GRASSROOTS EFFORTS TO PROTECT THAI IDENTITY THROUGH DESIGN

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Paradigmatic shift in cultural heritage makes grassroots become the new fulcrum of conservation. Cultural heritage and cultural identity are the mutual component of each other. Cultural identity is not only to hold for identification and possession, but is also the source of meanings in cultural heritage.

Thailand, like elsewhere, is facing significant cultural challenges in the face of globalisation, tourism and estate development. On one hand, the globalised identity represents being 'fashionable', 'developed', and/or 'internationalised'. On the other hand, the global identity is perceived on comparative and competitive terms to the local Thai identity.

This dissertation is the ethno-methodological study of Thai individual, family, and community as the grassroots of Thai society to protect their local identity by utilising spatial design. The local identity is the pluralistic sense of Thai identity, which is broader than the unique sense of the national identity of Thailand. The dissertation aims to explore how Thai grassroots protect their local cultural identity by employing design language to interpret the three case studies; which are Hor Man Muang in Chiang Mai, Ban Rabiang Nam in Nonthaburi, and Phuket Old Town in Phuket.

The case studies and their settings are approached by site observation and documentation, unstructured interview, and in-depth conversation. The information from the case studies is analysed in two steps. In the first step, the information from the visual observation, the review of related documents and the assessment of local community and local identity is analysed through critical discourse analysis. The visual information from site observation and documentation and the verbal information from unstructured interview and in-depth conversation is analysed through discourse analysis. In the second step, the outcomes of the first step are jointly analysed through critical discourse analysis.

The dissertation suggests that Thai grassroots identify and represent themselves by holding different local cultural identity as the primary platform. The grassroots spontaneously put their efforts to protect the local cultural identity by asserting in their contemporary lifestyle. It also demonstrates that to protect the local cultural identity is not necessary to return into nostalgic living as in the past; but is through creative design and adaptive re-use in a responsible, profitable and sustainable manner. Method of 'mix-and-match' the local cultural identity and contemporary lifestyle is the technique that the grassroots employ to protect the local cultural identity. In addition, the dissertation signifies that Thai identity is like 'cocktail' rather than 'pure'. The Thai identity consists of many different local cultural identities depend upon the local community. The local cultural identities cannot exist without local people as a medium that represent the identity in them or in their social space.

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Chapter 1

Key Issues

Cultural heritage and cultural identity become crucial issues in contemporary globalising world. The issues are in flux, complex, inseparable, and power-related. Not only common people put their efforts to conserve their cultural heritage and to protect their cultural identity, but also national governments and institutions. All stakeholders have their different standing points, motivations, and tactics in order to deal with cultural heritage conservation and cultural identity protection.

Thai cultural heritage and Thai cultural identity are always considered solely in the realm of nationalism. In this way, the national perspective of cultural heritage and cultural identity may marginalise local cultural heritage and local cultural identity. In addition, Thai cultural heritage and Thai local identity are abstract and discursive matters, which are critical and necessary to be explored.

The followings are the key issues of this dissertation, which start from its origin, statement of problem, and significance of problem. Then, objectives of the dissertation are stated. And conceptual framework of the dissertation is declared. There are also process and overview to illustrate the whole dissertation; as well as terminology to help the readers in clarifying the dissertation.

Origin of Dissertation

Cultural heritage is both tangible and intangible entities having cultural values for a cultural group or groups. It is inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and dedicated to the future generations. Conservation of cultural heritage is crucial for the present generation to ensure that the succeeding generations will have their own options over the heritage.

Individuals, families and communities are grassroots of socio-cultural structures having direct relationship with their local cultural heritage. They may consider the local heritage different from other stakeholders in cultural heritage conservation. But the new paradigm in cultural heritage conservation proposes that the conservation, if it will be successful, must be anchored in the grassroots level of society. This paradigm shift in cultural heritage takes conservation beyond the realm of elites and professionals to make it a common matter of grassroots. UNESCO has lunched a program called LEAP, which is abbreviated from *Integrated Community Development and Cultural Heritage Site Preservation through Local Effort in Asia and the Pacific*. The aim of the program is to encourage local communities to use their local cultural assets as the foundation for

their future development. Local actors are encouraged to assume an active stewardship over their heritage. And they are also empowered to develop their heritage in responsible, profitable and sustainable way.

The aim of grassroots approach such as LEAP is to address the weakest links in heritage conservation. The approach is not only to safeguard the heritage place, but also to maintain social and cultural traditions of the community. It helps to ease poverty, creates jobs, and generates income into the community.

Cultural identity is another core element of cultural heritage conservation. It is an imaginary entity, which we hold to identify, to position and to represent ourselves in our geographical world. It also gives meanings to our lives; we need an identity as a source of meanings to perceive and to experience both space and time, particularly in the information era of the twenty-first century.

In the information era, globalisation is a process which leads to homogeneity. The flux of advanced telecommunication technology and the increase of tourism industry have dissolved the geographical and imagined world boundaries. On one hand, globalisation introduces us a new ways of living. On the other hand, the globalisation initiates a resistance to itself. Localism becomes the focus for resistance, which evokes the awareness of cultural identity, indigenous wisdom, cultural heritage, and architectural heritage.

Architectural heritage is the interdisciplinary considerations dealing with cultural heritage values of a place. The cultural heritage values are important expressions of cultural identity and cultural experience. Individuals can give values to a place differently, depending on how these individuals identify themselves, and how they experience the place. Cultural identity informs cultural heritage; therefore cultural identity is crucial for architectural heritage management.

Thai architectural heritage conservation seems to be reserved for some professional agencies such as the Fine Arts Department (FAD), and the Association of Siamese Architects (ASA). The conservation of Thai architectural heritage, in most cases, lacks grassroots viewpoints which could be obtained through public hearing and local participation. Like cultural heritage conservation, the success of architectural heritage conservation is dependant on such grassroots level participation and stewardship to safeguard places of heritage.

This dissertation is therefore focused on how non-professional agencies (i.e.: *grassroots)*, employ efforts (i.e.: *cultural attitudes*) to protect (i.e.: *cultural practice)* their cultural identity and cultural representation (i.e.: *Thai identity)* through design.

Statement of Problem

Thailand, like elsewhere, is facing significant cultural challenges in the face of globalisation. On one hand, the globalised identity represents being 'fashionable', 'developed', and/or 'internationalised'. On the other hand, the global identity is perceived on comparative and competitive terms to the local Thai identity. This makes Thai identity a controversial platform, a cultural dilemma for grassroots. Undertaking and representing the global identity as well as realising and understanding Thai identity is the fulcrum. It does not mean that the global identity is necessarily opposed, but the awareness of Thai cultural identity is emphasised.

Tourism and estate development turn Thai identity into financial benefits. Tourism utilises the identity as a product and a service, and estate development utilises it in the form of 'concept design'. Such unplanned and unresponsive tourism utilisation can result in irreversible damage to Thai cultural heritage.

Heritage conservation programs can also create conflicts in Thai society. Top-down approaches on many occasions exclude the local community from the decision-making process, therefore failing to recognise the true local identity, and ultimately being rejected by the relevant local communities. In most case, local communities are relocated out of 'protected' sites in order to generate benefits to others, namely tourists and developers. The case of Mahakan Fort in the Rattanakosin conservation area in Bangkok is a good example.

To cope with these problems, the Thai national government has been attempting to implement several measures, such as the recently established Ministry of Culture in October 2002, which tries to identify the significance of national cultural heritage in both tangible forms (e.g. buildings, monuments, artefacts) and intangible forms (e.g. songs, dance, legends). However, such 'top down' processes may be less successful in influencing the way the general Thai society perceives its values and heritage. The response to the local identity cannot always compete with the response to the global one.

In addition, Thai government authorities always consider Thai identity in a narrow sense as 'national' identity. In this sense, Thai national identity becomes significant while ignoring and marginalising Thai local identities – the very essential identities which are central to people's daily lives, which give meanings to their surroundings, customs and traditions, and which ultimately form their 'self identity'.

As discussed above, Thai local identities are marginalised to global identity and Thai national identity. This is one of the key challenges for Thai cultural heritage conservation, as well as for the cultural rights of Thai grassroots.

Significance of the Problem

The Thai local identities are the source of cultural diversity in this country, and the disappearance of local identities is a significant problem for Thailand, like for many other nations in the globalised environment.

Efforts of Thai grassroots to protect their local identity are both fascinating for cultural heritage studies, and essential for cultural heritage conservation. Individual, family and community stewardship are key to sustained, long-term heritage protection and cultural continuity.

The study of efforts made by Thai grassroots to protect their local identities is critical for the sustainability of cultural heritage conservation in Thailand, and this study aims to shed light on the contemporary cultural context, and suggest future directions for cultural heritage management in this country, as well as the cultural diversity of all humankind.

Statement of Objectives

The objectives of this dissertation are:
- To explore the relationship between Thai grassroots and their local identity; and
- To understand how Thai grassroots protect their local identity by shaping their place.

Conceptual Framework

This dissertation is a phenomenological research which aims to study how Thai grassroots protect their Thai local identities by utilising the design of their place. The conceptual framework is derived from the central proposition that Thai individual, family and community are the grassroots of Thai society, and give value to their local identity and protect it by representing it in their place. Semiological theories are employed to 'read' the spatial design language, which includes architecture, interior and landscape of the places. Connotation of the design language, together with in-depth interviews of the grassroots, will clarify their efforts to protect their local identity - in other words: to demonstrate the spatial design as a non-verbal language, which is a product of culture, and 'read' it through semiological theories in order to understand the efforts being made.
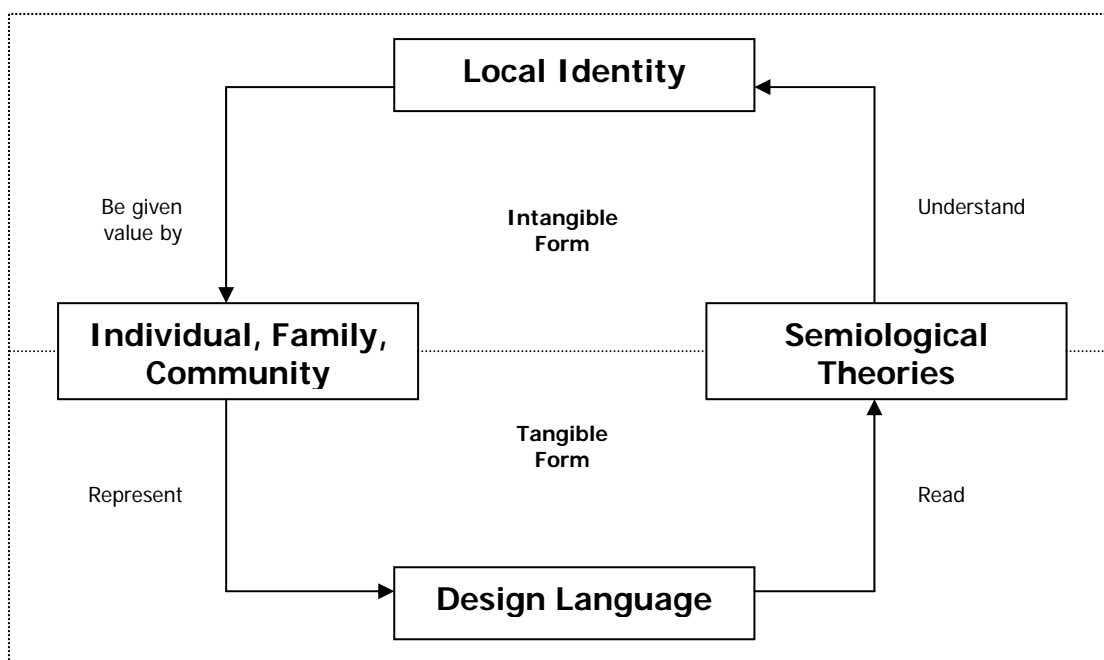
Figure 1 showing the conceptual framework of the dissertation

Process of Dissertation

Based on this conceptual framework, the dissertation continues by reviewing related literature, and designing a research methodology focused on case studies; following the process of case study assessment and analysis, the central proposition is unfolded in further discussion. Finally, conclusion and recommendations are carried out.

Overview of Dissertation

This dissertation is the phenomenological study of Thai individual, family, and community as the grassroots of Thai society to protect their local identity by utilising spatial design. The local identity is the pluralistic sense of Thai identity, which is broader than the unique sense of the national identity of Thailand. The dissertation involves three case studies in Thailand, which are:

- Hor Man Muang: the effort of an individual to protect local identity through new design;
- Ban Rabiang Nam: the effort of a family to protect local identity through adaptive re-use; and
- Phuket Town: the effort of a community to protect local identity through urbanism.

The dissertation also recommends the way forward to accomplish the protection of the Thai identity.

The dissertation consists of seven chapters. Chapter 1 introduces the origin of this dissertation, the statement and the significance of the problem. It addresses the objectives, the conceptual framework, and the process of the dissertation. It also notes about terminology as the dissertation involves a number of terms in Thai language. Having introduced the Key Issues in Chapter 1, related literature is reviewed in Chapter 2. Consequently, Chapter 3 moves towards a methodology for conducting the dissertation.

Chapter 4-6 are devoted to case studies. Reflecting the pluralistic character of local identities in Thai society, three case studies from around Thailand have been selected in order to provide good examples and understandings of the issue. Each case study is assessed and analysed on the basis of the central proposition.

Chapter 4 is dedicated to the case study of Hor Man Muang, which demonstrates the efforts of an individual to protect his cultural identity. The efforts can be seen in the representation of the cultural identity through the design of a contemporary space.

Chapter 5 is dedicated to the case study of Ban Rabiang Nam, which demonstrates the efforts of a family to protect the local identity. The efforts are demonstrated by the adaptive re-purposing of an old family house for a restaurant.

Chapter 6 is dedicated to the case study of Phuket Town, which demonstrates the efforts of a local community to protect their town identity. The efforts are signified by the revitalisation of the town.

Chapter 7 discusses from the assessment and analysis of the case studies. It proclaims the conclusions of the research. Finally, it recommends further studies, as continuation and extension of this dissertation.

At the end of each chapter, with the exception of Chapter 1 and Chapter 7, a summary is provided with key messages together with a bridging statement for the following chapter.

Terminology

Dealing with Thai cultural context but written in English, the dissertation adheres to a system of phonetic transcription for most Thai words, but without tonal marks. The system follows the *General System of Phonetic Transcription of Thai Characters into Roman*[1] devised by the Royal Institute of Thailand in 1999. The superscript and subscript marks of certain vowels and consonants are not shown

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[1]Royal Institute, General System of Phonetic Transcription of Thai Characters into Roman, 1999 [Online], Accessed 23 May 2007. Available from http://www.royin.go.th/upload/246/FileUpload/416_2157.pdf.

due to the constraints of typesetting. There are exceptions for those names which are widely known or which can be referenced by the transcription of the author.

Thai words are used where they can help explain the subject. The Thai words are italicised and also kept singular as there are no plurals in Thai language. However, the word 'Thais' is used as a plural of English word.

The English names of certain Thai kings, princes, and nobles, as they are known among historians, have been adopted rather than their full official titles. Thai people are referred to by their first names while Westerners are referred to by their last names. In the footnotes and the bibliography, therefore, Thai names are presented according to first names. The Thai names in this dissertation preserve the owners' spellings of their names.

Use of the terms 'Siam, Siamese, Thailand and Thai' in this dissertation follows a simple criterion: Siam and Siamese are used for the country and its people before the name of the country was changed in 1941; Thailand and Thai are used for the post-1941 context.

The term 'modern' can be sometimes misleading. Modern, in Western culture is generally timeline relative, i.e.: 'development' relative to 'absolute value' or 'universal value' of 'traditional' society. In the context of this dissertation the term 'modern' is not the same as used in European historical context, or the history of the arts. In the context of the history of Siam, 'modern' generally means 'Europeanised' as opposed to 'traditional Thai'. In many instances, the term 'modern', the meaning of *Khwam Than Samai* in Thai, implies a state of advancement, betterment, progress, goodness or virtue. It also claims superiority over its counterpart, the traditional. The claim, of course, is not absolutely true, but it is useful in this respect. Exceptions to this are instances where the noun following the term indicates a different context, such as 'modernism' in arts.

Meaning of the terms 'space' and 'place' in this dissertation are slightly different. According to Lefebvre[2], 'space' is classified as physical, mental, or social space, and the differentiation is defined in Chapter 2. 'Place' is more abstract, and involves meanings and values of a space associated with people.

Finally, citation and bibliography from Thai documents are in Thai language to source back to the original references. However, the English translation by the author appears below the Thai language references.

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[2] Henri Lefebvre, <u>The Production of Space</u>, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

Thai Cultural Identity in Cultural Heritage Conservation

From the key issues, the dissertation extends with review of related literature from a range of disciplines, including history, sociology, anthropology, economics, culture, architecture and design. The review is to discuss cultural identity, and 'Thai-ness' or Thai cultural identity in cultural heritage conservation.

This chapter starts with a discussion of the shift of cultural heritage conservation paradigm. It is followed by grassroots approach, which is the contemporary concept in cultural heritage conservation, and the relationship between cultural heritage and cultural identity. Then, the definitions and approaches of identity are expanded. Construction, practice and representation of cultural identity are unfolded consecutively. Finally, Thai-ness, the Thai cultural identity, is discussed in dimension of time and space.

Cultural Heritage Conservation: the Paradigm Shift

The very first reference in cultural heritage conservation is the *International Charter for the Conservation and Restoration of Monuments and Sites*, adopted by the 2nd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments in Venice, 1964; or often referred as the *Venice Charter*. The charter has become a reference for international and national legal framework, and has been translated into many different languages in order to conserve and restore historical monuments and sites.[1] Since the adoption of the Venice Charter in 1964, the paradigm of cultural heritage conservation has changed and it keeps changing. This section reviews the charters and documents to track this changing philosophy.

Cultural heritage conservation was initiated by Western nations to protect their 'Western' cultural heritage. The Venice Charter was drafted by 23 international committees but only one from Japan who represented UNESCO.[2] And the charter is appropriate for conservation of classical archaeological sites and monuments in Europe, or perhaps in some countries in the Middle East and South Asia.[3] The *Convention Concerning the Protection of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage*

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[1] Jukka Jokilehto, "The Context of the Venice Charter (1964)," <u>Conservation and Management of Archaeological Sites</u> 2 (1998).

[2] ICOMOS, "The Venice Charter," <u>The IInd International Congress of Architects and Technicians of Historic Monuments</u> (Venice, Italy: 1964).

[3] William Logan and Patrick O'Keefe, "The Venice Charter: Universal or European Solution?," <u>World Heritage</u> (Geelong: Deakin University, 2007).

1972 has been adopted by all but two Asian States.[4] Then, the *Burra Charter* (1979, latest revision 1999) was the first conceived and written specific application of cultural heritage conservation for non-European country.[5] Later, the *Nara Document on Authenticity* (1994) and the *Hoi An Declaration on Conservation of Historic District of Asia* (2003) show rising influence of Asian countries, particularly Japan, in the international stage of cultural heritage conservation. Both of the Nara Documents and the Hoi An Protocols propose criteria to conserve cultural heritage in context of the cultures of Asia. These indicate that cultural heritage conservation has shifted from Occidentalism to Orientalism.

A significant shift can be seen in the Burra Charter usage of the word 'place' instead of 'monument' and 'site' as in the Venice Charter.[6] Cultural landscape, the traditional setting of cultural heritage, is valued as much as structure or object. Intangible values are also acknowledged as equally or even more significant than tangible ones.[7] In addition, invisibility of cultural and natural heritage is emphasised. The Burra Charter has also recognised indigenous people, indigenous tradition, myth and spiritual values as important elements of cultural heritage which warrant protection. It allows each culture own perceived heritage, and promotes protection through an appropriate way upon each culture own context. These changes indicate a shift of cultural heritage conservation paradigm from uniformity of modernism to plurality of postmodernism.

The Nara Document has also recognised cultural diversity and cultural specificity. The document, although conceived in the spirit of the Venice Charter, extends the concept from 'ancient monuments' to 'living cultures'.[8] It has shifted the meaning of cultural heritage from fossil sense to living sense. This is the sign of changing cultural heritage conservation from static to dynamic approach.

Shifted from the Venice Charter, ICOMOS' *Charter on the Built Vernacular Heritage* (1999) has accepted that vernacular buildings can be a heritage. This extends the meaning of heritage from historical monument to common buildings in daily life. Cultural heritage conservation is no longer reserved for 'high culture' of classical architectures but it is applied to 'popular culture' of vernacular buildings.

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[4] Richard Engelhardt, "The Management of World Heritage Cities: Evolving Concepts, New Strategies," The Conservation of Urban Heritage: Macao Vision, ed. David Lung (Macao SAR, China: Cultural Institute of the Macao SAR Government, 2002), 34.

[5] Ken Taylor, "A Charter for All Seasons: The Burra Charter in an Asia-Pacific Context," Historic Environment 18.1 (2004).

[6] Jukka Jokilehto, "International Trends in Historic Preservation: From Ancient Monuments to Living Cultures," APT Bulletin 29.3-4 (1998). and Shiren Wang, "New Perspective on the Conservation of Cultural Heritage," In Place 1.4 (1999).

[7] Jokilehto, "International Trends in Historic Preservation: From Ancient Monuments to Living Cultures." and Taylor, "A Charter for All Seasons: The Burra Charter in an Asia-Pacific Context."

[8] Jokilehto, "International Trends in Historic Preservation: From Ancient Monuments to Living Cultures."

The *Principles for the Conservation of Heritage Sites in China* (2002), even though it has being criticised for its emphasises on the preservation of physical fabric as in 'Western practice' rather than 'Asian approach'[9], still stresses the need to protect the integrity of heritage sites to maintain the authenticity of historical reality. This indicates the conceptual expansion from authenticity to integrity.

UNESCO's conference of *Linking Universal and Local Values: Management a Sustainable Future for World Heritage* on 22-24 May 2003 in Amsterdam acknowledged value of place to the local peoples is a part of the universal values, not a hierarchy, of a heritage; and both of the values should not be separated.[10] This indicates the focal shift in world heritage from universalism to relativism.

The Hoi An Protocols and the *Seoul Declaration on Tourism in Asia's Historic Town and Area* (2005) not only stretches cultural heritage from archaeological monument to historic district and town, but also acknowledges the impact of tourism in Asia and the consequent effects on conservation of cultural heritage for tourism purposes. These suggest the turning direction of cultural heritage from historic conservation to economic development, as well as from preservation to adaptive re-use.

Integrated Community Development and Cultural Heritage Preservation in Asia and the Pacific through Local Efforts or LEAP program has been put out by UNESCO. The program is not to replace existing professional and institutional efforts to conserve cultural heritage, but is intended to compliment and to extend the efforts to grassroots. This demonstrates the changing centre of cultural heritage conservation from professionals and institutions to grassroots.

The paradigm shift of cultural heritage conservation is summarised in Figure 2.

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[9] Neville Agnew, Martha Demas, Sharon Sullivan and Kristy Altenburg, "The Begetting of Charters: Genesis of the China Principles," Historic Environment 18.1 (2004). and Taylor, "A Charter for All Seasons: The Burra Charter in an Asia-Pacific Context."

[10] UNESCO World Heritage Centre, "Linking Universal and Local Values: Managing a Sustainable Future for World Heritage," (Amsterdam, The Netherlands: Netherlands National Commission for UNESCO, 2003).

Former	Later
Occidentalism	Orientalism
Modernism	Postmodernism
Cultural Universalism	Cultural Relativism
Uniformity	Plurality
Static Approach	Dynamic Approach
Monument, Site	Place, Precinct
Structure, Object	Setting, Area
Tangible Fabric	Intangible Quality
Fossil Heritage	Living Heritage
High Culture	Popular culture
Authenticity	Integrity
Historic Conservation	Economic Development
Professionals and Institutions	Grassroots

Figure 2 showing the paradigm shift of cultural heritage conservation

Grassroots: the New Fulcrum in Cultural Heritage Conservation

According to LEAP, grassroots assume the key role in cultural heritage conservation. The word 'grassroots' may be confusing and misleading, therefore requires clarification as to the meaning of the word in this dissertation.

The first use of 'grassroots' may have been coined by the U.S. Senator Albert Jeremiah Beveridge in 1912.[11] According to the American Heritage Dictionary, grassroots means 'people or society at a local level rather than at the center of major political activity'.[12] But in many cases, the word is intentionally used in economic sense to connote a disadvantaged community or people who have less economic opportunity and need assistances from others in society.

In this dissertation, 'grassroots' is used in the sense of socio-cultural structure. It includes individuals, families and communities. All of them are the basic cultural units in society. They are the centre of the contemporary approach to cultural heritage conservation.[13]

Grassroots are the local actors who are having direct relationship with cultural heritage. They have their own rights to protect, to maintain, and to utilise their cultural heritage, as well as to earn social and economic benefits from them. Grassroots are the significant stakeholders to maintain a living heritage, and also to assume local stewardship of cultural heritage. Therefore, the grassroots should be

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[11] Albert J Beveridge, (Eigen's Political & Historical Quatations, 1912), vol. quoted in Wikipedia.

[12] The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, (Houghton Mifflin Company, 2006).

[13] Engelhardt, "The Management of World Heritage Cities: Evolving Concepts, New Strategies".

encouraged to look after their cultural heritage and to utilise their local heritage as the cultural assets for their future development.

In this respect, the grassroots approach, such as LEAP, is the weakest link in cultural heritage conservation practice, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.[14] The approach is not to encourage local people to return to the way they lived in the past, but rather to use their cultural heritage in responsible, profitable and sustainable way.

Cultural Heritage and Cultural Identity

> Places of cultural significance enrich people's lives, often providing a deep and inspirational sense of connection to community and landscape, to the past and to lived experiences. They are historical records, that are important as tangible expressions of Australian identity and experience. Places of cultural significance reflect the diversity of our communities, telling us about who we are and the past that has formed us and the Australian landscape. [15]

According to the preamble to the Burra Charter, cultural heritage places are historical records of cultural identity and experience; as well as are something we hold for our identity. Cultural heritage places are also the tangible expressions of the intangible cultural identity. UNSECO Declaration Concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage[16] also noted '…cultural heritage is an important component of the cultural identity of communities, groups and individuals…'. The experts who prepared the Hoi An Protocols underscored that conservation of cultural heritage sites is important to the diversity and the continuity of cultural identities in Asia.[17] These indicate the relationship between cultural heritage and cultural identity.

The relationship of cultural heritage and cultural identity is similar to the two sides of a coin. Both of them are the component of each other, united, and inseparable. Cultural identity is more abstract comparing to cultural heritage. The issue of cultural identity as the core of this dissertation will be discussed in the following topics, starting with the definitions and the approaches to identity, and then focusing on the representation of cultural identity in a place.

Identity: Definitions and Approaches

Identity is central to all human and social disciplines, including sociology, anthropology, psychology, cultural studies, and heritage studies. Discussion on

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[14] Ibid.

[15] Australian ICOMOS, "The Burra Charter," (1999).

[16] UNESCO, "UNESCO Declaration Concerning the Intentional Destruction of Cultural Heritage," The General Conference of the UNESCO (Paris: 2003).

[17] ICOMOS, "The Hoi an Declaration on Conservation of Historic Districts of Asia," The International Symposium on the Conservation of Cultural Heritage Sites and International Cooperation (Hoi An, Vietnam: 2003).

definitions and approaches to identity is essential to illustrate the understanding of dynamic, contested, multiple and fluid characteristics of identity.

'Identity' of an individual is always understood in absolute sense of 'uniqueness' or 'personality'. Theoretically, the definition of 'identity' is more relative sense of 'selfness'. The later definition is more appropriate in contemporary context.[18]

> We know of no people without names, no languages or cultures in which some manner of distinctions between self and other, we and they, are not made…Self-knowledge – always a construction no matter how much it feels like a discovery – is never altogether spreadable from claims to be known in specific ways by others.[19]

According to Calhoun, identity is the source of meaning for people to identify everything as well as themselves. The word 'identity' is rooted from the Latin word *identitas* or *idem*, which means 'the same'.[20] The meaning of 'identity' is always used in terms of power relations, representation and symbolism.[21]

Giddens[22] defined identity that is sources of meaning for the individuals themselves, and by themselves, constructed through a process of individualisation. It must be distinguished from roles, which are defined by norms structured by the institutions and organisations of society. For Giddens, identity involves meaning, while role involves function. Castells[23] defined identity different from Giddens in that it can be originated from dominant institutions and adopted by individuals to constructs their meaning within them. For Castells, identity is from the internal capability of individuals to achieve meaningful ends.

According to Gay, Evans and Redman[24], identity can be outlined theoretically as follow:

- 'Subject-to-language' approach developed upon many theories including structural linguistics, Marxism, and discourse theory. Human identity in this approach is formed by the mechanisms of language and its modes of

[18] อภิญญา เฟื่องฟูสกุล, <u>อัตลักษณ์ การทบทวนทฤษฎีและกรอบแนวคิด</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: คณะกรรมการสภาวิจัยแห่งชาติ สาขาสังคมวิทยา, 2546).

 [Apinya Fueangfusakul, <u>Identity: Theories and Concepts</u> (Bangkok: National Committee of Research, Sociology, 2003).]

[19]Craig Calhoun, ed., <u>Social Theory and the Politic of Identity</u> (Oxford: Blackwell, 1994) 9-10. quated in Manuel Castells, <u>The Power of Identity</u>, 2nd ed. (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004) 6.

[20] The American Heritage Dictionary of the English Language, vol.

[21] อภิญญา เฟื่องฟูสกุล, <u>อัตลักษณ์ การทบทวนทฤษฎีและกรอบแนวคิด</u> 1.

 [Apinya Fuengfusakul, <u>Identity: Theories and Concepts</u> 1]

[22] Anthony Giddens, <u>Modernity and Self-Identity: Self and Society in the Late Modern Age</u> (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1991).

[23] Castells, <u>The Power of Identity</u> 7.

[24] Pual Du Gay, Jessica Evans and Perter Redman, eds., <u>Identity: A Reader</u> (London: SAGE Publications, 2005) 1-2.

signification. It constituted in and through 'difference' and also 'dislocation' [insider-outsider].

- Psychoanalysis approach rooted up from Kleinian and object-relations 'British school' of clinically-based psycho-analytic literature. Human identity in this approach is an abstract notion, which is derived from direct experiences including sufferings, conflicts, and ambivalences of unconscious life.
- Socio-historical approach linked between psychoanalysis and genealogy. This approach emphasises the pluralistic character of human identity from the specific cultural contexts in which they are formed. It is more empirical, and more open for investigation.

These approaches consider identity in different ways; they suggest that identity is a domain that link between individuality and social aspect, and that it is a cultural product. This can be argued that some identity is a biological property, which people inherit by birth. In fact, the biological property is defined by culture through mechanisms of language. However, there are overlaps in the meanings of the words: *race*, *ethnicity* and *identity*. Nithi Aewsriwong[25] sought to distinguish between these similar words in the following manner:

- Race is a biological property, which one is born into and cannot change, such as being Jewish, Chinese, or Thai.
- Ethnicity is not a biological property and can be changed. It is a kind of cultural group that share common cultural practices such as language, custom, and tradition. An example is the Thai people in the United States who still keep speaking Thai language, eating Thai food and going to Thai temples as part of their daily life.
- Identity is an individual's or group's self-image and what differentiates 'I' from 'you', 'we' from 'they', 'us' from 'others'. It is an issue of defending or fighting for something such as cultural rights or social space. Identity is dynamic and changes depending upon the context of time and space.

Identity and culture, although not exactly the same, are always linked. According to Kidd[26], it is possible to distinguish between three related forms of identity but subtly different, which are:

- Individual identity is a set of cultural meaning that an individual creates and holds in his/her own right. It is the unique sense of personhood, the micro perspective of identity;
- Social identity is a collective sense of belonging to a group of individuals identifying themselves through sharing similarity or having something in common with others in the group. It is the sharing sense of a social group, the macro perspective of identity; and

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[25] นิธิ เอียวศรีวงศ์, "คนไทยกับ 3 คำเจ้าปัญหา: เชื้อชาติ-กลุ่มชาติพันธุ์-อัตลักษณ์," ศิลปวัฒนธรรม 26.9 (2548).

[Nithi Aewsriwong, "Thai People and 3 Confusing Words: Race-Ethnic Group-Identity," Art and Culture 26.9 (2005).]

[26] Warren Kidd, Culture and Identity (New York: Palgrave, 2002) 7-8 and 25-26.

- Cultural identity is a collective sense of belonging to a distinct ethnic, cultural or sub-cultural community. It is the flux of both of the abstract issues, identity and culture. It becomes more complex in contemporary globalising world.

Cultural identity is a complex and dynamic issue. According to Amara Pongsapish[27], cultural identity can be studied in two different notions, which are:

- Cultural Evolutionism developed in the same period of Charles Darwin's biological evolution. The notion emphasises the adaptation of humans to their surroundings. It distinguished ethnicities by the difference of materials and technologies they used. This notion is supported by archaeologists as it can indicate the cultural evolution through time. The notion has sought the 'vertical' changes of culture.
- Cultural Diffusionism developed after the Cultural Evolutionism. The notion emphasises the cross cultural comparison, which considers similarities and differences of culture. It examines cultural core and cultural area, instead of cultural origin. This notion is supported by anthropology, especially historical particularism. The notion has sought the 'horizontal' changes of culture through space.

Both of the notions of cultural studies do not compete but compliment each other. Through these notions, cultural identity becomes a complex issue. The issue of cultural identity from the dominance of 'class' as the 'master identity' has been challenged by the new cultural movements of identity including ecological movement, black struggles, feminism, and localism.[28] These movements turn cultural identity issues into discourse in cultural politics'[29] and in power relations[30].

Cultural identity, therefore, is the result of human identification in order to know who we are, who belong to our group, and how we should interact among ourselves. It also refers to a sense of belonging to a distinct ethnic, cultural or sub-cultural community. There are both advantages and disadvantages in cultural identification. The former is to establish unity, co-operation, and consideration within the group; the later is to create conflict among groups. The terrorist attack of World Trade Centre in New York on September 11th, 2001 is an example for the conflict of cultural identity.

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[27] อมรา พงศาพิชญ์, ความหลากหลายทางวัฒนธรรม (กระบวนทัศน์และบทบาทในประชาสังคม) (กรุงเทพฯ: สำนักพิมพ์แห่งจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย, 2549) 6-11.
   [Amara Pongsapish, Cultural Diversity (Paradigm and Role in Society) (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2006) 6-11.]
[28] Du Gay, Evans and Redman, eds., Identity: A Reader 1-2.
[29] Cornel West, "The New Cultural Politics of Difference," The Cultural Studies Reader, ed. Simon During (London: Routledge, 2005).
[30] Castells, The Power of Identity.

Cultural Identity: Construction, Practice and Representation

Cultural identity is a product of culture, which is a unique characteristic of humans. People identify everything around them as well as themselves through culture. People, across diversity of cultures, go through similar processes to construct, practise and represent their cultural identity. This section discusses the terms of construction, practice, and representation of cultural identity.

Cultural identity is not a pre-existing natural phenomenon. It is constructed by humans through their culture. It is a form of cultural production, which is never complete.[31] Cultural identity is composed of historic, geographic, biological and institutional ingredients; as well as of collective memory, personal fantasies, power apparatuses and religions. People construct their first level of identity, which is an identity that frames the others, from these compositions.[32] Cultural identity can be introduced by dominant institutions of society or nation to formulate what Castells called 'legitimising identity'.[33] Cultural identity is also generated to resist dominant ideologies and to maintain sense of differences, so called resistance identity.[34] Occasionally, people construct a new cultural identity to re-define or to re-position themselves in society, called 'projected identity'.[35]

People are able to construct their identity upon their agency. Giddens[36] defined 'agency' as follows:

> Agency refers not to the intentions people have in doing things but to their capability of doing those things in the first place… Agency concerns events of which an individual is the perpetrator, in the sense that the individual could, at any phase in a given sequence of conduct, have acted differently. Whatever happened would not have happened if that individual had not intervened. Action is a continuous process, a flow, in which the reflexive monitoring which the individual maintains is fundamental to the control of the body that actors ordinarily sustain throughout their day-to-day lives.

For Giddens, agency is about the capability of people to choose and of having a freedom to practise what they have chosen. But people are not totally free to practise their identity. Bourdieu's concept of *habitus*[37] suggested that although people can practise on the basis of both creativity and familiarity, they have to bend and adapt to the rules of the society that they belong to. De Certeau argued that the concept of

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[31] Stuart Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora," Identity: Community, Culture, Difference, ed. Jonathan Rutherford (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1990).

[32] Castells, The Power of Identity 7.

[33] Ibid., 8.

[34] Kobena Mercer, "Black Hair/Style Politics," Cultural Remix: Theories of Politics and the Popular, eds. E. Carter, J. Donald and J. Squires (London: Lawrence & Wishart, 1995).

[35] Castells, The Power of Identity 8.

[36] Anthony Giddens, The Giddens Reader, ed. P. Cassell (Basingstoke: Macmillan, 1993). quoted in Kidd, Culture and Identity 75.

[37] Pierre Bourdieu, Sociology in Question (London: Sage, 1993).

habitus may not be useful in the contemporary capitalist world where market and state take control and in various forms empower or suppress people.[38] Conversely, Askew noted that the concept of habitus allows understanding of how people manipulate cultural resources as a capital to achieve their meaningful goals.[39] Following Askew, this dissertation employs the habitus concept of Bourdieu to understand the ways that Thai grassroots protect their local identity by shaping space and its meaning through agency.

The notions of agency and habitus allow people to be seen as active and thinking beings rather than the passive victims or 'marionette' of culture. Hall[40] notes that:

> [Cultural] identity is not as transparent or unproblematic as we think. Perhaps instead of thinking of [cultural] identity as an already accomplished fact, which the new cultural practices then represent, we should think, instead, of [cultural] identity as a 'production', which is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within, not outside representation"

According to Hall, People do not only construct their cultural identity and practise their cultural activities by holding the identity, but they also represent their identity through a process. Cultural identity representation is a process to render intangible cultural identity into symbolic or iconic forms, which is mostly in visual information. The process is reconstruction rather than reflection of the reality of cultural identity through concepts and signs.[41]

Place is a platform for people to represent their cultural identity. Architecture, interior decoration, and landscape can be employed to interpret discursive issue of cultural identity.[42] They represent cultural identity through signs, symbols and rituals; which are definitely perpetual products of culture. Collective cultural ideology including cultural identity is woven into place. Therefore, both place and cultural ideology are the mirror image of each other. Anthropologists, on many occasions, have utilised this approach to convey understandings of human behaviours, attitudes, ideologies and cultural practices through architecture, interior decoration and landscape.[43]

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[38] Michel De Certeau, The Practice of Everyday Life (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1984) 34-42, 50-60.

[39] Marc Askew, "Bangkok: Transformation of the Thai City," Cultural Identity and Urban Change in Southeast Asia: Interpretative Essays, eds. Marc Askew and William S. Logan (Geelong: Deakin University Press, 1994) 9

[40] Hall, "Cultural Identity and Diaspora."

[41] Stuart Hall, "Introduction," Representation: Cultural Representations and Signifying Practices, ed. Stuart Hall (London: Sage, 1997).

[42] Roland Barthes, Mythologies, trans. Annette Lavers (London: Vintage, 2000).,Michel Foucault, "Space,Knowledge, and Power," Power: Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984, ed. James D. Faubion (London: Penguin Books). and Stuart Hall, "Encoding, Decoding," The Cultural Studies Reader, ed. Simon During (London: Routledge, 2005).

[43] Serena Nanda and Richard L. Warms, Cultural Anthropology, 9 ed. (Belmont: Thomson Wadsworth, 2007) 408-435.

Cultural identity, in conclusion, is a discourse involving 'we-they-others' and also 'similarity-difference'. It is a cultural product of innovation, borrowing from others, disruption and displacement. It is a mixture rather than a singular unit. It is also dynamic and contradictory. In other words: cultural identity can be constructed, de-constructed and re-constructed. It definitely links to power and categorisation in human society. The discourse of cultural identity becomes more critical in the present time of mass migration, convenient transportation, faster telecommunication, trans-national finance, and international tourism. Beyond the perception of 'we-they-others', the interchange between 'ours' and 'theirs' is equipped now with advanced technologies, which is faster than our former experiences. Although the issue of cultural identity remains un-concluded, cultural identity continues in reality to highlight differences among humans.

Thai-ness: the Cultural Identity of Thai People

Like other cultural identity, Thai-ness - *khwampenthai* or Thai cultural identity- is a complex and dynamic issue. It is difficult to define but it is supposed that Thai people know what it is. Thongchai Winichakul[44] noted that Thai people can identify their identity by the 'negative identification' or by that which is not Thai.

Thai-ness is not culturally uniform. But it is a plurality of cross-linked cultural patterns.[45] It has been accumulated from many origins, especially India, China and the Khmer kingdom. Elements of these foreign cultures have been selected through generations of Thai people and interwoven with local cultures, traditions, ideologies and beliefs; to create their own cultural identity.

Levi-Strauss[46] noted that both diachronic and synchronic aspects are required in order to understand the evolution of a society. For Levi-Strauss, the diachronic aspects refer to temporal dimension or changes through historical sequences; while the synchronic aspects refer to spatial dimension or changes within a particular space at a point of time. These aspects are also utilised in cultural studies as cultural evolutionism and cultural diffusionism consecutively.

Therefore, Thai-ness is discussed in the following subsections in relation to these two aspects. The discussion is from both phonetic and phonemic perspectives.

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[44] Thongchai Winichakul, <u>Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation</u> (Honollu: University of Hawaii Press, 1994) 5-6.

[45] Askew, "Bangkok: Transformation of the Thai City," 8-9.

[46] Claude Levi-Strauss, <u>Structural Anthropology</u>, trans. Claire Jacobson and Brooke Grundfest Schoepf (Harmondsworth, Middlesex: Penguin Books, 1963) 1-27. and Roman Jakobson and Halle Morris, "Principes De Phonologie Historique," <u>Fundamentals of Language</u> (The Hague: Mouton, 1956). cited in Levi-Strauss, <u>Structural Anthropology</u> 89.

Thai-ness: the Difference through Time

In terms of diachronic aspect, Thai-ness has changed through time. Idealistically, Thai-ness is a mixture of Buddhism, Brahmanism and local spirits. Despite its ancient roots, the identity is still associated with the contemporary lifestyle and has been the basis of traditions, festivals, rites of passage, and arts, including architecture. With regard to the fundamental aspect of *Tri Bhumi* cosmology derived from Brahmanism[47], the ancient Thai people used this ideology to explain their relative position and their relative location in the world and the universe. *Tri Bhumi* has also been used as a framework to explain natural phenomenon such as earthquakes caused by the reversal of *Pla Anon*; or day and night caused by translocation of two angles, *Phra Artit* [the sun] and *Phra Chan* [the moon] on *Mount Meru*.[48] Moreover, *Tri Bhumi* has influenced politics and government of the kingdom. Associated with Buddhism, is the belief that the king is *Phraya Jakapadiraj*, who is enlightened in both ways of the world and ways of *dharma* [ethics and moralities]. The king, also, represents the absolute power together with righteousness to look after his people, waiting for the returning of the Lord Buddha. Buddhism, however, is the core of the society. Thai people believe that the condition and status of present life is the result of *boon* [good acts] and *papa* [evil, wrong action] from previous lives[49]. The previous *boon* brings the living condition and social status to present life. After the finishing of the *boon* from previous life, the result of *papa* will occur. Therefore, *boon* should be accumulated at all times by *dana* [giving, generosity], *sila* [morality, precept] and *bharvana* [mental culture, meditation]; and in the meantime, *papa* should be avoided. The highest expectation is being free from this cycle of life, called *nippan* [Nirvana].[50]

With regard to the monarchy, the relationship between the king and his people in Thailand is a remarkable feature of the Thai identity. Kingship is always at the apex

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[47] สมคิด จิระทัศนกุล, <u>วัด: พุทธศาสนสถาปัตยกรรมไทย</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: โรงพิมพ์มหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์, 2545) 45-46. และ สุดจิต สนั่นไหว, <u>การศึกษาเรื่องการออกแบบสถาปัตยกรรมวัดราชบพิธสถิตมหาสีมา ราม</u> (กรุงเทพฯ คณะกรรมการจัดงานฉลองครบรอบ 100 ปี วันประสูติสมเด็จพระอริยวงศาคตญาณ (วาสนมหาเถระ), 2541) 188.

  [Somkid Jirathasanakul, <u>Wat: Buddhist Architecture</u> (Bangkok: Thammasart Press, 2002) 45-46 and Sudjit Snanwai, <u>Architectural Design of Wat Rajaborpit Sathitmahasimaram</u> (Bangkok: The Committee of Celebration of 100 Years of Somdet Phra Ariyawongsakatayan (Wasana Mahadhera), 1998) 188.]

[48] สมบัติ จันทรวงศ์, <u>บทพิจารณ์ว่าด้วยวรรณกรรมการเมืองและประวัติศาสตร์</u>, พิมพ์ครั้งที่ 2 (กรุงเทพฯ: คบไฟ, 2547) 235-253.

  [Sombat Chatarawong, <u>Critics of Political and Historical Literatures</u> 2nd ed. (Bangkok: Kobfai, 2004) 235-253.]

[49] อคิน รพีพัฒน์, <u>สังคมไทยในสมัยต้นกรุงรัตนโกสินทร์ (พ.ศ.2325-2416)</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: มูลนิธิโครงการ ตำราสังคมศาสตร์และมนุษยศาสตร์, 2518) 28-34.

  [Akin Rapeepat, <u>Thai Society in the Early Rattanakosin Era (1782-1873)</u> (Bangkok: Mulaniti Krongkan Tumra Sangkomsart Lae Manutsart, 1975) 28-34.]

[50] สมบัติ จันทรวงศ์, <u>บทพิจารณ์ว่าด้วยวรรณกรรมการเมืองและประวัติศาสตร์</u> 365-366.365-366.

  [Sombat Chatarawong, <u>Critics of Political and Historical Literatures</u> 365-366.]

of Thai society. But the status of the kingship has changed through time from *Devaraja* [divine kingship] of Sukhothai[51], *Sommutitape* [a living god] of Ayutthaya until early Rattanakosin[52], absolute monarchy in the reign of Rama V until the reign of Rama VI[53], and constitutional monarchy since the reign of Rama VII[54]. Even now, for Thai people, the king still holds the position of the highest respect. This is one of the most remarkable vertical relationships in contemporary Thai society. This 'idealistic' version of Thai-ness is what Thai people hold to identify themselves and to make sense of their world.

The crisis during the colonisation period forced Siam to re-figure itself. Philosophers of the royal court, Chaophraya Tippakornwong (Kum Bonnag) and Somdet Kromphraya Damrong Rajanubhap, had to invent an identity in order to create the unity in the kingdom. Royal chronicles and royal histories have been utilised to identify and to signify Thai race of the royal blood, which is not Mon, Lao, or Chinese. Nithi Aewsriwong[55] noted that this 'royal' version of Thai-ness has been

[51] ธิดา สาระยา, "โครงสร้างของชนชั้นในสังคมสุโขทัย," <u>รวมปาฐกถาจากสมาคมสังคมศาสตร์แห่ง
ประเทศไทย พ.ศ.2520-2521</u> (พระนคร: สมาคมสังคมศาสตร์แห่งประเทศไทย, 2521) 20-25.

  [Thida Saraya, "Social Structure of Sukhothai," <u>Ruam Patakatha Jak Samakom
Sangkomsart Hang Prathet Thai in 2520-2521</u> (Phra Nakorn: <u>Samakom Sangkomsart
Hang Prathet Thai</u>, 1978) 20-25.]

[52] นาฏวิภา ชลิตานนท์, <u>ประวัติศาสตร์นิพนธ์ไทย</u> (กรุงเทพฯ; มูลนิธิโครงการตำราสังคมศาสตร์และ
มนุษยศาสตร์ และมหาวิทยาลัยธรรมศาสตร์, 2524) 151-152. และ สมบัติ จันทรวงศ, <u>บทพิจารณ์ว่า
ด้วยวรรณกรรมการเมืองและประวัติศาสตร์</u> 372.

  [Nartwipa Chalitanon, <u>Thai History</u> (Bangkok: Mulanithi Krongkan Tamra
Sangkomsart Lae Manutsart Thammasart University, 1981) 151-152. and Sombat
Chatarawong, <u>Critics of Political and Historical Literatures</u> 372.]

[53] ธิดา สาระยา, <u>ราษฎรในครรลองแห่งความเจริญของสยาม</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: เมืองโบราณ, 2540) 6-24.
และ ศรีศักร วัลลิโภดม, <u>ทัศนะนอกรีต: สังคม-วัฒนธรรมในวิถีการอนุรักษ์</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: เมืองโบราญ,
2543) 7-8.

  [Thida Saraya, <u>People in the Ways of Modernising Siam</u> (Bangkok: Muang Boran,
1997) 6-24. and Srisak Wallipodom, <u>Opinion of an Outsider: Socio-cultural Approach
in Conservation</u> 7-8.]

[54] Judith A Stowe, <u>Siam Becomes Thailand: A Story of Intrigue</u> (London: Hurst &
Company, 1991) 9-24. and สุธี คุณาวิชยานนท์, <u>จากสยามเก่าสู่ไทยใหม่ : ว่าด้วยความพลิกผันของ
ศิลปะจากประเพณีสู่สมัยใหม่และร่วมสมัย</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: หอศิลป์ มหาวิทยาลัยศิลปากร, 2545) 44.

  [Stowe, <u>Siam Becomes Thailand: A Story of Intrigue</u> 9-24. and Sutee
Kunawichayanon, <u>From Siam to Thailand: the Change of Arts from Traditional to
Modern and Contemporary</u> 44.]

[55] นิธิ เอียวศรีวงศ, "การศึกษาประวัติศาสตร์ไทย: อดีตและอนาคต," <u>รวมบทความประวัติศาสตร์</u>, ฉบับที่1
(กรุงเทพฯ:สมาคมประวัติศาสตร์, 2523) 1-22.,นิธิ เอียวศรีวงศ, <u>การเมืองไทยสมัยพระนารายณ์</u>
(กรุงเทพฯ:สถาบันไทยคดีศึกษา, 2523).,นิธิ เอียวศรีวงศ, <u>การเมืองไทยสมัยพระเจ้ากรุงธนบุรี</u>
(กรุงเทพฯ: สำนักพิมพ์ศิลปวัฒนธรรม, 2529). และ นิธิ เอียวศรีวงศ, "ระบอบสมบูรณาญาสิทธิราช,"
<u>ศิลปวัฒนธรรม</u> มกราคม 2537: 111-112.

  [Nithi Aewsriwong, "Education of History: Past and Future," <u>Ruam Bot Kwam
Prawatsart</u>, vol. 1 (Bangkok: Association of History, 1980) 1-22., Nithi Aewsriwong,
<u>Politics in the Reign of King Narai</u> (Bangkok: Institute of Thai Studies, 1980)., Nithi

invented in order to make Siam as 'civilised' as western countries. For Nithi, the royal version of Thai-ness has served the kingdom of absolute monarchy in defence from western imperialism. Chatree Prakitnonthakarn[56] also noted about the royal version of Thai-ness that it might be a political strategy to establish the unique social attitude, which leads to the absolute power of the royal court.

Under the nationalism of King Vajiravudh [Rama VI], the king himself wrote plays designed to remind the rich of their Thai-ness. Moreover, he contributed articles to the press, by using a pen-name, warning against alien influences, particular Chinese, whom he dubbed 'the Jews of the East'.[57] The concept of Thai-ness was practised under the criteria of *Lak Thai* [the Thai Principle], which consists of 'the nation, the religion and the monarchy'. This ideology has been seen in the changing of the national flag from *Thong Chang Pueak* [the white elephant flag] to be *Thong Tri Rong* [the three colours flag], which are red, white and blue colours that represent the nation, the religion and the monarchy respectively.[58] Thongchai Winichakul[59] noticed that the nationalism at that time was not conceived by society at large, but was the king-preferred pattern, so called *Rajachatniyom*. Obviously, 'absolute monarchical' version of Thai-ness dominated the whole society at that period.

Then, under the autocracy-military government after the *coup d'état* in 1932, the leader launched many measures in order to convert Siam into a 'modernised' country. Thai-ness was edited into the government-preferred pattern, which was considered as the civilized way within the western context. The 'national version' of Thai-ness needed and had to differentiate the society from the monarchy. So, many customs,

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Aewsriwong, <u>Politics in the Reign of King Thonburi</u> (Bangkok: Art and Culture, 1986). and Nithi Aewsriwong, "Absolute Monarchy" <u>Arts and Culture</u> January 1994: 111-112.]

[56] ชาตรี ประกิตนนทการ, <u>การเมืองและสังคมในศิลปสถาปัตยกรรม สยามสมัย ไทยประยุกต์ ชาตินิยม</u> (กรุงเทพฯ:มติชน, 2547) 183-184.

  [Chatree Prakitnonthakarn, <u>Representation of Politic and Society in Architecture: Siam, Modern Thai, and Nationalism</u> (Bangkok: Matichon, 2004) 183-184.]

[57] Stowe, <u>Siam Becomes Thailand: A Story of Intrigue</u> 6. and ชาญวิทย์ เกษตรศิริ, <u>ประวัติการเมืองไทย 2475-2500</u>, 3 ed. (กรุงเทพฯ: มูลนิธิโครงการตำราสังคมศาสตร์และมนุษยศาสตร์, 2544) 59-60.

  [Stowe, <u>Siam Becomes Thailand: A Story of Intrigue</u> 6. and Chanwit Kasetsiri, History of Thai Politics 1932-1957, 3 ed. (Bangkok: Foundation of Sociology and Humanities, 2001) 59-60.]

[58] สุธี คุณาวิชยานนท์, <u>จากสยามเก่าสู่ไทยใหม่ : ว่าด้วยความพลิกผันของศิลปะจากประเพณีสู่สมัยใหม่และร่วมสมัย</u> 29.

  [Sutee Kunawichayanon, <u>From Siam to Thailand: the Change of Arts from Traditional to Modern and Contemporary</u> (Bangkok: Silpakorn Art Centre, 2002) 29.]

[59] ธงชัย วินิจะกูล, "ประวัติศาสตร์ไทยแบบราชาชาตินิยม: จากยุคอาณานิคมอำพรางสู่ราชาชาตินิยมใหม่ และ ลัทธิเสด็จพ่อของกระฎุมพีไทยในปัจจุบัน," <u>ศิลปวัฒนธรรม</u> พฤศจิกายน 2544.

  [Thongchai Winichakul "King-preferred Thai History: from Colonisation to Neo-nationalism and Latti Sadet Phor of Thai Middle Class" <u>Art and Culture</u> November 2001.]

traditions and royal procedures were abolished. The concept of nationalism was implemented. In 1939 the country has been renamed from the Kingdom of Siam to Thailand, the national state, and the national anthem has been established. The royal palace was no longer the centre of Thai-ness. The Thai 'national' identity became an issue linked to national security and, as such, resulted in the establishment of a 'cultural bureaucracy', including a National Identity Board within the Office of the Prime Minister to formulate and popularise ideas of national identity.[60] The national government had the leading role in determining Thai-ness that was based on the cultural characteristics of central Thailand and the capital, Bangkok, while local Thai identities were abandoned.

After World War II, a National Economic and Social Development Plan was initiated under the influence of the U.S. The plan was rooted in structural-functionalism.[61] Thai-ness was modified to serve the national development policy of industrialisation towards a 'new economic tiger of Asia'. Related to population growth, business expansion, economic development as well as the increasing number of middle class and educated people, the Thai identity was shifted into a 'middle class' version, which is based on liberal-capitalism. At that time, some of the 'experts' tried to change Thai identity into what they had learnt, seen, absorbed and experienced from the foreign countries regardless of cultural consistency and historical roots. Such trails still remain and are apparently observed.

Nowadays, Thai-ness is challenged by global identity through the process of globalisation. Time dimension is accelerated by information and telecommunication technologies.[62] Definition of Thai-ness in the contemporary context is still in process.

Thai-ness: the Difference through Space

In terms of synchronic aspect, 'Thai-ness' is verified at the same point of time but in the different space. The term 'space' in contemporary sociology and cultural studies is in power-relations rather than physical geography. According to Lefebvre[63], space is defined by relationships between 'firstspace' or physical space, and 'Secondspace' or mental space; the so called 'Thirdspace' or social space, is an intersection between

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[60] Craig J Raynolds, ed., <u>National Identity and Its Defenders: Thailand, 1939-89</u> (Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books, 1991).

[61] ฉัตรทิพย์ นาถสุภา และคณะ, บรรณธิการ, <u>สถานภาพไทยศึกษา: การสำรวจเชิงวิพากษ์</u> (กรุงทพฯ: ซิลค์เวอร์มบุ๊คส์, 2543) 2.,เทียนชัย วงศ์ชัยสุวรรณ, <u>โลกาภิวัฒน์ 2000 ยุคศรีอาริยะ</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: พิมพ์ดี , 2537) 184. และ ศรีศักร วัลลิโภดม, <u>ทัศนะนอกรีต: สังคม-วัฒนธรรมในวิถีการอนุรักษ์</u> 7-8.
  [Chatthip Natsupa and et.al, eds., <u>Status of Thai Studies: Criticism</u> (Bangkok: Silkworm Books, 2000) 2., Tienchai Wongchaisuwan, <u>Globalisation 2000 Yuk Sriaraya</u> 184. and Srisak Wallipodom, <u>Opinion of an Outsider:Socio-cultural Approach in Conservation</u> (Bangkok:Muang Boran,2000) 7-8.]

[62] Thomas L. Friedman, <u>The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century</u> (New York: International Creative Management, 2006).

[63] Henri Lefebvre, <u>The Production of Space</u>, trans. Donald Nicholson-Smith (Oxford: Blackwell, 1991).

physical and mental space. It is the space for social practices, which is separated from 'theoretical practices of mental space.[64] Cresswell[65] noted that social space is close to the definition of place.

The most common Thai-ness is the national identity of Thailand. In this way, Nation is the social space for practices of state power. Nation is a modern political organisation, which has emerged in the late 18th and 19th centuries.[66] Anderson[67] noted that the nation is an imagined or political community. Thongchai Winichakul[68] noted that nation is the result of mapping, which is modern technology of Western power. Smith[69] argued that the nation descended from the ethnic or cultural community, which had been in long existence previously. Bellah[70] noted that nation contains a profound ambiguity. On the one hand, it designates a people with a shared history and shared identity. It is characterised by possession of cultural memory, continuity and integrity. On the other hand, the nation designates a modern nation-state based on its economic, political and military power.

In space of nation, Thai-ness is a hegemonic cultural identity by marginalising local cultural identity. Thongchai Winichakul[71] noted that the nation-state, on many occasions, utilises 'national identity' by destroying the authentic traditional culture in the effort to centralise and enhance state power. For Thongchai nationalism is more of an enemy to the authentic ethno-cultural characteristics of Thai-ness than an expression of it. Moreover, the emergence of national identity can be achieved either through deviation, modification and elevation of an indigenous cultural identity imposed upon other 'lesser' indigenous and minority groups; or through the development of a new cultural identity suppressing various existing cultural identities.

The national identity also created incompatibility between political and cultural geography. The government at that time attempted to establish a unique national

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[64] Ibid. 3-7.

[65] Tim Cresswell, Place:A Short Introduction (Oxford:Blackwell Publishing,2004) 12.

[66] ศูนย์มานุษยวิทยาสิรินธร,ความเป็นไทย/ความเป็นไท(กรุงเทพฯ:ศูนย์มานุษยวิทยาสิรินธร,2547) (7).
[Sirindhorn Anthropological Centre, Thai/Tai (Bangkok: Sirindhorn Anthropological Centre, 2004) (7).]

[67] Benedict Anderson, Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism, revised edition ed. (London: Verso, 1992) 5-6.

[68] Thongchai Winichakul, Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation 166-169. and Charles F. Keyes, "A Princess in a People's Republic: A New Phase in the Construction of the Lao Nation," Civility and Savagery: Social Identity in Tai States ed. Andrew Turton (Richmond, Surrey: Curzon, 2000) 208.

[69] Anthony D. Smith, National Identity (Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1991).

[70] Robert M. Bellah, "Cultural Identity and Asian Modernization," Cultural Identity and Modernization in Asian Countries: Proceedings of Kokugakuin University Centennial Symposium (1983) 17-18.

[71] Thongchai Winichakul, Siam Mapped: A History of the Geo-Body of a Nation 166-169. and Keyes, "A Princess in a People's Republic: A New Phase in the Construction of the Lao Nation," 208.

identity in order to provide means of unifying the diverse cultural groups now encompassed within the boundaries of the nation state. The royal culture from the centre was borrowed for use as the shared identity and it was also introduced into the rural areas through the process of development, particularly in the period of autocracy-military government.[72] The standard style of temples, which is guided by Department of Religious Affairs for new temple buildings, is an example. The style from the central region may not fit into the culture of other local places, and can impair social values and integrity of the local communities. Sang-aroon Kanokpongchai[73] noted that borrowed styles can create an interaction between both royal and public culture, and can lead to shared characteristic of 'Thai-ness' to some degree. But Srisak Wanlipodom[74] and Nithi Aewsriwong[75] argue that only the selected national version of Thai cultural identity is realised and considered while the diverse local versions are ignored. This has been a result of elitism, which ruled the country since the period of absolute monarchy until the autocracy-military regime.[76] Central to this argument, is that Thai-ness as the national identity suppresses local identities by marginalisation.

Thai-ness is also utilised as corporate identity.[77] In this respect, the commercial enterprise is the social space. Thai-ness as the 'Royal Orchid Service' is to guarantee the high-standard in-flight service by 'Thai touch' of Thai Airways International.[78] 'My country, my beer' is the attempt to apply Thai-ness into non-Thai beverage. Transnational franchises such as McDonald and Coca-Cola also utilise Thai-ness in their marketing strategies.[79]

In the contemporary globalised world, social spaces are linked, they overlap, and they shrink through advanced information and telecommunication technologies.[80] Thai-

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[72] "สิม อีสาน: เหยื่ออารยธรรมสังคมใหม่," มติชน 7 ธันวาคม 2540: 10.

   ["Sim Issarn:the Victim of Social Modernisation,"Matichon 7 December 1997: 10.]

[73] แสงอรุณ กนกพงศ์ชัย, วัฒนธรรมในสังคมไทย (กรุงเทพฯ: สำนักพิมพ์แห่งจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย, 2548) 17-30.

   [Sang-aroon Kanokpongchai, Culture in Thai Society (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn Press, 2005) 17-30.]

[74] ศรีศักร วัลลิโภดม, ทัศนะนอกรีต: สังคม-วัฒนธรรมในวิถีการอนุรักษ์.

   [Srisak Wallipodom, Opinion of an Outsider: Socio-cultural Approach in Conservation.]

[75] นิธิ เอียวศรีวงศ์, ประวัติศาสตร์ ชาติ ประชาชน, บรรณาธิการโดย มุกหอม วงษ์เทศ (กรุงเทพฯ: มติชน, 2548).

   [Nithi Aewsriwong, History Nation People, ed. Mookhom Wongtet (Bangkok: Matichon, 2005).].

[76] Ibid.

[77] Patrick Jory, "Thai Identity, Globalisation and Advertising Culture," Asian Studies Review 23.4 (1999).

[78] Annual Report of Thai Airways International (Public) Company (Bangkok: Thai Airways International (Public) Company, 2007).

[79] Jory, "Thai Identity, Globalisation and Advertising Culture."

[80] Friedman, The World Is Flat: A Brief History of the Twenty-First Century.

ness in different social spaces shares the same physical space. Cyber space is another important space, but it is beyond the scope of this discussion. Thai-ness is, indeed, in chaotic space.

Different aspects of Thai-ness depend upon its social space. However, with the paradigm shift of cultural heritage conservation, as discussed, local community becomes the social space for conservation practices. Thai-ness, as the local cultural identity, is different upon its physical space. Therefore, Thai-ness in the sense of localism is appropriate for grassroots approach of cultural heritage conservation and cultural identity protection, which are central to this dissertation.

In conclusion, paradigm shift of cultural heritage conservation allows grassroots approach become the new fulcrum. Cultural identity and cultural heritage are the mutual component of each other. Cultural identity is not only to hold for identification and possession, but is also the source of meanings in cultural heritage. Cultural identity is abstract, pluralistic, dynamic, and in the space of flow. Cultural identity is therefore a discursive issue.

Construction, practice and representation of cultural identity are cultural processes, which render intangible cultural identity into tangible forms of sign, symbol and ritual. The tangible forms can be decoded in order to demystify the connotations encoded beforehand.

Thai-ness is Thai cultural identity, which is not a positive but a relative entity. Its connotations are diverse through time and space. It is different for each individual, group and community. Thai-ness in this dissertation, therefore, is in the contemporary sense of localism; as well as in the cultural heritage conservation cultural identity protection. The following chapter is methodologically discussed in order to research in the issue.

Chapter 3

Research Design

From the review of literatures in Chapter 2, the dissertation continues with a design of research methodology. The research design aims to study efforts of Thai grassroots to protect their local cultural identity. These efforts are interpreted through representation of the local cultural identity through the design of place which is shaped by the grassroots.

The qualitative research is based on ethno-methodological approach, which aims to study the social practises of real social actors in real social space.[1] It employs procedures to discover how people make their world 'accountable', display this sense of understanding to others, and produce the mutually social reality in which they live. It emphasises the contextual determination of meaning and concentrates on the uniqueness and the representation of the meaning.[2]

In this dissertation, Thai grassroots are the social actors. Efforts of the grassroots to protect their local identity are the social practises. Design language of their place is employed as the empirical evidence to understand the practises. The dissertation is based on primary and secondary sources of information including visual observation, site documentation, unstructured interview, and in-depth conversation, as well as printed literature, electronic documents, old photographs, and other media. Ethics and morals are considered as essential elements of the dissertation.

This chapter starts with research questions. It is followed by research procedure and research planning consecutively. Selection of case study is discussed. Field research and data collection are then outlined. Finally, process of data analysis is illustrated.

Research Questions

Derived from the statement of objectives in Chapter 1, the research questions of this dissertation are:
- What is the relationship between Thai grassroots and their local cultural identity?
- How Thai grassroots protect their local cultural identity through their spatial design? and

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[1] Harold Garfinkel, Ethnomethodology's Program (New York: Rowman and Littlefield, 2002) 117.

[2] Harold Garfinkel, Studies in Ethnomethodology (Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey Prentice-Hall, 1967).

- What is the ways forward for Thai grassroots in protecting their local cultural identity?

Research Procedure

From the research questions, the research procedure is designed to answer the questions. The research procedure is divided into five stages consecutively:
- Research Planning;
- Case Study Selection;
- Field Research and Data Collection;
- Data Analysis; and
- Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation.

Each stage of the research procedure is expanded in the following sections.

Research Planning

The study of Thai grassroots is on three levels: individual, family and community. The efforts of these Thai grassroots to protect their local cultural identity are interpreted from the representation of the local cultural identity through the design of place that shaped by these grassroots. The local cultural identity is deferent depend upon the local community. It is an assessment of local community and local identity for particular case study. The assessment is presented exclusively in the chapter of each case study.

Design language is employed as empirical evidence to interpret the case study. The design language can be 'read as text' to understand the 'written' message. Techniques for studying visual culture are utilised to connote the design language in the case studies.

Visual culture[3] is the study of connotation in visual information. The visual information takes account of all kinds of seen materials e.g. paintings, sculptures, photographs, films, television soaps and advertisements, videos, websites, medical images, maps, as well as built landscapes and architecture. Semiologically, this visual information is valued as texts that can be read and understood.[4] In other words: visual culture is the literacy of visual information.

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[3] Nicholas Mirzoeff, "What Is Visual Culture?," The Visual Culture Reader, ed. Nicholas Mirzoeff (London: Routledge, 1998).,Nicholas Mirzoeff, An Introduction to Visual Culture (London: Routledge, 1999).,Chris Jenks, "The Centrality of the Eye in Western Culture," Visual Culture, ed. Chris Jenks (London: Routledge, 1995). and สมเกียรติ ตั้งนะโม, มองหาเรื่อง: วัฒนธรรมทางสายตา (มหาสารคาม: สำนักพิมพ์มหาวิทยาลัย มหาสารคาม, 2549). [Somkiet Tangnamo, Visual Culture (Mahasarakam: Mahasarakam University Press, 2006).]

[4] Pamela Shurmer-Smith, ed., Doing Cultural Geography (London: Sage, 2002) 180-197.

Visual information of design in a space is derived from the existing condition of each case being studied. It includes architectural, interior, and landscape design presented in the place. Documentation of the information is discussed in the following section of Field Research and Data Collection.

Case Study Selection

After research planning, criteria for selecting case studies have been determined in order to answer the research questions. The selection criteria are:
- A place located in Thailand;
- A place where local cultural identity is being represented;
- A place which is being utilised during the time of study;
- A place owned by an individual, a family, or a combination of both; and
- A place which is being permitted from the owner(s) to conduct a research.

Based on the above criteria, case studies have been selected by review of literature and media, as well as by direct visits. The case studies have been considered to cover the grassroots level of socio-cultural structure, which include individual, family and community. The case studies also have been chosen from the different region around Thailand, which are the North, the Central, and the South; as Thai-ness is pluralistic depend upon social space. However, there are no case studies from the North-eastern, the East and the West due to the limitation of time. The location of the case studies is shown in Figure 3.

The following three places have been selected:
- *Hor Man Muang* a private residence in Sankanpheang District in Chiang Mai. The place is a complex of new buildings, which the design represents Lanna-Tai Khun local identity. It is an excellent example to demonstrate the protection of local identity while the place is accommodating the contemporary lifestyle.
- *Ban Rabieng Nam* a restaurant along Chao Phraya River in Nonthaburi. The place is an adaptive re-use of the old family house for a new restaurant. Even though the place has been adapted for a new use, it keeps representing local identity of *Ban Rim Nam* or house on the waterfront. It is an outstanding place that protecting the local identity and utilise it to generate economic benefits.
- *Phuket Old Town* a district in Phuket - a historic community in an urban area. The community is dealing with international tourism while keeping *Baba-Nyonya*, the cultural identity of the community, which is represented by Sino-Portuguese style of architecture. It is rare example of community that protecting the local identity in the context of urbanism and tourism.

These case studies are good examples for demonstrating the conservation of local cultural identity within the context of contemporary lifestyle. As the case studies involve mostly private properties and personal daily lives, permission for the study

was obtained from the authorised owners, who have been declared the framework and the objectives of the dissertation.
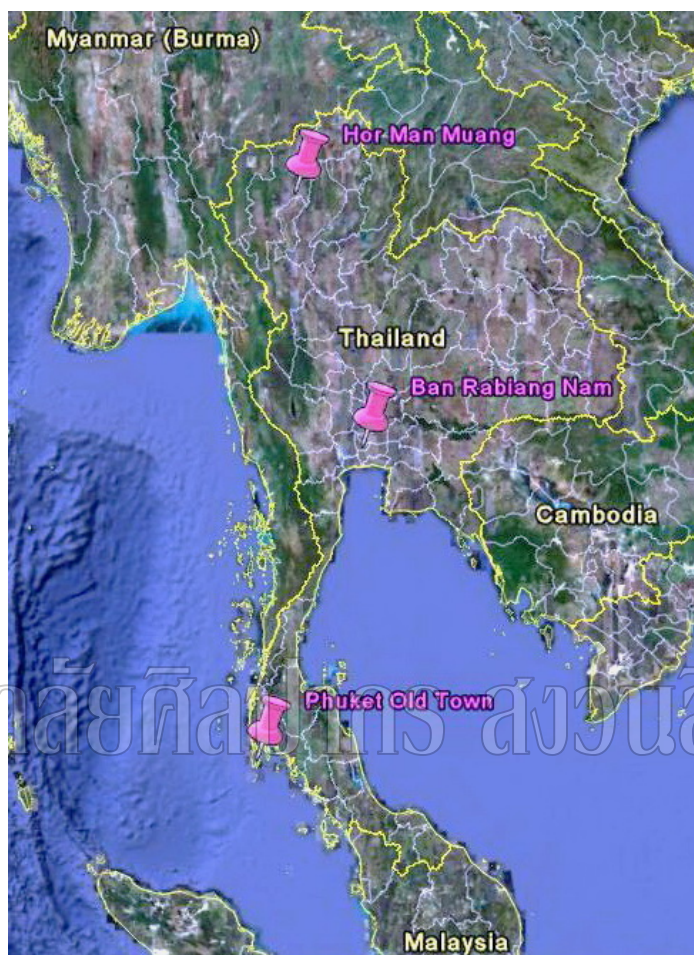
Figure 3 showing the location of the case studies
Source: modified from Google Earth

Field Research and Data Collection

After the selection of the case studies, field research has been conducted to gather information for each case, and assess the local community and local identity. The assessment of local community and local identity has been done by visual observation and review of related documents in order to understand the context of the case study.

The information of the case study has been gathered by site observation and documentation, unstructured interview, and in-depth conversation. The observation and the documentation are to gather the physical data of representation of local cultural identity. The unstructured interview and the in-depth conservation are to gather the verbal data of attitudes and opinions of the owner(s). The verbal data is significant to avoid any misinterpretation in the analytical process. The interview questions are listed in Annex.

The field research involves with two types of data: physical and verbal information. Research methods for data collection are selected accordingly. The physical information is collected by using digital photography, free-hand drawing, and descriptive narration. The verbal information is collected by hand note taking and voice recording in digital format. The interviews and conversations are carried out casually, in a relaxed manner conducive to mutual understanding and trust. For the collection of verbal information, hand note taking is more preferable than voice recording as it creates informal atmosphere during interview or conversation. The field research and data collection is summarised in Figure 3.

Data Analysis

From the field research, collected data is evaluated through the process of analysis. The collected data is analysed by using the technique of discourse analysis (DA) and critical discourse analysis (CDA). DA is a technique to analyse written, spoken and signed language including physical data.[5] The DA technique has been developed from traditional linguistics, and then taken up by semiology and iconography.[6] CDA is a technique to analyse discourse, which views social practices in social space as a dialectic and interactive form of language.[7] The CDA technique is an analytical method in many interdisciplinary approaches including cultural studies and heritage studies.

The process of data analysis consists of two steps. In the first step, the data from the visual observation, the review of related documents and the assessment of local community and local identity is analysed through CDA. The physical data from site observation and documentation is analysed through DA; as well as the verbal data from unstructured interview and in-depth conversation is analysed through DA. In the second step, the outcomes of the first step are jointly analysed through CDA. The process of data analysis is summarised in Figure 4.

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[5] James Paul Gee, An Introduction to Discourse Analysis: Theory and Method (London and New York: Routledge, 1999).,Malcolm Bernard, Approaches to Understanding Visual Culture (New York: Palgrave, 2001). and Winfried Nöth, Handbook of Semiotics (Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press, 1995).

[6] Gillian Rose, Visual Methodology: An Introduction to the Interpretation of Visual Materials (London: SAGE Publications, 2001).

[7] Chris Barker and Dariusz Galasinski, Cultural Studies and Discourse Analysis: A Dialogue on Language and Identity (London: SAGE Publications, 2001)., Sigrid Norris and Rodney H. Jones, eds., Discourse in Action (London and New York: Routledge, 2005). and Tony Thwaites, Lloyd Davis and Warwick Mules, Introducing Cultural and Media Studies: A Semiotic Approach (New York: Palgrave, 2002).
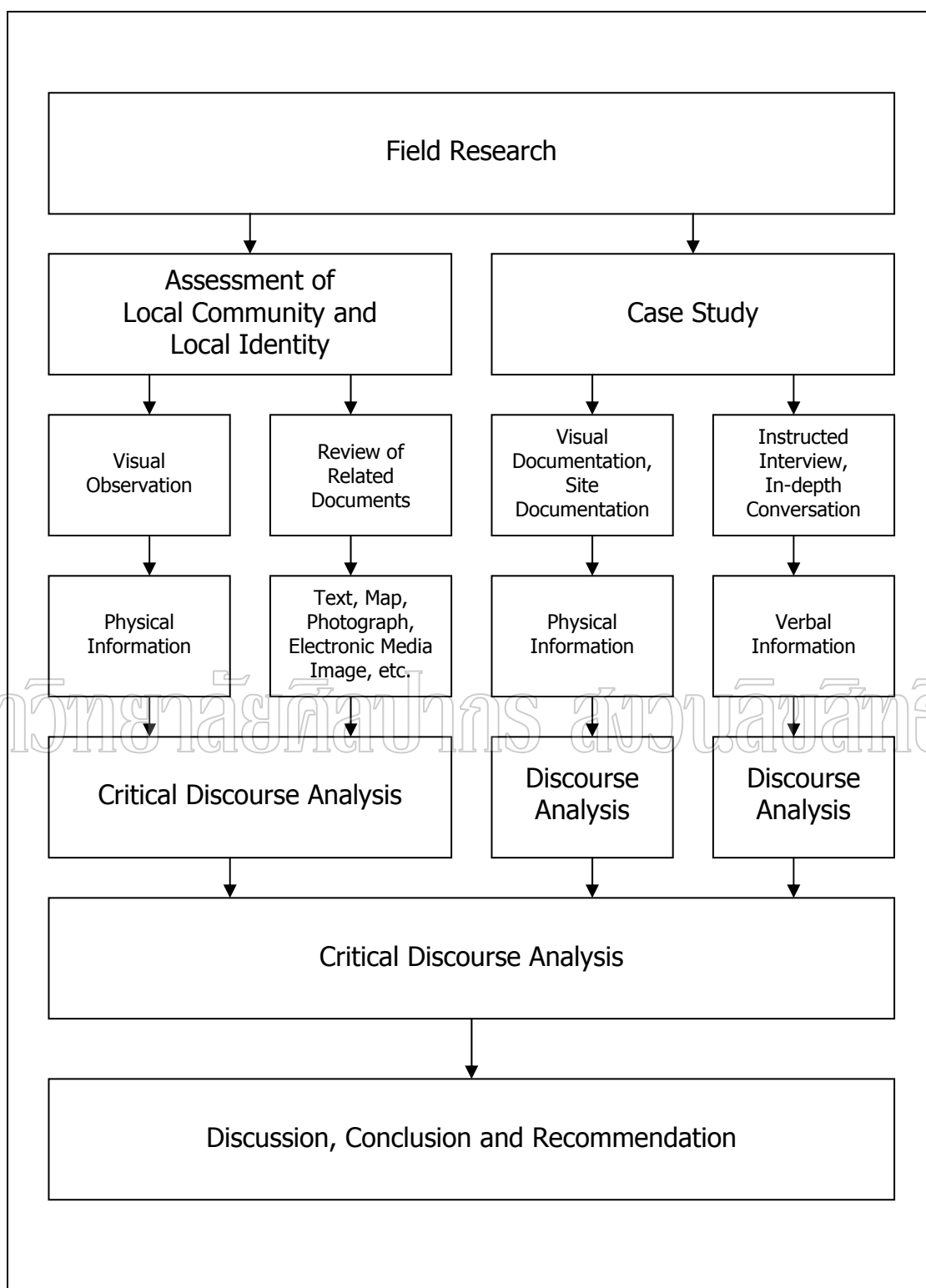
Figure 4 showing the process of field research, data collection, and data analysis of the dissertation
Source: author

In conclusion, the dissertation is a qualitative research, which involves three selected case studies in Thailand. The case studies are excellent examples in demonstrating the protection of local cultural identity in the contemporary social space. The field research is designed to involve both the case study and its context, which is the local community. Data from the field research is analysed by discourse analysis and critical discourse analysis according to the type of data. Information from the analysis is assessed by critical discourse analysis in order to interpret physical characters in each case study to answer the research questions. The following chapter, Chapter 4-6, are dedicated to the case studies; and Chapter 7 is the discussion, conclusion and recommendation of the dissertation.

Chapter 4

Hor Man Muang:
Efforts of an Individual to Protect Lanna-Tai Khun Identity through
Contemporary Design

This chapter aims to explore the efforts of a Thai individual to protect his local cultural identity through the design of a new building complex. It involves with one of the selected case study Hor Man Muang. The case study is in Chiang Mai, a northern province of Thailand. It is the excellent example to demonstrate the efforts to protect the local cultural identity while the place accommodating contemporary lifestyle.

The chapter starts with the historical background of Chiang Mai and Lanna cultural identity. Then, the case study of Hor Man Muang is explored. It includes the location, the background, the cultural setting, the description and the interpretation, and the assessment. Finally, the way forward of the place is recommended.

Chiang Mai: the Historical Background

This section is a review in historical background of Chiang Mai, the location of the case study. It is significant in the process of analysis in order to understand cultural context and cultural identity of both the case study and its community.

Chiang Mai has been the centre of Lanna culture for more than 700 years. The city has been found to be the capital of Lanna Kingdom by King Meng Rai in 1296 after his success over the Mon city of Haripunchai. Since then, the city has passed through four major periods divided by rulers. The first period was under ruling of Meng Rai Dynasty. The period was from the founding until the Burmese attack in 1558. There were many wars to protect and to expand the kingdom at the beginning. The peak of the first period or known as 'the golden age' of Lanna was in during the reign of King Tilokraraj to King Muang Kaeo.[1] Buddhism from India and local animism were intertwined to become unique Lanna culture.

The second period was under Burmese ruling from 1558 to 1774. After King Bayinnaung succeeded in controlling, Chiang Mai was ruled by 13 Burmese rulers in 216 years. The city had direct influences by the Burmese royal court through both governing and kinship.

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[1] Michael Freeman, <u>Lanna: Thailand's Northern Kingdom</u> (London: Thames&Hudson, 2001) 20-21. and Ping Amranand and William Warren, <u>Lanna Style: Art & Design of Northern Thailand</u> (Bangkok: Asia Books, 2000) 41-48.

The third period was under ruling of Siam since 1774 after King Taksin of Thonburi forced a Burmese ruler out of Chiang Mai. Chiang Mai, after the ravages of war, was abandoned for many years. The city was re-settled in 1796. Chao Kawila occupied the city by raiding Keng Tung and other areas for part of their population, which made this period also known as 'the revival Lanna'.[2] The city attracted British interests by its important commodity of teak. British involvements were contained by concessions including ability in teak trading. Due to its geography, the city had more convenient transportations through Burma than through Siam. However, the city was incorporated into Siam as the administrative unit of *Monthon Phayap* [northern territory] in 1892. Railway has reached Chiang Mai in 1921. This brought the city into the realm of world trade.

The forth period was under constitutional monarchy of Thailand. Chiang Mai has become a northern province of Thailand. It is the centre of economic, politic, cultural and educational activities in the north. It is also the attractive tourist destination from both domestic and international. The 6th National Economic and Social Development Policy, proposed by the Office of the National Economic and Social Development Board (NRSDB) in 1987, is claimed as a significant factor for rapid development in the traditional and historic city of Chiang Mai.[3] It was to promote the city to be the advanced educational and tourist hub in the northern Thailand. The development has transformed Chiang Mai into 'fragmented' city, which is a confrontation between traditional and new systems.[4]

Chiang Mai, from the capital of Lanna Kingdom to the tourist destination, is a social space that accommodates a set of cultural identities. The identities are not only for distinguishing from others and making sense to the world; but also for 'sale' to tourists.

Cultural Identity of Lanna

Lanna identity is not a unique but a set of cultural identities from many origins. Through time, the identity is a blend of many historical ingredients, which some of them is from legends, others from later construction and re-construction.

According to its historical setting, Chiang Mai was established, ruled, and re-established by many ethnic groups. These were from voluntary settlements or forced by gathering of many scattered communities for labour and craftsmen to build or to

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[2] Freeman, <u>Lanna: Thailand's Northern Kingdom</u> 22-23. and Ping Amranand and Warren, <u>Lanna Style: Art & Design of Northern Thailand</u> 63-69.

[3] Dounagjun Arpawacharuth Jareunmuang, <u>City and City Planning in Thailand: Case of Chiang Mai, Thailand</u> (Chiang Mai: Chiang Mai Urban Study Centre, 1998).

[4] Komson Teeraparpwong, "A Square Is Not Square? -Fragmented Chiang Mai Urbanism," <u>Internatinal Symposium on Architecture in the Land of Suvarnabhumi</u> (Bangkok: Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University, 2007).

re-build the city. Lanna cultural identity can be divided into three versions: the golden age, the revival, and the contemporary.

The golden age version is the classic Lanna identity influenced by Buddhism from Haripunchai and local animism from Lawa, the earliest known inhabitants of Chiang Mai. The degree of Buddhism influences have reached to the peak during the reign of King Tilokraraj. This version of Lanna identity is represented in many temples such as Wat Ched Yod and Wat Chedi Luang.

The revival version is the Lanna identity influenced by ethnic cultures from the forced immigration, by British through teak trading, and also by Bangkok as the ruler. This version of Lanna identity is represented in many places such as Wat Ton Kwen and Ruean Lanna Khan Tok.

The contemporary version is the hybrid identity between the golden age and/or the revival version with contemporary lifestyles. This version of Lanna identity is in the debates among local community and in Lanna studies. In some cases, the representation of the identity is a commodity to 'sale' to travellers. Glauberman noted in his Chiang Mai guide book that:

> Those [travellers] who think they will be the first to discover primitive tribes in the hills also will be disappointed when they learn that some tribes are discovered twice daily by organised tours. Even the more remote villages have become whistle stops on trekking tours arranged by Chiang Mai agencies.[5]

This critique shows Lanna identity is solely a commodity for tourism. Hotels and resorts also utilise Lanna identity as corporate identity of their products. The most controversial cases are the replica of religious and sacred places in hotels and resorts (Figure 5 and 6). On one hand, these cases are the utilisation of spiritual places in inappropriate function and also compromise the authenticity of the original places. On the other hand, they provoke the sense of cultural heritage conservation and rise questions to the stakeholders in conservation and representation of Lanna identity.

Beyond the three versions of Lanna identity, local cultural identities in Chiang Mai are observed. These local cultural identities rooted up from the settlement of ethnic groups around Chiang Mai. Tai Yai from Shan has settled out of the city around Chang Pueak Gate, as well as some part of Mae Rim and Mae Cham District. Wat Pa Pao is the centre of Tai Yai community.[6] Tai Yuan from Yong has settled in Sarapee District of Chiang Mai and Pa Sang District of Lumpun.[7] Tai Khun from Keng Tung

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[5] Stu Glauberman, Chiang Mai (Singapore: Tien Wah, 1986) 19.

[6] Andrew Forbes and David Henley, Khon Muang: People and Principalities of North Thailand (Sollo Developmemt Limited: 1997) 80-85.

[7] ฮันส์ เพนธ์ และ แอนดรู ฟอร์บส, ประวัติศาสตร์ล้านนาฉบับย่อ และ ชาวเชียงใหม่, แปลโดย ศิริรัฐ ทองใหญ่ ณ อยุธยา (หอศิลปวัฒนธรรมเมืองเชียงใหม่, 2547) 233.
[Hans Penth and Andrew Forbes, A Brief History of Lanna and Chiang Mai People, trans. Sirirat Thongyai Na Ayuttaya, (Chiang Mai Cultural Centre, 2004) 233.]

has settled in Sankampeang, Sansai, Doi Saket, and Muang District of Chiang Mai.[8] In addition, hill tribes and minorities scattered around Chiang Mai have their own local cultural identities. These local identities are embedded within Lanna identity.

Figure 5 showing *sum khong,* the arched gate, in a hotel (left) mimicked with the original at Wat Lhai Hin Luang, Lumpang (right)
Source: author, 3 July 2007 (left); and www.lannaworld.com (right)

Figure 6 showing *chedi* in the same hotel as in Figure 5 (left) mimicked with the original at Wat Lhai Hin Luang, Lumpang (centre and right)
Source: author, 3 July 2007 (left); and www.lannaworld.com (centre and right)

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[8] Wittaya Daungthima, "The Conservation of Tai-Kheun Community in Ban San Kangpla, Chiang Mai Province," Chulalongkorn University, 2005.

Hor Man Muang: the Case Study

Location of the Place

Hor Man Muang is located in a small village along the Route 1317, the new road to Sankampeang District of Chiang Mai. The place is close to Wat Phothimongkol. The studied area includes the whole complex of number 155 Moo2, Tumbon Thasala, Muang, Chiang Mai.The location of the studied area is shown in Figure 7.
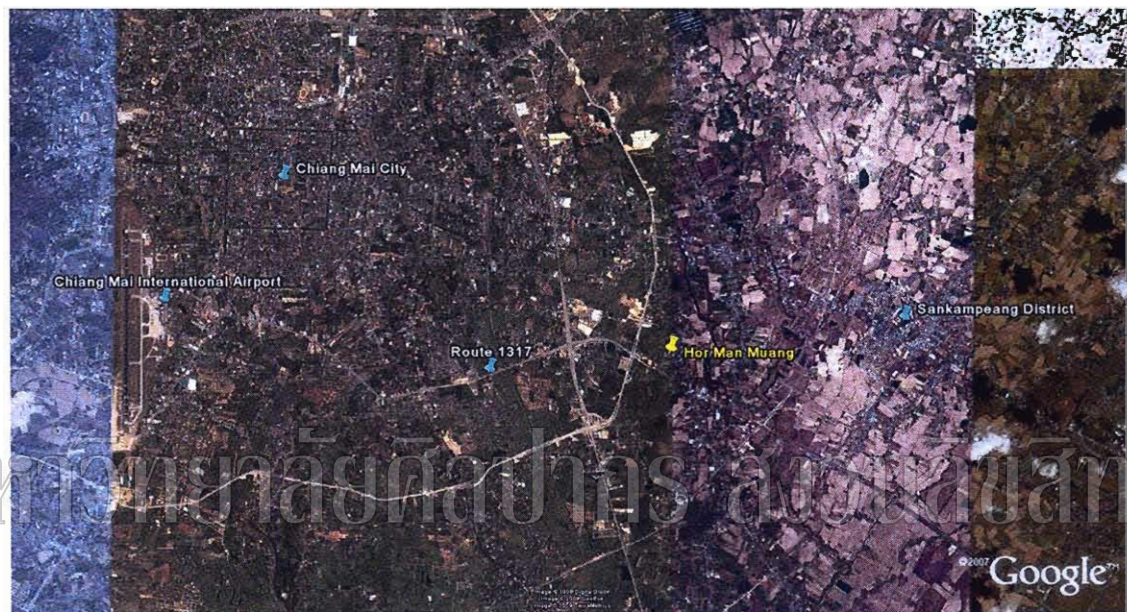
Figure 7 showing the location of Hor Man Muang
Source: modified from Google Earth

Background of the Place

Hor Man Muang means 'the place of faithfulness to Lanna local culture' attributed by the writer Wilak Sripasang.[9] It is owned by Nawapoomin Chaichompoo, a dentist. He described his place in the following way:

> As soon as I decided to have my own residence, I thought of Lanna style. Since I inherited the land from my father, I started to design my own house by looking at myself. I have a mixture between Tai Khun [the Tai ethnic group originated from Keng Tung, Myanmar], where my family name was derived, from my father's side and Tai Yaun from my mother's side. In association to the location, which is among Tai Khun community, Tai Khun style was first considered. For me, it's important to put the right style to the right place.[10]

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[9] ชัชวัรวี [นามแฝง], "ล้านนา-โบฮีเมีย," บ้านและสวน กุมภาพันธ์ 2549: 126.
  [Chatravee [psed.], "Lanna-Bohemia." Banlaesuan, Febuary 2003:126.]
[10] Interview with Nawapoomin Chaichompoo, the owner, Chiang Mai, 9 April 2006.

Nawapoomin, the owner, was born and grew up in Chiang Mai before moving to Bangkok for education purpose in 1989. He graduated a dentistry degree from Chulalongkorn University and had worked for a government sector in Chiang Mai as a dentist for ten months before his decision to resign due to bureaucracy. He moved to Bangkok again to work in a private hospital, Phyathai 1. After that, he moved to Pimai, Nakorn Ratchasima and started his own dental clinic. During that time he additionally opened a shop selling northern local products and also arranged northern performances for traditional events in both Nakorn Ratchasima and Chiang Mai. Soon after the economic crisis in 1998, he then decided to move back to Chiang Mai. He currently owns a dental clinic along with an event organising company in Chiang Mai. He plans to pursue a master degree in Visual Arts at Chiang Mai University commencing in June 2007.

Nawapoomin accepts that global culture affects his contemporary lifestyle. He counts that driving a car, listening to international music or singing karaoke are obvious examples. He personally agrees that he represents the global identity in his contemporary life including wearing jeans, following fashion and using a mobile phone. He also realises that most of Thai people are losing their local cultural identity. He believes he is losing his local cultural identity as well. For him, the global culture is a major issue but it could be minor to the attitude of the one who is accustomed to it. Unawareness and poor understandings in the issue of identity have caused the loss of the local cultural identity. Appropriate adoption and representation of both global and local cultural identity could be better approached. He said that he keeps representing the local cultural identity through his daily speaking, dining, behaving and living. It is not difficult for him to represent both cultural identities simultaneously. For him, 'Buddhist median way of practice' by opening up his mind for incoming things without forgetting the existing ones helps him cope with this circumstance. He also realised that everybody is different but they are classified into groups based on similarities. He said:

> I do not the feel same with or different from others. I have never compared myself with anyone. I respect people and their realities. In the similar way, I expect that the people will respect me in my reality.[11]

Vital to his personal space, he tries to represent Lanna-Tai Khun identity through the design including forms of architecture, materials, spatial arrangement, and ideologies. The integration of these ornaments creates the sense of local living in the place. In creating this place, he started with studying about Lanna and Tai Khun culture including living pattern, application of colours, and architecture. Following his additional study, he developed the design concept, which was derived into the spatial design. During the period of construction, there were many modifications in order to get satisfying outcome. Nawapoomin's reason for local cultural identity has been utilised in the design of his place is explained as follow:

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[11] Interview with Nawapoomin Chaichompoo, the owner, Chiang Mai, 21 August 2006.

> Because I am a Lanna-Tai Khun., I am supposed to know my cultural identity at my best. When I travel abroad, I would love to see people in their cultural context. In the same way, I believe that those peoples would love to see me in my local context. If everybody keeps representing the universal global identity, nobody will represent different local identities. Through the representation of local cultural identity in my place, I would like to leave a question why I have done like this. It is in order for others to interpret, to criticise, and to search for their own answer.[12]

He confidently believes that the design of his space help him to identify himself. The designs also remind him about local values, which is still existing. In his opinion, these local values help us to clarify our identity. For him, difficulties in representing the local cultural identity in his place are that he has to answer a lot of questions from his parents, family, relatives, and also the community. But all of them understand when the explanations are given. People often comment that his place is 'strange' but there is no noticeable opposition. Nawapoomin feels that people in the community are open-minded and try to understand him.

About government policies and measures regarding the protection of local cultural identity, he notices that the government launches a plenty of good projects, but almost all of them cannot bring any dramatic outcomes. In terms of investment, he considers those projects as 'waste'. For him, the good initiation must be followed by the appropriate implementation. In his opinion, thorough research and recommendations from experts and professionals together with comments and suggestions from local community are the key factors to success. He said that Thailand is not communism country, therefore comments and critics from local community must be verified. He also suggested that every possible dimension needs to be considered. In addition, lead-time should be given for the local community before the phase of implementation.

Nawapoomin intended to use the design of his place as a tool to protect his local cultural identity. He said if he 'studies more, considers more, and re-considers' before creating a space, it is not too difficult. Central to his efforts to protect his local cultural identity, He said that:

> Primarily, I would like to hand an option to the next generations by passing what I have received from previous generations. Secondarily, I would like Thailand to gain more economic potential from tourism industry. The better economy will help Thai people have a better life. Thai identity together with local wisdoms and knowledge is a great treasure or an existing capital handed from previous generations. It is a treasure that can turn into [economic] profits in contemporary [Capitalism] circumstances. A piece of wood is less value than a Thai wooden house. This is an excellent example of value-added property of Thai identity and local wisdoms. Design, moreover, is a process of thought, which can add value into a space. For me, the design offers an opportunity to accommodate both local and contemporary lifestyle.[13]

Nawapoomin also addresses that *thamma* [dharma], *thammada* [ordinary] and

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[12] Ibid.
[13] Ibid.

thammachat [nature] are identical. He personally believes that living with dharma is an ordinary lifestyle associated with nature.

Cultural Setting of the Place

Hor Man Muang is situated in a small village out of Chiang Mai city. In the past, the village was accessed from the Old Chiang Mai- Sankampeang Road. But now, it is easily accessed from Route 1317. This has changed the approach of the village from the north to the south.

According to classical tradition for community settlement, *chiang, wiang* and *Moo Ban* [city, town and village] are believed similar to 'the body of a human', which are head, body and feet.[14] The head of community must point to the north. It is the direction of auspicious and dignity, which always associated with royal activities and places. In this area, there is always *khuang*, an empty ground for accommodation of community's activities. The ground is called *khuang muang* for a city and *khuang ban* for a village. The body of the community is the centre as the birth place or spirit. It is the location of *Sa Due Muang* [navel of the city] and *Sao In Ta Kiln* [the city pillar]. The feet of the community are for commoners, which are nobles and elites' area on the south while artisans and craftsmen on the southeast. Inauspicious activities and places such as cemetery are on the southwest. The illustration of the local community is in Figure 8.

The community is a mixed residential, agricultural and light industrial area. There is a housing estate project across Route 1317. There are some indications of Lanna-Tai Khun culture in the community, which are:
- Wat Phothimongkol is the temple of the community (Figure 9). The north-facing old *viharn* demonstrates that the village has been settled heading to the north. There is a pair of *singha* at the main entrance similar to temples in Keng Tung (Figure 10). Immigrated groups of Tai Khun in the early of the Siam ruling period have settled together by having temple as the centre of their settlement.[15]

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[14] สมโชติ อ่องสกุล, <u>ผังเมืองเชียงใหม่ในฐานะเมืองประวัติศาสตร์ที่มีชีวิต: อดีตและอนาคต</u> (เชียงใหม่: คณะศึกษาศาสตร์ มหาวิทยาลัยเชียงใหม่, 2541). และ สุรพล ดำริห์กุล, <u>ข่วงเมืองและวัดหัวข่วง องค์ประกอบสำคัญของเมืองในดินแดนล้านนา</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: สำนักพิมพ์แห่งจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย, 2549) 17-19.

[Somchot Ongsakul, <u>City Planning of Chiang Mai: Past and Future of Living Historic City</u> (Chiang Mai: Faculty of Education Chiang Mai University, 1998). and Surapon Dumrikul, <u>Khuang Muang and Wat Hua Khuang: Significances of the Lanna Cities</u> (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Press, 2006) 17-19.]

[15] ลมูล จันทน์หอม, <u>ความเชื่อและพิธีกรรมของคนไทย-ไท ที่สะท้อนถึงภูมิปัญญาชาวบ้าน: กรณีศึกษา ไทยเขิน (การศึกษาเบื้องต้น)</u> (เชียงใหม่: เอกสารรวบรวมบทความความเชื่อและพิธีกรรมภูมิปัญญา ชาวบ้านไทย-ไท, 2537).

[Lamoon Chanhom, Reflection of Beliefs and Rituals of Thai-Tai People in Local Wisdom: Case Study of Thai Khun (Preliminary Study) (Chiang Mai: Documents of Beliefs, Rituals and Wisdoms of Thai-Tai People, 1994).]

- *Hor Chao Ban* or *Hor Thewada Ban* is the local spirit house of the community (Figure 11). It is the location of *Ton Pho* [*Ficus religiosa Linn.*]. The spirit house in Lanna-Tai Khun local community always close to but not in the community's temple.[16] The orientation of the spirit house may indicate that cemetery of the community is in the south across Route 1317.
- *Sao Jai Ban* is the pillar of the community. It is the centre of the community. The new structure has recently re-built to accommodate the pillar (Figure 12, left).
- *Khuang Ban* is the empty ground of the community (Figure 12, right). It is for activities of the community. It is now a playground and football field of the community.

The existing of places suggests that Lanna-Tai Khun is the local cultural identity of the community. The currently uses, maintenance, re-construction and worship these places indicate the remaining of the local cultural identity.
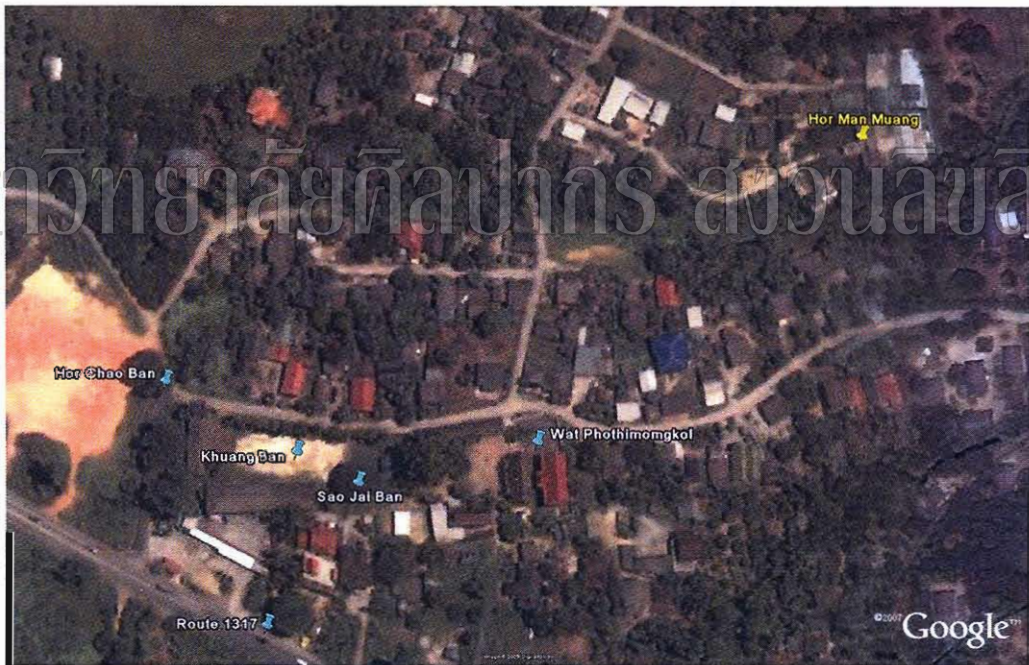
Figure 8 showing the local community of Hor Man Muang
Source: modified from Google Earth

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[16] Wittaya Daungthima, "The Conservation of Tai-Kheun Community in Ban San Kangpla, Chiang Mai Province."

Figure 9 showing Wat Phothimongkol, the temple of the community
Source: author, 17 June 2006

Figure 10 showing *singha* at the main entrance of Wat Phothimongkol (left),
which is similar to the temples in Keng Tung (centre and right)
Source: author, 17 June 2006 (left) and 12 July 2007 (centre and right)

Figure 11 showing Hor Chao Ban of the community (left), which is similar to
Hor Chao Ban of Ban Nong Ngoeng Village in Keng Tung (right)
Source: author, 17 June 2006 (left) and 12 July 2007(right)

Figure 12 showing the structure accommodating Sao Jai Ban (left) and
Khuang Ban (right)
Source: author, 17 June 2006

Description and Interpretation of the Place

Description and interpretation of Hor Man Muang is covered architectural, interior
and landscape details. The architectural details comprise of orientation, cluster
arrangement, architectural components, and materials. The interior details include
spatial organisation, function use, lighting, ventilation, and decoration. The landscape
details are boundaries and vegetation.

- **Architectural Details**

Hor Man Muang is a complex consists of four building, which are a main building,
two secondary buildings, and one open pavilion or *Sala* (Figure 13). Generally, the
place reflects both Lanna and Tai Khun style of architecture. The main building and a
building A is derived from Tai Khun buildings in Keng Tung in Myanmar (Figure 14
and 15), while a building B and the *Sala* are in Lanna style (Figure 16 and 17).

The place has been designed according to the road system, which is different from the
traditional settlement. This orientation makes the main entrance being on the
southwest. However, the main building is intentionally turned its length to the east-
west axis for the purpose of exposure to the prevailing sunlight. This characteristic is
remarkable of Lanna architecture as the different local climate.[17] The place is also
planned to respect a natural stream along the south.

All buildings are arranged in a marginal design. This cluster arrangement reflects the
local identity in cluster arrangement, which buildings in the same piece of land are
separated but still having their relationship. It is different from the single building of
modern housing. The cluster arrangement also helps reducing the scale of the

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[17] ลมูล จันทน์หอม, <u>ประเพณีความเชื่อการปลูกเรือนในล้านนาและเรือนกาแล</u> (เชียงใหม่: โรงพิมพ์มิ่ง
เมือง, 2547).

[Lamoon Chanhom, Tradition and Belief in the Construction of Lanna and Kalae
Houses (Chiang Mai: Mingmuang Printing, 2004).]

buildings, which allow the place having a sense of association between the architecture and the nature. The respect to the nature is one of the cultural identities of every Tai-Ethnic group including Tai Khun.[18]Moreover, the cluster arrangement allows the buildings serving each other as architectural counterpoints. This also creates a sense of space among the buildings.
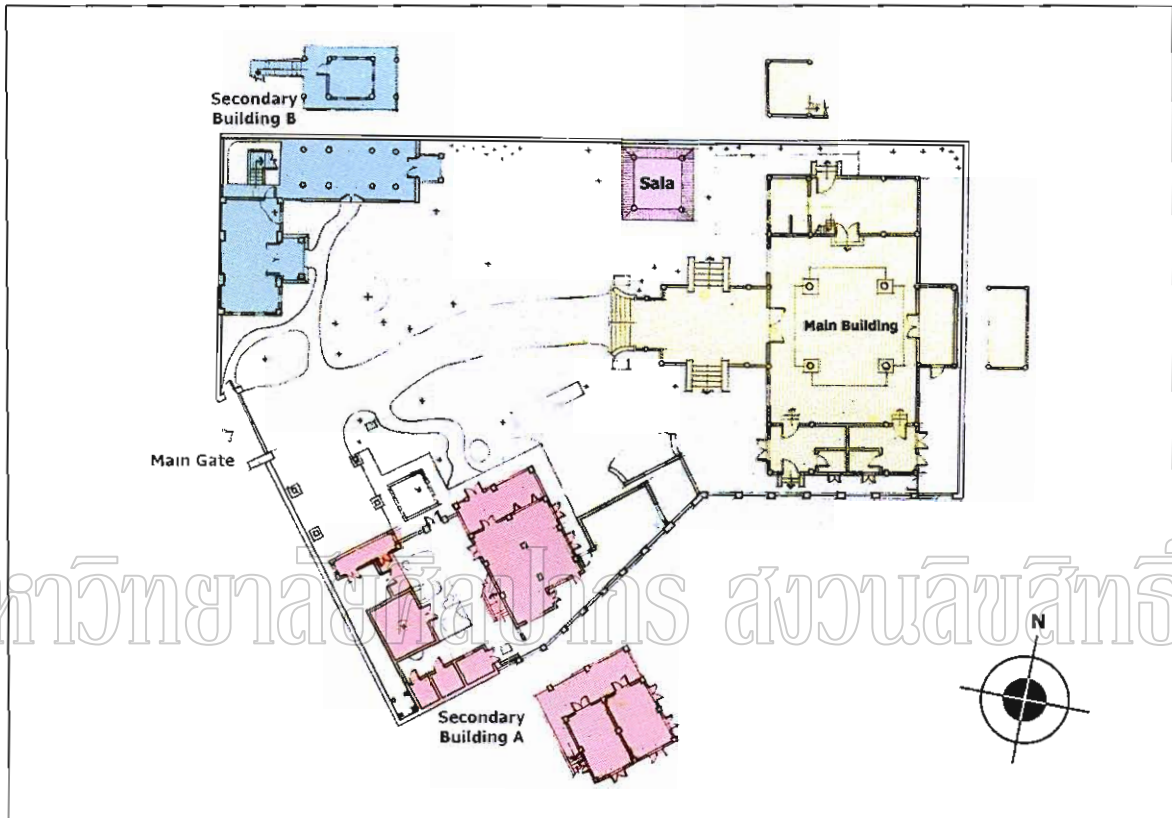
Figure 13 showing the orientation and the cluster arrangement of the place
Source: author

The roof profile of the main building (Figure 18) has been modified from a hall of Buddhist sanctuary in Keng Tung, the origin of Tai Khun (Figure 19). This is not merely borrowing the style, but it is the reflection of cultural identity of the family of the owner on his father's side. The roof consists of two series. The higher series above the hall are three-tiered: two gabled upper tiers over a hipped lower tier. At the top of the higher roofs, there are five pinnacles. The lower series above the main entrance are three-stacked pyramidal roofs. At the top of the lower roofs, there is *Phra Khetkaewchulamanee*, the pagoda of the Lanna horoscope year of dog. The owner indicated that the pinnacles represent *Sila 5*, the five precepts of the Lord Buddha;

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[18] Ornsiri Panin, "Tai Ethnic Villages in Suvarnabhumi," International Symposium on Architecture in the Land of Suvarnabhumi (The Royal River Hotel, Bangkok: Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University, 2006).

while the pagoda represents the year that the owner was born. Lanna people believe in worship the pagoda of their horoscope year of birth.[19] The roof of the main building, both profile and accessories, indicates the association of Buddhism and local belief that represented in the place.

Figure 14 showing architectural detail of the main building
Source: author, 15 November 2006

Figure 15 showing architectural detail the secondary building A
Source: author, 15 November 2006

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[19] เธียรชาย อักษรดิษฐ์, "ชุธาตุ: ความเชื่อเรื่อง "พระธาตุประจำปีเกิดในล้านนา" ปรากฏการณ์ทาง อำนาจ ศรัทธา มายาคดิ," ล้านนา: จักรวาล ตัวตน อำนาจ, บรรณาธิการโดย ทรงยศ แววหงษ์ (กรุงเทพฯ: ศุนย์หนังสือจุฬาลงกรณ์มหาวิทยาลัย, 2545).

[Tienchai Augsorndith, "Chu That: the Belief of "Phra That of Birth Year in Lanna" as Phenomenon of Power, Faith and Myth," Lanna: Cosmology, Identity and Power, ed. Songtyot Waewhong (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University Book Centre, 2002).]
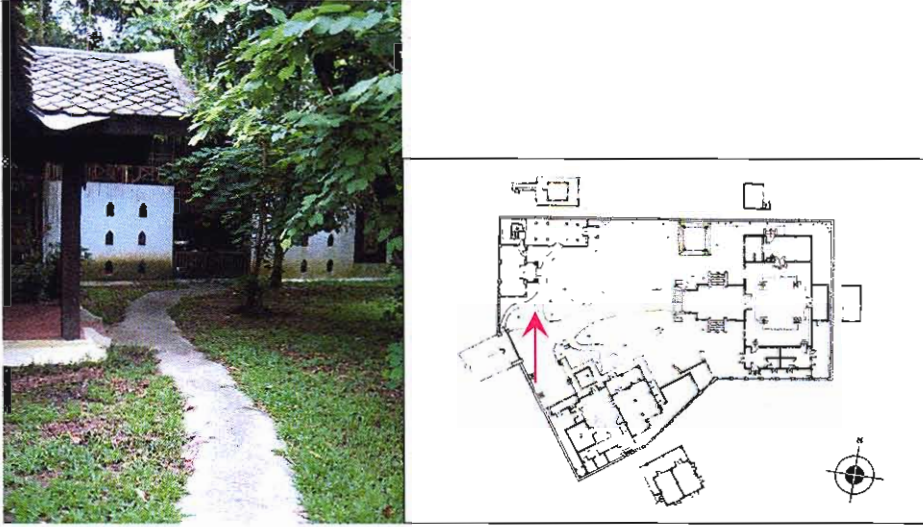
Figure 16 showing architectural detail of the secondary building B
Source: author, 20 August 2006
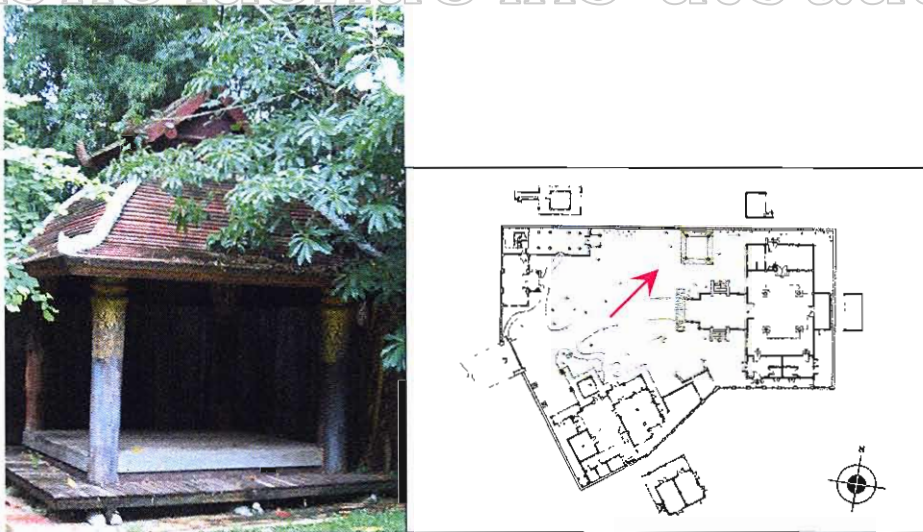
Figure 17 showing architectural detail of the *sala*
Source: author, 20 August 2006
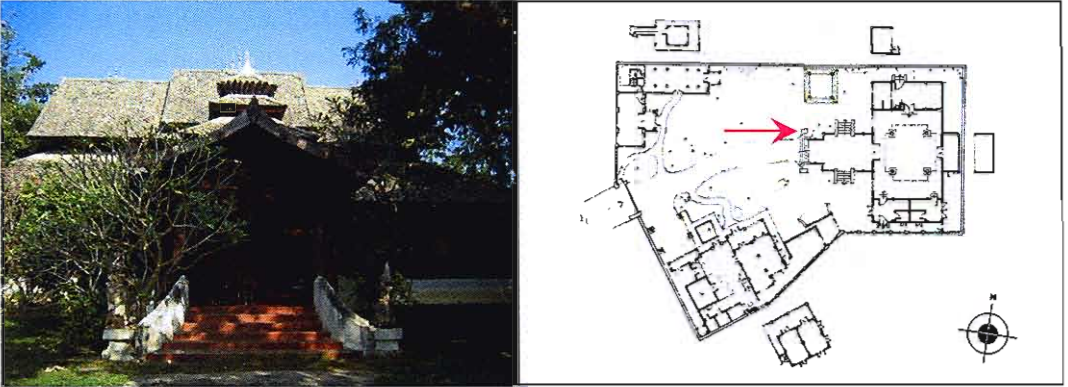
Figure 18 showing the roof profile and its accessories of the main building
Source: author, 15 November 2006

Figure 19 showing buildings in Keng Tung as the inspiration in design
Source: author, 11-13 July 2007

The bargeboard at the gable roofs above the entrance of the main building ends with head of naga (Figure 20). A wooden carving of a peacock and flower motifs are positioned in the pediment (Figure 21). Under the pediment, between the two inner pillars is a pelmet or *kong khieu* [eyebrow pelmet]. These decorative ornaments are symbolised Lanna identity.[20]
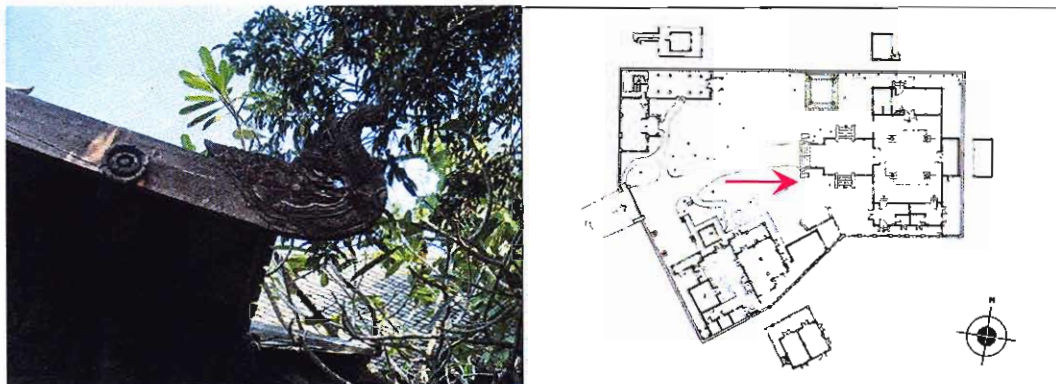
Figure 20 showing the bargeboard ended with head of *naga*
Source: author, 15 November 2006
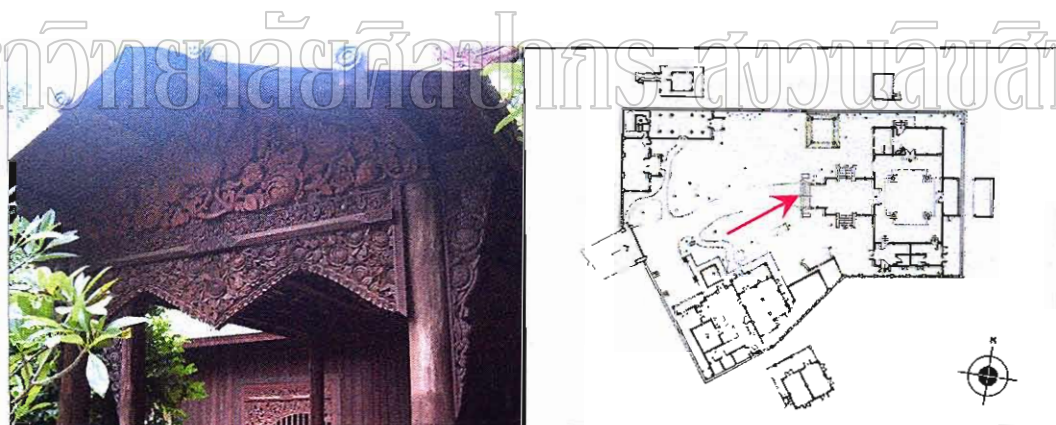
Figure 21 showing the wooden carving of peacock, flower motifs and a pelmet at the pediment of the entrance of the main building
Source: author, 20 August 2006

The roof profile of the secondary building A is hipped-gable roof (Figure 22), which is commonly found in Keng Tung's houses (Figure 23). The roof has eaves made of fibreglass, which allow the natural light but protecting the rain to the lower floor. The fibreglass is light weigh material, which allow using non-massive supporting structures. The eaves are decorated with *hasadiling*, a mythical bird with the head of an elephant (Figure 24). The mythical bird is always found on roofs of structures in

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[20] Ping Amranand and Warren, Lanna Style: Art & Design of Northern Thailand 77, 118-119.

Keng Tung (Figure 25). This indicates the intention to balance between the representation of the local identity and the contemporary material in architectural design.
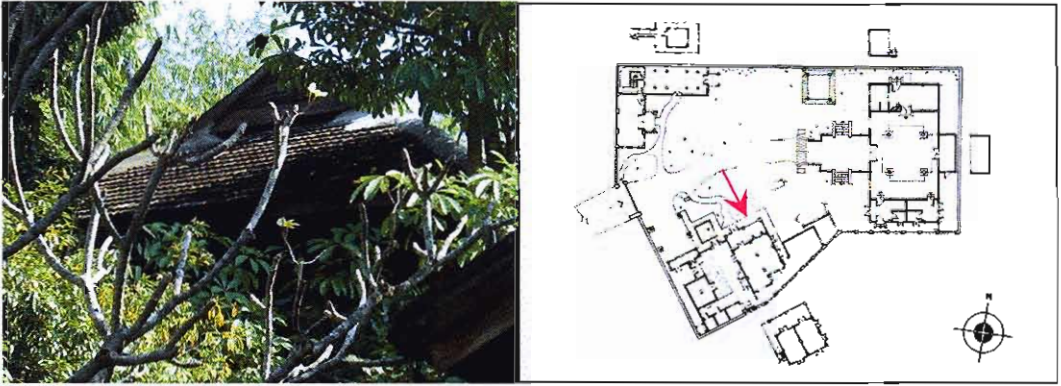
Figure 22 showing the hipped-gable roof of the secondary building A
Source: author, 15 November 2006

Figure 23 showing hipped-gable roof commonly found in Keng Tung's houses
Source: author, 11-13 July 2007
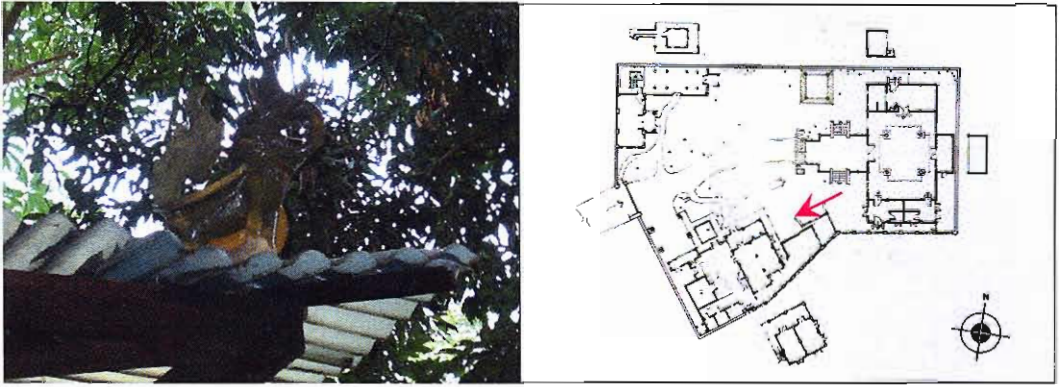
Figure 24 showing the fibreglass eave with *hasadiling*,
a mythical bird with the head of an elephant
Source: author, 25 August 2006

Figure 25 showing *hasdiling* commonly found on roofs of structures
in Keng Tung
Source: author, 11-13 July 2007

A building B is a gable roof with unglazed earthenware tiles (Figure 26). Part of the building is derived from *hlong khao*, or a rice barn, which is common found in Lanna houses (Figure 27). Different from other parts of Thailand, *hlong khao* has massive

pillars and a balcony on all four sides, which make the cabin apparently floating in the air[21] (Figure 28).
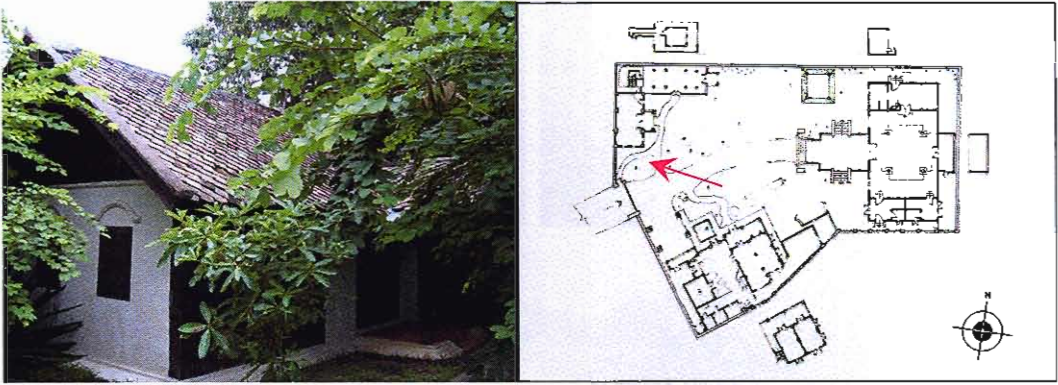
Figure 26 showing the roof of the secondary building B
Source: author, 20 August 2006

Figure 27 showing other parts of the secondary building B
derived from *hlong khao*
Source: author, 20 August 2006

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[21] Nithi Sthapitanonda and Brian Mertens, <u>Architect of Thailand:A Guide to Tradition and Contemporary Forms</u> (Bangkok: Asis Books, 2005) 38-39.

Figure 28 showing *hlong khao* in Chiang Mai
Source: author, (the two pictures on the top) and
www.lannaworld.com (the two pictures below)

The *Sala* is two-tiered roofs, which are also decorated with *tua ngao*. The gable roof and the decoration together with unglazed earthenware tiles commemorate the Lanna identity of architecture (Figure 29). The four columns supporting the roof structure are decorated with gold lacquered motifs (Figure 30), which is a traditional technique of Lanna arts.[22]

Most doors and windows are dual panels made of solid wood. The panels on major doors and windows are carved and/or painted in Lanna-style motifs such as *thewada*, the guardian divinities (figure 31). *Ham yon*, carved wooden guardian plaque, is always placed over the major doors of Lanna traditional homes (Figure 32). The symbols of guardian at the accesses and entrances are commonly found in Lanna architectures.[23]

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[22] Ping Amranand and Warren, Lanna Style: Art & Design of Northern Thailand 108-111.

[23] สามารถ สิริเวชพันธุ์, <u>สถาปัตยกรรมล้านนา: อดีต ปัจจุบัน และอนาคต</u> (เชียงใหม่: นันทพันธ์พริ้นติ้ง, 2548).

[Samart Siriwejapun, Lanna Architecture: Past, Present and Future (Chiang Mai: Nuntapun Printing, 2005).]
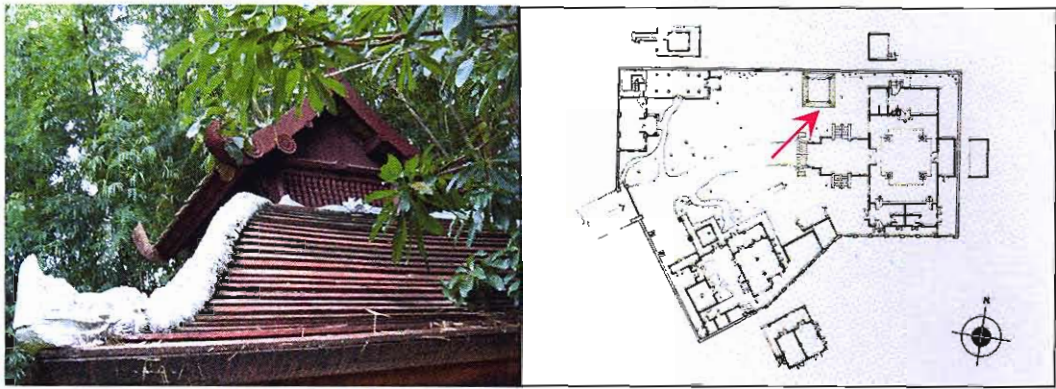
Figure 29 showing the roof of the *Sala*
Source: author, 20 August 2006
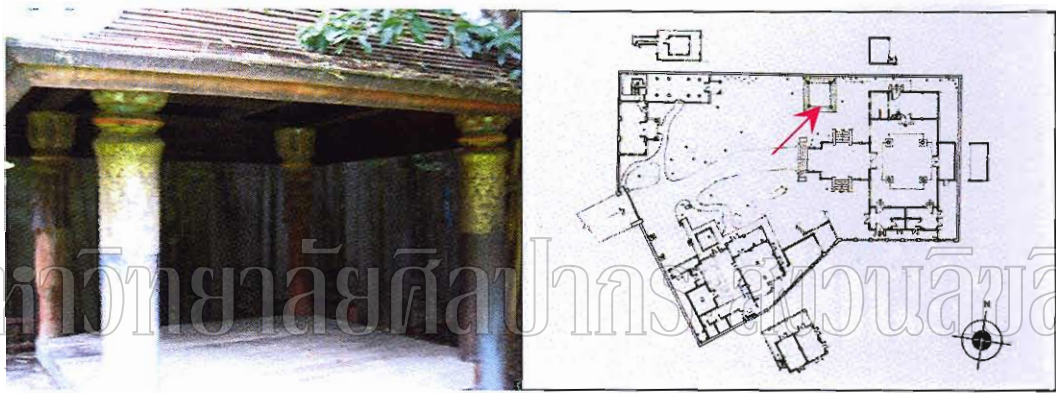
Figure 30 showing the gold lacquered columns of the *sala*
Source: author, 20 August 2006
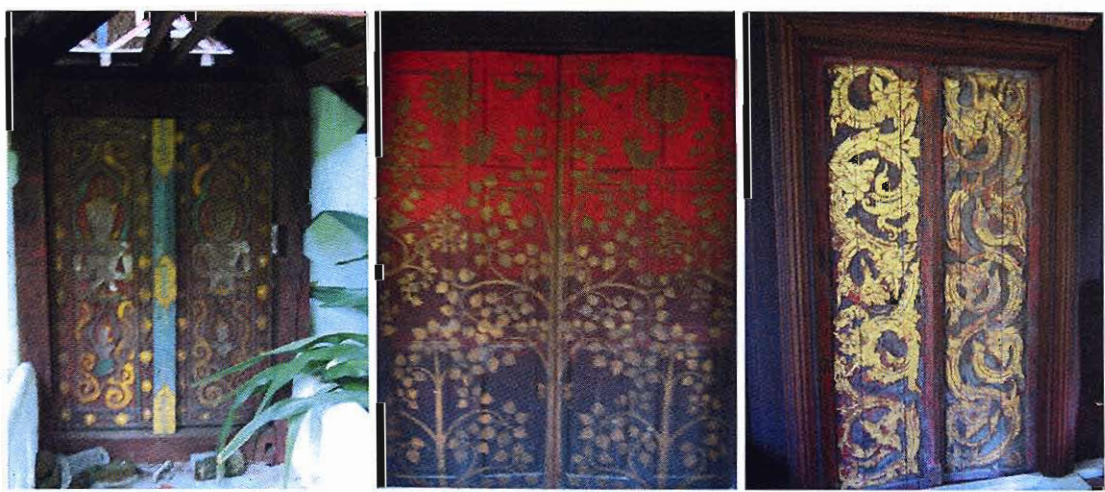
Figure 31 showing the Lanna motifs on doors and windows
Source: author, 24 August 2006 (left and centre) and
15 November 2006 (right)

Figure 32 showing *ham yon* over a door and windows
Source: author, 20 August 2006 (left) and 15 November 2006 (right)

Figure 33 showing the carved wood ventilation grilles from the exterior (left)
and the interior (right) of the main building
Source: author, 20 August 2006

Figure 34 showing carved wood ventilation grilles of Wat Buak Kok Luang
(left) and Wat Ton Kwen (right)
Source: author, 26 August 2006

Carved wood ventilation grilles, as well as perforated carvings set in the panelled walls and above the window, are appropriately installed (Figure 33). Wood carving was the highlight of Lanna art in the revival period.[24] The wood carving ventilation is commonly found in Lanna architecture, particularly in Buddhist sanctuary (Figure 34). It is the traditional wisdom to semi-permeable control natural sunlight and ventilation between the exterior and the interior of the buildings.

- **Interior Details and Functional Uses**

The main building is a single-storied building, which accommodates a master bedroom, a secondary bedroom, a common room, and a hall (Figure 35). The master bedroom with a private washroom, a separating closet, and a dressing room is for the owner. The secondary bedroom with built-in washroom is for guests. The common room is facilitated as a reading area, an office and also a television room. The hall serves many purposes, usually as a living area and occasionally as a reception area. There is a sacred niche in the hall facing to the entrance. The niche is divided into two parts, the upper part is the Buddha house or *ruan phra*, and the lower part is the spirit house or *ruan phi*. Buddha images are placed in the upper part while local spirits' objects are placed underneath (Figure 36). The hall is also the place for displaying the collective objects of the owner. *Kruang khun*, lacquered wares from Ken Tung, is part of his collection (Figure 37, right). As painting is a hobby of the owner, the corner adjacent to the entrance of the master bedroom is arranged as the area for painting (Figure 37, left). An open pavilion extends from the main building, and on many occasion serves as a meeting or a reception area.

[24] Freeman, <u>Lanna: Thailand's Northern Kingdom</u> 22-24.
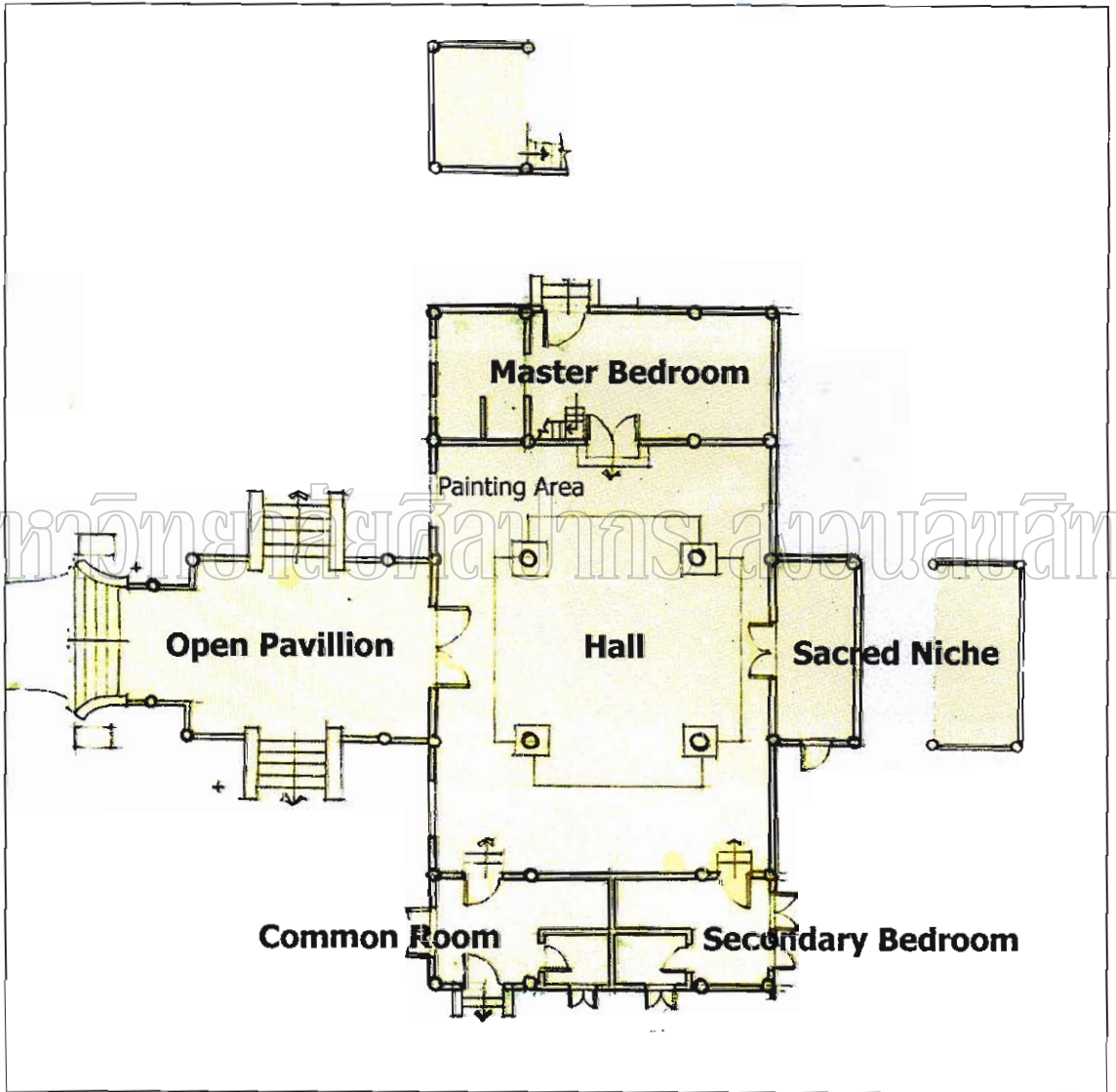
Figure 35 showing the functional uses of the main building
Source: author

Figure 36 showing sacred niche (left), *ruan phra* (centre), and *ruan phi* (right)
Source: author, 28 August 2006

Figure 37 showing the painting corner (left) and some collection of lacquered wares (right)
Source: author, 15 November 2006

The secondary building A is a two-storied building with two guestrooms, a dinning room, a kitchen, a laundry area, and a garage (Figure 38). The two guestrooms are on the upper floor while the others are on the lower floor. The guestrooms are linked together with a terrace, which leads to the lower floor through a staircase outside the building. An outdoor washroom, isolated from toilets, is at the base of the staircase. The outdoor washroom (Figure 39) is inspired by *tom nam*, the Lanna traditional bath closet without roof, for ladies near water well. The *tom nam* is now rare but can be found in northern of Thailand (Figure 40).

The interior decoration in this building is in contemporary style. Furniture is mostly made of wood. Kitchen is equipped with modern facility (Figure 41). Simplicity, local materials, and association with nature are the theme for decoration of the building.

However, the decoration is to serve the contemporary lifestyle, the local identity is represented through out the building.
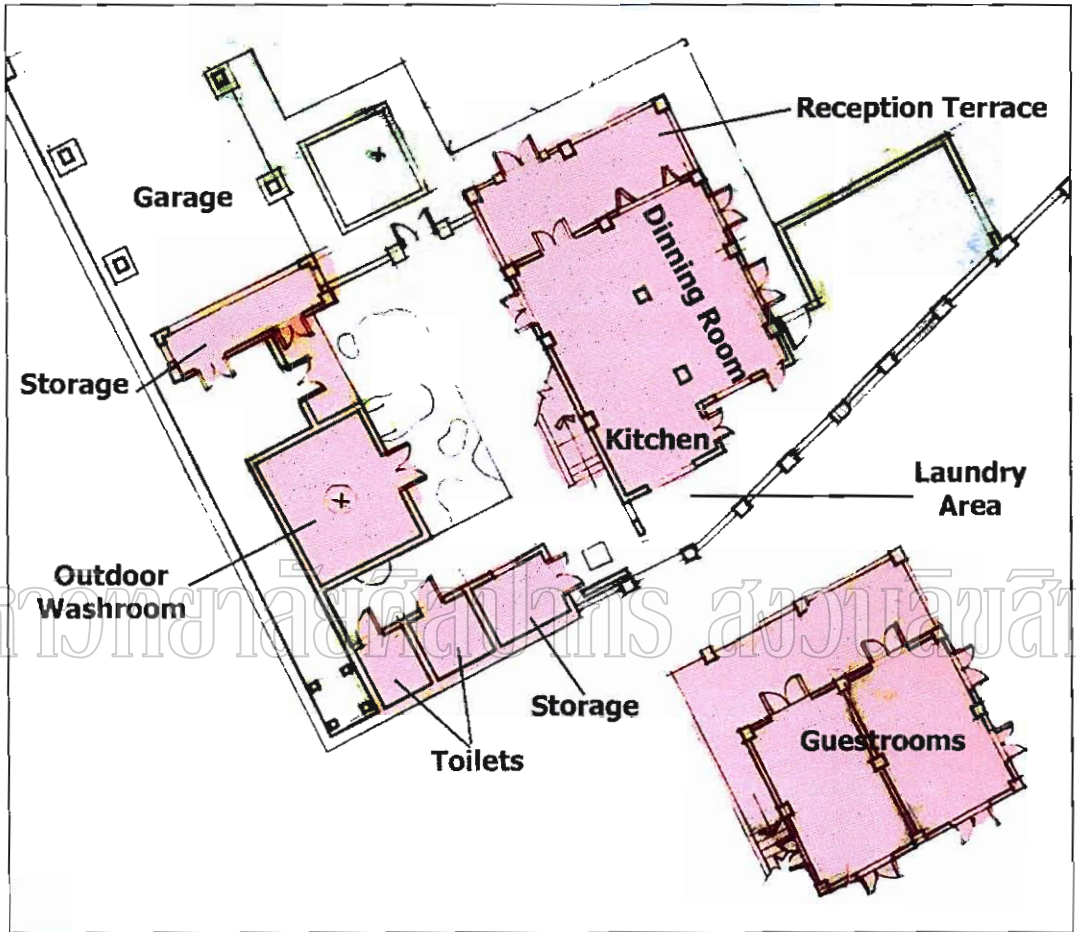
Figure 38 showing the function uses of the secondary building A
Source: author

Figure 39 showing the exterior conditions of the secondary building A
Source: author, 20 August 2006

Figure 40 showing the existing *tom nam* in Chiang Rai, northern Thailand
Source: author, 27 July 2006

Figure 41 showing the interior details of the secondary building A
Source: author, 20 August 2006

The L-shaped space of the secondary building B is divided into two parts: a hall and a house. The hall is single-storey while the house is two-storeys (Figure 42). The hall is divided into two sections: a relaxing room and a storage (Figure 43). The relaxing room is for the purpose of recreation such as exercise or weight-lifting. The house is designed for decoration, not for accommodation. The lower floor of the house, however, is applied as a cloth-hanging area during the rainy season.
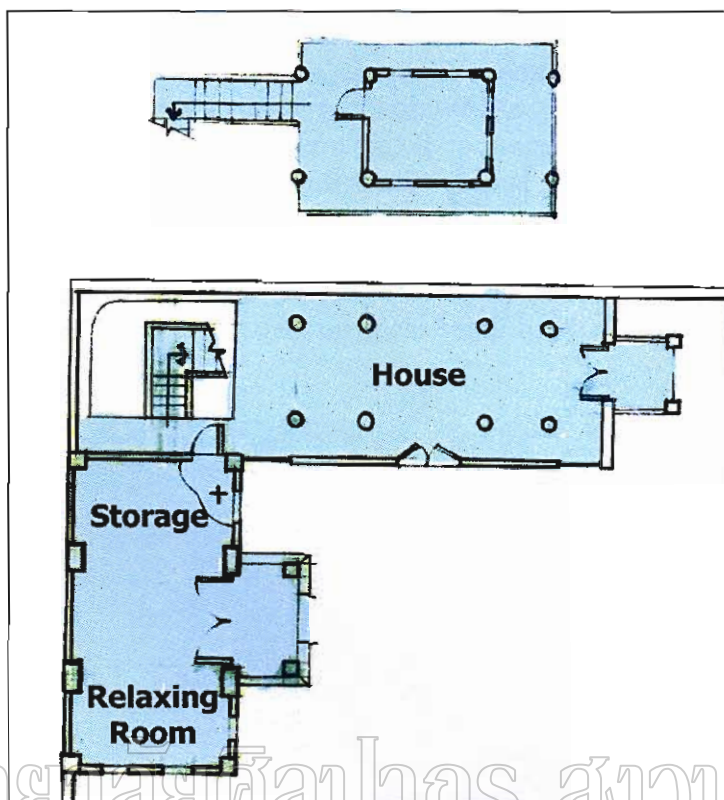
Figure 42 showing the function uses of the secondary building B
Source: author

Figure 43 showing details of the secondary building B
Source: author, 15 November 2006

- **Landscape Details**

The complex is surrounded by a concrete wall painted in white; except the side along the stream which is protected by a metal fence. The main entrance is a bi-folding gate made of solid wood. There is a set of roofs above the gate. The roofs are two-tiered gable and tiled with unglazed earthenware. It is supported by metal and wooden structures on concrete poses. There are lancet-shaped niches on the concrete wall. These niches are to place candles for decorative purpose rather than lighting purpose. There is a pair of *singha* at the top of top the gate columns. *Singha* is a popular symbol of strength and power to protect the property.[25] The boundary details are shown in Figure 44. The details reflect the local belief in symbolism.
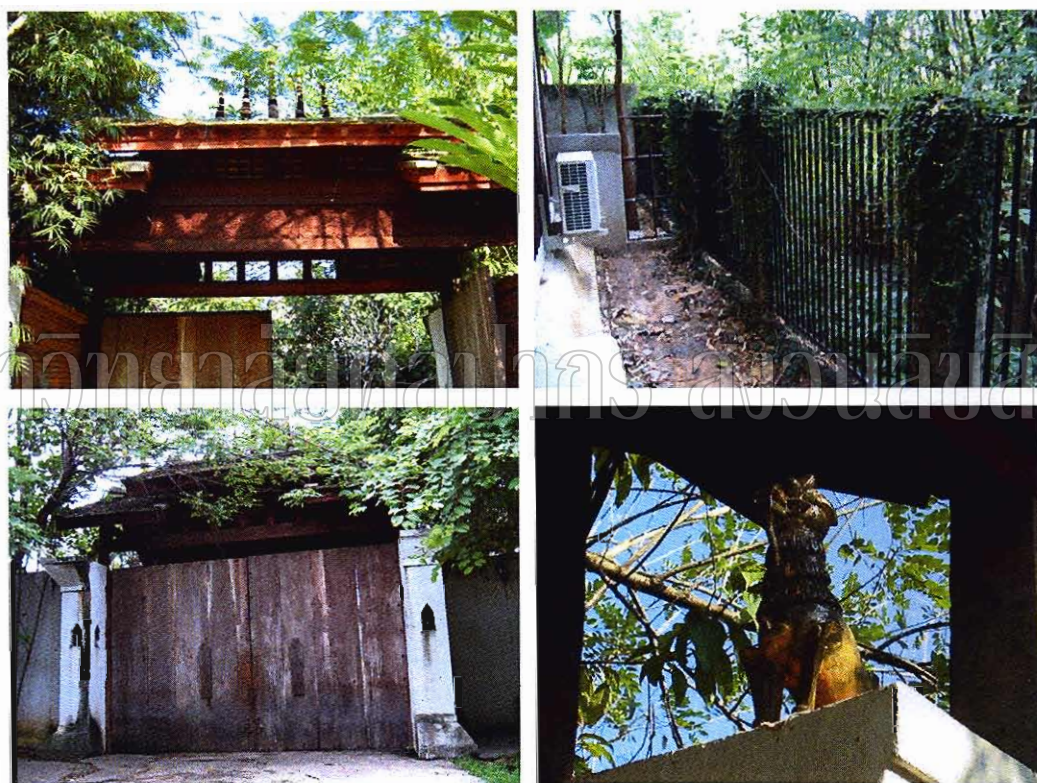
Figure 44 showing the boundary of Hor Man Muang
Source: author, 15 November 2006

At the steps to enter the main building, there are balustrades of mythological animals (Figure 45, left and centre). On the left, it is a *singha* or sacred lion balustrade. On the right, it is a *naga* or sacred serpent balustrade. The position of the balustrades suggest the local belief that these mythological animals are the guardians of the place, which

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[25] Ping Amranand and Warren, Lanna Style: Art & Design of Northern Thailand 118-119.

is always found at the entrance of principal buildings in Lanna particularly the stairways of temples.[26]

In the garden, there is an outdoor counter caters for parties (Figure 45, right). The counter can be accessed directly from the kitchen in the secondary building A. It is designed to serve contemporary function but it is representing local identity.

There is also a shrine in the garden (Figure 46, left and centre). The shrine is made of concrete on a wooden post. It is rather decorative than worshiping purpose. It reflects the belief of local spirits. Shires, similar to this one, are commonly found in Keng Tung's houses (Figure 46, right).

The land used to be the garden of the owner's family before being transformed to be his residence. Therefore, most of the vegetations planted are local tropical fruits including lychee, longan, and mango. Local plants such as teak are located. There are also local tropical scented flowers spread throughout the area. Beyond their fruits and fragrance, these plants also provide shade and protection as well as privacy.

The place has been designed with respect to the existing pattern of vegetation (Figure 47). A number of old trees have been kept around the place. The walkways are carefully created without disturbing the existing plants. This makes the place convey the strong sense of association with nature, which indicates the local ways of living.

Figure 45 showing *singha* (left), *naga* (centre) balustrades, and outdoor counter (right)
Source: author, 24 August 2006

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[26] Ibid.

Figure 46 showing shrine in the garden of Hor Man Muang (left and centre), and in a house in Keng Tung (right)
Source: author, 24 August 2008 (left and centre) and 11 July 2007 (right)

Figure 47 showing the vegetation around the place
Source: author, 15 November 2006

Assessment of the Place

Hor Man Muang indicates the efforts of the owner to protect his Lanna-Tai Khun cultural identity. It is a unique place being built by excellent understanding and value-giving from the owner to his local cultural identity. The place has been created through a contemporary design process by representing the local cultural identity in a contemporary space. The contemporary design process is an appropriate creative practice to protect cultural identity and to conserve architectural heritage. The process derives intangible meanings and values of the cultural identity into tangible architectural, interior and landscape details. This makes the integration of ordinary details become an extraordinary place, which is well balance tradition and modernity.

The place is completely different from other cases in Chiang Mai that mimic Lanna architectural heritage. It has been inspired by cultural identity represented in heritage buildings and religious structures, but never been duplicated from any places. The other cases are one-to-one mimesis of many different heritage buildings into a particular area. The mimesis of heritage places reduces cultural values, authenticity and integrity of the original places. Representation of cultural identity and creative inspiration through design language is more appropriate than duplication of heritage places.

The Way Forward of the Place

Hor Man Muang is a unique place, which requires an intensive maintenance. Wood is the major material, as well as many architectural details. Scheduled maintenance is recommended for the place. Craftsmen and available materials may be future problems. It should search for craftsmen and source of materials in advance.

In conclusion, contemporary design is a method to protect cultural identity. It renders intangible cultural identity to tangible representation in space. The method makes the meanings and values of cultural identity be kept even in other different creative forms. It is more appropriate practice to protect cultural identity and to conserve architectural heritage than duplication. However, it is necessary to have an excellent understanding in the abstract meanings of the cultural identity in order to ensuring the proper representation of the cultural identity.

Chapter 5

Ban Rabiang Nam: Efforts of a Family to Protect Ban Rim Nam
Identity through Adaptive Re-use

This chapter deals with the efforts of a family in transforming the old family house into a restaurant, called Ban Rabiang Nam. Chamchang family attempts to keep the old family house and to re-use the place to generate economic benefits. In the mean time, the family utilises the local cultural identity as the corporate identity of the restaurant. These make the place be one of the excellent examples in terms of local cultural identity protection and architectural heritage conservation.

The chapter starts with a review of adaptive re-use, a practice to maintain a heritage place by applying a contemporary function. Then, the case study of Ban Rabiang Nam is explored. It includes the location, the background, the cultural setting, the description and the interpretation, the assessment, and the way forward of the place consecutively.

Adaptive Re-use of Old Building: the Key Term

Adaptive re-use is a way to help extend the life of old buildings or places and to prevent them from becoming abandoned and ruined. The adaptive re-use is a transformation of place from the outdated functions into new used to serve contemporary demands. It can be applied to most of old buildings or places except where require a continuing high degree of authenticity-required places.[1] Buildings or places with high cultural significance may require specific methods of restoration. In these types of old buildings, the method and original functions of the place have to be considered prior adaptive re-use.

Advantages of adaptive re-use are:
- A tool for conservation of old buildings;
- Adding economic value to the place e.g. turning an old house into a restaurant, a retail shop, or a gallery;
- Adding social benefit to the community e.g. transforming an old mansion into a museum, a library, or a social welfare building;
- Introducing new business activities e.g. changing a shop-house into a boutique hotel, a hip guesthouse, or an internet café;
- Reducing cost comparing to a new construction, and

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[1] Yongtanit Pimonsathean, "Current Issue Concerning Adaptive Re-Use in the Conservation of Urban Cultural Heritage," The Conservation of Urban Heritage: Maccao Vision (Macao Cultural Centre, Macao SAR, China: 2002), 161-162.

- Being environmental friendly by reducing exploitation.

Yongtanit Pimonsathean[2] classified adaptive re-use into two categories in terms of financial return: active use and passive use. Active use is an adaptive re-use in which the new use is to generate sufficient financial return to maintain the place. Turning of an old house into a restaurant is an example of the active use category. Passive use is an adaptive re-use in which the new use may not generate sufficient financial return to maintain the place but it creates social benefits to community. Transforming an old mansion into a museum is an example of the passive use type.

Even though adaptive re-use can be a tool to conserve a place by introducing a new function into the old place, it has some common problems requiring great care. The physical and functional improvement to conserve the place without caring of socio-cultural assets associated with the place is a common problem of adaptive re-use. In this regard; existing individual, family and community who are the grassroots associated with the old place play the significant role in adaptive re-use of the place. This makes grassroots approach become the weakest link in adaptive re-use of the place. The approach, if it is to succeeded, is not only for heritage conservation but also for human resource development as well.

Adaptive re-use does not only offer a solution by recycling the old place; but it also provides a potential solution for protecting local identity. Ban Rabieng Nam is the selected case study in which a Thai grassroots family utilises adaptive re-use in order to protect its grassroots identity. It is an example of the active use category in which an old house is turned into a restaurant while keeping the place and also maintaining the local identity.

Ban Rabiang Nam: the Case Study

Location of the Place

Ban Rabiang Nam is the adaptive re-use of old house as a restaurant. It is located at 74/2 Moo 1, Soi Nonthaburi 23, Nonthaburi 1 Road, Muang, Nonthaburi. The restaurant is at the end of the same soi with Wat Khae Nok. It is on the eastern bank of Chao Phraya River.

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[2] Ibid., 163.

Figure 48 showing the location of Ban Rabiang Nam
Source: modified from Google Earth

Background of the Place

Sompong Chamchang has inherited an old house from her parents. She lives with her husband and her children in a new house, which has been built right behind the old one. Both of the new and old houses are among Sompong's brothers and sisters. After her parents passed away, the old house was kept closed.

Figure 49 showing the old house of Chamchang Family
before adaptive re-use as a restaurant
Source: Jipawat Chamchang

Later, Jipawat Chamchang, Sonpong's son, wished to open a small restaurant for his retired father, Kriengsak Chamchang. The old house of the family was considered as a suitable location for a restaurant because of its fantastic scenery and, being on the wider part of Chao Phraya River, a place to enjoy views of the sunset. Investing in the family's own property is lower risk than investing elsewhere. Jipawat[3] said that:

> Our old house has a good view of the river. It is important that we invest into our own house. We will not have to worry about the rental cost. We can utilise our old house as capital to generate income to our family. The workmanship is from our family and our relatives. We have modified the house with highly respect to its existing. At first, the restaurant was planned for my father after his retirement, which he can enjoy with his retired friends. But now, it becomes the business of our family.

The place has been renovated without a professional designer, but with the cooperation between Kriengsak and local craftsmen. However, the technical drawing was prepared by an architect for submission to Nonthaburi Municipality. After four months process of renovation, the restaurant has been opened since 1st December 2002.

Although the transformation into a restaurant was an adaptive re-use of the old family house, a ceremonial rising of the first post of the extension was set up according to the local Buddhist tradition. And after the construction finished, Buddhism ceremony also set up to bless the new place (Figure 50).

Figure 50 showing the ceremonial rising of the first post (left)
the Buddhism ceremony after the construction finished (right)
Source: Jipawat Chamchang, August 2002

Although no experience in running a restaurant, members of the family took turn in taking care of the restaurant in the beginning. Jipawat was always in-charge of the restaurant in the evening after his work as an engineer from the Office of Atoms for Peace. After Kriengsak was diagnosed that he has a malignant disease, Jipawat had to resign from his work to run the restaurant full-time. The restaurant has been extended by renting a two-storied wooden house from Jipawat's aunt. This makes the restaurant can accommodate 220 customers with 45 tables.

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[3] Conversation with Jipawat Chamchang, 8 December 2008

There was a conflict between the restaurant and the nearby community. The conflict was that the community claimed the restaurant had increased noise and traffic. Somporng Chamchang[4], Jipawat's mother, said about this point that:

> Our neighbours used to complain us when we started the restaurant. They said that the restaurant destroyed the peacefulness of the community. As we live here for long time, we have to take good care of our neighbours as well. We have clarified understandings with them. Now, the problem is solved. Most of our staffs are from our neighbours and community. The neighbours and the community are now happy that their children work close to home, and they also earn from customers of our restaurant.

The restaurant brings social and economic benefits to the community. It creates jobs and generates income to the people in the community. It also helps to promote local products of the community by both consignment and direct purchase. In this way, the conflict between the restaurant and the community is turn into convergence.

With its location being difficult to reach, the restaurant requires an intensive marketing plan. Frederic Loyat, a friend of Jipawat, helps the family for marketing and accounting management for the restaurant. Now, the restaurant is famous among both Thai and foreigners living in Nonthaburi and also in Bangkok.

Cultural Setting of the Place

The restaurant is located in Nonthaburi, a province in the lower Chao Phraya Delta. With the expansion of Bangkok, Nonthaburi is now the semi-rural fringe of Bangkok Metropolis. Chao Phraya River is the backbone of the province.

In the past, this area was waterside dwellings and orchards. Local communities were linked together with the river or *khlong* (canals), the secondary waterways from the river. The network of the canals and the river formed an ambitious character of the area. The *Wat* (temple) was the centre of the community. A *Talad* (market) was always adjacent to *wat*. Dwellings were around *wat* and *talad*, while orchards were the next ring to the dwellings. Later, a school was always built close to *wat* and *talad*. Houses by the river and canals are built facing the waterway, not the road. This was the typical character of *ban suan rim khlong* (house in orchard along khlong), or what Terdsak Tachakitkachorn[5] called 'agriculture-based waterside village'.

At the present time, the area is associated with roads more than waterways. Arterial roads, ring roads, and express ways are the physical factors related to many changes

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[4] Conversation with Somporng Chamchang , 8 December 2008

[5] Terdsak Tachakitkachorn, "Transformation Process of Waterside Dwellings in Khlong Bangkoknoi: Case Study of Waterside Villages in Khlong Watsakyai and Khlong Wat Jumpa," <u>Modernity, Tradition, Culture, Water: An International Symposium</u>, eds. Ross King, Ornsiri Panin and Claire Parin (Bangkok: Kasetsart University Press, 2003).

of the area. Nonthaburi has been planned to be a residential area and an urban sub-centre of Bangkok Metropolis. Housing estates, shopping malls, mega stores, and government offices are replacing the typical character of *ban suan rim khlong*. Billboards, signage, and architecture also indicate cultural change from self-sufficient ways of life to capitalist-popular lifestyles. In the meantime, low-cost houses improvised from corrugated metal indicate the poverty in the metropolis.

The setting of Ban Rabiang Nam is still an excellent demonstration of the local community complex as it was the past (Figure 51). Wat Kkae Nok is the centre of the community (Figure 52, left). Adjacent to the wat, there are Wat Khae Nok School (Figure 52, right) and a daily morning market (Figure 53). Local glossary stores still keep serving the community. This complex can be accessed from the river and from Nonthaburi 1 Road (Figure 54, left). Ban Rabieng Nam is in sub-soi leading from the complex. The restaurant is difficult to reach by car. However, it is a walking distance from the wat's parking area or a tricycle shuttle service from the car park (Figure 54, right).

Figure 51 showing the local lifestyle seeing from the restaurant
Source: author, 13 December 2008

Figure 52 showing Wat Khae Nok Temple (left) and
Wat Khae Nok School (right)
Source: author, 13 December 2008

Figure 53 showing the daily morning market near the place
Source: author, 13 December 2008

Figure 54 showing the access from Nonthaburi 1 Road (left) and
the parking in the *soi* (right)
Source: author, 13 December 2008

Description and Interpretation of the Place

The restaurant is a complex of five buildings, which are the old family house, the kitchen, the main dining area, the aunt's house and the washroom (Figure 55). The complex is separated but integrated by wooden planks as if it is a single building. The old family house is the only original structure in the complex, while the others are modified or extended from the other old structures. The modified structures are built respectfully in relation to the style of the original buildings. All of the modifications were built without technical drawings by an architect. Only simple sketches were used to communicate between Kriengsak and local craftsmen. This means that the modified structures represent the being the manifestation of local wisdom. The complex also indicates the typical ambitious character of *ban rim nam* (house by the water), where some part of the complex is built on land and another part extends out over onto the river. The extended part is built on tall posts, which allow the part being over the

river. Stairs at the end of the stretched part leading down into the water demonstrate the local ways of life in the past when the main access was from the river, as well as for bathing and landing from boats. This was the local lifestyle, with a close relationship between human and nature.

The old family house used to be the residence of Jipawat's grandmother. It is preserved as it was. The house is not used for any function but serves as a place of memory. In the house, local utensils are decorated as if someone still living there. The house is the core of the restaurant. It indicates the simple way of local living associated with the river.
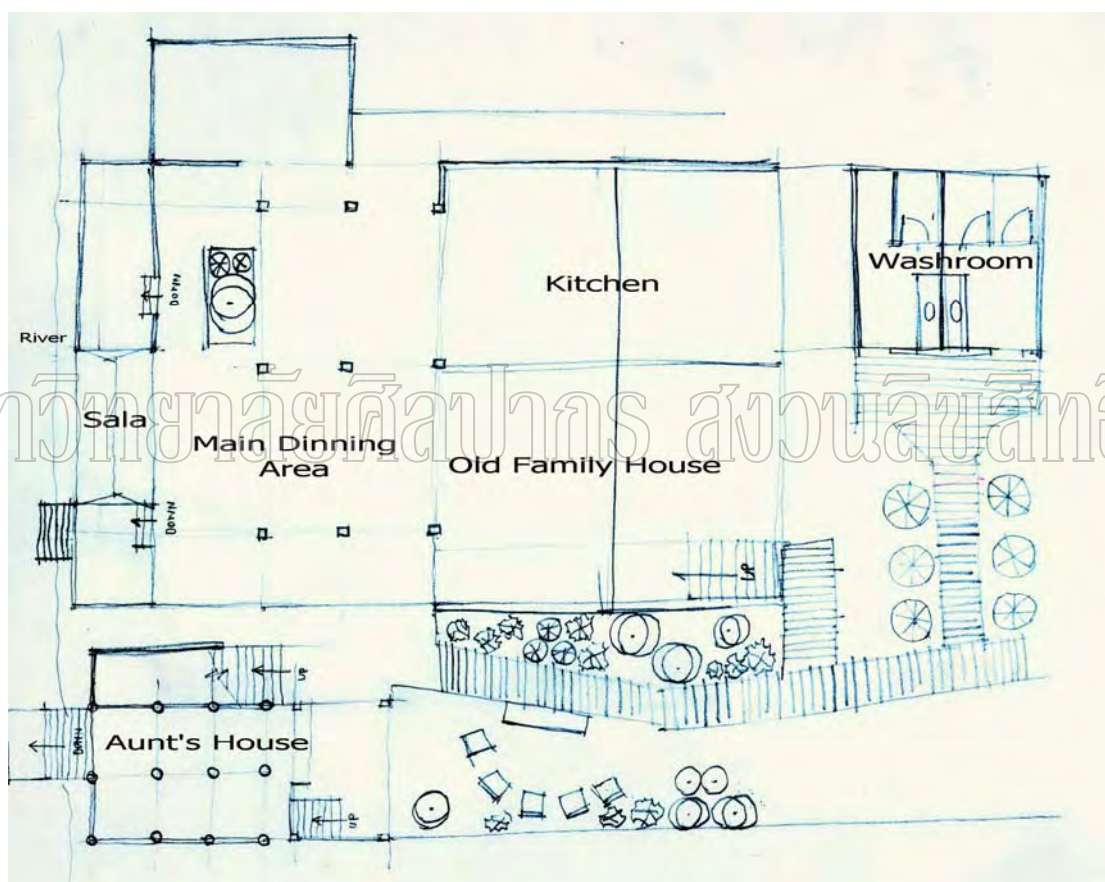
Figure 55 showing the complex of Ban Rabiang Nam
Source: author

The kitchen is extended from the old family house. It has separate access for the customers. It accommodates dry storage, cold storage, food preparation area, and washing area. The kitchen has been designed for the restaurant with efficiency being a key requirement for this area. It was necessary for circulation and the food preparation process to be considered in the design process. The kitchen is connected to the main dinning area. A beverage service station and the cashier counter are located at the connecting area between the kitchen and the main dining area.

Figure 56 showing the old family house before transforming into restaurant (left) and the same house as the restaurant (right)
Source: Jipawat Chamchang (left) and the author, 11 February 2009 (right)

Figure 57 showing the kitchen during the extension of the place
Source: Jipawat Chamchang

Figure 58 showing the kitchen in the restaurant
Source: the author, 11 February 2009

The main dining area is multi-level wooden platform. The platform is bordered by timber balustrades that create a sense of enclosure while admitting breezes and sunlight. The area is divided into three parts; which are higher platform, lower platform, and *sala rim nam* (an open pavilion on the river). The higher platform is under the hipped roof with no ceiling panels, which reduces weight on posts and exposes the underside of the roof for easier repairs. The semi-outdoor character of this part reflects the atmosphere of *chan*, a wooden board terrace found in the Thai traditional house. The lower platform used to be an outdoor part of the restaurant. Later, the area was modified by adding a transparent plastic roof in order to utilise the platform during the rainy season. But the light supporting structure and transparent material allow the area keeping its outdoor atmosphere. In addition, the supporting structure is hidden by covering with rived bamboo, which indicates the attempt to keep the local identity of the place. The sala rim nam is another step down from the lower platform. The sala is derived from Thai central-style houses with traditional roof details, balustrades, eave brackets, and other features. It indicates the typical character of ban suan rim nam. The sala is thatched roof of *Ya Faek* or vetiver grass (*Vetiver zizanioides*). The grass is the local material for roof covering in the central region of Thailand because of its waxy water-resistant surface, and its aromatic resistance to insects. The main dining area is connoted as 'the outdoor family room' on the multi-purpose terrace, which is the heart of the Thai houses.

Figure59 showing the *sala* before transforming into restaurant (left) and
as the dinning area of the restaurant (right)
Source: Jipawat Chamchang (left) and the author, 18 December 2008 (right)

The house of Jipawat's aunt is the extended part of the restaurant to the south (Figure 60 and 61). It had been kept for accommodation when the restaurant started. The house has been transformed into dining area when the business getting better. It is a two-storied wooden structure on the river. The lower floor is a dining room with the view of local lifestyle of the neighbourhood. The second floor consists of a dining room and a veranda with the higher view of local setting. The veranda is designed for the local Thai style dining area by sitting on the floor.

Figure 60 showing the aunt's house during daytime
Source: author, 11 February 2009

Figure 61 showing the aunt's house during night-time
Source: the author, 12 December 2008

The washroom is a single-storied building behind the old family house (Figure 62). It is hidden behind bamboo tree and is linked to the main dining area and the aunt's house by wooden planks. It has been designed in simple style but provides contemporary convenience and comfort. Old wooden panels are used as partitions in the male's room. The panels are adapted to serve the different function but to connote the local cultural identity.
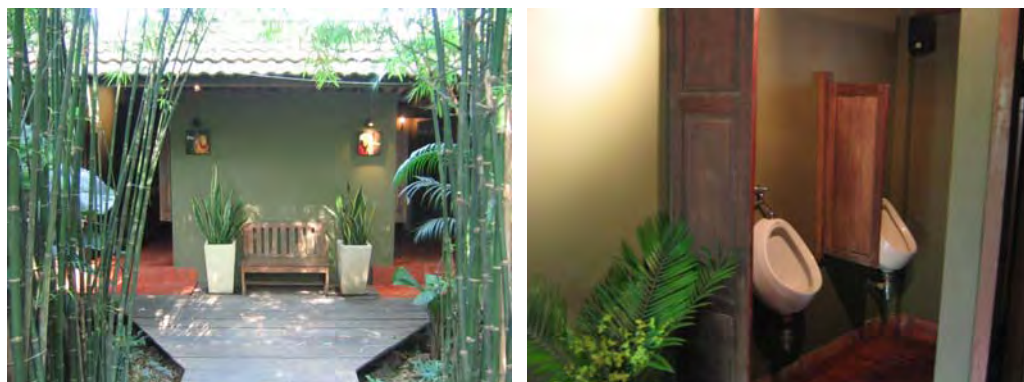
Figure 62 showing the washroom
Source: the author, 11 February 2009

The complex is surrounded by plants. The landscape design gives the restaurant a low-maintenance forest-like atmosphere. A *Krai* Tree (*Ficus concinna*) in the main dining area is intertwined with the old house. It has been re-erected during the modification of the place, and then derived into the logo of the restaurant (Figure 63). The tree grows up through an opening on the platform. Now it does not only provide shade for the main dining area, but it also protects the property from soil erosion. Afterwards, other plants are grown on land and in pots for manipulating landscape. There is an outdoor smoking area at the corner of the old house. Big earthen water jars are used for containing plants and decoration. Landscape lights create the green space for the restaurant in the evening. The lush forest-like setting creates the strong sense of association with nature to the restaurant (Figure 64 and 65).

Figure 63 showing *Krai* tree during the re-erection (left) and
the same tree in recent (right)
Source: Jipawat Chamchang (left) and the author, 13 December 2008 (right)

Figure 64 showing the landscape of the restaurant during daytime
Source: author, 11 February 2009
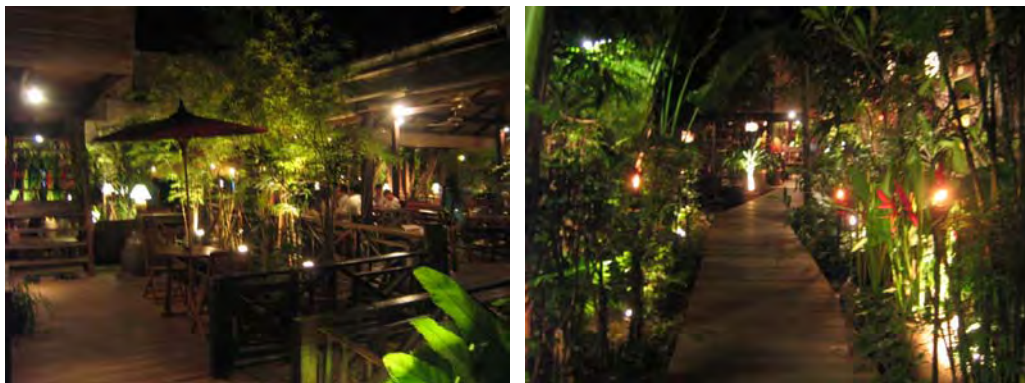
Figure 65 showing the landscape of the restaurant during night-time
Source: the author, 18 December 2008

Interior decoration of the restaurant (Figure 66) is simple: the beauty of bamboo and solid wood; as well as the adaptability of open and clustered space. Detailed decoration is kept to a minimum. Loose furniture and dining settings are in dark solid wood. Earthenware lamps provide indirect light over the restaurant. Pre-assembled wall panel with windows are used for decoration in the main dinning area. The colour scheme is solid brown and lush green. The brown is from wooden structures, furniture and earthen wares, while the green is from foliage. Hand-made umbrellas are not used

for providing shade, but for decoration. Local utensils and natural products are also used to decorate the restaurant. The interior decoration keeps the local identity and respects the simple local ways of life. In addition, it illustrates the fluent adaptation to climate and lifestyle of local identity.

Figure 66 showing the interior decoration of the restaurant
Source: author, 11 February 2009

Assessment of the Place

This section offers as assessment of Ban Rabiang Nam as an attempt by the Chamchang Family to protect the local identity through adaptive re-using the old family house as a restaurant. Protecting local identity and economic benefits are the key elements of the adaptive re-use.

The family has turned both natural and cultural landscapes of the restaurant into a form of cultural capital. The fantastic scenery of Chao Phraya River and the living local community around the restaurant are utilised to provide the corporate identity. Although the location of the restaurant is difficult to find, access to the restaurant is used as an impressive transitional space. Shuttle tricycle service is design to emphasise the transitional space. These are the attempts to turn a weakness into an opportunity.

Local identity, as discussed in the description and interpretation, is protected through the adaptive re-use of the place. The new function as a restaurant is appropriately integrated into the existing physical environment. The local identity is the complement by the creation of the restaurant. This is the key element of the success of the restaurant.

Collective memories and values that the family treasure in the old house are the essence that make the family prefer to keep the house and to reveal it to the public. Most of the family members are living in other properties around the restaurant. The members keep practising their daily life associated with the place.

The transformation of the place has been done by local craftsmen. Most of the restaurant staffs are from the community. Raw materials and ingredients in the restaurant are mostly local products or are bought from local distributers. Consignment of local products also provides an opportunity for people in the community to earn through the restaurant. These are the efforts that the family to protect not only physical appearance of local identity, but also the socio-cultural assets of the community.

The restaurant helps the local community to alleviate poverty, to create jobs, and to generate income. These social and economic benefits are considered to protect the sustainability of the community.

Ban Rabiang Nam provides physical evidence of the potentiality of protecting local identity, local wisdom, cultural and natural landscape while bring them together to generate economic benefits for the family and the community. In these ways, the local community is the stakeholders who get profits from the restaurant. It demonstrates the valuable association of local lifestyle with natural landscape, and shows how the socio-cultural assets of the community can be considered so as to protect and enhance the sustainability of the community.

The Way Forward of the Place

The followings are the recommendations to the way forward of Ban Rabiang Nam;
- The restaurant should have schedule maintenance. The wooden structure near water required a special care and treatment particular an extensive uses of space as a restaurant.
- The restaurant should have an indicator at the point where the floor level is different. This is to prevent possible injury particularly in the night time.
- Some parts of the restaurant are made of synthetic materials for purpose of duration. The materials should cover with natural materials or should paint in natural colour tone in order to hide from visual impact.
- Most of the customer is family sometimes with small children. This kind of customer should be addressed away from the waterfront.
- The restaurant should form a partnership with restaurants in the same area. The partnership is to empower the members to negotiate with suppliers and to

compliment the members to implement marketing plan including promotion and advertisement.

- The restaurant has a limitation of space, which is no longer extended. Concept of 'cruising restaurant' could help the restaurant to accommodate more customers. The concept is a dinning room on a boat that travel along the river to offer dynamic scenery of the waterfront.
- Customer satisfaction should be surveyed in order to point out strength, weakness, opportunity and threat of the restaurant. It helps the management to improve and to develop the place and the service; as well as to guide the marketing strategy of the restaurant.

In conclusion, Ban Rabiang Nam indicates that Chamchang family attempt to keep their old house by adaptive re-use the house as a restaurant. The adaptive re-use of the old place is not only to conserve the architectural heritage but also to generate economic benefits from the heritage. The cultural landscape of *ban rim nam* is utilised as the corporate identity of the restaurant. In this way, the local cultural identity is protected and represented to the customers and public at large.

However, the adaptive re-use of the place as the restaurant has introduced more traffic into the community. This negative impact brought a conflict to the neighbourhood. Sharing benefits of the restaurant and the community is the tactic to reduce the negative impact.

Chapter 6

Phuket Old Town: Efforts of a Community to
Protect Sino-Portuguese Identity in Urbanism

Urbanism is a kind of social space, as discussed in Chapter 2. Urban areas are tied with globalisation, which seem detached from the local settings, and express nothing about the locality in which they are situated. The urban areas feel the impact of the global flows more than rural areas. Consequently, local identity is threatened more in urban than in rural areas.

Urbanisation is not only making permanently changes by extending outwards and swallowing up the surrounding landscapes, but is also creating links between cities around the world. Urbanisation has diminished the local identity of place by introducing uniqueness into those cities. It has simultaneously introduced the global identity into that place. Places become what Relph[1] called 'placelessness', a losing identity of place.

Local identity in urbanism is therefore a relevant domain in which to develop the central argument of this dissertation. This chapter explores Thai grassroots concern to protect their identity in the urban context. It starts with the discussion of Thai identity in urbanism. Then, the case study of Phuket is explored to understand the efforts of its people in protecting the identity of their town against the standardisation that seems to flow from urbanisation world-wide.

Thai Identity in Urbanism

Urban areas in Thailand are rapidly changing and expanding, as if they are 'in a hurry'. A danger of rapid transformation is that buildings and places are transformed from the distinctive cultural definitions into the placelessness. The key factors in the urban transformation are: needs of modernisation, increasing of population, and demands of tourism. The complication of the key factors is that the government policies focusing in needs of development while edging the impact on natural and cultural heritage. The result is that urban areas in Thailand are loosing their local identity.

Bangkok has almost lost its identity as the 'Venice of the East'. The Chao Phraya River is no longer important as the central vein of the city –as *Mae Nam* or mother of water. The river and its branches of *klongs* or canals used to be the major system for

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[1] Edward Relph, <u>Place and Placelessness</u> (London: Pion, 1976). cited in Tim Cresswell, <u>Place: A Short Introduction</u> (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 2004).

water transportation of the city. The system has been partly filled up to build roads and partly being used as drainage of the metropolis. The amphibious character of Bangkok is replaced by 'forest of concrete'.

Similar to Bangkok, Chiang Mai's identity is fragmented. The local beliefs have been substituted by global trends like economic globalisation and westernisation. The morphological identity of the city is no longer in relation to the local Lanna beliefs; which are in the relation with the human body or the horoscope-based faith of *Maha Tak Sa*, a manuscript about the signs of horoscope. Komson Teeraparbwong[2] noted that the square shape of Chiang Mai city has connotative meanings, indeed represents more that 'a square'. It suggests the traditional belief in the model of spatial configuration, which is different from the current urban morphology that purely responds to the contemporary lifestyle. Chiang Mai is losing its identity through urbanisation, new uses, and global urban fabrics. The city is now re-identified by three-layer ring roads, which is distinguished from the traditional morphology.

Different from Bangkok and Chiang Mai, the urbanisation of Phuket did not originate in the town's historic district; but from the marginal coasts around the island. The coasts were developed for tourism, whereas the old town of Phuket served as the location for the administrative functions of government and business agencies. Resulting from the tourism boom in 1980s, there was a high demand housing, commercial and resort development. The land price in Phuket increased rapidly. Land-ownership in Phuket has been transferred from the local people to outside investors. Phuket is now not only the prime location for international business enterprises; but also the ideal place for retired people around the world. Doosadee Thaitakoo[3] noted that urbanisation, originated from tourism, has been the major threat for Phuket's cultural identity.

Phuket town is a historic district with a distinctive identity. The identity of Phuket town is definitely part of Thai identity, even if it appears differently. Phuket is a province of Thailand. Due to its remote location and its different culture, Phuket town identity is more similar to towns in Strait of Malacca, a narrow starch of water between the Malaysian Peninsular and Sumatra Island of Indonesia, than to other towns in Thailand. The town identity is recognised as 'Sino-Portuguese', which is discussed in Section 6.3. However, there were many studies aimed at conserving Phuket town during 1980 to 1990. Trungjai Buranasomphob[4] noticed that none of the studies before 1990 had become implemented, reflecting the wider situation in which 'Thailand never had the experience of preserving historic district that was more complicated than restoring a building'.

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[2] Komson Teeraparpwong, "A Square Is Not Square? -Fragmented Chiang Mai Urbanism," Internatinal Symposium on Architecture in the Land of Suvarnabhumi (Bangkok: Faculty of Architecture, Silpakorn University, 2007).

[3] Doosadee Thaitakoo, "Phuket: Urban Conservation versus Tourism," Cultural Identity and Urban Change in Southeast Asia: Interpretative Essays, eds. Marc Askew and Willia S. Logan (Geelong: Deakin University Press, 1994).

[4] Trungjai Buranasomphob, "Phuket, a Livable Tourictic City," (2006), 8.

Fortunately, the Association of Siamese Architects (ASA) recognised the practical attempts of people in Phuket's community to conserve their old town and to protect the town identity. So, ASA gave its Architectural Conservation Award to the town in 1990. This was a significant recognition of the town identity, which resulted in the declaration of the environmental conservation zone by Ministry of Science, Technology and Environment[5] in 1994. The attempts from 'top-down' should be complemented by the efforts from 'bottom-up'. Therefore, the effort of Phuket people to protect the identity of their town is the excellent case study of the conservation of Thai identity in urbanism.

Phuket: the Setting

Phuket is the biggest island of Thailand, approximately 543 square kilometres.[6] It is located on the shoulder of the Malayan peninsula, on the west coast of southern Thailand. Phuket Island is divided into three districts: Muang, Thalang, and Kathu (Figure 67). These three districts also cover some surrounding islands.

Figure 67 showing Phuket Island and its districts
Source: modified from Google Earth

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[5] After the governmental reorganisation, the environmental zone is under the supervision of Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment.

[6] รายงานการสำรวจโบราณสถานเมืองภูเก็ต (ฝ่ายอนุรักษ์โบราณสถาน, กรมศิลปากร, 2530), 2.
[Report of Archaeological Survey of Muang Phuket (Archaeological Conservation Division, Fine Art Department, 1987), 2.]

The local people inhabiting in Phuket are Buddhist Thais, Muslim Malays, and Hokkien Sino-Thais.[7] The Buddhist Thais mostly settled in Thalang. The district was the area ruled by southern Thais under the immediate control of the royal court.[8] The Muslim Malays and sea gypsies mostly settled around the island, particularly on the seaside. The Hokkien Sino-Thais mostly settled in Muang, the district of present Phuket town; and Kathu, the district that is famous with its vegetarian festival celebration.[9]

From a small settlement located on the eastern part of the island, Tha Rua became an active port as it is naturally protected from tropical monsoon. It was ruled separately from Thalang, or Chalang or Salang at that time. There was a Portuguese quarter in Tha Rua with a market street composed of brick shop-houses.[10] After many Burmese attacks, the town centre has been established at the existing location closed to Tha Rua, where was the rich tin source. Poket or Phuket became the principal town on the island in the second half of the nineteenth century; and Chinese was the major population of the town.[11] Phuket later was developed more than Thalang and other towns in the area.[12]

Phuket was well-known from its mineral resources than its natural qualities. Tin mining and trading were the main activities, which attracted workers and traders to the island. Chinese miners and entrepreneurs from China and Malaysia arrived to work for tin mines scattered over the island. Malays also came for the same purpose. Portuguese, Dutch, French, and English approached the town as traders accordingly.[13] The successful tin-mining Chinese families built their houses and shop-houses in the Sino-European style. These buildings are still appreciated today. George Town in Penang was the model of development. Some of buildings in Phuket were designed or supervised by architects from Penang.

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[7] Erik Cohen, <u>The Chinese Vegetatian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island</u> (Bangkok: White Lotus, 2001) 15.

[8] <u>รายงานการสำรวจโบราณสถานเมืองภูเก็ต</u>, 9-12.

  [Report of Archaeological Survey of Muang Phuket, 9-12.]

[9] Ibid., 6-9. and Cohen, <u>The Chinese Vegetatian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island</u> 16.

[10] Doosadee Thaitakoo, "Phuket: Urban Conservation versus Tourism," 138.

[11] Siam Society, <u>Old Phuket: Historical Retrospect of Junkceylon Island</u>, 2nd ed. (Bangkok: Siam Society, 1986) 169-171. quoted in Doosadee Thaitakoo, "Phuket: Urban Conservation Versus Tourism," 138-139.

[12] สมเด็จฯกรมพระยา ดำรงราชานุภาพ และ สมเด็จฯเจ้าฟ้า นริศรานุวัดติวงศ์, <u>สาส์นสมเด็จ เล่ม18</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: องค์การค้าคุรุสภา, 2505) 194.

[Somdet Krom Phraya Damrongrajanuphab and Somdet Chaofa Narisaranuwatiwongse, <u>Sarn Somdet Lem 18</u> (Bangkok: Kurusapha, 1962) 194] cited in Doosadee Thaitakoo, "Phuket: Urban Conservation Versus Tourism," 139.

[13] Preeyachanan Saisakares, "The Influences on the Architecture of Phuket Old Town," Chulalongkorn University, 2004, 18-36. and Trungjai Buranasomphob, "Phuket, a Livable Tourictic City," 2.

After the sharp recession of the world price of tin in 1980s, local tin production of Phuket also declined. Many tin mines were closed down. The former mines near the sea were replaced by prawn farming, while the in-land ones turning into rubber tree orchard.[14]

From 1970s, Phuket started to be famous in its natural settings and attractive tropical climate among backpackers and youth tourists.[15] The island, then, became a prime destination and also a hub of tourist industry in the south of Thailand. In order to support the tourism industry, Phuket Airport has been upgraded to be an international airport during 1980s.[16] Later, the amount of tourist increase every year except in 2005, the year after tsunami. But, Phuket tourism has recovered since 2006.

For tourism, Phuket is well-known as the 'Pearl of the Andaman' through its natural resources: turquoise sea, powdery sand, limestone caves, tropical palms, and rich marine life. This makes number of tourist in Phuket increase every year except in 2005 after tsunami attack in December 2004. In 2007, tourism in Phuket contributed more than 94 million baht into the national revenue[17]. Along with natural tourism, Phuket has a potential to develop cultural tourism. The old town of Phuket is the place containing both tangible and intangible cultural resources. The tangible resources are its buildings and structures, as well as the townscape. The intangible resources are the local cuisines, festivals, arts, performances, and costumes. These resources are the cultural assets of the island.

Related to tourism, the property market in Phuket is in rapid growth. New projects are both tourism-associated facilities and housing estates. The tourism-associated facilities are hotels, service apartments, commercial centres, and conventional centres such as the project of Royal Phuket Marina, a project for high-ended investor who love yachting and sailing (Figure 68). The housing estates are focusing in international investors and immigrated people from other provinces. High-end houses and second homes after retirement are the demands of the international investors, while low-medium price apartments and townhouses are the targets of the immigrating people from other provinces. High price and limitation of land are the key factors for the new projects. Vertical expansion of the projects is developed for higher returns. The height of building is controlled by laws and regulations. Due to laws and regulations, building height is more strictly controlled in coastal area than in town area. Development projects trend to be in the town area. Phuket Town, therefore, is now threatened by high-rise projects.

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[14] William Warren, A Guide to Phuket (Bangkok: Asia Books, 1987) 25.

[15] Erik Cohen, Thai Tourism: Hilltribes, Islands and Open-Ended Prostitution (Bangkok: White Lotus, 1996) 179-213.

[16] Cohen, The Chinese Vegetatian Festival in Phuket: Religion, Ethnicity and Tourism on a Southern Thai Island 15-16.

[17] Pakarang[pseud.], "Interview Niran Kalayanamit, Phuket's Governor," Phuket Bulletin 2008: 26.

Figure 68 showing a high-ended development project in Phuket
Source: Royal Phuket Marina

For future, Phuket is planned to be a special economical zone, and also a global hub of tourism. The island will have international business connections through mega projects including Phuket Bay Cyber City and Ocean Resort Project (figure 69), and the Free Trade Zone Project at Phuket Deep Sea Port. The Phuket Bay Cyber City and Ocean Resort Project has been initiated by the Central Government. It will be completed within five years if it approved.[18] Recently, the first Phuket international exhibition and conference centre was launched officially; and the first exhibition will be held in December 2008.

Figure 69 showing Phuket Bay Cyber City and Ocean Resort Project
Source: Niran Kalayanamit[19], Governor of Phuket

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[18] "Cabinet to Review B63bn Ao Phuket Project," Phuket Gazette 2 November 2004.

[19] Pakarang[pseud.], "Interview Niran Kalayanamit, Phuket's Governor," 27.

For Phuket, tourism and development are definitely the future direction. Conservation of both natural and cultural heritage seems to be far behind. Up to 2008, there has been no dramatic measure taken in favour of conservation, particularly for cultural heritage. Nevertheless the identity of Phuket is still obvious in the old town, even if the island is now challenged by tourism and development. This identity is the source of values and meanings, particularly for local people. The old town is a potential cultural resource for tourism. The town is currently served for provincial administrations, and commercial centre of the island. Now, the town is confronting mega projects and if it loses its identity, Phuket will join the examples of Relph's placelessness.

The Identity of Phuket Old Town

Phuket town is one of the historic cities on the Strait of Malacca. The town has a cultural identity because of its historical development based on trading, mining, and cultural exchanges between East and West. Nichols[20] called Phuket town a 'melting pot', in which many cultural elements have merged to form a unique identity. The identity indicates the close relationship between Phuket and the towns in Malaysia and Singapore such as George Town in Penang, the old town of Melaka, and the China town of Singapore.[21] Both George Town and the old city of Melaka were inscribed in the World Heritage List in 2008.

The identity of Phuket town is rooted in the Baba- Peranakan culture, which is the local ways of life. Baba-Peranakan is a unique identity developed from the inter-marriage experience. Baba means sons of Chinese immigrant father and native mother; while daughters of these couples are called Nyonya. The identity also builds on a mixture of Buddhism and Confucianism. The term Peranakan, which means 'born in local' in Malay, is commonly used in Singapore and Malaysia than in Phuket.[22]

The identity of Phuket town is seen in the integrity of local Thai, Chinese, and Malay identities; with foreign European identity, which have endowed the town with a specific multicultural heritage in both tangible and intangible forms. It can be seen in townscape, architecture, customs, traditions and cuisine. The identity makes Phuket town become distinctive on one hand; but sharing with other places in Thailand on the other hand. The identity of Phuket town represents the cultural identity of Phuket people in physical world, which imprint on the architecture and urban form.

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[20] Fiona Nichols, Phuket (Bangkok: Asia Books, 1985).

[21] Preeyachanan Saisakares, "The Influences on the Architecture of Phuket Old Town," 37-58.

[22] Monchaya Suebpong, "Dr Kosol and Peranakan Culture," Phuket Bulletin 7.77 (2008): 23. and Interview with Rudee Phumiputhavorn, Teacher, Satree Phuket School, Phuket, 7 October 2008.

For architecture, the identity of Phuket can be seen in its character of shop-houses in the old town. Doosadee Thaitakoo[23] described main features in the following passage:

> All of them were two-storey shop-houses covered with the gable roofs which run parallel to the frontage. The main elements of facades are the openings in the form of arches that were placed in between the order of pilasters and decorated beams which combined to produce delicate facades. Some of these structures, for example, the Charter Bank and the Aekwanich Company (built in 1907), have been made much more distinctive by their verandahs or arcades…these extensions was to protect the pedestrians from the monsoonal rains that fall in Phuket eight months a year (Figure 70). This style of shop-house architecture has been characterised as the 'Sino-Portuguese' style.[24]
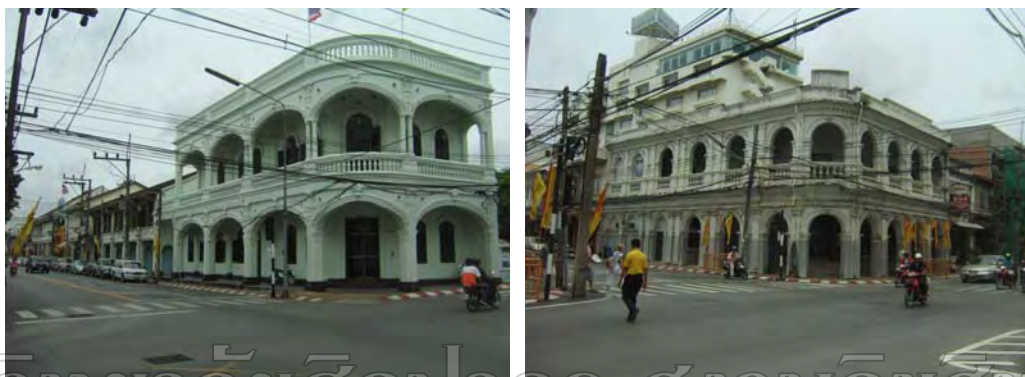
Figure 70 showing Aekwanich Company Building (left)
and the former Charter Bank Building (right)
Source: author, 21 September 2008

The 'Sino-Portuguese' architecture is not only the term for the buildings that show the mixture of Chinese and Portuguese influences; but is also used for the colonial European style buildings that were built by Chinese or Chinese-Malay labours during colonisation period. Doosadee[25] also noticed that there is no surviving evidence of original Portuguese style in Phuket because the Portuguese community was destroyed by the Burmese in 1809; so she uses the term 'Phuket style' for the shop-houses in Phuket were inspired by Baroque style with verandas and arcades (Figure 71).

[23] Doosadee Thaitakoo, "Phuket: Urban Conservation versus Tourism," 140.
[24] Ibid., 140-141.
[25] Ibid., 141.
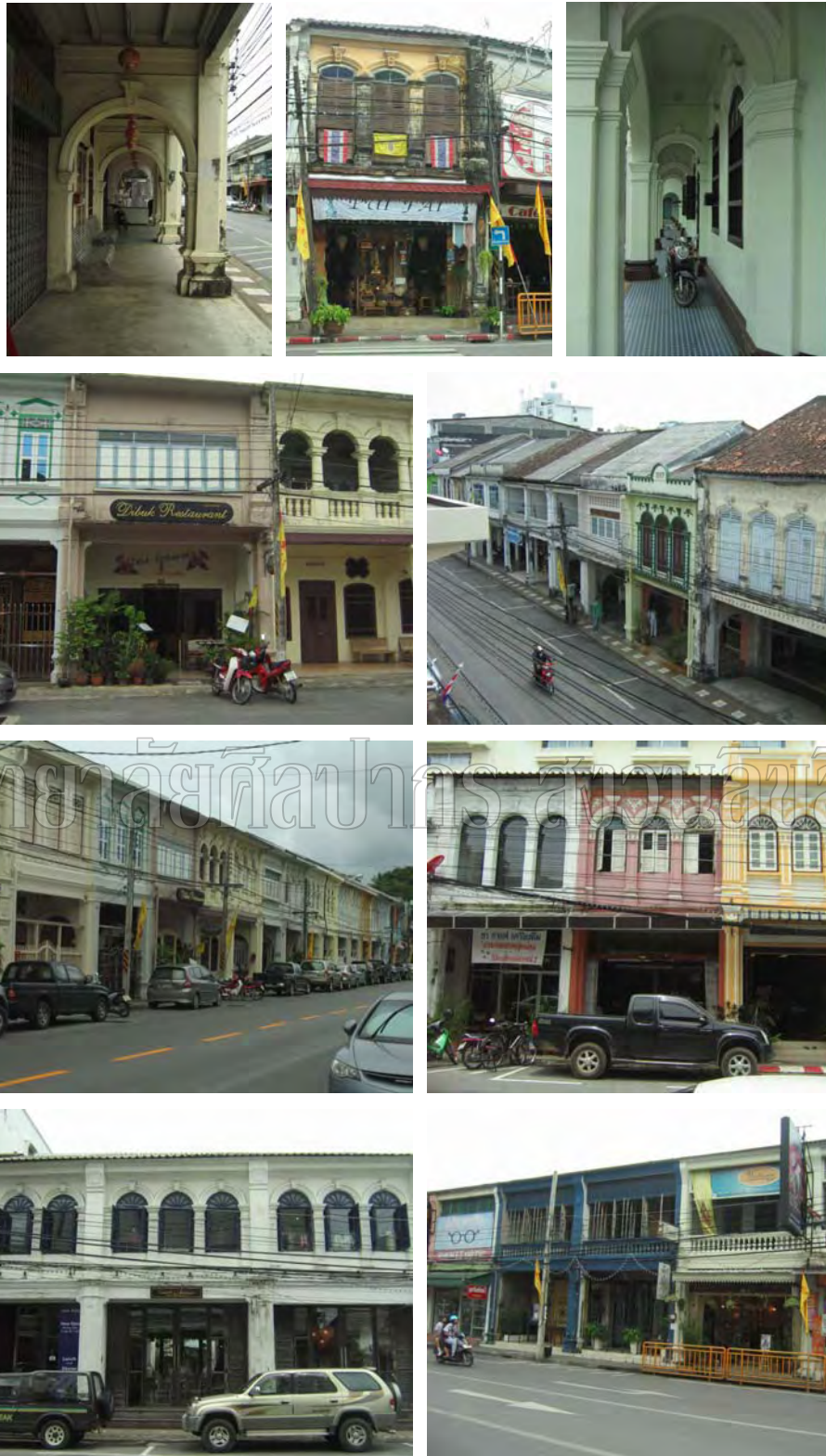
Figure 71 showing buildings in Phuket Town
Source: author, 21 -22 September 2008

Figure 72 showing buildings in Georgetown, Penang, Malaysia
Source: http://www.buten.net/max/my2001/penang/index_penang.html
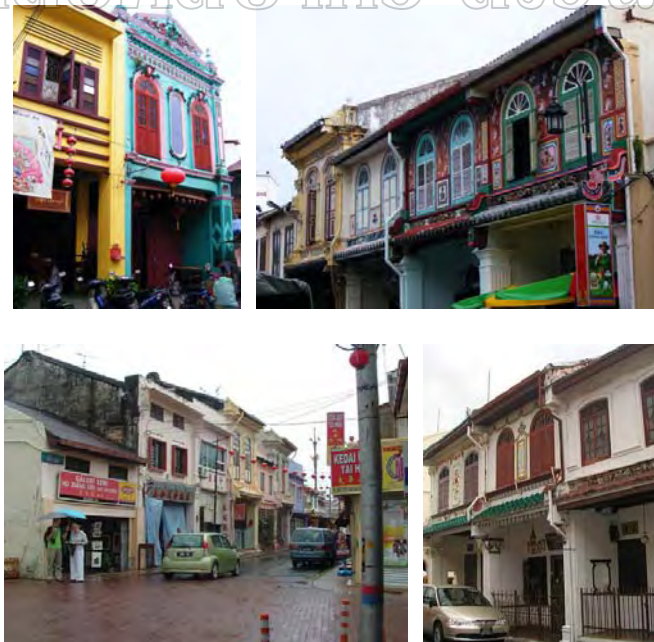
Figure 73 showing buildings in Melaka, Malaysia
Source: http://realtravel.com/melaka-malaysia-photos-d20121-7.html

Pensupha Sukata[26], a European-architectural historian, noted that 'Sino-Portuguese' style is a combination of Chinese, European, and Islamic identity. Preeyachanan Saisakares[27], an architect, suggested that the term 'Sino-European' is more appropriate for Phuket town as the sharing characteristics with other towns colonised by British. However, buildings in Phuket town are remarkable in terms of aesthetic and wisely blending the Chinese and the European characteristics of architecture together. The buildings share architectural characters with other towns such as George Town, Penang (Figure 72) and Malacca (Figure 73).

Old shop-houses in Phuket are deeper than contemporary shop-houses. These buildings are dominated by Chinese culture. The buildings were originally one or two stories, but some of them have been modified into three or four stories. They were built with brick and mortar. The thick brick bearing wall, which makes the buildings look massive, is to support the heavy load of the roof. The original roof is pitched roof, topped with Chinese baked clay tiles. Doors and windows are perforated wooden panels. There are different decorative details on the front façade, which Yongtanit Pimonsathean[28] classified into four styles:

- **Early Shop-house Style** is a low two-storied building without elaborate ornaments. It usually has one or two timber shuttered windows. There are two massive columns on the ground floor and the original door used to be timber-framed with timber panels (Figure 74, left). Later, these timber doors have been replaced with aluminium or steel materials.
- **Chinese Style** is also a low two-storied shop-house with Chinese ornaments. The remarkable features are timber door, windows, and bat-shaped vents at the ground floor façade. The name of the shop in Chinese characters is usually placed on the façade above the floor beam. The upper floor windows are timber frame with panelled-louvered shutters (Figure 74, right).
- **Neo-Classical Style** is mostly found in Phuket old town. It is the combination of Chinese and European architectural features. Door, windows, and vents on the ground floor façade are in Chinese style; while European classical architectural elements such as transom, pilasters, segmental arch, and keystone being found on the upper floor façade (Figure 75, left).
- **Art-Deco Style** is the latest style, which has been developed after the World War II. The motifs and ornaments are simplified from the Classical elements. Doors and windows are in rectangular or other geometric forms (Figure 75,

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[26] เพ็ญสุภา สุขคตะ, "ชิโน-โปรตุเกส หมายเหตุ ไทย-จีน-แขก-ฝรั่ง," <u>เยี่ยมเรือนเยือนอดีต</u> (กรุงเทพฯ: ร่วมด้วยช่วยกัน, 2543) 18-27.

   [Pensupha Sukhata, "Chino-Portuguese Remarks of Thai-Chinese-Muslim-Westerners," <u>Visiting Old Houses</u> (Bangkok: Ruam Douy Chouy Kan, 2000) 18-27.]

[27] Preeyachanan Saisakares, "The Influences on the Architecture of Phuket Old Town."

[28] Yongtanit Pimonsathean, "Local Initiatives for Old Town Conservation Planning: An Experience of Muang Phuket, Thailand," <u>Conservation and Revitalization of Vernacular Architecture and ICOMOS-CIAV Annual Meeting 1997</u> (Bangkok, Thailand: Department of Fine Arts, 1997), 240-242.

right). Some buildings are modified in to three or four stories; but most of them have been reinforced by concrete structure.

Figure 74 showing Early Shop-house Style (left) and Chinese Style (right)
Source: modified from Yongtanit Pimonsathean[29]
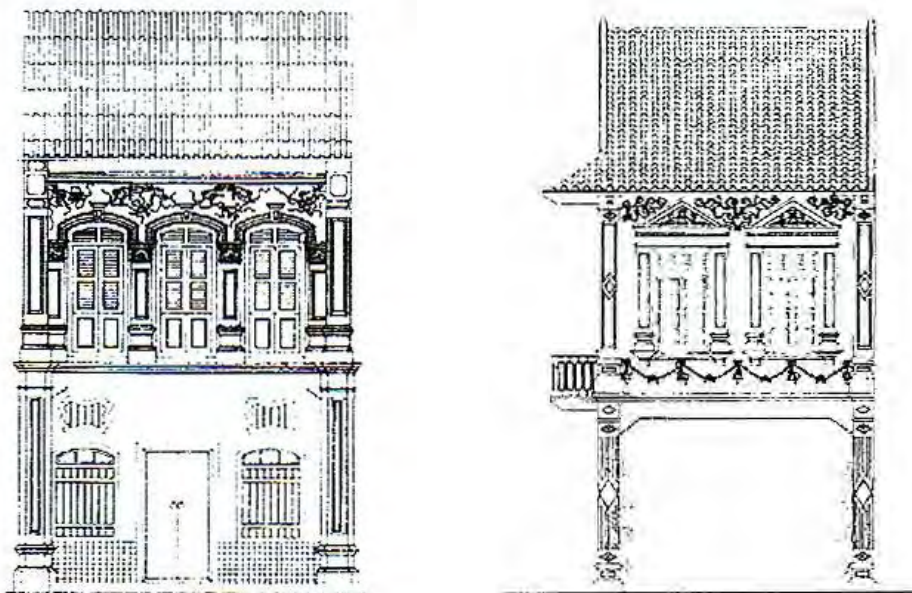
Figure 75 showing Neo-Classical Style (left) and Art-Deco Style (right)
Source: modified from Yongtanit Pimonsathean[30]

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[29] Ibid., 240-241.
[30] Ibid., 241 .

inner court

well

shop section

living section

up

up service section

colonnaded walkway

GROUND FLOOR PLAN

bedroom | living space | void | living space or storage | void | down | maid section

down
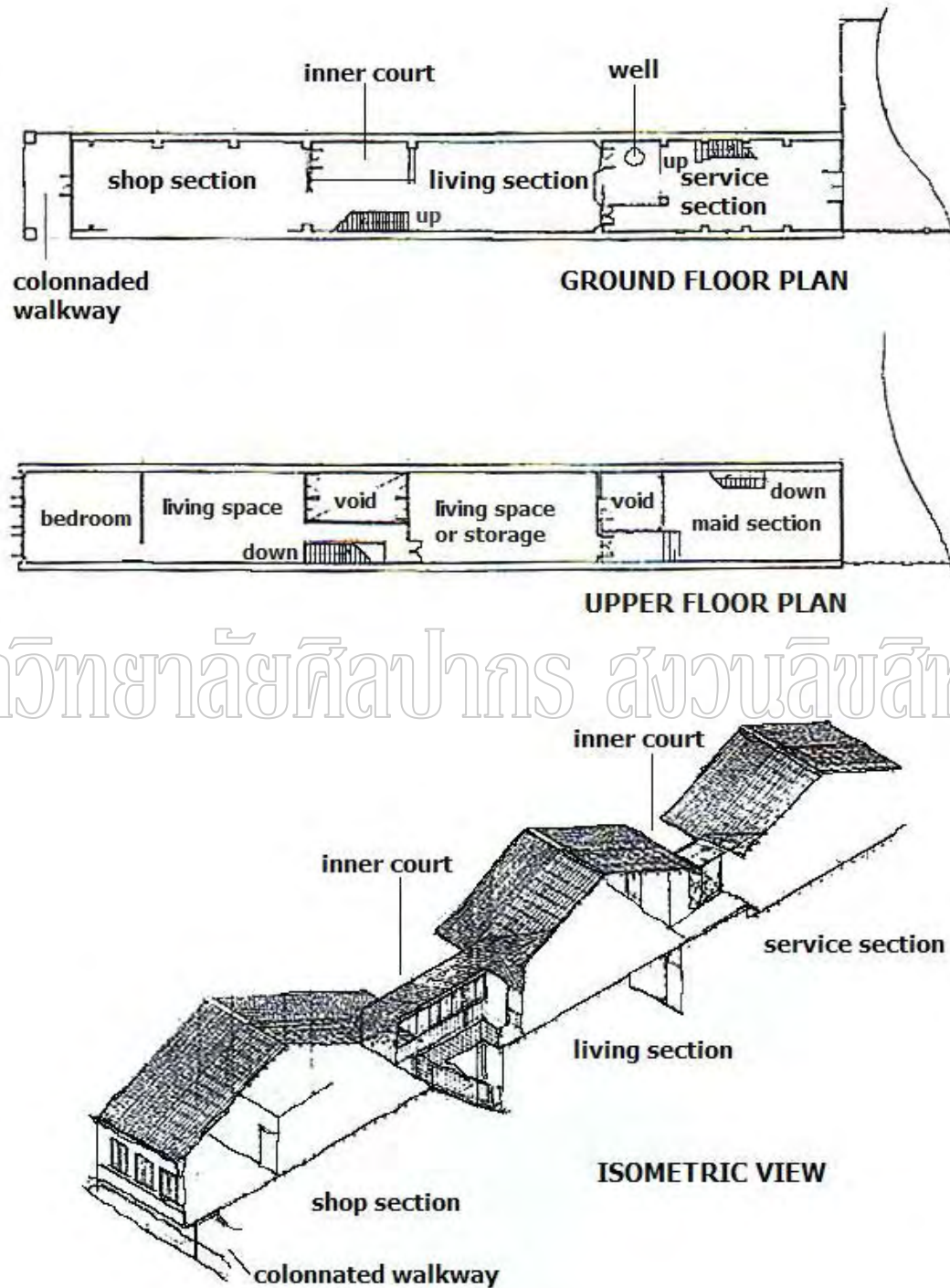
UPPER FLOOR PLAN

มหาวิทยาลัยศิลปากร สงวนลิขสิทธิ์

inner court

inner court

service section

living section

ISOMETRIC VIEW

shop section

colonnated walkway

Figure 76 showing the ground floor plan, upper floor plan, and isometric view
of shop-houses in Phuket Old Town
Source: modified from Yongtanit Pimonsathean[31]

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[31] Ibid., 243.

Most of the shop-houses are divided into three sections: shop, living, and service section (Figure 76). Due to the oblong-shape of the shop-houses, there is an inner court at each section. The inner court provides natural sunlight and ventilation. There is also a round-shaped well at the inner court of the service section. The well supplies clean underground water for household use.

Beyond the shop-houses, *Ang Mor Lao* is a 'Sino-Portuguese' architectural structure in Phuket (Figure 77). It is a two-storied mansion in European style mixed with Chinese beliefs. The mansion is built in brick and mortar with Chinese tiled roof. It is decorated with Roman styled columns and arches. The façade is ornamented by Chinese styled stuccos and sculptures. In side, the mansion always has *Chim Chae*, the inner courtyard for natural light and ventilation. The interior decoration is distinctly Chinese.

Figure 77 showing the exterior and the interior of *Ang Mor Lao* in Phuket
Source: author, 21 - 22 September 2008

Phuket town was developed by having Penang's town planning as the model of modernisation. The modern town plan laid out in a grid distinguishes Phuket town from the organic pattern of other historic towns in Thailand (Figure 78). The Phuket town layout indicates the application of European geometric patterns to settlements in Thailand, with local characteristics such as the long narrow plots for shop-houses.

This urban development is distinctiveness for Thailand during the period of European colonisation.

Phuket urban form also contributes the meaning that these people declaring in their space. The urban form indicates an achievement of its people in presenting of the local history and the local culture in physical expression. It represents multicultural trading, which forged from the mercantile and exchanges of Thai, Chinese, Malay, and European colonial powers.

Figure 78 showing Phuket town from an old photo took from a plane but partially blocked by the wing of the plane (left) and from a digital source (right)
Source: Book for 100 Years Anniversary of Phuket College (left) and Google Earth (right)

Phuket town identity has been developed through time. The identity is a source of meaning and value for the community. It is also closely linked with intangible heritage, which is still the ways of life in the community. Although Phuket town identity is different from Thai main identity, it is part of the Thai identity.

Today, Phuket has been threatened by development and tourism. Luxurious resorts and spas, housing estates, and international standard golf courses are expanding into tropical forests and rubber tree orchards. Marinas and pool villa condominiums are taking over mangroves. Phuket town has been changed from a quiet mineral town to be a famous tourist destination. New buildings and infrastructures are introduced into the old town without appropriate plan. Mega stores and shopping centres are replacing Sino-European shop-houses. These are the unsustainable development, and also impair the identity of Phuket. Within these circumstances, the identity of Phuket town is now facing a dilemma. On one hand, it is losing through the process of development; on the other hand, it is a potential for cultural tourism. However, there are some measures of the central government to conserve the identity of Phuket. This is discussed in the next topic.

Figure 79 showing new buildings, signage and wirings in Phuket Town
Source: author, 11 October 2008

'Top-Down' Measures to Conserve Identity of Phuket Old Town

Phuket Town, as discussed, has the unique identity. The identity is still perceived through the townscape and its architectural forms. This section aims to explore 'top-down' measures for conserving the identity of the town. These measures include legislative frameworks and the role of Phuket Municipality dealing with the identity.

Regarding legislative frameworks, there are four major laws that are concerned with the identity of Phuket Town. These laws are general framework for architectural heritage conservation in Thailand that being applied to conserve the identity of Phuket Town. Nevertheless, the laws are not specific framework dealing with conservation of historic district in urban area as in the case of Phuket Town.

The *Environment Act* is the only effective legal measure to conserve the identity of Phuket Town. The Act was passed by the Thai national government in 1992. The main purpose is to conserve natural resources, but cultural resources are also mentioned as a part of the environment. Under the Act, environmental management plans must be prepared by local agencies. Before then, a ministerial regulation has been used for immediate controls.

In 1994, it was agrees that the German government through the Deutsche Gesellshaft Fur Techniche Zusammenaarbeit would provide aid to help Thai local agencies in preparing the local environmental management plan, so Phuket Town had been proposed as a pilot project.[32] This resulted in a Ministerial Regulation in 1994 declared a 70-acre section of the old town of Phuket as an environmental conservation zone of cultural heritage significance. The environmental conservation zone covers eight roads and two *soi* [lanes]: Dibuk, Thalang, Phang Nga, Phuket, Rasada, Ranong, Yaowarat, Krabi, Soi Romanee, and Soi Soon Uthit (Figure 80 and 81). Within the zone, a twelve-metre limit was set on the height of buildings, and various other guidelines were restricted for the restoration of existing structures such as floor area ratio, and ground space ratio. The Ministerial Regulation is a short term control, which in this case remains valid only until 30 September 2009. According to the Act, local law is required to control the local environment after the expiry of the Regulation. Up to November 2008, there is no initiation from local authorities for a local law giving specific control over Phuket's cultural environment.
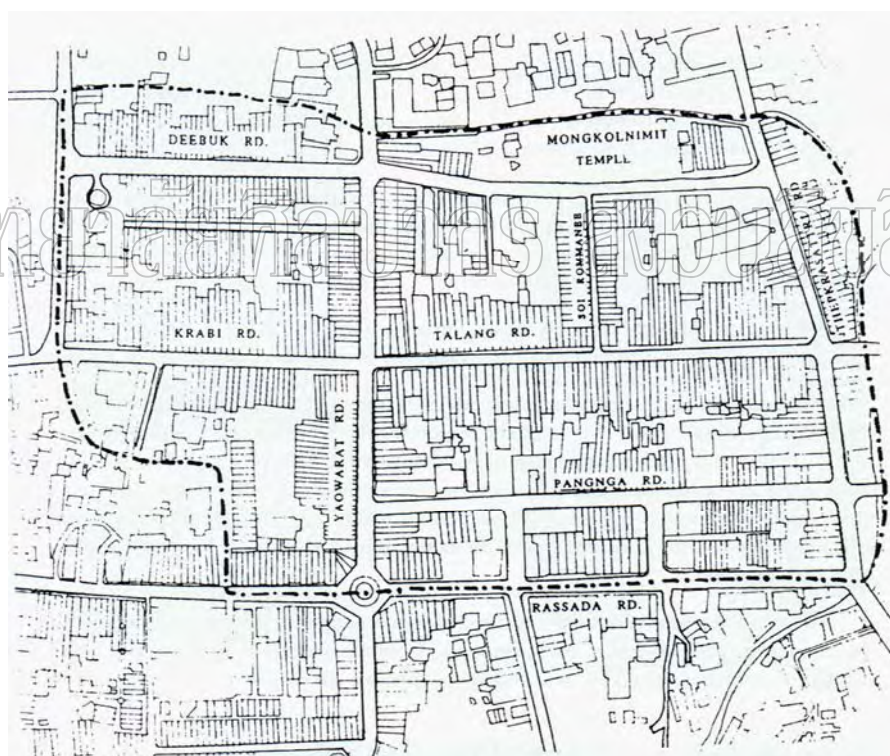
Figure 80 showing the conservation zone of Phuket Town
Source: Yongtanit Pimonsathean[33]

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[32] "รายงานกิจการเทศบาลเมืองภูเก็ต," บรรณาธิการ, กองวิชาการและแผนงาน เทศบาลเมืองภูเก็ต (2543).
  [Report of Phuket Municipality," ed., Academic and Planning Division Phuket Municipality (2000).]
[33] Yongtanit Pimonsathean, "Local Initiatives for Old Town Conservation Planning: An Experience of Muang Phuket, Thailand," 239.

Figure 81 showing the conservation zone of Phuket Town
Source: modified from Google Earth, February 2004

The *City Planning Act* is the national law dealing with land uses. The Act was legislated in 1975, and was modified in 1992. The Act used to cover only the development in provincial urban areas, but now is totally applied to all areas. Deriving from the Act, a 'Ministerial Regulation of Phuket Island' has been in force since 2005. The main purpose of the Regulations is to control Phuket Island's land use of after Tsunami in 2004. According to the Regulation, there are two conservation zones for Thai cultural heritage on Phuket Island, these being the residence of Chao Phraya Wichit and *Khok Chana Phama* [Victory to Burmese Hill]. Both zones are in Thalang District. The old town of Phuket is classified as a high-density commercial and residential zone (Figure 82). Therefore, the Regulation allows the land in the old town being used for commerce, residence, tourism, and governmental administration. It is declared in red colour in Figure 83.

The *Building Control Act* is the national law dealing with architecture in terms of safety, sanitation, and conservation. The Act was legislated in 1979, and was modified in 1992. Derived from this Act, a ministerial regulation could be legislated to give immediate control while waiting for a set of municipal regulations to be approved as the local law. The municipal regulation could control architectural details of the old town such as style, colour, materials, height, setback, uses, modification, demolition, relocation, and reconstruction. At the time of writing (November 2008) there is no ministerial regulation and municipal regulation for specific for buildings in the town.
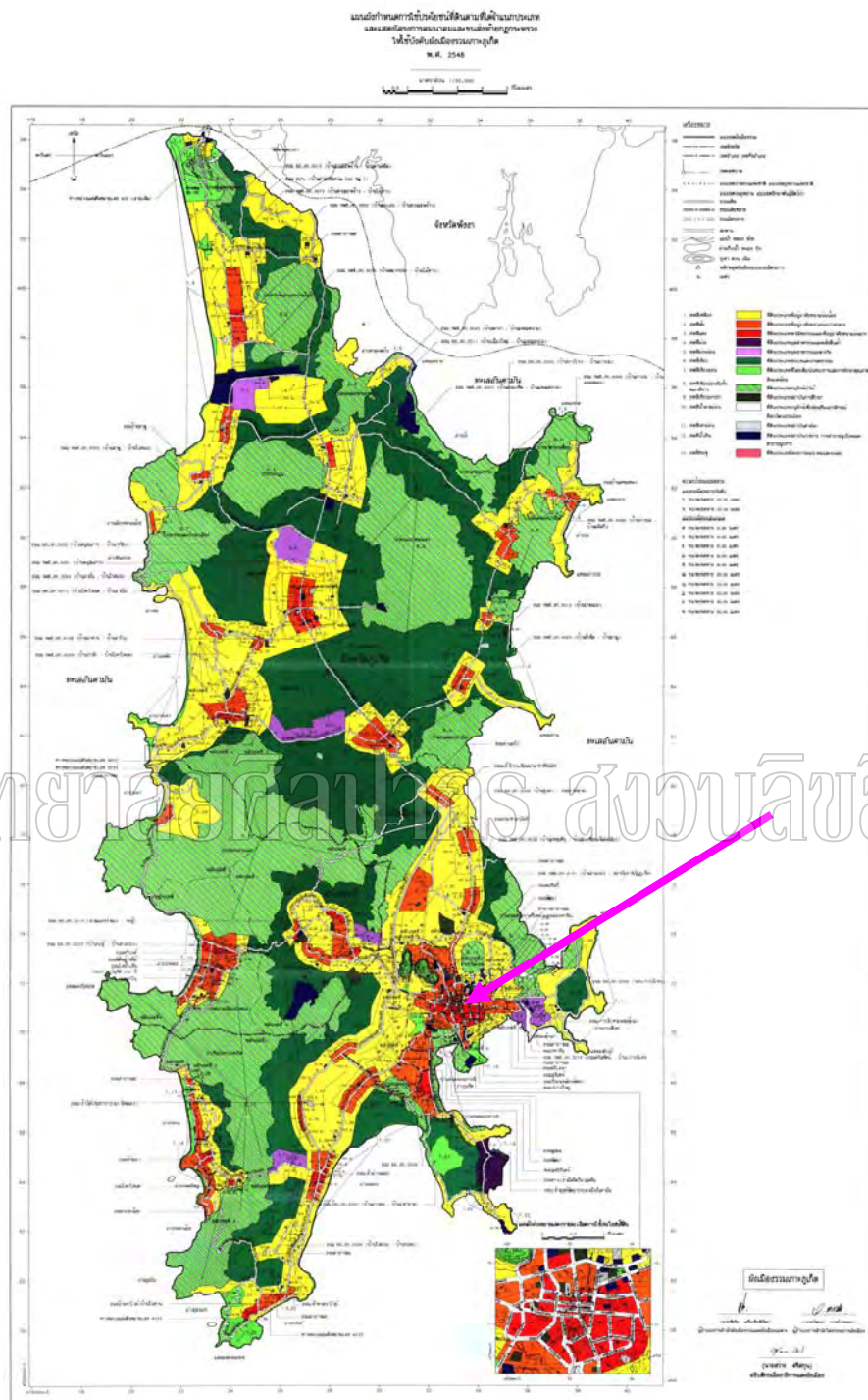
Figure 82 showing the urban planning and land use of Phuket according to
the Ministerial Regulation of Phuket Island 2005, the Red Zone is planned to
be the high density of commercial and residential area
Source: Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning
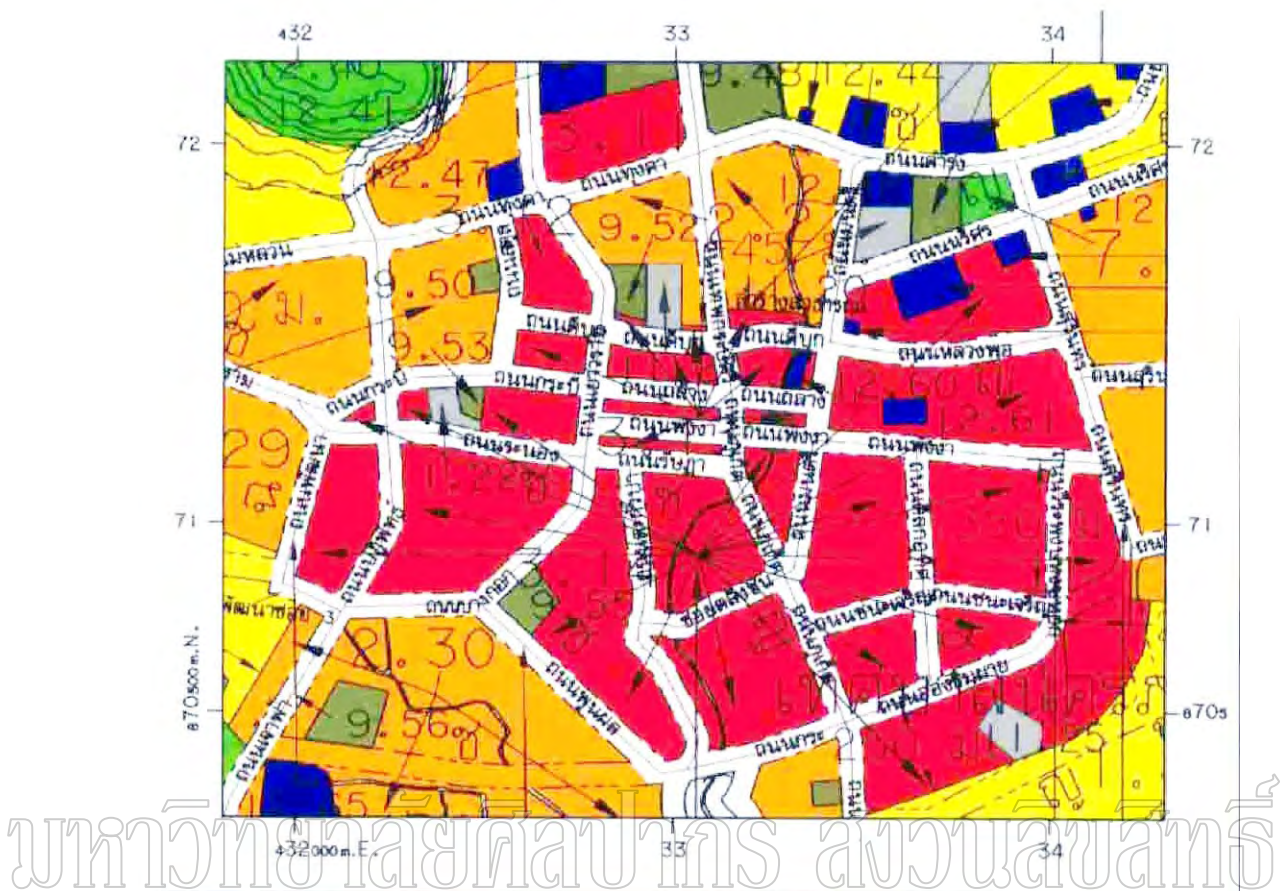
Figure 83 showing the Ministerial Regulation from the City Planning Act allows the land in the old town being used for commerce, residence, tourism, and governmental administration; which is indicated in red.
Source: Department of Public Works and Town & Country Planning

The *Monument Act 1961*, revised 1992, is the national law to empower the Fine Art Department (FAD) to declare qualified buildings or structures to be of 'national significance'. In 1987, the FAD conducted a survey and documentation of monuments and sites in old Phuket Town but a decision was reached that the town was not of national significance.[34] So the controls provided in the Act have not yet been applied to the area. It is important to note that the Act is based on the Venice Charter, which is concerned only with the tangible quality of places. The Act, therefore, is more useful for dead monuments and sites. In case of Phuket Town, which is a living urban heritage, the Act misses the important intangible quality of the place.

Phuket Municipality is in the 'middle position': that is between the central authorities and the local people. The municipality lacks absolute authority to establish a financial incentive system such as tax deduction to the owners who take good care of heritage

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[34] รายงานการสำรวจโบราณสถานเมืองภูเก็ต.
  [Report of Archaeological Survey of Muang Phuket.]

buildings. The municipality supports the conservation programs more in official images rather than in direct practices. Official long-term conservation plans are difficult to create as the term of municipal councillors is only five years. By contrast, short-term development projects receive more attention as successes by the councillors at their next election.

Reviewing these 'top-down' measures, it is clear that there are many gaps to fill. The Acts provide the broad concepts for conserving the identity of Phuket Town but specific guidelines for implementation are still missing. This makes the community in Phuket town trying to protect its identity in their own ways. The efforts of Phuket Town community to protect their identity are discussed in the next section.

Community's Efforts to Protect Identity of Phuket Old Town

As there are no specific guidelines for the conservation of Phuket Town, people in the town have to manage their place following their own personal considerations. Although the people have the same goal originating from self-awareness and pride in their town, they have managed their place differently in their attempt to keep the identity of the town. This section aims to explore what the individual people or groups of people in the town have done to protect the identity of Phuket Town.

The community of Phuket Town is among the few local communities in Thailand that has a keen awareness of its local identity. This can be seen in the strength of the Phuket Historic Interest Group (PHIG), which was established in 1980. The group was formed by local scholars and businessmen in order to collect historical information about Phuket Town. PHIG, with assistances from various institutions such as Asian Institute of Technology (AIT) and Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), initiated the Conservation and Development Plan for the old town in 1981, and then a proposal to promote cultural tourism in 1989.[35] The community received the conservation prize from Association of Siamese Architect (ASA) in 1990[36] and was recognised as the 'best group in conserving Thai architectural heritage' in 1997, the official year for Thai heritage conservation.[37] In 2000, the community also received the prize of *Muang Eakaluk* (the unique town) from Government Saving Bank.[38] However, the PHIG's activities decreased since then as its membership be ageing and lacked effective management.

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[35] Phuket Province, Tourism Authority of Thailand and Asian Institute of Technology, "Phuket: Architectural Conservation an Town Development," (1982).

[36] The Association of Siamese Architects under Royal Patronage, Architectural Heritage in Thailand (Bangkok: Amarin Printing and Publishing, 2004) 371.

[37] "รายงานกิจการเทศบาลเมืองภูเก็ต".

["Report of Phuket Municipality"]

[38] Ibid.

Later, in 2003, a local foundation called *Old Phuket Foundation* (OPF) was established. Prasit Koysiripong[39] explained that the foundation was set up by Aryut Thansiriroj, who was the deputy mayor of Phuket at that time. The foundation was planned to supplement the Phuket Municipality for local activities beyond the authority of the municipality. Aryut was voted to be the chairman of the foundation. Later, he resigned from the deputy mayorship of Phuket, as well as from the chairman of the foundation and Prasit has been the chairman since then. Prasit[40] said that he would like the OPF to be an active voluntary organisation supporting the protection of Phuket's cultural heritage. His strategy is to have regular income, permanent office with basic facilities, a permanent officer, and systematic management. The abbot of Wat Mongkolbopit, located on Dibuk Road, has recently donated an old building in the temple to be the office of the foundation (Figure 84). Nowadays, OPF is partially subsidised by Phuket Municipality for general management.

The OPF's mission is to develop, restore, revitalise, and preserve the way of life, the art, and the architecture of the old buildings in the old town, particularly in the conservation zone, as well as to create an awareness of cultural significances of the old town to both residences in the conservation zone and the people of Phuket. The OPF also promotes other cultural affairs in Phuket. It has its own journal called *Phuket Phum* or 'Phuketscape'. The journal is written in both Thai and English as there are many foreigners interesting in the old town. Moreover, the OPF cooperated with local media companies to produce 'Raksa Phuket', a narrative program for conserving cultural heritage of Phuket. The program has been broadcasted on local channel since June 2008. Each feature is available four times a day, and each series are changed weekly.

The OPF also attempts to revitalise the image of the old town by renovating and restoring the exterior condition of shop-houses on Thalang Road and Soi Romanee. These shop-houses are decayed and have deteriorated as the result of both natural and human actions. This attempt started in 2008 by cleaning the shop-houses. The green lichen on the walls of the shop-houses was scraped out. After cleaning and repairing the deteriorations, the shop-houses were decorated in new bright colours with donated paint. Electrical wiring in Soi Romanee has been properly managed in order to enhance the view and vista. Warm lighting was installed along the road and the soi to give light and also to create the sense of living in the old days (Figure 85).

There are some problems in the revitalising project including labour, budget, and misunderstandings with the owners. To cope with the labour and budget, the foundation has to search for help from local business community beyond the annual subsidy of one million baht or approximately 28,500 U.S. dollars from Phuket Municipality.[41] Some owners understood that they had to pay all expenses of the revitalisation and incoming bill in extra consumption of electricity for lighting that put on the exterior of their property. With regard to the misunderstandings with owners,

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[39] Conversation with Prasit Koysiripong, 7 October 2008
[40] Ibid.
[41] Keaw Thepakorn, "Decorating the Town," Phuketscape 2.2 (2008): 13.

Prasit Koysiripong[42] said that it was the basic problem, but most of the problem has been solved after clarifications in details to the owners.

Figure 84 showing the office of OPF located in Wat Mongkolbopit
Source: author, 12 October 2008

Kaew Thepakorn[43], a member of OPF, noted after the revitalisation that:

> We have to value what we now have and to protect and [to] improve upon it…We believed, that the understanding we have gained during our work on the city restoration, with people who live in that area, we have saved our Old Town and this can be valued for its historic beauty forever. We are almost grateful to our good minded Phuketians without whom, we could not have succeeded.

Figure 85 showing Thalang Road (left) and Soi Romanee (right) after the revitalisation
Source: author, 23 September 2008

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[42] Conversation with Prasit Koysiripong, 18 May 2008
[43] Keaw Thepakorn, "Decorating the Town," 14.

Under the Ministerial Regulation derived from the *Environment Act*, new buildings in the conservation zone are restricted in height, use and ground space ratio (the percentage of empty space by the whole authorised ground). The maximum height of new buildings in the zone is twelve metres. The use of building in the zone is limited. The ground space ratio must be more than 16% for the buildings with arcade and more than 30% for the others. These make some owners of the shop-houses in this zone, who are mostly unchanged or inherited, keep doing the business as in the past, while some are abandoned. Chinese drug stores, local Thai-Muslim restaurants, traditional textiles, old printing companies, and glossary stores keep running their shops as in the past (Figure 86).

Figure 86 showing a glossary store on Thalang Road
Source: author, 22 September 2008

There are some shop-houses in the conservation zone have been revitalised for a new business. China Inn is one of the shop-houses that have been turned into café-restaurants. The shop-house used to be the old home of Tantavanitj family, who were the tin traders and ran a money transfer service to China under the trademark of *Hub Hlong Huad*. The trademark is still indicated on an old rectangular wooden board above the main entrance. On both sides of the wooden board, there are half-circular signage indicated that 'Hub Hlong Huad Trademark money transfer service to Eh Mueng Port, Mainland China'. Supatra Prommachan[44], the new proprietor who rents the place from Tantavanitj family, said that:

> We took steps to repair and decorate the [shop-] house for three years with three million Baht. We came to inspect it six years ago and it in a stage of disrepair. The doors could not be opened because of the swollen wood, and the wall was distended because it was coated with clay. The ceiling had disappeared. In the back of the house was a forest. Some foreigners came to inspect, but all left. My father helped me financially, but still asked why we wanted to do this so much. We continued working, ignoring the fact that it is a rented house. I had dreamt of doing this since I was young, and I love it.

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[44] Jettana Ri-apivat, "Nowadays Trademark," Ibid.1: 79.

After revitalisation, the exterior of the shop-house has kept the identity of Phuket Town. The main entrance is a double-layered door. The outer door is distinguished carved perforate-designed door panels, inserted with squash-shaped spacing at eye level. The heavy door panels are hinged with turning socket system, which keeps them functioning as in the past. The fretwork supplements to the windows for the aeration throughout the building. The inner door is for protection, so it is solid with Chinese letters carved on both sides; *Hlong Hoo* or wealthy on the right, and *Huad Eang* or dignity on the left. The old trademark of the place is kept above the entrance. There is an open window equipped with iron bars on both sides of the entrance. The wall between the windows to the floor is tiled with flower-motif glazed tiles; while the floor is paved with geometric-motif brown tiles (Figure 87).

Figure 87 showing the exterior and the interior of China Inn
Source: author, 22 September 2008

Behind the door, it is a café that also serves as the reception area. The café is decorated with selected antiques. In the café, there is enough natural sunlight during the day, as well as comfortable temperature without the need for air-conditioning. These elements promote sense of the past. The restaurant is behind the café. The former washing area has been turned into a small garden. In the restaurant, natural sunlight and aeration compliments to the renovation of the place (Figure 88).

Figure 88 showing China Inn before and after the revitalisation
Source: Phuketscape (left) and author, 22 September 2008 (right)

San Chao Saengtham, or Shrine of Serene Light, is a Taoist temple on Phang Nga Road. It was abandoned for fifty years and its condition deteriorated. In 1995, people in Phuket Town started a conservation project on the shrine. The project finished in 2000. As there was no a public access to the shrine, an adjacent landowner, Sith Tantavanitj, donated a piece of land to enable access from Phang Nga Road (Figure 89).

Figure 89 showing San Chao Saengtham after the revitalisation
Source: author, 13 October 2008

The shrine was revitalised based on memories of local people living nearby, old photographs, and architectural remnants. Original architectural components were kept and interpreted on the left of the main building. The original wall murals of *Si In Gui*, a legendary Chinese hero, are still found on the interior walls. Now, the shrine serves as a religious place for the community and as a visiting place for tourists.

Within the conservation zone, there are other places transformed for contemporary activities while keeping the identity of Phuket. A remarkable feature is that the places originated from young generation. They rent the old shop-houses in order to create places for particular interests such as books and films, Volkswagen Club, Vespa Club, and jazz music. The places are located around Soi Romanee, the former red-light district of the old town.

Ran Nang (Sue) 2521, a shop selling books and showing films, is a meeting place for new generation art lovers. The place incorporates art pieces, literary works, extraordinary films, and a trendy café together (Figure 90). Marut Lekpet and his friends have transformed a shop-house into a minimalist café to support community based projects dealing with contemporary art and culture. The place is a common place of 'art talk' activities for young generations in Phuket. Since 2006 it has accommodated 'Platr', Phuket Life Access Tracking, an artist-in-residence program by young Japanese artists since 2006.

Figure 90 showing Ran Nang (Sue) 2521
Source: author, 11 October 2008

The place has been kept simple. The ground is a cafe and book store. There is an inner court with a small garden at the end of the shop-house. The original access to the second floor was destroyed, so it has been replaced with simple wooden structure. The second floor is a theatre, which audiences have to sit only on the floor.

The Forty-Three@Thalang Rd Guesthouse is a meeting place for a club of Volkswagen Cars loving members. The place is owned by Anan Thanomsak, Aphisit Jangjaiyen, and Bundit Namprasit. The shop-house was transformed into a meeting place for the club on the ground floor; and indie-style guesthouse, which is independent style inspired by original fabric of each room, on the upper floors. The design concept is 'young and fun with a limited budget'. The place is surrounded with Volkswagen collection and other old items collected from other shop-houses in Phuket. The collection makes the place look like art-student accommodation with interesting artefacts propped against and hanging from the walls. The nine rooms of the guesthouse are all different. Each of the rooms has been decorated in a particular colour for guests to choose according to their mood and character. The simply painted rooms and easy-going ambiance make the place welcoming (Figure 91). Anan[45] talked about himself and the place in the following way:

> I was born in Phuket and grow up here. My father used to sell vegetable in the fresh market. I know most of the local people here and also remember the city in the old days. We cannot turn the clock back as well as we cannot live as we were in the past. But we have to keep *Khwam Pen Phuket* [identity of Phuket]. I realised that very few people in my generation are interested in *Khwam Pen Phuket*. They are interested in something else which is more fashionable. I personally love old items including furniture, cabinet, utensils, and car especially Volkswagen. I collect Furniture and cabinets, which are bought when people moved out from the shop-houses in this area. I think these pieces collect memory and having values within themselves. The pieces also tell the stories of Phuket in the past for us to understand Phuket in present.

All of the owners have their own professional life. The guesthouse acts as a common meeting place among friends. But the guesthouse has to subsidise itself, as Aphisit explained:

> This shop-house used to be a shop selling gold. We rent it at the cheap price from a family. So we can let the rooms for 300-500 Baht a night. In fact we do not earn from the guesthouse; but we just would like a common place for our friends and the club. Recently, the Revenue Department came here for tax estimation. This make tax will be another cost for us. Luckily, the shop-house we rent is in the better condition than others in the area; so we do not have to spend much money for restoration. We have done most of decoration step by step by our own. Now, we have finished already five of nine rooms.

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[45] Conversation with Anan Thanomsak, 8 October 2008

Figure 91 showing Forty-Three@Thalang Rd, Guesthouse
Source: author, 12 November 2008

The Romanee Music House is the place of jazz lovers. It is situated in a transformed shop-house in Soi Romanee. The exterior of the place has been restored respectfully with regard to its authenticity and context, while the interior is more contemporary. The inner court, formerly a washing area, is kept but now utilised as a smoking area (Figure 92). Personal collection jazz records and live local teenager jazz bands are the theme of this place. Tanin Lekhaphan, the owner, said about his place that:

> Phuket is my hometown. I have seen it in the different eyes after I came back from study aboard and work in Bangkok. I was inspired by the space, which are the shop-house and the setting of the old town. The shop-house is not too large as it is on the short-side on the soi, comparing with the long-side on the street. The soi is the place for nightlife in the past, so I think it is suitable to be a music house. Personally, jazz music is my favourite. I also collect jazz records. But the music house is for all range of music and also a stage for local bands. Today, we have *Dummy* and *Ska*, the local bands of Phuket teenager.

The music house is an 'opened stage' for new face musicians in Phuket. The place offers an opportunity for new musicians to show their songs, to be listened to and discussed. Tanin also plans to open a music library on the second floor in order to provide a source of musical knowledge for the community.

Figure 92 showing the exterior and the interior of Romanee Music House
Source: author, 22 September 2008 (left) and 21 August 2008 (right)

Beyond the conservation zone, there were other attempts to protect the identity of Phuket. Jaroonrat Tantavanitj and her family put their strong efforts into conserve *Ban Chinpracha*; a 105 years old mansion on Krabi Road, merely few metres outside the conservation zone (see figure 81). The mansion was built in 1903 and was the very first mansion built in Sino-Portuguese style (Figure 93). The mansion is located on two pieces of land: the front piece and the rear piece. The major part of the mansion is on the rear piece, which is now owned by Jaroonrat. She has inherited the land with the mansion from her husband, Pracha Tantavanitj. The front piece was owned by Prathan Tantavanitj, the younger brother of Pracha; and then sold to a local developer. The project of the local developer involved building eight shop-houses along Krabi Road. These new three-storied shop-houses will hide the mansion from the public (Figure 95). Jaroonrat and her family with assistances from local community have already bought back the majority of the front piece of land. In order to get a financial loan, she has had to generate benefits from the mansion rather than to keep it merely a residence. She made her decision to develop the place while simultaneously conserving it. Therefore, the project is an attempt to interconnect between conservation and development intervention.

The Ban Chinpracha conservation project will start with preservation of the existing mansion and reconstruction of the front part, which was demolished. The reconstruction will be based on empirical evidence including photographs, architectural remnants, and sketches from memory of Prathan, an architect who grew up in this place. The project will incorporate low-rise shop-houses in front of the mansion. The alignment of the shop-houses will not hide the mansion from the public, but it will let the mansion be the focal point from the public view (Figure 95). The alignment will allow the open space to accommodate social activities. Moreover, the project will facilitate with restaurants, café, local museum, and shops.

Figure 93 showing the existing condition of Ban Chinpracha
Source: author, 22 September 2008

Figure 94 showing the construction and the advertisement of eight units of three-storied shop-houses in front of Ban Chinpracha in September 2008
Source: author, 21 September 2008

Figure 95 showing Ban Chinpracha after the conservation project
Source: Jaroonrat Tantavanitj

The Thai Peranakan Association (TPA) has been established by local community for revitalising Peranakan culture. The association always cooperates with the OPF in Phuket conservation activities but it emphasises more in the intangible heritage. It works with the Peranakan associations in Penang, Malacca, and Singapore. The associations help each other by exchanging cultural knowledge and by setting the annual meeting in every December. In this year (2008), the meeting is held on 5th-8th December at Malacca, a World Heritage site. In an interview to Phuket Bulletin, Kosol Tang-UThai, the President of TPA, explained that:

> We would like to rehabilitate and re-establish the Peranakan culture to a level of social appreciation to the new generation. Presently, many schools [in Phuket] have been very alert in this matter and have already added this subject into their syllabus…The trends of careers in developed countries are no more about business. Instead of seeking for something far from what they are, they come back to search for their roots and identities, which are a veritable treasure trove…TPA would like to have a Baba Peranakan museum

in Phuket. At the moment we have many valued items like books, kitchenware, cupboards, tables and more that we would like to organise.[46]

These examples show the efforts of people in Phuket Town to protect their identity. The people do not only realise the value of the identity, but also represent it in their own ways. The response of the community to protect the local identity has been positive. The community supports the idea of alternative uses for contemporary activities while keeping architectural features. However, there is a gap between the top-down measures and the grassroots efforts to protect the identity of Phuket Town. The way forward to protect the identity of Phuket Town is recommended in the next section.

The Way Forward to Protect Identity of Phuket Old Town

Idealistically, top-down measures and bottom-up efforts should be bridged as both of them having the same goal, which is to protect the identity of Phuket Town. However, in fact, there is still a wide gap between them. The following recommendations are proposed to help close the gap and better protect the town's cultural identity.

Specific guidelines to conserve Phuket Town should be prepared. The guidelines should be derived from the *Environment Act* and the *Building Control Act*. The guidelines should identify the conservation zone, buffer zone, and development zone for the town. It should set out the tangible quality, uses, and administration of the town. The tangible quality has to maintain the cultural significance of the town. The uses of the places should be close to the original use, and should seek to balance development and conservation. The use of shop-houses for residential and commercial facilities gives the most significant character to the town. The adaptive re-use of the shop-houses should be mentioned in the guidelines to prevent their possible elimination. The administration should allow the community's participation in decision-making to reduce the unfair sharing of benefits, as well as to respect the rights of the community.

The guidelines should be in accordance with national standards and international principles of authenticity, integrity and conformity, bolstering renovation projects and keeping a balance between different uses. The guidelines should enhance the quality of life of the community by ensuring sustainability. The OPF is recommended to be the core agent to prepare the guidelines instead of Phuket Municipality. This is to ensure that the guideline preparation keeps going even if the current municipal council is not re-elected. The guideline preparation should allow for every social group in Phuket Province to be stakeholders; not only for the community in Phuket Town. The young generations should be included as a stakeholder in order to incorporate the contemporary viewpoints and needs. Participation of the young generation is also an investment for the future to ensure the sustainable of Phuket identity.

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[46] Monchaya Suebpong, "Dr Kosol and Peranakan Culture," 30.

Phuket town planning should be reconceived. With its unique identity, the town is too fragile to be 'the high density of commercial and residential area'. It should be classified as conservation zone for Thai cultural heritage. This will eliminate the conflict from legislative framework over the town. During planning process to be conservation zone, mechanisms such as Cultural Impact Assessment (CIA) have to be prepared by specialists to reveal the socially and culturally significant context of the zone, and to make an inventory of the social needs and requirements as well as a justification of the implementation. The CIA has to be documented as part of the public document for display. This is to provide for a fair and equitable, transparent and legal instrument whereby all the stakeholders are able to follow and arrive at a common goal.

Incentives should be provided to motivate local people to invest in the project that protects Phuket identity. The community is not poor society; indeed many traders in the community are wealthy and well-educated. The incentives should be significant to convince them to participate. The incentives may offer as a business investment or development package in order to realise the traders for their long-term profit. Phuket Municipality should be a key player in cooperation with other government agencies such as the Revenue Department for tax deduction, and with government banks for low interest long-term loans. The incentives should offer a priority to the community to conserve their place. This is to prevent an impact of gentrification as the influx of immigrating people may not facilitate the local identity of the town.

Academic institutions in Phuket should include local heritage into their curriculum to educate the young generation about the values of their heritage and identity. The young generation who will become Phuket's future leaders as politicians, community and business leaders, and professionals should be made more fully aware of Phuket's identity through education and should be encouraged to learn to appreciate to protect it. In addition, training in conservation practices and techniques should be conducted to ensure adequate craftsmen and accurate restoration. Moreover, compatible materials should be researched for enable proper adaptations. This may not be useful only for conservation of Phuket Town; but also for new developments in the island to have available materials for their new design by keeping Phuket identity.

An interpretation centre for Phuket Town should be established. It is recommended that a shop-house with original quality in the town be transformed for such a centre. Phuket identity can be one of the themes for interpretation. Partnerships between the centre and other museums in Phuket and nearby provinces should be developed. Moreover, the interpretation centre may be more dynamic by bringing in temporary exhibitions from international sources.

Last but not least, the FAD has a key role to play in offering not only research and technical assistance for conserving Phuket's identity but also, and more importantly, in providing professional advices across the field of cultural identity conservation. The FAD should also re-conceive about Thai identity and heritage to encompass local identity. The current focus on royal heritage and archaeological ruins trends to marginalise local identities. Potentially, Phuket Town can be the World Heritage Site

alongside Georgetown and Melaka, which were successfully nominated in 2008. In fact, the FAD did an 'archaeological survey' in Phuket in 1987; but nothing has continued since then. It may seem that the strong Chinese influenced makes Phuket identity rather than Thai. However, the people in Phuket Town realise that they are Thai; and they protect their Phuket identity as their Thai identity.

In conclusion, Phuket Old Town is an excellent case study to demonstrate the community's efforts to protect their local cultural identity in urbanism. People in the community understand and give value to the local cultural identity. The community, particularly the young generations, try to protect their local cultural identity by adopting the idea of alternative uses for contemporary activities while keeping architectural features. However, there are some gaps in 'top-down' measures dealing with the identity, which includes no specific legislative frameworks, and the in effective role of Phuket Municipality.

Chapter 7

Conclusion

After involving with the selected case studies, this chapter is the discussion and the conclusion of the dissertation. It consists of five sections; which are discussion of the case studies, research outcomes, recommendation for conservation of Thai identity and cultural heritage, recommendation for further research, and the final words to share opinion and experience of the author in conducting the dissertation.

Discussion of the Case Studies

The three case studies suggest that Thai individual, family and community, which are the grassroots of Thai society, have different local cultural identity. This indicates the pluralistic character of Thai local cultural identity. The grassroots employ the local cultural identity to identify and to represent themselves. They also spontaneously put their efforts to protect the local cultural identity by asserting in their contemporary lifestyle through different methods of design. Creative design with understanding, giving value, and respecting to authenticity and integrity of the local cultural identity is the method being used in the case studies of Hor Man Muang and Phuket Old Town. Adaptive re-use of the old place and utilisation of the cultural landscape as corporate identity are the methods being used in the case study of Ban Rabiang Nam.

The case studies demonstrate that to protect the local cultural identity is not necessary to return into nostalgic living as in the past, but is able to accommodate in the contemporary lifestyle. The case study of Hor Man Muang shows that local cultural identity can be represented through creative design of the place. It indicates the appropriate fusion of old and new, past and present, as well as locality and globality. The case study of Phuket Old Town also shows that the people in the community re-present the local cultural identity through contemporary design, which helps them to protect the local cultural identity in the context of urbanisation. Both of the case studies suggest that method of 'mix-and-match' the local cultural identity and contemporary lifestyle is the technique that the grassroots employ to protect the local cultural identity.

The case studies of Ban Rabiang Nam and Phuket Old Town indicate that grassroots can use their local cultural identity in order to generate economic benefits. These indicate a discourse that heritage conservation is not a resistance but a complement to economic development. Adaptive re-use in a responsible, profitable and sustainable manner can make both conservation and development go together.

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All of the case studies also point out that the efforts of Thai grassroots to protect their local identity are spontaneous responses, which may be from different motivations. Personal background such as taste, education, and international experiences, may involve with the motivations. It is noticeable that the Thai grassroots are not professionals or practitioners in cultural heritage conservation.

In conclusion, Thai grassroots should be the focus of Thai identity protection and Thai cultural heritage conservation. The sustainability of the large picture of Thai identity is necessary to protect the small pixels of the local cultural identities. Thus, grassroots-based cultural heritage management should be the way forward of Thai cultural identity protection and Thai cultural heritage conservation.

Research Outcomes

From the discussion of the case study, the research outcomes are:

- The relationship between Thai grassroots and their local cultural identity is found in high level during the time of study. The Thai grassroots put their efforts to protect the local cultural identity in different ways, but not try to turn back to the nostalgic living as in the past;
- The Thai grassroots understand their local cultural identity well, as well as give a value to the local cultural identity. So, they can represent the local cultural identity through contemporary forms of architectural design well;
- Creative design, adaptive re-use, and utilisation of cultural landscape are the methods that the Thai grassroots employ to protect their local cultural identity.

Recommendation for Conservation of Thai Identity and Thai Cultural Heritage

Thai cultural identity and Thai cultural heritage, as discussed in Chapter 2, are similar to the two sides of a coin, which are the component of each other, united, and inseparable. Recommendations to protect Thai identity and to conserve Thai cultural heritage are:

- All stakeholders in Thai identity protection and Thai cultural heritage conservation need to change the mind set for heritage conservation. The paradigm shift in cultural heritage conservation takes the issue of cultural heritage beyond the realm of a small group of elites, professionals and practitioners to the general public at large. Grassroots become the new fulcrum of culture heritage conservation, while conservation professionals and practitioners becoming consultants or advisors rather than sole protagonists. This mind shift is fundamental and appropriate tools that need to be developed as the policy for all stakeholders in Thai cultural heritage conservation. The mind shift, however, is not to replace existing professional and institutional efforts in cultural identity protection and cultural heritage conservation; but it is to extend those efforts into grassroots and general public.

- The Monument Act, which is the only legal framework dealing directly with architectural heritage, should be reconsidered. The act has been legislated since 1961 and revised in 1992. It confers power on Fine Art Department (FAD) to conserve 'national cultural heritage'. It is rigid control that to freeze any development in the conservation area, unless allowed by FAD. The act is suitable for some monuments and sites such as archaeological structures made of stone, laterite and brick. It is lack of provision for heritage in urban area, local heritage and vernacular structures, and heritage of everyday life as popular culture.

- It is necessary to prepare a guideline for Thai cultural heritage conservation. The guideline should situate in the contemporary concepts of cultural heritage conservation, and should update time to time. ICOMOS Thailand can be a host to prepare the guideline, but the council should not be a 'nominee' of FAD.

- It is essential to empower Thai grassroots in the conservation and the management of their local cultural heritage in the manner that provides them with fair economic and social benefits, while they are serving the stewardship of their cultural heritage. Provision of incentives or positive methods should be considered to facilitate the grassroots to protect their cultural heritage.

- It is significant to ask the question of 'whose heritage is it?' before managing a cultural heritage. The question will help all stakeholders to know their role and responsibility to the heritage. It also helps the grassroots to claim their cultural rights and human right on the heritage.

- It is important to remind that a successful conservation and management regime of a cultural heritage is not to ensure the successful in conservation and management of the others. It is necessary to study a cultural heritage within its own context, which will guide an appropriate conservation and management regime.

- In many occasions, cultural heritage conservation is an attempt to preserve or to freeze the cultural identity of grassroots. The attempt is a way to 'conserve' the power relations between organisations or institutions over the grassroots. The organisations and the institutions must respect cultural rights and human rights of the grassroots in protecting their cultural identity and conserving their cultural heritage in their own ways.

- Thai government has a limit in resources in cultural identity protection and cultural heritage conservation. Grassroots support, adaptive re-use, and creative management regime could be the ways out in heritage conservation.

Recommendation for Further Research

In order to extend from this dissertation, there are some recommendations for future research as followings:

- Attitudes of the public to the case studies should be researched such as the attitudes of the customers of Ban Rabiang Nam, or the attitudes of visitors in Phuket Old Town. This is to understand the public responses to the protection of local cultural identity.

- Future and threats of Phuket Old Town for cultural tourism should be studied in order to recommend the guideline for the town as it is a potential cultural tourism site. Cultural impact assessment of the town also should be studied.
- More cultural identities from other locations in Thailand should be studied such as in North-eastern, Islamic southern provinces, costal areas, and minority hill tribes in the North and the West.
- Vision, policy and strategy in cultural heritage conservation of FAD should be researched in order to recommend the efficient and effective cultural heritage management in Thailand.
- Conservation technique, materials and craftsmanship in architectural heritage in Thailand should be researched in order to prepare traditional or alternative technique, materials and craftsmanship appropriate to each particular architectural heritage.

The Final Words

This section devotes for personal opinions in cultural identity and cultural heritage of the author after conducting the dissertation for five years. It is to share experiences and to open a discussion in the issues. It is also to question and to challenge other identity and heritage researchers in order to stretch the knowledge body.

Cultural identity is a kind of myth, which emphasises the pride of people have in their cultural accomplishment, their historical achievements, and the supremacy of their beliefs. This myth involves ideas in people themselves and relationship among people, between people and their natural environment, as well as between people and their supernatural world. Cultural identity cannot exist without people who define the cultural identity in him/herself and represent the cultural identity in his/her social space. This makes human become the most significant in the issue of cultural identity and in heritage studies.

Cultural identity that people claim is always partially from their own creation and partially from borrowing someone else. Then, the cultural identity is modified, symbolised, expressed, populated and represented by those people with their intention and in their own 'accents'.

Cultural identity is also claimed by people for their sake and legitimacy. It cannot be separated form power relations. In this way, cultural identity can become the origin of resistance, conflict and war. In order to avoid these results, people should understand, accept and respect their own cultural identity; and should represent the cultural identity in the appropriate ways. They also should understand, accept and respect other people's cultural identity and the ways that those people represent their cultural identity. In other words: we should value cultural identity of ours and of others in the same way.

Cultural heritage is more tangible form representing cultural identity, which is the essence of the cultural heritage. Conservation of a cultural heritage with ignorance of

its cultural identity results in 'Frankenstein' liked cultural heritage, which is to keep a heritage without its spirit. Cultural identity, therefore, is the central issue of cultural heritage conservation.

However, this dissertation is a small-scale study, which does not claim to be representative of what happening at large; and it offers only possible account of the problem, investigation and recommendation. It rather involves an interpretative commitment to processes of meaning in social life, and an approach to knowledge which sees this as open rather than closed. It definitely remains open to other critical insights.

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Annex

The questions in the field research:

General Questions

- What is the history of the place and its general background?
- What is 'Thai Identity' in your viewpoint?
- What is your opinion about Thai Identity in contemporary?
- How is your contemporary lifestyle?
- Do you think that you are losing Thai Identity?
- If you are losing, how do you respond with it?
- What do you think is the major task?
- Do you think that you represent Thai Identity in daily life?
- If you represent it, how do you represent it?
- Do you think that you are 'same' with or 'different' from others?
- What make you feel 'same' with or 'different' from others?
- What is your opinion about 'global culture'?

To identify what are the efforts of individuals to protect Thai identity

- Do you think that Thai Identity needs to be protected?
- What are your efforts to protect Thai Identity?
- How do you respond to these efforts?

To determine how these individuals protect Thai identity through spatial design

- Do you think that design can help protecting Thai Identity?
- What do you think that the design of your place help protecting Thai Identity?
- How does the design of your place help protecting Thai Identity?

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Profession

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2006 - Present	Guest Lecturer in various universities
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2003 - Present	Director, Intentio Co., Ltd.
2000 - 2003	Board of Management, Indigo Bar & Restaurant
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1994 - 2001	Researcher, Molecular Diagnostic Laboratory, Bangkok General Hospital
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Academic Activities

2007   Speaker, 'Visual Culture: an Architectural Heritage
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                   Training, 'Management World Heritage Site'
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                   Speaker, 'Thai-ness': the Cultural Identity in Thai Urbanism
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