and place associations as well as intangible accounts of the acts of atrocity, as interpreted by the various parties involved - victims, perpetrators, by-standers, and others. Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996: 96) have identified categories of atrocity heritage as follow;

- atrocities arising from the aggravation of natural or accidental disasters by alleged human action or neglect;
- atrocities interpreted as being perpetrated by an entire category of people on other entire category as an automatic concomitant of such group membership;
- atrocities arising from war or from within the context of war.

There are more specific categories, including;

- atrocity now perceived to have existed in former judicial system;
- atrocity associated with the persecution of racial, ethnic or social groups;
- atrocity arising from large-scale killing or massacre;
- atrocity that can be placed in the most extreme category of genocide.

7.2 Heritage interpretation

Australian ICOMOS Cultural Tourism Charter defined heritage interpretation as "all activities and process, including research, involved in presenting and communicating to visitors the meaning and significance of the place being visited" (1999: 23). Another definition by Tilden, who defined it as "a communication process designed to reveal characteristics, meanings, and relationships of cultural and/or natural heritage to the public through firsthand experience, illustrative media and references to objects, artefacts, landscapes, structures or persons" (1977: 9).

7.3 Cultural tourism

ICOMOS Cultural Tourism Charter defined it as "a form of tourism that focuses on the culture, and cultural environments, including landscape of the destination, the values of lifestyles, heritage, visual and performing arts, traditions and leisure pursuits of the local population or host community" (1999: 22).

7.4 Atrocity tourism

A form of cultural tourism that involves visiting sites or places associated with death, disaster, and atrocity of various kinds, as the main purpose of the trip (author's note).

8. Research methodology

The methodology applied in this dissertation involves constructing a theoretical framework of the problem under study, based on the findings from the literature review and from the case study. Concentration on survey research, both quantitative and qualitative will be used intensively. The methods used can be described as follows;

8.1 Literature Review; the literature review covers studies directly and indirectly related to the problem. The review will be organised by subject, starting with the more general studies related to the issues of heritage, interpretation, and tourism; heritage, history and authenticity; and heritage management; and continuing with more

specific studies on the history of Second World War in Kanchanaburi; atrocity tourism; cultural tourism; and others. The studies on atrocity heritage and its interpretation will be examined in greater detail, as being more relevant to the problem addressed in this dissertation. As well as an in-depth survey and study on literature, films and media have been interpreted for the two comparative case studies, as well as the case study itself. While using this case study based comparative methodology, the research will also:

8.1.1 Analyse existing theoretical approaches to interpreting atrocity heritage.

8.1.2 Investigate current cultural heritage conservation and management practice in relation to atrocity heritage (e.g. Kerr, 1988, 1992; Lowenthal, 1998).

8.1.3 Seek to develop a new framework for understanding the dilemmas and debates over this site at a societal, community and individual level.

8.2 Quantitative research; a questionnaire-based survey will be applied to visitors, to gather the following data: who are the visitors; where do they came from; do they have a 'sense of belonging' to the place; what are their backgrounds; how did they find about the present interpretation; what should be changed; what information do they want to know; how do they feel about the architectural characteristics of the place; etc. The questionnaire will also include questions about the visitors' demography, nationality, religion, occupation, and education. Further questions will be about personal interests, experience in visiting sites of atrocity, the objective of the visit, the level of understanding of the present interpretation, expectations, and changes to the heritage. Beside visitors, another questionnaire will also focus on the stakeholders of the place, with similar questions. Furthermore, questions will be posed about how they feel about the present interpretation, what are their expectations of change, how strong is their 'sense of belonging' to the place. This data will be used to verify an appropriate approach to heritage interpretation management.

8.3 Qualitative research; this method will be very useful in terms of the capability to gain in-depth data and details about the issues studied. This approach will focus on the specific content and subject of the research, and then investigate it in almost every aspect to understand and see the dynamic change of the issues. In this case, a process of qualitative method is carried out as follows;

8.3.1 Documentary research about related information from many related

resources and a primary survey that can provide a basic understanding and background of the heritage context from the past to the present. Also information or data about how this heritage is involved within the national and international government policy of promoting cultural tourism and any political regulations will be collected.

8.3.2 Survey research and observations from the case study; repeated visits to the places are vital. The physical investigation will focus on the existing architectural heritages; their setting, physical characteristics and political message; location; utilization and commodification of the heritage; and its present interpretation.

8.3.3 An in-depth interview; the research will concentrate on in-depth interviews introduced to gather more detailed information. It will focus on the same groups of people; visitors and the stakeholders of the place; it will contain similar questions concerning the interpretation of atrocity heritage. Beside the target group's demography, subjects will be asked about their interest and understanding of atrocity; life experience of atrocity; number of visits to the case study's sites and to other atrocity heritage sites; or/and participation in atrocity tourism and entertainment; the perception and understanding of interpretation of those sites and entertainment; the comparison, and the preferred subjects techniques and methods of interpretation. The data from the interviews will be used to compare with the data from the questionnaire-based survey.

8.3.4 Collecting of oral histories concerning the nature of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' that contains significant intangible heritage. This method is separated from the survey and interviews to address the importance of the intangible value of this heritage. Oral histories of the 'Death Railway' include stories from Ex-POWs and their families; stories from local people who lived through the wartime, especially stories from Mrs. Panee Sirivejaphan, the daughter of Mr. Boonpong Sirivejaphan, the Thai food supplier to the Japanese Army during the war, both played a large role in facilitating a secret supply for the POWs.

8.4 Comparative case studies method; to be used to compare the case study to two other comparative cases; Anne Frank House in Amsterdam and the Changi Chapel and Museum in Singapore. This method is chosen as the unquantifiable and complex nature of the research necessitates a qualitative rather than a quantitative research method. In comparing these, we will find the nature of atrocity heritage interpretation,

the complexities and means for interpretation, the appropriate subjects to interpret, and how.

9. Process of the study

9.1 Research planning and preparation.

9.2 Preliminary documents research relating to the topics.

9.3 Primary heritage survey/observations and heritage profiling.

9.4 Defining the current state of cultural heritage significance and the meanings of heritage, both at local and international levels.

9.5 Participant observations, questionnaire survey and in-depth interviews.

9.6 Summarising a primary report at the end of the first stage.

9.7 Comparative case studies method by analysing three cases.

9.8 Content analysis of information where it corresponds to the research objectives and hypothesis.

9.9 Proposing a final report of the research.

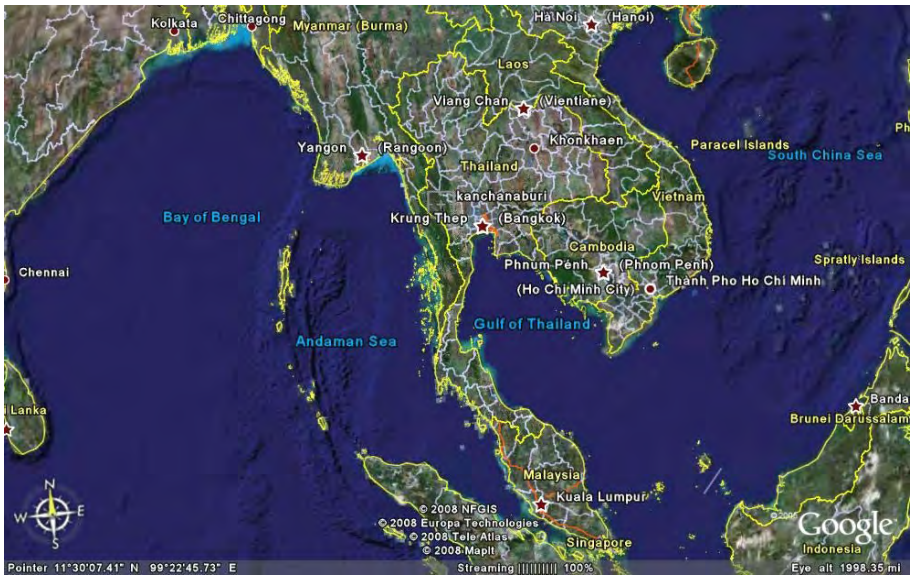


Fig.1 Map of Thailand. Google Earth, accessed March, 2008.

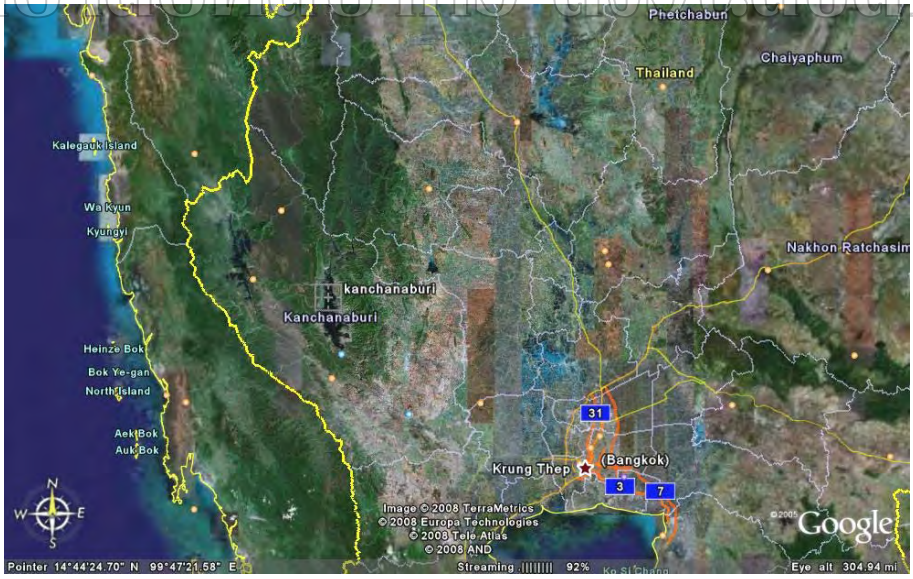


Fig.2 Map of Kanchanaburi. Google Earth, accessed March 2008.

Fig.3 Map of Kanchanaburi. Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), 2007.

Fig.4 The location of Bridge over the River Kwai. Google Earth, accessed March 2008.

Road to Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (70k.m)

Bridge over the River Kwai

Japanese Memorial

Kanchanaburi Train Station

Kanchanaburi War Cemetery

Chongkai War Cemetery

TAT

JEATH War Museum

Fig.5 Map of study area.

Fig.6 Map shows the 'Death Railway' from Banpong to Thanbyuzayat. HPMM brochure, 2007.

Fig.7 The Bridge over the River Kwai at present. The author, March. 2007.

Fig.8 Tourist vintage train along the famous ‘Death Railway’. The author, Aug.2007

Fig.9 The Kanchanaburi War Cemetery. The author, March, 2007.

Fig.10 The Chongkai War Cemetery. The author, April, 2006

Fig.11 The JEATH War Museum. The author, March 2007.

Fig.12 The Thailand-Burma Railway Centre (TBRC). The author, July, 2006.

Fig.13 The Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (HPMM). The author, April, 2006

Fig.14 The Japanese Memorial Monument. The author, April, 2006.

Chapter 2

Theoretical Frameworks and Review of Related Literature

Due to the limited availability of academic literature directly related to the interpretation of atrocity heritage, the present study is based on the general body of knowledge referring to heritage, atrocity heritage tourism, heritage interpretation, museum studies and visitor studies. The nature of atrocity heritage is being studied in great detail so as to be useful in the planning process of interpretation proposals for the case study. The little amount of existing body of articles and books on specific issues, and case studies, related to atrocity heritage is also considerable. The lack of a contemporary comprehensive study of the interpretation of atrocity heritage practices, with a particular focus on understanding the nature of these heritages, justifies the objectives of this study.

Part I: Theoretical Frameworks

One of the reasons for safeguarding atrocity is to memorialise it as a lesson for the present and hope for the future, as much as a description of the past. The didactic function that will be passed via interpretation is highly important. However, there are many producers of such heritage who might have misgivings about their role in an entertainment activity. The difficulty with this approach is that the message projected by the interpreter and that received by the consumers may be quite different (Ashworth, 2002). So far there is no measure to control that the message being sent from the interpreter to the receivers (visitors) will have points in common. A minimising of the disparity in interpretation and communication from the interpreter to the receivers in different forms is broadly used.

Reasons for using theoretical frameworks

The theoretical framework constructed in this dissertation seeks to explain and simplify the controversies generated by the interpretation of atrocity at the heritage sites of the case study. To understand and be able to create an interpretation plan for atrocity

heritage, a more comprehensive conceptual framework is needed. Such a structuring tool is the concept of 'dissonant heritage' (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996), that encompasses all issues involved - social, cultural, economic, and political - in their complexity, and has practical implications on a management level. The concept of dissonant heritage is not only providing a means for taxonomic description of the issues, but is also directly related to the interpretation management practice.

Other two models in relation to the topic will be adopted, those are; 'Model of Heritage Tourism Production' by Ashworth and Tunbridge and (Fig.15), this model illustrates the process of commodification of heritage and transforming it into a product intended for tourist consumption. This model is extremely necessary to understand the present situation of the case study. The second model is 'The Interactive Experience Model' by Falk and Dierking (Fig.16), this model provides a perspective to understand the visitors' total experience - socially, physically, intellectually, and emotionally. This model contributes to an understanding of the visitors' expectations and how interpretation should relate to different visitors. The analogous process of interpretation for the atrocity heritage will be further modified based on findings from the literature review and from the case study.

Fig.15. Heritage Tourism Production (G. J. Ashworth & J. E. Tunbridge, 1990)

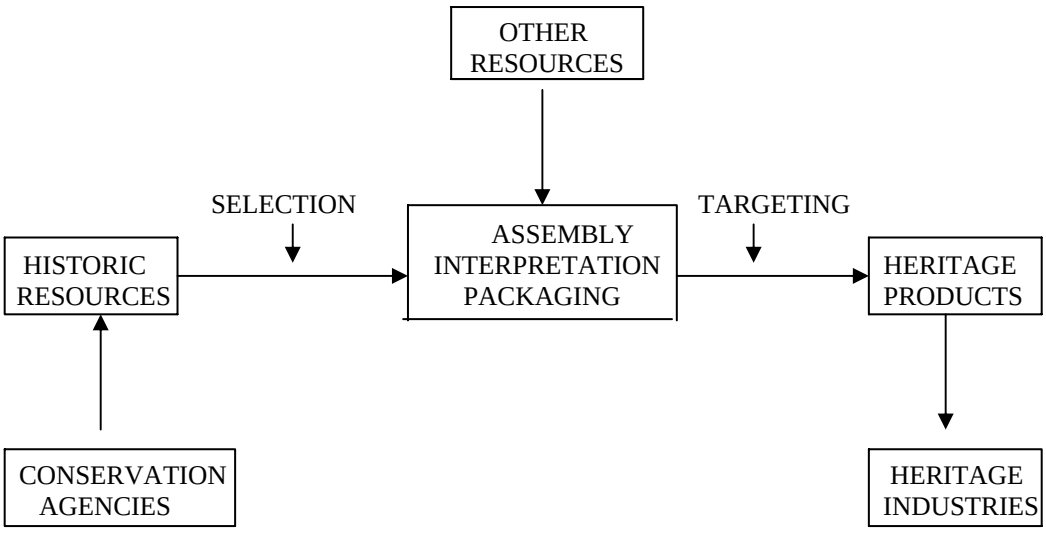
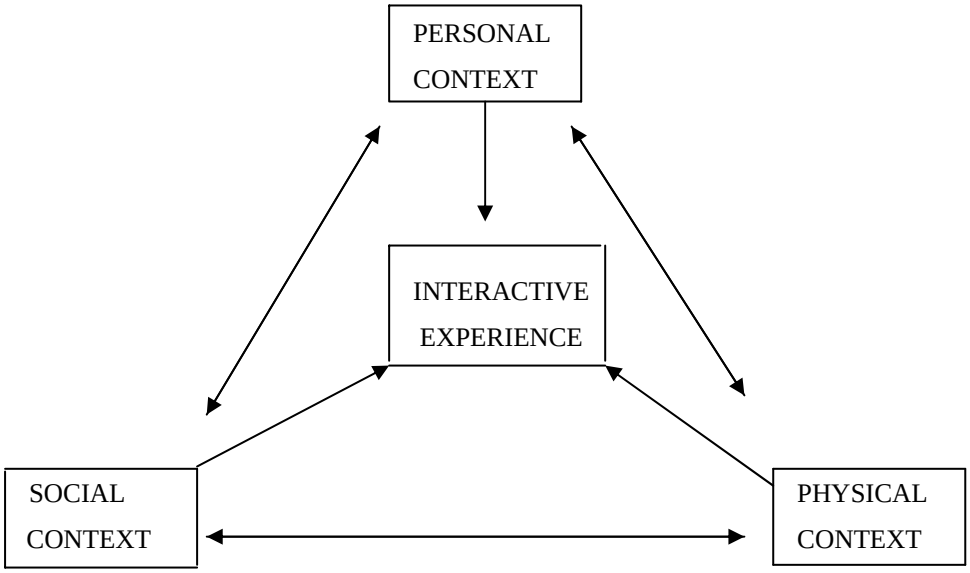


Fig.16. Interactive Experience Model (J.H. Falk & L.D. Dierking, 1992)



Part II: Review of Related Literature

The complex nature of the research subject and the case study of the 'Death Railway' require an interdisciplinary approach and thoughtful planning. Hall and McArthur (1998), in a well known lament about the state of heritage interpretation, makes it clear that the lack of strategic planning is a major problem leading to ad hoc programmes, predictable signage, a failure to integrate interpretation with site management policy and issues. Of course they have not been the first, or the last, to stress the importance of interpretation planning to a heritage place.

Several literatures are reviewed to put a good basic for the understanding of several subjects concerning to the topic. The management of the sites of the Second World War in Europe and overseas are also examined, including the development of memorials to these conflicts, both on and off-site. The management of sites of the Second World War in the Netherlands (Anne Frank's House) and in Singapore (Changi Chapel and Museum) are used as comparative case studies.

1. Related Studies

1.1 The Past, History, and Heritage

The very first step of successful heritage interpretation planning is to know the difference between the past, history and heritage. These three terms have always been mistakenly understood and confused. The definitions given by Ashworth in his article, ***On gaps and bridges in heritage,*** is clear about how they differ. He wrote "the past is what has happened, history is the attempt to describe or re-create that on the basis of selected available records but heritage is a product of the present, purposefully developed in response to current needs for it, and shaped by those requirements" (2000: 3).

Since the 1970s, the concept of 'heritage' has been widely and extensively reworked and expanded. 'Heritage' as a term referring to places and objects in both the private and public domain, is a relatively recent arrival, emerging in Europe and Australia in the 1970s. It is now used to refer to places, objects or artefacts, and indeed to "all accumulated cultural and artistic productivity, frequently whether produced in the past or currently" (Tunbridge, and Ashworth, 1996: 2).

The most renowned figure that people in heritage field owes to his thoughts is David Lowenthal who has suggested in his famous book ***The Past is a Foreign Country*** (1985) that historic sites of human tragedy frequently become commodified by being turned into atrocity exhibitions, which are meant to pander to the preconceptions of the tourists. The central thesis of Lowenthal's work is that the past cannot be recreated. All that modern re-creations of the past do is produce a representation of history that is shaped by present-day concerns. If tourists want to see a gallery of horrors, that expectation will influence those who attempt to re-create the past for the tourists.

Urry (1990) and other writers on cultural tourism have agreed with Lowenthal's thesis. Theorists on cultural tourism have noted that both tour operators and owners of tourist attractions who try to re-create the past do so according to what they think tourists want to experience or what they believe their intended audience thinks might have happened there. They deliberately package the past for their visitors' brief stay. The visit becomes a non-durable consumer commodity, if an intangible one, in which the tourists pay for the time they spend surrounded by exhibits selected, packaged and presented for them. This process means that, in representing the past, aspects of it are emphasised, while other events may be downplayed or left out entirely in the narrative

presented for the visitors' consumption.

A famous book on tourism of Urry, ***The Tourist Gaze*** (1990) has suggested the relationship between heritage and history, and how important interpretation is to heritage. He stated that since 1980, interpretation is being encountered (or consumed) by more people than ever before, who are more familiar with, and expect, interpretation when they visit heritage sites. Without doubt, interpretation is now a central corollary of the tourist gaze, and the desire to gaze upon history. For him, tourists whether consciously or not affect what they 'gaze' on; tourists who, as consumers are yet part of production process. The usages of heritage can be categorised as followings;

1.1.1 Heritage as a state/nation's representative

Heritage is often used as an attempt to create, understand and explain the nation's identity. In this case, many scholars in humanities, who in recent years have paid increasing attention to memorials and made 'memory' as a central concern, have been inspired by the following: David Lowenthal's ***The Past Is a Foreign Country*** (1985), and Pierre Nora's ***Les Lieux de Memoire*** (1984) - two of the key texts of the period.

The book ***The Past is a Foreign Country***, which summarises a large number of earlier articles by the author, has become the most mentioned book on the subject. For Lowenthal, the past in our everyday landscape can be explored like another country and it is continually reshaped by the present. He contends that only "by altering and adding to what we save does our heritage remain real, alive, and comprehensible" (1985: 410-411). The author concurs that heritage attracts the attention of visitors to an area, because it provides a sense of place, a sense of difference, a uniqueness for any community or area. Heritage sites also provide education about the results of research, a distinctive experience and form of entertainment, which is different from the ordinary and appreciated by many tourists.

For ***Les Lieux de Memoire***, Nora has edited seven volumes of essays from nearly hundred twenty French scholars from 1984-1992, dissecting memories of the republic, the nation, and France itself. The underlying purpose of this editing was to explore '*lieux de memoire*', which might be translated as *'realm of memory'* or perhaps as *'sites'* or *'places' of memory*. These cover the range of spaces, both physical and intellectual, wherein the memories of 'a nation' might be constructed, contained and contested. They are not necessarily 'sites' in the geographical sense, as they can also

include the flag, anthems, celebrations and festivals, and literary monuments. Nora built his concept on the social framing of memory; he looked at how social institutions and contexts made possible certain memories, encouraging certain recollections while discouraging others.

Central to Nora's argument is the idea of sites of memory (heritage) as compensation for a profound loss. He also claimed that, with the rise of modernism and its attendant traits of globalisation, democratisation and massification, modern media is substituted for collective memory. According to Nora, *lieux de memoire* allows for the past to be recalled in an emotional, spontaneous, detached stance of historical writings. "A general critical history would no doubt preserve some museums, some medallions and monuments…but it would empty them of what, to us, would make them '*lieux de memoire'*" (Nora, 1989: 9). What we have now is not lived memory, but reconstructed history. To compensate for this lack, sites of memory have arisen.

Nora's theory and terminology are, no doubt, suggestive of how history and heritage interact. Yet a distinction ought to be made between objects and places that are linked to individual or public memories, and historic monuments and artefacts that are cherished as emblems of the nation's history, in order to be invested with a discursive power over the past. Since then, scholars have prospected in the field of memory studies with uncommon zeal. Prompted by the rise of Holocaust studies, by the controversies surrounding the memorialisation of the Vietnam War, and by the post-modern dissatisfaction with terms like 'history', the study of collective memory seemed to promise a fresh view of the past.

1.1.2. Interpreting the past in the present

In addition to the importance of physical characteristics and intangible values of heritage, the main figure to tell history and interpret the past that lies in heritage is the historians. Historians themselves are aware that they are themselves 'packagers' of facts and 'chronicles'. They are not simply antiquarians; they contrast themselves with antiquarians, who collect documents and artefacts left by the past without interpretation. This leads to an argument that museums without specific interpretation are, in effect, still interpreting the past through their selection and presentation of the exhibits, as are antiquarians. So, new generations of historians arise to re-select, re-interpreted and re-judge the past.

Following the issue of how the ownership of history has changed over time and place, another book by Lowenthal, ***The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*** (1989), is about who does and should posses the story, of as well as the remains of, the past. Who has or should have rights to the past? Should it be an individual, the local people, the nation state, a supranational body or even an ideal? This literature shows the importance of the stakeholders of the heritage, which support the interpretation process of the case study. Lowenthal also summarises the three dimensions of the expansion of the concept of heritage as being: "from the elite and grand to the vernacular and everyday; from the remote to the recent; and from the material to the intangible" (1997: 14-19). It confirms the importance of interpretation and how much tourists are seeking to know about the story and intangible values in addition to the physical characteristics.

1.2. Heritage and Tourism: Heritage Resources as Tourism Product and Commodification

In contemporary society, heritage is often treated as a commodity for economic uses, especially for tourism (Graham, Ashworth & Tunbridge, 2000). Although the value of heritage is far more complex than that of most goods and services, it is believed that exploiting heritage for tourism consumption, if not managed properly and cautiously, may commercialise, trivialise, and standardise the intangible cultural meanings born by the physical manifestations.

In general, heritage is not always the primary reason for travel to a particular place, but it is often an important secondary reason for selecting one destination over another and in extending the length of stay. To support this argument, a recent review of trends in European heritage tourism by Richards (2000), notes that the number of visitors to cultural attractions who have a general to a rare interest in culture are growing more rapidly than those of visitors with a specific cultural motive. As this trend continues, he anticipates that the cultural market will extend towards mass tourism "through the opening of new popularised cultural and heritage attractions (2000: 14). His findings show that the nostalgia-driven heritage tourism boom of the 1980s has been replaced by a more pragmatic vision of the need to utilise the legacy of the past to stimulate contemporary production, as well as consumption, which inevitably creates a commodification of the heritage place (2000: 14). The atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is also an unexceptional case of the commodification of a place for mass

tourism. This commodification process is not only limited to physical characteristics, but to the intangible values of the heritage like a name of the river and war stories, which have been commodified via different interpretations.

Another book which indicates the importance of heritage interpretation that stimulates a heritage to be a heritage product is, ***Heritage and Tourism*** by Boniface and J.F. Fowler, (1993). Their general opinion about World Heritage Sites, which are expected to be *par excellence* global- heritage products in world-class tourism, can determine the presentation and interpretation strategy according to the significance of the place (e.g. religious sites or political faction). They also wrote that "there is now the fashion to formulate a heritage message, perforce of selected information, for their entertainment and education" (1993: 150). Their opinion supports strongly the role interpretation is playing to heritage according to the author's hypothesis that interpretation is a cultural heritage by itself.

Once there is the mentioning of subject about World Heritage Sites, it should be noted here that the idea to inscribe the 'Death Railway' for the designation as a World Heritage Site will not be discussed in detail in this research. But with the high potential of being listed on the World Heritage List (WHL) the subject will not be dismissed. There should be a long-term planning in the future to inscribe the site. Because it is very compatible with the other two sites relating to the Second World War that are on the WHL; the concentration camp of Auschwitz-Birkenau and the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome. The potential of this atrocity heritage to be on the WHL creates the need to have a good interpretation proposal plan for long term use.

For the usage of heritage, Ashworth has categorised the multiplicity of heritage in his article, ***On gaps and bridges in heritage,*** (2000), into four ways: as an idea; policy; industry; and education. Industry heritage is a resource, capable of being turned into marketable products and generating economic returns. Heritage is simply exploited worldwide in the production of heritage goods and services, and as a primary component of strategies to promote tourism, economic development and rural and urban regeneration.

Most heritage organisations, either governmental, or public agencies are typically concerned with issues of significance, integrity, conservation and sustainability. The primary concern of most cultural organisations is their cultural purpose. They do not

see themselves as serving a principally tourist market principally, if at all. Many are wary of the potential impacts of tourism on cultural, or site, value and integrity. Yet they are also likely to view tourism as being a way of earning much needed money that can generate funds for conservation work and (sometimes) provide local employment.

Tunbridge and Ashworth, (1996), also illustrated the process by which history and the artefacts of history are the raw materials packaged by interpretation into products for the 'user' industry. Thus, the heritage industry, from museums to theme- parks takes on, and makes money out, of this packaged past.

2. Specific Studies

2.1. Atrocity Heritage Studies

In this study, the term 'atrocity heritage' has been defined as; the case of deliberately inflicted extreme human suffering. However, it does include both tangible and intangible values of heritage as defined as; all associated artefacts, buildings, sites, and associated places, as well as intangible accounts of the acts of atrocity interpreted by the various parties involved - victims, perpetrators, by-standers, and others (state agencies, public companies, private firms or the local community).

Hartmaan (2002) has indirectly defined atrocity heritage as, memorial sites that recall past tragic events of a social, religious, ethnic, or culture groups which may have varying importance in a given locale. It may be a simple plaque honouring what happened to an individual or small group in a singular event or it may carry the purposeful explanation of a string of fatal events that led to catastrophe for many.

Atrocity heritage for a variety of reasons is particularly prone to many types of dissonances. Its nature imbues it with the capacity to amplify the effects, and thus render more serious what otherwise would be marginal or manageable. Tunbridge & Ashworth have noted "the dissonance created by atrocity is not only peculiarly intense and lasting but raises particularly complex issues of interpretation for those who associate with victims, perpetrators, and observers" (1996: 94).

The management of an atrocity heritage site is not a new topic. It raises a number of complex questions for cultural heritage managers. Can and should the site be preserved? Who should be consulted about decisions on the site? Who has responsibility for decisions about the site? Should events at the site be interpreted and how? Preservation of the sites is also important not only for maintaining the physical evidence

at the site, but also for interpretation of the atrocities. The management will impact not only on the survivors and their families, but also on the collective past of the event. The significance of these sites to the community may change over time if healing about the event progresses. The passage of time has meant the sites of atrocity take on international significance. Concentration camps during the Second World War in Germany and Poland are good examples.

Atrocity may be memorialised as a lesson for the present and hope for the future as much as a description of the past. The interpretation of these sites may, or may not, have the explicit objective of reconciliation and prevention of recurrence. The core question about the study of interpretation and management of such heritages is the question about who has responsibility for decisions about the site? Is it the actual owners of the site, the survivors and families of the victims or perpetrators, the local community, or the broader national or international community? Atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is one of the best examples to review answers to these questions.

2.2. Atrocity Heritage and Tourism

The addition of tourism demands for atrocity heritage requires answers to the question, 'Why is atrocity a tourism attraction?' The 'unique argument' claims that it is just unusual and thus attractive to those wishing to experience the 'unique' as a satisfaction of human curiosity. 'Atrocity tourism', like 'disaster tourism', has the entertainment value of the unusual, or at least the uncommon. The 'horror argument' may seem distasteful and not morally acceptable but 'horror tourism' is not new, and may be regarded as only an extreme form of a more general and socially acceptable attraction to the dramatic link between descriptions of violence and entertainment. The 'empathy argument' is a more acceptable way of expressing the fascination of horror. Empathy relies upon the capacity of heritage consumers to identify themselves with the individuals in the related atrocity (Ashworth, 2002).

The book, ***Horror and Human Tragedy Revisited: the Management of Sites of Atrocities for Tourism***, (2005), co-edited by Ashworth and Hartmann, has tried to link the two substantive topics, tourism and atrocity, with the term management. Several case studies of different atrocities were mentioned in three sections of the book. Some case studies are very useful for this study, it gives more clear perspective of how atrocity sites should be managed and interpreted, as the co-authors made suggestions for management

strategy at the end. The colourful article of Dann, G. M. S., ***Children of the Dark,*** shows how the post-modern world is coping with commodifying atrocities via entertainment; film; television and literature. His simple message is that we are all 'the children of the dark'. It also supports the idea of the co-authors that "atrocity heritage introduces seriousness into fun while tourism may introduce a trivialisation of the serious" (2005: 1).

There is also one strong argument on this issue from other scholars, which should be mentioned here. They have noted that through its interpretation and presentation, whether real or fictional, in popular culture, death has become a commodity for consumption in a global communications market (Palmer, G., 1993; Lennon, J. and Foley, M., 2000).

2.3. Dark tourism studies

Controversy over interpretation of death, horror and war is not new. Very often the main dichotomy - education vs. entertainment - is further complicated by political circumstances. The so-called 'dark tourism', sometimes also referred to as 'thanatourism' (Greek, Thanatos death), receives a lot of attention in literature. The challenges of presenting death, horror and war as a tourist attraction have been extensively studied in the case of the sites related to the World Wars of the 20th Century in Europe and Australia as well as several sites in Asia related to the Second World War and genocide massacre.

The concept of 'dark tourism' as such is relatively new, although the dark side of the tourism industry has been studied and analysed extensively in the last decade. Dark tourism was first so labelled by John Lennon and Malcolm Foley in their well-known book, ***Dark Tourism*** (2000), particularly referring to the attraction of sites of mass killings, genocide, and assassination, for tourists. 'Dark tourism' was added to the vocabulary of tourism studies to signify a "fundamental shift in the way in which deaths, disaster and atrocity are being handled by those who offer associated tourism 'product'" (Lennon, and Foley, 2000: 3). In particular, they aim to show that 'dark tourism' is both a product of the circumstances of the late modern world and a significant influence upon these circumstances. Moreover, the politics, economics, sociologies and technologies of the contemporary world are as much important factors in the events upon which this dark tourism is focused as they are central to the selection and interpretation of sites and events which become tourism products (Lennon, and Foley, 2000).

In Europe, where interpretation of war and conflict has a much longer history than in Asia, especially in Thailand, the use of an emotional and provocative approach to the interpretation of the more shameful events of the past is referred to as 'hot interpretation' (Uzzell & Ballentyne, 1989). For them, 'hot interpretation' is the means to tell a story that has an emotional effect on us and engages us emotionally, it also promotes personal reflection, leading to a deeper appreciation and understanding, viewpoint, attitude and behaviour. In other words, interpretation that appreciates the need for and injects an affective component into its subject matter, where appropriate, is 'hot interpretation'. Engaging with such issues is not generally a comfortable position for interpreters who often feel that they need to be neutral commentators. Sometimes it proves to be an impossible task to interpret 'hot issues' in an objective manner. They also argued that all interpretation is value-laden - even a so-called 'neutral' approach to interpretation demonstrates a value decision.

2.4. Dissonant Heritage Studies

The book, ***A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture & Economy***, (2000) co-authored by Graham, Ashworth, and Tunbridge, has made a clear explanation about this concept. Their thesis stated that heritage is fragmented and multi-dimensional, and contains a contested concept, and added that the definition of the heritage is the using of the past as a resource for the present. The whole process of definition of heritage brought forward the notion of heritage dissonance, to determine what heritage is. Whose story gets told, and how it should be preserved, produced and used will always bring forth a lack of agreement at any scale (local, national, international), from any perspective, or even from within the heritage community itself (conservation/commodification). Their strong point is that heritage is a fluid and multi-faceted concept, but they also concluded that the relationship between heritage, identity, and place can now be seen as intensely heterogeneous and full of nuances and ambiguities.

One famous book concerning the above issue is from Tunbridge and Ashworth, ***Dissonant Heritage: Management of the Past as a Resource in Conflict,*** which made it clear that dissonance, which is intrinsic to the nature of heritage, does not mean that dissonance is not manageable. As they have argued, "most dissonance is trivial, ignorable or bearable; much is avoidable, often quite simply, and much that is not avoidable is

certainly mitigatible in various way" (1996: 263). More sensitive and active management efforts are certainly required, however.

From a management perspective, they have divided atrocity sites into several types, based on the character of the site. Difficulties in the practice of interpretation have also been analysed. There are several interesting points; whatever strategy is adopted there is a series of problems particularly apparent in the interpretation of atrocity. Underlying these problems is the fundamental sensitivity of atrocity heritage, not only in its multiple dissonances but most particularly in the potential for memorialisation to provoke legitimisation, a disturbing political issue. The messages conveyed through the selection, packaging, and interpretation of atrocity heritage can be seen in terms of those projected by various producers and those received by visitors. These are unlikely to be the same in every respect as transmission itself is imperfect and they can on occasion differ dramatically.

Consider what Tunbridge and Ashworth have provided for a comprehensive examination of dissonance in the context of heritage, which they define as "a discordance or a lack of agreement and consistency" (1996: 20) in understanding and portraying what is or what is not heritage. When communities are complex and multidimensional in ethnic and social terms, there is bound to be some degree of dissonance and contestation regarding the treatment of heritage. In this case, questions nearly always arise as to which community of many is being considered, who represents it and do its interests conflict with those of other communities (Graham, 1996; Ashworth, 2003). As conservation and interpretation involve the presentation of messages, sometimes dissonance or contestation is created between groups who share the same heritage (Charlesworth, 1994; Graham, 1996; Tunbridge and Ashworth, 1996; Olsen, 2000). It is clear now that dissonance is embedded in any heritage; the question is how can we manage dissonance and contestation while not eradicating it? If dissonance is one of the most characteristic of atrocity heritage, without dissonance and contestation, atrocity heritage will be less interesting than it used to be.

Olsen has identified three types of contested heritage. The first involves two or more groups claiming the same or overlapping heritage. Here, the same places have different meanings for different groups, and each group believes that its view is correct, while that of the other group (s) is not. The second form of contested heritage is division

within one group. In some cases there are divisions within a group over what aspects of their heritage to emphasise and share with the public (Olsen, 2000) as Lowenthal noted that "what heritage does not highlight it often hides" (1996: 156). In this way, "heritage shapes an embraceable past" through the "celebrating of (some aspects of a heritage) and forgetting others" (Lowenthal, 1996: 162). The third form of contested heritage is indigenous versus colonial, which really refers to two different groups with parallel heritages, often leading to questions about which, or whose, heritage should be preserved.

2.5. Heritage Interpretation

In this section several theories and ideas about interpretation are explored to show its importance to heritage, as it is said that interpretation uses heritage properties and objects to demonstrate the past to visitors in hope of increasing their understanding and appreciation of the resource and subject being presented (Dewar, 1989; Herbert, 1989a; Hooper-Greenhill, 1992; Moscado and Woods, 1998; Prentice et al, 1998). Bramwell and Lane (1993) had identified a number of additional problems of interpretation. First, when interpretation is propelled by economic motives there is a danger that it is done for the wrong reasons (e.g. profit making). Secondly, heritage events and places are sometimes simplified to meet the harried needs of visitors. Thirdly, there is some danger in over-interpretation, which can lead to trivialisation of historic events and places and diminish the personal excitement in visiting. Finally, it is problematic when interpretation turns into a show where significant places are commodified into quaint tourist landscapes, where the show itself becomes more important that the message it is aiming to convey to visitors. After several site's surveys during these years, some sites on the 'Death Railway' in Kanchanaburi resemble these problems more or less.

At most sites, since interpretation is essentially "about place and the concept of place, about putting people and things into their environmental context" (Aldridge, 1989: 64), geography is an essential area of knowledge. Interpreters should have a firm grasp on the history and facts associated with the specific location where they work. In the words of Uzzell, traditionally "interpretation meant leaflets, exhibition panels and audiovisual programme. The range of interpretive media now used is more varied and technical: computer simulations, personal stereo guided tours, rides augmented with sounds and smells" (1994: 295). While modernising interpretive programmes is

important, managers need to be cautious not to allow the medium to dominate the resource. Too many high-tech mechanisms and gimmicks can detract from the real experience, causing some people to want to stay away.

Timothy and Boyd have noted that there is no escaping the fact that most heritage sites have been sanitised, and in a sense 'made ready for the visitors' and therefore have created idealised pasts (2003). Heritage providers may run the risk of offending some visitors if they try to make conditions as close to reality as possible in modern times. But in doing this they create the opportunity for tourists to take away memorable and lasting experiences. However, there is also the real danger that by beautifying the past, they may dilute the impact that it can have on tourists. To be fair to heritage providers, the past is often unknown and what presented are simply segments of history that we are fortunate enough to understand. From this perspective, the extent to which the past can be presented in an authentic manner is brought into proper context, which will be discussed later.

Interpretation is an essential process of communicating or explaining to visitors the significance of the place that they are visiting. Its purpose is to assist tourists and other visitors in experiencing a resource or event in a way that they might not have otherwise. Interpretation is nearly always seen in a positive light, as it educates and entertains visitors and causes them to reflect on environmental values. However, interpretation should not interfere with a visitor's own experience of the heritage place. Nonetheless, as Moscardo (2000) points out, it is possible that interpretation might interfere with an experience when an overzealous interpreter provides propaganda instead of presentation.

There is also a danger, when interpretation is propelled by economic motives, that it is done for the wrong reason e.g. profit making. There is also some danger in over-interpretation, which can lead to trivialization of historic events and places and diminish the personal excitement in visiting (Urry, 1990). Finally, it is problematic when interpretation turns into a show where significant places are commodified into quaint tourist landscapes, where the show itself becomes more important than the message it is aiming to convey to visitors. Throughout the 1980s heritage was used increasingly for commercial purposes, places were promoted as attractions for visitors. Interpreting heritage places and objects moved from a fairly straightforward process of conveying

information through signs and brochures to elaborate interpretative centres and costumed re-enactment.

Interpretation is a process of communicating to visitors the meaning and significance of the place being visited. It is an important part of heritage tourism and can be useful tool for managing heritage visitors and their impact. In the context of heritage and culture, interpretation plays at least three major roles (Timothy & Prideaux, 2004; Timothy & Boyd, 2003). First, it is an education tool. From this perspective, interpretation is important for increasing awareness and appreciation of the resources being presented, which in theory at least should result in higher levels of respect for and understanding of historic events, places and artefacts (Timothy & Boyd, 2003; Light, 1995; Prentice et al., 1998; Tilden, 1977). Secondly, interpretation may also include an entertainment factor. Today, education specialists realise that entertainment and learning are not dichotomous terms; learning can in fact be very entertaining and needs to be recognised by heritage managers as an enjoyable experience (Timothy & Boyd, 2003; McAndrew, 1995; Schouten, 1995). Finally, interpretation is a useful tool for meeting conservation sustainable development objectives through visitor management, positively influencing visitor spending and other economic benefits, promoting cultural heritage conservation, changing attitudes and values in positive ways, and involving destination communities in the provision of interpretation and other elements of the heritage product (Timothy & Boyd, 2003; Moscado & Woods 1998; Pearson & Sullivan, 1995; Bramwell & Lane, 1993).

At the Australia ICOMOS Annual Conference on *Telling Tales; interpretation in the conservation and design process* in 2003 it has brought together many scholars from different fields, concerning the interpretation of heritage. From the topic, to marked interpretation as the heart of heritage, it showed the importance of interpretation, simply said, it cannot live without it. Obviously, there are still doubts among Australian and worldwide scholars to put interpretation as the centre of heritage. However, according to the author's hypothesis that interpretation is in itself a cultural heritage, as how these sites are experienced and interpreted is as how we (globally), want to see our heritage. After all, heritage is a process that is dynamic.

In the Asia Pacific region, many issues can be identified in the provision of interpretative services for heritage and cultural tourists. Cultural differences are an

important issue in the region, because there are so many different ethnicities, nationalities, and cultures involved in tourism as both consumes and producers of the heritage product. As part of this, bi-lingual and multi-lingual interpretation is an important element of heritage management in places where visitors come from a variety of countries. There is a broad discussion for the definition of interpretation. The author has chosen some definitions that are most relevant to the hypothesis: this is a range of example definitions;

1. An educational activity which aims to reveal meanings and relationships through the use of original objects, by first-hand experience, and by illustrative media, rather than simply to communicate factual information. (Tilden, 1977)
2. The educative role of interpretation is not simply to reinforce the familiar or provide the 'facts' or 'truth' about the past, but to provide an opportunity to encourage the questioning and critical scrutiny of both the past and the present (Hall & McArthur, 1996).
3. A means of communicating ideas and feelings that help people enrich their understanding and appreciation of their world, and their role within it. (Interpretation Australia Association, 1995).
4. The communication process that aims at helping people to discover the significance of things, places, events…helping people change the way they perceive themselves and their world through a greater understanding of the world themselves. (McArthur, 1998)
5. Uzzell has also pointed out the need of interpretation and education that can serve different functions for different stakeholders of heritage. He observed that 'good interpretation' will not compensate for poor facilities, but good facilities will enhance their interpretation. From the visitor's perspective, interpretation and education can improve the quality of an experience by giving it context and meaning and by making it more enjoyable (1994).

In the book ***Dissonant Heritage,*** (1996) Tunbridge and Ashworth, have mentioned the transformation process of heritage which is similar to the idea of interpretation that the story of the place will be transmitted, but 'which story is being

transmitted, and not just a means of transmitting it: the question ‘which story is told to which listeners?’ is the most important and very much relevant to this study. They continued; interpretation integrates resource elements by the shaping of a ‘core product’. It is not the physical components of heritage that are actually traded, but intangible ideas and feelings such as fantasy, nostalgia, pleasure, pride and the like, which are communicated through interpretation of the physical elements.

The dissonance created by the interpretation of atrocity is not only peculiarly intense and lasting but also particularly complex for victims, perpetrators and observers. The reaction of those who suffered and those who were to blame, together with the rest of humanity who might under different circumstances have fallen into either category, are complex. Furthermore, highly charged controversy with respect to the identity of both victims and perpetrators creates a heritage dissonance problem without parallel and any attempt to resolve it can have profoundly unsettling, if not dangerous, political consequences. All of this means that the interpretation of the heritage of atrocity can be particularly influential as well as highly sensitive and difficult to undertake.

If we consider heritage as an idea about interpreting the past to the present; as a policy it is most interesting and highly relevant to the study that heritage is a medium of representation, which can be, and in practice is, used to communicate collective cultural values. It is thus influential in the reproduction and contestation of cultures. Who controls heritage may change the trajectory of the contestation for the ownership of the past in which cultural hegemony is the goal. Writing on the interpretation management of an atrocity heritage site is almost an impossible mission.

The controversial idea of Gottesdiener (1993) on interpretation, which should be noted here, is that the consequence of placing the visitor rather than the exhibition at the centre of the learning experience and treating knowledge as a social construction is that the visitor becomes the author of the exhibition. Each new visitor will bring to the heritage or museum a different reading or interpretation. The visitor starts psychologically to construct the interpretation through exhibition or heritage. One consequence of this is that each heritage, museum or exhibition becomes a mirror which reflects the vision’s own attitudes, values and beliefs. Perhaps this means that the visitor is unable to step back and take wider perspective on society and culture. It does simply mean that the interpreter or exhibition designers start to lose their autonomy - which

challenges Hooper-Greenhill's (1991) idea and many authors in this review, that museums and heritage are simply agents of political and ideological propaganda and inculcation. These two ideas contradict and touch directly to the case study of the 'Death Railway'. The author uses the theory of The Museum Experience (Falk & Dierking, 1992) as one of theoretical frameworks to understand visitors' experience to the case study. It was mentioned before that the experience of visitors will depend on the three contexts- physical, social and personal context. This theory takes both sides of the two ideas from Gottesdiener and Hooper-Greenhill.

2.6. Visitor Studies

Although the heritage professionals communicate - both intentionally and unintentionally - with visitors, the meaning of heritage or sites will depend on what visitors bring to them and this will change according to their personal knowledge and the individual experiences of those visitors. It is what we might call the visitor's own context. J. Falk and L. Dierking have suggested in their book, ***The Museum Experience*** (1992), that the visitors 'context' should be sub-divided into the personal, the socio-cultural and the physical. For them, all three spheres overlap, interrelate, and are modified as the memory of the visit is revised over time.

The psychological reaction of humans to atrocities is the main reason why people visit such places, however, this study will not attempt to examine the visitor's psychology, but try to understand their motivation and expectations to the place. By understanding visitors' motivations, interpreters of the sites can provide what visitors desire. Interpretation of atrocity is a means of preserving and conserving not just history, but also heritage, and personal and collective identity.

2.7. The State and its Heritage

Heritage is often used as an attempt to understand and explain the nation's identity as well as for political legitimisation. These social and political contexts are more complex if the heritage is in an area of extra-territoriality, which is the case of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. The country that has been most active to declare this heritage as theirs is Australia (as will be explained in detail later by the author). Thus, it is inevitable that the role of countries (Thailand / Australia) to the heritage site will be examined in great depth. Geographically, Thailand plays a major role as the host

country for internationally-shared heritage, while the Australian government owns one museum in the Thai territory under the special agreement between two countries.

2.7.1 The role of the Thai government in heritage

To have a better understanding of heritage management in Thailand, the role of the Thai government in heritage is being investigated in-depth. Urban heritage conservation, as a project of the state, has been underpinned by the close connection between urbanism and royalty and the historical role ascribed to the monarchy in preserving the integrity of the nation and the cultural identity in general. The state agencies such as Fine Arts Department and Tourism Authority of Thailand have promoted the conservation of built structures and zones, and have been particularly successful in preserving the symbols and artefacts associated with the history of kingship and urbanism in Thai society. Good examples from this promotion are heritage places like the World Heritage Sites of Ayutthaya and Sukhothai. As an ideological project of the Thai government, this programme links the present with the past in order to assert nationhood and cultural continuity in the face of widespread social, economic, and urban change.

As in other countries, the problematic issue is the multiplicity of levels of government involved in heritage management. In Thailand, controls are implemented at national, regional, provincial and municipal levels, under scientific and management overview from the governmental agency, the Thailand Fine Art Department. This is not necessarily a bad thing, demonstrating a degree of commitment to heritage protection across the country. However, when there is overlapping authority concerning the same buildings, sites, and places, and when registers are duplicated, rationalisation is needed. Thailand has a hierarchical system in which the government controls apply only to heritage features of national significance, the regional controls apply to heritage features of regional significance, the provincial controls apply to heritage of provincial significance and municipality controls apply to heritage of municipality significance. As a result of this structure, conflict and complications in heritage management in Thailand often occurs, because of the pyramid style of management. Major decisions are made from top, which is a government agencies - the Fine Arts Department under the Ministry of Culture, the Town Planning Department under the Interior Ministry and Environmental Department under the Public Health Ministry.

Metaphorically Thailand is the same as other countries in the world, in different ways, a palimpsest. An historical place is the site of political struggles over who, and what, should represent which collective past. Thailand heritage policy has, in part, attempted to erase the evidence of contention, rather than to recognise and celebrate creative compromise. It is not too difficult to identify elements of proclaimed heritage that underlie the construction of the defining triad of modern Siamese/Thai national identity - the King, Religion and Nation. The deeply respected levels of proclaimed heritage - the built monuments, monarchy, festivals/intangible cultures - carry vast symbolic capital in them, but also serve to mask exploitation and repression.

Since Rama V (1868- 1910), the appearance of Bangkok/Thailand began to change as the monarchy embraced the new icons of modern European architecture and elements of urban form. The King's effort to introduce western architecture and monarchical rituals was paralleled by initiatives towards defining Siam as territorial nation state with a discernible and continuous history. The construction of Thai identity is distinctively modern, followed by the establishment of the National Museum in 1887 and the Fine Arts Department (responsible for heritage in Thailand) in 1916. In 1935, the first legislation was enacted for the preservation of monuments and sites. Throughout the 1950s, the fine Arts Department continued to focus principally on the ancient city sites of Sukhothai and elsewhere (Askew, 2002: 286).

During the early years in the reign of King Bhumiphol (1957 onwards), he advanced and consolidate the reputation of his dynasty in his serving monarchy by a commitment to public welfare and socio-economic development. By the 1970s, the King proved himself indispensable to the Thai polity through judicious intervention in times of political and ideological conflict. In the period of unprecedented social and economic change, he crafted his kingship to represent an essential feature of cultural continuity and Thai identity. Already the centre of national narratives, as taught in schools and published in popular history books, the king and his dynastic forebears were also to be the centre of a developing state cultural policy, which linked the benefits of an increasing important urban heritage conservation policy to economic imperatives, particularly tourism.

By the early 1970s, a decade of state promoted economic restructuring had led to what most Thai intellectuals and scholars saw as a disturbing trend towards

materialism, individualism and westernisation. The Fourth National Economic and Social Development Plan (1977-81) emphasised the need to "cultivate the love for Thai traditional art and culture" through preserving "national art and culture treasures" (NESDB 1977: 284). Around 1980, the Fine Arts Department was responding to world conservation trends and beginning to advocate the importance of conservation areas, as opposed to specific monuments. UNESCO began to lend support to the excavation and interpretation of the old site of Sukhothai. There was a trend towards a convergence of interests on the part of the state and specialists in conservation fields, with the state having a major interest in promoting historic sites for education as well as tourism. From this period the term '*moradok'* (inheritance, or patrimony) came into official use to describe monuments, sites and artefacts of national heritage, a reflection of a widespread promotion of the 'heritage' in world conservation circles, and a complement to the expanding lexicon of state-promoted cultural policy terms (including *ekkalak Thai* – Thai identity; *wattanatham khong chat* – national culture). An historical narrative dominates this prevailing official definition of Thai heritage (moradok chat), which is both nationalist and royal-centred. Now, artefacts, monuments, and now urban precincts, derive their significance in official discourse in terms of a history, which locates the Thai kings in pre-eminent roles as national leaders and protectors of a distinctive Thai identity.

Thai philosophy behind monumentalisation and memorialisation

It is not uncommon for governments to utilise heritage in one form or another to shape public opinion, to build nationalism and to create images that reflects their political ideals. This is typically done by destroying or forgetting heritage, creating pasts that never existed, and manipulating history and heritage. According to Ashworth (1990), war arouses powerful nationalist emotions. This is why so many countries emphasise war heritage, including battlefields, national cemeteries, tombs of unknown soldiers and so on, to engender a sense of collective patriotism. This is certainly the case in Thailand where numerous monuments have been built around the country to commemorate kings, queens and warriors.

In Thailand, the public and civic form of monumentalisation occurred virtually simultaneously with the first major 'modernizing' impulses during the mid-to-late nineteenth century. The most important monuments tend to be statues depicting heroic historical figures, mostly Kings, who participated in 'turning points' of Thai military

history, generally since the Ayutthaya Period (late 1700's). Earlier forms of memorialisation were fully encompassed by a system of religious sites and representations, largely temples and holy images. Individuals were memorialised by inscriptions recording donations to temples of slaves, money and land, just as today inscriptions at modern temple sites indicate how much financial contribution prominent individuals and families have made on auspicious occasions.

However, even the modern monuments display a quality of 'sacredness' in accord with Thai beliefs concerning the power of famous Kings, and become shrines of pilgrimage, where people make floral offerings and pay obeisance. The monuments to 'modern' history, such as the Victory Monument and the Democracy Monument, do not seem to attract the same kind of spiritual legitimisation. Thus the 'modernity' of monumentalisation is overlaid with pre-existing cultural and religious beliefs, rendering a different form of monumental hierarchy to that found in Western societies.

2.7.2 The role of the Australian government in heritage

In Australia, governments have been paying much interest to heritage for the last few decades. The reason might come from the feeling of guilt as a settler, for mishandling the local indigenous people such as Aborigines. In the case of a newly established country, with a history only two hundred years old, Australia is obviously a country that uses heritage to create national identity, building up nationhood and the sense of being Australian.

Since the 1960s, international studies of postmodernism, the differences in race, culture, identity and more, has brought up new issues for multicultural and multiracial societies. This, in turn, has introduced another term: multiculturalism. It is an issue that scholars and intellectuals talk about and has become a concern for governments. As happened to other countries in the world, it also happened in Australia, the difference in race and culture has been exploited to gain more votes for politicians. Under the long governance of the last Prime minister, Mr. John Howard (until November 2007), who, since the beginning of his political career, emphasised the importance of culture and how a multicultural society can be integrated into one integration/nation. He continued several projects following his predecessor, Mr. Paul Keating, particularly those relating to war memorials and veterans, and wars which Australian soldiers had participated in. Those wars included: the Anglo-Boer War in South Africa, the First and

Second World Wars, the Korean War, the Gulf War and recently the War in Iraq. The projects relating to war memorials and veterans have been undertaken in different forms; museums, memorials and monuments, both inside and outside Australia.

It is clear how sensitive the subject of war is to the Australians. It would not be an exaggeration to say that almost every Australian family has learned to know these wars with personal war experience, or the loss of their family members, not dissimilar to several citizenships of European countries. There is even a dedicated ministry to take care of the matter, the Ministry of War Veterans Affairs. Apart from building up more war memorials (the Australian War Memorial in Canberra is one of the best war memorial museums in the world), a good social welfare for war veterans and their families, and more activities for commemorations are regularly used by national politicians to gain more popularity and votes.

In Australia the monumentalisation and memorialisation are particularly interesting, because 'the past', as a colonial past, is of such brief duration, resulting in a kind of manic over-compensation in the present, now that 'cultural conservation' and the concept of 'National Heritage' have emerged in accord with general socio-cultural trends of post-capitalist societies everywhere. The exhortation to retain and conserve 'the past', as part of the constitution of a viable 'national identity', is especially difficult when there is so little of it, at least in the form of recognisable constructed markers suitable for cultural memorialisation.

In both Thailand and Australia, there is a hidden dialogue between the builder of the memorial/monument and those to whom the monument is directed. Mostly there are two different hidden messages in building a monument and setting up a memorial site. The first message is "You must remember me", in the case of ancient memorials, to address the importance of an important person or event in the past. The second message is "We must remember you", in the case of the more modern forms of monument to show the gratitude and commemoration to those who played a big role in such events. The compulsion for remembrance comes from the fact these memorials may celebrate individuals, but rather they also represent the power of the state over its citizens. In the case of the pioneer settlers and explorers, it is the power of the state, which authorises their actions, at least retrospectively.

In the case of a War Memorial, it is generally even clearer that the soldier's

sacrifice was made on behalf of the state, its continuity and survival. The memorial may permit the citizen to remember with pride and gratitude the sacrifices of his/her forerunners; but it also reminds the citizen that the disposition of his/her life and fate rests too in the power of the state. Thus the distinction between the ancient and modern form of monument/memorial may be illusory: both inform the citizen of the superior power of the Mighty, but the modern memorial disguises the authorising power of the state in the personal narratives of individual heroism and sacrifice.

Critical issues in the interpretation of atrocity heritage

Heritage and its designation are inherently political concepts, and as such, certain heritages have been manipulated to suit the ideological goals of people and system in power. This has meant that heritage reflects the stories told by winners of wars and aristocratic elites who have seen heritage as a tool to legitimise political control. This atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' entails a choice. The choice should be made to maintain a balance between the aristocratic past of nobility, dominant racial groups and autocratic rulers and that of common folks, ethnic minorities and others whose past might have been conveniently forgotten. Should uncomfortable pasts be eliminated? This is a difficult question, especially for nations that are trying to right the wrongs of history, but the answer is 'probably not'. Despite this potential discomfort and embarrassment some heritages may bring to certain groups, the present and future generations have a right to know, and perhaps assist in healing process. Because heritage reflects power, it also reflects conflict. There is little doubt that it will remain an issue of dissonance, but heritage providers and leaders should aim to lessen intra-group (and inter-group) tensions by creating situations that involve people instead of excluding them. There are some critical issues in the interpretation of atrocity heritage that should be mentioned as a guideline for the interpretation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' as below.

1. Erasing of the dominant past

A good example of this issue is the case that Germany, after half a century following the Second World War, is still attempting to move past its disgraceful period of Nazi rule, and debates continue there over how best to preserve some of the controversial heritage from that era (Ashworth, 1991). Likewise, in some urban centres of Malaysia, officials are attempting to rewrite local heritage with a Malay focus and an overt neglect (or destruction) of colonial features (Shaw et al. 1997). This is to be expected, for

according to Graham, the process of nation building is often “as much about forgetting the past as commemorating it” (2000: 77).

Is it possible to interpret the atrocity heritage of the ‘Death Railway’ by erasing the history of the Second World War that took place in Thailand? How about Thailand’s role during the war? If not, how diplomatic shall we (all place’s stakeholders) be? How can we, as heritage practitioners, interpret what happened at the ‘Death Railway’ as part of Second World War to make most visitors feel comfortable, in the meantime avoiding a confrontation with the Thais and Thai government?

2. Collective amnesia and the excluded past

The heritage portrayed to tourists in many locations reflects what some observers call collective amnesia. This has a connotation of the deliberate forgetting of some aspects of the past, referring to the fact that entire societies elect to disregard, exclude or suppress certain aspects of history because they are uncomfortable, embarrassing, or by so doing, the society or its leaders can achieve some political/ideological objective(s), often with racist slant. Tunbridge and Ashworth term this ‘disinheritance’ whereby some social and ethnic groups are written out of the script of history (1996). This societal memory loss has resulted in many diverse heritages throughout the world being excluded from conservation and interpretation, and being hidden from the tourist gaze.

One of the primary methods used to exclude certain aspects of the past is through education and official curricula. There are primary reasons as follows;

- School curricula are already overcrowded, and educational leaders argue that time cannot be used up on ‘new’ subjects.
- The teacher’s own ignorance has allowed some important aspects of the past to be excluded. Many textbooks, for example, ignore a contemporary understanding of the past.
- Studying some aspects of the past is commonly seen as an extravagant luxury that has little direct relevance to today’s society.
- Aspects of the past are sometimes excluded intentionally for political or ideological reasons.

While all of these reasons have some political undertones, it is the last element that is of most concern in this study. Through education, dominant institutions can, based

on their ideological goals, reveal what is congenial and disregard what is inconvenient or what opposes the public opinion. The exclusion of Thailand's role during Second World War in Thai textbooks is one of the best examples of intentional amnesia, or excluded past.

3. The unknown past

This line of thinking suggests that true authenticity is impossible because people in the modern day cannot possibly understand precisely the lives of people from history, or know enough about the details of their everyday lives to make an accurate interpretation.

Researchers, managers and interpreters lack sufficient knowledge to provide precise depictions of the past. The past is not a known entity, for "no account can recover the past as it was, because the past was not an account, it was a set of events and situations" (Lowenthal 1985: 215). Thus, because people necessarily view the past from current perspectives, and authenticity is socially constructed, the past is enigmatic, and all that can be done is to imagine what it was like. Even if details are known, some are too difficult or unimaginable to portray.

Often, interpreters and historic site managers concentrate almost all of their attention on the portrayal of buildings and other human-created structures to be as accurate and authentic as possible. These also should be included in the interpretive programme, as the natural landscape surrounding the communities, or artefacts being considered, are also a part of the historic environment. As in the case of the Bridge over the River Kwai, where there was an effort to preserve the bridge and develop the area around for the access of tourism. In so doing, it has destroyed the original cultural landscape, environment, and physical setting of the bridge. Printed material shows that the bridge was built in the middle of a sub-tropical rainforest and surrounded by variety of domestic trees. This is one strong issue which was raised from the survey. The actual site is surrounded with concrete buildings on one side of the Bridge, large house and resorts on another side, numbers of long-tailed boats wait for passengers under the Bridge and a large floating restaurant beside. The tourists' expectation to see the bridge in the deep forest is eroded by tourism development. Then contestation occurred as to how the bridge should be developed.

Chapter 3

Atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai

History and background to the places

There are books on the history of the strategic railway; in particular to investigate how the victims, the perpetrator, the Thais, and others construct and preserve their historical memory. This preserved memory also reflects and influences present interpretation of these heritage sites. There are also numerous novels about the horror of becoming Japanese's Prisoner of War (POW) in building the 'Death Railway' and in particular the building of the Bridge over the River Kwai. Unfortunately, there is no book and academic research, which really focuses on management of this atrocity heritage and interprets what has happened in the past. The writers of most novels wrote their historical memory via those hearsays, some memories are original, and others are imaginary and fictitious. With the main goal of this research not to recite the history and atrocities occurred during the Second World War, thus the history and background of Second World War will be written as brief as possible and focusing on more relevant history and events, which are how the Japanese entered the war; how the war invaded into Southeast Asia and how these countries fell into the Japanese's hands; how the plan of the 'Death Railway' started and how the construction was.

History of the Second World War in Southeast Asia and how Japan entered the war

For most of the last millennium, Japan was an isolated, feudal island nation. Apart from occasional skirmished with their Chinese neighbours, they preferred to remain aloof from the rest of the world, following their own customs and culture and rejecting outside influences. Then in 1867, after the visit of foreign guests from United States, Japan was persuaded of the advantages of opening its borders to the world.

Japan quickly recognised the benefits of rapid industrialisation, which would give the country a strategic advantage over its neighbours, especially an enervated and deeply divided China, and placed Japan in a dominant position in the Pacific region. This new policy led to clashes with both China and Russia, who they defeated in a war in

1905, and created such alarm amongst western countries that the United States began instigating trade embargoes from 1922. Japan began its aggressive expansionist policy in 1930 by invading the Chinese province of Manchuria. Incidents over the following years led in 1937 to a full-scale invasion of the Chinese mainland.

Japan traditionally autocratic rulers were very attracted by the rise of fascist movements in Europe and became increasingly under the influence of these radical ideas. The placing of its signature on the Tripartite Pact with Nazi Germany and Italy, largely in annoyance at what they saw as unwarranted intervention in its affairs by the democratic countries, saw Japan move firmly into the Axis camp. Yet despite repeated attempts by Hitler after September 1939 to persuade Japan to join in the war against Britain and France, Japan preferred to bide its time and wait for a suitable opportunity to present itself. It hand was in fact forced by the United States, who placed a full oil embargo upon Japan in reaction to its continuing war against China. The Japanese leadership considered that there was no alternative to fighting the western powers to gain the room needed to establish its 'Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere', an economic bloc geared to Japanese needs, which was behind much of the strategic thinking behind Japanese plans leading up to the war.

Plans for a simultaneous attack against the United States and the Allied countries' colonial in Southeast Asia (the Dutch East Indies, Britain's Malaya and Burma colonies and French Indo-China) took place in great secrecy throughout 1941. These plans were enhancements of the various war games the Japanese military carried out throughout the 1930s, in readiness for a conflict they saw as not only unavoidable but desirable. The invasion plans for the conquest of Southeast Asia were started in the early 1930s and worked out in great detail, even to the extent of redesigning railway locomotives to run on the narrow gauge tracks of the Southeast Asian countries.

Japan's extensive network of spies in the region, operating often under the cover of traders and embassy officials, provided the Japanese military planners with precise details of the enemy forces they would encounter. They were confident that they would be able to conquer all of Southeast Asia, including Burma, and most of the islands of the western Pacific Ocean, including the Philippines, within six months- and they very largely succeeded.

The United States had disposed large naval forces – including a powerful naval air force – at Pearl Harbour, the Philippines and various Pacific island bases, but superior Japanese diplomatic tactics kept them convinced that war between them would not occur before 1942 at the earliest. The forces defending the Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) had been left isolated by the defeat of the Netherlands by Germany in 1940 and they comprised of largely conscripted local people with little knowledge of modern warfare. Britain's ability to defend its colonies in Southeast Asia were seriously hampered by its position, fighting desperately against the German onslaught in Europe and having not only to defend the vital Middle East theatre with its oilfields and the Suez Canal, but also having to provide as much material aids as possible to the Soviet Union, which in December 1941 was on the point of military collapse. The forces that could be scraped together consisted largely of raw recruits with only eight weeks of training behind them, and local volunteers. Divisions from the Australian Imperial Force, although having experience of fighting in the Middle East, were not sufficient in numbers to defend such a large area with notoriously difficult terrain.

A final and important reason for the quick Japanese success in the ensuing campaign was the fact that the western Allies seriously underestimated the planning capabilities and fighting qualities of the Japanese military. The forces assigned to undertake the campaign were largely battle-hardened troops with experience of bitter fighting in China, including guerrilla warfare and insurgency tactics. Yet the allied military in its propaganda to its troops depicted the Japanese soldier as dull-witted, short sighted and liable to run away at the first sign of serious opposition. The psychological shock to those who first experienced the tenacity and determination of the Japanese troops to win at any cost was not to be forgotten for some time.

Japan launched its attack against the western Allies with simultaneous operations against Pearl Harbour, the US Navy's Principal Pacific base, and Malaya and Hong Kong on 8th December 1941. The attack was so successful for the Japanese that it gave them a naval superiority in the western Pacific that enabled them to carry out their invasion plans with little fear.

The Malayan campaign began at the same time as the attack on Pearl Harbour and other US bases, and the Japanese also attacked Hong Kong. Malaya was however their principle land objective, as the first phase to conquering the entire Malayan

peninsular and attaining the key prize of Singapore. The Japanese Navy's modern carrier-based planes quickly established air superiority over the Allies' largely obsolete air force, allowing the landing parties to easily establish bridgeheads. The Allied ground troops were dispersed throughout Malaya to guard airfields, a tactical error that made the job of the Japanese commanders that much easier. By the time the mistakes were recognised it was too late; the Japanese Imperial Army had by then established firm footholds in southern Thailand and northern Malaya.

Although the result of the campaign was a foregone conclusion, the Allied troops fought with bravery, even when faced with Japanese atrocity. The Japanese military code depicted that surrender was the ultimate shameful act and those that did deserved to die. Mass executions of prisoners were common, and although this had the effect of hardening the will of the Allied soldiers to fight the invader, they were simply overwhelmed by superior force and experience of their enemy. By the end of January the Malayan campaign was all but over. Allied commanders made the decision to retreat to Singapore, which had long been held up as an 'unbreachable fortress' by British propaganda. Malaya was lost.

To stiffen the defence of Singapore, Allied command sent the British 18th Division and thousands of troops from the Australian Imperial force to supplement the local forces and those who able to escape to the island from the fighting in Malaya. This represented a large fighting force which at times was superior in numbers to the Japanese forces opposing them. But the Allied forces were yet again at a serious disadvantage. There was virtually no air cover, the Japanese had complete control of the sea-lanes, and worse still the island's main water supply was situated across the water at the southern tip of Malaya, which the Japanese soon captured. Heavy bombing of the city, causing many civilian casualties, combined with the steady depletion of the water supply, convinced the Allied commanders that further resistance was useless, and after seven days they accepted the Japanese terms of surrender on 15th February 1942. The British Empire's 'Jewel in the Crown' of its Far East possessions had fallen and 130,000 Australian, British and Indian troops were taken prisoner.

The invasion of Dutch East Indies was probably the easiest campaign the Japanese Army conducted in the conquest of Southeast Asia. With total control of the seas, they were able to land troops on any of the colony's islands at will. The allied

forces in place to oppose them were entirely inadequate for the task, and their small numbers were thinly dispersed throughout the colony. The main island of Java finally fell on 9th March 1942.

Japan began its invasion of Burma on 16th December 1941 from its bridgeheads in southern Thailand. The Japanese Army rapidly drove north along the narrow coastal strip dividing Thailand and Burma, encountering little serious resistance. By the end of December they controlled the entire Isthmus of Kra (the coastal strip) and were in position for the assault on the Burmese capital Rangoon. Allied resistance became stronger because of the better terrain for fighting of the Burmese central plains, but they were no match for the Japanese and the Burmese capital fell on 8th March 1942. Not pausing for celebration, the Japanese Army continued its drive and by May 1942 only small remnants of Allied forces remained in Burma. Japan had achieved its target of conquering Southeast Asia in six months (between December 1941- May 1942).

Timetable of the Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia

Date	*Event*
8th December 1941	Japan begins its invasion of Malaya and southern Thailand.
16th December 1941	Japanese forces begin the invasion of Southern Burma from its footholds in southern Thailand.
21st January 1942	Thailand is forced to sign a treaty of cooperation with Japan, under threat of total invasion and subjugation of its citizens. Without the necessary military means to resist, Thailand has no choice but to sign.
25th January 1942	Thailand is required by the Japanese to declare war on Britain and the U.S.A.
31st January 1942	The last Allied troops withdraw from Malaya.
8th February 1942	The battle for Singapore begins, with heavy bombing and the cutting of the island's mainland water supply.
15th February 1942	Allied commanders accept the Japanese terms of surrender and Singapore falls.

27th February 1942	The battle of Java Sea. Japan inflicts a heavy defeat on the remaining Allied naval forces and establishes complete dominance of western Pacific.
1st March 1942	The Australian cruiser HMAS Perth and the US cruiser USS Houston are sunk by the Japanese Navy. Survivors struggle ashore in Java. Japan begins its invasion of Java.
8th March 1942	Japanese troops capture the Burmese capital Rangoon.
9th March 1942	Allied forces surrender Java to the Japanese.
April-May 1942	Heavy fighting in Burma leads to the final withdrawal of allied forces into India. The Japanese conquest of mainland Southeast Asia is complete.

After their conquest of Southeast Asia, the Japanese authorities found that they had a very large number of prisoners of war to manage, a circumstance that they had not originally planned for. Prisoners of war were first held in temporary camps close to where they were captured. In mid- 1942 it was decided to transfer all prisoners captured in the region to a large camp in Singapore. Changi prisoner of war camp was eventually to hold 130,000 men. Condition were at first tolerable, although overcrowding was a problem. The Allied officers quickly established a command structure and placed all prisoners under military discipline, which had the effect of maintaining morale and also of establishing a stable communication structure with the Japanese prisoner of war administration.

The Japanese government was not a signatory to the Geneva Convention and their military code of honour deemed that anyone taken prisoner forfeited any rights and were considered to have changed sides. They therefore made what was for them the logical decision to put Allied prisoners of war to work. Heedless of the protests of Allied officers, captured men were sent to work on jobs that assisted the enemy. Prisoners at Changi were sent to work on the docks and to repair roads and buildings damaged by the conflict. The Japanese authorities quickly realised the potential usefulness to them of a large, well-disciplined body of men able to work on the various projects that had planned, as well as to make good the numbers of men lost to the Japanese economy through conscription to the military. The Japanese prisoner of war administration divided those

prisoners deemed to be fir for work into ‘Forces’ and began to plan the distribution of the men to various locations under their control to assist with the Japanese war efforts. These forces were:

‘A’ Force	Sent to Burma, initially to construct airfields, then to work on Thailand - Burma Railway.
‘B’ Force	Sent to Borneo to construct airfields.
‘C’ Force	Sent to Japan to work in shipyards, factories and mines.
‘D’ Force	Sent to Thailand to work on the Thailand-Burma Railway.
‘E’ Force	Sent to Borneo to construct airfields.
‘F’ Force	Sent to Thailand to work on the Thailand-Burma Railway.
‘G’ Force	Sent to Japan to work in shipyards, factories and mines.
‘H’ Force	Sent to Thailand to work on the Thailand-Burma Railway.
‘K’ Force	Sent to Thailand to provide medical services to Asian labourers.
‘L’ Force	Sent to Thailand to provide medical services to Asian labourers.

The construction of the Thailand-Burma Railway

When the Second World War started in South East Asia in December 1941, all countries in the region were affected. Especially the European-colonised countries like; Indochina, Burma, Singapore, Malaya and the Dutch East Indies. Thailand (Siam), although, not colonised, was located in the centre of South East Asia, was forced by the Japanese Imperial Army to coordinate in the construction of a strategic railway line to connect the Malay peninsular with Burma.

The idea of linking the railway systems of Burma and Thailand was first examined by the British colonial authorities in Burma, who conducted two surveys of four possible routes, in 1885 and in 1905. The route considered the most feasible was the one linking Kanchanaburi in Thailand with Moulmein in Burma, but the project was shelved because the British authorities decided that it would prove too costly to build, would not be economically viable and would cost too many lives in its construction and maintenance.

In late 1930s, the Japanese government carried out a study of the various routes available, largely from the early British surveys, and came to the same conclusion about the best route. Then in 1942, with the Japanese firmly in control of the region, a proper

survey of this route was undertaken. The Japanese authorities did not reach the same conclusions as the British about the potential effectiveness of the railway, because they wanted it for a different purpose. Their purpose was to use this cross-national railway as a military supply line through Burma to reach India without risking allied submarine attacks on the sea-routes. This was not to be a railway for the transportation of passengers and consumer goods but a war railway.

Little modern equipment was made available for railway work. Earth and rock were broken by shovels, picks and hoes, and carried away in baskets or sacks. Embankments of stone and earth were heaped up by human endeavour. Cuttings were driven through rock by hand; metal taps and sledgehammers being used to drill holes for explosives. Most of the bridges along the railway were timber trestle bridges made from timber cut from the surrounding jungle.

The railway line, which was later to be widely known as the 'Death Railway' is the Thailand-Burma Railway, built during June 1942 until October 1943 by British, Dutch, Australian and American prisoners of war and impressed Asian labourers, predominantly Indian, Tamils, Indonesian, Malay and Burmese (Fig. 17). During its construction it is estimated that more than 12,000 of the 60,000 allied prisoners of war died - mainly of disease, malnutrition and exhaustion - and were buried along the railway (Fig. 19). The Asian labourers also suffered high death rates, it is estimated that between 80,000 and 100,000 of more than 200,000 Asian workers perished (Fig. 18). The Japanese kept no records of these deaths and it was not possible for anyone else to do so. The graves of Asian workers remain unmarked.

Fig.17 Prisoners of war during the construction of the ‘Death Railway’. Australia War Memorial (AWM) P406/40/34

Fig.18 The Asian labourers. AWM (P406/40/18)

Fig.19 One of cemeteries along the ‘Death Railway’. Source unknown.

The route in Thailand was 303.95 kilometres in length, most of which passed through dense rain forests, deep valleys and streams, and high mountains before arriving at the Burmese border. From then on, the line went through similar topographic landscapes for 111.05 kilometres. The whole length of this cross-national railway line was 415 kilometres (Fig. 20). With such difficult terrain, the construction of this line was extremely difficult. The Japanese planned to complete the line within one year, while normally the construction would require 5 - 6 years for completion.

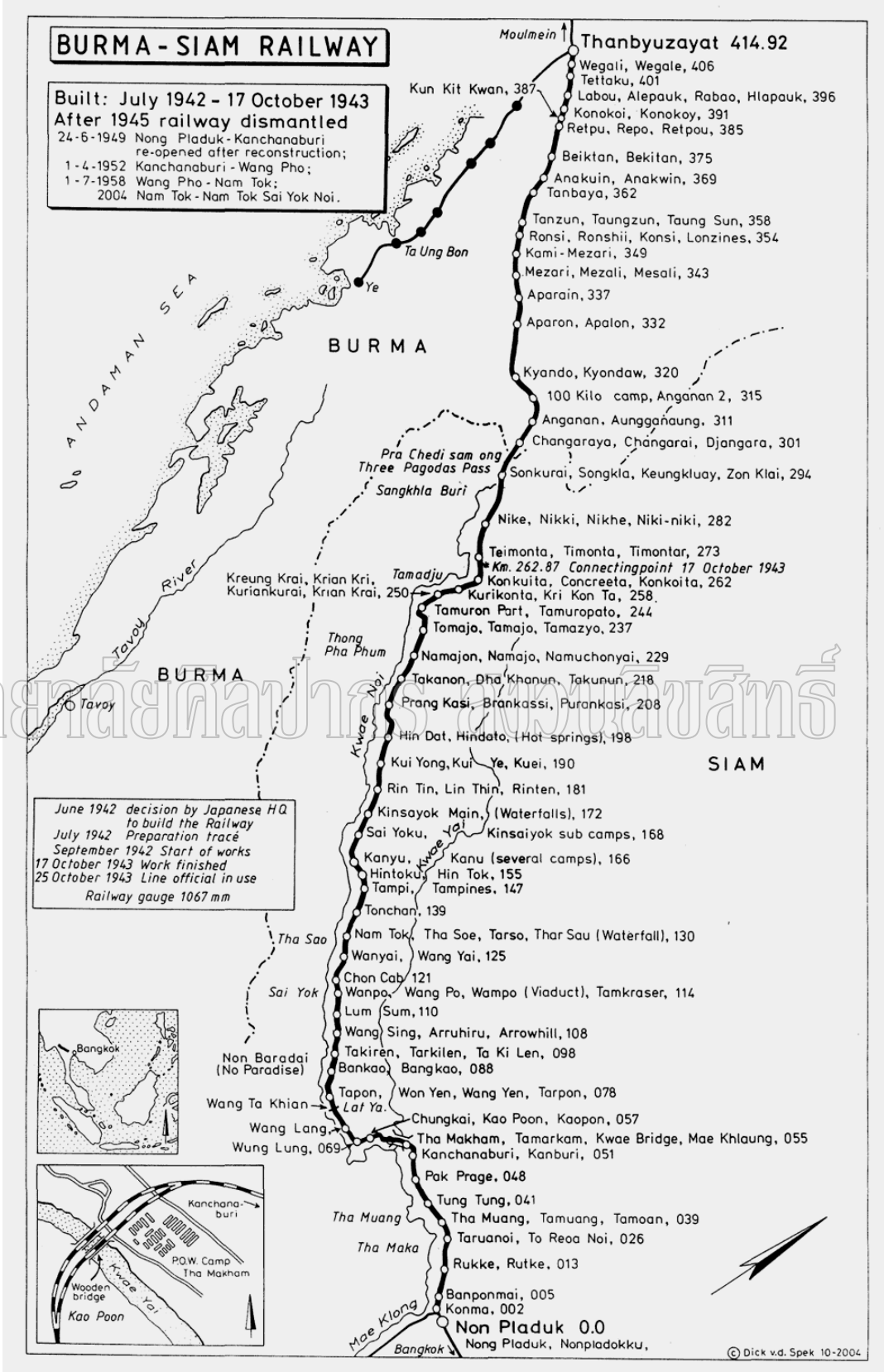


Fig.20 Old map of the 'Death Railway' started from Nong Pladuk (Thailand) to Thanbyuzayat (Burma). Source unknown.

Between December 1943 and August 1945 some 220,000 tons of military supplies were carried over the railway. Allied air raids hindered the railway's operation yet the Japanese continued to move supplies along the route. Following the end of the war, the British Army took up a short section of four kilometres of the railway line, at the Thailand-Burma border. The section of railway in Thailand was subsequently sold to the Thai Government along with most of the rolling stock. The remains of those who died during the construction and maintenance of the Thailand-Burma Railway (except the Americans whose remains were repatriated to U.S. soil) were transported from the camp burial grounds and solitary sites along the railway into three war cemeteries. At Chongkai and Kanchanaburi War cemeteries lay the remains of those who were recovered from the southern end of the railway. In the War Cemetery at Thanbyuzayat in Burma lie those from the northern end.

After inspection of the deteriorated and damaged rail in 1947, the State Railways of Thailand who administers all railways in the country, decided it was feasible to rebuild or re-lay the line only as far as Namtok Station (Sai Yok waterfall/ in wartime called 'Tarsao'). This strengthened and re-laid track became a famous tourist route, highly recommended as an *in situ* experience, and successful in achieving its goal as a time machine back to the past. The rest of the rails along the greater length of the railway were torn up and sold as scrap and over many years the timberwork, bridges, sleepers etc. have been taken away by local people for reuse or simply allowed to rot away in the jungle.

Cultural Heritage Significance Assessment

Principally, before making decisions about the future of a heritage, it is first necessary to understand its heritage significance. This leads to decisions that will retain these values in the future. The main aim in assessing significance is to produce a succinct statement of significance, which summarises a heritage's values. In the Australia ICOMOS Burra Charter, cultural heritage significance assessment criteria encompass the four values, which are commonly accepted as generic values by international professionals, these are:

- historical value
- aesthetic value

- scientific value
- social value

Places related to the Second World War in Kanchanaburi are highly important to both Thai and international history. They show evidence of a significant human activity of war. No one really denies the existence and tragedy of the Second World War. They are also associated with specific groups of people. Nowadays, the ex-POWs and families use some sites for commemorations on special occasions. They contribute knowledge and understanding about the Second World War, and assist us to make a link between the war that occurred in the West and in the East. These international historical values, contribute to crucial *genius loci* of the heritage to local communities. In general, people of Kanchanaburi have a 'sense of pride' in the war heritage, although later generations do not have much knowledge and are less emotionally connected to it. History of the Second World War has less importance in official Thai history according to textbooks from the Education Ministry, something the government does not want to mention in depth. Thus, the Thais feel that this heritage does not belong to them completely and has to be shared with, mostly, westerners. Simply said, the Thais share the physical part of the heritage, but not intangible values.

Another reason is the impact of the big failure in conservation of cultural heritage in Thailand that tends to push out local communities while isolating the heritage for tourists, or reserving it only for the social elite. Fortunately, the war heritage is spread over almost the whole province of Kanchanaburi. Daily confrontations with the war associated historic places assist the locals in becoming acquainted with it. It can also be seen that their appreciation of the heritage is based on an economic reason, in which heritage can be turned into tourism products.

Atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is a vast area the cultural heritage significance that mention here is in a more general term. Thus, this heritage has shown heritage significance that can be listed as follow;

1. Historical value

- It is highly important to both Thai and international history.
- It contributes knowledge and understanding about the Second World War.
- It assists in creating a link between the war in the West and in the East.
- It shows evidence of a significant human activity.

- It is associated with significant event, person, or several groups of people.
- It shows evidence of a significant human activity important to community.
- These international historical values contribute crucial *genius loci* of the physical setting to local communities.

2. Aesthetic value

- It is a fine example of its type (railway).
- It is significant in its setting, location, condition and size (especially the Hellfire Pass).
- It has a landmark quality.
- It is outstanding because of its integrity or the esteem in which it is held.

3. Scientific value

- It is an outstanding achievement in a railway's engineering on a difficult topography.
- It is the inspiration for a creative or technical innovation or achievement.
- It shows and is associated with creative or technical innovation or achievement via its railway, museum architecture, exhibition design, monumental designs and detail decorations.
- It is an important benchmark or reference site or type.

4. Social value

- It is crucial to the community's sense of place.
- It is important for its association with identifiable groups.
- It gives impact worldwide and the subjects about the 'Death Railway' is still an ongoing discourse internationally.

Level of significance

Commonly, there are two ways in grading the significance; first is in the level of local, province, state, national or international; second is by the degree of significance, ranking from exceptional, high, moderate, little and intrusive. For atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', after analysing its cultural heritage significance, combines with several physical investigations. The assessment tells that the heritage has exceptional significance in a level of international importance.

Statement of Significance

"Atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' serves as a symbol of atrocities between humans to humans that occurred during the Second World War. It also serves as a landmark of Second World War to Thailand and to the world. It represents one of the world most important historical war events as well as representing a high knowledge in railway's engineering, technology and architecture. Above all, it has a high 'sense of place' to both local and international".

Interpretation of the heritage places at the present

1. Around the Bridge over the River Kwai

Atrocity sites of the Second World War in Kanchanaburi, which have come to mark the beginning of the Thailand - Burma Railway for tourists, have been used by the local community to attract tourists to the small town in order to show them the past that tourists want to see. The 1957 film *Bridge on the River Kwai* (based on a novel of the same name by Pierre Boulle) had, by the 1970s, brought many tourists to the town, all wanting to see the 'real bridge on the River Kwai'; they were disappointed because a part of both the film and the book were fiction (Fig. 21). In his novel Pierre Boulle took 'Kwai' from the name of the Kwae Noi (meaning 'little tributary') which ran alongside the Thailand - Burma railway. There were, close to the River Kwae Noi, both a wooden bridge and a steel bridge, but these bridges were over the Mae Klong, a river that the Kwae Noi flowed into. Both these bridges over the river Mae Klong were part of the Thailand - Burma railway built by the POWs. The surviving steel bridge was the only remaining fixture that the locals could have designated as the 'Bridge over the River Kwai', to satisfy the demands of the mass influx of tourists to see the 'authentic' bridge. How this was done had more to do with artifice than a regard for historical accuracy. Rod Beattie, the present manager of Thailand - Burma Railway Centre wrote that " the film title was incorrect (there was never a bridge constructed over the River Kwae Noi…) the locals not wanting to disappoint the booming tourist, soon adopted the little-used name of the River Kwae Yai (big Kwae) for the River Mae Klong" (2005: 6). Thus there is the Bridge over the River Kwai. The impact of tourism and fiction had simply overwhelmed historical and geographical truth.

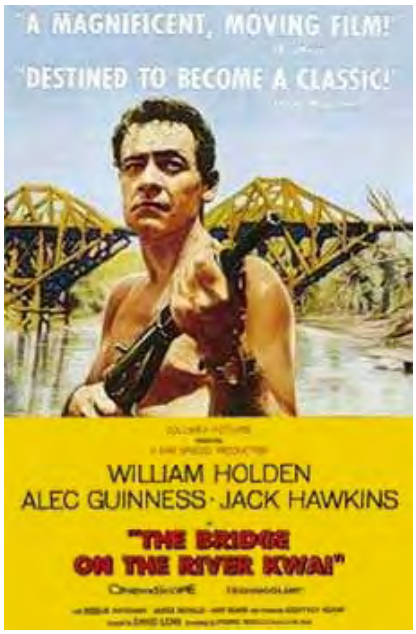


Fig.21 The poster of the famous film *'The Bridge on the River Kwai'*. The VDO cover.

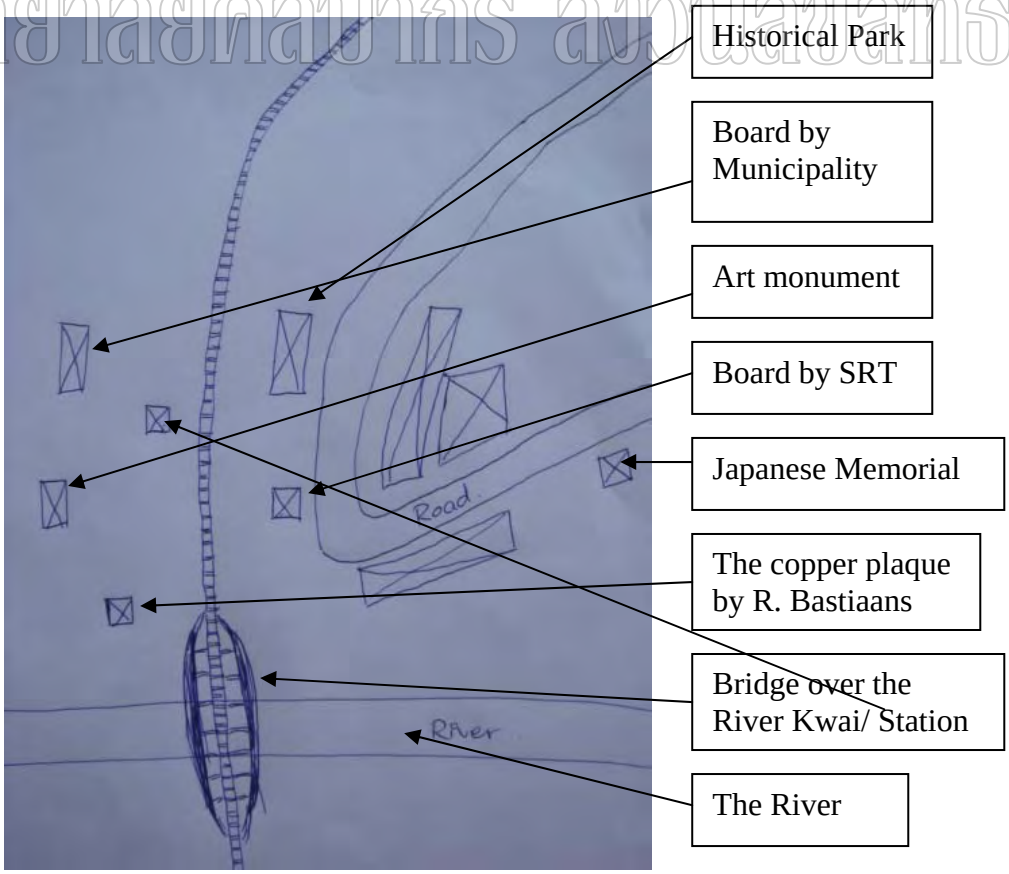


Fig.22 Map of the square around the Bridge over the River Kwai.

Fig.23 Vintage train passes the Bridge over the River Kwai. The author, Aug., 2007.

At the bridge, intensive commercial activities are taking place. There are numerous souvenir shops, which sell every conceivable commodity that can be connected with the war historical sites in Kanchanaburi, from T-shirts to miniature bombs and bridges. There are also festivals, such as the 'River Kwai Bridge Week', with its fireworks display over the bridge, held every last week of November to first week of December, to simulate Allied bombing of the bridge during the war. Ice-cream and drinks stands and hawker food stalls dot the area to cater for the busloads of tourists and guests staying in the nearby luxury hotels, such as the 'River Kwai Hotel'. There are even 'Bridge on the River Kwai' restaurants on rafts flanking the bridge, internet cafés, bars, even a brand of local drinking water and many more. Simply said, the conversion of 'history' to tourist attraction is carried here to the extreme: the site of the famous bridge is a monument to consumption, against which the narrative and relics that give it meaning are trivialised into mementos, souvenirs and snapshots.

A striking copper base-relief plaque designed by Australian Ex-POW Ross Bastiaans explaining the construction of the Bridge and 'Death Railway' stands in the square (Fig. 25). Bastiaans has made several of these plaques (in the same design) with a financial support from Australian organisations and placed them at important places related to the construction of the 'Death Railway'. These plaques can also be found at

the Hellfire Pass; the Nam Tok Train Station; and at the Three Pagoda Pass in Thailand. Another one outside Thailand is at the Changi Prison and Chapel Museum in Singapore.

At the same square, in the middle of stalls and hawkers, there are two old wooden boards explaining about the war and the construction of the Bridge and Railway, one made by the Kanchanaburi Municipality and another by the State Railway of Thailand (Fig. 24). The stories described are similar, being about the horror of war and almost copy each other. At the opposite corner of the square, there is what we call 'de-contextualsation' monuments (a means to get the context explained in a more understandable way) made in abstract forms. One group of these sculptures is made in the form of figures and letters. It reads "all war" (Fig. 27). Another monument is a gigantic panel of dark granite with a golden text on it which describes the history of the war and the railway in two languages, Thai and English (Fig. 26). This long panel of granite leads to the historical park, opposite the Bridge over River Kwai Train Station. In the historical park, there is collection of old locomotives used during wartime, being displayed in the open air with signs explaining the objects (Fig. 28).

Fig.24 The interpretation signpost made by SRT at the square. The author, March, 2007.

Fig.25 The copper plaque. The author, March 2007.

Fig.26 Interpretation made by Kanchanaburi Municipality as a part of monument on the square. The author, May 2007.

Fig.27 Art monument at the square. The author, March, 2007.

Fig.28 Historical Park at the square in front of the Bridge. The author, Oct., 2006.

Summary of physical setting and interpretative measures at the Bridge over the River Kwai

1. Physical setting: the Bridge is a typical of steel bridge of 20th century with concrete pillars supported from the river. The square in front of the Bridge is well-paved with granite and marble that being used on the ground. The board from SRT is old and decay and being disturbed by stalls. The board from Municipality is well-kept as well as copper plaque from Australian institute. The physical landscape of

the Bridge is poor, loss of integrity as a very important monument, being disturbed by boats, floating restaurants, numbers of shop houses and stalls. The development of tourist's amenities is not sympathetic to the Bridge and surrounding.

2. Buildings condition: most buildings, monuments and the Bridge are in modest condition. There is a regular maintenance of the Bridge but not all buildings and monuments associated to.

3. Site's location: excellent location, it is in the heart and a must-see tourist's destination of Kanchanaburi.

4. Accessibility: easy to access by several ways; car, public transportations (bus/train), bicycle and on foot.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the Bridge is listed in most national and international tourist brochures, public relations on radio/television/ newspapers/internet and several types of printing material.

5.2 On-site interpretation: *in situ* way of interpretation, which is the strong point of the site. Beside poor techniques are used such as boards, signposts.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: the Bridge is at original site, which stimulates emotion and curiosity of visitors. With little assistance from interpretative measures, the site interprets itself.

7. Exhibition evaluation: visitors are moved by curiosity and emotions of the place itself.

2. Kanchanaburi and Chongkai War Cemetery

The Kanchanaburi War Cemetery (local name 'Don Rak') is the place where the remains of 6,982 prisoners of war who died during the construction of the 'Death Railway' are buried. These remains are from several nationalities of prisoners of war such as British, Dutch, Australian and New Zealand. It is one of three cemeteries, the others being Chongkai (Kanchanburi) and Thanbuzyyat in Burma, under the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. It is located opposite the Kanchanaburi Railway Station and is open every day from 08.30-18.00. Beside the Bridge over the

River Kwai, this cemetery is the second most visited place in atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. Another war cemetery, Chongkai, is located on the bank of River Kwai Noi about two kilometres outside the town. It was the place where one of the biggest Prisoners of War's camps was set up. Nothing else remains to be seen apart from this tranquil cemetery. Here are the graves of 1,740 men, most of whom were British.

The design of the three cemeteries is similar to other Commonwealth War Graves around the world, with one entry gate and rows of gravestones in the form of a Roman Cross. The black granite gravestones are well-chosen. Tey reflect the use of local material are used as a symbol of a monument of death in several places. A very high standard in keeping the garden green and simple with old trees stimulates the sense of place and allows the place to speak for itself.

At the entry of both cemeteries, there are stereotype Commonwealth War Graves Commission copper boards with well-written text in three language, Thai, English and Dutch. The text relates the story of the war and the construction of the railway. The texts at both cemeteries in Thailand are the same. However, there is an effort to keep the text as a source of information rather than a source of emotion, and allow the self-experiencing and ambience of the place to play a role in interpretation to visitors, in which most cases came out with tears and emotional confusion.

Fig.29 The entrance at Kanchanaburi War Cemetery. The author, April, 2006.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is responsible for the maintenance of graves and memorials in some 150 countries which commemorate around 1,700,000 members of the Commonwealth forces who died in the two world wars. Those commemorated here and elsewhere include servicemen and women of several different faiths and of none.

สุสานสงครามกาญจนบุรี

เมื่อเดือนธันวาคม ปี ค.ศ. 1941 หลังจากที่ญี่ปุ่นเข้าร่วมสงครามโลกครั้งที่สองแล้ว กองทัพญี่ปุ่นได้ยึดครองดินแดนส่วนใหญ่ในเอเชียอาคเนย์อย่างรวดเร็วตลอดมาในปี ค.ศ. 1942 ญี่ปุ่นตัดสินใจใช้แรงงานเชลยศึกและกรรมการพลเรือนสร้างทางรถไฟทางเดี่ยวที่บ้านโป่งทางด้านตะวันออกเชื่อมกับธนบุรีรถไฟที่เมืองทันบูยาส่ด ทางด้านตะวันตกเพื่อย่นระยะทางเดินทาง และปกป้องเส้นทางการส่งเสบียงระหว่างประเทศสยาม (ประเทศไทยในปัจจุบัน) และประเทศพม่า (ปัจจุบัน คือเมียนมา) การสร้างทางรถไฟสายนี้เริ่มจากพม่า และประเทศไทยในเวลาเดียวกัน ซึ่งในที่สุดมาบรรจบกันที่ Konkuita เมื่อเดือนตุลาคม ค.ศ. 1943 การสร้างทางรถไฟสังหารชีวิตที่เป็นเชลยศึกไปประมาณ 15,000 คน และพลเรือนอีก 100,000 คน เนื่องจากประสบโรคภัยไข้เจ็บต่างๆ การขาดอาหาร ความเหน็ดเหนื่อยอ่อนเพลีย และการทารุณกรรม

สุสานแห่งนี้เป็นสุสานที่ใหญ่ที่สุดในจำนวนสามแห่งที่ตั้งอยู่ตลอดเส้นทางรถไฟพม่า-ไทย ตั้งอยู่ใกล้สถานที่ตั้งค่ายกักกันเชลยศึก "กาญจนบุรี" ในอดีต ซึ่งเป็นสถานที่ที่เชลยศึกส่วนใหญ่เดินทางมาถึงไปที่ต่างๆ Colin St Clair Oakes เป็นผู้ออกแบบสุสานนี้จากหน่วยสุสานทหารรบ (The Army Graves Service) สร้างขึ้นหลังจากสงครามโลกครั้งที่สอง หน่วยงานนี้ได้ดำเนินการย้ายศพทหารที่มีจากหลายๆ ที่ และสุสานที่อื่นๆ ตลอดเส้นทางรถไฟช่วงต่างๆ ในค่ายไทยรวมทั้งสถานที่อื่นๆ ในประเทศไทยด้วย

สุสานแห่งนี้สร้างขึ้นเพื่อระลึกถึงผู้เสียชีวิตจากประเทศในเครือจักรภพมากกว่า 5,000 คน และจากฮอลันดา 1,800 คน และในจำนวนนี้มีผู้เสียชีวิตจากโรงพักต่างๆ ที่ Nieke และ Changaraya ประมาณ 300 คน หลังจากดำเนินการฝังศพแล้วได้นำอัฐิมาไว้ที่สุสานแห่งนี้ ภายในสุสานสำหรับรายนามของผู้เสียชีวิตจารึกไว้ที่สายของสุสาน นอกจากนั้นยังมีสุสานทหารของกองทัพอินเดีย สิบเอ็ดคนที่มีอยู่ตามสถานที่อื่นในประเทศไทยซึ่งไม่สามารถดูแลรักษาได้ รายนามเหล่านั้นถูกจารึกไว้ที่ฝั่งตะวันตก ทางเข้าสุสาน

คณะกรรมาธิการสุสานสงครามแห่งเครือจักรภพ (The Commonwealth War Graves Commission) รับผิดชอบในการดูแลบำรุงรักษาสุสานและอนุสาวรีย์ประมาณ 150 ประเทศ ซึ่งระลึกถึงทหารจากประเทศต่างๆ ในเครือจักรภพประมาณ 1,700,000 คน ซึ่งเสียชีวิตในระหว่างสงครามโลกทั้งสองครั้ง ผู้ที่ได้รับการระลึกถึงทั้งที่นี่และที่อื่นๆ รวมผู้ชายและสตรีผู้ที่ให้ความช่วยเหลือในช่วงสงคราม ซึ่งเป็นผู้ที่นับถือศาสนาต่างๆ และผู้ไม่เชื่อมั่นในศาสนาใด

Kanchanaburi oorlogsbegraafplaats

Vanaf hun deelname in december 1941 aan de Tweede Wereldoorlog veroverden de Japanse strijdkrachten in snel tempo het grootste deel van Zuidoost-Azië. Op zoek naar een kortere en veiligere aanvoerroute tussen Birma (nu Myanmar) en Siam (nu Thailand) besloten de Japanners in 1942 krijgsgevangenen en burgers te gebruiken om een spoorlijn aan te leggen tussen Thanbyuzayat in het westen en Ban Pong in het oosten. Twee ploegen, één gestationeerd in Siam, de andere

Fig.30 The copper plaque by CWGC in front of Kanchanaburi War Cemetery written in three languages. The author, April, 2006.

Chongkai War Cemetery

After entering the Second World War in December 1941, Japanese forces quickly overran most of South East Asia. In 1942, in order to find a shorter and more secure line of supply between Burma (now Myanmar) and Siam (now Thailand), the Japanese decided to use prisoners of war and civilian labour to build a single line railway to link existing railheads at Thanbyuzayat in the west and Ban Pong in the east. Two forces, one based in Siam and one in Burma, worked from opposite ends of the line, meeting at Konkuita in October 1943. The project cost the lives of approximately 15,000 prisoners of war and 100,000 civilians as a result of sickness, malnutrition, exhaustion and maltreatment.

Chongkai was one of the major base camps on the railway. It contained a hospital and a church built by the prisoners and this cemetery, designed by Colin St Clair Oakes, was created from the original burial ground started by them. It now contains the graves of more than 1,400 Commonwealth and 300 Dutch casualties, the majority of whom died in the camp hospital.

The Commonwealth War Graves Commission is responsible for the maintenance of graves and memorials in some 150 countries which commemorate around 1,700,000 members of the Commonwealth forces who died in the two world wars. Those commemorated here and elsewhere include servicemen and women of several different faiths and of none.

สุสานสงครามช่องไก่

Chungkai oorlogsbegraafplaats

Vanaf hun deelname in december 1941 aan de Tweede Wereldoorlog veroverden de Japanse strijdkrachten in snel tempo het grootste deel van Zuidoost-Azië. Op zoek naar een kortere en veiligere aanvoerroute tussen Birma (nu Myanmar) en Siam (nu Thailand) besloten de Japanners in 1942 krijgsgevangenen en burgers te gebruiken om een spoorlijn aan te leggen tussen Thanbyuzayat in het westen en Ban Pong in het oosten. Twee ploegen, één gestationeerd in Siam, de andere in Birma, werkten vanaf deze eindpunten van de beide spoorlijnen naar elkaar toe en ontmoetten elkaar in oktober 1943 in Konkuita. Door ziekte, ondervoeding, uitputting en mishandeling heeft de Birmaspoorweg het leven gekost van ongeveer 15.000 krijgsgevangenen en 100.000 burgers.

Chungkai was een van de belangrijkste basiskampen aan de spoorweg. Het had een ziekenhuis, een door de gevangenen gebouwde kerk en een begraafplaats. Deze begraafplaats vormde later het uitgangspunt voor het definitieve ontwerp van Colin St Clair Oakes. Hier bevinden zich de graven van meer dan 1.400 slachtoffers van het Gemenebest. Daarnaast zijn hier 300 Nederlandse slachtoffers begraven. De meesten stierven in het kampziekenhuis.

De Commonwealth War Graves Commission is verantwoordelijk voor het onderhoud van graven en gedenktekens in bijna 150 landen. Het gaat om ongeveer 1.700.000 graven van leden van de strijdkrachten van het Gemenebest uit twee Wereldoorlogen, mannen en vrouwen van verschillende geloofsovertuiging.

Fig.31 The same copper plaque by CWGC in front of Chongkai War Cemetery. The author, April, 2006.

Summary of physical settings and interpretative measures at the Kanchanaburi and Chongkai cemetery

1. Physical settings: Both cemeteries were built in a stereotype of cemetery that under the care of Commonwealth War Graves Commissions with a simple design of entry and a cross at the centre of the graveyard. The garden is very well-kept with different types of flowers in front of the gravestones and big trees with a fence around. At Kanchanaburi cemetery the physical landscape is being disturbed by the housing development around the cemetery.

2. Buildings condition: all buildings and graves are in very good condition. Obviously, there is a regular maintenance and daily care. Both cemeteries are very well-kept with fence, lawn, flowers and big trees.

3. Site's location: excellent location, the Kanchanaburi cemetery is in the town's centre and right in front of the railway station while the Chongkai cemetery is outside the town in a reachable distance.

4. Accessibility: easy to access by several ways; car, public transportations (bus/train), bicycle and on foot. At Chongkai is also reachable by boat.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the two cemeteries are listed in most national and international tourist brochures, public relations on radio/television/newspapers/internet and several types of printing material.

5.2 On-site interpretation: There are copper boards made by CWGC at the entrance written in 3 languages. There is also name, and small detail of POWs at each gravestone.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: from the physical settings and symbolic meanings both cemeteries interpret themselves very well without an assistant of interpretative measures. It stimulates emotion of visitors.

7. Exhibition evaluation: visitors are moved by curiosity and emotions of the place itself.

3. The Japanese Memorial Monument

Little known to tourists, not far from the Bridge, stands the Japanese Memorial Monument in the middle of a well-kept garden. This memorial is made out of a massive stone with Japanese letters carved into it. The design resembles the 'Pillars of the Death' at the Hiroshima Memorial Garden. At four corners around the monument there are walls made from cement with eight marble plaques on the top in seven languages dedicated to those prisoners of war and Asian labourers who helped to built the railway. The languages are Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese, Hindi, Thai, Malay and English (Fig. 33).

Outside the gate there is only one interpretative sign for this memorial. It is a marble plaque which describes briefly about the monument. It was erected in February 1944 and was open by a high-rank Japanese military man (Fig. 34). Every year, in February, Japanese people who live in Thailand gather together at this memorial for a commemoration. The memorial is taken care of by Japanese Associations in Thailand. The land where the memorial is standing was sold to the Japanese government when the memorial was ordered to be built. There is no printed material or any interpretation about this memorial, neither is it included in travelling brochures from Tourism Authority of Thailand nor brochures by private agencies. There is a small table at the entrance selling postcards and other printed material of atrocity heritage places of the 'Death Railway', but not about the memorial itself. There is a small donation box with a guestbook that has rarely been signed. The man who is in charge of keeping the memorial is half-Thai half-Japanese. He was born in Thailand with a Thai mother and has never seen his Japanese father.

Fig.32 The Japanese Memorial Monument. The author, April, 2006.

Fig.33 Texts at one of the four corners of Japanese Memorial devoted to those who lost their lives in building the 'Death Railway' here in Thai and Vietnamese. The author, April, 2006.

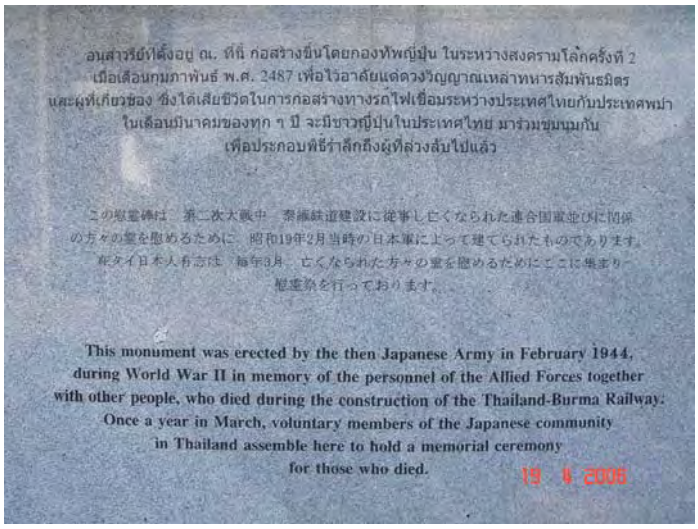


Fig.34 Interpretation plaque in front of the gate at Japanese Memorial Monument. The author, April, 2006.

Summary of physical setting and interpretative measures at the Japanese Memorial

1. Physical setting: the physical setting of the memorial consists of the big monument in the centre, surrounded with 4 corners of devotion, which written in 7 languages. There is a marble board at the fence-wall. The garden is nicely kept with big trees and fence around. The garden with big shadow gives a peaceful feeling. Very sympathetic to the surrounding.

2. Building condition: the monument is in a good state. Only at one of the corners of dedication was vandalised. There is a regular maintenance of the memorial and daily car by the care-giver.

3. Site's location: excellent location, around the corner of the Bridge.

4. Accessibility: easy to access by several ways; car, public transportations (bus/train), bicycle, and on foot.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the monument is not on the list in most national and international tourist brochures. There is no public relation on radio/television/newspapers/websites or any type of printing material.

5.2 On-site interpretation: There is only one board at the fence-wall describes shortly in 3 languages what the monument is for.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: the memorial is at original site, which stimulates emotion and curiosity of visitors. With little assistance from interpretative measures, the site interprets itself.

7. Exhibition evaluation: visitors are moved by curiosity and emotions of the place itself.

4. The JEATH War Museum

Amid the hawker stands and souvenir shops, and conveniently alongside the river, stands the JEATH Museum, which narrates the POW past. Its name has been sometimes taken by tourists for a misspelling of 'Death', but its operators insist that 'JEATH' came from 'J' for Japan, 'E' for England, 'A' for Australia and America, 'T' for Thailand, and 'H' for Holland. Nonetheless, this convenient confusion adds to tourist curiosity. The museum, which is a replica of the long bamboo sleeping huts that the POWs slept in, uses gruesome artefacts and pictures to convey the horrors of the POW experience (Fig.37). It was established in 1977, by a local Buddhist temple next to it. Visitors can experience the sight of a re-creation of the miseries of the POWs as they walk down the bamboo hut, which is dimly lit to create an eerie atmosphere.

Fig.35 The JEATH War Museum. The author, July, 2006.

Fig.36 Map shows the location of the JEATH War Museum. Museum brochure, 2006.

Fig.37 The museum's building that resembles the POWs' hut during the wartime. The author, July, 2006.

At the ticket counter, there is a free small brochure about the museum, provided in seven languages, Thai, English, Dutch, German, French, Japanese and Chinese. Here, the story is similar to stories at other places, on the horror of war. Visitors can gaze at a long gallery of gruesome images. Most objects exhibited were donated by villagers, some are relevant to the Second World War and the subject, and some objects are not from this war. The most effective interpretation in the museum is to show old photographs of POWs during the construction of the railway and in captivity along the shabby museum gallery. Beside the hundreds of gruesome pictures, there are copies of published articles from newspapers in several languages. Most articles repeat the same story and are written in a manner to provoke sensation rather than telling the war story. As observed by the author, it has such been the unrelenting nature of the depiction of human horrors that sometimes turns the eagerness and curiosity of the tourists to shock and tears.

Outside the museum's hut stands the interpretation board from Tourism Authority of Thailand, which describes the museum in short and inaccurate about the artefacts in the museum (Fig. 39). In front of the museum, next to the ticket counter stands another board from private company, which describe about the museum as similar to the one from TAT, but it does make a link to other Second World War atrocity sites in Kanchanaburi (Fig. 40).

Fig.38 Interpretation at JEATH War Museum. The author, Oct., 2006.

Fig.39 Interpretation by TAT in front of the JEATH War Museum's hut. The author, July, 2006.

Fig.40 Interpretation by private company in front of the ticket counter of the JEATH War Museum. The author, July, 2006.

Summary of physical setting and interpretative measures at the JEATH War Museum

1. Physical setting: the JEATH War Museum is an adjacent part of Wat Tai, it consists of a long bamboo hut exhibiting old and new pictures and newspaper's articles from all over the world. The ground of the hut is in clay as it was before during the wartime. There is ticket counter outside the fence-wall. At the fence-wall there is text written to inform the name of the museum, one board from the private company next to the ticket counter and TAT's board behind the fence-wall. The museum locates at the bank of the river and there is a boat pier just behind the museum for hired boats.

2. Building condition: in a sense of a bamboo hut the museum's hut is highly authentic. It is also in a good condition.

3. Site's location: good location, not too far from the Bridge.

4. Accessibility: easy to access by several ways; car, public transportations (bus), boat, bicycle, and on foot.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the museum is on the list in most local, national and international tourist brochures. There is a random public relation on national radio/television or other types of printing material. Often the museum is being written by international reporters or writers who visited the place (seen from numbers of international articles exposed in the museum). The museum has it own brochure in seven languages but no website.

5.2 On-site interpretation: Beside numbers of international articles that exposed in the museum, there is not much on-site interpretation. There is the name of the museum at the fence-wall and 2 boards describe shortly about the museum in 2 languages.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: the museum has a high characteristic that always draws attention from people to make a visit, might be

from several reasons such as the museum's hut as it was in the wartime, an eerie atmosphere or gruesome pictures and stories exhibited inside the museum. Interpretation at this museum is far beyond boards, panels and texts. It is all together with emotions, curiosity in a very unsettle environment.

7. Exhibition evaluation: visitors are moved by curiosity and emotions of the place itself.

5. The Thailand - Burma Railway Centre (TBRC)

Next to the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery, stands the newly open Thailand-Burma Railway Centre (2003). The museum is owned by a Thai-Australian Company, all of the managing team are Australians, while the other staff consist partly of Thais. It considers itself to be an interactive museum. The research and information centre is dedicated to presenting the story of Thailand-Burma Railway by using state-of-the-art display techniques combined with materials recovered from the route of the abandoned railway. The museum area has nine galleries and displays: topics start with an introduction and timeline of the Second World War. In the gallery 1 visitors enter the museum area under a wooden bridge mock-up constructed using the same techniques and materials used to build bridges on the railway. Gallery panels describe the Japanese invasion of Southeast Asia and the capture of prisoners. A light box displays the dispersal of Allied prisoners of war to many work areas throughout Asia. Further panels discuss the planning of the route. Visitors then pass through a mock-up of one of the 'rice wagon' railway boxcars used to transport prisoners from Singapore and Malaya to Thailand. An electric route map, using fibre optic lighting to display the actual routes taken, is located in the boxcar.

Fig.41 The museum building of Thailand-Burma Railway Centre. The author, July, 2006.

Fig.42 Map shows the location of TBRC. Museum brochure, 2006.

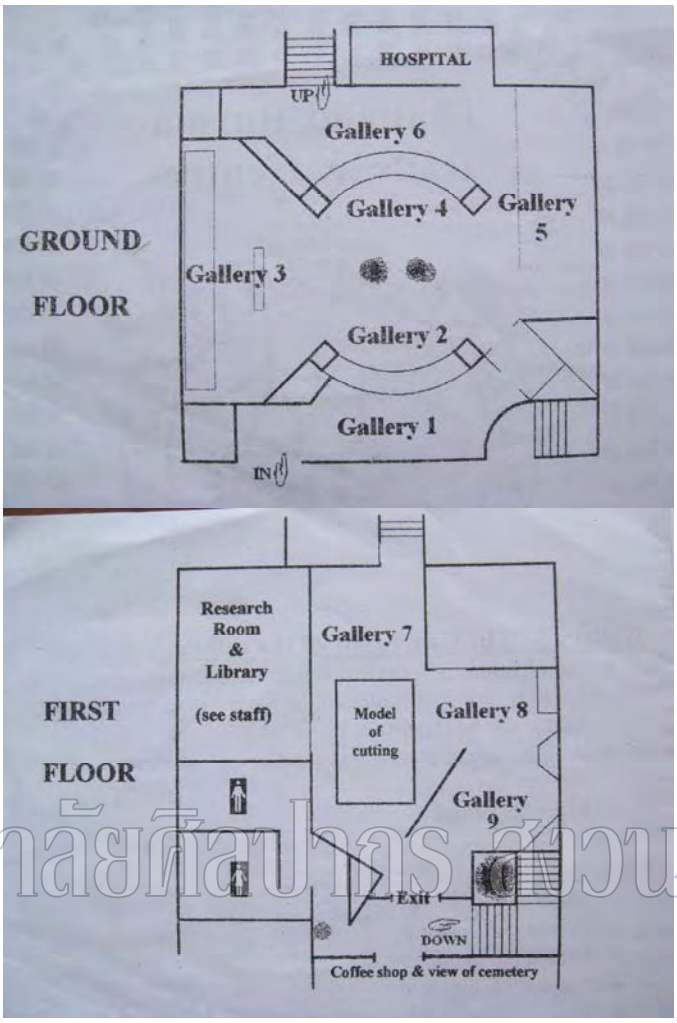


Fig.43 Floor plan of TBRC. Museum brochure, 2006.

In the gallery 2, there is the planning, construction and logistics of the railway, which details the techniques used by the Japanese engineers to plan, design, and build the railway. The gallery also contains actual relics of construction and tools used and recovered from the route of the railway (Fig. 43). Third gallery is the geography gallery, which is almost entirely visual in content. There are fascinating displays like a diorama depicting a riverside camp and construction scene; user-controlled lights pinpoint the confirmed locations of all of the work camps along the railway; graphic panels show wartime and present day images of the line. Several types of multimedia technology are used to tell stories, as well as models of the railway and a model of a railway cutting through a mountain (Fig. 43).

In the fourth gallery, the living conditions gallery, five panels describe the movement, accommodation, and food supplies of the prisoners, and compare the different conditions in each work area with the chances of survival of the workers. Interestingly, one panel is dedicated to describing the infamous 'Speedo' period between March and September 1943, when the majority of deaths occurred. The gallery also contains two showcases displaying relics of personal effects found in and around former POWs campsites. In the fifth gallery, another mock-up, in the medical aspects gallery, takes the form of a hospital hut. There are three main subjects in this room, doctors; disease and despair; and medical improvisation. Success is depicted in describing the skill, amazing resourcefulness, dedication and bravery of doctors and medical orderlies who did their utmost to help the men placed in their care (Fig. 43).

One of the easiest comprehensible exhibits is a histogram of the summary of deaths gallery, which is in galley 6. It made from old railway sleepers studded with rail spikes. It clearly shows the human cost of constructing the railway by nationality (Fig. 43). The upper floor leads us to gallery 7 - 9, which tells the story about the end of the railway and what happened after the war. Interestingly, the museum interpretation shows the human experience of liberation from the ordeal of captivity and slave labour, the repatriation of Allied POWs and Asian conscripts, and the establishment of three war cemeteries. The museum ends the visit with a coffee shop that offers a stunning panoramic view of the adjacent war cemetery. It is such a brilliant way of interpretation, the museum has integrated the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery into the museum building, in other words, the museum has made a link of atrocity events into the physical setting of the museum.

Fig.44 Chronological interpretation in gallery 1. The museum brochure, 2007.

Fig.45 Narration of the events at TBRC in gallery 9. The museum brochure, 2007.

Fig.46 Chronological way of interpretation at entrance. The author, Sept., 2006.

Fig.47 Interpretation by making of replica at gallery 4. The author, Sept. 2006.

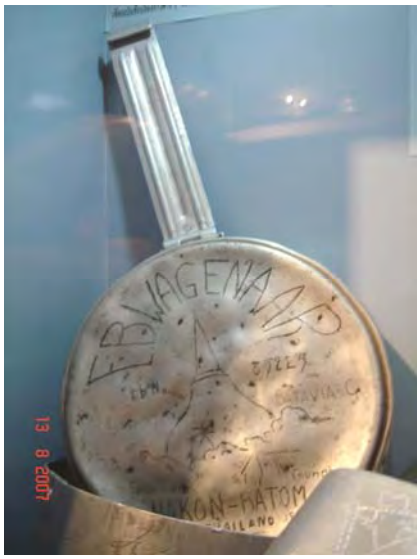


Fig.48 Interpretations at TBRC. The author, July, 2007.

Summary of physical setting and interpretative measures at the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre (TBRC)

1. Physical setting: the physical setting of TBRC consists of the museum building and a garden behind, which uses as outdoor exhibition space to exhibit a small piece of rail and some artefacts found from the 'Death Railway'. The museum has 2 floors with eight exhibition rooms and having a front door that faces to the Kanchanaburi cemetery.

2. Building condition: the museum and garden are in a good condition. There is a regular maintenance.

3. Site's location: excellent location, opposite the Kanchanaburi Cemetery.

4. Accessibility: easy to access by several ways; car, public transportations (bus/train), bicycle, and on foot.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the museum is on the list of local tourist brochure but not always on the list in national and international tourist brochures. There is a random public relations on radio/television/newspapers or other printing materials. The museum has its own website and brochure in 2 languages.

5.2 On-site interpretation: the museum practices a professional way of museum management. The museum is divided into 8 galleries and explains the exhibitions with panels, boards, pictures, artefacts, replicas and the usage of multimedia. On the upper floor visitors can enjoy a panoramic view of the Kanchanaburi Cemetery from the window of the museum.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: the museum has exploited from its location and integrating itself into the subject of war and atrocities happened during the war very well. The exhibitions are well-made, informative and give a moving experience to visitors.

7. Exhibition evaluation: visitor's experience is moved by the exhibition and interpretative measures exposed in the museum.

6. The Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (HPMM)

It is located in the forest, about seventy-five kilometres outside the town, further up the 'Death Railway' to the border to Burma. The name of the museum originally came from the name of the famous cutting, Konyu Cutting, later being named by the POWs as 'Hellfire Pass' (Fig. 57). It is derived from the fact that POWs, mainly Australians and British, had to work during the night at this cutting during the 'Speedo period'. They had to cut through the mountain, and with a primary campfire and the noise of working tools hitting on the rock, it resembled a hellfire. Although at present, even less has been left up to the imagination. This museum was opened by the Australian former Prime Minister Mr. John Howard, on Anzac Day (April, 25th) in 1998. In the beginning the project was funded by the Australian – Thai Chamber of Commerce to develop the walking trail until the Hellfire Pass. Later the Australian Government stepped in and gave the fund for the museum's building and exhibition inside. Until present the memorial is run by the Australian government.

Fig.49 The museum building of Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum. The author, April, 2006.

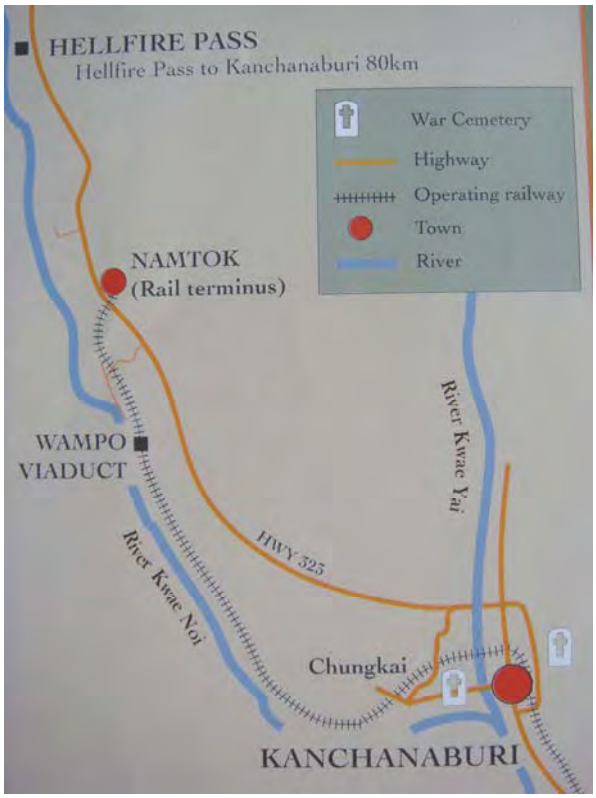


Fig.50 Map shows the location of Hellfire Pass. Museum brochure, 2007.

In one of the dimly lit chambers of the Hellfire Pass Museum, life-size dummies representing the POWs as living skeletons move the wooden ramparts of the railway. This museum has had the blessing of the Australian government and the ex-POWs. In comparison with the JEATH War Museum in the town of Kanchanaburi, the Hellfire Pass Museum appears to be more a site of commemoration than a site for tourists. This is perhaps because not so many tourists are willing to go that far up the Thailand - Burma Railway, compared to the more easily accessible JEATH War Museum.

As mentioned above, the museum is built, owned and run by the Australian government under the care of the Ministry of War Veterans Affairs. The manager is Australian and professionally trained to work in a museum. The other staffs are native Thai most of them are local people from Kanchanaburi. With knowledge, skill and adequate financial backing up, the memorial can create professional museum and exhibitions in comparison to the more financially poor museums in the town. The interpretation and presentation techniques here reach a good museum standard. Starting

from the building design, which is neutral with simple materials, it speaks for its own right as a museum, unfortunately not at all as a war memorial. The location *in situ* contributes to making *genius loci*, and is able to offer an interesting walking trail through the rail line. Exhibitions in the museum (the museum's workers prefer to call their museum an 'information centre') consist of an introduction and overview of World War II, and the construction of the Railway and how this place had importance. Although the museum is focussed on giving information rather than exhibiting relics, inevitably, the horror of war is being addressed and stimulated by the use of multimedia and technology for a better understanding. Printed materials for visitors like brochures, walking trail maps, etc. are well produced in four languages, Thai, English, Dutch and Japanese.

All objects displayed in the museums and sites are in some way or another 'interpreted'. Sometimes that interpretation is from the museum/site officials (with labels, captions, exhibition design, etc), sometimes from the visitors (drawing on his/her own experience). The museum and site managers and visitors put the museum, object, or site into some sort of context, whether cultural, social, artistic or natural, but not always the one intended or expected. The response to the site may be guided by the context given by the curator, but they will be accepted, rejected or adapted according to the visitor's knowledge and/or experience.

The way that the two museums, the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre and the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum, chose to tell visitors via their exhibitions that "These are the events that happened, here are the causes of those events, and these are the consequences of them" are stated facts, and it is left to the individual visitor to make his/her own judgement on the subject. The Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum is established on a significant site, which is a very effective tool of interpretation, for the site as well as the memorial. However, most visitors will need some sort of orientation to fully appreciate this significance, and the museum has provided several kinds of interpretation.

A narrative approach of explaining that these are the events that happened, here are the causes of those events, and these are the consequences of them is a common way to practice interpretation at this war site. All three museums at the war sites in Kanchanaburi use this means directly and indirectly.

Fig.51 Chronological way of interpretation at HPMM. The author, April,2006.

Fig.52 The terrace on the backside of the museum building with a view to the River Kwai and outlook to the 'Death Railway'. The author, April, 2006.

Fig.53 Multimedia interpretation. The author, Sept., 2006.

Fig.54 The national emblem of Australian Government used in all printing materials at HPMM and in the museum building. HPMM brochure, 2007.

Fig.55 Interpretations in the museum of HPMM. The author, Sept., 2006.

The highlight of this museum is the well-paved walking trail which provides an opportunity for visitors to follow a four kilometre section of the original railway and see first-hand where so many POWs were subjected to horrific conditions and treatment by their captors. Starting from the museum building, pass through the Hellfire Pass and end up at the Hintok Station (Fig. 56). But to experience the horror of this atrocity by walking through the trail for a short section of the first 300 metres until the Hellfire Pass has become famous and most used by the visitors (Fig.57). The Hellfire Pass (Konyu Cutting) stands just at that spot, with some relics like sleepers, hammer and spikes laying on the ground, as well as left studded in the rock. The visitor is guided by signposts and an audio explanation (Fig.58). At this point, there is monument to commemorate the deaths, made from black granite in an abstract form with a well-explained board. (Fig. 60). Every year at the dawn of Anzac Date, ex-POWs, their families and public gather here to commemorate those who never made it until the end of the war. It is worthwhile to note here that most foreigners who join the commemoration are Australians, both living in Thailand and overseas. It is obvious that there is a claim of ownership on the Hellfire Pass by the Australians. Furthermore, there is a strong political message at the museum and at the memorial. The message is focused on, and dedicated to, Australian POWs more than others. This might come from the fact that it is owned by the Australian government (under a specific agreement between two governments; Thailand and Australia), and during wartime mainly Australian POWs worked and died at the Hellfire Pass.

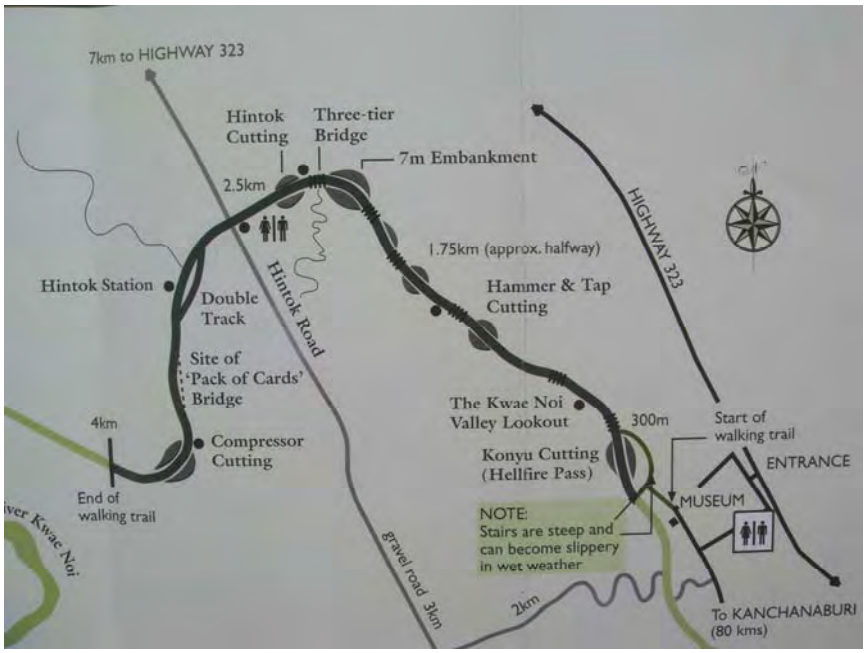


Fig.56 The walking trail map by HPMM. Museum brochure, 2007.


Fig.57 The Hellfire Pass Cutting. The author, April, 2006.

Fig.58 Memory plaque for Weary Dunlop at the Hellfire Cutting (where his ashes were scattered in the area). The author, April, 2006.

Fig.59 Another memory plaque at the Hellfire Cutting. The author, April, 2006.

Fig.60 Monument at Hellfire Cutting commemorates those POWs who built and those who lost their lives and during the construction of the 'Death Railway'. The author, April, 2006.

Summary of physical settings and interpretative measures at the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (HPMM)

1. Physical settings: the physical setting of HPMM consists of the museum building and the walking trail of 4 kilometres, which the Hellfire Cutting is a part of it. The museum building is in a modern design and simple form. On the way to the Hellfire Cutting there is a copper plaque made by Rod Bastiaans (as same as the one at the Bridge). At the Cutting there is the monument made from granite stone and 2 copper boards explain the place and remnants that are exhibited. The walking trail from the museum building to the Cutting is made out of concrete. From this point until the end of walking trail there is no concrete path, mostly with ground, stone and little rocks.

2. Building condition: the museum is in a very good condition. There is a regular maintenance of the building. The walking trail is well-paved and indicated.

3. Site's location: good location of being at the original site, but little disadvantage of having a far distance from the town.

4. Accessibility: can be accessed by car and local bus.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the memorial is on the list of local tourist brochures. Sometimes we can find in brochures of international travel agencies, especially agencies from Australia. There is a random public relations on radio/television/ newspapers. The memorial has it own website and brochure in 4 languages.

5.2 On-site interpretation: the museum practices a professional way of museum management. The museum is divided into galleries and explains the exhibitions with panels, boards, pictures, artefacts, replicas and the usage of multimedia. Only one place in the case study that provides personal audio guide for visitors, to carry with them during the visit. The presentation at the Hellfire Cutting is very informative with integration of the original site and little help from some railway's remnants and boards.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: the museum has exploited from its location as *in situ* museum and integrating itself into the subject of 'Death Railway' and atrocities happened during the war very well. The landscape setting of the museum and the walking trail in the middle of thick forest stimulates visitors' self interpretation of the site. The exhibitions in the museum are well-made, informative and well-prepared for visitors to have a more moving experience at the highlight of the memorial, the Hellfire Cutting. It is a fine example of the museum at original site.

7. Exhibition evaluation: visitor's experience is moved by the exhibitions, interpretative measures exposed in the museum. After visiting the museum, the walking trail to the Hellfire Cutting will highlight visitors to have more understanding about the 'Death Railway', especially atrocities occurred during the war time.

7. A ride on the vintage train along the 'Death Railway'

The most famous route of this vintage train is starting from the town of Kanchanaburi (Kanchanaburi Railway Station) to Nam Tok (waterfall) Station with a distance of seventy seven kilometres in total (Fig. 61). Along this route there are few more important stations where tourists can get onto the train, for instance Bridge over the River Station, Ban Kao Station, Tha Kilen Station, Wang Sigh Station and Kra Sae Cave Station (Fig. 62). Beside a self-interpreted experience from a ride on the train, other interpretative means at these stations is poor, almost none at all. It is focused on information to tourist about the riding on the vintage train; such as the ticket charge, train time schedule. This board are simply printed out on A4 papers and pasted on a board at most of stations the vintage train passes (Fig. 64). There is no brochure or any printed material about the vintage train and the 'Death Railway' to read or take away, neither is there any information on the train.

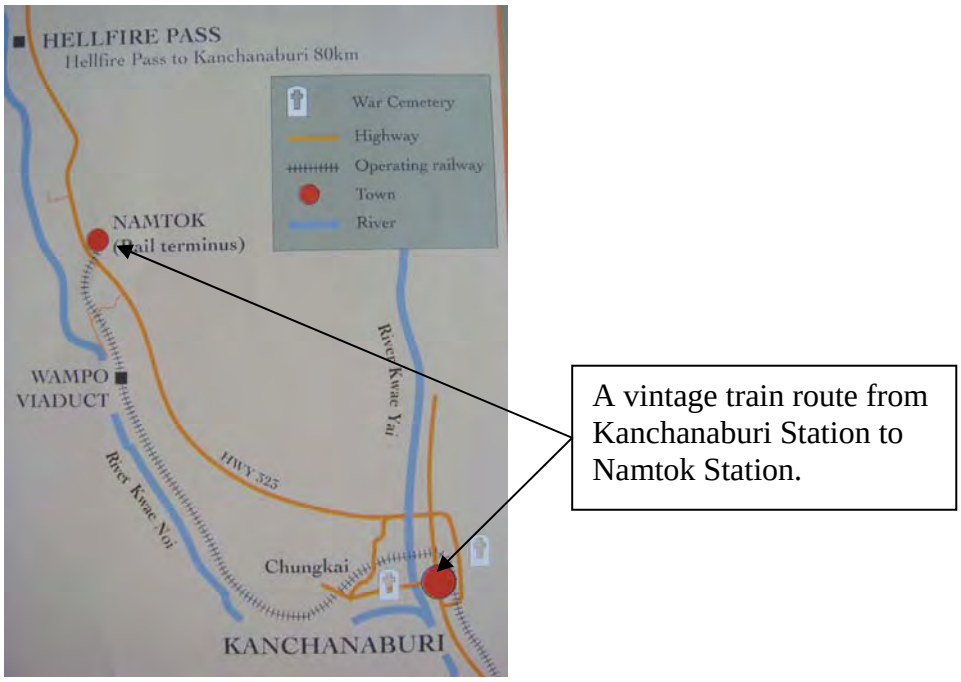


Fig.61 Map shows a vintage train route. HPMM brochure, 2007.

Fig.62 A vintage train along the 'Death Railway' is passing the famous spot, Wangpho Viaduct at the Krasae Cave Station. The author, Aug., 2007.

Fig.63 Signpost at Tha Kilen Station shows the usage of a vintage train by HRH Princess Sirinthorn in 1987. The author, July, 2006.

Fig.64 A4 board informs of vintage train's time schedules. The author, July, 2006.

Fig.65 Board shows special train's carriage at different charges between Thais and foreigners. With this charge passengers get 'Certificate of pride' as have been experienced the 'Death Railway's vintage train. The author, July, 2006.

This train departs twice a day, with more departures during the weekend and holidays. Along the railway that runs parallel to the River Kwae Noi, tourists will see a beautiful landscape, deep forests, mountains, streams and villages. It is very crowded with Thai tourists during the tourist season and at weekends. It is one of the most successful attractions in Thailand, which most youngsters from Bangkok and the provinces around Kanchanaburi would like to experience once in their lives. It is somehow an adventure in their perception.

Summary of physical setting and interpretative measures of a vintage train along the 'Death Railway'

1. Physical settings: physical settings of vintage train consist of the trains, all stations that the train pass and stop and the whole re-laid track of the 'Death Railway' from Kanchanaburi until Namtok Station. Trains that use for this vintage route are a diesel trains that commonly use by SRT for other lines around the country. It used to be streaming trains during the war time, which visitors can find examples at the square in front of the Bridge and at Sai Yok waterfall (near Nam

Tok Station). There is no decoration or interpretation inside the train to signify that it is a vintage train along the 'Death Railway'. Economical activities have overwhelmed at few stations with tourist's amenities and souvenirs.

2. Buildings condition: most of stations are in modest condition, made out of wood and some parts in concrete. The whole setting of stations are authentic. Trains are pretty old and shabby. The train, track and stations are maintained regularly.

3. Site's location: the route of vintage train of the 'Death Railway' is well-operated by SRT, the distance is not too long, either to get a ride from the Bangkok or Banpong (where 'Death Railway' starts), or other stations in Kanchanaburi. The train passes through most important spots of the Second World War in Kanchanaburi.

4. Accessibility: at several stations from Bangkok Noi until Namtok Station.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: a vintage of the 'Death Railway' is very well-promoted in most national and international tourist brochures. There is a random public relations on radio/television/internet and newspapers, especially during the 'Bridge over the River Kwai Week'. Mostly it is being used as tourist's attraction by travel agencies on their own websites or travel itineraries.

5.2 On-site interpretation: There is not much interpretation at stations and on the trains, beside a simple time schedule sheet.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: a vintage train of the 'Death Railway' has exploited from its route as *in situ* train route and able to offer visitors personal experience. Visitors or passengers in the train can have a clearer image of how it was during the war time. Both the construction of the railway and how the trains were operated. The landscape setting of the whole route is authentic, a single track through a deep forest. Getting a ride on

this train might be the best way to interpret atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. Visitor's own experience is far beyond any sign and explanation can do.

7. Exhibition evaluation: visitor's experience is moved by getting a ride on the train along the railway.

Interpretation at the Comparative Case Studies

1. Anne Frank's House, Amsterdam, the Netherlands

Anne Frank was just one of the many victims of the Jewish persecution during World War II. Her family fled to the Netherlands in 1933, when Hitler came to power in Germany. In May 1940, German Nazis occupied the Netherlands and from then on the repression of Jews increased here as well. By going into hiding, the Frank family hoped to escape this. After more than two years, they were betrayed, captured and deported via Westerbork to Auschwitz.

The Anne Frank House has been open to the public since May 3, 1960. The story of a Jewish girl hiding in her secret annex room during her childhood, in the middle of pains and fear of the war has been a legend for most people. Her annex room has become one of the most visited *in situ* sites in the world (Fig.71-2). The narrow, three-storey building, on the Prinsengracht canal would have hardly warranted the attention it gets from local residents and foreign visitors, had not young writer Anne Frank kept a diary that chronicled the time and events in hiding (Fig.67). In powerful words she was able to give a personal account of her observations inside and outside the house, and her hopes and fears during this trying time period. Anne and her sister Margot died in the Bergen-Belsen concentration camp in March 1945. The only survivor of the group was Anne's father Otto Frank. He pursued the publication of an edited version of the diaries, collected and preserved by helper Miep van Gies after the Nazi ransacking of the house. 'Het Achterhuis' (A House on the Back, 1947) was an instant success. Over the past decades millions of readers have been fascinated by Anne's diary, now published in more than sixty languages. The main setting of the story, 263 Prinsengracht, has become a well-known locale in Amsterdam. It is a distinct literary landscape that has attracted

more a million visitors a year (2006) to the historic site from all over the world, who come to find the left-behind story of war via her guiding, by both the diary and the site itself (Fig. 68).

There is continued interest and research about Anne Frank's life, writings, and thoughts. Several recently published biographies have reconstructed her life path in the given cultural, social, and political context. Her diaries have been republished, and more complete and annotated editions are now available. The responsibilities and rights to the book are exercised by the Anne Frank Fonds (Anne Frank Funds), a private foundation in Basel, Switzerland, where Otto Frank lived for most of his life after World War II. The Anne Frank House in Amsterdam is owned and administered by a local non-profit organisation, the Anne Frank Stichting (Anne Frank Foundation).

Within thirty years the Anne Frank House developed from a small curiosity to a leading international tourist attraction. The museum's mission is not only to provide access to and information about the historic site. It is devoted to promote Anne Frank's thoughts and ideals in a wider sense. The Anne Frank House/Foundation regularly publishes newsletters and magazines as well as organised exhibits, all focus on Anne Frank's writings and humanistic views of the world. As a result, the Anne Frank House has put forward many educational initiatives in the arena of intercultural and interracial learning at home and abroad. The visitor to the Anne Frank House can participate in these programmes that often address the issues and problems of the most current political conflicts.

Fig.66 The aerial view of Anne Frank House. The museum website, accessed March, 2007.

Fig.67 The old picture of Anne Frank House. The museum website, accessed March, 2007.

Fig.68 Anne Frank House museum at present. The author, May, 2006.

Fig.69. Multi media interpretation at Anne Frank House in seven languages. The author, May, 2006.

Fig.70 The bookcase that open to the hiding place. Museum brochure, 2007.

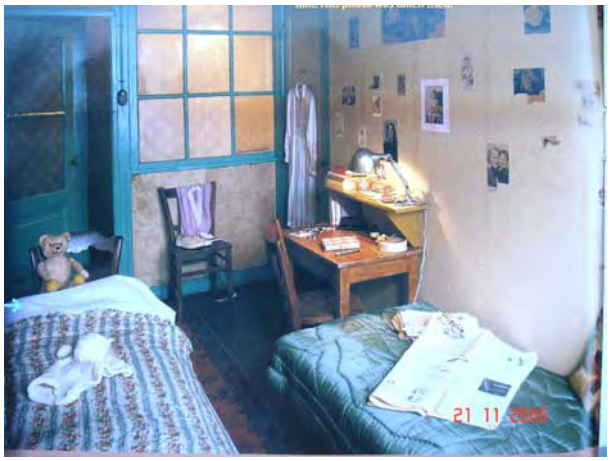


Fig.71 Anne's bedroom during hiding. Museum brochure, 2007.

Fig.72 *In situ* interpretations. The museum brochure, 2007.

Analysis of physical settings and interpretative measures at Anne Frank House

1. Physical settings: one original building with two new added buildings, integrated into the surrounding.

2. Buildings condition: very good condition with regular maintenance.

3. Site's location: excellent location, in a heart of Amsterdam, next to famous church and several tourist attractions.

4. Accessibility: by several ways; car, boat, public transportations (bus, tram), bicycle and on foot.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the museum is listed in most tourist brochures, advertisements on international train, national

train/tram/bus, public relations on radio/ television/newspapers/its own website and several types of printing material.

5.2 On-site interpretation: several techniques are used such as board, signpost, interactive exhibition and multimedia.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: *in situ* (at original site/context) way of interpretation.

7. Exhibition evaluation: informative, modern, easy to understand, stimulating of visitor's participation

2. Changi Prison and Chapel Museum, Singapore

Changi prison became known as the most notorious camp in Asia, and in the minds of many people in England, Australia, America and Europe, the Changi POW camp would invoke visions of atrocities, starvation, bad living conditions and emaciated men. It was the place where prisoners of war had been, not only in the Changi camp, but also in various camps in Singapore and Thailand talked about.

After the fall of Singapore to the Imperial Japanese Army, at the beginning of 1942, Changi was used throughout the war to jail the prisoners of war and a transit place to work on Japanese projects in other camps in the region, especially, camps along the 'Death Railway' in Thailand and Burma. Records of the number of POWs who were in Changi are not certain, they came in and went out, most of them were British, Australian and Dutch military men. One record said there were about 20,000 British and Australians in Changi prison. Sometimes the amount of POWs rose to the point that they were crammed in a small space, and this period accounts for Changi's place in popular memory. After the war, Changi Gaol once again became a civilian prison, while the Changi military area was repaired and redeveloped for use by the British garrison. Following the withdrawal of British troops in 1971, the area was taken over by the Singapore Armed Forces and still has one of the main concentrations of military facilities on the island. Robert Barracks remains in use, but the original buildings at Selarang were demolished in the 1980s.

Changi continues its function as a gaol, serving the state of Singapore - its wartime function having been largely forgotten, until pressure from groups of Allied war

veterans and their families wishing to return to the site found little to commemorate the events of the Japanese occupation. This pressure resulted in the allocation of a small building (in fact, the former prison officers' social club), and the dedication of a small, open-air, wooden chapel upon a piece of land immediately adjoining the huge walls and gates of the current gaol was opened in 1988. Under the watchtower of the main prison, visitors can visit a small interpretative centre in the former social club and may pay their respects at the chapel. The chapel is interesting because of the vehemence of some of the messages left behind upon the notice board. Strong feelings of anger from witnesses, albeit in written form. Certainly intended as a place of peace, this chapel has become a focus for the strong feelings about some of the deeds of the Imperial Japanese Military during the Second World War, and the failure of the British and other governments to secure what some see as an adequate apology or reparation for the suffering caused.

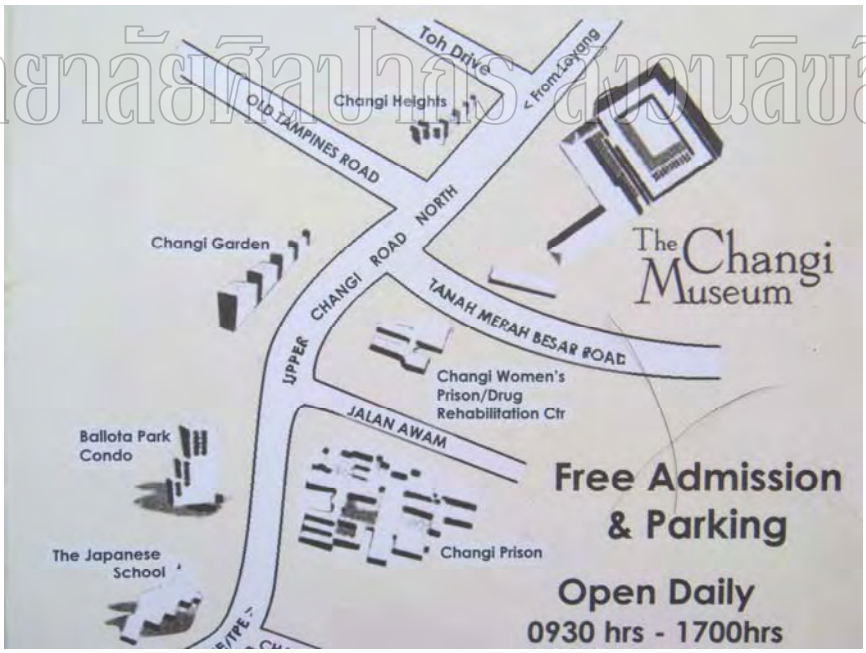


Fig.73 Map shows location of Changi Museum. Museum brochure, 2007.

After a decade of complaints and arguments, the Singapore Tourism Board (STB) redesigned a new museum, the Changi Chapel and Museum. The new museum was built adjacent to the Changi Gaol and opened its door 15 February 2001. This date was also chosen to coincide with the 59th Anniversary of the fall of Singapore to the

Japanese in 1942. The new Changi Chapel and Museum was meant to replace the Old Changi Prison Chapel and Museum , which built in 1988. It is an adjacent building to the current site of the gaol to make way for its expansion. The Changi Museum and Chapel in Singapore was the site of many atrocities perpetrated upon British and other allied soldiers during the Second World War. It contained many prisoners who would be compelled to work on Japanese projects.

Fig.74 The (new) Changi Chapel and Museum, Singapore. The author, July, 2007.

Fig.75 The entrance of Changi Museum. The museum website, www.changimuseum.com, accessed July, 2007.

The highlight of the new museum would be given to the Chapel in the courtyard in middle of the museum (Fig. 76). A wooden Chapel standing in very tranquil surroundings with numerous chairs for the worshippers is one of the best interpretations ever made, by letting the material and landscape setting speak for itself. There is a text, which explains that there were many chapels that were found in various parts of Singapore and Malaya during the Japanese Occupation from 1942 to 1945. The Changi Chapel stood as a monument to those who kept their faith and dignity in the face of seemingly hopeless odds. From the Fall of Singapore in February 1942 until the Japanese surrender in September 1945, life was a daily struggle against humiliation, loss of freedom, hunger and disease. Yet, it was in the midst of these difficult conditions that the human spirit raised to new heights. With simple tools and determination, the Chapel was finally built out of twigs, branches and any other materials the POWs could find during that time. At the end of WW II, one of the many chapels was dismantled and relocated to the Royal Military College, Duntroon, Canberra, Australia. During the Occupation, a British POW, Sgt. Harry Stogden fashioned a simple cross from a used artillery shell, which the chaplain of the chapel brought back to the UK after the war ended. His wife later returned the cross on loan to the Chapel in Singapore.

Fig.76 The Chapel inside the museum building. The museum website, accessed July, 2007.

In 1988, a simple chapel structure and museum was built next to Changi Prison, and maintained by the Singapore Prison Services. The building stood until 2001, when the Prison Authorities decided to enlarge the size of the prison and relocate all prisoners around Singapore to Changi. The Singapore Tourism Board (STB) took over and acquired a piece of land, one kilometre away from its previous site, and erected the new Museum. On 15 February 2001, Bernard Stogden (son of Sgt. Harry Stogden) was invited to place the cross in the new Chapel. As with the previous Chapel, memorabilia and notes were pinned on the notice board of the chapel, which served as a poignant reminder of that particular episode in our brief history.

The museum exhibition is divided into five sections. The first section is the zone called *We Remember*, where inspiring stories of bravery, sacrifice, perseverance and camaraderie, are on display for visitors to read and learn about (Fig. 77-9). These reports include stories of many war personalities (e.g. Choy Khoon Heng and Elizabeth Choy, Corporal Rodney E. Breavington, Mamuro Shinozaki) and secret missions like Operation Jaywick and Rimau. This segment also displays a block of the original Changi Prison wall, a Changi Prison cell door and barbed wire, which was acquired by the museum when the prison was torn down in 2005.

Fig.77 Narrating of events. The museum website, accesses July, 2007.

Fig.78 Another exhibition room. The museum website, accesses July, 2007.

Fig.79 Sophisticated interpretative idea of the prison's cell. The museum website, accesses July, 2007.

Fig.80 Another way of interpretation at Changi Museum. The museum website, accessed July, 2007.

The museum has replicated what is known as the *Changi Murals* (Fig. 81). The Changi Murals were drawn by Bombardier Stanley Warren, who was incarcerated by the Japanese. Stanley Warren began painting the murals as his appreciation to God for keeping him alive. These were painted in a small room at Block 151 Roberts Barracks, also known as St. Luke's Chapel, which was located just beneath the dysentery ward where Stanley Warren was recovering. The original murals are still intact, however the site is closed off to general visitors. Furthermore, the museum shows that during the war, many prisoners and civilian internees alike, recorded their experiences through drawings and paintings.

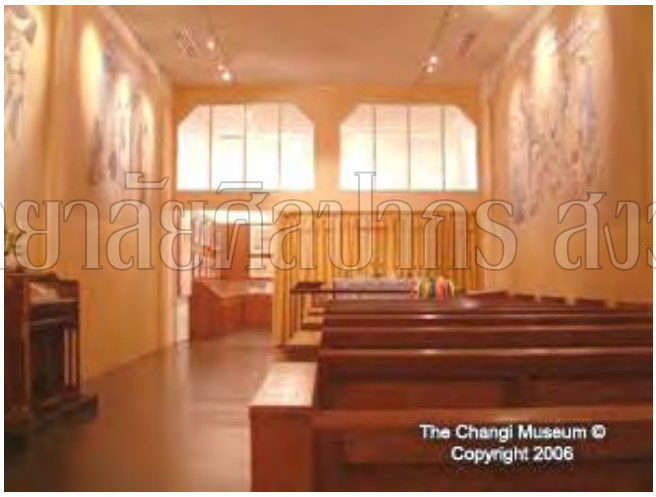


Fig.81 The replica of mural paintings, exhibited in the museum building. The museum website, accessed July, 2007.

The museum displays several paintings and drawings that depict life during WW II. Part of the collection includes seventeen original paintings by civilian internee, Mary Angela Bateman that the museum acquired from a private collector. This collection is on display at their *Wartime Artists* section, which mainly recognises the ingenuity of many of the POWs and civilian internees who were incarcerated in Changi during the Second World War. Their ingenuity was not only shown through art but also making of useful items like ashtrays, made from simple materials, which are on display here. The Museum has included a new section called *End of War*, where you can read the timeline of events that led up to the war. Also in this section, the museum displays an original

15th Century Samurai sword that was surrendered by a Japanese General.

Lastly, the Museum includes a small area called the *Kokonut Grove*. Entertainment during the war was limited but the prisoners of war managed to set up a place inside the Changi Gaol where they would hold their performances. One of the performing theatres was named *Kokonut Grove*. In the museum, a stage-like backdrop is erected to imitate the *Kokonut Grove*. In place of live performances, is a television screen, which plays selected videos related to the Second World War. These videos can be viewed for free by the visitors.

The museum also houses plaques, pennants and badges to commemorate the bravery of the various individuals, groups and regiments who had served and died defending Singapore (Fig. 82). Some of these also include soldiers, officers and military officials from Singapore, Australia, America, Britain and others who fought during the war. The simple design of the museum building, with an informative bookshop, makes the museum more interesting (Fig. 74). There is an intensive choice of books concerning the Second World War and Changi itself. Their well-designed website has a link to several related websites. Furthermore, the museum has a policy to attract more visitors by opening it for other facilities, one of the most common uses of the museum is for weddings and the Chapel has became one of the most photogenic spots in Singapore.

Fig.82 Collection of plaques, pennants and badges on the museum wall.
The museum website, accessed July, 2007.

Analysis of physical settings and interpretative measures at Changi Museum

1. Physical settings: newly built building in a simple design, sympathetic to the surrounding.

2. Buildings condition: very good condition with a regular maintenance. There is a high flexibility in the using of exhibition's space.

3. Site's location: excellent location in term of original context, a bit far from the centre of Singapore in term of tourist attraction.

4. Accessibility: by several ways; car, public transportations (bus), bicycle.

5. Interpretations:

5.1 Off-site interpretation: the museum is listed in most tourist brochures, public relations on radio/ television/newspapers/its own website and several types of printing material.

5.2 On-site interpretation: several techniques are used such as panels, boards, signposts, interactive exhibition and multimedia.

6. Interpretation's Characteristic: the museum is close to original site, which stimulate the curiosity of visitors. Using chronological way of telling history and events, which makes it easy to understand by the assistance of artefacts, pictures and replicas.

7. Exhibition evaluation: informative, modern, easy to understand, stimulating of visitor's participation.

Comparative Interpretation Analysis of Case Studies

Atrocity sites present major problems in interpretation that challenge current debates within literature on interpretation at heritage attractions. There are major problems for the language utilised in interpretation to adequately convey the horrors of the camps. Consequently, and because of historical records, visual representation is extensively used. Documentary evidence in the form of photographs is employed in sites, especially at the atrocity heritage site of the 'Death Railway'. Worldwide, historical photographs and documentation of this nature have been central in transmitting the events of the Second World War. The photographic image has the ability to transmit the reality of the death camps with a shock effect that words can rarely achieve. In this way visitor

can associate ‘photographic time’ and ‘the past’ with real time. There is an inherent danger in constant re-creation of the past, particularly if there is any attempt at stylisation, which can marginalise and indeed trivialise the enormity of the issues being dealt with.

Rod Beattie pointed out that when people heard about the Bridge over the River Kwai, these words conjure up images, largely from David Lean’s Hollywood movie (*The Bridge on the River Kwai*), made from a book by the French author, Pierre Boulle. The images of brutal, bumbling, and incompetent Japanese soldiers having to rely on the expertise of a group of compliant British prisoners of war to design and build a timbered bridge to carry a railway over a river. Unfortunately, as so often happens, the truth was not allowed to get in the way of a good story. The fact that Thailand has officially changed the name of some part of the River Mae Klong into the River Kwai, so that it relates to the film and recognition of most people, and of course to commodify tourists’ curiosity. The tourists’ commodification of the Bridge and its associated areas went on, up to the Bridge, and its tales became close to fantasy.

Such an extreme interpretation and tourist-commodified war sites in Kanchanaburi, especially at the Bridge over the River Kwai and the JEATH War Museum, have provided a reference point for the development of other POW historical sites in South East Asia. When Changi Prison Museum was created, Harold Payne, President of the Federation of Far Eastern Prisoner of War Clubs in Britain, referring to what had occurred at Kanchanaburi, remarked: “I am all for having a museum provided it doesn’t turn into a commercial playground like a certain bridge in Thailand, which has turned into tourist fairground with light and sound show” (Henderson 1997: 9) These sentiments, also expresses by other representatives of ex-POWs, who hint at their desire to preserve and interpret these historic sites associated with their lives as places of commemoration rather than as tourist attractions manipulated by tourist businesses.

The commodification of atrocity sites in Kanchanaburi via physical management and interpretation in the 1970s invites questions about how the Singapore tourism authorities in the 1980s handled the Changi Prison historic site, which had Kanchanaburi as an obvious example to follow if such an interpretation and commodification of the place was desired. Did the tourism authorities of Singapore in the 1980s set out to commodify the POWs experience by perhaps trying to create an atrocity exhibition of horrors that would draw tourists? Before examining this question, it is

necessary to outline how the Changi Prison site had been used before the Singapore tourism authorities intervened to create the Changi Prison Museum and Chapel 1988 and the totally new building in 2001. The prior uses of the site may well have exercised considerable influence over their decision-making process.

The varied cultural and colonial history of Singapore has resulted in multidimensional views of heritage. Different communities were influenced in different ways, which has now resulted in complications in current heritage meanings and perceptions. For example, each of the dominant ethnic communities - Malays, Chinese and Indians - had its own experience with the Second World War and the Japanese occupation, and the younger generations of all these communities believe it to have little relevance to their own lives (Henderson 1997: 40). This has resulted in various interpretations of the war and the development of several war-related tourist attractions that favour different ethnicities.

By the early 1980s the practice of taking visitors inside the prison had been turned into a lucrative activity by bus tour operators because they were bringing not just small groups of returning ex-POWs, but many paying tourists. Individual tourists could not just turn up at the prison gates and walk in; they had to arrange a visit inside Changi Prison through the tour operators, who charged a fee for their bus tours. The increasing commodification of the site was highlighted when tour operators expanded their schedule to include a visit to the roof of the prison complex. In 1986 Changi Prison was being visited by an average of two hundred tourists, or five coach loads of people, each day. As a result, in late 1986, prison authorities found it increasingly difficult to handle the large volume of tourists going through its prison gates, as it affected its security. The chapel was then moved into a modern building in the prison area, but outside the gates of the prison complex. Tour operators immediately reported to the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board (STB) that many tourists were unhappy with the new arrangements because they could no longer experience the atmosphere that being inside the Changi Prison evoked.

For the tourists, however, the attraction to the site has been to experience the ambience of Changi as a place with a terrible wartime past. Research conducted by the Singapore tourism authorities in early 1987 confirmed that this was what drew tourists to the place. They found that tourists were excited when visiting the chapel inside Changi, because they had to go through an army of guards and a large gate to visit the chapel.

The large, ominous dark metal gate through which visitors had to pass to enter the prison featured prominently among the photographs of attractions found in tourist guidebooks to Singapore. Going into Changi provided a satisfyingly eerie atmosphere, much like the dimly lit bamboo hut at the JEATH War Museum, that tourists wanted on a visit to what they imagined was a place of 'unspeakable horrors'. For the tourists, the experience of being inside Changi, the hut at the JEATH War Museum, or a walk across the reconstructed Bridge over the River Kwai were more important than having an accurate knowledge of the history of the site or even being aware that (because of major renovations) little remained as it had been during the war. In March 1987 Robbie Collins, a consultant who had originally appraised the Changi site for the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board (STB), observed : "there was a certain amount of novelty about getting admitted through the array of guards and large gates, but the visitors saw little else of the prison and the Chapel was not authentic" (STB, 1988: 9).

The principal members of the STB project team on the Changi site, Robbie Collins, Pamelia Lee and Bajintar Singh, still saw a re-creation of the POW past at Changi as the most viable way of restoring the place as a tourist attraction. Collins proposed a re-creation of the chapel in an open field outside the prison walls, which the prison authorities completely endorsed, and offered the use of prison labour to build the replica chapel in order to make the project affordable. The proposed chapel went ahead because it cost very little - only $18,500.

Collins was alone in believing that Changi could attract the large numbers of people that would warrant the cost of a 'high tech' re-creation of the past that he desired. The management of the STB thought that the Changi site was visited mainly by British, Australian and New Zealand ex-POWs and their relatives, and it appears to have been unaware that Kanchanaburi was experiencing a tourist boom. The decision reflected STB's priorities in developing Singapore's tourist attractions. Changi was considered a marginal tourist attraction, even though it was one of the projects that came under the billion dollars Singapore Tourism Product Development Plan, approved by Cabinet in 1986.

Commodification at Changi continued when we look at the outlines that the Changi Developing Team proposed. The atmosphere that tourists wanted could be restored by creating a spectacular audio-visual show under a big army tent seating up to

120 people. One suggestion said that the tourists in their buses "drive on by the main gate" in order to "let them photograph the entrance arch, then walk out over the grass area to the tent for the show, then go to the display area and exit through the salesroom to their buses". The team wrote that the STB "should do everything possible to create the attraction that the tour operators wanted" (STB Report 1988: 10).

The Changi Museum in 1988 is one of the best examples to represented Dann's idea of 'Children of the Dark'. The selection of objects to be put on display by the creators of the Changi Prison Museum of 1987, the Singapore Tourism Authority, reflected the infatuation of the Singapore Tourism Authorities with the image of Changi, largely deriving from the film *'King Rat'* (Fig. 84), as a place where only the fittest men survived. They decided to make George Aspinall's photographic collection the central feature of the museum's displays. These photographs, which had been published as a popular book, included many showing the very bad conditions on the Thailand - Burma Railway, as well as those of the POWs at Changi. In the display the experience of the Thailand- Burma Railway was thus mixed up with that of Changi, suggesting that conditions in the two places were much the same. The second most prominent display at the museum was Max Haxworth's water- colour paintings of the male section of the civilian internment camp. From 1942 to 1944 civilian internees occupied Changi Prison, while the POWs were moved inside the prison, the internees were moved to another camp in Singapore. The male image of Changi was strongly projected in these two displays. Haxworth's water-colours, painted while he was an internee, depicted male figures tackling the problems of very basic living conditions inside the grey prison walls. The collection reinforced the images of *'King Rat'*. The seven hundred women and children in the civilian internment camp in Changi Prison were ignored, despite the availability of material to depict their experience.

Lennon & Foley have noted when commenting on the Changi Chapel and Museum that "these elements of Changi are far removed from the 'English country garden' ambience of the cemeteries of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission" (2000:14). Spread throughout the world, these are the final resting places of Commonwealth soldiers who have died in combat since (and including) the First World War. The graves at these sites are of white stone and a series of stylised memorials are replicated at all sites, including the visitors' book, Cenotaph and crucified sword.

In honouring the spirit and commitment of those who rose from the depths of adversity, the Museum inspires future generations to come and deepen their appreciation of the heroic and inspirational stories that unfolded in Changi during the war. The Changi Museum has a goal dedicated to all those who lived and died in Singapore, in particular the Changi area, during the dark years of World War II. Through the documentation of significant events of the Japanese Occupation, the museum also serves as an important educational institution and resource centre. As for the Prisoners of War (POWs) and their families, it is a site that allows for closure of the many emotional scars inflicted by the war years.

The new Changi Museum has similar approach in interpretation that has been exercised at Anne Frank House. At both places, an attempt has been made to experiment with state-of-the-art interpretation techniques. It does not focus only on the stark black-and-white records and photographs which provide the horrified legacy for the events of atrocity, which the JEATH War Museum does, it addresses the historical events of the whole subject, and the Changi Prison and Anne Frank House took a part in this history.

The interpretation centre alongside the chapel offers contemporary drawings and accounts from former inmates as well as some interpretation of the events of the occupation of Singapore. Items on sale include some lurid contemporary ‘underground’ cartoons featuring gross stereotypes of Japanese soldiers and quasi-pornographic images representing their violent and cruel behaviour. The reactions of visitors at the chapel and about the books on sale are certainly unusual among the sites of death and suffering, where a spirit of reconciliation is at least purported to be on offer.

Atrocity interpretation by media/ Theory: ‘Children of the Dark’ By Graham Dann

The constant re-creation of atrocity events and especially Holocaust through films, documentary, texts and television reminds us of the massive interest in atrocity of human history. Mass killing sites present major challenges for interpretation and invariably questions arise concerning the nature of motivation for visitors. The enormity of the systematic destruction of human against human is beyond understanding and constitutes an enormous task in the sense of ‘interpretation’ and ‘explanation’. The scope of the subject area is difficult to comprehend, yet visitation to such atrocity sites continues and receives visits from a huge range of ages and nationalities. Herein the nature of interpretation and documentation presents a potential danger when dealing with

such atrocities in artistic/moralistic terms; even documentary/historical approaches have inherent problems when dealing with this subject.

Some have argued that, through its presentation, whether real or fictional, in popular culture, deaths and atrocities have become a commodity for consumption in a global communication market (Palmer, 1993). This presents the dilemma of authenticity and historical interpretation, similar to that of cultural heritage sites. However, it can also be argued that via news media and popular televised fiction, many face the issues of death and atrocity on a regular, perhaps daily, basis. It is disputed whether these kinds of experiences can be considered to accurately reflect the emotions and traumas of sudden or unexpected death and atrocity but it is, nevertheless, likely that most viewers of television, readers of fiction and cinema-goers will have had an experience of death and atrocity via replication. In the case of global news media, atrocities across the entire planet can be consumed in the living rooms of any country. It is simply argued to be axiomatic that the vast majority of those consuming tourism experiences will be familiar with many of these global media events. It is more difficult to ascertain the impact of these commodified atrocities upon the psychology of individuals, but it seems at least reasonable to expect that any tourism product designed around such an event will at least enjoy the benefit of 'familiarity'.

Both Kanchanaburi and Changi sites illustrate how works of fiction (in these cases Pierre Boulle's '*Bridge on the River Kwai*' (Fig. 83) and James Clavell's '*King Rat*' (Fig. 84), also the Holocaust film such as '*Schindler's List'* which can be related to the Anne Frank case study) have shaped public perceptions to the extent that the re-creations of the past at the sites have reflected such fictions. The sites confirm Lowenthal (1985) idea that when tourism authorities go about re-creating the past they try to represent what they think their visitors want to see. The STB's work at revamping the Changi site demonstrates that both commodification and commemoration of the past can proceed together, though not without some difference of opinion. By involving male ex-POWs in the process of representing the POW experience, the Singapore tourism authorities won support from many ex-POWs, who saw the Changi Prison Museum as their own, one that embodied their own experiences. On the other hand, the creators of Changi Prison Museum appear to have decided not to include female civilian internees in the process of creating the museum because such images would conflict with the themes

of *'King Rat'*. The result has been that while male ex-POWs have had little problem with the museum's main theme – a hard masculine world - former female internees have felt that the selection of material has excluded their experiences.

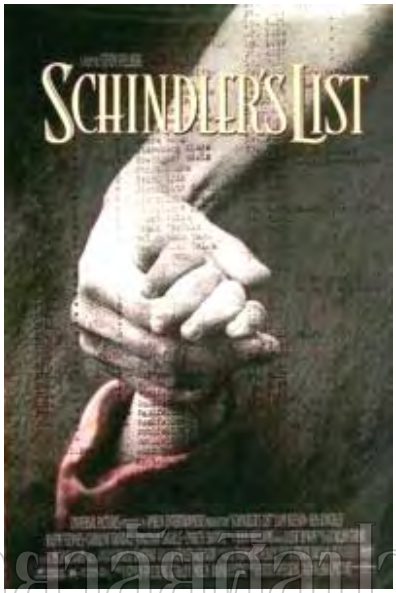


Fig.83 The poster of the film *'Schindler's List'*. Internet access on July, 2007.

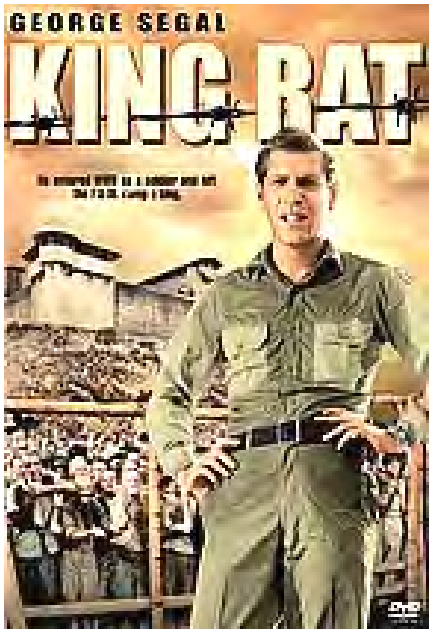


Fig.84 The poster of the film *'King Rat'*. Internet access on July, 2007.

Clavell's fiction of *'King Rat'* has been the text that has had the most influence in shaping public perceptions of Changi. The novel represents the prison camp as a chamber of horrors. It was originally published in 1962 and has never been out of print. In 1965 the novel was taken as the basis for a dark suspense movie, shot completely in black and white to emphasise the bleakness of conditions at Changi. Both the book and the movie showed the POWs at Changi as having lost their humanity because of the poor conditions provided by the Japanese. POWs were depicted as obsessed with surviving death and starvation in the camp even at the expense of their comrades' welfare. Others killed fellow POWs who broke the rules that governed the camp's food supply.

Clavell himself spent almost all of his time as a POW at Changi, and was not sent to places like the Thailand - Burma Railway, where conditions were far worse. Many POWs who only experienced Changi have felt unease at being spared the terrible conditions on the Thailand - Burma Railway, while their comrades were taken away and often worked to death. They have tried to rationalise their guilt. Clavell did this by portraying Changi in a harsher light than those who experienced a variety of camps have described it. The frequent blurb on the cover of *'King Rat'* has perpetuated the myth of Changi as the most notorious prisoner of war camp in Asia where only fit men survived. Clavell himself always maintained that his book was fiction, although it had a historical setting.

The reference to *'King Rat'* by the developing team of the Changi Prison in 1987 illustrated how fiction has had a greater impact on shaping popular perceptions of Changi than historical truth. When the STB intervened to re-establish Changi as an attractive tourist stop for Singapore's tour operators, the team proposed that the site should be completely refashioned according to the novel, just as the Bridge over the River Kwai and story line at JEATH War Museum in Kanchanaburi were commodified to follow Pierre Boulle's story. The proposal for Changi and the creation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' reflected the same line of thinking: that the site should cater to public perceptions in order to make it a more attractive tourist destination.

Chapter 4

Findings from a Field Study

Atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' in Kanchanaburi province is highly controversial and concerns international issues. Even the Thais, who have certain distance to this war heritage, consider the whole area to be a region of pain and horror. It is one of the most visited places in Thailand by international tourists with about four million locals, and around half a million international tourists per annum. On a busy day, the number of international tourists can reach almost 3,000. Most tourists who visit place are Dutch, Australian, American, French, German, British, Russian and many more nationalities. About half of the tourists spend one night or more in the province. With this amount and diversity of tourists, an appropriate management and especially interpretation of the site is a necessity. At the moment, those responsible for Thailand's heritage have no plan or idea of what is occurring here, combined with poor co-ordination between those agencies in the tourism industry and place stakeholders, the heritage is under threat of losing its physical authenticity as well as intangible values.

1. Findings from visitor surveys

To find out who, and how many visitors came to this atrocity heritage annually, a visitor survey of the case study was undertaken. Unfortunately, there is no record of the number of tourists who visit the Bridge over the River Kwai. Supportive research made by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) stated that around 80 percent of tourists who arrived in Kanchanaburi visited the Bridge (TAT Central Region I, 2001-3). The following graphs are details of the number of visitors recorded by each organisation;

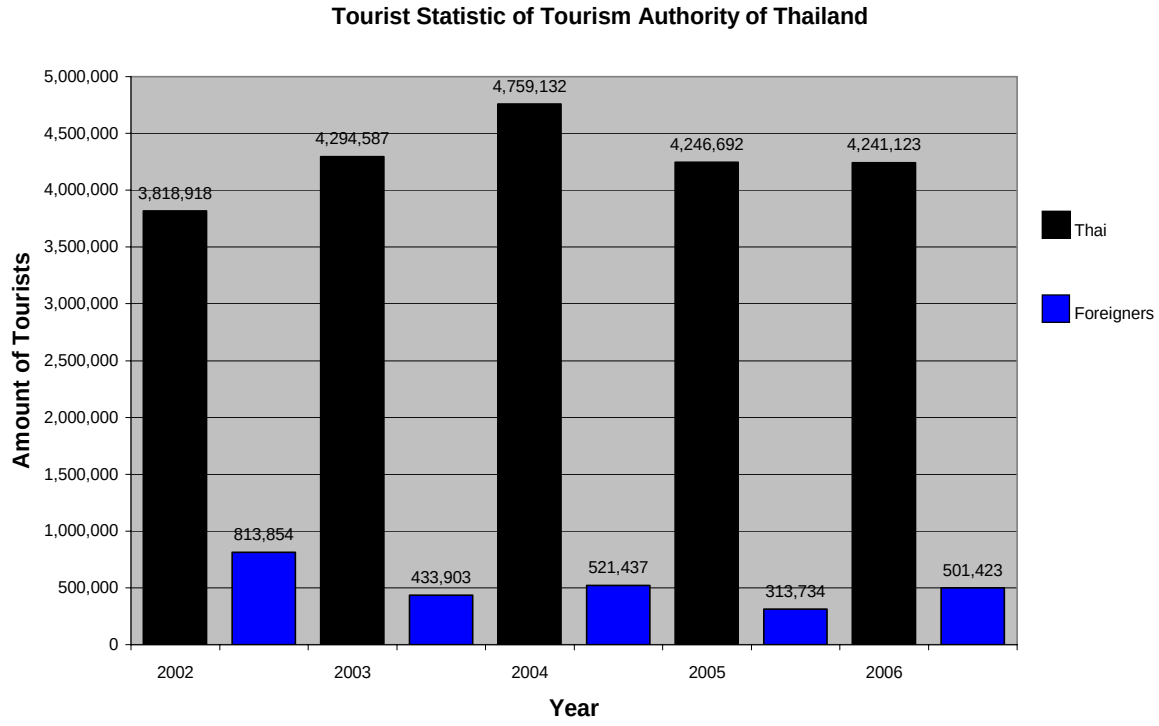


Table 1: Number of visitors to the province of Kanchanaburi by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

The figures above show that the number of visitors to Kanchanaburi, both Thai and international visitors, is unstable – it fluctuates every year. The number of Thai visitors has stayed above four million a year since 2003. The number of international visitors has a high fluctuation from one year to another, especially from the year 2004 to the year 2005, with a decrease of more than two hundred thousand visitors. Although, on average the number of international visitors remained at around half a million per year.

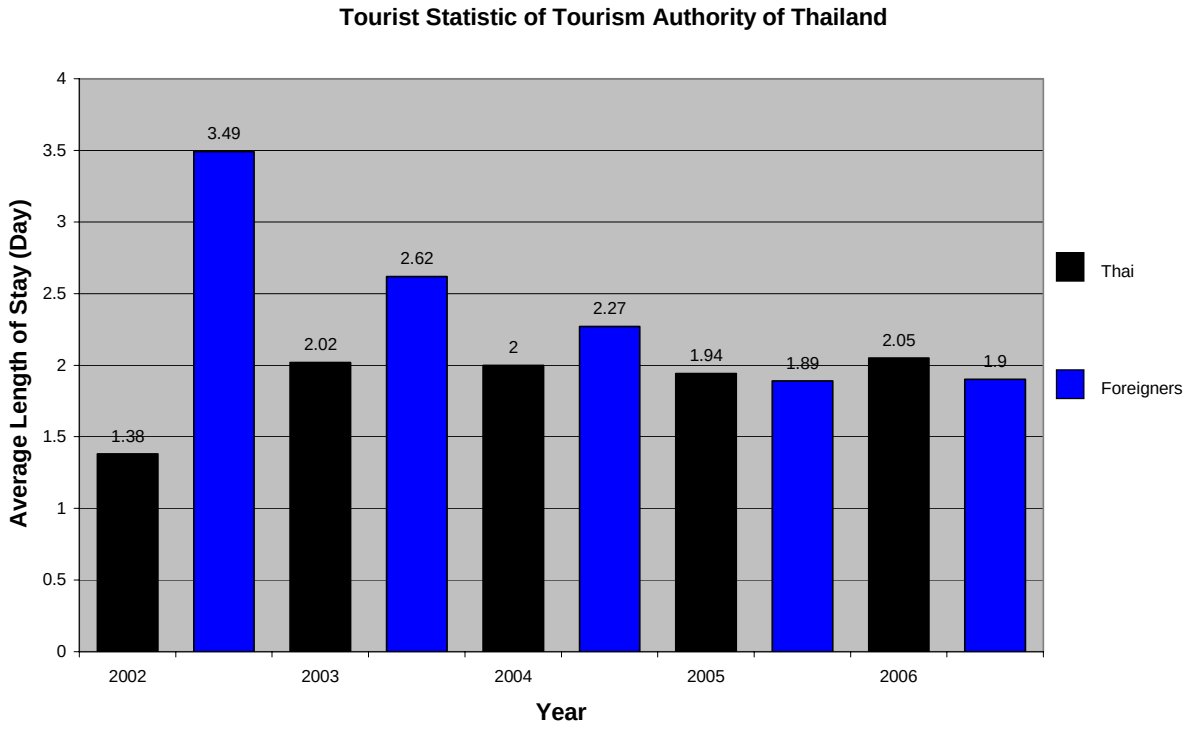


Table 2: Average length of stay of visitors to the province of Kanchanaburi by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

Table 2 shows that, on average, visitors stay in Kanchanaburi for about two days both Thai and international. There is an exceptional year in 2002 when international visitors stayed for three and half days in the province. It is also related to the high number of international visitors in 2002 that was above eight hundred thousands. It is the highest number of visitors from 2002 to 2006.

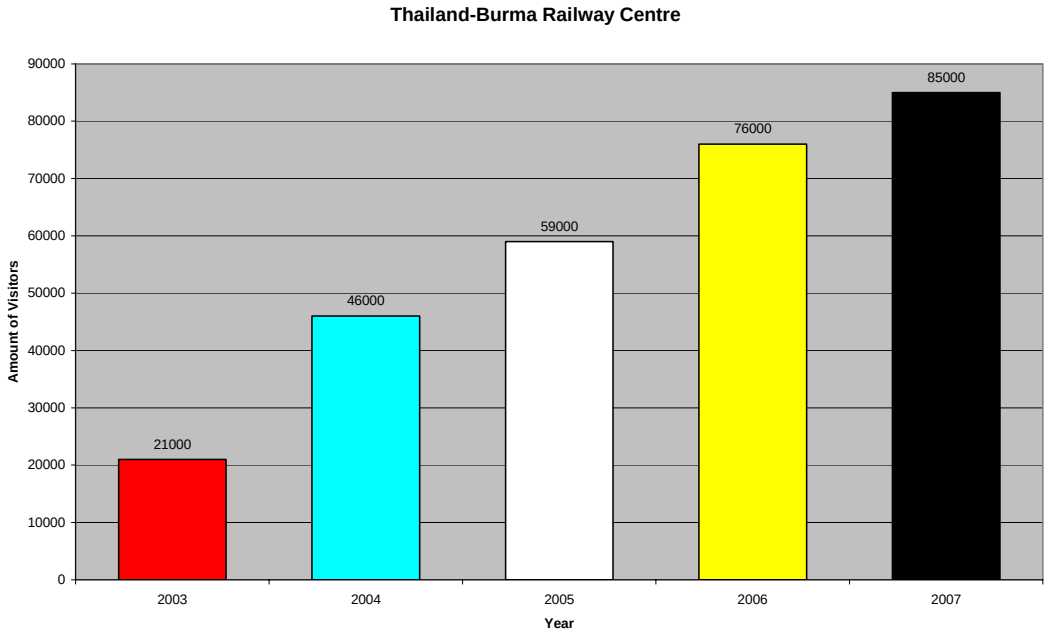


Table 3: Number of visitors to the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre.

The Thailand-Burma Railway Centre opened its doors in 2003, since then the number of visitors to this museum has been increasing every year. From the records of the museum more than 95 percent are international visitors (TBRC Report 2003-5). The growth of the number of visitors is gradual, even in the year 2005 the number of international visitors from the records of the Tourism Authority of Thailand was decreasing, but the number of visitors to this museum continued growing. The number of visitors in the year 2007 is based on an average growth estimated by the museum's manager.

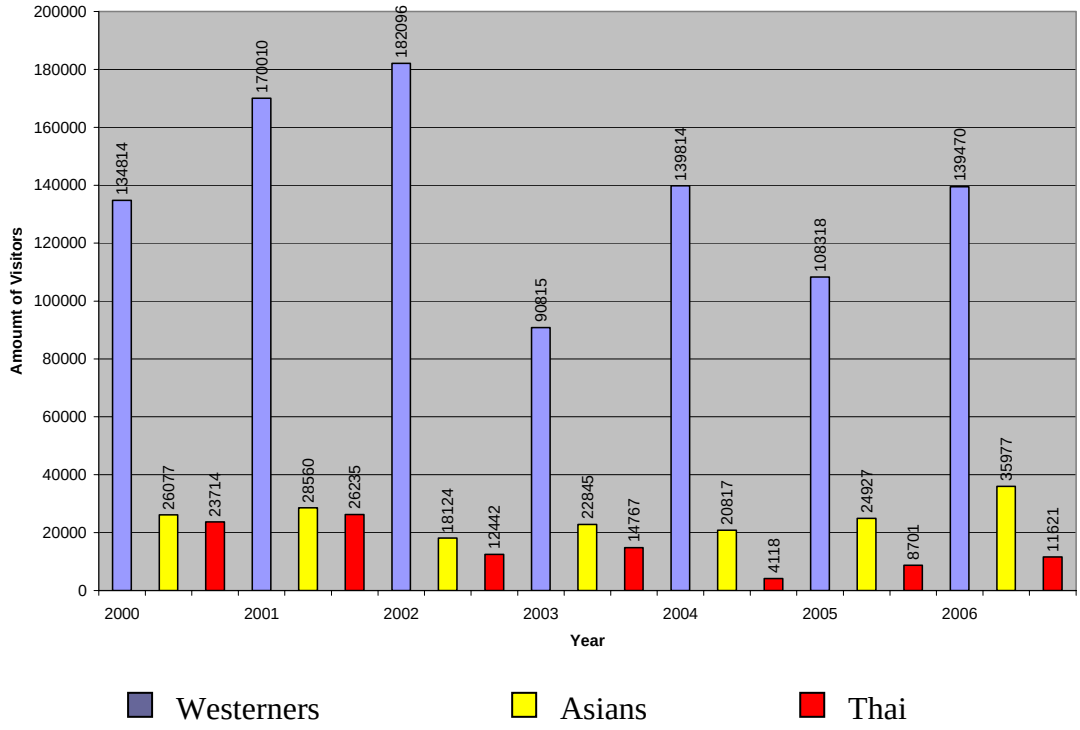


Table 4: Number of visitors to the JEATH War Museum.

	134,814	Westerners	
	26,077	Asians	
2000	23,714	Thai	**184,605**
	170,010	Westerners	
	28,560	Asians	
2001	26,235	Thai	**224,805**
	182,096	Westerners	
	18,124	Asians	
2002	12,442	Thai	**212,656**
	90,815	Westerners	
	22,845	Asians	
2003	14,767	Thai	**128,427**
	139,814	Westerners	
	20,817	Asians	
2004	4,118	Thai	**164,749**
	108,318	Westerners	
	24,927	Asians	
2005	8,701	Thai	**141,946**
	139,470	Westerners	
	35,977	Asians	
2006	11,621	Thai	**190,068**

Table 5: Total number of visitors to the JEATH War Museum.

The well-known JEATH War Museum has always been the most visited museum in Kanchanaburi. Although the JEATH War Museum is run by the local temple, Wat Tai, the recording of visitors to this museum is the most accurate, divided into three categories; Westerners, Asians and Thai visitors. From an interview with the museum's manager Prakhru Kanchanachaiyasith (a revered monk from the temple), the visitor's record came from the number of brochures that were taken away (provided in seven languages: Thai, English, French, Dutch, German, Japanese and Chinese). These language brochures are provided in seven baskets in front of the ticket counter, so that anybody can take as many as they like. There is no regular control from the ticket officer to give a brochure to each native visitor. To the question that there might have been

visitors who took more than one brochure for one visitor, the accuracy of the statistics have less credibility.

From the figures above it is clear that most visitors to this museum are westerners at around 50-90 percentage points higher than Asian and Thai visitors. There are more than thirty percent of westerner's visitors who visited the JEATH War Museum, from the total number of international visitors to Kanchanaburi. There is also a connection to the number of international visitors in the year 2002 from TAT, when there were more than eight hundred thousand, and the number of visitors to this museum in the same year, which was also high. The number of international visitors according to TAT fluctuated at the same rate, and time, as international visitors to the JEATH War Museum.

The number of non-Thai Asian visitors who visited the JEATH War Museum has always been higher than that of Thai visitors. Number of non-Thai Asian visitors who visited this museum has always been around one-fifth to one-ninth of the total number of international visitors who visited museum.

From the statistics presented, around 0.25 percent of Thai visitors to Kanchanaburi visit the JEATH War Museum. In 2004 the number of Thai visitors (according to TAT) reached almost five million (the highest record), there were about four thousand visitors to the JEATH War Museum, which is the lowest record (for Thais) in six years. Thus, there is no clear connection between the total number of visitors who visited Kanchanaburi and the number of visitor who visited this museum.

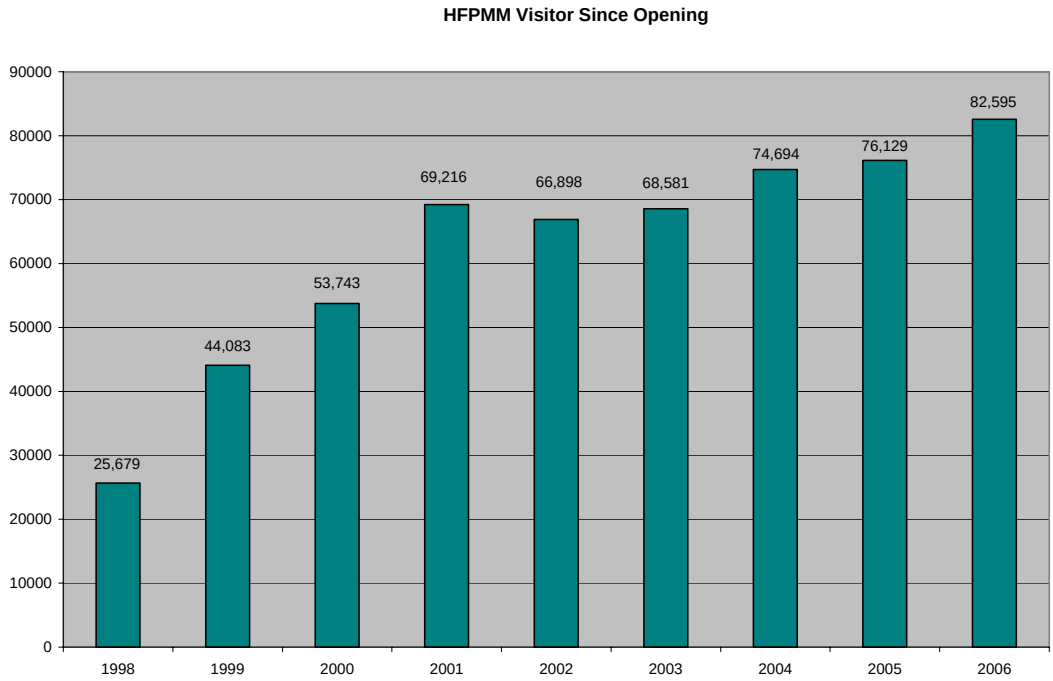


Table 6: Number of visitors to the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum.

The Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum is owed and run by the Ministry of Veteran Affairs of the Australian government. The museum, and the Hellfire Pass itself, have been unofficially declared by the Australians to be their heritage. There have been commemoration gestures such as Australian flags; koala bears; and Australian maps, laid at the site, and the number of these national symbols has been increasing over the years (The Memorial Manager, 2007). The museum and site is located seventy-five kilometres from the town of Kanchanaburi and towards the mountains at the border with Burma. On this scenic road there is an abundance of tourist attractions, both natural and cultural. It has been a famous tourist route for the Thais to visit waterfalls, national parks, rafting, golfing, and a hot springs. As consequence, 51-55 percent of total visitors to the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum are Thais. International visitors to this museum ranking from the highest percentage are British, Australian, Dutch, American, German, and Russian (The Memorial Manager, 2007).

Table 6 above shows that since the opening of the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum in 1998, the number of visitors has been increasing gradually, except in the year 2002 when the number of visitors decreased, very much in contrast to the records from TAT that showed the number of international visitors was at its highest for five years. In

2005 the international visitor's record at TAT is very low, at about three hundred thousand visitors, the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum did not suffer from the low rate of visitors. The visitors to the museum in that year continued growing.

If we compare the number of visitors at the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre to the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum, it can be said that the numbers visiting the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre is lower than the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum. Although the percentage of growth of visitor's at the Thailand- Burma Railway Centre is higher than at the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum. If we compare further, we will see that the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre received more international visitors, (95 percent of the total number of 85,000 which is 80,750 visitors in 2007), than the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum which received its highest percentage of 45 percent (which is around 36,112 visitors) in 2006 from a total of 82,595.

Visitors to the places

One of the questions in the survey was to determine where the visitors came from: locals, nationals, foreigners from Asian countries, or from western countries. Most places claimed to have visitors in all classes, with the most constant being organised groups of people over forty years of age. From observations at many sites in the study area, in general, there were more westerners visiting the museums than Asians or Thais. However, at the Bridge and cemetery the proportion of Asian visitors, especially Chinese was higher in proportion. At the two museums in town, the JEATH War Museum and the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre, most visitors were westerners. While at the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum more than half of the visitors were Thais. It is clear that visitors to this heritage site came from different countries, races, backgrounds, language and cultures.

The researcher was informed by the museum managers that free entry has an impact on the number of Thai visits. This assumption might be correct due to several observations at the three museums, the JEATH War Museum (where the entrance fee is 30 baht/US$1 per person); the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre (where the entrance fee is 80 baht/ US$2.7 person) and the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum (where the entry is free) found out that westerners most probably expect to pay an entry fee, while the Thais will decide not to visit, especially at TBRC. It is obvious that free entry can attract Thai

visitors; this is apparent at the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum where they ‘stop-over’. According to the present memorial manager, more than half of the Thai visitors did not intend to make a visit to the memorial, they actually needed to have access to free toilets (there are few public toilets on the way to the border). This assumption resulted in a charge of five baht person for the use of the toilets. However, another reason for visiting might be out of curiosity.

2. Findings from a Questionnaire Survey

The questionnaire for this research was undertaken without limit to one country. Despite the fact that Thais are the largest number of visitors to this heritage (or to be accurate, most visitors who visit the Bridge), the survey was extended to other internationalities. It should be noted that these statistics are based on a random survey and did not focus on Thai visitors. The number of Thai visitors who filled out the questionnaire was less than the actual number of total Thai visitors. The researcher decided to distribute the questionnaires to Thai visitors to gather their ideas and opinions about this heritage and other issues rather than demographical background. Whilst completing the questionnaire, visitors started to add more personal opinions and remarks about this heritage, thus, observation and note taking techniques were undertaken at the same time. The questionnaires were distributed not only at the Bridge and the War cemetery, but were spread around all study boundaries in order to have more wider variety of visitors and their opinions.

The results are compiled from five hundred questionnaires. Some information was not the same compared to past researches, however, some of the results were similar. The highest amount of visitors to this heritage from the survey (500 responses) were the British at 23 percent, the second was the Australians at 18 percent and the third was the Dutch at 13 percent. This result makes much more sense. All three countries were Allies during the Second World War, and had most war veterans in the region that were captured as prisoners of war to build the ‘Death Railway’ over the River Kwai. Visitors from these three countries have always been the main target groups for tourism in Kanchanaburi. From a random visitor’s survey completed by the three museums in the study area, it appears that sometimes there were more Australians or Dutch visiting this heritage. However, the three most numerous visitors to these sites stay within these three

countries. It is also interesting to see that there were a variety of visitors from different countries such as America, Germany, Denmark, Sweden, France, Belgium, Switzerland, Ireland, Canada, New Zealand, Mexico, Israel, Russia, South Africa, Japan, South Korea, China, Taiwan and the Philippines (see Table 7 below).

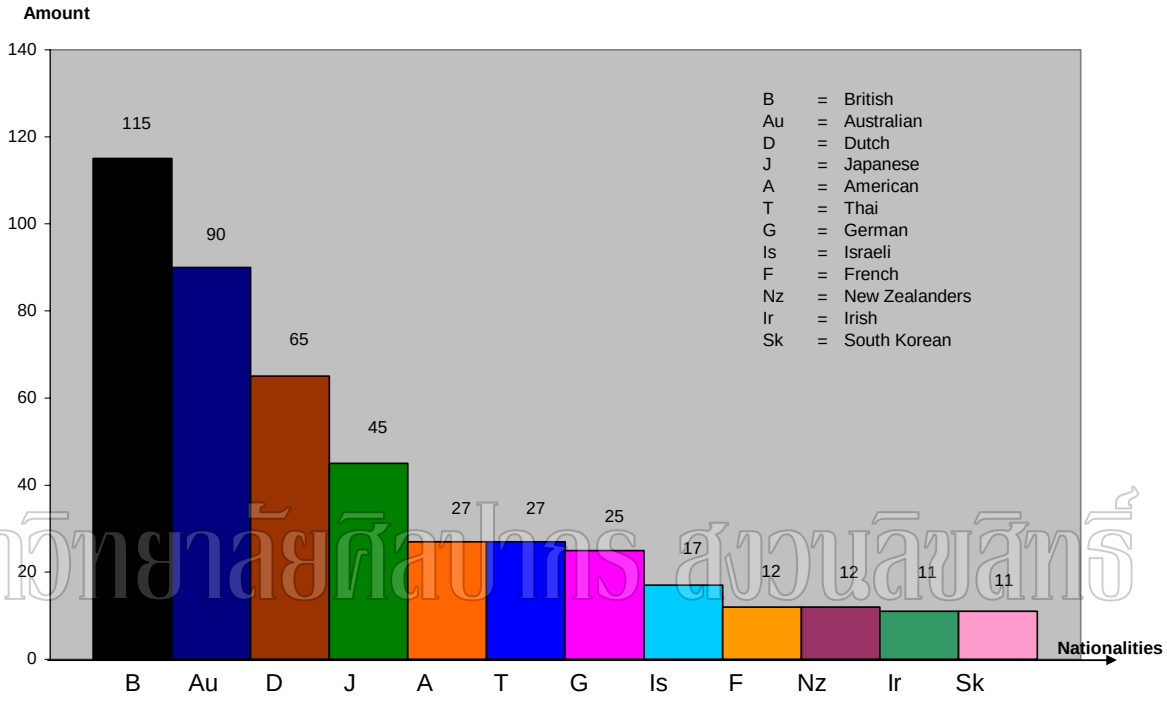


Table 7: Nationalities of visitors to atrocity heritage in Kanchanaburi (from a total of 500 visitors).

From a visitors' age survey, it revealed that visitors aged 46-65 year old were the highest group, with 25 percent, followed closely by young visitors aged below twenty-five, at 24 percent, while retired visits (above the age of 65) shared the lowest percentage at 14.2%. This result is related to the visitor's survey of the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre, which showed that the amount of elderly visitors, and visitors with special needs, are not the highest percentage, but the amount is big enough to manage the museum and sites to support their disabilities (TBRC, 2007). This result shows that this heritage attracts people from different ages, starting from below twenty-five until above sixty-five.

For the education level of visitors, the results showed that 48.8 percent of a total five hundred visitors are people who have education below a Bachelor's Degree. The number of visitors who obtained a Bachelor's Degree is 39.2 percent and number of visitors with higher education than a Bachelor's Degree is sharing 12 percent. If education level plays a certain role in a visit to a heritage place, these figures showed that there is an urgent need to develop interpretation of this heritage of atrocity to be more suitable to the educational background of visitors. This demographical background survey indicates that heritage interpretation of this site must cover these issues; nationality, age, and education level. Visitors with different backgrounds will certainly have different capacities in understanding the same subject.

Furthermore, the result showed that 78 percent of visitors arrived in organised groups. Visitor who travelled on their own amounted to 14 percent, the rest were visitors who arrived with families and friends. The figure of visitors who arrived as an organised group from this research is relevant to the visitor's survey of the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum done in l999, which showed that 89 percent of visitors arrived at the Hellfire Pass were in organised groups (HPMM Report, 1999). The location of the museum is the reason for a higher percent of organised groups as it is about seventy five kilometres outside the town.

The research went into more detail of the length of stay of the two types of organised groups which appeared to be very different. Forty-seven percent of organised groups were on a day-trip to visit atrocity heritage sites in Kanchanaburi. The one-night stays of organised groups was at 43 percent. The rest are visitors who spent more than a day and a night. These two organised groups, with a day-trip or one-night stay, are led through the heritage sites by their own native tour-guide, some groups also have Thai tour-guides. From an interview with four Thai tour-guides at one of the places, it emerged that more than half of them were willing to have a 'new' and 'standard' interpretation that all of them could use as a single interpretation to recount to visitors. Stories and history that they have been using to practice as a tour-guide is a collective interpretation, it is a story and information gathered from several sources and each makes his/her own interpretation. Often, stories told by one Thai tour-guide differed from another.

Furthermore, from interviews with four international tour-guides (two Dutch, one British, and one American) the need for an 'official' interpretation of this heritage was obvious. It is their duty to give some information and background to tourists about the places they are visiting. Basically, it is difficult to tell about atrocities and horrors that are associated with this heritage. From its several versions of interpretation, and the nature of contested heritage, it makes it almost impossible for them to give an accurate guide. Things got more complicated when there is no (so-called) 'official' or 'standard' interpretation. This result raised an issue of how to create heritage interpretation for cultural differences when heritage belongs to several groups of people from pluralised culture and pasts.

It should be noted here that it is sixty years after the Second World War, but some visitors were still very emotional after visiting this war heritage and learned stories that are associated with the site. It showed a strong contestation and dissonance that is embedded in this heritage. From the questionnaire that was distributed to visitors, there were numerous returned papers with questions such as;

- Why did this war have to happen?
- Why were the American soldiers here?
- Why did their loved ones have to be here?
- Why is there no record of the Asian labourer death tolls?
- Why is there no Asian cemetery?
- Why were the Japanese so brutal to their war prisoners?

Another point that needs to be mentioned from the returned questionnaires is the demand from visitors to have interpretation of this atrocity heritage by the Japanese. Most visitors agreed on the idea that it would be nice to have both sides of the story. The percentage of visitors who preferred to have an interpretation by the Japanese is 57.6 percent. Whilst visitors who did not wish to have interpretation by the Japanese, and felt that it was not necessary, is at 25.2 percent. Those visitors who felt that it did not matter if there was an interpretation by the Japanese is 17.2 percent. It is interesting to see that in this 42.4 percent (25.2% + 17.2%) of visitors who declined the interpretation by the Japanese or found that it does not matter, more than half are British and Australians. Even more interesting, the forty-five returned questionnaires from Japanese visitors out of total five hundred questionnaires found it is necessary to have interpretation of this war

atrocity heritage by Japanese's side. Again this result showed a strong contestation and dissonance in this heritage.

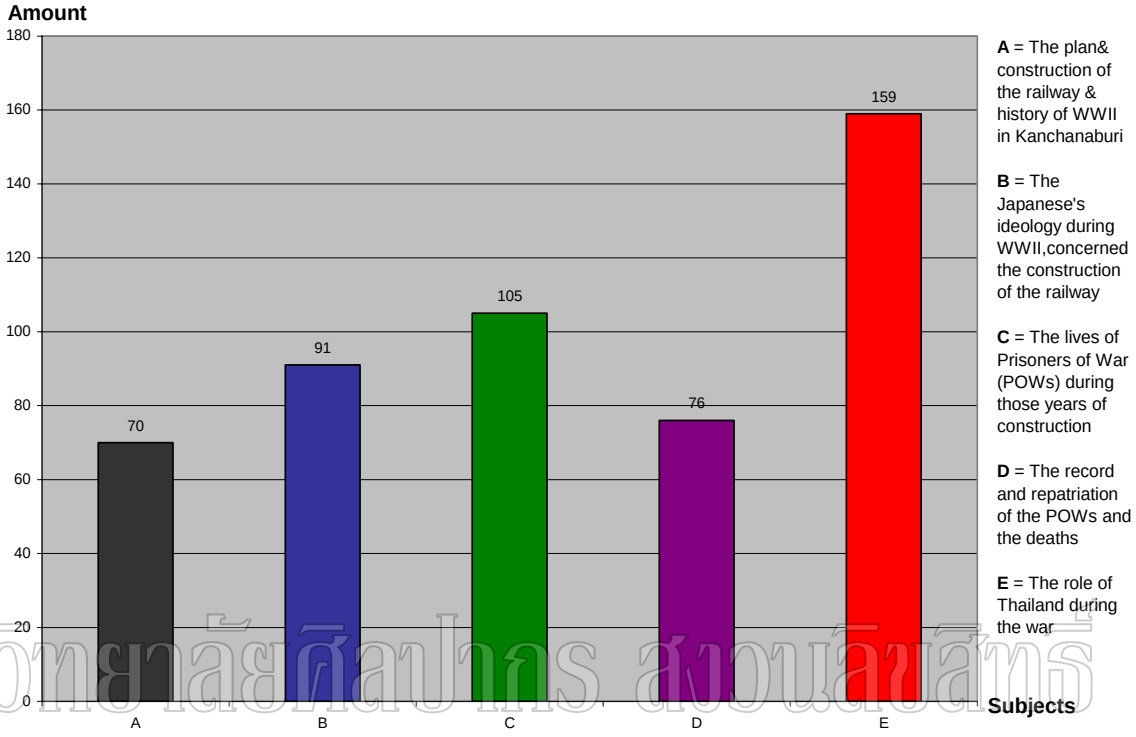


Table 8: Subjects that visitors would like more information (from total 500 visitors).

Table 8 shows that from the results of five hundred questionnaires (500 visitors), 159 visitors wished to have more interpretation on the subject about the role of Thailand during the war at the highest amount (31.8%). More than two times in the percentage of subject A: the planning and construction of the railway and the history of the Second World War in Kanchanaburi, which had the lowest percentage (14%). The three other subjects: the lives of Prisoners of War (POWs) during those years of construction, the Japanese's Ideology during WW II concerned the construction of the railway and the record and repatriation of the Prisoners of War and the deaths share 21%, 18.2% and 15% respectively. There is an obvious need to interpret or add more information about the role of Thailand during the war time into the interpretation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'.

3. Findings from the Interviews

1. The interviews with the museum and cemetery's managers

Questions	Answers	
	Yes	**No**
Interpretation at your museum/place has a goal to educate people and at the same time give information	4	-
There is an interpretation/presentation plan	3	1
Prefer to show the truth and horror of war for historical correctness and commemoration reason	4	-
There is a bias in telling the truth of war	-	4
You organise exhibition(s) following theme	3	1
You organise exhibition(s) following existing artefacts	1	3
There is a visitor's survey	3	1
Number of visitors is rising each year	4	-
Visitors spent more time reading panels about history of the war	3	1
Visitors spent more time reading panels about the story of POWs	3	1
Visitors spent more time reading about construction of the railway	3	1
Visitors spent more time reading about the horror of the war	3	1
Visitors spent more time reading the death tolls, especially from the Asian labourers	3	1
Visitors seek for stories about the role of Thailand in this war	4	-
In general, visitors read signposts, panels and recordings	4	-
Visitors stay shorter than one hour	2	2
Visitors stay longer than one hour	2	2
There is cooperation between the place's stakeholders	-	4
There is an on-site interpretation	4	-
There is an off-site interpretation; brochures, fliers, books	3	1
There are audiovisual, tape-cassette; MP3; DVD/VDO presentations	2	2
There is a bilingual on-site interpretation	3	1
There is a multilingual on-site interpretation	1	3

Table 9: Interpretation management at three museums and two war cemeteries.

The interviews to find out about the present interpretation and management at the three museums: the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre/TBRC; JEATH War Museum; Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum/HPMM, and two war cemeteries (the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery; and the Chongkai War Cemetery) were undertaken at a similar period of time. The two war cemeteries are managed by the same person, Mr. Rod Beattie, under the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. He is also the manager of the Thailand–Burma Railway Centre. Thus, the interview with him was easy but not simple, the separation between positions to each place was made very clear during the conversation. It should be noted here, from the fact the two war cemeteries are taken care of by one manager and under the custody of the same organisation, the policies, planning and management were the same. The answers for the two war cemeteries were counted as one in the report.

The results from the interview, showed that interpretation at these three museums and at the two war cemeteries had a goal to educate people and at the same time give information. There were interpretation/presentation plans, except at the JEATH War Museum that did not have an interpretation plan. All places preferred to show the truth and horror of war, with strong reasons that were meant for historical correctness and a commemoration. They also believed that there was no bias in telling the truth of war in their museums and organisations. All three museums organised exhibition (s) following a theme, and the JEATH War Museum in particular organised exhibition (s) following both a theme and the existing artefacts.

To tested on the authenticity of the results from the visitors', and questionnaire surveys that were undertaken before by the researcher, a general visitor's survey at these three museums and at two war cemeteries was undertaken. Similar results emerged. There were visitor's surveys at all three museums, but not at the two war cemeteries. Their surveys revealed that the number of visitors was rising each year. The manager of the two war cemeteries also agreed on an increasing number of visitors to the cemeteries. Most of the visitors to these places also arrived in organised groups that had their own tour-guide.

Visitors read signposts, panels and recordings in general. This shows the necessity of interpretation. They stayed less than one hour at the JEATH War Museum and at the two cemeteries. From the former study and observations of the cemetery's

manager, about 70 percent of visitors in organised groups spent half an hour there, and the rest tended to spend less time. There is a small percentage of less than 10 percent of visitors that spent longer than half an hour at the cemetery (Cemeteries Manager, 2007). There is associated data for a travel itinerary from TAT and several national and local travel agencies for their organised tours to Kanchanaburi. Most of them offer an itinerary as follows;

1) Itineraries of tour operators from Bangkok: **'One Day Trip to the 'Death Railway'**

8: 00 Leave the hotel (Bangkok)
10:00 Arrive at Kanchnaburi, visit the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery
10:30 Visit the JEATH War Museum or the Thailand-Burma Centre
11:00 A boat trip to the famous Bridge over the River Kwai
11:15 Visit the Bridge and lunch at the Bridge
13:00 Visit the Tiger Temple
14:30 Visit the Erawan Waterfall
16:00 Back to the hotel

2) Itineraries from local tour operators: **'A Day-Trip in Kanchanaburi'**

8: 00 Pick up at your hotel or at our office
9:00 Visit the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery
9:30 Visit the JEATH War Museum or the Thailand-Burma Centre
10:00 Boat trip to the famous Bridge over the River Kwai
10:15 Visit the Bridge and lunch at the Bridge
13:00 Visit the Tiger Temple
14:30 Visit the Erawan Waterfall
16:00 Back to the hotel

3) Alternative itineraries from local tour operators: **'Highlight of Second World War' in Kanchanaburi'**

8: 00 Pick up at your hotel or at our office
9:00 Visit the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery
9:30 Visit the JEATH War Museum or the Thailand-Burma Centre

10:30 A train trip along ‘Death Railway’ and across the Bridge over the River Kwai
12:30 Lunch at the infamous Wangpo Viaduct
14:00 Visit the Sai Yok Waterfall (POWs Camp)
15:00 Visit the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum
16:30 Back to the hotel

From these itineraries, there are considerable similarities in their time schedules and destinations. Most tourists arrive at the same time, visiting the same places and eat at the same restaurants. In the morning, numerous tourist coaches drive around the places, while in the afternoon the whole area falls into quietness. It is clear that there is no management of tourist flow in the tourist area, especially around the Bridge that is jammed with tourists before and around noon.

At the TBRC and HPMM visitors obviously stayed longer than one hour, according to several observations of the researcher and the records of the two museums. Although, from a survey of the travel agencies’ itineraries, it was found that most agencies allowed only one hour to visit the TBRC and one and half hours to visit the HPMM. In practice, it was also difficult for travel agencies to keep visitors on a time schedule if their interest in visiting the museums and exhibitions was high. Both museums offer a lot of recordings to read and several sophisticated multimedia that require a certain amount of attention time.

Inside the three museums visitors wanted to read as many panels as time permitted. Results showed that visitors were equally interested to read about the history of this war, stories of the lives of POWs during the war, stories about the construction of the railway, the horror of this war and stories about the death tolls, especially the death toll of Asian labourers. In all museums there were visitors seeking for stories about the role of Thailand in this war. There again, the interpretation about the role of Thailand during the war was being requested by visitors.

Presentations in the two museums (TBRC, HPMM) were designed to spend about 1-2 hours for casual visitors and up to 2-3 hours at TBRC in case of subject-interested visitors. In the case of HPMM, which is located *in situ* to the original site, about 40 percent of total visitors tended to take a walking trail to the Hellfire Pass Cutting that usually took about one hour more. From interviews with the museum managers of

both TBRC and HPMM, there are a large amount of visitors who spend time reading panels and follow the interpretative signs and media. Good and consensus interpretation of this war heritage is, according to them, extremely necessary.

Cooperation with the stakeholders of the place was at a superficial level. There is an unofficial coordination between TBRC and HPMM (both managerial teams were Australians). Cooperation with other stakeholders of the place happens rarely. There were on-site interpretations at all museums and cemeteries. Their on-site interpretation focused on signposts, boards, panels and recordings. All three museums had off-site interpretation, but not at the cemeteries. At the TBRC and HPMM there were choices of audiovisual; tape-cassette; MP3; and DVD/VDO presentations. At these three museums their off-site interpretations were printed materials; brochure, fliers, and books. All interpretation and presentation in these two museums were bilingual, while it was a multilingual on-site interpretation at the JEATH War Museum and the two war cemeteries.

2. Findings from interviews with other stakeholders of the place

Interviewed Questions	Answers	
	Yes	**No**
Tourism in Kanchanaburi is growing and has a high potential in tourism development	18	2
Main tourist attractions are both natural and cultural resources	20	-
Main tourist attractions are natural resources	11	9
Main tourist attractions are the WWII war sites	15	5
It is necessary to make more promotion on this war site	20	-
Your organisation promotes WWII war sites more than natural resources	13	7
Your promotion of this heritage are done via media and publications	15	5
Stories and history in your promotion are taken from textbooks	13	7
Stories and history in your promotion are taken from oral history and hearsay stories	7	13
There is a need to revise some parts of history of this atrocity heritage	7	13
Your responsibility to this war heritage is to preserve true history for educational reasons	9	11
Present techniques of interpretation of this war heritage is good, there is no need for change	12	8
Stories that are presented at this war heritage are correct, there is no need for change	11	9
If change, you want to hear more about the role of Thailand and its government during the WWII	15	5
If change, you want to hear more about story of the humanity of the Japanese ideology	5	15
If change, you want to hear more about story of the POWs during wartime	10	10
If change, you want to hear more about story of the Asian Labourers	5	15
There are enough interpretative signposts about this atrocity heritage around the sites and the town	10	10
There is cooperation between the place's stakeholders in promoting this war heritage	5	15

There must be a more closer cooperation between place's stakeholders in promoting this war heritage	20	-
There must be a change in landscape setting around the Bridge	10	10
There should be a better management on shops, stalls and vendors around the Bridge	14	6
The 'Bridge over the River Kwai Festival' with light and sound show is a successful event	15	5
You believe this festival brings more tourists and income to the province	20	-
The story that is illustrated in the light and sound show concentrates on bombing of the Bridge, there should be a change to more of a story of WWII in Kanchanaburi in general	12	8
There should be a change to more story of the role of Thailand and its government on this war	14	6
What ever stories will be changed, the bombing of the Bridge has to stay	16	4
The number of Thai tourists increases during this festival	20	-
The number of international tourists increases during this festival	3	17
The Bridge is the most visited place in this war heritage	20	-
The Kanchanaburi War Cemetery is the 2nd most visited place in this war heritage	20	-
There are enough and well-explained signposts/boards at the Bridge and the cemetery	8	12
There is future planning, especially on presentation and interpretation about this war heritage within your organisation	4	16

Table 10: Interpretation and management interviewed from the place stakeholders.

An interview with twenty other stakeholders of the places of this atrocity heritage was executed. These stakeholders were four international tour-guides (two Dutch, one British and one American); four Thai local guides; the Director of the Tourism Authority of Thailand, Central Part, Region 1; The Chairman of the Kanchanaburi Tourism Business Association; The Kanchanaburi Governmental Governor; the Kanchanaburi Municipality Governor; the Kanchanaburi Train Station

Chief Officer; and seven shop and stall owners at different locations in the study area. The results indicated their awareness of the rich natural and cultural resources in Kanchanaburi. Especially, a cultural resource where it pointed to atrocity heritage places of the Second World War. They recognised its historical and cultural significance and found that it is necessary to create more promotion of this war heritage. Promotion can be in several forms such as a good strategy in public relations, more promotion to foreign markets due to its decreasing numbers; and more fairs or events to attract more tourists.

The interviews revealed that their responsibility to this war heritage was not really to preserve history for educational reason. Their answers were more about safeguarding the history for the next generations, to use it as a reminder of the horror of war and as a healing process for victims and their families. They were not certain whether its goal was meant for educational reasons. Stories and history that they use in their organisation are taken from official Thai textbooks, as well as some stories and history, from oral history and hearsay. Seven out of twenty felt that there is a need to revise some parts of history of this atrocity heritage

The majority of them felt that there was no need to change the present interpretation techniques of this war heritage. It was good enough. In addition, eleven interviewees felt that there was no need to change stories that were presented at this war heritage, while nine of them felt that changing history and stories was needed. From these results, there are clearly two groups within the stakeholders that have different ideas about heritage interpretation of this war heritage. First group is the museum and cemetery managers and Thai and international tour guides, who would like to have one version about this atrocity heritage that can be used in every place. The other group is other stakeholders of this war heritage as mentioned above who felt that the present situation of interpretation is acceptable and there is no need to change. There was certainly a dissonance (from the results of the survey) in ideas about how this atrocity heritage should be interpreted.

It was found, from interviews with this group of stakeholders, that if there must be a change in stories that are presented at this atrocity heritage; 75% of them wanted the story of the role of Thailand and its government during the WWII to be changed or re-interpreted; 25% wanted the story of the humanity of the Japanese ideology; 50% wanted

the lives of POWs during the wartime to be interpreted; while 25% wanted the story of Asian Labourers to be interpreted.

For them, there was a lack of cooperation between the stakeholders in promoting this heritage, and, undoubtedly the stakeholders should be encouraged to form closer co-operation to promote this heritage. There have been several initiatives in the past, mostly from governmental initiatives via the Kanchanaburi Provincial House or TAT. These two organisations always invite other stakeholders of the place to participate in the project. Most of the time, they received co-operation from the Kanchanaburi Municipality and other governmental organisations. But co-operation from private museums and organisations rarely happens. It is considered to be a major threat to this atrocity heritage that the stakeholders of the place, who have legal rights to the heritage, have found difficulty in co-ordination. It appears that each organisation is working autonomously. A good example was a festival named 'Remembering WWII and the Bridge over the River Kwai' organised in 2006 at the Kanchanaburi Train Station Park, in front of the Kanchanaburi Cemetery. The festival was organised by Kanchanaburi Governing Authorities. There was an exhibition space in a bamboo hut with old pictures and recordings, some bombs and locomotives and numerous shops and stalls selling local products. Proper presented of the subject, and interpretation of this heritage place, were ignored and it was clearly being used as a motive to organise a festival aimed at promoting and selling local products to visitors. Regarding the physical and landscape setting of the heritage, especially at the Bridge, seventy percent of these stakeholders found that change was not necessary, but a better management of shops, stalls and vendors around the Bridge was advisable. From the question of the most popular attraction for tourists - the Bridge is the most visited place in this war heritage while the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery is the second most visited. There are enough and well-explained signposts/boards at these two places. Seventy-five percent of these stakeholders did not have any future plans about this war heritage within their organisation.

This group of stakeholders believed strongly that the 'Bridge over the River Kwai Festival' with a light and sound show is a good event and it is considered to be a success**.** One hundred percent believed that this festival brings more tourists and income to the province**.** From the records of the TAT, there were more tourists, both domestic

and international, arriving at the province during this festival. Unfortunately, there were not a lot of foreign visitors attending the 'Light and Sound Show' depicting the bombing of the Bridge. Last year, 2006, during a week long showing, there were less than 200 foreign visitors who bought tickets for the show that could also be used to visit a temporary exhibition tent in front of the Bridge (TAT Report 2006). On the contrary, numerous tourists preferred to buy an expensive ticket to have a dining table at one of the most famous private restaurants near the Bridge, with the show as a bonus. It is believed to be the best spot to see the show, even better than from the Bridge itself. It was Thai visitors who were keener and share most of the percentage in visiting the fair and attending the show. Most of these Thai tourists came from neighbouring provinces.

From several visits by the researcher, over the past decade and especially the last few years, the story and the show has not been changed. The presentation of the subjects in the exhibition remain the same. The story that is illustrated in light and sound show focuses on the bombing of the Bridge by the Allied military. From an interview with the stakeholders about this point, they feel that there should be more the stories about WWII in Kanchanaburi in general as well as the role of Thailand and its government during the war. However, they feel that the story of the bombing of the Bridge has to stay, even if other stories are changed.

Chapter 5

Interpretation of Atrocity Heritage the 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai

The Second World War is rapidly fading into the past, as are the memories of those who experienced it first hand, and it is becoming just another conflict. All past centuries, of course, have seen wars of varying lengths, and intensities. In the East, the Second World War, more than any other war, has affected large numbers of people, both directly and indirectly. The effect and resonance will continue for years to come, but the finer details will blur and merge with each other, and in due course only the bare outlines will remain. There is a hope, in the establishment of museums and sites for this atrocity event, to preserve these memories, through an awareness of the catastrophic effects, help to prevent or at least to minimise other atrocities that might take place in the future.

As the wars recede into the past, and personal experience of it dies, the museums and relics that they house, the artefacts that they exhibit, and sites that they preserve will need more and more interpretation for their visitors. Already the language of this conflict is becoming meaningless. Terms such as 'Death Railway', 'prisoners of war', 'Asian labourers, 'Hellfire Pass' and 'Speedo' are not always understood (author's experience from conversation with numerous visitors to the places). More than half of visitors do not know that there were about 200,000 Asian labourers building the railway and half of them died. Many American tourists were not aware that there were American prisoners of war at the 'Death Railway'. If you ask the Thais, they do not know who fought whom and why this war had happened in Thailand, when the war started and finished, how it finished, and even who won the war. As international travel increases, there will be more visitors who have even less knowledge, or who will come from a totally different background, and they may not know what this atrocity heritage is about.

This chapter discusses the difficulties in atrocity heritage interpretation, and emerging issues from the findings of the survey.

Difficulties in the practice of atrocity heritage interpretation of the 'Death Railway'

Intended and received messages

The message conveyed through the selection, packaging and interpretation of these atrocity heritage sites can be seen in terms of those projected by various producers, and those received by visitors. These are unlikely to be the same in every respect as transmission itself is imperfect and they can, on occasions, differ dramatically. This variation of messages being projected by site managers may have little to do with the motives, expectations or experiences of some visitors to such sites. The more variations of the origins and backgrounds of visitors, the more the message differs.

The event and the site

Attempts to interpret the events of an atrocity may be complicated by the nature of the sites associated with them. This is particularly true with a war site that is in a vast area of 415 square kilometres, and covers the territories of two countries that are politically sensitive. Many important atrocity events occurred on sites that are deliberately inaccessible. With the interpretation of these war sites being centred at the Bridge at normal time, and during the week-long Light and Sound Show, it is difficult to perceive those actual atrocity events happened dramatically three years during and after the construction of the railway.

Some actual sites of atrocity, although identifiable and accessible, possess no surviving attributes or physical artefacts that link the location with the events commemorated. Several good examples are sites such Rintin, which was an important Dutch cemetery. Hid-dad hot spring was the location for a POW camp, the hot spring being used for drinking and bathing by both the Japanese and POWs. The Songkurai Bridge where was built mainly by British and Australian POWs and the site of numerous deaths due to cholera. The cholera camp where contaminated prisoners of war were left alone and Dr. Weary Dunlop's hospital where hundreds of sick were 'housed' in bamboo huts like cattle.

The case of the JEATH War Museum, which is not on a site location but rather situated in the area, is also a good example of a recreation of museum. The museum chose to make the interpretation through a reconstruction of a war camp as a museum building, and evoke emotion and atrocity events by the presentation of old pictures and

artefacts - some of which are authentic to the site and some are inauthentic (they came from different wars at different places and were donated to the museum).

Establishing museums in or near significant sites can be an effective tool of interpretation, for the site as well as for the museum. However, most visitors will need some sort of orientation to appreciate this significance fully. The Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum seems to manage well with this idea, and is able to draw more visitors to the museum and site each year. Furthermore, techniques used in this museum range from the most basic to innovative and technologically sophisticated.

Another good point is the present land use or activities may bear no relationship to the atrocity that has occurred, and, indeed, may even detract from such interpretations. Most sites in the case study are located in the town of Kanchanaburi, where the locals who host this war heritage have little interest and put their priorities to something else, due to their financial limitation. Conversely, people who have stronger interest are outsiders who can invest in this atrocity heritage tourism industry. Most of the 'Death Railway' sites are lying in remote rural areas that are used for agriculture and recreational tourism. These sites are tranquil places that do not immediately evoke horror. In this case, the current users may find the use of the sites to interpret atrocity distasteful or undesirable, due to the fact that they have different ideas about the use of the land.

Atrocity as an entertainment attraction

It has been more than sixty years since the end of the Second World War. This passing of time may remove much of the horror, leaving only a compelling story from a distant past to be related as entertainment. The elapse of time may not only soften the events themselves but alter the responses of visitors who are no longer personally involved in the events being viewed and thus do not suffer emotionally. If such healing is a matter of time, the treatment by TAT and local agencies to this war heritage by presenting it as an entertainment tourism product, might be a good recreational development to distance people from the atrocity. The week-long 'Bridge over the River Kwai Festival', with a light and sound show of the bombing of the Bridge, has been promoted for more than thirty years. It is always scheduled for the last week of November to the beginning of December. Could this festival be offensive to both the victims and perpetrators? There is not enough in-depth research on this issue. TAT randomly conducted a questionnaire survey of tourists' opinions of this festival. The

research said the festival had no influence on the decision of western tourists to visit the site at this time of year, or to stay longer to attend the festival, or to visit more sites (TAT Central region 1 Report, 2006). The outcome of the TAT research is consensus to this research, where more than eighty percent of westerners arrived in Kanchanaburi in an organised group, with a planned itinerary. It should also be noted that the timing of the festival coincides with the beginning of the high tourist season. The number of tourist attending the festival might be increasing relevant to the increased number of tourist in general.

Interpretation of atrocity events broader terms

Among many presenters of past horrors, entertainment and education are the widespread assumptions of an imperative contemporary purpose use. These two are effectively and often inextricably combined to render atrocity as one of the most marketable of heritages, and one of the most powerful instruments for the transference of political or social messages.

The Second World War is a war that took place in several regions. There are cases of Jewish Holocaust museums, sites or concentration camps that interpret the genocide of the Jews and other groups targeted by the Nazis in a broader argument of direct contemporary relevance. Anne Frank's House, the comparative case study of this research also belongs in this category. Anne Frank's house provides explicit links between the wartime events in Amsterdam, to the rest of Europe, and the world. It portrays anti-Semitism as a popular attitude both then, and now, and makes a further connection between anti-Semitism and other forms of ethnic, religious or racial discrimination. Anne Frank's House often organises temporary exhibitions with illustrative material and documentation on current issues of social and ethnic conflicts, and has established a research centre for these humanitarian subjects. Anne Frank's story provides a more vivid picture of the systematic persecution of the Jewish people during the Second World War, than any numerical total of victims. This case shows that it is not even necessary for the personified victim actually to have existed; a literary character could equally serve the purpose. Similar to the case of ex-POWs of the 'Death Railway', their existence will matter to the sites anyway, as well as their documentary, records and books that were told and written by them.

The management of an atrocity site will impact not only the survivors and their families, but also on the public's memory of the event. The significance of these sites to the community may change over time as healing about the events progresses. The passage of time has seen the sites of concentration camps and atomic bomb explosion take on international significance and are declared World Heritage Sites. A good example of public memory about atrocity is the film '*Atonement*' which was set as a story during the Second World War. During the first week of September 2007, before the film was shown at cinemas, there was a survey conducted by Yahoo for the public's favourite war-time film. The film *'Bridge on the River Kwai'* came at number nine out of ten. A week after the film was shown, the film *'Bridge on the River Kwai'* moved from number nine to number seven. While number one was *'Lawrence of Arabia'*, number two was *'Schindler's List'*, number three was *'Saving Private Ryan'*, number four was *'Longest Day'*, number five was *'Platoon'*, number six was *'English Patient'*, number eight was *'Killing Fields'*, number nine was '*Life is Beautiful'* and number ten was *'Tora Tora'*. It shows that story of the 'Death Railway' and the film has been widespread internationally and is still being talked about after so many years.

Preservation of the sites can be important not only for maintaining the physical evidence at the site, but also for interpretation of the atrocities. One of the most evocative reminders of the atrocities of Second World War is the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome in Japan (Fig. 85), where hundreds of thousands of people died from an atomic bomb, which was followed by another atomic bomb at Nagasaki that ended the Second World War in August 1945. The city council of Hiroshima and the Japanese government chose to leave the ruins with skeleton buildings and the dome in the centre, just as it were the day after the bomb. These remains tell the story far more effectively than any signs or display could, as in Berlin with the Gedenkmal Kirche (Fig. 86).

Fig.85 WHL Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome. The Hiroshima Memorial website, accessed in April, 2008.

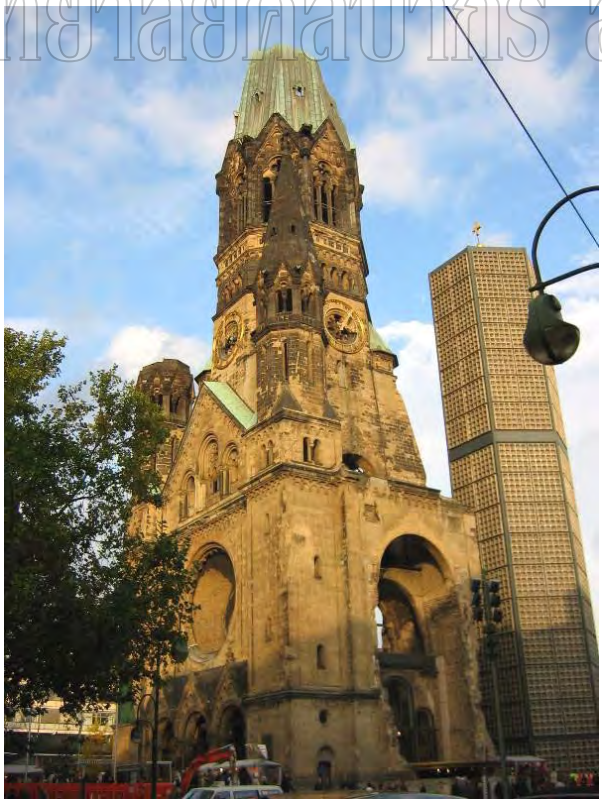


Fig.86 The Gedenkmal Kirche in Berlin. Internet accessed in April, 2008.

The memorials established on site are not only part of the healing process, but can be part of the interpretation of the sites. Both cemeteries in Kanchanaburi are designed as memorial places, with neatly kept gardens to provide peaceful areas where dreadful atrocities occurred, and areas where survivors and families can go and reflect on the events. Atrocities contain many elements of such extremes, which can be used to create marketable products from human cruelty and trauma. The heritage of atrocity concerns the deliberate infliction by people of suffering on people. The use of this in tourism, a discretionary activity pursued for entertainment, seems an inherently improbable phenomenon. Indeed the relating of these two human activities may be viewed at the very least bizarre and probably even as distasteful for atrocity heritage introduces a tone of seriousness into entertainment while tourism threatens to trivialise the serious (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996).

However, the exploitation of the heritage of the suffering of others for pleasure through the development of tourism products and experiences is not particularly new, and is now relatively commonplace in tourism in some form or other. The enormous range of events, sites and historic associations that attract tourists include many that commemorate or recall unpleasant or traumatic occurrences from the past. The justification for this study is that the use of such heritage poses distinctive issues and requires careful management based upon an understanding of phenomenon.

Motives of tourists

Although many elements of atrocity have a mass appeal, such tourism can be classified within the broad category of ‘special interest’, which is an amalgam of many quite different interests. When we look at a commodified site or event, atrocity tourism overlaps with many such specialised tourism such as ‘war tourism’, ‘battlefield tourism’, ‘disaster tourism’ and even ‘killing-fields tourism’. Secondly, it can be incorporated into a categorisation that relates to the disposition of the tourist or the sort of satisfaction obtained from the experience. Atrocity heritage tourism can be considered as one more narrowly defined aspect of the ‘dark tourism’ of Lennon & Foley (2000) and the ‘thanatourism’ of Dann and Seaton (2003). These encompass many motives from a pilgrimage of penance and repentance for an assumed complicity, through a quest for identity, a less personally engaged search for knowledge, understanding and enlightenment, a social mission to shape more desirable or responsible futures, to much

darker and less socially accepted emotions where gratification is obtained from violence and suffering (Ashworth, 2005). Finally, the much broader field of heritage interpretation has long had to confront the difficulty of managing the large quantity of the remembered and memorialised human past that involves atrocity (Uzzell, 1989). Tourism is not the only, and rarely even the most important, market for the consumption of interpretations of such a 'dissonant heritage' (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996) from a history that may hurt, confuse, or marginalise someone in some way. If tourism is the most important motive that we interpret heritage of atrocity, thus the study of motives must be stated here.

An explanation of why tourists are attracted to the heritage of atrocity is necessary to understand how such heritage is actually used by tourists and how it should be managed. Tourists are people and thus the uncomfortable question arises, 'Why are people attracted by atrocity?' An interest in atrocity is an aspect of quite normal behaviour or, at worst, only a more open or exaggerated form of normal intrinsic character traits of people. If this is so then we are all actual or potential atrocity tourists and the elements that favour the commodification of such sites, events, and associations for tourism are easy to appreciate. Four main arguments, each of which places atrocity within a much more familiar and generally unexceptional context, can be made.

1. The curiosity argument

The unusual or the unique is interesting to people and thus to tourists. Therefore the reason why tourists are attracted to atrocity comes at least in part from the same curiosity that motivates people to notice and remember occurrences that are out of the ordinary. The unique and unusual evokes and satisfies human curiosity: the tourist is not strange in this respect, only perhaps less inhibited in this exercise by the constraints of daily life. Curiosity about the atypical motivates 'disaster tourism' where accidents and natural calamities attract spectators, souvenir hunters and popular media attention. On a more organised, and socially acceptable level, some spectator sports, and even traditional circus activities, owe their popularity to the entertainment value of the perceived possibility of a personal disaster overtaking the performers. Atrocity being a unique, non-everyday event has a similar entertainment value.

2. The identity arguments

The explanation for an increasing interest in atrocity heritage may be the same as for heritage as a whole and heritage tourism is just an expression of this interest while on holiday. Heritage tourism is arguably a form tourism that tourist seeks for self-understanding and self-identity through heritage wherever it might be located. As much history has been unpleasant for many, it is not surprising that such a search almost inescapably reveals past atrocity with which the searcher can identify, most usually as victim. The motives for such a self-identifying visitor may be instruction in personal or family history, or have the spiritual and reflective characteristics of a pilgrimage to 'pay respects' to others with whom the visitor feels a personal link. Equally the increasing differentiation and fragmentation of the tourism market has been matched by attempts to increase the specificity of the tourist destination. Heritage has long been a major instrument for the transmission of this distinctiveness to answer what happened there that makes it different from other places. As with personal identities, atrocity heritage is an especially powerful instrument for differentiating places. Places may welcome such powerful indelible marking as 'putting them on the map' but equally if it is an undesirable map may attempt to escape from such ill repute (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996).

3. The horror argument

The idea that some people are attracted by horrific occurrences may appear a less acceptable argument than those mentioned above. It may seem repugnant and just not morally acceptable for people to be entertained by the accounts of the suffering of others. However horror tourism is not new, suffering and death have been used as public entertainment. The link between portrayals of violence and amusement may be only an extreme form of a more general and socially acceptable attraction to the dramatic. The deliberate evocation of a mix of the emotions of fascination and fear through a voyeuristic contact with horror is a staple product of not just many tourism sites and trails but much of literature, folk stories, art and more recently film and television production. The relating to tourists of the heritage of atrocity is thus as entertaining as any of these media and for precisely the same reasons and with the same moral loading. Furthermore if the tourism experience is essentially an emotional occurrence which contrasts with the experience of daily reality and offers a temporary escape from it, then the tourists are posing the question of what kind of extraordinary feelings can they experience out of the

visit of the site. (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). Sites of atrocity would seem particularly opposite because there are just more and rawer emotions to experience.

4. The empathy argument.

This could just be a more acceptable way of expressing the fascination of horror as the distinction between an acceptable empathetic identification and an unacceptable voyeurism is vague and difficult to draw, or to express, through interpretation. Empathy relies upon the capacity of heritage consumers to identify themselves with the atrocity narrative being related, which is much easier to obtain with named and personified individuals, in this case overwhelmingly Anne Frank, than with large abstract groups. This identification is more usually assumed to be with the portrayed victims: it could equally however be with the perpetrators. If tourists engage in fantasy (Dann, 1981) then is a visitor to an atrocity relating to a fantasy of being a victim, a perpetrator or both? None of these arguments are, of course, exclusive. A conscious political homage or atonement of largely sympathetic liberal markets in Europe and North America, meritorious self-education and a search for exemplars applicable elsewhere may combine to create curiosity about these places. Some of these places have been made notorious by their repetition in news bulletins, with a frisson of excitement through exposure to previous violence and present perceived criminality, and obsessive interest in the exercise of human cruelty.

Motives of the producers

The creators, custodians, interpreters and managers of the atrocity heritage not only may have, but are very likely to have, quite different motives and objectives to that of the visitors. The explicit intentions of many of the managers and interpreters of sites and museums of atrocity heritage are frequently and openly expressed to be didactic. From the viewpoint of governments, the principal function of heritage is the legitimation of dominant ideologies and jurisdictions, thus a revolutionary change in the ideology of the state will be reflected in a radical change in the public heritage which is adjusted to concur with new power relations, popular aspirations and values. A new past needs to be explicitly created to reflect and support the new present, whilst the old becomes at best irrelevant and at worst contradictory.

In addition, past atrocity is often used not only to stimulate empathy with past victims but to make any future repetition of such events in comparable circumstances less

likely. Further, many interpretations attempt to draw lessons from the past that are considered to be relevant for the present and the future. Heritage managers have agendas which may be broadly and vaguely philanthropic, anti-racist, anti-militarist, and multi-ethnic. The significant point is that the motives and messages of the heritage producers may not be the same as those of the consumers.

Motives of residents

Finally, although the motives of the visitors and of the official producers may well be very mixed, so also may the reactions of the local population. Residents and participants in the events commemorated may be gratified by outside interest, or might possibly resent the voyeuristic intrusion of 'poverty tourists' of another race and income. However local entrepreneurs, tour operators, guides, have been the owners, and those claiming to have been active in the resistance are prominent among the operators of such tours. This together with a lack of overtly expressed hostility to tourists suggests at the least that locals welcome the income more than they resent the intrusion.

There is the more general issue of the wider impacts of heritage atrocity tourism upon the societies of both the hosts and the guests. The objectives of most atrocity heritage producers are unambiguously altruistic and humanitarian. However, whether visitors accept their pedagogic moralising messages, and even whether they are actually received at all, and whether the latter behaviour of visitors is thereby altered for the benefit of their home societies, remains unknown. The experience of atrocity tourism may have an impact upon the individual tourist and the tourist's home society. Atrocity tourism may anaesthetise rather than sensitise visitors, making horror and suffering more normal or acceptable, rather than shocking and unacceptable. It may be psychologically undesirable and even destabilising for some susceptible individuals, and the publication of particularly horrific events may seriously affect them. There is also an argument that promoting the visiting of atrocity sites may legitimate the atrocity, or those who committed it, and thus encourage more in the future. Finally, tourists may be repelled rather than attracted by atrocity if they feel that they themselves could become victims of continuing terror, inconvenienced by the results of atrocity or merely because they find its recent memory distasteful rather than attractive (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996).

Emerging issues from the findings of the survey

From Chapter 4, it is clear there is a need to have stories about atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' interpreted. Different groups of visitors have different expectations and are interested in different issues. It is not too soon to say that these results support the research's hypothesis that interpretation in itself is a heritage - how we interpret our heritage is how we want our heritage to be. There are several issues which emerged during the survey to support this hypothesis, and these will be discussed in detail below.

I. The nature of the heritage as a 'share-contested heritage' and heritage of dissonance

According to Olsen who has identified three types of contested heritage as mentioned before in the review of literature, atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' falls into the first type. It involves two or more groups claiming the same or overlapping heritage. Here, same places have different meanings for different groups, and each group believes that its view is correct, while that of the other group (s) is not.

All heritage belongs to someone but the answer to the question, 'Whose heritage is it?' often receives multiple, and even conflicting answers. The idea of 'dissonant heritage' (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996) in which there is a mismatch between the heritage sites and artefacts, and the people experiencing them is central in a number of ways. In addition there are many inherent difficulties in the interpretation and management of the heritage of atrocity, especially when heritage is multi-use and multi-selling to several groups of people with different interests at the same time. Atrocity heritage presents a challenge of interpretation from three perspectives; the victims and those who are associated with them; the perpetrators and those who are associated with them; and those not directly involved. Not only are these interpretations likely to be different, they may conflict.

Atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' raises aspects of both these ideas. In this case the most obvious claim on the past is that of the victims and those who are associated with them. Although historically the Australian prisoners of war were not the most numerous group of victims (both the British and Dutch forces suffered heavier casualties and the number of local labourers who died remains unknown), nevertheless

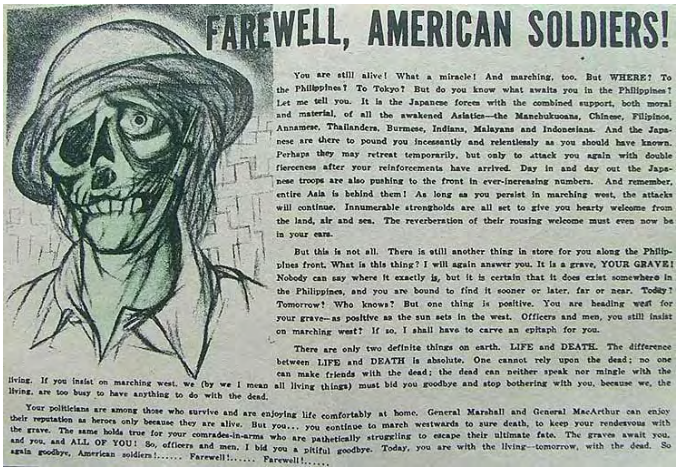
many of the sacred memories of the sites have been monopolised by the Australians. 'Hellfire Pass' in particular is strewn with small Australian flags and other personal tokens, no doubt left by visitors who may or may not have had any personal link with the individuals who died there (Fig. 87-88). What is abundantly clear is that the Australians have claimed these sites as their heritage. This area contains some of the most important sites relating to Australian heritage outside the country, similar to Gallipoli in Turkey. Equally the significance to Australians is not exclusive but is set in the context of Australia's interaction with a wider world.

Fig.87 Australian flag at Hellfire Pass. The author, July, 2006.

Fig.88 Monument at the Hellfire Pass shows the claim of heritage's ownership by Australians. The author, Sept., 2006.

Fig.89 Another monument at the Hellfire Pass commemorates those who built and those who dies during the construction of the railway. The author, Sept.,2006.

The other two groups, the perpetrators, in this case the Japanese army, and the 'bystanders', the Thai population in whose country the events occurred, have a more muted and somewhat ambiguous presence. There is the Japanese Memorial monument not far from the Bridge to commemorate of those who helped to build and died during the construction of the 'Death Railway', which is also included in the study area. Board and signpost at this Memorial is also translated into English and Thai. However interpretation to both these groups remains a challenge.



FAREWELL, AMERICAN SOLDIERS!

You are still alive! What a miracle! And marching, too. But WHERE? To the Philippines? To Tokyo? But do you know what awaits you in the Philippines? Let me tell you. It is the Japanese forces with the combined support, both moral and material, of all the awakened Asiatics—the Manchukuoans, Chinese, Filipinos, Annamese, Thailanders, Burmese, Indians, Malayans and Indonesians. And the Japanese are there to pound you incessantly and relentlessly as you should have known. Perhaps they may retreat temporarily, but only to attack you again with double fierceness after your reinforcements have arrived. Day in and day out the Japanese troops are also pushing to the front in ever-increasing numbers. And remember, entire Asia is behind them! As long as you persist in marching west, the attacks will continue. Innumerable strongholds are all set to give you hearty welcome from the land, air and sea. The reverberation of their rousing welcome must even now be in your ears.

But this is not all. There is still another thing in store for you along the Philippines front. What is this thing? I will again answer you. It is a grave, YOUR GRAVE! Nobody can say where it exactly is, but it is certain that it does exist somewhere in the Philippines, and you are bound to find it sooner or later, far or near. Today? Tomorrow? Who knows? But one thing is positive. You are heading west for your grave—as positive as the sun sets in the west. Officers and men, you still insist on marching west? If so, I shall have to carve an epitaph for you.

There are only two definite things on earth. LIFE and DEATH. The difference between LIFE and DEATH is absolute. One cannot rely upon the dead; no one can make friends with the dead; the dead can neither speak nor mingle with the living. If you insist on marching west, we (by we I mean all living things) must bid you goodbye and stop bothering with you, because we, the living, are too busy to have anything to do with the dead.

Your politicians are among those who survive and are enjoying life comfortably at home. General Marshall and General MacArthur can enjoy their reputation as heroes only because they are alive. But you... you continue to march westwards to sure death, to keep your rendezvous with the grave. The same holds true for your comrades-in-arms who are pathetically struggling to escape their ultimate fate. The graves await you, and you, and ALL OF YOU! So, officers and men, I bid you a pitiful goodbye. Today, you are with the living—tomorrow, with the dead. So again goodbye, American soldiers!..... Farewell!..... Farewell!.....

Fig.90 Example of controversial Japanese interpretation. Source unknown.

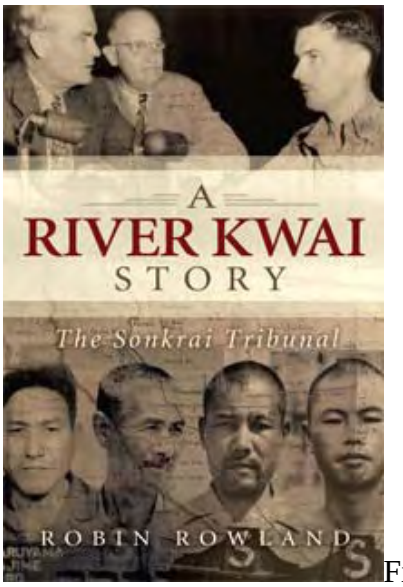


Fig.91 Example of book (released in April, 2008) about the 'Death Railway' and WWII Tribunal, written by Canadian journalist whose father was a British POWs.

Whose heritage?

Heritage fabricated by the media often seems more real because it is more familiar than the original. Whether or not "cultural property belonging to any people" held by the Hague Convention in 1954, is also "the cultural heritage of all mankind", cultural heritage is primarily seen in a global context as part of the common heritage of humanity. Though "natural and cultural resources belong to the people of a given country", World Heritage Spokesmen hold each country answerable to the global community for legacies in its own care. That the natural heritage is global is now beyond dispute. Fresh water and fossil fuels, rain forests and gene pools are legacies common to us all and need our care. Cultural resources likewise form part of the universal human heritage. Heritage practitioners in general believe that the designation of around 800 World Heritage Sites in about 150 countries around the world enhances their fame, enables their care, and sways national stewards to share them with folk the world over. Although this assumption might not totally correct, the idea to protect World heritage is one of its aims.

Heritage provokes internal as well as international rivalry. National, regional, local, and *in situ* museums contest its allocation. Great museums claim visibility for national icons and the benefit of comparative study, those on the spot stress the fusion of

heritage with habitat: tangible relics in their own locale. Following this issue the ownership of history has changed over time and place, as Lowenthal mentioned: Who does and should posses the story of as well as the remains of the past? Who has or should have rights to the past? An individual, the local people, the nation state, a supra-national body or even an ideal (Lowenthal, 1989).

Conflict is endemic to heritage. Victors and victims proclaim disparate and divisive versions of common pasts. Claims of ownership, uniqueness, and priority engender strife over every facet of collective legacies. To insist we were the first or the best, to celebrate what is ours and exclude others, is what heritage is all about. But we are not condemned to be forever driven by tribal demons. We shall take contrary impulses gather force, defining heritage as a global good. In the last century heritage became an ideal increasingly shared among each nation's peoples. Now it begins to belong, as of rights, to the whole world. Mutual respect for the heritages of others is a byword in agencies like UNESCO, ICOM (International Council of Museums) and ICOMOS (International Council on Monuments and Sites).

However, in the real world, the implications of various cultural heritage instruments are, of course, deeply political. They have potentially major impacts, especially for suppressed minority cultural groups in many countries. But they are also highly significant for governments and for dominant ethnic groups which feel their power is being undercut by efforts to raise the status of minority groups and their cultures. The subjects of cultural rights and human rights occur when we discuss about heritage of dissonance. The overview of this topic will be introduced shortly as below.

In heritage fields the relationships, and the potential but essential unfounded conflict, between the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the World Heritage Convention on Cultural Heritage and the ICOMOS Cultural Tourism Charter is complicated. If it also deals with more rulings such the Universal Declaration on Cultural Diversity, and the UN Declaration on the Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage, conflicts in these rulings will cause much dissonance to occur in heritage interpretation.

The topic of relationship between cultural rights and human rights raises an interesting question, which has been widely ignored by those on the conservation side, but addressed on many occasions by those whose primary interest is that of human rights. In the conservation field the emphasis is, understandable in western culture, on the

conservation of fabric with little attention given in many cases to the fundamental rights of owners of properties that may be controlled by various heritage authorities.

Three broad types of conflict can be defined, in which the inter-relationships between cultural rights and human rights issues are implicated:

- Cultural rights of minority groups to maintain their tangible and especially intangible heritage is threatened.
- Political implications in cultural heritage raise a selective interpretation of heritage that is used to influence mainstream cultural identity.
- Suppression of ethnic cultural practices and finally eradicated. While these ethnic groups claim a right to cultural practice as human rights.

This topic shows and supports the hypothesis of the research on the importance of heritage interpretation. Interpretation can be used to promote mainstream culture, however it can also be used to ignore or eradicate the minority culture. Thus, to reach such goals we shall put interpretation on the top of the agenda to lead the whole heritage conservation plan. Interpretive programmes, with a careful element, should be founded on three basic perspectives, which can help eliminate much of contestation among visitors that so often accompanies heritage interpretation:

1. There must be recognition of human dignity and the right of others to have beliefs and values different from one's own.
2. Positive attitudes towards people from other groups must prevail, such as fair-mindedness, respect for feelings, empathy and friendliness.
3. It is critical to accept differences with interest and pleasure, as an enrichment of one's own life and understanding rather than as an assumption of inferiority on the part of the different culture.

II. Political implications to the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway': case of Thailand

One of the most challenging aspects of the interpretation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is the connection of an understanding of heritage significance to the site's political context. This issue is not unique to 'Death Railway': interpreting sites of trauma, pain and suffering, or sites of controversial political importance is always difficult. Sites as diverse as Gallipoli in Turkey, Tol Sleng Killing Field in Cambodia,

the World Trade Centre in New York, and Buchenwald Concentration camp in Germany have all had their share of controversy because of the different meanings that these places are asked to convey by different interest groups. In the case of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', political implications are one of its major characteristics. These implications involve three main groups; the victim, the perpetrator and bystander governments and their citizens. What emerged strongly from the survey was the political implication of the two governments; Thai and Japanese. Due to a lack of documents, records and research about the Japanese handling of this war heritage, as well as Japanese national policy relating to the Second World War's which is strictly controlled and it is a very delicate subject of national importance, it was impossible for the researcher as an outsider to analyse the political implications of the Japanese to this war heritage within the time limit. Thus, in this research, the political implications of the Thai government to atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' will be discussed in great detail.

As it has been shown that the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is the most important historical site related to Second World War history in Thailand, but it is not clear that this significance is shared by the Thais in general, or appreciated by contemporary Thai government. Most Thais did not fight in the Second World War, and a large proportion of the Thai population that is below the age of sixty five has no direct personal experience of the Second World War in Thailand.

As with most national governments, particularly conservative with identity-building up country, the Thai government wishes to closely control the narrative expressed at sites of national heritage significance. This potentially narrows the scope of present interpretation: there was, for instance, no possibility of dealing with the history about the role of Thailand during the war, when a number of interpretations were produced for museums in the area. The political implications, and heritage sensitivity, of the 'Death Railway' atrocity heritage is a threat for interpretation, but the researcher believes strongly that we can manage the threat. The major political implication of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is national history that has been written about Thailand during the war, as will discuss in detail below:

Analysis of the official interpretation of the political situation during the Second World War and post-war period in Thailand

In national Thai history, there is a vested interest of the government and people in promoting the country's independence, and a sense of pride that Thailand has been highly successful in maintaining its independence and national security in a part of the world where dissension, struggles for power, territorial take-overs, armed insurgency, and war have been common. Most Thais never consider the passing through of the Japanese military during World War II as a country's occupation. The Thais managed to avoid the direct colonial rule that led many other Southeast Asian countries into years of colonisation, and they remain proud of their legacy of independence and wary of international developments they perceive as threatening. They succeeded in informing a buffer zone between British and French influence. Until now, the Thais had not fought a major war on their own soil since the eighteenth century, having avoided foreign military encroachment largely through adroit diplomatic manoeuvring.

Textbooks continue to explain further that the pragmatism inherent in Thai national security policy brought the country safely through World War II and into the post-war period. Rather than capitulating to the Japanese, the Thai entered into an alliance with them. At the same time, they maintained an active resistance movement that enjoyed the tolerance of the wartime Thai government. This lack of support for their wartime 'ally', combined with Thai diplomatic skills, achieved a post-war accommodation with the victorious Allies. In the face of communist advances in parts of Asia after World War II, Thai leaders sought protection against a possible threat from China by joining other countries for collective security through the 1954 Manila Pact, which laid the groundwork for the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation (SEATO). SEATO's lack of military forces in the tradition of the stronger North Atlantic Treaty Organisation (NATO), however, left Thai authorities apprehensive about depending on the organisation. In the 1960s, Thailand experienced a long-term protective alliance with the United States, which supplied vast quantities of economic, internal security, and military aid. The close association between the two countries later facilitated the United States use of Thai military bases and other facilities during the Indochina War (1954-75). These significant political manners show the Thai flexibility in national security matters reflected in the traditional analogy of bamboo bending with the wind.

Analysing Thailand's Role during the Second World War: Dual Diplomacy or Duplicity?

In Thailand, the government control of media has been strictly enforced. The central importance of mass media to the Thai power elite has been marked for a century by the enthusiastic promotion of communication technologies and their extension throughout the countryside. A study by Annette Hamilton in 1990, over the mass media and national identity of Thailand, said that the emergence and consolidation of a concept of national identity in Siam/Thailand has largely been examined through political-social frameworks. The transformation in consciousness, first among the elite but soon among the rising bourgeoisie and now among 'ordinary people', can be attributed as much to cultural and aesthetic factors as to the consequences of political struggle or official nationalism (Hamilton, 2002). The efficacy of state control over the media may provide its own negations; the circulation of discourse may escape from the channels intended to control it. And, where the populace is well aware that the mass media and its messages are censored and controlled, this only provides an even more fertile ground for the proliferation of rumours, gossip, and the circulation of information, criticism and sometimes wild imaginings. What is not said, the resounding silences, can open up fissures through which unofficial discourse is constructed and rapidly circulated. The competing circuits of power at every level of society ensure that even the forbidden may be available, and that which cannot be said may be expressed in other ways.

During the Second World War, Thailand entered the war in 1941 on the side of Japan and against the U.S. and Britain. By the time the war was over, Thailand was against Japan and on the side of the U.S. How did this flip-flop happen? Was Thailand really pro-Allied or pro-Axis or neither? Was Thailand forced to, or did it willingly agree to, allow Japanese troops passage to move through Thailand in December 1941? America and its major ally, Britain, differed greatly in interpreting Thailand's actions.

Thailand was not a colony, but there were some similarities to European colonies in Southeast Asia before World War II. Thailand was in the British economic sphere of the British Empire; the power of Britain was that it was the major buyer of Thai exports. During that time Thailand was an exporter of raw materials, and the main business was in the hands of the Chinese minority who lived in the Kingdom. During the reign of the two kings; King Mongkut and Chulalongkorn (Rama IV and V), Thailand

had played the British off against the French by using the benefit of geography as a buffer between French and British colonies. But, in the end, Thailand gave up parts of its territory to the French and the British to save its independence. Thailand also took benefit from chronology; the Thais learned from the mistakes the Chinese and Burmese leaders had made which had resulted in their countries being vulnerable to colonial take-overs. Most importantly, Thai leaders had not succumbed to getting too deeply in debt to the West. Thailand experienced a flamboyant growth in modern nationalist feelings in the 1930s (like other areas in Southeast Asia). A constitutional monarchy replaced the absolute monarch in 1932. The nationalist movement emphasised Thailand becoming a part of the world culture and economy. In building up the national identity, the then Prime Minister, Field Marshall Phibulsongkram, changed the name of the country from Siam to Thailand, honouring the national banner, national habits and manners, nation-building efforts, national anthem for the King, national dress, daily chores. Many monuments and official buildings were built, Thai music and literature flourished and several other cultural aspects were strongly promoted.

Fig.92 Marshall Phibulsongkram. Internet accessed July, 2006.

Many in Thailand admired Japanese achievements in industrialisation, economic development, and military diplomacy. Japan's appeal to Thailand used some of the same themes as its propaganda for Western colonies in Southeast Asia: anti-western, anti-British, racist appeal and all Asians were brothers (Fig. 93-5). The Japanese offered to help the Thai government to get back the former 'Thai' territories in Laos, Shan states, Malaya from the French and British, and in return Thailand should allow the Imperial Japanese Military troops to use the country as a passage to Burma. This political proposal was very seductive and came at the right moment under a government, which was engaged in building up nationhood. The government realised, later, how strong the Japanese military were. On January 21st, 1942 Thailand and Japan signed the Treaty of Co-operation and four days later on 25th, Thailand declared war on America and Britain. Later it became evident, after the fall of Malaya, Singapore, Philippines and most other countries in the region that they were under them, the troops had reached Thailand a few months before. Thailand had signed an agreement to be a Japanese war-ally, and had declared to side with the Japanese with no military support, only passage to Burma. The situation got worse when the Thai ambassador to Washington, M.R. Seni Pramote, refused to deliver a declaration of war that Thailand had to collaborate with the Japanese against the United States. United States missionaries and Thai students abroad, both in the States and Europe formed a resistance corps, the Seri Thai (Free Thai), and planned to infiltrate back into Thailand in 1944.

Fig.93 Propaganda for the 'Greater Co-Prosperity Sphere' in between Asian countries by the Japanese Imperial Army. Source unknown.

Fig.94 Same propaganda as above. Source unknown.

Fig.95 Same propaganda as above. Source unknown.

The Seri Thai corps was an underground resistance group against Japanese acts in Thailand, led by a Thai scholar, Mr. Pridi Panomyong. They sabotaged Japanese trains and buildings in Thailand. The members of Seri Thai became the government of Thailand in August 1944, once Japan was clearly losing the war. Pridi's group, with Mr. Khuang Aphaiwong as Prime Minister, took over power in the country. The Seri Thai (with the help of the United States) received the Japanese surrender in August 1945. The atomic bombs had ended the war in Asia earlier than the Allies planned and thought it would. The Allies had planned to re-enter their Southeast Asian colonies sometime between

September and November of 1945. The British, casting Thailand as an enemy-occupied nation, had intended to 'liberate' Thailand from the Japanese. Instead, when the Japanese in Thailand surrendered their weapons and returned property that they had expropriated, the Thai government – now in the hands of the Seri Thai – were the only authorities on site to receive the surrender.

Analysis of the interpretation of Thai identity and ways of life

To understand the Thai approach in heritage interpretation, the researcher would like to give an example of the way the Thais interpret their identity and way of life. The matter of the name change of the country is the best example, and has been hotly debated for several decades. The name of the country was changed from Siam to Thailand under the government of Marshall Phibulsongkram in 1939 (Fig. 92). Once, there was an effort to bring back the original name, which was used since 1782, during the government of Khuang Apaiwong/Pridi Panomyong, but it was used for a short while (1945-1949), then changed to Thailand again as directed by the new government. They considered the name Thailand was more modern and suitable to build up a national identity. There was also the ideology behind of honouring the 'Tai', which is a major group of people who lived in the central part of Siam and, is believed, took a major role in building up former capitals and the country. For several scholars, it was a vital mistake in an effort to build up national identity by erasing race and ethnicity groups that have been living and forming the country of Siam for centuries. Many groups living in the region; several hill tribes in the north and west, Malays in the south, Laotian and Khmers in the northeast, the Thais are more in the central plain. To set up the name of the country according to the ruler power, and at the same time, to neglect the multiracial and multicultural people is considered a mistake or a ruthless development.

To understand and be able to discuss about cultural identities in Thailand, we need to look at a study by Craig Reynolds, where he stressed the long tradition of cosmopolitanism in Thailand. He noted that traditional Thai manuals "on such matters as astrology, medicine and grammar had a capacity to absorb new material while appearing to remain unchanged, and that their fragmented, repetitive, and unsystematic character stemmed from the integration of foreign cultural elements" (1998: 124). Openness also characterised Thai attitudes toward Western knowledge, values, and abilities, although in the early twentieth century Thai monarchs warned against a copying of the West, for fear

of losing national identity and sovereignty. However, Reynolds argued that "in the globalising epoch of post-nationalism, it is culture, rather than sovereignty, that identifies and differentiates a community…. because there is the dilemma of how it is possible to remain Thai/Tai in the globalising age" (1998: 134-5).

If cultural tourism to ethnic Tai communities in neighbouring countries is a novelty made possible by globalisation with variety of international tourists, the international marketing of Thainess to bring tourists into the country is another. The international tourism campaigns are often coupled with domestic cultural themes, so that a kind of feedback mechanism operates which confirms that local identity is shaped in part by how the country is being sold to foreigners. "What has been commodified for the international tourist may be consumed by the Thai national, whether that something is a self-image" (Reynolds 1998: 135).

One of the most renowned Thai writers who had been making interpretation of difficult subjects such as Thai ways of life, state, monarchy, Buddhism and Thai identity is Sulak Sivaraksa. Concerning to these subjects, he wrote that in the past period of Sukhothai old capital, King Ramkhamheang the Great was stimulating his kingdom to have three important pillars, the independence, the freedom and the righteousness. All these were written into the stone inscription that being interpreted and used by several kings at several periods since Ayutthaya until the present dynasty of Chakri. These three important points should be stimulated in the present day society. Thai people should have independence to think, freedom to act and righteousness to live in the same time the governors to have the same moral and most importantly they have to rule the country in a righteousness way (Sivaraksa, 1985).

Examples of the interpretation of the political situation during the Second World War and post-war period in Thailand

Without a doubt there have been good examples of efforts to make accurate interpretations of critical subjects and stories about the Second World War in Thailand, especially the role of Thailand during the war via literatures such books and novels. A subject that often appears when we discuss Thailand is the monarchy, which will be mentioned in the last example.

1. A novel called '*Four Reigns*'

First example to be mentioned here is the Thai classic novel called *'Four*

Reigns' by M.R. Kukrij Pramote (former Thailand Prime Minister and the brother of Thailand's ambassador to the U.S. during the Second World War, who refused the Thai government to declare war on the U.S.). This novel was written in 1981 and republished several times as well as being translated into English. It has been optional additional reading for the Thai language or Thai literature subject at Secondary school for many years. It was used to produce a film, a television series, and several theatre productions. Pramote tried to interpret the monarchical, social, political and economical context of Siam during the past seventy years into a book via the novel's heroin, Ploi.

The novel tells the story of a traditional girl born outside the Grand Palace, and being brought up and raised by a single mother under the patriotism of an aristocratic family in Siam during the reign of King Rama V, and her life through the next three reigns. Her whole life never went further than inside the palace where the kings, royal family, royal consorts and her family lived, and the opposite area of Thonburi region, across the Chao Phaya River. She had her own family with children and grandchildren. During several decades of her long life she lived through changes. She had seen four kings, their queens and the big royal families of each king. The most important changes were during the second and third reigns - Rama VI and Rama VII. The (now) old lady, who was raised up in the royal palace in a very traditional and conservative way, could not accept the change from an Absolute Monarchy to a Constitutional one. She was obliged to obey the state's policy of being civilised. No more classical Thai clothes were allowed to be worn outside the house, and she did not know how to put a skirt higher than her ankles. Things got worse during the Second World War and it affected her own family. One son served as a high ranking Royal Military Officer under the Japanese command, while another son was in an underground movement group against the invading Japanese. The clashing of political ideas between the two sons at home made her life stressful. She died with pains and doubts after the bad news of the murder of King Rama VIII.

2. A novel called '*Democracy, Shaken & Stirred*'

A more contemporary interpretation is the novel called '*Democracy, Shaken & Stirred*' by young Thai novelist; Mr. Win Lyovarin. It was written in Thai in 1995 and won a Best Novel Thailand National Book Award in the same year, later won the South East Asian Writers Awards in 1997. It translated and published into English in 2003.

The novel is about sixty years of democracy development in Thailand, starting from the change of an Absolute Monarchy to Constitutional Monarchy in 1932 and following with stories of several political demonstrations by those in search of democracy. It is a very sophisticated way to interpret Thai politics via 'fictional' figures in the novel. Readers learn indirectly about the history of the Second World War. There are parts of the role of Thailand, the political idea and governmental movement, and the 'Seri Thai' political group in the novel, more or less as a main theme. The symbolic messages hidden in this novel are the writer's personal ideas about democracy and how democracy in Thailand has been manipulated by several influential parties. '*Democracy, Shaken & Stirred*' has now been included in the recommended reading list for students of Political Science in most universities.

3. An article in newspaper

Recently, an article in the popular national English newspaper, *Bangkok Post*, on January 31st, 2008 wrote about the Victory Monument in the heart of Bangkok. The writer attempted to interpret Thailand's role during Second World War by giving a historical background of the monument, and as the core of the article was very sophisticated it could explain quite clearly some details of Second World War history in Thailand. The monument was built to commemorate those 801 servicemen and civilians who were killed in the brief Franco-Thai War of 1940-41 and in subsequent conflicts. The article started by explain in some background about the 'lost territories' that were once under the rule of Siam (Thailand) and which are now in the Cambodian provinces of Battambang and Siem Riep. In 1893, Siam was forced to cede these two provinces to France as well as territory on the west bank of the Mekong River along the border with Laos. Fast forward to 1940, when Nazi Germany invaded and occupied most of France. Thailand seized the opportunity to pull a fast one on the colonial territories in French Indochina. Thai (the name had been changed from Siam) troops marched eastwards in an attempt to regain the 'lost territories'. Japan, realising that an ongoing conflict would disrupt its plan to invade the region, intervened and put pressure on the Vichy French government, via the Nazis, to surrender the provinces. The Franco-Thai War had lasted a little over two months.

Claiming victory, the Thai government commissioned a war memorial. But like the Franco-Thai War, the cheers were short-lived. Following the Allied victory,

Thailand was forced to hand back all the reclaimed territories to French Indochina in 1947, a penalty for having collaborated with the then bad guys *du jour*, Japan (Na Ranong, 2008).

4. A book called *'King Never Smiles'*

The most controversial book about Thai monarchy, *'King Never Smiles'*, written by a former Thailand-based American journalist, Paul Handley and published in 2006. It is prohibited to sell or import this book into the Kingdom of Thailand. With those limitations and act of professionalism, the story written in the book will not be summarised here, what I would like to highlight, however, is how interpretation can play a big role and act as a centre on critical subjects. In the meantime interpretation can create its own meanings and added value to the subject (here to the monarchy which is intangible heritage of Thailand) which again supports the hypothesis of this research that interpretation is heritage in itself.

From an unofficial debate relating to this book, in early January 2008, some four hundreds scholars from around the world met in Bangkok for the *Tenth International Conference on Thai Studies*. This academic jamboree takes place every three years. All the usual subjects were on the agenda: Buddhism; democracy; the history of Ayutthaya; agrarian relations; and Thai arts. But there was also something new and different. Three panels were devoted to discussion of the monarchy. Another two focused on the sufficiency economy (the present King's theory), and more papers on monarchical topics were scattered around other sessions. Never before has this subject attracted such attention.

Of course, it is strange to have any serious discussion of Thailand past and present without factoring in the monarchy. At previous conferences, the matter has been treated gingerly out of a mixture of deference and fear of legal complications. But the public presence of the monarchy in the life of the nation has expanded steadily over past decades. This is partly the result of the current long and remarkable reign, as reflected in the two massive celebrations of the 60th Jubilee and 80th Birthday over the recent months. It is partly because the idea of the sufficiency economy has been placed in the public domain and vigorously promoted as a guide for policy-making that will affect everybody. And it is partly because some figures closely associated with the monarchic institution have had prominent roles in the tense political conflict of the past two years. More and

more, the monarchy has become a subject that is impossible to leave out.

But this is still a delicate matter to discuss or interpret, especially for a meeting held inside Thailand. The organisers came under some pressure over the issue. To their credit, the host institution, Thammasat University, went ahead on grounds that these were legitimate subjects for academic discussion. Collectively, those various contributing papers demonstrated the immense complexity of the institution. In image, the monarchy is both a traditional Buddhist kingship and a pioneer of modernity. Through its investments, the crown is at the centre of Thailand's growing capitalist economy, while royal theories on development seem designed to shield ordinary people from the same process. The developments over sixty years in law, public image, and institutions like the Privy Council reflect major changes in the meaning of monarchy. By laying out this complexity, the conference panels quietly made a case for the need to understand and interpret the institution better. Luckily, most papers displayed weighty research, balanced arguments, careful thoughts and a subtle use of language.

Four very distinguished scholars from the panellists offered their reactions to Paul Handley's '*King Never Smiles*'. The first speaker said the role of the monarchy had evidently changed from 1973 onwards, and interpret that the book was just a simply one attempt to catch up with reality. While the second thought the book's title was silly and the writer's assumption often too American, but in the end it was a good book that could have been better with a better interpretation of the monarchy by the writer himself. The third lamented that Handley seemed to interpret the monarchy in a ritual and symbolic way. The fourth speaker raised a simple question of why such a big fuss was created about this book. Banning had been ineffective anyway. It would make a difference if the book was translated into Thai, and possibly people would find the content so familiar and unremarkable, it would be dismissed as nothing new, just other ordinary stuff. There will be no need for interpretation of this book from one person to another as is happening at the moment, because this kind of personal interpretation can be quite a dilemma to the content of the book itself.

III. Cross–cultural understanding of the heritage and special needs visitors

Heritage places and museums are conceived as areas for cross-cultural and intercultural dialogues. Cultural accessibility is obviously not exempt from conflicts. In a globalise world with people's interaction, migration, mingling and right to choose whether or not to preserve their identity, it is necessary to pose some questions, such as, how to manage heritage when facing intercultural dialogues, how to construct coexistent patterns through heritage interpretation, or what is a heritage manager's social responsibility.

From a visitors survey of tourists who visited the war sites in Kanchanaburi, beside the different nationalities there was a high percentage of 'grey-tourists', people with special needs, middle-aged and youngsters. Thus, visitors to the 'Death Railway' are not a homogeneous group of people with undifferentiated interests and needs. It is becoming clear, however, that with the variety of nationalities of visitors, heritage places are becoming ever more prominent places of cross-cultural interface. More and more heritage sites are beginning to be added to the itineraries of international travellers and more destinations are desirous to include their heritage offering on tour circuits. Likewise, more people with special needs are now travelling, as laws and practice have required tourist facilities to accommodate their special needs. In light of these changes, and as part of good management, the interpretation and interpretive programmes must adapt to address the issues of multilingual interpretation, cross-cultural understanding and special needs visitors.

A cross-cultural understanding of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is one of the basic difficulties in this type of contested heritage. It has been exacerbated by numerous visitors from different countries who are automatically considered as outsiders, westerners, or foreigners. It is completely legitimate for countries to seek to control their own sense of identity and heritage, and this means that a high degree of sensitivity with regard to foreign visitors is necessary. Visitors brought their own perceptions of Thailand and its history, some with little knowledge of the country, some with more in-depth understanding and some had a long- research interest in its history and heritage.

There was an interesting project founded by Professor William Logan's Deakin University Central Research Grant 2003, which, in turn, grew out of his research interest

in the Hoa Lo Jail in Hanoi, Vietnam. He presented his initial findings on Hoa Lo at the 2002, Australia ICOMOS national conference at Port Arthur, Tasmania, on the theme of 'Islands of Banishment'. This conference sought to 'explore, conserve, and interpret places which commemorate painful or ambivalent themes in the history of our societies' and its papers were highly relevant to Deakin University's collaborative Pain and Shame project. Logan's paper dealt with the way in which the Vietnamese went about conserving the central Hanoi prison, a site of injustice and intense suffering during French colonial times as well as the place where American pilots were imprisoned during the Vietnam War (Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and Pacific/CHCAP website, 2007).

The project of Pain and Shame was conceived as a cross-cultural study of imprisonment sites, their heritage values and the ways that communities, government agencies and heritage professionals deal with these cases of 'difficult heritage'. Based on a case study approach focusing (although not exclusively) on Asia-Pacific, examples of places of detention and incarceration, the project dealt with places not generally celebrated because of their association with pain and suffering in the past. Such places frequently become the subject of calls for their demolition in order to erase the shame associated with them. This reason is very relevant to atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. The Thai government has not shown any action to either erase or to preserve this part of history. With other issues that have priority, the war heritage of the 'Death Railway' is being neglected. There is a strong need for this research to assist in clarifying the processes of identifying, documenting (where appropriate), interpreting and physically protecting significant sites that are threatened with obliteration.

On the other hand, some places of imprisonment become regarded with the passage of time as having a quasi-sacred status, often as reminders of the bitter pages in a society's evolution, and warnings of the potential humans have for inhumane actions towards one another. Sometimes, these places may become regarded as the sites of an individual's or group's transcendence over the conditions of unjust imprisonment. In such cases there may be little or no dispute about their heritage significance, although the processes of achieving their effective interpretation, documentation and long-term protection remain difficult. The atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' falls into this category – easily recognised as having 'universal outstanding significance' but with many questions hanging over its future, there has never been any intention, discussion or

initiative from the Thai government to seek its inscription on the World Heritage List or to promote its significance in a more broader term.

IV. Extra-territorial heritage

There is a growing interest in the theme of sadness, pain, retribution, tragedy, and (sometimes) redemption at both international and national levels. UNESCO sees the forced migration of peoples as a useful new theme leading to new places being considered for World Heritage Listing. The theme is one way of putting into operation its 'Global Strategy' of shifting the balance of the World Heritage List away from Western Europe and North America, and already sites such as South Africa's Robben Island (site of Nelson Mandela's imprisonment) and the Gorée Slave Collection Point in Senegal have been added to the List (Graham et al, 2000).

There are many heritage places in the world that are considered extra-territorial. Sites like the cemeteries in Gallipoli, Turkey, and the whole cemetery-landscape of Ieper (Ypres) in Belgium (Fig. 96) where several nations that participated in the First World War, including Australia, showed their interest and claimed their right to the heritage. As well as hundreds of war cemeteries around the world that are cared for by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission who represents a political claim upon foreign territories.

Fig.96 Cemetery landscape of WW I spreads throughout the town of Ieper, Belgium. The author, Feb., 2008.

In the case of the atrocity heritage of the ‘Death Railway’, it is obvious that Australians have been paying a lot of attention and claimed this outside the country’s heritage as their heritage. A place like Hellfire Pass, where numerous Australians together with British prisoners of war died during the construction of the railway, has become a very significant site for the Australians. With the existence of the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum; the development of a Walking Trail from the Hellfire Cutting to Hintok Station (a distance of four kilometres), and commemoration activities taking place each year on the Anzac Day of 25th April show how the Australian government are seriously interested in this extra-territorial heritage. The management of such a site is controversial, with the basic thought that this war heritage is highly politically driven. Although the Australian government has been struggling to avoid the political message, unfortunately it is embedded at the site’s significance. Inevitably, interpretations in the memorial museum as well as at the Hellfire Cutting carry a political message, and an obvious claim of heritage to one nation by numerous Australian visitors who leave behind signs such Australian flags; Australian maps; Kangaroos and Koala bears. By doing so, the Australians have indirectly exclaved this heritage from other nations, especially from the Thais.

Fig.97 The Australian flag at Hellfire Pass. The author, Aug., 2007.

The research found out about Thailand's political implication that keeps the Thais, in general, a certain distance from the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. In the case of Hellfire Pass, the Australians have put a claim and created a museum building, and the overall physical setting of the site in a western style without relation to the surroundings and Thainess, thus making the Thais feel that this heritage site is so-called 'enclave heritage'. Ashworth & Van der Aa wrote about this issue concerning the criteria for designation of World Heritage Sites in their article about the destruction of the Bamiyan Buddha statues in Afghanistan by the Taliban political group. They called the site, 'enclave heritage' (the location of the heritage of one people in the physical space of another), which can have extremely high significance in a critical location. The site certainly needs more intensive consideration and specific care in conservation, interpretation and management, with or without being designated as World Heritage Site (the site is not on the World Heritage List). It shows many critical points to the criteria of UNESCO which does not always cover all qualified heritages, especially heritages that are situated in a difficult area (Ashworth, G.J. & Van der Aa, 2003).

The lack of a good relationship with the Thailand Development Military Base, where the heritage place is located; unsuccessful communication between the local people; and local communities and the Thais in general, Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum has a long way to go to interpret the significance of the site in a more neutral way. There should be an effort in the ways in which this war heritage and its significant heritage values can be, and are being, interpreted and conserved through planning and management interventions with a mutual understanding between those nations whose heritage is extra-territorial.

V. Heritage authenticity and heritage commodification

Cultural Heritage Authenticity

'Authenticity' is described as the relative integrity of a place, an object or an activity in relation to its original creation. In the context of living cultural practices, the context of authenticity responds to the evolution of the traditional practice. In the context of an 'historic place' or 'object', authenticity can encompass the accuracy or extent of its reconstruction to a known earlier state (ICOMOS International Cultural Tourism Charter, 1999). Authenticity can be divided into the physical fabrics and intangible values of

heritage. The fact about authenticity in cultural tourism is that most tourists want to consume a sense of 'authenticity'. Many tourists are interested in cultural heritage, some have more, and some have less knowledge about the past. Authenticity is then a social construct that is determined in part by the individual's own knowledge and frame of reference.

When we mention about the authenticity of heritage, the commodification of heritage is an unavoidable issue, almost is embedded in most heritage places. Especially at the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', that has been over-commodified for tourism. The researcher addresses on the issue of the commodification of the place because it is one of the major factors that has driven the present interpretation of this war heritage. To understand the commodification of this heritage, the theory of Heritage Tourism Products from Tunbridge and Ashworth is used as a ground understanding. As mentioned before that during the process of making heritage resource to be a tourism product, commodification is embedded in this process. What matter is to seek for a careful management to minimise commodification to the heritage product.

'Staged authenticity' and commodified heritage

The desire of tourists to experience authentic heritage, coupled with their common lack of discernment between reality and fabrication, has led to the presentation of what MacCannell (1976) termed 'staged authenticity', referring to a series of phases in which local conditions and regions go through a process of being staged for tourist consumption. He suggests that front regions, or locations where tourists come in contact with the local environment and people, become decorated and superficially presented to resemble places, peoples and practices of back regions to which visitors have limited access. Backstage in this context means the authentic and true, while front stage is the staged, or inauthentic, front, which tourists see and experience.

Commodification of the Atrocity Heritage of the 'Death Railway'

1. Commodification of the past

We are apt to confuse history and heritage, interchanging seamlessly one for the other. On this issue, the researcher would like to turn to a particular theme in David Lowenthal's book, *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*, as it expressed in the Introduction:

> "In domesticating the past we enlist it for present causes. Legends of origin and endurance, of victory or calamity, project the present back, the past forward; they align us with forebears whose virtues we share and whose vices we shun. We are apt to call such communion history, but it is actually heritage. The distinction is vital. History explores and explains pasts ever grown more opaque over time; heritage clarifies pasts so as to infuse them with present purposes (1989: 11)".

Heritage is not history. It may use historical fact as well as other sources such relics, literature or Mythology to translate fact to sustain and support memory and values. Heritage is, thus, not our prime or sole link with the past. History maintains a significant role, but has the lure of heritage overtaken history as a prime way of recovering the past as Lowenthal ventured to suggest. Heritage is, then, what we absorb from the past, and part of the growing dependence we have on the past where we may, in fact, falsify history. This is so much like the case of the Bridge over the River Kwai and the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. Not many tourists and people are aware that there never was a Bridge over the River Kwai during wartime. In fact, the Bridge was ordered to be built across the River Mae Klong. The fact that Thailand has officially changed the name of the River Mae Klong into the River Kwai, according to the film so that people could relate to it, and, of course, to commodify tourists' curiosity.

The heritage's commodification to falsify historical stories (the death toll, the role of Thailand during the war, the brutality of the Japanese and the POW experience) continues further at several sites. Most stories are sanitised. Most literatures about the subject are half fiction, written by ex-POWs or their relatives. Admittedly, heritage interpretation in a case like this could hardly avoid controversy. It involves issues such as the war atrocities committed by Japan (presently Thailand's prime foreign investor), as well as its iconography established by the Allies, overshadowing the fact about the war victims, both the Allied prisoners of war (POWs) and the Asian impressed labourers. The whole concept of the war story becomes an object for individual interpretation.

2. Physical Setting Commodification

The daily use of the Bridge for passing trains and the number of tourists who walk on it every day should have posed a serious threat to its physical authenticity. On the contrary, the physical fabric of the Bridge itself stays highly intact. After the bombing by the Allied air force, the Bridge was repaired, re-used and is maintain regularly by the State Railway of Thailand (SRT). It is a steel bridge with concrete supports going into the river. A more serious threat is the speed and scale of engineering works around the Bridge, and the River Kwai train station. The physical authenticity of the landscape setting around the Bridge is degrading from a rich tropical landscape with big trees and space, to be overcrowded with concrete buildings and tourist amenities. Some parts of the former tropical landscape around the Bridge have been seriously destroyed and commodified for tourism. New buildings, a square, footpaths, and monuments to accommodate the large amount of tourists and train passengers have also been constructed. The most radical impact is the development of concrete 'egg-carton box' shop houses to sell souvenirs, and used for tourist's amenities such as restaurants, car park, shopping mall, etc. They damage the landscape setting, destroy the integrity of the Bridge and the train station, and totally change the visual and symbolic connection between the place and its setting.

Fig.98 Inauthentic products sell to a mass tourist at the corner of the Bridge. The author, March, 2007.

Fig.99 Bustling street in front of the Bridge. The author, March, 2007.

3. Cultural Context Commodification

Another misfortune that has happened at the Bridge is the de-contextualsation of the war story and the war heritage by making modern monuments, in abstract forms and designs, with non-domestic materials, which are spread around the square where the Bridge and train station stand. The intention to interpret war stories by building these monuments has been a bad decision. The message from the creator/sender cannot be received or transmitted to the receiver/visitor. Not many people read the sign, or have any contact or understand these monuments. They are used by stall-keepers to stock their belongings.

This is a good example of a common habit when we de-contextualise our culture by building theme parks around our historic monuments and we treat them as garden ornaments. We also do it with intangible heritage when we put on dinner dance shows, and treat these expressions of art and ritual as some kind of desert for trivial consumption. This de-contextualsation of our culture is a very serious problem because it destroys the authenticity of the cultural expression that usually takes place in its own space and time. One is the creation of distracting and inappropriate conflicting messages and interpretations. The other is the cluttering of signs, etc. that make the core message less clear.

There is also a marked difference in the context of the way a heritage place is approached by foreigners and locals which should be mentioned here. While the

foreigners wander around as tourists, the Thais make a visit to heritage places like temple and palace to "constitutes a form of pilgrimage, during which obeisance is made to the religious symbols of the realm" (Cohen 1992: 40). For domestics, heritage sites, more or less, represent national treasures and symbols of national identity, more than just a tourist attraction. It is quite a tricky issue, and what is happening is really the opposite in the case of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' – especially the Bridge. As mentioned before, Thai people and the locals were taught to keep a distance from this heritage, and it appears to them that it is not really their heritage, while the Bridge and this war heritage do give a sense of place to numbers of tourist, especially from the former Allied countries and from Japan.

The main governmental figure in operating the Thai tourism industry is the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) which has been promoting heritage sites for the past two decades, and has centred on their use as stage settings for festivals or spectacular events, taking place in many places around the country. The atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', and mainly the Bridge over the River Kwai, is also a part of these festival promotions. To give as an example, the oldest and by far the most famous, is the Loy Kratong Festival, celebrated over three full moon nights in November amidst the ruins of Sukhothai. The highlight of this festival is a light and sound show with performers garbed in historical costumes, staged at the most important temple of the complex. Since its earliest staging, in the early 1980s, this Broadway-like spectacle has been presented as a genuine Sukhothai tradition and it lent considerable credibility to the event's supposed authenticity.

The same thing happens to the River Kwai Bridge, and how it is marketable into a tourist attraction. It has practically elided the horror of war associated with the site and transformed itself into a place for entertainment. Bypassing the dilemma between the '*cold*' and '*hot*' interpretation of war sites (Uzzell, 1989), TAT has opted for the jocular: a ten-day festival staged at the end of November at/around the Bridge in an estimated area of 4-5 kilometres, which includes thousands of stalls selling food, drinks, handicrafts, etc. The festival features 'rides on a vintage train', and the highlight is a light and sound presentation simulating an air attack of the Bridge. It receives some attention from international tourists, but not as high as one would expect when compared with the total amount of visitors to Kanchanaburi. One can assume that, among the

international tourists, those interested in culture are attracted by the site *per se* and not by the attached fair. The situation is different for domestic tourists, who are lesser keen than international tourists in their quest for cultural authenticity, and are more receptive to sites, celebrations and other events that exploit the royal and religious imagery. This kind of festival, both the Loy Kratong for domestic tourists and the Light-and-Sound Show at the Bridge for international tourists, is a perfect example of the commodification of heritage sites. It can be seen to display what Erik Cohen has conceptualised as 'emergent authenticity', whereby "a cultural product…which is at one point generally judged as contrived or inauthentic may, in the course of time, become generally recognised as authentic, even by experts" (Cohen 1988: 379-80).

It is probably safe to assume that most tourists are aware that performances and events are staged to some extent, have been altered and do not entirely reflect what conditions were like in pre-tourist eras. One of the most pressing challenges facing heritage manager today is the creation of authentic environments. However as complete reality is unrealised and simply impossible, perhaps it is becoming more important for managers to focus on being as authentic as possible within bounds of logic and providing visitors with satisfying experiences.

In doing so, there is a universal common practice, when we promote culture for tourism, to promote simple repetition or replication of cultural forms. The same dance is performed over and over, repeated night after night for changing audiences or tourists, like the case of Light-and-Sound show at the Bridge over the River Kwai (Fig. 100). The illustrated story about the origin, construction and the bombing has been repeating itself for more than thirty years. A big failure is the language used in the story is only in Thai (there are headphones available for a translation at extra cost) while the show focuses on international audiences. There is no cultural transmission or heritage interpretation, what is produced is the result in interruption of the process and the atrophy of cultural forms into marketable products. The interpretation of these war heritages is seemingly designed to dispel, rather than to unfold.

There is a lot of work involved in the interpretation of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' via the 'Bridge over the River Kwai Festival' with the 'Light and Sound Show'. From an interview of twenty stakeholders, it is clear that this festival plays an important role in the local economy in Kanchanaburi, and will stay. Most of the

stakeholders do not feel that this war heritage has been over-commodified for tourism. To withdraw the festival around the Bridge, and the show of the bombing of the Bridge, would be inappropriate and impossible. There is a possibility of working in co-ordination with the stakeholders to influence the organising of festival, and the show, to minimise commodification and retain authenticity of the heritage, both physical and intangible as much as possible and good interpretation would be very useful in this case.

Fig.100 'Light and Sound Show' with the bombing of the Bridge. The author, Nov., 2006.

Commodification at other sites

Apart from the Bridge, which is the centre and represents the whole context of Second World War in Kanchanaburi, the town of Kanchanaburi does contain four other powerful mnemonic sites: the Kanchanaburi and Chongkai War Cemeteries of Allied POWs (under the management of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission). At the Kanchanaburi War Cemetery the landscape setting and visual effect is spoiled by the growth of engineering and property construction. There are concrete buildings around the cemetery, there is also a road running both sides of the cemetery (Fig. 101). It is missing the tranquility, which is very much needed at such a site. However, the price of properties around the cemetery is still at a lower rate compared to other parts of the town. This is probably due to a strong respect (and fear perhaps) of the dead by the Thais.

While the Chongkai War Cemetery, which is located in a quiet area, is surrounded by trees which offers a calmer and better location. It is next to a big road, but it is quiet enough for visitors to contemplate their thoughts and commemorate those POWs who have their resting places there.

Fig.101 Landscape behind Kanchanaburi War Cemetery. The author, March, 2007.

A more threatening commodification of the cemetery is the contextual authenticity. It is regarded as photo-spot by most casual tourists, especially the Thais and other Asians. Every weekend, SRT organises more trains from Bangkok to the 'Death Railway' and has even introduced an organised train that stops at the Kanchanaburi Station (in front of the cemetery) for forty minutes, so that tourists can visit the cemetery. The result of this organised train is that groups of youngsters run in and out and around the cemetery to get the 'best spot' for pictures. Western visitors, however, react differently with much more respect and decency both in their manner and their dress.

The second site is the JEATH War Museum, where POWs' personal belongings and photographs are exhibited in a bamboo hut, built as a replica of those in the prison camps. Besides the commodified of falsified or fantastic stories of the war, the museum has chosen to bias clearly on the side of the allies, and condemns the Japanese.

Combined with the unprofessional display, a visit to this museum is an unsettling experience, associated with the idea of a holiday to Thailand.

Thirdly, a newly opened museum, the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre (TBRC), located at next to the Kanchanaburi war cemetery, is receiving more attention from serious tourists or tourists that have more time to spend in a museum. The two-storey building with an unattractive architectural design, overlooking to the cemetery with a panoramic view on the upper floor, offers in-depth information about the Second World War, especially in Kanchanaburi. Operating with a more professional team with good techniques of presentation, especially minimising the commodification, the museum is considered to be a success.

Lastly, a ride on a vintage train is highly recommended by most travel agents, which is indeed a good experience and one of the best ways to understand about the rail line; its construction; typography; and how the Ex-POWs had lived. Once more, tourist commodification follows on to the train and everywhere train passes. This train route is not only used for tourism, but it is also public transport for the locals. Again, while the locals are travelling as part of their daily life, tourists are experiencing the 'Death Railway' as a tourist attraction. A clash between the functions of the train and the passenger's cultures is phenomenal. The ticket price is also different, locals pay one-tenth of the tourist price. There are no official interpretations, such as brochures, leaflets or boards, either on the train or at the stations. If it is provided, it is apparently a very poor interpretation, unreliable and often the information is commodified.

VI. Local stakeholders' cooperation and community involvement in interpretation

This is an issue that has become a standard and should always be included in heritage conservation planning in general, especially in Asia. This is a very important aspect of any kind of tourist attraction. A lack of cooperation between the stakeholders, at local, national and international levels, is not a new topic, and the war heritage of the 'Death Railway' is a prime example. There is a high degree of lack of cooperation and miscommunication between the stakeholders. The heritage dissonance, which is a strong characteristic of this heritage (aforementioned), can be used to explain this lack of cooperation.

The fact is that there are several mitigating factors that facilitate or limit higher levels of community and individual empowerment in Thailand. Education, to have a better understanding of the heritage significance of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is a starting point. Once understood, then heritage appreciation will occur and heritage preservation will follow. It is also important to determine whether or not the local residents are able and/or willing to participate in decision making. Educational theorists argue that knowledge is power, and advocates of community empowerment contend that increased levels of community and individual awareness about tourism leads to higher levels of all types of empowerment. Thus, hopefully, through increased awareness, community members who are the most important stakeholders of this war heritage, will be better able to influence decision making and initiate development programmes themselves without a great deal of external interference.

Conversely, ignorance or lack of awareness keeps grassroots stakeholders under the control of more powerful elites. This in fact was a strategy commonly used by colonial powers and ruling classes, and has always been the case in Thailand. By keeping their subjects in a state of relative ignorance, rulers were (or continue to be) able to reduce the powerless to 'cultures of silence' (Botchway, 2001). In subtle ways, government officials sometimes perpetuate a feeling among community members that they are not clever enough, or do not possess adequate knowledge about tourism, to be able to participate (Timothy, 1999). For instance, many government officials, in several departments in Thailand, discount community input and suggest through official media statements that local people do not understand the real issues involved. Likewise, many government agencies overtly involve local elites in planning, and they suggest that they are the ones in possession of enough understanding to make any kind of contribution.

Centralisation of administration and elitism are also problems in Thailand. It is perpetuated when powerful elite groups (government officials) keep majority populations (or minorities) in a state of oppression and ignorance. Though, there are governmental offices from all ministries spread around the country, the Thai way of official administration that centralises most issues to ministries in the capital, has slowed down the country's development. Decentralisation of power and decision making in administration has been practiced, but has not yet been successful.

From a perspective of tourism development, heritage tourism in Thailand has traditionally been dominated by a nationalistic view of history while a more global view has been intentionally obscured. Similarly, in terms of living culture, most minority groups such as hill-tribes in the north, and the more than ten thousand ethnic Mon in Kanchanaburi, have virtually no control of how their cultures have been portrayed to tourists.

An issue of corruption, which can also occur even with the existence of empowerment initiatives, is especially the case when some groups or individual become empowered while others are not. Power imbalances are thus created which are conducive to corruption, as people take advantage of their (perceived) 'empowered' status to exercise their power in an informal, illegal manner over those who are less empowered. This form of control is deeply embedded in most societies of the developing world and often manifests in tourism development. Asia is particularly well known for its corrupt countries, and Thailand is one of them. There is nothing to be ashamed of by admitting it, what is more important is to seek ways of preventing and eradicating it. In this case, corruption becomes a major barrier to true empowerment, as inequities are created in destination communities that are often not formally acknowledged, or interwoven into development initiatives towards empowerment.

Fig.102 Campaign board by the Kanchanaburi Municipality in front of the Bridge. The author, March, 2007.

Fig.103 Famous floating restaurant locates almost under the Bridge. The author, March, 2007.

Chapter 6

Proposal for atrocity interpretation for the heritage of the 'Death Railway'

Once it is decided to remember past atrocities, the reasons and the resulting strategies can be discussed for each of the three groups of participants: the victims; the perpetrators; and the bystanders. Hereby, all study boundaries are located in Thailand, which is considered a bystander for this atrocity heritage. As the bystander's motives and strategies were mentioned before, at this stage two major reasons for interpretation management of this atrocity site will be proposed. Follow with four proposal strategies for atrocity interpretation management of heritage of the 'Death Railway'.

Reasons for atrocity interpretation management

1. Interpretation management for the reconciliation and prevention of atrocity

Those who are not directly involved, and do not identify with either the victims or perpetrators, may argue that they have an interest in memorialisation to prevent the reoccurrence of a similar atrocity, in which they might be involved. This is global humanitarian propaganda, inspired by the well-meaning intention, that lessons can be learned for the avoidance of future atrocity through presentation of previous occurrences. "If a museum or a site is to have educational value…they must also honestly represent the more shameful events of our pasts…if interpretation is to be a social good then it must … alert us to the future through the past" (Uzzell, 1989: 46). Such bland, well-meaning statements raise many questions about "whose honesty?" or "whose shame?" that cannot be unambiguously answered in many of the cases above, but the assumptions of an imperative instrumentality is clear (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). However, the interpretation of heritage places in this study has a quite explicit objective of reconciliation and prevention of recurrence. The atrocity that is memorialised here is used as a lesson for the present and as a hope for the future, as much as a description of the past.

A fundamental difficulty with the reconciliation and prevention approach is that the message projected by the interpreters and that received by the consumers may be quite different. This comes from a variation of the physical, social and cultural context of visitors (Falk & Dierking, 1992) and might come from a 'wrong' transmission as we have discussed before. In the field of promotion it is well known that a number of barriers exist that interfere with the effective communication of the message. Simply put, the message may not be heard, if heard not noticed, and if noticed not believed (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). The individual necessarily defends himself against the bombardment of external messages with effective filters and, as many researchers of the consumption of heritage have discovered (Merriman, 1991; Prentice, 1993), will incorporate only those parts of the projected messages that fit into their own existing mental constructs. As the background, motives and mental constructs of producers are very likely to be different from those of visitors, this will prove to be at the least a formidable obstacle to be overcome.

The ultimate argument against the use of atrocity heritage to prevent the recurrence has shown in the past that it has not worked. However, tourism on atrocity sites is often justified on precisely these grounds. Increasing knowledge in a world has not led to a diminution of atrocity and may even have increased it through technology transfer, copycatting, and the existence of a potential instant world audience. The future shortage of atrocity places to use in heritage tourism cannot be predicted (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996).

2. Interpretation management for use as a tourism product

As far as tourism is concerned, the didactic function may be a useful justification and reassurance to the procedures of such heritage, who might otherwise have misgivings about their role in an entertainment activity. They can argue that they are in the missionary business of educating visitors in world-improving worthy ideas rather than entertaining customers with the less savoury aspect of humanity.

There are number of difficulties with this approach. Tourists may be repelled as much as attracted by the relating of horror. The theory of Heritage Tourism Product by Tunbridge & Ashworth as introduced in literature review can help to understand the process and development of a heritage place to be a product in tourism. According to this theory, one of the most important issues when we want to use a heritage place for tourism

is the equity in benefit to all parties, and all interests should be equal. There is no doubt that the atrocity heritage of the 'Death railway' has high dissonance in the usage of heritage. The multi-use by multi-selling of this heritage in different products must not be a cause of social or economical bias for exclusive groups of one consumer at one time.

To turn the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' into a fair and sustainable tourism product is not a simple issue. Not only may the product be regarded as distasteful in itself, it may be associated with a fear of personal insecurity or inconvenience. Violence and accompanying disorder usually results in a precipitous decline in tourist numbers, followed by slow recovery. The extent of the decline, and its incidence in particular markets, will depend upon tourist perception and knowledge. Scale shadowing suggests that the more distant the market, the less the local knowledge, and thus the wider the shadow of anxiety. The pace of recovery depends upon the fading of the memory of the events, or their replacement by others, which might be expected to occur first among recent expatriates with local knowledge and only later among other groups. The 'museumification' of the horrific events may help render them safe as they are consigned to a visitable past and distanced from the tourist's present.

Proposal strategies for atrocity interpretation management of the heritage of the 'Death Railway'

1. Proposed interpretation plan for cross-cultural understanding

As a means of negotiating the heritage dissonance, the political and heritage sensitivities, the researcher would suggest the key concepts of heritage practice which might be extremely useful. The using of the methodology identified in the Burra Charter (2001) to emphasise the importance of significance and authenticity to heritage interpretation. With a collective statement of significance that are well-interpreted in the two museums (TBRC and HPMM) as a starting point, as a basis for subsequent discussions about the appropriate interpretation techniques suitable for the 'Death Railway' atrocity heritage.

Although all good heritage practitioners know that identifying a place's significance is the first step to its protection and interpretation, how we reach an understanding of that significance is particularly important when working in an international context. Problems usually occur when we work on place's significance,

especially dissonant heritage like the case study, owing to the question of 'significance to whom?' Here, a close discussion about the site's significance between stakeholders (local, national and international) will diminish or eradicate this problem. The close cooperation will animate both Thai and international stakeholders in a very concrete way. If this interpretation plan is carefully undertaken, what will surface will be a debate about the intricacies of their understanding of Thai history and especially the Second World War in Thailand. The process of discussion about the role of Thailand and the history of the Second World War will demonstrate a sense of the Thai participants' engagement in the project as well as a contribution by international stakeholders in their own perspective about the heritage. If cultural heritage significance is to guide interpretation work in heritage preservation, it must be explicitly recognised at the outset of all planning processes.

To be successful in developing an interpretation plan for cross-cultural understanding of heritage of the 'Death Railway', both local and international stakeholders should have a basic understanding of the place, especially when we found out from the research that international visitors (who are one of the stakeholders) wanted the fundamental elements of significance to reflect Thai understanding of the site. From here, it is valid to bring an international perspective to contribute in the interpretation plan of this heritage. After all, the researcher strongly believes that the heritage of the 'Death Railway' is of international significance as one of the best examples of a site related to the Second World War, especially in Asia. It is also useful for the Thai stakeholders to know the international importance of their country's history.

The framework of significance and authenticity is not only crucial to sound heritage practice; it also helps to negotiate difficult cross-cultural learning issues. This can establish an excellent agreed base for subsequent work in developing the interpretation plan. The next step is to integrate community engagement into the interpretation plan. Community involvement strategy is also an essential component of any interpretation plan. They can include simple information sessions, consultative focus groups or active participatory projects, and are a means of collecting or distributing information. They are beneficial as a means of raising a community's awareness of new projects or proposals, seeking their input and advice, and/or developing collaborative

partnerships. Further, this strategy can be used to build community capacity, promote social interaction, and enhance the community's skills.

The general consensus from the community engagement is that we will see the need for interpretation of the 'Death Railway'. There might be also agreement that particular methods, such as improved signage, promotional material and oral history, would enhance the visitor's experience and understanding. The community's involvement will provide the Thais with an opportunity to situate their work in a broader context, to learn from their immediate community as well as from international stakeholders who participate in the group.

2. Proposed interpretation plan of the intangible heritage of the 'Death Railway'

Heritage conservation management planning, a method born out of environmental management planning, systematises the management of heritage resources. This planning method focuses attention on the identification and protection of the heritage significance of the resource. Heritage conservation management planning is a relatively new field in Thailand, but as a result of the Thailand National Heritage Act of 1985, has been used throughout the country. It requires that designated heritage places be managed according to a conservation management plan. All management authorities for World Heritage Sites in Thailand are also required to develop and implement such a plan.

Conservation planning methods are pioneered by several charters such as the Venice Charter, Burra Charter, Chinese Principles for Conservation Practice in Asia, Hoi An Protocols and the latest introduced by Australians like James Kerr, 2000. These methods have been elucidated and elaborated in Thailand at different periods of time. Most of these conservation models focus on the management of historic fabric, which has been highly practice in Thailand since the end of 1970. As a result Thailand was bestowed two World Heritage Sites in 1992, Sukhothai and Ayutthaya Historical Parks. Since the past few years the Nara Document on Authenticity has been introduced, and heritage practitioners in Thailand started to realise the importance of intangible authenticity according to the document.

The atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai, especially the Bridge became a must-see destination amongst foreign visitors around the middle of 1970, after the film *'Bridge o the River Kwai'* won five Oscars and several nominations

in 1957. Then work soon commenced on various infrastructural upgrades. At this time, no conservation management plan (CMP) had yet been developed. To be accurate the Thailand Heritage Agency did not take part in the development of this area in the beginning. The State Railway of Thailand (SRT) re-laid the track, reconstructed the Bridge over the River Kwai and operated a vintage train to Nam Tok Station, soon after the end of the war in 1952. Other stakeholders, such as the Kanchanaburi Municipality, developed infrastructures around the Bridge. The repatriation of the remains of POWs who died along the railway was achieved, and were placed at Kanchanaburi and Chongkai War Cemeteries. The Commonwealth War Graves Commission took over the administration of these two cemeteries and documented those perished lives. The remains of American prisoners of war were repatriated back to U.S. soil. The Municipality of Kanchanaburi assisted in leasing the land for the cemetery and developing infrastructures such as roads and signposts. Local communities and villagers saw the economical benefits and started to build their houses and businesses around the tourist area. The JEATH War Museum that is owned by Wat Tai Temple was initiated to be a place as a reminder of the horror of war. This museum came later and soon became famous among tourists. Much later the two governmental offices, the Thailand Heritage Agency (Fine Arts Department) and the Tourism Authority of Thailand stepped in. The Fine Arts Department only registered the Bridge out of this vast area of 'Death Railway' heritage. Thus, the whole length of the 'Death Railway' in Thailand (303.9 km.) is not on the Thailand Heritage Registration List.

Until now no conservation management plan, either by the Thailand Heritage Agency or by local agencies, has been published. The relative lack of emphasis on conservation planning is the reason why the stakeholders, both national and local, focus on tourism rather than conservation. It is also the cause of the relative lack of local experience with, and models for, management planning for historic sites, particularly those of a highly complex nature and with a high degree of intangible heritage value.

'Intangible heritage' is a term used to describe aesthetic, spiritual, symbolic or other social values people may associate with a site, as well as rituals, music, language, know-how, oral traditions and the cultural spaces in which these 'living heritage' traditions are played out. Some countries, mainly in East Asia, have long recognised the importance of non-material heritage, but the West was slow to recognise as heritage-

worthy both living heritage and intangible values associated with places or objects. Where intangible values of places, such as aesthetic value, were recognised as heritage-worthy these were seen as expert defined values rather than community-defined values. Social value was seen as a confirmation of the heritage value of the place rather than an independent aspect of heritage value. In Western tradition the main criteria for identifying heritage sites has been architectural style and historical significance.

Gradual but tentative acceptance of the importance of intangible heritage internationally can be illustrated by three key moments of change: the acceptance of symbolic value as the prime reason for the inscription of Auschwitz as a World Heritage Site in 1979; the acceptance of 'cultural landscapes' as heritage-worthy in the World Heritage Convention (WHC) Guidelines in 1992; and the rethinking of UNESCO's 1989 'Recommendation on the Safeguarding of Traditional Culture and Folklore' in the 1990s that resulted in the launching of a new Safeguarding of Intangible Heritage Convention in 2003. The 1992 modifications to the WHC Guidelines allowed for the recognition that cultural meanings associated with natural phenomena, such as the spiritual Indigenous landscapes in Australia, are worthy of world heritage status. But because of fears about potential political conflict between UNESCO member states, inscription of world heritage sites on the basis of symbolic association alone has been limited. Also, UNESCO has adopted an add-on approach to the incorporation of non-material intangible heritage forms, proposing a separate Convention and a separate international heritage list.

In Thailand, traditional cultural expressions such as dance, Buddhist's rituals and literature have long been recognised for its importance, and well-promoted as part of national culture and tradition. Yet, less than five years ago the newly introduced term of 'intangible heritage' recognised and has become politically acceptable, even attractive, in an attempt to insert and strengthen new interpretations of Thai identity onto the weakening Thai society under the globalising world. Oral histories of local people were recognised since last century and have been studied and recorded by several anthropologists and historians. Unfortunately, there are not many oral histories about the 'Death Railway' recorded in the Thai language or by the Thais (although the researcher did interview one prominent Thai person who lived through the war, Mrs. Panee Sirivejaphan). Most oral histories appeared in the form of pocket books that were written

by ex-POWs and their families. The researcher found out during the research that oral history is a key part to interpret the 'Death Railway' atrocity heritage.

In Thailand, heritage preservation has been focussing physical fabrics. The importance of the 'living heritage' is also associated with places and objects, however the affects the intangible heritage of the 'Death Railway' have not yet been recognised as a central element of its heritage significance. This is understandable and it will take time for heritage preservation agencies to realise the importance of the intangible values of heritage as a central element.

Second World War did not happen in isolation. It affects people; they are the results of people's actions, and they influence other actions. They are an aspect of social history. To remain relevant to modern society museums and sites must include more social history, especially that relating the countries involved, the political and economic forces operating to push countries into war or keep them out or stay neutral like the case of Thailand, and the effect on the daily lives of ordinary people in the participant countries. Another reason for including social history in museums and sites of this war heritage is the effects of military development on civil life as a result of technological developments that have taken place during the war, such as the development of surgical techniques in skin grafting and reconstructive surgery.

The intangible heritage of the 'Death Railway' should be considered as primary importance for heritage conservation, because the repressive physical features of the place (e.g. the cemeteries, the Bridge, the rotting railway, and several cuttings through mountains) have been overlaid with a discourse of war and human rights. Another similar case that is designated as World Heritage Site is the Atomic Bomb Dome of Hiroshima in 1996. Here, it is clear that history and intangible values that associated to the sites have a higher significance than the physical fabric. Although the simple recognition of the importance of the Atomic Bomb Dome of Hiroshima's intangible heritage did not clarify the relationship between the supposedly 'universal' symbolism of the site, other forms of heritage significance, and conservation of historic fabric.

To take the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome as an example, it is clear that the identification and management of the 'Death Railway' heritage resources pose a number of difficult challenges for the conservation planning team. Here, some of the problems

experienced in the planning process will be discussed, especially with regard to the identification and management of intangible heritage.

Identifying the Death Railway's intangible heritage

Intangible heritage is not a new or different kind of heritage – the concept is a political construct emerging out of the historical focus on grand buildings as heritage in the western tradition. Jean-Louis Luxen, Secretary General of ICOMOS, argues that "the distinction between physical heritage and intangible heritage is … artificial." Tangible and intangible meanings associated with sites are in any case often inseparable. According to the thesis of this research that interpretation is heritage in itself. Experiencing heritage places through physical relics, which is a vehicle, is an intangible heritage in itself. Thus it is quite obvious here that the interpretation of a heritage place by experiencing it is heritage. And all interpretations of place are human constructions, and no heritage value is therefore completely 'tangible'.

As the division of 'intangible' from 'tangible' is highly politically driven, there has been work on the definition of intangible heritage in several versions by several agencies under UNESCO. Most notions made by these agencies are often based on a country's interests. The notion of 'intangible heritage' made by the researcher might be new and not at all fall into those categories. In spite of the lack of analytical differentiation, the notion of intangible heritage remains attractive. National definitions of what constitutes intangible heritage thus vary according to what has been perceived as marginalised. In western countries, pre-modern, rural skills and vernacular architecture are promoted. In settler countries like Australia and Canada, and in other parts of the non-western world, marginalised indigenous ethnic heritage is prioritised.

In Thailand, the royal palaces, buildings and places associated with kings and monarchy and religious-related buildings like temples are prioritised buildings for being listed as first-class heritage. The secondary heritages are those governmental buildings and places associated with important persons in Thai history. The heritage of ordinary people receives lesser importance. This has meant that the intangible heritage of ordinary people has not been as heavily promoted as that from royal families. One of the most important intangible heritage is oral history. Recognising the oral history of the 'Death Railway' in particular will help the government to underline the commonality of the

Second World War. It will thus support the government's policy of reconciliation, and redress and rearrange the history during the war.

The identification of the Death Railway's intangible heritage took place within a specific historical and political context. There have been several research projects and documentation produced in the past that recorded and established an extensive oral history about the Second World War in the Pacific and especially about the 'Death Railway'. These oral histories mainly came from ex-POWs, their families and some local people. One of the most prominent ex-POWs who is still living, and has been promoting a continuation of the stories of the 'Death Railway', is an Australian, Keith Flanagan. He was a machine gunner on the same ship as Weary Dunlop (a famous Australian medical doctor during the Japanese capture) they eventually became prisoners of war together. From the intensive interview several unknown stories during the Japanese's capture came out. He is vibrant, articulate and an extremely engaging link to these horrible events that emerged out of the jungles along the 'Death Railway'. Flanagan has been mostly responsible for creating public awareness of the heroic actions of Dunlop in saving the lives of POWs. He is on a quest, a quest to educate young Australians about these great men of the Second World War.

Mrs. Panee Sirivejaphan (Mr. Boonpong Sirivejaphan's daughter – the war-time Japanese food supplier) is also a good local source of first-hand-experience as she helped her father to deliver food supplies to the Japanese army along the river. Boonpong (Fig. 105) and his family risked certain death and torture by smuggling life saving medicines for the POWs into Japanese prisoners of war camps. Panee Sirivejaphan was only fourteen years old and beautiful, a particularly good 'distraction' for the young Japanese prison guards. The medicines slipped through unnoticed. Lives of some prisoners of war were saved.

Fig.104 Mr. Boonpong Sirivejaphan, TBRC's exhibition, 2007.

Fig.105 The house from Boonpong Sirivejaphan and family, old house during the wartime was demolished. This house was built later at the same place where he traded with the Japanese Army. Mrs.Panee is living here with her family. The author, July, 2006.

Most of stories being told in documentaries, films, recordings and books are about the POW roles during the war; how they were captured and transported to the railway; the brutality of the Japanese; the difficult life during the construction of the railway; the condition of camps and the deaths. This focused public attention on the 'Death Railway' as a place of horror; brutality and lack of respect, which lead to a maltreatment of the prisoners of war. Most of the published accounts of the history of the

'Death Railway' continues to be memoirs from ex-POWs and their families, or academic pieces that rely heavily on the interpretations of their experiences given in interviews.

Such oral histories were recorded in a form of a documentation to be shown on television internationally, but not in Thailand. In the TBRC and HPMM these documentaries are on sale in the form of DVDs and VDO tapes. The famous documentaries are: *'Spirit of the Railway: the true story of the Thai-Burma Railway'* produced by Australian award-winning film maker, Robin Newell in 1999. He used a skilful blend of survivor first-hand accounts and never-seen-before footage from American, Australian and Japanese archives to finally reveal the true story of the Thailand-Burma 'Death Railway'. Another documentary that should be mentioned is *'The Quiet Lion'* made by A Thought Films Pty. Ltd. Production in 2007. This film details the stories of two men involved in the Thailand-Burma 'Death Railway'. One is an Australian surgeon, Dr. Weary Dunlop and the other a Thai trader, Boonpong Sirivejaphan. The lives of these two persons during the Second World War and the legacy left in the form of an exchange programme that trains young Thai surgeons in Australia were addressed. From the film we can see how something remarkably positive can be built out of unspeakable horrors.

The central narrative 'Death Railway' of Japanese brutality standing strong in the face of human rights was given a broader gloss in the early 1960s after the famous film, *'Bridge on the River Kwai'* had drawn public attention. There were many debates and discussions internationally about the implication of the Geneva Convention during war time. Although Japan did not sign the Geneva Convention relating to the Treatment of Prisoners of War 1929, in 1942 Japan promised to abide by the Geneva rules. As in many places of Second World War atrocities, the 'Death Railway' has always been one of example of how this convention was ignored. After the war, several sites around the world relating to the Second World War have been designated on the World Heritage List (Auschwitz-Birkenau, Fig. 106). The main reason is to memorialise those who lost their lives and to remind us that such atrocity should never happen again. Interpretation of the war heritage of the 'Death Railway' can also serve those reasons (although not yet recognized as World Heritage). It can also be used as a peaceful transition based on a human rights model. A number of ex-POWs and families have been key negotiators and

activists working to promote human rights after the establishment of United Nations Declaration on Human Rights in 1958.

Fig.106 The entrance gate of WHL Auschwitz-Birkenau Memorial and Museum. Museum website, accessed April, 2008.

The idea that 'Death Railway' symbolises 'the triumph of the human spirit over adversity and a wish for a peaceful future' was first widely publicised through publications and later used a central narrative in some museums. Especially at the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum where a hidden message of typically Australian 'mate-ship' is promoted through the exhibitions. On the opening of the museum in 1998, Mr. John Howard (then Prime Minister) also addressed the Australian 'mate-ship', which was a big factor that resulted in the death toll of Australian prisoners of war lower than that of other allied nations. He repeated the same words six times during his short speech. From this point, a good interpretation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' can be used in a broader human rights culture: symbolising all kinds of triumphs over evil and adversity, creating 'mate-ship' and 'friendship' large and small, anywhere in the world. The 'Death Railway' was conceived at national and international levels as both a gateway to tourism, and thus tourism development, in Kanchanaburi and Thailand, and as a model of memory and hope for a better future.

Tensions in the symbolic meaning of the 'Death Railway'

Understanding the politics behind the formulation of the official symbolism of the 'Death Railway' (its symbolic meaning) helps us to understand why the three parties that share this war heritage: the victims (ex-POWs and families of the former allied countries and Asian labourer countries); the perpetrators (the Japanese); and the bystanders (the general public from neutral countries such as Thai people), have contested the interpretation of this heritage. It also helps us to develop ways of incorporating the process of contestation and debate into a statement of significance.

Proclaiming sites of 'intangible' heritage by defining their symbolic meaning is a kind of significance interpretation. To create a symbolic meaning for a heritage site one has to come up with a simple statement that encapsulates as well as simplifies what is often a complex set of meanings associated with a site. This signifying of symbolic meaning process then influences how we interpret the site and how we manage it. Interpretation of symbolic meaning is a feature of all heritage work, to some extent, because the heritage industry is selling something for a particular purpose and from a particular perspective, it thus needs interpretation to reach such goals. Lowenthal suggests that heritage "seeks to design a past that will fix the identity and enhance the well-being of some chosen [group]". He argues that "heritage is not an inquiry into the past but a celebration of it, not an effort to know what actually happened but a profession of faith in a past tailored to present-day purposes" (1995: 18).

Tunbridge and Ashworth have suggested that all heritages are thus one-sided, exclusionary or 'dissonant' to some degree. Particularly in complex post-colonial societies seeking to reconcile different viewpoints within a new political order, heritage "becomes a highly political and contentious arena in which decisions have to be made about its conservation, presentation and current usage against a background of various and possibly competing interpretations" (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996: 38). This leads to a focusing of meaning in an official significance and possible 'dissonance', or the exclusion of other interpretations.

Interpretation of symbolic value is a particularly interesting process with regard to a site like the 'Death Railway' because symbolic meaning is central to the definition of its value. The 'Death Railway' faces the problem of how to make its symbolic meaning inclusive enough to accommodate shades of opinion within its main stakeholder groups,

i.e. ex-POWs and their families and people from former Asian labourer countries, as well as how to accommodate alternative interpretations by other interested groups. But at a broader level, the degree of contestation is itself part of the significance of the site.

The atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is symbolically over-determined due to the fact that the 'Death Railway' performed a powerful symbolic role for the triumph of humankind against adversity and the brutality of war. Owning an interpretation of a site so deeply inscribed with the soul of 'lest we forget' and 'let's forgive' are plays for power. Not surprisingly, struggles over the Death Railway's meanings are thus echoes of broader political struggles. Since few museums and other heritage sites were created as key symbols of political reconciliation, they are also sites where a challenge to the Thai government unorthodoxy can be prominently aired.

The official message of humankind's triumph over brutality at the 'Death Railway', read internationally as a moral and universalising one, is often read internationally as a political one. Sometimes questions arise about the extent and value of this human triumph over Japanese brutality demonstrated during 1942-1945. Others challenge the historical emphasis on the role and act of those allied countries to their own military men. The most talked-about case was about the 'home coming' from the Second World War of Dutch military men. After the end of the war, thousands of these men had to stay in Kanchanaburi, some longer than a year. They did not know whether they would be assign to go back to the Netherlands or to support the military army in the occupied Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia) where the war on independence was arising.

Sometimes both humankind's triumph and Japanese brutality narratives are better addressed by a temporary exhibition or event, for example when World War II veterans and families gather for commemoration, and on such occasions there is a reason for the 'negative aspects' of the 'Death Railway' to be shown.

Environmentalists usually see the 'Death Railway' in a wholly different light, as the railway runs through some of Thailand's richest natural resource of deep forest. This forest is the natural border to Burma (a part of Thenasserim / Thai local name 'Tanaosri') and it forms a mountain range to the Thailand Natural World Heritage Site, Huaykhakheang and Thung Yai Naresuan National Park. The national park is one of the few places in Asia where tigers, a rare and endangered species, can still be found. The idea to relay and reconstruct the complete railway of 303.9 km. in Thailand will be a long

debate. Archaeologists have shown that Kanchanaburi, especially along the River Kwai Noi where the railway was built, has one of the only surviving examples of a Prehistoric site where men lived in the caves. The Ban Kao National Museum was built at the bend of the river and is very close to the railway. The Ban Kao cave, where archaeologists found a lot of stone axes, beads from fresh-water shells and cave paintings, was first discovered by a prisoner of war. This POW made a record of the utensils found in the cave and hid them away from the Japanese. Fortunately, the man survived the war and could report to Thai government, and excavation of the cave was executed. This is one of the best oral histories and significance of the 'Death Railway' that has not yet been broadcast worldwide. There is considerable conflict, both local and internationally, about the relative importance of the 'Death Railway' history versus Thailand's history. The stories of the prisoners of war's deaths and struggles versus other Thai historical narratives, or the natural versus the cultural heritage resources of the 'Death Railway' and surroundings, or cultural heritage versus Thai national security of the shared- border with Burma.

Changes in ideas about the role of Thailand during the war, and changes in the historical and political climate, challenges by local and international interest groups to the government, and claims for the authenticity of this heritage of memories about the history of the Second World War through adversity, horror, shame and pain can, and will, challenge the official interpretation of the 'Death Railway' site. Such challenges should not be ignored. They can and should become a very central and positive part of our understanding of 'intangible' heritage sites. Engaging more fully with debates over the significance of the 'Death Railway' could help Thailand and its agencies develop an approach to a symbolic value that remains focused but not exclusive. This, however, still needs to be debated extensively with all place stakeholders and the general public.

The atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' has an important role not only as an interpreter of the symbolic value of the Second World War but also as a forum for debating the meaning of the site. Ultimately, an openness to debate will strengthen the symbolic meaning, both because it will influence the official significance and because recognising alternative interpretations will help to foster wider public 'ownership' of the site.

3. Using heritage interpretation as a centre in developing conservation strategies

As we have seen, the symbolic value of the 'Death Railway' is a historical and politically-driven interpretation of the site, closely linked to the horror of war and the perpetrator's brutality. Present interpretations are broadly accepted but remain contested in many quarters. For heritage interpretation planning, on the one hand, it is essential to protect all the different kinds of significance identified, and on the other hand, for the sake of heritage conservation it is critical to manage both the significant fabric of the site and the values associated with the site, whether or not these values are expressed in the historic fabric. In performing these tasks the main problem is to achieve a balance and to assign priority. This cannot be easily achieved if interpretation of this heritage is still in ambiguity and contested. It is dangerous to focus only on the symbolic values in identifying significance to be protected. Ashworth and Tunbridge have described what happens when heritage as a tourism product drives conservation and interpretation strategies. They have focused on what they call the 'tourist-historic city', in which an appropriate historic image is identified and marketed, and then preservation and conservation policies are applied in conformity with this image, including the reconstruction of what is thought to exist (Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2000). In his paper on Melaka as a tourist historic city in Malaysia, Worden describes how the city has been re-packaged to represent the birth of the nation in the context of a political project to represent the pre-colonial feudal Melakan Sultanate as emblematic of the modern nation since the 1970s (Worden, 2001). This influenced historical representation within the city's museums and development strategies until very recently.

Interpretation of symbolic value and meaning is itself a very powerful exercise. Like Melaka, the 'Death Railway's symbolic meaning focuses on its role as the crucible for the reminders of a horrified past and wish for a peaceful future to all nations. Tourism rather than conservation has also been the main focus of its work. The 'Death Railway' symbolic values affect all of the work of the museums and heritage sites in the area, including educational messages, research and tour guide narratives. Although international tour guides come from different political and personal perspectives, a result from the study suggests that their personal ideas, as told to tourists, have been deeply influenced by the former Allies narratives give the powerful nature of the symbolic values and the relative lack of attention to interpretation of this heritage. It is very

important that conservation and interpretation strategies are carefully and openly formulated and reviewed. It is vital to distinguish between short-term and long-term goals, and between marketing, tour information and research priorities. Although the symbolic value can be used for marketing, and in setting short-term interpretive priorities, the full statement of significance should be used to develop longer-term conservation and interpretation strategies.

Following the examples of the classical Venice Charter and a newly introduced, Burra Charter, to develop a conservative response to changes in fabric, the relationship between symbolic value and historic fabric, and the preservation of layers of meaning, can be critical issues in the development of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. Because of the influence of these two documents and work done by the Thailand Heritage Agency (the Bridge is in Heritage List of Fine Art Department) it has been practice for several decades in heritage preservation Thailand, but it tended to focus on ways of protecting significance inherent in historic fabric. In the meantime research, education and exhibitions already in progress at the two museums (TBRC, HPMM) in the area are identifying and protecting the intangible heritage of the place. Places of significance to this wartime site and construction of the railway have been identified through biographical interviews, individual site visits and larger reference groups on site conducted by the museum staff.

Interpretation and conservation policies should seek to protect the fabric of the site as far as possible, not only within the confines of what is significant in terms of the symbolic meaning. The conservation of fabric is necessary but not sufficient for conservation of an intangible heritage site, however. Therefore, atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' has to continue to develop ways in which the spirit of the place can be conserved through its interpretation practices such educational programs, research and interpretive strategies. Too often these are seen as operational issues and are addressed separately from conservation practice.

The hypothesis of this research is that interpretation is in itself a heritage – how we interpret it is how we want to see a heritage. It is a very new approach to put interpretation as the centre for heritage conservation, where it can require several starting points. Those starting points might be an idea, a view, a style, a budget or a prescribed direction – but, in considering cultural heritage that needs to be conserved, it might

equally be the heritage of the place and its interpretation opportunities. Interpretation is often at the end of the design or building process: in the model proposed in this research, it is at the beginning.

Implicit in this research is an appreciation that the historical circumstances that gave rise to a particular cultural landscape, and heritage from the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' can be interpreted and, when a new site's developments is proposed, can be involved in the design process. In this proposed model – termed here as 'interpretation-based' approach – the interpretation of heritage values and symbolic meanings are the starting point and, once adopted in a physical form, can extend beyond the normal forms of interpretation such as heritage fabric retention, complementary artworks or new information plaques.

1. Heritage interpretation provides another starting point for new management of historic sites

The researcher would like to address the importance of heritage interpretation in the management of heritage place which can draw inspiration from many sources especially at the design process; designers conceive their designs from both abstract ideas and fixed references. To start with historic and landscape designers usually work within stable and objective parameters to manage the process of designing everyday structures – their starting points might be parameters such as the client's brief (function, technology, accommodation and budget) or environmental needs (such as orientation and materials), or cultural needs (including aesthetics and heritage impacts). They may use a computer in that design process (but as yet there is no computer program that can independently generate a design from a set of abstract variables and references).

The alternative approach advocated in this research, an interpretation-based approach model, requires the designer to return to a much earlier starting point. It requires designers to carefully examine (intangible) values of the heritage and cultural landscape, to consider the cultural history as it was before the widespread degradation and decline of the built environments, and to return to the fundamental cultural origins of the place. Using this process, the degradation and decline could perhaps be minimised or reversed – incrementally enhancing pre-existing values to produce strong, attractive, new developments that would become valued over time as positive contributions to the pool of heritage places of future significance.

The starting point for the design of new structures in an interpretation-based approach model is the interpretation of the existing cultural landscape. In the interpretation-based approach model interpretation takes the lead position – at the head of all of the cultural issues – with the consequence that the heritage impacts of new developments that respond positively to the interpretation would be limited, because the design would respond to the heritage values and their proper interpretation.

2. Interpretation needs to be moved from the end to the beginning of the design process

Broadly speaking, interpretation is a process of communication used to reveal meanings and relationships of cultural and natural heritage. Its success depends on its capacity to provide emotional and intellectual connections between the past and the present by way of the cultural resource. It is usually undertaken at the end of the design process to provide an understanding of what has already occurred. Without sound interpretation, the cultural heritage might remain unclear. However, there is no reason why interpretation should not be brought forward to the beginning of the design process as proposed in the interpretation-based approach model.

Interpretation has the potential to provide a better starting point for new design than any of the more conventional starting points (without diminishing the value of, or need for, any of those conventional reference points in the design continuum). If the interpretation-based approach model is successful, the outcome might be better historic sites and monument designs that are more coherent in the particular cultural landscape.

Implicit in the conventional meaning and purpose of interpretation in relation to heritage conservation is its placement at the end of the design process, where it is used to explain the meanings of the old and the new (Burra Charter, China Principles and Streetwise Asia). But there is no reason why it should not be brought to the beginning of the process with the consequential benefit of better designs. This is a reversal of the usual design process for historic sites whereby designers relegate interpretation to the end, along with the interior decoration and the landscape gardening – often leading to the historic environment becoming more confusing, and indeed harder to understand. This can be thought of as the process that actually adds to, or even creates, the aesthetic chaos of the modern-day urban environment.

So, as we know it now, when places change, interpretation is undertaken to explain the history, tangible and intangible values and reasons for change, as well as

decisions taken in relation to the change, including the fabric that is retained expressly for interpretation reasons. What is important, but rarely recognised, is how interpretation can be used effectively to communicate heritage significance before any change is made, and that the interpretation of the place in the future can be a powerful initiator of and foundation for subsequent change.

3. The form of interpretation needs to change in this model

In addition to changing its sequence in the design process, under this model the form of interpretation also needs to change to be more strategic. Where cultural landscapes have a dominant intangible value or history of agricultural or certain use like the case of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', strategic interpretation provides a potent means of assisting us to understand the landscape's cultural significance, especially when newly built forms reveal hitherto unappreciated significance.

For examples, vacant sites with obvious development potential like the former hospital of Dr. Weary Dunlop, Rintin: former Dutch cemetery and cholera camp might require particular styles and functions of building and the site's development to meet the interpretation needs; or, conversely, the site might need to be preserved as open space for the same reasons (because it could be that the most powerful form of interpretation for the site could be human imagination rather than a built form). Consider the ghost structure of the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Dome in Japan and the Gedenkmal Kirche in Berlin which interprets the places where the bombs were dropped – our imagination fills the gaps with great meaning.

4. Redefining of 'interpretation'

Heritage interpretation can be any communication process designed to reveal the meaning and relationship of a cultural and natural heritage to the public, through first hand involvement with an object, artefacts, landscape, monument or site (Interpretation Canada, 1976). It is a communication process that forges emotional and intellectual connections between the interests of the audience and the meanings inherent in the resource (National Association for Interpretation USA). Its definitions are widely varied; however, in this research, heritage places itself as the most powerful vehicle for interpretation of heritage values. Experiencing a heritage place is where the interpretation starts.

Interpretation is sometimes an occasional opportunity that arises when a place is opened to the public, and the public needs to be informed about the heritage. For places that are open to visitors, such as tourism places, interpretation is an integral component of their management and operation. Such interpretation can be planned to meet educational and recreational needs.

Interpretation, in the context of historic sites and cultural landscapes, is usually taken to mean all the ways of presenting the significance of a place. It may be a combination of the treatment of the fabric of the place; the use of the place; the use of interpretation media, or all of them. Good interpretation can strengthen and sustain relationships between the community and its heritage place, and may provide the community with economic and social benefits, especially when it brings enhanced understanding that results in the achievement of conservation aims. Or it might provide a means of generating increased revenue through tourism. It might also assist in reducing risk at vulnerable places that are exposed to risk. These risks can be a demolition of heritage for other purposes such agricultural land use, new urban planning or a lack of appreciation that finally brings the abandonment of a heritage, or demolition at the end.

One example of the sometimes conflicting aims of increasing revenue and minimising damage at a vulnerable place can be found at Jim Thompson's House in Bangkok. The interpretation there is very tightly scripted yet informative and entertaining. The sophisticated management of the interpretation provides a large number of visitors with an in-depth exploration of the Jim Thompson story while conserving the fragile fabric and contents of the place. The museum buildings and exhibitions can reveal symbolic meanings of the place at the same time visitors have a moving experience through individual interpretation. By contrast, the more traditional (or old-fashioned) form of interpretation at the grandeur Bang Pa In Summer Palace in Ayutthaya or Mirigritayawan Summer Palace in Petchburi deny visitors such a meaningful experience due mainly to the use of physical barriers to keep visitors apart from the artefacts and their cultural meanings.

Fig.107 Jim Thomson's House with its sophisticated interpretations. The author, 2006.

Fig. 108 The famous summer palace, Bang Pa In with old fashioned interpretations. The author, Jan., 2006.

5. How could interpretation improve the design process at heritage places?

Interpretation can create or add value in the design process. It can be used to achieve high quality design that is well integrated in the cultural landscape and complementary to the historical narrative. Five ways that interpretation can improve the design process at heritage places are offered below.

5.1 Interpreting the history and meanings of a place to provide socio-cultural benefits

A place with no recorded meaning is an impoverished place – this is very well known in heritage conservation circles where heritage professionals can clearly demonstrate the benefits of retaining heritage items in urban redevelopments as a means of retaining cultural links and achieving integrated outcomes.

There are many studies which quantify the socio-cultural benefits of heritage conservation, or preservation as it is termed in European and North American cultures. The phenomenon of poor quality new development, with no historical links to the heritage and cultural landscape, creating new forms of social disadvantage, is common to Asian societies. Even the works of the greatest heritage conservators or modern architects are vulnerable to this phenomenon when they ignore the pre-existing cultural landscape in their attempts to create a freestanding new style of architecture. While these examples do not necessarily involve the demolition of heritage items to any extent, or the destruction of strong cultural communities, they are developments which stand outside the pre-existing cultural and social fabric of the communities which in fact is itself intangible heritage.

It can also be seen that new developments, even when designed by the best architects, have the potential to destroy the social fabric of a community. This destructive power seems to be most potent when the new development and architectural forms are alien to the cultural landscape in which they exist. A better alternative, therefore, is the approach advocated here, whereby new developments should build on the pre-existing values embodied in the history, heritage fabric and cultural landscape of the place.

All social communities are vulnerable to excessive environmental change so it is essential that change should be gradual. Even if the change is essential and irreversible as is often now required to cope with the growing world population, it should be managed in accordance with cultural needs, in particular the need to integrate with the cultural

landscape. An integrated approach will serve to avoid the disastrous consequence of some major new developments of the past.

5.2 Interpreting the cultural landscape to assist with integration of the new

The need to interpret the cultural landscape is a socio-cultural need, and in particular an aesthetic need. New additions and developments, both monuments and buildings, to historic sites should not just look pleasing, they should also look 'right' and give a sense of place. They should be compatible with tangible and intangible cultural values. It is possible to design historic sites in a cultural landscape that are modern in every way along the 'Death Railway'. In addition the modern development of a historic sites such as modern museum buildings, modern monuments and signage must be a vehicle to transmit symbolic values or meanings of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' through the visitor's experience.

It is easier when there is a strong local character that can be emulated, but it is not appropriate for new site's development and buildings to look too much like old structures. In the case of the 'Death Railway', any interpretation means such as new museum buildings; monuments; interpretative signage; signposts; or walking trails should reflect contemporary aesthetic values and they should also look as if they belong in its cultural landscape. And most of all it should give a sense of place to enhance the visitor's experience of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'.

5.3 Revealing and enhancing cultural significance

It should be the role of the development of a new site to reveal and enhance the significance of its particular cultural landscape. Every new monument or site development that will take place along the 415 square kilometres of the 'Death Railway' should add to, and never detract from, the cultural values and symbolic meaning of this atrocity heritage. At a minimum, new developments should not conceal or diminish cultural significance. It is much better for new works to reveal and enhance the built forms and their ability to interpret the cultural landscape.

The corollary to this, as it relates to interpretation, is that the interpretation will become harder the more the historic character is impaired. It is obvious there is a time element involved in the interpretation and conservation of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. The events memorialised and commemorated occurred more than sixty years ago. As time passes artefacts decay, the sites become less identifiable and human

memories fade. If the sites are not identified, events recorded and the heritage suitably marked now, it will become increasingly more difficult to do. In addition it may be argued that the sixty year gap, representing the passing of the generation directly involved, allows this to be the moment when the events can be confronted, and even reconciled in some sort of settlement of memory by those associated with both the victims and the perpetrators. Interpretation can have a crucial role to play in mitigating some of the problems that might be created through heritage contestation.

It is much easier to tell a story about a place when the physical evidence is clear and easy to understand at every level and by everybody. Designers should not have to provide detailed explanations of what their buildings and site's developments mean; that should be self evident from the fabrics and architecture itself.

5.4 Consolidating heritage character

The need to consolidate the heritage character when new works and developments are planned is obvious. The all-too-common situation is the constant erosion of the heritage character caused by the demolition of existing artefacts to create new sites for higher yielding accommodation. In some historic places in Thailand this has manifested in the demolition of some of existing artefacts to create buildings, and to develop sites for bigger and grander historical park - consider the development of the World Heritage listed Sukhothai and Ayutthaya Historical Park. The cultural conflicts created by this phenomenon are sometimes absurd.

It is much better to preserve most of the existing artefacts and to build onto it in a way that enables the new work and development to be integrated while having its own identity. This goal can be achieved equally in new works to heritage places and or in the vicinity of heritage places. It is also much better if a liberal interpretation of the historic character is used to guide new design work with the obvious benefits for creativity without any consequent loss of authenticity.

5.5 Providing a framework for local planning

The role of heritage and urban planners in providing legal and administrative frameworks for development is now enshrined in modern planning law. At the end of the day, it is the role of planners to provide the frameworks that protect the environment and provide for the legitimate needs of societies to grow in a healthy way. Therefore heritage planners, in particular, need starting points that will serve the planning processes well.

The interpretation of the historic sites using the 'interpretation-based' approach, can provide that starting point. Through a correct analysis of the historic sites, including the history and the cultural landscape, planning controls such as interpretive signage; walking paths; lot sizes, road reservations, buildings and development zones, open space reserves and community facilities can be overlaid onto the cultural landscape with minimal adverse impacts.

At present the planning system in Thailand (and some other parts in Asia) is either very weak, or it is adversarial, with regrettable consequent losses of valuable heritage resources, when a consensus view about the interpretation of the cultural landscape would no doubt provide a better pathway towards a more sustainable living cultural landscape.

4. Alternative Interpretation: Atrocity interpretation management by media/ Theory 'Children of the Dark' by Graham Dann

This issue was discussed before in Chapter 3 how atrocities during the Second World War have been used in novels and films and how these media have had influence on a public memory. In this globalising world with bombardment of information and new technology, atrocity interpretation of heritage of the 'Death Railway' by media might be one of the most effective ways. The following examples, although less relevant to the subject of the Second World War in Thailand, but highly important to heritage interpretation and at the end it links to the subject of Second World War itself. The examples of two classical interpretations of Thai way of life and monarchy in the novels *'The English Governess and the Siamese Court'* (first published in 1870) and *'The Romance of the Harem'*. Both novels were written by Anna Leonowens, an English woman who was invited by the King Rama IV of Siam to tutor his wives and children for their English. She lived in Siam for five years and these two books were written out of her experience of these years in the court of Siam. Beside a delightful portrait of an unlikely friendship between two headstrong personalities, it is also a revealing peek at two very different cultures in the novel. It became an inspiration to many people, notably those experiences would be immortalised in the famous Broadway musical *'The King and I'*, which also became an award-winning movie.

Unfortunately, these two novels are prohibited to sell in Thailand since it came to the market. Recently in 1999 there was an effort to produce the film *'Anna and the King'* according to the novel 'The English Governess and the Siamese Court' by foreign film company in Thailand. The request to produce this film at several historic places and locations in Thailand was declined. The same thing happened when the Hollywood film company requested to use *in situ* locations in Kanchanaburi to produce the film *'Bridge on the River Kwai'* in the 60s. At the end the film was produce in Sri Lanka instead of original locations of the 'Death Railway'. The same thing happened to the film producer of *'Anna and the King'*, historic places and locations in George Town, Penang, Malaysia was chosen as the option and the film was produced.

Different decisions were made on the request to use locations in Thailand to produce films concerning to other subjects. Example of films that produced by using locations in Thailand are *'The Killing Field'*, *'The Beach'* and '*James Bond'*.

Here it is a good example to use the film, *'Anna and the King'* as a revenue raising and marketing opportunity for tourism (here) for Penang, Malaysia. When heritage places and towns are used as film locations, there can be many benefits for the local community. In addition to the obvious economic benefits to the place while the film crew is being hosted, there is the potential for increased visitation after the film has been released for public viewing. When approached by the film company as the possible setting for a film, it is important that local communities ensure that maximum economic benefit is obtained in the process. In February-March 1999, *'Anna and the King'* was filmed in George Town, Penang, Malaysia. The production designer for the film stated that

> "extensive European research shows that the value of such historic locations lies as much in the long-term benefit, which accrues after the film is released. Apparently films have an enormous influence on choice of tourist destination. Holiday-makers will opt to explore in depth the historical building and locations that pleased them so much on the screen".

The Penang Heritage Trust seized the opportunity and published a 32-page full-colour souvenir book about the film in December 1999 (Fig.110). The proceeds of this book go towards funding conservation and heritage education programme facilitated by

the Trust. There are similar opportunities for other sites in Asia which had, or are to be, used as film locations. Hoi An, Vietnam could use to its advantage the publicity surrounding the release of the film *'The Quiet American'* in late 2002.

Fig.109 The poster of 'Anna and the King' in Penang. The author, July, 2000.

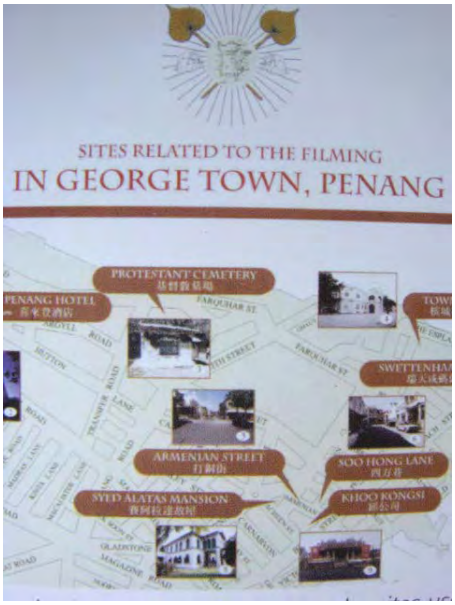


Fig.110 The brochure promoted sites related to the filming of 'Anna and the King'. The author, July, 2000.

Different thing happened at atrocity heritage of the ‘Death Railway’ in the 70s. Sri Lankan tourism agency and government did not make a promotion of the filming location that was taken place in Sri Lanka. Not many people knew that the filming location was not in Kanchanaburi, Thailand. As a result, there was a tourist booming to see the Bridge over the River Kwai and the ‘Death Railway’ after the film was released until now according to the result from the survey that a number of tourists were inspired by the film and many have seen the film before arriving at the sites. Thailand did not have to do as much as the Penang Heritage Trust to promote the filming location heritage tourism in itself.

To promote the film *‘Bridge on the River Kwai’* in gaining advantage to atrocity heritage of the ‘Death Railway’ like *‘Anna and the King’* did to Penang is a new subject but very useful for atrocity interpretation. There has been awareness about this film, but there was no plan how to use it. The similar approach to *‘Anna and the King’* as discussed above can be used.

More supportive issues to be considered in heritage interpretation

Interpretation is a distinctive form of education that goes beyond the simple conveyance of factual information to reveal meanings and relationships through firsthand exposure to the real world, and through illustrative media. Effective interpretation must be enjoyable and entertaining, bearing in mind that tourists are non-captive recipients who can walk away from or otherwise tune out messages that are not satisfying. It must also be made personally relevant to the visitor and audience through the use of analogies and metaphors and by referring to their values and convictions and to issues and impacts that directly affect the visitor. Although throughout the research, the importance of interpretation has been addressed, the researcher would like to mention more thoughts to assist how scholars and academic people see interpretation.

1. Heritage interpretation in a globalising world

At the ENAME Colloquium 2007, Professor Nezar Al-Sayyad from the University of California, Berkeley, addressed on how important interpretation is, although not new, but a useful idea. He argued that processes of globalisation and the emergence of new forms of communication and entertainment has created new imperatives for the conservation and the preservation communities and the larger

discourse about heritage. In this new arena where history is invented, heritage is always manufactured, and traditions are regularly commercially consumed, authenticity can no longer be used as the principal frame of reference or the bearer of valuable historic knowledge to be passed on from one generation to another. In this new climate where the relationship between the original and the copy, the real and the fake, the physical and the virtual, has been unsettled, there is a need to re-conceptualise heritage and recognise the role that the 'hyper-traditions' of the new built environments are playing in this ever-changing dynamic process. These thoughts are relevant to most heritage places, especially atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' where both physical and intangible authenticity is highly manufactured. It is necessary for all stakeholders to reconsider the status and image of this heritage to the world.

2. The process of changing in heritage is in itself interpretation

Gustavo Araoz, U.S. ICOMOS Executive Secretary, made his speech at the same conference to make us aware of the moving process of cultural heritage. The concept of heritage that evolved over the 19th century and well into the 20th before the drafting of the Venice Charter and the creation of ICOMOS relied on the axiomatic assumption that the totality of the values of a heritage place lay on its physical manifestation. Because of this, all conservation theories, legal frameworks, heritage classifications and appropriateness of treatments were predicated on this materiality. Over the last twenty years, however, for many of the heritage sites that have emerged, the vessel for their values and significance lies elsewhere, in ill-defined immaterial constructs that has proven hard to grasp. For these sites, if they are to be preserved, the tools for protection, conservation and management must be re-directed from the material evidence towards those intangible vessels where the values actually lie. Here, we can call these vessels as a 'carrier', a passing of intangible heritage or 'living heritage' from one generation to another. In other words, we are all a 'carrier' of heritage. Interpretation can play a most important role to communicate the significance of the process. The challenge is that at present, few tools have been developed for understanding, identifying or characterizing what those other vessels for significance are, much less what the right legal or even moral procedures for protecting them should be.

Because much of the new heritage is dynamic in nature, the vessels for its significance are the process of change, which brings heritage conservation to an apparent

oxymoron: the need to protect and preserve change. With preservation long assumed to be concerned with the prevention of change, the field has had to re-define its mission: it is not so much about preventing change any more; it is about managing change. Although this issue has long been discussed but it touched solely to the proposal interpretation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' that the researcher has suggested; interpretation intangible values and symbolic meanings of the heritage. Under the process of interpreting the intangible values, more elements that are embedded in the process of change of these intangibles from one generation to another generation or one person to another person will occur simultaneously.

The resulting situation is more than an expansion of heritage classifications. It is a major paradigm shift which relies on the acceptance of a new set of heritage values, and that requires a whole new way of conceiving heritage via interpretation. In this still uncharted world, some of the innocent victims that could be lost along the way may be such sacred precepts as the reversibility of treatments, the conservation of historic fabric, the inter-generational pact for transmitting heritage unchanged; the principles of authenticity and the Venice Charter itself.

3. Bilingual and multilingual interpretation

Very little research has been done on bilingual and multilingual heritage interpretation despite the fact that more places are increasingly including foreign languages in their interpretive media. In countries where only one language dominates, it is becoming more common for museums and heritage places to provide interpretive programmes in the languages of their largest international visitor groups. Thus it is critical for managers to know their visitors, where they are from and what their primary languages are. There is no problem of language use at all sites of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' all of them are bilingual or multilingual by having Thai language as a primary and English language as secondary language. It should be noted here for long term planning, if the budget allows, that more languages can be added in according to the visitors to the sites. Those languages are Dutch, German, Russian and Asian languages like Chinese, Japanese and Korean. A good example is the comparative case study of Anne Frank's House in Amsterdam. The museum brochure and audio-visual guide introducing the life of Anne Frank, and the development of museum, are provided in a multilingual format. There is Dutch (the official language); English; German; French;

Spanish; Hebrew; Japanese and Chinese. It shows that the museum has compiled a visitors' study and knows who its visitors are. The signage in the museum itself and most publications in the bookshop are provided in two main languages; Dutch and English. A different approach is used at Changi Museum and Chapel, where the official language is English there is no effort to use other languages in its interpretation.

4. Static interpretation

Static interpretation includes signage, displays, brochures, videos, web cams, audio-tapes and other technologies that do not rely on the presence of an actual tour guide or interpreter. Cost effectiveness is therefore a major advantage, along with the ability to carefully control the contents so as to provide the greatest positive impact on audience behaviour. However, even if it utilizes interactive technologies, it cannot effectively take into account specific or obscure inquiries and cannot bond with visitors, personalise interactions, or adjust to ever changing situational factors.

The language used should also be reconsidered. It is not only whether captions are in English and/or other languages, but whether there are other ways of providing understanding; for example, audio tape/MP3 for tours in foreign languages, foreign language guides, etc. The need for alternative languages to English will undoubtedly alter with time. Today we are looking at Asian languages. Thirty years ago it would have been European languages: in thirty years' time it might well be African languages. If special terms as mentioned before must be used, then they must be explained.

In the era of digital globalization and postmodernism, the daily bombardment of information has reached unimagined levels. We are surrounded by information that generates noise first, and then, may be, understanding. This dramatic growth of information generates greater complexity, but it is unclear if an excess of information to the edge of chaos can create understanding. If it does, so we must create a suitable mechanism for its communication.

Cultural heritage cannot escape from the dynamics of complexity; an interdisciplinary way to transmit and communicate knowledge, and to a diminution of the social impact of research: what is not perceived cannot be communicated. This is one of the key challenges of virtual heritage. The big challenge posed by digital technologies is to integrate the ontology of data into a single process: digital acquisition, digital processing, and digital communication and in the end digital interpretation.

At the moment at which the aesthetics of models seemed to have higher priority than the accuracy and quantity of the information passed, we have entered a phase in which researchers and stakeholders must raise epistemological questions to enable their discipline advance methodologically. The quantity of models (geometric, epistemological, cultural, spatial, etc.), which digital technologies have been able to produce is impressive and grows at an increasing rate. This phenomenon cannot be culturally digested without suitable methodological and theoretical reflections.

Sometimes it is necessary for the managers of a heritage place to recognise that the majority of their 'audience' is unlikely ever to visit the site in person. In Sydney, Australia, the Heritage Office under the Heritage Council of New South Wales has produced an internet-based interpretation project. The aim of this project is to make the many-layered cultural significance of the building – Old King's School, which has been home for its office since 2002 – to be accessible to a challenging range of audiences. Its website has become the 16th most visited website in the heritage field in the whole of Australia in 2007. Although, this similar kind of internet-based interpretation has been emerging for almost two decades, especially relating to databases of museums, it is interesting to see new developments focusing on internet-based interpretation.

5. Dynamic interpretation

Interpretation involves public communication of perceptions and values attached to heritage, and cultural tourism is its main global arena. But who has the right to 'tell the story', to interpret? How can the 'local' and 'universal' be defined in our increasingly globalised communities and administrations? And what determines the rights of ownership of heritage: collective sentiments and consciousness, the national/regional identity, or the specialists' 'technologies of government' (authority of knowledge, legislation)?

In tourism, there is a 'contact zone' sector where the local, global, personal, social and professional contexts interact (as mentioned before with the Visitor's Experience Model from Falk and Dierking, 1992). These lines reveal the stark contrast of perceptions as to who has the right to 'tell the story', in a peripheral context of a country with a nationalist baggage, that revolves on the slogan of the 'unity in diversity' dogma. Strict national legislation, allowing only those tour guides with state licenses to guide and restricted stories about the role of Thailand during the Second World War to tell to

tourists, aroused an open confrontation and fierce competition about ‘rights’ to interpretation. While foreign tour guides have learned a different history. How do these two (the local and international tour guides) get along, and who has the ‘right’ to tell ‘which stories’? How dynamic should the intangible heritage of the ‘Death Railway’ be?

During the research, there were several dynamic interpretations founded. It is quite common to heritage places that there is a ‘local’ and ‘international’ interpretation or in other words ‘official’ and ‘unofficial’ interpretations. This dynamic interpretation stimulates the process of reinterpretation of the Thai official interpretation of the atrocity heritage of the ‘Death Railway’. The advantage of this dynamic interpretation is that it keeps the story fresh, and confirms the theory of Lowenthal that heritage is about how we use the past for the present day’s purposes, and directly relates to the researcher’s hypothesis that in fact interpretation is in itself heritage. How we interpret heritage is how we want to it to be.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

Heritage is a contemporary function, selecting from the past, for a transmission to the future. Heritage serves a variety of purposes including; education, preservation for the future, identity building, entertainment, profit, and political legitimisation. Atrocity in its popular usage could mean almost any event that is abnormally bad. Atrocity is recognised in two overlapping ways – first, as acts of deliberate cruelty perpetrated by people against people, and second, as occurrences, particularly shocking or horrifying to others. An important element of atrocity is the perceived culpability implicit in these occurrences, which in most cases becomes the primary source of dissonance in the interpretation. From this definition of atrocity, atrocity heritage can be denoted as all associated artefacts, buildings, sites and place associations as well as intangible accounts of the acts of atrocity, as interpreted by the various parties involved – the victims, perpetrators, by-standers, and others.

In the case of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', it is an atrocity that is an act of deliberate cruelty perpetrated by people against people. It charts a changing history of conceptions of social order and identity. These important, but often ambivalently regarded sites of historical memory may recall traumatic involvements in war. As a cultural resource, it can be used for one or more of the purposes mentioned above. Interestingly, atrocity heritage tourism has become one of the major types of tourism, whatever the reason for the visit.

An important element of atrocity is the perceived culpability implicit in these occurrences, which in most cases becomes the primary source of dissonance in the interpretation. Dissonance is embedded in most heritage, but more characteristic in atrocity heritage due to its different users; the victims, perpetrators and by-standers. These three users have different interests and opinions concerning the heritage place. Beside the users, there are residents who hosts the place and these residents probably

have different interests from the three users. This is very much the case in the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'.

In this research, atrocity heritage interpretation to minimise the dissonance and complication of the heritage is used. In the process of atrocity heritage interpretation, there is a rising concern about certain aspects of how marketing and interpreting atrocity heritage tourism products and sites should be managed to meet the visitor's expectation, whilst maintaining the authenticity of the place. How atrocity heritage interpretation under global trends can minimise the commodification of the heritage when establishing a heritage place to be a heritage product.

To manage heritage dissonance of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway', there is a need to understand, beside the significance of the heritage and the present interpretation, the users of the heritage. From this understanding there will be closer dialogue between the users, the residents and all the place stakeholders to create an atrocity heritage interpretation for good management of the places. Documentary research and physical characteristics surveys of the heritage places were undertaken and followed up with a questionnaire survey of visitors, residents and stakeholders. The last stage was an in-depth interview with the stakeholders of the place. All these processes helped to give a clear image of the importance and what role the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' is to the different users and stakeholders.

Several important issues emerged from the survey. The first issue is the nature of the heritage as a share-contested heritage and heritage of dissonance. It is a heritage that shares several contestations from several owners that claim on the heritage. As a consequence, it contains high complexity and dissonance. The second issue is the political implications of the heritage, both for Thailand as the residence for the heritage, or the by-stander, and Japan as the perpetrator. The two countries have been very much protecting their role in the heritage. In the meantime, Australian government has played a big role into the heritage by having its own memorial museum in the Thailand territory and obviously claim the heritage as theirs. The third issue is the characteristic of the heritage as a cross-cultural heritage, where different users from different backgrounds interact, exchange ideas, and add meanings and values to this heritage. The fourth issue is also another characteristic of this heritage - being an extra-territoriality, several nations have put a claim of ownership as supported to the second issue. The last issue is the

commodification and commercialisation of this atrocity heritage which also brings the issue of heritage authenticity. As regards authenticity, a strong argument was made to challenge the thinking that its existence or absence affects the experiences of the tourists.

After the emerging issues from the survey, that show the nature and characteristics of the atrocity heritage of the' Death Railway', four proposals for atrocity interpretation of the heritage of the 'Death Railway' were put forward. The main goal of these proposals is to reduce heritage dissonance and complications, to give a better understanding of the heritage for different users, residents and stakeholders, as well as to use it as a conciliation reason to prevent a similar atrocity to happen again in the future. The first interpretation proposal plan for this research is interpretation plan for a cross-cultural understanding. The second is interpretation plan of the intangible heritage of the 'Death Railway'. To do this, verification of cultural heritage significance and symbolic meanings of the heritage from all place's stakeholders is necessary. The third plan is to use heritage interpretation as a centre in developing conservation strategies of the heritage. And the last proposal plan is an alternative interpretation, which is atrocity interpretation management by media, base on the theory 'Children of the Dark' by Graham Dann.

Although these proposals have a specific non-commercial interest, and even if not all interests are likely to be satisfied, this should reduce the dissonance of commercial interpretation, which may involve central issues of social, cultural or political content or may exist apart from them.

In interpretation of atrocity heritage the question 'whose interpretation' remains critical. As interpretation is a means to reveal the cultural values and symbolic meanings of heritage, interpretation plays an essential role in assisting the visitor's learning process. Not only does it educate and entertain through experiencing, it also offers a means to convey conservation and sustainable development principles. However, heritage managers need to be cautious in not letting interpretation diminish the visitors experiences. This process of experiencing heritage is considered by the researcher as heritage interpretation. An assumption is often made that heritage tourists are a more education-oriented people, who are keen to learn new things through heritage experiences. While that may be true for some, it cannot be assumed to apply to the majority of visitors, especially the case of the atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'.

Therefore, the challenge is to provide interpretation across a range of capabilities, willingness, and interests, and to ensure that the right message be conveyed through the most appropriate medium.

The importance of education shall always be a priority, as most literature about atrocity and why we preserve this heritage is to educate people so that this conflict could never happen again. Developing an 'official' version of interpretation (according to issues that emerged from the survey) via education programmes in museums and at the sites, open to adult as well as children, to the Thais as well as international visitors, should be a priority. This can be achieved by a range of activities, some of which are already features in the museums. Conferences, debates, special talks, temporary exhibitions as well as interpretation of atrocity by media (as suggested as one of the interpretation proposals), all help visitors to understand this heritage, its effect, and the role played by the heritage managers.

Problems of conservation and interpretation face all heritage sites, in part because their meaning is always contested and politicised. This research suggests that sites of atrocity rely very heavily on symbolic interpretations of meaning that create particularly intense forms of heritage dissonance. This is particularly true when symbolic interpretations are linked to past events and are part of a national political project within a country, and have social implications, which is the case at the 'Death Railway'. It is also particularly true where a heritage site draws its significance from an interpretation of human atrocity, which the 'Death Railway' does.

This research has linked the 'Death Railway's symbolic meanings to the Thai political implication on the heritage, and shown how the significance of the site has been contested and expanded by different users; the residents, stakeholders and other nations that put a claim on the heritage. It has suggested that this contestation over the meaning is, in itself, an important index of the 'Death Railway's value as a heritage place. Suppression of alternative interpretations may damage its heritage value. While the formulation of symbolic meanings is an essential part of the management of the heritage, it should be seen as the tip of the heritage iceberg: supplementary and alternative meanings also have to be researched and represented.

In the researcher's theory, interpretation should form the most important part of any heritage attraction. A flexible approach may need to be adopted regarding its

importance with regard to site goals and objectives. Ashworth has introduced more alternatives in heritage interpretation that, if territoriality, sovereignty, nationalism and the state need no longer all be bundled together, then there are many possibilities for more inclusive, pluralist and overlapping structures, identities and senses of place, all of which could be validated through heritage interpretation (Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). This applies very much to the interpretation of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'. As a result, four proposed strategies for interpretation were suggested.

Lastly, we all know that the Second World War is rapidly fading into the past, as are the memories of those who experienced it first hand, and it is becoming just another conflict. All past centuries, of course, have seen wars of varying lengths, and intensities, and the Second World War has affected a large number of people, both directly and indirectly. The effects and resonances will continue for years to come. But the finer details will blur and merge into each other, and in due course only the bare outlines will remain. The establishment of interpretation to use in museums and sites for this atrocity event will help to preserve these memories, and possibly, through an awareness of the catastrophic effects, help to prevent or at least to minimise other atrocities.

Bibliography

Aldridge, D. (1989). 'How the ship of interpretation was blown off course in the tempest: some philosophical thoughts', In D. L. Uzzell, (ed.), *Heritage Interpretation, Volume I: The Natural and Built Environment*. London: Belhaven Press, 64–87.

Aplin, G. (1998) *Heritage, Identification, Conservation, and Management*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Ashworth, G. J. (1990) 'Products, places and promotion: Destination images in the analysis of the tourism industry', In G. Ashworth, & B. Goodall (eds) *Marketing tourism places*, 121- 42. London: Routledge.

Ashworth, G. J. (1991) *War and the City*. New York: Routledge.

Ashworth, G.J. (1997) 'Jewish culture and holocaust tourism', in M. Robinson (ed.), *Culture and Tourism*. New Castle: Centre for Tourism Studies.

Ashworth, G.J. (1998) 'Heritage, identity and interpreting a European sense of place', in D. Uzzell and R. Ballantyne (eds), *Contemporary Issues in Heritage and Environmental Interpretation*. London: The Stationery Office 112-32.

Ashworth, G.J. (2000) 'Heritage, Tourism and Places: A Review', *Tourism Recreation Research,* 25 (1): 19-29.

Ashworth, G.J. (2002) 'Holocaust Tourism: The experience of Krakow-Kazimiez', *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education.* 11: 363-7.

Ashworth, G.J. and Aa, B. van der (2003) 'Bamiyam: Whose Heritage Was It and What Should We Do About It?' *Current Issues in Tourism*. 5: 447-57.

Ashworth, G.J. Graham, B. and Tunbridge, J. E. (2005) 'The uses and abuses of heritage', In Corsane, G. (ed.), *Heritage, Museums and Galleries.* London: Routledge, 26-37.

Ashworth, G.J. and Hartmann, R. (2005) *Horror and Human Tragedy Revisited: The Management of Sites of Atrocities for Tourism.* New York: Cognizant Communication Corporation.

Ashworth G. J. and Howard, P. (2000) *European Heritage Planning and Management*. Bristol: Intellect.

Ashworth, G.J. and Tunbridge, J. E. (1999) 'Old cities, new pasts: Heritage planning in selected cities of Central Europe', *Geojournal*. 49: 105-16.

Ashworth, G.J. and Tunbridge, J. E. (2000) The Tourist-historic City: Retrospect and prospect of Managing the Heritage City. London: Pergamon/Elsvier.

Askew, M. (2002) *Bangkok: Place, Practice and Representation*. London: Routledge.

Australia ICOMOS (1998) *The Burra Charter: Code on the Ethics of Co-existence in Conserving Significant Places*.

Australian-Thai Chamber of Commerce, (2004) *Hellfire Pass Memorial: Thailand-Burma Railway*. Bangkok: Image Makers.

Beasley, W.G. (1987) *Japanese Imperialism 1894-1945*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Beattie, R. (2005) *Death Railway: Brief History*. Bangkok: Image Makers Publishing.

Beattie, R. (2005) *Thailand-Burma Railway: the True Story of the Bridge Over the River Kwai*. Bangkok: Image Makers Publishing.

Boniface, P. (1995) *Managing Quality Cultural Tourism*. London: Routledge.

Boniface, P. and Fowler, P.J. (1993) *Heritage and Tourism in the 'global village'*. London: Praeger.

Botchway, K. (2001) 'Paradox of empowerment: reflections on a case study from northern Ghana', *World Development*. 29: 135-153.

Bramwell, W. and Lane, B. (1993) 'Sustainable Tourism : An Evolving Global Approach', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 1 (1): 1 – 5.

Clarke, H.V. (1986) *A Life for Every Sleeper: A pictorial record of the Burma-Thailand Railway*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Cohen, E. (1992) 'Pilgrimage Centers: Concentric and Excentric', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 19 (1) 33-50.

Cohen, E. (1998) 'Authenticity and Commoditization in Tourism', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 15 : 371 -86.

Corsane, G. (2005) *Heritage, Museums and Galleries: An introductory reader*. London: Routledge.

Cultural Heritage Centre for Asia and the Pacific (Online), accessed 6 December 2007. Available from http://chcap.edu.au

Falk, J.H. and Dierking, L.D. (1992) *The Museum Experience*. Washington D.C.: Whalesback Books.

Fine Art Department, Ministry of Culture (Online), accessed on 10 April, 2007. Available from http:// finearts.go.th

Forbes, C. (2005) *Hellfire: The story of Australia, Japan and the Prisoners of War.* Sydney: Macmillan.

Gottesdiener, H. (1993) 'Observation Method', in R. C. Prentice (ed.) *Tourism and Heritage Places.* London:Routledge.

Graham, B. (2002) 'Heritage as Knowledge: Capital or Culture?' *Urban Studies*. 39: 1003-17.

Graham, B., Ashworth, G. J., and Tunbridge, J. E. (2000) *A Geography of Heritage: Power, Culture and Economy*. London: Arnold.

Hall, C. and McArthur, S. (1998) *Integrated Heritage Management Principles and Practice*, London: The Stationery Office.

Hamilton, A. (2002) 'Rumours, Foul Calumnies and the Safety of the State: Mass Media and National Identity in Thailand', In C. Reynolds (ed.), *National Identity and Its Defenders: Thailand Today.* Chiangmai: Silkworm Books, 277-307.

Haartman, R. (2002) 'Places of Horror We Should Never Forget – Approaces to Teaching the Holocaust, Atrocity Sites and Pariah Landscape in the Geography Classroom', *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 11(4): 2002.

Henderson, J.C. (1997) 'War as a tourist attraction', *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 2 (4): 269 – 80.

Henderson, J.C. (2001) 'Heritage, Identity and Tourism in Hong Kong', *International Journal of Heritage Studies.* 7: 219-35.

International ICOMOS (1999) *Cultural Tourism Charter*, Mexico City.

International ICOMOS (1994) *The Nara Document on Authenticity*, (Japan).

Interpretation Australia Association (Online), accessed on 1 Feb, 2007. Available from http:// interpretationaustralia.asn.au

Interpretation Canada (Online) accesses on 5 August, 2007. Available from http://interpcan.ca

Jones, F.C. (1954) *Japan's New Order in East Asia: Its Rise and Fall, 1937-1945.* London: Oxford University Press.

Kammen, M. (1998) *In the past lane: Historical perspectives on American Culture*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Kerr, J. S. (2000) *Conservation Plan: A Guide to the Preservation of Conservation plans for Places of European Cultural Significance*. New South Wales: The National Trust of Australia.

Kinvig, C. (1992) *The River Kwai: The Story of Burma-Siam Railroad.* London: Brassey's.

Lebra, C.J. (1975) *Japanese's Greater East Asia Co-Prosperity Sphere in World War II: Selected Reading and Documents.* Kuala Lumpur: Oxford University Press.

Lyovarin, W. (1995) *Democracy, Shaken and Stirred.* Bangkok: Dokya.

Lennon, J. and Foley, M. (2000) *Dark Tourism*. London: Continuum.

Logan, W.S. (2000) *Hanoi: Biography of a City*. Sydney: University of New South Wales Press.

Logan, W.S. (2002) 'Introduction: Globalization, Cultural Identity, and Heritage', In W.S. Logan (ed.), *The Disappearing 'Asian' City: Protecting Asia's Urban Heritage in a Globalising World*. Hong Kong: Oxford University Press, xii-xxi.

Logan, W.S. and Askew, M. (1994) *Cultural identity and urban change in Southeast Asia: Interpretative Essays.* Victoria: Deakin University Press.

Lowenthal, D. (1985) *The Past is a Foreign Country*. Cambridge: University Press.

Lowenthal, D. (1998) *The Heritage Crusade and the Spoils of History*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Mason, R. (2005) 'Museums, galleries and heritage; Sites of meaning-making and communication', In G. Corsane (ed.) *Heritage, Museums and Galleries.* London: Routledge, 200-214.

Mc Arthur, S. and Hall, C. M. (1996) *Heritage Management in Australia & New Zealand.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mc Arthur, S. and Hall, C. M. (1996) *Interpretation Principles and Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Mac Cannell, D., (1973) Staged Authenticity: Arrangements of Social Space in Tourist Settings, *American Journal of Sociology*, 79: 589 - 603.

Merriman, N. (1991) *Beyond the Glass Case: The Past, the heritage and the Public in Britain*. Leicester: Leicester University Press.

Moscardo, G. (2000) 'Cultural and heritage tourism: the great debates', in B. Faulkner, G. Moscardo and E. Laws (eds), *Tourism in 21st Century: Lesson from experience*. London: Continuum, 3-17.

Na Ranong, C. (2008) Revisiting history. *Bangkok Post*, January 31, 2008: H3.

National Association for Interpretation USA (Online), accesses on 5 August, 2007. Available from http://interpnet.com

National Economic and Social Committee, (1977*) National Economic and Social Development Plan.* Bangkok.

NSW Heritage Office (2001) *Assessing Heritage Significance, a NSW Manual Update.*

Nobutaka, I. (Year Unknown) *Japan's Decision for War : Records of the 1941 Policy Conferences.* California: Stanford University Press.

Noel, T. (2005) 'Public Monuments and Political Correctness', in G.J Ashworth and R. Hartman (eds), *Horror and Human Tragedy Revisited: The Management of Sites of Atrocities for tourism.* New York: Cognizant Communication Corporation, 70-2.

Nora, P. (2001) *Rethinking France.* English translation. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. *Lieux de Memoire* (1984) Paris: Gallimard.

Nummonda, T. (1977) *Thailand and Japanese Presence, 1941-1945. Research Notes and Discussions Series No.6.* Bangkok: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies.

Olsen, D. H. (2003) 'Heritage, Tourism, and the Commodification of Religion. *Tourism Recreation Research*. 28(3): 99-104.

Olsen, D. H. (2003) 'Review of Myra Shackley?s ?Managing Sacred Sites.? '*International Journal of Tourism Research*. 5(6): 462-63.

Peleggi, M. (2000) *The Politics of the Ruins in Thailand*. Bangkok: White Lotus Printing.

Prentice, R. C. (1993) *Tourism and Heritage Attractions*. London: Routledge.

Prentice, R. C. (2005) 'Heritage: A key sector in the 'new' tourism', In G. Corsane (ed.) *Heritage, Museums and Galleries.* London: Routledge, 243-321.

Promote, K. M.R. (1981) *Four Reigns.* Bangkok: Duang Kamol.

Reed, B. & Peeke, M. (2004) *Lost Souls of the River Kwai*. South Yorkshire: Pen & Sword Military.

Reynolds, C. (2002) *National Identity and Its Defenders: Thailand Today*. Chiangmai: Silkworm Books.

Reynolds, E.B. (1994) *Thailand and Japan's Southern Advance, 1941-1945.* New York: St. Martin's Press.

Richards, G. (2000) 'Tourism and the World of Cultural and Heritage', *Tourism Recreation Research*. 25: 7-9.

Shaw, B.J., Jones, R. and Ling, O.G. (1997) 'Urban heritage, development and tourism in Southeast Asian cities: a contestation continuum', in B.J. Shawcand R. Jones (eds), *Contested Urban Heritage: Voices from the Periphery*. Aldershot: Ashgate. 169-96.

Singapore Tourist Promotion Board (1988) *Report from Changi Conservation Project*. Singapore.

Sivaraksa, S. (1985) *Siamese Resurgence: A Thai Buddhist Voice on Asia and a World of Change* . Bangkok: Asian Cultural Forum on Development.

Strike, J. (1993) *Architecture in Conservation*. London: Routledge.

Swan, L.W. (1986) *Japanese Economic Relations with Siam: aspects of Their Historical Development 1884-1942. A Dissertation Submitted for the Degree of doctor of Philosophy*. Sydney: Australian National University.

Tamayama, K. and Nunneley, J. (2000) *Tales by Japanese Soldiers*. London: Cassell.

Taylor, K. (1996) Valuing the Ordinary-an Australian Perspective, *CRM*. 19: 45-8.

Tilden, F. (1977) *Interpreting Our Heritage*. Chapel Hill: University North Carolina Press.

Timothy, D.J. and Boyd, S.W. (2003) *Heritage Tourism*. London: Pearson Education.

Timothy, D.J. and Prideaux, B. (2004) 'Issues in Heritage and Culture in the Asia Pacific Region', *Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research*. 9: 213-23.

Timothy, D. J. and White, K. (1999) 'Community-based ecotourism development on the periphery of Belize', *Current Issues in Tourism.* 2: 226-42.

Tourism Authority of Thailand (Central Office Region 1) *Year Report. 2002-2007*. Kanchanaburi.

Tunbridge, J. E. and Ashworth, G. J. (1996) *Dissonant Heritage: Managing the Past as a Resource in Conflict.* Chichester: Wiley.

Urry, J. (1990) *The Tourist Gaze*. London: Sage Publications.

Uzzell, D. (1989) *Heritage Interpretation Volume 1. The Natural and Cultural Environment.* London: Belhaven.

Uzzell, D. (1995) Consuming Places. London: Routledge.

Uzzell, D. and Ballantyne, R. (1998) *Contemporary Issues in Heritage and Environmental Interpretation*. London: The Stationery Office.

Vines, E. (2005) *Streetwise Asia*: *A practical guide for the conservation and revitalisation of heritage cities and towns in Asia*. Bangkok: UNESCO Bangkok.

Wigmore, L. (Year unknown) *The Japanese Thrust*. Canberra: Australian War Memorial.

Worden, N. (2003) 'National Identity and Heritage Tourism in Melaka', *Indonesia and Malay World.* 31:31-43.

Yeoh, B. and Kong, L. (1996) 'The notion of place in the construction of history, Nostalgia and heritage in Singapore', *Singapore Journal of Tropical Geography* 17: 52-65.

Appendix

Appendix I: Questionnaire for visitors to atrocity heritage in Kanchanaburi

PhD. Research on Interpretation of Atrocity Heritage of the 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai

Researcher: Mrs. Apinya Baggelaar Arrunnapaporn
Email: thaiartfoundation@yahoo.co.uk
www.thaiculturalheritage.org

Questionnaire for visitors to atrocity heritage in Kanchanaburi

The survey intends to evaluate the existing presentation, interpretation and management of atrocity heritage in Kanchanaburi and will be used to create an appropriate management of these sites in the future. I am grateful for your contribution of time in filling out this questionnaire and helping the researcher to reach such aims. Please return the completed form. Thank you.

Part I: General information

1. Country of Residence:…… Nationality……
2. Gender …….1) Male ……2) Female
3. Age ……. Years
4. Your highest education level

….1) Below bachelor's ….2) Bachelor's degree …3) Higher than Bachelor's degree

5. Is this your first visit to Kanchanaburi?

…1) Yes ….2) No, it's my ……..…….visit.

6. Is this your first visit to atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'/ WWII war sites in Kanchanaburi?

…1) Yes ….2) No, it's my ……..…….visit.

7. You stay in Thailand for ……..days. You stay in Kanchanaburi for……days.

Part II: Specific information

8. Your main purpose for visiting Kanchanaburi (more than one answer is allowed)

… 1) General travelling

...2) Visiting friends or relatives

... 3) Especially visiting atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway'

... 4) Commemoration reasons

9. What are the sites of atrocity heritage of the 'Death Railway' you have visited or are going to visit? (as many answers as you need is allowed).

….1) Kanchanaburi War Cemetery ….2) Chongkai War Cemetery

….3) JEATH War Museum … 4) Thailand Burma Railway Centre

…5) Bridge over the River Kwai …6) Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum

…7) Riding on a vintage train …8) Japanese Monument

10. Where did you hear about these war sites? (more than one answer is allowed)

....1) Media; T.V., radio, internet ….2) Printing materials; books, newspaper, brochure

….3) Family/friends/relatives …..4) Words by mouth

….5) Travel agency …..6) The film *'Bridge over the River Kwai'*

11. Does the information you have received attract you to visit these sites?

…1) Yes. …2) No. …3) Not specifically.

12. How do find the information provided at the sites below? Please rate your satisfaction level in the following aspects. **Given 5 = for most satisfied 1 = for least satisfied**

The JEATH War Museum

Items	**Your satisfaction**					**Don't know**
	1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**	
1. Availability of printed materials						
2. Appropriateness of other media in presentation						
3. A clear explanation of exhibitions						
4. Availability of guide tour/audio tour						
5. Interesting stories/subjects presented						

The Thailand Burma Railway Centre

Items	Your satisfaction					Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Availability of printed materials						
2. Appropriateness of other media in presentation						
3. A clear explanation of exhibitions						
4. Availability of guide tour/audio tour						
5. Interesting stories/subjects presented						

The Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum

Items	Your satisfaction					Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Availability of printed materials						
2.Appropriateness of other media in presentation						
3. A clear explanation of exhibitions						
4. Availability of guide tour/audio tour						
5. Interesting stories/subjects presented						

The Bridge over River Kwai

Items	Your satisfaction					Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Availability of printed materials						
2. Appropriateness of other media in presentation						
3. A clear explanation of exhibitions						
4. Availability of guide tour/audio tour						
5. Interesting stories/subjects presented						

The Kanchanaburi and Chongkai War cemetery

Items	Your satisfaction					Don't know
	1	2	3	4	5	
1. Availability of printed materials						
2. Appropriateness of other media in presentation						
3. A clear explanation of exhibitions						
4. Availability of guide tour/audio tour						
5. Interesting stories/subjects presented						

13. Concerning the stories over the Second World War in Kanchanaburi related to these sites, what are subjects would you like to hear more? (more than one answer is allowed)

…1) The construction of the railway and history of this war in Kanchananaburi.

…2) The Japanese's Ideology during WWII, concerned the construction of the railway.

…3) The lives of Prisoners of War (POWs) during those years of construction.

…4) The record and repatriation of the POWs and the Asian Labourer deaths.

…5) The role of Thailand during the war.

14. Most exhibitions, presentations and interpretations of these war sites in Kanchanaburi are done with Thai and westerner's point of views, would you like to hear story from the Japanese's point of view?

....1) Yes, very much necessary …2) It does not matter …3) No, not necessary

15. If the answer is 'yes' in question 14, what are the subjects would you like to hear?

…..1) The Japanese's ideology during WWII, concerned the construction of the railway.

….2) The Japanese humanity's ideology during the war.

….3) Their present ideas over the Second World War in general and to these war sites.

THANK YOU……..

Appendix II: List of place's stakeholders and interview questions.

INTERVIEW FORMAT

Interpretation of Atrocity Heritage of the 'Death Railway' of the River Kwai

Ph.D. Research

Researcher: Mrs. Apinya Baggelaar Arrunnapaporn

Email: thaiartfoundation@yahoo.co.uk

www.thaiculturalheritage.org

List of the place's stakeholders to be interviewed

1. The manager of the JEATH War museum.
2. The manager of the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre.
3. The manager of the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum.
4. The manager of two war cemeteries under the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.
5. The Director of Tourism Authority of Thailand, Central Part, Region 1.
6. The Railway Chief Officer of three railway stations; Kanchanaburi; Tha Kilen and Wangpho station.
7. The Kanchanaburi Province Governor.
8. The Kanchanaburi Municipality Governor.
9. The Chairman of Kanchanaburi Association of Business and Tourism.
10. Three Kanchanaburi travel agencies.
11. Three Thai local guides and four international tour guides
12. The owners of shops and stalls around the bridge and its associations.

Questions for the interview to the place's stakeholders number 1 - 4

1. Are you satisfied with interpretation of the subjects over the war in your museum/organisation now?
2. Is there an interpretation/presentation plan for visitor?
3. Which do you consider to be your main aim, to educate visitors or provide information?

4. Do you want to show the truth and horror of war for historical correctness and commemoration reason in your organization?
5. Are you aware of any bias in your interpretations?
6. How do you organise the exhibition? By setting up specific themes or following the existing collections?
7. Is a visitor survey conducted?
8. Are they in organised group or more usually individual travellers?
9. What are proportions of your visitors in organised groups?
10. Do visitors read the exhibition panels, recording and boards?
11. Which subject visitors have most interest in your exhibition?
12. How long do they stay at our site/place?
13. Do you have on-site interpretation? What are they?
14. Do you have off-site interpretation? What are they?
15. Is there a survey of visitor's opinion or suggestion beside the Guestbook?
16. Is there any cooperation between other place's stakeholders? If yes, in what way? If no, why not?

Questions for the Interview to place's stakeholders number 5- 11

1. Is tourism in Kanchanaburi growing?
2. How important do you think about tourism is in Kanchanaburi?
3. Where are places on which you focus your promotion/PR between natural and cultural resources? Why there?
4. What are your responsibilities to this atrocity heritage as being one of the place's stakeholders?
5. Is it necessary to make more promotion on this atrocity heritage/war site?
6. What do you think about the present interpretation of the subjects of this atrocity heritage in general?
7. Should there be a change?
8. If change is necessary, what kind of stories you wan to hear more-the story about the Prisoners of War during the war time, the story about Asian Labourers, the story of construction of the railway, the story about the

Japanese Human's Ideology and the story about the role of Thailand during the war?

9. Is there any cooperation between other place's stakeholders? If yes, in what way?
10. What is your opinion about the management of monuments, tourist information centres, traffic system, signs, restaurants, public toilets, shops, stalls around the Bridge, cemetery and the JEATH War Museum?
11. What do you think about the landscape and physical setting around the Bridge? Should there be a change?
12. What do you think about the 'River Kwai Bridge Week' with 'Light and Sound' show?
13. Does it bring more Thai/international tourists and income to the province?
14. What is your idea about the story told in the 'Light and Sound' show during the 'River Kwai Bridge Week' festival?
15. Should there be a change in the content of the illustrated story?
16. Is the Bridge most visited place in this atrocity heritage?
17. How about the 2nd most visited place?
18. Are there enough signs and boards to explain these two places?
19. Is there a future planning for this atrocity heritage in your organization?

Researcher's biography

Mrs Apinya Baggelaar Arrunnapaporn, has a strong interest in social sciences such as Anthropology, arts, history, museums, heritage preservation, and especially heritage interpretation. She has been working in museum and art institute for several years in Amsterdam, the Netherlands. Beside, she has been giving lectures in Museum Studies and Cultural Management as a visiting lecturer at several universities in Thailand. She is giving a consult on heritage preservation and academic advisor for international projects. She is one of prominent Thailand/ICOMOS members and represented as a member of International Committee on Interpretation and Presentation (ICIP).

Curriculum Vitae

Name: Mrs. Apinya Baggelaar Arrunnapaporn, Thailand, 1972.

Educational background

1992	BA(Anthropology), Archaeology Faculty, Silpakorn University, Bangkok
	MA (Museology), Reinwardt Academie, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands.
	Certificate History of Art, University of Amsterdam, the Netherlands
2006-now	PhD. Researcher in Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism, Silpakorn University/Thailand.

Working experience

1995-2003 Lived and worked in Amsterdam as art curator in modern art museum and gallery.

Lectures Given and Taught Courses

2002 - Guest Lecturer in Museum and Art Curating, Amsterdammse Hogeschool voor Beelden Kunsten, Amsterdam.

- Guest Lecturer in Modern and Contemporary Art in Thailand, Amsterdam Art Funds Foundation, and Mondriaan Foundation, Amsterdam.

2002 - 3 - Visiting Lecturer in Museum Management, Thammasat University and Mahidol University.

2007 - Guest Lecturer in Museum and its Architecture, Uthenthawai University.

- Visiting Lecturer in Museum and ICT, Walailuk University.
- Speaker at 10th US/ICOMOS International Symposium, San Francisco.
- Speaker at AU/ICOMOS International Symposium, Cairns, Australia.
- Speaker at 2nd International Symposium on Architectural and Culture in Suwannabhumi Region, KMITL, Bangkok.
- Speaker at 'Building Blocks' International Symposium on Interpretation, Interpretation Australian Association, Sydney, Australia.
- Speaker at Thailand/ICOMOS International Symposium, Bangkok.
- Speaker at SEAMEO-SPAFA International Conference, Bangkok.

International Symposium Participations

2006 - International Symposium on Tourism Destination Rejuvenation, International College, Mahidol University.

- International Symposium on Objects and Artifacts Reconciliation, Tropical Institute, Amsterdam.
- 1st International Symposium on Architectural and Culture in Suwannabhumi Region, Bangkok.
- Thailand/ICOMOS International Symposium, Udonthani.

2007 - 10th US/ICOMOS International Symposium, San Francisco, U.S.A.

- AU/ICOMOS International Symposium, Cairns, Australia.
- 2nd International Symposium on Architectural and Culture in Suwannabhumi Region, KMITL, Bangkok.
- 3rd Ename Colloquium (International Scientific Committee for Heritage Interpretation and Presentation), Ghent, Belgium.
- 'Building Blocks' International Symposium on Interpretation, Interpretation Australian Association, Sydney, Australia.
- Thailand/ICOMOS International Symposium, Bangkok.
- SEAMEO-SPAFA International Conference, Bangkok.

Residence in Thailand 56/9 Baan Cha-am 1/3 Rd. Cha-am, Petchburi 76120
Tel/Fax: 66 32 471700 mobile phone 66 89 2562470/
email: thaiartfoundation@yahoo.co.uk
Website: thaiculturalheritage.org