

COMPLETION REPORT

CRMA Research Center

Surat Lertlum

【Subject of Research Project】

Revealing The Past: Geo-Informatics Search for The Japanese Army Camp During World War II and Its Local History in Nakorn Nayok, Thailand

This project examined historical heritage site in Nakorn Nayok province in Thailand where the largest Japanese army camps were built in Southeast Asia during World War II. Part of the site is now situated in Chulachomklao Royal Military Academy (CRMA). Since the end of WWII in 1945, the local landscape has been changed due to the aging and development of the society. The number of people that had memoir and experience about the Japanese army camp during the WWII have become small or almost non-existent. Taking advantage of the remnants from Japanese army camp left in CRMA, this research updates the scholarly and scientific information from the previous study in 1989 by surveying the site with current technology, such as precision positioning, high resolution aerial map and LiDAR survey that were not available in 1989 that still used hand-drawn map as well as interviewing local people in the area about their knowledge about the local story during WWII period. The new survey and interviews to locals also collected and updated the current situation of the surrounding area. As the result, the new information about the camp sites in detailed was revealed about the additional position of bunkers, cemeteries, as well as the perspective of locals to the Japanese soldiers.

In this project, we conducted literature review, geo-informatics survey and interviewed to local people, in order to produce maps including roads, water ponds, bunkers and caves made from stones during the war time. The LiDAR data (Figure 3B) could identify precise locations and more details of the existing physical evidence from WWII in the area. The bunkers in dense tree cover could be identified. (Figure 4) After collecting and analyzing data, a database about the Japanese army camps during WWII in Nakorn Nayok was produced. The new findings include: the total plan of Japanese army camps in Nakorn Nayok in detail on high resolution map (Figure 1 & 2), the local sole survivor from the period (Figure 5), as well as the current environment.

In all, from this study, we had conducted newly geo-informatics survey and updated the historical information about the Japanese army activities during WWII in Nakorn Nayok, Thailand, and developed social media content and e-book about the history of Japanese army in Nakorn Nayok during WWII. Currently, the information is not commonly known to the public now a day, even in the area. From the interview with local people, in general, they have no more memory of the period. The recognition of the human relationship between Thai and Japanese during the time will be lost forever if we donot have this important historical information available to the public. Such collection of local history and physical evidence from WWII could be utilized to enhance the relationship between Thailand and Japan though local history. This information could also contribute to create a new tourist attractions and income for locals via tourism activities, while conserving the cultural heritage. The result of the research can be utilized further to wider public awareness through social mediaand e-book that were produced, and at local exhibition. This will play an important role

to strengthen Thai-Japanese friendship and conserve war-time heritage and memories to the next generation.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation (Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

20 Nov 2023 CRMA Academic Exhibition 2023 The title “*Revealing The Past: Geo-Informatics Search for The Japanese Army Camp During World War II and Its Local History in Nakorn Nayok, Thailand: The Progress Result*” (Figure 6)

In near future: 18 Nov 2024 CRMA Academic Exhibition 2024 The title “*Revealing The Past: Geo-Informatics Search for The Japanese Army Camp During World War II and Its Local History in Nakorn Nayok, Thailand: The Final Result*”

Thesis (Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

Book (Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)