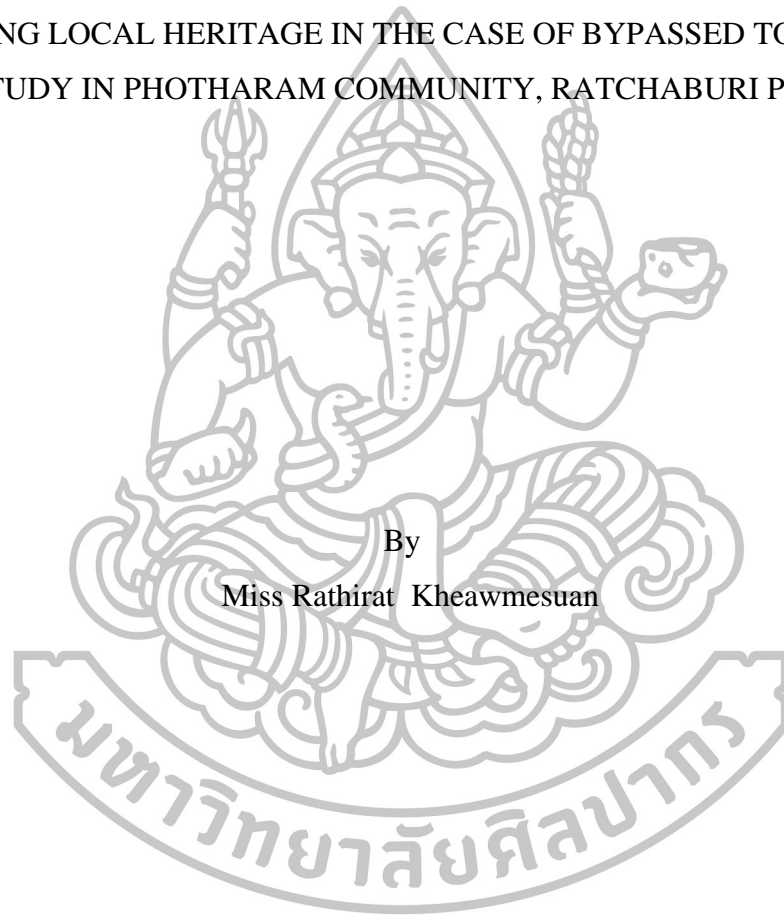




DEFINING LOCAL HERITAGE IN THE CASE OF BYPASSED TOWNS : A  
CASE STUDY IN PHOTHARAM COMMUNITY, RATCHABURI PROVINCE



By  
Miss Rathirat Kheawmesuan

A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree  
Doctor of Philosophy Program in Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism

International Program

Graduate School, Silpakorn University

Academic Year 2015

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The Graduate School, Silpakorn University has approved and accredited the Thesis title of “Defining Local Heritage in the Case of Bypassed Towns : A case study in Photharam community, Ratchaburi province” submitted by Ms.Rathirat Kheawmesuan as a partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy in Architectural Heritage Management and Tourism

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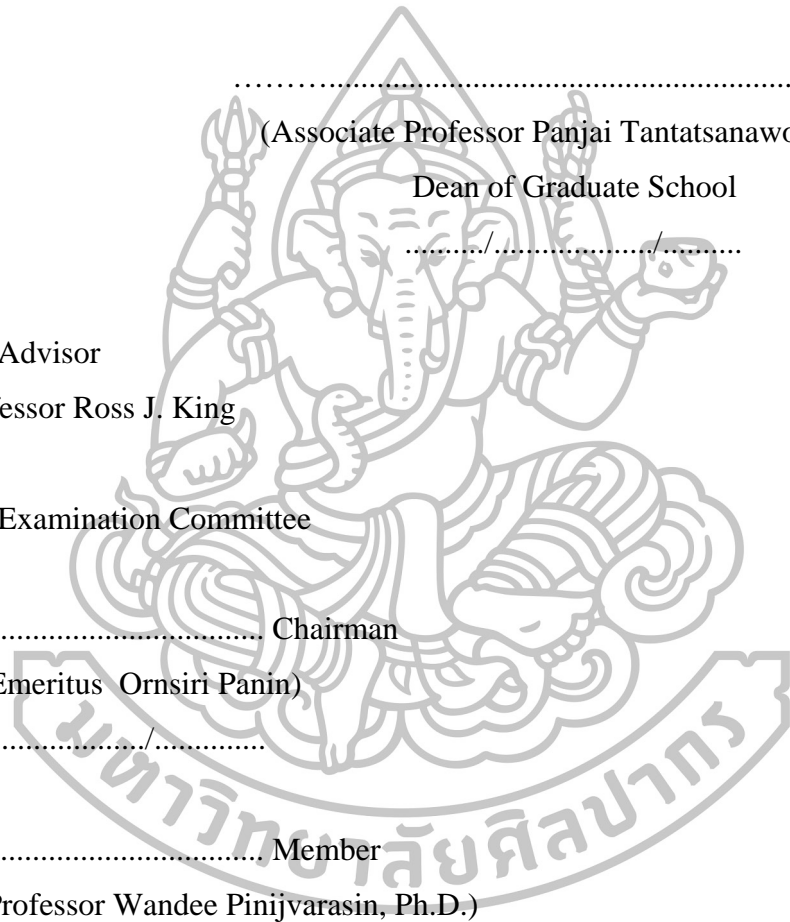
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KEY WORD: LOCAL HERITAGE / IDENTITY / MEMORY / SITE OF MEMORY /  
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Thailand is rich in tourism resources that fascinate both Thais and international visitors. The outstanding significance of each tourism place represents important factors that attract tourists while other towns which are not as significant or beautiful will be defined as bypassed towns. Thailand has a lot of old communities and old cities scattered around the nation. In the past, most of them were ignored by tourists although, when the nostalgia tourism movement became a new trend, some of them have promoted themselves to be new tourism destinations which contain elements of a nostalgia-laden atmosphere, especially in the area around Bangkok. This research concentrates on Photharam community in Ratchaburi province which has promoted itself to be a new tourist destination.

The research aims to examine the physical conditions of Photharam, to understand the points of view of local people and the factors that they use to express their identity and to define a sense of heritage, to clarify the concept of local heritage and to speculate on the question of tourism potential in this place. The researcher used site visits and open-ended questions for in-depth interviews for the data collection, to explore those communities regarding their local heritage and the factors that its people use to define their local heritage, their identity and the type of tourism that might be appropriate for Photharam. The key informants are local people who have lived in Photharam and members of the “Forget Photharam Not Club”. The analysis partly follows the framework of Relph’s triad (static physical objects and appearance, activities, and meaning).

The research found that for local heritage in Photharam, it might said that memory and connection to the place are the factors to define local heritage for Photharam people. In addition, local people realize that their hometown is a bypassed town and that they cannot change this fact. However, it is argued here, they can change the wording from “bypassed” to “visited” by promoting the atmosphere of an old town, good views and fresh air at the river, also including various foods that are delicious and not expensive. Photharam, in summary, is to be judged as suitable for a tourist attraction but not fit for all types of tourists. This place is appropriate to niche tourism such as in education, for old town lovers or those who love slow-living and the perfect way to withdraw and reflect. In addition, Photharam is appropriate for the growing trend of nostalgia tourism in Thailand because this place is a place that plenty of antique buildings and other elements and there an aura of authenticity.

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Student’s signature.....      Academic Year 2015  
Thesis Advisor’s signature.....

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## Contents

	Page
Abstract.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
List of Figures.....	vii
Chapter	
1 Introduction.....	1
Statement of Significance.....	1
History of Photharam.....	3
Research Question.....	5
Objective of the Research.....	5
Scope of the Research.....	6
Research Methodology.....	7
Problems and limitation of interviews.....	8
Time of collecting data and interviews.....	8
Analysis of data.....	8
Remark.....	9
2 Literature Review.....	10
Heritage and Local heritage.....	10
Memory and Sites of memory.....	13
Identity and Place identity.....	16
Nostalgia Tourism.....	27
3 General background.....	32
Introduction.....	32
Background of Photharam.....	36
Ethnics groups.....	38
Site information.....	41
The Maeklong river and sand beach.....	79
Local festivals.....	82

Chapter	Page
4	Identity of Photharam ..... 91
	Physical features or appearance ..... 91
	Observable activities and functions ..... 99
	Meanings or symbols..... 100
	Physical setting and activities..... 102
	Physical setting and meanings..... 103
	Activities and meanings ..... 104
	Sense of place ..... 104
5	Conclusion ..... 106
	Local heritage..... 106
	Identity of Photharam..... 108
	The point of view of local people about Photharam and tourism . 109
	References..... 113
	Appendix..... 125
	Appendix A..... 126
	Appendix B..... 128
	Biography..... 131



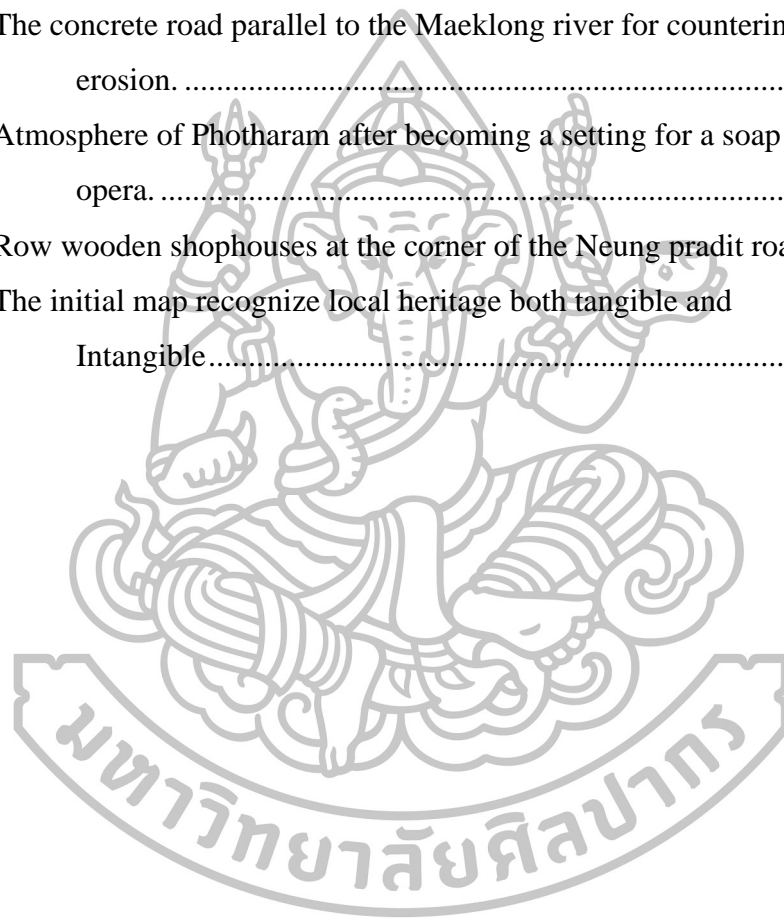
## Table of Figures

Figures	Page
1 Photharam district, Ratchburi province .....	3
2 Scope of study boundary .....	6
3 Welcome sign at the entrance .....	32
4 The appearance of sand beach in the past .....	34
5 Photharam railway station.....	35
6 Town of the beauty women, the slogan of Photharam.....	37
7 Map of three main area of Photharam.....	42
8 Map of Talad Bon .....	43
9 Character of buildings at Talad Bon .....	44
10 Wat Sai Aree Rak.....	45
11 Wihan of Wat Sai Aree Rak.....	46
12 Chinese Shrine cover sacred Buddha footprint.....	47
13 Various style of chedi which contain ancestors' ashes.....	48
14 Bot of Wat Sai Aree Rak .....	49
15 King Rama V in the Wat Sai mural painting .....	49
16 Painting of entertainment activities .....	50
17 Chao Mae Pun Pim shrine.....	51
18 Vic Kru Tawee.....	52
19 Wooden chairs inside Vic Kru Tawee .....	53
20 Baan Mae Lay Kha, an office of “Forget Photharam Not Club” .....	54
21 An old photographer’s shop.....	55
22 Tangible heritage in Talad Bon area .....	56
23 Map of Talad klang area .....	57
24 Morning market at Talad Klang.....	58
25 Ubosot of Wat Photharam.....	59
26 The cloister around the ubosot.....	60
27 Guan Yu shrine .....	61
28 Soon Tien Tua Vegetarian Cafeteria.....	62



Figures	Page
29	Photharam railway station..... 63
30	Coolie Alley or Rat –Utiti road..... 64
31	Black tofu..... 65
32	Song Prapas road..... 66
33	Local heritage in Talad Klang area..... 67
34	Map of Talad Lang area..... 68
35	Abandoned shophouses..... 69
36	One of the fish sauce factories still running their business..... 70
37	Containers for fish sauces in the past..... 71
38	Wat Pho Phai Roj and Luangpor Sukhothai ..... 71
39	Larn wat of Wat Phot Phai Roj was used a venue for annual Festivals ..... 72
40	Wat Choke ..... 73
41	Lao Pun Tao Kong Shrine..... 74
42	Chao Mae Tuptim Shrine..... 75
43	Chao Por Sam Ta shrine ..... 76
44	Hang Meng Tua Vegetarian Cafeteria..... 77
45	Local heritage in Talad Lang area ..... 78
46	Bean sprouts were sort out before cleaning ..... 81
47	Cleaning bean sprouts in the Maeklong river ..... 82
48	All goddesses and gods are respectfully invited to the marquees that are constructed at the sand beach..... 83
49	Venue of sand beach festival which is located in Talad Klang area..... 84
50	Local people doing Joodprateep ..... 85
51	Local people prepare Yai Sawan for Joodprateep activity ..... 86
52	Buddha footprint inside wihan..... 87
53	Tam prateep activity ..... 88
54	Kratong si were prepared for Loy kratong festiva..... 89
55	Venue of Loy Kratong Si festival ..... 90
56	Elevated houses at Talad Bon..... 92

Figures	Page
57 Abandoned row houses at Talad Lang.....	93
58 Single Thai style house at Talad Lang.....	93
59 The fish sauce factory building at Talad Lang.....	94
60 Existing condition of coolie alley .....	95
61 The physical condition of the sand beach after sucking sand.....	96
62 The concrete road parallel to the Maeklong river for countering soil erosion. ....	97
63 Atmosphere of Photharam after becoming a setting for a soap opera. ....	98
64 Row wooden shophouses at the corner of the Neung pradit road.....	99
65 The initial map recognize local heritage both tangible and Intangible.....	112



## **Chapter 2**

### **Literature Review**

This chapter focuses on important concepts and theoretical frameworks needed for acknowledgement of the background of this research and also reviewing of relating documents. This begins with concepts of heritage and local heritage which describe the meaning of heritage and local heritage. Next, the concept of memory, relationships of heritage and memory including the meaning of sites of memory must be explained. Then, the theory of identity and place identity will be defined and amplified. The last is the explanation of nostalgia and nostalgia tourism. Therefore, this chapter is classified into four concepts consisting of;

1. Heritage and local heritage
2. Memory and Sites of memory
3. Identity and place identity
4. Nostalgia tourism

#### **1. Heritage and local heritage**

This section consists of two subtitles are heritage and local heritage. It starts with the concept of heritage form scholars and criteria of cultural heritage from UNESCO and ICOMOS Thailand. Then combine concept of heritage and local to define concept of local heritage for apply in this research.

##### **1.1 Heritage**

Most researchers accept that heritage is linked to the past, that it represents some sort of inheritance to be passed down to current and future generations, both in terms of cultural traditions and physical artifacts (Hardy 1998 cited in Timothy and Boyd 2003, p.2). Similarly Ashworth (2009, as cited in Kaminski, Benson and Arnold, 2014, p.5) has described “heritage as the significance of the past to the present”.

Ashworth and Tunbridge (1999 cited in Timothy and Boyd 2003, pp.2-3) showed that;

the contemporary uses of the past... The interpretation of the past in history, the surviving relict buildings and artifacts and collective and individual memories are all harnessed in response to current needs which include the identification of individuals with social, ethnic and territorial entities and the provision of economic resources for commodification with heritage industries.

Merriman (1991, as cited in Timothy and Boyd 2003, p3) pointed out that “... the word [heritage] is used to describe culture and landscape that are created by the community and passed on to the future to serve people’s need for a sense of identity and belonging”.

However, heritage is more than just an object, it is ‘a societal relationship, an attribution of meaning and value to an object’ (Doff –Bonekamper 2005, as cited in Kaminski, Benson and Arnold, 2014, p.5).

In UNESCO's Convention concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage 1972, Article 1 about cultural heritage states that:

For the purposes of this Convention, the following shall be considered as "cultural heritage":

Monuments: architectural works, works of monumental sculpture and painting, elements or structures of an archaeological nature, inscriptions, cave dwellings and combinations of features, which are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

Groups of buildings: groups of separate or connected buildings which, because of their architecture, their homogeneity or their place in the landscape, are of outstanding universal value from the point of view of history, art or science;

Sites: works of man or the combined works of nature and man, and areas including archaeological sites which are of outstanding

universal value from the historical, aesthetic, ethnological or anthropological point of view.

The definition of cultural heritage identified in ICOMOS Thailand Newsletter No.26-27 is explained:

Cultural heritage means: creative work made by people of the nation, which is valuable cultural property that has been handed down from past generations, being testimonial to the historical development. This includes man-made environment and ecosystem that is valuable and irreplaceable. It is the symbol that reflects the achievements of people in the past, a manifestation of outstanding culture and local identity that has been handed down from past to present, and worth transferring to the future. Cultural heritage can be categorized into 2 types namely, tangible cultural heritage and intangible cultural heritage

a) Tangible cultural heritage means: cultural heritage which is tangible, that is, touchable and visible i.e. ancient sites, monuments, architecture, buildings, group of buildings, local urban sites, old towns, historic sites, archaeological sites, historic landscapes, cultural landscapes, ancient objects and various forms of art.

b) Intangible cultural heritage means: cultural heritage which is intangible that is, untouchable and not physically expressed i.e. knowledge, meanings, beliefs, skills, norms, traditions, that persons or communities have created to be part of their lives and have been transferred from one generation to the next until the present.

Heritage has different levels namely world, national, local and personal (Timothy and Boyd 2003; Graham et al.2000; Swarbrooke 1994; Timothy 1997). In the scale of local heritage, Lowenthal (1979 cited in Timothy and Boyd 2003, p15) noted that “at the local level, communities need familiar landmark so that they can remain in touch with their own collective pasts in a rapidly changing world. Many

cities, towns and villages go to great lengths to conserve scenes and structures of the past that ‘would never qualify for preservation grants as architectural gems or ancient monuments’”.

### **1.2 Local**

Karnchanaprasert (2002 cited in Prapakron 2011, p.270) described that the word ‘local’ cannot be defined by scale of territory or population. Sometimes it may be used in a similar way to community, district, village, depending on the purpose and the overview that will be applied. Similarly Punroob (2011) explained that local refers to a specific place that can be community, village or town that has a specific culture that is different from the others. Siangdham foundation (2009) claimed that local means a group of people who lived together in the same territory, with the same way of life, unity, and have interacted with each other under the same regulatory rules. Therefore, it might be said that local refers “the interaction of people or groups of individuals who live within some geographic area that provides for most of their daily needs. They share certain values and meanings about their common life situation” (Warran, n.d.).

From concepts above might said that heritage means creative works made by people which is valuable things, both touchable or visible things and untouchable or not physically feature, to be handed down to current and next generations. Therefore, local heritage in this research refers to an inheritance of things both tangible and intangible which are valued for their significance by Photharam community and would be passed by them from one generation to the next.

## **2. Memory and Sites of memory**

There are three subtheme related in this theme are memory, heritage and memory, and site of memory. Starting with the meaning of memory and its importance, relationship between memory and heritage and, the concept of sites of memory, respectively.

### **2.1 Memory**

Ardakanr and Oloonabadi (2011, pp.986-987) showed that “memory is the mental capacity or faculty of retaining and reviving facts, events, impressions, etc., or of recalling or recognizing previous experiences. Memories help us preserve

past events”. Khun Eng Kuah-Pearce (2011, p.4) points out that “memory is a subjective thought-process. It is the events and situations which individuals have experienced that constitute personal memories. These memories are passed on to others in various ways; these include recording in diaries, memories, letters; storytelling; and other forms of oral transmission”. In addition, “memories can play a complementary role to primary sources in history. Memories can help reconstruct the historical context of a person or event with aspects not otherwise revealed. The significance of memory lies in the interpretation of reality; different and conflicting memories are not wrong - they simply show how people’s perceptions and experience vary” (Mehnert 2011, p.90).

Ardakanr and Oloonabadi (2011, pp.986-987) add that “collective memory is a series of events collectively remembered by a group of people who share it and involve themselves in shaping it. Most of these collective memories have been incorporated in the social ceremonies and rituals.... Collective memories are place-specific and their remembering and reproduction associates with the place where the events that form those memories have occurred”. Khun Eng Kuah-Pearce (2011, p.6) stated that “The significance of collective memory lies in the roles which it plays within a society. It does not only help people to understand certain historical events but also present ones”. “When a collective memory is valued, actually, it is the identity of the place which has been valued” (Hague 2005 cited in Ardakanr and Oloonabadi 2011, p.987).

## **2.2 Heritage and memory**

Peckham (2003 cited in Graham and Howard 2008, p.2) argued that “heritage is often used a form of collective memory...”. Similarly Harrison and Rose (2010, p.240) state that “intangible heritage is intimately connected with memory”. Graham and Howard (2008, p2) conclude that “...heritage is less about tangible material artifacts or other intangible forms of the past than about the meanings placed upon them and the representations which are created from them (Graham, Ashworth and Tunbridge, 2000; Graham, 2002; Smith, 2004).”

Walker (1996, p.69) cited in Mcdowell (2008, p.42) showed that “remembering and commemorating the past is an essential part of the present and is important for a number of reasons. Not only is it tied inexorably to our sense of

identity, but it is also an inherent part of the heritage process as we remember the past ‘in the light of our (present) needs and aspirations’”.

Sirikulchayanont (2009, p.13) point out that “ place is not only physical form, but it also exists in memories, stories and names”. Tuan (1991, cited in Sirikulchayanont 2009, p.12) explained that “the character of place is enriched through oral history, personal memory, and even the way a local community named their place. Narrative can reflect individuals and communities’ experiences and memories that they have with that certain place”. Sirikulchayanont (2009, p.13) said that “[a] story about a certain place, including oral history, and historical novels, has the role in provoking the memory of people and revealing the layers of place and how it develops and communities might call their local district differently from what it is officially named and that simply reflects the attachment that the community have with their place”.

From concepts above, it is found that memory is a psychological process that to revive or recall events or facts in former time. Memory is a key factor to preserve past events. Moreover, memory is one sort of intangible heritage and it plays a role to characterizes the place, as McDowell (2008, p.42) asserted that “without memory, a sense of self, identity, culture and heritage is lost”.

### **2.3 Sites of memory**

Erl (2011, pp. 23-24) stated that “Site can therefore include geographical location, buildings, monuments and works of art as well as historical persons, memorial days, philosophical and scientific texts, or symbolic actions”, whereas Field (2007, p.22) explained that “sites of memory can be places, buildings, objects, institutions and individuals or groups of people”.

In the first volume of *Les lieux de memoire*, Nora explains the conditions which an event or an object must fulfill in order to be identified as a site of memory (Erl 2011, p.24). Nora (1989, pp. 18-19) explained about “sites of memory” or “Lieux de memoire” that:

Lieux de memoire are simple and ambiguous, natural and artificial, at once immediately available in concrete sensual experience and susceptible to the most abstract elaborate. Indeed, they are lieux - places, sites, causes - in three senses of the word - material, symbolic,



and functional and the three aspects always coexist. Even an apparently purely material site, like an archive, becomes a lieu de memoire only if the imagination invests it with a symbolic aura. A purely functional site, like a classroom manual, a testament, or a veterans' reunion belongs to the category only inasmuch as it is also the object of a ritual. And the observance of a commemorative minute of silence, an extreme example of a strictly symbolic action, serves as a concentrated appeal to memory by literally breaking a temporal continuity. For example, the notion of a historical generation; it is material by its demographic content and supposedly functional - since memories are crystallized and transmitted from one generation to the next - but it is also symbolic, since it characterizes, by referring to events or experiences shared by a small minority, a larger group that may not have participated in them.

From the above review one can conclude that sites of memory are places, buildings, objects or anything that refers to events or experiences in the past. Sites of memory present in three senses, i.e. material, symbolic, and functional.

### **3. Identity and place identity**

This topic talks about notion of identity and place identity. In the notion of identity focuses on meaning and the concept of identity and elements to shape identity. While, the topic of place identity starts with the concept of place and identity of place; then, description of the importance of sense of place and components of sense of place are shown. Finally, the concept of spirit of place is presented.

#### **3.1 Identity**

“The notion of identity applies to the entire universe of creatures, things and substances, as well as to humans, and its general meanings are worth considering” (Jenkins 2004, p.4). The concept of “identity” had been used in a lot of fields, as Suttipisan (2008, p.12) states that “identity is central to all human and social disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, psychology, cultural studies, and heritage studies”. However, “identity is a complex term where each discipline has its

own definitions, and uses the term differently according to its own tradition” (Hauge 2007, p.45).

Hogg and Dominic (1988, p.2) state that “identity is the people's concepts of who they are, of what sort of people they are, and how they relate to others”, whereas Woodward (2007, pp.1-2) extends the concept of Hogg and Dominic to state that “identity gives us an idea of who we are and of how we relate to others and to the world in which we live. Identity marks the ways in which we are the same as others who share that position, and the ways in which we are different from those who do not”. Further, Prasannam (2005, para 12) points out that “identity is the idea about ‘who I am’ through the eye of individuals seeing themselves and also as others see them. The importance of identification is what characters or identities make us similar or distinguished from others”.

From the ideas above it can be found that “identity involves making comparisons between people and therefore establishing similarities and differences between them” (Jenkin 1996 cited in Haralambos 2004, p.818) in the same way as Woodward (2000 cited in Haralambos 2004, p.819) has said that “identity is ‘marked by similarity’: you identify with others because of the similarities between you and the differences between the group you identify with and other groups.” Hence, the definition of identity can be assumed as Hauge (2007) asserts, namely that “identity can be described as the distinguishing character or personality of an individual”.

When the concept of identity was applied to communities and cities, Lynch (1981, cited in Oktay 2002, p.261) said that “... like individuals, cities should have character and distinctions; therefore, identity means the extent to which a person can recognize or recall a place as being distinct from other places”. Oktay (2002, p.261) extends the idea of Lynch and the significance of identity to the effect that “...many advantages can be gained by discovering and reinforcing a city’s own identity. Small differences may be magnified, special events may be commemorated, designers may seek to set their stamps on projects, and many other motives may encourage efforts to undertake the quest for urban identity”. Hence, local identity should be “the distinctive characters or elements that make the local differentiate themselves from others and be recognized”. Identity is important to the local. Itulua-Abumere (n.d., para10 ) has pointed out that “identity relates to the understandings

people hold about who they are and what is meaningful to them” because “identity is the source of meaning and experience for people to identify everything as well as themselves” (Calhoun, cited in Suttipisan 2008, p.13, Fung 2004, p.400). Similarly Tomlinson (2003, p.269) has said that “identity was not just a description of cultural belonging; it was a sort of collective treasure of local communities. But it was also discovered to be something fragile that needed protecting and preserving, that could be lost”. Moreover, Smith (2001 cited in Rausch 2005, p.124) has referred to “...the construction of national identity as the maintenance and continuous reproduction of the pattern of values, symbols, memories, myths, and traditions that compose a distinctive heritage...”. However, “Identity is dynamic and changes depending on the goals of interaction and the situations in which individuals and groups find themselves” (Val and Polina 2010, p.1); it is also negotiable (Jenkin 1996 cited in Haralambos 2004, p.818). Breakwell (1986 cited in Twigger-Ross and Uzzell 1996, p.206) proposed that “identity should be conceptualized in terms of a biological organism moving through time which develops through the accommodation, assimilation and evaluation of the social world”, whereas, Fung (2004, p.401) asserts that “when the local identities are challenged by external forces, they may re-engineer themselves and reproduce certain identities that are fit for survival. In general, the elaboration of cultural identity is a gradual process in which histories, traditions, and social memories are created, produced and reproduced”.

Yoshimura and Wall (2010, pp.52-53) described three main ways to understand identities;

First, identities are understood by differentiate themselves from others.

Second, identities are dynamic. Holloway et al. (2003, cited in Yoshimura and Wall 2010, p.53) have argued all societies are relational in that “they are always constructed and understood in terms of their sameness to, and difference from, others”.

Third, our identities are multiple, are not singular.

Gombay (2005 cited in Yoshimura and Wall 2010, p.54) argued that “identity exists at many levels. It exists in private and in public. It is attached both to individuals and to collectives. The composition of identity reflects social experiences, historical context and origins. By understanding the elements that constitute identity,

the socio-cultural and political-economic processes that have affected people can be better understood”.

### **Element of local identity**

Yoshimura and Wall (2010, p.71) have argued that “our identities are not singular but are multiple”; therefore, many elements are included to shape local identity. Also, Hauge (2007, p.47) points out that “...many factors - genetic, social, and cultural as well as the built environment - combine to shape identity”. Rausch (2005, p.124) asserts that “... geographic, cultural, and socio-economic idiosyncrasy, [are] cast in common terms as local identity”. Similarly, Oktay (2002, p.262) states that “the local context is formed by all elements of the physical and natural elements, in particular the manner in which the urban environment is created over generations”.

In relation to the concept of elements of local identity mentioned above, we can assume that the elements that constitute the local identity consist of two major categories, namely natural elements and cultural elements. However, this study is about cultural heritage; hence, the cultural elements are the only elements to be taken into account and focus. The cultural elements are divided into two categories, namely:

Tangible – physical and visual aspects such as natural landscapes and settlements, buildings, monuments and built environment.

Intangible - customs, traditions, food, arts, knowledge, festivals, events, craftsmanship, language etc.

## **3.2 Place Identity**

### **3.2.1 Place**

Place is defined as any locality or space that has [acquired] meaning by human experience in it (Tuan 1977 cited in Semken, Neakrase and Dial 2009, p.136). Sirikulchayanont (2009, p.1) explains that “Place embraces variety of life as people settled and shaped that place, as well as adding their patterns over time. It is the cultural value that people bring into the place that plays a key role, not only affecting the form, but also adding life and character to that place. Place acts as a cultural clue that reveals human ideologies, meaning, values, as well as activities, which all involved human life”. So, Sirikulchayanont (2009, p.3) summarizes that “the meaning, values, living ways, and ideologies of people have shaped a place and [are] reflected through its form and character”; likewise, Turner and Turner (2006,

p.207) describe that “Place results from our experience of a space, our memories and emotional attachment to that space, and the meanings we attach to it”. In addition, Shamai 1991 (cited in Najafi and Shariff 2011, pp.188-189) points out that “a place is not just an object, but part of a larger whole that is being felt through the actual experience of meaningful events. The experience is felt through all the senses (sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch), and the place experience is in fact a total sensual experience”. From the above ideas one might assume that “place is an interaction of three components, i.e. ‘physical setting’, ‘activity’ and ‘meaning’” (Relph 1976, p.48).

### **3.2.2 Identity of place**

Gustafson (2001 cited in Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.187) states that “each place has its own unique character” and Lynch (1960, cited in Relph 1976, p.45) enhances Gustafson’s idea that “the identity of a place provides its individuality or distinction from other places and serves as the basis for its recognition as a separable entity”. Sirikulchayanont (2009, p.12) explains that “the character of place is enriched through oral history, personal memory, and even the way [a] local community named their place”. Likewise Kask and Raagmaa (2010, pp.163-164) remark that “the identity, spirit and quality of a place are constituted by: the natural and anthropogenic environment; local people, who are also service providers, and visitors, who together form the social environment; symbolic meanings; and stories (narratives) told about the place, including history (urban) legends, current images in the media, and stories spread on the basis of personal experience”.

Likewise Kong and Yeoh (1995, p.15) point out “three categories of place characteristics, which are built environment, unique combination of different elements of non-material culture, and genius-loci – spirit of place”.

### **3.2.3 The importance of sense of place**

Although sense of place has made each place have its own identity and characteristics and differentiates it from other places, nevertheless the digital age and the sameness of buildings are diminishing a sense of place (Shamai and Ilatov 2005, p.468). Najafi and Shariff (2011, p.187) have said that “.... in contemporary societies due to the growth of human societies, changes in people’s lifestyles and also development of technological advances, places convey no

meanings anymore and people suffer from a sense of ‘placelessness’”. Relph (1976, cited in Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.187) explained that “placelessness means the settings which do not have any distinctive personality or sense of place and claimed that when places cannot be culturally recognized, they suffer from lacking a sense of place; in this case people are faced with placelessness”. Sime (1986, cited in Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.187) states that “Placelessness can be explained as the physical characteristics of non place, which is culturally unidentifiable environments that are similar anywhere”. Therefore, “the creation or preservation of sense of place is important in maintaining the quality of the environment as well as the integrity of human life within it” (Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.188) and this can keep identity and uniqueness of places in comparison to other similar places.

#### **3.2.4 Components of sense of place**

Shamai and Ilatov (2005, p.468) explain, in ‘Measuring Sense of Place: Methodological Aspects’, that “Sense of place also is defined as a combination of three elements, i.e. location, landscape, and personal involvement; so, to create a sense of place all three components should interact together”. Similarly, Shamsuddin and Ujang (2008, p.399) said that “sense of place definition includes the point where the physical element, activity and meaning are intertwined in the people’s experience of place”; likewise, Montgomery (1998 cited in Shamsuddin and Ujang 2008, p.400) suggests that “...in the people’s experience of a place, the physical forms, activities and meanings combined together to form the sense [of] place and character.”

Turner and Turner (2006, p.206) enhance Montgomery’s idea that the components of sense of place generally comprise:

1. The physical features and surrounding;
2. The activities afforded by the place and the social interactions associated with the place (considered by some authors as a sub class of activities);
3. The affect and meanings including memories and associations, as well as connotations and denotations.

Phuong and Groves (2010, p.3) in their paper “Sense of Place in Hanoi’s Shop-House: The Influences of Local Belief on Interior Architecture”, assert that “sense of place relies on:

1. the physical characteristics of a setting, activities, and experiences in that setting.

2. personal identification with place or the degree that people are considered as inside/outside of a place, which influences people's perception and interpretation of place".

Although Phuong and Groves clarified that sense of place will rely on two components as described above, the physical characteristics factor already includes activities inside. Therefore, we might say that the components of sense of place comprise three factors which are physical characteristics, activities, and meanings.

However, the physical characteristics of a place are fundamental factors in presenting its sense of place (Phuong and Groves 2010, p.3). Najafi and Shariff (2011, p.189) summarized that "the contributed factors to form the sense of place can be broadly divided into two groups: the cognitive and perceptual factors and the physical characteristics of a physical setting. The cognitive factors refer to the meanings and concepts that are understood by people in a place. And the physical characteristics and attributes of an environment not only define the kind of setting but also they contribute to the perceived meanings, [while] the characteristics of physical setting influence the sense of place".

Steele (1981 cited in Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.190) mentioned the significant elements of a setting that "contribute to the sense of place as the size of setting, scale, proportion, diversity, distance, texture, ornaments, color, smell, sound, temperature and visual variety. He also argued that identity, history, fantasy, mystery, pleasure, surprise, safety, vitality, livability and memory influence people's relationships with place. Therefore reviewed seminal literature revealed that the physical features of a place that create meanings, conceptions and also safeguard their function contribute to make sense of place".

Farnum et.al (2004 cited in Amsden 2007, p.7) point out that "sense of place comes from direct experiences with a landscape, both in terms of the natural environment itself and the activities that take place within that environment, and symbols, both directly and indirectly experienced, that describe what the landscape represents." Amsden (2007, p.8) further explains that "in terms of direct

experiences, a sense of place is often represented by the characteristics of a setting”. The setting domain focused on the physical characteristics of built, natural and socio/cultural factors, including inherent and transactional factors (Steele 1981 cited in Bott and Banning 2008).

However, Shamai (1991 cited in Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.188) argued that “sense of place can be much more than one’s own personal experience. Most likely it is developed among different generational groups. It means that the long-term relationship between place and people establishes identities and meanings with physical environments that create sense of place”. Likewise, Relph (1976, cited in Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.188) explains that “sense of place, which is the ability to recognize places and their identities, can be created and develop through long-time connections between users and places” and “Sense of place as a dynamic phenomenon occurs in both time and space and is related to the notion of locale as a focal point of physical and social interaction” (Dear and Wolch 1989 cited in Holmes, James and Janice 2003, p. 239).

### **3.2.5 Spirit of place**

Alford (2011, p.10) observed that “various publications have used a number of terms relating to sense of place including place identity, place character, and spirit of place”. Relph (1996, cited in Kask and Raagmaa 2010 p.163) asserts that “the term ‘sense of place’ is often used to mean the same as ‘spirit of place’ (genius loci)”. Seamon (1989, cited in Holmes, James and Janice 2003, p.239) explains that “sense of place can also be expressed conceptually as a genius loci, a notion that acknowledges people, space and environment as key structures”.

“The term ‘genius loci’ means spirit of place. It originally appeared in a Roman myth... it was concerned with the idea that each place in the world has its own spirit creating cultural forms that gave identity to those places. The term ‘spirit of place’ in contemporary use refers to the distinctive identity of a place, which is the weave of cultures and intangible aspects of a place...” (Sirikulchayanont 2009, p.14); similarly for Steele (1981 cited in Cross 2001, p.1) “Spirit of place means the combination of characteristics that gives some locations a special ‘feel’ or personality”. Holmes, James and Janice (2003, p.240) state that “Genius loci includes



natural and constructed elements of the environment that affect human experience and development”.

Garnham (1995, p.7) points out that “Genius Loci or the spirit of place is ... based upon the belief that each town has its own individual special uniqueness, character, identity, and spirit which differs from all other places” and “since remote times man had recognized that different places have a different character. This character is often so strong that it, in fact, determines the basic properties of the environmental images of most people present, making them feel that they experience and belong to the same place’ (Norberg-Schulz, 1971, cited in Garnham 1995 p.7).

Dubos (1972, cited in Garnham1995, p.7) states that “the widespread acceptance of the words ‘Genius’ and ‘Spirit’ to denote the distinctive characteristics of a given region or city implies the tacit acknowledgement that each place possesses a set of attributes that determines the uniqueness of its landscape and its people”.

In addition, Garnham (1995, p.9) highlights that “a town can identify and define its component ingredients and thereby to accurately communicate the role they play in the creation of its unique character. These ingredients tend to be drawn from the town’s built form, its natural setting, the activities which happen in it, its past, and the meaning the place has acquired or developed for those who experience it, or have experienced it throughout history”. Therefore, Dubos (1972 cited in Garnham, 1995 p.7) summarizes the major components of identity which creates Genius Loci to be:

1. Physical features and appearance: the actual physical structure of a place. The reality of its buildings, landscape, climate and aesthetic quality.
2. Observable activities and functions: how a place’s people interact with it, how their cultural institutions have affected it, and how the buildings and landscape are used.
3. Meanings or symbols: much of a place’s character will be derived from people’s reactions to its physical and functional aspects (Relph 1976).

Steele (1981, cited in Garnham 1995, p.9) gives more detail, namely that “unique character, or strong sense of place is often based upon such items

as: architectural style, climate, unique natural setting, memory and metaphor, what the place means to people who experience it, the use of local materials, craftsmanship, sensitivity in the siting of important buildings and bridges, cultural diversity and history, people's values, town wide activities, daily and seasonal". These items represent an initial breakdown of the range of possible local conditions which create a unique town spirit or character, separate one place from another and begin to introduce more detail into the three components.

From the above idea and concept of both identity and sense of place, it is found that the major components of each concept are the same, namely: physical appearance and objects, activities and functions, and meanings or symbols. Therefore, the term 'spirit of place', 'sense of place' or 'genius of place', as mentioned above, mean the idea of identity or character of place.

However, Relph (1976, p.48) suggests that "Although these three components of place (static physical appearance, the activities, and the meanings) are the raw materials of the identity of places, and the dialectical links between them are the elementary structural relations of that identity; but [this] is not complete. There is another important aspect or dimension of identity that is less tangible than these components and dialectics, yet serves to link and embrace them. This is the attribute of identity that has been variously termed 'spirit of place', 'sense of place' or 'genius of place' (genius loci) – all terms which refer to character or personality. The spirit of place involves topography and appearance, economic functions and social activities, and particular significance deriving from past events and present situations".

### 3.2.6 Sense of place

The term "sense of place" has been defined and used in many different ways by many different scholars such as in environmental psychology, sociology, geography, anthropology, landscape and urban design, and architecture (Kil 2008, Eyles and Williams 2008).

As the term "sense of place" has been used widely, there are some differences in the concept that arise in different disciplines.

1. **Architects, planners, and urban designers** suggest that sense of place represents not only physical characteristics of the built environment but also the embedded soul or spirit in a place (Lyndon & Moore 1994, cited in Phuong

and Groves 2010, p.2); likewise the Rutgers Center for Green Building (2013) enhances the idea of sense of place in architecture, that “it is about context as well as the identity or unique characteristics of a building or space that creates meaning for an occupant. A sense of place can be derived by incorporating vernacular design elements, local materials and craftsmanship and connecting to the natural and cultural resources of a community”

**2. Geographers** see sense of place as denoting meaning connected to human experiences and activities within a particular setting (Relph, 1976, cited in Phuong and Groves 2010, p.2).

**3. For urban historians and conservationists,** sense of place is the memory of a place associated with past experiences and the sense of well-being at the place, while urban sociologists have asserted that sense of place is socially constructed under the forces of political economy and globalization (Hayden 1995, cited in Phuong and Groves 2010, p.2).

**4. Landscape** sense of place contributes to psychological ideas of self-identity and existential belonging (Cuba and Hummon 1993, cited in Holmes, Gary, and Janice 2003, p.240).

**5. In human geography,** “...sense of place has increasingly been examined as an outcome of interconnected psychoanalytic, social and environmental processes, creating and manipulating quite flexible relations with physical place”(Cosgrove 2000, p.731); in addition, The Oxford Dictionary of Geography 2004 (cited in Phuong and Groves 2010, p.2) defines sense of place as “either the intrinsic character of a place, or the meaning people give to it, but, more often, a mixture of both”.

**6. For phenomenologists,** “...sense of place is an emotional connection with place via understanding its symbols and meanings. One place is a part of an environment that has been experienced via our senses” (Najafi and Shariff 2011, p.189).

Shamai (1991 cited in Jorgensen and Stedman 2001, p.233) describes “sense of place has been referred to as an overarching concept which describes the relationship between people and spatial settings, i.e. place attachment, national identity, and awareness or perception of region etc.”. Similarly Najafi and

Shariff (2011, p.187) have said that “sense of place is used in studying human place bonding, attachment and place meaning and sense of place usually is defined as an overarching impression encompassing the general ways in which people feel about places, sense it, and assign concepts and values to it”.

In addition, Sirikilchayanont (2009, p.15) explained that “sense of place combines all aspects of senses together with memory, imagination and anticipation”.

Amsden (2007, pp.7- 9) points out that “sense of place comes from 1. direct experiences with a landscape, both in terms of the natural environment itself and the activities that take place within that environment, and 2. symbols, both directly and indirectly experienced. When sense of place is built upon direct experiences, in both natural and manmade settings, people will report a more specific sense of place based on their memories, activities, or relationships with others. On the other hand, when sense of place is constructed around symbols (that represent the meaning), people will be less specific, relating ideas that are connected more to their own identity. For instance, people who feel strongly about hiking will give specific examples of the trail, past hikes, or their hiking companions”.

From the above concept it is found that sense of place is the explanation of people’s feelings to each place. Therefore, the idea of sense of space suggested by Sirikilchayanont and by Najafi and Shariff will mostly be used to frame the analysis sought in this project.

#### **4. Nostalgia tourism**

Nostalgia is about emotion that refer to a longing for past memories. The origin of nostalgia theory is in medical categories, association with the feeling of homesickness, illness or remembrance of something from one’s past (Chartniyom 2013, p.9). Nostalgia is from the Greek *nostos*, to return home, and *algai*, a painful condition; thus, a painful yearning to return home (Davis 1977).

Nostalgia is a term used to describe a psychological state of longing for something familiar, usually from the past (Chen et al., 2014 cited in Leong, Yeh and Chang 2015, p.89). Similarly, Wang, Li, Chou and Huang (2014, p.185) stated that “nostalgia is defined as a longing for the past, yearning for yesterday, or a fondness

for possessions and activities associated with day[s] gone by...”. Hutcheon (1998 cited in Chartnuyom 2013, pp29-30) gave more explanation that “nostalgia, in fact, is known commonly as a yearning for the past of the time, place, circumstance or event. Nostalgia is a process of reproducing the good old memories to the present time and thus provokes the desire to return to that state. Paradoxically, in the present time, nostalgia becomes a new concept associated with nationalism, chauvinism or even innocent forms such as the eating of familiar foods”.

Nostalgia can be seen as a primary driver of the recent popularity of heritage tourism (Suntikul n.d.; Canton & Santos, 2007; Dann, 1994; Kim 2005). The nostalgic impulse in tourism has at times been criticized for the distraction it can bring from the realities of the present (Suntikul n.d.). Nostalgia tourism is one of the most noticeable new developments of the so-called postmodern tourism (Uriely 2005 cited in Leong et al., 2015, p.90). McKenzie (2013, p.15) described that “nostalgia tourism deals with the past while remembrance focuses more on educational aspect”, similarly Canton and Santos (2007 cited in McKenzie 2013, p.115) pointed out that “nostalgia tourism looks at the historical events, with an aim to promote kitschy and longing representations in the past”.

One is always led to speculate if the ‘nostalgia tourist’ is seeking not a *remembered* past but a *dreamed* one, founded in a sense of loss and nostalgia; similarly Kelly (1986 cited in Watanasaward 2012, p.46) described that “nostalgia is an imagination of a world we have lost”. Steven Legg (2005) quotes Susan Steward (1984, p.23) on the nature of the nostalgic:

The nostalgic dreams of a moment before knowledge and self-consciousness that itself lives only in the self-consciousness of the nostalgic narrative. Nostalgia is the repetition that mourns the inauthenticity of all repetition and denies repetition’s capacity to form identity.

Nostalgia might be seen as being in some sense of a dialectical opposite to authenticity. At a less abstract level, its key characteristics might be that it involves a sense of loss, more specifically the imagining of a lost past, therefore a sense of longing for that past, also the idea of repetition or *the return* to some place that might

represent that loss (as implied in the quote from Susan Steward above), yet at the same time an almost tragic realisation that such a repetition or return can never satisfy the search for identity (or, in Steward's terms, authenticity).

There are many studies of communities in present Thailand where questions of shared memory are salient. In this category, JinnapasPathumporn (2012) has described a phenomenon among the Phutai people of Thailand's Northeast (Isaan): through a series of mostly forced migrations, the Phutai originating from Dien Bien Phu in present Vietnam came to settle in various locations in Isaan, also in Phetchaburi, while retaining many aspects of their culture and, tellingly, apparently always seeking locations whose geography resembled that remembered from Dien Bien Phu, even though Dien Bien Phu was many generations in the past. While this and similar studies may usefully assist reflection on the links between memory, heritage and nostalgia, there is no evidence that the Phutai return as tourists to this region of memory – we do not find here a case of nostalgia tourism. Rather, it might be called nostalgic recall.

It would seem from the *tourism* literature that 'nostalgia tourism' relates to two phenomena. At a more superficial level, there is (1) tourism where the tourist seeks to return to some place that they have visited previously and of which they retain happy memories – it is the wish to re-connect with previous experience. Then, at an arguably deeper level, there is travel in search of one's ancestral roots – here the wish can be seen as to re-connect with one's own identity. At this second level, the reconnection can be (2) either *real* (for example to a known place of one's ancestry) or (3) *imagined* (to a place that seems to remind the visitor of what their origins might have been). So, it is suggested here, three broad categories of nostalgia tourism can be identified.

The first of these categories, tourism to re-connect with previous experiences, is also referred to as 'memory tourism'. An example might be represented in the cases of farang tourists who will return, each year, to Phuket or a similar venue because it can evoke happy memories of some first visit in the past.

On the second, travel in search of ancestral roots, there is Russell (2008). Another interesting paper by Sabine Marschall (2014) further differentiates between categories within this form of nostalgia tourism: there is homesick tourism (people

wishing to return to their former homes, often in another country), ancestral roots tourism (where the ‘homes’ may be several generations in the past), personal heritage tourism, and migrant return travel.

It is the third category, tourism to places that suggest what one’s origins might have been like, that has particular salience in the present study. People, both Thai and *farang*, travel in some quest “to find the real Thailand”. In the Bangkok region, this type of tourism accounts for the new popularity of “floating markets” (King, 2011, pp. 107-08), also *khlong* tourism more generally. There is also the popularity of small-town tourism – a noted case is Chiangkhan in Loei province, studied by SiridaTienkow (2016 forthcoming); also A. Nilnoppakun and K.Ampavat (2015).

#### **Nostalgia tourism in Thailand**

Watanasawad (2012, p.50) claimed that from an anthropological point of view, the nostalgia phenomenon in Thailand’s society came from the lack of self confidence of people in society, being anxious for today’s society and worried about the future. Therefore, they would like to look for identity for fulfill their lost. Nostalgia is a social phenomenon that has prevailed for a long time and is related to the history of Thailand’s economy. After Thailand faced economic crisis in 2540 B.E., the nostalgia trend started booming. Peleggi(2002 cited in Watanasawad 2012) has described the situation of nostalgia tourism in Thailand:

During the past ten years or so, nostalgia has established itself firmly in the Thai collective consciousness, first as the other side of the middle class pursuit of modernity and globalization and, after the financial crisis of 1997, as an imaginary refuge from the ruthlessness of the global marketplace. As Thailand continues to modernize and industrialize, the chance for the experience of peasant society to survive in the collective memory will depend on the intelligibility to contemporaries of the representations that articulate that memory....; but as consumers in the cultural industry market, which includes tourism, their position may afford more autonomy. On the one hand, they may indulge in a market-driven nostalgia that glamorizes indiscriminately the past; on the other hand, they may critically

engage the representations of the past put forth by museums and Historical Parks at home and going abroad as tourists, even compare familiar motifs to those that in other countries articulate representations of their national history (Peleggi 2002, pp. 78-79).

From the above discussion it can be concluded that in the situation of nostalgia tourism in Photharam there are two aspect that Photharam can fit in. The first is for search of ancestral roots, There will be people whose visits to Photharam come into this category – they might have been born there, subsequently moved to Bangkok or elsewhere, then come back to “see the old town”. However, this is scarcely a group for whom tourism can be planned. The second is for the tourists who would like to find the real Thailand. It would seem that Photharam could be well suited to this form of tourism. It has two major advantages: first, it has a rich and complex heritage that highlights both the diverse cultures of Thailand (Mon, Thai, Lao, Sino-Thai) and also the peaceful and creative co-existence of those cultures. Its second advantage is its proximity to Bangkok and hence its ability to offer day tours for tourists who want to see more than just the monuments of Bangkok.

From concepts of nostalgia found that it has a strong related with memories. Likewise McDermott (2002 cited in Agnew 2005, p.9) argued that “...nostalgia is a necessary ingredient of memory work. When we long for the past, we long for what might have been as well as what was...”. From the description of nostalgia tourism found that nostalgia tourism can analyzed into three aspects and every single of aspect connected with memories. In addition, memories play a role to construct a social and personal identity in a world (Giles 2002, 21 cited in Agnew 2005 p7) and can create new understanding of both the past and the present (Agnew 2005, p.7).



## Chapter 3

### General Background of the study area

#### Introduction

Photharam has a slogan ‘town of the beautiful women’. In the time when water transportation was thriving, Photharam was a great port and it was once a major commercial center of the Maeklong river basin. However, the town became sluggish because of changing transportation and a huge blaze in 2509 B.E. (Photharam municipality, 2011).



Figure 3 Welcome sign at the entrance

Source: Author in April, 2016

Photharam community is located at the west of Thailand in Photharam district, Ratchaburi province. It is located on the bank of the lower part of the Maeklong river which was the major transportation route of the western region. The population of this town is 9,953 and there are 3,506 housing units while the number of households is 1,796 (Photharam municipality, 2016). “Photharam community is more than 100 years old and located on the bank of the Maeklong river which once was the important business district of Ratchaburi province. Photharam had developed from a small market to a significantly larger community; furthermore, it was a place that had high economic growth due to Photharam not only being a place to exchange products but also as a lay-by for the boats with which to travel between Bangkok and other towns in Ratchaburi province and Kanchaburi province” (Rattanamat 2013).

Jindamaneeroj (1994, pp.39-41) wrote that “Digging klong Pasi charoen and klong Damnoen saduck for connecting the Chaopraya, Tha chin and Maeklong rivers, in the reigns of king Rama IV to King Rama V, caused water transportation to operate comfortably and trading efficiently. Lots of Chinese people traveled to several villages in Photharam and its neighborhood for doing business. Some places that were used to assemble goods and products for exchanging developed themselves to become a small market and finally turn into a CBD. Thus Photharam developed itself to be a business district where products and goods from outside were transported by boats and ships, and those from inside were carried by carts, all then to be assembled”.

Riwcharoenritkul (2012, pp. 60-61) adds that “... in the past, Photharam had a long and wide sand beach, around 2 kilometers, at the bank of the river when the water level decreased to the lowest level; thus, it was a proper place for lay by of boats and ships and this space was set up to be a place for trading and exchanging of locals and neighbors. Dates and times for commerce will be scheduled, called ‘Nut’, according to the lunar system”.



Figure 4 The appearance of sand beach in the past

Source: [https://www.facebook.com/ Photharam-Photo-Club-23021513724504/photos](https://www.facebook.com/Photharam-Photo-Club-23021513724504/photos)  
(Access in February 25, 2015)

When the southern railway line was constructed in the reign of King Rama V 2437-2443 B.E., it ran from Bangkok's Thonburi station, through Nakhon Prathom and Ratchaburi provinces to Petchaburi province. This was a new transportation line providing convenience for trading and traveling. For Ratchaburi province, the railway passes many important places, one being Phothoram; for this reason, Phothoram developed and became a market town for different kinds of goods transported by railway, boats and carts. As a result, Photharam welcomed various customers – Thai, Mon, Lao and Khmer (Jindamaneeroj, 1994).



Figure 5 Photharam railway station

Source: Author in June, 2012

Jindamaneeroj (1994, p.50) has pointed out that “Photharam market was prosperous in the beginning because it is located close to and can connect to the bigger markets such as those of Ratchaburi province and Nakorn Prathom province, so most territory in Photharam was a business district. Later, Photharam experienced a huge blaze several times, especially in 1966. After this incident, the prosperity of Photharam stopped and it now cannot compete with the neighboring market”. Furthermore, Riwcharoenritkul (2012, p.8) explained that “Because of World War II, doing business in Photharam was paused; some Chinese people who were the owners of businesses moved out; therefore, the three talad [markets] inside Photharam were depressed.”

“After World War II, road transportation was developed, whereas water transportation, especially on the Maeklong river that was previously the major transportation mode for people both inside Photharam and neighboring communities,

was reduced significantly. Moreover, the construction of Wachiralongkorn Dam or Khaolaem Dam, Kanchanaburi province, changed the environment of the Maeklong river. In the present time, the water transportation that once marked the main trade route has been replaced by a road and, as a result, Photharam has faded and become sluggish” (Dekdoi-look kao nung, 2012).

### **Background of Photharam**

Photharam has had a long history and it is one of the old communities in Ratchaburi province but the origin of the term ‘Photharam’ is not possible to specify as one cannot find any trace of its source. However local people believe that this wording might have come in two possible ways.

First, ‘Photharam’ might derive from the accent of a different ethnic group. There may have been lots of Bodhi trees near Dam’s house; hence, local people would have named this place **Ban Pho ta Dam** and the Mon who had immigrated here named this place with their accent as **Phod ha ram**, while the Chinese accent that would have yielded **Por lai jum**; then finally **Photharam**.

Second, ‘Photharm’ might derive from the character of the landscape. This area has lots of Bodhi trees in the temple precinct; therefore, people possibly named this area ‘Baan Pho Ar Ram’ or ‘Photharam’.

Riwcharoenritkul (2012, p.27) has suggested that the “name ‘photharam’ might relate to lots of the Bodhi trees inside the wat; therefore, the wat and the community located there were named as Wat Photharam and Photharam community as other communities are named from a wat close by”.

As mentioned previously, Photharam is allegedly a town of beautiful women or kon suay Photharam. This sentence is assumed to derive from wording of King Rama V who admired the women in Photharam when he went back there from a third travel to Sai yok by boats in 2431 B.E. Then, the motto of Ratchaburi province was created; hence, the wording ‘kon suay Photharam’ (women who have lived in Photharam are beautiful) was used as the beginning of the Ratchaburi motto from 2532 B.E. until the present.



Figure 6 Town of the beauty women, the slogan of Photharam

Source: Author in April, 2016

The beginning of the story of the beauty of women in Photharam is explained by Suketorn and Subunnaket (2005, p.8) in “Chinese community in Photharam”, that “...the descendants who are hybrid of Chinese and other natives will have an outstanding feature such as light skin, tall and slim, smooth skin and good looking from their ancestor Chinese, Thai, Laos and Mon, respectively”.

Riwcharoenritkul (2012) observes that “Photharam has various ethnic groups who have come to this place for different purposes. The Mon and Lao were prisoners of war herded to this area for reinforcements to Thai troops, whereas Chinese people came here for trading. The Mon mostly settled down on the bank whereas Thais and Laos mainly lived on the low land”.

During the early Rattankosin era, from King Rama I to King Rama IV, both sides of the Maeklong river from Baan Pong to Baan Photharam became the major place for immigration of neighbors who escaped after being captured in war. Scholars have supposed that the origin of the first group of people that settled here might be Mon; afterwards, Thais moved to this area and settled down mingling with the Mon community. Laos from Vientiane moved to Photharam in the Thonburi era after the Lao were defeated by the Thai in 1778. Each ethnic group dwelled along both sides of the Maeklong river and they had wat in the center of their community. Chinese people migrated to Siam in the early Rattanakosin era. Most of the Chinese people who migrated to Siam worked as coolies in Bangkok or in agricultural areas adjoining the big cities, especially an area located near a significant river of Thailand. A huge migration of Chinese people took place during the era of King Rama III to King Rama V. In the reign of King Rama IV a lot of coolies were hired to dig Khlong Damnoen Saduak, connecting the Maeklong River at Bang Nok Khwaek to the Tha Chin River at Pratunam Bang Yang, and for construction of the southern railway line in the reign of King Rama V. The southern railway line was built from Thonburi station to Petchaburi province. Hence, Chinese people immigrated to big cities that the railway passed for work (Department of Provincial Administration, 2008).

Photharam Municipality (2011) has remarked that most residents who live inside Photharam market are Chinese people while the Mon dwell along both sides of the Maeklong river, and Laotians from Vientiane settled their community inland quite far from the Maeklong river. Although Photharam comprises various ethnic groups, they can live peacefully together; therefore, Photharam became a place that is fascinating and colorful for its culture which creates a unique character as expressed in the words “Thais live at the river basin, the Laotian live in the upland, the Mon live near the river and Chinese people dwell at the market”.

### **Ethnic groups**

In “Local history of the Maeklong basin the diversity of people community and culture Baan Pong – Baan Jed Samien”, Jindamaneeroj (2010, pp.18-19) described that “Along both sides of the Maeklong river, land was selected for the settling down of different ethnic groups, namely Thais, Mon, Laos and Chinese

people. Because of the war between the Thai and Burmese during the Thonburi era to the early Rattanakosin period, lots of people escaped and migrated to Siam. After the period of King Rama III, Siam was free from war with Burma; therefore, prosperity from trading was increasing especially along both sides of the river. Furthermore, the abolition of slavery during the era of King Rama V was the reason that attracted people from neighboring areas to move in and expand their community. The southern railway that was constructed to connect Bangkok and Petchaburi made travelling and product transport convenient particularly for a town or community that the railway passed through or that had a railway station such as Nakorn Prathom, Ratchaburi, Photharam, Baan Pong etc. Photharam and Baan Pong transformed from commercial hubs for water transport to ones for the new railroad. This incident was like a magnet for Chinese people from Bangkok and Nakorn Prathom to move to do business in Photharam community”.

“The centers of communities or villages of Thais, also Laos and Mon are the wats because they are Buddhist; hence, they always built wats for each community and most wats were built at the bank along both sides of the river because of convenient water transportation. In contrast, the center of myth and belief of Chinese people is the Chinese shrine”(Jindamaneeroj 1994, p.19).

**Thais** resided scattered around the riverside of the Maeklong river and built wats for their own community. Riwcharoenritkul (2012, p.21) clarified that “Native or Thai community settled their community on both sides of the river; the east of the Maeklong river around Klong ta kod, which has wat Ban Mor, is the centre of the community, while wat Ka Non is the center of the Thai community that settled at the west of the river”. Jindamaneeroj (1994, p.25, 31) pointed out that “inside the territory of Photharam municipality, the only wat that was built with Thai character is wat Pho Pai Roj (built in the period of King Rama V, in 2430 B.E.).

**Mon:** Pradecho (n.d., p.14) stated in “Mon Thais in Photharam” that “Mon in Photharam had migrated there since the early Rattanakosin era, of King Rama I. In that time the Mon found that the bank of the lower part of the Maeklong river was a fertile plain, while the area between Baan Pong to Photharam at that time had few dwellers; therefore, they settled their community here until now”. Jindameeroj (1994, pp. 19-24) confirmed that “Mon mostly settled their community



along both sides of the Maeklong river from Baan Pong to Photharam. Mon practise a strict Buddhism; hence, wats with Mon character were built along both sides of the river for their own community. There are three wats with Mon character in the territory of Photharam municipality, namely Wat Sai Aree Rak, Wat Photharam, and Wat Choke. Jindamaneeroj (1994, p 24) has shown that Wat Choke was built in the Thonburi era (2323 B.E.), Wat Sai Aree Rak was in the early Rattanakosin era (King Rama II, 2353 B.E.) as well as Wat Photharam (King Rama IV, 2404 B.E.).

**Lao:** Kaewngarmpraserd (n.d., p.16) has stated that “Laos from Vientiane were herded to Siam twice; the first time was in the Thonburi era (2321 B.E.) and then in the Rattankosin era (2372 B.E.). Laos were permitted to settle their new community in the lower part of central Siam, especially Ratchaburi and Petchaburi provinces”. Moreover, “...in Photharam’s territory, Laos who were herded during the Thonburi and early Rattankosin eras lived at the waterfront of the Maeklong river, in the north of the Photharam market; after that, Mon immigrated and settled their community in the same area. Fighting between the two groups of people constantly happened; so the Laos were moved inland far from the river around 2 kilometers” (Photharam 2000, p.34). Jindameeroj (1994, p.31) has asserted that “Laos lived at the bank on both sides of the Maeklong river but had to move after Mon immigrated to Photharam in the reign of King Rama I. Laos were evacuated to build their new community inland because they prefer dry land”.

**Chinese:** Most of the Chinese people who migrated to Siam were poor people; therefore, they worked as coolies and farmers in Siam. They started doing small business after they got some money and extended their businesses; after that, lots of Chinese people migrated here and finally became a huge community (Suketorn and Subunnaket 2005, p1).

Riwcharoenritkul (2012, p.21) has clarified that “there are four kind of groups of Chinese people who migrated to Photharam: Hakka, Hainan, Cantonese and Chaozhou. Chaozhou is the major group of Chinese people who have lived in Photharam especially at the market, because Chaozhou people are expert in trading. Hainanese mostly lived far away from the community and needed more space for their houses because they are skilled in craft; so, they are sawmill workers or house

builders. In addition, their houses are always next to the river because they rely on water to carry teak wood”.

### Site information

Photharam Municipality is one of the subdistricts in Photharam district, Ratchaburi province. It is about 88 kilometers from Bangkok. Photharam community is located between the Maeklong river as its western boundary, while the railway line parallel to the river is the eastern boundary of the community. The community has wat Sai Aree Rak at its the northern boundary and wat Choke at the southern boundary.

Photharam Municipality (2011) has divided Photharam into three main areas: Talad Bon (upper market), Talad Klang (middle market) and Talad Lang (lower market).

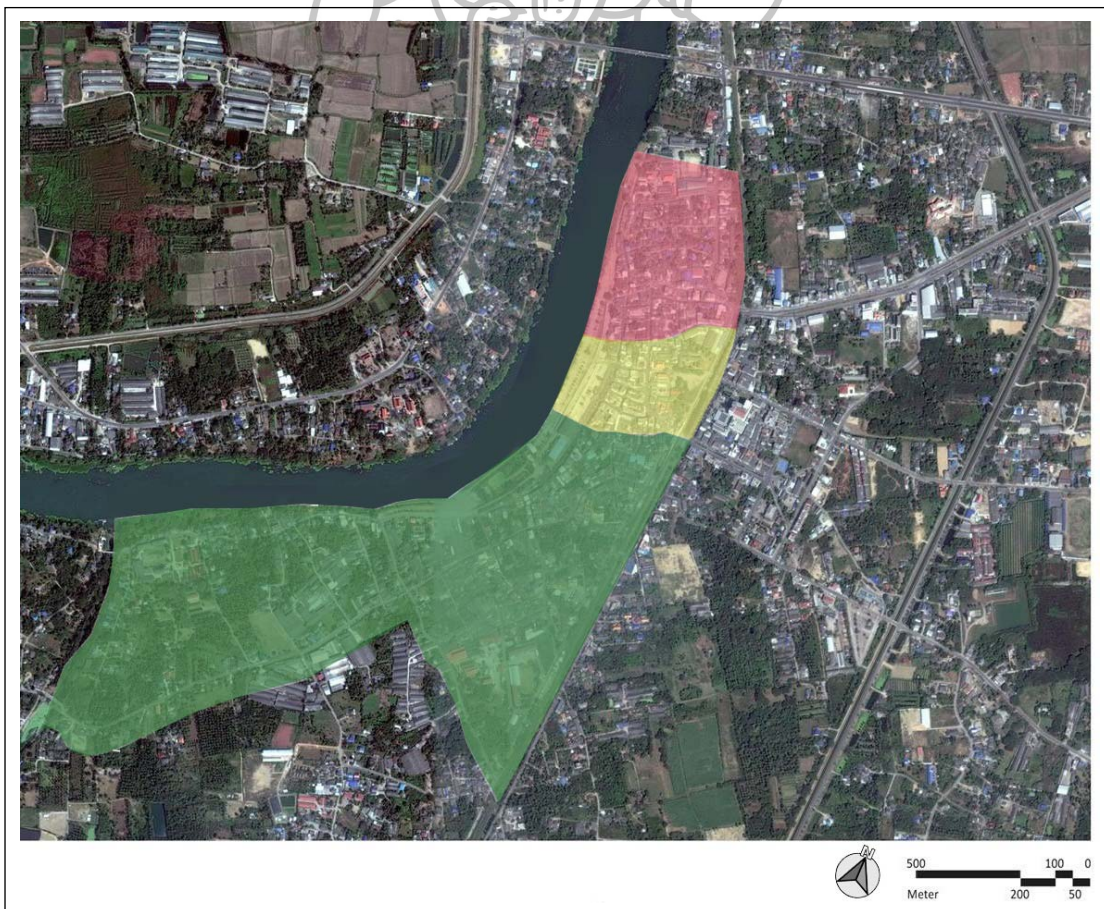


Figure 7 Three main area of Photharam community

Source: Adapted from Google earth

## Talad Bon

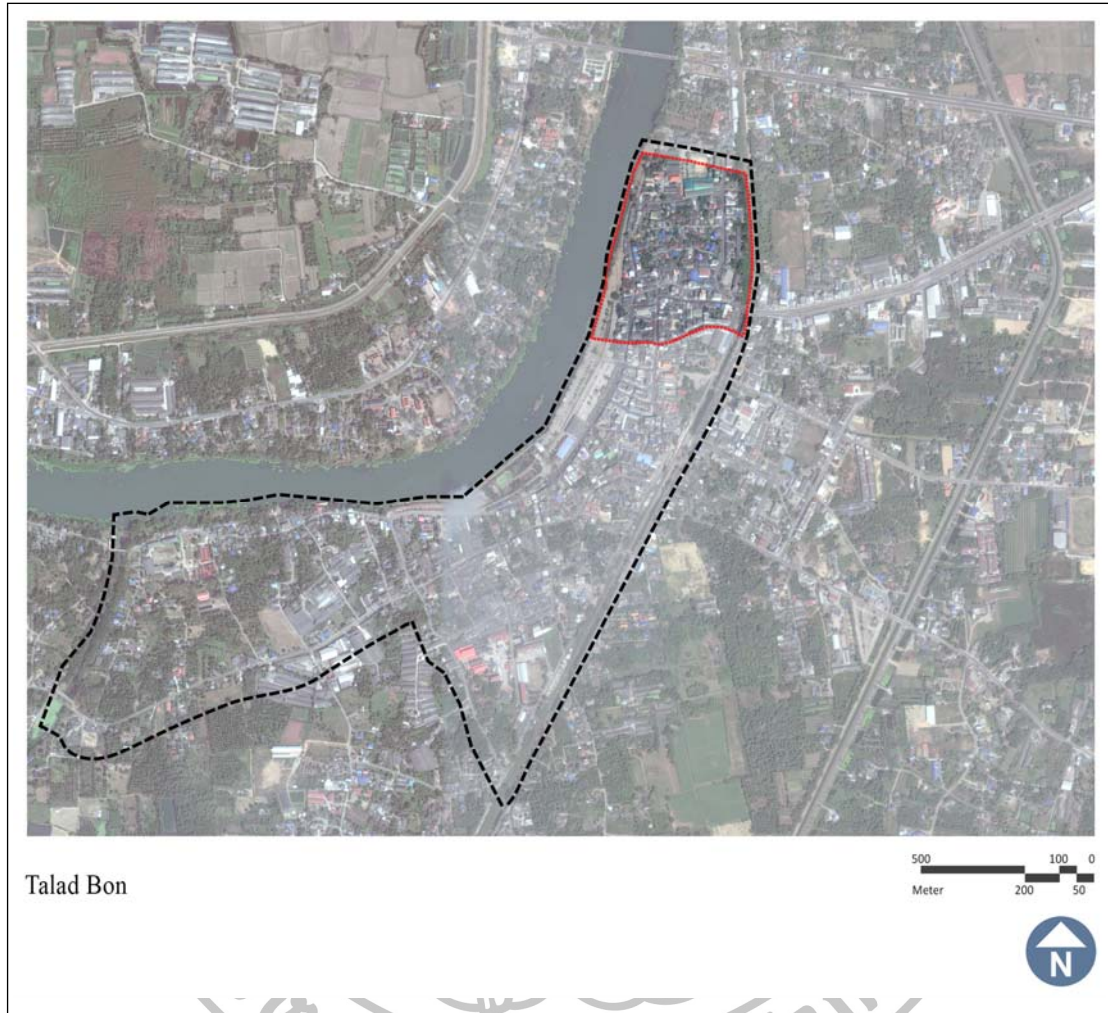


Figure 8 Map of Talad Bon

Source: Adapted from Google earth

Character of Talad Bon: mostly buildings in this area are one and two storey wooden row houses scattering around. This area has the oldest wooden row houses in Photharam and it is the richest in old buildings especially wooden shophouses. Majority group of wooden buildings can be found along both side of Choekchai road that parallel to the Maeklong river. Most of houses for living purpose, but some houses adapted their first floor for doing business.



Figure 9 Character of buildings on Choekchai road at Talad Bon

Source: Author in June, 2012

Sacred places: there are two ritualistic places inside Talad Bon which are one wat and one Chinese shrine;

1. Wat Sai Aree Rak: It is a Mon temple; the exact date and time of building has not been found but it is assumed that Wat Sai Aree Rak was built in the year 1810 A.D. in the reign of king Rama II (Jindamaneeroj 1994, p.24).



Figure 10 Wat Sai Aree Rak

Source: Author in June, 2012

The most interesting aspect of Wat Sai is the mural painting telling the stories of the Buddha together with images of King Rama V.

Wat Sai Aree Rak has 17 monks in the present day. Wat Sai was in the past accessed from the Maeklong river and accordingly the bot faces the river; there is now a new, concrete sala on the river bank (it is clearly a popular gathering place), a new wall and a new gate. However, entry is now from 'the rear' or landward side and the Buddha image has therefore been placed with its back to the original entrance. That entrance facing the river still has a central door, permanently closed; it also has a splendid and ancient mural. This wat is located in a Mon community so that Mon values are asserted: the Mon insist that women are not to enter the bot.

The wihan is Lao in its character which might derive from the Lao community that settled here during the Lao-Siam alliances of the Rama II period and wars of the Rama III reign. It assumed that the wihan might have been constructed before the bot; so, the principal Buddha image in the temple might be the first of the

Buddha images of Photharam. Inside the wihan, an outstanding object is a Chinese shrine over a sacred foot print of the Buddha.



Figure 11 Wihan of Wat Sai Aree Rak

Source: Author in June, 2012

Regarding the Chinese shrine over the sacred footprint of the Buddha inside the wihan, Pra kru krai sorn (n.d.) cited in Silapasorn (2005, pp. 8-9) told that “when he was young, Chinese people would always make merit at Wai Sai Aree Rak. Migrated Chinese people always pay respect to the sacred objects of each place where they have migrated to. They prayed for safety and wealth and so, when Chinese people got rich, they built a Chinese shrine to cover the sacred footprint of the Buddha for an offering to the Buddha”.



Figure 12 Chinese Shrine cover sacred Buddha footprint

Source: Author in June, 2012

Outside of the wihan's wall, there is a disordered assembly of chedi-like memorial shrines surrounding the wihan, in an array of forms and styles, each different from all the others, retaining the remains of ancestors.



Figure 13 Various style of chedi which contain ancestors' ashes

Source: Author in June, 2012

The bot is early Rattanakosin period in its style and displays very fine interior murals which are a curious merging of stories of the Buddha together with the images of Rama V, as noted above - the king himself is present and the guards are in the military uniforms of his age.





Figure 14 Bot of Wat Sai Aree Rak

Source: Author in June, 2012



Figure 15 King Rama V in the Wat Sai mural painting

Source: Author in June, 2012

Silapasorn (2005, p.77) has stated that “the mural painting inside the Bot is stories of the Buddha from birth, to the enlightenment and the passing away; the existing mural painting is a restoration from the reign of King Rama V. The well known mural painting is of the funeral procession of Lord Buddha and the celebration of the cremation ceremony. The way of life and entertainment activities that were painted related to the situation at that time such as the dressing of people; Chinese, Thais and Mon while the entertainments are Likay, shadow show and Chinese opera”.



Figure 16 Painting of entertainment activities

Source: Author in June, 2012

2. Chao Mae Pun Pim Shrine: it is located on the Pun Pim klong that was subsequently covered to be a road. It is assumed that the name of this shrine might have derived from the name of the klong that it is located on. The details of this shrine are not shown but it is assumed that it might have been constructed more than a hundred years ago.



Figure 17 Chao Mae Pun Pim shrine

Source: Author in May, 2016

Outstanding buildings: there are three places that Photharam municipality recommend to visit. These are;

1. Vic Kru Tawee is one of the most memorable of its buildings; it is an old theater. Chokecharadsakul (2010, para3) explained that “Vic Kru Tawee was an old theater and was built in the reign of King Rama VI by Kru Tawee”.



Figure 18 Vic Kru Tawee

Source: Author in June, 2012

In the beginning, it was built on the site of 10-15 wooden row houses and it was rebuilt with concrete in 1958. It is a representative of the prosperity of Photharam in the past. Although the theater has not operated for 13 years now, the fixtures and fittings remain just as they were. The decoration inside, the original screen and about 200 fold-able wooden chairs, too, remain just as they were during the theater's working life. Chocepatara (2009) described in "Travel Guide Journal" that "50 years ago, Vic Kru Tawee played a role as a 'Center point at Siam Square where it was the meeting place of adolescents and the only theater in this neighborhood'."

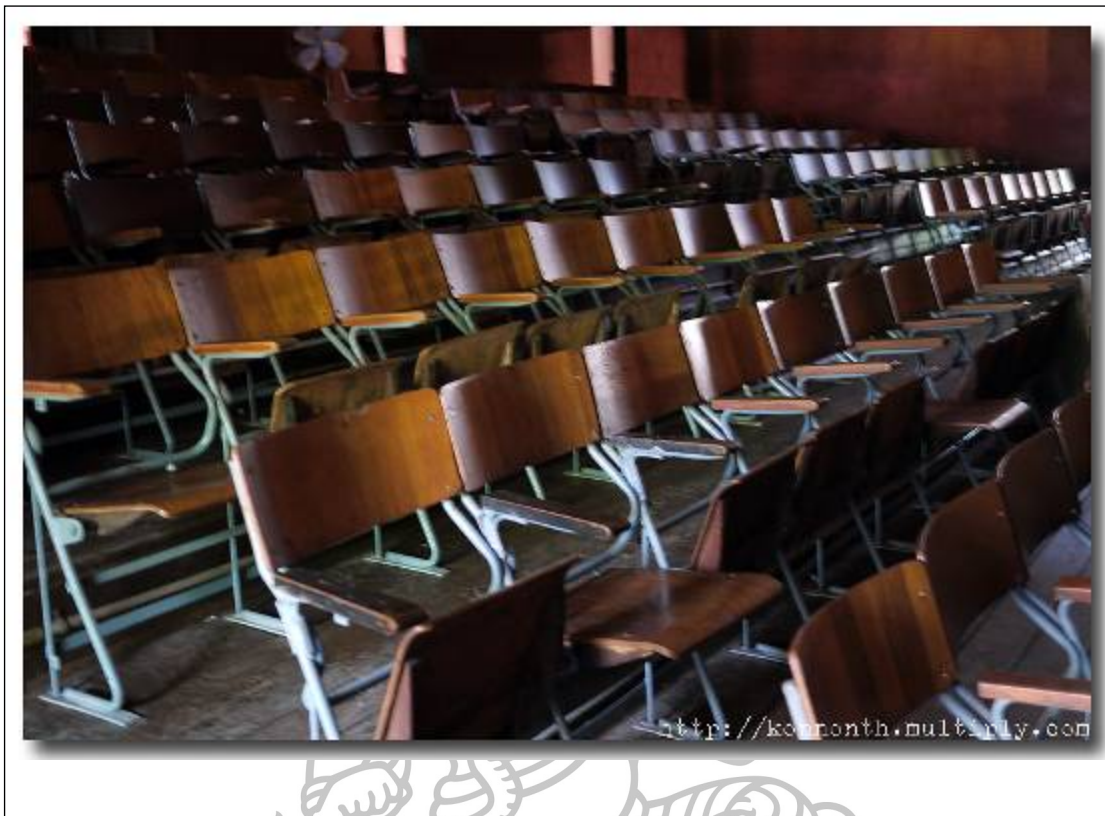


Figure 19 Wooden chairs inside Vic Kru Tawee

Source: <http://topicstock.pantip.com/chalermthai/topicstock/2010/07/A9462117/A9462117.html> (Accessed on May 25, 2013)

2. Ban Mae Lay Kha: This is the office of the “Forget Photharam Not Club”. The club was founded in 2009 and aims to rehabilitate the prosperity of Photharam. This club would like to promote Photharam to be a cultural tourism destination, the highlight for tourism being an old community that comprises wooden row houses, and the old theater. However, the important key for this club is preserving the old houses and buildings and encouraging locals to realize the existing value of their heritage. In other words, tourism is a strategy to be used for preserving heritage.



Figure 20 Baan Mae Lay Kha, an office of “Forget Photharam Not Club”

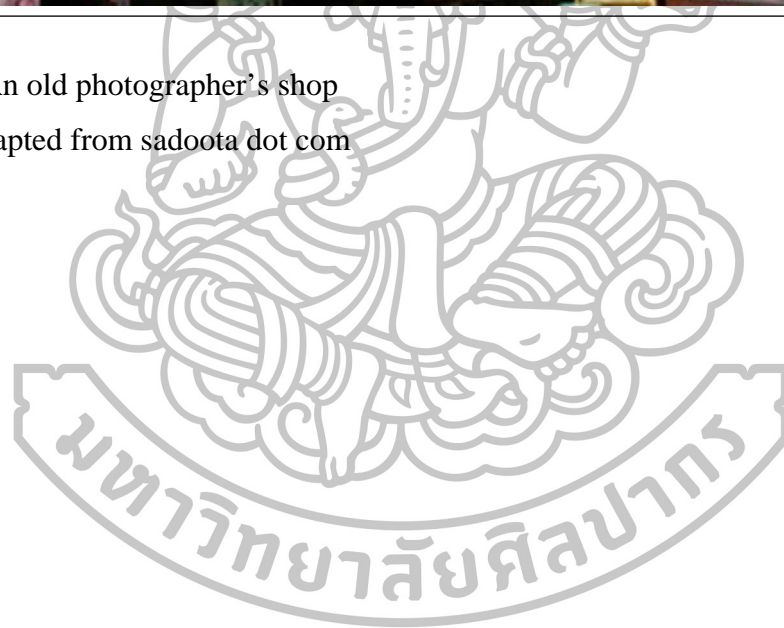
Source: Author in June, 2012

3. Satien Thong: an old photographer’s shop has managed to retain its antique atmosphere. It is a wooden shophouse of one and a half stories with kite-tile roofs. Photharam Municipality (n.d., p.19) explained that “This is the only photographer’s shop that keeps an old atmosphere and the old camera still in use”. Inside the studio, lots of old pictures are decorated and hang on the wall; in other words, this is a place that gathers old memories of Photharam.



Figure 21 An old photographer's shop

Source: Adapted from sadoota dot com



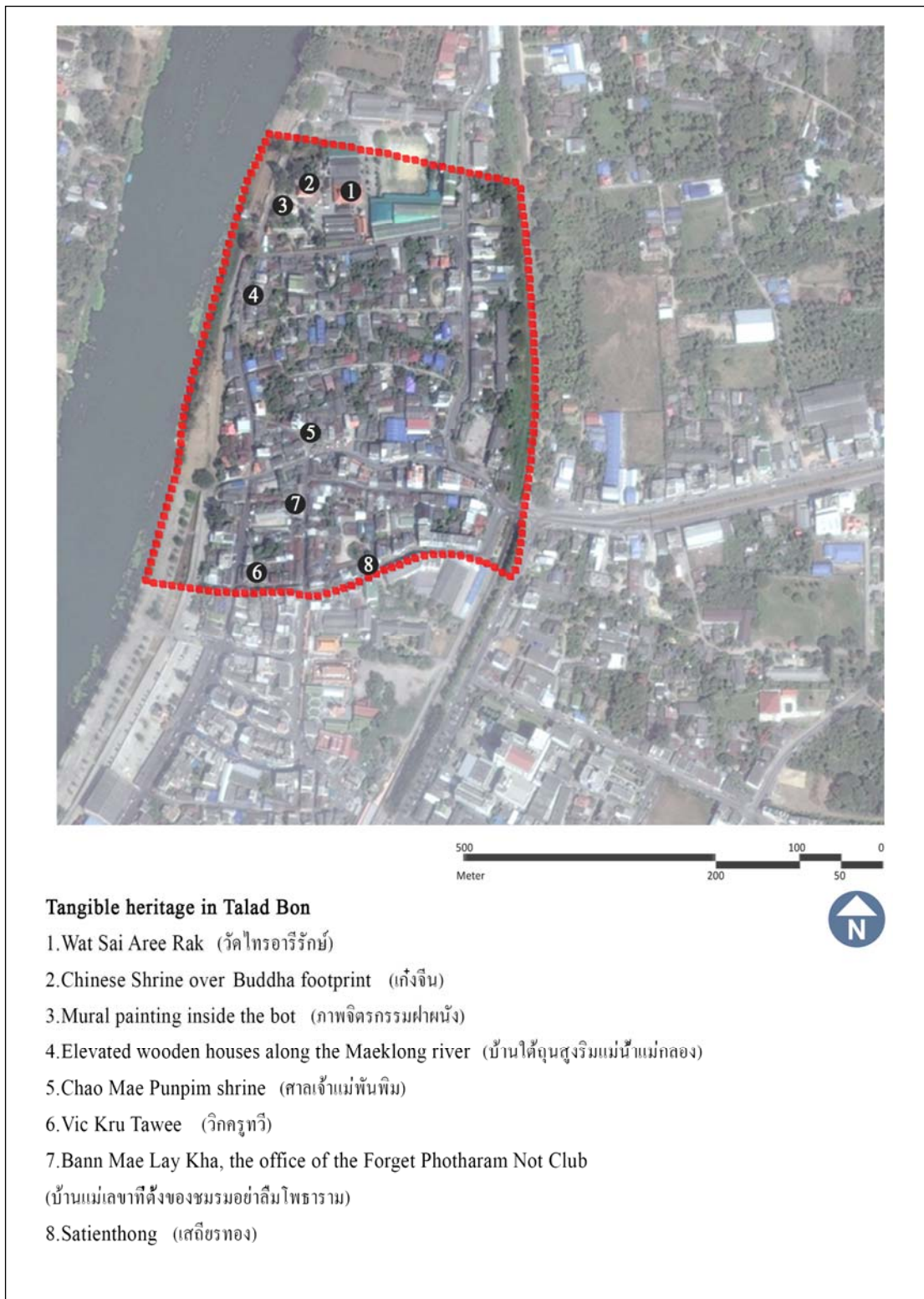


Figure 22 Tangible heritage in Talad Bon area

Source: Adapted from Google earth



## Talad Klang

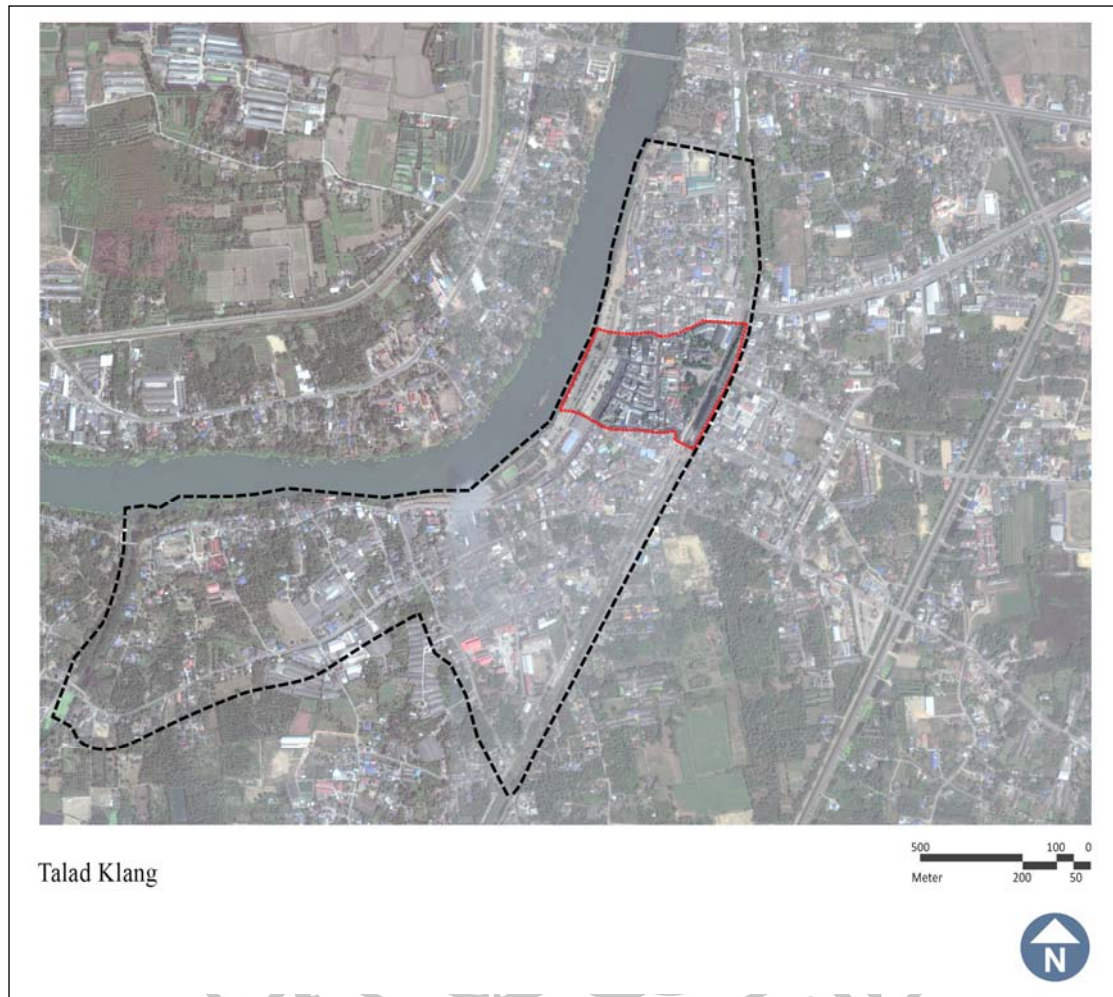


Figure 23 Map of Talad klang area

Source: Adapted from Google earth

Character of Talad Klang: is an especially distinctive part of Photharam. Because this area was seriously burnt in 2509 B.E., lots of its old wooden shophouses were lost. Therefore, some concrete buildings were built in replacement, although some wooden shophouses still remain in the coolie alley and at the back of the train station.. Talad Klang is the liveliest part of the Photharam community these days as it plays host to a fresh market. The daily market will take place twice while the vendors sell various forms of farm produce. Unfortunately, many ancient wooden buildings that were located in Talad Klang were destroyed or had to be demolished following a

huge blaze in 1966; so, most new buildings in Talad Klang were constructed with mortar and concrete. Hence, Photharam is a city which combines elements of traditional style and modern style. The community is connected with small labyrinthine streets, used for a daily market from 4.30 to 9.30 am. The highlight of Talad Klang is Song Pra Pard road where King Rama V walked to visit local people when he traveled to Photharam.



Figure 24 Morning market at Talad Klang

Source: Author in September, 2012

Sacred places: there are three ritualistic place inside Talad Klang consist of one wat and one Chinese shrine and one Vegetarian cafeteria;

1. Wat Photharam: This is located at the left hand side of the Maeklong river. It is an ancient monument that has had a long history. In the early times, monks'

dwellings, priests' eating hall and sala were built in wood as an ancient center with Thai character.



Figure 25 Ubosot of Wat Photharam

Source: Author in September, 2012

The Ubosot was constructed by local Buddhist builders. Wat Photharam is an important monument of Photharam; most of the wats have only one sema, the boundary of a bot around the ubosot, whilst wat Photharam has double sema. In the year 1999, Fine Art Department officers explored it and assumed that this wat would have been built in the late Ayutthaya period around more than 250 years ago while, contrarily, Jindamaneeroj confirmed that this temple was built in the reign of King Rama IV in 2402 B.E (1994, p.24).

There are 140 Buddha images regimented into long rows in the cloister and the principal Buddha image in the temple was made by carved laterite.



Figure 26 The cloister around the ubosot

Source: Author in September, 2012

It is mostly in a Thai Buddhist style and probably dates from the late Ayutthaya period, although it has clearly been much renovated. Much of its applied decoration is Chinese as is its display of community wealth. The exterior wall of the cloister presents the temple's most ambiguous images. These are bas-relief in the form of guardians and are indeterminately Chinese/Khmer, suggesting the indeterminacy of origins. Also, there are the giant guardians warding off evil from the cloister and bot which they guard.

In the past, the entrance to the temple faced directly on the river as in Wat Sai Aree Rak but, when road transportation was developed, the back entrance that was close to the market became the new entrance, instead. Chawewan Thammarat (personal interview, May 6, 2012) commented that inside the bot the Buddha image will face to the East or the back entrance. Therefore, in the previous time people would enter at the back of the Buddha image.

2. Guan Yu Shrine: Guan Yu is the god who local people believe that they survived from a huge blaze because of his power. Guan Yu Shrine is located at Coolie Alley; it was originally a one story wooden shrine; then, a two stories concrete building with Chinese form replaced it. Chinese people who live in Photharam, especially in Coolie Alley, give high respect to Guan Yu because they believe that Guan Yu protected Coolie alley from huge flames in 1955 and 1966.



Figure 27 Guan Yu shrine

Source: Author in March, 2014

3. Soon Tien Tua Vegetarian Cafeteria was the first vegetarian cafeteria in Photharam and is more than a hundred years old. In the beginning, it was a wooden building with elevated ground floor; then it was demolished and replaced with a two storied concrete building with Chinese form.



Figure 28 Soon Tien Tua Vegetarian Cafeteria

Source: Author in May, 2016

Outstanding buildings: The 'Journal of tourism in Photharam' suggested the important places for visiting comprise are as below:

1. Photharam railway station was originally built in the reign of King Rama V. This is one of the stations on the southern railway line; it was a key factor that encouraged the prosperity of business in Photharam.



Figure 29 Photharam railway station

Source: Author in May, 2016

2. Coolie Alley or Jupgang Alley is named because, in the olden times, most goods were transported by train due to transport regularity and convenience and then unloaded by laborers. The area nearby Photharam Railway Station was home to "Jupgang" or laborers who loaded and unloaded boxes, luggage and goods from the train and the locals retain the name up until today. (State railway of Thailand, 2012). Yai Eua-a-roonchai (personal interview, May 30, 2012) explained that “coolie alley is a work place and home of coolies”. Photharam is a market that gathers different kinds of goods and products; hence, transfers of goods by boats (from Bangkok) or by train (from the South) are always happening. Lots of coolies are the key factors in transferring goods.



Figure 30 Physical form of coolie alley

Source: Author in May, 2013

At coolie alley, it has a special food that only produces at Photharam that is 'black tofu'. Black tofu is a local Chinese food and famous in Photharam. Black tofu is produced and sold at Coolie Alley. This uses one kind of method to preserve food that is from the knowledge of the Chinese people. It serves as a souvenir of this town. There are two shops sells black tofu at coolie alley are Mae lek and J-Ung.





Figure 31 Black tofu

Source: Author in May, 2016

3. Song Prapas road is located at Talad Klang and provides a link between Wat Photharam and the sand beach. This name was given to the road to remind people that once King Rama V came to Photharam and walked through this road for seeing the way of life of local people.



Figure 32 Song Prapas road.

Source: Author in May, 2016

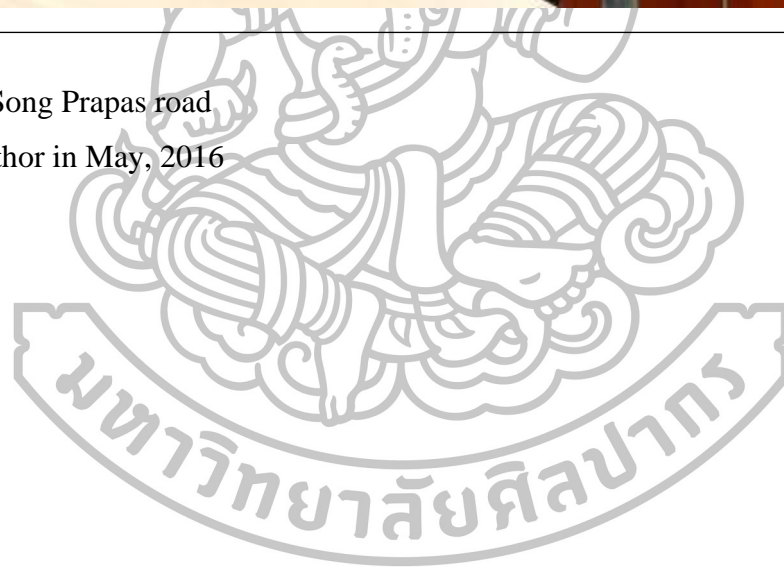




Figure 33 Tangible heritage in Talad klang

Source: Adapted from Google earth

## Talad Lang

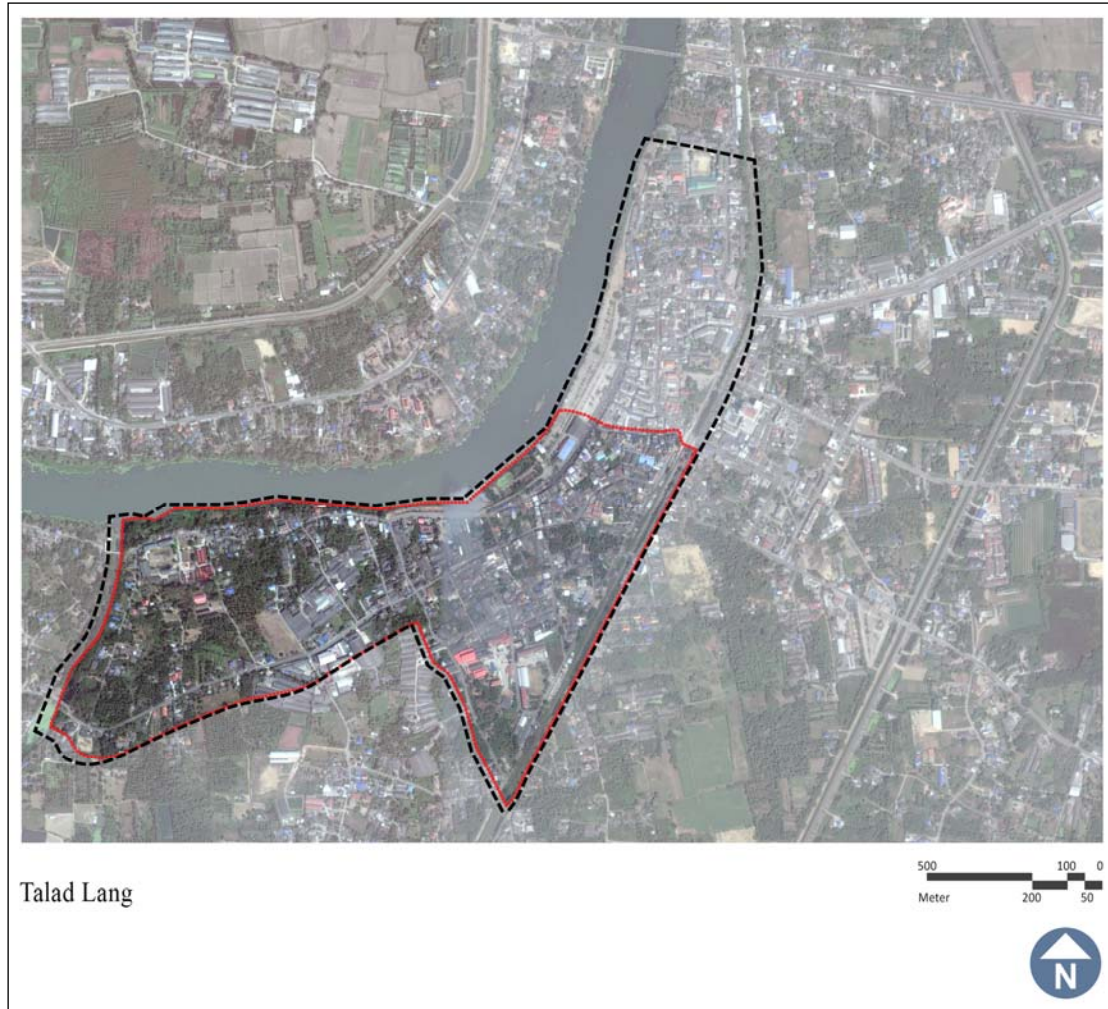


Figure 34 Map of Talad Lang area

Source: Adapted from Google earth

Character of Talad Lang: wooden shophouses are scattered around the area. The styles of houses are quite different from those of Talad Bon and Talad Klang, where most are rowhouses or shophouses; the Talad Lang area, by contrast, is occupied by single houses with yards. In the past, this was an area of factories especially fish sauce factories but only a few of these are still open. After some factories shut down, some wooden row houses which were the dwellings of workers of the factories were abandoned and let run down.



Figure 35 Abandoned shophouses

Source: Author in September, 2012

Fish sauce factories, in the beginning, produced for households; then, subsequently they expanded capacity for commerce.

Mr. Teera Arakvichanun (cited in Sujachaya and Poomsiri, n.d.) said that “In the past, there were a lot of fish sauce factories in Photharam – around 40 factories”. Most of them were located on both sides of Songpon Rd, from Sukree road to Rong Heep road, and on the left hand side of Choke Chai road or Talad Lang area.



Figure 36 One of the fish sauce factories still running their business

Source: Author in September, 2012

In the beginning, fish sauces were distributed to nearby communities such as Ban Pong and Muang Ratchaburi by boats. After expanding capacity, commercial routes were extended to the Northeastern region and bottles and gallon containers were used instead of jars. Sea fish were imported to be a production material instead of fresh water fish because of a reduction of the amount of fish. These days, few fish sauce factories are running businesses; some of them have moved out or closed down (Suketorn and Subunnaket, 2005).



Figure 37 Containers for fish sauces in the past

Source: Author in March, 2014

Sacred places: there are six ritualistic place inside Talad Lang consisting of two wat and three Chinese shrines and one Vegetarian cafeteria;

1. Wat Pho Phai Roj is located in the Talad Lang area. It was built in 1887; Jindamaneeroj (1994, p.31) has confirmed that it was built in the reign of King RamaV (B.E.2430). It is the only wat of the Thai community who live in Photharam.



Figure 38 Wat Pho Phai Roj and Luangpor Sukhothai

Source: Author in May, 2016

Wat Pho Phai Roj occupies a very extensive area of land. The larn wat or temple yard is used here for community activities and annual festivals, including wat festivals. It has a giant Buddha in the open beside the bot as in Wat Choke.

Pranee Sasalab (personal interview June 5, 2012) has recounted that people who live in Talad Lang and nearby pay special respect to the “Luangpor Sukhothai”, the huge Buddha image. Local people believe that Luangpor Sukhothai will bless and make everything that people wish come true and when the people’s wishes happen, they will bring firecrackers to Luangpor Sukhothai in return because local people believe that is what Luangpor Sukhothai likes.



Figure 39 Larn wat of Wat Phot Phai Roj was used a venue for annual festivals.

Source: [https://www.facebook.com/pages/Forget Photharam Not Club](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Forget%20Photharam%20Not%20Club) (Accessed on June 2, 2014)



2. Wat Choke was built in the Thonburi, in Era 2323 (Jindamaneeroj 1994, p.31), or 1780; its old name was “Wat Baan Mai”. The founder of the wat is not known. Wat Choke is located on the eastern bank of the MaeKlong river. The 10<sup>th</sup> Supreme Patriarch of Thailand traveled to Ratchaburi province and stayed here; as a result, he renamed it Wat Choke in 1915. The major renovation and reconstruction of monuments (bot, viharn, sermon hall in the monastery) had occurred in the period of the 7<sup>th</sup> abbot.



Figure 40 Wat Choke

Source: Author in March, 2014

Wat Choke is located in the lower market area. It has a giant golden Buddha as its most striking element; this is a more modern form of display, in the open rather than being enclosed (protected) in a bot as in the past. Its size is representative of a more modern form and styling; similarly the stairs and entrance to the monks' quarters, in a quite discordant semi-circular form, are also especially 'modern' in this sense,

3. Lao Pun Tao Kong Shrine is located in Talad Lang; it was built by the Chiu Chow community. It was a wooden shrine in the beginning; then, it was reconstructed with concrete with Chinese form and was decorated with stucco. Date and time of construction are not found but it is assumed that it might have been constructed more than 100 years ago. Lao Pun Tao Kong means the god who protects the community or the guardian who protect that area.



Figure 41 Lao Pun Tao Kong Shrine

Source: Author in March, 2014

4. Chao Mae Tuptim Shrine is located to the immediate south of Lao Pun Tao Kong Shrine; date and time of construction are not found but it is assumed that it was around a hundred years ago. It was built by the Hainanese community who lived in the Talad Lang area. The shrine was built in Chinese form similar to Lao Pun Tao Kong shrine. Chao Mae Tuptim means the goddess who protects the river or sea; consequently, Chinese people who always travel by boats are highly respectful and

expect her protection while they travel. However, Chao Mae Tuptim has several names depending on each region.



Figure 42 Chao Mae Tuptim Shrine

Source: Author in March, 2014

5. Chao Por Sam Ta Shrine or Chao Pro Huay Sin Ear is located at Lert Pa Nid road. It is an 80 year-old concrete building. Local people especially those who lived in Coolie Alley believed that Chao Por Sam Ta protected them from the blaze (Riwcharoenritkul, 2012).



Figure 43 Chao Por Sam Ta shrine

Source: Author, 2016

6. Hang Meng Tua Vegetarian Cafeteria or Roang Jay Lang is assumed to have been built in the reign of King Rama VI (B.E. 2456-2467). Most of its activities will take place during the vegetarian festival and other Chinese occasional festivals.



Figure 44 Hang Meng Tua Vegetarian Cafeteria

Source: Author in May, 2016



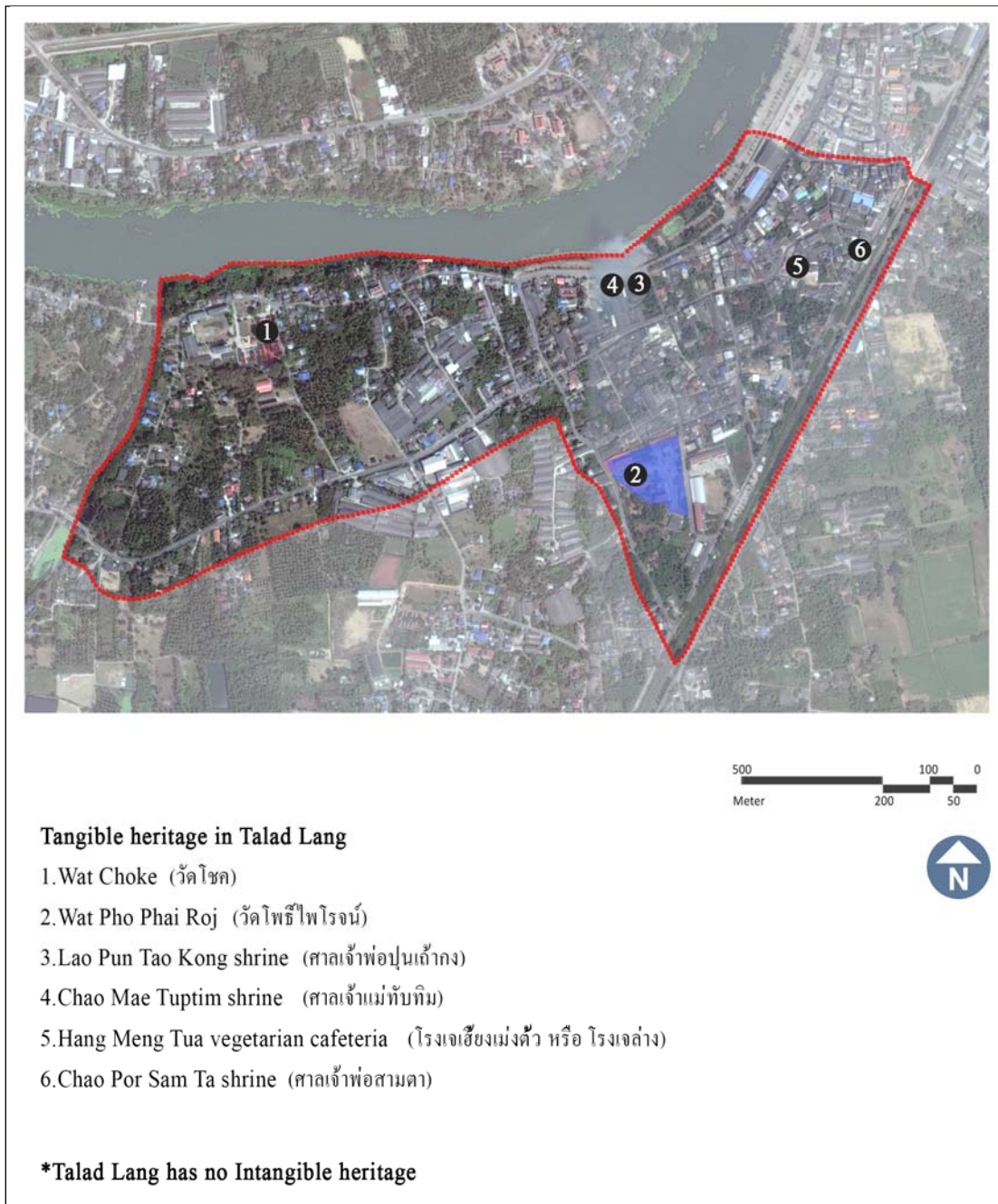


Figure 45 Local heritage in Talad Lang area

Source: Adapted from Google earth

### **The Maeklong river and sand beach**

Thongnamtako (2012, p.50) has explained that “Photharam is located on the eastern side of the Maeklong river. Before the dam was built, Photharam was flooded almost every year during the rainy season; then, during the dry season the water level decreased until a sand beach appeared. The sand beach is white in color and delicate, it acts as a strainer to make clear water. Even though we stood in the river at chest level, we could see our feet clearly”. Local people used the Maeklong river for bathing, laundry and sometimes for drinking because a water supply system was not created; so every single house used groundwater instead or carried water by hand. When the water level decreased, the sand beach appeared for a long distance as beautiful scenery and it was used for a lot of activities such as playground, venue for an annual festival and recreation, etc.

Roungrai Karnaramkul (personal interview, May 20, 2012) mentioned that the sand beach is a happy place for children while adult people who both live near or far from the river always come to the sand beach for bathing and washing their clothes. Besides, some families would select the sand beach as a place for having dinner.

Chokepatara (2009, para 4) described, in “Visit to Photharam, the town of beautiful women in Maeklong basin”, that “... in the previous time, before the concrete wall was built along the bank of the Maeklong river, every year during the dry season the water level decreased to the lowest level and, with width more than 50 meters and length more than kilometers, the sand beach appeared. Because this is a wide place, it is used as a sand beach festival venue. The activities of this festival are: Li kay – Thailand’s folk opera, Chinese folk opera, theatre, luk thung band - traditional Thai music and used to be a playground as well.” Kumraksa (n.d.) confirmed that “Photharam’s sand beach festival was an outstanding annual festival and well known to old people not only in Ratchaburi province but also Nakorn Prathom, Karnchanaburi and neighboring provinces”.

Suketorn and Subunnaket (2005, p. 48) have pointed out that “the sand beach festival was a special festival which took place only at Photharam. The objective of this festival is to celebrate the winter season and make an auspicious time for local people. This festival will be held for six days around January in every year.

Lao Pun Tao Kong Shrine and Chao Mae Tup Tim, which are important holy objects, are respectfully engaged to the sand beach”.

During the period of the festival, Chinese opera of the Chiu Chow community and Hainanese community were hired to play as an activity of respect to their god and goddess. Chinese opera of the Chiu Chow community was shown at the Lao Pun Tao Kong Shrine for three nights and another three nights was for the Chinese opera from the Hainanese community showing Chao Mae Tup Tim. On the 5<sup>th</sup> day of the festival, the oblation would be held for making a wish and asking the god and goddess for their peace, happiness, and to be healthy and wealthy. However, the Chinese opera of the Chiu Chow community is the only one to be played nowadays; in addition, the atmosphere of the festival has changed from celebration to a meeting place and market.

Sujachaya and Poomsiri (n.d., pp. 98-100) said that “In the Maeklong river, sand mining the river was a huge business. There were a lot of sand dredging boats along the river from Baan Pong, Photharam to Muang Ratchaburi. The business of sucking huge amounts of sand from the river floor has been used in the construction of roads and buildings. Demand for sand continues to increase. Sand mining was a direct and obvious cause of bank erosion and the expanding width of the river”. Sanguan Nuamdee, Photharam’s vegetable merchant, some 75 years old, gave an interview cited in Sujachaya and Poomsiri (n.d.) to the effect that “... formerly, the river was narrow, not wide like this day; during the dry period the annual festival was held on a wide beach. It was a famous festival that everyone waited for and joined but, nowadays, the sand beach has vanished because of the sand mining industry”.

### **Bean sprouts production**

Suketorn and Subunnaket (2005, p.26) reported that “cultivating bean sprouts is another important career at Photharam”. Ms. Heng Leng Sae-ung in Sujachaya (n.d., p.295) commented that “the body of bean sprouts which were planted at Photharam were thick and were cultivated at the sand beach along the Maeklong river. During December to February of every year, the water level of the river decreased, to create the wide sand beach. Bean sprouts were planted at holes that were dug and to be covered by sand. Sand that covered bean sprouts was pushed down tightly; therefore, the bean sprouts are short because of the weight of sand, they



cannot go to the surface”. Thongnantako (2012, p.10) confirmed that “...after Wachiralongkorn dam was built, the environment changed and sand was transformed to soil; as a result, cultivating bean sprouts was changed from sand to ashes”.



Figure 46 Bean sprouts were sort out before cleaning

Source: Author in March, 2014

Roungrai Karnaramkul (personal interview, May 20, 2012) reported that, in past times, bean sprouts would be produced at the sand beach during the dry season and they were famous. Chawewan Thammarat (personal interview, May 6, 2012) asserted that the bean sprouts produced here indicate a characteristic of the local people. The sand beach from Klong Punpim to Wat Choke was occupied to produce bean sprouts.



Figure 47 Cleaning bean sprouts in the Maeklong river

Source: Author in March, 2014

### Local festivals

Photharam like other communities or towns has an annual festival for every special occasion such as Songkran festival, Chinese vegetarian festival or Loykratong festival. However, there is a special festival that take place only here that is “The sand beach festival”.

#### 1. The sand beach festival

This is an annual festival of Photharam. It is a tradition of Chinese people who have lived here. The long sand beach of the Maeklong river bank was chosen as the place for this festival; in addition, it is a special festival that takes place only at Photharam. Its aims are to celebrate the coming winter season and to thank the gods and goddesses for their protection. The festival is always held in the twelfth month according to the Chinese calendar, around January, for six days and six nights. All gods and goddess are respectfully invited to the marquees that are constructed at

the sand beach. According to the story telling of locals, it is assumed that this festival has been held for more than a hundred years.



Figure 48 All goddesses and gods are invited to the marquees at the sand beach  
Source: Author in January, 2014

Silapasorn (2005, pp.81-84) reported that “Chinese operas are the annual shows that play a role to pay respect and thank the gods and goddesses comprising Chao Mae Pun Pim, Chao Mae Tuptim, Lao Pun Tao Kong, Guan Yu and Chao Por Sam Ta. Around 40 years ago during the dry season, the sand beach was a venue for Chinese operas. Normally in the past, local people always used the sand beach for recreation and the area for planting bean sprouts. Although these days the sand beach has been replaced with a concrete road, it still can be a venue for the festival and the atmosphere has changed from festival to meeting place and market.



Figure 49 Venue of sand beach festival which is located in Talad Klang area

Source: Adapted from Google earth

## 2. Loy kratong festival

Although this festival is a tradition of Thailand and is held up all around Thailand, yet it is special here. There are two special activities that take place in this tradition at Photharam. They are Loy kratong si and the highly respectful

praying to the Buddha footprint in the wihan and lighting the fire around the bot's wall.

## 2.1 Joodprateep and Tamprateep activities

2.1.1 Lighting a fire around the bot's wall (Joodprateep rob bot) takes place on the evening of the full moon of the 12th month in the traditional Thai lunar calendar and this is an outstanding activity of Wai Sai Aree Rak.



Figure 50 Local people doing Joodprateep

Source: Author in November, 2013

Locals will take Yai sawan or Mai sawan (some pieces of clothes soaked with oil) to light up and put them into the containers around the bot's wall. This activity has been an old tradition of this community for a long time and local people believe that this action will bring some brightness to their lives. Preecha Pravek (personal interview, May 20, 2012) explained that this activity shows highly respectful prayer to the Lord Buddha.



Figure 51 Local people prepare Yai Sawan for Joodprateep activity

Source: Author in November, 2013

2.1.2 Highly respectful prayer to the Buddha footprint in the wihan (Tamprateep rob wihan) occurs within the wihan itself. Apichart Siriudomseth (personal interview, May 20, 2012) explains that Tam prateep is a new activity that the Forget Photharam Not Club created. This was because in the past the wihan was abandoned and the club would like people and monks at Wat Sai Aree Rak to pay more attention to it.



Figure 52 Buddha footprint inside wihan

Source: Author in November, 2013

Tamprateep activity, which takes place here, is derived from Tamprateep at Kyaikhtiyo pagoda, Prasad In Kwan, of Mon people in Burma, remembering that Wat Sai is the Mon people's wat in Photharam. This activity was launched here in 2009 (Forget Photharam Not Club, n.d.).



Figure 53 Tam prateep activity

Source: Author in November, 2013

2.2 Kratong si and Kraong sai (floating in line) of Wat Sai Aree Rak. The train of floating illuminations stretching along the river is to worship the goddess of water, to pay homage to the Buddha's footprint, and to wash away sorrows. Luang Phor Uttama, the abbot of Wat Wang Wiwekaram in Kanchanaburi province, saw that local people spent more time and money for making kratongs during the festival. He started to adapt paper cutting of the Mon community to make paper kratongs. In Baan Pong, paper kratongs in white color were made for ten years and called "Kratong sai" because lots of kratongs were floating simultaneously. In Photharam, kratong sai was brought to Wat sai aree rak by Forget Photharam Not Club in the year 2552 B.E. but paper kratongs were made in various colors, not only white, as in Baan Pong, and named "kratong si". Kratongs are made from paper (natural materials); therefore, they are plain, economical, and high accomplished.





Figure 54 Kratong si were prepared for Loy kratong festival

Source: Author in November, 2013

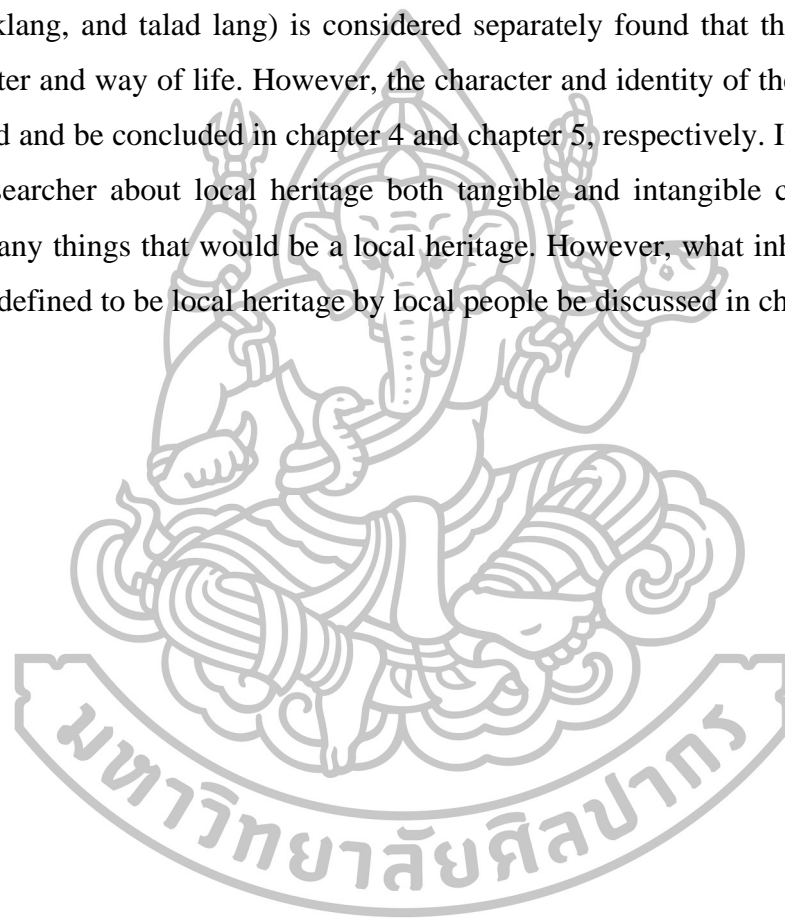




Figure 55 Venue of Loy Kratong Si festival

Source: Adapted from Google earth

From the location found that Photharam is located in the middle between train station and the Maeklong river which were the important transportation of Photharam; hence, Photharam has various activities that related with them. Coolie alley and bean sprout production are a testimony of their relation. Description of Photharam above found that even though Photharam is a small town but it is interesting especially when we look deep down in each talad. When each talad (talad bon, talad klang, and talad lang) is considered separately found that they have their own character and way of life. However, the character and identity of the whole town be discussed and be concluded in chapter 4 and chapter 5, respectively. In the point of view of researcher about local heritage both tangible and intangible considers that there are many things that would be a local heritage. However, what inheritances are valued and defined to be local heritage by local people be discussed in chapter 4.



## **Chapter 4**

### **Identity of Photharam**

Each town or place has its own uniqueness, character or identity which differs from others. Accordingly, Lynch (1960, cited in Relph, 1976, p.45) claimed that "... the identity of place simply is that which provides its individuality or distinction from other places and serves as the basis for its recognition as a separable entity". Therefore this chapter will focus on the identity of Photharam, in the sense discussed in Chapter 2 above.

Thus Relph (1976) remarks that the raw materials of the identity of places are physical setting, activities and meaning; therefore the identity of Photharam can be characterised as below.

#### **Physical features or appearance**

This section describes about the physical feature and existing condition of Photharam which contain two subtopics are landscape of Photharam and outstanding buildings.

##### **1. Landscape of Photharam**

Photharam is located at the eastern bank of the Maeklong river, with the river as the western boundary to the community while the railway which parallels it is the eastern boundary. Photharam community is divided into three parts or talad are talad bon, talad klang and talad lang.

Talad Bon, the northernmost of these, comprises a lot of one and two story wooden buildings; besides, some elevated houses can be seen at the bank of the river.



Figure 56 Elevated houses at Talad Bon

Source: Author in November, 2013

Talad Klang, the second of the old town's areas, is an especially distinctive part of Photharam. Because this area was seriously burnt in the year 2509 B.E., lots of its old wooden shophouses were lost. Therefore, some concrete buildings were built in replacement, although some wooden shophouses still remain. Apichart Udomseth (personal interview, May 20, 2012) has said that this talad is charming and presents a good combination because the shophouses which are located at the head and at the opposite end of the area are made by wood while the middle part is made by concrete. Talad Lang, the third and southernmost area, is also an area of factories, especially fish sauces. There are many types of buildings in this area such as wooden row houses for laborers who worked at the factories, though abandoned now, also the single house in Thai style, and the concrete buildings of the fish sauce factories.



Figure 57 Abandoned row houses at Talad Lang

Source: Author in June, 2012



Figure 58 Single Thai style house at Talad Lang

Source: Author in June, 2012



Figure 59 The fish sauce factory building at Talad Lang

Source: Author in June, 2012

Railway station: Photharam railway station is located at the western side of the community in the Talad Klang area. The appearance is similar to that of other railway stations and gets good maintenance.

Narrow streets: The areas of Talad Bon and Talad Klang are interconnected with narrow streets especially at Talad Klang due to Talad Klang being a center for the transfer of goods both by river and train; therefore, the streets were built for convenient transfer. Preecha Pravek (personal interview, May 20, 2012) stated that, in the past, local people always traveled by walking, cycling, and using carts for carrying goods to merchants at the market; thus, the width of street is appropriate for these reasons but it is not appropriate for these days when cars are the important vehicles. Apichart Udomseth (personal interview, May 20, 2012) further observed that the narrow streets are the identity of Photharam and the confusion of

directions which comes from the street maze is the charm of Photharam and tourists who come to Photharam may get lost in this confusion of streets and alleys.

**Coolie Alley:** This alley is located at the Talad Klang, behind the railway station. The original wooden shophouses can be seen in this alley. Some local people said that if someone would like to see and feel the old atmosphere of Photharam, this alley is the answer.



Figure 60 Existing condition of coolie alley

Source: Author in May, 2016

**Sacred places:** There are four wats, five Chinese shrines and two vegetarian cafeterias in this community. According to Jindamaneeroj (1994), Wat Pho Pai Roj is the only wat built with Thai character while the other three wats were built with Mon character. All five Chinese shrines and the two vegetarian cafeterias were built with Chinese character. These sacred buildings are located scattered around the Phothram municipality; so, in Talad Bon there is one wat and one Chinese shrine; Talad Klang has one wat, one Chinese shrine and one vegetarian cafeteria in the area.



Then there are two wats, one vegetarian cafeteria and three Chinese shrines in the Talad Lang area.

Concrete road along the Maeklong river: There is a concrete road parallel to the Maeklong river. This road was built to counter the problem of soil erosion and land slide at the bank after the sand sucking industries devastated the area. The most significant casualty of long-term sand dredging had been a renowned sand beach in front of the town; so the concrete road might be seen as a demeaning replacement for a major and renowned natural feature of the region.



Figure 61 The physical condition of the sand beach after sucking sand.

Source: Adapted from the original photos of the Forget Photharam Not Club



Figure 62 The concrete road parallel to the Maeklong river for countering soil erosion.  
Source: Author in June, 2012

Atmosphere: Because there are a lot of old buildings both wooden and concrete, Photharam still keeps the old atmosphere around the community, especially around the Forget Photharam Not Club. Preecha Pravek (2012) stated that because Photharam still has an old atmosphere, it was often selected to be a location for many movies and soap operas. Indeed, it might be said that Photharam is like a movie town.



Figure 63 Atmosphere of Photharam after becoming a setting for a soap opera.

Source: Author in June, 2014

#### Outstanding buildings

**Vic Kru Tawee:** It is an old theatre of the community and has stood together with the community for many years. Its appearance is quite different from the buildings nearby because it is a big concrete building while the nearby buildings are wooden shophouses. Saipin Kaewngarmprasert (personal interview, May 6, 2012) asserted that this theatre is one of the identifying icons of Photharam because it has a unique character and is easily remembered. Similarly, Apichart Udomseth (personal interview, May 20, 2012) confirmed that Vic Kru Tawee is the highlight of Photharam; besides, it is the landmark of this town.

The wooden shophouses which standing at the corner of the Neung pradit road. These are a row of wooden shophouses with hipped roof type and covered with the original kite shaped tiles. Apichart Udonseth (personal interview, May 20, 2012) has reported that this building is one of a building complex that contributes to the

atmosphere of Photharam and its surviving antique ambience and he would like to keep this building alive and protect it from the demolition that might confront it in the future.



Figure 64 Row wooden shophouses at the corner of the Neung pradit road  
Source: Author in June, 2012

### **Observable activities and functions**

This part talks about function of Photharam that is discussed in three parts are social, economic and religious.

**Social :** Photharam is a workplace of many people especially merchants. Although it plays a key role as a work place, on the other hand it is still a home for local people who have lived here for a long time. The role of Photharam in the social parts are described into three duties are meeting place, place for food production and conservation of Thai culture.

Meeting place: Open space along the river or the fresh market are the meeting places of local people, especially the fresh market in Talad Klang. Saipin

Kaewngarmprasert (personal interview May 6, 2012) observed that every day an old lady will bring her goods for sale in the market but actually she does not care if her goods are sold or not. She comes to the market every day because the major purpose for coming is talking and sharing experiences with other merchants.

Place for food production: Mutsha Pratansakul (personal interview May 30, 2012) saw Photharam as the cafeteria of people who live both inside and outside Photharam. There are many small restaurants and food shops scattered around Photharam. The importance is that all foods are not expensive and are delicious. Local people are always proud of their local food and are happy to recommend the special restaurant of each kind of food.

Conservation of Thai culture: For special occasions such as the Songkran festival or the Loy Kratong festival, wats still play a role in conserving Thai culture and carrying on traditional practices. Further, the wats themselves present architectural distinction and can be read as subtle documents of the towns ethnic identities

**Economic:** Photharam plays a role as trade center and place of food production. The daily market routine of Photharam runs from 04.30 to 09.30 in the morning on the road in front of the clock tower in Talad Klang, and in the evening the night market will be on duty in front of Wat Photharam. During day time, a fresh market will be active inside the Talad Klang. Apichart Udonseth (2012) stated that Photharam has never died, only it is not vivid like in the past. Food production such as bean sprouts, fish sauces and black tofu continues, but fish sauce is the only product that is distributed to outside the community.

**Religious:** Activities that relate to religion and rituals are still practiced in the area.

### **Meanings or symbols**

Town's motto: Saipin Kaewngarmprasert (personal interview May 6, 2012) has stated the town's motto is 'kon suay Photharam', a town of beautiful women, which is also the beginning of the Ratchaburi province's motto. This refers back to a story of the arrival of King Rama V when he was travelling back from a third travel to Sai yok by boats in 2431 B.E. In that time King Rama V saw the ladies,

who are the combination of different ethnicities, and said that Photharam people are beautiful.

Slogan : There is a local slogan to the effect that “Thais live at the river basin, the Laotian live in the upland, the Mon live near the river and Chinese people dwell at the market” reflecting the distinctive characters of various ethnic groups in Photharam. Moreover, this slogan suggests the guiding concepts of each ethnic group to select land for settling their community.

Place names: Names of places in Photharam link to the events or activities that happened there. Saipin Kaewngarmprasert (personal interview May 6, 2012) shows that Song Prapad road links to King Rama V and the local pride that once the King visited their hometown; in turn, Cooley Alley indicated this as a work place and home of laborers who are always the important key to goods distribution and transfer.

Different brands of banks: These show that local people are sufficiency conscious, humble and not extravagant with money; they also suggest a wider commercial confidence in the town’s economy – banks can operate profitably here. Yai Uar-aroonchai (personal interview May 30, 2012) claimed that Photharam people are rich but they live a simple life, they always save their money; hence, different banks appear here. Saipin Kaewngarmprasert (2012) asserted that the wording, “Photharam people take the train to keep their loans while people who live in other towns take expensive cars, borrowing the money of Photharam people”, shows the way of living of local people.

In discussing ‘place’ in general, Relph (1976, p.48) explained that “What is significant here is the way in which physical setting, activities, and meanings are always interrelated. Physical context and activities combine to give the human equivalent of locations within the ‘functional circle’ of animals; setting and meanings combine in the direct and empathetic experience of landscapes or townscapes; activities and meaning combine in many social acts and shared histories that have little reference to physical setting.”

Therefore, the next part is the combination analysis of the three component namely:

1. Physical setting and activities
2. Physical setting and meanings
3. Activities and meanings

### **Physical setting and activities**

The sand beach: Although these days the sand beach has disappeared, result of the sand dredging industry, the area that was the sand beach still be a place of many activities that happened in the past. Nowadays, local people use this place for their recreation, a meeting point and other outdoor activities like the old local people did, especially for special occasions such as the sand beach festival which takes place every year around January for celebrating the coming winter and for good luck. Mutsha Pratansakul (personal interview May 30, 2012) recalled that local people always had a deep connection with the sand beach. It was a playground for children, a place for planting bean sprouts, it would be a local for recreation, and a meeting place of people or a bathing place. It is said that every activity of local people was connected with the sand beach.

Cleansing bean sprouts: Although the procedure and technique of planting bean sprouts are changed, as in the old time bean sprouts were planted at the riverbank, nevertheless they will still be cleaned at the river. It might be said that the connection between bean sprouts and the river – more specifically the sand beach – still continues, albeit more strongly in memory.

Relation between the river and local people: It might also be said that the connection of local people and the Maeklong river still persists though not very obviously. In the past, local people always relied on the river in both direct and indirect ways such as fishing for food, for consumption and use for households, as the place for bean sprouts plantation etc. In the present day, these activities are gone; however, the less production-focused or economic activities still remain such as recreation and a meeting point. Yai Uar-aroonchai (personal interview May 30, 2012) explained that even though the sand beach has vanished, he would still like to walk by the river because it has a good atmosphere; in addition, the smell of the water make him feel fresh and happy.

Talad klang still plays its role as a trading center as it was in the past. It has never died and is still alive but not prosperous as in the old days. Apichart Siriudomseth (personal interview, May 20, 2012) asserted that Photharam is still performing its 'duty' and is still alive, where the various brands of banks are the guarantee of the continuing economic vitality of the town.

### **Physical setting and meanings**

Concrete buildings located in the Talad Klang remind one of the huge blaze but also the power of Guan Yu god. Local people in Photharam especially those who have lived at Cooley Alley believe that they survived from that blaze because of the protection of Guan Yu god.

Vic Kru Tawee: Saipin Kaewngarmprasert (personal interview May 6, 2012) recounted that when she was a child she watched the movies inside this theatre. This place contains the memory of local people because it was the only theatre and entertainment place in that time. The theatre survives; its place in the lives of inhabitants, however, is now memory.

Sa tien thong: The old studio for photographs of Photharam's inhabitant contains the stories and memories of old local people. Saipin Kaewngarmprasert (personal interview May 6, 2012) explained that this place can tell an old story and convey feelings to a new generation, as a younger generation will absorb the atmosphere and can imagine old stories from when people in the past would sit down at the old chair for their portrait to be taken with a still surviving antique camera.

The sand beach still conveys value to local people even though it has disappeared; but when local people talk about the sand beach, there will be a smile and a good feeling. In addition, the story of the sand beach will be linked to the landscape of old Photharam, the form of the houses before they faced the blaze, and the activities of people in that day. From the interviews with present residents, it became clear that the sand beach is the site evoking the strongest memory of local people.

The Chinese shrine covering the scared Buddha footprint at Wat Sai Aree Rak: It shows that the Photharam community does not express the difference but the unity of its diversity of ethnic groups. This building is in a Chinese style itself but



it is inside the Wihan which is Lao style in Wat Sai Aree Rak which, in turn, is the Mon community.

### **Activities and meanings**

**Sand beach festival:** Although the sand beach which was the venue of the festival in the past has disappeared, the festival still happens, while respect for the goddesses and gods is still the same and still celebrated in the festival. Moreover, the name of the festival is still “Sand beach festival”; it is a name that will recall that once Photharam had its long and beautiful sand beach at the bank of the Maeklong river.

**Tamprateep activity:** Highly respectful prayer to the Buddha footprint in the wihan at Wat Sai Aree Rak. Apichart Udomseth (personal interview, May 20, 2012) told that this activity was created to link with the Joodprateep activity that has occurred for a long time; furthermore, this is for promoting the wihan to be an interesting place because the wihan had been abandoned and neglected in the past.

Relph (1976, p.48) mentioned that “Physical appearance, activities, and meanings are the raw materials of the identity of places, and the dialectical links between them are the elementary structural relations of that identity, but these are not complete. There is another important aspect or dimension of identity that is ‘sense of place’”. Najafi and Shariff (2011, p.187) explained that “Sense of Place usually is defined as an overarching impression encompassing the general ways in which people feel about places, sense it, and assign concepts and value to it”.

### **Sense of place**

Local people feel that Photharam is the place of their home, a work place and a place of safety for living. However, everything around themselves seems to them ordinary and not outstanding or attractive to tourists. The obvious thing that guarantees the previous idea is when local people are asked about the tourist attractions inside Photharam, they always answer the name of the tourist attraction sites which are located outside the community, but within Photharam Ampor, such as Wat Kong Ka Ram which is the location of a Mon museum, Wat Kanon which has a Nang Yai Wat Khanon national museum, the grand shadow play etc. However, they are always happy to present and recommend the famous foods of the town and the

best shops for each kind of food. It might be that Photharam has developed from the trade community to become a place for living well; therefore, activities and the fabrics of life that happen inside the community are for this purpose.

From the study's interviews and observations it was found that local people do not focus on their houses or the urban fabric but they focus on the activities that connect to the specific place. Furthermore, they focus on the memory of the sand beach, as they retain a sense of regret for its loss. It might be that local people have deep connection with the sand beach because they had an experience of it in their daily life. While the sand beach festival is held up as an important annual activity, the local people feel that the atmosphere of the old festival is lost but it still has to be continued because it recalls that the sand beach was once here and its memory is still important to local people.

Most local people, when thinking about their memories, always link with the activities that connected them to the sand beach and the river. The daily routine of local people in the past must be seen to link to the sand beach in some way. In addition, the other two places that contain the memory of local people are Vic Krutawee and Sa Tien Thong; even though local people had memories that connected to these buildings, nevertheless the memory of the sand beach was reported by interviewees to be stronger. It might be that people connected to the sand beach through everyday experience, while going to see a movie and taking photos were only special occasions.

When talking about tourism at Photharam, most local people will be curious, reflecting that there are no outstanding and magnetic places or objects to show tourists. Simply, there is nothing here. Saipin Kaewngarmprasert (personal interview May 6, 2012) asserted that there are no tourist attractions in Photharam, and that for niche tourism it might be quite suitable but not for mass tourism.

## Chapter 5

### Conclusion

This final chapter returns to the underlying questions that have driven this research and which were introduced in Chapter 1. The first of these questions related to how local people in Photharam see their town: what might constitute the essentially *locally* valued heritage of Photharam that distinguishes it in the imagination as giving a sense of identity to its citizens? The second related to the strategies that might be adopted to attract a tourist segment, thereby to end the town's status as "bypassed"?

#### Local heritage

From interviews with local people, it was found that when the question of the important things in their memory was raised, the sand beach and the Vic Kru Tawee were the most frequent answers. While these interviews were from a very limited sample of people chosen for a commitment to the question of the town's identity, there is no reason to doubt their representativeness. More importantly, the interviewees were from precisely that cohort of the town's population that would be expected to take a leadership role on any promotion of its attractions. So, what is to be said of these resources?

Vic Kru Tawee is an old theatre that has been shut down for a long time. It is an outstanding fabric in this community because of its size and appearance. Although it is quite ordinary when compared with other theatres, it is remarkable when it is located in the Photharam community surrounded with wooden rowhouses. While the sand beach has disappeared and been replaced with the concrete road, local people are still reminded of it and regret losing it. They keep its fabric as local heritage. It might be said that although the physical sand beach is gone, nevertheless the memory and the activities that still link and connect to the sand beach remain

present; for example, the sand beach festival that is an annual festival is still set up every January. Although the major purpose for this festival is for celebrating the coming winter and to pay the highest respect to every god and goddess in the community, nevertheless it has another hidden purpose, namely to recall that once Photharam had a sand beach and still uses the sand beach as the name of the festival as they select the concrete road which was the sand beach to be the venue of the festival as in the old days. Note that both Vic Kru Tawee and the sand beach are connected with local people via memories of old activities. Vic Kru Tawee is the only entertainment form that fails to enter the digital age. It is a place that gathers happy memories of local people from that time. Although local people have a connection to the Vic Kru Tawee, nevertheless the connection of local people to the sand beach is deeper. Vic Kru Tawee served as a recreation place or entertainment place for local people but the sand beach acted as a playground for children, meeting place of local people, place for producing bean sprouts and also a place for recreation. In the past, people utilized the sand beach for several purposes and the sand beach was the destination of everyone in their daily routines; hence, local people have a deep connection with the memory of the sand beach.

This finding, derived from the analysis of Chapter 4 above, can be placed in some contrast with the detailed observations of the wider town and its historic fabric in Chapter 3. These latter were from the admittedly professional viewpoint of the 'outside' heritage researcher looking for the social and architectural/cultural fabric and identifying what might be of interest to the passing visitor. Especially identified were the social history of Photharam, its temples, shrines, old shophouses and an ambience of still vibrant traditional lifestyles.

For local heritage, the research found that memory and traditional connections to the place are the factors to define local heritage for Photharam people, as Jackson (1994, p.160) expressed in *A Sense of Place, A Sense of Time*, namely that "What made the marketplace significant was not its architecture, it was the event which took place there, the recurring day". For the passing visitor, on the other hand, the town is likely to be seen more in the context of some generalized understanding of a *national* heritage – temples and their distinctive murals, other monuments, fine streetscapes, river views and the like.

In passing, it is worth commenting that Chapters 3 and 4, delivering radically different understandings of Photharam, were based on equally radically different research approaches or methodologies. Chapter 3 derives from direct observation and participant observation of the town. Chapter 4, on the other hand, was based on in-depth interview where participants were encouraged to express their own views of the town's heritage. The two approaches yielded different views of the town's tourism potential.

### **Identity of Photharam**

On the basis of the Chapter 3 analysis, the identity of Photharam that might be presented to the informed, passing visitor might focus on a diversity of its characteristics that might include the following.

1. The functions or responsibilities of Photharam are still the same as in the past. Photharam is still acting as a trading center and market as in the past. In other words, Photharam is a market and meeting place for both local people and those nearby.
2. The physical built environment bequeathed by this history displays both an attractive, deeply evocative ambience and elements of architectural distinction. While these characteristics would engage the discerning tourist, they were mostly unmentioned in interviews and discussions with Photharam residents.
3. Local people keep practicing the activities of both Buddhism and Chinese beliefs just as their ancestors did. All *wats*, Chinese shrines and Vegetarian cafeterias are still always used in every special event linked to the people's beliefs, Thus Chinese people who live in Photharam will be vegetarians and still go the Vegetarian cafeterias for praying during the Chinese Vegetarian Festival; similarly *wats* are used as a place for Buddhists praying during the beginning of the Buddhist lent and other ceremonial times.
4. The local people retain a deep connection to the Maeklong river and sand beach in both direct and indirect ways.
5. Photharam is a mix of ethnic groups but these live with a sense of unity. The Chinese shrine covering the Buddha image at Wat Sai Aree Rak is the best example of this intersection of beliefs and customs.

6. The local population might include affluent people but all live very simply according to the principle of sufficiency economy which comes from the past.

7. Photharam is a market that never stops performing its social function though it is not busy as in the past. Yet it never dies.

All of this, it is suggested, constitutes a heritage that might attract the passing visitor. For this potential to be realized, however, there might be a first necessary task to bring the town's riches to the minds of its inhabitants.

### **The point of view of local people about Photharam and Tourism**

Local people, in contrast, think that they have nothing outstanding to be a tourist destination. When asked about attractions of the place, most of them will recommend destinations which are located outside the Photharam community such as the Nang Yai museum at Wat Karon or the bats cave at Kao Chong Pran. It might be said that local people think that Photharam community is a home and work place for them where everything is ordinary and things are not significant. In addition, local people realize that their hometown is a bypassed town and they cannot change this fact. However, it is argued here, they can change the wording from "bypassed" to "visited" by promoting the atmosphere of an old town, good views and fresh air at the river, also including various foods that are delicious and not expensive. Photharam, in summary, is to be judged as suitable for a tourist attraction but not fit for all types of tourists. This place is appropriate to niche tourism such as in education, for old town lovers or those who love slow-life living and the perfect way to withdraw and reflect.

During the past ten years nostalgia tourism has emerged as a trendy tourism form in Thailand. Prakitnonthakarn (2013) explained in "Retro Market in trend of Nostalgia Tourism. TAT review magazine" that during the past ten years the phenomenon of 'nostalgia tourism' has increased and a new kind of tourist destination was created called 'Retro Market. An old atmosphere recreated by decorated shops with an antique stuffs are importance elements to made the retro market. In the case of Photharam, the atmosphere, the way of life, the decoration and all elements are authentic. It might be said that this is a retro market that is still alive.

According to the review the concept of nostalgia tourism that explained in chapter two might conclude that there might be two tourism niches that Photharam

could partially fill. The first is for both local and *farang* tourists who are looking “to find the real Thailand”. Here Photharam’s advantage is in offering a rich local heritage reflecting its interlinked, multi-ethnic cultures, also in its proximity to Bangkok. The second would be for domestic tourists seeking to be reminded of a lost past – the way Bangkok “used to be”.

There is a problem in promoting such niche tourism, however. It would seem that local Photharam people fail to recognise the richness of the town’s heritage and its tourism potential. A promotional strategy is suggested, however, in Newland and Taylor (2010) where it is argued that diaspora populations can play an important role for less-developed regions as bridges to broader markets, through what they term “heritage tourism and nostalgia trade”. People who have left a town or country to live elsewhere and who return as heritage or nostalgia tourists can act as advocates for their old domains, also to encourage a tourism and heritage industry in those old domains. The Newland and Taylor argument can be extended to the case of Photharam or similar small towns: there would clearly be value in having visitors from Bangkok, whether Photharam diaspora or otherwise, to interact with present Photharam people to help the latter to understand and appreciate their own local heritage and its richness. This is another way of saying that local people need to learn about their own environment and its heritage value and potential.

Although in the aspect of local people, this place has nothing outstanding for travelling to, however, in the view of outsider Photharam does has something interesting. In 2012, Photharam and another 11 towns were selected to be a new tourist destination in a campaign “108-1009 travel mission season 2” by the Tourism Authority of Thailand. TAT had gathered 12 towns across the country aimed at presenting a unique way of life of different activities throughout the trip that many people may never have experienced before (MGR online, 2012). Therefore, an initial map was created for showing the interesting places and activities for tourists and locals to recognize the local heritage both tangible and intangible inside this town.

If we look at Photharam in some larger picture we will not find immediate treasure; rather, the visitor will have to take time with this community, and its great strengths and richnesses will finally appear.

**Problems that were found during research**

1. Local people does not have knowledge and details about their hometown; therefore, they fail to recognise their valuable town's heritage.
2. Local does not recording a local history. Just only few people know their history and details but in memories not recoding in books. If these people passed away, some part of town's history is disappeared.

**Suggestions**

1. Local history should be produced and are filled in the student's curriculum in Photharam.
2. Tourists who traveled here is a niche group such as education, slow-life living or nostalgia tourism. So zoning or activities for specific purpose should be created.
3. There did not record data and details when group of tourists visited Photharam, in the past. Therefore, local people did not know the reason of outsiders that why they chose this place for their destination?, did they enjoy for traveling here?, what is the most impressed them?. Each group of tourists has different purpose for visiting here. If local people understand these data, they will draw an appropriate plan for managing and understand ideas of outsider that how they look at Photharam.



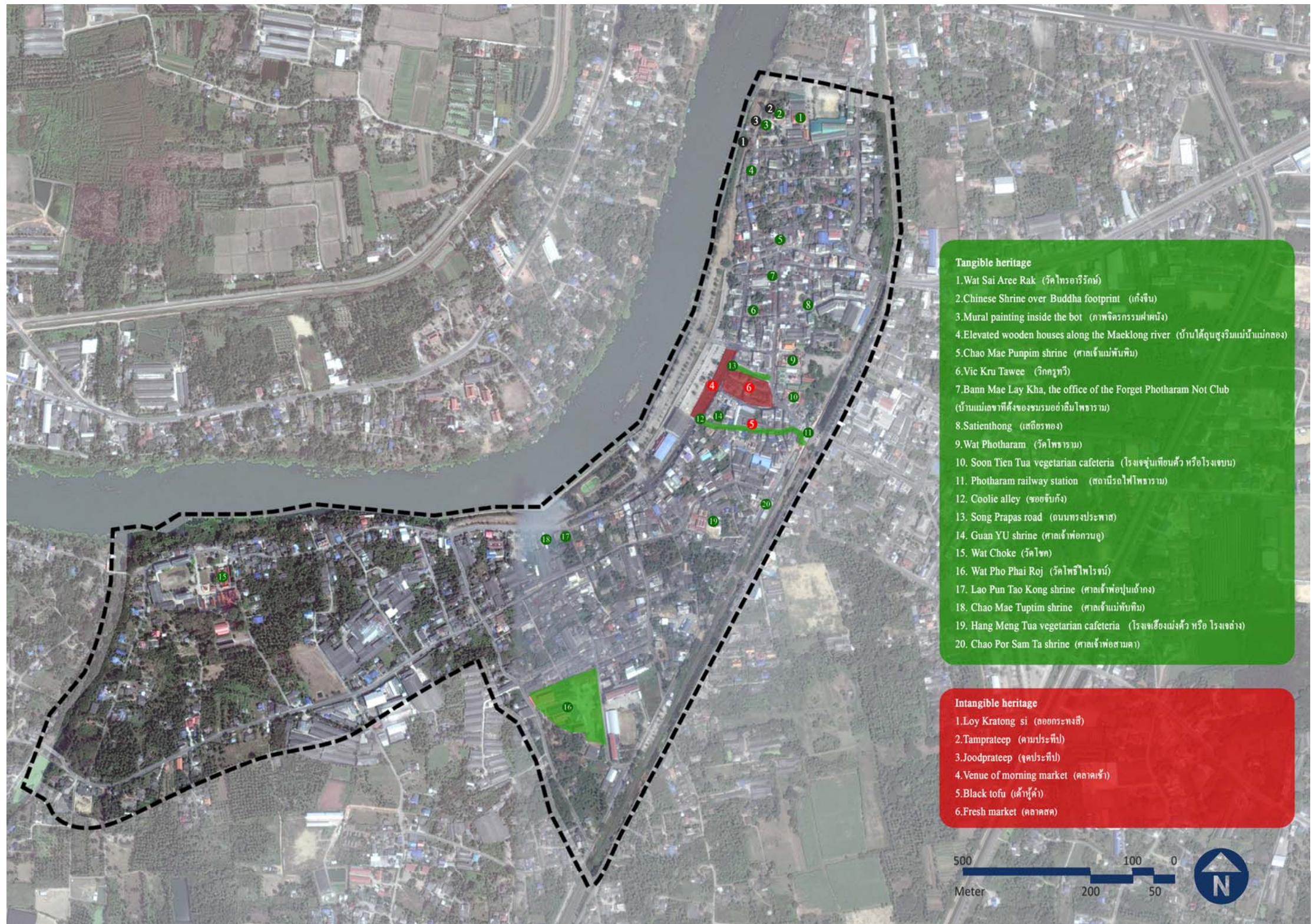


Figure 65 The initial map recognize local heritage both tangible and intangible

Source: Adapted from Google earth

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Appendix



Appendix A

**Appendix A**  
**List of Interview**

1. Apichart Udomseth 53 years old, head of The Forget Photharam Not Club, personal interview, May 20, 2012
2. Preecha Pravek 50 years old, member of The Forget Photharam Not Club, has lived at Talad Bon area, personal interview, May 20, 2012
3. Saipin Kaewngarmprasert 52 years old, teacher at Phothawattanaseni school at Photharam, personal interview May 6, 2012
4. Mutsha Pratansakul 50 years old, has lived at Talad Lang area, personal interview May 30, 2012
5. Yai Uar-aroonchai 83 years old, has lived at coolie alley, Talad Klang area, personal interview May 30, 2012
6. Pranee Sasalab 71 years old, former teacher at Wat Sai Aree Rak school, has lived at Talad Klang area, personal interview June 5, 2012
7. Roungrai Karn-aramkul 57 years old, has lived at Talad Bon area, personal interview May 20, 2012
8. Samruay Meejanpetch 60 years old, has lived at Talad Lang area, personal interview June 5, 2012
9. Chawewan Thammarat 60 years old, the head of Talad Bon community, personal interview May 6, 2012





**Appendix B**

## Appendix B

### Questions for in-depth interview

1. What might distinguish Photharam in the minds of its local people?
  - 1.1 Have any stories telling, myth, local story, narratives, local histories, famous person in this place? (local identity)
  - 1.2 The way of life of local, migration, carrier, economic, social, religious (basic information) (local identity)
  - 1.3 Have any spiritual landscape (shrines, trees, stories, etc) in Photharam? Why they are important to local people? Does spiritual landscape interact with activities and meaning and how? (compare with the past for testing authenticity) (local identity)
  - 1.4 What is the outstanding objects or buildings or culture (Tangible, intangible or both) of Photharam ? (local identity)
  - 1.5 If something changed , it will reduce or destroy identity of Photharam. Do you think what is it? (local identity)
  - 1.6 When we think or talk about photharm, what do you remember or recognize? (show outstanding and identity)
  - 1.7 Which products have produced inside this community ? (local identity)
  - 1.8 What is definition of Photharam (show identity of Photharam)
  - 1.9 What do you think if expanding the width of the road? (identity)
  - 1.10 How Photharam distinguish from other town? (identity)
  - 1.11 What make Photharam be a special place for local? (identity)

2. What strategies might a local population adopt in the quest to end their town's status as 'bypassed'?

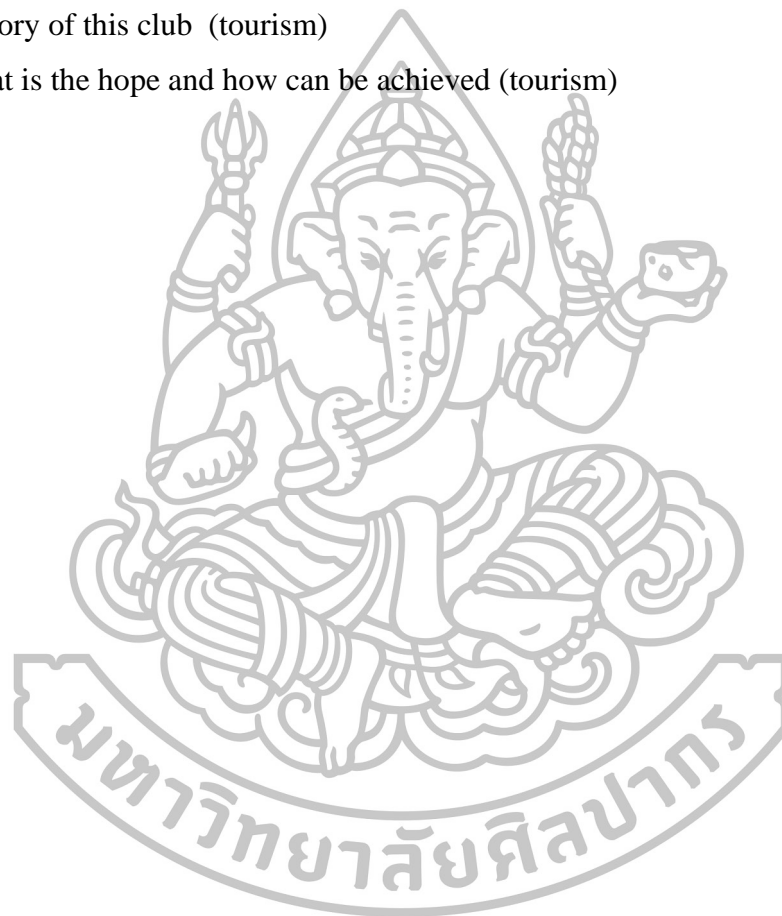
2.1 Do you think Photharm is an appropriate place to be a tourist attraction? Why ?

What is the appropriate type of tourism for Photharam? (tourism)

2.2 What do you think about Photharam is a bypassed town or closed town? (tourism)

2.3 History of this club (tourism)

2.4 What is the hope and how can be achieved (tourism)



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### Educational Background

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