

Management and Conservation of Historic Site for Cultural Heritage Tourism :  
A Case Study of Scriptures Library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram  
Woramahavihara, Bangkok

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**Abstract**

This research aimed to review (1) the heritage values and cultural significance of the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara, and (2) the potential for cultural heritage tourism. Critical to the aims was the assumption of acknowledging the importance of promoting better understanding for tourists and community of the place, the associated roles of management and conservation plans, cooperation between the stakeholders, and appropriate interpretation and presentation of cultural heritage resources.

Scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara is a valuable historic site that still maintains its cultural significance which is one important key factor to indicate why such place is worth conserving. Scriptures library, or Ho Phra Traipidok, is located at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara in Bangkok Noi district, Bangkok. Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara is an ancient monastery founded in Ayutthaya period. It was established as a royal temple in the reign of King Taksin the Great, Thon Buri period. The scripture library was originally the residence of Phra Rajavarindra, a state official who became King Rama I, the founding king of Chakri dynasty. The residence was donated to the monastery which was, at that time, called Wat Bang Wa Yai. This scriptures library is shown the wooden traditional Thai house with a long history of use in Thailand nowadays. Moreover, its significances were identified and analyzed to understand its congenital values to the tourists and local residents of the place in terms of aesthetic, historic, social and scientific perspectives. These values support the notion of Scriptures Library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara sustaining its identity.

However, there are no management plans to promote cultural heritage tourism and conserve cultural heritage significance in scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara today. There is, therefore, a need to provide better understanding of the temple's significance to tourists through the inception of management plans which will provide for tourism, conserve the significance of cultural heritage values, and also enhance community involvement as well as providing economic and social benefits. Proposed management and conservation plans for cultural heritage tourism at Scriptures Library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara and its communities is also proposed for creating sustainable tourism.

Finally, scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara is encountering a number of problems threatening its significance including garbage, dirty with pigeon droppings, air pollution, insufficient knowledge of conservation and management, and erecting tall buildings that block the view of historical temples. Therefore, the government, all members in the community and stakeholders are major participants for future actions to address those problems. In order to get achieve a stronghold of the community in the sustainable way. Scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara has a very high potential for Cultural Heritage Tourism as well as Historical Tourism, because of its cultural heritage value.

Keywords : Cultural Heritage Tourism /Local Heritage /Management and Conservation of Historic Site/Management and Conservation Plans

## Introduction

Bangkok, Thailand's capital, is a famous destination of cultural heritage tourism and historical tourism. Many cultural and historical resources in Bangkok such as religious buildings, museums and palaces are attracted the interest from international visitors around the world. Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara is one of Buddhist temples in Bangkok which is now one of the most important tourist destinations for visitors to Bangkok because of its scriptures library. The scriptures library, or Ho Phra Traipidok, is located at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram in Bangkok Noi district, Bangkok. This scripture library was originally the residence of Phra Rajavarindra, a state official who became King Rama I, the founding king of Chakri dynasty. Wat Rakhang Khosittaram is an ancient temple founded in Ayutthaya period. It was established as a royal temple in the reign of King Taksin the Great, Thon Buri period. At that time, the temple was called Wat Bang Wa Yai. This monastery stands on the west bank of Chao Phraya River. Wat Bang Wa Yai became a royal monastery under the royal patronage of King Taksin the Great. King Rama I was at that time a state official at King Taksin's court. When he was 33 years old, he moved his house at Amphawa, at the present, in Samut Songkhram province to the area where is nearby this monastery. This is time when his residence was built. In 1782, King Rama I ascended the throne at the age of 46. He thought of his former residence because he wished to have the structure rehabilitated to make it more substantial and more beautiful. He declared his intention for it to be made a Thai Buddhist monastery library, or a Ho Phra Traipidok, in which the Tripitaka would be deposited. Thus, King Rama I assigned King Rama II, who was a prince then, to be in charge of improving the residence in 1784. Subsequently, it was re-erected in the middle of the pond on the back side of the ordination hall (Ubosoth) of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram.

As the time passed by, the scriptures library was deteriorated. Thus, there are two phases for restoration that had been taken. The first phase, it was in 1968, under the reign of King Bhumibol Adulyadej (King Rama IX), that Somdet Phra Phuttachan (To Phromrangsi) Foundation and The Department of Fine Arts, moved the library from the silted up pond because the water became polluted. However, there were some problems occurred at the first phase. Those were 1.) The Department of Fine Arts couldn't obtain a budgetary allocation for the job and 2.) There was a need for men of learning and for craftsmen trained in architectural restoration. Therefore, the abbot of the temple wrote the letter to The Association of Siamese Architects Under Royal Patronage for requesting assistance to restore the scriptures library. When this was known by King Bhumibol Adulyadej, he graciously came to visit the library in 1971 and also granted a sum of money to inaugurate the campaign to raise funds for the restoration.

As the time coincide with the auspicious celebration of the Chakri dynasty, and the Rattanakosin Bicentennial Celebration, The Shell Company of Thailand Limited had contributed funds for restoring the library. Therefore, the second phase of restoration had finally been completed in 1982. H.R.H. Princess Maha Chakri Sirindhorn proceeded, on behalf of H.M. The King Bhumibol Adulyadej, to perform the religious celebrating as an opening

ceremony the scriptures library on 14 August 1982. Nowadays, the library is located in the west of the old ordination hall and it stands on the ground and used as a monastery library.



**Fig. 1** The picture is shown the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram. Photo by Panot Asawachai, 2017

The scriptures library is a Thai architecture comprises 3 buildings with a fenced porch in the front. The building is faced to the east. These 3 connected buildings have their structural arrangement. This means the central room is now placed King Rama I painting and the room on the right is called “The Reading Room” where is now placed a beautiful gilded lacquer cabinet. The room on the left is called “The Retiring Room” where is also placed the other gilded lacquer cabinet. The building is made of timber plank walls and the roof tiled. The buildings are finely decorated with woodcarvings. Colour glass mosaics and gold leaves. The interior walls are decorated with mural paintings from King Rama I period. Moreover, beautiful art objects and scriptures cabinets are housed in this library.

The scriptures library of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram is registered as an “ Ancient Monument” of Thailand by ACT ON ANCIENT MONUMENTS, ANTIQUES, OBJECTS OF ART AND NATIONAL MUSEUMS, B.E. 2504 (1961). According to Section 4 in this act, “ Ancient monument” means an immovable property which, by its age or architectural characteristics or historical evidence, is useful in the field of art, history or archaeology and shall include places which are archaeological sites, historic sites and historic parks.” The scriptures library is useful in the field of art, history or archaeology and its importance architectural characteristics. Therefore, that is the reason for registering as the nation’s ancient monument. Nowadays, the ownership and tenure pattern of this scriptures library are belonged to Wat Rakhang Khosittaram. However, Fine Art Department is the organization, which takes a responsibility in controlling of repairing, modifying, altering, demolishing, adding to, destroying and removing the scriptures library. In 1987, the scriptures library was received the conservation award by the Association of Siamese Architects Under Royal Patronage. The objectives of this award are aimed to 1.) promote and support the conservation of valuable architectural heritage 2.) to announce prestigious awards and provide encouragement to those who own and maintain historic buildings and 3.) to add social value in conservation and application of old buildings, instead of destroying them or supplanting them with new ones. As the result, the scriptures library has become the good example for

conserving the old building as many people who are interested in art and architecture come to visit it every day.

Nowadays, this scriptures library is used as a monastery library. Furthermore, it is maintained as a building of artistic and historical importance in its own right. However, the scriptures library is poor looked after by the temple at present. Referring to the field observation, the scriptures library is penned and set separately from the temple's compound. Inside the fence, it has been developed as the rest area for the people who come to this temple for pilgrimage. The scriptures library is now dirty with pigeon droppings and garbage. Sadly, the temple stores the temple's accessories under the scriptures library. That is made the scriptures library unclean and undisciplined. A few months ago, the temple built the new building behind the scriptures library for using it as a store room. Many people were afraid that the construction of the new building would be affected the structure of the library. So, the new building was demolished for preventing this affect. Because of demolishing the store room, the temple stores the accessories under the library instead. The scripture library is opened everyday and free of admission fee. There is not any communication for interpretation inside the library.

### **Objectives**

1. To review and analyze cultural significance and heritage values of the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram as it is one of Thailand's heritage and cultural sources.
2. To study the process of current management and conservation plans for cultural heritage tourism at the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram, and to propose management and conservation plans for cultural heritage tourism at the monastery which is collaborated between the stakeholders.

### **Scope of the study**

1. Area of study : This research focused on the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram and its community.

The scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram is located in 250 Arun Ammarin Road, Siriraj Sub District, Bangkok Noi District in Bangkok. This temple is surrounded by two major communities which are Wat Rakhang community and Sala Ton Chan community. Its community landscape is located at the east of Arun Ammarin Road, with the site boundaries connecting close to Chao Phraya River.

2. Focus of the research : investigating and outlining cultural heritage management toward cultural heritage tourism at the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram and its community.

3. Target groups : spilted into three groups of stakeholders which are consisted of monks who live in Wat Rakhang Khosittaram and local residents, private and government agencies, and tourists.

4. Examining and discovering : addressing both tangible and intangible heritage values. Tangible includes heritage buildings and infrastructure. Intangible includes culture, beliefs, way of life, and other related aspects.

### **Research Methodology**

This research was focused on qualitative method. Qualitative method aims to gather an in-depth understanding of issues studied. In this case, research instruments of this research were carried out as follows:

- (1) Literature research
- (2) Field observation
- (3) In-depth interview
- (4) Interview / focus group meeting / participatory research

**Literature research:** The researcher had conducted a through literature search from books, academic journal, research reports, government data, daily newspapers and the Internet. The research was focused on topics relevant to the study. This literature research helps for basic understanding and background of temples' contexts from the past until today. Furthermore, information or data of what this temple was involved into the government policy of promoting cultural heritage tourism were also observed.

**Field observation :** The research had made an inventory of cultural heritage significance that had relevance to cultural heritage tourism at this temple and its communities by observation and photographic recordings. Field data sheets had prepared to facilitate field data collection. Relevant temple' s antique collections, if available, were examined to determine the changes in cultural heritage significance and values of this temple and the temple's communities over time.

**In-depth interview :** This was undertaken with the abbot, monks, leaders of local communities, government organizations' officers, academics, private-sector operations, visitors and people working in architecture. All interviews were recorded by using a portable tape recorder (if permitted by the respondents) to avoid any disruptions caused by note taking.

**Interview / focus group meeting / participatory research :** The research approached local residents in the communities that are nearby the temple to solicit their personal opinion about the cultural heritage significance and values of the temple. The researcher also participated in religious and cultural ceremonies and festivals that reflect the communities' cultures.

### **Analysis of data**

As all interviews were undertaken in Thai language, the collected data was transcribed and translated into English. To reduce bias and misunderstandings arising from translations, the researcher referred translation-related concerns to some English native speakers in Thailand. Analysis the results were comprehend into these topics:

- Analysis of value and cultural significance of the temple's scriptures library which is including aesthetic, historic, social and scientific values.

- Determining the positive and negative impacts of cultural heritage tourism development on cultural heritage significances and values of the temple's scriptures library.

- Consideration and development of policies for the conservation and management recommendations on conserving and managing the cultural heritage significances and values of the temple's scriptures library and its communities.

### Cultural significance analysis

According to Australia ICOMOS (1999, p.12), Cultural significance is a concept which helps in estimating the value of places. The places that are likely to be of significance are those which help an understanding of the past or enrich the present, and which will be of value to future generations. The adjectives used in definitions of cultural significance are aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values. For this scriptures library, cultural significance is found in each value as follows;

Value	The scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram
Aesthetic	1.) The architecture of the scriptures library is shown a fine traditional Thai house, being like that of old at the former capital (Ayutthya period). 2.) There are many fine components of the scriptures library to see. For example, (1.) The door leaves with pediment above that one passes through to come onto the platform are ornamentally carved as of old. They are beautiful and make a real visual surprise. (2.) The door into the central room is also beautifully carved, but with different ornamentation than that on the door leaves outside and (3) Many beautiful bracket pieces can be seen around the library. These brackets are taken the form of an ornately decorated Naga. 3.) The cabinets for keeping the Tripitaka have been placed in both the right and left rooms. These cabinets are shown as beautiful art objects and they are shown of fine washed gilded lacquer art.



**Fig 2** The door leaves with pediment above that one passes through to come onto the platform are ornamentally carved as of old. They are beautiful and make a real visual surprise. Credit by Panot Asawachai, 2017.



**Fig 3** The door into the central room is also beautifully carved, but with different ornamentation than that on the door leaves outside. Credit by Panot Asawachai, 2017.



**Fig 4-6** Many beautiful bracket pieces can be seen around the library. These brackets are taken the form of an ornately decorated Naga. Credit by Panot Asawachai, 2017.

<b>Value</b>	<b>The scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram</b>
Scientific	1.) One of the values of this building is that it allows us to learn something about the methods of construction of houses during the reign of King Rama I (1782-1809).

<b>Value</b>	<b>The scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram</b>
Historic	1.) This scriptures library is shown the wooden traditional Thai house with a long history of use in Thailand. The age of this building is more than 200 years.

<b>Value</b>	<b>The scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram</b>
Social	1.) Nowadays, this building is used as a monastery library. Furthermore, it is preserved as a building of artistic and historical importance as well. This is

because the building is closely linked with the present King's illustrious ancestor (His great-great-great-grandfather).
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For the scriptures library, the significance in aesthetic is the most important significance for preserving this building. For anyone interested in the art of Thailand, a visit to the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram is a must because it can be shown the spectacular beauty of the early Rattanakosin period.



**Fig 7** The library is now become the place for worshipping the King Rama I and it is used as a monastery library. Furthermore, it is preserved as a building of artistic and historical importance as well. Credit by Panot Asawachai, 2017.

### **Current Management of the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram**

At the present, the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram formally engages in tourism. However, the library is devalued and dilapidated by the present improper management. Before taking a look at the current management of the library, there must take a look at the potential benefit of promoting the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram as a major tourist destination for cultural heritage tourism.

The first potential benefit of promoting the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram as a tourist destination is to create the awareness of public value's importance and to conserve it. "Public value" or "Community heritage value" are terms sometimes used to refer to those elements of significance of heritage places that are most generally valued by communities and society as a whole. The public value is consisted of historic, aesthetic, scientific and social attributes. These attributes can create a sense of place which is important to national or local self-identity. Thai people from the past to present generations remind the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram as a memorial place of King Rama I. Many visitors including the communities around this temple appreciate the library's aesthetic value such as beautiful bracket pieces and door leaves with pediment. The library also has major historical value due to its role in the history of Thai architecture in the early Rattanakosin period. All these attributes contribute to the reasons why the communities and Thai people value this temple as a public value. As the conclusion, promoting this temple as a tourist destination can be created the public awareness of library's significances that can be conserved the public value for this temple.

The second potential benefit is economic benefit. Promoting tourism into this temple can be brought "Tourism development". Tourism development can bring improved income and living standards for local people. It stimulates the economy in the communities by creating demand for communities' producing and through infrastructure development projects.

Creating jobs for local people may be associated directly such as local tour guide or managerial positions; or in supporting tourism industry like food production or retail suppliers. Some locals are hired as permanent employees to take care of this temple and the library. According to the temple's location, There are two communities nearby this temple and they can be promoted as cultural heritage attractions which are Baan Chang Lo and Baan Matoom Communities. These two communities are on the verge of losing the skills they are famous. Baan Matoom community has been famous for making sweetened bael fruit and Baan Chang Lo community has been famous for making Buddha statues since Ayutthaya period. Tourism development which brings economic benefit to these communities means increased spending in the communities generated from visitors or tourism businesses can directly and indirectly promote the viability of local businesses. Nevertheless, infrastructure including roads, parks and other public spaces can be developed and improved both for visitors and local residents through increased tourism activity in the communities. This is also the economic benefit from tourism development as well.

The pride of communities from presenting this temple as a tourism destination can be generated through tourism. This is the third potential benefit which is counted as "Social benefit". A positive sense of community identity can be reinforced and tourism can encourage local communities to maintain their traditions and identity. The scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram is the pride of the communities and the nation as a whole. This is because there are many important components and contents which make this library unique. For example, the library is finely decorated with woodcarvings, colour glass mosaics and gold leaves. Furthermore, beautiful art objects, the scriptures cabinet of washed gilded lacquer are housed in the library. This unique can be brought the pride of the communities and the nation as a whole.

According to data received by in-depth interview and field observation, there is no any current conservation plan for this temple and the library. However, this research indicates the following factors are significant for the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram's management and temple's management.

### **1.) Way of life**

The scripture library of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram has been a place for holding religious ceremonies. According to Thai customs, there is a variety of practices including religious activities held at the temple, such as making merits, listening the sermon, Buddhist ordination ceremony, and an important Buddhism ceremony which is called The Candle Festival. The most elaborate of the traditional parading of candles to the temple has been transferred from generations to generations. These can be regards as intangible heritage of the temple and communities and can be last very long time.

### **2.) Tourism facilities**

- Car park : there is official car park for the tourists who want to visit this temple and the library. It is generally known, all tourists' vehicles should park at the provided car park at behind the area of temple. However, some tourists use public transports such as taxi, public bus and public ferry to access to this temple.

- Accommodation is not available for tourists in the temple's communities.

- Toilet facilities : there is two station public toilets available in the temple compound. The toilet is adequately separated for male and female.

- Information center : there is no official information center in the temple compound at this moment. However, there is a Tourist Information center of Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) located at the Tha Chang ferry pier as information center of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram. Moreover, the visitors who would like to visit the library as a group tour should send the letter for asking the permission from the abbot of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram first.

- Interpretation : Nowadays, the interpretation at the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram is “rich in objects but poor in interpretation”. This temple and its library have many interesting and important fabrics that are related with cultural significance. However, the interpretation process for educating and communicating is not foreseen its importance. There are a few information boards for informing the temple’s history inside the temple. These information boards are not given the details of cultural significances of this temple. They just provide general information of temple’s history. This can not be enhanced the visitor experience and conserved the pride of the communities and nation.

- Food shop/restaurant : There are many food shops and local restaurants available around the temple. Tourists can find them easily. However, most shops are opened only in the evening period of a day. Most of them run between 17.00-21.00 hrs.

- Safety : there are security guards managed by the temple available everyday from 7.00-17.00 hrs.

### 3.)Tourism activities

The scriptures library is now promoting a cultural tourism and religious tourism programs at the temple that are highly relevant to Thai’s belief, which pays respecting to the royal portrait of King Rama I kept inside the library and pays respecting to the molded statue of Somdet Phra Phutthachan (To Phromrangs) who is a revered monk of this temple. The temple itself is considered as one of the nine sacred temples in Bangkok where is well-known for Thai Buddhist pilgrimage. In 2006, “Paying Homage to Nine temples in Bangkok” launched by Bangkok Mass Transit Authority in cooperation with Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT), Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara was one of those nine temples that was very successful because of an increasing number of Thai tourists. Moreover, other tourism activity seasonally organized by the monks is pays respecting to the molded statue of Somdet Phra Phutthachan (To Phromrangs). This Buddhism ceremony is widely known among Thai tourists which is always held in every June.

### 4.) Resources

There are two main sources of money for looking after of the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara;

4.1 The fund from Fine Arts Department is the main fund for renovating the historic buildings inside the temple compound and also developing the infrastructure inside the temple.

4.2 Donation : this fund is responsible for sanitation, infrastructure, education, and other public services.

Budget is mostly spend on conservation of historic buildings inside the temple compound. Budget allocation for developing and promoting tourism activities is insignificant.

### 5.) Stakeholder

Stakeholders for relevant to the cultural heritage tourism at the the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara and the templeat present can be divided into three parts as follows :

5.1 Government sector : the municipality of Bangkok Noi district is a representative, which is officially authorized to provide tourism information to the tourists and improve better quality of environment around the temple's area. The municipality also collaborates with Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) for tourism promotion. Moreover, Department of Fine Arts is also involved for conservation of historic buildings inside the temple compound and this department is responsible for providing funds for conservation.

5.2 Abbot and monks of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara: this key stakeholder is more suitable to play the role of organizing cultural heritage tourism at Wat Rakhang because they are as a cultural heritage center of the temple.

5.3 Communities : this party is also the main important key stakeholder to take role of encouraging conservation and promoting tourism at the temple.

### **Proposed Management Plan for Cultural Heritage Tourism**

According to current management of the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara, they should improve the interpretation program. This is for communicating the values and all meanings of cultural heritage site by encouraging individuals and communities to reflect on their own perceptions of the site. All media to communicate include publications, signs, self-guided activities, visitor centers, audio-visual devices and indoor and outdoor exhibits (Hall, C.M. & McArthur, S. 1996, p. 91). The interpretation programs at the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara should be established;

#### 1.1 Setting a visitor service center

This visitor service center should be included both service and interpretation areas at the same place. The service area is for providing snacks, drinks, toilet, and rest area. The interpretation area is the area to provide some background knowledge of the temple, the library and the important significances of this temple. As the conclusion, this visitor service center is established as an assisting tool of the process of transferring useful information to visitors. However, it should be operated by community as well. This is because community participation in providing visitor service center will be brought the community's pride.

#### 1.2 Signage improvement and development

Signs and information boards can be a direct technique to reach visitor's understanding. Signage can be a link between the community, messages and visitors. All signs are valuable tools to get visitors understand the site in same direction. Furthermore, the signage should be attached to the appropriate location and it should be provided both in Thai and English. The signage and information boards should be located around the temple and nearby such as entrance of the temple. The signage and information boards should inform visitors know what exists and what is important inside the temple's area.

#### 1.3 Developing potential media

The media to facilitate visitors at pre-visit, on site and post-visit should be developed such as publication, visual media and web page. Nowadays, there are only web pages providing for this temple in Thai languages. So, This should be developed the English version

web pages suddenly as for providing pre-visiting and post-visit experience to the international tourists.

#### 1.4 Establishing Wat Rakhang's local museum

Grouping traditional objects with a basis of similarity (temple's document, religious objects, communities' offering objects to the temple and etc.) is recommended. There are a lot of interesting objects at this temple such as the Buddhist scripture cabinets. So, that is why there should have a local museum inside the temple. This is an other way to build interpretation program to the visitors. All objects should be explained their history and significance with obvious informative signs in both Thai and English. Furthermore, prohibited signs should be regulated for all people such as no touching objects, no smoking, no shoes. Nowadays, there is no any local museum operated inside the temple.

#### 1.5 Traffic and transportation management

Coaches and heavy vehicles are not allowed inside the temple due to their heavy weight and compaction of soil. Normally, the visitors who want to visit this temple have to take public transportations such as bus, taxi, ferry and taking a walk to this temple because there is limitation of car park area available. So, the best solution of this problem is to suggest the traveling route of walk. This is because the visitors can experience the other place nearby this temple at the same time. The routing should be started from Wang Lang Market - Wat Rakhang - Wat Kruawan - Wat Arun.

### **Proposed Conservation Plan for Cultural Heritage Tourism**

There is no any conservation plan for conserving the scriptures library at present. So, there is needed for setting the policies and conservation plan for the future. The policies that should be put in this place to ensure that it will be conserved in a way that protects its important values whilst providing for the future are as following;

- Do not allow any person construct any building within the compound of the scriptures library except permit has been obtained from the Department of Fine Arts.
- In the case where the building being constructed without permit, the Department of Fine Arts has the power to stop the construction and to demolish the building or a part of the building.
- Do not allow any action of repairing, modifying, altering, demolishing, adding to, destroying, removing the scriptures library or its parts or excavating for anything within the compound of the library, except by the order of the Department of Fine Arts, or permit has been obtained from the Department of Fine Arts. If the permit contains any conditions, they have to be complied with.
- Inside the scriptures library, please refrain from running around, eating and/or drinking, smoking, or improperly disposing of wastepaper.
- The scriptures library has the right to refuse the enter to those wearing improper attire, and bringing in pets.

- There should have the persons who are in charge of looking after the objects inside the scriptures library for protecting the objects from touching and stealing.
- Inside the scriptures library and the temple, there must have the communication of interpretation such as information panel, audio tour, tour guide or brochure. This communication of interpretation will be shown the cultural significance and values of this scriptures library to the public.
- There must have a group of people who is responsible for looking after the surrounding environment of the scriptures library such as decorating and cutting the brunches of trees inside the fence and keeping the area clean.

### Plan for the future

For a plan in the future, the Information service such as brochures, site panels and audio tour are insufficient. Without good interpretation or inappropriate presentation of the heritage, it is difficult for the visitor to appreciate the value of the scriptures library. Even though, there is only one site panel in front the scriptures library, the visitors still neglect to read it anyway because it is left abandoned without proper maintenance, as shown in Figure 8.



**Fig 8** The site panel is not well maintained. So, the people cannot read what the information is on the panel. Credit by Panot Asawachai, 2017.

In addition, the scriptures library needs to have the “interpretation” to achieve a number of objectives in preserving the significance in aesthetic of this library as following;

- enriching visitors’ experience in aesthetic value when visiting the scriptures library;
- assisting visitors to develop a keener awareness, appreciation and understanding of the scriptures library being visited;
- accomplishing management objectives through encouraging thoughtful use of the scriptures library by visitors, including reducing the need for regulation and enforcement, and carefully distributing visitor pressure to minimize environmental impacts on fragile resources.

There are some several options for interpretation for communicating the significance in aesthetic of this scriptures library. The options are the interpretation methods. Each option has

its own advantage and disadvantage to consider. Here is the options for communicating the significance in aesthetic of this library and the temple;

<b>Options</b>	<b>Advantage</b>	<b>Disadvantage</b>
Training tour guides for personal interpretation	1.) interpret complicated processes and help visitors understand the aesthetic value easily. 2.) can be cost effective, require little investment. 3.) can generate income. 4.) can provide employment. 5.) can offer two-ways communication between the tour guide and the visitors.	1.) usually require a lot of organizing. 2.) involve teams of people who need support and nurture. 3.) are never finished as there is a need to be flexible to accommodate demands from the visitors, foresee developments and be creative. 4.) need continuing commitment from everyone involved to maintain quality.

<b>Options</b>	<b>Advantage</b>	<b>Disadvantage</b>
Providing "site panels"	1.) providing interpretation at any hour of the day and on the spot that it is needed. 2.) integrating pictures and diagrams with text. Perhaps to show how the scriptures library was in the middle of the pond.	1.) when greeting large numbers of people at once. Some people will stand in front of a panel while the rest walk past and panel cannot answer spontaneous questions. 2.) at interpreting complicated stories on a single panel.

#### Discussion and Conclusion

The scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara's is famous attraction site in Bangkok. Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara is one of famous Buddhist temples in Bangkok which is considered as an interesting temple and have many special significances because it used to be a royal monastery under the royal patronage of King Taksin. Nowadays, it is a royal temple under the royal patronage of Chakri Dynasty. The scripture library was originally the residence of Phra Rajavarindra, a state official who became King Rama I, the founding king of Chakri dynasty. The residence was donated to Wat Rakhang and it is later used as the scriptures library of this temple. The scriptures library of this temple is rich in cultural significances, which are aesthetic, historic, scientific and social values. The potential benefits of promoting the scriptures library of Wat Rakhang as a tourist destination is to create the awareness of public value's importance and to conserve it. Secondly, promoting tourism into the scriptures library of this temple can be brought "Tourism development". Tourism development can bring improved income and living standards for local people. This can be counted as "Economic benefit". Thirdly, the pride of communities from presenting this temple's scriptures library as a tourism destination can be generated through tourism. This is the third potential benefit which is counted as "Social benefit". According to current management of the scriptures library of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara, it is shown that local residents need tourism coming to their

and temple and community. However, the current management cannot completely provide better understanding of the scriptures library of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara's significances to tourists. Thus, a proposed management plan is needed which mainly aims at providing opportunities and facilities for tourists to have conserving the significance of cultural heritage values, and also enhancing community involvement as well as economic benefit and social benefit. From the assessment and analysis from the field study it is shown that proposed management planning for cultural heritage tourism in the scriptures library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara into interpretation program which is involved 1.) Setting a visitor service center 2.) Signage improvement and development 3.) Developing potential media 4.) Establishing Wat Rakhang's local museum 5.) Traffic and transportation management.

At present, the local community and the monks who live at this temple agree to set a visitor service center where is the interpretation area that provides visitors with some background knowledge of the scriptures library of Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara and prepare the facility before going to see the real site and its exhibitions. It is proposed to locate within the area of the temple that is nearby the entrance of the temple in order to be easier for visitors to find. Moreover, direction signs in both Thai and English versions are all located around the site and nearby such as entrance of the temple and at the main road before the entrance of the temple. For developing potential media, publication and web page in both Thai and English version are now developed to provide for visitors. Nowadays, there is no any local museum operated inside the temple. However, the monks who live at this temple and the communities agree to establish Wat Rakhang's local museum in the future. For traffic and transportation management, government agencies have not been sufficiently involved in management the traffic and transportation problems in the temple's area. The road is also without proper guide posts as well as street signs, which they are necessary things for visitors in order to reach the temple and the community. The main road to the temple is now starting to decline without maintenance. These are some examples waiting for government agencies to support and make all come true as soon as possible.

### **Suggestions for Future Research**

Certainly, future research needs to be conducted, so the suggestions for future research in relation to this research include:

1. The future research should be specific on how to conserve the library at Wat Rakhang Khosittaram Woramahavihara's identity and deal with the global changes that influence the reduction of heritage values.
2. The future research should be carried out on how well management and conservation plans effective to the temple and the community after all participants start with their own responsibilities.

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