

## Potential Development of Cultural Heritage Tourism of Ancient Remains in Maha Sarakham

### การพัฒนาศักยภาพการท่องเที่ยวเชิงมรดกวัฒนธรรมของแหล่งโบราณสถาน ในจังหวัดมหาสารคาม

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#### Abstract

This research is acquired from the research of participatory knowledge management for the cultural tourism drive of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham according to the creative economy concept. The research objectives are 1) to study the current condition of ancient remains, 2) to study the attraction potential of tourism of ancient remains and 3) to suggest the model of potential development of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham. This research is quantitatively and qualitatively conducted. The representative samples are 8 key informants respondents from the agency relevant to ancient remains and 400 respondents who are people in the area of ancient remains. This research uses the purposive sampling. According to 93 areas, it was found that the most ancient remains in Maha Sarakham are complete but dilapidated which around 47 ancients remains can be used as archaeological evidence. Most of them are not registered with the Department of Fine Arts. There is no agency or community which looks after them until they are dilapidated. There are 17 places where do not seem to be ancients remains. There are 18 ancient remained where were renovated by temples, communities and incomes from donation, Pha Pa (a Thai way of raising fund) and several religious ceremonies. Completeness can be used as archaeological evidence to some extent. There are 11 ancients remains where are still complete and can be used as archaeological evidence. For attraction potential of tourism, it could be summarized that the factors with the averages from high to low was local people affiliated with ancient remains ( $\bar{X} = 3.67$ ), ancient remains were safe for tourism ( $\bar{X} = 3.65$ ) and ancient remains had various tourist activities ( $\bar{X} = 3.15$ ). And the model in the potential development of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham, it was revealed as follows 1) must have made use of

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the background of ancient remains affiliated with locality as the selling point. 2) The development planning of communication network, telecommunication, information system and software of digital contents would support tourism by the e-commerce system broadly. 3) The promotion of ancient remain images. 4) The development of a variety of tourist activities was considered the least factor. 5) The development of infrastructures and facilities with efficiency focused on development and improvement of logistic system and facilities for ancient remains. 6) The development of restoration of ancient remains for durability focused on restoring dilapidated ancient remains. And 7) It promoted the participatory process of governmental sector, public sector and administrative organization in management of ancient remains.

**Keyword:** 1. Knowledge Management 2. Cultural Tourism 2. Ancient Remains

### บทคัดย่อ

บทความวิจัยนี้ถอดองค์ความรู้มาจากการวิจัยเรื่องการจัดการความรู้แบบมีส่วนร่วมเพื่อขับเคลื่อนการท่องเที่ยวเชิงมรดกวัฒนธรรมของแหล่งโบราณสถานในจังหวัดมหาสารคามตามแนวคิดเศรษฐกิจสร้างสรรค์ มีวัตถุประสงค์ในการนำเสนอประเด็นดังนี้ 1) เพื่อศึกษาสภาพปัจจุบันของแหล่งโบราณสถาน 2) ศึกษาศักยภาพในการดึงดูดใจด้านการท่องเที่ยวของแหล่งโบราณสถานของ 3) เสนอแนะแนวทางในการพัฒนาศักยภาพการท่องเที่ยวเชิงมรดกวัฒนธรรมของแหล่งโบราณสถานในจังหวัดมหาสารคาม ใช้วิวิจัยแบบผสมผสานทั้งคุณภาพและปริมาณกลุ่มตัวอย่างคือ ตัวแทนหน่วยงานที่มีส่วนเกี่ยวข้องกับแหล่งโบราณสถาน 8 คนและตัวแทนประชาชนในพื้นที่แหล่งโบราณสถาน 400 คน ใช้วิธีเลือกกลุ่มตัวอย่างแบบเฉพาะเจาะจง จากวิจัยทั้ง 93 แห่ง พบร่วมกันแหล่งโบราณสถานในจังหวัดมหาสารคามมีสภาพสมบูรณ์แต่กรุดโกร姆 สามารถใช้เป็นหลักฐานทางโบราณคดีได้เพียงบางส่วน กว่า 47 แห่ง ซึ่งส่วนมากจะเป็นแหล่งที่ไม่ได้ขึ้นทะเบียนกับกรมศิลปากร ไม่มีหน่วยงานหรือชุมชนดูแลจึงเกิดการเสื่อมโทรม มี 17 แห่งไม่เพบเห็นร่องรอยของการเป็นแหล่งโบราณสถาน มี 18 แห่ง ที่มีการบูรณะปฏิสังขรณ์โดยวัด ชุมชนและรายได้จากการบริจาค ผ้าป่าและงานบุญต่างๆยังคงสภาพสมบูรณ์ ความสมบูรณ์สามารถใช้เป็นหลักฐาน ทางโบราณคดีได้พอสมควรและ มี 11 แห่งยังคงมีความสมบูรณ์สามารถใช้เป็นหลักฐานทางโบราณคดีได้ สำหรับศักยภาพในการดึงดูดใจด้านการท่องเที่ยวสรุปได้ว่าปัจจัยที่มีค่าเฉลี่ยสูงสุด คือ คนในท้องถิ่นมีความผูกพันต่อแหล่งโบราณสถาน ค่าเฉลี่ย ( $\bar{X} = 3.67$ ) รองลงมาคือแหล่งโบราณสถานมีความปลดภัยด้านการท่องเที่ยว ค่าเฉลี่ย ( $\bar{X} = 3.65$ ) ส่วนปัจจัยที่น้อยที่สุดคือ แหล่งโบราณสถานมีความหลากหลายของกิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยว ค่าเฉลี่ย ( $\bar{X} = 3.15$ ) รวมถึงแนวทางในการพัฒนาศักยภาพการท่องเที่ยวเชิงมรดกวัฒนธรรมของแหล่งโบราณสถานในจังหวัดมหาสารคามค้นพบดังนี้

1) แหล่งโบราณสถานในจังหวัดมหาสารคามจะต้องใช้เรื่องราวต่างๆของแหล่งโบราณสถานที่ความผูกพันต่อกันเป็นจุดขาย หรือการนำเรื่องราวเหล่านั้นมาสร้างเป็น Story Telling ต่อนักท่องเที่ยว 2) การวางแผนพัฒนาเครือข่ายการสื่อสาร โทรคมนาคม ระบบสารสนเทศ และซอฟต์แวร์ ดิจิทัลคอนเนนต์ เพื่อการท่องเที่ยวสนับสนุนให้เกิดการใช้ระบบ e-commerce อย่างแพร่หลายส่งเสริมการจัดทำข้อมูลการท่องเที่ยวออนไลน์ และการเชื่อมโยงระบบบริการต่างๆ ด้านการท่องเที่ยวแหล่งโบราณสถานทางเว็บไซด์ 3) ส่งเสริมภาพลักษณ์ของแหล่งโบราณสถานให้มีความปลอดภัยด้านการท่องเที่ยว 4) พัฒนาความหลากหลายของกิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยว ซึ่งถือว่าเป็นปัจจัยที่น้อยที่สุดคือ แหล่งโบราณสถานมีความหลากหลายของกิจกรรมการท่องเที่ยว 5) การพัฒนาโครงสร้างพื้นฐานและสิ่งอำนวยความสะดวกให้มีประสิทธิภาพ โดยมุ่งเน้นการพัฒนาและปรับปรุงระบบโลจิสติกส์และสิ่งอำนวยความสะดวกให้มีประสิทธิภาพ โดยมุ่งเน้นการพัฒนาแหล่งโบราณสถานที่มีเสื่อมโทรมให้มีความสมบูรณ์ดังเดิม และ 7) ส่งเสริมกระบวนการมีส่วนร่วมของภาครัฐ ภาคประชาชนและองค์กรปกครอง ในการบริหารจัดการแหล่งโบราณสถาน โดยมุ่งเน้นการสร้างและพัฒนากลไกในการบริหารจัดการการ เพื่อให้การดำเนินงานด้านการท่องเที่ยวมีเอกภาพมีการบูรณาการร่วมกัน ลดความซ้ำซ้อนของการกิจและเปิดโอกาสให้ทุกภาคส่วนเข้ามามีส่วนร่วมการบริหารจัดการ.

**คำสำคัญ :** การจัดการความรู้ การท่องเที่ยวเชิงมรดกวัฒนธรรม แหล่งโบราณสถาน

## 1. Introduction

Tourism is a large industry where can earn tons of money for many countries over the world. World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) predicts that the number of tourists will reach 1,800 million in 2030, and the international tourism will increase 4 percent per year on average. The regions where tend to be the continuously popular tourist attraction are countries in Southeast Asia (World Tourism Organization, 2016). In Thailand, tourist industry highly expands and plays a key role to the economic system and society of Thailand. Also, it is considered the major income source which brings in foreign currencies, employment and development distribution to provincial parts (Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2016). However, tourist situations in Thailand comprises of factors which impacts on changes of tourism, backgrounds of mass tourism and tourism according to particular interests. Specific tourism can be categorized in many methods such as categorized as geography, categorized as demography, categorized as environments and activities or like categorization of market share

of specific tourism. A group of tourist with particular interests will have different demand, motivation, requirement and behavior (Ranee Isichaikul, 2014).

Presently, cultural tourism is a kind of industries which is important economic factor in Thailand. (Warinthorn Phuditthanawong and Rungjarat Hutacharoen,2016) The cultural tourism is the strength of Thailand because there have been many tourist attractions over the country, especially in Maha Sarakham where is located in the middle of the northeastern region of Thailand with the peaceful and simple city atmosphere. At the present moment, Maha Sarakham is the educational center of the region because there are many educational institutes well known as the “City of Education of Northeastern Region of Thailand”. There are remarkable historical and cultural tourist resources; therefore, people who visit this city will experience simple-and-attractive Isan people’s lifestyle which is rarely found in the current society. The major river here is Chi River. Maha Sarakham is considered a historical city where is both prosperous and dilapidated in each age (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2016). Maha Sarakham is one of ten provinces as the model of creatively economic cities of Thailand with the source of archaeology, the art in Dvaravati and the influence of Khmer cultures, the ancient community including the graven image and the earthenware which is generally found in different 93 areas of Maha Sarakham, already registered in 16 areas and not yet registered but recorded in the database in 77 areas (9<sup>th</sup> Provincial Khon Kaen Office of Fine Arts, 2017). However, there are many dilapidated ancient remains where are neglected and unoccupied; not renovated. If they are not systematically developed and properly conserved, it may impact on the damage of ancient remains in the future.

Subsequently, when the tendency of particular tourists increases; tourists are more interested in learning cultures; many valuable cultural resources of Maha Sarakham which are both complete and dilapidated, they can be promoted as the tourist attraction. The researchers realize importance of the aforesaid points and occasions and conducts this research with the objectives of studying the current condition of ancient remains, the attraction potential of tourism of ancient remains and suggestion of the model of potential development of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham. The research goal is to develop tourism with cooperation of all segments which leads to appreciate ancient remains, causes network members try to promote it for conservation and develops as the tourist product which is how to earn incomes, incomes distribution and life quality enhancement for local people in the community based on the local cultural resources. It is considered another forward step of tourist research which gives the opportunity to all segments to participate to

think, to do, to push each other as the network, to connect to each other from the policy level to the local level with the benefits to ancient remains and to improve comprehension of trendy tourist pattern changes at the present moment which positively affects tourism. All of the above conform to the framework of development which corresponds to the strategy of Thai tourist reformation, the National Tourist Development Plan B.E. 2560-2564 and the Development Plan of Maha Sarakham B.E. 2561-2565 which can get the most out of the research findings in the future.

## 2. Research Methodology

The scope of the study is divided in the research objectives as follows: 1) studying the current condition of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham, collecting the data by the survey field and the actual condition of 93 specified ancient remains by the criterion of adjustment from the manual of quality standard evaluation of historical tourist attractions of the Department of Tourism, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, 2) studying the attraction potential of tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham; the representative samples are 400 respondents who are local people in the 93 areas ancient remains by comparing the value from Yamane's table with the confidence level at 95 percent and the deviation at 5 percent; the data was collected by the questionnaire and 3) suggesting the model of potential development of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham; the representative samples are 8 agency representatives relevant to ancient remains; the data was collected by the in-depth interview. The variables used in this research comprise of the current condition of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham including the quantitative variables as follows: 1) historical importance, 2) archaeological evidence, 3) uniqueness of age, 4) completeness of architectural structure, 5) artistic completeness, 6) affiliation with locality, 7) physical potential and activity holding, 8) tourist safety, 9) variety of tourist activities, 10) potential of tourist support and 11) potential of tourist development from external factors.

## 3. Research Findings

According to the overall research of the current condition of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham, the field survey was used to collect the data from the actual condition of specified tourist attractions, and the criterion of adjustment from the manual of quality standard evaluation of historical tourist attractions of the Department of Tourism, the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, was used to improve the quality standard of tourist attractions with the following operations: studying the theory relevant to the draft of standard criteria and

indicators, testing the standard criteria and indicators and holding the meeting for accepting relevant people's opinions by expecting experts, academicians, tourist entrepreneurs, tourists and common people who are interested in to freely criticize for the quality standard of tourist attractions which all segments participate in as well as interviewing relevant agencies on the following findings:

For the current condition of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham by the indicator of completeness of archaeological evidence, it was revealed that the most of 93 ancient remains in Maha Sarakham were complete but dilapidated. Some of them considered 47 ancient remains could be used as archaeological evidence. Most of them were not registered with the Department of Fine Arts. There was no agency or community which looks after them. There were 17 places where did not seem to be ancients remains. There were 18 ancient remains where were renovated by temples, communities and incomes from donation, Pha Pa (a Thai way of raising fund) and several religious ceremonies. Completeness could be used as archaeological evidence to some extent. There were 11 ancients remains where are still complete and can be used as archaeological evidence. When considering the completeness of remains and the significant evidence with the necessary archaeological information in tourist attractions could be made use of promoting tourism. Communities around did not well manage tourist attractions because Maha Sarakham was not the main scenery town; there were still a few of tourists when comparing to the base of existing resources. Considering the capability of supporting tourists was also important which would not affect local people's lifestyle; therefore, it was the policy formulated by the community leader who mainly looked after ancient remains. Making use of the area with balances was determined against the capability of tourist support.

Also, clear rules, regulations and punishments were not formulated for the ancient remains in Maha Sarakham in order to supervise tourist attractions including defensive and suppressive measures against natural tourist attraction intruders and seriously inspect the law enforcement. However, it lacked of the development of public utilities for supports of tourism, especially enhancement of quality and standard of tourist attractions, disposal system of waste, waste water and pollution and lacked of planning of tourist architectural management in all of the national level, the tourist level, the provincial level and the regional level.

In the point of the attraction potential of tourism; according to collecting the data by the questionnaire from people in the community of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham with the questions which were improved from the criterion of adjustment from the manual of

quality standard evaluation of historical tourist attractions (revised edition), they could be sorted out as follows:

**Table 1:** Potential of Ancient Remains

Potential of Ancient Remains	Average ( $\bar{X}$ )	Standard Deviation (SD)	Importance Level
01. Historical Importance	3.22	0.59	Moderate
02. Archaeological Evidence	3.64	1.52	Most
03. Uniqueness of Age	3.45	0.62	Moderate
04. Completeness of Architectural Structure	3.44	0.58	Moderate
05. Artistic Completeness	3.19	0.52	Moderate
06. Affiliation with Locality	3.67	0.62	Most
07. Physical Potential and Activity Holding	3.17	0.59	Moderate
08. Tourist Safety	3.65	0.83	Most
09. Variety of Tourist Activities	3.15	0.52	Moderate
10. Potential of Tourist Support	3.23	0.74	Moderate
11. Potential of Tourist Development from External Factors	3.22	0.87	Moderate
<b>Total</b>	<b>3.55</b>	<b>0.76</b>	<b>Most</b>

According to the table above, it could be summarized that the factors with the averages from high to low was local people affiliated with ancient remains ( $\bar{X} = 3.67$ ), ancient remains were safe for tourism ( $\bar{X} = 3.65$ ) and ancient remains had various tourist activities ( $\bar{X} = 3.15$ ).

However, according to the in-depth interview of agency representative concerned ancient remains for the model in the potential development of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham, it was revealed as follows:

1) The potential development of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham must have made use of the background of ancient remains affiliated with locality as the selling point or made use of the background of ancient remains affiliated with locality to tell to tourists. The Provincial Office of Tourism and Sports suggested that because of many ancient remains in Maha Sarakham where both had a potential and did not have a potential to support tourism. Therefore, if the drive would be developed, it would start from potential

ancient remains before. Then dilapidated ancient remains would be specified in the provincial strategy to make a development plan including collecting relevant stories and making them in a map or tourist route which would be publicized to particular tourists.

2) The development planning of communication network, telecommunication, information system and software of digital contents would support tourism by the e-commerce system broadly, promote making online tourist information and connection of service systems of ancient remains on websites and develop the center of tourist information and one stop services which tourists could ask for information of ancient remains; the center would solve tourists' problem and help if there were any emergencies conveniently and quickly; spread in major tourist attractions.

3) The promotion of ancient remain images in Maha Sarakham would be done for tourists' safety because current tourists were Thai or local people; therefore, a few of tourists were taken advantages or attacked. Some tourist attractions where were far from the community must have counted on tourism of particular festivals only because of desolation and no public transportation; as a result, confidence should have been built, and tourist promotion must have focused on publicizing the good image of ancient remains, building environments and developing the system of supporting the marketing of ancient remains so that tourists would widely know and understand the good image of the province and foreign tourists would make sure of it. Then the value of tourist products would be added through the popular media at the present time including the approach marketing which appointed agencies in the province to tender the rights and held events which advertised ancient remains.

4) The development of a variety of tourist activities was considered the least factor; that is to say, ancient remains were plenty of a variety of tourist activities. Therefore, ancient remains should have created new tourist activities which conformed to tourists' interest and target group's particular demand, plus ancient remains should have promoted creation of economy and development of conceptual innovation in order to add values of tourist products, promoted tourist activities for durability, considered values and environments and supported improvement of atmospheres in new tourist activities relevant to potential activities such as health business and services or recreational business and services, especially management of community tourism, management of OTOP products and keepsakes and so on; moreover, promoting festivals, traditions, movie , movie creation relevant to ancient remains and establishment of the center unit to support the business of movie creation in the section of production, service and the business relevant to ancient remains.

5) The development of infrastructures and facilities with efficiency focused on development and improvement of logistic system and facilities for ancient remains, creation of communicative route network and connection system of tourism with neighboring countries and provincial parts for the potential of supporting tourists in the countries and in other countries including facilitating all groups of tourists which could access ancient remains more easily.

6) The development of restoration of ancient remains for durability focused on restoring dilapidated ancient remains. The development of tourism in manner of a group of tourists connected between major tourist attractions and minor tourist attractions and enhanced the quality and standard of tourist attractions compatibly with the world's trend. It supported the participation of community and local administrative organization in the development of tourism so that ancient remains would be systematically developed with high quality and standard and could add values of tourism.

7) It promoted the participatory process of governmental sector, public sector and administrative organization in management of ancient remains which focused on creation and development of managing mechanism for unity and integration of tourist operation, less complexity of tasks and the opportunity for all segments to participate in management.

#### 4. Summary

According to the quantitative and qualitative analysis of information, then the researchers had the model of potential development to drive the cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham. It could be concluded that most of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham are complete but dilapidated could be used as archaeological evidence. There were only 11 ancient remains where were complete which could be used as archaeological evidence. When considering the completeness of remains and the significant evidence with the necessary archaeological information in tourist attractions could be made use of promoting tourism. Communities around did not well manage tourist attractions because Maha Sarakham was not the main scenery town; there were still a few of tourists when comparing to the base of existing resources. Considering the capability of supporting tourists was also important which would not affect local people's lifestyle; therefore, it was the policy formulated by the community leader who mainly looked after ancient remains. Making use of the area with balances was determined against the capability of tourist support.

Also, clear rules, regulations and punishments were not formulated for the ancient remains in Maha Sarakham in order to supervise tourist attractions including defensive and suppressive measures against natural tourist attraction intruders and seriously inspect the law enforcement. However, it lacked of the development of public utilities for supports of tourism, especially enhancement of quality and standard of tourist attractions, disposal system of waste, waste water and pollution and lacked of planning of tourist architectural management in all of the national level, the tourist level, the provincial level and the regional level by conserving, repairing and maintaining major and unique architectures of each areas which would conform to the provincial strategy.

According to the quantitative information, it could be summarized that the attraction potential of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham affiliated with locality as the most factor, and the least factor was that ancient remains had various tourist activities; therefore, ancient remains should have created new tourist activities which conformed to tourists' interest and target group's particular demand, plus ancient remains should have promoted creation of economy and development of conceptual innovation in order to add values of tourist products, promoted tourist activities for durability, considered values and environments and supported improvement of atmospheres in new tourist activities relevant to potential. The management of heritage site has to consider heritage conservation integrated with tourism planning and sustainable concept to achieve the management goal. (Saijai Diteepeng and Ken Taylor, 2016)

It could be summarized that the potential development of cultural tourism of ancient remains in Maha Sarakham must have focused on development and restoration of ancient remains, created conscious minds of ancient remains with communities, promoted tourism activities, made advertising media, formulated rules and regulations of locality and created new choices of tourist industry of the province; moreover, it focused on development of tourist attractions or tourist products which could make and add values according to the potential tourism which was ancient remains. It would enhance the quality of tourism with regional standard and acceptance, develop infrastructures and facilities which focused on development and improvement of logistic system and facilities for ancient remains and restore ancient remains with durability which focused on restoration of dilapidated ancient remains and promotion of the participatory process by the governmental sector, public sector and administrative organization in management of ancient remains which focused on creation and development of managing mechanism for unity and integration of tourist operation.

## 5. Acknowledgement

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