

Shophouses in Phetchaburi: A Community-based Approach to Conservation and Tourism

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Abstract

Throughout the vernacular shophouses in Thailand there are places worth keeping because they enrich our lives - by helping us understand the past, by contributing to the richness of the present environment. In Phetchaburi, the unique simple living and traditional lifestyle are preserved by the old generations who have lived there. The existing traces well indicate ways of living, cultures, traditions, beliefs, economies, and community societies.

Thai community society is the actual agrarian one which is the core of the existence of the community. In addition, agriculture is the foundation of the country's economies. Local cultures are beautifully grown by agriculture. Benefits from agriculture do not include only products, but also the emergence of the sibling commercial community. Factual rural development processes must not be shadowed by economically stimulated factors but should emphasize on true values in societies and transferred issues of agrarian society. Buddhist Economics Theory echoes contemporary concepts in Thai culture as it harmonizes with knowledge of a self-sufficient economy. Imparting knowledge to local communities will ensure that they can help themselves achieve a reasonably good quality of life and become acquainted with external changes, thereby strengthening their communities and resulting in economic and environmental restoration.

If the community could carry on agriculture, such community could possess sustainability. They could be self-dependent without relying on other external factors. As a result, the image of beautiful ways of living and real sustainable community is clearly presented. The appropriate way to manage the tourism system in the community of vernacular shophouses will constitute a guideline for the local communities, as well as government and tourism organization, to engage in an appropriate form of sustainable tourism development for shophouses community in Thailand as a whole.

Key words : community based tourism, vernacular shophouse, self-sufficient economy, buddhist economics theory

บทคัดย่อ

จากการศึกษาสภาพการดำรงอยู่ของเรือนค้าขายพื้นถิ่นในประเทศไทย พบว่าเรือนลักษณะดังกล่าวมีปรากฏทั่วไปทุกจังหวัด มีประวัติความเป็นมาที่น่าสนใจและความงดงามเชิงสถาปัตยกรรม, วิถีชีวิตและวัฒนธรรมในชุมชนที่สืบทอดกันมาช้านาน เพชรบุรีเป็นอีกพื้นที่ที่ยังคงสภาพวิถีชีวิตความเป็นอยู่ภายในเรือนและสังคมวัฒนธรรมในชุมชนไว้อย่างสมบูรณ์

สังคมชนบทไทยโดยแก่นแท้คือสังคมเกษตรกรรมอันเป็นหัวใจหลักในการดำรงอยู่ของชุมชน มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมมีชุมชนชนบทที่มีการเกษตรกรรมเป็นพื้นฐานทางวัฒนธรรม เป็นผู้สืบทอด และสานต่อให้ดำรงอยู่ชั่วลูกหลาน เป็นต้นทุนทางการท่องเที่ยวที่หากเสื่อมสลายไปก็ยากจะฟื้นกลับให้ดีเหมือนเก่า การจะดำรงไว้ซึ่งชุมชนและวิถีชีวิตจะต้องเข้าใจและให้คนในชุมชนได้รับรู้และมีส่วนร่วมในการตัดสินใจ นอกจากนั้นชุมชนจะต้องมีความเข้มแข็งการใช้ชีวิตโดยพึ่งพาปัจจัยภายนอกชุมชนเป็นหลักทำให้เสียดุลยภาพในการดำเนินชีวิต และนำไปสู่การล่มสลายของชุมชนในที่สุด การฟื้นฟูวิถีเกษตรกรรมที่เคยเป็นหลักในการดำรงชีวิตของชาวชนบทมาเนิ่นนาน การหวนกลับสู่วัฒนธรรมการเกษตรที่ใช้หลักพุทธเศรษฐศาสตร์ อันเป็นแนวคิดร่วมสมัยในสังคมไทยที่สอดคล้องกับความรู้เรื่องเศรษฐกิจพอเพียง ทำให้ชุมชนพึ่งตนเองได้โดยไม่ต้องพึ่งพาปัจจัยภายนอก ส่งผลให้สภาพความเป็นอยู่ดีขึ้น เป็นคำตอบของการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืน ความงดงามในวิถีชีวิตของชุมชนจะกลับคืนมาและเป็นปัจจัยสำคัญที่สุดในการดึงดูดความสนใจให้นักท่องเที่ยวมาชมวัฒนธรรมของชุมชนเรือนค้าขายพื้นถิ่น ทั้งในเพชรบุรีและจังหวัดอื่นๆ ทั่วประเทศ

คำสำคัญ : เรือนค้าขายพื้นถิ่น, เศรษฐกิจพอเพียง, พุทธเศรษฐศาสตร์, จังหวัดเพชรบุรี การจัดการการท่องเที่ยว

Nowadays, old-fashioned shophouses have gradually given way to modern buildings. In major provincial towns, most shophouses are left in a dilapidated states and many of them are being torn down or awaiting demolition. However, in many urban areas in Thailand, some beautifully living vernacular shophouses of the past can still be found. Before these houses become simply a found memory, further studies should be conducted on these buildings and their relations to social and historical contexts¹.

Fig. 1 Shophouse Community, a Living Heritage of Phetchaburi
Photograph from survey in February 2006 taken by author



However, the management of community tourism and cultural heritage mostly focuses on the economic advantages. The benefits derived from tourism are used for the development of the community in order to ensure the continued existence of that community. In reality, these methods are constricted and fail in terms of community management, unfortunately resulting in the collapse of the community. The management of community tourism and cultural heritage should help strengthen the community and make it to really self-dependent before bringing tourism into such an area.

In Phetchaburi, 124 shophouses out of a total of 167 are in poor condition. Amidst the threats and conflicts caused by globalization, the future, with regard to preserving these vernacular shophouses, seems rather hopeless if the owners and local authorities do not understand and realize the quality and importance of such places.

¹ Sangaroon Kanokpongchai, *The History of Rowhouses*, Muang Boran journal, Vol.24 No.2 April-June 1998. p.82-91

According to the preservation of communities through many economic systems, the economic stability is the most important to preserve the way of living in communities. Thai economy development should start by building strengths from bottom up; that is from families, communities, districts, and locals. A contemporary concept in Thai culture as it harmonizes with knowledge on sufficient economy and is a basis for understanding Buddhist economics. Being self-reliance of the local society is an answer to problems of economic development that focuses on production and later turns into destruction.

Statement of the Problems

The Bowring Treaty, which Thailand signed in 1855, brought about significant changes in the culture of Thai rice farmers. It has changed the lives of Thai farmers, especially in the central region, from one of self-sufficiency to one geared towards trade and export.

Since the era of Admiral Sarith Thanarat , the expansion of the market economy and capitalism has affected villagers to a profound degree, prompting them to gear their production pattern to sales instead of self-sufficiency.² Large-scale production in large areas has led to environmental destruction, the invasion of forests, and most importantly, has resulted in villagers producing fewer types of products, or even only one product, to obtain a greater output. Therefore, villagers must reduce or cease production of a number of varieties of produce that used to form the basis of their own their livelihood, and have thus become less self-reliant. In the current marketing economy, agriculture is doing a great deal of harm, is not suitable for the agriculturalists themselves, and leads to the disintegration of the local community. People have to leave their hometown, moving either to inner cities or abroad in search of work. Many women become prostitutes, while children have to sell their labor in factories.

This paper is concerned with the relationship between communities driven by tourism development and vernacular shophouses. The example selected for the study of tourism management regarding vernacular shophouses is in “Ampur Muang Phetch”.

² Srisakara Vallibhotoma, ทักษะ
นอกรีต สังคม-วัฒนธรรม ในวิถีการ
อนุรักษ์ (Cultural Society in the
way of Conservation). Bangkok:
Muang Boran, 2000.

Why Shophouses in Phetchaburi Were the Focused in This Study

Phetchaburi province, located in the central part of the country, possessing a long and distinguished history that dates back to before the Dhavaravati³ period. Phetchaburi province is a source of ancient history, where the architectural styles of temples, palaces, and local residences are still reasonably in good condition. The physical characteristics of shophouses reflect the essentially Thai style of such structures, wherein wood is used as the main material. In the past, many of these structures used to be shophouses that sold the agricultural products which represent the way of life of inhabitants of Muang Phetch. Urban planed in this area shows that the Wat is the center of community life, and shophouses were built along the roads surrounding Wat Mahathat. Phetchaburi has a long history as an agrarian society, with various traditions, cultures, and ways of life, as well as a reputation for agricultural products, foods, ancient Thai desserts, and crafts. There are artworks ranging from high arts, or the arts of skilled craftsmen called “Sakul Chang Muang Phetch”, to the folk arts or arts of minority groups, namely, gold work, sculpture and stucco work, weaving etc. Some people even view Phetchaburi as a ‘living Ayutthaya’. Thus, Phetchaburi possesses a culture and an environment that should prove an advantage for the development of tourism in the area.

Summary of Key Factors in Selecting the Phra Prang Community

1. There is the real ancient commercial community that originated as river-based culture.
2. This river-based culture originated from the relationship between the ways of living, environment, and local ecologies.
3. The community based on the agrarian values.
4. It is the source of a variety products and exceptional historic arts.
5. There are a number of traditional shophouses that have survived which are of architectural value.

³ Sudara Sudchaya, Phetchaburi. Bangkok: Sarakhadi Publishing, 1994.

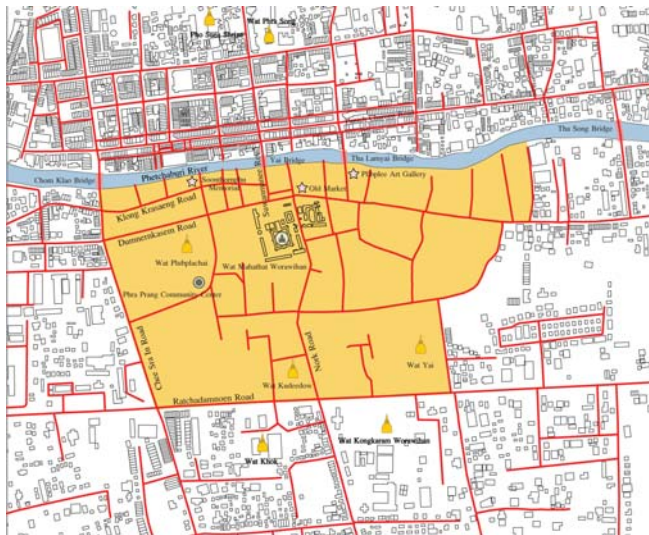


Fig.2 : Scope of area study: Phra Prang Community by author

Scope and Process of the study

The area covered by the study focuses on the Wat Mahathat market community in Muang District. Inhabitants of the vernacular shophouses along Damern Kasem road through to Nork road have been interviewed to seek answers to the question as to what exactly constitutes a heritage site. The study also examines vernacular architecture and the conflicts between new development and indigenous shop house owners.⁴

Phetchaburi does not have its own historical chronicles. For this reason, the history of Muang Petchaburi has to be inferred from the chronicle of Muang Nakhon Sri Thammarat and the legend of Nakhon Sri Thammarat. There is very little local history concerning the Phra Prang Community that is written down, so the community history was created from oral history and data derived from the physical survey. Lastly, the survey was conducted in three periods, first period being from August-September 2005, the second period from February-August 2006, and the third from May-June 2007. The personal data belong to different demographic profiles regarding to the movements of the residents of the shophouses under study.

⁴ Ornsiri Panin, เรือนค้าขายพื้นถิ่นในชุมชนเมือง (Shophouses in Community). Bangkok: J.Print, 2001 research contained a data survey of shophouses in Phetchaburi .

Although there are three different groups of interesting shophouses in Muang Phetchaburi, those along Cheesarainn Road and Panicharoen Road are not situated in Phra Prang Community, but the area of study concentrated solely upon the area of Wat Mahathat Market, which was originally the center of the ancient city of Muang District. The boundaries of the research site does not include the whole area of the community as defined by the government under the title of the “Phra Prang Community”, of which shophouses constitute only part of the community (167 households out of a total of 1,165 in the Phra Prang Community)⁵. The title of this research is designed in such a way as to focus on the indigenous traditional shophouses of Muang Phetchaburi, which, according to the review of literature, are concentrated within the boundaries defined by the researcher. Basically, therefore, the results of the analysis rely on the data regarding shophouses, and do not represent those who live in other types of residence within the community.

In the second phase of social data collection and analysis, the hearing process is firstly expected to be confined to those who previously gave responses to the structured interviews; the researcher could not expect all of them to participate in the hearing process. Thus the monthly meeting of the members of Phra Prang Community was deemed to yield the best opportunity to assemble those who usually attended such meetings meeting members, as well as some extra participants specially invited for this hearing process. The latter was conducted by the researcher as a part of the usual monthly meeting, although most of the participants may not have come from shophouses, but rather from other types of residence within the community. However, the issues discussed in the meeting will probably prove useful for shaping development policies for both the shophouses and the community as a whole.

⁵ Interview with Miss Somjai Pewpong, The President of Phra Prang Community Center, January, 2004.

The research presents an effective tourism development strategy for the conservation of the indigenous shophouse community of Muang Phetch, based on the community's attitude and self-evaluation of the value of tourism related to such conservation efforts by providing conclusive answer to the following research questions :

1. Why do the local shophouses need to be conserved?

The main cultural asset of Phra Prang Community is the community itself, which has accumulated in value throughout a long and distinguished history. Consequently, this cultural asset can turn out to be a positive benefit in terms of cultural tourism.

The main target is to conserve the vernacular shophouses in Phra Prang Community with real quality and with the requisite standards achieved and sustained. The ideal conserved shophouse is one which exhibits good-quality living conditions, in addition to being an authentic reflection of local culture and in good physical condition.

Thai society has been an agricultural society for more than a thousand years, and many areas. This outcome will be true providing that the villagers have the opportunity to continue with their agriculture and handicrafts in order to make a sustainable living. All the villagers have to understand the value of their community so that they will agree to protect and conserve the architecture and land from the changes caused by development projects that are pulling them in the opposite direction. Moreover the community needs local authorities to support their conservation plans and to protect the village from any adverse impacts.

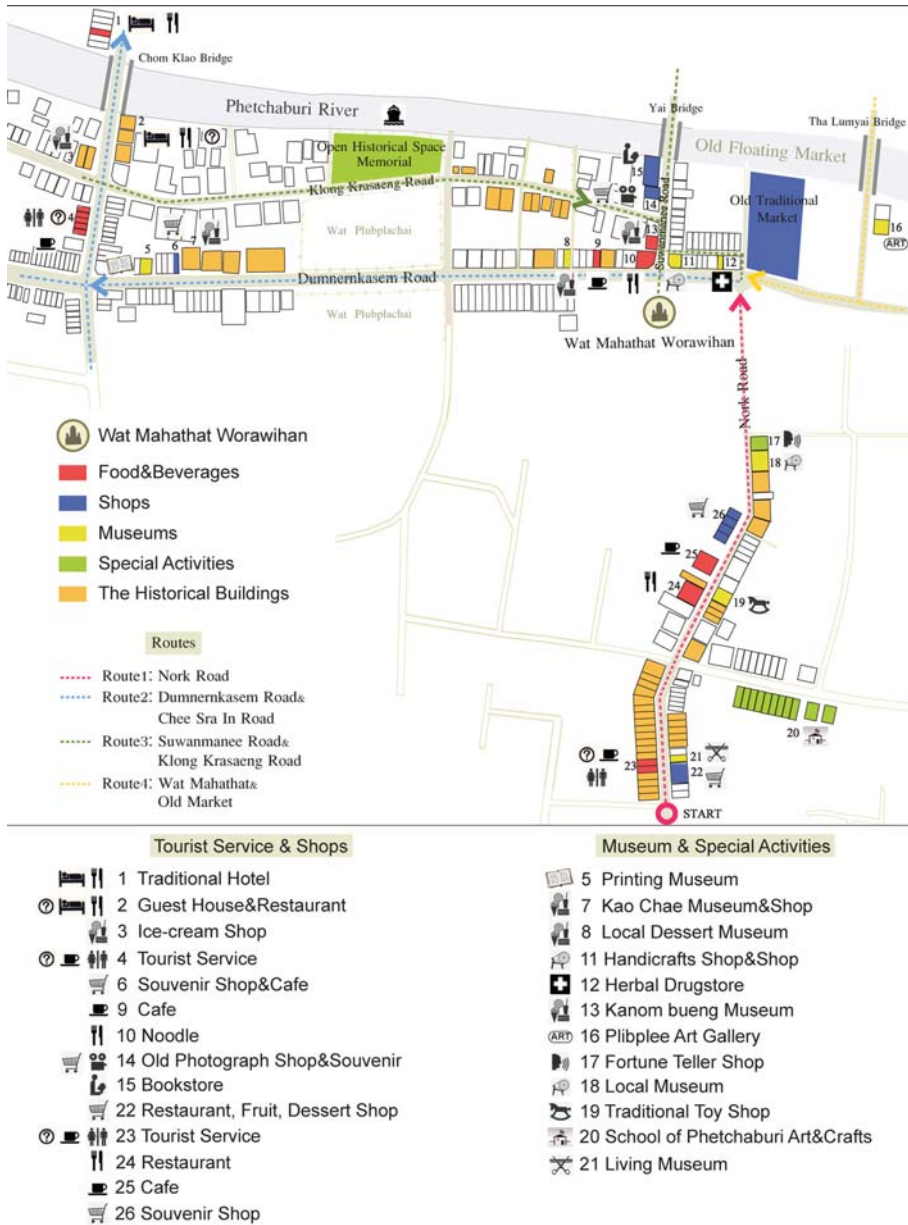


2. What factors contribute to the continued existence of local shophouses?

1. The major factor is the gradual rehabilitation of agricultural conditions that will enable villagers to become self-reliant. Existing ways of life in the community will reflect real life, which is the kind of genuineness that every tourist looks for and values -- genuineness that also comes from sustainable beauty. Tourism in the community will continue to flourish provided there is suitable tourism management.

Fig. 3 This type of shophouse in the least good condition is located at Nork road, the street cutting through Wat Mahathat. Photograph taken by author on 12 May 2007

The most important factor in the existence of local shophouses is the power of community to create understanding and awareness regarding the value of its arts and culture in order to cherish and keep such elements intact for their successors. Hence, tourism development and the conservation of the Phra Prang Community using a community-based approach is considered to be the most suitable and relevant starting point. The most important aspect of this approach is that the community should have the capability of sustaining its arts and culture in an appropriate and permanent manner. This can be achieved if they are able to make a living (as their main income) from agriculture and related occupations, including farming, as landowners renting out land, growing mixed plant crops, tending livestock, and agricultural product processing in order to nourish these local ways of life and examples of local architecture without relying on income from tourism. The community will be able to set up rules and regulations for tourism without destroying the culture and architecture within the community. Hence, the community can select the kind of tourists they wish to attract without changing their way of life and fine culture for the convenience of such visitors, but can decide to develop in a manner that is sufficient to support tourism under the conservation principles adopted by the community. This can be done by keeping the valuable and beneficial parts of the community, while improving basic requirements so that they are up to standard and enhancing the quality of production by keeping existing production relationships and improving formats that provide production power with modern technology without destroying the community and its environment. Then, the community can keep its unique traits and have negotiating power and true stability. Moreover, other important factors affecting the existence of local shophouses are support from public sectors for the establishment of an administrative organization in the community that has the role of controlling and promoting cultural conservation in the community. In addition, the support of the non-profit sector, and professional consultants should be elicited to assist in both tourism conservation and development. These consultants must study and possess a thorough understanding of the various aspects of the community's identity in order to practice the conservation of the community and its cultural heritage in a suitable and correct manner.



Map 1 Tourist's Walking Route Map, Program for Implementation of Tourism Management by publishing tourists' walking route maps around the old business quarters and Phra Prang community that show routes between old shops.

2. Fostering understanding and cooperation from the community. In the eyes of tourists, the overall picture of the Phra Prang community is one of genuineness, an authentic community with suitable tourist facilities. Wat Mahathat, for example, is the community center as well as the center for several festivals. The main tourist routes are Damnern Kasem Road and Nork Road. A number of tourist attractions are scattered along these roads, such as the Museum of Phetchaburi people, the Museum of Thai Desserts, the Museum of Phetchaburi Local Foods, and a history museum showing the way of life and agricultural society of Phetchaburi natives. These museums have real-life exhibitions, in buildings such as shophouses, and demonstrations at specific time periods. These areas should also provide tourist information centers, tourist service areas, local home stays, restaurants, beverage stores, coffee houses, souvenir shops, book stores, ancient herbal drug stores, etc. The rehabilitation and revitalization of fresh markets and floating markets is yet another mechanism linking agricultural society to commerce in a full circle, just like in the past. Besides, old houses could be turned into schools for the handicrafts Phetchaburi people that have been passed on from the old generations to next generations by printing textbooks and making recordings as evidence to preserve Phetchaburi's craftsmanship. This will promote and create understanding among tourists about cultural values in the community by using principles of interpretation and simple media, as well as encouraging their involvement in the conservation of the culture and ancient architecture within the community.⁶

3. If conservation is carried out, could the local shophouses really continue to exist?

From the survey of opinions and viewpoints of people in the community, residents generally love their culture and architecture and understand their value, especially the younger generation, who are in favor of living in -- and engaging in -- artistic activities in ancient local shophouses. In this community, there is a group of people whose declared intention it is to conserve the local culture and architecture of Phetchaburi. These people can conserve, and rehabilitate the local cultural environment without any form of external financial support, existing by engaging in

⁶ Duang-ngern Suephakdee, SHOPHOUSES IN PHETCHABURI: A COMMUNITY-BASED APPROACH TO CONSERVATION AND TOURISM. Silpakorn University, 2008.

occupations created to support the conservation of old shophouses, together with all kinds of arts passed on by members of the older generation. This demonstrates that the existence of these ancient local shophouses depends mainly on the community's attitudes. When people in the community see the value in it, then they will participate in the conservation process by making their living in such a way as to support this effort. All occupations are often related to culture and ancient local architecture, which in turn that can be linked to tourism as well.

In terms of the physical aspect, it is fact of life that everything will change and eventually deteriorate ; it is the responsibility of any conservation effort, therefore, to use substitute materials that are, as far as possible, in harmony with the original and maintain its unique beauty. Initially, this can be done by an analysis of the architectural components to determine a building's distinctive elements, those that reflect its authenticity; conservation can then begin with rehabilitation or finding new objects for replacing the originals. The foundation for this conservation effort may begin with close coordination between the government sector and academic experts, not to mention community leaders, by holding meetings and eliciting the opinions of members of the community who are the owners of such buildings. There should be several approaches for the owners to choose from of their own free will. There should be virtual images relating to the implementation of the conservation of these local shophouses. If there is conservation in the community, potential data should be gathered and presented, for example with regard to higher incomes in the community from tourism development, better environments, the reduction of traffic problems, the revitalization of vanished or disappearing cultures, a better living for artists, improvements to the conditions of the Phetchaburi River, etc.



Fig.5 The above illustrations show the design of the pedestrian walkway and plants.

4. How could the local shophouses continue to exist? How should the goal be reached?

Our hope that is the community retains its authentic living conditions, cultural condition and physical condition. The main problem, however, lies in the weakness of the villagers. In order to bolster their power, therefore, the following concepts should be adopted to resolve the two main problems regarding cultural heritage in Phra Prang Community:

1. Concepts Regarding the Resolution of Agricultural Problems

1. Building new beliefs and attitudes on the part of agriculturists in the community by presenting Buddhist agriculture, a new agricultural theory, which will provide a way for Thai farmers surviving. This system will give farmers freedom -- freedom in terms of their way of thinking and way of life with materials and spirits, resulting in a better quality of life.
2. Focusing mainly on self-sufficient agriculture and farming means growing produce mainly for consumption by family members without being affected by tourism or other economies. Excess produce will be sold to trading centers such as markets. It will be additional incomes apart from tourism and crafting.
3. Balancing the needs of agriculture with those of the natural environment requires reducing the use of chemicals in the cultivation of rice, vegetables and so on. Eventually, there will be pesticide-free agriculture that maintains a harmonious balance with nature, while at the same time improving the environment.
4. Agriculture based on the environment. In rural areas, the Thai way of life is intimately connected to agriculture based on local environmental conditions, i.e. rice growing, vegetable growing, and orchards in flat lands and fisheries in areas near water resources.

5. Using the barter system as an immune system for the community involves recover villagers' local wisdom, encouraging them to engage in such as basket-weaving and the weaving of fish traps to produce items that can be exchanged for rice from neighbors instead of selling produce at outside markets. Produce exchange markets in local areas where buyers and sellers know one another, understand each other's way of life, and have mutual needs, will be markets marked by a sense of fairness.
6. The concept of cooperatives.⁷ According to the theory of a self-sufficient economy initiated by H.M. the King Bhumibol, a cooperative is an economic center for people in the community. The community cooperative movement designated the years 2006-2016 the decade of cooperatives based on a system of exchange and of the sufficiency economy, all aimed at creating a society living in harmony.
7. The government has to do the price insurance and support the agricultural product of the villagers
8. Setting up agro-tourism projects in ways that are relevant to tourism and local commerce in urban communities. This will utilize local resources to gain benefits from various agricultural resources, for example, rice growing, plantations, livestock, fruit plantations, and agriculture integrated with nature, man made evolution, and the community's way of life. Upgrading local facilities and modifying local landscapes and agricultural tracts could promote tourism in the areas in accordance with the motto: "Travel to Phetchaburi. Visit plantations, villages, rice fields, orchards, pesticide-free vegetable gardens, cottage industries, processed foods, and handicrafts".
9. Providing education to the community by the community involves promoting the dissemination of villagers' local wisdom to their children. The community will be aware, develop confidence in their abilities and provide career development guidelines for the community.

⁷ Wichitwong Na Pomphetch, พระบาทสมเด็จพระเจ้าอยู่หัวกับปัญหาเศรษฐกิจของประเทศไทย (H.M. the King and the Economic Problems of Thailand), 2nd ed., Bangkok: Sang Dao Publishing, 2006.

10. Cultural reproduction, for example with regard to wood crafts, stucco, weaving textiles, basketry, making traditional Thai desserts, producing sugar from coconut juice, and cooking traditional Thai foods.
11. Setting up a community organization initiative to be the center for people to congregate, to exchange knowledge, to transfer knowledge regarding careers, and to helping each other.
12. Besides agriculture, the main cultural asset of local residents is their village as that has accumulated in value down the centuries. This cultural asset can turn into a positive benefit, but the government first has to encourage the villagers to promote eco-tourism and home-stay visits for tourists during the villagers' free time.
13. Since unsustainable tourism development projects would have an adverse impact on vernacular shophouses, it is important to educate local people to understand the values of their community and to inform tourists about its cultural norms and acceptable behavior in an effective way⁸.

2. Concepts Regarding the Resolution of Conservation Problems

1. It is necessary to study local history because it constitutes the foundation for understanding the community; therefore it will be of both tangible and intangible benefit to the community. For example, the results of studies can be used to establish local museums, this enabling the community to understand their origins and to enhance the power and unity of its members.
2. Cultural heritage conservation aimed at attracting tourists must conserve both the form and meaning of tangible elements such as buildings, temples, markets, and arts, as well as intangible elements such as culture, peasant communities, beliefs, local identities. Local wisdom shall be applied to present livings of people in the community.

⁸ The good example is Charun Manopetch, the northern artist and singer who has fight for northern cultural heritage by his songs, from Tanes Charoenmuang, พลเมืองกับท้องถิ่นเข้มแข็ง (Polla-muang Kub Thongthin Kemkang). 1st ed., Bangkok: Kobfai publishing, 2006.

3. It must be clear that the conservation of “Cultural Heritage” will consist of the elements that exist in agricultural societies, so it is necessary to maintain the atmosphere and environment of local cultures. As a starting point, the conservation of the community’s agricultural practices should be carried out and the issue of vernacular wooden shophouses should be raised as one requiring urgent attention.
4. It must be kept in mind that conservation can only be considered complete when the community is sustainable. Effective and appropriate answers to the conservation issue are a self-sufficient economy and an economic congregation of the community without aiming at profit or being involved in a trade economy ; the aim should be merely to maintain traditional community life which is the concept of rural’ restoration used by farmers in Japan⁹ and the wisdom of Thai farmers.¹⁰
5. Building a strong villagers’ organization. In this way, the villagers will have more power, in every aspect that concerns the survival of their village, to strike a bargain with other stakeholders. A portion of the tourism revenues should be returned and used for the development of vernacular shophouses.
6. The active involvement and support of local authorities. The community needs the active involvement and support of local authorities to maintain their agricultural practices and to a stronger organization among themselves. In this case, direct democracy is needed, in addition to which voting for the right representatives for the leadership of the local administration is essential.
7. All cultural heritage development projects should be designed in consultation with communities. The community needs to be fully involved in the decision-making process with regard to any tourism project. Establish Public-private input should be established to assist in the decision-making process itself.

⁹ Wunchai Tun, Japan’s Diary.
Bangkok: circle publishing, 2006.
p.41-48

¹⁰ Seree Pongpis, ภูมิปัญญาชาวบ้านกับการพัฒนาชนบท 1 (Thai Wisdom and Rural Development 1).
2nd ed., Bangkok: Ammarin Printing & Publishing Public Co.,Ltd.1993.
Kalayanee Pratimapornthep, ครูชบ ยอดแก้ว ครูภูมิปัญญาไทย : นักเศรษฐศาสตร์ชุมชน (Chob Yodkaew The teacher of Thai Wisdom). 1st ed., Bangkok: Love And lip Press, 2000.

8. Tourism facilities should be kept separate from cultural and natural resources.
9. Cultural attractions should be designed with boardwalks and other features to protect the community's cultural assets and the environment
10. Publicly-owned parks and reserves should be zoned to separate sensitive areas from 'hard' areas suitable for tourist facilities. A protected zone should be marked out in the old part of the community and in the area surrounding Wat Mahathat.
11. Plans for improving sewage treatment should be established. The urban development plan will take into account future extensions of the city and the startup of modern businesses near the old town.
12. Establish a responsible organization to guide shophouses in terms of their adaptation to tourism and interpretations centers which provide a rich, accurate and entertaining understanding of shophouses and their context for visitors.

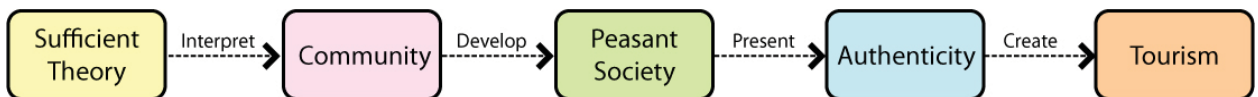


Fig. 6 Conceptual Diagram of an Effective Process for Tourism Development and Shophouse Conservation Using a Community-based Approach, Muang Phetch

An important goal is to integrate tourism development into the social and economic life of a community so as to improve the quality of life of all residents, while ensuring the sustainability of the unique cultural and natural heritage resources and the spiritual traditions which sustain community identity.

Main answers of research work are creating stability in communities, that is, communities must be flexible for labor utilization. In each period of time, one can use labor forces in one's own family for farming, like rice farming twice a year depending on the nature, trading when products are harvested, and handcrafting when free from farming. Even though there is a limitation in lands but one can do intensive farming and cultivate cash crops in small empty plots, and fishing for sales.

Since Thailand's economic development guidelines at present has been changed as it turns to be alert on the world's problem situation, an urgent issue in line with solving guidelines by the theory of sufficient economy of the King and the Buddhist Economics Theory, Thai grass root people will return back to their agricultural profession using solution guidelines from principles of sufficiency without waiting for money as the solution's factor. Villagers can really start to carry out after having agreement and understanding in principles of sufficient economy.

Table 1: The comparing rice price during the past 4 years

Resource: <http://go.toknow.org/blog/strategiest/174746>

Date	Price of Milled Jasmine Rice		Price of Unmilled Rice-5% Broken	
	Domestic (Baht/Ton)	Export (US\$/Ton)	Domestic (Baht/Ton)	Export (US\$/Ton)
2005	7,685	423.9	6,607	288.8
2006	8,032	500	6,533	306.96
2007	8,875	633.5	6,587	372
Jan 2008	10,150	698.75	6,955	389
Feb 2008	11,906	730	7,439	454
Mar 2008	13,800-15,600	904	10,700-12,000	611

Currently the rice price increases more than double in the past four years due to the four main reasons as follows;

1. The Global warming that creates weather fluctuation. Rice sources of major world rice exporters face many disasters, for example, China and Vietnam faced flooding causing reduction of rice quantity. Thailand, as rice is the number one export of the country, has low productivity per rai, therefore, even the supply falls while the demand is the same, it can make the price of rice increase.

2. Recently, as a result of an increase in oil price, some rice fields are turned into farming other plants to produce alternative fuels.
3. An increase in production cost, especially chemical fertilizers.
4. Speculation of foreign funds, starting from speculation in property market, then money market, stock market, precious metal market, oil market, and now food market.

People have changed their viewpoints and values on farmers. This crisis is a main mechanism to attract the community back to rice farming. An increase in the rice price is an indicator to show a bright economic opportunity for the farmers. The hope in preservation of ways of living and community's cultures will become true when the community becomes strong in preservation of Agrarian society under the principle of Buddhist Economics Theory, and it can eventually guarantee a sustainable community.

Hope for economic recovery in the farmer community and agriculture occupations in the Phra Prang community and other communities, especially communities having important component of backgrounds and foundation as originally agricultural communities, will not be only a dream. In the near future, the theories of sufficient economy, Buddhist Economics and rehabilitation guidelines for agricultural society can be understood well by having tourism as an additional part of incomes.

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