

Graphical Representation of Place in Conservatory Tourism Design

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Abstract

In the city of ancient history for hundreds of years, Banglumphu as a historical tourism site has been promoted to be a popular tourist destination in Bangkok. Tourism businesses come along and eradicate some part of historical architecture and the local's way of life. Using traditional and digital media to convey the story of Banglumphu can be a challenge. Evaluating the sense of place from its architecture, religion, communities, and gastronomic categories and using them for media design in delivering a significant message of long history could stimulate historical tourism in learning the real Banglumphu. Photographic surveys and interviews are used to discover the history of the area as primary research alongside literature research. The shape of place identity in each category for this study has been used in developing the design. The meaning of shape delivers place memory and place attachment to the tourists to recognize Banglumphu with their impressive stay. The marketing media and map of attraction place based on the history known to the locals hopefully enhances tourist discovery of Banglumphu as a historical site and triggers their good memory after a visit.

Keywords - Sense of Place, Conservatory Tourism, Place Identity, Traditional Design

1. Introduction

Tourism is one most important industries for Thailand economy. In tourism business alone can increase revenue for Thai businesses across the country. Many development projects are supporting the tourism industry including food and beverage, accommodation, logistics and transportation, hospitality management. The influx of international tourists come from different parts of the globe circulated Thai Tourism industry has been flowing throughout the country. New and renovate businesses especially the accommodation industry has been tremendously growing. Supporting each tourism industry's sector is Information Technology and media design.

The design of media in communicating to the tourists who come from different parts of the world can be a huge challenge but it can establish a great impact on the tourism ecosystem. Bangkok as the capital city of Thailand has been a major destination city for tourists in different parts of the world ever since ancient times. The previous King has cooperated with many countries in knowledge exchange and establish alliances throughout the globe. Bangkok is recognized as a vibrant non-stopped city of angle enriching with ancient history, delicious local food, and cultural diversity. Most tourists found themselves within the ancient city alongside the modernization of the current era. Tourists can relate themselves with cultural diversity under a comfortable environment of the Thai life style.

Banglumphu is one such city in Bangkok. Being a historical location in the heart of Bangkok, it attracts lots of tourists from all over the globe. Many come to Banglumphu for relaxation and slow life. What Banglumphu has to offer is a simple way of life and cultural diversity. One important attraction in Banglumphu is Khao San Road. Foreign tourists came to Khao San Road a long time ago. Since then, they have never been lacking foreign tourists. Songkran or Water Festival is one of the most attended festivities in Khao San Road. Even if it turns out to be an attractive place, lots of problems arise for local people and businesses. Local people adapt themselves in gaining profit. Most of them see it as an opportunity to gain some revenue. At the same time, outsiders also come to gain some benefit from Banglumphu's popularity. Looking through the area, there are lots of historical sites that most tourists must see and learn more from. Local communities need to adapt and fight back to gain more profit themselves. This is how this research came along in discovering Banglumphu as a historical site and gain insight into the area. What is the real Banglumphu? What are some interesting historical sites that need to be touched on and explore by the tourist?

Sense of Place is developed based on the connectivity of people and place (Dameria, 2018). In gaining more insight into places, tourists gain a better understanding and get attached to the place. The relationship between tourists and historical places can be intimated and related. The researcher should return the power of place ownership of the local in delivering the right meaning of place memory for tourists, Margaret Rodman said (Ruotsala, 2008). Research information about each place can be done through literature review or local communities' interviews. The stories within each place can deliver ownership of that place among local people (Mulligan, 2004). The older generation in the community delivered and expressed place attachment through the memorable story in the past. Place attachment is the connection of place with people and their environment. It can be in a historical, economical or psychological sense. This attachment can affect the value of a place to the people psychologically (Ujang, 2015). Knowing the city not so well but understanding the value of heritage sites can leverage the historical place in the city through the appropriateness of city development (Chow, 2012). Considering the physical form of the place or build environment can present the relationship of place with people, however, what is embedded within the place is its history and story that interact with not only people in the community but a visitor from the outside community (Ujanga, 2015). In achieving better results to promote tourism in a postmodern world, the place identity, phenomenal and impressive culture needs to be presented and demonstrated within appropriate tourism context (Domšić, 2013). In terms of place identity, the geometric shape can be used to identify the area based on the combination of shapes. There are 3 types of shapes – Geometric, Organic, and Abstract. Each shape when used represented a different meaning, for example, stability can use a square to represent it, and a circle instead can depict wholeness in design. Some shapes with different directions can depict distinctively as triangles point up and point down. Triangle point up means power, on the other hand, point down represents instability (Velarde, 2018).

This research objective of this research aims to discover different attractions and local life style in Banglumphu. Then, searching identity of Banglumphu is examined in each group of attractions and local lifestyle related. Lastly, marketing media is designed with identity for tourism promotion.

2. Methodology

In this research, using photography to utilize in a survey as a tool had been extensively used throughout the process. Walking along the area and taking photographs of attraction places were probably the first methods in exploring the area and engaging in some historical places. Taking a photograph of each possible attraction developed a knowledge-based of attraction site in the area. Multiple photographs had been taken and recognized as a memorable place for this experimental site. An affinity diagram has been used to group them into four categories - historical architecture, religion, community, and gastronomy. Ten historical places have been selected and examined in the historical architecture category. Eight temples, two mosques, four shrines, one local Hindu Gods' Collection shrine, and some other shrines in the selected case study area have been determined for the religion category. Eight communities have been picked for the community category. Some prominent gastronomic places have been selected for the gastronomic category. The differentiation or single out each group can determine the identity of each category and define the geometrical shape for media design meaningfully. Place identity needs to be defined and understood through historical research and local interview.

Local people can express their physical and emotional attachment to the place. This place attachment information is examined and conversely determined the identity of attracting categories – historical architecture, religion, communities, and gastronomic.

Secondary research was done for each place to obtain in-depth information. In gaining insight into linkage between place and local communities, interviewing people in communities has been conducted. Next, the graphical representation was drawn and developed for tourism marketing in related media such as Rack Card and Tourist Map.

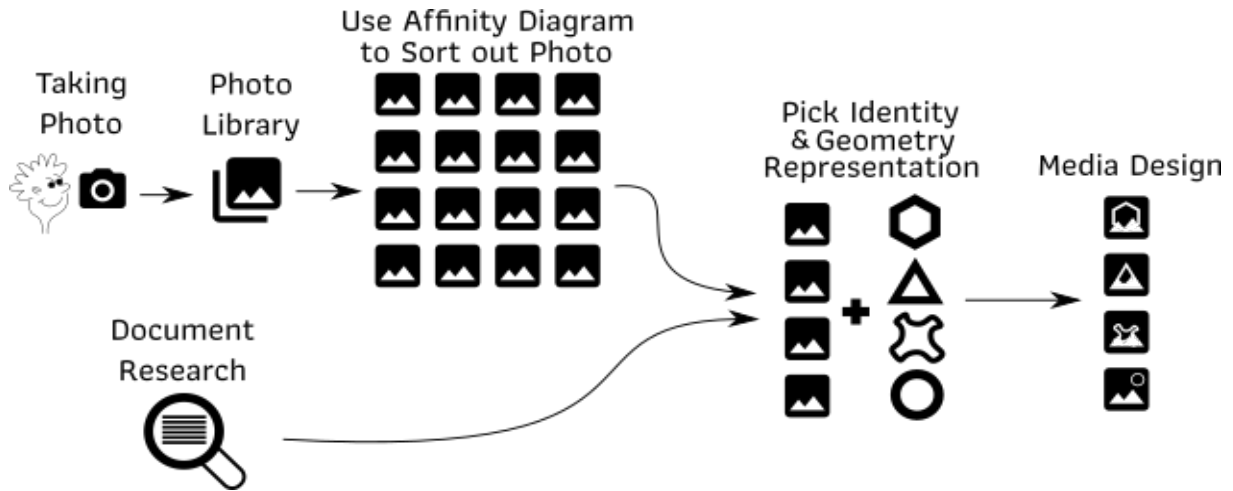


Figure 1. Process Diagram

Theoretically, the survey is the process to investigate and examine different viewpoints of each place. In each category of this research, interest has a different characteristic in presenting its place and identity. Place identity can be identified by its chronological period, its location, and its memorable of related community. History can also play an important role in determining the place identity as much as other factors. The content of in-depth interview can be critical information to examine place attachment between the previous generation and significance of place toward communities.

Combining secondary research information of all places in order to define the identity for each category was the next step to determine the identity for each category. The identity was picked based on different criteria as memorable place, important landmark, similarity. In that identity place picked, the geometrical shape had been applied for recognition. Each geometric shape then used in media design to promote the area.

3. Result and Discussion

Some collected photographs from the survey have been put into 4 categories as shown below for some sample photographs in figure 2 – 5 for each category respectively. Phra Sumeth fort has been picked for the identity of historical architecture. Wat Bowonniweth Vihara has been picked for religion. Lumphu tree has been picked to represent the community. Container and cooking equipment has been picked to represent gastronomy. All categories and their geometric shape represented in figure 6 with some explanation.



Figure 2. Some sample photographs of architecture category



Figure 3. Some sample photographs of religion category

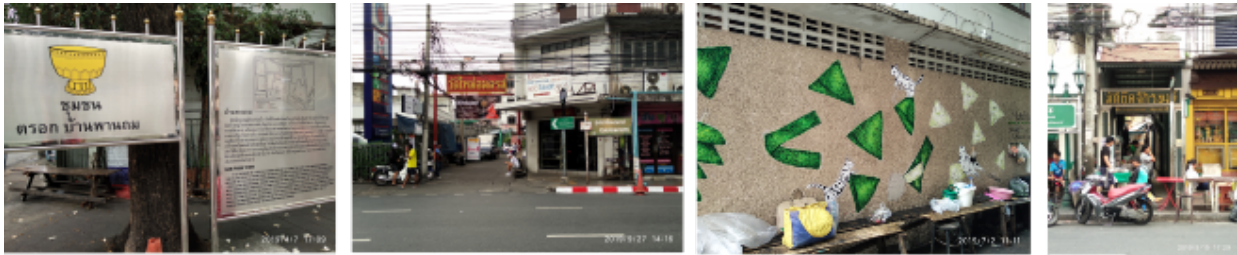


Figure 4. Some sample photographs of community category



Figure 5. Some sample photographs of gastronomy category

Interviewing with the locals gave some insight into the historic life. Most people who settled here came mostly from the south and Indonesia as a royal workers. The first Muslim group who settled in the area came from the south. They brought Islamic culture and gastronomic taste. The non-Islamic settlers who stayed in the different communities had mostly served in the palace. They brought tradition and culture along. This area used to be an old palace with a fort and wall all around. The only fort left in this area is Phra Sumeth fort which later becomes iconic and a gathering place for local communities. It depicts as an iconic landmark of this area and portrays the lifestyle of communities around it. Mon is another group who came to settle in this area because of the royal relation. Mon had supported Buddhism and brought gastronomic culture. Wat Chanasongkram has been the center for Mon support. The linkage between Mon and Buddhism was clear. Wat Bowonniweth Vihara, on the other hand, has been one most important temples in this area at more than 200 years old. It collected some of the royal relics. Most of the significant traditions involved this temple. It also became the centre of the Buddhist community. Chakkramong on the other hand became the centre for the Muslim community before Baan Tukdin was built. Most people who have lived in communities around temples and mosques have been living there for a very long period. This area has been through a tough time with all the fire and flood due to the riverbank location. There used to be a famous local market that brought people together. After a big fire broke in, the area was changed differently. The river and canal were used as the main transport. The first street, Chareonkrung, came later. This new road brought new civilization to the area. The monorail was also used. One other popular is the department store. It was the centre of fashion and civilization. Even though the centre of fashion has moved to other areas, but food especially traditional street style is still very popular in this area with the variation of gastronomic taste in Bangkok. Bangkokian remembers this area mostly for food and commercial

goods nowadays. Based on this brief interview data, the relationship between people and place has been established a long time ago. The memory of the place is still clear to most of them.

History and Place attachment for Banglumphu is quite important in long and interesting history that related to most of the remaining architecture within the area. Some of its architecture has been destroyed and rebuilt. Some had been altered and built new environments surrounding it to serve a different purpose for its communities. As for its architecture, the historical story behind each one was impressive and related to the area established in the beginning. The remaining architecture can represent and portrait the obvious history of the area. There were several forts in this area right along the borderline. Phra Sumeth Fort is the only fort left in this area that used to serve as protection to the old Palace in the past. Most of the other forts had been demolished. Phra Sumeth today is transformed into a park and a meeting place for communities to gather and deliver activities. It locates near Phra Athit Pier where the Chao Phraya Express boat comes to deliver tourists from the main Pier (Taksin Pier). The area itself demonstrates the portrait of local lifestyle in bas-relief.

On the opposite side is the Lumphu tree which is the identity for the community category. Tree considers representing life in this community setting. The name Banglumphu came from the word Bang and Lumphu. Bang means the area of a city that has a water body running across the area. Lumphu is the name of a tree that becomes the centre of its communities. Lumphu tree attracts fireflies very well. The oldest approximately 100 years old Lumphu tree just died. Some new trees have been replaced steadily. Lumphu tree can then represent the heart of communities in Banglumphu.

In religion categories, Wat Bowonniweth as one most important temples in this area become the icon of the area in representing the religion category. Wat Bowonniweth has a long history related to the late King for more than 200 years. Some remains of the past Rattanakosin Kings are within this temple including our beloved late King Rama the Ninth. One big golden Chedi has been outstanding. It can be spotted from afar. Many visitors and tourists have come to visit in many different periods.

In the gastronomic category, the process of determining the identity has changed a bit into a holistic process. That means the whole items in this category has been looked at and determined their similarity within. One criterion that has been explored was the type of food. Street food has been popular in this area. Banglumphu has been popular for food for a long period. Being a hub of business and gastronomic for Phra Nakhon district, one of its well-known features is a place for all kinds of street food, fruit and vegetable. Most street foods are on a food cart. There has adopted original taste. Some street foods have been there for seventy to eighty years. They passed on from the previous generation to the next. The determination was not the chronological of the food or how long the food was passing along. It related mostly to the method of taking the food. Plate, both form and traditional material, consider being used at all times. The shape can be varied. Most of it is in a circle with different depths and styles. The repeating shape can determine to represent the decoration of any type of food.



Figure 6. Identity of each group and which shape that fit

As the meaning of shape, the hexagon can represent architecture category based on Phra Sumeth Fort. Hexagon as in graphical representation can mean strong, steady, and obvious based on the psychology of shape. In

religion uses the triangle represents the shape of Chedi which means steady, openness, and development. For the community, as said earlier, Lumphu tree would represent a free form of shape toward an ever-changing and diverse community in Banglumphu. Lastly, the gastronomic category can be well represented by circle meaning the holistic well-rounded spectacular taste, the especially original one. The shape can highlight and elevate the design including the place as well.

The rack card design can be done in a combination of each representative shape and a photographic representation of each place in each category. Figures 7 - 10 show some examples of rack cards that create based on each category and its shape.



Figure 7. - Architecture Route



Figure 8. Religion Route

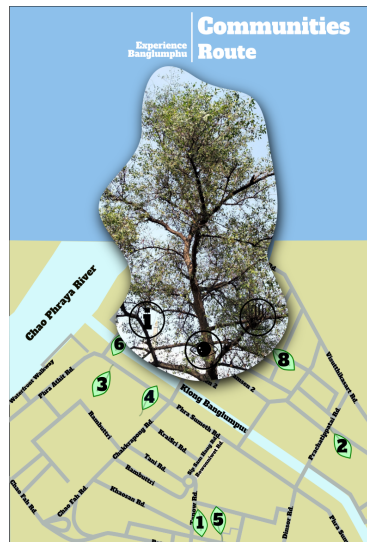


Figure 9. Community Route



Figure 10. Gastronomic Route

Graphic Designer Expert has an opinion that Thai graphical elements should be included in the design. It should add to every aspect of the work to establish the Thai mood and tone of the design, however, it can be in modern design as well. The graphical representation needs to extend the original place. Modern design should not need to be with only modern content. It should be able to represent every context in a modern way. If the Thai pattern elements are added, it might dominant the design and distract the user from looking at the Thai graphical element. Using modern design with no distract help user focus more on the subject and quickly access more to the subject. This expert also said that surrounded elements such as border, map, and numbering point should gain more treatment of Thai conservative sense to express the conservative design. The researcher thinks that the design should be in a modern design approach. The design should be simple and focus mainly on information that needs to be explored. Adding more elements or creating high decorative elements to reflect the mood and tone of historical experience might decrease the ability to display accurate information to the user. As information concerned, the design should be as clean as possible to minimize the information search and give more attention to the photography. One others designer, on the other hand, thinks that the overall design is good. Despite the controversial discussion in disagreement of expert comment, experimental design modification of religion and community route poster based on the first expert comment are shown in figure 11 and 12.

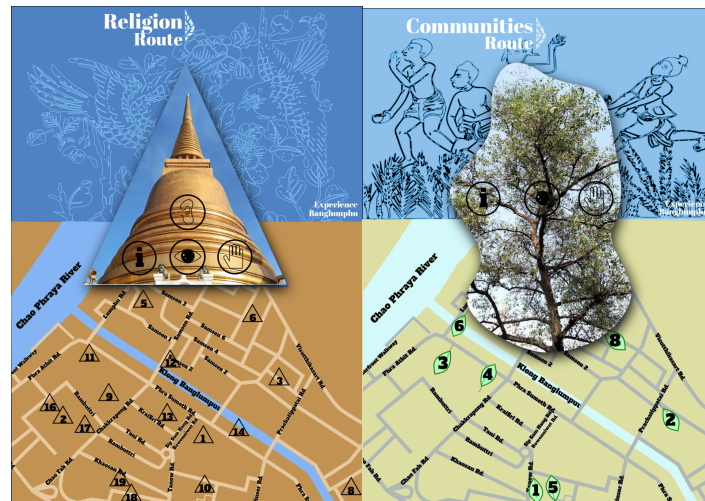


Figure.11 and 12 Religion and Community Routes

The purpose of this experimental modification is to reflect historical image and still maintain the simplicity and clean of the design that precisely represents information to the user.

4. Conclusion

Historical conservatory place come in with chronological constraint that related and expresses its story with a sense of place in place attachment and place memory. The relationship of people within communities alongside historical place demonstrate storytelling quality by itself. Extract the architectural or context form in each category for this research that related to its identity can toggle place memory that attached not only local communities' members but also tourists. Each graphical representation is also depicted its quality that related to the quality of each place identity. Categories of representation in this research are related directly to Banglumphu area. Each graphical representation initial the recognition of place for tourists in the future. They work as a trigger in place memory and establish place attachment within tourist consciousness.

In the final touch of this research, people in the communities can deliver a story that is related and recognized to the historical place. Graphical representation in geometry-shape based on the historical form can also toggle place memory through place identity and create place attachment within tourist once visited. Good memory through traditional design with graphical representation based on place identity and memory can create one possible chronological memory of a historical site.

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