Abstract

**Tourism and Local Development: The Case of Chiang Saen,
Chiangrai, Thailand.**

The study examines the relationship between tourism and development with a particular focus on the effects of development on the historic town of Chiang Saen, located in northern Thailand. This town is currently undergoing profound social, political, and economic change due to the rapid growth of the tourism industry in the region and government plans to promote Chiang Sean as a business hub and as part of the major international development project named the "Greater Maekong Sub-Region" (GMS). The study investigates how these changes affect the local community, in particular examining the perspective of local residents concerning the impact and changes to the local identity of the community as an historic town, its culture and way of life. It documents local resident's reactions directed at minimising and reducing negative impacts by proposing forms of development which they perceive to be more appropriate because they have less impact on the community and consume fewer resources. According to the study, community-based tourism such as home-stay tourism, cultural tourism, and historical tourism are perceived by local residents to be new forms of tourism, which unlike mass tourism, are not resource intensive. These forms of tourism offer local residents greater opportunities to operate and manage tourism activities themselves and enable them to sustain and conserve their community's identity. In addition, the study also illustrates that community involvement and participation in development are perceived by local residents to be key in achieving successful community development.

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Acknowledgements

This thesis is dedicated to the memory of my dad.

Chapter 1
Introduction

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a general introduction to this research. After presenting the background to the project, it then outlines the research question, the aims and objectives, and the contribution of this research to both scholarly and policy debates. The chapter concludes with an overview of the dissertation and a summary of each chapter.

Introduction

According to Murphy (1985), Tourism has become one of the world's major industries and is growing rapidly due to the efforts of both government and private sectors. Murphy also stated that this great expansion of tourism, in particular mass tourism, has generated a huge volume of tourist flows and receipts from tourism. This expansion has been driven by commercial ends and has often occurred outside of careful management and control, leading to environmental and social impacts that have increasingly entered public awareness (Murphy, 1985). Kantamuturapoj (2007) likewise contends that traditional tourism - so-called 'mass tourism' - has caused severe social and environmental impacts. As a consequence, Kantamuturapoj has stated that this has generated responses from several organizations concerned to minimise the impacts of mass tourism by offering another kind of tourism which is perceived to consume less resources and generate less impact. According to Richards and Hall (2000), the new form of tourism is not only able to minimize resource use and reduce environmental impact, but also be more sustainable. Among these forms, Rocharungsat (2008) argues that community-based tourism is the most appropriate form of tourism for local communities.

Such tourism is considered to be one of the potential tools for improving the economic conditions of local communities. As UNWTO stated in 2007[1];

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[1] http://www.unwto.org/aboutwto/why/en/why.php?op=1 (Accessed: 8 September 2007).

Tourism has become one of the world's most important sources of employment. It stimulates enormous investment in infrastructure, most of which also helps to improve the living conditions of local people. It provides governments with substantial tax revenues. Most new tourism jobs and business are created in developing countries, helping to equalize economic opportunities and keep rural residents from moving to overcrowded cities.

Moscardo (2008) suggests that the reason why tourism has been perceived as a development strategy in several communities is because tourism is believed to be a potential motor to generate income and enhance benefits for the community. Such a concern has frequently been observed particularly in communities where tourism already existed, communities that are therefore already aware of the impacts of mass tourism. Several approaches and forms of tourism development have been introduced in order to replace the traditional so-called 'top-down approach' with approaches which initiate models of tourist development based on community respect and the needs of local members (Talib, 1997). According to Rocharungsat (2008), the involvement of the community in the development of tourism is perceived as an important factor for the success of tourism. This is because it is based on the active support of community members who are perceived to have shared goals vis-à-vis development. Murphy (1985) illustrated that in the tourism industry, 'the community' has been used by the industry as a resource; the industry sells the community as a product, and in the process affects the lives of community members. This being so, community involvement and participation in the process of tourism development is to be expected and should be encouraged. However, according to Reid (2003), although tourism is perceived as one of the most important strategies for community development, as discussed above, it is not always a successful development tool. This is due to contested understandings of tourism development and its impact on communities in areas such as identity, socio-cultural change, and environmental impact. In relation to the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen, which has the potential to be promoted as a famous tourist destination in northern Thailand, the increase of tourism in the town and nearby destinations has attracted the interest of local stakeholders who see tourism as one tool of community development. However,

alongside the increase of tourism, the government has also proposed the town and nearby region as the core area for a major economic project related to the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). This has concerned many in the local community who worry that this project will have severe impacts on their community. In particular, they are concerned about the impact on the identity of the community as an historic town. Reason why select this topic as theme of the study will illustrate in next section and following by the background to these contested visions of local stakeholders towards development in the town.

The reason for selecting the topic

This research topic was chosen because the researcher was inspired by preliminary studies of the historic town. The author organised a fieldtrip to the city for undergraduate students, and also worked there part time as a freelance tourist guide. These occasions generated opportunities for the researcher to talk and exchange ideas about tourism development with local residents in the town, including both local elites and the general population. Conversations majored on the impact of development projects initiated by the central government, including projects related to the GMS and tourism. Residents were concerned about where the benefits of development projects were going, and whether they targeted local residents or people in the business sector.

One of the most significant pieces of information he gained concerned the different perception of local residents about tourism development. Most ordinary residents thought that maintenance of traditional ways of life in a preserved historic town would attract tourists. On the other hand, elites such as entrepreneurs, officials and those in related organizations thought that progressing the government's development and tourism-related projects in the town would increase the business opportunities and also attract and facilitate more tourists to visit. It seemed to the researcher that the development of tourism business and other government projects could be perceived as a potential factor in generating benefits for the town particularly economic benefits; however, the negative impact those development projects might have worried most of the local residents.

These contested visions of development sparked the researcher's interest and prompted him to investigate to what extent government initiated development projects and tourism development could potentially meet the needs of both sides. The researcher was interested in this not merely as an academic question, but one which obviously had a significant policy question: what development approach would be most appropriate for the historic town? Some further details about the decision to do this particular study are also provided in chapter 3.

Background

The historic town of Chiang Saen is an ancient city in the district of Chiang Saen in Chiangrai, the northernmost province of Thailand, located on the banks of the Maekong River. It is near the border with Myanmar and Laos, (see map of Chiang Saen in chapter 4). Chiang Saen was originally called Hirun Nakorn Ngoen Yang and served as the capital of the Lanna Thai Kingdom in the 13th century. Today, Chiang Saen has a rich cultural heritage and is becoming a well-known tourist destination, especially for western visitors. The historic town of Chiang Saen covers an area of approximately two square kilometres and has been chosen as the research site due to its reputation as a unique and ancient town that could be damaged by the mismanagement of projects designed to modernise and develop it.

Chiang Saen is currently undergoing profound social, political and economic changes. These changes include the rapid growth of its tourism industry as well as changes relating to the government's decision to include the town in The Greater Maekong Sub-Region Project. The GMS is designed to enhance economic cooperation between the countries located on the banks of the Maekong River: China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam. It also aims to support economic exchange and collaboration between member countries. To assist with this, all member countries need to invest in the necessary infrastructure.

However, most development projects in Chiang Saen focus on its physical infrastructure and business and marketing opportunities, rather than on ways to improve the social, cultural and environmental aspects of the whole region. This

has made residents concerned about what their future life will be like. They question whether such developments will bring them a better quality of life or potentially cause huge changes to their social structure, traditions and community. The need for economic development and the development of tourism has usually meant that only positive messages have been sent out to communities in GMS countries. However, outsiders take most of the decisions about which projects or activities are appropriate for the communities. Consequently, they are often based upon economic and political pressure rather than the communities' needs.

Increases in development and tourism activity are expected to bring radical changes to Chiang Saen but the 'top-down' approach to decision making adopted across the whole region has so far been problematic at a community level in terms of its social and cultural impact. Conflicts have arisen between different stakeholders, such as tourist organisations and host communities and between local government and local social actors.

The tourist industry is in fact becoming an important tool for economic regeneration and development in the city, but at times it tends to compete for the control and consumption of spaces and resources crucial for the life of its communities. This competition might translate into a critical gap between the needs of hosts and guests and also between 'demand' and 'supply'. In order to reduce this gap, the development of tourism should be able to meet the needs of both the tourist and the community directly or indirectly involved. For this reason the decision making process and the relationships among stakeholders or key players is a fundamental component of any analysis of the impact of international tourism on the development of local communities (Obasily, 2000). However, the variety of players, and roles, implies that a wide range of disciplines and expertise is required to understand the respective 'agendas' and the potential conflicts that might arise among them and, eventually, become a major constraint for the whole development process. Consequently, it is very important to shed light on the contested visions of local stakeholders towards the development in the historic town of Chiang Saen. In particular, it is important to explore what different actors understand by "appropriate development". Minimizing conflict and maximizing participation between all key players has become a particularly important goal

which could help sustain and consolidate the historic town of Chiang Sean as a unique historical city and a well known destination in northern Thailand, especially for international tourists.

Research Questions

The key question of this research is to what extent do local stakeholders' contested perceptions of the place identity of Chiang Saen, Thailand, inform different visions about the role of tourism in its development trajectory? To answer this overarching question, it has been broken down into four specific questions:

1. Can Chiang Saen retain its unique historical and rural identity under the pressure of increased tourism and the GMS project? This question aims to investigate how the historic town of Chiang Saen could maintain its existing identity under pressure from both internal and external factors. Internal factors include the need for development identified by some local stakeholders. External factors involve the increasing interest of central government and investors in promoting the town as a core area for economic development projects.

2. Will growth lead to the further decline and destruction of Chiang Saen's cultural identity and unique atmosphere? As the historic town is currently under pressure from several factors in the larger town, this question aims to examine how these changes are affecting (or might affect) the historic area. Particular attention is given to the perceived risk that the town might lose its historic identity.

3. Should Chiang Saen go beyond the past and become a hub for business and trade? Would this mean abandoning its identity as an historic town?

4. To what extent has community participation and stakeholder cooperation been occurring in the Chiang Saen development process?

Research aim and objectives

The historic town of Chiang Saen, and its vicinity, has suffered from a lack of planning and from a development model based on a top-down economic project promoted by the national government. It has also suffered from the misunderstandings of some key players in the tourist development of the area, from the imbalance between tourism demand and supply, and from tourist flows that exceed the tourist carrying capacity. This research aims to understand these processes and explore the extent to which alternative, community-based tourist development models can overcome these problems. This is approached primarily through examining the role of different understandings of place identity in contests over the role of tourism in the development trajectory of the historic town of Chiang Saen. To pursue this practically, the main aim and objectives of this research may be outlined as follows:

1. To investigate the contested perceptions of local stakeholders toward the prospective impacts of the government's proposed development project, in particular contested visions of the identity of the historic town

2. To investigate the different approaches to tourism and local development in relation to the historic town of Chiang Saen, considering the impact of the GMS-related project (The Greater Mekong Sub-Region) and the growth of tourism.

3. To investigate the participation of the key players in the development of tourism in Chiang Saen District in order to understand how it would be possible to minimize conflict and maximize cooperation between each player.

The contributions of this study

This research aims to contribute, according to key findings, some knowledge that is applicable for implementing tourism development in the local community. There are three major contributions of this research: the first two to scholarship in general, and the third being to public policy.

The first is a detailed, empirical case study of an under-researched place. This both enhances our understanding of tourism and development in an important region of Thailand, and also captures the dynamics of a set of struggles over place that have parallels in many tourist destinations the world over.

The second contribution of this research is to identify a set of useful analytical tools to assess the relationships between tourism and local development.

The third contribution is of specific concern for the debates outlined within this study. The dissertation concludes with policy proposals as to an appropriate approach to tourism and local development in the historic town of Chiang Saen. Adapted versions of this model might also prove useful to communities in other parts of Thailand.

Key concepts used in this study

As this research is centrally on tourism and local community development, this research is based on the development of a type of tourism that is focused on the needs of a local community. As discussed in more detail in chapter two which will examine the concept of local and community-based tourism, this research focuses on debates and discussions about community involvement and participation. The starting position of the researcher is that the development of tourism in local communities should be handled through the involvement and participation of all concerned stakeholders and with planning decisions adopted at a local level. In addition, the concept of balancing costs and benefits such as those between the positive and negative impacts of tourism development is also illustrated and discussed in the research.

Research Method

This research is based on qualitative techniques. These include the analysis of primary documents, research site-observation (participation observation) and in-depth interviews with key local stakeholders in the research site area. The aim of these methods is to investigate the contested visions of local stakeholders toward the identity of place in the historic town of Chiang Saen. It is also to investigate

what these stakeholders see as an appropriate approach towards tourism development in the town and to highlight the problems inherent in the existing approach.

Organization of the thesis

This thesis is divided into eight chapters. Following the introductory chapter (chapter 1), the researcher will discuss and explore in more detail the theoretical framework and concepts used in the thesis. These include the discussion of tourism development and in particular the discussion of tourism as a tool of development. Tourism is recognised as an important tool for economic development that has generated several positive benefits for communities. At the same time, tourism has also had negative socio-economic and environmental impacts. As a result, communities often actively seek to minimise these impacts. Consequently, the search for appropriate forms of tourism development that involve community participation is also highlighted as an important factor in the development of tourism. The chapter illustrates these debates with an outline of tourism development in Thailand. The importance of local involvement is highlighted as a key theme of the thesis.

Chapter 3 provides details of the research methods used. The chapter gives an overview of the research site and data collection methods. The chapter reflects on the conducting of field interviews, and idenfities some specific terms used in the thesis.

Chapter 4 begins an exploration of the contested vision of development futures in the historic town of Chiang Saen through the lens of official plans. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first part presents a profile of the historic town of Chiang Saen as the local context of the research site for this research. It provides both general background and tourism information. The second part of the chapter investigates and discusses the contested visions of development in the town by outlining the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) trans-boundary project. Key sources for this chapter are the plans of two key local organizations: the Chiang

Saen District Office and the Chiang Saen Municipality Office as well as documents from the tourism ministry.

Following the discussion of differing visions of development of Chiang Saen in chapter 4, chapter 5 considers conservation and tourism development in the historic town of Chiang Saen. Illuminating the challenges facing the town's residents, it analyses and discusses the relationships between development and conservation. In particular, it dwells on conflicts between the need for development and a desire for conservation. The chapter also details how residents in the historic town react to the development of their community and how they seek to minimise the impacts and maximise the benefits. The chapter will also discuss forms of development that community residents consider to be appropriate and acceptable, such as community-based tourism. The chapter examines the processes whereby community residents access information to reach conclusions about which forms of development are appropriate for their community.

Building on this discussion of conservation and development, chapter 6 focuses on change and development in the historic town: the challenge of preserving the historic identity of Chiang Saen while developing it as a tourist destination. The chapter discusses how residents perceive the current identity of the historic town of Chiang Saen and whether they want the town to develop in the future. It will examine how some residents have used Chiang Saen's historic identity to justify protesting against changes that they perceive as inappropriate for their community. The chapter also engages with local debates about the transformation of the historic town of Chiang Saen and its vicinity from an historic town into a business hub. It investigates how the town's identity is being reconstructed in order to meet the demands of tourism.

Chapter 7 considers community involvement and participation, and whether this represents a genuinely new approach to the development of tourism in the historic town of Chiang Saen. This chapter will examine whether community involvement in the decision making process correlates to the success of development in the historic town of Chiang Saen. It asks to what extent it results in better development projects within Chiang Saen than those currently initiated by the

government and developers acting alone. The chapter will also discuss residents' views about increasing their level of participation. The key question in this chapter is whether community involvement increases the ability of local people to help themselves to develop, and thus prove an appropriate approach to develop tourism in the historic town of Chiang Saen. This is highlighted as an important question because residents of the historic town of Chiang Saen believe that traditional top-down development approaches have not worked. These approaches have not allowed residents to participate in the development process and have not maintained the town's historic identity as the residents wished. The chapter will also discuss residents' views on the changes taking place in their town and whether they want more active community participation in the new types of tourism and also discuss whether more community involvement could be encouraged in other (non-touristic) development activities. Through examples the chapter illustrates how some local residents have participated in development activities within the historic town of Chiang Sean.

Chapter 8, the conclusion chapter, provides summaries of the discussion in previous chapters and also provides general conclusions about contested visions of local stakeholders towards tourism development in the local community. It summarises the scholarly and policy implications of the research. The chapter concludes by identifying some potential future research questions.

Chapter 2
Development, tourism and community in Thailand

Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to locate this study in contemporary tourism debates and within a broader understanding of both the development and impacts of tourism in Thailand. Factors influencing recent changes include the establishment of an official tourism policy and a tourism organisation in Thailand, a stronger role for the government, the emergence of sustainable tourism and the greater awareness of the implications of tourism on local communities and thus a movement towards developing appropriate forms of tourism through strategies such as participation. The chapter will pay particular attention to the effects of the development of tourism in Thailand on local communities.

Tourism and development

Tourism is now internationally recognised as the world's biggest and fastest growing industry. It is also widely regarded as an effective vehicle for economic development. The increasing emphasis on using tourism as a development tool in local communities is evident all over the world, and especially in developing countries (Sharpley, 2002). The attraction of different cultures, landscapes, natural resources, unique lifestyles and people is becoming a key motivational factor for people travelling abroad, and many communities are finding ways to promote their region as a tourist destination. Tourism has thus become a major driving force for community development, helping to generate economic and social benefits and employment opportunities, as stated by the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO);

> Over the decades, tourism has experienced continued growth and deepening diversification to become one of the fastest growing economic sectors in the world. Modern tourism is closely linked to development and encompasses a growing number of new destinations. These dynamics have turned tourism into a key driver for socio-economic progress. Today, the business volume of tourism equals or even surpasses that of oil exports,

food products or automobiles. Tourism has become one of the major players in international commerce, and represents at the same time one of the main income sources for many developing countries. This growth goes hand in hand with an increasing diversification and competition among destinations. This global spread of tourism in industrialised and developed states has produced economic and employment benefits in many related sectors - from construction to agriculture or telecommunications (UNWTO, 2009)[2].

Telfer (2002) argues that tourism can be seen as an economic development tool in promoting development clusters at the regional level, as will be discussed in relation to trans-boundary tourism in the GMS region in chapter 4. Kaosa-ard (2007) also observes a rapid and widespread growth of interest in tourism amongst developing countries as a way to combat poverty. In addition to basic poverty amelioration, it can also be employed as a strategy to improve infrastructure:

> Tourism is often perceived by policy makers as a convenient strategy for development. This perception is partly because tourism depends largely on historical, cultural and natural endowments, often implying less private and public investment in the initial phase. As demand for tourism grows, income generated from tourism is then used to improve infrastructure and management (Kaosa-ard, 2007:1).

Tourism is the major source of income and employment for communities in some countires, including Cambodia, The Gambia, and Mognolia (Blake et al. 2006). In developing countries as tourism represents an important element of their economic and social development policies, it is therefore fundamental to the development of other sectors of the economy. According to de Kadt (1976), tourism is the new opportunity for third world countries to secure foreign exchange and to stimulate economic growth.

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[2] UNWTO (2009) *About UNWTO*.
Available at:http://www.unwto.org/aboutwto/why/en/why.php?op=1
(Last accessed: 2 June 2009).

In some coutries tourism may thus be the main source of income: for many others, however, it is an additional source (Pearce, 2002). For example, Hitchcock, King and Parnwell (1993) state that the ASEAN countries have generated vast revenues from the growth of both domestic and foreign tourist numbers, so that tourism has become an important sources of income alongside key sectors such as trade, industry, and agriculture. Chon (2000) claims that this has meant that since the 1990s the region's governments have become increasingly attuned to the importance of the industry. This is evidenced by greater economic cooperation among countries such as those in the Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS) and Indonesia – Malaysia – Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) which will be discussed in chapter 4. The financial importance of tourism to the region is shown in table 2.1.

Table 2.1: Size of tourist economies in 2004

Destination	Tourist Arrivals (million)	Tourism Earnings (million)	Tourism Revenue as % of GDP	Export Earning (US$ billion)	Export as % of GDP	Tourism as % of Export
ASEAN Destination						
Malaysia	15.70	8,198	6.69	126.5	104.40	6.48
Singapore	5.71	5,090	4.77	179.6	168.09	2.84
Indonesia	5.32	4,798	1.86	69.7	25.89	6.88
Philippines	2.29	2,012	2.33	39.6	45.81	5.08
Mekong Destination						
Thailand	11.74	10,034	6.14	97.7	59.76	10.27
Vietnam	2.93	2,170	4.80	26.2	58.02	8.28
Cambodia	1.06	532	11.57	2.5	53.40	21.67
Lao PDR	0.89	118	4.89	0.5	18.86	23.60
Myanmar*	0.22	99	1.08	2.40	26.32	4.12

Source: Adapted from Kaosa-ard (2007)

*2002 statistics.

Table 2.1 shows that Thailand is the country that earned most from tourism in the Mekong region. According to Park et al (2003) Thailand is the key player within the region and is also considered as central to the future of the sub-region due to the location of the country as the natural economic bridge between the GMS and the rest of ASEAN. In addition, in terms of tourism development, Thailand is also considered as the first nation in the region which added tourism to the development agenda (Kaosa-ard, 2007). According to Hitchcock, King and Parnwell (1993), tourism development in Thailand in the early period (1960s) is perceived as one of the factors that promoted recovery from the decreased foreign exchange earnings caused by the decline of contract labour remittances from the Middle East. The next section will discuss the development and impacts of tourism in more detail.

The meaning of tourism

Tourism may be defined in many ways, with definitions varying according to their underlying purpose. In general, definitions of tourism are based on three aspects: the purpose of visit, the time and the situation (Burn and Holden, 1995). Following this approach, Mathieson and Wall (1982:1) have provided a definition of tourism as: 'the temporary movement of people to destinations outside their normal place of work and residence, the activities taken during their stay in those destinations and the facilities created to cater for their needs'. The WTO (1999) defines tourism as the activities of people travelling and staying in places outside of their usual environment for not more than one consecutive year. These can be leisure, business or other activities.

Weaver and Opperman (2000:3) define tourism as the sum of the relationships between tourists and business suppliers, governments, host communities, universities, community colleges and non-government organisations, when attracting, transporting, hosting and managing tourists and other visitors. Like Weaver and Opperman (2000), Sharpley and Telfer (2004:22) define tourism as a social phenomenon that involves the temporary movement of people to various destinations. Urry (1990) defines tourism as a complex social and psychological relationship between the individual and society, having a great deal to do with

extricating the familiar from the novel. Jafari (1977:8) defines it as: the study of man away from his usual habitat; as the industry which responds to his needs; and, as the impacts that both he and the industry have on the host's socio-cultural, economic and physical environment. According to Jafari, Cohen (1974) extended the meaning of tourism, describing tourists as voluntary, temporary travellers; travelling in the expectation of pleasure from the novelties and changes experienced on a relatively long and non-recurrent round-trip. Following Jafari and Cohen, it might be said that tourism is not only about personal interest but is also a social activity, as travellers have to interact with other parties, such interacting with services providers.

Thus it can be argued that the definitions of tourism are variable, contested and debatable, depending on different experiences and backgrounds. In this research tourism is defined as a set of human activities and social interactions that, for a limited period of time, take place outside of people's usual residence or workplace, and can have a variety of purposes. This definition of tourism is not intended to be comprehensive, but instead aims to underline the idea that tourism is one common form of daily human activity. As this research studies the effects of the development of tourism on a Thai community, the discussion in the next section will provide different views about tourism, particularly the implications of using tourism as a tool for development in local communities.

Tourism as a development tool

Given the rapid increase in tourism across the world, especially tourism to the developing world, governments are pouring more money into tourism marketing and infrastructure projects, such as roads, hotels and air transport services. To stimulate investment, many countries offer promotional assistance as well as economic incentives - such as subsidies, guarantees, and exemptions from tax and import duties. This is because their governments hope to diversify their economies by attracting foreign exchange. They hope that this will enable them to reduce their international debt, pay for imports, strengthen their domestic infrastructure and boost social services. According to the UN, in the world's 49 least developed countries (the majority of which are in Africa and Asia) tourism is now the second

biggest source of foreign exchange, after oil. In some small island nations in the Caribbean and Pacific, it accounts for more than 40% of their GDP. In addition, the World Trade Organisation reports that tourism is the only economic area where developing countries consistently run a trade surplus (UNCTAD, 2005)[3].

The contribution of tourism to development can be classified into several areas, such as creating wealth, employment opportunities, socio-cultural benefits and increased environmental and conservation awareness. Each of these will be considered in turn.

Tourism and economic development

Tourism is frequently justified on the basis of its potential to contribute to economic development. Increases in income and employment are the main benefits (Mihalic, 2002). Mihalic defines development as a process of socio-economic change and progress, embracing indicators which include: increases in per capita income; a reduction in poverty levels among the masses; more social justice; modernisation in terms of social changes; higher levels of employment and literacy; improvements in, and wider access to, medical treatment; and, a better life with more opportunities for self-improvement. In addition, Mihalic also divides development caused by increased levels of tourism into three stages, according to its contribution to the growth of the destination's economy. The first stage of development is spontaneous and unsupported by either tourism policy or by intensive capital investment. Tourists visit attractive places and generate income for the host region without any purpose-built tourism infrastructure. At this stage the average capital-output ratio in the tourism sector is low, much lower than the average for the economy as a whole. The second stage of development occurs when tourism begins to be promoted and politically supported, with associated investments in tourism infrastructure. Significant levels of capital investment are usually required and the average capital-output ratio for the tourism sector increases and becomes higher than the average ratio for the economy as a whole. The final stage refers to a situation where the average tourism capital-output ratio falls to, or below, the average ratio for the economy as

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[3] www.unctad.org. (Last accessed: 28 December 2005).

a whole. This is the result of benefits being gained from previous investments in tourism infrastructure and also from current innovations and improvements in the quality of the tourism products offered. Together, these encourage higher levels of tourist consumption, hence contributing to the economic growth of the local economy (2002:85).

It is widely assumed that tourism can help to eliminate the widening economic gap between developed and less developed countries and ensure the steady acceleration of economic and social development in developing countries (WTO, 1980). This is because tourism has several positive economic impacts, such as foreign exchange earnings, contributions to government revenues and the creation of employment and investment through businesses. These four impacts will be considered in turn.

The first contribution of tourism to development is by generating foreign exchange earnings, from tourists and from the export and import of related goods and services to the host country. Table 2.2, for example, shows revenue generates from tourism in Thailand from 1998 to 2007.

Table 2.2: Tourism statistics: Foreign exchange and revenue earning from tourism sector in Thailand 1998-2007

Year	Revenue earning for Tourism	
	Domestic (Million Baht / Million Pound Sterling)	International (Million Baht/ Million Pound Sterling[4])
1998	187,897 (£3,416)	242,177 (£4,403)
1999	203,179 (£3,694)	253,018 (£4,600)
2000	210,516 (£3,827)	285,272 (£5,186)
2001	223,732 (£4,067)	299,047 (£5,437)
2002	235,337 (£4,278)	323,484 (£5,881)
2003	289,986 (£5,272)	309,269 (£5,623)
2004	317,224 (£5,767)	384,360 (£6,988)
2005	334,716 (£6,085)	367,380 (£6,679)
2006	365,276 (£6,641)	482,319 (£8,769)
2007	380,417 (£6,916)	547,782* (£9,959)

* Forecast data at the time of collection

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2008.

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[4] In the time of writing this thesis, £1 is approximately 55 baht

Secondly, tourism aids development by contributing to government revenues both directly and indirectly. Direct revenues are created by taxing income from jobs in the tourism industry, by taxing tourism businesses and by imposing levies on tourism, such as airport departure taxes. Indirect revenues are created from taxes and duties levied on products and services supplied to tourists.

The third contribution of tourism to development is the creation of employment. The expansion of tourism industries, especially international tourism, creates more opportunities for local people to obtain jobs, such as acting as tour guides, working in hotels and restaurants, driving taxis and selling local products (Rabibhadana and Jatuworapruk, 2007). They may also work for companies supplying products and services needed by the tourism industry.

Fourthly, tourism stimulates development through increased investment in infrastructure. In order to satisfy tourists, host governments need to improve their country's infrastructure, such as their transport networks, roads and public vehicles, internet and telephone services, water and sewage systems, electricity, security and safety systems. It is argued that local people benefit from improvements in these services as well (Nguyen, Pigram and Rugendyke, 2002).

However, even though tourism creates positive impacts in host countries, this does not mean that all of the benefits remain in these countries. This is because the majority of the revenue from tourism is from foreign-owned businesses or payments for imported goods and labour (Walton, 1993). Walton argues that tourism is important in ASEAN countries in facilitating economic development and generating foreign exchange, but most tourism businesses belong to foreign enterprises, who repatriate much of the revenues derived. As Walton illustrates:

> The most obvious and most quoted example in ASEAN is the Japanese tourist whose tour is pre-paid in Japan, and who travels on Japan Air Lines, is transported to a Japanese hotel in a Japanese care and probably consumes a large proportion of imported food. (1993: 216)

In addition, the increasing number of foreign investments, mergers and franchising arrangements - such as hotel chains - threaten to crowd out small local operators who are unable to compete (Rattanasuwongchai 1998). The majority of tourists' expenditure takes place in their home country when paying for package tours. Therefore, the real benefits to host governments may not be as significant as the statistics suggest. Moreover, in some host countries that are economically dependent on tourism, a crisis – such as SARS or Bird Flu in Southeast Asia or the tsunami in southern Thailand (26 December 2004)- can seriously affect their tourism industry and national economy. Increases in tourism can also cause increases in the price of goods and services that will affect local people and could make it more difficult for them to meet their basic daily needs. Thailand here maybe an exception. As the ADB (2005) claims, the leakage of foreign exchange generated by tourism is quite low compared to other countries in the GMS region as Thailand has a strong and broad-based economy which covers almost all tourism supplies such as food, beverages, transport, accommodation, and other goods.

Tourism and employment

Much of the debate concerning the impact of tourism on development has focused on the direct and visual impacts, such as the construction of new infrastructure or pollution. However, where tourism provides new jobs in traditional agricultural communities its indirect impacts may be greater than the direct ones (Forsyth, 1995). For example, tourism can be a potential source of foreign exchange, can generate new opportunities for employment and can stimulate demand for local products and industries. The significant differences between tourism and other sectors is that most tourism products cannot be stored and sent to consumers as they are considered to be perishable and intangible such as hotel rooms and seats available on the plane during the low tourism season. These cannot be stored for tourists in the peak season when demand has increased nor can the beautiful seasonal scenery of a specific destination such as the scenery of a mountain covered with snow, be transferred to tourists resident in other areas. Unlike other more tangible products which can be posted to them by a producer or supplier these people have to come to see it by themselves (Holloway, 1994:3-4). This characteristic means that tourism can generate more benefits than other sectors of

the economy because there are no costs from exporting, packaging or storing the product. Holloway also argued that tourism is a labour-intensive industry and it is thus a key means of development in most of the world's poor countries, where it generates more direct and indirect employment opportunities than other sectors.

The most obvious and immediate benefit from tourism is thus the creation of jobs and the opportunity for people to increase their income and standard of living. Employment generated directly in the tourism sector, in hotels and restaurants, is generally shown to yield earnings at least as high as, and often higher than, those available in other sectors, especially agriculture. Tourism also has indirect effects on other sectors. For example, it increases demand for food products, souvenirs, and other goods and it generates employment in agriculture, food processing, handicrafts and light manufacturing. Rabibhadana and Jatuworapruk (2007), in their study of the impact of tourism upon local communities in Chiang Mai, conclude that tourism has generated income opportunities for residents to earn money from tourism as an additional source of income derived from the agricultural sector. They also find that for some community members, tourism has become the major source of income when they work entirely on the production and sale of products for tourists instead of working in the agricultural sector. Similarly to Rabibhadana and Jatuworapruk, Parnwell's 1993 research on tourism and rural handicrafts in Thailand finds that the production of rural handicraft items for the tourism market is of benefit for local residents. However, Parnwell has also argued that, in this case, the balance between the commercialisation of handicrafts in tourism markets and the art and culture of the objects produced needs to be considered very carefully.

Apart from employment opportunities, the other way in which local people can benefit from tourism is through general improvements in the quality of their life. Training and education for local people, in order to improve their chances of gaining employment in the tourism industry, is also considered one of the benefits of tourism as Nimmonratana (2000) stated in her study on the impact of tourism in Chiang Mai. She found that training courses on traditional dance and music provided for school children and young residents is one way to provide employment opportunities for them, as they can be hired by restaurant and tourist

operators to perform for tourists. In so doing they can also demonstrate their community identity

Tourism and socio-cultural development

Many countries' regional or local cultures have begun to be newly appreciated by the local population. In some places this interest in arts and crafts has been created; in others it has been reinforced. Sometimes a national sense of cultural identity has been rediscovered, as Nimmonratana found in her 2000 study on the impact of tourism in Chiang Mai. She argues that one positive impact of tourism on communities is that it reawakens the interests of residents in local culture and arts as they perceive it to be a factor in attracting tourists. The community of local residents and local organisations such as local schools have thus organised activities in order to encourage local residents to become aware of the importance of these traditions. Thus school children are taught traditional dance, music and costumes, and other residents are also encouraged to wear traditional dress. Similar to Nimmonratana, Lou Halin and Ma Li (2004) have studied tourism development and local identity of the Dai Park region in Namenghan of Xishuangbanna in Yunnan province, China. They likewise found that tourism facilitated greater pride amongst local residents in their traditional identity and culture. The preservation of simple historic buildings and traditional environments for enjoyment by tourists and local people has thus been vigorously pursued.

Some local communities that produce souvenirs for tourists have found that tourism can lead to a resurgence in local art, as Nimmonratana (2000) discovered in relation to Chiang Mai's souvenir industry. However, Nimmonratana also stated in her study that this is not simply the return to an unchanged past: rather, tourism itself is generative of changes in the meaning of 'the traditional'. Chambers (1991) noted that some Thai communities might change the design, style and materials of their products in order to meet with the needs of tourists. Likewise, Ryan (1999) found that art associated with religious symbolism may lose its original meaning when consumed by tourists. As Mathieson and Wall (2000) have described, and as illustrated previously, the interaction of tourists with local residents changes the host community's quality of life, value systems, division of labour, family relationships, attitudes, and behavioural patterns.

In general, encounters between tourists and residents occur in three main contexts: the first is where the tourist is buying some goods or services from a resident; the second is when they are in the same place at the same time; and the third is when they meet to share ideas and information (de Kadt, cited in Hall and Richards, 2000). The major impacts of this for the tourist–resident relationship are the so-called 'demonstration effect', when the residents' behaviour is modified in order to initiate tourism. As Dearden (1991:408) has stated in his study one example of this impact is the increased tendency of the hill tribes in the northern Thailand to abandon their traditional forms of dress. In addition, Hall and Richards (2000) have also stated that changes in the language used by residents; the growth of crime, prostitution and gambling; and the transformation of the material and non-material forms of local culture are also considered as the impact caused by tourism. Dearden (1991) found that tourism caused changes to hill tribes in Northern Thailand, as some communities became opposed to tourists, perceiving them as hostile strangers, whereas others viewed them as an opportunity to earn money through homestays and souvenir sales. Dearden also claimed that tourism caused conflict between community members who benefitted from tourism and those who did not. Likewise, Ryan (1999) claims that tourism has changed local lifestyles in numerous ways. For example, some residents now work nights instead of during the day-time, selling souvenirs or working in traditional performance such as folk dance.

The development of tourism also contributes to changes in the quality of life, social structure and social organisation of residents. It is often credited with generating employment opportunities, but in Thailand many of these are seasonal, unskilled and low-paid jobs (Rattanasuwongchai, 1998).

There are several socio-cultural factors involved in the development of tourism. Apart from the factors mentioned above, religion, traditions, and economic inequalities are other socio-cultural impacts of tourism. Different attitudes towards religion may be significant, especially when tourists from an agnostic western culture come to parts of the developing world where religious beliefs may be strong. This is illustrated when such tourists visit Thai temples and are requested to take off their shoes and hats and not allowed to wear shorts or make

loud noises.[5] Some tourists are more prepared to pay to visit a chapel than to worship in it and problems may emerge when such tourists fail to appreciate the importance of religious shrines to their hosts. Tourists may also cause shock amongst hosts because of their dress (or rather lack of it) and hosts may view certain ways tourists dress as inappropriate. Conran (2006) argues that encounters between tourists and hosts in Thailand are prone to such misunderstandings. In addition Nguyen, Pigram and Rugendyke's (2002) study of tourism in national parks in Vietnam found that tourism may not always be the most appropriate form of development because there can be conflicts, such as those between tourism and traditional cultures and lifestyles, if the development is dominated by outside interests that pay scant regard to community needs and sensitivities.

The development of tourism and its effect on the environment
As tourism requires a sophisticated infrastructure, such as the building of roads and the expansion of hotels, this can significantly alter the physical environment. Some scholars claim that tourism's impact is not limited to human, cultural and environmental issues: some argue that 'tourism kills tourism' because of the heavy physical impact on popular destinations (Preglau, 1983). It is also argued that the development of tourism can become a potential source of conflict between large-scale projects and a need to protect areas of outstanding beauty. For example, According to Ross (2003), who studies sustainable tourism in Thailand, there was a conflict between residents living near Maya beach in Krabi province, southern Thailand, and a film production company from Hollywood over the use the beach as the location for the film *The Beach* (2000). This happened because, while local people wanted to protect their natural environment, the film company wanted to re-shape it as a set for their production.

In order to reduce the impact of tourism on the environment, scholars such as Ross have argued that appropriate techniques and methods should be introduced into the development process (Ross, 2003). She/he recommends that sustainable tourism be led by organizations responsible for tourism, such as the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) in providing training courses on themes such as

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[5] See 'do's and don't for tourist visiting Thailand' at http://www.tourismthailand.org/faq/faq-detail-14.html. (Last accessed 10 August 2009)

tourism and the environment for organizations and local communities. According to Ross, Laverack and Thangphet (2007), building community capacity is one of the methods to generate better understanding, knowledge and skills for local residents in order to manage and control tourism in their own community. This should enable them to minimise the negative impact of tourism and reinforce community cohesion.

Thus far I have considered more general perspectives on tourism and development. In the following section I will explore this in more detail in relation to Thailand.

The development of tourism in Thailand

According to the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT, 1995), the development of tourism in Thailand can be traced back to the reign of King Chulalongkorn (Rama V) (1868-1910). At this time, His Royal Highness Prince Purachatra Jayakary (Krom Phra Kambaengbejra Agrayondin) - then Commissioner-General of the Royal State Railway of Siam - sent publicity materials about Thailand to the United States of America. In 1924, a public relations section was formed as part of the Royal State Railway of Siam. Its duty was to welcome tourists to Thailand as well as to better manage the promotion of what the country had to offer.

In 1936, the Ministry of Economic Affairs proposed another plan to promote tourism in Thailand, suggesting that more publicity to attract tourists was needed along with more facilities for those who chose to visit. The Department of Commerce was entrusted with looking after all tourism related matters, although the proposal to set up an independent tourism body was rejected. Work to promote tourism in Thailand came to an abrupt end however at the start of the Second World War (TAT, 1995).

In 1949 it was proposed that the government agency responsible for tourism should be transferred from the Ministry of Commerce and Transport to the Publicity Department, part of the Office of the Prime Minister. The Publicity Department was renamed the Office for the Promotion of Tourism and its funding

came directly from the Office of the Prime Minister. The rapid expansion of tourism convinced the Publicity Department of the need to upgrade the office to a regular division called the Tourism Office. This was achieved following a royal decree in 1950 (TAT, 1995).

The Publicity Department became an independent body during the administration of Field Marshall Srisdi Dhanarajata. He was impressed by the success of tourism in America, which he saw on a trip there in 1959, and upon his return announced a plan to re-organise the Publicity Department and establish by royal decree the National Tourist Office. This organisation was inaugurated with its own offices on March 18, 1960. In 1963, a second royal decree proclaimed that the phrase "of Thailand" would be added to its previous title to become the Tourist Organisation of Thailand (TOT).

Following the establishment of the Tourism Organisation of Thailand, the promotion of tourism rapidly increased (TAT, 1995). However, given the widening scope of tourist activities, it was seen as necessary to develop and conserve the country's tourism resources and to organise and take more control of the travel trade. Two bills, a Tourism Authority of Thailand Bill and a Travel Trade Regulations Arrangement Bill, were submitted to the National Legislative Assembly on April 20th 1979. Having been voted upon, only the former was passed into law. This resulted in the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) replacing the Tourist Organisation of Thailand (TOT).

In 1987, the Thai government launched a project to promote tourism called the 'Visit Thailand Year'. This was to commemorate the 60th Birthday anniversary of His Majesty the King, and to celebrate His Majesty becoming the longest reigning monarch in Thai history. Private and public organisations promoted tourism throughout the year. From 1980-1987 visitors to Thailand increased at the rate of 10.53% per year. In 1987 this figure increased by 23.59% to 3.48 million visitors and 50,023 million baht (£909.5 million) in revenue was created for the country from tourism alone (TAT, 1995).

The following year, the number of visitors increased again to 4.23 million people, 21.47% up from the previous year, with 78,828 million baht (£1,433 million) in revenue being created. Tourist numbers in 1989 rose to 4.8 million, with another 96,000 million baht (£1,745 million) being taken in revenue. In contrast, between 2003 and 2004 the number visitors and the total revenue from Thai tourism declined because of the Iraq War, SARS, Asian Bird Flu and the tsunami. Both figures continued to decline in 2005, with about 1.51 million tourists visiting the country. However, in 2006 the numbers of visitors increased by 20.01% and the total revenue generated for the country was 482,319 million baht (£8,769 million). The number of tourists predicted to visit Thailand in 2007 was 14.46 million and the predicted revenue from these tourists is 547,782 million baht (£9,959 million)[6], see table 2.3

Table 2.3: The number of international tourists arriving in Thailand, 1960 - 2006

Year	Number of visitors (millions)	Change (%)	Average length of stay (in days)	Revenue (million baht/ million pound sterling)
1960	81,340	32.11	3.00	196 (£3.56)
1970	628,671	33.82	4.80	2,175 (£39.54)
1980	1,858,801	16.80	4.90	17,765 (£323)
1987 (Visit Thailand Year)	3,482,958	23.59	6.06	50,024 (£909)
1990	5,298,860	10.17	7.06	110,572 (£2,010)
1997 (Thailand's economic crisis)	7,211,345	0.41	8.33	220,754 (£4,013)
2000	9,508,623	10.82	7.77	285,272 (£5,186)
2003 (Iraq War, SARS and Bird Flu)	10,004,453	-7.36	7.96	309,269 (£5,623)
2004 (Tsunami)	11,650,000	16.46	8.13	384,360 (£6,988)
2005	11,520,000	-1.51	8.20	367,380 (£6,679)
2006	13,820,000	20.01	8.62	482,319 (8£,769)
2007*	14,460,000	4.65	9.19	547,782 (£9,959)

* Forecast data at the time of collection

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2008

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[6] There are the only official data produced since 2006

From the above table it can be seen that, apart from those times which were affected by exceptional circumstances, tourism in Thailand has steadily increased both in terms of the number of visitors and revenue they create. In part, this is due to the establishment of a formal tourism organisation in Thailand. It is also the result of the character of the country that has attracted tourists to visit. Both can be considered important factors leading to the success of the tourism industry in Thailand. They will be examined in more detail in the next section.

Reasons for the success Thailand's tourism industry

Thailand's favourable location makes it an ideal commercial aviation centre for Southeast Asia. It is convenient for flights from all over the world to stop over at Bangkok International Airport. Being readily accessible is part of the reason for the expansion of the Thai tourism industry. Other factors include the attractiveness of Thai traditions and culture and the quality and diversity of the environment - including beaches, seaside, picturesque forests and mountains, historic tourist destinations and ancient remains. All of these are used to promote tourism in Thailand (see for example in http://www.tourismthailand.org/about-thailand/)[7].

According to Elliott (1987), the success of the tourism industry in Thailand since the 1980s is due to its natural environment, friendly people, traditional culture and central position in the region. In addition, Thailand has developed the services it can provide to tourists - such as accommodation, transportation, restaurants, souvenirs and entertainment - while the friendliness and helpfulness of Thai people makes them ideal as employees. A high standard of service impresses international tourists, who pass this information onto friends and acquaintances. This has helped to publicise Thailand as tourist destination.

The government's dedicated tourism policies, as we saw above, are also an important factor behind the success of tourism. Thailand's success derives from the government's strong interest in the development of the tourism industry which

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[7] Last accessed 28 December 2007

has resulted in a large budget being awarded to the Tourism Authority of Thailand to promote tourism through activities like the so- called the Visit Thailand Year in 1987 (Goodman, 2006). The cooperation between private and public offices and the Tourism Authority of Thailand has also resulted in the successful promotion of Thailand as a tourist destination; examples include cooperation with the Thai Hotel Association (THA), the Association of Thai Travel Agency (ATTA), and Thai Airways Public Company (TAT, 1995).

To some extent Elliott (1987), contests the positive vision of tourism development promoted by the TAT as described in the previous section. She recalls that, during the early 1980s the Thai government gave a very low priority to tourism, which at that time did not figure on its policy agenda. As Elliott (1987) and Kaosa-ard (1994) state at that time other issues took priority because during the 1980s Thailand was politically unstable and Prime Minister Prem was primarily concerned with the survival of his government and with countering political and military threats and pressure. Elliott also states that a lack of tourism facilities for tourists in the country was also one of the key reasons why the government gave a low priority to tourism promotion during that period. However, despite the government's lack of emphasis on tourism in this period, TAT worked hard to promote Thailand's rich resources. As a consequence, during his final term (1986-1989), Prem began to emphasise that tourism is a vital industry in Thailand– one that could contribute to international understanding and cooperation as well as bringing substantial economic and social improvements to the country (TDRI, 1997)[8]. Nevertheless, critics say that the government only started to pay more attention to tourism once it began to see the importance of tourism to the Thai economy (Elliott, 1987). Indeed, at this time several important problems with tourism in Thailand were not addressed, such as the lack of an effective central organisation responsible for tourism policy; a lack of cooperation among tourism organisations; and insufficient resources. According to Elliott (1987) and Kaosa-ard (1994), on top of the lack of a central organisation responsible for tourism, there was no firm direction or management guidelines for tourism development in

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[8] TDRI (The Thailand Development Research Institute) was established as a public policy research institute in 1984. Its legal form is that of a private non-profit foundation. It provides technical analysis (mostly but not entirely in economic areas) to various public agencies to help formulate policies to support long-term economic and social development in Thailand.

the country during that time. TAT, as the national tourism office (NTO), was only the organisation responsible for tourism and focus was mostly based on marketing and promotion activities rather than having overall responsibility for making plans and policies. Elliott (1987:227) has also highlighted the cautious bureaucratic approach of government which concentrated too much on paperwork and regulation. She considers this to have been a key problem in the development of tourism in the country.

1986 was the first time that tourism formally became part of the Thai National Social and Economic Plan[9]. At this point the government recognized and started to respond to the needs of tourism due to severe economic pressure rather than a concern for the problem of the lack of facilities and organisation and cooperation (Kaosa-ard, 1994). Since then, tourism has been seen as an important part of economic development. Nowadays, the government believes that tourism industries are a major source of national revenue. Tourism is ranked as the most important factor for economic development (Kaosa-ard, 1994). Thus, in order to create, and carry out a strategy for the development of tourism, the Ministry of Tourism was established in 2002. The Ministry, as a central organisation, is responsible for all national tourism activities, plans, management, and resources (see http://www.mots.go.th for more details of the Ministry of Tourism such as organization structure, policies and activities). It has administrated plans, policies and resources through the TAT, their provincial offices and related organisations.

According to Kaosa-ard (1994), the relationship between the government and the tourism industry is crucial, especially in developing countries where tourism is an important means of development and a vital source of foreign currency. However, without well-managed plans the expansion of tourism could lead to problems of environmental degradation and an over supply of tourism facilities. In order to benefit from tourism, governments play an active role as both supporters and monitors of tourism. According to TAT, the way in which this was achieved in Thailand is outlined in box 2.1 which is selected from their website.

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[9] National Social and Economic Plan is the National Development Plan of Thailand. The first plan was established in 1961 and the current plan is the 10th, (2007-2011). See more details for each plan at http://www.nesdb.go.th/Default.aspx?tabid=62

Box 2.1: Factors influencing to tourism achievement in Thailand

1. The development of a service sector policy that aims to:
1.1. Improve and develop the basic factors necessary to increase efficiency and boost the competitiveness of Thailand's service sector. This includes the production and development of service sector personnel, the development of different forms of service provision, and the development of technology and infrastructure.

1.2. Arrangements for agencies and organisations to join together to develop a strategy whereby the potential of the service sector can be fully utilised. This enables the service sector to be a source of foreign exchange and local revenue in areas such as tourism, education, health services, health care, sports and recreation.

1.3. Accelerate the development of entrepreneurs in the service sector by providing them with appropriate knowledge and skills in languages, service standards and management. This helps to prepare them to cope with any new changes in international agreements governing the service sector.

2. The development of a tourism promotion policy that aims to:
2.1. Strengthen relations and cooperation between Thailand's neighbouring countries, in order to promote Thailand as the main gateway for tourism in the region, as well as overcoming any obstacles to the further development of tourism.

2.2. Use proactive marketing tactics to increase tourism. Tourist activities must be developed both at the domestic and international level, with linkages to small-and medium-sized enterprises as well as to community businesses. The quality of tourism services must be enhanced and Thailand's standing must be elevated so that it becomes a centre for conferences, seminars and exhibitions in Southeast Asia.

Source: TAT, 2004[10]

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[10] www.tourismthailand.org (Last accessed: 27 December 2005).

Box 2.1: Factors influencing to tourism achievement in Thailand (continued)

2.3. Accelerate the restoration and revival of the country's cultural heritage and assets, both inside and outside of city areas, in order to create a new focus for tourism. Create new shopping areas for tourists by promoting the role of the private sector in collaboration with communities. At the same time, effort should be made to ensure that tourist sites and the Thai ways of life should remain distinct and vibrant.

2.4. Increase the diversity of tourists, by targeting eco-tourism, health tourism and nature tourism. New tourist sites must be developed and promoted. Communities must be able to play a greater role in the management of tourism, whether through the establishment of tourism cooperatives or through the development of community areas as tourist sites.

2.5. Increase tourist facilities; ensure greater tourist safety; prevent unfair exploitation of tourists; and, develop effective measures to eliminate the difficulties faced by tourists.

Source: TAT, 2004[11]

According to the lists in box 2.1, in relation to Elliott's comment about the TAT discussed in the previous section, it can be argued that the TAT has generated several activities specifically to promote tourism. It has acted as a link organisation in order to seek cooperation between organisations both in the private and public sector. Despite Elliott's observation that tourism ranked as a low priority and received less support from the government in the early stages of its development, It is clear that in recent years TAT's work has contributed to the success of tourism development in Thailand.

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[11] www.tourismthailand.org (Last accessed: 27 December 2005).

TAT's focus on promoting and developing new tourist destinations (illustrated in point.2.4) such as eco-tourism and natural tourism are as the most relevant to the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen studied in this thesis. The focus on community involvement and cooperation are particularly relevant and will be discussed in more detail in chapter 4. The relationship of tourism to economic development more generally in Thailand will be discussed in the next section.

The role of tourism in the economic development of Thailand

Thailand's economy grew rapidly from the 1960s onwards due to an increase in agricultural outputs. This was achieved by employing an expanded labour force, the result of population growth in Thailand, to farm unutilised land (Phongpaichit and Sarntisart, 2000). The tourism industry has also played a major role in Thailand's economic development for over 45 years. The importance of tourism to the Thai economy can be shown by the income accrued from tourism, which now accounts for 5.4% of the country's GDP. This rate is higher than any other ASEAN country, except Singapore whose tourism revenue accounts for 11.4% of its GDP (World Travel & Tourism Council, 2005).

Elliott (1987) has observed that since the Thai Government started to recognise that tourism is a major source of national revenue; tourism is on the country's agenda and ranks high in economic development. In addition, she also stated that tourism-related organisations have learnt that a lack of cooperation in tourism development in Thailand has caused problems in the past. Consequently, well managed plans for tourism and good government support have become the key facilitating factors for the economic development of tourism.

According to Elliott's argument above, it has become the policy of the government to promote and improve the quality, diversity and standard of services and ensure the long-term competitiveness of the Thai tourism industry (TDRI, 1997). For the first time a tourism development plan was included in the 4th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1977-1981). From then on, it has been included in every plan. According to the TDRI (1997) the Thai

Government's 6th National Economic and Social Development Plan (1987-1991) gave particular attention to the development of tourism and the result was a substantial boost to national revenue from tourism, from 50,000 million baht (£909 million) in 1987 to 123,135 million baht (£2,238 million) in 1992. By 1991, income from tourism was equivalent to two-thirds of the country's agricultural export earnings and was nearly the same as the country's income from textile and garment exports. By 2004, revenue from tourism increased to almost 390,000 million baht (£7,090 million), and the predicted revenue for the year 2007 is 547,782 million baht (£9,959 million)[12], see table 2.3 (TAT, 2008). In the next section, the evolution of tourism in Thailand will be discussed in order to illustrate the contributions of the interaction and implementation of tourism plans and activities in Thailand.

The evolution of Thailand's tourism industry

Since the late 1980s tourism in Thailand has replaced agriculture as the main source of jobs and income, especially in the big cities such as Bangkok, Pattaya, Phuket, Chiangmai, and Koh Samui (Kaosa-ard, 1994). Consequently, during the past four decades tourism has played an important role in Thailand's economic development. The country's historic, cultural and natural attractions have contributed to the development of mass tourism, which has had both positive and negative effects on development. For example, the increased numbers of tourists visiting Thailand led to the very quick development of several projects, such as investments in infrastructure and other related services for tourists, although many of these were poorly planned. According to Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT, 2006), the evolution of Thailand's tourism industry can be classified into four stages:

Stage 1: the start of the tourism industry in Thailand (1959 – 1975).
The government invested heavily in major infrastructure projects to boost other parts of the economy. The number of tourists was small, but increased dramatically by the end of stage 1.

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[12] There are the only official data produced since 2006 as the latest data available

Stage 2: the development of the tourism industry in Thailand (1976-1990).

Tourism became a crucial part of the National Economic and Social Development Plan. Many marketing activities were launched to convince international tourists to visit the country - such as the Visit Thailand Year in 1987. At this time the Tourism Authority of Thailand promoted the country to foreign tourists as the 'land of smiles'; with 'paradise beaches'; and with the '4-s of sun, sand, sea, and smiles'. During this stage, both the number of tourists and the revenue created rose sharply. Tourism revenue became the country's main revenue source, overtaking that obtained from agricultural exports.

Stage 3: the maturity the tourism industry in Thailand (1991-2005).

During this phase many marketing activities were launched to promote the country. For example, the Thailand Arts and Crafts Year, the Amazing Thailand Year, the Paradise of Eating and Shopping, and Unseen Thailand. Although there were some crises during this stage - such as Gulf War in 1991, the Iraq War, SARS and Bird Flu in 2003, and the Tsunami at the end of 2004 - the number of international tourists and the revenue created continued to increase by an average of about 5%.

Stage 4: the current situation.

Nowadays tourism is still an important sector of the Thai economy and has been ranked by the government as the main sector for creating national income (TAT, 2004). However, the uncertain political climate within the country has caused problems for the development of tourism. There has been a decline in the number of visitors and the revenue created by tourism and declining employment in the tourism industry (see table 2.3 between 2000 and 2004). However, the Thai government has tried very hard to solve these problems with initiatives such as organising special tourism packages and starting a campaign to promote tourism in order to persuade Thai people to travel within the country like the package called unseen Thailand (see box 2.2) (similar to the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen which will be discussed in chapter 4) and packages in order to attract foreigners to visit Thailand such as the Bangkok International Film Festival (TAT, 2006). It also allocated a bigger budget for several tourism and related

organisations particularly TAT in order to support tourism activities and to build up cooperation to support tourism (see box 2.3).

Box 2.2: Tourism Promotion for Thai tourists.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand, or TAT, has launched the 2nd Unseen Thailand Project, focusing on the 'real touch' of Thailand

TAT Governor JUTHAMAS SIRIVAN (จุฑามาศ ศิริวรรณ) presided over the opening ceremony of the 2nd *UnseenThailand project* at the Central World Plaza on May 8th
Mrs. JUTHAMAS said that the Unseen Thailand II Project's theme is the "real touch" of Thailand. The TAT will introduce the tourist attractions from different points of view, making them amazing and extravagant. The tourists will have an opportunity to explore new destinations which are worth-travelling to. The Unseen Thailand II Project includes 50 amazing destinations which tourists can visit during May to September 2004. The target groups comprises working people, senior citizens, youths and families, government officials, and state enterprise employees in the middle to high income group.

There are 4 categories of the Unseen Thailand II destinations, namely amazing and natural destinations, cultural and tradition destinations, holy destinations, and adventurous destinations. The TAT expects that the number of Thai tourists will be 68 million, while the income is expected to reach 368,000 million baht.

Source: National New Bureau of Thailand, Public Relations Department [13]

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[13] http://thainews.prd.go.th/en/news.php?id=254705090014X

(Last accessed 25 August 2009)

Box 2.3: Tourism Promotion for International tourists

THAI ,TAT, and TCT Join Hands in Boosting Thailand Tourism

Thai Airways International Public Company Limited (THAI), Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), and Tourism Council of Thailand (TCT) are cooperating in the organization of "MEGA FAM TRIP 2003," inviting top journalists and travel agents from around the world to visit Thailand during June - August 2003. The project aims to promote the Thai tourism industry and to create confidence in Thailand as a SARS zero transmission country.

Mr. Tasnai Sudasna, THAI's Executive Vice President for Commercial, said that the "MEGA FAM TRIP 2003" is being organized to boost Thai tourism, which has been affected by the SARS outbreak, for the purpose of promoting the tourism in Thailand to the international media and travel agents in various countries. Thailand is being promoted, in the "MEGA FAM TRIP 2003" promotion, as a SARS-free tourist destination.

THAI and TAT have jointly selected top travel and tourism journalists as well as travel agents from around the world to participate in the "MEGA FAM TRIP 2003" to Thailand, with participants from the Australia, China, Hong Kong, Indonesia, Nepal, New Zealand, Pakistan, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), Singapore, United States of America, and other nations. Approximately 1,500 tour operators and travel-tourism media will travel to Thailand to join in the tourism educational programme during June - August 2003, which entails travel to tourist sights in Bangkok, Pattaya, Karnchanaburi, Hua Hin, Chiang Mai, Chiang Rai, Phuket, and Krabi.

Upon arrival in Thailand, participants will be welcomed at a cocktail reception by Thailand's Minister of Tourism and Sports together with the Management of THAI, TAT, and TCT, and the group will visit top tourist destinations in Thailand. THAI will sponsor approximately 1,500 air tickets for travel on its international and domestic routenet, TAT will sponsor meals, and TCT will sponsor land arrangements.

Mrs. Juthamas Siriwan, Governor of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), stated that the "MEGA FAM TRIP 2003," organized in support of the "Thailand Smile Plus" project, is a major tourism campaign which aims to boost travel from target markets according to region. The "European MEGA FAM TRIP" will be organized with the participation of tour operators and journalists from the European region, with confirmed attendance from those in the countries of Germany, Switzerland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland. In addition, the "Russian Mega Fam Trip" from the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) amounts to approximately 600 participants, that includes a welcome reception and introduction of Thailand as a tourist destination on Friday, 13 June at the Bangkok Convention Center, Sofitel Central Plaza Hotel. At the end of June, "Japan Big Bang" will be held for the Asian market, with the promotion period lasting from July - August, inviting up to 15,000 participants. TAT has arranged for presentations to be made about the current state of the Thai tourism industry and the facts about SARS, providing preventive measures that may be taken. Public speakers will be invited from the government, Ministry of Public Health, and the World Health Organization, who will jointly speak about SARS issues and Thailand as a SARS-free country

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Source: Thai Press Release, Thai Airways International Public Company[14]

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[14] http://www.thaiair.info/press/press.htm

(Last accessed 25 August 2009)

According to the detail in the boxes, it could be argued that tourism development in Thailand has grown in a gradual and plane way in recent years. In the case of TAT, Elliott (1987) argues that although it is considered to be the first national tourism organisation responsible for tourism in the country, because of its administration as part of the government bureaucracy, plans and policies and the allocation of resources must be approved and based on central government decisions. This means that agendas are sometimes also linked to political concerns because TAT is administrated by a minister normally appointed from among the ranks of the politicians.

Thus, it can be argued that, in the case of Thailand, the lack of an effective central organisation able to lead and direct tourism-related organisations to implement tourism policies, both in the private and public sector, is the key factor causing delays in the development of tourism in the country. These issues will be discussed in more detail in relation to tourism development specifically in the historic town of Chiang Saen in chapter 4.

Although tourism has been widely perceived as one of the most powerful tools for economic development in Thailand, as illustrated in the section on the evolution of tourism in Thailand above, the increasing demands of tourism have caused a negative impact on both the natural and cultural environment in tourist destinations. According to Parnwell (1993), this might be because of a lack of planning and a lack of environmental management by all stakeholders. However, Parnwell also points out that, because most of the businesses in the tourism industry are national or international, they focus on how to gain more profits. They think less about how their business affects the local community. Some of them also think that environmental management should be the responsibility of government bodies because they pay taxes to the government.

Consequently, the environmental degradation caused by tourism has become a serious problem as Kontogeorgopoulos (2005) states in his study on community-based ecotourism in Phuket and Ao Phangnga, Thailand. He argues that tourism has caused several environmental impacts particularly on the ecosystems in the area of Ao Phangnga which has experienced traditional mass tourism over a long

period. Sustainable development has been introduced as one way to try to solve this, as it is believed to be an environmentally friendly form of tourism. Local communities and other stakeholders also support it because it is believed to be a key tool for environmental management (Ross, 2003). Sustainable development is not anti-development. It is based on balancing and controlling the development of tourism and the natural carrying capacity of the environment. The emergence of sustainable tourism in Thailand is discussed in more detail in the next section.

The development of sustainable tourism in Thailand

The 1992 the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development (UNCED) - the Rio Earth Summit - identified travel and tourism as one of the key economic sectors that could make a contribution to achieving sustainable development. The Earth Summit led to Agenda 21, a comprehensive programme of action adopted by 182 governments, which provided a global blueprint for achieving sustainable development. Travel and tourism is the first sector to have launched an industry–specific action plan based on Agenda 21.

According to Ross (2003), in Thailand sustainable tourism uses less resources; reduces over-consumption and waste; maintains cultural, social and natural diversity; integrates tourism development into national development policies; involves local communities; trains staff to a high standard; and, markets sites in a way that is honest and that educates visitors about local cultural, social and natural environments (Ross, 2003). Through its TAT offices, the government aims to preserve the culture, resources and natural environment in order to maintain Thailand's unique heritage and to engage all stakeholders, including civil society, in addressing tourism problems (Chaiyant cited in Ross, 2003). On the other hand, the government also focuses on ways to maximise the number of tourists in order to encourage economic development. The difficulty is how to promote mass tourism and still be sustainable when the two aims are opposed (Ross, 2003).

Dearden (1991) argues that in order to sustain tourism and to make sure that it creates benefits for the local community (not only economic benefits but also social, cultural and environmental benefits), the tourism industry itself needs to

facilitate sustainable development in communities. According to Ross (2003), although sustainable tourism in Thailand was launched almost two decades ago, uptake among investors has been low because they need to spend more money at first and then have to wait longer for a return on their investment. On the other hand, if investors develop mass tourism businesses they can gain more profit than through sustainable tourism projects within shorter periods of time. Despite this, most public organisations - such as World Tourism Organisation, UNCTAD, TAT and Non Government Organisations - keep encouraging investors to develop sustainable tourism businesses by making sure that they are aware of the benefits (Ross, 2003). According to Rattanasuwongchai (1998), the rapid development of tourism in Thailand has not only had positive impacts on communities living near to tourism sites, but has had negative impacts as well. Rattanasuwongchai also stated that local people who live close to tourist sites have found that instead of gaining benefits from tourism, people from outside of the community usually take the majority of the benefits. The response of these communities has been to express a desire to 'save' and 'protect' their environment and its identity from unfair exploitation by the tourism industry. To do this, such communities often try to manage their environment through self-sufficiency. This builds self-reliance and strong communities with the confidence to resist external pressures. It also increases the ability of a community to take control of its own destiny by making informed decisions about the future (Seri, 1989, cited in Kevin).

Self-sufficiency can apply to individuals as well as to whole communities. However, a lack of management, tools and support from government organisations means that most self-sufficient communities still choose to work with NGOs. This might be because there are fewer rules for communities to follow when working with NGOs, compared to when working with government organisations (Edward, 2005). Also it is useful that the members of some of NGOs are from similar backgrounds to the communities that they are trying to help. According to Pongpaichit (2000), NGOs in Thailand are usually associated with the concept of civil society and the greater influence of NGOs represents the increasing ability of civil society to stand up to an authoritarian state and demand democracy.

In Thailand, NGOs normally get involved in small-scale projects: for example, community-based sustainable tourism projects or projects that focus on helping an ethnic or indigenous group in remote areas. The significance of NGOs is that they help to spread the concept of self-sufficiency and provide training. In theory they must then step back and allow local people to work together to find ways to make their development projects succeed. According to Rattanasuwongchai (1998), the most sustainable forms of tourism are achieved when local people take control of their lives and decide to live according to their own traditions, on their own terms, according to the philosophy of self-sufficiency. In the next section I will focus in more detail upon the relations between tourism and local community

Local communities and tourism

As has been stressed throughout this chapter, tourism is a tool for development that could potentially have several impacts upon a community. Governments, particularly in developing countries, have used tourism as an economic development tool in destinations where tourism is profitable (Fagence, 1998). Tourism has provided host communities with new opportunities, such as employment and an alternative source of income to that from agriculture as discussed above and Rattanasuwongchai (1998) also stated that for some communities tourism is a by-product of the agricultural economy. On the other hand, tourism can have negative impacts on communities if it is incorrectly managed. The way in which tourism is managed in one community may not be suitable for other communities that have different characteristics. It is therefore important for developers and stakeholders in communities to decide how they are going to position tourism: as a replacement for existing sources of income, such as income from agriculture, or as an alternative source of community income. This is important because it influences planning and the approach taken to development. For example, if tourism is based on the demands of tourists, rather than a community's needs and desires, the development of tourism will potentially cause conflict between community stakeholders. Gunn (1994) points out that, in terms of the development of tourism in a community, it is rare to see any strategic planning and argues that it is a lack of plans, strategies, direction and management that sees the development of tourism in communities often fail. In addition, Gunn

observes that in some communities, where plans and strategies do exist, people from outside of the community - such as government or developers - have usually designed them. According to Gunn, this is the result of the traditional top-down approach to management adopted by governments. Similarly, Fagence (1998) states that community residents must want to have tourism in their community and the community must have a significant say in the type of tourism used to attract visitors.

Thailand is traditionally an agricultural country and, according to Forsyth (1995) many agricultural communities have now decided to work in the Thai tourism industry. Forsyth also stated in his study of tourism and agriculture in Thailand that whereas agricultural communities use their land to its maximum in order to earn as much money as they can from it, people have questioned whether these communities will be able to earn enough money from tourism. According to Forsyth, there are only a small number of residents in former agricultural communities that are able to benefit from tourism, such as those who run small local shops selling grocery products to residents and tourists. Also, the seasonal nature of tourism may prevent some residents from being able to participate in the local tourism industry. This is particularly true in those agricultural communities where the tourist season is at the same time as the cultivation period for farmers. In this case, residents would have to carry out their cultivation activities or lose money through poor crops. In some exceptional cases, employment in the tourism industry may become a new way of life for a former agricultural community, although it can still be difficult for some members of these communities to adapt to working in tourism businesses due to a lack of familiarity with what is required. As a result of these difficulties, Forsyth argues that, in order to enable more people to benefit from the opportunities that tourism can create, appropriate resources should be allocated and members of the community given an equal opportunity to access these resources (1995:893). Similarly to Forsyth, Rattanasuwongchai (1998), who studied rural tourism in Thailand also emphasized that selling some of their own (local) products to tourists is considered as by local people as an opportunity to derive some benefit from tourism (1998).

The meaning of 'community'

Thus far the concept of 'community' has been invoked unproblematically in this study. It is, however, important to clarify what community means in this study and how it relates to tourism.

Community can be defined in different ways. According to Beeton (2006), the word community is derived from the Latin *communitas*, which refers to the very spirit of community, or to an unstructured community in which people are equal. Urry, who has written extensively on consuming places (1995:10), has analysed what Bell and Newby said about the concept of community and concludes that there are four different definitions. Firstly, there is the idea of community as belonging to a specific topographical location. Secondly, there is the idea of community as a particular local social system. Thirdly, there is the idea of community as a feeling of 'communitas' or togetherness. Finally, there is the idea of community as an ideology that often hides the power relations that inevitably underlie communities. According to Richards and Hall (2000), the concept of community can be seen as being explicitly disengaged from the local in its application to social, cultural or ethnic groups that may be spread throughout a nation or country, or even across the entire globe. Turner (cited in Beeton, 2006:4) describes communitas as relating to a community in progress: 'a whole group of people crossing a threshold and together entering a time and space that is in between; that is neither past nor present; and a space that is neither here nor there.' However, Beeton (2006) observes that the common use of the word 'community' today tends to relate it to geography, such as villages, valleys, rural and urban communities. Community can therefore be defined in at least in three different ways, as a spatial, social and economic term. In this study, community refers to the specific geographical location of the inner area of the historic town of Chiang Saen where local residents live mostly dependent on traditional ways of life and culture and work in the agricultural sector.

The connections between communities and tourism can be seen in the way that communities relate to the tourism industry and the way in which they supply different forms of attractions and products to the tourism industry, in terms of

both natural and built resources. On the other hand, tourism is also a part of life for people living in communities that are dominated by tourism. This means that tourism is not separate from other aspects of life and is often seen as an important part of a community's existence. In this sense a community might be defined as the integration of the spatial aspect of place, location and environment; with the social aspect of shared culture and ways of life; and with economic benefits and values. However, communities might experience changes in the relationship between these three aspects depending on external driving forces, like globalisation and the changing market for tourism, and internal forces, such as changing local needs and interests. The shifting desires and needs of people in a community can also be a factor in community change. This could be related to concerns about changes in social values, culture and the commitment of people in the community or to the changing place and space within a community.

It is inevitable that communities will change but the mismanagement of the development of tourism in communities by central government and external agencies has often made these changes happen more quickly. People living in communities where they are proud of their unique culture, lifestyle, identity and heritage (and where they are trying to preserve these as in the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen in this thesis) can perceive the development of tourism as a threat to their unique culture and identity. In order to access the benefits of the tourism industry, such communities need to find ways to adjust and change in order to compete with other communities that have already established solid reputations as popular tourist destination, while balancing this with the conservation of their community. This has caused such communities to ask how they can have more opportunities to access the process of development and be involved in decision-making that affects their residents. Consequently, investigating appropriate forms of tourism for a community that will provide them with greater opportunities to access resources, knowledge and the decision-making process is important.

Contested forms of community tourism

Throughout the history of tourism in local communities, top-down approaches controlled by the government have been seen by policy makers as the main way to manage these developments. This has resulted in a poor flow of information to local communities and, according to Bramwell (1997), the implementations of highly controversial tourism developments. By contrast, many argue that bottom-up approaches provide better information to communities about the nature and consequences of different tourism developments and so avoid later conflicts between stakeholders (Pleumarom, 2002). This is important because, as Mitchell (cited in Bramwell, 1997:524) highlights, local people often have little power to influence tourism development in their communities. Participation can be a matter of power relationships, with the unequal distribution of power and the uneven flows of information disenfranchising members of the community when decisions are being taken (Richard and Hall, 2000). In contrast, a bottom-up, flexible regulatory approach promotes greater community involvement in the development of tourism, especially in the process of decision-making (McCabe and Heap, cited in Bramwell, 1997; see also Pleumarom, 2002 for discussion). Some argue that this can be aided further if the model of mass tourism is rejected and is replaced by alternatives, such as sustainable tourism, cultural tourism home-stay tourism and heritage tourism. (Bramwell, 1997)

An important part of these bottom-up approaches for developing community tourism is the role of government intervention, the deregulation of national policies, and an emphasis on public-private sector partnership organisations. In the next section, I will explore in more detail the contrasts between traditional and newer forms of tourism

Mass tourism and community tourism

According to Scheyvens (2002:11), mass tourism always has negative impacts on communities. Therefore, she argues, to enable residents to have more input into the decisions being made about how to develop tourism in their community, different forms of tourism must be considered. In responding to such arguments,

more appropriate forms of tourism have been sought by residents that can be operated and controlled by themselves based on their community's carrying capacity. Several different forms of tourism have been proposed, such as community-based tourism, sustainable community tourism, eco-tourism, responsible tourism, green tourism, alternative tourism and cultural tourism. While the particular type of tourism is usually chosen to suit the characteristics of each community, all such alternative forms of tourism aim to minimise the use of resources and generate fewer impacts on communities than mass tourism (Butler, 1990). As Kontogeorgopoulos argued in his 2004 study of ecotourism and mass tourism in Phuket, ecotourism in Thailand is considered by many as the form of tourism best able to reduce the impacts of existing mass tourism. For example, such developments include a sea canoe tour rather than activities that consume resources. However, even this form of tourism will also need some of the trappings of mass tourism, such as accommodation and transport services.

Nevertheless, according to Butler (1990), as these new forms of tourism provide opportunities for visitors to access residents' personal spaces, such as in the case of home-stay tourism, they could still potentially cause changes to residents' ways of life and patterns of behaviour. There is also a downside to the impact reduction: the economic benefits for host communities are less than from mass tourism (although it is known that overall mass tourism generates more negative impacts on communities - see Shah and Gupta, 2000). Another significant difference between mass tourism and community-based tourism is that mass tourism normally involves people from outside communities in the process of planning, managing and benefitting from tourism activities (Khan, 1997). In contrast, Rocharungsat (2008) argues that community-based tourism provides residents in tourist destinations with more opportunities to become involved in the process of planning and managing tourist activities. Given that new forms of tourism attract visitors who have more interest in learning about something new, about communities' identities, cultures and environments, they also allow the community to develop tourism in a way that they see as being appropriate for their needs and encourages them to maintain the distinct identity of each community, as I discuss below.

Community-based tourism

According to Liu (1994) and Cater (1993), community-based tourism (CBT) is one form of tourism in which local communities have a high degree of control over the activities that are provided. As Brohman (1996: 60) states:

> Community-based tourism would seek to strengthen institutions designed to enhance local participation and promote the economic, social and cultural well being of the popular majority. It would also seek to strike a balanced and harmonious approach to development that would stress considerations such as the compatibility of various forms of tourism with other components of the local economy; the quality of developments, both culturally and environmentally; and the divergent needs, interests, and potentials of the community and its inhabitants.

Brohman and Timothy (2002) argue that community-based tourism is a more sustainable form of tourism than conventional mass tourism because it allows space for community members to manage and organise activities with less interference from outside entrepreneurs, such as tour operators. They also suggest that community-based tourism prioritises the empowerment of residents by seeking consensus among them as to the future direction that it should take (see also Beeton, 2006 for discussion). According to Pearce (1992), community-based tourism provides a way to ensure an equitable flow of benefits to all those affected by tourism through consensus based decision-making and local control of developments.

Sustainable community tourism is often the most desirable form of tourism for residents, as the value added to communities is not only in the form of economic benefits but also in the form of social, cultural, and environment benefits, such as sustaining the unique architecture and way of life of communities' residents. According to Dearden (1991), the tourism industry itself needs to facilitate sustainable development in communities, as it could then play a more major role in the future - particularly cultural, historic and heritage based tourism.

Authenticity and cultural tourism

The term authenticity means different things to different people. In terms of tourism, authenticity is normally concerned with how the culture and history of a destination is interpreted by tourists. Conran (2006) suggests that tourists have their own expectations before travelling to a site and that they will be satisfied if their expectations are met and unsatisfied if their expectations are not met. Authenticity, he suggests, is therefore the result of expectations, human interaction and tourists' imaginations.

Conran also observes that the encounter between guests and hosts normally happens through 'cultural exchanges' or 'interaction experiences' but that sometimes misunderstandings might cause unexpected experiences. As most tourists wish to become more 'absorbed' within the cultural experience, host communities may need to provide an appropriate cultural programme for tourists. Nevertheless, they also need to ensure that it is not too artificial and that they do not adapt their culture too much (these issues will be discussed in chapter 5 in relation to debates over the production of heritage tourism in the historic town of Chiang Saen). It might be argued that one of the problems for communities presenting their culture to tourists is that if they modify their culture too much they may potentially loose both their identity and the tourists. Conran (2006) has also argued that different backgrounds of people could cause them interpret authenticity differently.

Culture clashes in community tourism

It is inevitable that changes to places will occur as a result of the development of tourism but how these changes can be managed needs to be addressed. While there may be positive economic benefits from tourism, the impact of tourism on culture is often mostly negative, due to changes to the ways of life in local communities. The extent of the changes to the culture of a place from tourism may differ from place to place, but when changes do happen it is very hard for local people to sustain their culture. In some areas people think only about how to survive instead of thinking about how to sustain their culture. Returning to

Dearden's 1991 study of tourism and sustainable development in northern Thailand will help illustrate this. He asserts that change occurred in hill tribe communities and the way that they think. For example, they have learnt that they can make and exchange their traditional dress with tourists in exchange for cash. This situation is complex, as it is not only about replacing the local culture with tourists' culture - there is also cultural mixing. For example, local people may begin eating and dressing in the style of tourists, which they think is better than their own traditional ways. Thus Dearden (1991:408) observed tribesfolk wearing T-shirts instead of their traditional dress because they think it is a sign of modernity. Equally tourists view destinations as an opportunity to 'discover themselves', changing themselves in a cultural laboratory where they can learn, try and discover new aspects of their identities and social relations (Crang, 2004).

The question that always comes up in debates about tourism and culture is: do people need to maintain their old traditional way of life or it is better to seek modern economic opportunities? This causes conflict between the two different outlooks and leads to a lack of community unity. In most communities this situation is a challenge facing residents, travel businesses, local organisations and the academic sector. A model of tourism management that respects traditional community identities is seen by many as successful. For example, Fagence's 1998 study of rural and village tourism in Indonesia and Thailand reveals that one of the key factors to the success of tourism development in rural communities is that it is based on local needs and identity. In a similar vein, Nimmonratana's 2000 study of the impact of tourism in Chiang Mai, Thailand also stated that residents generally consider tourism developments inappropriate if they cause negative impacts on the community's perceived traditional way of life. In her study of the impacts of tourism in rural Thailand, Rattanasuwongchai (1998) found that the most locally popular form of tourism development is not only based on rural identity but also based on the involvement and cooperation of local communities. However, Chang and Huang (2004) have argued that this model seems very idealistic and difficult to implement in reality. In relation to Chang and Huang's argument, this is because it makes little room for comprise, insisting that all tourism activities have to be based on old fashioned community beliefs.

Because tourism can impact community cultures in the ways discussed above, ways of managing it that promote community participation become essential. This topic will be considered in the next section.

Community participation in the development of tourism

Community participation has been given different names for a long time, such as capacity building, community action and community development (Curry, 2001). According to Desai (2002), community participation is an indispensable part of any programme or project encouraged by national governments, the World Bank, UN agencies and non-governmental organisations. The United Nations has defined participation as people sharing in the benefits of development; people actively contributing to development; and their involvement in decision-making at all levels of society (Desai, 2002).

Mayo and Craig (1995) state that community participation is an important alternative development approach for grassroots development because it increases empowerment. According to Korten and Alfonso (1983), this emphasis on community involvement and participation results from the critiques made by scholars of the top-town approach to development, which usually fails to meet the needs of the poor due to decision-making being far removed from the community (see also Mathbor, 1997; Robinson, 1995 for discussion). Dorsner (2004) also points out that community involvement and participation are important new perspectives on development as they bring more efficiency, accountability, transparency and empowerment of stakeholders, compared to traditional top-down approaches (see also Uphoff, 1991; Thomas and Potter, 1992). According to Pual (1987), some international organisations, such as the World Bank, have described community involvement and participation as one of the most efficient and cost-effective methods of development because it promotes self-help. However, the United Nations argue that the success of community involvement and participation depends on three factors: the first is the voluntary and democratic involvement of people in the development effort; the second is the equitable sharing of the benefits; and, the last factor is the equality of all stakeholders in decision-making, setting goals, formulating policies and implementing economic

and social development programmes (Midgley, 1986). This is possible, given Stronza's (2008) observation that the number of residents seeking an opportunity to manage tourism in their community has increased.

According to the United Nations, community involvement and participation is currently associated with the voluntary sector, non-governmental organisations, residents and communities. This is a new direction for community development, rather than working only with the government sector (Midgley, 1986), although Hastings et al (1996) and Taylor (1995) note that community participation is increasing in the government sector as well. According to Missingham (1997), community participation has a political dimension and is concerned with the need to relocate power over the resources, planning and local developments to people who have been previously obstructed and excluded. Community involvement and participation is therefore seen by many as a way to transform the power relations between organisations, such as governments, other administrative organisations and local communities

Community participation in tourism

The involvement and participation of local people is central to many community development activities. Howard (2004) suggests that people are looking for ways to get involved in development activities because they believe it will give them an opportunity to present their voices and perspectives. However, in the real world getting involved and participating in development programmes is not easy, particularly for those living in developing countries who receive limited information. Aber (2000) states that effective participation by citizens depends on progressive local government. This means that it is very important that the government and developers include residents and communities in projects.

Abbott (1995) argues that government reaction to the idea of community involvement in development programmes is one of the key factors influencing the success or failure of this approach. In addition, he argues that community development projects operate successfully when the degree of government involvement and the needs of a particular community are in balance (Abbott,

1995). The key factor in this is that the government accepts the right of people to be involved in the decision-making process. However, the increasing complexity of decision – making processes may produce less involvement and less effective development projects. As discussed earlier in the chapter in relation to the study of Rattanasuwongchai (1998), community involvement and participation is considered to be the key factor for the success of tourism development. This will be discussed in more detail in the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen in chapter 4 with particular attention given to its relationship to the national plan for tourism under the responsibility of government organisations such as the Ministry of Tourism and Sports, TAT, Chiang Saen District Office, and Chiang Saen Municipality Office.

Definitions of community participation

Several meanings of participation have existed but essentially it involves people, particularly those affected by the outcome of decisions, in the taking and implementation of those decisions. The UNDP (United Nations Development Program) has defined participation as people having constant access to decision-making and power. In terms of development, the UNDP suggest that the best route is to encourage people, particularly those in rural and marginal areas living with less resources and bargaining power, to create their own entrepreneurial spirit: to control, to manage and to decide the development direction and speed (WECD, 1987). According to the UNDP, empowerment of people is a vital part of community involvement and participation. This is similar to a statement by the Brundtland Commission, which recognised that:

> The law alone cannot enforce the common interest. It principally needs community knowledge and support, which entails greater public participation in decisions which affect the environment. This is best secured by decentralising the management of resources upon which local communities depend, and giving these communities an effective say over the use of the resources. It will also require promoting citizens' initiatives, empowering people's organisations and strengthening local democracy (WCED, 1987:63).

Simanowitz (1997) describes participation as an important part of ensuring that a development project will meet the needs of the whole community, including those of marginalised groups; while Cook and Kothari (2001) argue that it is an approach to development which is justified in terms of its sustainability, relevance and empowerment.

According to Oakley (1991), participation can be seen as a means to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of projects by using the resources of local people:

> Participation is concerned with human development and increases people's sense of control over issues which affect their lives, helps them to learn how to plan and implement and, on a broader front, prepares them for participation at regional or even national level. In essence, participation is a good thing because it breaks people's isolation and lays the groundwork for them to have not only a more substantial influence over development, but also a greater independence and control over their lives. (Oakley, 1991:17)

As stated earlier, Curry points out that participation can also be known as community development. Taylor (1992) defines community development as being concerned with change and growth and with giving people more power over the changes that are taking place around them, the policies that affect them and the services they use. It seeks to enable individuals and communities to grow and change according to their own needs and priorities, rather than those dictated by circumstances beyond their boundaries. Community development works by bringing people together to share skills, knowledge and experiences in the belief that it is through working together that they will reach their full potential. Like Taylor, Flecknoe and McLellan (1994) also observe that:

> Community development is a process which aims to make real and to extend participative democracy. Through its activities, the rights of citizenship are claimed for traditionally unheard and powerless people. Social needs and individual problems are turned into public issues to be tackled through collective activity, so that the people involved build up their personal skills and

confidence and take greater control of their communal life. (Flecknoe and McLellan, 1994:5)

Arnstein (cited in Warburton, 1997:9) proposed that community participation could be measured using what is known as 'Arnstein's ladder'. This ladder consists of eight levels. The first level is *manipulation*, which refers to a community that is seen as a passive community. *Education* is the second level, which is the stage that is reached when a community is being given information that is partial or inaccurate. The third level is *information,* where people are being told what is going to happen, is happening or has happened. The fourth level is *consultation* at which stage communities are handed opportunities to share their voice but without the power to influence outcomes. The fifth level is *involvement*. This level allows residents to have some opportunities to be involved and to have some influence - but external parties still hold the power and make all key decisions. The sixth level is *partnership*. At this stage communities are allowed more opportunities to share power, such as in negotiations with traditional power holders. The seventh level is *delegated power*, at which stage communities are allocated some more power. The final level is *citizen control*. Communities at this level have a full opportunity to take part in the process of decision-making. By analysing 'Arnstein's ladder' it can be seen that only at the top three levels (from sixth to eighth) are communities provided with opportunities to share, participate and take control of development projects. At the other five levels (from first to fifth) people cannot participate in development activity.

Like Arnstein, Oakley has also divided the power and control given to participants from communities into three levels:

> First, participation as contribution. At this level, control and direction are not passed to local people; they are just asked to contribute resources. Second, participation as organisation. The creation and/or the development of organisations and institutions is an important element in participation. Formal organisations may result from a participatory process, as well as informal groupings. There is a distinction between organisations that are

externally conceived and introduced, and organisations that emerge and take structure as a result of the process of participation. However, in both cases, the development of a new or changed organisation will involve some delegation of power and control. Finally, participation as empowerment. At this level, the relationship between power and participation is made explicit: participation is developmental and power and control are devolved. There is debate about the notion of empowerment. Some see empowerment as the development of skills and abilities to enable people to manage better, or negotiate better for services. Others see it as enabling people to decide upon and take the actions they believe are essential for their development. (Oakley, 1991:6)

According to Oakley's framework, it can be argued that the third level of the relationship between power and participation is considered to be the level that provides people with the most opportunities to share power with traditional power holders, such as governments and local organisations. In relation to tourism, it is very important that local residents are provided with the greatest opportunities to participate in development activities. Rocharungsat (2008) has argued that the success of tourism development at the community level is based on active support from power holders such as government and developers and involvement from local residents. This will be examined in the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen in chapter 4.

Arnstein and Oakley both show that people can participate in the development process in different ways. In the early stages people and organisations in charge of development can manipulate the idea of participation. Then, participation allows people to have some opportunities to share ideas. Finally, Arnstein and Oakley illustrate that participation in the later stages is where people might be able to influence development activities if they are provided with more opportunities to share power and to be involved in decision-making.

In addition to the definitions mentioned above, Paul (1987) describes participation as an active process through which client groups influence the direction and execution of a development project with a view to enhancing their well being in

terms of income, personal growth, self-reliance or other values. However, following Arnstein and Oakley, it can be seen that it is the opportunities people have to participate in development activities that determines the level of their involvement. Organisations (or the people in charge of them) determine the way people participate in development and consequently the nature of any participation will be different among passive participants and interactive participants. In this study, local involvement and participation refers to active opportunities for local residents to share their views with developers (such as government and private organisations) about development in their community so that it meets with their needs and wants. These issues will be explored in depth in relation to the historic town of Chiang Saen case study in chapter 7, which explores community involvement and participation in tourism development.

As discussed earlier in the chapter, community involvement and participation is seen as one such approach to development, particularly development in local communities - such as the development of tourism – which is discussed further in the final section below.

Community involvement in the development of tourism

Desai (2002) lists the reasons why communities, development agencies and governments see participation as desirable. The first reason is that people have a right to participate in decision-making that directly affects their living conditions. The second reason is that social development can be promoted by increasing local self-reliance. This is because people know their own needs, desires and what they can afford and so only close co-operation between project leaders and the community can produce an effective project. The third reason is that the people and the government working together can make political capital. The final reason is that co-opting a strong but malleable community leadership can increase political or social control.

However, Hafner (1995) states that the variety of development goals and the different methods used to promote local involvement are factors that need to be clarified and re-considered by stakeholders. Hafner describes the key

characteristics of a successful development project as: building awareness of participation; having development goals that meet local needs; having participants who are willing to be involved; having a willingness to share the process of development; and, having development projects that have incentives for community self-management. Hafner (1995) argues that the reason why development projects fail is that often participants are seen as workers instead of members. He also suggests that in communities where local leaders delegate the process of voluntary participation to small groups, these quickly dissolve due to a lack of local interest. Creating viable groups based on voluntary participation is therefore an important principle for community development because it will help to strengthen the community and is a crucial factor in the long-term success of many small-scale projects.

In Thailand, community involvement in the development of tourism can be seen as one of the important factors for the development of tourism, particularly in rural communities. In her study of tourism in a rural community in Kanchanaburi province, Rattanasuwongchai (1998) concludes that local involvement is the key factor for the success of tourism development. She also suggests that a lack of local involvement and cooperation among related organizations will potentially cause local residents to resist the development, leading to its failure. In his cognate study of community-based ecotourism in Phuket and Ao Phangnga, Kontogeorgopoulos (2005) has also stated that although tourism generates employment for local residents, a lack of local initiation of and participation in the management and control of tourism development could potentially cause conflict among stakeholders. I will discuss this in chapters 5-7, in the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen.

Conclusion

Tourism is an important tool for community development and this chapter has discussed the relationship between the two. It has examined the positive impact generated by tourism on communities, such as the economic benefits, and also the negative impacts, such as the damage done to a community's culture, way of life, identity and environment. The chapter has discussed approaches to tourism that

cause less of these negative impacts on communities and allow residents to have more opportunities to control and manage their own needs. In addition, the chapter has discussed the main factor that influences the success of community development, namely the involvement and participation or residents. According to this discussion, community involvement and participation is now an important part of all new approaches to tourism, such as community-based tourism.

In spite of the increasingly widespread recognition of the importance of participation, very little detailed research on this topic has been conducted in relation to Thailand and tourism in particular. This is a major gap in the literature especially, as this chapter has made clear, because tourism is such an integral part of the Thai economy and a sector that has long been promoted and managed by the government. Therefore this dissertation aims to contribute towards filling this gap with a detailed study of debates around tourism, development and participation in Chiang Saen.

Chapter 3
Methodology

Introduction

As stated in the introductory chapter, the aim of this research is to examine the role of different understandings of place identity in contests over the role of tourism in the development trajectory of the historic town of Chiang Saen, Thailand. The research also attempts to find out whether community participation in the process of Chiang Saen's development, and cooperation among all stakeholders, is possible. This chapter will examine the research methodologies and research design that have been used. The first part of the chapter will give an overview of the research, the research site, the research's focus and the methods used to collect data. The chapter will then provide details about the interviewees, the design of the interview questions and the process of developing the fieldwork. The final part of the chapter will give some reflections on the interview process and the interviewees, key terms will be defined and some practicalities discussed.

Theoretical and empirical research

The theoretical framework for this research is based on the study of the tourism and local development literature, which gives a general understanding of the research context. The theoretical concepts used have been previously illustrated in the literature review chapter. For this research it has been necessary to put the theoretical concepts into practice in an empirical study, through the data collection methods and the form of interview questions used.

Overview of the research site

This research was conducted in an area known as the inner-town, part of the historic community of Chiang Saen that covers approximately two square kilometres. Chiang Saen is a small, historic, agricultural town situated in the north of the Chiangrai province, the northernmost province in Thailand, on the banks of the Maekong River. It is close to the border with both Myanmar and Laos. The community of Chiang Saen to which this study refers can be defined as the people

living within the inner-city area of the historic town. They share an interest in maintaining its unique identity, while improving their individual and collective quality of life. The decision to select Chiang Saen as the location for this research was influenced by a number of factors. These included:

1. The historic town is known as one of the main destinations for tourists visiting Chiangrai province. It is particularly well known as a site for historical and cultural tourism.
2. There is an ongoing, controversial debate among Chiang Saen residents and outsiders - such as the government, scholars and private entrepreneurs - as to whether the town should become a hub for business or maintain its historic identity.
3. The town is in a region that the central government aims to promote as an economic development zone, part of the Greater Mekong Sub-Region project that was initiated by the Asian Development Bank.
4. There is great potential in the historic town to promote tourism, particularly in a form that is controlled by the community.
5. There is increasing local concern about several of the current development projects in the town. Residents are worried whether they will damage the historic identity of Chiang Saen and because of this protested against the majority of the development projects initiated in the region by central government and private entrepreneurs as part of the Greater Maekong Sub-Region project, particularly those that affected the historic town

An awareness of these factors was gained through the researcher's previous experience as a tourism lecturer in Chiangrai University. In this capacity he studied documents and attended conferences and seminars about the historic town of Chiang Saen and also conducted several study visits and site surveys to the historic town for a group of undergraduate students registered for the Tourist Guide Module.

Overview of the research methods

The methodology for this research is based upon qualitative research. The term 'qualitative research' is something of an enigma (Phillimore and Goodson, 2004). Traditionally, qualitative research has been viewed somewhat simplistically as a set of different research methods that have certain features in common. Phillimore and Goodson (2004) state that qualitative research methods are employed to collect data about activities, events and behaviour and that they seek an understanding of actions, problems and processes in their social context.

The choice of qualitative methods as the key form of data collection for this study grew out of discussions between the researcher and his supervisors concerning the type of information needed for a study that aims to investigate the views of local. The discussion focused heavily on which method (qualitative and quantitative) could possibly generate the in-depth information required to achieve the research objective. The discussion also compared the advantages and disadvantages of the two approaches and the limitation of using quantitative method such as questionnaires for data collection. The researcher had learnt from his initial investigation in Chiang Saen that quantitative questionnaires distributed to residents have a low rate of return. In addition, the researcher had also learnt that direct conversation in the form of questions and answers rather than a formal questionnaire was a way in which local residents were generally more willing to provide in-depth information about their community. Consequently, a qualitative method using in-depth interviews was finally selected as the key method for data collection, combined with site observation (participation observation).

Focus groups were another method that the researcher investigated for possible use in Chiang Saen. This was considered to be one of the best ways to help the researcher gain in-depth information from local residents. However there were logistical limitations to using focus groups. The field work coincided with the cultivation and monsoon period (June to October) making it difficult to organize groups of people to participate. During the first field work period (May – August 2007) local residents were engaged in preparing their land to grow crops, and the second field work visit (November 2007 – February 2008) occurred during the

harvest period when local resident were engaged in gathering their crops (Rice). Another difficulty of organizing focus groups was the expense involved in providing meals, drinks, a locale and transport for local residents. Time was also another limiting factor. Due to these limitations, the researcher and his supervisors decided not to combine focus groups with interviews.

It could be argued that research that uses a single method of qualitative data collection will not be able to gather sufficient reliable and valid data, while a multi-method approach enables researchers to corroborate data from several sources to help to reduce any biases. Therefore, this research has used three methods to collect data. These are the analysis of documents and other secondary sources, interviews and site observations. The aim of using all three methods is to create data from different sources and different informants. In the following sections each of these three methods will be discussed.

The analysis of secondary sources

Gathering data from secondary sources, such as government documents and reports, local newspapers, magazines and conference papers, is very useful in order to gain an understanding of the research context and to form an understanding of issues relating to the case study site. Information about the changes that have taken place in Chiang Saen during the last three decades was very helpful for gaining an insight into the issues and debates currently affecting the residents. Government reports, statistics and journal articles about the way in which residents of Chiang Saen perceive these changes also helped in the formulation of the research framework.

However, the researcher did have some difficulties with the secondary data sources. Accessing some secondary data, particularly government documents, was difficult as permission is always needed and this can take a long time. Other archives, such as those providing journal articles and old newspapers, were not completely reliable. The position they adopt in debates appears to depend on whether they are for or against the government's plans. Another problem was that there are no written documents or records about tourism in Chiang Saen. Most of

the data collected was therefore word-of-mouth accounts from people involved in Chiang Saen's tourism industry. Nevertheless, the study of secondary data sources has been particularly useful when writing descriptions of the research site and the research context and when developing the research's objectives and framework.

Participation observation in research site

Site observation was selected as a data collection method in order to access other important information and to corroborate some of the evidence from secondary sources, such as comparing the way in which some controversial issues in Chiang Saen have been represented in local newspapers with the real situation. In site observation, the researcher plays the role of an observer. According to Gold (quoted in Preissle and Grant, 2004), this is the same role played by researchers in participant observation. Participant observation is a method of data collection in which researchers make observations while taking part in the same activities as the people they are studying. Gerg, Taylor and Bogdan (quoted in Belsky, 2004) are critical of the idea that during this participation the researcher will remain neutral, an objective interpreter and seeker of the truth. Instead, they emphasise the subjectivity of the research process and the empathy between researcher and the research subjects. Cole (2004) states that participant observation is the most appropriate method to use when the research is concerned with human meanings and interaction from an insider's perspective - particularly where there are important differences between the views of insiders and outsiders. As an outsider the researcher felt that local residents perceived him to be a stranger while conducting site observation because he was an unfamiliar face. When he walked around the town and photographed the way of life of local residents and the old buildings he attracted attention and some of them asked him what he was doing. However, this did not affect the site observation in any great way as he tried not to behave any differently to local residents. He always asked for permission first and tried to use the local language when speaking with local residents. Even though he cannot speak the local language fluently he is able to understand almost a hundred percent of what is being said (this is discussed in the reflection in the relationship section on page 87). He found that using the local language helped him access some information directly from local residents which cannot normally be revealed

by government documents. An example of this is when he asked people about their satisfaction with regard to government services such as local transport, and other basic infrastructure. Likewise Cole, Jorgensen (2004) insists that participant observation seeks to uncover, to make accessible and to reveal the meanings people use to make sense of their everyday lives.

The researcher used participant observation during the initial stages of this project, before conducting any interviews, in order to get to know the research site and some prospective interviewees. Participating in activities organised by the Chiang Saen community helped the researcher to access information and also created the opportunity to build up good relationships with some residents. As participation observation at the research site aims to gain an in-depth and natural understanding of the research setting, it can be expected that data collected using this method will be compatible with data collected from other research methods.

Interviews: the main method of data collection for this research project

After the process of preliminary research site observation using participation observation, interviewing was the main data collection method used during this research project. Gellham (2000) defines an interview as a conversation, usually between two people, where one person is seeking responses to questions for a particular purpose. According to Jennings (2004), interviewing is becoming a global research method, used for making sense of people's actions throughout the world. Jennings (2004) also states that interviews are not all the same: each follows different rules, procedures and guidelines and is embedded in different philosophical backgrounds. He also points out that an interview can be both a formal and an informal interaction. From the work of Jennings (2004) and Gellham (2000) we can see that there are many types of interview method: structured interviews, for which the interviewer has prepared questions to ask; semi structured interviews for which the interviewer has prepared some of their questions but allows the sequence of questions to follow in a conversational style; and, finally, unstructured interviews during which the interviewer has only a list of topics which he informally works down. According to Bryman (2008),

structured interviews are sometimes referred to as qualitative interviews or as in-depth interviews. However, where interviews follow a question and answer format they are more closely associated with a quantitative methodology. A conversation style interview (i.e. a semi structured or unstructured interview) is more commonly associated with a qualitative methodology. In this research, unstructured interviews have been used as the main method of data collection during the field research. The decision to use unstructured interviews as the main method of data collection during the field research was based on the need to gain in-depth and specific information about how local residents perceive development. It was felt that interviews without a fixed form or a formal list of questions would encourage the interviewees to feel more comfortable and feel free to present their personal perspectives. Braman (2008) argues that unstructured interviews which normally provide only a series of key questions/themes generate an informal atmosphere for interviews. The sequencing and wording uses during such interviews are also more flexible.

Conducting interviews in the field

According to Jennings (2004), it is very important for researchers to remember that interviews are more than a conversation: they are conversations with a purpose. Therefore, before doing any interviews, I had to use my research questions to plan and design questions for my interviews. I prepared an interview schedule, a covering letter and selected participants to be interviewed. It was also very important to choose the locations for the interviews, and to organise times for them to take place, in such a way as to minimise any inconvenience caused to residents.

As different forms of data collection techniques have different strengths and weaknesses, before choosing interviews as the main data collection method for this research, these were examined by the researcher. This was done in order to minimise any negative influences on the research process, which would in turn reduce the quality of the data that was gathered. Several strengths of interviewing as a research method were identified. According to Jennings (2004), some of these strengths are:

1. Interviewing is an adaptable method, enabling the researcher to probe specific themes while taking account of each interviewee's particular experiences. This makes it a flexible method because, as the data collection progresses and new ideas relevant to understanding the research topic emerge, interview schedules can be refined to reflect these insights. An example of this was that after an interview with one interviewee, the researcher could adapt his interview with others based on the experienced gained from the previous interview. This was particularly important for the overall time spent and the sequencing of questions.

2. In addition to analysing each interviewee's response, the face-to-face nature of interviewing enables the researcher to read their body language and other non-verbal forms of communication which can elicit valuable insights. This did not happen for all interviewees but some of them displayed body language which indicated that they felt uncomfortable making conversation when they saw the researcher's tape recorder. Taking note of this kind of body language, the researcher explained the reason for the tape recorder and tried to minimise its effect by placing the recorder in the pouch out of sight instead, although it remained switched on.

3. The personal nature of interviews may enable the researcher to develop empathy with interview participants thereby creating a more comfortable environment for both parties. In this case, the researcher responded to what was being said by interviewees by smiling and nodding his head during the conversation in order to create a good atmosphere.

4. There is little equipment required for interviews, so the location can be easily changed to accommodate the preferences of the researcher and the interview participant. In this case, only a tape recorder was needed as most interviews took place in the interviewee's organization or home.

5. It is possible for the interconnections between different interviewees' experiences and views to be explored. Asking similar questions to interviewees from different background and experience indicated that interviewees with more experience in a particular area often provided more details than the others.

6. Interviews can provide rich and descriptive data, with many details and illustrative examples of the different experiences of interviewees. In the case of this research interviewees told the researcher examples of events and festivals related to religion and provided extra details when asked about activities that his organization had organized in order to promote the identity of the historic town as a centre for Lanna Thai culture.

7. Interviews can generate high levels of validity in the data that is produced, because interviewers can ensure that interview questions are understood by the interviewees by changing the wording, or probing further to elicit more in-depth responses. The researcher has found that this strength of the interview method helped him gain in-depth details from interviewees particularly when some of them did not understand a specific question. In this case the researcher asked the interviewees again adjusting wording and phrasing while still maintaining the same meaning. An example was when asking about the identity of the town some of the interviewees did not understand the word 'identity'[15]. The researcher then explained what the meaning of 'identity' was by using an example and a synonym[16]. In this way the interviewee was able to understand the meaning of the word 'identity' according to the series of questions in the interview.

While interviewing is a method that can generate a number of positive benefits for data collection, there are also some weaknesses as Jennings (2004) has illustrated that the researcher should know about in order to minimise their impact upon the research. Some of these weaknesses are:

1. Misunderstandings between the researcher and the participant can happen if the interview questions are not clear. In this research, some problems happened when interviews were conducted with school students as they did not understand the questions properly. The researcher explained them again with clearer and more concise language whilst still aiming to cover

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[15] อัตลักษณ์, เอกลักษณ์

[16] คำที่มีความหมายคล้ายกัน เช่น สัญลักษณ์, เอกลักษณ์, ภาพลักษณ์, ลักษณะเฉพาะตัว, (such as symbols, images, and characteristics of the town)

the full meaning of the original question. This was not a problem with other interviewees.

2. New researchers require training in this method and lots of confidence. Some theoretical insights are also needed to be able to probe in more detail as the interview progresses. For the researcher, using interviews as the method for data collection was not a new method as he gained experience from attending the training course for qualitative research methods organised by the HASS Postgraduate School during his first year of study. In addition, he also had experience of conducting research using interviews as a method of data collection when he worked in the university in his home country. However, when he conducted this specific research project, the researcher still needed to study some new interview techniques which focused particularly on how to interview young people and children as some of his prospective interviewees were secondary school students, as mentioned above.

3. Interviewing can be an awkward and uncomfortable experience, especially for inexperienced researchers. This weakness with the interview method was not a big issue in this research other than when some of the interviewees asked the researcher his opinion about the political situation and in particular whether he took a pro or anti-government position. How the researcher coped with this situation is illustrated in the section on practicalities below.

4. The value of the data that is gathered is dependent on the honesty of the interviewee, or their desire to say what they think the interviewer wants to hear. In this study all the information gained from the interview was cross referenced and checked through the series of questions asked. While it is difficult to prove people's honesty, the interviewees' reaction to questions and to the researcher during the interview generated trust in the data gained

5. Recording what was said in an interview can be problematic if the interviewee does not want to be voice-recorded or is self conscious about this taking place. As already indicated, the researcher had some difficulties with this issue but dealt with it when a difficulty arose in the way described above.

6. Interviews can generate a large amount of data extraneous to the topic and so it may be difficult to identify comparable themes. This will also be a time-consuming process at the stage of data processing, transcription and analysis. This became a particular problem for this research at the point of data transcription. The researcher coped with this problem by designing a tight work schedule for each step.

By examining and evaluating the lists of pros and cons of each method of data collection, including interviews as discussed above, the researcher attempted to avoid the potential problems associated with specific methods before starting fieldwork. The researcher also asked for permission from all interviewees, briefly outlining the purpose of the interview in a covering letter sent to them beforehand. This is in accordance with the view of Oppenheim (1966), who stresses that researchers must be aware of the respondents' right to privacy, their right to refuse to be interviewed at all, and their right to refuse to answer certain questions. This should always be respected and no undue pressure should be placed upon interviewees. Similarly Kvate (1996) points out that the confidentiality and anonymity of individuals should be maintained and private details that might identify an interviewee should not be revealed. Kvate (1996) and Mason (2002) also point out that interviewers must avoid asking questions about personal or private matters. However, there might be exceptions in some circumstances. For example in this research, the researcher realised that by exchanging personal questions between the interviewees and interviewer in first few minutes of the interview helped generate a good atmosphere for the interview as it made it feel more informal. The researcher was often asked by interviewees about his health and general matters about the university where he worked. In turn the researcher often asked similar questions and made small talk about general matters like the weather, food, and hobbies. According to Kvate (1996) and Mason (2002), another issue that arises is when interviewees add further information that they have remembered once an interview has finished. In such cases the researcher must ask again for the interviewee's consent to add this information to the other information they provided during their interview.

Interpreting the interview data

The analysis of interview data is an important part of the process (Jennings, 2004). Depending upon the nature of the project, the researcher can draw upon one or more techniques to analyse the data. The use of computer programs is also possible but they are only as effective as the researcher who operates them (Dey, 2004). For this project, the researcher transcribed each interview soon after it had finished. This was because, if the tape recorder had not worked, the interview would still be relatively fresh in the researcher's mind. It would also be possible to piece together what had been said from interview notes. This approach particularly helps the researcher in terms of reducing the problem of being confronted by one large pile of taped interviews that may take several weeks to transcribe.

The chosen technique for analysing the data gathered from interviews involves coding the data and then interpreting what has been said (Dey, 2004). The first step is to transcribe what has been said from tape recordings of each interview and make lists of them according to the questions asked and research objectives. The second step is coding the data from these interview transcripts, again according to the research objectives. Coding involves the researcher labelling and grouping together particular words and phrases for subsequent analysis. In this research, interview transcripts have been labelled and grouped into five different groups in the first instance. These include:

1. Identity and place
2. Conservation and development
3. Conflict of interest
4. Tourism development forms and approaches
5. Community involvement

The above codes were then re-grouped into specific codes according to the research objectives and research question. This reduced them into three groups which were used as the key theme for analysis and discussion. These include:

1. Conflict of interest over identity and place

2. Contested perceptions of conservation and development

3. Community involvement and participation in tourism development

Finally, once the researcher had completed the previous steps and the data had been grouped together, it was again compared to the research's goals and objectives. The researcher has proceed these steps manually as he troubled using the computer software

Designing and developing the interview questions

Each interview question was designed and developed according to the objectives of the research. As this research uses in-depth interviews with unstructured questions as the main method of data collection, interview questions were designed and developed relating to issues about tourism and local development that emerged from a review of the literature. The questions were also discussed with the researcher's Ph.D. supervisors before any interviews were conducted.

Selecting the interviewees

The aim of this research is to explore whether residents of Chiang Saen would like to see their town keep its historic identity or develop into a business hub as illustrated in the introduction section. The researcher attempted to gain insights into residents' perceptions of these issues by, firstly, gathering data from several secondary sources in order to establish the context for the research. Once the research context was clear, the researcher then decided who was going to be interviewed. The researcher was aware that he should not make the number of interviewees too large or too small because as Schvaneveldt (1991) argues too many interviewees might affect the use of resources such as the time for conducting the interview and the process of transcribing. By contrast too few interviewees might affect the quality of the results gained from the interviews. Prospective interviewees were chosen because they were representative of residents who had experience of tourism and development in Chiang Saen. Using these criteria a total of 33 interviews were conducted from May 2007 - July 2007

and from November 2007 - December 2007. These interviewees include the following which are quoted directly in the text of this thesis:

- four interviews with local entrepreneurs.
- four interviews with local residents.
- seven interviews with government officials.
- four interviews with secondary school students.
- six interviews with sub-community leaders.
- one interview with a monk.
- one interview with local school teachers.
- three interviews with members of NGOs.
- three interviews with a retired government officials.

All of the interviews were conducted in the area of Chiang Saen's historic town. The exact location of the interviews varied depending on each interviewee's place of work and they all lasted between 30 - 75 minutes, including the time taken for interviewees to ask questions about the research and the time taken up by general conversation. The length of the interviews varied depending on the interviewee. For example, the length of the interviews with most government officials was less than that of the interviews with members of the local community and NGOs. This was because most government officials were very busy and making an appointment with them was difficult. In contrast, interviews with community leaders were much easier and it was possible to arrange an appointment by telephone. The interviews were recorded on a tape recorder but names, addresses, job titles and company names have not been published. Details of interviewees' profiles and groupings provided by ordinary residents will be described in the section on terminology used in the study.

The research process

A site observation was carried out as the first step when preparing for the field interviews. The aim of the site observation was to acquire background knowledge about the research site and prospective interviewees. In addition, site observation also enabled the researcher to crosscheck some of the data gathered from

secondary sources and to update some information found in government documents.

After the site observation, a framework for the research was designed and appropriate methods to collect the data were chosen. The researcher then had to design an interview schedule and arrange times when the interviews could take place. One of the advantages of doing a site observation was that the researcher had an opportunity to get to know some of the residents, particularly key actors such as community leaders, and informal conversations with such people provided extra information. This enabled the researcher to draw up a list of people who could be approached about being interviewed. Each person was then contacted to ask whether they would be willing to be interviewed. This is a formal process and the first contact was made by writing letters. It might also be argued that in Thailand traditionally this process is considered a formal requirement when dealing with government officials or government organizations. Without a letter it is very difficult to access government officials and government organizations or gain access to government documents and reports. According to a conversation with one local government official whom the researcher contacted during field work, a letter is required because of formal regulations governing all government organizations. Additionally officials who have been interviewed can use the letter as evidence of fulfilling a public service role. In some exceptional cases, if for example you know an official personally and have good personal relationship with them, this kind of letter is not needed. Also if what is needed is only general information which is normally published in open sources such as tourist brochures a letter is not required. So, for this research, two letters were sent to each person: the first a personal introductory letter from the researcher and the second a covering letter from the researcher's Ph.D. supervisors. This process took almost three weeks. Although some people refused to be interviewed, prospective interviewees who replied positively were then telephoned in order to schedule appointments when the interviews could take place. These included a retired school teacher who had a friend working at the university where the researcher worked and another retired government official who had been studying for his degree in the same university. These two contacts are exceptional cases as the

researcher had to telephone the rest of the interviewees to follow up on the letter and ask if they would be available for interview.

This process was the same for both the first and second set of interviews. The first field interviews were conducted from June 2007 - July 2007. Having processed the data gathered from these interviews, discussions between the researcher and his supervisors concluded that more information was required in order to meet the research's objectives. A second set of field interviews were therefore designed and conducted from November 2007 - December 2007. The majority of these second interviews were conducted with the same interviewees, but new questions were asked.

After the second set of field interviews had been completed, the researcher returned to Newcastle University in order to start the data processing stage, which required both interview transcripts and their analysis. As a researcher, I have found that conducting interviews with residents has generated a relationship between the two parties and some reflections about this process are given in the next section.

Reflections on the relationship established with interviewees while collecting data and the researcher's positionality'

Conducting this research generated direct interaction with members of the Chiang Saen community and some unexpected issues emerged as a by-product of the process. Firstly, although residents recognised the researcher in two different roles - one as a university lecturer, the other as a Ph.D. student - these did not generate significantly different responses or reactions from interviewees. As a lecturer in a government university, the researcher found that this role generated some advantages, such as facilitating access to secondary data provided by the local government organizations. Some local organisations also provided an officer to help access additional up to date information and provided places where interviews with members of their organisation could take place. Being a university lecturer also enabled the researcher to get access to additional sources of information, as most interviewees suggested places where further information was

available. It also helped to create a good atmosphere during the interview conversations. In terms of being a Ph.D. student, some residents and local officials asked general questions, such as why Chiang Saen had been chosen as the research site and whether the research would have any impact on them.

Interviewing local residents not only created the opportunity to find out their views about the development process in Chiang Saen; it also created opportunities for the researcher to find out other information, such as details about some of the interviewees' families. This is reflected in the time it took to complete each interview, as the researcher had to spend extra time with some interviewees. The researcher found that these conversations helped to create a good relationship with the participants, which will be useful for further work as an independent scholar once this Ph.D. has been completed. In addition, taking the extra time to make general conversation with interviewees helped them to explore issues in more detail than they would in their day-to-day lives.

However, as the research was conducted during a period of intense political conflict in Thailand, a question often asked by residents was which side of the argument the researcher was on – the pro government side or the anti-government side. As this is a sensitive topic, with the potential to cause conflict, the researcher never answered such questions. As the researcher had been away from the country for quite a long time before this saga happened[17], the researcher knew little about recent Thai politics and positioned him as neutral. It appeared that most of the interviewees who asked this question did not expect to get an answer from the researcher, but the researcher felt uncomfortable during these interviews because he knew that some of the interviewees had their own political positions. Despite these questions, the researcher does not feel that overall this had much affect on the interview atmosphere. The researcher had prepared for questions about the political situation before conducting interviews as the intense situation in domestic politics started in September 2006, before the field interviews began. Nevertheless this situation did affect the time needed for establishing the

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[17] See http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/5361512.stm,
 http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/asia-pacific/7584369.stm and
http://www.alertnet.org/thenews/newsdesk/BKK140289.htm)

availability of local government officials as most of them were very busy with the administration work related to the political situation. The researcher spent a lot of time over this bureaucratic process compared to other interviewees such as those with more ordinary residents.

One other reflection on the process of conducting the interviews is the fact that residents saw the researcher as a stranger. Abd Rashid (1998) who conducted a study on cultural sustainability and local involvement in place marketing in the UK also stated that the researcher's status as an outsider and stranger might cause problems during interviews with local resident due to lack of familiarity with the research site. Abd Rashid also argued that familiarity with the research site is an advantage for the researcher as it can facilitate access to local residents and sources of data but in some case the familiarity with the research site might also potentially be a disadvantage in contexts when interviews are held with local resident who are known to the researcher. These interviewees may only provide the information that they think that the researcher wants rather than sharing their own personal perspectives. In the field work for this thesis, the role of the researcher as a stranger caused some trouble during the interviews, particularly at the start of some interviews, as it seemed that interviewees had little confidence about giving an interview to a stranger. In these cases, the researcher tried to make general conversation, creating a good atmosphere that would encourage the interviewees to feel more confident. According to Goodson (2002), who conducted a study on residents' perceptions of tourism impacts in the city of Bath, UK, differences between the language and accent of researchers and interviewees can also greatly affects the interview process. Some of the interviewees in Chiang Saen were more comfortable speaking in their local language (Northern Language), rather than the official language (Central Thai Language), as they can speak this more fluently. In such cases the researcher encouraged them to speak in the local language because, although the researcher is originally from another part of the country and speaks a different local language, he has been working in Chiangrai for over 15 years so is able to understand what is being said. However, the process of generating a good conservational atmosphere helped to create a smoother interview and made the interview easier. In the next section, the

researcher will discuss some of practicalities of collecting data from interviewees, discussing particularly the uniformity of data that was gathered.

Practicalities of the research process: the issue of data uniformity

A number of significant findings were uncovered during the interviews and while transcribing the interview data. Notably, it was found that most of the interviewees gave similar answers to several of the questions. To investigate how this uniformity happened, the researcher has examined the local context for the research. This examination, and some information from secondary sources, has provided possible reasons.

Although from the secondary data and site observation various possible reasons emerge, one key explanation for the uniformity of the responses obtained from residents is the process through which their awareness of the changes taking place in Chiang Saen has been raised. It was found that the plan to launch several mega projects in the town, which was initially designed and developed by the central government, caused a fear of change among residents - particularly among vulnerable residents. Since then, local residents - in collaboration with local NGOs, middle class and elite groups, independent scholars, educational institutions, the local media and some local organisations - have organised a series of seminars and meetings in Chiang Saen on themes such as 'the past, present and future', 'contested visions of the Chiang Saen Industrial Park' (See Figure 3.1 for example). According to the secondary data, lots of ideas emerged from these seminars and meetings, but almost all contained the same basic view that the most suitable identity for Chiang Saen is as an historic town. The outcome of these seminars and meetings became known throughout the community, with local leaders, NGOs and some local organisations informing residents by word of mouth, through national media such as the Manager newspaper, and through local media such as Chiangrai's radio station, announcements on community radio programmes and in the Phrachathai newspaper. As these messages continued, they became a means through which to educate local people about the extent of the proposed developments in their town and how concerned they should be about

this. The messages persuaded residents to join together and all focus on preventing the town's development. However, the community's unity has been tested by some critical issues, such as the debate about whether to turn Chiang Saen into a world heritage site (as discussed in chapters 4 and 7). The controversial debate about whether the town should retain its identity as an historic town or become a business hub is another critical issue that tested and challenged the unity and commitment of the Chiang Saen community which will be discussed in more detail in the analysis and discussion chapters.

Figure 3.1: Illustrated the theme of the seminar 'Contested visions of the Chiang Saen Industrial Park'

Figure 3.1: Illustrates some of the themes in the seminars relating to the controversial debate about change and development in Chiang Saen. This figure illustrates a seminar theme 'Contested visions of the Chiang Saen Industrial Park'

on the project called Chiang Saen Industrial Park which was organized by Chiangrai Rajabhat University in association with some local organizations in Chiang Saen on November 30th, 2004. (Source: Chiangrai Rajabhat University, 2004)

It might be expected that each actor in a community would have different concerns about its development depending on their priorities, their background and their sources of information about development projects, yet in Chiang Saen they produced almost uniform responses to most of the interview questions. This can be explained because all of information the community received was derived from the same sources: people attended the same seminars and meetings on the 'past, present and future' of the town; and most communication was one-way from community leaders to members of the public, from adults to children, from teachers to students and from government officers to residents. According to the Chiangrai Rajabhat University (2004), there was some two-way communication between actors, such as small group discussions in between the seminars and other meetings, but the views residents shared and exchanged were still basically those they had received from a few leaders and scholars as illustrated by most of the secondary documents such as the conference paper concerning the debates on the Chiang Saen Industrial Park project (Chiangrai Rajabhat University, 2004). In selecting which quotations to use from different interviewees for the same interview question the researcher has chosen the quotations which are most detailed.

The researcher feels that this has helped residents of Chiang Saen to absorb ideas that they frequently heard and with which they have become familiar. However, the key thing to consider is whether this has facilitated their understanding of the issues facing Chiang Saen and allowed them to build up their own thoughts on the town's future. If residents have been able to do this, it will benefit both themselves and the town as a whole. The community will move forward in the same direction. On the other hand, if residents have not deeply thought through the issues about the future development of Chiang Saen, and have been too influenced by what other people have told them, then they might be persuaded

later by other information to change their view on whether the town should be developed.

The traditions and culture of the residents of Chiang Saen could be another reason why they produced almost the same responses to interview questions. This is because in Thailand, particularly in local areas, people have a strong traditional belief that 'trust the leader is good for living' and 'thinking differently from others would potentially generate risky impact for living'. This belief became a well-known part of Thai culture during period that General Por Pibunsongkram was the Prime Minister, around 1948. However, according to the conversation with the head of Chiang Saen district office, nowadays, it does not strongly influence most young people but it remains important for older people - and the majority of interviewees in this research were people in the senior age group as will be illustrated in the section on the general profile of interviewees. Another concern about the interviews in this research is the difference in the number of male and female interviewees and between informed residents and ordinary residents. These differences are the result of information gained during site observation and the criteria for choosing interviewees outlined previously.

Terminology used in the thesis

The researcher was not allowed to use the real names of all of the interviewees in the text because some felt uncomfortable about giving their views during the interview and they did not want to have them made public. Therefore, for clarity, pseudonyms have been used to identity interviewees.

In addition, the researcher has also identified some words and phrases that are used within Chiang Saen as part of the local language and as specific terms use in this research. For clarity, these have been defined in the text by providing their meaning as footnotes. Other important terms that need to be defined are:

1. The historic town of Chiang Saen: This refers to the inner part of the historic town, with an area of two square kilometres and six-sub communities.

2. Community: In this research the term 'community' refers to the community living in the historic town of Chiang Saen. *(เชียงแสน)*[18]

3. Sub-community: Sub-communities are the six specific areas that the historic town of Chiang Saen has been informally divided into. This has not been organized by the government but has been divided based on the mutual consent of local residents. The Chiang Saen Municipality Office has provided some support in the form of small budgets and advice. This has been done in order to help residents design and organise activities according to their needs. It is also considered to be an informal form of community empowerment by the Chiang Saen Municipality Organization.

4. The leader of a sub-community of Chiang Saen: This is a resident who has been appointed as leader following an election held among residents in each sub-community every two years.

5. A group of senior residents: A group of ordinary residents that has formed in the community in order to participate in activities together. Mostly these are cultural or healthy activities and members of the group consist of local residents aged over 60 years old. Joining a group is voluntary.

6. Stakeholders: In this research, stakeholders refers to people living within the historic town of Chiang Saen including ordinary residents, informed residents, entrepreneurs, local NGOs, local government organizations such as Chiang Saen District Office, Chiang Saen Municipality Office, and other representative offices of central government such as the Custom Office.

7. Residents: In this research, residents have been classified into two main groups.

   7.1 Informed residents refers to leaders of local government organizations in Chiang Saen and some local and district officials such as the Mayor of Chiang Saen Municipality Organization, the head of Chiang Saen District Office, and the Leader of Wiang Chiang Saen *Tumbon*[19] Administration. This group of residents have more opportunity than ordinary residents to access resources and information, particularly in-depth information about the town such as development projects, central government plans and activities. They also have more opportunity to participate in development

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[18] Refers to Chiang Saen in Thai
[19] Refers to local government organization as the sub-district.

projects in the town so in term of conducting interviews this group of residents have normally given more details in their answers.

   7.2 Ordinary residents: These are residents who do not have any particular role or position in the community but live in Chiang Saen. These residents are the majority of resident in the town. The leader of the sub-community and local entrepreneurs who own small family businesses are also included in this group.

8. Organizations. In this research, organizations have been classified into two groups. These include;

   8.1 Representative organizations of central government such as the Office of Tourism and Sport Organization, the Office of Custom Department, Chiang Saen Distric Office. In this research, the Chiang Saen District Office or Amphoe in Thai is often the key organization referred to as it played a key role as the central administrative and management organization for the district. It collaborates with other organizations both at a local and national level. The leader of this organization, appointed by central government and called 'Nai Amphoe[20]' in Thai, is moved to another district office or promoted to a higher level depending on central government policy and is usually moved every 2 to 4 years.

   8.2 Local government organizations refer to those which are fully responsible for management and administration in the historic town of Chiang Saen. These include the Chiang Saen Municipality Office and those partly responsible in some area of the historic town such as the Wiang Chiang Saen Tumbon Administration. These organizations are part of the local organization of the Ministry of Interior. The leader of these organizations is appointed through the electoral process which normally organised every four year.

The aims of these organizations (8.1 and 8.2) are to provide basic infrastructure and services for local residents. They seek to collaborate with other organizations both at a local and national level in order to develop the town.

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[20] Refers to Head of the District Office

Table 3.1: Details of Organization referred in the research

Type of Organizations	Key Characteristics	Aims and Objectives
1. Chiang Saen District Office	Representative of Central Government	General administration and management in order to provide general and basic infrastructure and services for local residents in Chiang Saen district, on behalf of central government
2. Office of Tourism and Sport Organization, Chiangrai Office	Representative of Central Government	Promote and develop Tourism and Sport Activities in Chiangrai
3. Wiang Chiang Saen Tumbon Administration	Local Government Organization, part of the Ministry of Interior	General administration and management in order to provide general and basic infrastructure and services for local residents in Wiang Chiang Saen sub-district, on behalf of central government
4. Chiang Saen Municipality Office	Local Government Organization, part of the Ministry of Interior	General administration and management in order to provide general and basic infrastructure and services for local residents in the area of the historic town of Chiang Saen sub-district, on behalf of central government

The interviewees

As illustrated earlier on page 83-84, the total number of all interviewees for the study was 33. However, the information gained from many interviews was similar, as discussed on pages 89-92. Furthermore, some interviewees provided very short answers to the questions, and the researcher decided to use only quotes from interviewees who had contributed more detailed and extensive responses to the interview questions as discussed on page 91. Therefore out of the total of 33 interviewees conducted, only 23 were selected and quoted directly in the study.

Although details about interviewees - such as their real names, jobs, place of work, age and education - have not been given in the study, pseudonyms and a general profile of interviewees is given below.

1. Wanchai is one of the informed residents. He has worked as a leader in a local government organization in Chiang Saen for over ten years. The interview with him took place at his office on 30 May 2007. He is between 50 and 55 years old.

2. Somsak is one of the informed residents. Somsak has been working as a senior officer in one of the local government organizations in Chiang Saen for over 8 years. The interview with him took place at his office on 19 December 2007. He is between 45 and 50 years old.

3. Piti is a secondary school pupil who has a personal interest in traditional culture and history in the historic town of Chiang Saen. The interview with him took place at the Chiang Saen Municipality where he attended a seminar on local activity on 1 December 2007. He is between 15 and 18 years old.

4. Similar to Piti, Tida is another secondary school pupil who also has a personal interest in traditional culture and history in the historic town of Chiang Saen. The interview with her took place at the Chiang Saen Municipality where she attended the seminar on local activity on 1 December 2007 the seminar. She is aged between 15 and 18 years old.

5. Similar to Wanchai and Somsak, Siam is another informed resident. He works as the leader in one of the local government organizations in Chiang Saen. Unlike Wanchai he has a long experience working in Chiang Saen before being appointed

as the leader of this organization. The interview with him took place at his office on 19 December 2007. His age is between 40 and 45 years old.

6. Sompong is a senior resident who has lived in the historic town of Chiang Saen since he was born. As ordinary resident, Sompong was elected by local residents as the leader of a sub-community. He is also the leader of a group of senior residents in the historic town. The interview with him took place at his place (house) on 7 June 2007. His age is between 65 and 70 years old.

7. Wichit is another ordinary resident. He has retired in the last few years from his work as the leader of community in the historic town of Chiang Saen which he did for more than 10 years. Nowadays, he enjoys his time participating in the activities organised by a group of senior residents and provides advice for community member upon requested. The interview with him took place at his place on 8 June 2007 and his age is between 65 and 70 years old.

8. Sinthong is an ordinary resident. He retired from his duty as a local school teacher 5 years ago. Since then, he has spent his time working for the community becoming an advisor on the culture and history of the town as he has personal interest in history and traditional culture following his time as a school teacher. The interview with him took place at his place (house) on 8 June 2007. His age is between 55 and 60 years old.

9. Thiti is one of the informed residents. He is the founding member of the Chiang Saen Conservation Group (CSC) and has been the leader of the group since it formed. The interview with him took place at his place on 6 June 2007. His age is between 45 and 50 years old.

10. Prasong is an ordinary resident although his position as the abbot of the main temple in the historic town of Chaing Saen is considered to be powerful by local residents. However his role mainly concerns religious activities which have not played a significant role in this research so the researcher has classified him as ordinary resident. The interview with him took place at the temple on 6 June 2007. His age is between 55 and 60 years old.

11. Suthi is an ordinary resident. He retired from his duty as a local school teacher almost 10 years ago. Since then, he has spent his time at home reading books and

magazines. In recent years, he has been elected as the leader of sub-community in the historic town (he was still the leader of sub-community during the field interview). The interview with him took place in his place (house) on 8 June 2007. His age is between 65 and 70 years old.

12. Amnath is considered by local residents to be one of the very active leaders on the sub-community in the historic town. The interview with him took place at his place on 7 June 2007. His age is between 60 and 65 years old.

13. Mongkol is a local school teacher who often joined cultural activity organised by local government organizations. He also organised some learning activities for his students on local culture and history in the town. The interview with him took place at the school where he works on 19 December 2007. His age is between 45 and 50 years old. In this research, Mongkol is classified as an ordinary resident.

14. Yongyuth is a sub-community leader. He used to work as a government official for over 25 years but has been retired for 5 years. The interview with him took place at his place on 7 June 2007. His age is between 55 and 60 years old.

15. Thongchai is the youngest leader of the sub-community in the historic town. He also has a small family business. The interview with him took place at his place on 7 June 2007. His age is between 45 and 50 years old.

16. Winai is an informed resident. He retired from his work as a government official more than 5 years ago and has been elected as the leader of one of the local organizations by local residents. The interview with him took place at his office on 6 June 2007. His age is between 55 and 60 years old.

17. Somchai is an informed resident who works as the leader of a government organization. The interview with him took place at his office on 27 July 2007. His age is between 55 and 60 years old.

18. Phaiboon is a senior ordinary resident who has a personal interest in tourism. The interview with him took place at his place on 6 June 2007. His age is between 65 and 70 years old.

19. Pattana is an ordinary resident who has a small family business. The interview with her took place at her place on 6 June 2007. Her age is between 55 and 60 years old.

20. Nongnuch is another ordinary resident who has a small family business. The interview with her took place at her place on 19 December 2007. Her age is between 45 and 50 years old.

21. Yingyong is an ordinary resident who has a small family business. The interview with her took place at her place on 8 June 2007. Her age is between 55 and 60 years old.

22. Din is an ordinary resident who normally joins activities related to local culture organised in the historic town by local organisations. The interview with him took place at his place on 24 June 2007. His age is between 45 and 50 years old.

23. Similar to Din, Montri is an ordinary resident who normally joins activities related to local culture organised in the historic town by local organisations. The interview with him took place at his place on 19 December 2007. His age is between 45 and 50 years old.

According to the above general profile of interviewees the number of informed residents is less then ordinary residents and the majority of interviewees are male. The different number of male and female interviewees reflects the criteria for choosing the interviewees, as illustrated on research process and practicalities section and the implications of these differences for the research are also discussed in the practicality section in page.

Conclusion

This chapter has given an overview of the research's objectives, the research design and the methods of data collection used. These are analysing secondary sources, site observation and in-depth interviews. In terms of the interviews, the chapter has outlined how the interview questions were designed and developed and has also illustrated the process of conducting interviews and analysing the

data. In addition, the chapter has reflected on the practicalities of doing field interviews, such as the changing relationship between the researcher and the interviewees, and has questioned the uniformity of the data gathered from transcribing the interviews. In the final part of the chapter, some of the specific terms and words used in the research have been defined in order to provide the reader with a better understanding of the data in the following chapters.

Chapter 4

Contested visions of development futures in the historic town of Chiang Saen: official plans

Introduction

The key argument of this dissertation is that whilst regional and central government on the one hand, and the local community on the other, believe that tourism is important for the development of Chiang Saen, there is much disagreement about exactly how such development should be pursued. That is to say, there are contested visions of development futures for Chiang Saen, visions that are at root contested ideas about the nature and identity of Chiang Saen as a place. This chapter begins the empirical exploration of these visions by identifying and analysing government plans and proposals for tourist and broader economic development of Chiang Saen and the region around it. By 'government plans' I indicate central and regional bodies of the Thai government, as well as regional (Asian and South East Asian) inter-governmental bodies of which Thailand is a part.

The chapter is divided into two parts. The first is an outline of the existing tourism facilities in developments in Chiang Saen, whilst the second is an analysis of government plans and proposals. This analysis is based on official government documents and interviews with officials.

Setting the scene: an introduction to the research site of Chiang Saen

Historically, Chiang Saen was a nodal point in mainland Southeast Asia, located on the Mekong River and controlling trade in the associated region. There was a principality here, and it had considerable local importance. Subsequently the focus of attention shifted southwards and this inland settlement became increasingly marginal – so much so that there was de-population. With the Cold War and the sealing of the border with Laos, Chiang Saen's status became one of a town of little importance on the margins of the Thai state. This has increasingly changed with rapprochement between the countries of the region, the ADB's GMS project, the extension of Chinese economic power into the area and the opening of

borders. This study is thus situated at a particularly important time in the history of the area.

The Chiang Saen District is a peaceful, agricultural area located on the banks of the Maekong, Ruak and Kam Rivers (see map 4.1). It is approximately 442 square kilometres in size and is located 60 kilometres north of Chiangrai, Thailand (see map 4.2). The area includes six Tumbon[21] and seventy villages with a total population of 47,028 (24,569 males and 25,255 females), including 5,430 people who belonging to minority populations[22] (Chiang Saen District, 2006). The area can be divided into three types of land: half is lowland where the majority of people live, farming and growing crops; about one third is highlands and mountains where some minority peoples such as hill tribes live; and the rest is the area for irrigation such as the area of natural water resources including Maekong, Ruak and Kam Rivers.

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[21] Tumbon is a sub-section of an administrative area also called sub-district.
[22] Hill-tribes, asylum-seeker and refugees from China, Laos and Myanmar.
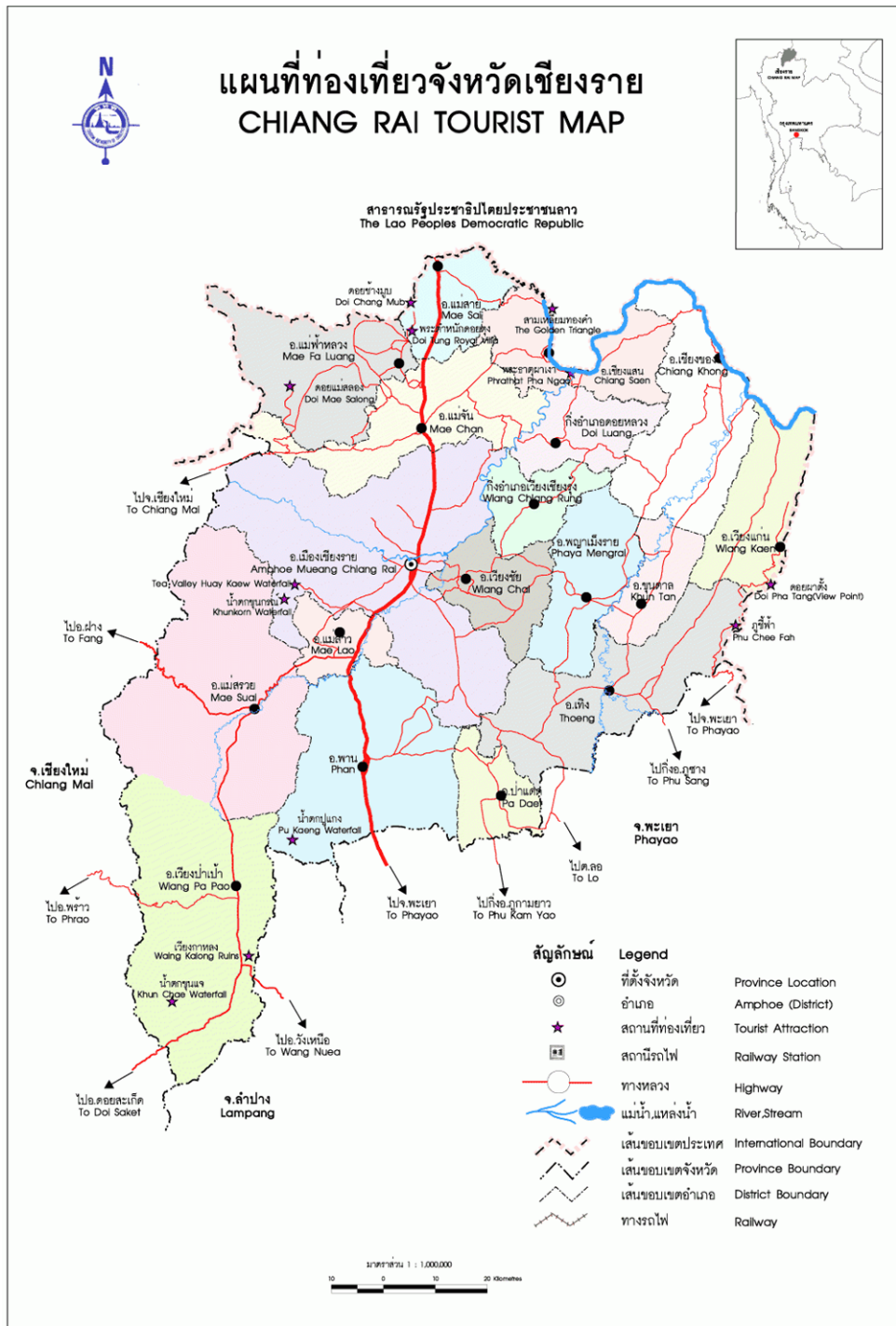
Map 4.1: Map of Chiangrai

Source: http://www.cisco.com/web/TH/assets/images/microsite/

thpc09_chiang_rai_map.gif (Last access 25 September 2009)

Map 4.2: Map of Thailand.

Source: http://www.un.org/Depts/Cartographic/map/profile/mekong.pdf

(Last accessed 20 September 2008)

The Chiang Saen District shares a border with the city of Thakilex in Myanmar and the city of Tonpeung in Laos to the North, the Chiang Kong District of Chiangrai to the East, the Mae Sai and Mae Chan Districts of Chiangrai to the West and the Doi Luang District of Chiangrai to the South.

According to a report from the Chiang Saen District Office (2007), Chiang Saen is heavily dependent on agriculture, with more than 77% of the population earning their living from farming. Tourism plays an important part in local business but only in the area of the so-called Golden Triangle (picture 4.1) 6 kilometres north of the historic town of Chiang Saen. This region is famous due to its reputation as the place where the border of three countries, Thailand, Myanmar and Laos, meet. However, most of the tourism facilities and services are owned by investors from other regions rather than by locals. In addition, its history as an area of opium production in 1950s, and the investment of the casino complex, jointly owned by Myanmar and Thai entrepreneurs in the city of Thakilex, opposite the border of Chiang Saen district, has been seen by tour operators and the local community as the key tourist attraction within the Golden Triangle (Leader of Chiang Saen District Office, 2007)[23]. Tourists can easily cross the border at Chiang Saen on the bank of Ruak River to the casino complex in Myanmar. Furthermore, there are several tourist attractions and activities provided for tourists in the area of the Golden Triangle: luxury hotels (picture 4.2), restaurants, the Opium museum, boat tours along the Maekong River (picture 4.3), and souvenir shops selling local products (Wiang Chiang Saen Tumbon Administration, 2006). The construction of a new casino and entertainment complex by entrepreneurs from Laos and China on the bank of the Maekong Rivers in Laos (picture 4.4) is also considered as a potential key attraction for visitors to the Golden Triangle (Tourism Association of Chiangrai, 2007).

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[23] Interview with the Leader of Chiang Saen District Office, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen District Office

Picture 4.1: The Golden Triangle. The building on the left bank of the Maekong River is the casino complex in Myanmar. On the opposite bank (in Laos) a Chinese-Laos casino joint venture is under construction. Source: Author.

Picture 4.2: Luxury Accommodation in the Golden Triangle.
Source: Author.

Picture 4.3: Boat Tour along the Maekong River.

Source: Author

Picture 4.4: Planned site of the new casino and entertainment complex in Laos.

Source: Author.

In terms of economic investment, according to the report from the Chiang Saen District Office (2007), there are some small factories and other businesses related to the agricultural sector operating within the Chiang Saen District. However, most of these enterprises are operated by investors from outside the Chiang Saen region.

There are two government-owned ports and one private port along the Maekong River but only one of the government ports is located in the area of the historic town (see pictures 4.5-4.6). It has operated since early 2001 and although it was considered to be a large port at that time it is now too small to accommodate the rapid growth of trade and transportation between Thailand and the neighbouring countries of China, Laos and Myanmar (see table 4.1). Due to the restrictions placed upon developments within the area of the historic town, the construction of no new large buildings are allowed in the area including a new port (The Leader of Chiang Saen District Office, 2007).[24] Therefore, an expansion of this port was not possible and the construction of a second port in Chiang Saen was necessary. This is considered by government to be an important factor in the town's economic development (Foreign Office, the Government Public Relations Department, 2007)[25].

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[24] Interview with the Leader of Chiang Saen District Office, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen District Office

[25] http://thailand.prd.go.th/view_inside.php?id=2488 (Last accessed 10 May 2007)

Picture 4.5: The Port of Chiang Saen. Source: Author

Picture 4.6: The Port of Chiang Saen. Source: Author

Table 4.1: The value of goods imported and exported through the Port of Chiang Saen

Year	Import (Millions Baht)	Export (Millions Baht)
2000	644.6 (£11.70 Millions)	1,022.32 (£18.59 Millions)[26]
2001	702.22 (£12.76 Millions)	2,036.61 (£37 Millions)
2002	788.55 (£14.32 Millions)	2,515.44 ((£45.70 Millions)
2003	703.53 (£12.78 Millions)	3,372.55 (£61.30 Millions)
2004	1,334.79 (£24.25 Millions)	3,782.73 (£68.76 Millions)
2005	1,277.86 (£23.21 Millions)	5,238.65 (£95.23 Millions)
2006	1,162.64 (£21.12 Millions)	6,031.02 (£109.65 Millions)
October 2006 – June 2007	764.75 (£13.89 Millions)	3,612.88 (£65.67 Millions)
Total	7,378.94 (£134.14 Millions)	27,612.20 (£502 Millions)

Source: Chiang Saen Custom Office, 2007[27]

The historic town of Chiang Saen

The historic town of Chiang Saen is located in the so-called inner city area, on the banks of the Maekong River (see Map 4.3). It has an area of approximately two square kilometres. The town comprises two villages, Baan Wieng Nueo Moo 2[28] and Baan Wieng Tai Moo 3. It is divided into six communities (see Map 4.4) with 2,439 households and a total population of approximately 4,783 (Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007; see table 4.2). Historic buildings surround the town. These include seventy-five old temples, ancient walls, old pagodas and some local houses built in the traditional style. There are 134 small shops, two markets, four banks, one medium-sized hotel and over twenty-five small food stores - in addition to restaurants, other services, and a port. The majority of people living in Chiang Saen are dependent upon the agricultural sector and there are no factories inside the town due to restrictions intended to conserve the area.

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[26] At time of writing (2009), it is approximately 55 Thai Baht equivalent to 1 UK

Pound sterling (£1)

[27] This was the latest information available at the time of data collection

[28] This is a specific boundary or area designed by the government for administrative purposes, particularly local administration. Baan is Thai for a village
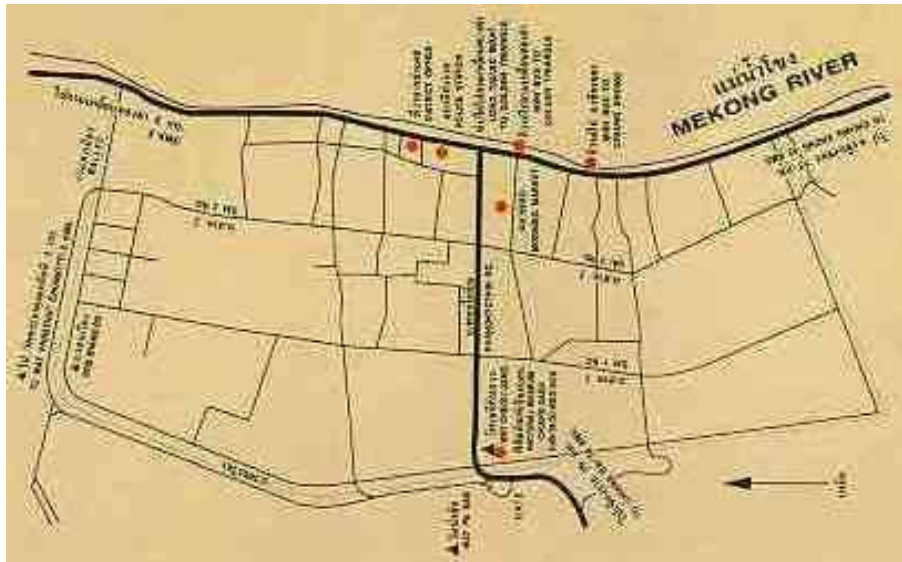
Map 4.3: A map of the historic town of Chiang Saen

Source: Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007
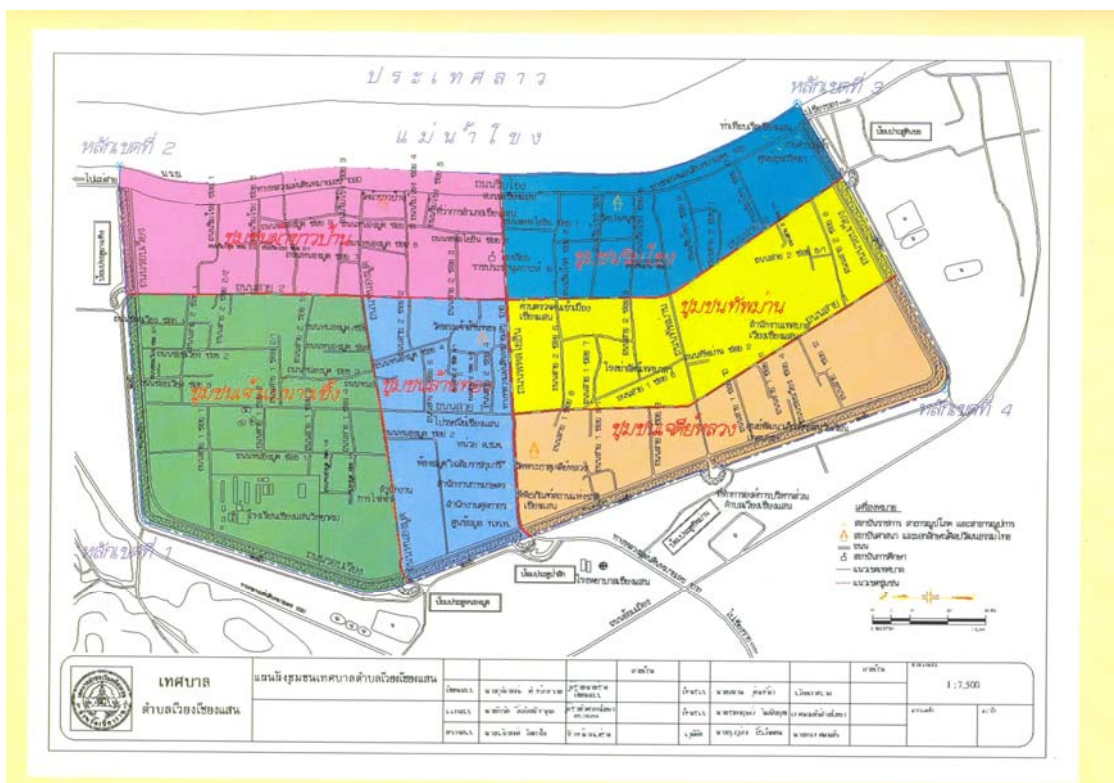
Map 4.4: A map of the six communities within the area of the historic town

Source: Chiang Saen Municipality, 2007

Table 4.2: Demographic data for the historic town of Chiang Saen 2007

Village	Number of households	Number of males	Number of females	Total number of residents
Wieng Nueo Moo. 2	1,179	1,120	1,308	2,428
Wieng Tai Moo. 3	1,260	1,111	1,244	2,355
Total	2,439	2,231	2,552	4,783

Source: Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007.

In terms of facilities and basic services in the historic town, there are 134 local shops which sell local consumer products to residents and 2 local markets (see picture 4.7). As for tourism facilities, there is only one small guest house and one medium sized-hotel with 115 guest rooms, 24 local food restaurants selling a la carte dishes, and a small traditional Thai massage parlour. The economic infrastructure consists of four branches of the Thai Bank, one government port office on the bank of the Maekong River, one Customs Office (a subsidiary of the Customs Department in Bangkok), and one petrol station (Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007).

Table 4.3: Information about local businesses in the historic town of Chiang Saen

Type of facility or service	Number of these in the historic town of Chiang Saen
Local shops (selling local consumer products to residents)	134
Local markets	2
Guest houses (number of rooms not specified)	1
Local hotels (medium size with 115 guest rooms)	1
Banks (branch offices of the Thai Bank)	4
Local food restaurants	25
Ports	1
Customs Offices (part of the Customs Department in Bangkok)	1
Petro stations	1
Local Thai massage parlours	1

Source: Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007.

Picture 4.7: Local Markets in the historic town of Chiang Saen. Source: Author.

As illustrated in the government reports such as the report by the Chiang Saen District Office (2007) and in a report by the Chiang Saen Municipality Office (2007), the historic town of Chiang Saen can be classified according to its different characteristics in the following way.

Firstly, as a cultural and historic town, it used to serve as the capital city of the early kingdom in Thailand (as illustrated in chapter 1). Nowadays, it is one of the centres for Lanna Thai culture and is also considered to be one of the favourite cultural and historic destinations in the northern part of Thailand.

Secondly, Chiang Saen is an economic area. The community is dependent upon agriculture and there are only a few small business operating within the area of the historic town. Tourism plays only a small part in the local economy. The Chiang Saen District report states that the majority of tourists visiting the historic town make only a short visit, as most of their package tours have already been organised by travel agencies in their home country. Consequently, tourists rarely spend much of their money in the town and use few of the local services - such as food, accommodation and transport - as these are also provided in the city of Chiangrai, in the Golden Triangle, and in Maesai. There are some small tourism businesses: home-stay guesthouses, ancient Thai massage parlours and souvenir shops can be found in the historic town. Apart from the agricultural sector and the tourism business, some small family-run businesses can also be seen in the historic town, trading everyday products for locals.

Thirdly, Chiang Saen is strategically important. The Thai government has attempted to promote the town as a business hub. However, due to the restrictions on construction in a conservation area in the historic town, these plans are being re-considered. There are several government organisations concerned with the development of the historic town, such as the Chiang Saen District Office, the Fine Art Department, the Chiang Saen Municipality Office and the Wiang Chiang Saen administration (Tumbon Administration Office). It is clear that there is neither a (single) master plan for the development of the historic town nor a single organisation responsible for its development. While these organisations cooperate

to develop the town in what is known as an 'integrated cluster',[29] cooperation is so loose that progress is slow.

Finally, Chiang Saen is a community of people. Most of the residents are part of local families who have lived in the town for generations. There are no significant groups of indigenous or ethnic minorities in Chiang Saen. The Chiang Saen Conservation Group is the only NGO working in the historic town[30].

Tourism in the historic town of Chiang Saen

Although Chiang Saen is one of the famous destinations in Chiangrai, there is no organisation directly responsible for collecting tourism statistics in the town. Consequently, the numbers shown in tables 4.4 and 4.5 are the number of tourists visiting Chiangrai province as a whole. According to estimates given in a report by the Chiang Saen District Office, the number of tourists visiting Chiang Saen is approximately 300,000 – 400,000 a year, including domestic and international tourists, generating income of up to 30-40 million Baht a year (approximately £545,000 - £ 727,000). However, the report also notes that only about 30% of these tourists visited the historic town of Chiang Saen. The rest visited the Golden Triangle about six kilometres to the north of the historic town (as explained earlier in the chapter, the Golden Triangle is one of the key destinations for the majority of tourists travelling to the Chiangrai region). Reports by the Chiang Saen Municipality Office (2007) and a report by the Chiang Saen District Office (2006) both note that one of the problems is that tourists do not stay overnight in the historic town of Chiang Saen because of a lack of tourism services and facilities, such as restaurants and accommodation. However, building such facilities within the area of the historic town is restricted.

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[29] Refers to the cooperation of several organisations in order to sort out problems by sharing resources, such as their budgets, labour forces, and information.

[30] This group was founded in 1995 by a number of residents who were interested in history, culture and environmental conservation. The founder member of the group is a local school teacher who specialises in art studies. It now consists of members from different backgrounds, such as a local officer, local elite, senior residents and secondary school children.

Table 4.4: Number of Thai tourists visiting Chiangrai and the revenue created between1997 and 2006

Year	Number of visitors	Change (%)	Revenue (Millions Baht)
1997	1,006,149	-	-
1998	1,025,912	+ 1.96	-
1999	1,034,597	+ 0.85	-
2000	1,122,533	+ 8.50	-
2001	1,084,870	- 3.36	-
2002	1,082,056	- 0.26	-
2003	1,052,591	- 2.72	-
2004	1,149,101	+ 9.17	-
2005	1,148,173	- 0.08	-
2006	1,332,518	+ 16.06	7,012.43 (£127.49 Millions)

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, Chiangrai Office, 2007.[31]

Table 4.5: Number of foreign tourists visiting Chiangrai and the revenue created between 2005 and 2006

Year	Number of visitors	Change (%)	Revenue (Millions Baht)*
2005	283,313	-	-
2006	289,357	+ 2.13	2,361.77 (£42.92 Millions)

Source: Tourism Authority of Thailand, Chiangrai Office, 2007.[32]

Some government reports - such as the report of the Chiang Saen District Office (2006) - argue that historic buildings generate less interest among tourists. However, the report also suggests that better management and presentation of the historic buildings could potentially attract more tourists to visit the town. The next section will provide information about the main destinations and attractions for tourists visiting Chiang Saen.

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[31] This was the most recent information available at the time of data collection
[32] This was the most recent information available at the time of data collection

Tourist attractions in the historic town of Chiang Saen.

As an historic town, Chiang Saen is one of the most famous destinations for tourists in the northern part of Thailand (Chiang Saen District Office, 2007). The main tourist destinations within the historic town are the historic buildings and old temples, Chiang Saen Museum, the old city's wall (picture 4.8) and the beautiful scenery along the Maekong River. Although there are more than 75 temples within the area of the historic town, according to a report from the Chiang Sean District Office (2007), only a couple of these temples are considered famous enough for tourists to visit. These are the Wat[33] Jedi-Luang (picture 4.9), Wat Pa-Sak (picture 4.10) which were built by King Saen Phu of Chiang Saen in the early 14th century.

Picture 4.8: The Old city's wall. Source: Author

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[33] Wat is Thai word for the Temple

Picture 4.9: Wat Jedi Luang. Source: Author

Picture 4.10: Wat Pa-Sak. Source: Author

Chiang Saen is also known as the centre of Lanna Thai culture; for its unique art, such as the image of Buddha called 'Phar-Chiang Saen'[34] (picture 4.11); and for making traditional clothes. In addition, the way of life which juxtaposes daily life and historic buildings (pictures 4.12-4.13) with dependence upon the agricultural sector (pictures 4.14-4.15) is also a factor attracting tourists to visit the town.

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[34] Thai term meaning Bhadda and monk.

Picture 4.11: Some 'Phar-Chiang Saen'. Source: Author

Picture 4.12: Old Temple and pagoda surrounded by residents' houses.

Source: Author

Picture 4.13: Old Temple and pagoda surrounded by residents' houses and the marketplace. Source: Author

Picture 4.14: The mainstay of the local labour market is agriculture. Here, a rice field is shown. Source: Author

Picture 4.15: A vegetable field, further illustrating the importance of agriculture to the local economy. Source: Author

In addition, tourists can also enjoy ancient Thai massages that are carried out by resident local therapists in small, open-air massage parlours along the banks of the Maekong River (see picture 4.16).

Picture 4.16: Thai massage. Source: Author.

Changes and developments: controversies over the historic town of Chiang Saen

There have been several changes and developments in the Chiang Saen district over the last three decades. These have had both positive and negative impacts on the town, and particularly on the historic town area of Chiang Saen. Some existing and proposed development projects have challenged the identity of the historic town.

In early 1989, the Thai government – led by the Prime Minister Chatchai Chunhawan – initiated the so-called 'change the battle field into the trade field' agenda. The idea was conceived at the end of the Cold War. It involved turning the Maekong subregion into a peaceful, market-based economy that would support the whole region. The Thai government, as the strongest economy in the region at that time (Pleumarom, 2002), proposed this agenda to other countries in the region in order to build-up economic cooperation. Then, in 1992 the Asian Development Bank (ADB) launched a project called the Greater Maekong Subregion Economic Zone (GMS) - a joint development project along the Maekong River region between the Yunnan Province in southern China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia, and Vietnam (ADB, 1992). The GMS project caught the interest of the Thai government, which hoped that it could develop the economy of the whole country by investing in several GMS projects. For example, it invested in building the first port in Chiang Saen in 2000, as an important part of the infrastructure facilitating trade between Thailand and neighbouring countries (Chiang Saen District Office, 2006).

A year later the Thai government proposed a project called the Triangle of Economic Development, creating a specific zone for economic development between three border towns in the Chiangrai province, namely the Maesai district, the Chiang Saen district and the Chiang Kong district, see map 4.1 (The Thailand Research Fund: TRF, 2004).

In 2003, the Thai government proposed a project called the Chiang Saen Industrial Park (Manager Newspaper, January 13, 2004). However, the Industrial

Park project has generated a series of debates and discussions amongst government organisations, the local community and other related organisations - such as NGOs and educational institutions – about whether an historic town like Chiang Saen is the right place for it.

Later in the same year, the first port of Chiang Saen was opened to commercial freighters on the Maekong River, which facilitated an increase in trade between entrepreneurs from Thailand and from other GMS countries (Laos, Myanmar and China). Following this increase in trade, the government has also proposed a road infrastructure project to facilitate trade across the region (The Mayor of Chiang Saen Municipality, 2007)[35]. This is because the capacity of the existing road network from the city of Chiangrai to Chiang Saen is not able to serve the increasing number of cargo trucks and commuter vehicles travelling between the two cities. This new road project was proposed by the government in 2004 but has not yet been constructed due to discussions about the road's environmental impact assessment (The CSC leader, 2007).

Between the years 2006 - 2008 no development projects were proposed in Chiang Saen, due to the uncertain political situation in Thailand. A change of government and national political conflicts affected the development of Chiang Saen due to the inconsistency of the government's policies. One example of this is that zone management in the town, intended to isolate the area zoned for the business sector from the area of the historic town, has been held up because the project needs to be approved by central government.

Table 4.6 summarises these development proposals. Surveying the list, I would argue that the majority of changes and development projects have been made by people and organisations from outside of the community.

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[35] Interview with the Mayor of Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 8 May 2007, Chiang Saen Municipality Office

Table 4.6: The main changes and developments in Chiang Saen

Year	Name of project / plan	Proponent
1989	A project to turn the battlefield into a trade field	Thai Government (Prime Minister Chatchai Chunhawan)
1992	The Greater Maekong Subregion (GMS)	Asian Development Bank (ADB)
2000	The first port in Chiang Saen	Thai Government
2001	The Triangle of Economic Development	Thai Government
2003	The Chiang Saen Industrial Park	Thai Government
2004	The superhighway from Chiangrai to Chiang Saen	Thai Government
2005	The second port of Chiang Saen	Thai government

Chiang Saen industrial park project was one of the projects initiated by the Thai government as part of the GMS in order to boost the national economy in the northern region of the country and to increase economic cooperation with the member countries of the GMS, particularly China. The project is located in Sridornmoon sub-district, Chiang Saen district (see map 4.5) about 8 kilometres southwest of the historic town of Chiang Saen and 50 kilometres north of the town of Chiangrai, and covers approximately 1,280 acres (3,200 rai)[36]. This development is projected to become the base for more than a hundred factories in several industries including textiles, jewellery, electronic and mechanical parts, pharmaceuticals and medicine, agricultural tools and equipment, agricultural products, cannery, and so forth. Due to the size and type of the project, local residents are worried about the potential impact on the natural environment in the area nearby, and particularly on the historic town. They are concerned about pollution, the creation of an eyesore by juxtaposing different designs (the new and

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[36] Approximately 2.5 rai = acre

modern designs of the industrial site and related buildings with the historical buildings in the historic town), and the impact of numerous heavy trucks that would transport products produced by the factories in the industrial site to Chiang Saen port located on the bank of the Mekong River in the area of the historic town. The existing port is located in the area of the historic town, and the second port currently under construction located approximately 5 kilometers north of the historic town. These ports are the gateway for import and export products and raw materials to and from the neighbouring countries of China, Laos, and Myanmar.

In addition, the development of related infrastructural projects by the government such as the superhighway from the industrial park to Chiang Saen port are considered by local residents as a potential threat to the community. Upgrading roads to enable them to carry heavy trucks for industrial transportation will mean locals will have to adapt away from a community life dependent on traditional farming (growing crops such as rice). There are also fears of the impacts of vibration made by the heavy trucks on the old and historic buildings in the historic town. Local residents therefore decided to oppose the project in various ways, as will be illustrated in the empirical chapters.

Chiang Saen, Chiangrai

Map 4.5: Chiang Saen district, Chiangrai: The location of the proposed industrial park[37]

In terms of the development of tourism in the historic town, according to material obtained from interviews with senior residents, few people visited the historic town during the early 1980s and most who did were really interested in visiting the Golden Triangle. However, some foreign visitors - such as hippies - did want to visit the historic town to explore new experiences. In contrast, once the government announced that the inner city of Chiang Saen would become a

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[37] http://www.dld.go.th/pvlo_cri/ampur/Chiangsaen%20web%20file/image/first%20page/map.gif
(Last accessed: 9 March 2010)

protected conservation area the number of tourists has dramatically increased. This senior residents illustrated his view that;

> From my experience, there only a small number of tourists visited the town in during the early of 1980s and there is also lack of tourism facilities in the town. I saw only some backpacker tourists visiting the town and most of them always asking for the Golden Triangle. However, in the late 1990s the town has dramatically changed both in terms of the physical environment and people's ways of life and the number of tourists visiting the town also increased. (Prasong, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

According to an interview with a government officer[38] who works in the Chiang Saen district, the increased number of tourists, services and revenue in the town - and in the wider Golden Triangle area - shows the positive economic benefits from developing tourism in Chiang Saen. However, revenue from tourists has not increased significantly. There is little money actually spent in the town itself because there are few tourism services or facilities provided. In addition, many of the tourists have already paid for their package holiday through travel agents in their home country. These travel agents, in turn, arrange for tourists to visit Chiang Saen for only one or two hours. No tourists stay overnight, as there are very limited numbers of restaurants or accommodation places in the town due to the restrictions on construction and investment within a conservation area.

Consequently, the development of tourism in the historic town of Chiang Saen over the last three decades has shown slow progress compared to the Golden Triangle, where it can be seen that the number of restaurants and places to stay has increased, keeping up with increasing tourist numbers. Community leaders in the historic town of Chiang Saen confirm that tourism has not played a key part in the economic development of the town, with the majority of residents still economically dependent on the agricultural sector. One leader stated that;

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[38] Senior Officer in Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen Municipality Office

In my opinion, I think tourism doesn't play a major role in the town's economy compare to the Golden Triangle although tourism generates some work opportunity for local people. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

However, these leaders also said that recently the benefits to the community from tourism have grown dramatically - particularly during the period between 1998 and 1999 when the government through TAT, as discussed in chapter 2, ran a tourist promotion campaign called the 'Amazing Thailand Year' aimed at attracting more international tourists to visit the country and also to persuade national tourists to travel around more. Despite this, residents are still worried about the negative impact of more tourism on the historic character of their town. Residents have accepted that tourism could be one economic tool for the town's development, but they are still unsure as to whether this will have any negative impacts on its identity. Which forms of tourism are the most appropriate for Chiang Saen will be discussed in the next three analysis chapters. However, an important context to frame that discussion is the fact that Chiang Saen has been proposed as part of the Greater Mekong Sub-region Project (GMS) by the Thai government. As a result, as illustrated earlier, several development projects were proposed for Chiang Saen which were not related to the local region nearby but rather linked to partnerships with neighbouring countries such as Myanmar, Laos, and China as part or wider trans-boundary cooperation development as discussed in the next section.

Trans-boundary cooperation and development in the Greater Mekong Sub-region

Trans-boundary cooperation may have several purposes: economic development, the promotion of international trade development, human resource development, and regional economic integration such as the economic integration in the European Communty (UNCTAD Division on Transnational Corporations and Investment, 1996). Dunning (1996) has stated that a transnational corporation is normally constituted by: one or two companies or enterprises which own or control activities in two or more countries, or transnational cooperation between states and states or corporations, particularly in the form of foreign direct

investment. Moran (1996) has also argued that although the investment in trans-boundary cooperation is normally made through private enterprises, it usually has the support of the governments of both the host country and the country where the enterprise originated. There are several forms of trans-national cooperation, such as alliances, joint ventures, management contracts, and networks (Buckley, 1996). According to Dunning and Sauvant (1996) trans-boundary cooperation may be one important development tool for national governments seeking to promote a fairer distribution of resources.

In Southeast Asia, trans-boundary cooperation is often identified as a key factor in development. McGregor (2008) has stated that Southeast Asia is often referred to as one of the development success areas in the world particularly when compared to other developing regions, and this success has generated several benefits for the region such as improvements in living standards, infrastructure, and economics (at least up until the economic crisis in the region in 1997). As stated by Rigg (2002:137);

> In the years running up to 1997, a select band of East and Southeast Asian countries experienced perhaps the most rapid and sustained period of economic growth in human history. This growth was not a mere statistical sleight of hand: never had so many people been plucked out of poverty over such a short space of time.

In Southeast Asia, the emergence of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) in 1967 is recognised as one of the most significant forms of trans-boundary cooperation and development in the region. It aims to promote development collaboration among the member countries. It was founded by Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and Thailand, with Brunei, Cambodia, Laos, Myanmar, and Vietnam joining later (Acharya, 1999). One example of trans-boundary projects it facilitated is the ASEAN Free Trade Area (AFTA), a non-tariff area for promoting intra-regional trade (ASEAN, 1992).

The Indonesia – Malaysia – Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT) is another example of trans-boundary cooperation in Southeast Asia (ADB, 1993). This project also aims to accelerate sub-regions' economic development by enhancing

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economic advantages such as competitiveness for investments and exports, and the promotion of tourism.

The Greater Mekong Sub-regions (GMS) is the main trans-boundary development project currently covering the area of the historic town of Chiang Saen initiated in 1992 by the Asian Development Bank (ADB). The GMS comprises Yunnan Province of China, Myanmar, Laos, Thailand, Cambodia and Vietnam (see map 4.6). It aims to work towards the 2015 Millennium Development Goals of achieving substantial poverty reduction and the sustainable development of bio-diversity and other natural resources, and also the building of cooperation between countries along the Maekong River. Under the auspices of this trans-boundary development project, governments of the member countries, supported by the ADB, have delivered several investment projects in the region. Most of the projects are concerned with alleviating poverty and improving basic infrastructure, such as transport networks, power supply, and health care services (ADB, 1992).

Map 4.6: The Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS)

Source: Asian Development Bank (ADB)

However, according to the ADB (1992) there are several obstacles to the success of this project such as the conflict between members along their border, political instability in some countries, poor infrastructure, lack of funds, poor cooperation and coordination between the members, and minimal benefits to local people who

frequently have little say or investment in the projects. In studying Sino-Thai strategic economic development in the greater Mekong sub-region (1992-2003), Masviriyakul (2004) has argued that the member countries of the GMS are not equally active participants in the process of economic cooperation due to different domestic economic and financial constraints. According to Dosch and Hensengerth (2005), Thailand and China are the members who potentially stand to gain more from regional cooperation than any other members of the GMS. Masviriyakul (2004) has also stated that among the member countries of the GMS, only Thailand and China have played leading roles in pushing the GMS projects such as the North-South economic corridor project as the transport gateway for southwestern China in order to connect China to Southeast Asia via Thailand and according to this corridor. The Thai government expects to benefit from this initiative as a tool to promote the northern region as the hub for transport and economic investment.

Tourism cooperation in the GMS has been identified as the most important sub-project under this scheme. This trans-boundary project has highlighted tourism as a vital part and the potential sector in order to boost the economy in the region. The aims of the tourism sub-project include;

1. Promoting the sub-region as a single destination.

2. Developing tourism related infrastructure.

3. Improving human resources in the tourism sector.

4. Improving standards for managing natural and cultural resources.

5. Promoting sustainable tourism in poor communities.

6. Encouraging private sector participation in the GMS tourism sector.

7. Facilitating the movement of tourists to, and within, the GMS region.

(ADB, 2005)

Sofield (2006) investigated trans-boundary tourism development in the GMS and has stated that tourism is perceived as a potential motor of economic development for all member countries, a source of foreign currency and the creation of more opportunities for countries and communities. However, he also reminds us that it is important for all member countries to balance the positive and negative impacts

of tourism development. The benefits of tourism are normally limited for marginalized communities, and in fact, as illustrated in chapter 2, tourism may have negative impacts on them. Similar to Masviriyakul (2004), Sofield suggests that there are several potential factors which may contribute to the success of trans-boundary tourism cooperation in the GMS. These include regional agreements (for example restrictions on the movement of people and products), border conflicts and border protection, domestic political and economic factors, relations amongst the member countries, and cultural differences. All of these can be barriers to cooperation for the GMS tourism project. Xu (2006) who analysed the effectiveness of regional tourism integration of the Quadrgrangle Economic Cooperation Zone in Great Mekong Region (Yunnan Province of China, Laos, Myanmar, and Thailand) has argued that the trans-border tourism between the member countries has been identified as a priority and considered as an effective way to facilitate peace, to reduce poverty and to bring about regional cooperation. Similar to Dosch and Hensengerth (2005) and Masviriyakul (2004), Xu also stated that Thailand and China are still considered as the major regional players in the development of the tourism sector, both in terms of investors and tourist numbers. It might be argued that, compared with other development projects in the region such as the utilization of the Maekong River, Irrigation and Hydro-Power Project and Dam Construction in the Maekong Rivers (Shearer, 1995), tourism is the project least likely to lead to conflict between the region's countries. Consequently, the demand for tourism development has the potential to push political reform and facilitate further economic cooperation in the region (XU, 2006).

In relation to more specific tourism promotion in Thailand particularly through the GMS region as trans-boundary tourism, the Thai Government through the TAT and the Ministry of Tourism and Sport has also set up several cooperative plans and policies with member countries in order to promote and enhance tourism within the region. According to Tirasatayapitak and Laws (2003), cooperating with member countries in the region, organising specific itineraries including major destinations within the member countries is considered as one of the policies that the Thai Government has championed in order to promote and enhance tourism in the region. More details of national tourism plans and policies,

as promoted by the TAT and the Ministry of Tourism and Sport will be discussed in the section on government policies for tourism development in Chiang Saen.

Chiang Saen and the GMS

In order to facilitate economic investment in the country, the Thai government proposed several projects in different regions that all share links with other countries in the GMS. In the case of Chiang Saen, the government launched a scheme known as the Triangle of Economic Development in 2001. This covers the three border cities in Chiangrai province: Maesai, Chiang Saen, and Chiang Kong (see map 4.1). One of the key projects in this scheme was the government's proposal to establish the Chiang Saen Industrial Park by 2003 (Manager Newspaper, January 13, 2004). This was designed as a centre of industrial manufacturing that could be used by both national and international investors, although it was recognised that most of the investors would be entrepreneurs from China. Debates amongst government representatives, independent scholars, NGOs and local communities about whether an industrial park would be a good thing for the Chiang Saen community became a controversial issue throughout the region, see Box 4.1.

Box 4.1: Message describing one of the seminars debates on the Chiang Saen Industrial Park, hosted by Chiangrai Rajabhat University

Contested visions of the Chiang Saen Industrial Park Project	มองต่างมิติ – รุมชี้ศรีดอนมูลไม่เหมาะ
The seminar debate on the perception of stakeholders towards the impact of Chiang Saen Industrial Park Project was hosted by Chiangrai Rajabhat University on November 30th, 2004. Participants included government officials, local residents, university students, independent scholars and private sectors. One of the local residents said that the government always delivers positive messages about the project to local residents including that the project would generate work opportunities for local residents but the government does not provide information about the potential negative impacts that would be caused by the project such as social and environmental problems.	วันที่ 30 พ.ย. 47 ที่หอประชุมกาสะลองคำ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงราย จ.เชียงราย มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงรายเป็นเจ้าภาพในการจัดเวที เสวนาเรื่องมุมมองมิติต่อการจัดตั้งนิคมอุตสาหกรรมเชียง แสน โดยมีตัวแทนนักวิชาการ ตัวแทนการนิคมอุตสหกรรม แห่งประเทศไทย ตัวแทนองค์กร หน่วยงานที่เกี่ยวข้อง นักเรียน นักศึกษา และประชาชนเข้าร่วมงานกันกว่า 1,000 คน หนึ่งในตัวแทนชาวบ้านกล่าวว่า โครงการนี้จะสร้าง ผลกระทบอย่างมากทั้งต่อสังคมและสิ่งแวดล้อม รัฐบาลไม่ เคยให้ข้อมูลที่แท้จริงต่อแก่ประชาชนนอกจากข้อมูลด้าน บวกของโครงการ เช่น การสร้างโอกาสในการจ้างงานให้แก่ ชาวบ้านในพื้นที่

Source: Prachathai Newspaper, 5 December 2004[39].

The Thai government has attempted to promote Chiang Saen as a business hub in the GMS region as it was hoped that this would have economic benefits for the north of the country. The main message that the government has delivered to these communities via several channels such as local radio programmes, community leaders, and newspapers, is that these projects will generate economic benefits and will enhance economic cooperation within the GMS region, increasing national income and international trade. In addition, it is claimed that the projects will generate employment for local people (Prachathai, 5 December 2004, Manager Newspapers, 13 January 2004, Khaosod Newspaper, 15 June 2004, also see Box 4.2 for some of messages delivered to the public by some of government organizations).

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[39] http://www.apecthai.org/2008/th/journal.php?year=2006&month=2&id=393 (Last accessed 4 May 2007)

Box 4.2: Example of a message from a government organization about the economic benefit of GMS related projects such as the Industrial Park project delivered to the public and community members. In this figure, the message outlines the benefits of the industrial park project at emphasises that it will generate employment opportunities for local residents.

Government said that the community is happy with the Industrial Park Project	การนิคมอุตสาหกรรมระบุชาวบ้านกว่าร้อยละ 90 เห็นด้วยกับการตั้งนิคมอุตสาหกรรมเชียงแสน
The government via the Industrial Estate Department has confirmed that over 90 percent of local residents agree with and are happy to see the Industrial Park in Chiang Saen. They think that the project will bring work and economic opportunities for them. One of the community leaders has stated that the government information delivered to them shows that the project not only generates work opportunities for local residents but that is will also benefit basic services such as education services.	การนิคมอุตสาหกรรมแห่งประเทศไทย เปิดเผยชาวบ้านในพื้นที่ก่อสร้างนิคมอุตสาหกรรมเชียงแสนกว่าร้อยละ 90 เห็นด้วยกับการก่อตั้งนิคมอุตสาหกรรมในพื้นที่ โดยชาวบ้านเห็นว่าการมีนิคมอุตสาหกรรมในพื้นที่จะช่วยสร้างงาน สร้างอาชีพให้แก่ชาวบ้านซึ่งส่วนใหญ่มีความยากจน ทำให้มีคุณภาพชีวิตและความเป็นอยู่ที่ดีขึ้น รวมทั้งจะส่งผลต่อการพัฒนาบริการขั้นพื้นฐานต่างๆในชุมชนด้วย เช่น ด้านการศึกษา เด็กๆ ที่จบการศึกษาแล้วไม่จำเป็นต้องไปหางานทำต่างจังหวัด

Source: Manager Newspaper, 8 October 2004[40]

Apart from being told by the government, as illustrated in Box 4.2, about the economic benefits that the GMS project will bring to the community, many residents of Chiang Saen also have concerns about the changes it would bring and the potential impact it would have on the environment: for example there were concerns about possible pollution from the industrial park and about changes in the historic town (see Box 4.3).

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[40] www.manageronline.com
(Last access 10 May 2007)

Box 4.3: Message illustrating local people's reaction and their concerns about the negative impacts on the community of projects related to the GMS such as the Industrial Park. The message in the box shows that local residents questioned the potential impact of the industrial park on the community.

Local residents react to the Industrial Park	คนเชียงแสนลุกขึ้นถามสร้างนิคมฯ ชาวบ้านไม่รับรู้
A group of local residents in the area proposed for Chiang Saen Industrial Park Project have asked the government about the facts of the project particularly about the potential impact the project could have on the community rather than information saying how good the project is. Local residents also asked the government for details of the environmental impact assessment of the project.	ประชาชนในพื้นที่เป้าหมายที่รัฐบาลกำหนดใช้เป็นสถานที่ก่อสร้างนิคมอุตสาหกรรมเชียงแสนทวงถามรัฐบาลเกี่ยวกับผลกระทบของการโครงการที่จะส่งผลต่อชุมชนนอกเหนือจากข้อมูลเชิงบวกที่รัฐบาลโดยการนิคมฯ ได้เปิดเผยว่าชาวบ้านส่วนใหญ่กว่าร้อยละ 90 เห็นด้วยกับการก่อสร้างนิคมฯ และรวมถึงข้อมูลเชิงบวกอื่นๆ ที่ได้นำเสนอต่อชาวบ้านในระยะที่ผ่านมา โดยเฉพาะข้อมูลผลการศึกษาผลกระทบต่อสิ่งแวดล้อมของโครงการ ผลกระทบด้านสังคม ซึ่งสิ่งต่างๆ เหล่านี้ได้สร้างความกังวลใจต่อชาวบ้านส่วนใหญ่

Source: Prachathai Newspaper, 5 December 2004[41]

In addition to the discussion above, local residents were also worried about the impact on the expansion of the community and the impact on the way of life of local residents. They were concerned that it would potentially become a social problem for the community because the project, according to the message they received from government, will create a massive number of work opportunities in the area. These opportunities would not only be for local residents but would also attract workers from other regions to come to work in the project. According to Rigg, Veeravongs & Veeravongs, and Rohitarachoon (2008), in their study of reconfiguring rural spaces and remaking rural lives in central Thailand, the impact of transforming communities from an agricultural community, where local residents work is dependent on the agricultural sector, to factory-based employment affects land use and facilitates the expansion of the community. Many people migrate from other regions in order to work in the factories. The

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[41] http://www.apecthai.org/2008/th/journal.php?year=2006&month=2&id=393
(Last accessed 10 May 2007)

increasing numbers of workers causes an increase in the demand for local services such as housing and other basic services.

This material illustrates the earlier contention that tourism has been identified by the Thai government as a key development tool for the north of the country, and Chiang Saen in particular. It is partially through the auspices of the GMS that the government is seeking to pursue this. According to XU (2006), Thailand is better equipped with tourism facilities than other regions on the GMS, and has thus gained more from cooperation than any other participant. However, Tirasatayapitak and Laws (2003) have argued that the success of tourism development in Thailand has attracted other member countries of the GMS to focus more on tourism.

According to key reports by both the Chiang Saen District Office and Chiang Saen Municipality Office, it is important to intervene to promote tourism in Chiang Saen if it is to generate economic benefits for the town's residents. The following section provides an analysis of how these organisations have attempted to do this.

National and provincial Government policies for the development of tourism

As previously discussed, tourism has not played a major role in Chiang Saen's local economy - but it could become more significant if the plans for the development of tourism in the town are successful. To this end, important local organisations that are responsible for the management and administration of Chiang Saen, including the Chiang Saen District Office and the Chiang Saen Municipality Office, have attempted to integrate their plans and policies for tourism to provide a single strategy and operational framework.

In relation to tourism plans and policies for Chiang Saen and the historic town of Chiang Saen, it is important to discuss and examine their relationship to broad national tourism plans and policies which are under the responsibility of the Ministry of Tourism and Sport and the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), which mostly address marketing and the promotion of tourism as discussed in

chapter 2. The national plan sets out the direction and framework for tourism development for the whole country including Chiang Saen district and the historic town of Chiang Saen.

According to the Tourism Development Department and the Ministry of Tourism and Sport[42], the aim of tourism development is to promote the country as a world class destination able to compete with other destinations in the world tourism market and become a major source for foreign exchange. Details of the key plans and policies for tourism development of Thailand are outlined as below;

1. Preserving, maintaining, developing and regenerating tourism resources and tourism destinations.
2. Enhancing tourism cooperation among tourism-related organisations in the country such as between local and national organisations in order to build up a strong network for tourism development.
3. Promoting and developing tourism facilities and standards.
4. Promoting tourism as a source of income for Thai people particularly in local communities where there is potential to promote it as a tourist destination.
5. Developing tourism infrastructure in order to facilitate and maintain tourism competitiveness.
6. Promoting and organising tourism campaigns as marketing activities in order to attract international tourists and to compete with other destinations.
7. Promoting and supporting local communities and local organisations in order to ensure that their community benefits from the tourism industry such as developing local products as tourist souvenirs.
8. Promoting and enhancing cooperation with other countries in order to develop tourism in the region.
9. Developing human resource for tourism business.
10. Promoting sustainable tourism development.

Source: http://www.tourism.go.th/2007/th/home/index.php[43]

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[42] http://www.tourism.go.th/2007/th/home/index.php (Last accessed 20 May 2007)
[43] http://www.tourism.go.th/2007/th/home/index.php (Last accessed 20 May 2007)

According to the above list, the Ministry of Tourism and Sport delivers the plans and policies through their provincial offices, TAT, and other related organisations in order to implement the plans and policies at different levels and scales from the provincial to the local community level. In the case of TAT, as one component of the Ministry of Tourism and Sports since it was established in 2002, major role is to be responsible for organising marketing activities and promoting tourism, both international and national tourism (see http://www.tourismthailand.org/about-tat/about-tat-49-1.html for more details of the marketing and tourism promotion activity responsible by TAT).

According to an interview with a government official who works in the Chiangrai Office of the Ministry of Tourism and Sport, TAT has sole responsibility for marketing and tourism development whereas all other aspects of tourism development (tourist destinations, tourism facilities, human resources, and enhancing cooperation among related organisations) comes under the general responsibility of the department of tourism development in the ministry of Tourism and Sports. This organisation normally works in cooperation with several organisations from different ministries and at different levels. However, it can be argued that the implementation of national tourism plans and policies is not effective enough due to this top-down approach and the paper work involved, as illustrated in chapter 2. This has caused tourism to progress slowly in the region. In addition, regional, provincial and local organisations tend to directly copy national plans because they are tied to specific budgets. Elliott (1987) has argued that the process of establishing and implementing tourism plans and policies is normally undertaken by government officials and technocrats rather than involving all sectors.

In terms of Chiangrai province, the tourism plans and policies are part of the provincial strategic development plan an outlined below[44].

1. Establishing a Tourism Centre as the specific and central unit responsible for tourism development in the province

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[44] http://www.tourism.go.th/2007/th/home/index.php (Last accessed 20 May 2007)

2. Regenerating existing tourist destinations and developing new destinations in the province

3. Promoting historic tourism and enhancing cooperation with other nearby provinces

4. Marketing and promoting tourism in the province all year round

5. Promoting the province as central for tourism in the GMS

Based on to the above list, it could be argued that there are no exact plans and policies mentioned about promoting tourism at the community level because the plans and policies mainly prioritise marketing tourism as a key business. Compared with the national plans and policies, it could be argued that the tourism plans and policies of Chiangrai province are similar in terms of the aim to promote tourism as a potential source of economic growth. For example the aim to promote the province as the centre for tourism in the GMS region and focusing on promoting and organising tourism activities all year round have a distinctly economic flavour. However, while the national plans have addressed the importance of cooperation between related organisations and communities in order to develop tourism this is not mentioned in the Chiangrai provincial plan.

Local Government policies for the development of tourism in Chiang Saen

In term of tourism development in Chaing Saen district, the Chiang Saen District Office has established plans to turn tourism into a major part of Chiang Saen's local economic development for the whole area of Chiang Saen district. The key plans and policies of the Chiang Saen District Office intended to achieve this are as follows:

1. Improving the quality of tourist destinations within the area of Chiang Saen. This plan aims to improve all basic services and facilities for tourists in the whole area of Chiang Saen district, but in particular the Golden Triangle, the place where Thailand, Myanmar and Laos meet together. According to one

government official in the district office[45], the Golden Triangle is the favourite tourist destination in Chiang Saen district, so in order to attract more tourists to the historic town basic services and facilities for tourists are included in this plan, including better accessibility by road, and a higher quality of the physical landscape.

2. Helping the local community and local organisations to increase awareness about the importance of tourism and helping them to become better at hosting tourists. The key plank of this plan is the belief that community participation and awareness could enable sustainable tourism in the community and enhance pride in local identity.

3. Promoting tourism within the Chiang Saen area, particularly cultural and historic tourism. Activites include organising and regenerating some traditional activities such as Songkran Festival (Thai Traditional New Year) in the very unique Lanna Thai style.

4. Developing the town's infrastructure for tourists, such as public transport services to and from tourist destinations.

5. Developing existing tourist destinations within the historic town and the wider area such as improving the physical landscape.

6. Promoting youth tourism for local teenagers such as organising a day tour for school children to visit the historic buildings and old temples. According to the Chiang Saen Conservation (CSC) group leader[46] and the leader of Chiang Saen District Office[47] which organised the Youth Guide Training course for local teenagers, they believe that this activity could potentially enable the young to not only enjoy the activity but also facilitate an awareness of local knowledge and identity and stimulate community pride.

7. Organising seminars and meetings about the development of tourism for residents and local organisations in order to obtain support for the planned changes.

8. Organising training and development courses for residents, so that they can work in tourism businesses.

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[45] Interview with the Leader of Chiang Saen District Office, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen District Office
[46] Interview with the Leader of Chiang Saen Conservation Group, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen
[47] Interview with the Leader of Chiang Saen District Office, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen District Office

9. Building support for the development of tourism in the area among local and national organisations - such as the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), the Fine Arts Department and educational institutions.

10. Cooperating with neighbouring countries, such as with Myanmar, Laos and China, to develop tourism.

(Adapted from Chiang Saen District Office, 2006: pages 2-3)

According to the above list of plans, the Chiang Saen District Office will cooperate both directly and indirectly with related organisations to support the development of tourism in Chiang Saen. This includes cooperating as part of general infrastructural projects as well as tourism specific projects. In addition, activities such as creating traditional folk art, traditional costumes, landscape improvements, occupational training and human resource development for residents are also included in the plans. According to the details illustrated in the plans above, it can be argued that the tourism plans of Chiang Saen District Office aim to build strong community tourism management – as illustrated by the plan to strengthen community awareness toward the importance of cultural and traditional ways of life and tourism. In addition, the Chiang Saen District Office also proposed the plan in order to build up a network and seek cooperation with organizations in neighbouring countries such as Myanmar and Laos. This is evidence of the trans-boundary cooperation as illustrated earlier with reference to Sofield's 2006 work.

It can also be argued that most of the Chiang Saen district plans directly reflect the national plans and provincial plans initiated by the Ministry of Tourism and Sport. The plans cover both promoting tourism as potential economic benefits for local resident and at the same time the plans also address the importance of community involvement in tourism activity, which is also illustrated in the national plan. The plan aims to increase local awareness of the importance of tourism for the community and emphasises how to implement tourism as a tool to maintain the identity of the community and build up strong commitment among community residents. The similarity between the Chiang Saen district plan and the

provincial plan is they also both aim to promote cooperation with member counties in the GMS region.

In the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen, similar to the Chiang Saen District Office, as the direct local government organization responsible for the management of the historic town, the Chiang Saen Municipality Office has also developed plans, policies and activities to promote tourism in Chiang Saen and integrated these into its management plan. This information was released in late 2007 in the form of a public announcement to community residents through the inaugural speech of the New Mayor and through the Chiang Saen Municipality closes circuit radio and the municipality notice board. These plans, policies and activities are as follows;

1. Develop the historic town of Chiang Saen as the centre for Lanna Thai culture.
2. Promote, develop, conserve and support the town in becoming a unique tourism destination, focusing upon its traditional culture and way of life.
3. Promote the town as a destination for cultural and historic tourism by organising events and festivals in the town all year round.
4. Provide tourism services and facilities, such as local guides, brochures, and a tourist information centre.
5. Persuade residents to run tourism services, such as guesthouses, home-stay tourism, and community-based tourism.
6. Help residents to get involved and to participate in tourism related activities organised in the town.
7. Improve the quality of public services related to tourism, such as local transport services, the quality of the roads within the historic town and the quality of the physical environment and landscape.

(Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007)

According to these Chiang Saen Municipality Office plans for tourism development in the historic town, it is clear that it has identified tourism as an important tool to add value to the historic town. This is also one of the main aims in the tourism development plan of the district office. Both plans have a similar

purpose aiming to develop the quality of basic services and facilities for tourists. Another similarity between them is that they both aim to promote and enhance local involvement and participation in tourism activity. The significant difference between the two seems only to be the scale and area that each plan aims to cover. The plan of the Chiang Saen District Office covers the whole area of the Chiang Saen district while the plan of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office covers only the area within the inner zone area of the historic town, approximately two square kilometres, and focuses on shaping the historic town of Chiang Saen as a specific destination for tourist. According to an interview with a government official in the Municipality Office,[48] one of the differences between the district plan and the municipality plan was the process of creating the plan. As the later is smaller in terms of size, most local residents had more opportunity to participate in the process, while the district plan was mainly based on meetings between government officials and some individual community leaders.

However, both the district office and the municipality office plans and policies were designed to turn tourism in Chiang Saen into a source of extra income for residents, in addition to their main income from agricultural work. It is hoped that this can be achieved by increasing the number of visits by tourists and their overall expenditure. A series of sub-activities of the plans and policies of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office have been delivered and implemented in several ways in order to push tourism development in the historic town in a direction that is acceptable to community residents (this will be discussed in more detail in the next three chapters). The organising and regeneration of some traditional and cultural festivals in ancient ways rarely seen in the present time has been done to encourage the participation of local residents, and to stimulate local economic growth; The Chiang Saen Foods and Products Fair and Chiang Saen Shopping Street, part of the plans of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office, are examples here. Details of Festivals and Events scheduled to be organised in the historic town almost all year round are illustrated in the table below (table 4.7)

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[48] Government Official in Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen

Table 4.7: Events and festivals organised by the Chiang Saen Municipality Office
to aid the development of tourism in Chiang Saen

Month	Events / Festival
January	New Year Festival
	Chiang Saen Food and Products Fair
	Chiang Saen Shopping Street Fair
	(local products such as handicrafts)
February	Chiang Saen Shopping Street Fair
March	Chiang Saen Sports Festival
	Chiang Saen Triathlon
	Chiang Saen Elephant Polo
April	Songkran Festival (Thai Traditional New Year) Chiang Saen Boat Racing (see figure 4.1)
May[49]	-
June	-
July	Buddhist Lent and Candle Festival (see figure 4.2)
August	-
September	-
October	-
November	Loy Kra-Thong Festival (see figure 4.2)
December	Winter Festival

Source: Chiang Saen Municipality Office (2007:22-23)

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[49] Between May and July residents are busy cultivating and the period of May to September is also the monsoons which impacts to all outdoor activity and by mid of October to November resident are busy collecting their harvests. Consequently, there are normally no specific events or festivals held during this period - except for the *Buddhist Lent and Candle Festival*, which is very important because the majority of the residents of Chiang Saen are Buddhists.

Figure 4.1: Boat Racing during Songkran Festival on April every year, Pictures from a document promoting the historic town of Chiang Saen (Source: Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007)

Figure 4.2: Major festival organized in the historic town, Pictures from a document promoting the historic town of Chiang Saen (Source: Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 2007)

The general secretary of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office[50] states that these events and festivals shown in table 4.7 are part of a plan to promote the historic town to become known more widely by people from outside the community (both

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[50] General secretary of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen

national and international tourists). A feature of this plan is also to encourage local residents to participate in activities organised in the community. This official also stated that the process of deciding which events and festival should be included in the activity calendar is based on the agreement between municipality representatives and local residents through their sub-community leaders.

According to the table, it is possible to classify events and festivals into two main groups. First are events and festivals related to the culture and traditions of local residents, particularly religious festivals, such as Songkran Festival (Thai Traditional New Year), Buddhist Lent and Candle Festival, and Loy Kra-Thong Festival. All of these events and festivals generally occur throughout the country. It is argued that organising all these festivals in the historic town is perceived by local residents and local organizations as part of the process of preserving the identity of the community. This was mentioned by one local resident[51] as an important factor in sustainable tourism and is also seen as a way of presenting events and festival which are unique to the region

The second broad group of events and festivals are those which indirectly relate to local identity such as the New Year Festival and the Sport Festival. According to the general secretary of Chiang Saen Municipality Office[52]. These events aim to attract people from outside, both national and international tourists, to visit the town in order to participate in activities and then spend their free time exploring the historic town and shopping for local products from local residents. The event such as Chiang Saen Shopping Street Fair and Chiang Saen Foods and Product Festival are also included in this group.

To sum up, the plans and policies at all four levels (the Ministry of Tourism and Sport including TAT as national plans, the plans and policies of Chiangrai province as provincial plan, plans and policies of Chiang Saen District and plans and policies of the Municipality) have many similarities and some differences. In terms of similarities, at every level plans have identified tourism as a potential source of economic benefit, this is particularly clear in the national plan,

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[51] Local resident, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen
[52] General secretary of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen

provincial and district plan. It is not, however, as significant in the municipality plan. In terms of the provincial plans, it could be argued that most of the plans and policies have prioritised promoting tourism as a tool to generate economic benefits following the lead by TAT, while most of the district and municipality plans share the goal of prioritising the importance of tourism for the community with the national plans. However, having a plan and policy for tourism is no guarantee for the success of tourism development. As Elliott (1987) cautions, apart from having good support from government and firm direction for tourism development, the success of tourism development also depends on the effective implementation of plans and policies. I would argue that this is particularly true at the local level. The plans and policies of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office are not enough in themselves to make a success of and profit from tourist destinations. The community is the key factor. Strong cooperation among local stakeholders and a good understanding of and commitment to the shared vision of the development direction for the community is crucial for the implementation of plans and policies. We shall explore these issues in the next three chapters.

We shall explore these issues in the next three chapters. It can also argue that nature of planning process in community can also see as the factors reflect to the successful of development activity as will discuss in next section.

The nature of planning process in Thailand

The previous section discussed the tourism development plans and policies at several levels and it can be argued that the differences between plans reflect how each plan has been initiated and formulated (i.e. the actual planning process). This process is a key part of development activities and a well planned process obviously has a significant bearing on the success of the particular development activity. A plan identifies the processes and activities that need to be systematically undertaken in order to achieve development goals. However, planning is often one of the hardest parts of development activity. For example, if planning occurs with a lack of participation of the supposed beneficiaries, in practice planning does not work.

In Thailand, for example, Demaine (1986) has illustrated that the planning process is often formulated and supervised by government officials and people from other elite groups (such as scholars) without the participation of ordinary residents. This is similar to what was illustrated in the previous section regarding the planning process for tourism development at a national and provincial level. Most plans and policies were formulated by government officials but only district and municipality levels provided more opportunity for non-official personnel to get involved in the planning process.

Another significant feature of the planning process in Thailand is that it is closely linked to the personal agency of particular politicians, and several plans have changed over time with the turnover of politicians and political parties in power. According to the interview with one local resident[53] in the historic town, most development plans for Chiang Saen have been initiated and formulated by central government and interfered with by politicians. This local resident also cited the planning process of Chiang Saen Municipality as being formulated mainly by a group of politicians who, having won the election and taken over the municipality office, developed a plan that would only last for the period they are in office. This period normally lasts for four years. The plan will then be changed again as soon as a new group of politicians win the election and formulate a new set of initiatives instead of maintaining the existing plan. This is the usual practice unless the same political groups are able to retain their power. This is widely recognized as a key feature of the planning process in Thailand which has a great effect on the consistency and the progression of development activities at the community level. It is one of the reasons why so many development projects fail. In addition, the formulation of plans in this way is also the reason for limited access to and participation in development activities among local resident and grass roots members.

Therefore, it can be argued that changing the nature of the planning process by providing adequate opportunity for all concerned actors to participate from the bottom-up, is crucial to maximising the success of development projects and

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[53] [53] Local resident, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen

activities whilst minimising potential conflict and generating a good understanding about new initiatives. Demaine (1986:108) illustrates the attempts of the Thai government and related organizations to try out the new approach in order to overcome the problems of traditional and bureaucratic approaches:

> These new institutions are expected to operate according to a bottom-up framework of planning and administration. Village councils put their problems to the Tambol Council so that the latter can propose projects consistent with their needs to the various local representatives of the development agencies. At the same time the ministries allocate the technical and financial resources to each province. The Provincial Development Committee thus coordinates the requests from the lower level with the resources available, and assigns priorities among the projects. The ministries then consider the provincial proposal and in advance of the budget year set out their work plans. At each level the plans of the various departments are coordinated. Budget funds are allocated according to the plan agreed upon by the ministries and provincial administrations and are administered by the provinces. There should then be full cooperation at all levels during the implementation of the projects, as well as constant data-gathering for maintaining and evaluating the completed projects".

However, doubts remains over the operations of this complicated structure still and whether in practice it can generate enough opportunities for ordinary people to participate. One resident[54] expressed doubt that the local representative had an adequate understanding of local people's needs and desires, in the planning process. He explained that he questioned whether the local representative had adequate opportunity to share and participate ("Meesuenreum"[55]) as most of people in the planning committee were people from government sectors, scholars and elites. The possibilities for moving towards genuine participation for all

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[54] Local resident, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen
[55] Thai word which refers to 'participate' pronounce as "Mee-Suen-Reum" and 'participation' as 'Kan-Mee-Suen-Reum'.

people concerned in development activity will be discussed in-depth in next three chapters.

Conclusion

This chapter has been divided into two parts. The first part has presented a profile of the historic town of Chiang Saen, the research site for this study. It has provided both general background information and information relating to tourism. According to the general information provided, tourism could come to play a greater role in Chiang Saen - both in terms of increasing the number of tourists and in terms of the economic benefits to residents - due to its reputation as an agricultural town surrounded by unique historic buildings. Although tourism in the town has not increased in recent years, it has been shown that awareness about the importance of tourism to the town's economy has increased among residents and local organisations. Some changes to tourism patterns in Chiang Saen have already taken place, along with some changes to other sectors of the town's economy.

The second part of the chapter has discussed and analysed the different visions about development in the town by outlining the trans-boundary projects that affects the development of the town, particularly the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). The chapter also highlighted and discussed the plans and policies of the Ministry of Tourism and Sport as national tourism plans, Chiangrai province as provincial plans and of two key local organizations, the Chiang Saen District Office and the Chiang Saen Municipality Office, in the historic town in order to point out the direction for tourism development in the town. Although these plans seem comprehensive, the visions of tourism development that they entail are actively contested in different ways by different actors in Chiang Saen. These contested visions of development are the topic of the next three chapters.

Chapter 5

Conservation and tourism development in the historic town of Chiang Saen:

a discussion of the challenges facing the town's residents

Development in historic towns has the potential to cause significant impacts upon old buildings and the residents' traditional cultures and ways of life. In contrast, conservation has been proposed as a way to minimise the impact of such development and to preserve traditional ways of life. It has become an important decision for residents whether to preserve the historic characteristics of their towns or to embrace the potential for economic growth by allowing developments initiated by residents. This dilemma for residents of Chiang Saen will be the focus of this chapter.

Introduction

Conservation and development have been seen as controversial issues within historic towns, particularly in those where conservation and restoration policies are not clear as to the criteria for conservation or whether any development is acceptable. The form of conservation and the approach taken are therefore key areas for debate. In addition, Larkham (1996) argues that the strongest desire for conservation is sometimes found in upper and middle class residents, while the majority of the community are more apathetic. According to Larkham, these differences are potential sources of conflict surrounding the issue of conservation and development in historic towns.

Conservation emerged as an international issue in the early 1960s and was well established by 1972 (see Rodwell, 2007). Driving this recognition were the coordinated efforts of two international organisations: the United Nations (UN) and United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organisation (UNESCO). The UN organised a conference on the human environment in Stockholm, while UNESCO adopted the World Heritage Convention at its General Conference in Paris. Both addressed the issues of sustainability and conservation and these have subsequently become core issues for both organisations, emerging as an important

part of their strategies. This is shown in the operational guidelines for the Implementation of the World Heritage Convention:

> Since the adoption of the Convention in 1972, the international community has embraced the concept of sustainable development. The protection and conservation of the natural and cultural heritage are a significant contribution to sustainable development (Cited in Rodwell, 2007: 64).

In the case of Chiang Saen, since 1991 a project called GMS (Greater Maekong Sub-region), implemented by the Asian Development Bank (For more details on the GMS project see on Chapter 4), has tried to boost economic cooperation and alleviate poverty in the region of the Maekong River. In addition, the Thai government has established a business hub in the town. Residents believe that these initiatives have increased the need for better local awareness of conservation issues. Residents, community activists and entrepreneurs argue that they must protect their community from the threats such projects pose to their peaceful way of life, as development may harm the area's reputation as a famous tourist destination. On the other hand, the town also faces threats to its historic identity from the increasing tourist numbers; the result of successful campaigns run by the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT).

Kain (1981) considers the impact of economic, social and technological changes on the conservation and development movement, concluding that changes to the built environment are a reflection of social motives, attitudes and tastes. He claims that there are at least three factors that affect conservation and development. First is increasing public awareness of the fragility of natural and historic environments through the proliferation of conservation pressure groups. Second are technological innovations and their effect on architectural style, planning and design. The final factor is the increasing cost of conservation and development, which might lead to problems such as inappropriate sites being selected on the grounds of cost. Youngson (1968) argues that the reasons for conservation include the growth of population, rising standards of living, technological change, and changing societal norms and expectations.

However, conservation always involves a struggle between the attitudes of different members of the community to the form and approach that it should take. The compromises that have to be made between conservation and development, and the balance that has to be struck between the social value of the former and the economic benefits of the latter, therefore need investigating. As conservation and development have ambiguous and contradictory meanings for different actors, this chapter will explore whether it is possible to reduce potential conflicts by maintaining an historic environment for the benefit of the community whilst also using this as a vehicle for the development of an historic town. In so doing, the chapter will investigate the potential for a form of conservation friendly tourism that will bring development to an historic town. It will also inquire into the form that this tourism should take.

The chapter focuses on conservation and development in the historic town of Chiang Saen. It will mainly address the issue of conservation: the residents' desire for conservation; their perception of the impact of government development projects upon an historic environment; and how they react to this potential change. This is seen as a critical challenge facing the town, and is the main focus of the chapter. In the first section, the chapter will outline differing definitions of conservation and discuss which is the most appropriate for Chiang Saen. The chapter will then discuss conservation and tourism, in particular what residents perceive as appropriate forms of tourism for their town. It will also consider why residents perceive only some forms of tourism as appropriate, and the factors that influence their decision-making.

Conservation and development

Conservation and development have become controversial issues since being recognised by the UN and UNESCO in 1972 (Rodwell, 2007). Since then, there has been increased interest in conservation in both the public and private sector in the light of increasing development. There are now several types of conservation: for example urban conservation, architectural conservation, historic conservation, built environment conservation etc. There are also now several definitions of conservation: ICCOROM (The International Centre for Conservation in Rome)

and The International Centre for the Study of the Preservation and Restoration of Cultural Property define conservation as a combination of preservation and restoration. According to the Burra Charter (Rodwell, 2007:8), the specific meaning of preservation, restoration and conservation are different:

Preservation is maintaining the fabric of a place in its existing state and retarding deterioration.

Restoration is returning the existing fabric of a place to a known earlier state by removing accretions and by reassembling existing components without the introduction of new material.

Conservation is all the processes of looking after a place so as to retain its cultural significance.

According to the above, it might be argued that there are different meanings according to the specific terms used. Nevertheless they all share a similar approach in as much as the 'existing thing' refers to something in the past such as historic buildings, some specific place, and/or traditional way of life. Hubbard (1993) has also argued that the meaning of conservation varies according to people's different background and values.

According to Pendlebury (2008), who looked at the function of the United Kingdom's built heritage in society, most conservation in the early stages is aimed at the protection of very special places for cultural reasons, which emphasise the stewardship of such places for future generations. As such, Pendlebury highlights the importance of the protection and management of heritage, particularly historic environments. This definition of conservation focuses attention upon the value of what is to be conserved.

Marks (1996) conducted a study of conservation and development in Stonetown, Zanzibar, in order to investigate the benefit to the local community of improving the relationship between tourism and development. Marks' definition of conservation created an alternative vision of conservation, planning and restoration. This involves a more participatory, free and democratic planning process in which conservation serves as a tool of progressive development and

empowerment. He insisted that it also acts as a means to retain and recover the cultural significance of the urban environment, particularly at a time of rapid flux in the city. Therefore, while Pendlebury's interpretation of conservation focused upon the value of what is to be conserved, Marks' sees it as one of the tools of development.

Hobson's work (2004) focused on conservation policy, planning and strategy in the United Kingdom. In contrast to the above, Hobson argued that conservation is a way to determine and represent how people perceived the past and is also a framework of policies and controls which reflects deeper cultural attitudes to the past. Lowenthal (cited in Larkham, 1996) concurs, suggesting that conservation is an attempt to interpret the past in some form. Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000) insist that conservation is a means through which the past can be interpreted and the dominant representation passed onto future generations. Fethi (1993) describes conservation as the careful planning and management of limited and selected resources and insists that it is a conscious process designed to minimise change and ensure the survival of cultural heritage over a long period of time. Like Fethi, Strike (1994) argues that conservation is a method for controlling the pressure from new buildings in historic areas:

> Historic areas are progressively coming under threat of new development, not only in conservation areas but also at historic houses, gardens, and archaeological sites. So that the impact of new building work is noticed, not only at nationally important sites, but also in small conservation areas and remote archaeological humps and bumps in the countryside (Strike 1994:1).

In terms of the debate over whether to maintain and conserve the identity of Chiang Saen as an historic town (as illustrated chapter 3) it is the definitions of conservation adopted by Hobson (2004), Lowenthal (1985) and Ashworth and Tonbridge (2000) that are most appropriate. This is because residents are interested in maintaining the town's historic identity. The majority of the residents' views are also similar to the work of Pendlebury (2008), in focusing on

the protection and value of heritage rather than being interested in policies and plans.

According to Pearce (1989), conservation should be a creative process and he considers how public bodies, developers and community groups can use legislation and finance to encourage attractive schemes designed to save buildings at risk. Whitehan (1981) argues that conservation is necessary and important for society both practically and academically in a sense of maintaining historic knowledge. However, Strike (1994) points out that attitudes towards conservation vary and are adjusted over time according to philosophical, political and religious beliefs.

According to Strike (1994), most historic sites are currently under pressure from new buildings, environmental change and development. Conservation is one of the ideas aiming to minimise these changes in such a way as to benefit all stakeholders. Given the importance of tourism to historic sites, Chiang Saen currently faces a dilemma regarding how to represent the town. There is a choice between conserving the past and passing its value onto future generations or focusing on the development of a new environment. According to some senior members of the local community and senior members of local organisations, who are concerned about some of the Thai government's development projects in Chiang Saen, it will be difficult for residents to make this choice. Although the historic town is seen as a tangible and valuable link between the past, the present and future, decisions are mainly taken by central government:

> I think local people want to maintain the town's identity as the historic town but I'm not sure about this because in recent years all development projects in the town have been directed by central government due to sources of the budget which are controlled by government. (Winai, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Consequently, residents insisted that how decisions about development in Chiang Saen are made is a critical factor that divides the government and residents:

In terms of decision-making, sometimes the word important has a different meaning and priority for the government sector and residents. While the government considered something important and its first priority, residents considered it in a different way. So, for residents, the things that are not important are what the government wants to see and do. What is required is more respect and opportunity to participate in development. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

The above comments suggest that it is crucial to debate among *stakeholders*[56] whether the town should be conserved or developed, as there is a need to clarify how the decision making process works and to minimise conflicts over development within the community.

According to Ashworth and Tunbridge (2000), historic resources have often been preserved and managed by those who value their intrinsic qualities of age and beauty. This needs no further justification to tourists. However this is rarely the sole objective of the conservation process in historic cities. In Chiang Saen, it was also found that clashes between conservation and development were related to political factors. Whether intentionally or not, the decision to conserve or develop the town - in particular the decision as to what conservation and development means - is determined by what is perceived to be important by politicians. This may be different to the views of residents. Some community members have argued that in order to progress the conservation and development plan for the town such decisions should be made by residents. In the words of one more informed resident who works for a government organisation.

I think in order to decide the importance of conservation and development in Chiang Saen historic town we should rely on what local people think as it is more important than what I or people from outside of the community think. (Somchai, 27 July 2007, Chiangrai)

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[56] See meaning used in this thesis in the section on terminology used in the Methodology chapter

The reasons given in favour of conserving historic towns vary. Wayland Young suggests that one reason is because:

> An ancient building is evidence of the way our ancestors lived…an example of a class of beautiful things…an emblem of our attachment to values more pleasant or joyful than money…It is the gentler side of us. We smile at each other when we see it, thinking how much nicer it is than what would have replaced it, and how much nicer we are than the people who wanted to knock it down (Young cited in Kain, 1981:11).

This is similar to Lowenthal and Binney (1981), who observe that conserving the past encourages people today to see the links between themselves, their ancestors, traditions and history. However, Marks (1996) has argued that conservation in historic towns makes a series of assumptions about the benefits of restoration and tourism for a local community: conservation enables people living and working in the historic area to preserve their traditional buildings and spaces, while tourism and investors bring in money, and money brings development.

Projecting forwards, another reason to maintain the historic identity of Chiang Saen - apart from protecting it from the threat of huge government projects such as the business hub and a project related to GMS – is to pass its history and traditions onto future generations. A resident who was concerned about the Chiang Saen Industrial Park project voiced this view most clearly:

> I think people in the town will try to preserve and maintain the identity of the historic town and all large scale businesses and industries must be isolated from the area of the historic town. In my opinion, I think this is one of the ways to maintain and represent the town's identity for the future. (Yongyuth, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Interviews with residents also found that there were a growing number of environmental groups in the region, such as the Chiang Saen Conservation Group (and Chiang Kong Conservation Group in the Chiang Kong district), and that

these had increased the pressure for more conservation of both the natural and built environment in the region.

One Chiang Saen Conservation Group (CSC) member said that their role was to highlight the views that residents held about the importance of their historic town and to involve the residents in activities organised by the CSC, such as a seminar on conservation and development in Chiang Saen:

> From my experience, the numbers of local people interested in participating in activities organised by the CSC in recent years - such as seminars and meetings about the topic of conservation and development in the town and about the government's project and the GMS - has increased compared to when the CSC organised similar activities in previous times. I think local people are aware of what might potentially be the impact on the town. (Thiti, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Despite increasing awareness of conservation among residents being seen as a good thing, clashes with developers still remain a controversial subject. Residents receive limited information about development projects and there is little opportunity to participate in discussions. One CSC member confirmed this:

> In terms of opportunity, locals often claimed that they don't have enough opportunity to participate in most of the activities related to government development projects. They don't know when the development project is planned and designed; they know only when it has already begun. (Sinthong, 8 June 2008, Chiang Saen)

Development is considered an important issue by most of the community members, as it is seen as a factor in the growth of the population and in raising standards of living due to the technological and economic changes that it produces. Conservation is also considered important, particularly in vulnerable places such as historic towns and old buildings, where there is pressure from development. An example of this is the government's business hub proposed in

Chiang Saen and the development projects it entails. It is important that such developments follow proper plans and management procedures in order to minimise their impact and ensure that they will not affect conservation:

> In my opinion, I think most of the residents understand that development is also important for the town but they just worry whether those development projects might cause some problems for the town, such as the changing of the environment and landscape and their impact on the old and historic buildings. This is because local resident don't have enough information about development, such as they don't know about the plans or policies. (Wichit, 8 June 2008, Chiang Saen)

The above quote is from a senior resident who has worked as a community leader in recent years and has experience of coordinating discussions between the Thai government and residents in order to try to generate a better relationship between both sides. He said that, in his experience, it seems that residents support most of the development projects initiated by the government but that instances of lack of support from residents stem from the fact that they cannot access detailed information about development projects.

It can be argued that the clash between conservation and development has become a critical debate not only within academia but also for the community as a whole. Increasing public awareness of conservation of the natural and built environment can be seen as a driving force generating conflicts of interest between stakeholders within several communities. The interest of residents in potential change within Chiang Saen has grown since they realised that the government had initiated a number of development projects in the town and nearby area. Consequently, it is very important to shed light upon the different social actors involved in Chiang Saen's development plan and to clarify what the plan defines as appropriate development. Minimising conflict, and maximising participation, between all key players is a particularly important goal that could help conserve Chiang Saen as a unique historic town and a well-known destination for

international tourists in Northern Thailand. This will be discussed in next two sections.

The development of tourism in the historic town of Chiang Saen and the challenges this poses for conservation

Central to Chiang Saen are the old buildings (see pictures in chapter 4) and these play a key role in attracting tourists, the numbers of which have increased in the last 10 years. The business sector has also grown, but there is no master plan for either conservation or development in the town. Most interviewees considered that community members and residents[57] believe that this mismanagement will cause severe damage and they have sought the development of a master plan to ensure that the historic fabric of the town is conserved. The growth in public support for conservation in Chiang Saen can be seen through the way in which local people have contributed to campaigns highlighting the importance of the town's history, designed to persuade local government to include conservation and development into their management. A group called *Roaw-Rak Chiang Saen* (the Chiang Saen Conservation Group)[58] initiated the first campaign in the town. This group has sought to raise awareness of the importance of historic buildings within Chiang Saen since the late 1990s. This was a time when the government's attention was on both its efforts to develop the town as a business hub and also on the heavy promotion of the town as a tourist destination. Campaigns by local organisations, such as the Chiang Saen District Office and Chiang Saen Municipality Office, and through local media, such as the community radio station, local newspaper and Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), reinforced the concerns of community members about the need to address conservation and development in the town. The challenge, however, was how to bring together

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[57] See meaning used in this thesis in the terminology used section in Methodology chapter

[58] According to the interview with the CSC leader, this group was founded in 1995 by a number of residents who were interested in historic, cultural and environmental conservation. The founding member of the group is a local school teacher who specialises in art studies. It now consists of members from different backgrounds such as local officer (such as government officials in local government organizations), member of the local elite such as senior school teacher, independent scholar) senior residents and secondary school children.

these powerful forces in such a way as to maintain the identity and symbols of the town while still being attractive to tourists.

According to Grimwade and Carter (2000), historic towns are significant because they are places where it is possible to conserve and restore former glories. Therefore, appropriate management approaches must be applied towards their conservation and development. This means that public awareness and appreciation of what is being conserved and developed should be encouraged so that they fully appreciate the meaning and value of the past. The desire to conserve historic towns should come from residents rather than outsiders, as their perspectives on what is valued from the past and the form that conservation should take could be different.

One local resident, who retired as a local schoolteacher almost 10 years ago, insisted that:

> I think it is possible [to conserve and develop the town as an historic destination] but it might be difficult if the government and related organisations do not generate a clear vision for development plans and do not generate a better understanding among stakeholders. In my opinion, the government has failed to communicate with people about development in the town. I also think that what the government needs to do is to provide proper and enough information for local people about development plans and projects and propose a project which is able to generate more benefits for them, not just for the business sector as they have seen. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

From interviews with residents and from reading the grey literature it appears that initiatives to develop or conserve the town come mainly from central government as discussed in chapter 4. As this is considered by local residents as an outside perspective, progress on development projects has been very slow because they get less support from residents. One local resident who is involved in development activity within Chiang Saen in several ways - as a member of the

CSC, as a non-official consultant to leaders of local organisations, as a member of Chiang Saen's senior group and as a member of Chiang Saen's Cultural Council - said that:

> What I have seen is that all of the development plans are derived from central government and considered as business facilities, with all direct benefit going to the business sector. There are no plans or projects concerned directly with local people and the maintaining of the historic town. In contrast, most of the government's plans and projects are considered to be problem by the city. (Thiti, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Despite the problem of lack of information, increased public awareness of the need to conserve the historic fabric of Chiang Saen has encouraged several community groups to arrange conservation activities and events. For example, every Friday residents, schoolchildren, government officials and private employees are encouraged to wear traditional costume called *Pha-Muang*[59] (See Picture 5.1 and Figure 5.1). According to The Secretary General of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office[60], his office also organised activities relating to the traditional and cultural characteristics of Chiang Saen in order to promote the town as a unique historic site in northern part of the country. These activities included daytrips and sightseeing tours to old temples, traditional shows, the local food market etc.

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[59] Traditional clothes and costumes are normally only worn on special occasions, such as at traditional cultural or religion festivals.

[60] Interview with the Secretary General of Chiang Saen Municipality Office, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen Municipality Office

Picture 5.1: A picture of some of traditional clothes and costumes in Chiang Saen
(Source: Author)

Figure 5.1: A Scanned version of picture of some of traditional clothes and costumes in Chiang Saen (Source: Chiang Saen Local Museum, 2007)

Religious organisations, such as the local temple, also organised activities in order to increase local awareness of the need to conserve their traditional identity and culture. One local temple member said:

> We organise several activities for residents all year round. Most of the activities are considered part of religion activities and relate to both local culture and traditional ways of life. (Prasong, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

While there is no doubt that conservation is important for historic towns, the conservation effort in Chiang Saen is seen by some residents - particularly entrepreneurs, government organisations and investors - as an obstacle to the development of the town for business purposes (see chapter 6). Although awareness of the need for conservation has grown among residents, progress has been very slow and lacking a direction because of the changeable nature of the government's conservation and development plans. As previously mentioned, a better understanding of the government's plans in the community would be beneficial as this would generate support for development among stakeholders. In addition to providing information to justify why conservation is needed to protect the historic features of Chiang Saen, it could be argued that a better understanding of how residents and organisations can take part in conservation is needed. This will be discussed in the next section, which focuses in particular on residents' reactions to the development of tourism in Chiang Saen.

Contested representations of tourism and conservation in Chiang Saen

Tourism in historic towns has grown significantly. Most historic towns in the world have promoted themselves to tourists in a variety of ways, such as through heritage tourism, historic tourism, cultural tourism, eco-museum tourism etc. All such towns seek to use tourism as a tool for development but a number of problems, such as a lack of planning and management or encouraging an inappropriate type of tourism, often limit the success of such ventures. Mass tourism is one type of tourism which can generate a number of advantages for an historic town, as once the town becomes famous this will generate higher rates of repeat visits and an associated increase in tourist numbers. However, mass

tourism also consumes a large number of natural resources and often causes a negative impact on the host community. For example, Damrongsunthornchai (2008) points out that the Ayutthaya world heritage site in Thailand is currently suffering the impact of rapidly increasing mass tourism. He argues that tourists now cause a number of problems within the area of the inner town, such as traffic congestion, and that this causes a conflict of interest between residents and central government. Similarly, Marks (1996) looked at the case of Stone Town in Zanzibar. He concludes that, while tourism has been a major driving force in the town's development, mismanagement of planning and conservation by foreign consultants has done little to control the impact of tourism: by focusing on physical structures and spaces in Stone Town, the socio-economic and political impact has been ignored. Marks' view is that treating planning as a neutral and separate process allowed it to be used as a means of wealth creation by politicians, foreign investors and Zanzibarian entrepreneurs, at the expense of residents.

One form of tourism that consumes fewer resources, generates less impact upon the local community, and meets with the needs of residents is sustainable tourism as discussed in chapter 2. In 1993 the World Tourism Organisation defined sustainable tourism as that which meets the needs of present tourists and host regions whilst enhancing opportunities for the future. Hunter (1995) defines it as meeting the needs and wants of the local host community in terms of improved living standards and quality-of-life; satisfying the demands of tourists and the tourism industry; and, safeguard the environmental resource base for tourism - including natural, built and cultural components - while also meeting the preceding aims. In a similar vein the Worldwide Fund for Nature (WWF) interprets sustainable tourism as operating within the capacity of the natural resources to regenerate and maintain future productivity; while recognising the contribution that local people and host communities, their customs and lifestyles, make to the tourism experience; accepting that these people must have an equitable share in the economic benefits of tourism; and ensuring that any development adheres to the wishes of local communities (WCED, 1987). For Bramwell (1996), sustainable tourism means that which develops as quickly as possible, taking account of current accommodation capacity, the local population and the environment. The Federation of Nature and National Parks (cited in

Bramwell, 1996) define it as all forms of tourism development, management and activity that maintains the environmental, social and economic integrity and well being of natural, built and cultural resources in perpetuity. Therefore, according to Bramwell (1996), the definition of sustainable tourism varies depending on the different perceptions, approaches, location and scale of the tourism enterprise. As such, it is important to define and clarify the meaning of sustainable tourism because a narrow definition will limit the range of issues to be considered.

Despite these debates, most tourism developments are driven by the business sector with an eye to potential economic benefits to be gained. Consequently, sustainable tourism is not attractive to many investors because there is less potential for a return on their investment. The restrictions that apply to operating sustainable tourism mean that most sustainable tourist destinations are targeted at a niche market more interested in traditional ways of life and community participation than in mass tourism. Fundamental to the idea of sustainable tourism is a high degree of community participation in the process and adequate public discussion of all of the potential impacts from tourism (WCED, 1987). In most cases, communities at the front line of non-sustainable tourist ventures are the last to receive any benefits from investment and development because most of these communities are located in so-called "remote" regions and lack participation in the process. Examples include communities along the border with Myanmar, Southern China, Laos and Thailand (XU, 2006). In addition, where benefits are passed onto the local community, not all residents benefit equally (Richard and Hall, 2000). It is therefore important that sustainable tourism is not simply seen as a marketing ploy, or as a form of green tourism for those with an interest in nature or culture, but that it is seen as something which is distinct and brings benefits to the local community (Eber, 1992).

In the case of Chiang Saen, residents have proposed several forms of what they consider to be appropriate tourism, such as special interest tourism, home-stay tourism, alternative tourism, cultural tourism and historic tourism. Indeed, one senior resident of the town, a retired government officer, said that:

I think that the most appropriate form of tourism for the city is cultural and historic tourism. I want to see the city as a living cultural and historic tourist city. This is because the city is surrounded by historic buildings, old temples, and the city wall. Tourists can easily enjoy their life and time with friendly people in the city. In addition, I want to see local people and the community as the organisers or owners of tourism businesses, such as a small home-stay accommodation, as tourist guides for city sightseeing, local souvenir shop owners, and organisers of tourism activity. (Winai, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

This informed resident thought that such forms of tourism would attract people who were interested in seeing and experiencing the community's culture and history, he assumed that such people would be friendlier to the community and create less impact on the town.

From the above comments it might be concluded that a community such as Chiang Saen, which is proudly trying to preserve its unique culture and identity, might perceive tourist developments as a threat to its traditional way of life. Indeed, the experience of similar communities, which are already promoted as tourist destinations, suggests that in order to access tourist markets, to be competitive and to survive the people of Chiang Saen will need to adjust and change their lifestyle. Consequently, the community must find a balance between sustaining their traditional way of life and enabling more tourist developments to take place. Although it is clearly vital for the community to investigate which forms of tourist development will be most appropriate, when discussing different types of development there was no consensus among residents as to which format would allow them to have the most involvement and participation. According to Liu (1994) and Cater (1993), community-based tourism or CBT *(Karn-tong-tiew-deoy-choom-chon-mee-suen-leum: การท่องเที่ยวโดยชุมชนมีส่วนร่วม)*[61] is considered to be the type of tourism which affords local communities both the highest degree of control over activities and most access to the benefits generated. As Brohman (1996:60) states:

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[61] This refers to a form of tourism development which is mainly organised by the host community

Community-based tourism development would seek to strengthen institutions designed to enhance local participation and promote the economic, social, and cultural well-being of the popular majority. It would also seek to strike a balanced and harmonious approach to development that would stress considerations such as the compatibility of various forms of tourism with other components of the local economy; the quality of developments, both culturally and environmentally; and the divergent needs, interests, and potential of the community and its inhabitants.

Timothy (2002) argues that community-based tourism is thought to be a more sustainable form of tourism than mass tourism as it empowers local community members take the lead in managing and organising tourism in their area with less interference from outside entrepreneurs and tour operators (see also Beeton, 2006, for discussion). According to Pearce (1992), community-based tourism therefore offers a way to provide an equitable flow of benefits to all affected by tourism through consensus based decision-making and local control of developments.

Residents of Chiang Saen believe that community-based tourism is one of the key determinants of how successful the development of tourism in their historic town will be. The following quote, made by an ordinary resident in the community, shows what residents understand community tourism to be and indicates the extent to which residents believe it could provide opportunities for them to participate and control the changes:

> I think community-based tourism is the most appropriate form of tourism development because the city is quite small, peaceful, and very unique in terms of its culture and way of life. I think these characteristics will attract a group of special interest tourists to visit the city and I think that this type of tourist likes to visit very natural destinations and prefers to stay in a real community *(Choom-chon-tae-jing: ชุมชนแท้จริง)[62]*. So, if all of the tourism

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[62] Refers to the natural environment and atmosphere of a community - without or with artificial environments

facilities and services - such as home-stay accommodation, sight-seeing, the local shop, local operator and so on - are organised by the community I think it must be very good for us and the city as we can design and organise tourism developments and activities according to our needs. (Phaiboon, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Local residents often spoke about what changes they wanted to see and what they wanted to take place in their community, but had learnt from the past that events normally went in other directions due to a lack of opportunity for them to share and participate. Nevertheless, the above comment demonstrates that residents still expect community-based tourism to happen and shows their efforts to extend their influence and to seek more opportunities to become involved.

Similarly, a senior resident, who was involved in establishing the Chiang Saen Senior Citizens' Group and attended a number of meetings and seminars on tourism development in Chiang Saen, was also supportive of this type of tourism being developed in the town:

I think that Chiang Saen is famous amongst tourists because of its characteristics as an historic town, surrounded by old buildings and historic buildings with a very unique traditional way of life of the local people. So I think that the form of appropriate tourism for the town might be home-stay tourism, historic tourism, and cultural tourism. (Sompong, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Wanchai, who has 10 years of experience participating in some of development projects within the Chiang Saen community, said that:

I think that Chiang Saen is not famous for mass tourism because there is no entertainment and recreational activities and services in the historic town, as these activities and services are only available in the Golden Triangle, which is located away outside the area of the historic town. The tourism business has not played a major role for local business in Chiang Saen. However, although the very unique nature of the historic town has

attracted tourists and people from outside to visit, it has not increased greatly the number of tourists. I think the historic town should be promoted as a destination for special interest tourists, particularly groups of people who are interested in culture and history. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

From the above comments, it is clear that the forms of tourism that are most attractive to all Chiang Saen residents (both those who are more informed because of their involvement in local organisations and those who are ordinary community members) are those which they believe will have the least impact on their community and allow them to maintain and conserve their historic town. This is reinforced by the comments of another local resident, also a member of the Chiang Saen Senior Citizens' Group. This gentleman was standing as a candidate in the next local election, due to be held in early August 2007, because he wanted to contribute to policies for developing tourism in the town:

In my opinion, I think that if we could design tourism activity in Chiang Saen in a way that relates to local needs and desires I think it would benefit the community more than becoming a mass tourist destination. I think that home-stay tourism, historic tourism or cultural tourism is the form that will cause less impact for the town so I think all these forms are suitable for our community. (Yongyuth, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

It was suggested in the interviews that the reason residents think that these forms of tourism are appropriate for their community is because they believe that they will have the least impact on the identity of Chiang Saen as an historic town. According to most of the interviews, this view is said to have emerged among residents following the visit of community leaders and some of local members to other historic sites – the Sukhothai Historical Park, the Ayutthaya Historical Park and the Luang Prabang World Heritage Site in Laos which were organised and funded by some local organisations in Chiang Saen such as the Wiang Chiang Saen *Tumbon Administration* [63] and Chiang Saen Municipality Office – in order to

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[63] Refers to a local unit government or a sub-district in Thailand, normally known as province (Changwat), district (Amphoe), and sub-district (Tumbon)

study and see how they managed their increasing tourist numbers. Residents also attended community meetings about the development of tourism in Chiang Saen organised by the CSC group, the Fine Art Department, the Tourism Authority of Thailand, the Chiang Saen Municipality Office, the Chiang Saen District Office and the Education Institute of nearby Chiangrai Rajabhat University and Mae Fah Luang University. One of local resident who joined most of above activities has described what he had learnt and experienced in the following way:

> I learnt and experienced several things from participating in activities organised for residents in order to investigate what tourism development in historic towns is like. I joined the study visit to Sukhothai and Ayuthhaya Historical Park and learnt about how local resident are important for the conservation of the historic park. I also learnt about the problem of the conflict between residents and the organisation responsible for the historic park and the problem between the organisation responsible for the historic park and other local organizations. (Sompong, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

The majority of community members, having gained experience of different types of tourism, and having attended various meetings, seminars and study visits, argue that is very important to decide now which type of tourism is the best one for the community to pursue in the long run. They also stated that given the importance of residents' living and working conditions, tourism must not threaten the community's identity, way of life, culture, history, religion or beliefs. One community member, who had joined both study visits to other historic towns in Thailand and attended meetings and seminars about tourism in Chiang Saen, expressed his vision for tourism in the town in the following terms:

> What we expect from tourists is to see them come to visit our community with respect for what we are and who we are, rather than just to see landscape, historic buildings and the like. We will be very happy if they come to learn and experience our culture and history. (Winai, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

These activities (meetings, seminars, and study visits) were organised for residents because they wanted to find better ways to promote Chiang Saen as an historic destination. Following these activities residents concluded that these were forms of tourism that would allow them to move towards being a sustainable community, consuming less natural resources, being more friendly to the environment, and less intrusive upon the rest of the community.

They also believed that by rejecting mass tourism and instead following a sustainable model of tourism development, they would have better job opportunities and the ability to share in a larger proportion of the income generated by tourists. As Uddhammar points out in the work of Ribot and Peluso:

Local users are often completely excluded from nature reserves, particularly if they intend to extract resources […] although conservation and development activists often expect local people to protect endangered wildlife and habitats […] Scientists, on the other hand, most of whom tend not to be 'local' in the sense of villagers, often have privileged access to the resources in a reserve and may even extract or modify those resources for the purpose of their work. (2006:664-665)

In terms of the extractive effects of tourism on the community, Pleumarom (2002) states that some tourism developments consume large amounts of natural resources, more than the amount consumed by the rest of the host community. Pleumarom also found that most of these natural resources are, in any case, inaccessible to local people but because of the importance of tourism most governments, particularly in developing countries, make it easy for investors by giving them special access to a variety of sources of investment capital. For example, according to Pleumarom (2002:33), golf course developers in Thailand have been accused of illegally grabbing land and encroaching upon protected areas, while it is an open secret that politicians and military officers have financial stakes in the project. The proposed 27-hole golf course planned by the governments of Cambodia, Laos and Thailand is another example of a tourism project that the Thai government openly supports and to whose investors it has given special privileges. The part of the project for which the Thai government is

responsible is located in Ubon Ratchathani's Phu Chong Na Yoi National Park, a protected area in which the National Park Act prohibits building. Similar cases can also be found in protected forests in other national parks, such as the Kho-Yai National Park, the Suthep-Pui National Park and the Phang-Nga National Park, and in specific regions for industrial and economic development such as Chiang Kong district and Chiang Saen district of Chiangrai province. In the case of Chiang Saen, previous central government development projects have tended to produce minimal participation from residents and have tended to leave them feeling unfairly treated because local resources have been used while there has been limited opportunity for residents to share in the benefits. Therefore, on balance, residents said they believed that the negative consequences associated with traditional forms of development outweigh the positive benefits, as they operate with little respect for local needs.

In the case of Chiang Saen, one community member talks about the town in similar terms to that of an endangered nature reserve, in this case referring to the need to protect and value specific attributes of life in the town:

> I think forms of tourism, such as community-based tourism, are one of the most appropriate forms of tourism development for the historic town because the town is quite small, peaceful, and very unique, particularly with regard to the culture and ways of life. I think these characteristics will be able to attract a group of people who have a special interest in a very natural and local destination and want to stay and experience the community's life. So, if all tourism facilities and services - such as accommodation in the form of home-stay, sight-seeing and day-trips, local shops, local operators and so on - are organised by community members I think it must be very good for the town as a whole, as we don't need to invest such a huge amount of resources. And it might be very attractive for tourists, as they might consider that the money they pay is generally going directly to residents rather than to the businessmen as they have normally seen in terms of mass tourism. (Winai, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

From the above comments, discussion over the most appropriate form of tourism for Chiang Saen to develop can be seen as one of the most critical challenges facing residents. It is clearly necessary to distinguish between so-called mass tourism and alternative approaches and the effect of these on the town's ability to balance the demands of tourism and conservation.

As mentioned previously, residents proposed several forms of tourism that they considered appropriate for their community. They hoped that such sustainable tourism would afford them the opportunity to organise and manage development in such a way as to maximise the benefit to their community while minimising the damage caused to the community's traditional way of life. They envisaged a model of tourism created by residents and based upon their wishes and needs. This is important because the changes caused by development projects affect all people in the community both directly and indirectly for the whole of their lives. Therefore, as citizens they should have the opportunity to have their voices heard and for their opinions to be respected so that future tourist developments can balance the wishes of all stakeholders.

It might be said that the residents, having learned more about alternative forms of tourism and having experienced the development process, now understand better the importance of community involvement in tourism. On the other hand, it can be seen that the Thai government and related organisations have learned the importance of creating public understanding about conservation and development projects, as well as providing affected communities with clear information about future developments.

Conclusion

This chapter has analysed and discussed the relationship between development and conservation in the historic town of Chiang Saen. In particular, it has focused upon conflicts between the need for development and a desire for conservation. The chapter has illustrated how residents in Chiang Saen react to the development of their community and how they look to minimise the impacts and maximise the

benefits. The chapter has looked at forms of development that residents find acceptable and described how home-stay tourism, historic tourism etc. are seen as appropriate. This is because these are perceived as forms of tourism that require limited resources to operate effectively and are popular only in a niche market of people who have an interest in history, culture and nature. The chapter also examined the process through which residents gained sufficient information and expertise to reach this conclusion, observing how they had visited other historic towns in Thailand and neighbouring countries, such as Laos, and attended meetings and seminars about tourism. Finally, the chapter has illustrated the importance that residents attach to community involvement in tourism industries. It has also been shown that the Thai government has learned the importance of creating public understanding about conservation and development projects.

The next chapter will discuss the different ideas and perceptions of residents as to whether Chiang Saen should maintain its identity as an historic town or progress towards becoming a business hub as the Thai government wishes. This will be highlighted as a key debate engaging residents.

Chapter 6

The development and transformation of tourism:

the challenge of preserving the historic identity of Chiang Saen

Introduction

The previous chapter discussed controversial issues relating to the conservation and development of Chiang Saen and considered whether it was possible for these apparently opposing forces to be made to work together for the good of the town.

The aim of this chapter is to discuss the role of Chiang Saen's identity as an historic town in its development as a tourist destination. This discussion of identity is important because the identity of a place is symbolic: it represents the place's values, characteristics and a story of its past. The identity of a community is in turn symbolic of a place's future, the local peoples' perceptions of their environment and their activities within it. The chapter will discuss how residents perceive the current identity of Chiang Saen and whether they want the town to develop in the future. It will examine how some residents have used Chiang Saen's historic identity to justify protesting against changes that they perceive as inappropriate for their community. Examples discussed include the residents' proposal that the town be given national or world heritage status in order to protect it against the Thai government's proposal to build the Chiang Saen Industrial Park. As such, the chapter also engages with local debates about the transformation of Chiang Saen from an historic town into a business hub and reconstruction of the town's identity in order to meet the demands of tourism.

Place and Identity

There are several different views about what identity means. Sometimes identity refers to the distinct character of who we are and where we are from. According to Amundsen (2001), identity is what is central, real and typical of something or someone. This meaning has its origins in psychology and psychiatry, and is focused upon the differences between individual identities. Ashworth and Graham (2005) suggest that it is difficult to clarify exactly what is meant by 'identity' or

'the identity of a place' as this depends upon the criteria used. It is said that these criteria may be cultural (such as traditional costumes, ways of life and history); that they may focus upon landscape characteristics and environment; or they may address a place's economic activities and products. Hague and Jenkins (2005) add to this list the importance of memory, sensual experience and interpretation; while Urry (1995) argues that gaining an understanding of place is a complex theoretical and empirical task requiring a range of novel techniques and methods of investigation. Therefore, while identity is an important factor linking people to their locality, changing economic, social and settlement circumstances can challenge it.

Groote et al (2002:2) list six aspects of a place's identity. Firstly there is social construction, which refers to the process through which the activities and characteristics of a place are created by people and give it a distinctive identity. This could be a positive process, such as the feelings of people living in a place that is home, or a negative one, such as the feelings generated in busy towns or in areas with high rates of crime. This type of identity normally takes a long time to develop, as the process of social construction can be influenced by several factors and progress is gradual.

The second aspect of a place's identity concerns the characteristics of a place, such as the distinctiveness of its environment and physical landscape. Thirdly, the identity of a place is said to be based upon its history. How people perceived a place in the past is said have an influence upon its contemporary identity. Jensma (1997) suggests that this is particularly true in places where traditional cultural and rural ways of life have been lost.

Fourthly is the idea of debatable identity: the idea that the identity of a place will always be open to debate as different people will have different views as to what it should be. In such circumstances, it is normally the most powerful members of the community, with the most authority or resources, who will dominate the debate and fashion the place's identity.

The fifth aspect determining a place's identity is its location, or what is known by the socio-geographical term 'situation'. Also included in this category are socio-cultural influences, such as the prevailing norms and values of the society and the social and economic circumstances. Planning trends relating to the structure and function of places are also relevant here.

The final aspect of a place's identity is an ongoing process through which new members of a community establish themselves, their goals and ideas for change. While some established identities are confirmed, this process enables other place identities to change continually as information is exchanged through a variety of communication channels. Consequently, the future identities of a place are formed from its current identity, its history and other unprecedented factors. This process may be called the evolution of the identity of place.

While Groote et al (2000:2) define place in terms of physical landscape and location characteristics, Hague and Jenkins's (2005) definition also includes intangible characteristics of identity such as social norms, memories and atmosphere. Like Ashworth and Graham (2005), Hague and Jenkins' (2005:7) also note that the identity of a place is sometimes constructed and reconstructed through the experience and perceptions of people and the processes of socialisation.

According to the classification developed by Groote et al (Ashworth and Graham, 2005: 21), it is the third aspect of a place's identity – that which is based upon the history of a place and perception of residents towards traditional cultural and rural ways of life – that is most applicable to Chiang Saen. It is this perception that is currently being challenged by the promotion of Chiang Saen as a business hub and other pressures for change in the town. According to most of the interviewees, the Greater Maekong Sub-region (GMS) project - of which the business hub is one part – concerns residents as they realise this will make it difficult to maintain Chiang Saen's identity as an historic town. One local resident expressed his concern about the possibility and difficulty of progressing the government's plan of a business hub in Chiang Saen.

I think that it is difficult to promote the city as the business hub because the local people are worried that the project would potentially cause problems for the historic town. However, I think it might be better for the historic town if, instead of a business hub, the government modified their project to meet local needs and promoted specific projects that would have fewer impacts on the historic town such as small tourism related businesses. They should ensure that other kind of business projects linked to the GMS is located away from the area of the historic town. (Thongchai, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Castree (2009:154) has argued that people see places differently in terms of the form of cause and effect of place connections. He also classifies the definition of place based on geographical concepts into three different meanings (2009:155). The first refers to place as a location such as a specific area on the planet. Second, place is represented in terms of how people feel about their place or sense of place and finally, Castree defines place as a territory or area (scale) for people to carry out their daily activity. Thus like Groote et al (2002), Castree defines place as location and an area where people live, carry out activity and interact with others. Such an approach understands place as both the site of connection and interaction, and a representation of unique cultural characteristics in specific landscapes. All these factors help to generate people's feeling about the place as 'sense of place'. Place can also be seen as the centre for people to share their values and learning (Tuan, 1977).

Definitions and interpretations of a sense of place have varied and adapted according to their purpose and use. According to Farnum et al (2005) the unique characteristics of place such as its value and the way a place represents environmental characteristics must also be considered as central in the construction of a sense of place because these factors generate people's feeling about a place. Farnum et al (2005:2) argue that a sense of place connects people to place. They also argue that a sense of place can reflect the identity of the place because it represents how people perceive of their place and how people from outside see it. According to Castree (2009) this can be seen in the types of relationships formed between people from inside and outside the place.

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Consequently, it can also be argued that a sense of place and the identity of place can be transformed according to the openness of relationships inside and outside the place. This might be related to what was Massey has called a global sense of the local (cited in Castree, 2009). In relation to the historic town of Chiang Saen, the proposal for the town to be part of the business hub in the GMS cooperation can be considered as an attempt to transform the town's identity (and sense of place) motivated by outside needs (central government and entrepreneurs) and connected with another part (place) of the world (in this case are the countries in the GMS area).

Place is crucial for tourism, as the identity of place and sense of place are factors that can generate impacts on the community or on the destination as a place. Besculides et al (2002) argue that tourism is a key channel for representing the sense of place and place identity to the outside world. Tourism also prompts people living in a particular destination (place) to think about their sense of place (what the place represents for them and what they feel about it) a well as their place's identity. This process can strengthen their belief in what it means to live within their community and place.

In the case of Chiang Saen it can be seen that its identity is the product of power relations and social activities among stakeholders. As such, it is likely that perceptions of the town's identity will be contested and the town's identity constructed and reconstructed in the community until agreement among all residents is reached. This is an important process as it generates a strong community consensus around the future direction development and conservation that Chiang Saen should take. This study addresses these power relations among community stakeholders in the section that investigates the collaboration of stakeholders over appropriate forms of development for the community.

In terms of development within Chiang Saen, most interviewees thought that it was how developers interpreted the town's identity that was the key factor in determining whether a project would meet with residents' approval. Most interviewees also mentioned the need to engage residents in the process of reconstructing Chiang Saen's identity, as developers should not have sole power

to decide the identity of a place: rather it should be derived from a consensus between all stakeholders in the community, taking account of the town's existing character. This can be contrasted with the view of Groote et al (2000), who argue that those members of the community with most power, influence and resources dominate the processes of creating or re-creating a place's identity. However, achieving a consensus among all members of the community is important. Interviewees thought that residents should have the right to participate and share their views on the identity of their own community. It may therefore be possible for a place's identity to be constructed and reconstructed from time to time and from place to place by residents and other stakeholders.

The majority of the interviewees also said that the identity of Chiang Saen is used for marketing purposes in order to attract more tourists. As the previous chapter indicated, interviewees thought that the outstanding characteristics of the town constitute 'the face of the place', which make it recognisable to tourists as one of the most famous historic destinations in northern Thailand. However, what also emerged from the interviews was that residents, developers and business entrepreneurs held different views about tourism and the town's identity. For example, it became clear that developers and entrepreneurs perceived tourism as a development tool for the local economy and as a reason to reconstruct and market Chiang Saen's identity in order to attract more tourists. In contrast, residents perceive tourism to be a by-product of the unique identity of Chiang Saen and believe that this is a key reason why tourists visit. Consequently, residents feared that if the identity of their town changed, apart from losing its uniqueness, tourists would no longer want to visit. It might therefore be argued that tourism is a social activity resulting from the interaction of human performance with place at a particular time and that this has put pressure on the community to decide whether Chiang Saen's identity should be transformed to attract increasing tourist numbers or whether an alternative form of tourism should be developed that would allow its current identity to be retained. As discussed in the previous chapter, a key factor in this decision could be increased local awareness of the need to balance conservation and development and to balance the wishes of some residents with the wishes of tour operators and entrepreneurs. Different perceptions among

stakeholders of the need to reconstruct the identity of Chiang Saen are also important and these will be discussed in the following sections of this chapter.

From an historic town to a business hub: the misguided development of Chiang Saen?

While Chiang Saen is famous for being an historic town, its strategic location has led to increasing interest from the central government and other investors in turning the town into a business centre. These groups hope that the development of the Greater Maekong Sub-region (GMS) project by the Asian Development Bank will generate economic benefits for the whole country. This development has increased debate within the Chiang Saen community about the changing identity of the town: is the most suitable identity for Chiang Saen as a business hub or as an historic town? As I have already suggested most of the residents interviewed feel that the town's future should be decided by them and not by the government. In particular, they want their views to be respected by developers:

> In my opinion, it is important for local resident to have enough opportunity to share ideas about what they like or dislike about development projects that the government and related organisations initiate and want to carry out within our community. We just want to let them know what we are thinking and want them to listen. (Yongyuth, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

According to Ashworth et al (2007), the institutionalisation of a place's identity through place branding and heritage policies could also increase the distance between community members and developers. In the case of Chiang Saen, the government has tried to use spatial planning to link together tourism and business in order to generate better economic opportunities for the town. The main objective of the government when deciding where to locate GMS projects was to maximise economic opportunities in the northern region of Thailand. Some government projects within the GMS frequently refer in the region as the Triangle

of Economic Cooperation[64], and as the Five Chiang Project[65] (TRF, 2004). Both central and local government believe that GMS projects will enhance the historic identity of Chiang Saen as the business hub, particularly those projects focused on attracting more tourists. One senior government officer, who works in a government organisation in Chiang Saen, insisted that:

> The reason that the government initiated projects related to the GMS in this region is to boost the economic environment and the opportunities for local entrepreneurs and local people, as the project will generate more chances for them to do business and improve the quality of their life….These projects are to try to make people - including businessmen and tourists - know about Chiang Saen which will attract them to come to see the town. It will be known by more people than in the past. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

Despite this, most of the interviewees raised questions about the new identity of the town that is being presented by some government led GMS projects, such as the Industrial Park project. The controversy regarding whether Chiang Saen should retain its identity as an historic town or become a business hub remains undecided within the community.

The different perspectives and perceptions of local residents about identity and place in Chiang Saen and the historic town is the key issue that generates a conflict of interest among community stakeholders. There is division over whether to maintain it as a historic town and/or develop it as a business hub. This is not necessarily an either/or choice. It is clear from the discussion about the government projects and local protests in chapter 4, that the conflict among the stakeholders in Chiang Saen is based on inadequate information and the lack of an

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[64] An economic cooperation project initially created by Laos, Myanmar and Thailand, which are joined together by the same border.

[65] 'Chiang' is a synonym for city or town and is commonly used by local people. The Five Chiang are Chiangrai, Chiang Saen, Chiang Khong of Thailand, Chinag Thong (Luang Prabang of Laos) and Chiang Rung (a city in Xishuangbanna province of southern of China).

inclusive planning process. Thus developers (government and entrepreneurs) are unable to generate a clear understanding of what the development project involves for local residents. The complicated structure of government administration and a traditional bureaucratic system are also part of the reason for the conflict among community stakeholders. Because of this it is mainly seen as a partisan, polarised conflict between local residents and developers (government organizations and entrepreneurs) whether or not this is actually the case and whether or not some similarities between their agendas exist. The strong and different perceptions and perspectives concerning the identity of place in Chiang Saen underpin these polarised representations. The conflict in the historic town was not focused on what direct harm would be caused to individuals but rather about the potential impact on the town as a whole under a misguided development strategy. Creating enough opportunities for community stakeholders to access adequate information and generate a good understand and relationship between them would have helped to minimise conflict.

Most of the interviewees said that the operation of the business hub project depends mainly on the central government, local government and local organisations, while participation by residents is low and access to adequate information is rare. They thought that government organisations were trying to prevent them from understanding the details of what the project is and how it could potentially impact upon their community. Most of information they have reveals the positive side of the hub but there is little information about the negative aspects. Residents believe that they have the right to know what is going to happen in their community and they have grouped together as a loose and informal group which consists of local resident in order to ask government agencies questions and seek proper information about the project and its impacts. However, because of government bureaucracy and its top-down approach to management, they have been very slow to respond. In the meantime anxiety about the project among residents has increased. Most interviewees agreed that the lack of a proper management plan and the lack of local participation were the main cause of protests in Chiang Saen about the development of a business hub, as discussed in chapter 4.

As the hub's main purpose is to contribute to the economic performance of the region, and to use these economic benefits to improve the life of the people living in Chiang Saen, other projects were also initiated by the central government to establish large-scale transportation networks and an industrial infrastructure. All of these projects appear to be incompatible with the idea of an historic town. Chiang Saen residents' thought that all developments would be environmentally friendly and result in only small-scale industry. They did not expect extremely large industrial projects. Residents believe that the construction of a new port for Chiang Saen and the building of a new four-lane superhighway linking it to the city of Chiangrai will have numerous impacts upon their historic town, such as noise pollution from cargo trucks and damage to the Maekong River's ecosystem by pollution from freighters. Pleumarom (2002) also observes that the construction of highways, ports and airports, along with hotels, resorts, casinos and other facilities has damaged the local ecosystem, disrupted community life and made local people vulnerable to exploitation by tourism companies and industrialists.

Residents of Chiang Saen have expressed their concerns about the government's project since they experienced a similar project in another region – the Industrial Park project in Lumpun province. Local organisations in Chiang Saen such as Wiang Chiang Sean Tumbon Administration and Chiang Saen Municipality Office arranged a study visit to the Industrial Park for residents. The majority of the residents of Chiang Saen who were interviewed said that they now believe most of the government's plans for the town are incompatible with its historic identity:

> In my opinion, local people do not want to see the city become a business hub, although they know they could earn more [money] from it. They are worried about the changes to the city, especially the changes to the city's identity as an historic town. They really want to retain the city's identity as an historic town. (Montri, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

According to Groote et al (2000), the attempt by government organizations to promote Chiang Saen as a business hub can be considered to be part of a process

of constructing a new identity for the town. However different stakeholders perceive this in different ways. In the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen the key debate is that the government wanted to promote the town as the business hub as a new identity but as we shall see local residents, especially those living in the old town, wanted to keep its identity as an historic town. According to Groote et al (2000) in such struggles over constructing place identity the most powerful members of society are often able to be dominant.

A lack of information about the government's plans from the organisations responsible also concerns residents:

> I think it might be difficult for the government and developers to progress their projects if the projects do not meet with local needs, and it seems that most of the projects go that way. However, it might be possible if the government and related organisations initiate proper plans and projects and respect the needs of local residents. I think that they have to provide adequate details and information about their plans to local residents to create a better understanding of the project and to gain local support….I think it is hard to progress development projects without these as it could possibly cause locals to protest about the project. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Residents said that the aggressive promotion of the government's GMS business hub project in Chiang Saen during the latter period of the first Taksin Shinawatara government (2001-2005) led to more questions being asked by the community about where the benefits of the project will go - to residents or to national and international entrepreneurs. In addition, interviewees also mentioned that so far few employment benefits had been gained directly from the project: many of the jobs were taken by people from outside of the town and the remaining jobs required unskilled labour and paid very low wages. Yet, there are clearly impacts upon the historic town and its unique lifestyle:

> What I have seen is that all of the government's projects and plans are for business facilities and all of the direct benefit is going to the business

sector. There are no plans or projects concerned directly with local people and the maintaining the historic town. In contrast, most of the government plans and projects are considered a problem for the city. (Thiti, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Clearly, for residents one of the most controversial aspects of the transition of Chiang Saen from being an historic town into a business hub is the lack of proper plans and misguided information about the development:

> I think that it is possible to promote the town as business hub but I think what needs to be done before that is the setting of a proper direction and plan for how to balance being an historic town and a business hub. I also think we have to isolate the area for business projects away from the area of the historic town and try not to do any kind of business which would possibly cause impacts upon the historic town. (Siam, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

However, another resident of Chiang Saen, who had worked as the leader of a sub-community in the town as well as running a small business, insisted that was possible to manage successfully the transition from promoting the historic town to developing the business hub:

> I think becoming the business hub might be possible but all responsible organisations need to learn the lesson from recent years when most of projects were delayed. They need to provide clear directions and set up what is known as a master plan, a management tool for development; and provide enough information and opportunities for local residents to participate; and also create a good relationship towards development projects among stakeholders. (Thongchai, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen

The transition of the Chiang Saen community's identity from one that is recognised by residents into a new one is not an easy process. As we shall see below this is because people are concerned about the risk of losing their unique

identity and are worried about the potential impacts of the transition process as a result of its mismanagement.

The role of identity in the creation of Chiang Saen's sense of place

Chiang Saen is recognised as being an historic town because during the 14th century it served as the capital city of the Northern Kingdom of Thailand. The town is surrounded by historic buildings that remind people how unique the town is.

As described in the introduction to this chapter, the identity of a place is the product of various factors that represent how people see its image; reshaped by what others tell us about the place; and filtered by our own socialisation, knowledge and experience. As such, the sense of identity attached to a place varies from person-to-person as it depends on the process of receiving, selectively reconstructing and then re-communicating a narrative transforming a space into a place (Rose, 1995). The identity of a place should not be constructed only by an elite - such as leading politicians, bureaucrats or business figures - but rather should relate to everyday life and the living choice of people within the community. This is because all community stakeholders should have the right to share what they perceive as the identity of their own community. This is similar to the argument of Groth (2002:19), who states that:

> The construction of the identities should be formed from a broad partnership of visions for the first order development of the city, while at the same time leaving room for a multitude of second order dialogues with citizens and cultural and social movements.

Amundsen (2001) has raised four criticisms against how identity is used to represent a sense of place. These are: firstly, spatial qualities that distinguish a place from others - such as location, infrastructure, communication and architecture; secondly, the characteristics or qualities of the inhabitants that distinguish them from inhabitants of other places - such as values, customs and physical appearance; thirdly, social conditions and social relations between the

inhabitants; and, finally, culture and history that connect the inhabitants to traditions, unifying them as a group and distinguishing them from others. Therefore, it would appear that the identity of a place represents both what distinguishes it from other places and the sense of belonging that its people feel towards it.

Somsak, a senior officer with a local organisation in Chiang Saen, who has experience of organising cultural activities for older residents (*Phoo-a-wu-so or Phoo-soong-a-yu:* ผู้อาวุโส หรือ ผู้สูงอายุ)[66] and working with other local organisations in Chiang Saen, was concerned about how local people perceive the town's identity:

> I would like them to recognise the town as being cultural and historic, where they can learn and experience specific traditional ways of life that they cannot find in any other place. (Somsak, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

One of the younger residents of Chiang Saen *(Khon Num Khon Sao:* คนหนุ่มคนสาว)[67], who often participates in traditional cultural activities organised by secondary schools and local organisations (such as the Chiang Saen District Office, Administration Office, and Municipality Office) was equally clear about how he wanted outsiders to view the town:

> I want them to perceive the city as a beautiful and unique cultural and historic city. (Piti, 1 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

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[66] Refers to a senior residents group (normally for those over sixty years old). It is an informal group organising cultural and healthy activities for members within Chiang Saen. Joining the group for an activity is optional and a matter of personal interest. Most activities are funded by group members and sometimes supported by local organisations such as the District Office, Chiang Saen Municipality Office, Wiang Chiang Saen Tumbon Administration, and the CSC group.

[67] Refers to a secondary school student, usually between 15 and 18 year old.

Another young resident expressed a similar wish:

> I really want to see the city as the centre for Lanna Thai culture. A place where people can come to study about the unique Lanna Thai culture. (Tida, 1 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

Sompong, a local person who participated in activities organised for elderly residents, said that the majority of them wanted to see the town remain as an historic and quiet place:

> I think the main identity of the town is its unique culture, history and beautiful, peaceful scenery. (Sompong, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

It therefore important for the town's residents to think about what form of identity should be retained:

> I want to see an historic town, where people can come to visit and learn the history of the country, study traditional culture, and experience local life. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

Ashworth and Graham (2005) argue that the identity of a place creates a sense of heritage from artefacts, mythologies, memories, traditions and culture, which become resources for the present. I would argue that heritage does not mean only these tangible aspects but also represents the values of the past, which in turn influence the future image and identity of a place. However, heritage is a flexible idea and it is equally true that different stakeholders in a community can define it in different ways to suit their own needs. It could be defined by the past images of a community or by the contemporary needs and demands of a community's stakeholders. According to Ashworth and Graham (2005), the process of using heritage as a means to re-present the identity of a place may cause conflict among community members, if the purpose of this process and how it will be managed is not clear. This has happened in the case of Chiang Saen.

Proposals for a heritage site

Contested ideas about the identity of Chiang Saen have caused conflict among stakeholders in the town. One example that illustrates this was when some residents proposed that Chiang Saen should be nominated as a world heritage site. This was designed as a protest against a Thai government development called the Chiang Saen Industrial Park, which residents thought would have a negative impact upon the town, its environment and identity. However, their proposal lacked detail and residents did not fully understand what being a world heritage site involves. According to a leader of the Chiang Saen Conservation Group (CSC), once local organisations - such as the Chiang Saen Municipality Office, The Fine Arts Department and the CSC - distributed information about world heritage sites to residents some turned from being supporters of the proposal into opponents. The newspapers and local radio stations advertised activities focused on inviting local people to learn more about the historic town (Figures 6.1, 6.2). Workshops held by the Fine Arts Department were also advertised in the local press (Figure 6.3). The World Heritage Site became a controversial issue which most residents thought would cause conflict among different stakeholders in the town. The CSC leader explained that one fear among residents about achieving world heritage status was that those currently living in or close to historic buildings, such as an old temple, may be asked to move out of their homes. This concern arose because only after the project had been initiated was The Charter for the Conservation of Historic Towns, published by UNESCO's International Council of Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS), sent to residents by several organisations in Chiang Saen. The other major factor was that the local university organised seminars and a study visit to a world heritage site (as discussed in chapter 5) so that residents could find out more information about what such sites are like. The CSC leader said that residents were worried because some of the information they had received said that, if their proposal was successful, their lives would change and they may have difficulty finding a new place to live.

ผู้สื่อข่าวรายงานว่า นายสมหวัง รุ่งตระกูลชัย นายอำเภอเชียงแสน จ.เชียงราย พร้อมด้วยนายบุญส่ง เชื้อเจ็ดตน นายกเทศมนตรีเทศบาล ต.เวียง อ.เชียงแสน นายมิติ ยาประสิทธิ์ หัวหน้ากลุ่มรักษ์เชียงแสน

ร่วมกับกลุ่มองค์กรพัฒนาเมืองชายแดน จัดประชุมเวิร์กช็อปหัวข้อการบูรณาการความร่วมมือระหว่าง ภาครัฐกับภาคประชาชนในการอนุรักษ์และพัฒนาเมืองเชียงแสน หนึ่งในเขตเศรษฐกิจพิเศษชายแดน และอุทยานประวัติศาสตร์โบราณอายุพันปี

นายบุญส่งกล่าวว่า การเข้ามาบูรณะโบราณสถานของกรมศิลปากรมีการจัดทำแบบแยกส่วน ชาวบ้าน ในท้องถิ่นไม่ได้มีส่วนร่วมและไม่ทราบถึงการเข้ามาดำเนินโครงการแต่อย่างใด ทำให้การทำงานเดิน สวนทางกัน ในจุดนี้อยากขอให้ทางกรมศิลปากรทบทวนการทำงาน เปิดโอกาสให้ชาวบ้านมีบทบาท มากขึ้นในการร่วมอนุรักษ์ดูแลโบราณสถาน มีสิทธิ์ในการตัดสินใจ ทั้งนี้ ปัญหาส่วนหนึ่งเกิดขึ้นจาก การที่ชาวบ้านไม่เข้าใจบทบาทของตนเอง จึงต้องมาปรับทิศทางสร้างความเข้าใจระหว่างท้องถิ่นกับ กรมศิลปากร สร้างแนวทางการพัฒนาที่ยั่งยืน

นายมิติ ยาประสิทธิ์ แกนนำกลุ่มรักษ์เชียงแสน กล่าวเสริมว่า ควรจะให้ความสำคัญกับเด็กและเยาวชน ปลูกจิตสำนึกให้รู้สึกหวงแหนใบสมบัติที่ตนเองมีอยู่ เพราะการจัดกิจกรรมพื้นฟูศิลปวัฒนธรรม เป็น อีกวิธีหนึ่งที่ทำให้เยาวชนใช้เวลาว่างให้เป็นประโยชน์ เป็นเกราะป้องกันกระแสการพัฒนาเศรษฐกิจ และท้องถิ่นแบบไร้ทิศทาง การปลูกกระแสอนุรักษ์เมืองเชียงแสน เมืองประวัติศาสตร์ให้ยั่งยืน ภาครัฐ ต้องให้ความสำคัญกับความคิดเห็นของประชาชน การทำงานต้องตรวจสอบได้ และควรมีการจัด ประชุมเวิร์กช็อปลักษณะนี้ขึ้นมาอย่างต่อเนื่องเพื่อปลูกจิตสำนึกแก่คนในท้องถิ่น สนับสนุนให้มี หลักสูตรท้องถิ่นจึงจะทำให้การอนุรักษ์เป็นจริงขึ้นมาได้

http://www.thaipost.net/index.asp?bk=xcite&post_date=24/Oct/2549&news_id=132113&cat_id=200600

Figure 6.1: An example of an activity organised in the historic town in order to provide information and to create a better understand for local resident about the importance of the historic town. *(Detail shown in this picture is about the workshop organised by local government and local community organizations to discuss the important of the historic town and the role of all stakeholders in the conservation process of the historic town in)*

Source: Thaipost Newspaper, October 24th, 2006
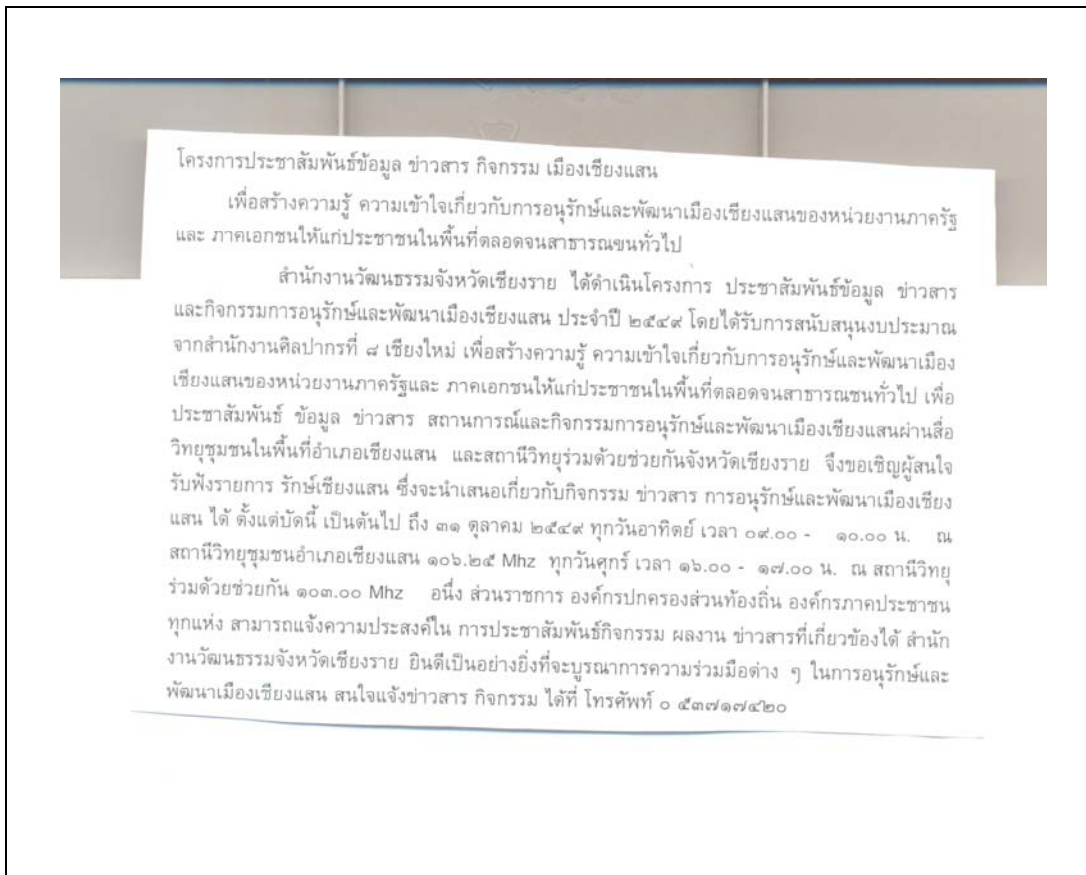
Figure 6.2: An example of an activity organised in the historic town in order to provide information and to create a better understanding among local residenta about the importance of the historic town

(Detail shown in this picture is about the announcement by the Chiangrai Radio Station inviting the local community and local organizations to publish news and activities relating to the conservation of Chiang Saen historic town via radio programs on this radio station)

Source: Chiangrai Radio Station, August 9th, 2006

กรมศิลป์ฯจับมือท้องถิ่น
เรียนรู้ร่วมกัน
น่าชมโบราณสถานทั่วเมือง

กรมศิลปากร โดยสำนักศิลปากรที่ ๘ เชียงใหม่
ได้ดำเนินการจัดสัมมนาโครงการเรียนรู้ร่วม
กันสู่ท้องถิ่น : ประวัติศาสตร์ โบราณคดีเชียง
แสน
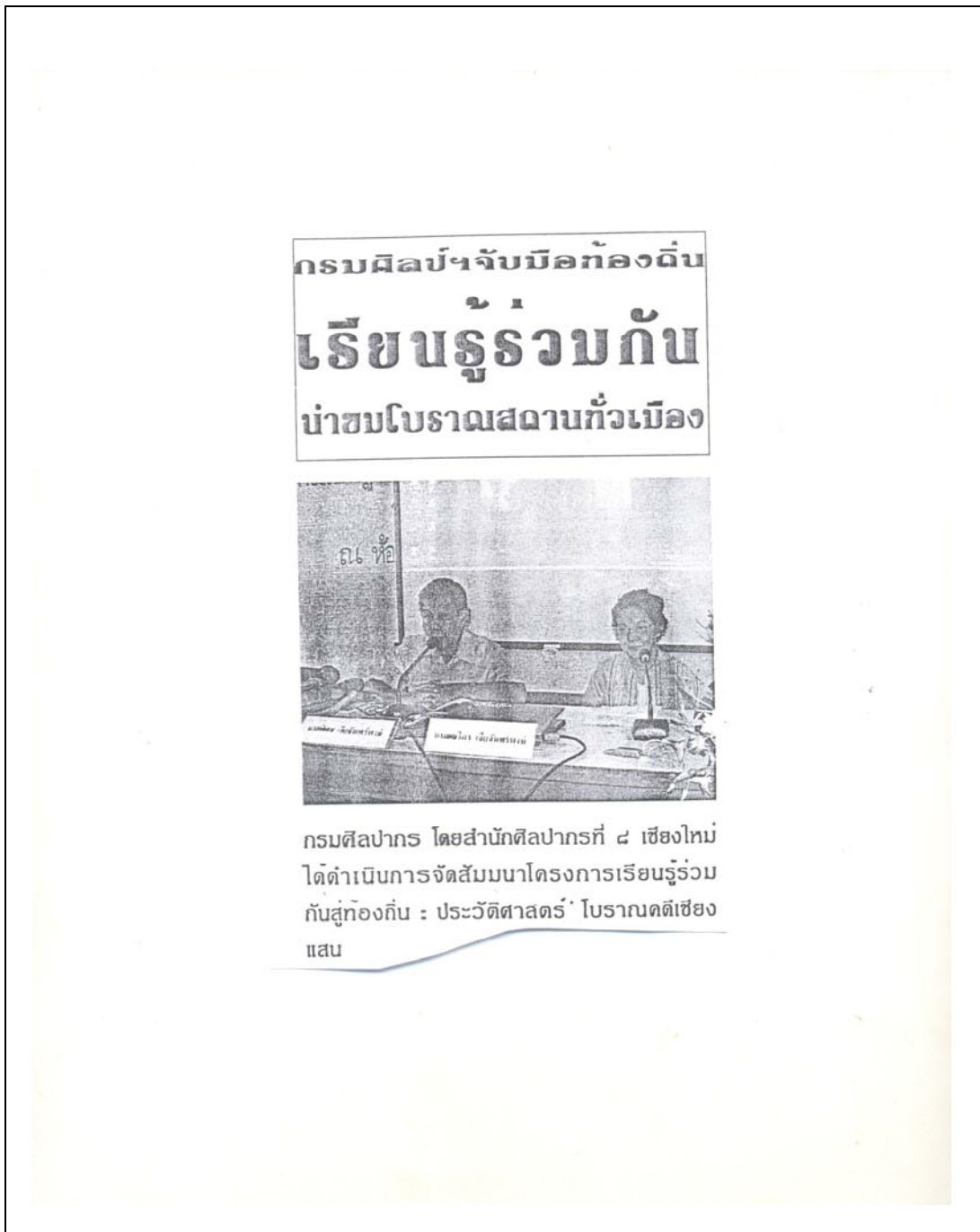
Figure 6.3: An example of an activity organised in the historic town in order to provide information and to create a better understanding among local residents about the importance of the historic town

(Detail shown in this picture is about the seminar organised by local government organizations and the office of the Fine Arts department on the topic of the historic town.

Source: Rak Chiang Saen News, September 2007.

From this example it is possible to conclude that, in order to create a sense of place and identity, the real needs and desires of the whole community should be taken into account. However, according to Hall (1997), representing the heritage and identity of a place is a process that involves the production and exchange of information and contains pros and cons for everyone involved. A similar view was expressed by a resident of Chiang Saen, who had worked among both protesters and supporters of the world heritage proposal as the mediation person, when asked whether the town could ever be promoted as a world heritage site:

> I think it is possible [to promote the city as world heritage site] but, as I said, we need to improve understanding among stakeholders in the city about its future direction in order to build up commitment and community unity. I think that the strategic location of the city and its identity as an historic town and border city are the most advantageous characteristics for the city in order to attract more tourists to visit and economic investors to invest their business. But what we need to have at the first stage is a good plan to manage of the project. The Government sector must provide the community with precise information – for example details of the environmental impact assessment, costs and benefits of the project and so on. I think that to nominate the city as the world heritage site is no longer difficult if we progress all these things in the proper way. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

It was clear from the interviews that respect for the Government and local organisations was also important when trying to build local support for the proposal to apply for world heritage status:

> I think that it is possible if we have a good plan and the full support from the government. The government must provide both positive and negative information for people and try to generate a good understanding among stakeholders about the project. Personally, I want to see the city as the world heritage site as it would attract more tourists to visit the city. (Wichit, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

To some extent, the identity of a place is also related to social identity at a given time (Ashworth and Graham, 2005:15). This means that the identity of a place sometimes represents how well a community interacts and communicates. Therefore, I want to address here how language is also another part of a place's identity. In Chiang Saen the unique language and culture are an important part of the identity of the town. They are different from other communities in the northern part of Thailand, even though they are often presumed to be the same; a fact confirmed by a Chiang Saen resident who is recognised by other residents as an expert on the town and its culture:

> Personally I think that people in Chiang Saen are different from those in other parts of the northern region as our speaking language, culture and traditional ways are very unique and slightly different. These are what we are proud of and recognise as the core identity of the town. (Sinthong, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

According to the Mayor of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office[68], the way in which they present the town's identity is by scheduling a calendar of cultural events over the course of the year as discussed in chapter 4. He tried to use this calendar to inform local people about the activities held in the community and also as a marketing tool to attract potential new tourists, both Thai tourists and international tourists, to visit the town. Information was published through various means, such as press releases, community meetings and the Chiang Saen municipality closed circuit radio.

To summarise, the identity of a place includes both tangible and intangible aspects that distinguish one place from another; can be a source of disagreement between community members; but can also benefit the community in different ways. For example, in some communities where tourism is seen to have potential economic benefits the identity of a place can be used as a tool to market the area to tourists. However, in order to benefit from this, it is important for community stakeholders

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[68] This interview took place on 19 December 2007 at the Chiang Saen Municipality Office.

to assess how increased tourism could in turn impact upon the sense of identity that they are promoting as I discuss below.

The effect of tourism on the identity of Chiang Saen

In addition to the role identity plays in helping people to understand who they are and where they have come from, it is also important to examine the vital role that the identity of a place plays in the tourism industry. Constructing or reconstructing the identity of a place is not only the right of locals and residents, but sometimes people from outside the community such as tour operators and investors are interested in this process. The increasing pressure to reshape the identity of places in order to meet the expectations of tourists is an example of the involvement of outsiders in a community and illustrates how conflicts of interest between different stakeholders can arise: some may want to keep the identity of a place, while others may think that reshaping its identity would generate more benefits for the community. As MacCannell (1992) argues, tourism is not just the aggregation of commercial activities but is also the ideological framing of history, nature and tradition, reshaped to its own needs.

I would argue that it is these factors that have generated debates about the effect of tourism on the identity in Chiang Saen. One of the interesting findings from interviews with residents who are involved with community organisations is that, while the community is clearly concerned about the effect of tourism on the town's identity and their way of life, residents also believe that tourism is important for their community as it generates economic benefits:

> Residents understand that tourism is good for the local economy as it generates opportunities for people to get jobs and income. But, what they are concerned about is that tourism will cause problems for the community, particularly changing the way of life. From my experience, I'm a bit worried that when some local organisations have arranged cultural activities for tourists they have changed some of the details and format of those activities in order to meet with the tourists' expectations. It will potentially attract more tourists to visit the town but I'm afraid that

people will misunderstand our culture. Sometimes local organisations also arrange some cultural activities to promote event tourism in the town but my concern is that these are traditional activities, normally scheduled at a specific time in each calendar year. So I think this might confuse people, not just about the timing but it would also confuse people about the facts of our cultural activity and its definition. (Thiti, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

A similar comment was made by a local schoolteacher, who also supported tourism but was concerned about the way in which cultural activities were organised for tourists within Chiang Saen. The teacher observed that when some local organisations decided to organise cultural events in order to promote the town they designed the theme of the activities in non-traditional ways and changed some of the details. When residents had wanted to organise events themselves in a traditional style, local organisations sometimes prevented this and modified some parts to meet what they thought tourists' expectations would be. On other occasions local organisations had brought in outside event organisers to take charge of the planning and decision-making. The teacher argued that inevitably residents were concerned about the impact of these changes upon their traditions:

It is sad for me when some local organisations have organised cultural activities for the purpose of promoting tourism by modifying the details of the real activities in order to meet with tourists' expectations. I don't know what tourists think about this, but I think what tourists want to see and experience is the unique original activities. As a local resident, I am also frustrated to see that some of the activities are organised by people from outside our community, as I don't think they know about our culture better than we do. But I can't argue about this much as it has already been decided by the local organisation in charge of the activities. (Mongkol, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

The fact that local organisations in Chiang Saen modify cultural activities to meet the demands of tourism can be contrasted with the view of Viken (2006), who argues that tourists visit a community because they want to see reality: 'people are

coming because we are who we are.' Prasong, a resident of Chiang Saen who is involved with cultural and religious activities, shares Viken's view. He said that the most common reason for tourists to visit the town was because they wanted to experience its atmosphere; to see the old buildings, art and culture; and to explore the town by themselves, guided by travel books, brochures and what they had heard from friends and relatives:

> I think the reason why people are visiting the town is because they want to see the historic buildings and old temples, to study and explore local art and culture and experience traditional ways of life, and some of them want to participate in some religious activities. (Prasong, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Din, another resident of the community who has experience of organising tourist activities as a volunteer, also explained why people visit Chiang Saen:

> I think most of them want to see the city and the historic town and want to learn about the history of the early kingdom of Thailand, as Chiang Saen is known as one of the early kingdoms of Thailand. (Din, 24 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

A similar view was expressed by one of the senior officers in a local organisation responsible for some of the recent tourist activities in Chiang Saen:

> The most interesting reason, and the main reason, why tourists travel to the city is because of the identity of the city as a cultural and historic destination. (Somsak, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

From the above, one could argue that discussions about the identity of Chiang Saen benefit the local community by creating a marketing tool to attract tourists and because they remind residents how special their community is, motivating them to maintain it. Indeed, Palmer (1999) argues that tourism and the identity of a place interact in two ways: firstly, in how the identity of a place is formed and

becomes a site for tourism and, secondly, in the way in which tourism changes the identity of a place over time.

In some ways, the identity of a place can be considered in the same way as a marketing brand, as a tool used to attract people from the outside world to visit. According to Donald and Gammack (2007), people who live in places whose identity is not known or clearly defined try to construct identities for their locality, a process they describe as 'branding the city.' They describe this as constructing the city's personality, attempting to put together the attractive and distinctive features of the city in a manageable and imaginative way. Attracting tourists is the ultimate purpose of branding a place and is found in most major tourist destinations such as Paris, New York and Bangkok. Nevertheless, as discussed earlier, it is important for people involved in the process of branding to consider other stakeholders in the process. It is important what they think and that the identity of a place is represented in a way that is acceptable to all.

The idea of branding or identity construction is not a major issue in Chiang Saen, as the town already represents itself as an historic destination. However, both internal and external pressures threaten the town's historic identity. Internal threats include the desire of some stakeholders - such as the leaders of local organisations and some local investors – to reconstruct the town's identity as a mixture between being an historic site and a business hub. These people believe that this new, hybrid identity will generate more benefits for the town and will enable it to attract both tourists and business investors. External pressure for change comes from the desire of the central government to promote the town as a business hub. Consequently, the need to balance identity, tourism and development is a dilemma facing residents. It is difficult for them to know what is the best outcome. Even though residents want to maintain the historic identity of the town, they accept the need for reasonable change, such as cultural and heritage tourism which is organised in a way that will not conflict with their cultural practices or traditional ways of life. However, this approach was seen by some local organisation such as Chiang Saen Municipality Office as too conservative and so market-led ways to increase tourist activity in the town have been

introduced (see chapter 4). This has led to both an increase in tourist numbers and to an increase in the variety of tourist activities taking place.

The residents believe that in order to find the correct balance between tourism, business and heritage in Chiang Saen the support of both residents and government organisations will be needed. This may present a problem in the future, as residents are increasingly concerned about the changing landscape of the town and the potential for environmental degradation and pollution:

> I think residents must be very concerned about promoting their historic town for tourism because it could cause potential impacts on the landscape and cause environment change, pollution, eyesores and change their culture and way of life. I also think that it is very important that developers and related organisations focus on generating a good understanding of development projects among local resident and they need to clarify for residents that development projects will respond to their needs as well as the goals of the developers….In addition, I also think that the support of government organisations is vital for the success of development projects in the town because without their support, budget, information and legal support it is very difficult to progress development projects. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

It would appear that change and development in Chiang Saen will happen, so the key question is how to make this meet the needs of residents. Without local support and understanding it would be difficult for any changes or development within the town to be successful. Given the close relationship between tourism and the identity of Chiang Saen, both residents and developers must try to compromise. It is important for both sides to recognise that tourism and development projects that are suitable for one community may not be suitable for another.

Balancing the impact of tourism on the identity and socio-economy of Chiang Saen

This section discusses whether it is possible to achieve a balance between identity and socio-economic agendas, so achieving a sustainable model of tourism for the future.

Although it is generally known in Chiang Saen that increases in tourism could have a substantial positive effect upon the economic development of the town, the way in which the benefits of tourism are perceived is different among different stakeholders. For residents, an important consideration is how the increased level of tourism is achieved: they give equal priority to both the 'means' and the 'ends'. In contrast, other stakeholders - such as local leaders and entrepreneurs - give a high priority to ensuring that their development objectives are met and are less interested in the means for achieving this. The majority of those who were interviewed thought that the development of tourism would generate benefits for the community - particularly economic benefits, such as income from working in the tourism industry and selling local products to tourists. A retired schoolteacher, who was the leader of a sub-community[69] within Chiang Saen, said that:

> I think that the development of tourism in Chiang Saen will generate some economic benefits for local people - such as they will be able to sell some of their products to tourists. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Another member of the Chiang Saen community said that, if managed correctly, increased tourism could generate opportunities for local businesses and so provide a better quality of life for residents. However, he insisted that investment by local organisations should focus upon improving basic services for tourists - for

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[69] The town of Chiang Saen has been informal divided into six sub-communities, with the consent of residents and the Chiang Saen Municipality Office. This is an attempt to help residents design and organise activities according to their needs. (see more details in the section of terminology used in thesis in the methodology chapter)

example, local transport services, the environment and landscape around historic buildings, and basic infrastructure such as the quality of the roads:

> I think that a good development project to increase tourism would generate opportunities for local people to own some small businesses, such as home stay tourism or a local food shop for tourists. I also think that the development project should be concerned with managing the historic town's landscape, such as re-decorating old buildings and historic buildings, improving infrastructure and tourist services. (Wichit, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Despite this, most of interviewees were less concerned about the economic benefits from increased tourism than they were about the potential for it to improve the quality of life for residents. Residents defined quality of life not only in terms of wealth, but also in terms of enjoying a safe and friendly environment and having good relationships with other members of the community:

> Although tourism is important for the town as it generates economic benefits for local people, I don't think that the income people earn from tourism is the priority for local residents….What we want from the town's development is that it is able to generate a better quality of life for local people….In my opinion, I think living in a safe environment and a good community is also able to generate a good quality of life for people. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Interviewees were also concerned about how the budget of the Chiang Saen Municipality Office and other local government organisations was being spent. They wanted more money invested directly into projects and activities designed to help residents, such as improving local education services for children, improving health services and the local infrastructure. Amnath, a resident and the leader of a sub-community in Chiang Saen, said that in his experience these organisations spent an increasing part of their budget on tourism development projects, rather than spending it on projects for residents. He was also concerned about the fact

that tourists to Thailand spend the majority of their money with tour operators in their home country or in Bangkok, Chiang Mai and the city of Chiangri and only make a short visit of two or three hours to Chiang Saen. There is little tourist income from visits to Wat Jedi Luang and Wat Pa Sak and spending on souvenirs is significantly less than when tourists visit other destinations such as the Golden Triangle and Maesai:

> The local government and related organisations should allocate more of their budget for local services such as local health, education and security facilities in the town, rather than to projects aiming to attract tourists - such as buying a tram in order to organise sightseeing tours in the area of the inner city of the historic town or buying a boat to organise boat trips on the Maekong River. I think these projects should be organised by the private sector. I don't think these projects will generate much benefit for local residents, as most of the tourists spend less than 2-3 hours of their time in the historic town and their travel arrangements have already been made by tour operators in their own country or in the city where they started their travels such as Bangkok, Chiang Mai and the city of Chiangrai. (Amnath, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Mayo (2000) argues that a community is not just a geographical area shared by a group of people but is also a group of people with shared interests. Residents in Chiang Saen believe that local politicians and investors do not have enough respect for the community's wishes and that during election campaigns politicians commit themselves to helping the interests of businesses. Consequently, they stressed the importance of finding ways for members of the community to have their voice heard within the decision-making process. This has been seen most clearly recently in the shift from demands for world heritage status to community interests in gaining recognition for Chiang Saen as a national heritage site.

Government Plans for national heritage status

As an alternative to the failed proposal to turn Chiang Saen into a world heritage site (discussed earlier in the chapter) the community has recently proposed a new project that residents think will be a more suitable way to maintain the town's identity. Based upon the residents' needs, it is hoped that it will cause fewer conflicts of interest among stakeholders. According to conversations with the head of the Chiang Saen District Office, the CSC leader and Mayor of Chiang Saen Municipality there is no specific organisation or person that raised this proposal but they said that it was initiated and proposed by a group of local residents and local organisations who were associated together as a loose and informal group. In interviews, residents named this the National Heritage Project. It has been defined by the community as an attempt to promote Chiang Saen as a place with a unique history, culture, architecture, traditions and way of life. The project has been supported by a number of community members:

> In my opinion, I think the most appropriate thing in order to maintain the historic town is to promote its national heritage instead of [promoting it] as a world heritage site because local people can remain in their houses and on their land and it won't cause conflicts amongst them. (Sompong, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

> I think becoming a national heritage site is better suited for Chiang Saen as we can retain the city's identity and we are able to continue to develop appropriate business projects. However, all development projects must be carried out with care and local respect. In addition, zonal management of businesses development and the city's master plan must be ready by that time. (Wichit, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

It could be argued that the above comments also represent one of Grootes (2000) categories of place identity making where the focus is on the debatable identity of a place. These comments refer to a different perspective from community members towards what the identity of community should be. The debate among

community members about the identity of community is also illustrated by other interviewees as discussed below.

When interviewed, another local resident agreed that being a world heritage site would have caused problems within the community:

> In my opinion, I think Chiang Saen is unable to promote itself as a world heritage site, as it would cause a huge problem with land and property development, economic investment, local livelihoods and conflicts amongst community members. (Yongyuth, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Thongchai - a resident who has experienced the long-running debates within the community about the pros and cons of the proposal to become a world heritage site - added that the community hoped the National Heritage Project would allow them to balance conflicting ideas about the future of Chiang Saen:

> I think we can progress the town in both ways if we balance the needs of local people for a traditional ways of life, culture, the city's identity and the business sector. I don't see any reason to promote the city as the world heritage site, as we have learned that it caused conflict within our community. If we could position the city in this way I'm confident that people will be happy and might perceive the city as a national heritage or cultural heritage city. (Thongchai, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Another interesting contribution to this debate was made by a Chiang Saen resident who had worked with several education, cultural and conservation projects within the town:

> Honestly, rather than becoming a destination for mass tourism, I want to see the city become a centre for Lanna Thai culture, where people can come to learn and experience a very unique culture and traditional way of life. I don't want to see conflict among local people about how to construct or re-construct the town's identity or whether being a world heritage site or national heritage site is more suitable for Chiang Saen. As for debates

about the future direction of the city, particularly between conservation and development, I want them to compromise and balance the conservation and development of the city in order to fulfil the needs of all stakeholders. I think that becoming a national heritage site could possibly make what I just mentioned happen. (Thiti, 24 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Summing up all of the above quotes, it could be argued that the desire to preserve the historic identity of Chiang Saen is an attempt to enhance the town's value as a tourist destination. Those in favour of preservation hope to attract more tourists to visit, particularly from the new market for special-interest tourism. It is believed that special-interest tourists will spend much longer visiting the town, compared to mass market tourists, because they will want to know more about Chiang Saen's local culture, history and traditional way of life. Residents hope to attract more special interest tourists by advertising the town to both the public and to the tourism industry through press releases, regional television programs, the internet, word-of-mouth and by organising special events. One interviewee, a Chiang Saen resident who worked with local organisations responsible for tourism and other cultural activities, said that he hoped enhancing the attractiveness of the town would enable it to compete with other destinations for tourism and to promote more features of the town's identity than previously:

I think that instead of attempting to push the town to be a business hub, which currently is a controversial debate among stakeholders, we had better move our intentions forward by enhancing the town's identity. It is already recognised by people from other regions as an historic town and by promoting the town to the wider public and to tourism businesses via advertising channels we can make them aware that the town has more unique characteristics which are worth them visiting: such as promoting the town as the centre for original Lanna culture and art; as a place where people, particularly people with special interests, can come to see and experience the very unique lifestyle of residents; and as a very peaceful environment, which is good for people who want to hide themselves away from their busy life. (Siam, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

Consequently, it is important that residents of Chiang Saen have enough opportunities to decide their own future. To make sure that they benefit from any changes it is also important that they have the opportunity to add their knowledge - or what they call local wisdom - into the process of preserving and developing the identity of the town. Furthermore, it is clear that the transition of Chiang Saen from being an historic town is a continuing process, which might change from time to time depending upon the goals and interests of the community. According to Groote et al (2000), the identity of a place is constructed and reconstructed in such a way that it changes continually depending upon the nature of the current identity, historical factors and unprecedented factors. In the case of Chiang Saen, the transition and development of the town can be seen as producing an evolution of the town's identity. Residents have argued that if their participation in the transition process is increased then a better understanding about the details of different projects will be created within the community, which will create a more supportive environment for projects to develop. It is hoped that this will lead to greater successes than at present, where it is perceived that a small group of people and organisations (such as politicians, entrepreneurs and government organisations) control the processes of change within Chiang Saen.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed different ideas about the identity of places and communities and the transition of Chiang Saen's identity. Identity symbolises the nature of a place, its landscape, residents' interests and history, and differentiates one place from another. In the case of Chiang Saen, both residents and those living outside of the area know the identity of the town. Consequently, it has become a famous destination for tourists. Residents have used Chiang Saen's identity as a means to protest about some development projects initiated by the government in order to promote the northern regions of Thailand. They express concern that the development of a business hub and the Chiang Saen Industrial Park could have a negative impact upon the historic character of their town. There has been much debate among residents as to whether Chiang Saen should remain as an historic town or become a business hub. This chapter showed that the majority of residents want the town to retain its own identity, rather than

becoming a business hub, and the majority want to be involved in the process of changing the town's identity. Residents' involvement is seen as a key factor for establishing a good relationship among all stakeholders and ensuring the success of development projects. However, the approach taken to developing the town, the activities taking place and the nature of the transition process is still controversial within the community. This controversy will be discussed in the next and final empirical chapter focusing on community involvement and participation in the development process.

Chapter 7
Community involvement and participation: a new approach to the development of tourism in the historic town of Chiang Saen

Introduction

The previous two chapters have discussed conservation and development projects in the historic town of Chiang Saen. They have considered the need to strike a balance between the two and to take account of the wishes of various stakeholders, including the town's residents. What has emerged is the need for more community participation in the decision-making process, so that whichever way the identity of Chiang Saen is reconstructed their needs will be met.

This chapter examines whether such increased community involvement in the decision making process is appropriate and whether it will result in better development projects within Chiang Saen than those currently initiated by the government and developers acting alone. In addition, residents' views about increasing their level of participation will also be disscussed. The main question the chapter will address is: will more community participation and involvement increase the ability of local people to help themselves to develop and will it lead to the creation of an appropriate model to develop tourism in Chiang Saen? This is an important question because, as discussed in the previous chapters, residents of Chiang Saen believe that traditional top-down development approaches have not worked. They have not allowed them to participate in the development process and have not maintained the town's historic identity as the residents wished. The first section of this chapter briefly discusses definitions and different types of community participation and links these to the case study of Chiang Saen.

As discussed at length in chapter 2, participation is understood in this study as the ways and opportunity through which people are able to share and become involved in and derive benefits from development activities and processes.

In Thailand, participation is seen as the ways in which people are able to share in activities organized by the government (both at national and local level), communities and Non Government Organizations. Turton (1987) suggests that

participation in Thailand has been promoted as an alternative approach that represents bottom-up development aiming to replace top-down approaches and emphasising a wider group of people rather than only officials and elites. Turton (1987) also argues that participation in Thailand reflects cultural norms and as a result, the degree of women's participation is low compared to that of men. Women normally share their views by letting the men (their husbands or community leaders) speak for them. It can also be argued that participation in Thailand is mostly seen in the form of client relationships, particularly between the government and ordinary residents (Demaine, 1986:106).

In Chiang Saen it can be argued that the local residents' willingness to participate resulted from their perception that the benefits of the development projects initiated by the government are unlikely to reach the local community. They realized that the benefits will mainly go to the business sectors, such as trading and commercial entrepreneurs who have migrated from outside the community. There are no details or data provided to guarantee that the potential impacts generated by the government's development projects are controllable and manageable. People therefore requested participation as they believed it could provide them with an opportunity to speak out and share their views with officials about what they need and want to see in their community. This reflects Hirsch's (1990:229) interpretation of participation as a method to involve people in something from which they have been excluded. On the other hand, government officials also realize that providing adequate opportunities for people to get involved in development activities is the way to empower community members and local residents and enable them to learn and exchange knowledge about their community. For example the head of the Chiang Saen district office[70] stated that government organizations usually encourage local residents to participate in activities organized by local organizations such as attending meetings and seminars as a means to share their needs.

The participation of local residents in Chiang Saen, can be classified in different forms as mentioned by one local resident[71] who said that locals defined

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[70] The head of Chiang Saen district office, 31 May 2007, Chiang Saen
[71] Local resident, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen

participation as "Kan Mee Suen Reum". They want to attend meetings, seminars and study visits, and to share in the benefits from development, especially tourism development, so that they can sell their local products and have the opportunity to gain a better quality and standard of services provide by government. The ways in which participation is promoted and achieved in Chiang Saen will be discussed in more details in the chapter below.

The next section discusses residents' views on the changes taking place in their town and whether they want more active community participation in the new types of tourism being created. It also considers whether more community involvement could be encouraged in other development activities, apart for tourism. Specific examples of how local residents have participated in development activities within Chiang Saen are also outlined.

Community involvement in Chiang Saen's tourism industry: a new approach to development?

The emergence of community participation in Chiang Saen can be traced back to the early 1990s when residents formed the Chiang Saen Conservation Group (CSC), a group interested in doing conservation work in the town. Since this time the CSC has organised conservation activities for residents, particularly designed to educate them about why conservation is important. Since the 1990s the CSC's activities have widened into other areas, such as the environmental impacts of economically beneficial projects designed by both the government and the private sector. However, according to the CSC leader, community participation in the CSC's activities has remained limited to only a small number of residents: CSC members, elderly residents and some grandees from the town have been the most frequent attendees. It is claimed that traditional cultural norms and shyness are the main reasons why more residents have not turned up to their activities in the past. Plus, as most of the development projects in Chiang Saen were organised by the

government on behalf of ordinary people *(Phra-cha-chon-tam-ma-da: ประชาชน ธรรมดา),*[72] initially local people trusted the government to initiate developments that would have a positive effect upon their lives:

> In terms of development, I think local people had no questions about the benefits they would receive from those development projects as they were initiated by the government, and local residents believed that the government always provided them with services which were free of charge or less expensive, such as basic services – for example education and health care services. (Nongnuch, 19 December 2007, Chiang Saen)

However, once local residents started to realise that they were not receiving many benefits from the development of tourism in Chiang Saen, they have increasingly questioned whether they had any influence over the changes happening within the tourist market in the town and if they could increase this. Residents were keen to have their voice heard because of the close connection between the community and tourism in the town. On the one hand, the community provides access to different attractions and products for the tourism industry - from both the natural and the built environment. On the other hand, tourism changes the lives of a community that is dominated by visitors. This means that tourism cannot be separated from other aspects of life and becomes an important part of the community (see also Richards and Hall, 2000 for discussion).

Tourism is perceived as an important part of the town's economic development, even though it has not played an important role in its economic development in recent years because the community relies heavily upon the agricultural sector. In a sense, a community may also be defined as the coming together of a physical area (a place and its environment) with a set of values (a culture, economy and way of life). The relative importance of these different factors may change over time depending upon external forces, such as globalisation and the changing market for tourism, or due to internal forces, such as local needs and interests. In addition, a community may also change in response to the changing political will

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[72] Refers to ordinary people (without any position or rank) who live in the community.

of the people. It is inevitable that a community will change with tourism but the perceived mismanagement of tourism within Chiang Saen has caused problems within the community. Usually initiated by central government and external agencies, without community participation, the development of tourism is perceived by many residents as failing to meet their needs. Like most communities, Chiang Saen's is now more alert to the ways in which residents can access the process of development and influence decision-making. One example of the way in which local residents attempted to lead the development process is when they initiated a proposal to turn their town into a world heritage site, and more recently into a national heritage site, in order to protest about the Industrial Park Project as discussed in in the previous chapter.

In this chapter, community is not only considered to be a location with a specific boundary enclosing a group of people, but also as a commodity with the potential to make profit from the tourism market. Past attempts by the government, and other organisations, to use tourism to promote the community of Chiang Saen seem to have been successful. However, in practice there are several difficulties, such as the different nature of the community, different perceptions about the development of tourism in the town, and unequal access to the decision making process. In addition, McLaren (1998) highlights that a lack of information, resources and power, compared to other stakeholders, have been obstacles preventing the involvement of the community in the development of tourism. Despite this, residents believe that they should increase their attempts to participate in the process of developing the town, so that they can share in the potential benefits from tourists visiting the area:

> I have lived in the town since I was born and can see how it has been changed. As an agricultural town surrounded by historic buildings, the town has attracted a number of tourists to visit and is becoming a famous destination. In recent years the government and some local organisations have launched the idea of promoting and developing the town into a more famous destination for tourists through several plans and projects that we thought were good at the time. However, we realised that these plans and projects were not going in the way we expected, as most of them were

designed and processed by the government. I don't think we have had enough opportunities to get involved in detail….It seems that we know only what they want us to know. I think this is not good for us because we should have the right to know and participate in any activity scheduled in our community *(Choom-chon: ชุมชน)*[73], as they will cause an impact on our livelihoods. I think the government and related organisations should provide us with the opportunity to participate and become involved, and listen to what we think about projects, as we are living here and will be living here for the rest of our lives. (Amnath, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

This comment, from a resident who was born in Chiang Saen and has lived there all of his life, reflects the fact that residents believe that the way in which development of the town has been managed by the government in recent years has failed to meet the needs of the community. The strength of this feeling is such that many think it is now an obstacle preventing effective future collaborations between residents and government.

Similarly, another resident said that his experience of development activity in recent years was that local residents had not had enough opportunities to participate and too often had been asked to attend meetings where the government announced to residents what they had already done. He argues that residents should have equal opportunities to participate in the development process and not just be forced to listen to what the government and developers wanted them to know. He thought that residents should have access to government development projects by being involved in early consultations about each initiative and then by having residents represented as members of the development's project team:

I think that in terms of having the opportunity to participate in development activity, we, as local people, don't have enough opportunities. I'm aware that it is very important for us to participate in development activity because the outcome of the development project will affect us either for good or bad. We've tried to communicate to the

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[73] Refers to a community in Thai language. The geographical area where people live in the inner area of Chiang Saen historic town is approximately two square kilometres.

government that we require more opportunities from them but not much has changed. (Yongyuth, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

From the above, it would appear that the more equal involvement of residents in development activities should be a key part of any plan to promote community participation. Such increased community involvement could also lead to more of the benefits from developments, particularly from tourism, being passed onto residents rather than going to outsiders. This will be discussed in the following sections.

Residents' (contradictory) views about increasing their participation in Chiang Saen's changing tourism industry

Smith (1998) states that often local people perceive that participation in national government schemes means more than using the service in question or being part of the supply-chain of small firms providing resource inputs. He describes this as 'passive participation', which tends to be seen as tokenism, inauthentic and repressive, arguing that participation must involve some degree of control over the service in question. Therefore, more involvement by community members in the process of development and more influence over the spending of public resources is needed. Such 'active participation' could also lead to improvements in residents' standard of living and reduce inequalities between government and the people, between the rich and poor. In the case of Chiang Saen, more active participation by residents may help to answer the question of who development is designed to benefit - the government, entrepreneurs or the local people:

> I have always heard from government officers and local organisations when attending meetings about some development project within the community, especially projects related to tourism, that they have allocated a lot of money to the budget for the project. It seems to me that those projects are mainly designed to satisfy tourists as their first priority. I'm not sure where they put us [Chiang Saen residents] in this. I just think that they should allocate a bigger budget for local services. (Amnath, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Amnath went on to say that when local residents had proposed projects to improve basic community services, such as organising a short training course for elderly residents, improving health care or arranging a traditional activity, it had always taken a long time to get a response from either the government or a local organisation. He said that, compared to government development projects which were allocated a large budget, normally residents were told that there was not enough money to fund their ideas:

> I, on behalf of community residents, proposed to the government and local organisations ideas for improving road quality within our community, but they said that they didn't have a large enough budget at that time and that we needed to wait - but I don't know for how long. We learned that, in the meantime, they allocated more than triple the budget we asked for to a project they believe will help them to promote tourism in the community. I'm not quite sure who the development is for, us or tourists….What they said to us is that tourism will generate benefits for the community and we will have opportunities to gain those benefits, but I'm not sure we will. (Amnath, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

It is interesting that when interviewed, leaders of local organisations pointed out that they and the central government had provided opportunities for local residents to get involved in several development projects:

> I think that local people are aware of how important local involvement is. I think they like to participate in most development activities and we also provided them with the opportunity to participate. (Winai, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

In contrast, most of the residents of Chiang Saen who were interviewed were keen to highlight that they did not think that they had had enough opportunities to participate in development projects:

> I think local residents do not have enough opportunities although they are aware that their participation in development activities is important and

they now want more opportunities from development organisations. I think local residents might have more opportunities in the future because it seems to me that development organisations will take action more about this. (Yongyuth, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Similarly, Pattana, the resident with a small tourism business in Chiang Saen, agreed that residents wanted more opportunities to participate in the development plans of the government and local organisations:

Personally, I think residents do not have enough opportunities to get involved and participate in development activities in the community [of Chiang Saen]. It seems that sometimes the development organisations try not to offer opportunities to local people, particularly when they perceive or worry that local residents or their representatives will potentially present ideas and debates in different ways to that which is expected. (Pattana, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

When the government and developers have not provided the community with opportunities to participate residents have interpreted this to mean that they did not want interference in their development activities:

I think local residents are aware of the importance of community participation and involvement compared to in the past but, because sometimes they are not provided with enough opportunities from the related organisations, this has caused them not to be willing to participate or to get involved. (Pattana, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

It could be argued that such differing perceptions between residents and developers about the opportunities for community participation are the result of misunderstandings between the stakeholders. This can be seen as a sign of a lack of communication about this issue taking place in town.

Scheyvens (2002) argues that the opportunity for residents to share the social and economic benefits from tourism is another way in which they can participate in

development activities. Smith describes the way in which local residents are able to participate in these benefits in the following way:

> Firstly, ownership confers personal status in the community and promotes expanded networking through membership of organisations with a louder voice in the wider community. Secondly, it better enables residents to take control and to manage local tourism through existing social networks or to establish *ad hoc* associations to help empower them as decision-makers. Thirdly, privatisation can build equity in business terms, to become a family legacy or sellable retirement asset. Fourthly, the psychological satisfaction of owing one's own business can generate personal opportunities to increase earning power through responsible management and hard work. Finally, family proprietorships can hire disabled, elderly, juvenile and, in some cases, female family members and friends who might not otherwise be employable. (Smith quoted in Timothy, 2002:157)

In the case of Chiang Saen, one of the interesting findings from the interviews with residents is that tourism is not seen as the dominant industry in the town, as the majority of residents are dependent upon the agricultural sector (as illustrated in chapter 4). Wanchai, who has worked in Chiang Saen for over 10 years, argued that residents therefore have less opportunity to share in the potential benefits from community participation in development activities in the town:

> As tourism has not played a major role in the local economy of Chiang Saen, there are only a small number of local residents who are able to share and access the benefits from tourism, such as some local entrepreneurs who operate small guest houses and souvenir shops. Most of the tourism activities and services in the town are provided and organised by tour operators outside of the community. Although tourism generates some work opportunities, I think there are not many significant opportunities for local residents to share in these benefits, as some work requires semi-skilled and skilled workers while most local residents are un-skilled for the tourism business. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

Thiti, another local resident who is also a member of the Chiang Saen Conservation Group, expressed a similar view:

> I think that tourism is not a major sector in the town's economy as the town itself is primarily dependent on the agricultural sector. What I have seen is that tourists visiting to the town, mostly in the form of group tours that are organised by travel agencies, make only a short visit for an hour to the city. So, I think there are not many benefits that local people are able to share and participate in. However, some local people who sell some local products to tourists might be able to participate in the benefits from tourism but these people can be seen as a very small number of residents in the town. Apart from these people, I don't see any other people who have participated in the economic benefits from tourism. (Thiti, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

In addition to above comments, a review of the secondary data also reveals some interesting findings about the reaction of residents in the historic town of Chiang Saen to the proposals for tourism and development projects in the town.

Firstly there was the reaction of residents in Chiang Saen to the proposed Chiang Saen Industrial Park, which they thought could cause more negative impacts for the community than positive ones as we learnt in the previous chapter. The important lesson learnt from the residents' opposition to this project is that if the community became self-dependent this would help to maintain the town's identity. On the other hand, the important lesson for the government was that if it fails to respect the community's wishes and provides inadequate information this could delay development projects throughout Chiang Saen, evidence for this lesson was that local residents proposed that Chiang Saen should be nominated as a world heritage site which was designed as a protest against the Thai government's Chiang Saen Industrial Park. While it is not clear how decisive this was in persuading the government to move their proposed industrial park to another region, it is interesting to note the reaction of residents to the idea of world heritage status being obtained for Chiang Saen and their subsequent

empowerment through seminars, workshops and study visits and the emergence of the Chiang Saen National Heritage project.

The reaction of residents as community stakeholders to the changes and developments taking place in Chiang Saen can be classified into four different categories, according to the analysis of secondary documents about residents' reactions and interviews. Firstly, there is a group of residents who need more opportunities to get involved in development activities and want to retain the town's historic identity. This group are mostly ordinary local residents, who believes that all development projects should be evaluated to see if they are in keeping with the town's identity and to assure residents that they will not cause negative changes to the town. This group point out that tourists travel to Chiang Saen because they want to see the historic town. Development is necessary. However they think that, rather than the development of tourism being the first priority, the development of residents' basic needs - such as their livelihoods, nutrition, education, health, safety, and other basic infrastructure -is more important and should happen first.

Secondly, there is a group made up of local government organisations, some government officials, leaders of local organisations and some local entrepreneurs. Members of this group need more support from central government - particularly budgetary support. They believe that business development projects are very important for Chiang Saen as they will generate economic benefits for the community, create jobs and provide a better quality of life for local people. It is also interesting to note that, while many residents of Chiang Saen argue that they have not had enough opportunities to participate in government proposals to develop their town, members of this group argue that they have provided opportunities for them to participate but residents were reluctant to do so.

Thirdly, there is a group of local entrepreneurs who believe that the development of Chiang Saen could generate economic benefits for the whole town and will contribute to improving the residents' quality of life. This group needs more consistency in the government's policies for economic development and financial support from the government for small and medium size businesses.

Lastly, there is a group of elite people - such as schoolteachers, some government officials, the middle class and local NGOs. Information from secondary sources suggests that this group believe that development is important for Chiang Saen's future but that the local community should have more opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. This is because they think that more community control over proposed developments would reduce the problem of conflicts between the local community and developers.

From the above discussion, it would appear that a lack of opportunities for the residents of Chiang Saen to share and participate in the benefits from tourism has meant that they are not willing to participate in other development activities, such as meetings or workshops organised by the government. This would suggest that in order to create equitable opportunities for all residents to participate in the development of their town, and to share in the benefits, the building of local partnerships among stakeholders - such as government organisations, non-government organisations and the local community - is necessary in order to answer questions about who the development of Chiang Saen is for and who will gain the benefits. Creating good relationships between such stakeholders and the community, by organising meetings and seminars to exchange information and ideas, could also facilitate better cooperation from residents in support of development activities in their town. Ideas for building such collaborations and partnerships will be discussed in more detail in the next section.

Creating opportunities for the participation of stakeholders: community collaborations and commitment to the development process in Chiang Saen

As mentioned previously, the participation of residents is an essential part of community development. However, the question that remains to be answered is: can those involved in the development of Chiang Saen create a supportive environment that facilitates the participation of members of the local community? How the government, non-governmental organisations and residents collaborate is a key part of successfully developing Chiang Saen, particularly in terms of its ability to attract tourists. Therefore, as Lynn and Timothy (2000) observe, it is

important that such organisations are aware of the need to educate residents about how changes in their town will affect them because this will lead to a greater willingness to participate in development projects:

> Officials can also play an important role in building public awareness of tourism through media campaigns, education courses for residents involved in tourism (formally and informally) and public meetings. This is particularly important in regions of the world where economic and social circumstances have kept locals from having experiences as travelers. Some of these efforts are beginning to pay off in the developing world where governments are offering training courses to residents, but are also passing on vital information about being hosts by means of television, newspaper, and brochure campaigns. (Lynn and Timothy, quoted in Sharpley and Telfer, 2002:159)

In the case of Chiang Saen, the need to inform the community about what changes are planned has been disregarded by most government organisations and agencies due to inconsistent planning, limited budgets and the operation of a traditionally paternalistic, bureaucratic style of management. For example, Phongpaichit and Baker (2001) have pointed out that it took over two decades for several large development projects to be completed in Thailand due to the government's assumption that it had the sole right to make decisions and to identify the country's interests without consulting other parties. In fact, these projects were strongly opposed by a coalition of local people, activists, NGOs and environmental groups which delayed their implementation. According to Phongpaichit (2000), it is noticeable that the government tends to disregard the need to inform ordinary residents about what they are planning to do, preferring only to announce what they want residents to know after projects have started. Consequently, collaboration and coordination among interested parties is rarely seen in most development projects in Thailand. This is no different to the situation in Chiang Saen, where, as we have seen in the previous chapters, most of the new development projects are built for economic reasons and their impact on the local community's way of life, quality of life and social values is not considered.

According to Phongpaichit (2000), NGOs in Thailand have often been criticised by the government for being too radical and funded by organisations outside of the country. However, in recent years NGOs have gained support from the Thai public, particularly from people who have been affected by government development projects in the past this is because NGOs have helped ordinary people by bringing together those with similar problems to form support networks. NGOs have also connected residents in affected communities to experts, scholars, academic institutes and government officials in order for them to cooperate to find solutions to the various problems caused by development activities. Not every NGO has been successful in working with communities. A community member in Chiang Saen argued that creating a good working relationship and understanding between the town's residents, government organisations, the local administration and NGOs is an important part of establishing successful development projects in the community:

> I think that the relationships between local people and local organisations, and the relationship between organisations within the town, are the main obstacles to development in the city. In the meantime, it also becomes a key factor for successful development as well….So, I think that creating a good relationship and understanding among stakeholders is an important thing to do in order to progress development in the town because this will bring a bright future to development projects and they can share resources and information. (Somsak, 19 Dec 2007, Chiang Saen)

Somsak also pointed out that, in addition to creating a good relationship between organisations and local people in Chiang Saen, it is important for development projects to establish a good working relationship between different organisations:

> From my experience, I have found that different organisations have different plans and directions for development. So, it is easy to cause conflict and delays to development projects when they have to work together or to share resources….In order to sort this problem out they need to have a single plan and direction for development or set up a master plan for the town's development and designate a specific organisation to be

responsible for all development projects. (Somsak, 19 Dec 2007, Chiang Saen)

The above comment reflects the poor record of coordination and cooperation between organisations within the Chiang Saen community. It is noticeable that the government, as the organisation which owns most of the resources (human resources, budget and information) could play the role of mediator in order to build collaborations and partnerships in the community. Instead it tends to act as a dictator.

Timothy (2002) describes four different types of development cooperation:

First is cooperation between the private and public sectors, such as the hotel sector and ministries of tourism. Second is cooperation between government agencies, such as department of transportation and department of cultural affairs. Third is cooperation between different levels of administration, such as national and provincial; and, finally, is cross-border cooperation between same-level polities such as state and state (Timothy, quoted in Sharpley and Telfer, 2002:162).

However, Timothy goes on to argue that such cooperation is rarely successful in practice due to a lack of collaboration among related organisations. This can also be seen in the case of Chiang Saen's development activities in recent years. According to an interview with one key government official in the town, poor collaboration among related organisations in the town has slowed down the progress of development activities:

As you might know, among local government organisations within the city we set up a management scheme called 'integrated management' and we tried to work together to share some information. However, this scheme's progress was not so smooth as there were many limitations and it was not familiar to people as it is quite a new form of working. What I see as the key obstacle for this scheme is cooperation among organisations, as each organisation has its own plans and policies. However, if we can progress the scheme well I think it will generate advantages for the community,

such as it could provide more opportunities for the community and for local people to get involved in development activities than in the past. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

The emergence of the Chiang Saen Conservation Group (CSC) has been the starting point for improved community collaboration and commitment to development activities within Chiang Saen, as over the course of the previous decade only one NGO had been officially concerned with changes and developments in the town. The leader of the CSC said that changes to the town brought about by tourism have increased awareness among local people and entrepreneurs about the importance of Chiang Saen's culture, traditional way of life, identity, economy, environment and social values. While everyone involved should be informed about the potential positive and negative consequences of development, the leader of the CSC observed that previous attempts at collaboration between the local government and local organisations within Chiang Saen had not gone well because relations were too loosely structured. He did not know the reason why this had happened, except due to a lack of resources, budget and traditional styles of working. Nevertheless, the CSC has sometimes organised activities in the historic town with the cooperation of local organizations such as the office of Fine Arts department, the District Office and organizations outside the community such as Chiangrai University in order to generate more attention among local resident about the historic town. One example of such an activity was the youth guide program (see Figure 7.1). This aimed to train local school pupils to understand more about the historic town and be able to conduct day tours as volunteer guides if requested by local organizations. Many local organizations receive formal visitors and provide study visit programs for school pupils from outside the community.
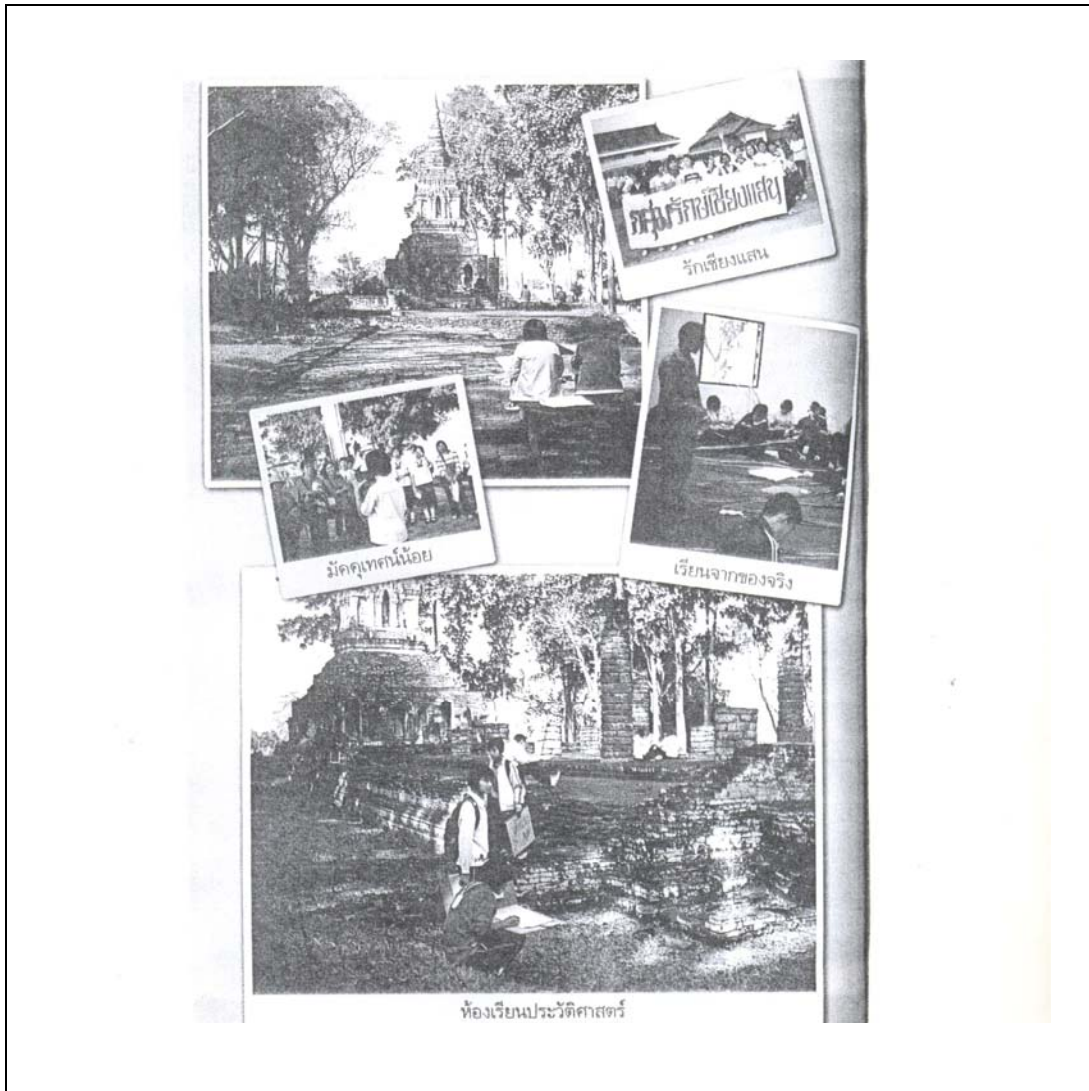
Figure 7.1: Illustration of the Youth Guide Training program for local school pupils Source: The CSC group, 2005

The CSC remained concerned that such organisations wanted to attract more tourists to Chiang Saen through large-scale projects. Instead, the CSC hoped that in the future they would pay more attention to persuading local people to maintain their local identity, as this would build local commitment towards development in the town. This, their leader explained, was what tourists wanted to come to Chiang Saen to see and was the best way to attract more visitors. It was also relatively cheap and would create the right environment to encourage people to participate in development projects initiated in their own community:

> I think that the problem for developing tourism in Chiang Saen, apart from unclear directions and plans from the government and related

organisations, is the inconsistency of their policy and plans for development. Ineffective communication, such as the one-way communication made by these organisations, does not generate enough opportunities for local members to participate. In addition, it seems that these organisations lack collaboration with each other. What I have seen is that they try to compete with each other and I think this is the reason why local people have not turned up to participate in most of the development activities in the town in recent years, even though people are aware of the importance of participation. (Thiti, 6 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

This seems to suggest that poor communication and a lack of understanding between stakeholders can cause problems for community development and that both government and nongovernmental organisations have very important roles to play. Discussing the current role of NGOs, the leader of the CSC thought that it was important for them to cooperate with the central government and other organisations in order to create a better understanding of development activities in Chiang Saen. He added that ideally NGOs should work as mediators, providing residents with accurate information about development activities and creating networking opportunities to increase participation and cooperation among all stakeholders (more details about the role of NGOs and tourism can be found in the chapter 2). However, in the case of Chiang Saen different approaches to development have been adopted by NGOs, government organisations and the local administration which have limited their ability to cooperate and has caused delays to development projects in the town.

In the meantime, the head of the Chiang Saen District Office said that residents and community organisations must be educated about the importance of their continued participation in current development projects in Chiang Saen and about the importance of strong collaborations between the government and the community:

I think that a lack of public relations from government organisations about the importance of community participation is the problem and is why people are reluctant to participate in most activities. I think that it is

important not only for local residents to understand why this is important but I think that government officials need to understand this too. So, I think government organisations and the local community need to become more organised and to work together on this issue in order to generate a better understanding and a good relationship. I think that it is very important to build up the community's commitment [to develop] good, understanding relationships between both local residents and local government organisations and between local government and local organisations. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

Despite the head of the Chiang Saen District Office's wishes, traditional development and management approaches within the government sector, based on a top-down approach with little involvement from local residents, remains an obstacle to progress in Chiang Saen. Indeed, as we have seen residents have often protested against developments. Consequently, it is difficult to find a form of development that the community believe will give them more opportunities to participate. Although stakeholders are exploring this, residents question whether any form of participation would meet their expectations and lead to their community becoming a sustainable, self-sufficient community (Choom-chon-baeb-pho-phiang: ชุมชนแบบพอเพียง)[74]. This difficulty will be analysed in the final section below.

Reconsidering community participation in Chiang Saen: a new approach to the development of tourism

As discussed previously, increasing the participation of residents in the development of Chiang Saen would enable them to take more control of the processes of economic and social change in their town. Consequently, residents are interested in finding a different approach to development that would allow them more involvement. However, misunderstandings, a top-down style of government project management, the failure of some stakeholders to involve

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[74] Refers to community where people's lives depend mainly on their own production and management. Subsides among members and a barter system are introduced as means for economic development within the community.

residents, problems with interpersonal relationships and ethical issues - such as residents' potential bias - are all reasons why up until now it has been difficult for the community to participate fully and successfully in Chiang Saen's development. These problems have also caused conflicts between residents of Chiang Saen about the best way for the community to participate. For example, some residents believe that the community's attempts to participate have caused delays to some developments in the town due to the very complicated nature of the consultation process:

> I used to participate in development activity. I think it is good for community members to have this opportunity. But, as most development activities are organised by the government and local organisations, it was complicated due to the bureaucracy and red tape and I think this caused a delay in some development activities and caused some community members not to be willing to participate in such activities. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

This suggests that attempts by the government and local organisations to provide opportunities for members of the community to participate in development activities in Chiang Saen may not be practical because they are poorly organised and not compatible with their own top-down form of management.

Nevertheless, according to interviewees, residents have often been told by scholars and government officials that community participation will provide more opportunities for them to access the benefits of development and could be a new approach to their town's development. This is confirmed by a government official who said that:

> I think that community participation is very important for the development of Chiang Saen, if community members are able to work together and share some information with development organisations. In addition, the participation of community members will become a channel for them to present what they want and need. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

He then went on to illustrate further why residents' involvement in the development process is important for their community:

> I think local involvement is very important as it helps people to be aware of their community and will bring them opportunities to get involved in development activities and will create a chance for them to decide what form of development they want for their community. (Wanchai, 30 May 2007, Chiang Saen)

These ideas were supported by a member of the Chiang Saen community, who worked as the leader of local organisations in the town:

> In my opinion, local people's participation is the key factor for the success of all development projects. This is because without their support delays to development projects could easily happen, particularly when they protest about projects and perceive developers as an opposition party to them. (Siam, 19 December 2008, Chiang Saen)

However, despite comments from scholars and government officials supporting the idea of increasing the participation of the community in Chiang Saen's development, residents' previous experiences mean that they are still not sure whether to believe what they have been told:

> I think local participation and involvement is very important for our community because I think that it will enable people to be aware of the changes and developments in the community and it will also generate the commitment of local people to their community. But sometimes I think local residents are confused about developments in their community because of the inconsistency of government plans and policies, such as the plan to educate people about the importance of community participation and involvement. It seems to me that they educate people why this is important but in practice it does not apply and [they don't] provide them with enough opportunities to be part of the activity. (Wichit, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Another resident, a retired school teacher, said that, although he did not understand why the government and local organisations had not provided more opportunities for Chiang Saen residents to participate in development activities, he felt that residents often had not wanted to participate:

> I think local involvement is very important but it seems to me that organisations, such as the government and local organisations, do not try to create enough opportunities for local residents to participate. I also don't understand why, sometimes, most local residents do not like to participate. It seems that they will participate only when they are forced to, such as when they are informed that if they do not participate they will be affected by the activity's outcome. For me, I think to attend development activities, and other activities organised in the community, is very important because you can tell people what you want to see and how would you like the government and other organisations to do this for you. In addition, you can also ask about what you don't understand. (Suthi, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Some of the reasons why local residents do not participate have already been explained by the leader of CSC in the previous quotation. In addition, according to a conversation with one ordinary resident who no longer participated in activities organised by the local government organizations, local residents are not given enough opportunities to speak out about what they think.

> Although I know that participation is important for local residents sometimes I felt that we waste our time participating in some activities organised by the local government as they do not provide enough opportunity for us to speak out about what we think. What I experienced is that the government officer is the one who is always speaking throughout the activity. (Amnath, 7 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

The reason illustrated in the above comment is similar to what was described by Arnstein (1969) as illustrated in chapter 2 in the 'Arnstein's ladder'. The third level, so-called *information* refering to community involvement and participation

where the participation of people is being told what is going to happen is happening or has happened by officials as this will not attract the interest of local residents to participate.

Clearly, it is important that the residents of Chiang Saen begin to see it as their right to participate in development activities. Picture 7.1 illustrates the participation of local resident in the activity related to development which was organised by local organisations can be an opportunity for them to demonstrate what they think about developments in their community. In this photograph residents are leading a focus group with other residents, and using a flip chart to collect opinions. In a similar vein a community leader said:

> I think local involvement is very important for development activity. People should be aware of their right to share ideas or to ask about what they don't understand by getting involved in as many activities as they can. They must learn how to form a group in order to progress some development activities within the community on their own. (Yingyong, 8 June 2007, Chiang Saen)

Picture 7.1: Residents participate in some tourism related activities, organised by the Chiang Saen Municipality Office and other related organisations.

Source: Author

Arguably, the most significant obstacle to increasing community participation is how to interpret the idea from theory into practice. There is no doubt that participation is important and can extend the ability of the community to influence development activities. However, a lack of understanding about the process of community participation, the relationship between stakeholders in the community's development and government red tape has made Chiang Saen residents sceptical as to whether increased community participation can be seen as a new approach to the development of their historic town.

Conclusion

This chapter has discussed whether community participation and involvement could be a potential (new) approach to development, including the development of tourism, in the historic town of Chiang Saen. Chiang Saen residents are unsure whether to maintain their town's historic identity or to develop it in response to the economic needs of the government. For the residents of Chiang Saen,

participating in proposals to change tourism in their town is perceived as one way of creating more opportunities for them to access the development process. In particular, it allows them to access the decision-making process, which they have been excluded from under the traditional top-down approach to development over the last two decades *(Karn-pattana-bon-long-lang:* การพัฒนาแบบบนลงล่าง*)*[75]. The participation of Chiang Saen residents means that there is more chance of them having the power to make decisions and to control development projects. Sharing in the benefits of development projects is also seen as a form of participation. Building commitments to collaborate with all parties interested in the development of Chiang Saen is therefore seen as important. It is hoped that collaboration among all parties will generate appropriate changes in the town and create developments that the community think are appropriate given the town's historic identity. According to this study, creating a single method of local participation in development projects and re-examining how to apply the idea of local participation in practice would reassure the Chiang Saen community that participation can produce an acceptable new approach to the development of their historic town.

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[75] Refers to a development approach in which decision-making is controlled by the government or external agencies without participation from local residents (Karn-pattana Bon long lang).

Chapter 8
Conclusions chapter

Introduction

This thesis sets out to examine the contested vision of local stakeholders regarding the relative importance of the identity of place over the role of tourism in the development trajectory of the historic town of Chiang Saen. According to the theoretical framework and literature review, as illustrated in the introduction chapter, the main aims and objectives of this research may be outlined as follows:

1. To investigate the contested perceptions of local stakeholders towards the prospective impact of the government's proposed tourism development project; in particular the contested vision of the threat to the identity of the historic town

2. To investigate the appropriate approach to tourism and local development in the historic town of Chiang Saen, Chiang Saen District, Chiangrai, Thailand, especially considering the impact of the Greater Mekong Sub-Region (GMS) related project and the growth of tourism.

3. To investigate the participation of the key players in the development of tourism in Chiang Saen District in order to understand how it would be possible to minimize conflict and maximize cooperation between these players.

In this final part of the thesis the researcher will provide and review a summary of the key findings, conclusions and any recommendations that might be applicable to future good practice. At this point some suggestions for future research are also included.

Summary of key findings

In this section, key findings will be illustrated according to the research objectives outlined in the introduction chapter.

In accordance with the first objective of the research, one interesting finding is that local stakeholders perceived that the government's proposed development

project would have a negative impact on the community rather than the positive impact that had been suggested. This perception led to protest against several government projects, as illustrated in chapter 4. The key problem identified by the research was that there was no opportunity for local people to gain unmediated access to information about the proposed developments. Information promulgated by the government highlighted only the likely positive outcomes and did not facilitate a two-way communication or consultative process with local stakeholders. The most crucial impact perceived by local stakeholders, and the one that caused them greatest concern, was that it would cause major changes to the town, particularly the impact on the identity of the town in its important historic context. In addition, the research also showed the strength of local stakeholder reaction to the threat of change in the town in the community's collective protest against this threat as illustrated in chapters 4 to 7. The research also illustrated that the contested vision of the town's identity, whether it should remain simply an historic town or go beyond this and become the business hub envisaged by the government, was the key debate among local stakeholders. The majority of these local stakeholders were vociferous in their opinion that the town should maintain its historic identity rather than become the business hub, as argued in chapter 5 and 6.

In reaction to government development projects local stakeholders sought an appropriate combination of tourism and local development. This led to the second objective of the research; the approach they sought was one that would consume least resources and generate least impact for the community of the historic town of Chiang Saen. Several activities had been organised by local organisations and the wider community in order to investigate and examine an appropriate approach, as illustrated in chapters 6 and 7, such as seminars and meetings, and a study visit to another historic town. The research has illustrated that these activities were considered as the key sources where local stakeholders gained knowledge and understanding of viable approaches to tourism and development and also information which would enable them to decide which approach was most appropriate for their historic town. Among several approaches they considered was a community-based development, such as tourism that was based on and respected community needs; this approach seems acceptable to local stakeholders

in Chiang Saen. As the researcher argued in chapter 2, community-based development was the approach that provided most opportunity for community stakeholders to be involved in development activities particularly in terms of access to spaces where they are able to speak about their needs and wants.

This finding leads naturally to the final objective of this research which focuses on how local involvement and participation are important for community development. The key finding of this research objective showed that lack of community involvement could cause delay in achieving the desired development aims through provoking local protest against the development. In addition, another key finding in this research is that the failure of both the government bodies and developers to deliver detailed information about proposed development projects to local stakeholders was the primary reason why their attempts to progress several related projects to the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS) had failed. This research also showed that local stakeholders did not take up those opportunities of consultation that were offered as they had lost faith in the government; it was perceived that any consultative activities were offered in order to manipulate local opinion and that the government and others involved in the proposed developments would not disclose full unmediated information to local people. These attitudes relate to the model described by Arnstein (1969) in 'Arnstein's ladder of citizen participation' where, on the lowest rung of (non)participation, the manipulation level, the community is seen as a passive community; and even at the information level, which is participatory and people are being told what is going to happen, is happening or has happened, participants, even if active, will not have the agency to influence events.

In chapter 2 it is demonstrated that local involvement and participation is perceived as a factor influencing the success of community development as Rattanasuwongchai (1998) and Rocharungsat (2008) argued; local involvement and participation is the key factor for community tourism development. In this research, poor management by government bodies and developers is also seen as a key finding and perceived as a factor influencing the failure of community development, as illustrated in chapter 7.

This research also showed that local stakeholders perceived that the traditional approach to development of the community would exclude them from involvement and participation in such development activity and also that those traditional approaches of development have in the past failed to meet their (local) needs. As Marsden and Oakley (1982) stated, community involvement and participation has emerged because of the failure of the conventional development approach which often refers to economic benefit and modernisation of the community as the aim of development. In relation to this, in chapter 6, one of the key findings showed that local stakeholders considered that the main purpose of development in this historic town was not about economic benefit, but rather about maintaining their traditional way of life and local business, which is based on self-sufficient economic principles such as agricultural-related business and small scale business (family business). This finding has shown a significant difference of views between local stakeholders and the government organizations who are responsible for the development projects in the historic town. Local stakeholders maintained that people from outside the community (tourists) came to visit because of the historic value of the town, while the government sectors maintained that the development and promotion of the town as a business hub will attract more people, both tourists and investors. This would both maximise economic benefit to the town and facilitate an increase in tourism.

After the government had announced that the proposed Chiang Saen Industrial Park would not be built, the community, in association with some local organisations, decided to continue their campaign to be nominated as a world heritage site. A series of activities were organised, designed to allow residents to find out what a World Heritage Site is like. These activities included seminars - which were organised by independent scholars, education institutions, government organisations and NGOs - and a study visit to world heritage sites in Thailand and Luang Prabang, Laos. These events helped residents decide whether the nomination of Chiang Saen for this status would generate positive or negative impacts on their lives. The community became increasingly anxious about becoming a world heritage site. Once they realised the number of restrictions imposed by UNESCO, more than a half of them no longer supported the project. According to the local newspaper, some residents said that preparing for the

nomination process was too difficult and too complicated. The newspaper also said that some of the residents were worried about how they would be affected by the restrictions imposed on world heritage sites by UNESCO; and that some local entrepreneurs were worried that these restrictions would obstruct the town's development. These reactions indicate that inadequate information can create misunderstandings among community members and can cause problems. Given the lack of support from some members of the community, others proposed an alternative form of development that would minimise conflict among residents and meet need for both conservation and business development in Chiang Saen. This was called the Chiang Saen National Heritage Project.

The reactions of local stakeholders to the changes and developments taking place in the historic town of Chiang Saen, are classified into four different categories in chapter 7. The research showed that the first group, made up of ordinary residents, who strongly support the retention of the town's historic identity, need more opportunities to become involved in development activities. They also believed that it was very important to evaluate every development project to ensure it would not impair the town's identity and to maintain the confidence of local stakeholders. Similarly, this group points out that tourists travel to Chiang Saen because of its historic value. However, this group did acknowledge that development is necessary, but a significant finding was that, rather than the development of the town as a hub for business, including tourism, they would prioritise the development of the livelihoods, nutrition, education, health, safety, and other fundamental infrastructure of the community.

Secondly is a group that includes local government organisations, some government officials, leaders of local organisations and some local entrepreneurs. The research showed that this group required more support from central government – particularly budgetary support. They believe that business development projects are very important for Chiang Saen as they will generate economic benefits for the community, create work opportunities and provide a better quality of life for local residents. It is also interesting to note that, while many residents of Chiang Saen argue that they have not had enough opportunities to participate in government proposals to develop their town, members of this

group argue that they have provided opportunities for them to participate but the residents were reluctant to do so, as discussed in chapter 7.

Thirdly is a group of local entrepreneurs who believed that the development of Chiang Saen could generate economic benefits for the whole town and would contribute to improving the residents' quality of life. Similarly to the second group, this group needs more consistency in the government's policies for economic development and financial support from the government for small and medium size businesses.

Finally is a group of elite people – such as schoolteachers, some government officials, the middle class and local NGOs. The research showed that this group believed that development is important for Chiang Saen's future, but that the local community should have more opportunities to participate in the decision-making process. This is because they think that more community control over proposed developments would reduce the problem of conflict between the local community and developers.

As most of the government projects proposed in the historic town of Chiang Saen and the nearby region are related to the Greater Mekong Sub-region project (GMS), one of the key findings in this research was that the majority of development projects were delivered and initiated by people and organisations from outside the local community. Local stakeholders were not involved in the planning process, only being told after the event and the research has illustrated this as one of the main reasons for local stakeholder protest against government projects and the reason for significantly differing opinions about the role of development in the town.

The contested vision of local stakeholders as illustrated above, particularly about the identity of the town, as a key finding of the research, was mainly based on the prospective change and impact that the government-related GMS projects have caused and are likely to cause. This is detailed in the next section

Policy recommendation

It has been illustrated in the previous section that the contested perceptions of local stakeholders in the historic town of Chiang Saen towards the development in the town has raised controversial debate among local stakeholders and affected the progression of overall development. Development was first initiated by central government plans for several mega-projects related to the Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS). Residents of Chiang Saen were not provided with adequate information about these proposed changes and no opportunity was given for them to evaluate the plans. In response to this many local protests were mounted against government projects, such as the world and national heritage projects discussed in chapters 6 and 7 and summarised above.

The nomination for the world heritage site project was seen to fail because of poor information management with local stakeholders. The complexity and time constraints of the nomination process were not understood by the local community and the value of their local culture and historic identity overlooked. A vital opportunity was lost in the chaos and with it a chance to protect the town's sense of place from outside forces, such as globalisation and the economic effect of increased tourism.

The contested perceptions of the identity of the historic town of Chiang Saen suggests that the transition of the community's identity from the traditional one recognised by residents into a new one envisaged by government developmenters is not an easy process. This is because people are concerned about the risk of losing their unique identity and are worried about the potential impacts of the transition process as a result of mismanagement. However, the earlier discussion has highlighted ways to overcome local concerns, such as creating a good understanding and good relationships between all stakeholders. Through this process and dialogue it would be hoped that other ways of representing Chiang Saen's identity would emerge that are more encompassing and that recognise multiple modernities and the transformative role of tradition in many new narratives about modern places across the world.

The contested perceptions of the identity of the historic town of Chiang Saen suggests that the transition of the community's identity from the traditional one recognised by residents into a new one imposed by government development is not an easy process. This is because people are concerned about the risk of losing their unique identity and are worried about the potential impacts of the transition process as a result of mismanagement. However, the earlier discussion has highlighted ways to overcome local concerns, such as creating a good understanding and good relationships between all stakeholders. Through this process and dialogue it would be hoped that other ways of to representing Chiang Saen's identity would emerge that are more encompassing and that recognise multiple modernities and the transformative role of tradition in many new narrative about modern places.

In relation to the development of tourism, it is unrealistic to believe that tourism will always generate positive economic benefits for a community and have few negative impacts. It is important for the developers of tourism, government organisations and entrepreneurs to provide reliable information to residents of the ways in which tourism could impact both positively and negatively upon their way of life. The process of development within the historic town of Chiang Saen requires careful management otherwise the negative consequences may outweigh the positive benefits. With more information available to them, all stakeholders will have a better understanding of the effects of tourism and how its development is being managed. It is important to note that the development of tourism in a community must safeguard local identity and the needs of local residents from outside demands, such as tourism. This is because, if tourism development within a community is based on the demands of tourists, rather than the community's needs and desires, there is the potential for tourism to cause conflict between community stakeholders As Pearce (1992) stated, the development of tourism based on community identity and needs will provide a way to ensure an equitable flow of benefits to all those affected by tourism through consensus-based decision-making and the local control of development.

In relation to tourism plans and policies of the community, it is important to note that the community should develop and construct their own plans according to

what they perceived to be the place identity and the characteristics of their community, the need of local residents and through their participation and involvement rather than by attempting to copy from national or provincial plan's as illustrated in chapter 4.

In terms of local involvement and participation in development activities, this research has shown that the majority of local stakeholders perceived this to be an important factor for community development. In order to increase collaboration among stakeholders, a supportive environment that encourages local involvement and participation must be established at an early stage of all new projects in the historic town of Chiang Saen; all development projects must be accountable and meaningful; increasing the participation of the town's residents must be addressed. Arnstein (1969) and Oakley (1991) stated that real participation can be seen when they are provided with enough opportunity to share the idea and take part in the process of decision-making and are also allocated the power to share in the control process and influence development activity. The initial stage in this is to create the willingness in the local community to take part in the development process. This alone is not enough, and promoting actual involvement and active participation is vital. To facilitate this is may be possible to involve local organisations concerned directly with the development to monitor and follow-up community stakeholder participation, perhaps setting up a database of interested parties. In the next section some of the research contributions will be illustrated.

Contributions

According to the research aims and objectives, as illustrated in the introduction chapter, the following highlights the contributions that this research makes to the body of knowledge.

1. The research has identified that the appropriate approach for tourism and local development in the historic town of Chiang Saen was community-based tourism. This approach is based on the needs and wants of community residents and perceived as one that consumes least resources and generates least live impact on the community. In comparison with traditional tourism (mass tourism) as illustrated in chapter 2, community-

based tourism is the approach that most favours local stakeholders, while mass tourism mainly focuses on maximising profit and benefits those from outside rather than community residents. However, although this research has found that community-based tourism was the appropriate approach for this community, it is important to note that, for a community where they want to implement community-based tourism, they must consider the characteristics of the host community and whether this matches their needs rather than implement it as the stereotype. It is particularly important that active local involvement and participation is promoted, as has been strongly suggested in the case of development in the historic town of Chiang Saen, as this was found to be a key factor in the success or failure of the development. As Fagence (1998) stated, an approach that is successful in one community may not be practical in others and each community should evaluate whether the approach is appropriate to the characteristics and identities of the host community, and that all sensitive local factors that might be affected by tourism are considered.

2. The second contribution of the research is that of the implementation of the cooperation between local stakeholders. In the case of the historic town of Chiang Saen, cooperation among local stakeholders such as between local government organisations and the local community in the early stages of development was seen to be poor and led to lack of cooperation and outright conflict. However, the increase in participation between these parties created a good relationship and better understanding that led to some progress in development activities in the community and drew the lesson that they had learnt from the development process within the community. This could be an exemplar for other communities wishing to implement cooperative development processes, thus reducing conflict in the planning stages and minimising negative impacts and maximising the benefits of the development for the local community.

Recommendations for future research

This research has adopted qualitative research as the key research method and three techniques of data collection have been implemented. These include

secondary data analysis; research site observation; and in-depth interviews. There are some limitations to this research, mainly because of the time taken on the field study which was conducted during the monsoon season and during a period of very complicated domestic politics in Thailand. This affected the research particularly in terms of access to prospective interviewees. In addition, one of the key limitations of this research was the lack of related secondary data in form of statistics and systematic up-to-date information related to the research site. Another limitation of the research is already discussed in the practicality section in the methodology chapter.

In terms of the benefit of conducting this research, it is argued that the research has provided an understanding of how local stakeholders react to changes and developments in their community. In relation to literature documents, the findings from the research has also illustrated some insight and better understanding of similar and differing perspectives. Different characteristics and identities of community are reflected in different analyses, for example the perception of local stakeholders towards community involvement and participation and the identity of place in the passive community and the community where people were dominated by a government organisation.

As this research examines local residents' perceptions of the role and approach of development within the community it generally relies upon presenting arguments in the context of the community. In relation to this, a recommendation for future research is that the research should also investigate and examine the perspective of national policy makers, and should therefore include interview data from a central government organisation. However, in common with all elite interviews, the access to such interviewees may prove to be an insurmountable constraint. In my experience, if access to high ranking officials is a problem, the relevant information may be available through written sources in the public domain; this will not replace an interview, but will provide some credible information. In all cases when considering the application of this research to future research, it is vital to evaluate the research methods' suitability. In terms of research questions, it is will be necessary to integrate the detail within this research, regarding the

information about the community, moving this forward from past and present information and extrapolate future trends to focus the direction of future research.

Another suggestion for future research, in a similar context and community, is the long-term study of local perceptions as they change over time. An examination and investigation of the local involvement and participation continuum from planning to post-development stages. This is important because the differing perceptions of local residents resulting in the contested visions of the development could negatively affect the community as a whole, and a long-term study may gain enough information to evaluate the factors influencing the acceptability of change within the community.

Another interesting area for future research, in relation to this study, is to conduct a comparative study between the historic town of Chiang Saen and another town in the GMS countries where they have similar characteristics in order to investigate whether the different government policies and political systems influence tourism policy and most importantly design and implementation. There may be key differences between Thailand as a democratic country where local people have more opportunities to present and show what they want concern development projects and Laos as which a communist country gives people more limited opportunities to react or speak out. In addition, the study may also provide details on how different communities are able to share and exchange development experience and enhance development cooperation.

Another key area for possible future research, in tandem with the suggestion for a long-term study, is that to evaluate the implementation of the development approach that local stakeholders perceived as most appropriate for their community. This would compare what they presumed would be the outcome before implementation and the actual outcome of the approach, and the community's reactions to the outcome. The value of this final suggestion would need to be finely balanced against the inevitable time and financial commitments required.

Conclusion

This chapter, as the final part of the thesis, has provided a summary of the key findings of the research according to the research objectives, which were classified into three main areas. The chapter also suggested some of the policy recommendations that might be applicable for a practitioner in relevant community projects. In accordance with policy recommendation, the chapter has also illustrated the contributions the research has made to the body of knowledge. In the final part of the chapter, some limitations of conducting this research and suggestions for future research are also included.

Appendices

Appendix one: Cover Letter from Academic Supervisors

1st November 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Mr Sa-Ngiam Boonpat

Mr Sa-Ngiam Boonpat is a full-time registered student of this University reading for the degree of PhD. His research programme involves Tourism and Local Development: The Case of Chiang Saen, Chiangrai, Thailand, which is being carried out under the supervision of Professor Nina Laurie and Dr Nick Megoran.

We expect Mr Boonpat to visit Thailand from 15 November 2007 to 31 January 2008 to engage in field work that is an integral part of his studies. I hope that you will grant him the necessary permission for his research by assisting with information access and interview support.

If you require further information about Mr Boonpat's studies then I can be contacted at the address above.

Thank you for your assistance, which I would be delighted to reciprocate.

Yours faithfully

Professor Nina Laurie
Professor of Development and Environment

nina.laurie@ncl.ac.uk
telephone +44(0) 191 222 6346

School of Geography, Politics and Sociology

(Geography)
University of Newcastle upon Tyne
Daysh Building
NE1 7RU

Head of School
Professor A E Gillespie

20th May 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

Re: Mr Sa-Ngiam Boonpat

Mr Sa-Ngiam Boonpat is a full-time registered student of this University reading for the degree of PhD. His research programme involves Tourism and Local Development: The Case of Chiang Saen, Chiangrai, Thailand, which is being carried out under the supervision of Professor Nina Laurie and Dr Nick Megoran.

We expect Mr Boonpat to visit Thailand from 21 April 2007 to 21 July 2007 to engage in field work that is an integral part of his studies. I hope that you will grant him the necessary permission for his research by assisting with information access and interview support.

If you require further information about Mr Boonpat's studies then I can be contacted at the address above.

Thank you for your assistance, which I would be delighted to reciprocate.

Yours faithfully

Professor Nina Laurie
Professor of Development and Environment

nina.laurie@ncl.ac.uk
telephone +44(0) 191 222 6346

Direct dial · 0191 222 6340
Switchboard · 0191 222 6359
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www.ncl.ac.uk/geps

Appendix Two: Example of Introductory letters and forms to interviewees (only available in Thai)

<div align="center">๑๑ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐</div>

เรื่อง ขออนุญาตสัมภาษณ์ และ ขอความอนุเคราะห์ข้อมูลเพื่อประกอบการวิจัย

เรียน นายกเทศมนตรีเทศบาลตำบลเวียงเชียงแสน

      ข้าพเจ้า นายเสงี่ยม บุญพัฒน์ อาจารย์ประจำคณะวิทยาการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงราย กำลังศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก ณ มหาวิทยาลัยนิวคาสเซิล ประเทศอังกฤษและอยู่ระหว่างดำเนินการรวบรวมข้อมูลเพื่อประกอบการวิจัยในหัวข้อ การท่องเที่ยวและการพัฒนาท้องถิ่น กรณีศึกษาอำเภอเชียงแสน จังหวัดเชียงราย โดยมีวัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อศึกษารูปแบบที่เหมาะสมสำหรับการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวของอำเภอเชียงแสน โดยเน้นพื้นที่ในเขตเทศบาลตำบลเวียงเชียงแสนเป็นพื้นที่หลักในการศึกษา

      ในฐานะที่ท่านเป็นผู้ที่มีบทบาทอย่างสูงยิ่งในการกำหนดทิศทางและนโยบายเกี่ยวกับการพัฒนาด้านต่างๆ ในพื้นที่เทศบาลตำบลเวียงเชียงแสน โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งในการพัฒนาและส่งเสริมด้านการท่องเที่ยว ทั้งบทบาทในส่วนของการนำเสนอแนวความคิดต่อประชาคมในพื้นที่และการดำเนินกิจกรรมและโครงการต่างๆ มาอย่างต่อเนื่อง ดังนั้น ข้าพเจ้าจึงใคร่ขออนุญาตสัมภาษณ์ท่าน ณ สถานที่ทำงานของท่าน ในวันและเวลาตามที่ท่านพิจารณา เห็นสมควรระหว่างวันที่ ๑๗ ถึง ๒๑ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ ดังระบุในแบบตอบรับการ สัมภาษณ์ที่แนบ โดยจะใช้เวลาในการสัมภาษณ์ประมาณ ๔๕ นาที

      พร้อมกับจดหมายฉบับนี้ ข้าพเจ้าได้แนบแนวทางการสัมภาษณ์มาเพื่อท่านได้พิจารณาล่วงหน้าด้วย ข้าพเจ้าขอยืนยันว่าข้อมูลที่จะได้จากการสัมภาษณ์ในครั้งนี้ จะนำไปใช้เพื่อประกอบการดำเนินการวิจัยเท่านั้น โดยจะเก็บรักษาเป็นความลับและจะไม่เปิดเผยส่วนหนึ่งส่วนใดจนกว่าจะได้รับอนุญาตจากท่าน

      ข้าพเจ้าหวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่าคงจะได้รับอนุญาตให้ทำการสัมภาษณ์และได้รับความอนุเคราะห์ข้อมูลจากท่าน และกรุณาส่งแบบตอบรับการสัมภาษณ์คืนข้าพเจ้าตามที่อยู่ที่ระบุในซองที่แนบ หรือแจ้งทางโทรศัพท์ที่หมายเลข ๐๘๑ ๕๓๐๘๕๖๓

      จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณาให้ความอนุเคราะห์ และอนุญาต

<div align="center">ขอแสดงความนับถือ</div>

<div align="center">(นายเสงี่ยม บุญพัฒน์)</div>

<div align="center">256</div>

แนวทางการสัมภาษณ์

๑. ทัศนคติและการรับรู้ต่อการพัฒนาและการท่องเที่ยว

๒. ความคาดหวังต่อทิศทางการพัฒนาของเมืองเชียงแสน โดยเฉพาะในด้านการท่องเที่ยวในเขต
เมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

๓. การมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนและชุมชนในการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวในเขตเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

๔. บทบาทของเทศบาลตำบลเวียงเชียงแสนต่อการส่งเสริมและพัฒนาเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

<div align="center">**แบบตอบรับการสัมภาษณ์**</div>

<div align="center">............</div>

นายกเทศมนตรีตำบลเวียงเชียงแสน

๑. ( ) **อนุญาตให้สัมภาษณ์** ในวันที่

      ( ) ๑๗ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๑๘ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๑๙ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๒๐ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๒๑ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

๒. ( ) **มอบให้** .... เป็นผู้ให้สัมภาษณ์ **แทน** ในวันที่

      ( ) ๑๗ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๑๘ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๑๙ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๒๐ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

      ( ) ๒๑ ธันวาคม ๒๕๕๐ เวลา..............

๓. ( ) **ไม่สามารถให้สมภาษณ์ได้**

            ลงชื่อ..

            วันที่.............เดือน.......................................พ.ศ................

กรุณาส่งแบบตอบรับนี้กลับ โดยใช้ซองที่แนบมาพร้อมนี้

<div align="center">**ขอขอบพระคุณอย่างสูงในความอนุเคราะห์**</div>

28 พฤษภาคม 2550

เรื่อง ขออนุญาตสัมภาษณ์ข้อมูลประกอบการวิจัย

เรียน ผู้อำนวยการศูนย์การท่องเที่ยว กีฬา และนันทนาการเชียงราย

      ข้าพเจ้า นายเสงี่ยม บุญพัฒน์ อาจารย์ประจำคณะวิทยาการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงราย กำลัง
ศึกษาระดับปริญญาเอก ณ มหาวิทยาลัยนิวคาสเซิล ประเทศอังกฤษและอยู่ระหว่างดำเนินการรวบรวมข้อมูลเพื่อ
ประกอบการวิจัยในหัวข้อ การท่องเที่ยวและการพัฒนาท้องถิ่น กรณีศึกษาอำเภอเชียงแสน จังหวัดเชียงราย โดยมี
วัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อศึกษารูปแบบที่เหมาะสมสำหรับการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวของอำเภอเชียงแสน โดยข้าพเจ้า
ได้เลือกการสัมภาษณ์เป็นวิธีหลักในการรวบรวมข้อมูลสำหรับการวิจัยครั้งนี้

      ในฐานะที่ท่านเป็นผู้ที่มีบทบาทอย่างสูงยิ่งต่อการกำหนดทิศทางการพัฒนาและส่งเสริมด้านการท่อง
เที่ยวในเขตพื้นที่จังหวัดเชียงราย โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งบทบาทในด้านการนำเสนอแนวความคิดต่อประชาคมจังหวัด
เชียงราย ตลอดจนการดำเนินกิจกรรมต่างๆ ทั้งในด้านการอนุรักษ์ศิลปวัฒนธรรม วิถีชีวิต รวมถึงการดำเนินกิจ
กรรมการพัฒนาด้านการท่องเที่ยวของจังหวัดเชียงราย ดังนั้น ข้าพเจ้าจึงใคร่ขออนุญาตสัมภาษณ์ท่าน ณ สถานที่
ทำงานของท่าน ในวันและเวลาตามที่ท่านจะพิจารณาเห็นสมควร ทั้งนี้จะใช้เวลาในการสัมภาษณ์ประมาณ 45
นาที พร้อมกับจดหมายฉบับนี้ ข้าพเจ้าได้แนบแนวทางการสัมภาษณ์มาเพื่อท่านได้พิจารณาล่วงหน้า ข้าพเจ้าขอ
ยืนยันว่า ข้อมูลจากการสัมภาษณ์นี้ จะนำไปใช้เพื่อประกอบการดำเนินการวิจัยเท่านั้น โดยจะเก็บรักษาเป็นความ
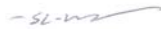ลับ และจะไม่มีการเปิดเผยข้อมูลส่วนหนึ่งส่วนใดโดยไม่ได้รับอนุญาตจากท่าน

      ข้าพเจ้าหวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่าคงจะได้รับอนุญาตจากท่านให้ทำการสัมภาษณ์ได้ ในขณะเดียวกัน หากท่านติด
ขัดประการใดหรือจะติดต่อข้าพเจ้า กรุณาติดต่อได้ที่
เลขที่ 197/83 สินธานี 5 ต.บ้านดู่ หมู่ 4 อ.เมือง จ.เชียงราย 57100
โทรศัพท์ 081 5308993 Email: sboonpat@yahoo.com

      จึงเรียนมาเพื่อโปรดพิจารณาอนุญาต

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

(นายเสงี่ยม บุญพัฒน์)

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Professor A E Gillespie
Head of School

28 พฤษภาคม 2550

เรื่อง ขออนุญาตสัมภาษณ์ข้อมูลประกอบการวิจัย

เรียน

      ข้าพเจ้า นายเสงี่ยม บุญพัฒน์ อาจารย์ประจำคณะวิทยาการจัดการ มหาวิทยาลัยราชภัฏเชียงราย กำลัง
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ลับ และจะไม่มีการเปิดเผยข้อมูลส่วนหนึ่งส่วนใดโดยไม่ได้รับอนุญาตจากท่าน

      ข้าพเจ้าหวังเป็นอย่างยิ่งว่าคงจะได้รับอนุญาตจากท่านให้ทำการสัมภาษณ์ได้ ในขณะเดียวกัน หากท่านติด
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Appendix Three: Interview question themes

Part I: About attitude and perception towards tourism and development

To examine how local residents perceives the impacts (positive and negative) of tourism on the community

    1. What are the impacts of tourism since tourism were initiated in the inner city of CS and how the local people and community in the inner city of CS react to those impacts? (Tourism and Economics, tourism and social, and tourism and environment)

    2. How the local resident aware about the overall development of the town and the development of tourism?

    3. How the local residents perceived of tourism development in recent year and what they expected from tourism development?

    4. What approaches and forms of tourism development that local residents perceived as appropriate and acceptable for the historic town?

Part 2: About the expectation (need) towards the town's identity

To examine the needs of local residents on development (government projects related to the GMS and tourism development) to what extend they want Chiang Saen to be in the future and what they perceive Chiang Saen under the increase of tourism and the pressure of the the GMS

    1. In what extend that local resident perceived as the identity of the town and do they believe whether the historic town of Chiang Saen can retain its identity under the pressure of increased tourism and the government project (GMS)?   Why and How?

    2. Will growth lead to the further decline and destruction the identity of the historic town of Chiang Saens.

3. Should the historic town go beyond the past and become a hub for business and trade? Why?

Part 3: About participation and development activity

To investigate the appropriate approaches and forms of tourism and local development in the historic town of Chiang Saen and to examines perception of local residents towards local involvement and participation in the development activities.

    1. Investigate how local residents and community perceived the important of the involvement and participation in development activity.

    2. Investigate the experience of local resident's toward the involvement and participation in development activity in recent year.

    3. Examine local residents' perception towards appropriate and acceptable approaches and forms of involvement and participation for development activity.

Part 4: Additional comments?

Appendix Four: Interview question themes - Thai Version

ขอบข่ายคำถามสำหรับสัมภาษณ์

ส่วนที่ 1 ทัศนคติและการรับรู้ต่อการพัฒนาและการท่องเที่ยว

เพื่อศึกษาการรับรู้ของประชาชนต่อผลกระทบของการท่องเที่ยวต่อชุมชน

    1. ปัจจัยที่ประชาชนคิดว่าเป็นผลกระทบต่อชุมชน ที่เกิดจากการท่องเที่ยว (เช่น ด้านเศรษฐกิจ สังคม สิ่งแวดล้อม)

    2. ปฏิกิริยาของประชาชนต่อผลกระทบจากการท่องเที่ยว

    3. การรับรู้ของประชาชนต่อการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวในช่วงที่ผ่านมา และความคาดหวังจากการท่องเที่ยว

    4. รูปแบบและลักษณะของการพัฒนาการท่องเที่ยวที่ประชาชนยอมรับว่ามีความเหมาะสมกับเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

ส่วนที่ 2 ด้านความคาดหวัง (ความต้องการ) ต่ออัตลักษณ์ของประชาชนในเขตเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

เพื่ออธิบายความต้องการของประชาชนที่ต้องการอยากให้เมืองโบราณเชียงแสนคงความเป็นเอกลักษณ์หรือ
มีภาพลักษณ์อย่างไรในอนาคต   ภายใต้การขยายตัวของการท่องเที่ยวและโครงการส่งเสริมการลงทุนต่างๆ
ของรัฐบาลตามโครงการความร่วมมือทางเศรษฐกิจในอนุภาคลุ่มน้ำโขง

1. ประชาชนมีความเข้าใจต่ออัตลักษณ์ เอกลักษณ์ ภาพลักษณ์ของเมืองโบราณเชียงแสนในลักษณะ
ใด และคิดว่าจะสามารถรักษาอัตลักษณ์ เอกลักษณ์ ภาพลักษณ์เหล่านั้นไว้ได้หรือไม่ ภายใต้แรงกดดันจาก
การเติบโตด้านการท่องเที่ยวและการส่งเสริมการลงทุนในโครงการต่างๆ   ของรัฐบาลตามโครงการความ
ร่วมมือทางเศรษฐกิจในอนุภาคลุ่มน้ำโขง

2. การขยายตัวของการท่องเที่ยวและการลงทุนด้านเศรษฐกิจของรัฐบาล จะส่งผลต่อการการเปลี่ยน
แปลงอัตลักษณ์ เอกลักษณ์ ภาพลักษณ์ของเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

3. เมืองโบราณเชียงแสน ควรจะพัฒนาไปสู่การเป็นเมืองศูนย์กลางทางด้านเศรษฐกิจและการค้า

ส่วนที่ 3 ด้านการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนในการพัฒนาในเขตเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

เพื่อศึกษารูปแบบการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนในกิจกรรมการพัฒนาต่างๆ ในเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน การ
รับรู้และความเข้าใจต่อความสำคัญ   ความจำเป็นของการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนในกิจกรรมการพัฒนา
ประสบการณ์การมีส่วนร่วม   และรูปแบบการมีส่วนร่วมที่เป็นที่ยอมรับของประชาชนว่าเหมาะสมและจะ
ส่งผลต่อความสำเร็จของการพัฒนาเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

1. ประชาชนมีความรู้ ความเข้าใจในความสำคัญและความจำเป็นของการมีส่วนร่วมในกิจกรรมการ
พัฒนาลักษณะใดและอย่างไร

2. ประสบการณ์ของประชาชนในการมีส่วนร่วมในกิจกรรมการพัฒนาต่างๆ ที่มีขึ้นในเมืองโบราณ
เชียงแสนในระยะที่ผ่านมา

3. ลักษณะของการมีส่วนร่วมในกิจกรรมการพัฒนาที่ประชาชนยอมรับว่าเหมาะสมและจะส่งผลต่อ
ความสำเร็จในการดำเนินกิจกรรมการพัฒนาในเมืองโบราณเชียงแสน

ส่วนที่ 4 ข้อเสนอแนะเพิ่มเติม

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