

Choreography Creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya Dance Set for Enhancing Public Relations and Promoting Cultural Tourism Attractions of Prasat Thong, Surin, Thailand

Jamnong Junkhiew^{a*} & Yasothara Siripaprapagon^b

^a Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, Surindra Rajabhat University, Surin, 32000 Thailand

^b Surin Dhamma Practice Office, Surin, 32000 Thailand

Abstract

Choreography creation fosters growth and prosperity to the realm of dancing art. When a choreography is aesthetically pleasing, it gains widespread recognition and contributes to the creation of cultural identity and the promotion of cultural tourism on community levels. This research aimed to: (1) study the identities of Prasat Thong's community, Prasat Thong Sub-district, Khwao Sinarin District, Surin Province, Thailand; (2) create the choreography of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya; and (3) enhance the public relations and promoting cultural tourism of Prasat Thong's community. Data was collected through documentary analysis and fieldworks, including observation, interview, focus group discussion, participation in community rituals, and workshop. A total of 100 individuals (77 informants for group 1, 10 key informants for group 2, 10 students for group 3, and three academic experts for group 4) were involved in this research, using the qualitative research approach by inductive analysis, and descriptive analysis. Research findings revealed that the identities of Prasat Thong's community delved into the community's histories, cultures and distinctive folk performances. The results showed that Prasat Thong's community has the identities expressing through local performing arts and traditions, which provide a strong foundation for the development of choreography. Additionally, Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set was literally designed to reflect those identities and community's ways of life. It showcases a captivating blend of sacred and aesthetic dancing movements, paying homage to local arts and cultures with fostering community's pride. This research not only created the choreography but also served a powerful tool for promoting the cultural tourism to Prasat Thong's community, stimulating the local economy, and ensuring the conservation of this valuable cultural heritage.

Keywords: Cultural tourism, Cultural preservation, Sanctuary conservation, Soft power

* Corresponding Author

e-mail: Jamnong_tokta@hotmail.com

Introduction

Lower northeastern Thailand is situated in the Mun river basin and bordered with Cambodia, comprising Nakhon Ratchasima, Buriram, Surin, Sisaket and Ubon Ratchathani Provinces. Historical studies of this region have revealed numerous ancient settlements, as evidenced by renowned archaeological sites such as Phanom Rung Historical Park in Chalem Phrakiat District, Buriram Province; Phimai Historical Park in Phimai District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province; and Khao Phra Wihan Sanctuary in Kantharak District, Sisaket Province.

Surin Province (14°49'60"N/103°45'0"E), northeastern Thailand (Figure 1), has the provincial motto, related to archaeological sites and ancient sanctuaries (castles or Prasat in Thai language), as "the land of big elephants, beautiful silk, magnificent bead, plentiful sanctuaries, sweet radish, aromatic rice, and beautiful culture". These ancient sanctuaries were constructed in Khmer civilization, serving as evidences of religions, beliefs, cultures and traditions from ancient time to present (Sombuthrungrueang, 2010). Surin Province has defined the tourism strategy linked to the tourism development in historical, cultural, natural and way-of-life dimensions as the soft power of Thailand for driving the country's economy (Siripaprapagon et al., 2021).

Utilizing an advantage of location bordering with Cambodia, Surin Province has plentiful ancient religious and archeological sites, demonstrating the abundance of tourism resources with the diversity of cultures and traditions, including beliefs, rituals, local wisdoms and customs (Siripaprapagon, 2017). There were about 1,199,453 and 190,449 tourists visiting Surin Province during January to April in 2016 and 2017, respectively, mainly from United States of America, United Kingdom, Netherlands, Germany, France, China, Japan and Cambodia (Salangam et al., 2019).

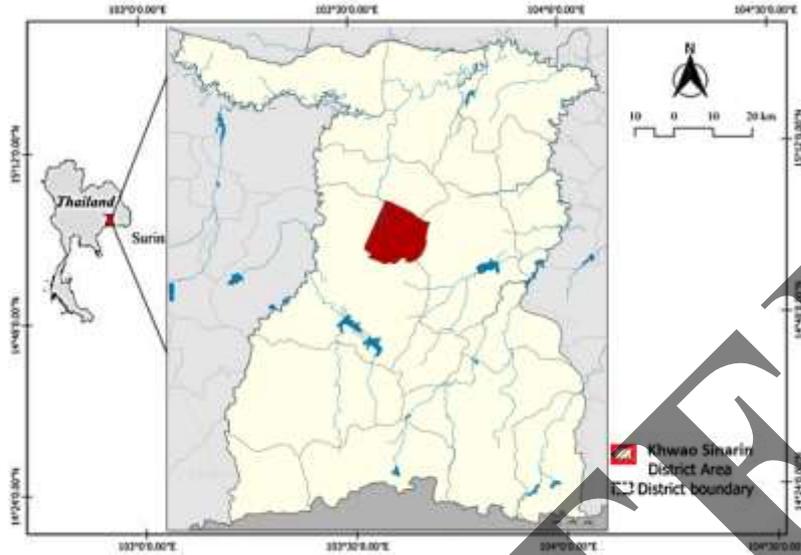


Figure 1 Maps of Thailand and Surin Province

In Surin Province, there are 28 famous and well-known ancient Khmer sanctuaries located in 12 districts, dedicated in Brahmanism and Hinduism according to Shaivism, as well as Buddhism during the reign of King Jayavarman VII (Office of Provincial Commercial Affairs Surin, 2021). One of the most interesting sanctuaries is Prasat Thong (Figure 2), located in Prasat Thong Sub-district, Khwao Sinarin District, Surin Province (as illustrated in red color of Figure 1), which was registered in Announcement of Ancient Sites in the Royal Gazette, Volume 52, Page 3713, on March 8, 1935 because Prasat Thong Sub-district Administration Organization arranges the light and sound performance to attract tourists on April 13-14, every year (The Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Center, 2021) and is considered to represent an ancient local community surrounding Prasat Thong with local cultures and traditions.

Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya signifies the merit of the King of Sri Dvarati, was firstly discovered in Nakhon Prathom Province with the name of the King Hanshavaraman appeared on a copper inscription at U-Thong ancient city, and then found in many provinces lower northeastern Thailand including Nakhon Ratchasima, Surin and other provinces on inscriptions on Buddha sculptures (Jindawattanaphum, 2023). Choreography creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya, studied from the Buddha sculptures, would create and cultivate cultural and traditional perspectives with historical importance and archeological site conservation for the next generations.



Figure 2 Prasat Thong, Located in Khwao Sinarin District, Surin Province

To our best knowledge from the preliminary study by searching information, researching, and discussing with local communities around Prasat Thong, there have been no study about choreography of dance set for promoting cultural tourism attractions in this sanctuary. Hence, we were of utmost interest to create the choreography of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set for enhancing public relations and promoting cultural tourism attractions of Prasat Thong. This

dance set reflects the contexts of cultures, traditions, beliefs, customs, and ways of life of Prasat Thong's communities. The Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set is then used to perform in the light and sound performance to attract tourists on April 13-14, every year to contribute in economic, cultural and tourism dimensions with academic values to community development.

Objectives

The objectives of this research were to

- 1) Study the identities of Prasat Thong's community, Prasat Thong Sub-district, Khwao Sinarin District, Surin Province, Thailand
- 2) Create the choreography of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya
- 3) Enhance the public relations and promoting the cultural tourism of Prasat Thong's community.

Conceptual Framework

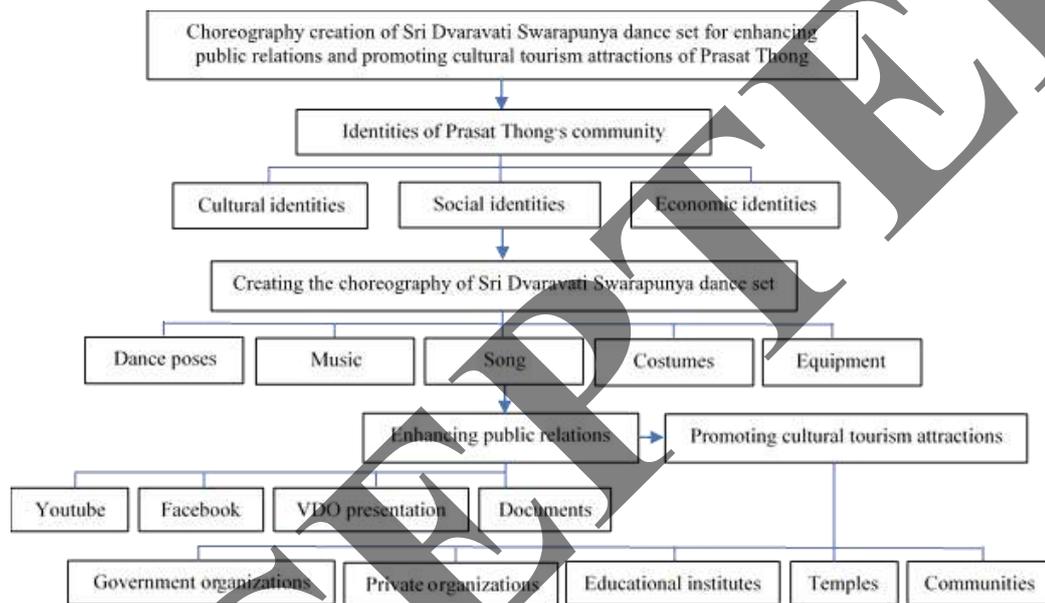


Figure 3 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This research used the research and development (R&D) approach employing the documentary analysis, qualitative research by inductive analysis, triangulation, and descriptive analysis methods, which was conducted at Prasat Thong's ancient community, Prasat Thong Sub-district, Khwao Sinarin District, Surin Province, Thailand during October 1, 2022 to August 30, 2024. This research was prepared accordingly: (1) study relevant documents and researches, (2) contact relevant organizations and collect data, (3) develop research instruments, and (4) submit the instruments to three academic experts in dramatic arts for validation and feedback. Additionally, the data was collected through documentary analysis and filed works together with observation, interview, focus group discussions, participation in community rituals and workshops, and then descriptively analyzed according to the objectives.

1. Target Groups

Target groups in this research were separated into 4 groups as follows.

- Group 1 for stage 1: The target group was 77 informants about Prasat Thong using purposive sampling providing the data and information, consisting of 28 individuals providing the information about Prasat Thong; 28 individuals providing the identities about Prasat Thong's community, including ways of life, traditions, beliefs and rituals; 11 individuals (local wisdom experts) providing the information and identities about Prasat Thong's community, including ways of life, beliefs and rituals, and 10 individuals (members of small enterprises of silk weaving group) providing the information about silk weaving and occupations as shown in Figure 4.

- Group 2 for stage 2: The target group was 10 key informants for focus group discussion comprising community leaders and information supporters of activities of Prasat Thong's community, who were involved using focus group discussion as shown in Figure 5.

- Group 3 for stage 3: The target group was 10 students in the Program of Dramatic Arts, Surindra Rajabhat University (SRRU), Thailand using purposive sampling, qualified as the outstanding dance performers by the 5 lecturers of SRRU, for workshop of choreography creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set.

- Group 4 for stage 4: The target group was three academic experts of dramatic arts for group discussion and workshop.



Figure 4 Interviews of Informants at Prasat Thong



Figure 5 Focus group discussion of key informants at Prasat Thong

2. Research Instruments and Methodologies

Research instruments used the structured and unstructured interview form, VDO recorder, notebook and voice recorder for collecting data, and research methodologies were briefly described as the followings.

- Preliminary survey was conducted to collect the data of social, economic and cultural aspects from the group 1 of Prasat Thong's community.
- Structured and unstructured interviews were used to collect the data of in-depth information from the group 2.
- Participant and non-participant observations were used to study the behaviors from the groups 1 and 2 as the community members.
- Focus group discussion guideline was used to study the data of community insights and perspectives from the groups 2 and 4.
- Workshop was conducted for creating the choreography of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set from the groups 3 and 4.

After that, all the data was reviewed for completion regarding to the research objectives, and checked by the academic experts using peer reviewing, playback method and data triangulation considering persons, times and places.

The choreography creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set was processed with these following steps according to the research principles (Creswell, 2013; Patton, 2002).

- Gathering historical and belief-related data about Prasat Thong's community from the academic documents and local experts as key informants.
- Creating the choreography by designing dance movements of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set that reflect the rituals of worshipping deities and Prasat Thong, i.e. gestures of reverence and offerings.

- Collaborating the local experts and performers with those 10 students for rehearsal and refinement to ensure that the Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set authentically conveys the community's identity and beliefs.

The enhancement of public relations and promoting the cultural tourism of Prasat Thong's community were studied using the documentary analysis and the interviews of the academic experts.

3. Collection of Data

Data was collected from the following methods.

- Documentary analysis was used to collect data from various documents with titles, author, key information, and important and supporting statements for the details of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya.

- Observations were conducted to collect data in order to develop potential directions based on the identities of Prasat Thong's community for the choreography creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set.

- Interviews were conducted to collect data for developing potential directions and strategies for creating the choreography of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set and promoting cultural tourism attractions of Prasat Thong.

4. Data Analysis

All the data was analyzed using the documentary analysis by the method of agreement for validating the data involving the relevant concepts and theories from various documents and researches. The fieldworks' data was analyzed using these following methods.

- Inductive analysis was involved for interpreting conclusions based on concrete data or observable phenomena.

- Data categorization was employed, using both theory-based and theory-free approaches depending on data suitability.

- Comparative analysis was involved for comparing data based on events or phenomena to facilitate discussion and interpretation.

- Data analysis of choreography creation was involved using theories to characterize data and providing expert validation through these following steps: 1) classification, characterization and selection of suit performance segments from theories and documentary evidences; 2) determination of conceptual framework of choreography comprising storylines, movements, costumes, music and formations; 3) presentation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set for feedback from the experts; and 4) adjustment of the dance set incorporated with the feedback to the completed Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set for enhancing public relations and promoting cultural tourism attractions of Prasat Thong.

Results

Research results were as the following sections

1. Identities of Prasat Thong's Community

Surin province is a significant area in the history of the ancient Khmer civilization, particularly in terms of religious sites and artifacts of high religious values in both Brahman-Hindu and Buddhist regions. Prasat Thong is one of the important ancient religious sanctuaries built from laterite and brick, following Buddhist concepts. Prasat Thong is not only a hundred-year-old archaeological site but also reflects the evolution of religious beliefs that have blended over many periods together. The structure and components of Prasat Thong demonstrate the beliefs in the past, including the creation of images for worship with Buddha image as the center piece of rituals at that time as shown in Figure 6.



Figure 6 Buddha Image as the Center Piece of Rituals in Prasat Thong

Architecturally, Prasat Thong is a single prang with a multi-story building in the prang's shape, constructed of brick and stucco during the Khmer civilization. It is located on a hill with a base made of a brick-filled earthen embankment (Figure 7). It faces east with a Mara Vichaya Buddha image enshrined the eastern direction. The floor's

plan is square with added corners and a solid appearance. Prasat Thong is in the state of disrepair and there is no information publicized about the history and sculpture or related religions, cultures, traditions and activities.



Figure 7 Prasat Thong, Located on a Hill

The area around Prasat Thong is located near local community but still faces obstacles in tourism development owing to the lack of easily accessible basic information for tourists. As a result, Prasat Thong is not well-known and has not gained much popularity as other sanctuaries in Surin Province, which impacts the community's income. Therefore, promoting and disseminating information about Prasat Thong is necessary to develop this cultural tourism attractions, which would stimulate the local economy. (Sriboonnak, 2007).

The identities of Prasat Thong's community were found that local people have a good quality of life, preserving community traditions, natural resources and sustainable agriculture. Additionally, they embrace the Sufficiency Economy Philosophy initiated by His Majesty the late King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX) of Thailand being applied as an important guideline for community development (Wattanakornsiri et al., 2020) at the household level. The motto of Prasat Thong community reflects the identity and uniqueness as "Precious Prasat Thong, preserved culture, beautiful silk, and sweet sound Kantruem" as shown in Figure 8. There is no clear evidence of Prasat Thong's history that there are only stories told by the local people.



Figure 8 Ceremonies of Prasat Thong's Community

Moreover, the distinctive identities of Prasat Thong's community are: silk with Naga Sadoong Nam (Dancing Naga in Water), Khor (elephant hook), Pikul flower (*Mimusops elengi* L.) and flowing water patterns; ancient beliefs in worship and supernatural power; rituals of Prasat Thong's community using Khmer and Pali languages; as well as cultures and traditions of Khmer, Kui and Lao people.

2. Choreography Creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya Dance Set

The Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set was designed based on the identities of Prasat Thong's community, reflecting the community's life style, beliefs and rituals. This study revealed that local people of Prasat Thong have Khmer ethnicity holding these following beliefs.

- Worship of Prasat Thong as a sacred site for the community.

- Influence of their beliefs and respects for overall success in daily life.
- Supernatural power in daily life.
- Impact of their beliefs for daily life, livelihood and agricultural practice.

Owing to the Khmer civilization in the past and the Prasat Thong's community influenced by Buddhism and accompanied with Brahmanism and Hindu beliefs, there are regular ceremonies involving offerings, which the rituals are conducted with a combination of Khmer and Pali languages. There are traditional performances and games, i.e. Kantruem, Reum An-re, Ar-yay, Chong, Sa-baa, Khmer dramatic performance, Mahoree Jareang and Jareang Berin, as well as local handicrafts including Surin silverware and silk fabrics, designed and inspired by Prasat Thong features with Khor (elephant hook), Pikul flower (*Mimusops elengi* L.) and flowing water patterns, including Naga Sadoong Nam (Dancing Naga in Water) and Prasat Thong's images (Figure 9).



Figure 9 Silk Patterns of Prasat Thong's Community Identity

The Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set presents through dance movements conveying a sense of sacredness and beauty, symbolizing reverence, in order to preserve local arts and cultures and foster community's pride. The choreography creation of the Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set would help to promote the cultural tourism of Prasat Thong being more widely known to attract tourists, who are interested in arts and cultures (Smith, 2019).

There are totally 79 poses of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set, which some of the poses are shown in Figure 10. Besides, there are 8 row patterns, which one of the row patterns is shown in Figure 11.



Figure 10 Some of the Poses of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya Dance Set

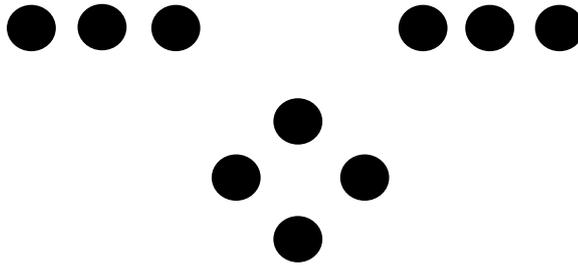


Figure 11 One of the Row Patterns of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya Dance Sset

Designs of the clothing and accessories of performers were inspired by Prasat Thong, which is a single prang on a hill, believed to have been constructed in the 14th century by the Khmer ethnic group, which then were depicted in the 14th century carvings. These carvings often show women wearing face veils and high buns and some of them depict women with bare chests or only wearing small loincloths. A brick-red color for the loincloths was chosen for matching the bricks of Prasat Thong. The lower garments feature a wrap skirt with pleated sides. The fabrics used were silk with the unique Prasat Thong pattern from Khwao Sinarin District, Surin Province, in green color with Khor (elephant hook), Pikul flower (*Mimusops elengi* L.) and flowing water patterns (Figure 12), designed by the small enterprises of silk weaving group as illustrated from the community's identities.



Figure 12 Clothing and Accessories of Performers

3. Enhancement of Public Relations and Promotion of Cultural Tourism Attractions

To ensure the long-term sustainable local development to Prasat Thong's community, it is essential to enhance public relations and promote tourism strategies to be accessible and understandable to tourists and visitors. There are many channels to publicize information all Prasat Thong contexts and the Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set as the followings.

- Youtube: The study revealed that the youtube contents for introducing and presenting Prasat Thong should comprise: (1) Prasat Thong's community, including identities, contexts, cultures, traditions, local arts, etc., (2) Prasat Thong, comprising history, images, photos, blessing ceremonies, religious rituals, local activities, etc., (3) Community lifestyle and traditions, including local experts' interviews, daily ways of life activities, community's identities, etc., (4) Tourism activities, including local festivals, cultural events, ecotourism activities, etc., (5) Community conservation and development, comprising local arts, cultures, traditions, etc., and (6) Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya, comprising significance and uniqueness of local traditions, using appropriate names, i.e. "Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya: Heritage of Prasat Thong",

“Magic of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya: Preserving the Culture of Prasat Thong”, or “Charm of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya: Preserving the Lifestyle of Prasat Thong’s Community”.

- Facebook: There are many ways to promote Prasat Thong using Facebook as the followings: (1) Daily post, sharing historical, cultural and traditional information about Prasat Thong and it’s community, (2) Live streaming, showing community events like ways of life, local festivals, cultural performances, etc., (3) Infographics, presenting tourist attractions, cultural performing arts, community identities, etc., (4) Interactive activities, presenting photo contests taken during the ceremonies, festivals and cultural performances, etc., and (5) Content reviews, sharing experiences from visiting Prasat Thong with those attractive information, etc.

- VDO Presentation: VDO is used to provide to Prasat Thong’s community, Tourism Authority of Thailand (Surin Office) and other related organizations to promote Prasat Thong with the following VDOs comprising: (1) Prasat Thong’s community introduction, (2) Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set, (3) Prasat Thong blessing ceremony, (4) Natural and cultural attractions, (5) Local ways of life, (6) Local festivals, and (7) Community activities for tourism.

- Documents: Various promotional materials of Prasat Thong can be used to publicize the Prasat Thong contexts: (1) Prasat Thong’s community brochure, (2) Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set brochure, (3) Prasat Thong ceremony brochure, (4) Community’s ways of life booklet, (5) Prasat Thong’s community travel guidebook, (6) Prasat Thong rituals guidebook, (7) Prasat Thong’s festival poster, (8) Cultural tourism brochure, (9) Local handicraft brochure, and (10) Cultural preservation brochure.

Discussion

The identities of Prasat Thong’s community have the unique beliefs, cultures and traditions as the followings.

- Spiritual belief: Prasat Thong’s community has strong beliefs in spirit and protective power of deities, reflecting in long-standing rituals and ceremonies that not only foster the community’s unity but also symbolize the community’s strength and longevity. An informant of small enterprises of silk weaving group mentioned the intricate patterns of Naga Sadoong Nam (Dancing Naga in Water) and Prasat Thong’s images are illustrated in Figure 9 are another symbol of the community’s identity. These patterns are interwoven with beliefs and local legends related to the history of Prasat Thong.

- Local language and cuisines: Local language is Khmer-Surin and cuisines are traditional Khmer identities, reflecting their lifestyles and beliefs as Prasat Thong’s community identities.

- Beliefs about Prasat Thong: The community beliefs that Prasat Thong is a sacred site with powerful protective energy. Therefore, they continuously perform their rituals to pay respect and gratitude to Prasat Thong. A local wisdom expert in the focus group discussion mentioned that the Prasat Thong’s identities, reflecting beliefs and traditions, and strengthening and unifying the community, being incorporated in the Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set would create an importance and value of local cultures, promoting Prasat Thong’s cultural tourism.

Owing to the interviews of local experts, there are little interest and attractions from children, youths and people about cultural tourism; however, the history and identities of Prasat Thong’s community for hundreds years are interesting to attract tourists. These states aligned with the research of Seangmas et al. (2018), revealing that ancient sites and surrounding communities have undergone the development over many eras and have been inhabited by the communities since ancient periods; they would then be created for cultural tourism. From the interviews of key informants, children, youths and people in the community are very important to pay attention on the conservation of Prasat Thong, and publicize and promote the cultural tourism of Prasat Thong’s community. Besides, children and youths should be trained as tour guides for providing information about Prasat Thong and its community because the values of children as tour guides in cultural tourism engage children’s experiences and required social skills in working (Rantala et al., 2019).

For the choreography creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set, the informants mentioned that the beliefs of Prasat Thong’s community have created a ceremony of worship Prasat Thong in April every year. Besides, the Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set was designed with 79 poses from 108 traditional Indian dance poses, incorporating between Indian hand gestures (Indian Mudras reflecting Hinduism, Jainism and Buddhism) (Nair, 2013) and Thai dance footwork for a contemporary edge. Besides, the costume and jewelry designs were inspired by Prasat Thong with the 14th century fashion, i.e. high buns and brick-red color scheme representing the brick color of Prasat Thong, and the clothing incorporates local silk patterns comprising the iconic Prasat Thong pattern, flower pattern and flowing water designs.

Enhancing public relations and promoting cultural tourism as a strategic approach in the digital era are essential in online public relations for sustainable tourism (Sawir et al., 2024) because tourists can access information about Prasat Thong and the community’s ways of life and activities to gain a deeper understanding. Smartphones, nowadays, are used to search for information and relaxation purposes by watching poses, videos and contents on Youtube, Facebook, video presentations, documents and other social media, which are the most effective ways to reach target audience. Pila (2016) found that the use of social media significantly influenced tourists’ decisions when choosing domestic tourist destinations; therefore, tourism should prioritize the use of social media with accurate, complete and timely information for public relations. Our findings are consistent with the research of Prapakornkiat (2019), which the prototype media, i.e. online applications, brochures, maps, infographics, tourist maps and promotional videos received high-quality ratings from key informants on promoting tourism. This is also in line with Aرسال et al. (2008), which reported that online tourism communities influence the tourists’ decisions about accommodation, food and beverages, safety, financial considerations, destinations and travelling details. Then, effective online public relations in promoting cultural tourism are very important to attract more tourists to Prasat Thong’s community. Leveraging modern online media by engaging

interesting and attractive contents would encourage tourists to visit and explore the community's unique cultural heritage.

Conclusion

This research revealed insight information about Prasat Thong being constructed of brick and stucco during the Khmer civilization, which its structure and components demonstrate the beliefs in the past, including the Buddha image for rituals as the center piece of rituals. The identities of Prasat Thong's community concerning the community's histories, cultures and folk performances. The distinctive identities of Prasat Thong's community are: silk with Naga Sadoong Nam (Dancing Naga in Water), Khor (elephant hook), Pikul flower (*Mimusops elengi* L.) and flowing water patterns; ancient beliefs in worship and supernatural power; rituals of Prasat Thong's community using Khmer and Pali languages; as well as cultures and traditions of Khmer, Kui and Lao people.

The choreography creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set presents through dance movements with sacredness and beauty, comprising 79 poses and 8 row patterns, aiming to preserve local arts and cultures and foster community's pride. The Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set would help to promote the cultural tourism of Prasat Thong being more widely known to attract tourists.

The effective online public relations, i.e. Youtube and Facebook, together with VDO presentation and documents are inevitably needed to attract tourists to Prasat Thong's community. The choreography creation of Sri Dvaravati Swarapunya dance set is served as a potent tool for promoting the cultural tourism to Prasat Thong's community, not only elevating the local economy but also conserving the ancient heritage.

Recommendations of using this research are as the followings: (1) Equipping local communities with knowledge about their heritage will power them to participate in tourism development. (2) Creating high-quality and multilingual (Thai, English and Cambodian languages) promotional materials is crucial for attracting tourists. And, (3) fostering partnerships among various stakeholders, i.e. government organizations, Tourism Authority of Thailand, Fine Arts Department of Thailand, Surin Provincial Administration Organization, and so on, is essential for the sustainable local development of tourism. Besides, recommendations for the future research should conduct studies of exploring ways of enhancing collaboration among these various stakeholders, creating new routes, such as "Following the Lan Chang civilization trail in Surin", to attract more visitors and promote region's rich history, and studying variables concerning public relations in Prasat Thong's community.

Acknowledgement

This research was financially supported by Thailand Science, Research and Innovation (Fundamental Fund) (Project Number: 182623). We acknowledge all the informants and local experts of Prasat Thong's community for providing all the research data. This research was reviewed by Surindra Rajabhat University ethical board (No. HE662030).

References

- Arsal, I., Backman, S. J., & Baldwin, E. D. (2008). Influence of an online travel community on travel decisions. In P. O'Connor, W. Höpken, & U. Gretzel (Eds.), *Information and Communication Technologies in Tourism 2008* (pp. 82–93). Springer. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-211-77280-5_8
- Creswell, J. W. (2013). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (4th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Jindawattanaphum, S. (2023). Warrior of Dvaravati from archaeological evidence. In *Proceedings of the 15th NPRU National Academic Conference* (pp. 1511–1520). Nakhon Pathom Rajabhat University. <https://publication.npru.ac.th/bitstream/123456789/2021/1/147.pdf>
- Nair, S. (2013). Mudra: Choreography in hands. *Body, Space & Technology*, 12. <http://doi.org/10.16995/bst.61>
- Office of Provincial Commercial Affairs Surin. (2021). *General Information of Surin Province*. <https://surin.moc.go.th/th/content/page/index/id/1055>
- Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Pila, B. (2016). *Travel motivation, information reliability, online word of mouth, travel attitudes, and social media usage affecting to choose Thailand's tourism attractions of consumers in Saraburi Province* [Master's thesis, Bangkok University]. Bangkok University.
- Prapakornkiat, S. (2019). *The development of tourism public relations based on the community based tourism concept* [Master's thesis, Mahasarakham University]. Mahasarakham University.
- Rantala, O., Milne, J., & Grimwood, B. (2019). Children as tour guides. *Matkailututkimus*, 15(2), 33–44.
- Salangam, A., Phimyon, J., Kessada, P., Phuengphai, P., Thanomsit, C., Jammongkan, T., Tongnunui, S., & Wattanakornsiri, A. (2019). Solid waste quantity, composition, and characteristic, and its current management at Elephant Study Center (Surin, Thailand). *Naresuan University Journal: Science and Technology*, 27(2), 48–57.
- Sawir, M., Mastika, I. K., Prayitna, H., Lestari, A., Nur'aina, A., & Arsyad, D. H. (2024). Public relations strategies and sustainable tourism in Tolitoli Regency: A case study in the Indonesian context. *Cogent Social Sciences*, 10(1), 2376163. <https://doi.org/10.1080/23311886.2024.2376163>
- Seangmas, K., Siriparapagon, Y., Prathumkhav, S., Klangrit, S., & Inthayung, S. (2018). *The development of the GPS system for cultural tourism promotion in Surin Province, Thailand*. Mahachulalongkornrajavidyalaya University, Surin Campus.

- Siripaprapagon, Y. (2017). Bai Sai: Buddhist innovation as a sacrifice to promote a constancy way of life of the Thai-Khmer group in Surin Province. *Journal of Buddhist Studies Vanam Donrak*, 4(1), 16–23.
- Siripaprapagon, Y., Klangrit, S., Kaewhom, P. M., & Kanthiang, K. (2021). A study of conservation tourism attraction and folk performing arts development in Surin Province. In *Proceedings of the 3rd National Symposium: Buddhism and philosophy—Concepts, perspectives, society, post-COVID-19* (pp. 34–51). Mahamakut Buddhist University. <https://philo.mbu.ac.th/25640529-01/>
- Smith, M. K. (2019). *Issues in cultural tourism studies* (3rd ed.). Routledge.
- Sombuthrungueang, K. (2010). *A study to identify the cultural environment identity of Talad Plu community in Thon Buri District, Bangkok* [Master's thesis, Silpakorn University]. Silpakorn University. https://www.thapra.lib.su.ac.th/objects/thesis/fulltext/thapra/Kritsanu_Sombuthrungueang/fulltext.pdf
- Sriboonnak, K. (2007). *Development of performance art from the Heet ritual of ancient Mon-Khmer tribes in Mekong Regions*. Surindra Rajabhat University.
- The Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn Anthropology Center. (2021). *Prasat Thong*. <https://archaeology.sac.or.th/archaeology/758>.
- Wattanakornsiri, A., Pukkalanun, N., & Phimphanthavong, H. (2020). Sufficiency economy philosophy for a community-driven development approach on sustainable local development: Lessons learned and success factors from sufficiency economy villages, Surin Province, Thailand. *Journal of Local Governance and Innovation*, 4(2), 15–33.

Article info

Received 16 August 2024

Revised 1 December 2024

Accepted 20 May 2025

Author

Junkhiew & Siriphaprapagon

Email

Jamnong_tokta@hotmail.com