



Illustration by Elena Kalashnik

Our Framework

ALPHA seeks to engender empathy, ethics, and civic and social engagement among learners and teachers. Our experiential learning methods engage both the rational and emotional capacities of learners. We use a variety of tools and approaches ranging from interactive learning sessions and workshops to art, literature, primary and secondary historical sources, and artifacts.

About ALPHA Education

ALPHA Education is an educational non-profit organization and a registered charity in Canada that promotes a critical-historical investigation of the events of World War II in Asia. Our goal is to activate historical memory and dialogue in order to promote justice, peace, reconciliation, healing, closure, and cross-cultural understanding.

For more information about the DAP and how to become a DAP volunteer, please visit our website: www.alphaeducation.org

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DIGITAL ARCHIVE PROJECT

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“You can’t do research if you don’t have an archive. But if you don’t have a history, you can’t get an archive.”

Maria Cortera, Archival Legibility and Invisibility Panel, Modern Language Association (MLA) Convention 2016



ALPHA'S DIGITAL ARCHIVE PROJECT

The Digital Archive Project (DAP) aims to build a large volume of educational and instructional material as well as research aids that feature primary resources about World War II in Asia. We work closely with volunteer researchers who contribute to the DAP as researchers, translators, transcribers, and annotators. The DAP offers students and volunteers a valuable learning experience. Volunteers participate in a series of modules on historical thinking and other critical approaches to history. In turn, DAP Volunteers help educate other students and the broader public about the history of World War II in Asia.



In 1992, Maria Rosa Henson became the first Filipina to speak publicly about her experiences as a comfort woman (military sex slave) for the Imperial Japanese Army during the Second World War. (Photo from Henson's autobiography published in 2016)

'Silences are, in part, the manifestation of the actions of the powerful in denying the marginal access to archives, which has a significant impact on the ability of the marginal groups to form social memory and history.'

Rodney G.S. Carter, Of Things Said and Unsaid: Power, Archival Silences, and Power in Silence, Archivaria (2006)

ALPHA adopts a critical approach to annotation as path-building.

ALPHA considers the pedagogical aspect of building the digital archive every bit as important as its final and material output: the archive's collections, which showcase the lesser known and suppressed narratives of World War II history in Asia. Taking inspiration from critical approaches to historical thinking, which emphasizes the development of historical literacy and encourage reflection on the moral dimensions of historical memory, the DAP offers volunteers a unique opportunity to develop critical approaches to writing history, as well as to archival and museum studies. Volunteers' assignments mainly involve:

- **Research on Primary Sources** and
- **The Development of Collections**



Above: a man approaches injured children in aftermath of the November 1937 bombing of Shanghai railway station during the Sino-Japanese War (Topical Press Agency/Getty Images)
Below: Unit 731 Scientist (Courtesy of the Alliance for Preserving the Truth of the Sino-Japanese War)

DAP Volunteers undergo an application and screening process which considers the volunteers' previous research and writing experience. Our current pool of researcher volunteers range from scholars and experts in history, Asian civilizations, international relations, law, and political science, to history enthusiasts and peace and justice advocates.

Some DAP Volunteers are also our former interns and participants in ALPHA's Joint Summer Internship with the Unit 731 Research Center at Harbin, and the Nanjing Massacre Memorial and Peace Museum in China. Through these exchanges, our interns visit museums and view historical sites overseas, as well as gain access to primary sources.

