

SECONDARY TOURISM DESTINATION WITH HERITAGE POTENTIALS, KHIRIWONG COMMUNITY, NAKHON SI THAMMARAT, THAILAND

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ABSTRACT

The research's purpose is to present a cultural heritage place as a secondary destination where the Khiriwong community in Lansaka district, Nakhon Si Thammarat, Thailand, can be a potential case to offer into the tourist destination. There are two main types of attractions that can be hierarchically identified: Primary and Secondary attractions. Primary attractions are those which are the main reason for taking a leisure trip. They tend to draw visitors' attention from great distance and visitors will spend most of their times because the site is a vital major resource for their preferred activities. On the other hand, secondary attractions are places that do not have adequate pulling power of their own to bring tourists to a destination. They may be seen as supplementary attractions. In order to understand the heritage of Khiriwong community and its related context, this investigated its heritage values and potential significance that are found in 5 values listed alphabetically; (1) **Aesthetic value** : Unique traditional performance, Shadow puppet show known as Nang Talung that is local ancient performance. Also this area is a model community of ecological tourism management and organically grows a variety of crops in the same orchard. Moreover, the natural tie-dye fabric group allows visitors to witness the wonders of nature and the locals' unique wisdom. (2) **Historic value** : Krung Ching forest in Khao Luang National Park has many interesting historical evidences interesting like battle field, Phratu Chai cave (air raid shelter), Khlur cave (food store cave), basketball field. (3) **Scientific value** : Wild orchids, endangered species of mammal and birds are also found. This village nestled at the foot of the mountains which is situated in the purest ozone location of Thailand. Som Kandarn tree has been found in Khiriwong village for more than one hundred years. (4) **Social value** : Most villagers earn their living through this traditional mixed orchards or Suan Som Rom. (5) **Spiritual value** : The villagers believe that the forests are protected by some spirit. This belief is well illustrated by the way of life and traditional values and agricultural methods hinging deeply on respect of Mother Nature. Religious ceremonies and festivities have been well preserved including those to show gratitude to the older persons. To conclude this, living heritage places which normally small, less visit and not well-known, are usually classified in the secondary category. Therefore, Khiriwong community is excellent tourism model to promote as secondary heritage destination.

Keywords—Heritage values, Heritage significance, Khiriwong community, Secondary Destination, Tourist Experiences

INTRODUCTION

In the past, cultural heritage managers tended to put their emphasis only on noble monuments and archeological locations, famous and well-known architecture, and historical sites with connections to the rich and famous. But now, there is a shift in the heritage's value system to focus on heritages that are more humble, ordinary and related to everyday life such as cultural landscapes and setting, living history and heritage, intangible values, vernacular heritage, and community involvement (Taylor, 2010). According to the Association for Tourism and Leisure Education research, there are a number of cultural tourists that are becoming more experienced, sophisticated and better able to structure their own tourism experiences. They

tend to enjoy the experiences in those small-scale, less visited places that offer a taste of “local” or “authentic” culture rather than those Disney-like places which seem to be more standardized, more rigid and less engaging (Richards, 2009). For above reasons, promoting the secondary sites would bring many potential benefits to many cultural heritage tourism stakeholders.

Khiriwong Community is situated in Lan Saka District, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, about 23 kilometers from the city of Nakhon Si Thammarate. A Southern province, Nakhon Si Thammarat ranks number two among the largest Southern provinces covering 9,942.5 square-kilometers. The Western end is marked by high plateaus, lush forests and mountains which slope toward the East reaching out to the Gulf of Siam. It has Suratthani in the North, Trang, Pattalung and Songkhla in the South, Gulf of Siam in the East, and Krabi in the West (TAT, 2002). A watershed area, Khiriwong is nestled among layers of mountain ranges in Nakhon Si Thammarat with Khao Luang as the highest peak at 1,835 meters MSL. The complex mountainous setting gives birth to many streams and tributaries. Primarily, a Tropical Rain Forest nature, the area boasts highly rich biodiversity and is one of the most precious habitations of plants and faunas in the world (Institute of Asian Studies, 2010).

LITERATURE & THEORY

There are also many typologies concerning the formation of the image. Gartner's (1993) typology is one of the most important and supports that the image is formed by organic, induced and autonomous sources of information. This is basically the image perceived before experiencing a destination, which is called secondary or naïve image (Phelps, 1986). In contrast, the primary or reevaluated image is formed by actually visiting the destination. It is believed that actual visitation creates an image more realistic than that existing prior to visitation (Tasci and Gartner, 2007). The secondary sources of information play a vital role in forming images (naïve) of the alternative destinations to be considered in the decision making process. Specifically, Mansfeld (1992) underlines that there is a theoretical consensus that the secondary sources fulfill three basic functions in destination choice: minimize the risk of the decision, create the destination's image and serve as a mechanism for later justification of the decision. At the same time this aspect of the image represents its static element, since it is already formed because is based on information sources. The primary image, in contrast, meaning the experience itself, is considered the most dynamic aspect of the image. Also, Selby and Morgan (1996) have noted that the possibility of separating naïve from reevaluated images, allows integrated image studies to indicate the priorities for action to a tourism authority and has implications for destination marketing. The degree of consumer satisfaction will depend on the assessment of the perceived overall experience of the destination versus anticipated expectations and perceptions. In order to achieve that, a comparison between secondary and primary image must be attempted, which will offer the possibility of measurable deviations from the expectations (secondary image). The fact will result in revealing the existence and the characteristics of the primary image. Additionally, Baloglu and McCleary (1999) support that the primary image could differ from the secondary. Other authors (Gartner and Hunt, 1987, Pearce, 1982, Phelps, 1986) support that the primary image tends to be different from the secondary. However, Echtner and Ritchie (2003) are among those who support that the visit will affect and modify the secondary image through the “first hand” information and acquired experience.

DISCUSSION

There are two main types of attractions that can be hierarchically identified: Primary and Secondary attractions. Primary attractions are those which are the main reason for taking a leisure trip. They tend to draw visitors' attention from great distance and visitors will spend most of their time either because the site is a vital resource for a preferred activity or to enjoy all its elements in order to worth for their money. On the

other hand, secondary attractions (supporting attractions) are those places that do not have pulling power of their own (individually) to bring tourist to a destination. They can be seen as supplementary attractions able to enhance and diversify tourist experiences by providing vital addition to primary attraction. They also might be those places visited on the way to and from the primary attractions. (Swarbrooke, 2002, Ivanovic, 2008) However, it should be noted that what is primary or secondary attraction is different for each visitor, depending on the preferences, attitudes interests and the reasons for visiting. (McKercher, et al, 2002)

METHODOLOGY

The research was based on the primary data collected through field work in 2016, personal observation and interaction with locals and tourists that visit the study area. Apart from this, secondary data related to the topic were collected from different sources which include tourist inflow, flora and fauna found in the study area along with plant species, existing culture of the area and the historical background of the area, from promotional pamphlets, relevant books and articles in magazines and local newspapers, literatures, journals, dissertations, PhD. thesis and statistical data from government offices. Field work was carried out in and around Khiriwong village area to collect primary data and information related to the topic. Field work is an essential tool of landscape analysis; various features of landform not shown in the topographical map were verified during field work. The information on different aspects like landscape characteristic of the study area was obtained. The geomorphic features are the locales for ecotourism development. The physical landscape was studied and interpreted to identify as secondary destination for heritage sites of ecotourism. Photographs were also taken to support the research.

RESULTS

According to "The Burra Charter" The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 1997, each heritage site/place has its own cultural significance (synonym to heritage significant or cultural heritage value) which is embedded in the place itself, its fabric, setting, uses, associations, meaning, records, related places and related objects. In addition, "The Burra Charter" The Australia ICOMOS Charter for Places of Cultural Significance 2013. It can be divided into 5 values which listed alphabetically; Aesthetic, Historic, Scientific, Social and Spiritual values. Thus, in order to understand the heritage of Khiriwong community and its related context, we should investigate its heritage values and potential significance that are found in this paper as follows;

1. Aesthetic Value - there are aesthetic values of the place as listed below;

(a) Traditional performance is unique traditional performance. Shadow puppet show known as Nang Talung that is local ancient performance. The locals make their puppets of cow's skin. The performance consists of the puppet, the narrator, the actor and the musician.

(b) Khiriwong community is located amidst the mountain, forest and river, the outstanding feature of Khiriwong village is its natural scenery. It was originated from the old community who migrated to live at Khao Luang foothill, Kamlon subdistrict which is the pathway to Khao Luang's peak. This community is the model community of ecological tourism management. The visitors can also enjoy soaking in the cool waterfall, swim in the stream, trek the nature trail around the village, and make a trip to Khao Luang National Park. The village has the potential of sustainable tourism, based on local biodiversity, culture and way of life. The Khao Luang National Park is one of the most valuable natural landscapes in Thailand and in

the world. The national park with 570 square kilometers, mostly occupied by rain forest and mountainous areas and supplies the villagers with food and recreation.

(c) Khiriwong community organically grows a variety of crops; such as, mangosteens, rambutans, durians, parkia, and betel nuts, in the same orchard. Touring the orchards enables tourists or visitors to learn that not only does this integrated farming system help to increase the nutritional value of the soil and produce better crop yields, but it also allows the harvesting of different kinds of fruits all year round. Apart from selling fresh produce from the orchard, the villagers manufacture processed goods. For example, the herbal group makes good use of the abundant supplies of mangosteens and manufactures mangosteen soap. This soap reflects useful local wisdom in the combination of the benefits of herbs and the husks of the mangosteens to create a product with tremendous therapeutic value. Visitors can observe the production process of the soap and learn some of its benefits.

(d) Khiriwong's natural tie-dye fabric group allows visitors to witness the wonders of nature and the locals' unique wisdom. The natural tie-dyeing process starts with tying the fabric with two small pieces of bamboo and a rubber band according to the chosen pattern, and then immersing it in a basin containing liquid dye. The group uses natural dyes from leaves, husks, and kernels of plants easily found in the local area. Once the dyeing is complete, the bamboo and rubber band are removed to reveal beautifully patterned fabric. Also, batik-making is commonly found in the southern part of Thailand. Khiriwong community illustrates to visitors how this intricate work of art is done.

2. Historic value - there is a historic value of the place as listed below;

(a) Khiriwong community is at the foot of Khao Luang (Luang mountain), which raises 1,835 meters. Some parts were destroyed during floods and landslides in 1988. Despite the devastation of the flood, the atmosphere of the village is still characterized by its natural beauty and culture. Krung Ching forest in Khao Luang National Park has 3.8-km trail and has many interesting historical evidences like battle field, Phratu Chai cave (air raid shelter), Khlur cave (food store cave), basketball field. The end of this trail has Phon San Ha waterfall, the most beautiful waterfall in this park.

3. Scientific value - there are scientific values of the place as listed below;

(a) Khao Luang national park, the vastly diverse ecological system of the forest has given rise to a variety of plants and faunas as well as major microorganisms and endemic species reflecting the rich biodiversity of the tropical forest. It should thus be considered one of the most important hubs of bio-natural resources of the world. Wild orchids and other endangered species are also found, more than 300 kinds, as well as, it is home for endemic species including Khao Luang *Rosa hybrid* which can be found only in this national park (Tourism Authority of Thailand Magazine, 1996). Moreover, around one hundred endangered species of mammal including *Panthera tigris*, clouded leopard, mountain goat, tapir, and not less than two hundreds species birds including greater racket-tailed drongo, black eagle, hornbill, Thick-billed green pigeon and rare butterfly such as malayan tree nymph, etc.

(b) Khiriwong community is a charming village nestled at the foot of the lush mountains in the Southern Region of Thailand. This ideal community is the purest ozone location of Thailand that have been proven and announced by Tourism Authority of Thailand.

(c) Khiriwong village was taken up as a site for the conservation and sustainable use of cultivated and wild tropical fruit diversity: promoting sustainable livelihoods, food security and ecosystem services project. The project funded by UNEP, United Nations Environment Programme / GEF, Global Environment Facility during 2009 - 2014 was scoped on fruit trees of 4 genus, *Mangifera* spp., *Garcinia* spp., *Nephelium* spp., and *Citrus* spp. 'Som Kandarn', the local name of a cultivar of *Garcinia atroviridis* Griff., has been found in Khiriwong village for more than 100 years at the mountainous forest according to the local people. Some big old trees were also found naturally near by the riverside at the lower land possibly the seedlings came with the tide in the river. Therefore, local people believed that Khiriwong mountainous area is an original area of 'Som Kandarn' which named according to the meaning of sour fruit which could grow in the unsuitable areas.

(d) The heritage conservation process, many events and activities supports that had been applied to the community and its related place by the strong collaborations are the prime case study for any communities that would like to value their heritages and sustainably use them in the future.

4. Social value - there are social or spiritual values of the place as listed below;

(a) As the forests are a common space, they are treated at the same time as a private space as well. They are the space in which the Khiriwong folk till the land in the mountains based on the method of traditional mixed orchards, or "Suan Som Rom". Each of them is entitled to certain plots of land. They learn to use the land for their personal and family's interests. The sustenance of Suan Som Rom for centuries indicates how the community has kept its land use in a sustainable manner. The kind of agriculture is not simply a farming technique that relies chiefly on biodiversity and mutual help among the variety of vegetations, but has been intrinsically connected with the local domain, economically, socially and culturally. Most villagers in Khiriwong earn their living through this traditional mixed orchards or Suan Som Rom. The underlying concepts and rituals including the paying of respect to the spirit guardians, forest opening and closing ceremonies, etc. have been performed seasonally and held onto as the ethos for the community.

(b) Khiriwong is a close community. Since the beginning, the 14 families came to settle here and started producing food, and later they were joined by people from different other clans. Such a strong kinship has lasted for centuries and influenced by landholding pattern, local and traditional culture, governance, and livelihood. In unity, they have maintained their independence and rely on seniority to develop their social order and other guidelines as well. To settle disputes, the villagers resort to brainstorming and group analysis. Khiriwong Temple founded since 1694 has been playing an important role in settling community disputes, though lately, the role has been taken over significantly by local administration organizations. With a lack of coordination, the religious institution has played lessened roles, though it still functions to pass on traditions and cultures as well as religious rituals.

(c) Khiriwong community is the one of the 59 model villages throughout Thailand. This village attracts quite a number of tourists because of its mountainous, peaceful natural beauty and tourist destination developed by outstanding groups. One of the factors of success is the community leaders who were born in their community and had university bachelor and working experiences in Bangkok city, then come back with extensive views and good vision knowing outside. They love their hometown and have a passion and motivation to develop their hometown. There are two outstanding groups producing high quality products; they are natural color and batik group and integrated gardening and the medicated soup groups. The natural color batik group is producing natural color batik with locally available natural materials. They dye fabric

with natural substance such as mangosteen skin with beautifully designed by young artists. They sell their products at their shop and send to the resorts and souvenir shops. Another group is operating integrated gardening. The garden is planted with number of fruit trees with different medicinal trees. They produce mangosteen skin soap beautifully packaged with the leaves of rubber trees that are also local products used to be waste. They sell the soap in their shop and to hotels by order.

5. Spiritual value - there are spiritual values of the place as listed below;

(a) Khiriwong community defines and values forests that may differ from that given by forestry textbooks. Forest is an abode of belief, a private space and a collective property at the same time and a source of stability. Based on such definition, Khiriwong villages believe that the forests are protected by some spirit. The forest guardians have the authority to reward or punish any person coming to use the forest. This belief is well illustrated by the way of life and traditional values and agricultural methods hinging deeply on respect of Mother Nature. Certain beliefs and rituals held since ancient time in Khiriwong community have still been carried out. Their traditional beliefs and rituals reflect well their close relationships with nature.

(b) There are 5 holy water sources in Nakhon Si Thammarat including one source in Khiriwong community. Those pools are famous for all over as their water is regarded as sacred. The water was used in royal coronation ceremonies, pledge of allegiance to the king and Buddhist rites. In Lan Saka district, there is the winding brook at Pak Nakharat look like a serpent when the water is full which is one of holy water sources.

(c) Religious ceremonies and festivities have been well preserved including those to show gratitude to the older persons, ask for forgiveness between the parties of dispute to nurture mutual understanding and other practice to maintain unity and cohesiveness in community including the “tenth month ceremony” to honor ancestral contributions, and the making of traditional sweet. The villagers are unique in holding ceremonies to honor contributions of their ancestors, for example, the commemoration of Phra Palad Thuan Suchato, who led the villagers in various development activities and commanded great reverence from people. The first of such ceremony took place on the half moon of the third month in 1954 and since then has been organized every year to honor those making contribution to the community. Also, a ceremony in memorial of the losses caused by the floods in 1988 has been organized every November to help giving the merits to those who died from the disaster and to remind local villagers that they should refrain from doing anything that shall bring about such a calamity.

CONCLUSION

Most countries on earth try to make their places as primary destinations for tourism which is well-known. They provide their visitors with tourism services or have spectacular attractions to motivate more markets. But most places which are considered as secondary destinations. For example, living heritage places which normally small, less visit and not well-known are usually classified in this category. Those are places of ordinary life and everyday heritage reflecting much of the authenticity of a place. Then, there is a good chance for us to promote secondary heritage attractions/ destination in sustainable heritage tourism management. So, Khiriwong community and its related places in cultural historic district are excellence examples for this type of development.

Moreover, the domestic participation in the nature-based tourism aspect, 60% of the 50 million domestic tourism trips taken each year in Thailand are nature based. It can also be assumed that whatever the level of

nature-based participation, not all would qualify as ecotourism. Furthermore, ecotourism alludes to methods of recreational behavior among Thais and other Southeast Asians when referring to nature and /or protected areas, visits are prone to be a holiday experience involving large groups on public holidays or vacations, and concentrated on pleasure-based recreation by the middle class people (TAT, 2002). As a result, planning Khiriwong community as a secondary tourism destination would be good potential for the tourism company.

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