

Research Title	Maintaining the Cultural Identity of the Tai Yai Community through Transitions in Mae Hong Son Province	
Researcher	Asst. Prof. Sakaraj Fakao	
Advisory Committee	Prof. Chaun Petkaew	Chairperson
	Assoc. Prof. Dr. Somsak Srisantisuk	Member
	Ms. Moltira Sawatdiraksa	Member

ABSTRACT

The research, namely maintaining the cultural identity of the Tai Yai community through transitions in Mae Hong Son province, had three objectives. They were to (1) study the cultural identity of the Tai Yai community in Mae Hong Son province, (2) analyze the factors that influence changes regarding cultural identity within the Tai Yai community in Mae Hong Son province, and (3) synthesize and suggest ways of preserving the cultural identity of the Tai Yai community in Mae Hong Son province.

This required integrating qualitative and quantitative research. The data was collected through observation, interviews, and focus group discussions with community leaders, villages and monks sampled randomly. A set of questionnaires were also presented to official leaders as part of the purposive sampling, and then analyzed using descriptive analysis, frequency distribution, and percentages.

The results of the research showed that the cultural identity of the Tai Yai community in Mae Hong Son province is a fusion of various historical developments. The Buddhist faith, a combination of animist beliefs, and a respect for tradition is strongly valued in the Tai Yai community. Additionally, an awareness of the importance of maintaining cultural traditions and their own way of life is present.

Through research, it was found that the external factors of globalization representing modern culture, including the development of communication and technology, and internal factors of

economic expansion, including social tourism in the province, caused a transition in regards to cultural identity within the Tai Yai community. Additionally, the research showed that these cultural processes, as they related to the management of the Tai Yai community, were supported by the four main parties of the group, insofar as they helped to maintain their cultural identity in a substantial and sustainable way.

The guidelines require that members of the Tai Yai community participate in management in every dimension, and be directly involved with the preservation and promotion of cultural work, building of community ethics, and developing the capacity to build networks in a globalized world. All these must be based on the participation and self-sufficiency of the Tai Yai community, which can strengthen the group and can help them both retain their cultural identity and develop a sustainable existence.