

A journey to the past

An analysis of the contemporary display of the Death Railway,
Thailand



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MA Thesis Archaeological Heritage Management

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1. Introduction

The Burma-Thailand Railway, known as the Death Railway, was built by the Japanese army during World War II to secure transportation facilities between two existing lines: - one from Singapore to Bangkok and a second along the Andaman coast to Rangoon – in order to provide a more direct route to Rangoon. As the Japanese navy lost command of the Bengal Bay, and the sea route to Burma became almost impossible, the 415 kilometer (260 mile) railway was built within 15 months which was a great engineering achievement, but came at the cost of high death rate of prisoners of war, local workers and even Japanese soldiers themselves. The extreme hardship during the construction work have been well documented in various publications, but these focus mostly on the capture, incarceration, and eventual liberation of the POWs building the railroad and on how their experiences deeply affected their later lives. A famous bridge on the River Kwai in Kanchanaburi and the well-known 1957 Hollywood movie by David Lean with the same name, repeat the same message. This makes the Death Railway not only a symbol of the wartime tragedy in Thailand, but also a legendary focus for more than a million tourists annually from all over the world (Braithwaite & Leiper 2010, 311).

After the Japanese surrender on 15 August 1945, the railway's role shifted from that of a military supply line to a tourist railway. It is now used as an important instrument in Kanchanaburi's 'city branding', because it brings a huge economic benefit to the region. The Death Railway itself, and the associated museums and war cemeteries, manage to capture the curiosity of international visitors (especially those who come from the countries directly involved in the railway's construction), who seek to find out what happened to their countrymen and relatives. In this case the railway is used successfully as heritage for tourists. The economic value of the site has become a powerful factor influencing the display, management and agenda of the site (Freire 2009, 1-2). However, depicting POWs as the main focus of the site gives little attention to the local Thai people, Asian labourers and Japanese soldiers who were also involved. This creates a dissonance in the site's management, for this limited angle of the display's presentation affects the way in which different groups of visitors experience the site. This brought up an important question: 'How and why are certain aspects of the past highlighted and others silenced?' This question has much to do with the postwar situation in Thailand and the political issues in developing tourism, which will be discussed later in this research.

The motivation to write this thesis emerged when I travelled with the Death Railway in 2013-2014, while I was conducting my Bachelor thesis about Thonburi railway station under the occupation of the Imperial Japanese Army during World War II. Thonburi hold it's important as a first station of the Death Railway. During my visit, I found that different audiences travelling to the site had different expectations, which affected the ways in which they experienced the site. For example, the visitors who have roots in POWs countries travelled to the site with respect and care, while Thai people and other visitors were just having fun in what is the resort town of Kanchanaburi (Isaac et al. 2014, 196). While observing those phenomena, I found myself more and more interested in the question of how and why the Death Railway is recognized and remembered by different groups of visitors. I asked whether or not the contemporary display of the site affected the way different audiences experienced the site. These topics then became the main focus of my thesis. Moreover, Kanchanaburi has a long and multi-layered history, because it played an important role in Thai history. However, when visiting the site, it is clear that the main image of Kanchanaburi is focused on recent history, especially World War II, which is remembered by a large part of the worldwide audience.

The central question that will be answered in this thesis is:

'What is the effect of the contemporary display of the Death Railway on the image visitors have?'

To answer this question, quantitative and qualitative questions will be included in surveys for both visitors and local people, as well as an analysis of the current issues of the site's presentation. In order to answer the main question, I would like also to investigate the subquestions:

-What is displayed at the sites related to the Death Railway and why?

-What do visitors learn from the display?

-What is the dissonance in the presentation of the Death Railway and how does this affect people?

Heritage by nature is selective (Chhabra 2012, 1702), for most heritage tourism and heritage in general excludes the past of the powerless and minorities in society (Timothy & Boyd 2003, 257). However, there is a need to acknowledge the multiple constituencies involved in the site and mirror the views of the host communities (Chhabra 2012, 1702). Heritage can no longer remain isolated from the communities within which it rests (Ashworth, 1991, Tunbridge & Ashworth, 1996). This idea will later be used to discuss the results of this research project and to formulate further recommendations at the end of the thesis.

This thesis is divided into six chapters. In Chapter One the history and the importance of the site will be introduced briefly. Chapter Two grounds the research framework and theoretical approach for this research. Chapter Three will explain the methodology and representative sample of the population used in my survey. Chapter Four analyzes in depth the results from the surveys which have been carried out on the Death Railway and Kanchanaburi. Data analysis on visitors and the host community's perception will also be discussed in this chapter. Chapter Five will give an overview of the current state of the display of the Death Railway and its associated sites. Chapter Six will provide the conclusion and discussion in which the main and sub research questions will be answered. At the end of this chapter, further recommendations for site management will be proposed.

2. The history of the Death Railway (Thailand-Burma Railway)

In October 1943, Japanese forces in Thailand celebrated the completion of what has become known as the Death Railway (Leesuwan 1988, 58-59). A third of a million men were forced to work on the Railway which allowed Japan to invade Burma and seize the colony from British control. Taking only one year to finish, over 90,000 men died building the railway, according to the Death Railway Museum. Most of these died from disease, malnutrition and exhaustion. It is said that more people died during the work than there are sleepers in the railway (Komonmena *et al.*, 1993).

After the end of World War II, the story of the Death Railway was often presented to the public. However, there is more publication on individual rather than general history, global rather than local history, POWs (defined as Prisoner of war) rather than others (although over 80 percent of workers who worked and died on the Railway's construction were Asian (the Death Railway Museum)), and more publication on the war itself rather than the pre- and post-war periods. Most of the publications describe the Japanese war strategy in building the railway line, the fate of the allied prisoners of war who died as a result of being sent to work on the Railway and the (auto)biographies of prisoners of war who witnessed the dead and suffering during the railway's construction. Ian Denys Peek's *One fourteenth of an elephant: a memoir of life and death on the Burma-Thailand Railway* (2003) and David Nelson's *The story of Changi; Singapore* (1974) are examples illustrating the history of the Railway from the POWs point of view, while the study by Kanzuo Tamayama (*Building the Burma-Thailand Railway 1942-43*, 2004) retells the same story, but from the perspective of the guards and soldiers who were cruel to POWs. Of course, the history of the Death Railway cannot be separated from the history of these people, which will be discussed in this research. However, in this chapter, I suggest to look through the history of the Death Railway mainly from the Thai and Japanese wartime archives, which will provide a wider view of the Railway's history as part of Thailand's history as a whole.

2.1 Building the Death Railway

By the late 1941, when the Second World War entered its third year, Japanese forces entered Thailand, in order to allow the passage of Japanese troops to invade British-held Malaya and Burma. To avoid a fight, the Thai government considered it preferable to cooperate with the Japanese. After Thailand agreed to let Japanese troops pass the country, the mutual offensive-defensive alliance pact between the two countries was

signed. Thailand declared war on the Allies on January 25, 1942 (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 12 December 1941 – 4 October 1945).

The Death Railway was built under wartime pressure as a supply line from Bangkok, Thailand to Thanbyuzayat, Burma, through Kanchanaburi, a province in the western part of Thailand (Leesuwan 1988, 3). This project was in fact a great collaborative project between the Thai and Japanese government, since it required many resources and labour from both sides in order to execute its construction (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 27 August – 29 September 1943, Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 20 June 1942 – 3 September 1945, Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 26 May 1942 – 21 September 1945). The whole distance of the Railway was almost 400 kilometers. The Japanese were responsible for building the main part of the railway line, starting from Burma, as well as 688 of the wooden and steel bridges over rivers (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 23 March – 28 December 1942). The Bridge over the River Kwai was one of the only two steel bridge built during the construction (another is in Burma). Meanwhile, the Thai government was responsible for constructing the railway line from Ban Pong station in Thailand. Both railway lines were connected in Konkoita station (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 26 May 1942 – 21 September 1945). The Japanese asked the Thai government for supplying food, light equipment (such as hoes, shovels, axes, rock crushers et cetera) and to recruit personnel, such as technicians, carpenters, divers, and Thai and Thai-Chinese labourers (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 6 July – 1 September 1943, Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 21 October 1942- 27 December 1943, Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 27 August 1942 – 26 August 1943). These would be working alongside the POWs and Asian labourers, who were collectively known as Romusha and consisted of South Indians, Malays, Burmese and Indonesians, under the control of Japanese army.

The Thailand-Burma Railway became known as the Death Railway, because of the great number of dead and the hard labour needed for its construction. For 90% of the whole distance the Railway ran through dense forest, without any village nearby. Many large cutting and embankments were constructed to negotiate the hilly country, which would normally have required at least eight years to be properly constructed (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 23 March – 28 December 1942). The Thai Railway company found it difficult to finding enough voluntary labourers to fulfill the Japanese needs, since this area is full of disease and danger. The Thai authorities

doubted if the Japanese could successfully build the Railway (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 22 August 1942 – 26 August 1943). However, the Japanese were well-educated, many at western schools, and among them were specialists in constructing railways in hilly country, since hilly terrain is omnipresent in Japan. The biggest problem for the Japanese was not whether they could build the Railway, but rather whether they could build it in time with the resources available (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 23 March 1942- 23 January 1943). After the Japanese decision to complete the railroad, more than 61,000 prisoners (mostly British, Dutch, Australian and American), who had been taken during the campaigns in Southeast Asia and the Pacific, were brought to Thailand to solve these problems (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 2 January- 13 April 1943, Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 5-6 May 1943)

The two ends of the railway line were joined in October 1943. From that time, the Railway became a main supply route for the Japanese forces in Burma. During the last year of war, this Railway was used as an escape route to transfer Japanese soldiers out of Burma. The Railway was often attacked by the Allied air force. However, it was rebuilt quickly, by the same group of Asian and POW labourers who had survived the construction process. The Railway was used to serve the Japanese for military purposes until the end of the war in August 1945.



Figure 1. Map of the Death Railway (Hellfire Pass Memory Museum)

2.2 The Death Railway after the war

Bombed by Allied air raids, the Railway was left in a poor condition after the war. Over 60 % of the railway sleepers had to be replaced (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 3-5 October 1945). The Railway was property of the Japanese Army during the war and was transferred to British ownership afterwards. The Death Railway was the longest and perhaps, most dangerous railway line in Thailand at that time, which required a great amount of money and specialist knowledge to maintain. The Thai authorities in the postwar period did not have enough resources and knowledge to take care of the whole railway (Royal Thai Armed Forces Headquarters, 3-5 October 1945). Fearing that the railway might be used to supply the Karen separatists in Burma, the British authorities tore up four kilometers of track near the Three Pagodas Pass, so that the railway could not be used (Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum). After the railway line in Burmese territory was destroyed on British orders, the rest of the line was sold to the Thai authorities, who bought it for 1,250,000 pound sterling (Komonmena 2007, 88). Taking the financial and political issues into account, Thai Railway decided to dismantle the section from the Burmese border to Nam Tok station. The role of the Death Railway was shifted from a

military to a public railway line in 1958. Nam Tok station, in the western part of Kanchanaburi, remains the last station of the Death Railway today.

The Hellfire Pass (Konyu cutting) is the only dismantled section which is now used for education purposes; it is now open as a memorial museum. Hellfire Pass is important as the hardest and the most dangerous cutting of the whole line. This cutting was completed during the monsoon season in 1943 under top-speed conditions (known as speedo), when working hours were 15-18 hours day and night. This caused massive deaths among the labourers (Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum).

2.3 The impact of the Death Railway upon Kanchanaburi province

The establishment of the Death Railway had a great impact on the development of the western region of Thailand and especially on Kanchanaburi, the place where the main construction activities were located. Kanchanaburi in the prewar period was mostly jungle, without any train connection (which was the main transportation of that time). Kanchanaburi was only a small faraway province without any economic interest. However, the Japanese's intention to build the railway line via this province boosted major economical and sociological changes in the area. The study by Phanpracha (1987) on the impact of the Death Railway on the western region of Thailand posed that the Railway's construction created great economic opportunities and led to business competition between Thai, Chinese and Japanese businessmen. However, the wartime period was short, so that it only benefited the business sectors who traded directly with the Japanese. The economic effects did not yet spread to the local community. On the other hand, the arrival of different nationalities of labourers brought in by the Japanese had a great sociological impact on the local society. Kanchanaburi was, for the first time, amazed by people with different languages and cultures, which later caused serious problems, especially in relation to crime and disease (Panpracha 1987, 178).

Suffering from the effects of the war, Kanchanaburi was introduced to the global stage together with the story of Death Railway, which was brought back by the POW survivors to their home countries. This later generated great curiosity among their countries and families to find out what really happened to their relatives and countrymen. The establishment of the Death Railway has had major effects in the postwar period: the city has become widely known and its history has been spread in Thailand worldwide. Thanks to the many publications and movies about the Death Railway, the railway line has become an international symbol of wartime Thailand.

Kanchanaburi is one of the main tourist destinations in Thailand and is full of tourist facilities and events. The first museum representing the story of POWs in Kanchanaburi was established in 1977. In 1979 the River Kwai Week Fair started; other displays and events regarding the story of the railway and POWs followed.

The River Kwai Week Fair, which takes place in late November to early December, is the most important event of the year to celebrate the establishment of the railway line and Kanchanaburi's history. The highlight of the festival is the Sound & Light Show, which tells the history of the Death Railway, the Hellfire Pass and the Bridge on the River Kwai by using the original soundtrack 'The Bridge on the River Kwai march' from the movie 'Bridge on the River Kwai' as a theme song. The fair also includes exhibitions on World War II, live music and a pedestrian street. Taking place at the river bank near a famous River Kwai Bridge, this event attracts great numbers of tourists. In fact, the number of visitors is the highest in the months of November and December (Kanchanaburi tourist information center).

2.4 The Death Railway as a part of Kanchanaburi military role

The third biggest province in Thailand, Kanchanaburi has played a strategic role from the pre-historical period onwards. Located in the very western part of Thailand, near the boundary with Burma, Kanchanaburi was strategically important since the Late Lop Buri period (11th – 13th centuries A.D.). The importance of Kanchanaburi continued in the Ayutthaya period (14th – 18th centuries A.D.) and the early Bangkok period (founded in 1782), when the majority of wars between Siam and Burma took place. Prasat Mueng Sing and the Nine-Army Battle historical park are representative sites from those periods. The majority of wartime artifacts in Thai museums was found during excavations at these sites. Kanchanaburi only lost its importance as a military city after the French and British imperialism invaded South East Asia and dominated in the 19th and 20th centuries. It would be interesting if tourist attractions recognized that Kanchanaburi is a land with a violent history and that its importance was again reestablished by the invasion of the Japanese during World War II. However, the World War heritage is much more emphasized in the city than other historical periods, because the authorities choose to present a period important for people on an international scale.

Kanchanaburi is also famous for its prehistoric archaeological site. The construction of the Death Railway in fact led to a discovery of great importance for the pre-historical period. Ban Kao is the first prehistoric site discovered in Thailand during

1960-62 (Sørensen 1967, 5). The site was first report by the Dutch archaeologist Dr. H.R. Van Heekeren (Sørensen 1967, 8), who was a Dutch POW during the war. Finding fragments of stone tools during the railway's construction, he returned to the site in the aftermath and discovered many Neolithic remains and utensils (such as skeletal remains, pots, axe heads, jewelry made from animal bones, and other artifacts) (Sørensen 1967), so that Ban Kao National Museum was established afterward. It is relevant to note that the effect of the Death Railway to the city is not limited only to the economic and social issues, but also had great impact on the study of archaeology.

3. Research framework and theoretical approach

Whereas much work has focused on the history of the Death Railway, the number of site management studies is limited. Braithwaite and Leiper (2010) are among the few scholars who touch upon the effect that the dissonant narrative of the Death Railway has on the misleading display of the site. My study will further discuss the effect of these displays on the way visitors experience the site.

The theoretical approaches applied to this research are mostly based on literature on history, heritage and tourism management. From the historical viewpoint, the Death Railway consists of various memories and has different meanings to different racial and ethnic groups, who played different roles and experienced different stories during the Railway's construction. In this case, the most useful approach for this study is the concept of 'dissonance in heritage', which arises from 'a distinction between the past (what has happened), history (selective attempts to describe this) and heritage (a contemporary product shaped from history)' (Tunbridge & Ashworth 1996, 20). Heritage here can be defined as 'contemporary use of the past' (Graham *et al.* 2000, 2), where an effective management plan must be based on an analysis of the way in which the events are considered significant to remember (Logan & Reeves 2009, 2). Some locations, the Death Railway for instance, have been difficult to manage as part of a nation or local community's heritage, since they involved many stakeholders with different backgrounds and interests. Furthermore, they represent particular painful or shameful episodes. Because of its connection with the war and prisoners of war, the Death Railway can be categorized as 'difficult heritage' (Logan & Reeves 2009) and 'atrocities heritage' (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005).

Mitterhofer posed that the heritage of dissonance challenges uncritical assumptions that heritage is necessarily 'good' because it binds individuals and communities together. Instead it creates conflict in social collective memory and diverse social meanings of historical narratives (Mitterhofer 2013, 48). However, in such places, victimization has played a central role in state building, as in the case of Israel, which uses the victims of Auschwitz as a legitimization for its existence as a state (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 258). Indeed states such as Australia and Canada, which evolved quite peacefully into independent statehood, sometimes have difficulty in shaping national identity. Ashworth and Hartmann identify and discuss the role of dissonant heritage as a powerful tool for groups and even individuals, who use past atrocities as an argument for present support and even find comfort in victimization as an explanation for their

current difficulties or lack of progress in various fields. They also seek sympathy from outside, for example to attract external tourists (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 258). In this case, most dissonant heritages are either displayed from the view point of victims or are not managed at all. Sites illustrating the story from 'perpetrators' or 'bystanders' standpoints are frustrated by the lack of public acknowledgement of the tragedies that happened there. After all, it is more difficult to understand why perpetrators should want the atrocities they committed to be memorized (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 259).

In term of heritage management, Tunbridge and Ashworth (1996, 21-29) proposed three types of dissonance under the context of dissonance heritage: dissonance in place products (where the same 'place' is sold as a different product to different users), dissonance implicit in multi-use (distinctly different user markets) and dissonance implicit in the content of messages. Braithwaite and Leiper (2010) used these approaches to explain the dissonant viewpoints of the famous River Kwai Bridge, which represents different messages to different visitors. For example, famous objects for photographing by tourists represent the wartime tragedy in the perspective of those looking for memories of their ancestors' suffering. Apart from the famous Kanchanaburi bridge, all three types of dissonance can be applied to the analysis of the display of the Death Railway and its associated museums and cemeteries.

Even though the display of the Death Railway is not always associated with death and sorrow, it attracts many tourists who seek to experience the sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre. In this perspective, the Death Railway can be considered as 'Dark Heritage', that is a site that displays elements of death and atrocities (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005). Visitor who visit the site with this motivation and expectation can be categorised as 'Dark Tourists', defined as those visiting death-related sites (Lennon & Foley 2000). In this case 'Dark tourism' is another useful approach for this research. Dark Tourism is linked with sites where in many cases the motivation to visit is not purely for tourist reasons, but also to experience death, commemorate the past or take a kind of pilgrimage (Selmi *et al.* 2012, 314). Moreover, dark tourism has been categorised into different 'shades' of dark (Isaac & Çakmak 2014, 166): places where acts of violence actually occurred are categorized as 'darker' than museums illustrating these events. In this case, tourists who visit the Death Railway and Bridge of the River Kwai should be considered as a darker shade of tourist than those who visit other displays associated with the sites. However, Urry (1990) argues that the

convergence between tourism and heritage activities should also be taken into account, since the way tourists consume and/or interact with a site also affects the authenticity of the heritage.

Another approach related to this research is landscape studies, which represents human interaction with the natural environment. The landscape will change over time, and in many ways it will become a palimpsest of past activities overlain by the present (Finlayson & Dennis 2002, 220). Johnston (1998) posed that people can experience the landscape through different perceptions, in which 'the same physical landscape can be seen in many different ways by different people' (Layton & Ucko 1999, 1). Landscape studies can be linked to many different approaches. The impact of tragedy and violence on the landscape is one the branch, which explains how tragic events and their memories are impressed upon the natural landscape. Foote (1997) poses that memories of tragic events can be impressed upon the natural landscape in four ways: 'sanctification' (the creation of a 'sacred' space), 'designation' (the use of tourist markets to acknowledge the location of the event), 'rectification' (the return of the space to operable conditions) and 'obliteration' (the effacement of evidence of tragedy from a space) (Foote 1997, 7-8). He argues that national identity can be impressed upon the landscape through the events chosen for sanctification; battlefields are chosen to represent the concepts of bravery, courage, and sacrifice for example. In contrast, if the event is connected to shame and grief, the related sites are mostly obliterated by lack of public acknowledgement.

Useful concepts for further analysis is the 'wilful distortion' of collective memory by government in a 'nationalistic politics', as theorized by Hobsbawm (1997), as well as 'forgetting and memory' by Todorov (2003). Hobsbawm stated that 'history is the raw material for nationalist or fundamentalist ideologies' (Hobsbawm 1997, 5). In his view, history is always 'invented' if there is no 'suitable past' to fulfil the political interests of a nation and achieve political and cultural cohesion. Moreover, history plays an importation role in political action. The history of Jewish genocide by Hitler, for example, has been turned into a legitimizing myth for the existence of the state of Israel (Hobsbawm 1997, 8).

Todorov (2003) states that the way in which people choose to remember an event depends on who they are. For an African, for example, what counts most in the twentieth century must be colonization and decolonization (Todorov 2003, 1). In this sense, memory should not be thought of as a mechanical recording of what happened,

because different people can derive different moral attitudes from the same events. Todorov (2003, 3) poses several questions regarding memory and forgetting, such as 'Is memory necessarily a good thing?' 'Is forgetting always a curse?' 'Are all uses of the past permissible?' and 'Does the past always help us to understand the present, or can it serve to confuse our view of here and now?' Although the concepts of nationalistic politics and forgetting and memory are not directly related to the Death Railway or the site management, they can help in shaping the theoretical approach of this project.

In this research, the theory of dissonance heritage will be the main instrument to explore the ideology of the site's display and presentation, which in turn affect the current situation of the site in general. The Death Railway suffers this dissonance not only in its image, but also in its narrative. These factors affect the way different groups of visitors experience the site in different ways. The concept of dissonance of heritage will allow me to understand the process that turned the Death Railway from a military railway line into a tourist railway and later became remembered by a worldwide audience. In a way, the dissonance also lies in the change of its image from a heritage of grief to a place of recreation for many.

While wartime generations can transmit a memory merely by talking about it, the postwar generation can only access wartime stories by seeing the memorials; they have to imagine that an image or symbol refers to something real (Winter 2009, 610). In this case, the landscape approach will be applied in order to discuss whether or not the audience can access wartime stories via looking at the landscape and scenery while travelling on the Death Railway, even if they do not visit any other informative displays such as museums or cemeteries.

Olick (1999) suggests that social memory can be identified through a study of tourists' experiences. The Dark Heritage and Dark Tourism approach will help me go into depth about the tourists' motivations to visit the site. Is the tourism in Kanchanaburi dark tourism? Are the Death Railway, the bridge and its associated museums and cemeteries dark heritage? These questions were at first not a central issue in my research. However, they recurred several times during my survey and are salient to the theme of discordant narratives and dissonant heritage. In order to support my research's results, the historical approaches of Todorov (2003) and Hobsbawm (1997) will be applied to explain how the wartime heritage, memorials and cemeteries helped to frame the social memory of the Great War within the context of the Thai nation and the international community.

4. Methodology

In this section I will discuss the current perceptions and expectations of visitors towards the Death Railway and Kanchanaburi Province, the place where the main rail line was constructed. To do so, a questionnaire was prepared to hand out to visitors before their visit to the site. The perspective of the local community will also be discussed in this study. Quantitative and qualitative surveys were included in the surveys for both visitors and local people. Moreover, I did some observations about the situation during the train trip, e.g. by listening to conversations held by people around me. The current situation of the whole site will be illustrated in the data analysis part and also in the chapter on the current situation of the site.

4.1 Visitors' survey

The survey was conducted on three days: Wednesday 14, Saturday 17 and Sunday 18 February 2015. The studies were performed during both weekends and weekdays. This allowed me to survey two types of visitors: those visiting during the week were groups of Thai people on special trips organized by their company or organization, whereas at the weekend there was a larger proportion of individual visitors, both Thai and foreign. The questionnaires were prepared in English and Thai versions and handed out during the journey from Bangkok (Thonburi Station) to Kanchanaburi (Nam Tok Station, the final destination of the rail line) and on the way back from Kanchanaburi to Bangkok. At the Death Railway I did not ask for any formal authorization for my survey, as it was not required.

Due to the long journey on the train, the questionnaire was given out to both Thai and foreign visitors when the train reached Nong Pladuk Junction, the first station of the Death Railway, and collected right away by the researcher. The visitors were asked to do the same questionnaire again when the train left Kanchanaburi station for Bangkok, on the evening of the same day, to make sure that the visitors had already done their trip and visited the entire site. However, the population of the visitors before and after visit the site was not exactly the same group, because many visitors preferred to spend several days in Kanchanaburi. Also, many visitors preferred to travel back by bus rather than by train, in order to save time.

According to the statistics recorded by Thai Railway, in the last five years about 16,000-21,000 passengers per year travelled out and back with the Death Railway, as illustrated in table below.

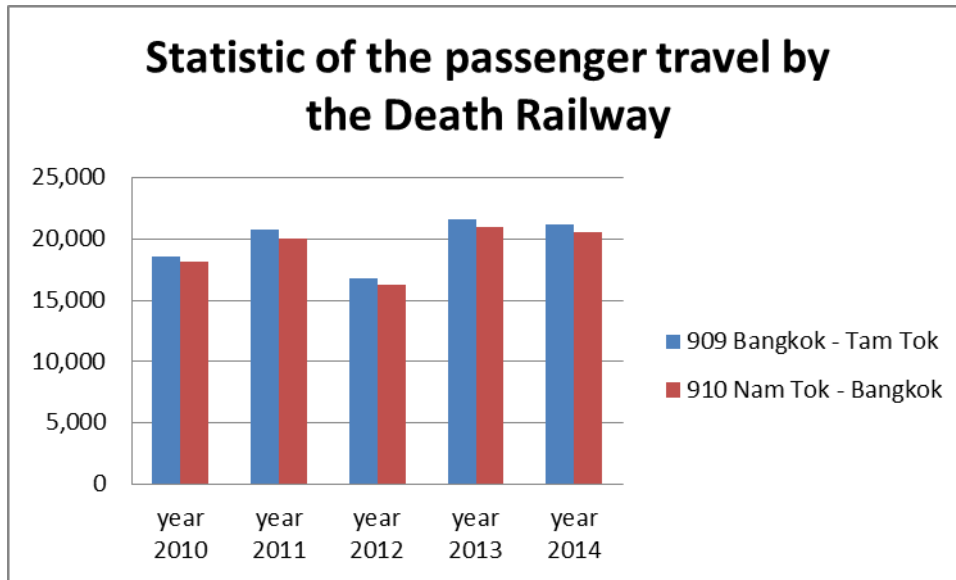


Figure 2. Statistics of passenger travel by the Death Railway from 2010-2014 (data recorded by Thai Railway)

Train/Year	From-To	2553	2554	2555	2556	2557	Average
909	Bangkok-Nam Tok	18,605	20,790	16,789	21,569	21,222	19,795
910	Nam Tok- Bangkok	18,138	20,008	16,289	20,916	20,508	19,171

Table 1. Statistics of passenger travel by the Death Railway from 2010-2014 (data recorded by Thai Railway.)

The questionnaire was designed to collect data in order to achieve the main goal: investigating the effect of the contemporary display of the Death Railway on the image visitors have before and after they visit the site. To do so, all the visitors on the train were asked to complete the questionnaire, containing nine questions in three parts: Personal information, the Death Railway, and Kanchanaburi Province. The questions were both open question and multiple choice questions and mostly focused on the image of the site from the visitors' perspective. Some of the visitors were selected randomly to conduct a short interview about their attitudes to the Death Railway.

In total 324 questionnaires were returned in a complete form (224 from Thai visitors and 110 from foreigners, 206 before and 118 after they visited the site). Some

questionnaires were not answered in a complete form and therefore not included in the study.

4.2 The Representative Sample from a visitor Population

On average 19,979 people travel from Bangkok to the sites, 55 on daily base, while the population in the return trip is lower, 19,171, 52 on daily base. The survey gained 206 answers from visitors before visiting the site and 118 from after the visit. The data accuracy can be explained from the table below.

Trip	Sample size / Population	Confidence/ error level	Confidence/ error level	Confidence/ error level
Out	206 / 19,979	99%/8.9%	95%/6.8%	90%/5.7%
Return	118 / 19,171	99%/11.8%	95%/9%	90%/7.6%

Table 2. Data confidence and error level

From statistical calculation, the sample size from the population is not big enough to represent the perspectives of all visitors. Furthermore, there is also some error level, between 5.7-8.9 in the outwards trip and 7.6-11.8 in the return trip. Therefore, the data from this survey is not a stratigraphically representative for it needs over 642 responses from each trip's population to be confidence. However, they are sufficient to say something about the current situation of the site.

Note while preparing the questionnaire in English, I made a wrong English translation of one of the museum names in Question 3, part 2 (Which war-related sites in Kanchanaburi would you like to visit?), which might affect the result of that question. In order to be able to use the data, I decided to group the answers into categories: museum, war cemetery, places where wartime activities occurred, and others. However, the original result from the Thai version can still be seen in the raw data section at the end of the research report.

4.3 Host community survey

In order to gain a comprehensive answer to the research question, this section investigates the local people's participation in the Death Railway's contemporary display in two aspects. (1) What is the image of the Death Railway in the local people's perspective: are they satisfied with the way it is presented? What images would local people like to be promoted more to tourists? (2) How do they want their city

(Kanchanaburi) to be remembered by tourists: Do they think wartime memory should be encouraged? Do they want to promote visits to war-related sites in their own area? Are they interested to educate themselves about the wartime history of to their hometown? Are they aware of the Death Railway as heritage?

To do so, the questionnaire was applied to gain a general view from local people, while interview was used to collect answers from the wartime generation in Kanchanaburi province. This survey will allow me to gain a wider view of heritage from different generations.

The host community survey in Kanchanaburi was conducted for five days from Monday 19 to Friday 23 January 2015. The quantitative research was set up at war-related sites: the war museum, war cemetery, River Kwai Bridge, restaurant, hotel, souvenir shop and souvenir stall area within the tourist complex. Due to the fact that it is impossible to knock on the door and get answers from the habitation area, all the answers were collected from a public space. The people working here are mostly low-educated and make a profit from the heritage site. Moreover, I found it difficult to get collaboration from the host community, since they more focus on selling their products to tourists rather than spending time to assist in my research. I often had to buy their products and ask them to answer my questionnaire in return. Their position relative to the site may affect the way they value heritage.

The sample can be divided into four groups. Merchants, who sell souvenirs or other tangible products to visitors, were the first group. The second group was comprised people who sell services on the site, such as taxi drivers, hotel and hostel employees, servicemen and waiters. The third group was composed of people who are owners or managers (either in the public sector or private sector, such as museums, or a combination of public and private). This group usually has more knowledge and a deeper understanding of the site than the others. The last group is made up of Kanchanaburi's residents in general, who do not gain any direct profit from the heritage site. This group is the smallest of the four. During the survey, some local people from each group were selected to conduct a short interview about the Death Railway's currently display and tourism issue in Kanchanaburi. At the end of the survey, a total of 37 completed questionnaires were collected in Kanchanaburi.

The qualitative interview part was more intensive. This method was applied to a specific group, namely those who experienced the war by themselves; they are all over 70 years old. I selected Pak Phraek Heritage Street as a survey location, because this is

the only main road where all the main interaction between Japanese soldiers, POWs and local people occurred during wartime period. I asked for interviews with local residents and found five persons willing to share their perspectives on the Death Railway for my research. The interview took around one to two hours per one interviewee, because some of the subjects were very old.

During the interview, the interviewees were asked to recount their personal experiences during the war, associated with the Railway construction. They were asked about their perspective toward the construction of the Death Railway, the role of the local community during the construction, and the relationship between the local community and the Japanese Army and POWs. Moreover, the interviewees were asked answer the following five questions about the current issue of the Death Railway: (1) What image of the Death Railway and Kanchanaburi would you want visitors to recognize? (2) Does the contemporary display of the Death Railway represent the war in the way you once experienced? (3) Did you participate in any heritage institution management (such as the museum or the Death Railway itself) or any activities related to wartime memory? (4) Do you agree with the current display and management of the Death Railway? (5) What kind of image do you want to be illustrated more to visitors? Questions 1–2 were designed to analyze the image that local people have on the Death Railway; questions 3–5 concern site management issues.

4.4 The Representative Sample from the local people

Due to the small sample from the host community, this data cannot be recognized as representative of the local community. However, this data can be used as an example of how local people recognize their heritage and how they want to promote their site to tourists. Some opinions about further improvement were voiced during the survey. The data from the quantitative and qualitative survey will play an important role in understanding the different values of the heritage to the different generations. Moreover, this study might provide a comprehensive view of the current situation and contribute to a shift from tourism issues to focus more on the interests of local people. However, it would be important to keep in mind that the result from the sampling should also be counted as a personal opinion, since they are represent individual aspects, not a representation of a whole population or a generation.

5. Data analysis on the visitors' and host community's perception of the Death Railway

The following section gives the current perspective of the visitors and the host community on the presentation of the Death Railway based on the questionnaire, interviews and observations.

5.1 Results from the visitors questionnaire

Part 1. The Death Railway

Over half the visitors were Thai citizens (214 out of 324 questionnaires, figure 1). This might be an effect of the 'Free Train Policy' introduced by the Thai government in 2008, which makes train travel free for all Thai citizens. The Death Railway is not only a historical railway line for the visitors to experience the wartime memory, but is also recognized widely among Thai people as a safe, comfortable and economical method of transportation from Bangkok and rural cities in the Western part of the country.

During the survey, some of the visitors refused to answer the questionnaire; most of them were Thai citizens who cannot read and write. It should be noted therefore that my data only included educated Thai people and might therefore not be totally representative of all visitors. Because some questionnaires were filled out by foreigners who use English as their native tongue or as a second language, it should be noted that there might be some errors resulting from language barriers.

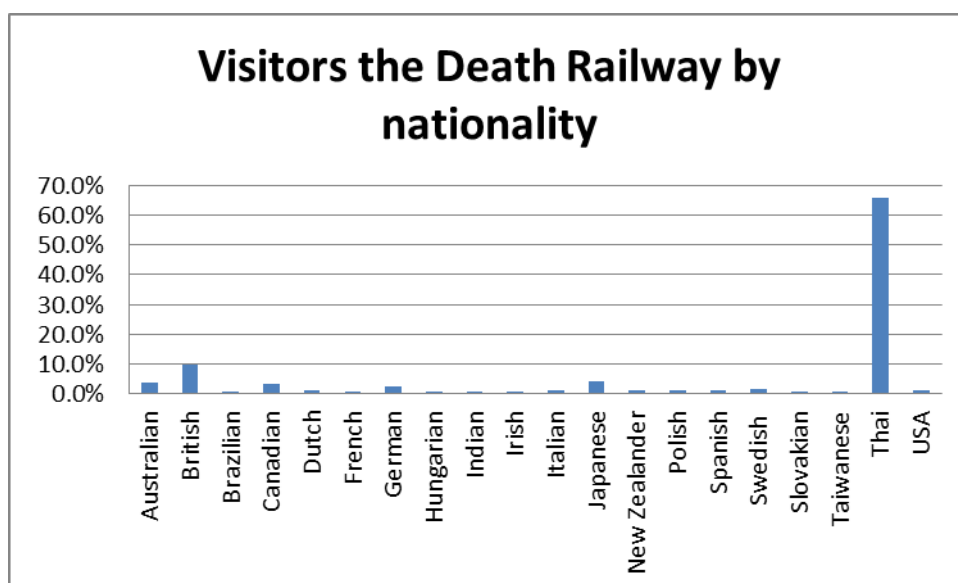


Figure 3. Visitors of the Death Railway by nationality

The nationalities of the Death Railway’s visitors vary greatly. However, the biggest group of visitors were Thai people, which made up over 60 percent of the research population (figure 3). This result may be due to the fact that two out of three surveys were carried out during the weekend (Saturday 17 and Sunday 18), when Thai citizens have a higher mobility than on weekdays. Moreover, Kanchanaburi is not far from Bangkok and suitable for a one-day or weekend trip.

Not taking Thai visitors in to account, it is noticeable that the majority of international visitors came from countries involved with the site’s construction during the war, called JEATH. JEATH stands for the abbreviation of the names of the six countries involved: Japan (J), England (E), America (A), Australia (A), Thailand (T) and Holland (H). (figure 2). Most visitors were from England (28.2 %), as well as Australia, The Netherlands, Japan, New Zealand and the United States of America (figure 4). Countries without a historical connection to the site, such as Brazil, Hungary, Ireland and Slovakia, were represented by only one visitor each (0.9 %) (figure 5).

When looking at the continents, it became clear that a large portion of the visitors came from Europe, followed by Asia, Oceania and North America. South America is the only continent found in the survey without any historical relations with the site; only 1% of visitors came from this continent. There were no visitors from Africa during the survey (figure 6).

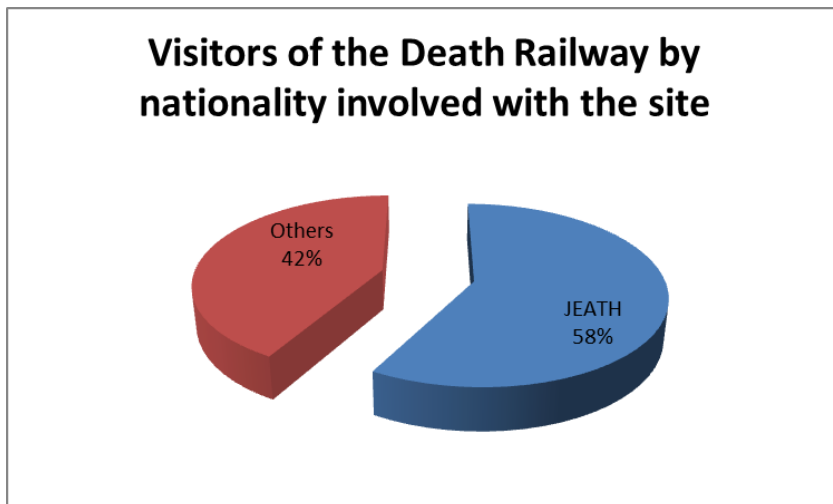


Figure 4. Foreign visitors of the Death Railway by nationalities involved with the site.

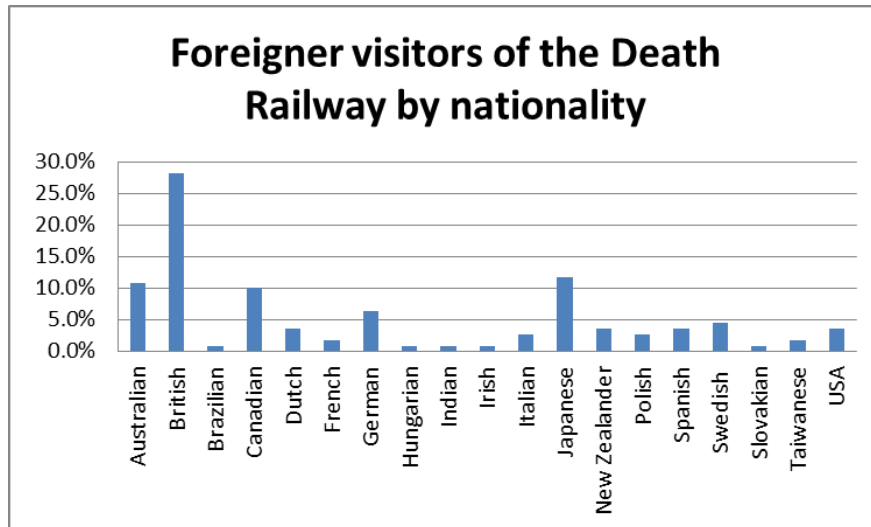


Figure 5. Foreign visitors of the Death Railway by nationality

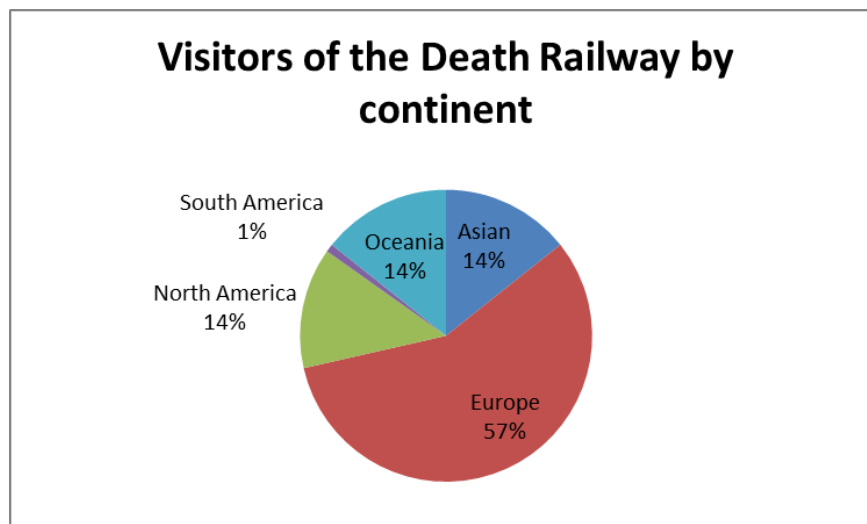


Figure 6. Foreign visitors of the Death Railway by continent

The Death Railway attracts a large number of young visitors, between the age of 21 and 30 (figure 7). The result shows the same tendency among both Thai and foreigners (figure 8). This result might be due to the fact that Kanchanaburi has the image of both a historical city and city with great natural treasures, which of course fits the interests of a younger generation. A group of young Thai travelers mentioned that they chose to travel to Kanchanaburi because they the city is not far from the capital and they can both enjoy sport activities at the beautiful waterfall out site the city and visit cultural heritage inside the city complex.

Moreover, the people in the age group of 21-30 are, on the one hand, more interested in extreme adventures and low-cost travel, and on the other hand do not mind long travel times and uncomfortable transport. The answer given by many young

travelers is that the train is the best way to present the characteristic of the site. They do not worry about wasting time, discomfort or the lack of punctuality of the train, for they feel the journey started when they boarded the train, not when they reach the destination. This sense of travel is different from travel by car. This should be taken into account as reasons why the Death Railway itself is not popular among older visitors, who might be more worried about time and comfort or who travel with a tourist agency. Although the survey took place during the New Year's break on February, when all age group are free to travel, the population of other age groups is very low compared to the group of visitors between 21 and 30.

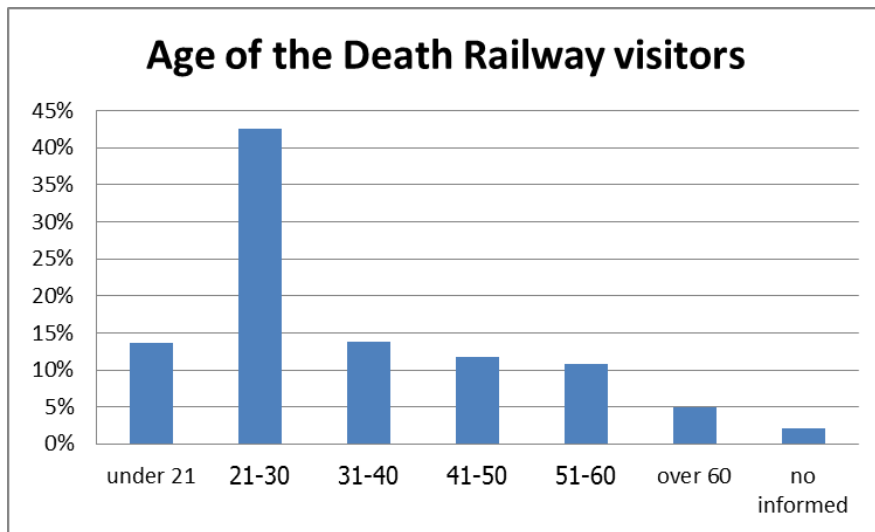


Figure 7. Age of visitors of the Death Railway

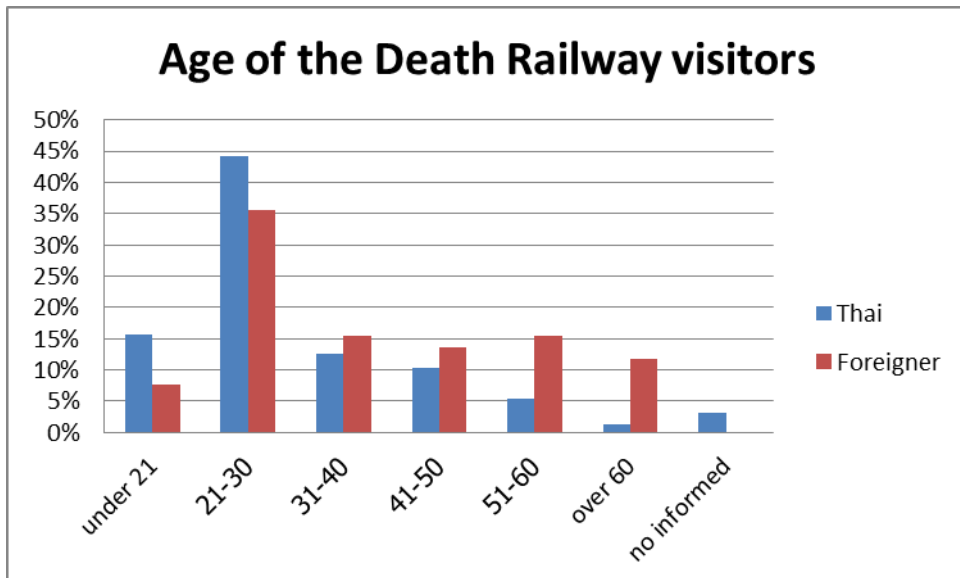


Figure 8. The age of the visitors of the Death Railway, compared between Thai and foreigners.

While the result shows that the visitors from countries without a connection to the site are mostly young visitors aged under 21 or between 21 and 30 (figure 9), visitors aged over 40 mostly come from the JEATH countries (figure 10). This might be a result of the connection between the historical background of the site and their identity. Due to the fact that train travel is inconvenient and more time-consuming than other transportation, it is interesting to notice that many older visitors (especially over 60) from JEATH countries still choose to travel with the Death Railway. Visitors from other countries are mostly young. Moreover, the result from the questionnaire shows that younger visitors expect to see a beautiful natural landscape and experience an exotic train trip, while the older generation seems to be more interested in the historical background.

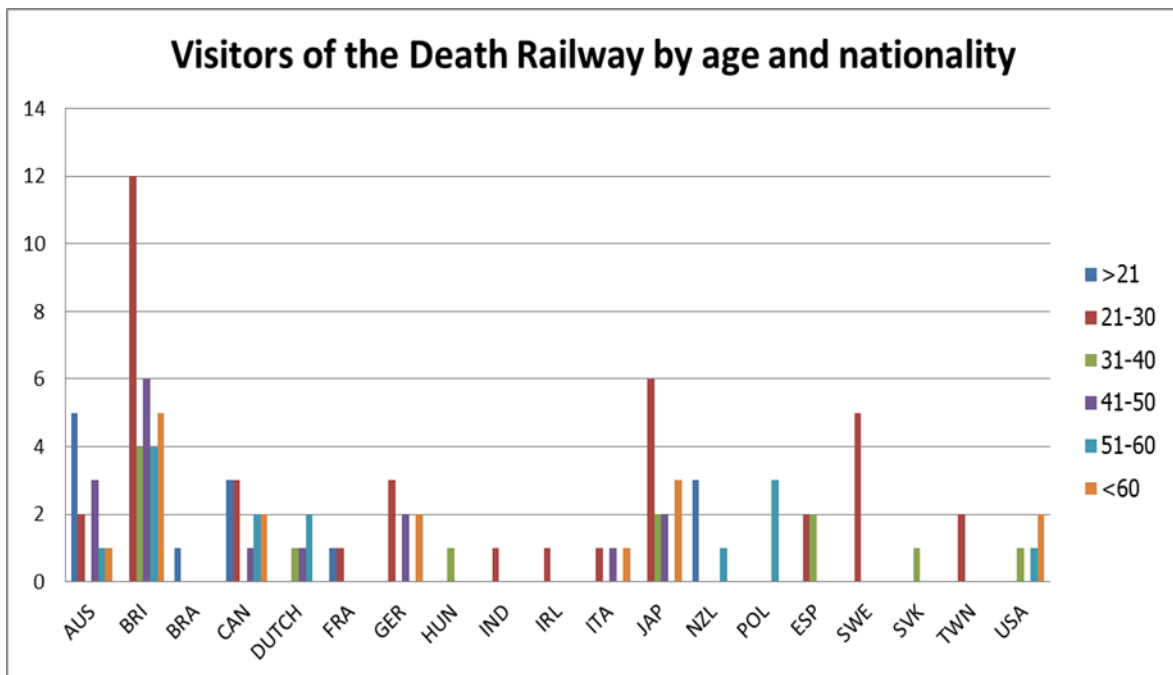


Figure 9. Visitors of the Death Railway by age and nationality

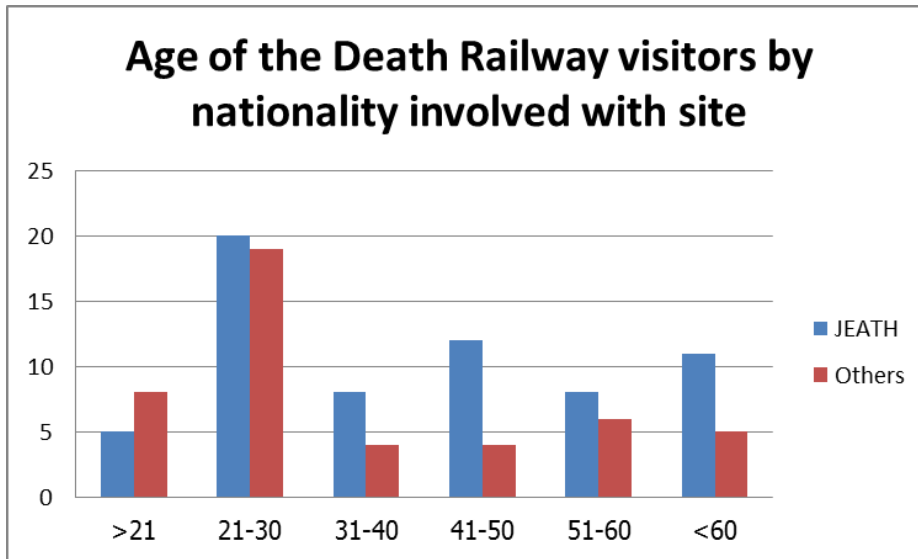


Figure 10. Age of the international visitors compared between JEATH and other countries

The majority of the passengers traveling with the Death Railway are first-time visitors. Most second-time visitors are Thai citizens (figure 11). Reasons to revisit the site are to visit tourist attractions other than the Railway, wishing to enjoy the beautiful scenery, personal business, or to travel to other destinations.

On the other hand, 80 % of foreigners are first-time visitors. Some of the visitors who revisit the site mention that they want to learn more about its wartime history, that they love to travel in Kanchanaburi, or that they want to bring along friends and family who have never visited the site. It is important to note that some passengers who travel by the Death Railway are not actually visitors, but are traveling to other destinations (such as travel back home). These were excluded from the figure and analysis.

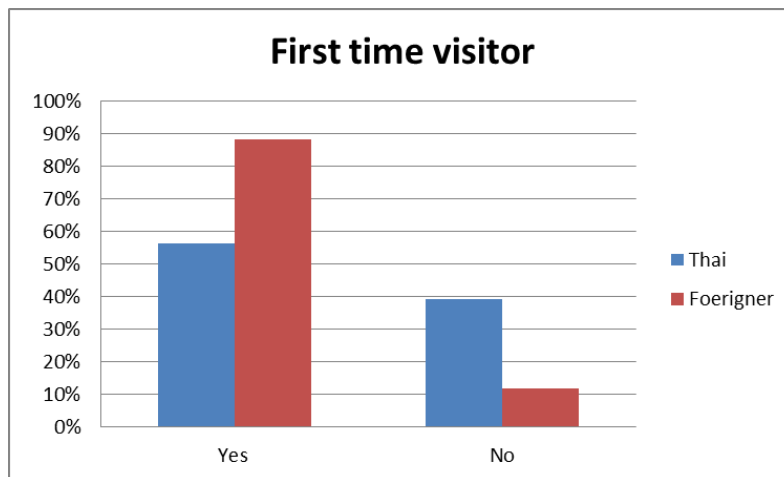


Figure 11. First-time visitors of the Death Railway

The open question about visitors' expectations showed a very wide range of answers. It is necessary to group up some answers. The category 'History', for example, included memory, wartime story, war-related sites, museums, displays, information and other informative displays about wartime history. Some particular museums and places were mentioned by foreign visitors (like the Death Railway museum, Hellfire pass memorial museum, War cemetery, museums with a history of POWs, museums to highlight Japanese atrocities and inhumane treatment). The Bridge on the Kwai River was the only war-related site to stand out in the results, because many visitors (21 people) intentionally mentioned this site; most of them are British. This might be an effect of the well-known British film 'Bridge on the River Kwai' (1957). Some of the visitors were more specific, mentioning that they expected the River Kwai Bridge to be a 'wooden bridge' as it was depicted in the film; on the contrary, the real River Kwai Bridge is a steel bridge.

Landscape and scenery are the most popular answers among Thai visitors, while foreigners place more emphasis on the background story of the railway line (figure 12). History seems to be lacking as an interest among Thai citizens. However, the result shows that the expectations about the landscape rose among foreigners after visiting the site (figure 13). This might be based on the unique landscape along the railway line, with jungle, river and cliff views. Also, it should be noted that in some cases people had more than one reason to visit the site, so some of the population belongs to more than one group of answers.

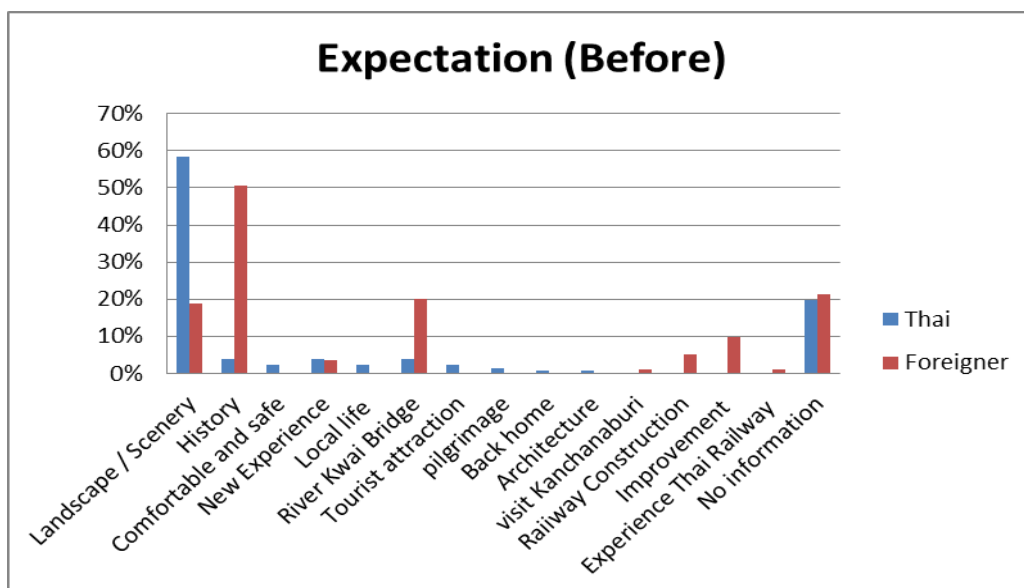


Figure 12. Visitors' expectations of the Death Railway before visiting the site

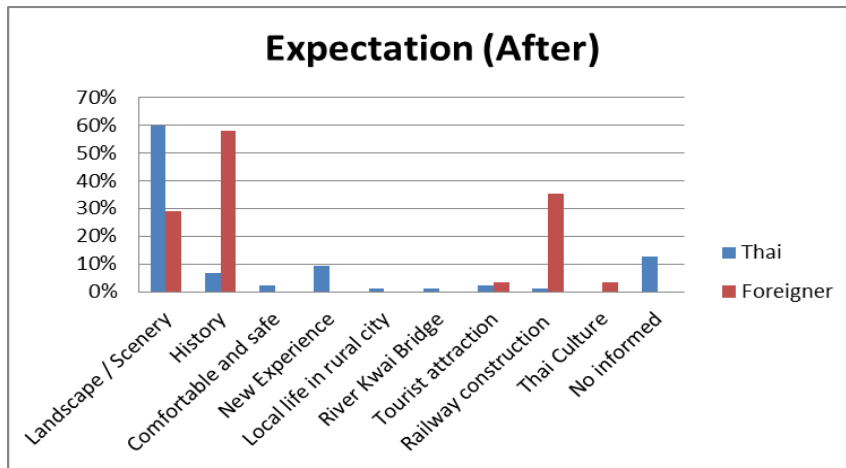


Figure 13. Visitors' expectations on the Death Railway after visiting the site (regarding things people noticed and will remember about the site).

Most of the tourists know about the Death Railway from friends and family (figure 14). It can be said that most visitors are satisfied with the site and will introduce this site to their friends and family. Television programmes (documentaries, reports) and internet are the second and third most important sources of information for Thai people. Foreigners were mostly informed about the Death Railway by guidebooks and films instead. A specific guidebook mentioned by foreigner visitors was *Lonely Planet*; among films many mentioned 'The railway man' (2013). Thai Railway is the only source officially controlled by the government, but this seems to be a less useful source for information. In general, most of the visitors receive information about the Death Railway from private sources.

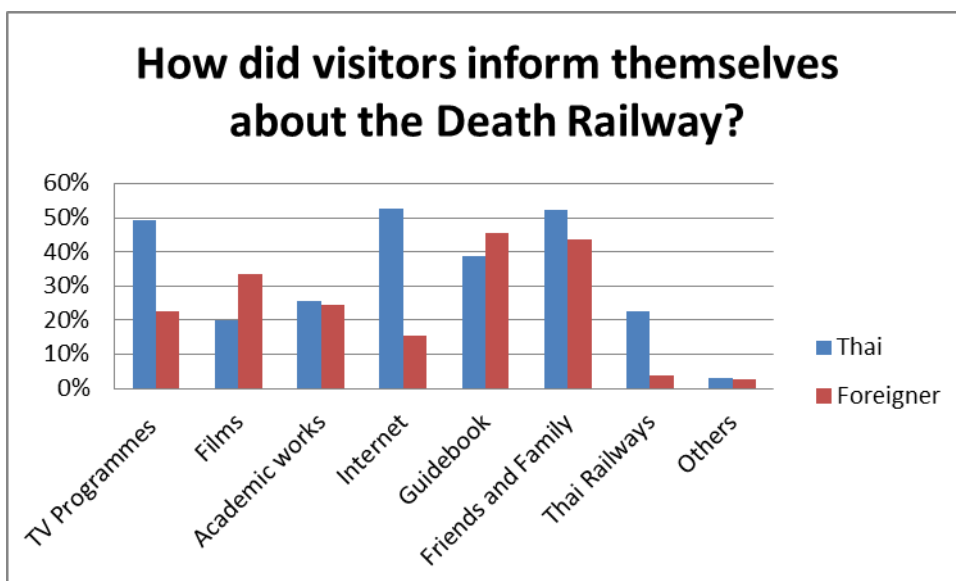


Figure 14. How did the visitors receive information about the Death Railway?

The perception of the Death Railway before visiting the site and afterward is quite different between Thai and international audiences. Thai tourists have a more positive attitude to the Death Railway than foreigners. Thai answers fall in positive categories, such as ‘A railway with Beautiful landscape’, ‘The famous tourist Railway’ and ‘A monument of war’. Thai visitors seems to avoid negative or dark answers such as ‘The death and suffering of the prisoner of war (POWs)’ and ‘Asian laborers and local people who worked and died during railway construction’. What also became clear is that Thai and foreigners have a very different image of the Death Railway. Foreigners, again, repeat their perception about the war, death, suffering, prisoners of war and the cruelty of the Japanese (figure 15). Those images tended to remain the same and even to become more clear to foreign visitors after visiting the site (figure 16). It is interesting to notice that the collaboration and wartime friendship between Thai and Japanese is denied by foreign visitors both before and after visiting the site.

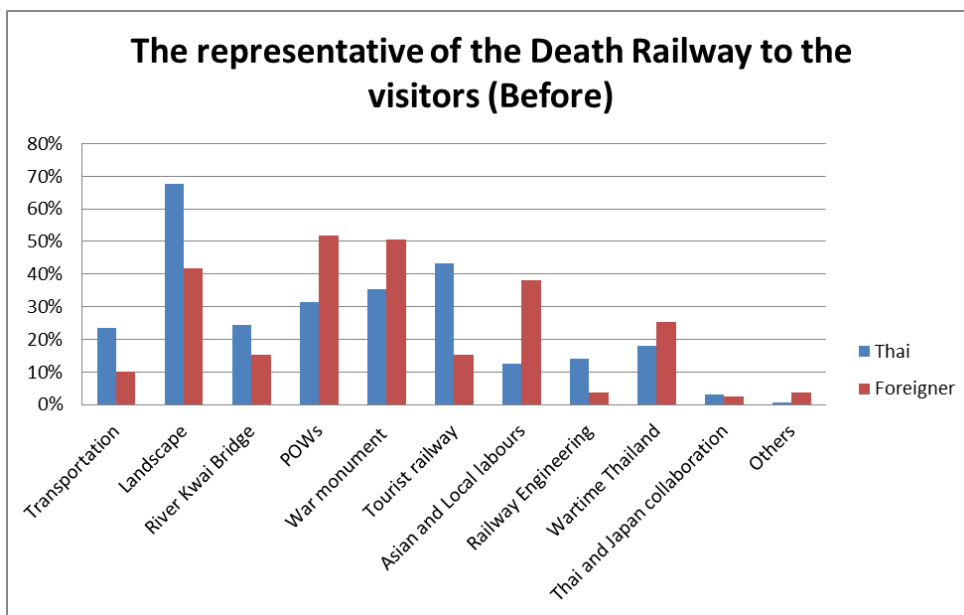


Figure 15. What does the Death Railway represent in your point of view (before visiting the site)?

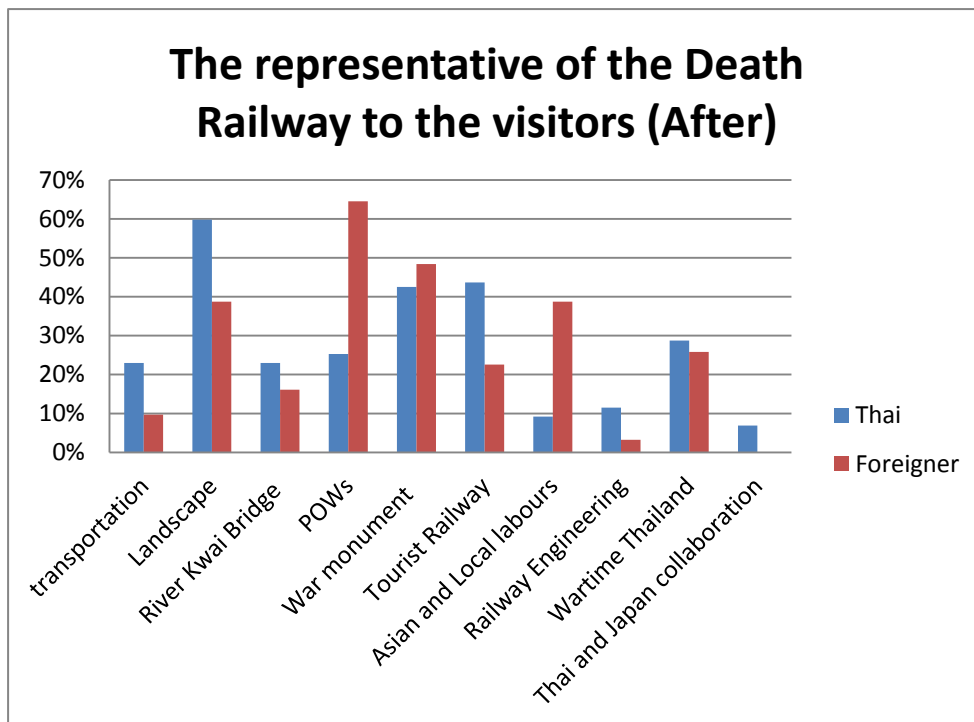


Figure 16. What does the Death Railway represent in your point of view (after visiting the site)?

When looking separately at Thai and international visitor, the perception of Thai visitors before and after visiting the site was similar; in both cases the landscape, the tourist railway and the war monument emerged as the top three answers (figure 17).

For most foreigners, the main perception of the Death Railway before and after visiting, can still be categorized as 'dark'. POWs, the war monument and Asian labor are the top three choices selected. However, the landscape also gains attraction from these visitors, so that they do not visit the site purely for historical reasons (figure 18). The fact that the image of the Death Railway in the visitors' perception did not change dramatically might be due to three main reasons. Firstly, the Death Railway itself lacks informative displays. Many visitors mention that 'they don't even know this was the Death Railway'. Secondly, in some cases passengers travel by the Death Railway, but not for historical reasons, so they do not visit other war-related or informative sites. Thirdly, most of the informative sites in Kanchanaburi carried the message 'to maintain a memory and to dedicate to the victims of the constructions of the Death Railway and River Kwai Bridge', which is related to prisoners of war more than other perceptions.

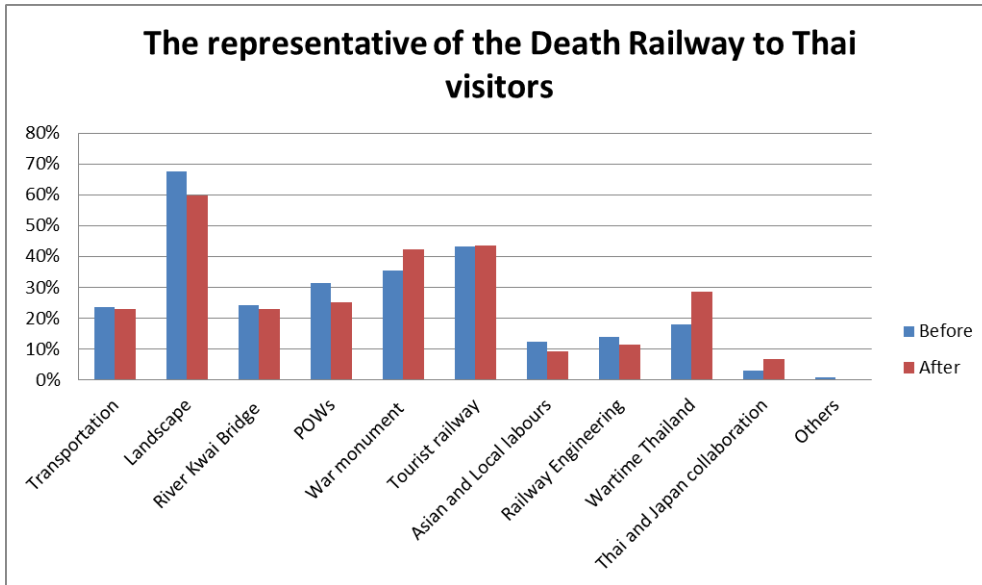


Figure 17. What does the Death Railway represent in your point of view (Thai visitors, before and after visiting the site)?

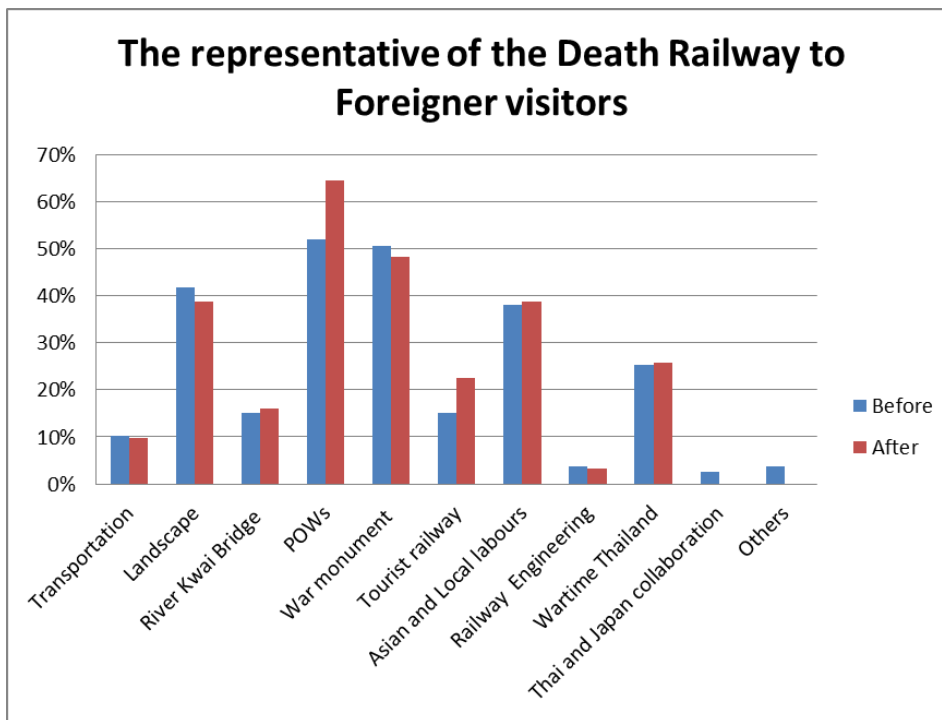


Figure 18. What does the Death Railway represent in your point of view (foreign visitors before and after visiting the site)?

Part 2 Kanchanaburi province

Over 80 percent of foreigners were first-time visitors to Kanchanaburi province (figure 19). The survey also shows that almost all foreigners who revisited Kanchanaburi revisited the Death Railway. The reasons for revisiting the province are similar to those for revisiting the Death Railway. Some of the foreign tourists mentioned that they

revisited Kanchanaburi because they wanted to travel by the Death Railway. The popularity of the Death Railway among foreigners is illustrated by a visitor who answered during the short interview ‘the Railway is a living memory which allowed us to experience what happened there in the war’.

In contrast, the answers from the short interviews on the Railway show that Thai visitors prefer to travel to Kanchanaburi by bus or van rather than by train. The people who travel by train do so intentionally: they want to take a train trip (the most popular reasons for this were to enjoy the beautiful landscape and to travel to Sai Yok Noi Waterfall, located in the final destination of the Death Railway), were inspired by the most famous Thai wartime novel *Koo Kam*, or wanted to save some money by using cheap transportation.

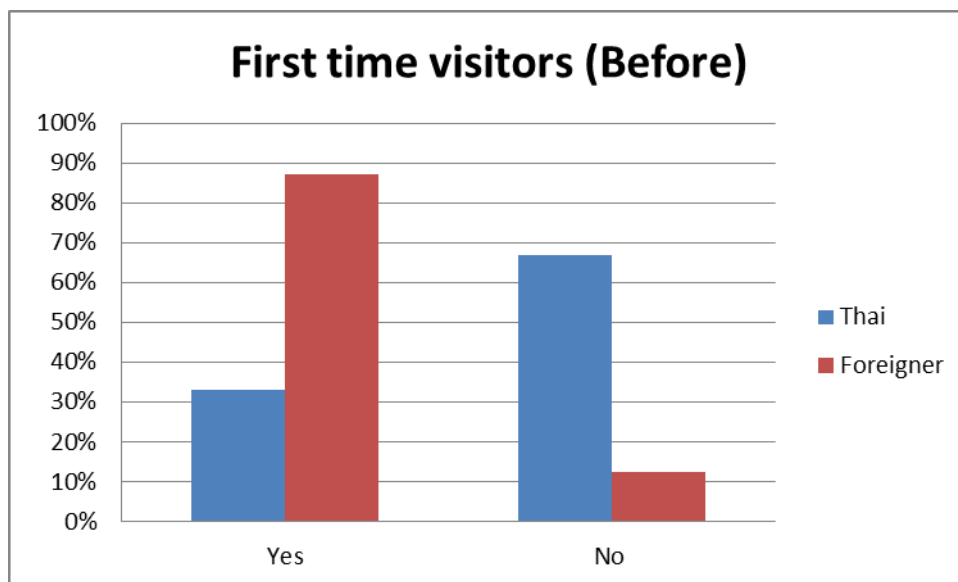


Figure 19. First-time visitors of Kanchanaburi province

Comparing Thai and international audiences, the respondents show dramatically different motives for visiting Kanchanaburi. Thai citizens pictured Kanchanaburi as a rural city with beautiful natural surroundings. Their main reason to visit Kanchanaburi is the fact that they are on holiday and want to relax with an enjoyable tour. Moreover, Kanchanaburi is rich in natural attractions, such as waterfalls, mountains and forests, which are suitable for extreme sports, adventure programs and other activities. They can also do activities with friends and family in the way they cannot at a historical site. ‘I can only walk and see and it won’t take much time, so I prefer to go to natural attractions; but there are many more things to do there’, one of Thai visitors answered during a short interview. However, international visitors are more aware of the historical and educational value of the site (figure 20).

The results of the question about the image of Kanchanaburi were similar to the results of the question about the Death Railway. Positive answers were chosen by Thai visitors, both before and after they visited the site. However, their ideas about the history of the site became stronger after they visited the site, especially the image of prisoners of war and Railway engineering. This might be explained by war-related sites in Kanchanaburi, where the history of POWs is emphasized (in three museums) and where Railway engineering is displayed (in one museum). From the survey we can assume that the display in Kanchanaburi province affected the image of other sites rather than that of the Railway itself. However, it is interesting to notice that the only answer directly involved with the older historical layers of Kanchanaburi, ‘a lively city with rich culture and archaeological sites’, was not well recognized by visitors either before or after visiting the site. This might due to the fact that these historical layers are not promoted as much as the wartime history of Kanchanaburi.

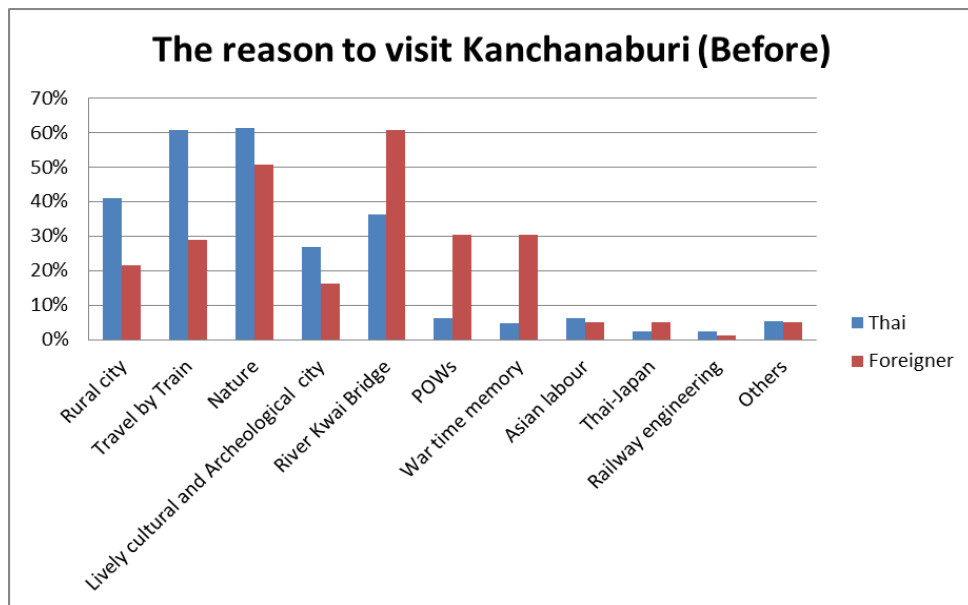


Figure 20. What does Kanchanaburi represent in your point of view (before visiting the site)?

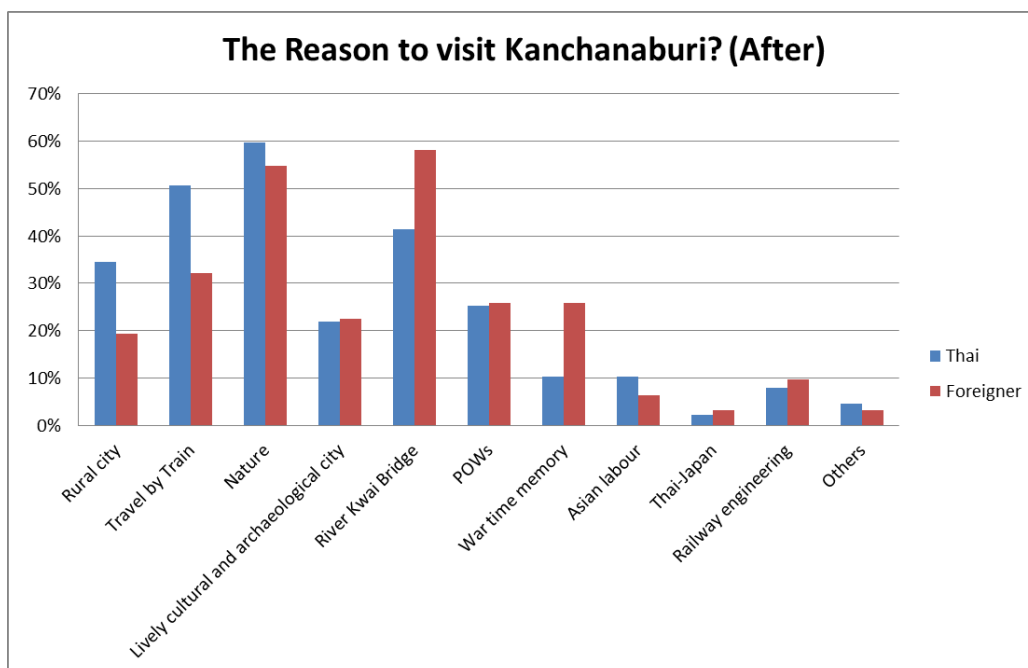


Figure 21. What does Kanchanaburi represent in your point of view (after visiting the site)?

Overall, the reasons for visiting Kanchanaburi for Thai citizens did not change significantly after visiting the Death Railway. Visiting a rural city with beautiful nature and a rich culture remains the main reason. It is noticeable that historical reasons rose after the site was visited and that visitors became more aware of the historical value of the site, especially of the history of prisoners of war. ‘Experiencing River Kwai Bridge’ was the only historical reason with a high response. However, the distinction between the River Kwai Bridge’s role as historical heritage and as a tourism landmark for taking photos remains unclear (figure 22).

For most foreigners, the main motives for visiting Kanchanaburi were to see and experience the River Kwai Bridge. This answer was also mentioned in the previous open question asking about their expectations in visiting the Death Railway. Visiting the Death Railway Museum was another answer mentioned in the same question. This might be the reason why ‘Railway engineering’ was selected more often after visiting, since railway engineering is the main message illustrated in that museum (figure 23).

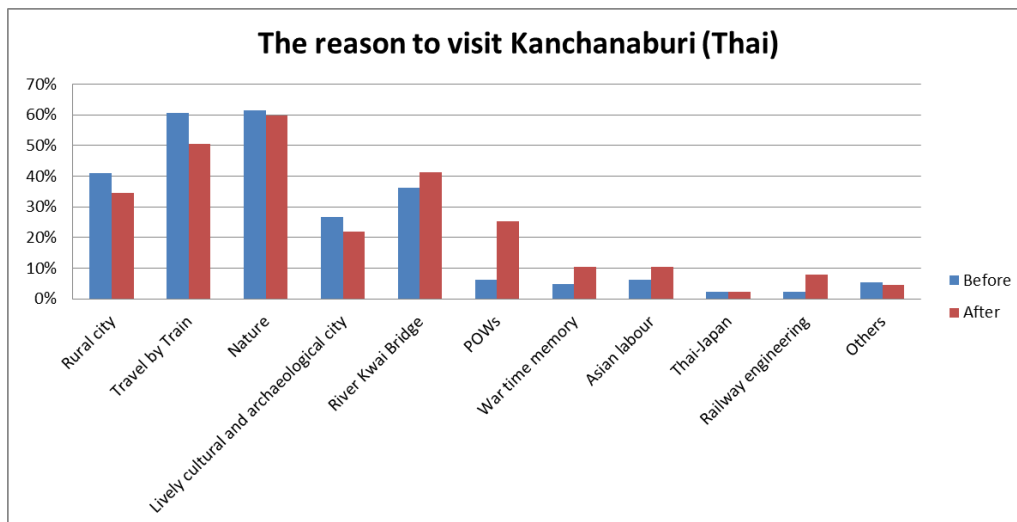


Figure 22. What does Kanchanaburi represent in your point of view (Thai visitors before and after visiting the site)?

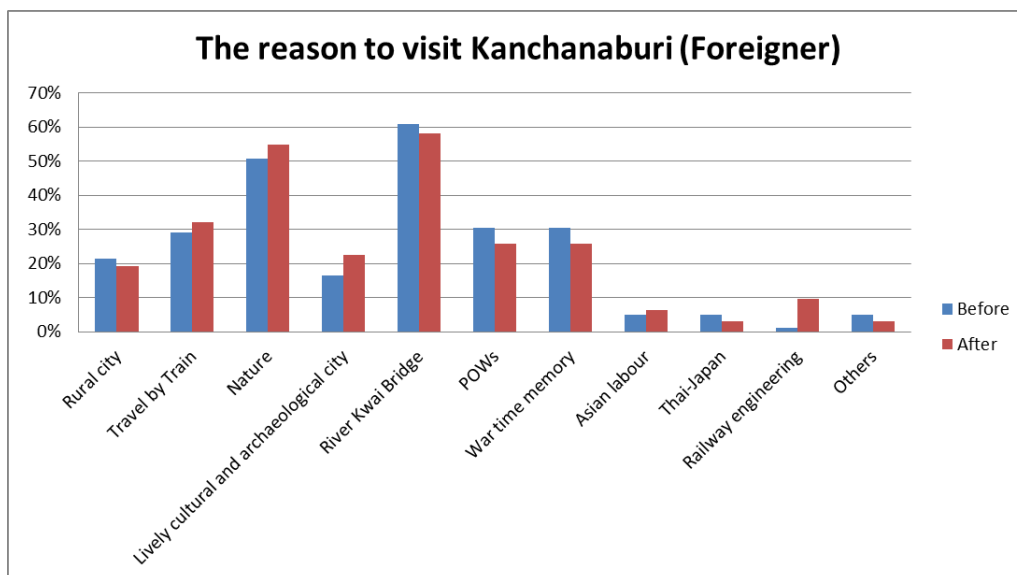


Figure 23. What does Kanchanaburi represent in your point of view (foreigner visitors before and after visiting the site)?

Even though history is not the major interest of the visitor travel to Kanchanaburi, the majority of the visitors would like to learn more about the Death Railway by visiting other war-related sites. Most of the respondents selected museums as their first interest. The Death Railway museum and Hellfire pass memorial museum were most often mentioned, while the World War II museum, Art Gallery and Kanchanaburi War Cemetery also gained an interest (figure 24). According to the results, visitors of the Death Railway might therefore pay a visit to those sites afterwards. However, it is interesting to note that the answers to this question are totally different from those above. Since the majority of visitors, especially Thai citizens, are mostly interested in

nature, it is doubtful whether they will really go to war-related sites.

Five reasons could explain the difference between the results of this question and those of the previous one. Firstly, if visitors have to choose between a museum, a war cemetery and a place associated with wartime activities, they prefer going to a museum and might go there if they have extra time, or in the next trip, even if it is not the main target for their trip. Secondly, they are not totally uninterested in war-related sites, but do not find them a priority and did not think about it while answering the previous question. Thirdly, the previous question gave them some idea about the importance of the sites as war heritage and they may have become interested in exploring this heritage after answering the questionnaire. Fourthly, they avoid giving a negative answer. Lastly, they want to satisfy the survey taker by giving a positive answer, because they think that it might be more relevant or helpful to the study.

After visiting the site, some visitors would like to learn more about the place where the POWs camps, Asian laborers' camp and workplaces were once located (figure 24). Pak Phraek Heritage Street, the street where many war activities happened, was mentioned in a questionnaire by a visitor who traveled back by train. The answer given by one foreigner interviewee who revisited the Death Railway for the third time shows that he was interested in the place where wartime activities happened more than in the newly built museums. He visited some museums only for the first time on his third trip to the site. He preferred to do sightseeing at Tham Krasae Bridge, where Japanese workers built the railway line next to the cliff.

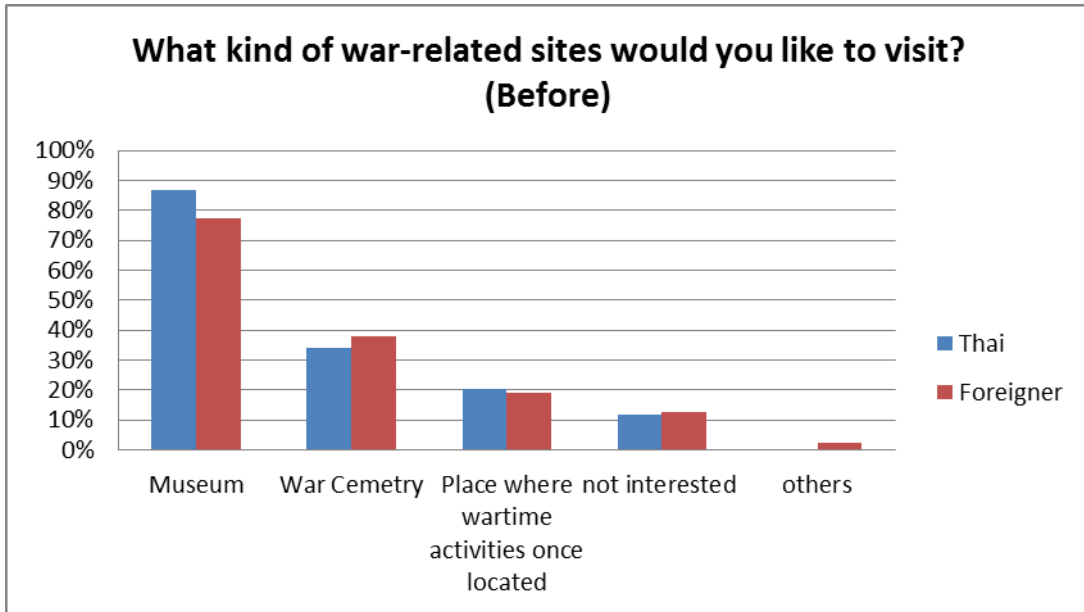


Figure 24. Are visitors of the Death Railway are also interested in visiting other war-related sites, and if so, what kind of war-related sited they would like to visit (before visiting the site)?

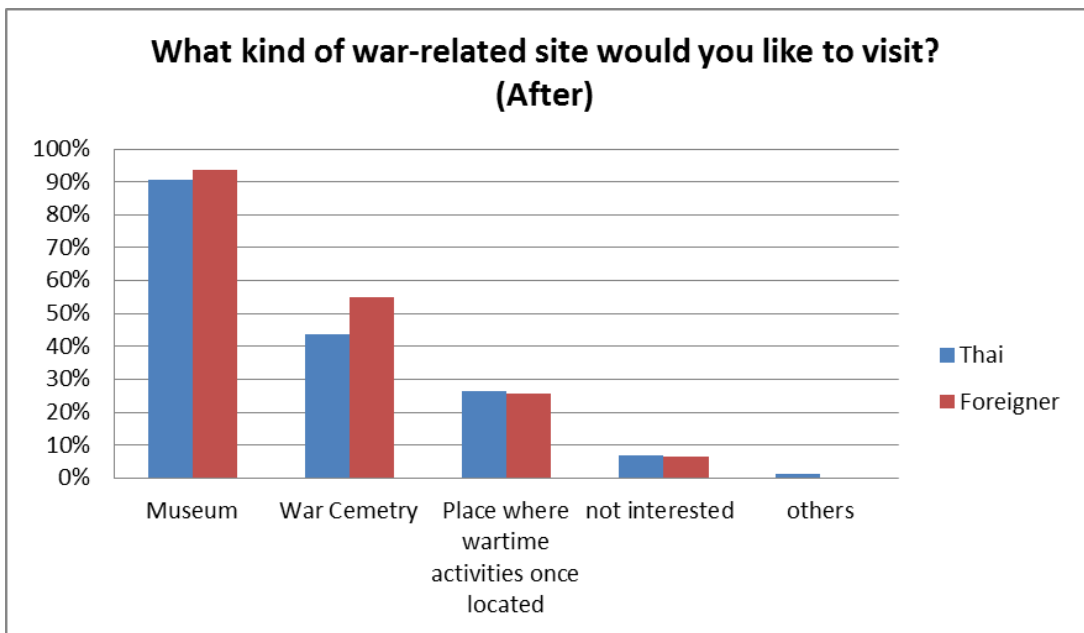


Figure 25. Are visitors of the Death Railway are also interested in visiting other war-related sites, and if so, what kind of war-related site would they like to visit (after visiting the site)?

5.2 Discussion on the results of the visitors' questionnaire

The questionnaires collected during the journey on the Death Railway do not show a great difference between the image that visitors have of the Death Railway before and after visiting the site. This might be explained by the lack of information given to visitors on the train. During the seven-hour journey from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi, there is no information provided. The only way to access information was by talking to local passengers on the train. The informative display at the museum in Kanchanaburi complex seems to affect the image of the Death Railway in general, especially the image of POWs.

In other words, people will receive new information about the Death Railway only if they visit other war-related sites. Thai and foreign visitors have a very different image of the site. For Thai people the Death Railway has the general image of 'a Railway with a beautiful landscape along a journey', while foreigners seem to visit the Death Railway because of their own interest in war-time history. The image of the Death Railway, especially to visitors from countries with connections to the war, is very clear and extremely negative. The Death Railway is a place full of memory and pain for their ancestors who suffered and died during its construction. Some visitors came in order to commemorate a relative. One Australian visitor mentions that he would like to see the place where his uncles were murdered by the Japanese and would like to visit the city which carries such a poignant memory of the war for Australians. In short, the image of the Death Railway for foreigners is more likely a place of genocide or a killing field, while Thai visitors see this railway line as a recreational site.

It is noticeable that one of the Australian visitors told us that the history of the Death Railway was taught to Australian students in school. In contrast, the history of the Death Railway was never included in the Thai education program. Furthermore, the current display of the site, with the museum and information displays, puts the history of POWs in the center of the image. This might be the reason why Thai people do not feel connected to the site: they think this place is mostly of relevance to remember events that had nothing to do with them.

5.3 Results from the host community

The results from this survey were mostly gathered from members of the host communities that were between 21 and 40 years of age (figure 26). This is due to the fact that a questionnaire is not welcomed by the host community if it does not bring any benefit in return. Many questionnaires were collected from people who sold items or earned money at the heritage site, such as merchants, tourist agency workers, curators, and restaurant and hotel staff, in which cases I had to purchase their product in exchange. The data from the host community was unfortunately limited, because many local people refused to fill out the questionnaire. Only 37 were returned in a complete form. Of the respondents, 78.4 percent came from Kanchanaburi, while there was only one person each from every other city (21.6 percent) (figure 27).

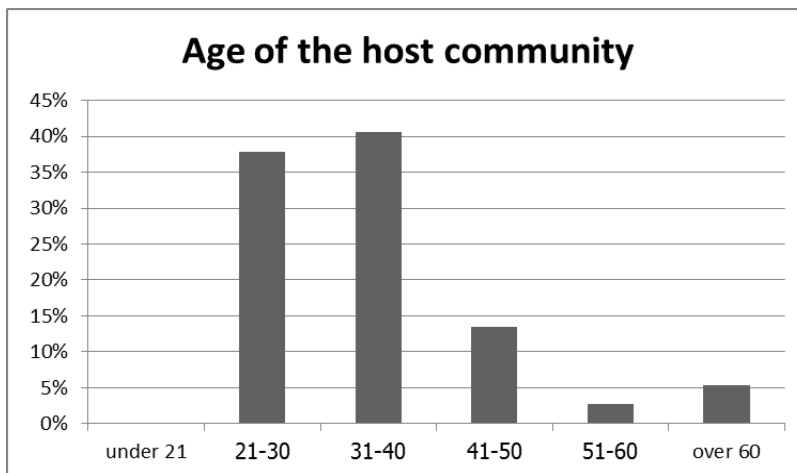


Figure 26. Age of the host community

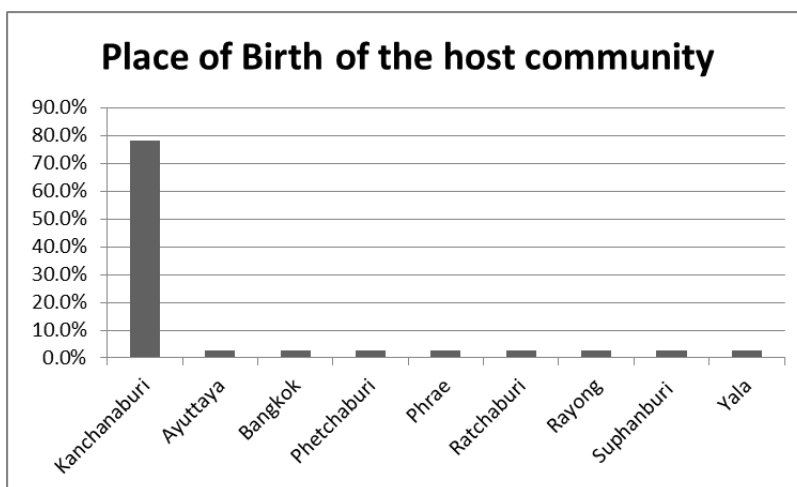


Figure 27. Place of birth of the host community

In terms of the site's presentation, the majority of the host community would like to present the Death Railway as a famous tourist railway that can attract lots of visitors (Figure 28). This might be explained by the select group who participated, since they often earn money from the Death Railway. This answer was the only answer which directly involved the Railway's economic value. The image of POWs, which is already the main topic illustrated in many displays, is also mentioned often in the survey. The pride and identity of Kanchanaburi was an extra option in the host communities' questionnaire and it was chosen by many respondents.

However, it might be useful to look at the lack of interest in the story of their community. The image of POWs was selected as an image they would like to present, rather than the story of Asian workers and local people (insiders) or the collaboration and activities between local Thai people and Japanese soldiers. Surprisingly, foreigners were more curious to know about the local history of wartime Kanchanaburi (figure 29). However, we should consider the possibility that the respondents might answer only with the image they already have, rather than the image they would like to experience.

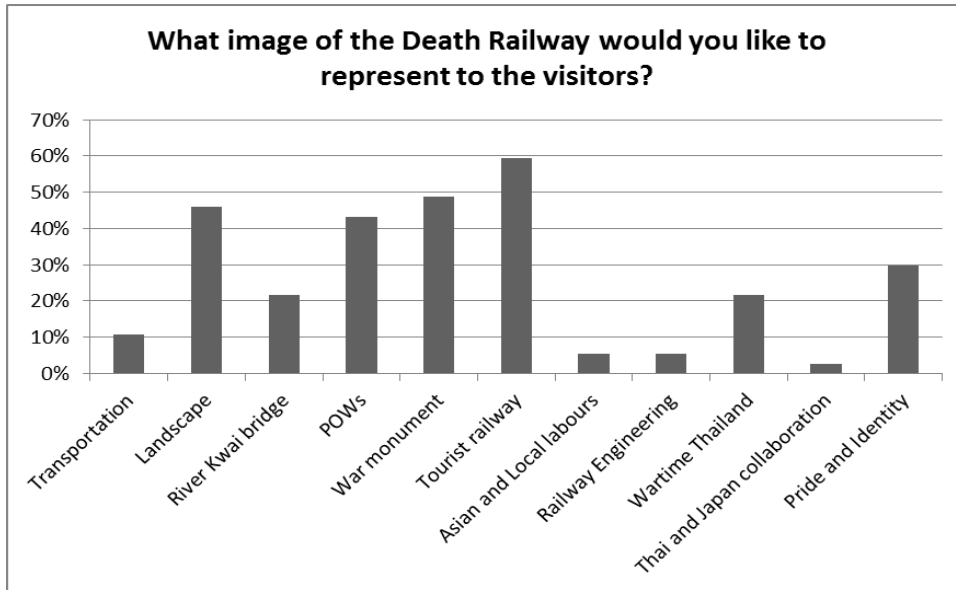


Figure 28. What image of the Death Railway would the host community like to present to the visitor?

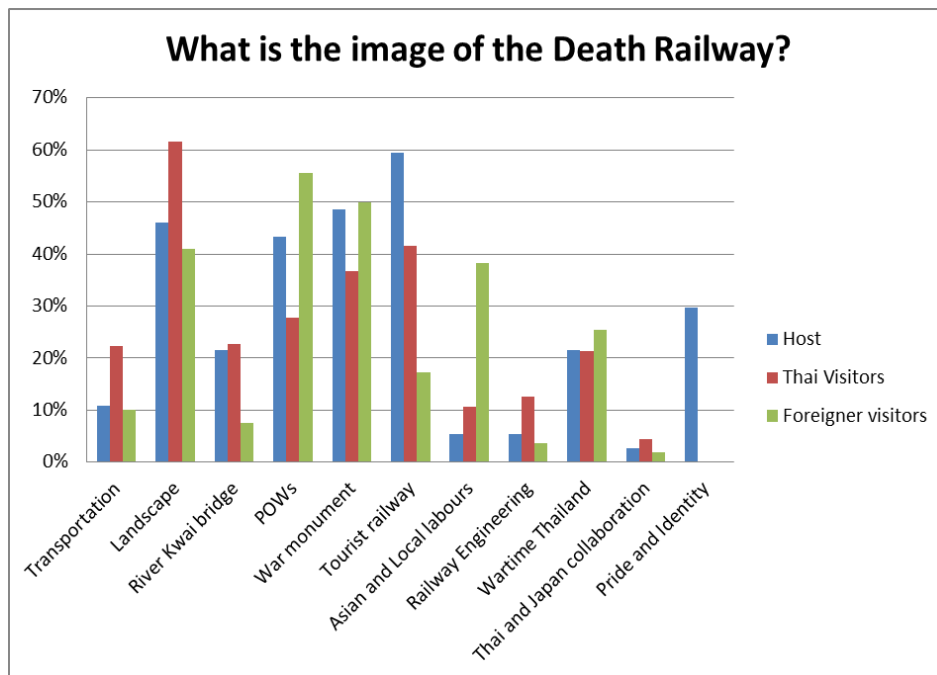


Figure 29. The image of the Death Railway compared between the host community, Thai visitors and foreign visitors

From the previous chart it became clear that the majority of both visitors and host community pictured the Death Railway as a war monument with a beautiful landscape, built by the pain and suffering of POWs, and at the same time as a tourist attraction. Those images seem to form the main characteristics of the site and affect the expectations of the visitor in general. Although the majority of the host community

answered that they are satisfied with the contemporary image (figure 30), some suggested that the image of the site could be improved (figure 31).

Local and oral history about wartime Thailand was not only the first interest of host community, but also for foreign visitors (as shown in figure 29). Displays connected to local history and survivor storytelling might be added to fill the gap between the local and the global wartime story.

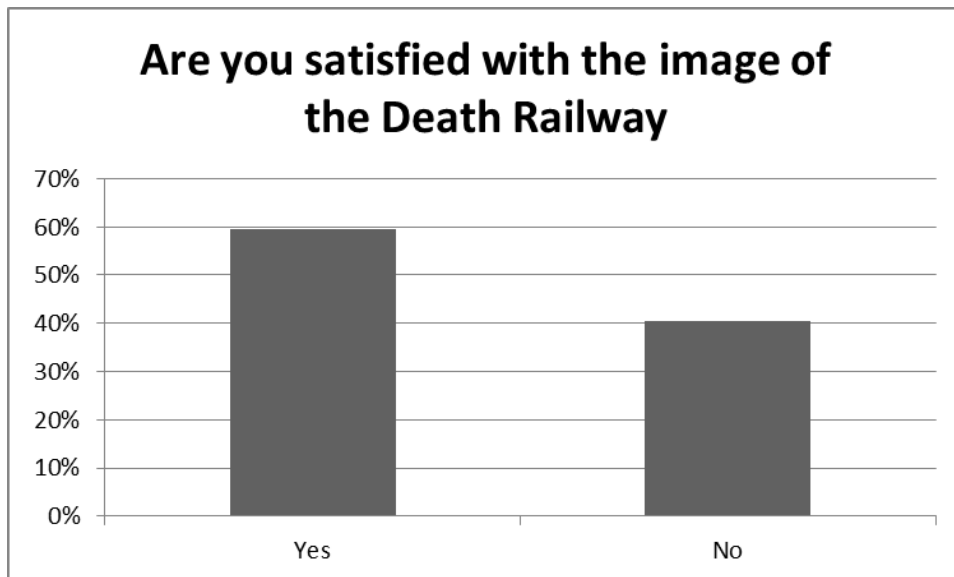


Figure 30. The satisfaction of the contemporary image of the Death Railway

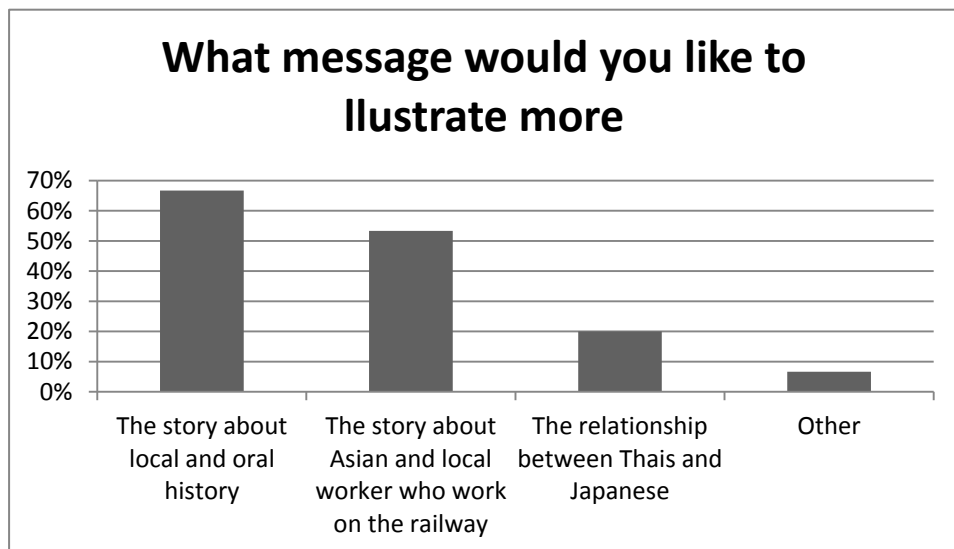


Figure 31. The message that the host community would like to illustrate more

When asked about the image of Kanchanaburi, the answers that people gave are in the same range as the image of the Death Railway (figure 28). The host community is more interested in presenting its city and heritage as a lively tourist attraction, rather than a

place of pain and sorrow (see figure 28 and 32). However, it can also be seen that the local community is interested in the cultural and archaeological sites in the city.

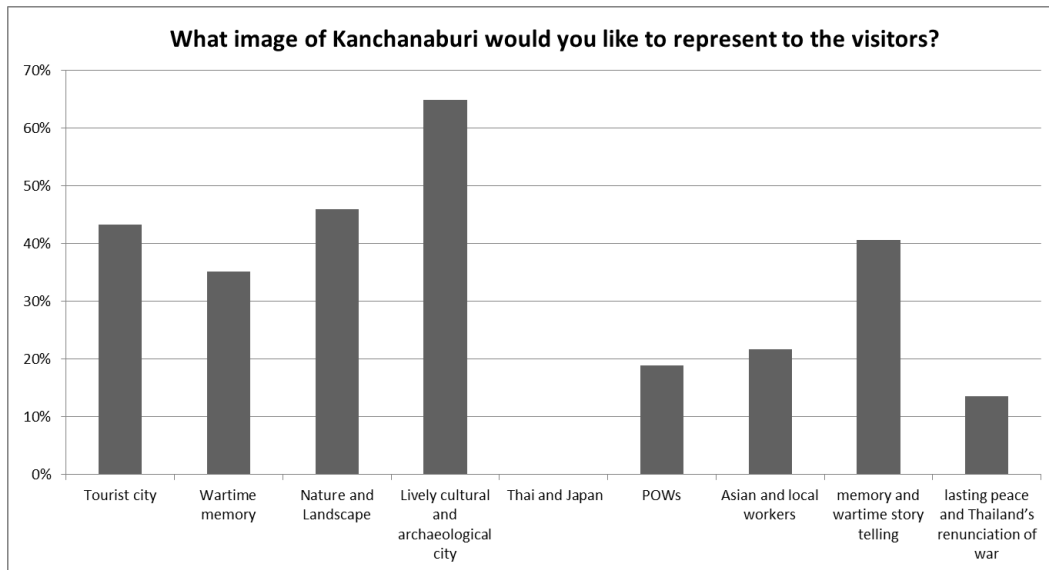


Figure 32. What image of Kanchanaburi would you like to present to visitors?

To see the interest of the respondents, the host community was asked to list ‘the three best places to see in Kanchanaburi’ (in order of their importance, from most to least important). The site in the first rank got three points; the second two and the last one. After the calculation, the results shows that the Bridge on the Kwai River is in the lead (figure 33). This is not only one of the most famous tourist spots and a city landmark, but also a symbol of the whole province. This famous bridge appears on the city’s electricity posts and even in the slogan of the city:

‘A province of ancient community, three pagodas pass, precious stones, River Kwai Bridge, minerals and waterfall resources.’

The River Kwai Bridge is very famous thanks to the film ‘Bridge on the River Kwai’, one of the most famous war films ever made (Bourke 2006, 68; Watt 2000, 203). The film won seven Academy Awards in 1957, including Best Picture, and has remained popular in many countries via TV and DVD. Due to this, the Bridge is even more famous than the Railway itself.

The Erawan waterfall is in second place, followed by other natural tourist attractions. Other war-related sites mentioned in the questionnaire were mainly museums and war cemeteries. Sapan Tham Krasea is one of the stopping points of the railway line, with extraordinary scenery along the cliff. The Death Railway itself did not gain much recognition as a heritage site, but rather as a mode of transportation.

I did an observation at the visitor center in Kanchanaburi and asked the desk attendant for suggestions about places to visit. Not surprisingly, the attendant recommended no war-related sites or other historical and archaeological sites, since the city is well known of its national beauty. However, this might be due to the fact that I am a Thai citizen and the majority of Thai tourists do not travel to Kanchanaburi for purely historical purposes. The attendant's answer result might change for foreign visitors. Moreover, more than half of the information provided to visitors (such as booklets, leaflets et cetera) are about natural sites.

The officer at the Tourism Authority of Thailand in Kanchanaburi's visitor center gave an opinion about tourism issues from her experience. She mentioned that tourists mostly prefer to visit Kanchanaburi by bus and take local transportation to visit the Erawan waterfall and other natural sites, rather than cultural and historical sites. Tourists might spend some time in the city and visit war-related sites and city landmarks. The most popular landmark is River Kwai Bridge, while the most popular war-related site asked about by foreign visitors is the JEATH museum, which she said is a highlight among local museums about the war. She stated that the interests of international visitors lay in visiting local and exotic museums, rather than museums with high technology and interactive displays such as the Death Railway Museum and Hellfire Pass memorial museum. However, the latter kind of museum is far more popular among Thai visitors. It might help to keep in mind that wartime heritage is not the main interest of the majority of Kanchanaburi visitors, but rather natural attractions (if we include tourists who travel to Kanchanaburi by every kind of transportation). The River Kwai Bridge is recognized as a 'city landmark', not as 'heritage'.

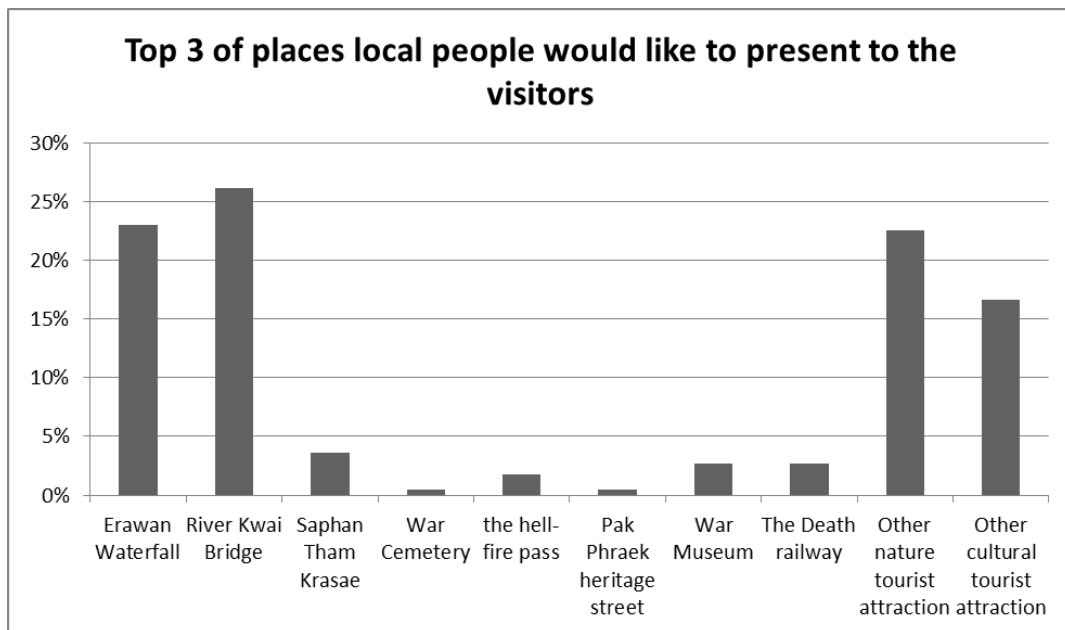


Figure 33. Three best places local people would like to present to the visitors

Taking a closer look at the issue of wartime heritage, Kanchanaburi and Chungkai war cemetery were the most often visited sites among the host community (figure 34). One of the reasons for this is that they offer free entry and are located in the middle of the city, not far from the Bridge. The Hellfire pass memorial museum was the most visited museum among other visitors. This museum is the only place that is built on top of the previous workplaces and POW camps and is also free of charge. The places local people have visited might also affect their perception of Death Railway, as mentioned in figure 28. The story of POWs and wartime memorials were actually the main image presented at these sites; the Hellfire pass museum is dedicated to Asian labor and allied POWs who suffered and died building the Death Railway. However, the wartime story illustrated on this site is told only from the point of view of Australian soldiers who survived the railroad construction. Kanchanaburi and Chungkai war cemeteries are also POW cemeteries and will only strengthen this image.

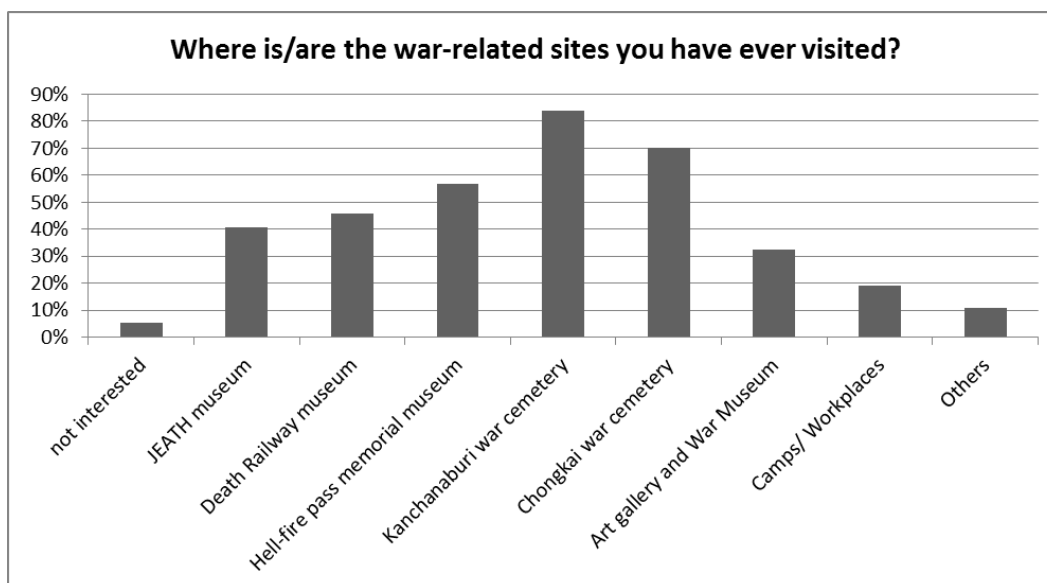


Figure 34. Which war-related sites you have ever visited?

5.4 Results from local eye witness interviews

The interview was warmly welcomed by war survivors who were willing to share their wartime experiences during the railway construction for academic purposes. The interviewees were selected from the local residents in Pak Phraek Heritage Street in Kanchanaburi. They were people who born before or during the war, were healthy enough to talk and still remembered what happened in Kanchanaburi. Five people were interviewed: Ms. Supatra Tantivanich (76), Mr. Vichai Sirichumsang (81), Mrs. Ornanong Palang Teerasin (83), Mrs. Lamyai Sirivejjabhandu (85), and Mr. Juri Visutsatorn (87).

The interviewees had different roles during the war, which of course affects the way in which they remember it. Mr. Juri’s family knows the Japanese very well. His parents’ house was rented by Japanese Army during World War II as the MP station in Kanchanaburi. Mrs. Lamyai’s brother in law, Mr. Boonphong Sirivejjabhandu, assisted a number of POWs by secretly sending medicines, medical equipment, radios et cetera to the prisoners and helping them escape to freedom. He was gratefully called a ‘War Hero of the Death Railway’. Mrs. Ornanong and Mr. Vichai were young residents of Kanchanaburi who witnessed the railway construction. Their families did not have a special relationship with either the Japanese or the prisoners. The two families run a small shop in Pak Phraek Street and their business affected by the war as well as other business. Ms. Supatra was only 4 years old when the railway was constructed. She is

too young to remember the events and most of her memories can hardly be seen as those of an eyewitness. Her knowledge about wartime Kanchanaburi and what happened during the railway construction comes mostly from what she was told by her family and people around her. However, she got selected as an interviewee because she has an extensive additional knowledge about the local history of the site. She has been working to collect oral history from local residents in Pak Phraek Street for a number of years; some of her interviewees had already passed away. Her work was later published as a booklet by the Tourist Authority of Kanchanaburi to promote Pak Phraek as a heritage street. In this case, she can be regarded as an active resident who participates in local activities.

Section 1 Image that local people have about the Death Railway

Question 1 What image of the Death Railway and Kanchanaburi would you want the visitor to recognize?

Name/Questions	Transportation	Landscape	River Kwai bridge	POWs	War monument	Tourist railway	Asian and local labor	Engineering	Wartime Thailand	Thailand and Japan	Pride and identity
Supatra											
Vichai											
Ornanong											
Lamyai											
Juri											

Table 3. What is the image of Death Railway that you would want visitors to recognize?

The relationship and the collaboration between local Thai people, Japanese and POWs is the subject selected the most during the interview. The interviewees recognized the Death Railway as having a historical value, rather than an economic or natural value. Because the Railway construction was conducted under multinational management, its display should represent the story of all these people equally. Although they feel bad about the awful treatment of POWs during the construction, they seem to have a positive attitude towards the Japanese and were willing to help both the prisoners and the Japanese. It is interesting that the story of POWs in their memory is not about death and suffering, but rather about the relationship with the POWs, such as local people trying to help them with food and medical care and hiding prisoners of war who escaped from the work camps. The image of Japanese involved with the reconstruction is not that of inhumane and cruel soldiers; in contrast, they remember the Japanese as men who had to be apart from their home and suffered from the war as the others did. Moreover, they think that the great Japanese railway engineering skills needs to be mentioned alongside the story of the men and women who died during the construction, since the railway line was built under the limiting conditions of war. The Railway was bombed uncountable times by the enemy, yet it was built successfully and is still used today. Surprisingly, they want the wartime story to be recognized,

but the way they remember the Death Railway is not dark at all. This is not only different from the international visitors, who expect to see the death and suffering of POWs, but also different from Thai visitors, who see the site as an attraction, and from the young local community who seeks to promote the site as a tourist attraction.

Name/Question	Tourist city	Memorial of war	Nature and landscape	Lively city with rich culture and archaeology	Thailand and Japan	POWs	Asian and local workers	Memory and wartime storytelling	Lasting peace and Thailand's renunciation of war
Supatra									
Vichai									
Ornanong									
Lamyai									
Juri									

Table 4. What is the image of Kanchanaburi would you want the visitor to recognize?

Again, the respondents focused on the historical aspects of Kanchanaburi. Not only the wartime story but also its history in other periods were mentioned during the conversation. Vichai talked about the reason why the history and memory of the place should be emphasized as a main display of the city. In his perspective, history is unique and cannot be remade. History is specific to a place and Kanchanaburi is an important historical city, as it has been a regular battlefield and strategic city since Ayuttaya (14-18 AD). Other interviewees seem to agree with this statement; they stated that the emphasis on nature causes visitors to miss an opportunity to learn more about historical and archaeological sites in Kanchanaburi. The Death Railway itself also run passes Ban Kao prehistoric settlement (2300 - 1500 B.C.), one of the most important archaeological sites in Thailand, but unfortunately the result from the interviews on the train shows that none of the visitors on the train knows that they are running past an archaeological site.

Comparing this to the result from the younger local generation, the relationship between Thai and Japanese during the wartime was the only choice ignored by the questionnaire collected from the younger generation group. This might be due to the fact that local citizens are not well educated about local history. Furthermore, the collaboration between Thai and Japanese is not a selling point of the site.

Question 2 Does the contemporary display of the Death Railway represent the war in the way you once experienced it?

On the whole, the interviewees gave a positive opinion about the current display of the site. However, it seems to be told from the winners' perspective and pictures the Japanese in the worst way possible. Juri talked about his good impression of the Japanese; they never did any harm to the local people. Moreover they took good care of the villagers, especially women and children. The Japanese in his memory were polite, gentle, kind and well-organised. Although the violence and torture of the Japanese towards the POWs is undeniably true, the interviewees choose to believe it happened for valid reasons, such as escape from the POW camp, burglary or even pressure to keep up with the construction schedule. Lamyai argued that it was mostly Korean soldiers who ill-treated the prisoners.

According to the interviewees, it is also important to present the Death Railway's memory comprehensively. To do this, local history is something the authorities cannot ignore. Supatra stated that local history could become more relevant to visitors if she could take part in the display as a storyteller, so that visitors can listen to the real wartime experiences of local people. Pak Phraek Heritage Street should be promoted as a living memory of Kanchanaburi, since this place captures wartime activities and should be presented to outsiders in the same way as the museum.

However, it is important to keep in mind that local people did not take part in railway construction directly, but only as supporters. Therefore, they experienced a different story than the prisoners who participated in every stage of construction. Also, the Japanese might have used a different standard to treat locals and prisoners, because Thailand was not colonized by the Japanese. Including local history into the main display is not to say that the existing display is wrong, but that the same story could be told from a different perspective.

Name/Questions	Q. 3. Have you ever participated in any heritage institution management?	Q. 4. Do you agree with the current situation of the Death Railway?	Why?	Q. 5. What kind of image do you want illustrated better to the visitor?	Suggestions
Supatra	No	No	-Lack of local history. -The Railway has become more like a mass tourist attraction for photographs.	-Local and oral history. -The story of postwar Thailand in Kanchanaburi.	People should be informed about the history of the Death Railway during the train trip.
Vichai	No	No	-The authorities do not understand the value of the site.	-More comprehensive view from local and Japanese viewpoints. -Thai, POWs and Japan relationship. -Historical and archaeological sites from other periods.	History should be a main selling point of the city.
Ornanong	No	No	-Mass tourism destroyed the historical landscape. especially the landscape around River Kwai Bridge.	-Local and oral history. -The story of postwar Thailand in Kanchanaburi. -Historical and archaeological sites from other periods.	Place historical value up front and add wartime history as one part of Kanchanaburi's history as a whole.
Lamyai	No	No	-Lack of local history. -The authorities do not understand the value of the site.	-Local and oral history. -The story of postwar Thailand in Kanchanaburi. -Thai, POWs and Japan relationship.	Media is important for raising awareness.
Juri	No	No	-Mass tourism destroyed historical landscape. -The authorities do not understand the value of the site.	-More comprehensive view from local and Japanese viewpoints. -Thai, POWs and Japan relationship.	Development and site authenticity should be balanced.

Table 5. A summary of interview results

Section 2 Site management issues

In this section I gave the floor to the interviewees to talk about their personal opinions by asking open questions about the site management and the current situation of the Death Railway. Firstly, I asked if they ever have been a part of any museum organization. Have the local memories ever been included in any museum display? Have the local authorities asked for their opinions when establishing the River Kwai Week Fair? Is any museum or heritage institution collaborating with local community at all? Secondly, I went in depth about their satisfaction of the display of the site and possible improvements. The results of this open question showed a very wide range of answers. It is necessary to group up their answers which have the same content into the categories as seen in table 5. Thirdly, I went further by asking their ideas on how they would like to improve their heritage. Lastly, the relevant points from the interviews were given at the end as suggestions.

It is important to realize that the local community has never been included in site management and display development. The Death Railway display was built by the authorities to fulfill tourists' interests and ignored local communities. This led to conflicts about site authenticity and city development. The survey points out poor management around the River Kwai Bridge, the most famous tourist attraction in Kanchanaburi, which is full of souvenir, clothing and food stalls. Big resorts, hotels and other tourist facilities were built along the railway line. These affect the historical landscape of the site and transform the Death Railway from a wartime tragedy to a commercial place (Braithwaite & Leiper 2010).

However, if we take local interests into consideration, the results become clearer. People who lived through the war choose to present the positive side of the war. They prefer the image of the Death Railway as that of a display capturing the wartime relationship between different kinds of people, instead of a wartime tragedy. It is noticeable that they remember the railway construction as an important factor in the city's development. Kanchanaburi's change from a jungle city in the middle of the forest to a well-known city on a national and international scale was caused by its connection to the Thai railway system. This brought many opportunities to Kanchanaburi in the postwar period. The respondents seem to be proud that they, in secrecy and under impossible conditions, treated prisoners and soldiers of all nations as equals during the war. They believed that all human beings, whether victors or defeated, are part of humanity and have a good heart. The point is not to remember the

sadness or pointing out who is right or wrong. They happily talk about prisoners and Japanese soldiers who revisited Kanchanaburi after the war, and wish that visitors take the same feeling back after visiting the Death Railway.

Moreover, when talking about suggestions for improvement, all the interviewees seem to agree that the site’s historical value should be of greater concern. To do so, the media might be an important instrument; movies such as ‘Bridge on the River Kwai’ are a good example. Supatra stated that it would be better if the background story of the Death Railway was displayed to passengers during the trip, for they would be aware of what they were going to see during the trip. Furthermore, the respondents suggest that the contemporary display of the site is in fact not bad, but the main problem is that the people who are in charge of the heritage, such as curators, lack an understanding of the site and have only limited knowledge of local history. They mentioned that many wartime objects in the museum display were donated by the local community. Unfortunately, more than half were stolen or kept in bad conditions due to careless preservation. Vichai even mentioned that JEATH museum, although it is the first local museum displaying many relevant objects, looks more like a storeroom, where artifacts are poorly displayed like pieces of junk.

5.5 Discussion on the host community’s result

Comparing between generations, there are some interesting differences between the younger and older generations among the local community, which will be discussed in this section. Firstly, the image that local people of different generations have of the Death Railway is dramatically different and can be categorized as in the table below.

Purple – historical value, Green – natural value, Blue – Economic value

Wartime generation	Postwar generation
1. Prisoners of war	1. Tourist railway
2. Thai and Japanese collaboration	2. Railway with beautiful natural landscape
3. Railway engineering	3. Monuments of war

Table 6. Comparing the image of the Death Railway between generations

Wartime generation	Postwar generation
1.Thai and Japanese collaboration	1. Lively city with rich culture and archaeology
2. Prisoners of war	2. Nature and landscape
3. Lively city with rich culture and archaeology / memory and wartime storytelling	3. Tourist city

Table 7. Comparing the image of Kanchanaburi between generations

(For the wartime generation, if some answers got the same number of points, I have ranked them in the order in which the answers were given, with the one mentioned first receiving more points.)

Respondents ranked the top three images of the site they would like to be presented to visitors. It can be seen that age is an important factor in the way people value the site. All top three answers from both tables among the wartime generation focus on historical value. The postwar generation gave a variety of values to the site. This might be the effect from the change in social value and tourism demand (Wu *et al.* 2014, 547). For example, in the past travel abroad was by a costly and time-consuming journey by ship, which only the rich could afford (Inglis 2005), so that the tourist industrial was not so popular in that time and heritage was not yet used for economic benefits.

However, travel abroad is more accessible and affordable nowadays. Tourists demand changes in the way that heritage is consumed. The social value of the site is shifting from historical value (to remember) to economic (to make money). However, both generations are more likely to present the positive site of the Death Railway to visitors. Although the wartime generation would like history to be recognized, they want visitors to remember the good sides of the war, as it shows that humans from all nations have good hearts and that they all suffered from the war in a different way. Cultural, archaeological and historical sites from other periods are also among the images which both generations would like to promote more to the visitor. It would be a good opportunity for visitors to see the connection between the city's history and its present.

6. The contemporary display of the site and issues related to its presentation

This section will discuss the issue of the current situation and presentation of the Death Railway and other displays associated with the site. These are the Bridge over the Kwai River, Tham Kra Sae Bridge, the war cemeteries, the war museums, and Pak Phraek heritage walking street. As I mentioned in the previous chapter, although the Death Railway played an important role in the wartime history of Kanchanaburi, the railway display itself does not say much about its story, but allows other displays, such as museums and the war cemeteries, to do so. Therefore, the ways in which visitors can inform themselves about the site are limited: either by reading a history of the site in a guidebook or website or by visiting other war-related sites during their trip. When looking at the results from the survey and questionnaire from the previous chapter, it is clear that the expectations and perceptions of visitors were influenced by the way they informed themselves.

6.1 The current presentation of the Death Railway

The Death Railway is currently used by both normal passengers, who see the rail line as a method of public transportation, and the passengers who visit the Railway for historical purposes. There are only limited options for visitors to experience the Death Railway. They can travel by normal railway, which runs only two times a day from the first station (Thonburi, Bangkok) (Figure 35) to the final station (Nam Tok, Kanchanaburi) and travel back with the same train. The official duration is five hours for a single trip and ten hours for a return. However, due to the unorganized nature of the train system, the real duration of a single trip can be more than eight hours. Therefore, many tourists prefer to travel back by bus or other transportation, which will take approximately two to three hours. Some visitors prefer to take a train for a short distance, mostly from River Kwai Bridge station to Tham Krasae station, since the train will run across the Bridge of the Kwai River on the way. Visitors can also buy a special one-day train tour from Bangkok station to Nam Tok station, which is mainly used by Thai tourists who want to take a one-day trip to Saiyoknoy waterfall. This research will not include the latter train.

The Death Railway itself lacks informative displays and there is no presentation or information about the background story of the rail line. It looks like a normal train

without any special decoration (Figure 36). The first and only informative sign is shown when the train reaches Nong Pla Duk Junction (Figure 37 and 38). This is the first station on the Death Railway, and it is stated that the Death Railway starts from here. The highlight of the train trip is the moment when the train crosses the famous historical landmark, the River Kwai Bridge. From here on the train will run into the mountainous part of the journey, with beautiful landscapes along the way. The *Lonely Planet* guidebook states that the most historical part of the journey begins north of Kanchanaburi, as the train crosses the Death Railway Bridge (River Kwai Bridge) and terminates at Nam Tok station. Therefore, many tourists prefer to take a short trip in Kanchanaburi instead of travelling from Bangkok all the way by train.



Figure 35. Thonburi station in Bangkok



Figures 38. Nong Pla Duk Junction, the start of the Death Railway

6.2 The current presentation of war-related sites

6.2.1 The River Kwai Bridge (Death Railway Bridge)

The Bridge on the River Kwai is one of the best-known historical bridges in Thailand and the most famous landmark of the city. The Bridge is listed as a top-20 experience that tourist should have in Thailand, as a representative of Kanchanaburi province's wartime past (*Lonely Planet Thailand*, 15). It is interesting to notice that the Bridge over the River Kwai was chosen as an iconic symbol of the wartime city, instead of the Death Railway itself, and that it often appears in the city as a decoration (Figure 39). This might be due to the fact that many visitors have expectations about this bridge from the eponymous 1957 film 'The Bridge on the River Kwai'. According to some, this is 'the best-known war film ever made' (Bourke 2006, 68; Watt 2000, 203). The film depicts the story of a British prisoner of war, based on the novel by Boulle (1954), who actually never had any personal experience in Thailand – he was a POW of Vichy France in Vietnam. The image of the Bridge has a strong relationship to the memory of the POWs' suffering. However, it is not likely to work as a dark or dissonant heritage, a concept that stresses a lack of agreement and consistency (Tunbridge & Ashworth 1996). From my observation, visitors only have simple needs at the site, such as see the bridge, walking across and recording their visit by taking a photo (Figure 40).

The River Kwai Bridge is the best photo point in the provincial town of Kanchanaburi. Sather-Wagstaff (2008) makes an interesting point by arguing that tourist photographs have more meaning since they pictorially perform their experiences through photographic practices. This not only reveals diverse tourist-centered

perspectives, but also shows how these perspectives are continually constructed and performed in the tourists' home communities through the workings of memory. Tourists are constantly 'picturing' their experiences after their visit, re-imagining, re-presenting, and remembering the events and their aftermath. The majority of the visitors mentioned that they knew about the Death Railway via friends and family. Photographs might be one of the instruments that encourage potential visitors to visit the site and take their own picture. This can also explain why many visitors mention the River Kwai Bridge as one of their main expectations for this trip.

There is also a sign providing background information about the site next to the Bridge. However, the majority of visitors did not pay attention to it, since it was hidden by souvenir stalls (Figure 41). Although people who walk across the bridge might gain more experience of site authenticity and reality, they hardly get new insights into the site if they travel without a tour guide.

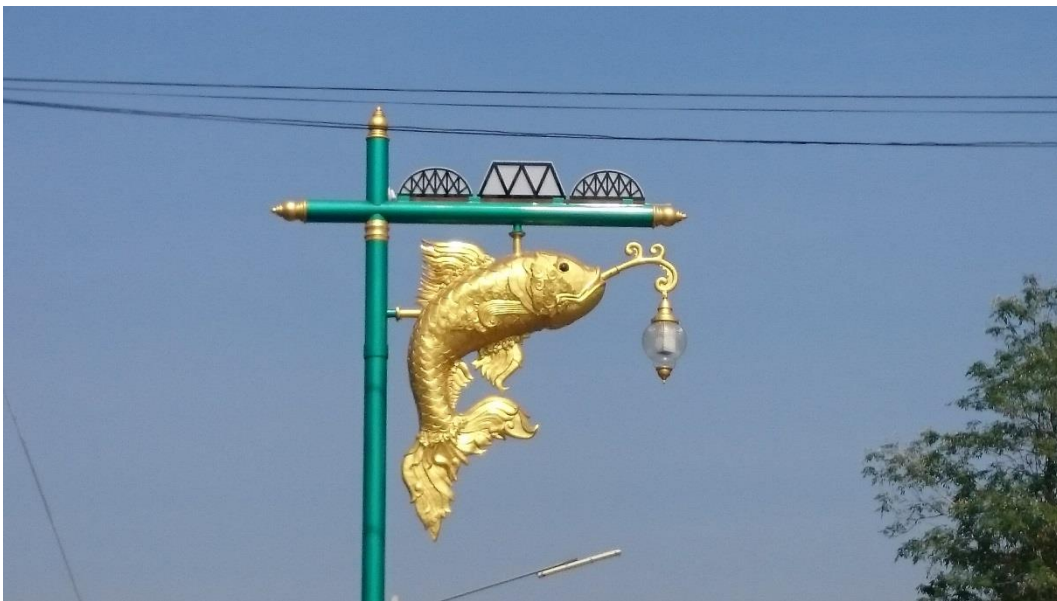


Figure 39. The River Kwai Bridge used as a decoration for a street lamp in Kanchanaburi



Figure 40. Walking on the River Kwai Bridge



Figure 41. The information sign about the Bridge and the souvenir stalls

6.2.2 Tham Kra Sae Bridge

Taking the train from the Bridge over the River Kwai, Tham Kra Sae Bridge (Figure 42) is another famous station where visitors can venture along the wooden railway track and bridge (Figure 43). Near the site is a cave which is thought to have been used by the Japanese whilst the POWs were forced to work on the track and bridge. Inside the cave there is now a Buddha shrine, which is not related to any wartime history. Without any informative display, this bridge is more likely a place to enjoy the beautiful scenery and authenticity of the place. Like the River Kwai Bridge and the Death Railway, this site allows visitors to take a closer look and experience the site by themselves



Figure 42. The train crosses the wooden Tham Kra Sae Bridge

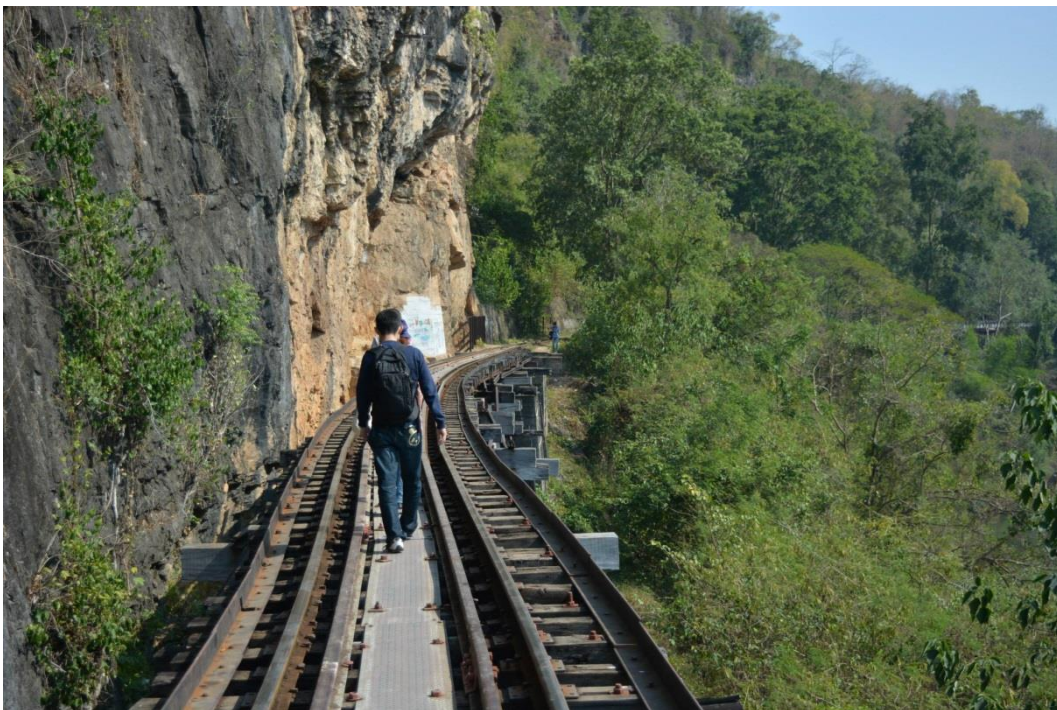


Figure 43. Walking along the rail line on Tham Kra Sae Bridge

6.2.3 War cemeteries

6.2.3.1 Chungkai War Cemetery

Chungkai is the biggest and oldest war cemetery in Kanchanaburi. It is the final resting place of more than 1,400 Commonwealth and over 300 Dutch soldiers who lost their life

while working as forced labourers on the construction of the Thai-Burma Railway (Figure 44). Nearly half were British; the rest come mainly from Australia and the Netherlands. Only the remains of POWs from the USA were repatriated for re-burial in their homeland. The cemetery is visited by mostly western visitors. For many tourists, especially from Britain, the Netherlands and Australia, visits to the cemeteries are the most moving experiences they have in Kanchanaburi. Information at the cemeteries, on tombstones and other media is not discordant with this experience; it is simple and truthful (Braithwaite and Leiper 2010, 315). The Cemeteries form a specific kind of memorial in which individuals can be remembered out of the massive number of dead. The name of the dead was carved on the stone and receives respect from the visitor or family who travels to visit the last resting place of their loved one (Figure 46). There is also a small office near the site, which has lists of the names and the location of the graves of the soldiers within the cemetery. Their tombstones display personal information and some memorial words, such as DUTY NOBLY DONE, GOD REST HIS SOUL, KNOWN UNTO GOD, et cetera (Figure 45).



Figure 44. Tombstones in Chungkai war cemetery



Figure 45. Tombstones in Chungkai war cemetery

6.2.3.2 Kanchanaburi War Cemetery (Don Rak War Cemetery)

Carrying the same message as Chungkai, Kanchanaburi War Cemetery is smaller in scale and located outside the city center, since this cemetery is near the location of the POW camp. Again, the cemetery contains only the remains of Allied prisoners who perished during the construction of the Death Railway, when other Asian and local labourers did not participate.



Figure 46. Tombstones in Kanchanaburi war cemetery

6.2.3.2 Japanese cemetery

Unlike the POW cemeteries, the Japanese cemetery lacks interest from both tourists and authorities. The monument, or cemetery, as it is called by the local people, was created

by the Japanese Army in February 1944 in memory of the personnel of the Allied Forces, together with other people who died during the construction of the Thailand-Burma Railway (Figure 47). Once a year, in March, volunteer members of the Japanese community in Thailand assemble here to hold a memorial ceremony for those who died. However, the cemetery was left in a bad condition and is not even mentioned in any travel or guide book. I was informed about this place by local people. Although this site is very close to the River Kwai Bridge, its poor condition and the current presentation of the site means that visitors hardly recognize the meaning of the place.



Figure 47. The monument in the Japanese cemetery

6.2.4 War-related museums

6.2.4.1 The JEATH War Museum

The JEATH war museum is the earliest war museum in Kanchanaburi, established in 1977 by the abbot of Chaichumpol temple (Figure 48). It is interesting to note that the display of the museum mentions the role of those countries by saying that 'The Japanese were the controllers of the railway project. The other four countries were

involved as POWs on the actual construction of the 415 kilometer long Death Railway and the bridge over the River Kwae.' Thailand, however, is highlighted as 'the conquered country' instead of a collaborator. This is misleading, since not only JEATH countries were involved in the construction, but also Burmese, Javanese, Koreans, Taiwanese et cetera.

The museum includes three parts. Firstly, a bamboo hut with a collection of photographs (Figure 49). This hut is not actually an original, but was rebuilt as an exact copy of the original living quarters of POWs. Inside, the photos offer harsh reminders of the brutal punishments meted out by the Japanese army. Secondly, the exhibition of photographs taken by Thai and prisoners of war. These photos tell the suffering of the prisoners of war, together with newspaper cuttings, letters and other items. Thirdly, there are individual objects of the prisoners of war, such as pistols, knives, helmets, water canteens et cetera. These items were mostly donated by local people in Pak Phraek Street who traded with prisoners of war during the war (Figure 50). However, these displays offer very little interpretative information, so that visitors do not learn much, but rather repeat things they have already been told or can read on the internet.

Although this open air museum is a local museum owned by a local temple, local history does not receive any space in the exhibition. The objects already show their age and the curator does not have any knowledge about them. However, because of its location in the city center and the cheap entrance fee (only 50 bath, or around 1.5 euros, for foreigners, and 0.25 euro for Thai), this museum is widely visited by many tourists. The main purpose of the museum is to illustrate the poor life of POWs and their living conditions when they were working for the Japanese. This is done mainly by photographs, sketches and pictures depicting various aspects of their life, under the slogan of 'forgive but not forget'.



Figure 48. The front of the JEATH war museum



Figure 49. The copy of the bamboo hut living quarters of POWs



Figure 50. Wartime artifacts displayed in the JEATH museum

6.2.4.2 Thailand-Burma Railway centre (Death Railway museum)

While the JEATH museum mostly illustrates the pain and suffering of the POWs, the Thai-Burma Railway centre (Figure 51), in contrast, focuses more on education. This place is an interactive museum, research and information centre dedicated to presenting the story of the Railway construction. It displays the high level of Japanese railway engineering, e.g. planning construction and logistics, the geography of the railway, the workers' living conditions and the story of the Railway after the war. The museum also displays original POW relics and artifacts, but on a smaller scale than the JEATH museum. This is the only museum where books, DVDs and souvenirs about the Railway and the Second World War were available in the museum shop.

This centre is the only museum that talks about the pros and cons of the railway line and tries to explain the situation during the construction based on academic research. Also, this is the only museum which represents the story of the Asian labourers, such as Korean and Taiwanese soldiers in Japanese army. It is also interesting to note that the story of the Railway's construction is explained from both the point of view of both Japanese and POWs, since the main aim of this museum is 'to research into the reason of what, why and how those situations happen and provide a truthful information to the public who have no idea of what happened during the Thai-Burma Railway construction' (Thailand-Burma Railway centre display).

This informative museum uses video footage, models and detailed display panels to explain Kanchanaburi's role in World War II (*Lonely Planet Thailand*, 175).

Moreover, this is the only war-related museum chosen as a top choice to visit in Kanchanaburi by the *Lonely Planet* travel guide. This might be a reason why some of the visitors mentioned this museum as a destination in the questionnaire. The museum is located in the city center not far from Kanchanaburi War Cemetery, which is very easy to visit. However, with a price of 120 Bath (around 4 euro), this museum is the most expensive museum compared to the others and it does not allow photography.



Figure 51. In front of the Death Railway museum

6.2.4.3 World War II museum and art gallery

Located right next to the River Kwai Bridge, this museum is indeed a very eclectic and downright odd site (*Lonely Planet Thailand*, 177), housing everything from wartime artifacts to paintings of former beauty queens. The museum on the one hand represents a very old local Thai museum style with words and pictures about the war and war artifacts that were treated as sacred items. But on the other hand, it looks like a very disorganized museum, with war relics presented without information to interpret their meaning to visitors. According to my interview in the last chapter, this museum was established by a local wealthy Kanchanaburi merchant who collected wartime artifacts as his hobby. Buying many artifacts from local people, he turned his private collection into a public museum. Among his collection, the steam locomotive from the wartime period is the highlight of the museum (Figure 52).

The museum itself displays too many stories, which sometimes are not related to the war at all, such as ore, jewelry, coins, Thai history, Miss Thailand contests et

cetera. Therefore, the overall message of the museum is unclear. The highlight of the museum are the historic items, as in the case of the JEATH museum. However, the informative displays are mostly articles printed from the internet. Some of them have nothing to do with the Railway and the Bridge, such as articles on kamikaze, Japanese Yamato battleships or short biographies of important Axis and allied generals (Figure 53).



Figure 52. The steam locomotive from the wartime period



Figure 53. The display about Axis and Allied generals' biography in the World War II museum

6.2.4.4 The Hellfire pass memorial museum

Hellfire pass is the only museum built in the area of the infamous cutting known as Hellfire pass (or Konyu cutting). Visitors can both visit the informative museum and walk down to the Hellfire cutting pass, where the railway construction once took place (Figure 54). A free audio guide is provided to make visitors truly understand the site, by giving information based on the real experiences of a wartime survivor. Although the theme of this museum is Asian labour and the POWs who suffered and died during the railway construction, the main display is told from the Australian prisoner of war's point of view, since this museum was established by the Australian government. It also hosts a special event on Anzac day, on the 25th of April, while the stories of Asian labourers are discussed only a little.

The Hellfire pass museum asks visitors to remember and respect all the dead. However, this is a special place of memory for Australian people, who want to commemorate their ancestors. This might be due to the fact that Australia do not have an authentic wartime site in their own country. Australians can only commemorate and seek out the graves of their countrymen by traveling to a faraway country (Winter 2009, 616). In this case Australians are strongly motivated to experience the site associated with their nation. There are many cards, pictures, flowers, Australian flags and koala dolls left by visitors (Figure 55). Leaving traces of their visit is often an act of visitors to dark heritage sites (Dalton 2009, 215), i.e. sites associated with death, suffering and the seemingly macabre (Stone 2006, 146). It is noticeable that this museum is the only place where this act clearly occurs. Even the bridge and the Railway itself do not receive this kind of attention. Although this museum is free of charge, it is located 80 kilometers away from the provincial town and is not really accessible, since there is no public transport to the site. The *DK* travel guide book even mentions the Hellfire pass when discussing Sai Yok National Park outside the city (*DK eyewitness travel Thailand*, 169), rather than as part of the historical city tour.



Figure 54. The remains of the Death Railway's railway line in hellfire pass



Figure 55. The objects left by the visitors along the Hellfire pass cutting

6.2.5 Pak Phraek heritage walking street

Located in the heart of the old town Kanchanaburi, Pak Phraek was the only existing street during the war, where all wartime activity took place. The street is full of old buildings of the pre-wartime and post-war period. Many shops date from the early 20th century and are still owned by the same family.

During World War II, the Japanese army camp surrounded the city walls. The Japanese rented some houses in the Pak Phraek street for their command post, or MP office, for officers' residences, prostitutes et cetera. Many activities happened on this road, such as interaction between Japanese soldiers and their prisoners and trade between Japanese and Thai, and between allied prisoners and Thai. More than 20

yellow signs tell the history of each building (Figure 56). The residents are mostly happy to welcome visitors to come in and share their wartime experience, but only if visitors speak Thai. It is interesting to note that the public relations handbook published by the local government claims that a good relationship existed between allied prisoners and Thai on Pak Phraek Street. For example, Thai helped many allied prisoners to escape and played an active role in saving Thailand from repercussions by the victorious allies after the war (Office of Tourism and Sports, 9). The authorities clearly put the relationship between Thai and POWs up front. Boonpong Sirivejabhand, a former resident who secretly helped POWs, is presented as a wartime hero and symbol of the street.



Figure 56. Old houses in Pak Phraek Street with yellow information signs

6.3 Summary of the contemporary displays connected to the Death Railway

In this chapter, I have discussed the displays through which visitors might be able to inform themselves while visiting the Death Railway. I have discussed what message they would get from the visit and the pros and cons of each display. Because of the lack of informative displays along the Death Railway itself, it was necessary to include museums, their collections and the design of the exhibits (Sather-Wagstaff 2008, 79). To make it clearer, these data are displayed below into a summary table in order to compare the main displays of those sites (Table 8). I will also discuss the information about these sites in two famous guidebooks, *Lonely Planet* (14th edition), *DK* (2010 edition), and official free guidebooks provided by the Tourism authority of Thailand. From the table below we will see that even though the history of the Death Railway is a main part of city's wartime history, the Railway itself is not introduced or recommended

as a top choice to visit. It seems more important as a mode of transportation than as a historical or cultural heritage site.

Site/issue	Main display	Location	Entrance fee	Owner	Language accessible	<i>Lonely Planet</i>	<i>DK</i>	Tourism authority of Thailand
The Death Railway	Authenticity, landscape	Bangkok-Kanchanaburi	Free (Thai); 3 euro (foreigner)	Public (Thai Railway)	-	Yes, but as a transportation method, not a historical site	Yes, only in the introduction	Yes, but as a method of transportation, not a historical site
The River Kwai Bridge	Authenticity, landscape	The provincial town of Kanchanaburi	Free	Public (Thai Railway)	Thai/English (sign)	Yes (top choice)	Yes	Yes
Tham Kra Sae Bridge	Authenticity, landscape	Away from the provincial town	Free (Thai); 3 euro (foreigner)	Public (Thai Railway)	-	No	No	No
Chungkai War Cemetery	POWs	The provincial town of Kanchanaburi	Free	Public (funding by Allied countries)	Thai/English	Yes	Yes	Yes
Kanchanaburi War Cemetery	POWs	The provincial town of Kanchanaburi	Free	Public (funding by Allied countries)	Thai/English	Yes (top choice)	Yes	Yes

Site/issue	Main display	Location	Entrance fee	Owner	Language accessible	<i>Lonely Planet</i>	<i>DK</i>	Tourism authority of Thailand
Japanese cemetery	War memorial	The provincial town of Kanchanaburi	Free	Public	Thai/English/Japanese	No	No	No
JEATH War Museum	POWs	The provincial town of Kanchanaburi	0.25 euro (Thai); 1.5 euro (foreigner)	Private (temple)	Thai/English (leaflet in all JEATH languages)	Yes	Yes	Yes
Thailand – Burma Railway centre	Railway engineering, POWs, Japanese army, Asian labour	The provincial town of Kanchanaburi	4 euro for Thai and foreigner	Private (foreign researcher)	Thai/English	Yes (top choice)	Yes	Yes

Site/issue	Main display	Location	Entrance fee	Owner	Language accessible	<i>Lonely Planet</i>	<i>DK</i>	Tourism authority of Thailand
The Hellfire pass memorial museum	POWs (Australian POWs)	80 km from the provincial town	Free	Australian and Thai government	Thai/English	Yes	Yes, as an environment near Sai Yok National Park	No
Pak Phraek heritage walking street	Local history, wartime relationship (Thai-Japanese-POWs)	The provincial town of Kanchanaburi	Free	Public and private	Thai/English for signs; only Thai for private storytelling	Yes	No	Yes

Table 8 Summary of contemporary displays involved with the Death Railway

6.4. The discussion on the current issue of the Death Railway's presentation

From the results collected and summered above, it can be concluded that the display of each site has its own limitations and of course these affect the way in which visitors can inform themselves. However, Winter (2009) suggests that even though most of the visitors who visit war-related site had no family involvement, but instead had been initially motivated by historical interest and their knowledge about the war. This knowledge can later change by many factors, not only the major display of the site, but also the activities going on at the site during time of the visit, such as commercial activities, significant days (such as ANZAC Day, The River Kwai Week Fair) and the characteristics of the site itself. This section will discuss the importance of site presentation as connected to other factors. It will focus on four issues: site authenticity and landscape presentation, site presentation and commercial activities, site presentation and its dissonance, and the role of the Death Railway as part of the wartime heritage and Kanchanaburi's historical presentation.

6.4.1 Site authenticity and landscape presentation

Three original sites, the Death Railway and two bridges, were left without proper and organized informative displays which, on the one hand, makes visitors miss an opportunity to learn more about the site's history. However, on the other hand, Bryant (2005) posed that people remember 10% of what they hear, 30% of what they read, 50% of what they see and 90% of what they do. In this perspective, even though these three site lack information signs or other informative presentation, visitors can also gain historical insights not from what they could have heard or read, but from what they have seen, which is more important according to Bryant (2005). The Railway and the bridges form an authentic presentation of the site that cannot be achieved for other sites.

It is important to note that visitors can also experience the wartime tragedy by seeing the landscape. The natural and cultural landscape of the region is striking: mesas, canyons, deserts and mountains present the visitor with an alternately enchanting and bleak spectacle that has long prompted reflection on the meaning of these different landscapes in both native and non-native discourse (Fowles 2010, 455). Johnson also poses that physical experiences can be qualified, deepened or made more rigorous than linguistic experiences (Johnson 2012, 279), because there is no language barrier. Some

scholars, such as Young (2009) and Dalton (2009), astutely assert that it might be more valuable for visitors to experience rather than be informed. The results from the questionnaire also support this idea, because they show that the importance visitors attach to the landscape increased after having visited the site.

6.4.2 Site presentation and commercial activities

For some visitors who cannot do not feel satisfied by seeing the authentic landscape on the train trip, the optional way to inform themselves is to visit other war-related sites during the trip. Commercial activities going on at the site will play an active role for the visitor to access these presentations. The Thailand-Burma Railway centre is the most comprehensive museum and is highly recommend by both the *DK* and *Lonely Planet* guidebooks. However, the entrance fee is quite high compared to other sites (120 Bath or around 4 euro). No special discount is provided for Thai citizens, which is quite odd for a Thai museum. For this reason, the museum is visited more often by foreigners than by Thai citizens. This museum also provides the only historical Thailand-Burma Railway tour, conducted by specialists from the museum. However, the price of the tour is also too high: it costs 3,500 Bath per person (around 100 euro for a half-day trip) which is unaffordable for Thai citizens in general. Vichai also mentioned this during our interview, saying that this museum is the best educational museum of the four, but at the same time the most commercial. Although this museum was founded by a professional researcher and its price represents its quality, it is undeniable that the entry fee, and especially the price of the historical tour, is one of the reasons why this museum is ignored by Thai visitors.

Other museums and cemeteries are more accessible in terms of pricing. However, they are mostly focused on the story of POWs and give little attention to other themes. Sites illustrating the wartime history of other groups, such as the Japanese cemetery and Pak Phraek Heritage street, are not widely advertised compared to other sites. From the survey result, it could be concluded that after visiting the major sites, visitors will receive images only from certain angles. In this case, tourists can only learn the history of the site from a limited point of view, since the focus is mostly on one historical perspective. This can explain why the knowledge about POWs, as displayed in the questionnaire, is very high.

It is interesting to take into account the tour guide industry in Kanchanaburi, because guided tours are a popular way for foreign visitors to explore Kanchanaburi. The

tourist industry plays a big role in the city's economic development. Jumbo, the biggest and perhaps best-known travel center in Kanchanaburi, is has been chosen t for my research. Although most of the tour programs focus on wildlife, adventure, or other natural attractions, there are some tours especially aimed at history lovers. The Bridge over the Kawi River, the JEATH museum and Chungkai war cemetery are usually included in the trip, while some trips include a short trip on the Death Railway, for approximately 30 minutes. Since all sites are located in the city center, it costs only around 1000 Bath per person for one day trip (20-25 euro). This is less than half the price of the Thailand-Burma Railway historical tour. The Hellfire pass is the only war-related site never included in historical tours, since it is located outside the city itself, but sometimes it appears in nature tours. It is interesting to note that tour operators and guides ignore the Thailand-Burma railway centre. Braithwaite and Leiper explain this problem by saying that tour guides want to avoid time-consuming places, so that they will have more time to take tourists to shops, where money they spend earns commissions and/or kickbacks (Braithwaite & Leiper 2010, 319).

The subject of tour guides is also relevant to the discussion, because tour guides perform on-site interpretations and performances, which influence and define tourists' experiences (Yankovska & Hannam 2014, 937). Bruner (2004) explains that the experience of a site depends a lot on the performance of the tour guides, since they can provide tourists with a more complex presentation and a deeper understanding of a site. However, Braithwaite and Leiper claim that the tour guides from big travel agencies in Kanchanaburi have only limited knowledge. The presence of tour guides with a lack of knowledge about the site means that some tourists are not aware of what exactly they are visiting (Braithwaite & Leiper, 2010, 317). This will affect the perception visitors might have after visiting the site. From this section, we can conclude that the commercial activities in Kanchanaburi also limit the visitors' experience in some ways. However, according to Braithwaite & Leiper, it would be too cynical to say that the tour guides provided by Kanchanaburi's tourist agency all lack knowledge and give misleading information regarding site authenticity. It would require an intensive survey into this topic such to establish the awareness of tour guides as to whether they see their role as educational or as part of a mass-tourism enterprise (Keil 2005, 484). Furthermore, going to a site without a tour guide might cause carelessness among visitors, for the tour guides make tourists aware of some of the mistakes and misinformation circulating about the war (Yankovska & Hannam 2014, 937).

6.4.3 Site presentation and its dissonance

World War II was a major global conflict. The conflicts during the wartime play an important role in site's presentation. The sites associated with the war have been mostly shaped from the perspective of the victorious (Winter 2009, 609), which later created a certain dissonance for the site. The Death Railway is also suffering from a dissonance of its image, for many countries with different backgrounds claim ownership, and visitors go to the site with different interests. Visitors from POW countries mostly expect to see the history of their own countries and of the men who died as a result of working on the Death Railway. For those people who want to seek for what happen to their relatives or ancestors, the Death Railway functions as Dark Heritage, i.e. a site that displays elements of death and atrocities (Ashworth & Hartmann, 2005). The contemporary display of the sites is more likely to fit these interests, since the story of POWs is the main display of the four museums, the two war cemeteries and even for other original sites (the Death Railway, Pak Phraek Heritage Street and the other two bridges). Heritage by nature is selective (Chhabra 2012, 1702); in site management it is always necessary to be selective in presenting the material.

However, what tourists find interesting cannot always be taken into consideration (Winter 2009; Robb 2009). There is a need to embrace a diverse approach so as to connect heritage with multiple constituencies, such as ethnic groups (Chhabra 2012, 1702). Many interviewees agree that the reason why Thai citizens and the younger local community do not know about the historical value of the site is because the Death Railway lacks a sense of belonging. They are not interested in learning about it, since it only presents the story of prisoners of war. In this sense, the Death Railway for Thai citizens is a mass tourism attraction without a historical connection.

Depicting POWs as the main focus of the site has much to do with the postwar situation in Thailand and the political issues in developing tourism (Hall, 1994). After the unconditional surrender of the Japanese in 1945, the status of the Thai people was torn between that of collaborators and victims of the Japanese. Although the Thai Government sided with Japan and in January 1942 declared war on the USA and its allies, the free Thai movement (Seri Thai), a Thai underground resistance movement against the Japanese, immediately issued a declaration stating that the Thai government's declaration of war was unconstitutional and legally void. Thailand received little punishment for its wartime role from the victorious allies. Not

surprisingly, the relationship between Thailand and Japan and the role of the Thai wartime government was muted, so that the presentation of the Death Railway was shifted from the relationship between Thai and Japanese to that between POWs and Japanese.

The Death Railway's has global significance, but it has been removed from its local context. It will be a challenge to create space for other stakeholders to take part in the site's presentation, because the experience of one group during the war was not more important than that of other groups. The current presentation of the site is more likely to be of interest for a particular group, who want to commemorate their own countrymen, such as the Hellfire pass for Australian POWs, the River Kwai bridge for film-inspired tourists (mostly British, for the film depicts British POWs in the leading roles). The site presentation fulfills these interests, but is not representative of the site's historical importance as a whole. Also, it is questionable whether visitors will gain new knowledge from a visit or will only recall what they have already been told.

6.4.4 The wartime heritage and Kanchanaburi's historical presentation

An overview of the factors associated with the display's presentation of the Death Railway has already been discussed. However, it would be more comprehensive to further discuss the connection of the site and other historical layers in Kanchanaburi's history. Kanchanaburi is a city with a rich culture. Surrounded by many archaeological and historical sites, this city plays an important role in Thai history and identity, which can be traced back to the prehistorical period (see chapter 2). The Death Railway's history actually has an interesting relationship with the great archaeological discovery of the prehistorical site at Ban Kao, since the work camp of the prisoners of war was located here. However, the presentation of the wartime heritage unfortunately misses this link.

The limitations in site presentation, which are more focused on natural attractions and on World War II, make visitors miss the chance to learn about other historical layers of the city. World War II is the only historical period recognized and told by international guidebooks (*Lonely Planet* and *DK*). This results from a lack in presentation of older historical layers. This can also be seen from the survey results, where the cultural and archaeological aspects of the city are not acknowledged by the audience.

7. Conclusion and recommendations

The aim of my research was to explore what effect the contemporary display of the Death Railway has on the image that visitors have of it. However, there are several subquestions that should be discussed in order to make the current situation of the site clearer. To do so, I will first answer these subquestions before moving to the final conclusion regarding to the main research question. At the end of this section, some recommendations will be proposed for the further site development.

7.1 What is displayed at the Death Railway and why?

The Death Railway, with its associated museums and cemeteries, is the third largest foreign tourism attraction in Thailand (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 4). However, its displays mostly capture the experiences of prisoners of war, giving little attention to local Thai people, Asian labourers and Japanese soldiers. This limited presentation brought up an important question: 'How and why are certain aspects of the past highlighted and others silenced?' According to Swenson, ignoring certain elements can be a way to protect individuals from exposure to painful memories and to exclude others from recognition on purely ethical grounds (Swensen 2014, 1). This might be due to the fact that the wartime experiences of the Japanese (perpetrators) were muted. The Japanese authorities are not involved with the site management, even though the Death Railway actually plays a major role in Japanese wartime history; it represents the greatest feat of Japanese military railway engineering (the Death Railway museum).

However, this argument does not explain the neglect of local Thai activities during the war in the current display. The survey shows that Thai citizens who experienced the war are not likely to cover up their past, but are quite willing to talk about their individual memories. Focusing on the prisoners of war might be explained by the concept of 'victimization', which plays an important role in wartime heritage 'branding'. Ashworth & Hartmann argue that the display of sites associated with atrocities is mostly determined and interpreted by the state's policy (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 2). States often feel a need for selected events to capture the imagination of others, at the time of the events and later (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 3). In this perspective, the more innocent the victims and the more atrocious the event, the more sympathy the display can capture from outsiders. Moreover, as Lennon and Foley (2000) suggest, 'unusual' deaths can attract more tourist attention than 'normal'

deaths. This may explain why the death of charming youthful princess Diana of a car crash was more remembered than the death of mother Theresa, who died of old age (Dann 2005, 237). The same situation can also be seen in selective displays of the Death Railway, where the inhumane treatment of the innocent prisoners of war is the center of presentation. It is not only remembered by a larger part of the audience, but also attracts more visitor curiosity than the interaction between Thai citizens and Japanese soldiers. The creation of the display is also connected to Thai history after the war, when the emphasis on the story of victorious countries meant to show that 'their' pain is widely recognized in 'our' Thai history. Giving the impression that the POWs experience had been integrated into the Thai national past is likely to be powerful propaganda, because it stresses that we were on the same side and fought the same enemy, the Japanese.

Ashworth and Hartmann (2005) state that victimization has played a central role in state building, especially in the postwar period, when the status of Thailand was disputed. No dramatic wartime event befell the Thai citizens, which put the tragedy of the prisoners of war up front and neglected the role of the perpetrators of the atrocities and their collaborators. At the time, this seemed to be an effective postwar policy. The Thai authorities integrated the role of victims into Thai identity and looked for sympathy from outsiders. Not surprisingly, the positive attitude toward the Japanese that many Thai had displayed during the war was muted, since this image conflicted with the main message. The Thai authorities created a suitable past for the Death Railway which would not create more conflict and at the same time achieved a political aim. This can also explain why the story of the Asian labourers who died during the Railway's construction has little space in the display: it does not fulfill any political interests. It can be concluded that views from different angle lack 'gravitas', i.e. weight, and lack 'benefit' for the Thai state and its citizens (Coté 2009, 139).

'Heritage' means the contemporary use of the past (Graham *et al.* 2000, 2). This means that the economic value of the Death Railway must also be taken into consideration. What is displayed on the Death Railway also benefits the commercial activities in the area. In an economic sense, the story of the Death Railway is one of the most popular tourist attractions in Kanchanaburi and Thailand, which generates local business and creates income for the community. The display of the story of POWs fits this interest, since it can capture tourists' curiosity on a wider scale. However, it is interesting to note that even though the POWs are the main theme of the site's

presentation, the local authorities do not create a sorrowful message, but rather present a joyful and child-friendly image. From the survey it is clear that the majority of the host community pictures the Death Railway as a 'tourist railway and famous tourist attraction' and recognizes Kanchanaburi as 'a lively city with a rich cultural heritage and archaeological sites'. The light and sound show during the 'River Kwai Week Fair' is the major event on the site, which maintains the joyful theme around the celebration of the completion of the Death Railway. This might be due to the fact that such a joyful atmosphere can attract more tourists, especially those with children. Tourism is a voluntary activity for which entertainment is the main justification and where fun is used as an instrument of serious instruction (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 256). This result is again repeated in the survey results, where the answers which directly involve the Railway's economic value are the most popular answer among the host community.

7.2 What do visitors learn from the display?

Not taking the natural landscape into consideration, the survey results show that the pain and suffering of the prisoners of war is the main message, for it is highly recognized by both international and Thai visitors. Also, this image remains the same after they visit the site; it is even higher for Thai citizens, who seem to have less historical awareness before visiting the site. However, this cannot be explained by the success of the associated museums and cemeteries alone: it occurs because people are already aware of the site's history via publications, documentaries, TV programs and films, especially David Lean's 1957 film. This made the Bridge on the River Kwai one of the main expectations for many visitors, in the same way that *Schindler's list* (1993) affected 'Schindler tourism' to Auschwitz. However, this image is likely to be supplemented by local tourist authorities in Thailand, who took advantage from the successful movie by reinforcing the same message in site management. Thus, they present what the movie showed, rather than actual events during the war.

It can be concluded that visitors know mostly about the prisoners of war and expect to see a display matching what they have been told. Nevertheless, some tourists become more aware of the Asians and local labourers who also worked on the Railway's construction. Still only a small percentage of visitors are aware of the wartime history from other points of view, especially the experiences of the local community and the Japanese. However, it should be argued that visitors can also gain historical insights from experiencing the site via the natural and historical landscape along the train route

(Foote 1997; Johnston 1998; Layton & Ucko 1999; Fowles 2010; Johnson 2012). In this way, the Death Railway speaks of its own history, even without informative displays. Mitterhofer argues that heritage itself can become a museum by displaying its authenticity in an original context (Mitterhofer 2013, 56). In this sense, even though the Death Railway does not provide any informative displays during the trip, it still displays the landscape and scenery, through which visitors can also learn about the wartime tragedy.

7.3 What is the dissonance of the Death Railway?

According to my results, the Death Railway is not only dissonant in its image, but it also attracts several types of tourist, who visit the site for different motivations. Although the results did not show dramatic differences between the image that visitors have before and after they visit the site, it shows significant differences between visitors from different nations. Foreign visitors, especially from JEATH countries, mostly visit the Death Railway for historical reasons. These can be divided into different subgroups, such as those who want to commemorate their ancestors, those who come for educational purposes, or even those who wish to experience death and suffering, defined as dark tourists (Lennon & Foley 1996). In contrast, Thai and other international visitors recognize the place's beautiful image and visit the site for basic tourist reasons. They can be defined as 'mass tourists'. The majority of the host community would like to present their heritage as a 'tourist railway and famous tourist attraction', where the economic value is more recognized than the dark history of the site. On the other hand, the older generation, who witnessed the Railway's construction, gives a stronger historical value to the site by criticizing the mass tourist development that affects the authenticity of the site. In this sense, the display of the Death Railway is not undesirable, but rather dissonant; its dissonance is not because of the painful memories and shame connected to the place, but rather because it was used at the time by different groups, who nowadays still use the same product (the Death Railway) for different purposes.

Even though the role of the local Thai population in the construction of the Death Railway is an almost forgotten episode in Thai history, the Dutch and Commonwealth dead are honoured at war cemeteries and memorial sites along the Railway. The Australian government tends to 'commandeer' the Hellfire Pass story; its museum emphasizes the story of Australians and others who suffered along the Railway. For those who lost their loved ones abroad, these war-related sites attempt to cater to

the need of those who grieve from a distance. The dissonance of the Death Railway is mostly caused by the fact that the way in which people choose to remember an event depends on who they are (Todorov 2003, 1) and how can they find themselves connected to the heritage. This can explain why the historical image of the Death Railway is only vaguely known among Thai tourists, since the heritage itself has no direct link to their personal identity, so that they lack a sense of belonging and a lack of interest to learn about it.

Moreover, the Death Railway also suffers from a dissonance between its role as a means of public transportation and its heritage role. According to the travel guidebooks and the results from my questionnaire, it is interesting to notice that the majority of the visitors and even of the host community recognizes the Bridge on the River Kwai as a symbol of the wartime tragedy, while considering the Death Railway as a means of transportation to the Bridge.

The Railway and the Bridge are two important original sites where the wartime tragedy occurred, so that the people who visit those sites, in principle, should be considered as a darker shade of tourist than those who visit newly built museums (Isaac & Çakma 2014, 166). However, those two sites in reality receive few acts of grief or commemorative behaviour; they are more likely to be consumed as normal tourist attractions. The Hellfire Pass memorial museum is the only war-related museum which receives this kind of commemoration (see chapter 5). This might be due to the fact that the majority of the tourists are not aware of the dark history of the original sites. The questionnaire results also show that only a small number of visitors recognizes the Death Railway as dark heritage (see chapter 4). Also, it is noticeable that one of the reasons why the Hellfire Pass receives such respect and care from visitors is because of the way that it chooses to present the museum: it provides a free audio guide to visitors while they walk along the cut, so that they can listen to wartime stories based on the real experiences of a wartime survivor. Yankovska and Hannam support this kind of presentation, arguing that tourists gain more insight and satisfaction when 'real' people, who suffered and experienced the tragedy themselves, tell the 'real' story and describe the horrific events in detail (Yankovska & Hannam 2014, 935). It is important to note that the way in which the site is displayed affects the acts of visitors during the tour, because they will be more aware of what they are seeing. This impacts how they will remember the site after the tour.

7.4 What is the effect of the contemporary display of the Death Railway on the image that visitors have?

When looking at the survey, the contemporary display of the Death Railway alone does not dramatically change the image that visitors have of the site. The great majority of foreign visitors picture the Death Railway as a site of wartime tragedy, where POWs form the center of the story. Thai visitors visit the site for its natural beauty. The same results still were prevalent after they made their trip. It can therefore be concluded that the majority of foreigners are historical visitors, while local visitors are nature visitors. The Death Railway is used to fulfill those different purposes; few new insights are gained.

However, when looking at the presentation in Kanchanaburi, the awareness of wartime history rose slightly for local Thai visitors after their visit to the city, while historical images were already strong for foreign visitors. This might be due to the fact that the visitors will be more educated about the war if they visit war-related museums and cemeteries in the Kanchanaburi complex. The survey also shows that the majority of respondents was already interested in war-related sites and might therefore gain insights from these displays.

It is interesting to note that the only historical image ignored or denied by both groups of visitors, and on which their perception did not change after visiting the site, is the story of the collaboration and friendship between Thai and Japanese. This image is, in fact, never displayed at any war-related site, and the Thai public knows little about this wartime relationship in general and events in Kanchanaburi in particular. The only sampling group who has a strong awareness of this relationship are the older residents who lived in Kanchanaburi during the period of Railway construction. However, this group of people has never been included in site management and display development. If we consider tourists as passive actors in the tourist industry, influenced by displays, guidebooks, tour guides or the media (Yankovska & Hannam 2014; Walter 2009), the image of the Death Railway that visitors might receive is limited by 'what' and 'how' the local authorities and museums want the site to be seen. Tourism could, however, also be seen as a voluntary activity (Ashworth & Hartmann 2005, 256), and tourists make their own choice in visiting heritage sites depending on their background and interests, so that they experience their own personal reflection and contemplation toward the site (Eichmann 2012, 328). We can conclude that the display presentation and activities have little effect on the visitors' experiences. In this case, it can hardly be concluded that the

contemporary displays alone are successful in affecting the image of the site. I suggest that the background of the visitors also strongly affects the way in which visitors experience the site.

7.5 Further recommendations

Lowenthal observed that heritage denotes more and more what we hold jointly with others (Lowenthal 1998, 60). However, conflicts surrounding heritage mostly occur between those who do and who do not conform to this joint relationship (Wallace 2009, 18). With regard to international relationships, the Death Railway is the best-known wartime heritage in Thailand and perhaps of South East Asia. However, as I discussed above, Thai residents are not very aware of their famous heritage, because it is only represented from a certain angle, that of the POWs. Detaching the Thai citizens from the Death Railway's history does not only affect their sense of belonging, but also detaches the Death Railway episode from the Thai national past. Looking at my survey results, Thai citizens know little about the site; most of them place their interest and expectation in images which are more easy to consume, such as the train trip and the beautiful natural landscape (see chapter 4). It is important to discuss how the symbolic status of the site can be made broader, so that the Death Railway can be seen from multiple perspectives. At the same time, conflicts should be avoided, because this would risk a decline in the satisfaction of tourists.

The current state of the Death Railway can be improved in two ways: firstly, by presenting a wider view of the heritage in both the historical and ethnical sense, and, secondly, by creating a sense of belonging among Thai citizens by engaging the local community with the site management. In the historical sense, the Death Railway and its wartime history should not be disassociated from other historical layers. Although most visitors mainly wish to experience the wartime period, Kanchanaburi has many other significant cultural and archeological sites. Although the site's presentation focuses mostly on recent history, it would be beneficial if the local authorities would also give attention to other historical layers in the city, as they also played an important role in Thailand's history.

However, this is more difficult in the ethnical sense, as has been observed by Kobayashi and Ziino: 'The remains from the battlefield of the Pacific War have been an outstanding problem since the end of the war' (*Asahi Shinbun* newspaper (15 January 1955), as cited in Kobayashi & Ziino 2009, 104). Because even in death, soldiers still

belong to their nations. It would be difficult to tell the story from one angle without blaming another party. For example, the contemporary display of the Death Railway captures the theme of victimization by telling the story from the POWs' perspective by blaming the inhuman treatment of the Japanese. Giving more attention to the Japanese soldiers' perspective might make visitors from POWs countries feel offended. This problem was both diplomatic and deeply emotional; Kobayashi and Ziino called it 'politics of the dead' (Kobayashi & Ziino 2009, 105).

However, this might be the next step: to acknowledge the memory of loss, pain and grief from other nations (including the perpetrators), which will eventually overcome wartime prejudice and integrate those memories into the Death Railway's history and display. Winter (2009) suggests that social memories are dynamic and are updated in response to different generational needs. In the many years since the memorials were constructed, society's need to remember has changed; education has become an important focus point, rather than remembrance and glorification. She notes that the role of tourists visiting wartime heritage has moved from pilgrimage (remembrance and honouring), who only passively look at the memorials, to more historically motivated tourists, who actively seek information to help them understand the part played by their relatives and countrymen and women in the war (Winter 2009, 618). It might be expected that in the near future, when the time passes and the pain fades away, tourists will have more strongly ethical and moral foundations, since they will be more willing to learn, accept and respect the memory from different angles.

As appears from the survey, the Death Railway has different meanings for the host community, depending on the age group. I suggest that these meanings should be taken into account. To do so, community projects such as public meetings, workshops, and a survey should be created to include the community into the management circle. Collaboration with the community and relationship building is also important in order to connect the Death Railway to the local historical background. Giving the community co-ownership means to give them a responsibility to take part in site promotion and presentation (Bruce & Creighton 2006, 241). Moreover, as results from the questionnaire show, visitors nowadays become more open to and interested in the experiences and wartime memories of the host community, as well as the history of their own countrymen. The closing of this gap can further contribute to site development, since both younger and older generations among the host community are interested in this topic. Furthermore, community engagement projects might be an

opportunity to improve the economy of the community. Heritage can be used for the sustainable development of the local community and a balance should be found in its development, which has often been presented as a simple choice between focusing on local needs and fulfilling tourist desires.

Abstract

The remains of the battlefields of World War II have been a great problem since the end of the war. They often bring dissonant memories for both individuals and groups of people. This thesis examines the dissonance of the Death Railway (Thailand-Burma Railway), a major site of wartime heritage in Kanchanaburi province, Thailand. It focuses on one of the issues concerning the site's interpretation. The main question that will be answered in this thesis is *'What is the effect of the contemporary display of the Death Railway on the image visitors have?'*

For this reason it is important to explore the visitors' perceptions about the site and investigate whether their perceptions change after their visit. The survey was conducted in February 2015 at Kanchanaburi; a questionnaire was handed out to visitors before and after they visited the site. The perspective of the local community will also be discussed in this study. To do so, a questionnaire was used to gain insights into the general views from local people, while interviews were used to collect answers from members of the wartime generation in Kanchanaburi province. Comparing the results from this survey to the literature review from the same area of study, it can be concluded that the display presentation and activities at the site have little effect on the tourists' perception towards the site.

The visitors' nationality and knowledge about the war more strongly affect the way in which visitors experience the site. The majority of international visitors, especially those who come from countries involved with the Railway's construction, are well aware of the site's historical value. On the other hand, Thai visitors and visitors from other countries just want to have fun and enjoy the natural beauty during the train trip.

However, it can be argued that what is presented is very important too. The current display of the Death Railway and its associated museums and cemeteries mainly capture the memory of the prisoners of war, but gives little attention to Japanese soldiers and local Thai history. This affects the sense of belonging among Thai citizens, for they know very little about the importance of their heritage and lose the interest to learn about it. It would be beneficial to include more historical viewpoints and to present a wider view of the site's heritage in both the historical and ethnical sense. In this way, the Death Railway can be seen from multiple perspectives and at the same time create a sense of belonging among Thai citizens.

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Appendix 1 The survey questionnaire

Questionnaire for visitors

As part of my Archaeological research thesis at Leiden University the Netherlands. I am conducting a survey that investigates 'what is the effect of the contemporary display of the Death Railway on the image visitors have'.

Please answer the following question by across (x) in the relevant box or write down your answer in the space provided.

Nationality_____ Age_____

Part 1 The Death Railway

1. Is this the first time you have visited the Death Railway?
 Yes
 No what made you revisit The Death Railway?_____

2. What do you expect to see at The Death Railway?

3. How did you receive information about The Death Railway? (can be more than one)
 through programmes (documentary, reports)
 through films
 through historical books, articles and academic works
 through internet
 through guidebook, travel magazine, travel company, tourist agency
 through friends and family
 through Thai Railway
 Others _____

4. What does the Death Railway represent in your point of view? (please choose maximum 3 choices of answers)

 The comfortable transportation from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi province
 The railway with beautiful landscape along a journey
 The only transportation which cross the Kwai bridge
 The death and suffering of the Prisoners of war (POWs)
 The monument of war
 The famous tourist railway
 The Asian and local labourers who worked and died during railway construction
 The Great Japanese engineering, the fastest railway ever made

- The memorial of wartime Thailand
- The collaboration and friendship between Thai and Japanese
- Others _____

Part 2 Kanchanaburi province

1. Is this the first time you have visited Kanchanaburi Province?
 - Yes
 - No what make you revisit Kanchanaburi? _____

2. Why do you want to visit Kanchanaburi? (please choose maximum 3 choices of answers)
 - I want to travel with the Death Railway
 - I want to see the Kwai Bridge
 - I want to visit the city with wartime memory
 - I want to learn more about life and death of the prisoners of war.
 - I want to learn more about life and death of local and Asian labourers
 - I want to learn more about the relationship between Thai and Japan in wartime
 - I want to learn more about the engineering and the way they build the railway
 - I want to visit the city with beautiful nature and landscape (Erawan waterfalls, mountains, caves and national parks)
 - I want to visit a lively city with rich culture, history and archaeological sites
 - I want to enjoy vacation in a rural city
 - Other _____

3. Which war-related sites in Kanchanaburi would you like to visit? (can be more than one)
 - I'm not interested in war-related site
 - Chungkai War Cemetery
 - Kanchanaburi War Cemetery
 - Thailand-Burma Railway Centre
 - World War II Museum and Art Gallery
 - JEATH War Museum
 - Death Railway Museum
 - Places where POW and Asian labourers' camps were once located
 - Other _____

Thank you for completing this Questionnaire

Questionnaire for local community

As part of my Archaeological research thesis at Leiden University the Netherlands. I am conducting a survey that investigates 'what is the effect of the contemporary display of the Death Railway on the image visitors have'.

Please answer the following question by a cross (x) in the relevant box or write down your answer in the space provided.

Age_____ Birthplace_____ Place of resident _____

Part 1 The Death Railway

1. What is the image of Death Railway you would like to represent to the visitors?
(please choose maximum 3 choices of answers)

- () The comfortable transportation from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi province
- () The railway with beautiful landscape along a journey
- () The only transportation which cross the Kwai bridge
- () The death and suffered of the Prisoners of war (POWs)
- () The monument of war
- () The famous tourist railway
- () The Asian labourers who worked and died during railway construction
- () The Great Japanese engineering, the fastest railway ever made
- () The memorial of wartime Thailand
- () The collaboration and friendship between Thai and Japanese
- () The pride and identity of Kanchanaburi
- () Others _____

2. Do you satisfy with the image of the death railway?

- () Yes (Skip to part 2)
- () No

3. What message would you like to illustrate more? (can be more than one)

- () The story about local and oral history
- () The story about Asian and local worker who work on the railway
- () The relationship between Thais and Japanese
- () Other _____

Part 2 Kanchanaburi

1. What is the image of Kanchanaburi you would like to represent to the visitors?
(please choose maximum 3 choices of answers)

- The tourist city with history and hospitality comfortable to live, amazing to visit
- The city represents wartime memory of Thailand
- The city with beautiful nature and landscape (Erawan waterfalls, mountains, caves and national parks)
- The lively city with rich culture, history and archaeological sites
- The city with wartime relationship between Thai and Japan
- The city with memory of life and death of Prisoners of war
- The city with memory of life and death of Asian and local workers
- The city with full of memory and wartime story telling
- The city with lasting peace and Thailand's renunciation of war
- Other _____

2. Please list three best places you would like to present to the visitors.

- 2.1 _____
- 2.2 _____
- 2.3 _____

3. Where is/are the war-related site you have ever visited?

- I'm not interested in war-related site
- Chungkai War Cemetery
- Kanchanaburi War Cemetery
- Thailand-Burma Railway Centre
- World War II Museum and Art Gallery
- JEATH War Museum
- Death Railway Museum
- places where POW and Asian labourers' camps were once located
- Other _____

Thank you for completing this Questionnaire

Appendix 2 Raw Data from survey

1 Raw Data from Thai visitor who travel to the site

Sampling number in total: 127

Personal information

Age	Percent	Population
under 21	11%	14
21-30	57%	72
31-40	13%	16
41-50	12%	15
51-60	6%	7
over 60	1%	1
no informed	2%	2

Part 1 The Death Railway

1. Is this the first time you visit The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
Yes	62%	79
No	38%	48

What make you revisit the Death Railway	Percent	Population
explore/travel more	8%	4
Landscape / Scenery	25%	12
History	0%	0
Back home	8%	4
Work/Personal Business	4%	2
Comfortable and safe	19%	9
Love the city (Kanchanaburi)	2%	1
Bring along friend and/or family who never visit the site	2%	1
Love to travel by the train	2%	3
no informed	25%	12

2. What do you expect to see in The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
Landscape / Scenery	58%	74
History	4%	5
Comfortable and safe	2%	3
New Experience	4%	5
Local life in rural city	2%	3
Bridge on the River Kwai	4%	5
Tourist and Tourist attraction	2%	3
pilgrimage	2%	2
Back home	1%	1
construction and Architecture	1%	1
Improvement	1%	1
No informed	20%	25

3. How do you get inform about The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
TV programmers (documentary, reports)	48%	67
Films	20%	26
Historical books, articles, academic works	27%	34
Internet	61%	78
Guidebook	40%	51
Friends and Family	53%	67
Thai Railways	28%	35
Others	3%	4

Others: I was born in Kanchanaburi (1), I got inform from local people (2), I got inform from wartime people in Bangkok (1),

4. What is the image of the Death Railway in your point of view?	Percent	Population
The comfortable transportation from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi province	24%	30
The railway with beautiful landscape along a journey	68%	86
The only transportation which cross the Kwai bridge	24%	31
The death and suffering of the Prisoners of war (POWs)	31%	40
The monument of war	35%	45
The famous tourist railway	43%	55
The Asian and Local people who worked and died during railway construction	13%	16
The Great Japanese engineering, the fastest railway ever made	14%	18
The memorial of wartime Thailand	18%	23
The collaboration and friendship between Thai and Japanese	3%	4
Others	1%	1

Others: I don't have any image about this train

Part 2 Kanchanaburi Province

1. Is this the first time you visit Kanchanaburi Province	Percent	Population
Yes	33%	42
No	67%	85

What make you revisit Kanchanaburi	Percent	Population
explore/travel more	35%	30
Beautiful Nature and landscape	16%	14
History	0%	0
Back home	11%	9
Work/Business	2%	2
Comfortable and easy to visit	5%	4
Love the city	13%	11
Pilgrimage	2%	2
Travel by Train	1%	1

2. Why do you want to visit Kanchanaburi?	Percent	Population
I want to enjoy vacation in a rural city	41%	52
I want to travel with the Death Railway	61%	77
I want to visit the city with beautiful nature and landscape (Erawan waterfalls, mountains, caves and national parks)	61%	78
I want to visit a lively city with rich culture, history and archaeological sites	27%	34
I want to see the Kwai Bridge	36%	46
I want to learn more about life and death of the prisoners of war.	6%	8
I want to learn more about wartime Thailand	5%	6
I want to learn more about life and death of local and Asian labourers	6%	8
I want to learn more about the relationship between Thai and Japan in wartime	2%	3
I want to learn more about the engineering and the way they build the railway	2%	3
Others	6%	7

Others: I need to run some errands (1), I love the city (2), I love the food (1), the city is near Bangkok (1), I want to recall my memory (1), I want to introduce the city to my friend (1)

3. Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
not interested	12%	15
JEATH museum	35%	45
Death Railway museum	28%	35
Hell-fire pass memorial museum	46%	59
Kanchanaburi war cemetery	39%	50
Chungkai war cemetery	20%	25
World War II museum and Art Gallery	38%	48
Camp/ Work place once located	21%	27

3. Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
Museum	87%	110
War Cemetery	34%	43
Place	20%	26
not interested	12%	15

2.Raw Data from Foreigner visitor who travel to the site

Sampling number in total: 79

Personal information

Nationality	Percent	Population
Australian	9%	7
British	28%	22
Canadian	14%	11
Dutch	3%	2
French	3%	2
German	8%	6
Hungarian	1%	1
Indian	1%	1
Irish	1%	1
Italian	3%	2
Japanese	11%	9
New Zealander	1%	1
Spanish	5%	4
Swedish	5%	4
Slovakian	1%	1
Taiwanese	3%	2
American	4%	3

Age	Percent	Population
under 21	3%	2
21-30	35%	28
31-40	16%	13
41-50	16%	13
51-60	18%	14
over 60	11%	9

Part 1 The Death Railway

4. Is this the first time you visit The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
Yes	87%	69
No	13%	10

Reason of revisit The Death Railway	Percent	Population
explore/travel more	10%	1
History	30%	3
River Kwai Bridge	10%	1
Love the city (Kanchanaburi)	10%	1
Love to travel by the train	10%	1
no informed	40%	4

2. What do you expect to see in The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
Landscape / Scenery	19%	15
History	51%	40
New Experience	4%	3
Bridge on the River Kwai	20%	16
Kanchanaburi	1%	1
Thai Railway system	1%	1
Railway construction	5%	4
Improvement	10%	1
No informed	22%	22

3. How do you get inform about The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
TV programmers (documentary, reports)	25%	20
Films	37%	29
Historical books, articles, academic works	24%	19
Internet	16%	13
Guidebook	46%	36
Friends and Family	37%	29
Thai Railways	4%	3
Others	4%	3

Others: School tour country history=3

4. What is the image of the Death Railway in your point of view?	Percent	Population
The comfortable transportation from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi province	10%	8
The railway with beautiful landscape along a journey	42%	33
The only transportation which cross the Kwai bridge	15%	12
The death and suffering of the Prisoners of war (POWs)	52%	41
The monument of war	51%	40
The famous tourist railway	15%	12
The Asian and Local people who worked and died during railway construction	38%	30
The Great Japanese engineering, the fastest railway ever made	4%	3
The memorial of wartime Thailand	25%	20
The collaboration and friendship between Thai and Japanese	3%	2
Others	4%	3

Others: the inhumane treatment by Japanese (1), Thai Railway system (1), Good time (1)

Part 2 Kanchanaburi Province

1. Is this the first time you visit Kanchanaburi Province	Percent	Population
Yes	87%	69
No	13%	10

What make you revisit Kanchanaburi	Percent	Population
explore/travel more	8%	1
Love the city	60%	6
Bring along friend and/or family	10%	1
No informed	20%	2

2. Why do you want to visit Kanchanaburi?	Percent	Population
I want to enjoy vacation in a rural city	25%	17
I want to travel with the Death Railway	29%	23
I want to visit the city with beautiful nature and landscape (Erawan waterfalls, mountains, caves and national parks)	51%	40
I want to visit a lively city with rich culture, history and archaeological sites	16%	13
I want to see the Kwai Bridge	61%	48
I want to learn more about life and death of the prisoners of war.	30%	24
I want to learn more about wartime Thailand	30%	24
I want to learn more about life and death of local and Asian labourers	5%	4
I want to learn more about the relationship between Thai and Japan in wartime	5%	4
I want to learn more about the engineering and the way they build the railway	1%	1
Others	5%	4

Others: I want to see elephant (1), I want to relax at the river and bridge (2), I want to show Erawan waterfall to my friend (1)

3. Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
not interested	11%	9
JEATH museum	15%	12
Death Railway museum	67%	53
Hell-fire pass memorial museum	-	-
Kanchanaburi war cemetery	34%	27
Chungkai war cemetery	11%	9
World War II museum and Art Gallery	32%	25
Camp/ Work place once located	20%	16
Others	3%	2

Others: Place where my uncles were murder by Japanese (1), I don't know yet (1)

Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
Museum	77%	61
War Cemetery	38%	30
Place	19%	15
not interested	3%	10
Others	2%	2

Others: Place where my uncles were murder by Japanese (1), I don't know yet (1)

3 Raw Data from Foreigner visitor who travel back from the site

Sampling number in total: 87

Personal information

Age	Percent	Population
under 21	24%	21
21-30	31%	27
31-40	14%	12
41-50	9%	8
51-60	14%	12
over 60	2%	2
no informed	6%	5

Part 1 The Death Railway

1. Is this the first time you visit The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
Yes	54%	47
No	46%	40

What make you revisit the Death Railway	Percent	Population
explore/travel more	10%	4
Landscape / Scenery	28%	11
History	10%	4
Back home	3%	1
Work/Personal Business	13%	5
Comfortable and safe	10%	4
Love the city (Kanchanaburi)	5%	2
Bring along friend and/or family who never visit the site	8%	3
New experience	3%	1
Pilgrimage	3%	1
no informed	10%	4

2. What do you expect to see in The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
landscape / Scenery	60%	52
History	7%	6
Comfortable and safe	2%	2
New Experience	9%	8
Local life in rural city	1%	1
Bridge on the River Kwai	1%	1
Tourist and Tourist attraction	2%	2
Train	1%	1
No informed	13%	11

3. How do you get inform about The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
TV programmers (documentary, reports)	46%	40
Films	22%	19
Historical books, articles, academic works	26%	23
Internet	46%	40
Guidebook	64%	56
Friends and Family	45%	39
Thai Railways	18%	16
Others	1%	1

Others: School trip (1)

4. What is the image of the Death Railway in your point of view?	Percent	Population
The comfortable transportation from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi province	23%	20
The railway with beautiful landscape along a journey	60%	52
The only transportation which cross the Kwai bridge	23%	20
The death and suffering of the Prisoners of war (POWs)	25%	22
The monument of war	43%	37
The famous tourist railway	44%	38
The Asian and Local people who worked and died during railway construction	9%	8
The Great Japanese engineering, the fastest railway ever made	11%	10
The memorial of wartime Thailand	29%	25
The collaboration and friendship between Thai and Japanese	7%	6
Others	0%	0

Part 2 Kanchanaburi Province

1. Is this the first time you visit Kanchanaburi Province	Percent	Population
Yes	20%	17
No	80%	70

What make you revisit Kanchanaburi	Percent	Population
explore/travel more	26%	11
Beautiful Nature and landscape	23%	16
History	3%	3
Back home	4%	3
Work/Business	10%	7
Comfortable and easy to visit	4%	3
Love the city	7%	5
Pilgrimage	1%	1
Travel by Train	1%	1
River Kwai Bridge	1%	1
No informed	17%	12

2. Why do you want to visit Kanchanaburi?	Percent	Population
I want to enjoy vacation in a rural city	34%	30
I want to travel with the Death Railway	51%	44
I want to visit the city with beautiful nature and landscape (Erawan waterfalls, mountains, caves and national parks)	60%	52
I want to visit a lively city with rich culture, history and archaeological sites	22%	19
I want to see the Kwai Bridge	41%	36
I want to learn more about life and death of the prisoners of war.	25%	22
I want to learn more about wartime Thailand	10%	9
I want to learn more about life and death of local and Asian labourers	10%	9
I want to learn more about the relationship between Thai and Japan in wartime	2%	2
I want to learn more about the engineering and the way they build the railway	8%	7
Others	5%	4

Others: I need to run some errands (2), I come with my girlfriend (1)

3. Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
not interested	8%	7
JEATH museum	32%	28
Death Railway museum	41%	36
Hell-fire pass memorial museum	46%	40
Kanchanaburi war cemetery	33%	29
Chungkai war cemetery	24%	21
World War II museum and Art Gallery	44%	38
Camp/ Work place once located	25%	22

3. Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
Museum	91%	79
War Cemetery	44%	28
Place	26%	23
not interested	7%	6
Others	1%	1

Others: Pak Phraek Heritage Street (1)

4 Raw Data from Foreigner visitor who travel back from the site

Sampling number in total: 31

Personal information

Nationality	Percent	Population
Australian	16%	5
British	29%	9
Brazilian	3%	1
Dutch	6%	2
German	3%	1
Italian	3%	1
Japanese	13%	4
New Zealander	10%	3
Polish	10%	3
Swedish	3%	1
American	3%	1

Age	Percent	Population
under 21	23%	7
21-30	35%	11
31-40	13%	4
41-50	6%	2
51-60	10%	3
over 60	13%	4

Part 1 The Death Railway

1. Is this the first time you visit The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
Yes	90%	28
No	10%	3

What make you revisit the Death Railway	Percent	Population
Beautiful experience	33%	1
Bring along friend and/or family	67%	2

2. What do you expect to see in The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
Landscape / Scenery	29%	9
History	58%	18
Tourist and Tourist attraction	3%	1
Thai culture	3%	1
Railway construction	35%	11
No informed	6%	2

3. How do you get inform about The Death Railway?	Percent	Population
TV programmes (documentary, reports)	16%	5
Films	26%	8
Historical books, articles, academic works	26%	8
Internet	13%	4
Guidebook	45%	14
Friends and Family	61%	19
Thai Railways	3%	1
Others	6%	2

Others: Railway is my hobby and my employ (railway engineer) (1), my relative built it (1)

4. What is the image of the Death Railway in your point of view?	Percent	Population
The comfortable transportation from Bangkok to Kanchanaburi province	10%	3
The railway with beautiful landscape along a journey	39%	12
The only transportation which cross the Kwai bridge	16%	5
The death and suffering of the Prisoners of war (POWs)	65%	20
The monument of war	48%	15
The famous tourist railway	23%	7
The Asian and Local people who worked and died during railway construction	39%	12
The Great Japanese engineering, the fastest railway ever made	3%	1
The memorial of wartime Thailand	26%	8
The collaboration and friendship between Thai and Japanese	0%	0
Others	0%	0

Part 2 Kanchanaburi Province

1. Is this the first time you visit Kanchanaburi Province	Percent	Population
Yes	90%	28
No	10%	3

Reason of revisit Kanchanaburi	Percent	Population
Landscape and Nature	33%	1
Bring along friend and/or family	67%	2

2. Why do you want to visit Kanchanaburi?	Percent	Population
I want to enjoy vacation in a rural city	19%	6
I want to travel with the Death Railway	32%	10
I want to visit the city with beautiful nature and landscape (Erawan waterfalls, mountains, caves and national parks)	55%	17
I want to visit a lively city with rich culture, history and archaeological sites	23%	7
I want to see the Kwai Bridge	58%	18
I want to learn more about life and death of the prisoners of war.	26%	8
I want to learn more about wartime Thailand	26%	8
I want to learn more about life and death of local and Asian labourers	6%	2
I want to learn more about the relationship between Thai and Japan in wartime	3%	1
I want to learn more about the engineering and the way they build the railway	10%	3
Others	6%	2

Others: I want to see my girlfriend's town (1), I want to commemorate with my grandfather (1)

3. Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
not interested	6%	2
JEATH museum	48%	15
Death Railway museum	68%	21
Hell-fire pass memorial museum	-	-
Kanchanaburi war cemetery	35%	11
Chungkai war cemetery	19%	6
World War II museum and Art Gallery	29%	9
Camp/ Work place once located	26%	8

3. Which war-related sites would you like to visit?	Percent	Population
Museum	94%	29
War Cemetery	55%	17
Place where wartime activities once located	26%	8
not interested	6%	2