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# THE PRIVATE ARCHITECTURAL HERITAGE RENOVATION WAS CREATED TO THE NEW TOURIST ATTRACTION CASE STUDY “LHONG 1919, 19<sup>TH</sup> CENTURY CHINESE MANSION” BANGKOK THAILAND.

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## ABSTRACT

This paper tries to focus on the renovation conceptual design to turn the old private architectural heritage to the public mixed-use space and create a new tourist attraction. There are many reasons to renovate the significance architectural heritage and one among the others is a tourism attraction purpose. Lhong 1919 Bangkok, a 19th century Chinese mansion, is a good example that has been fully renovated and opened as a tourist attraction. It mixes Bangkok heritage with shopping, dining and lots of interesting photo opportunities – it ticks all the boxes for a fun day out in Bangkok. The center point of this old Chinese manor is the large shrine to Mazu, the Chinese goddess of seafarers. The air is heavy with the scent of incense and smoke and many people will kneel to say a prayer. As you walk around the courtyard and rooms, you will be able to see period fixtures and artefacts displayed for visitors to see. In parts, it feels a little like a theme park recreation of what a 19th century Chinese mansion should be, but it's still wildly popular with locals and visitors. The Wang Lee family, an old Thai Chinese family, has transformed the original pier buildings into a shopping, entertainment, live stage and restaurant complex. Many original features have been preserved, and Lhong 1919 has a lot of regular events attracting mainly the locals, and transformed to the new tourist attraction on the left bank of Choa Praya River.

**Keywords:** Architectural heritage, Renovation, Lhong 1919

## INTRODUCTION

Over 130 years ago, Teochew adventurer Tan Siew-Wang sailed from Southern China to Bangkok, where he founded the Wanglee clan, one of Thailand's most prominent Thai-Chinese family dynasties, now in its 5th generation. Virtually nothing is known of the Wanglee forbear, who took up residence next to a Chao Phraya River steamship pier, built in 1850 to receive vessels from China, Hong Kong, and Singapore.

Lhong 1919 is a historic port and warehouse in siheyuan style (Chinese courtyard architecture), it was built in 1850 as a port for shipping from overseas such as British Malaya, Mainland China or British Hong Kong. Its name is derived from the word Huang Chung Lhong (火船廊; lit: steamer port), which is an old name. Until 1919, the Wanglee family was acquired and finally became an owner.

For the very best location of this significance architectural heritage, Lhong 1919 Bangkok, a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Chinese mansion, was built on the bank of Choa Praya River. Old storage facilities on Charoenkrung, Lhong 1919 (Thai: ล้ง 1919; Chinese: 廊 1919) is a tourist attraction on the west bank of Chao Phraya River in Bangkok's Thonburi side in concept

similar to Asiatique The Riverfront in Phra Nakhon side. Located at Khlong San Sub-District, Khlong San District, Bangkok.

Until October 2016, Wanglee family renovated it as a tourist attraction and a new landmark of Khlong San and Tha Din Deang area. Renovation completed and it was officially opened on the evening of November 2, 2017. Lhong 1919, there are eateries, cafés, photography spots, art and craft shops, co-working space, learning center about Thai-Chinese relations history and resting place with good atmosphere along the river.

The center point of this place is the large shrine to Mazu, the goddess of the sea and seafaring according to Chinese beliefs since ancient times. This shrine was built from the Wanglee family to own this place. The air is heavy with the scent of incense and smoke and many people will kneel to say a prayer

## **OBJECTIVE**

1. This paper tries to focus on the renovation of conceptual design to turn the old private architectural heritage to the public mixed-use space and create a new tourist attraction.

2. To study the successful project of the private architectural heritage renovation case study, Lhong 1919.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### **Method of study**

#### **1. Documentation research**

- Observing and collecting tourism information and details
- Observing the behavior of local communities that are involved . Lhong 1919 Bangkok as a comparison.
- Reviewing all literature pertaining to cultural or sustainable tourism
- Studying all documents relating to places and activities in . Lhong 1919 Bangkok from both primary sources and secondary sources, such as diaries, local documents, ancient photographs, maps, reports and related studies.
- Collecting the original and ancient information from national archives.

#### **2. Site research**

- Site survey of siheyuan style (Chinese courtyard architecture), to gather general information of the existing physical landscape and its architectural heritage. Photographing and mapping the site
- Data will be collected from the local community, visitors and local authority.
- This will be studied, collected and reviewed to establish the architectural heritage Lhong 1919 assessing and analyzing the potential and planning the promotion of cultural tourism.

### **Where is Lhong 1919 and How to get there?**

Lhong 1919 is located just right by the Chao Phraya River here in Bangkok, Thailand.

Opening Hours: 09:00-22:00 BTS: Saphan Taksin (take the free shuttle boat from Sathorn Pier in front of the station) Address: Lhong 1919, 248 Chiang Mai Rd., Bangkok Riverside Tel: +66 (0)91 187 1919

How to get there: To get to Lhong 1919, take the BTS to Saphan Taksin. In front of the station, you'll find Sathorn Pier. There are free shuttle boats to and from the pier, roughly every 30 minutes.

The public pier on the riverside is not officially opened so visits require some trip planning. Try taking the river-crossing boat from Si Phraya pier to Klongsan pier and walking along Soi Wat<sup>1</sup> Thong Thammachart

### **Historic place turned to sight seeing place to explore**

Constructed in 1849 by Phraya Pisal Suppapol, a Chinese Thai Official, to be cargo disembark port for steamboat from China as trade cooperation under the Treaty of Friendship and Commerce between the British Empire and the Kingdom of Siam so-called Bowring Treat. This 167-year-old port was sold to "Wang Lee" Family, a Chinese tycoon in 1919. It is not only the port to unload cargos but also Chinese people who first come from mainland China to seek fortune in Thailand. It has been abandoned for quite sometimes and just have been renovated as a new tourist destination to come and see history of this place with old atmosphere back in 1849 mixed with new trendy renovation. At the moment (Nov 2017), the renovation still not finish. Some shops are open, I just only have a chance to peek in a shop selling aromatic oil and enjoy lunch + dinner at "Nai Harng" & "Rong Si"<sup>2</sup>, the 2 restaurant operates at the moment. The latter is by the river and have more space with extensive menu mainly seafood. The property has free ferry shuttle serving between Sathorn pier

(Hilton Millanium hotel pier), Si Praya pier (next to Royal river shopping complex pier) every hour but no fix schedule. Parking lot is also available (open air). Quiet interesting to explore

### **The attraction**

Lhong 1919 has reclaimed a group of old warehouses and a Chinese shrine dating back to King Rama IV (1851-1868) for its 6,800 sq meters of co-working space, eateries and art and design shops spotlighting the work of young artists.

The riverfront mixed-used project is a new destination for Bangkokians hankering for an outdoor venue at which to spend money on design products from eight locally-owned shops.

The brand lineup ensures that this will be a favorite shopping destination of moneyed hipsters. Zettino provides men's leather goods, Hummingbird sells beautifully decorated plants, and Studio is showcasing Chinese design-inflected furniture.

Not in the mood to shop? Iberry's new restaurant Rong Si serves up Thai standards, as does Thai cafe and restaurant Ploenwan Panich's new branch. Karmakamet's also has an eatery here.

The ground floor of the main building has a row of boutique stores. For home furnishings, candles and other gorgeously scented items, check out Thai brand Karma Kamet. Zettino is a leather brand, which makes wallets, belts and various other apparel. Other shops sell plants, homeware and fashion, and there's a souvenir shop at the roadside entrance. If you get hungry, there's a Thai restaurant and a smart coffee shop set up on the riverside. If you just fancy a casual snack or fruit smoothie, you'll find several stalls along the main thoroughfare leading up to the shrine.

**Figure 1**  
**Lhong1919 is located just right by the Chao Phraya River here in Bangkok,Thailan**



### **Chinese Influences on Thai Culture**

It's been years and years like hundreds that Chinese people started to come in and do some business in Thailand. Many of them migrated and live here for generations. A lot of Thai people are hybrid Thai-Chinese. The center point of this old Chinese manor is the large shrine to Mazu<sup>3</sup> the Chinese goddess of seafarers. The air is heavy with the scent of incense and smoke and many people will kneel to say a prayer. As you walk around the courtyard and rooms, you can see period fixtures and artefacts displayed for visitors to see. In parts, it feels a little like a theme park recreation of what a 19<sup>th</sup>-century Chinese mansion should be, but it's still wildly popular with locals and visitors.

**Figure 2**  
**The old Chinese manor is the large shrine to Mazu**



**Figure 3**  
**An interior of the old Chinese shrine**





**Figure 4**

**The original warehouse before renovation**



**Figure 5**

**The original warehouse after renovation**



### **Historic Chinese Pier**

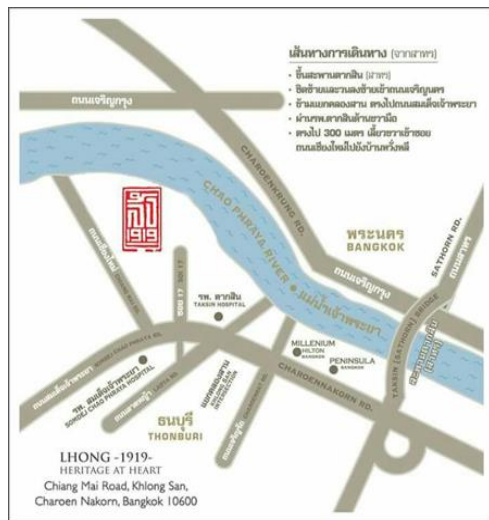
Besides historic buildings and ancient Chinese arts by the Chao Phraya River, Lhong 1919 (ล้ง 1919) also got a large shrine at the place. The Chinese goddess of seafarers where you could go pay some respect. A lot of Thai-Chinese people do believe in this sort of things. Go ask for what they want at shrines, temples or even some big trees that people have them decorated with colorful clothes.

**Figure 6**

**Chinese young woman graffiti on the entrance wall. The artist worked on Chinese old painting**



**Figure 8**



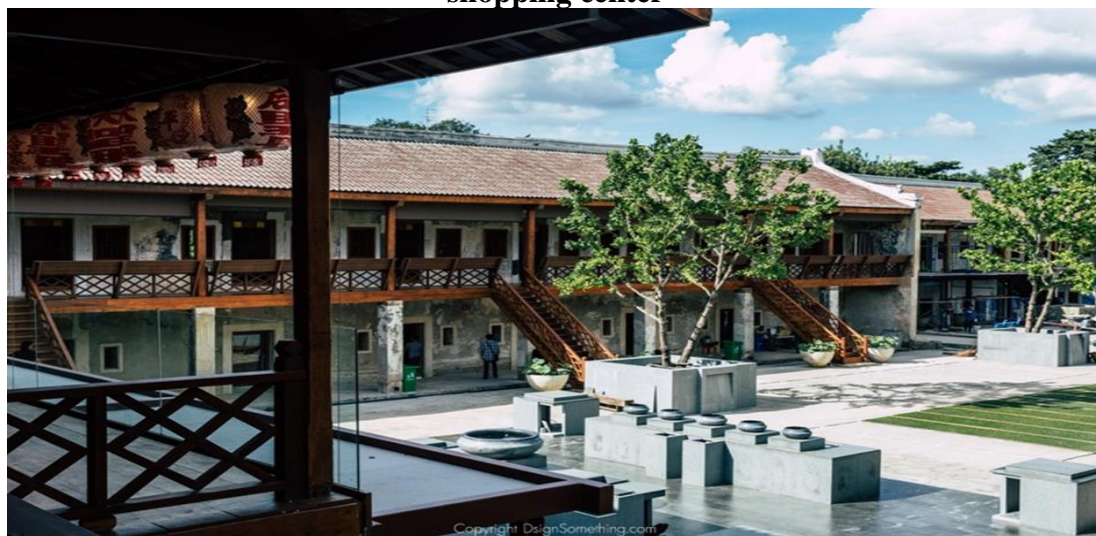
**Figure 9**  
**Lhong 1919 location map**  
**Lhong 1919 directory**



## CONCLUSION

Unlike Asiatique, who lost its original character due to over renovation, Lhong 1919 has been very carefully refurbished preserving the old vibes, and try to keep the old character of the architectural style. The Wang Lee family, an old Thai Chinese family, has transformed the original pier buildings into a shopping, entertainment, live stage and restaurant complex. Many original features have been preserved, and Lhong 1919 has a lot of regular events attracting mainly the locals. Lhong 1919 Bangkok is a 19th century Chinese mansion that has been fully restored and opened as an attraction. It mixes Bangkok heritage with shopping, dining and lots of interesting photo opportunities – it ticks all the boxes for a fun day out in Bangkok. It is necessary to have a central Authority to be the coordinator to collect all the construction documents of the signification historical place as the cultural heritage documents. This will be useful for the studying, explore, and conserve this architectural heritage in a correct and perfect procedures. (nimmol, korkiat, 2015)

**Figure 10**  
**The complete renovation of Lhong 1919 to transform the original pier building to shopping center**



## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my sincere thanks to Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University for invaluable help throughout this research.

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