PERFORMING ARTS IN PHRA NAKHON SI AYUTTHAYA PROVINCE IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE TOURISM AUTHORITY OF THAILAND (TAT) POLICY

Yuwadee KUMLUNGDEE[1] and Manissa VASINAROM[1]
1 Faculty of Fine and Applied Arts, Suan Sunandha Rajabhat University, Thailand; s66126613007@ssru.ac.th (Y. K.); manissa.va@ssru.ac.th (M. V.)

ABSTRACT
This research article aims to study the performance patterns according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand's policy in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province, as seen in the festivals and tourism promotion of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province. The study was conducted through document analysis, interviews, and observations, and the results were presented using descriptive analysis. The research findings reveal that Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya is an ancient city of Thailand with diverse ethnic groups coexisting. The culture of each ethnic group is reflected in the community performances, which have been passed down to the present day. The significant local history includes the war between Thailand and Myanmar. The tourism promotion policy of the Tourism Authority of Thailand is evident in the annual provincial festivals. As seen in the annual provincial festivals, there are five main events: the "Yoyos Yingfa Ayutthaya World Heritage," the Cultural Plaza, the Commemoration of King Naresuan the Great, the Cultural World by the Riverside, and the Krung Si Khon Festival. The content of the performances is derived from the local cultural heritage, which includes 1) historical performances, 2) community identity, and 3) local performing arts. These serve as a means of cultural heritage transmission, promoting and instilling a sense of awareness among community members and audiences. The performances and promotion of identity are conducted at both national and international levels, and they also provide a guideline for enhancing the creative economy of the community through Thailand's cultural tourism.
Keywords: Performance, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province, Tourism Policy, Tourism Authority of Thailand

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism is an activity that is related to economic, social, and cultural dimensions, especially cultural tourism, which utilizes cultural capital and historical heritage to create value and interest for tourist attractions (Narumol Anusonpat, 2006). Cultural heritage and the creative industry play a role in promoting the uniqueness and attractiveness of tourist destinations. At the same time, sustainable tourism development should consider the preservation of cultural heritage and the benefits to local communities (UNESCO, 2023). Cultural performances are a form of intellectual heritage that reflects the history, way of life, beliefs, and identity of the community, serving as a medium to convey knowledge, cultural values, and stories from the past to the present, which can help create experiences and add value to tourism (Methavee Jamniang, 2019). Therefore, promoting performances as part of tourism activities is one way to connect cultural heritage with creating experiences for tourists, while also recognizing the importance of preserving and passing on cultural arts.

Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province is an important cultural tourism destination in Thailand due to its prosperous history spanning over 400 years. It served as a significant center for politics, economy, religion, and culture, as evidenced by ancient sites, temples, palaces, and artworks that reflect the wisdom, beliefs, and lifestyles of people in the past, as well as the cultural integration resulting from trade and relationships with people from various regions (Kanyarat Kongporn, 2025). Due to its outstanding features, the Historic City of Ayutthaya was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site in 1991) B.E. In addition to its historical and archeological significance, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province also conveys its historical narratives and cultural capital through tourism activities and various festivals. This is particularly evident in performances that communicate past stories and reflect the local identity, including historical light and sound shows, traditional Thai dance performances, folk performances, and Likay shows. These performances are considered art forms that are closely related to the lifestyle and culture of the local people. The development of these cultural assets into tourism activities aligns with the policies of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT). Which aims to promote cultural tourism and drive the country's Soft Power to create a positive image and enhance competitiveness in tourism (Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Provincial Cultural Office, 2023).

Given the importance of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province as a historical and cultural tourist destination, along with tourism promotion strategies that emphasize adding value through cultural capital, performances are considered an essential element that should be studied. Furthermore, there is currently a lack of data collection and research that provides an overview of the types of performances used, as well as management approaches that align with tourism policies and cultural capital development. These performances aim to convey historical narratives, reflect local identity, and create cultural experiences for tourists. Therefore, studying the types of performances in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province related to the tourism promotion strategies of the Tourism Authority of Thailand will help understand the presentation of cultural arts as part of tourism activities. It

For this reason, the researcher is interested in studying performances in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province, focusing on performance forms according to the tourism policy of Thailand's Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province. The study will utilize document analysis, interviews, and observations as methods to explore the use of performances as a tool for promoting cultural tourism, developing performance management to create economic value, and preserving the cultural heritage of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province and interested agencies.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

1) Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province

1.1 Background

Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province has been the capital of Thailand since B.E. B.E. 1893-2310 is historically and culturally significant, with ancient sites, art, and local wisdom being key assets in promoting tourism (Ananya Inphum, 2021; Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Provincial Office, 2025; Fine Arts Department, 2001).

1.2 Community Characteristics and Way of Life

The community's way of life is closely tied to the river and the floodplain, engaging in agriculture and trade. Food, handicrafts, markets, and local wisdom serve as resources to promote tourism (Fine Arts Department, 2001; UNESCO World Heritage Center, n.d.). n.d. P.S.

1.3 Arts, Culture, and Performances

The province's arts and culture are reflected through traditions, music, performing arts, Khon, and Likay, which help convey history and local identity to tourism (Fine Arts Department, 2001; Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Provincial Public Relations Office, 2025).

2) Tourism Policy

The province aims to promote cultural tourism to generate income and develop into a national and international destination, focusing on preserving existing tourist sites, enhancing resource efficiency, and developing new activities to increase competitiveness (Nares Wongsa, 2006; Project Planning Division, TAT, 1997).

3) Concept of Managing Performances for Cultural Tourism

The management of performances must consider the elements of the show, administration, and appropriateness for the audience to effectively convey cultural values (Wilasini Noikrubri, 2017; Piyawadee Makpha, 2015). Research indicates that incorporating Muay Thai and Khon into tourism activities helps preserve performing arts, promote Thai identity, and enhance economic value (Treethawat Meesomsak, 2020; Thidarath Phumwattana and Treethawat Meesomsak, 2021).

4) Performances in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province Today

4.1 Performances of Arts, Culture, and History

Including the Khon Krung Si Festival and the Yoyos Ying Fa Ayutthaya World Heritage event, which present historical stories through Khon, light, sound, and Thai cultural performances (Ministry of Culture, 2026; Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Provincial Public Relations Office, 2026).4.2 Performances in Contemporary Tourism Festivals

Including the Thai music and contemporary performing arts festival of the World Heritage City, and the opening of the Likhit performance legend, which help promote local identity and boost the community economy (Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Provincial Public Relations Office, 2025).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research on performances in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province according to the policy of the Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Aiming to study the performance styles according to the Tourism Authority of Thailand's policy in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province. B.E. 2568, which appears in both live performances and social media, includes document studies, photographs, videos, social media, websites, interviews with government personnel involved in organizing performances and promoting tourism in the area, observations from recorded performances, and live performances. The study results are presented through descriptive analysis.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province is distinguished for its history and culture, as Ayutthaya was the capital of Thailand for 417 years. Historical evidence, ancient sites, and artifacts reflect the prosperity of past civilizations, along with customs, traditions, and lifestyles that have been passed down to the present day. Additionally, the Historic City of Ayutthaya was registered as a UNESCO World Heritage Site on December 13, 1991) A.D. In 1991, the province became an internationally significant destination for historical and cultural tourism (Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Provincial Office, 2025). The province's historical and cultural capital can also be used as a guideline for organizing tourism performances. By incorporating historical stories, art, customs, traditions, and the way of life of the Ayutthaya people into the performances, the unique identity of the area can be conveyed to tourists, allowing them to understand and appreciate it more deeply. This aligns with the Tourism Authority of Thailand's presentation of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya as an ancient capital that still shows traces of civilization and cultural heritage today (Tourism Authority of Thailand, n.d.). P. P.P.) The key characteristic of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province that is conducive to cultural performances is its status as a historical city and a UNESCO World Heritage site with diverse cultural capital. This can be used as evidence to create various forms of performances, including historical storytelling, traditional Thai dance and music, performances related to local traditions, and contemporary performances that reinterpret the historical elements and identity of Ayutthaya. Such performances can serve as mechanisms to promote tourism, create experiences for tourists, and enhance the cultural capital of the province while still connecting with the context of the World Heritage site and preserving historical and cultural values (Kwan Suda Phanpian, 2026). Given this context, Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province continuously organizes cultural activities and performances on various occasions. From the study of large annual festivals, the types of performances in the province can be categorized into three types: 1) historical performances, 2) community identity, and 3) local performing arts, as detailed below.

1) Historical performance Historical performances

The management of cultural performances in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya province plays a significant role in promoting cultural tourism, especially through the organization of celebrations and activities related to its status as a World Heritage City. These performances, which reflect the history and local identity, convey cultural values while providing experiences for tourists. Support from government agencies and the management of cultural resources contribute to making these performances a mechanism that links the preservation of cultural heritage with tourism development in a tangible way (Kwan Suda Phanphian, 2026). Additionally, publicity through digital media and word-of-mouth among tourists helps disseminate information about the performances widely, fostering interest and encouraging travel to the province. This can lead to spending on accommodation, food, and various services in the area, increasing opportunities for income generation for local businesses and communities while promoting the province's cultural values.

The "Yaiyos Yingfa Ayutthaya World Heritage" is an important annual festival of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province, organized to celebrate and promote the value of the Historic City of Ayutthaya as a UNESCO World Heritage cultural site, which was registered by UNESCO on December 13, 2013) B.E. In 1991, the event played a role in promoting historical learning, preserving cultural heritage, and tourism in the province through the presentation of cultural performances and activities that provided opportunities for the public and tourists to engage with historical sites.

For the annual event, B.E. B.E. 2568 was held under the concept "In the Heart of the People, Ayutthaya, a World Heritage." It presented historical stories through light, sound, and historical performances, along with decorating the area with lights and organizing cultural activities.

Additionally, there were local product sales and retro activities. These elements made the event a cultural festival that combined performances, learning, and tourism.

1) Concept of performance Concept of the performance

The concept "In the Heart of the People, Ayutthaya, a World Heritage" aims to communicate pride in historical and cultural heritage, alongside a remembrance of royal benevolence. This is achieved through lighting and historical light, sound, and color shows, using ancient sites as part of the scene to connect past stories with real locations, while also promoting cultural participation and the community's way of life.

2) Content of the performance Content of the performance

The content aims to convey the history of Ayutthaya, focusing on the valor of kings, the courage in defending the kingdom, and the prosperity of the realm. This is presented through live performances, battle scenes, and realistic props, while integrating local performing arts, court culture, and Western-style performances to promote learning and raise awareness of historical and cultural values.

3) Performance Elements Elements of the performance

The elements of the performance include historical storytelling conveyed through narration, dialog, and reenactments, using music and sound effects to create atmosphere and emphasize the emotions of various scenes. The presentation combines live performances with lighting, color, sound techniques, and set design to enhance realism. The positioning of actors, movements, costumes, and props, such as replica weapons and cannons, must align with the events and the roles of the characters. Additionally, using historical sites and cultural squares as performance spaces helps create a connection with the historical context, considering the appropriateness of the area and the preservation of the historical sites. The annual festival performances also help disseminate historical knowledge, promote tourism, and provide opportunities for the community to engage economically and culturally.

4) Additional details of the event and activities Additional details of the event and accompanying activities

The activities within the event include lighting decorations and photo spots to create an atmosphere and promote tourism through social media, a walking street, and local shops offering food and souvenirs, as well as the sale of OTOP products and community goods to disseminate wisdom and generate income for the grassroots economy. Additionally, the tram service facilitates travel between activity areas and enhances access to tourist attractions within the event.

The King Naresuan Memorial event in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province is held regularly in mid-January to honor and commemorate His Majesty's great benevolence, especially his heroic deeds in restoring independence and the battle of Yuthahatthi. The event features light and sound shows, cultural performances, royal history exhibitions, historical discussions, and a retro market. The performances convey royal history, royal duties, and significant historical events through the movements of actors, costumes, and props that are consistent with the era. Music and sound effects help set the rhythm and create the mood, while the design of light, color, and sound emphasizes important characters and events, connecting the performance with the surrounding historical sites. The various activities within the event thus promote the learning of history and culture, while also providing a historical tourism experience for participants.

1) Concept of performance Concept of the performance

The King Naresuan Memorial event is organized to honor and pay tribute to His Majesty's great benevolence by using performances to convey his royal history and significant deeds, alongside promoting the learning of history and cultural tourism in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province.

2) Content of the performance Content of the performance

The content aims to present the biography, royal duties, and heroic deeds of King Naresuan the Great, especially the restoration of independence and the battle of Yuthahatthi, through a light, sound, and color-enhanced drama to convey the emotions of significant events and connect historical stories with the province's area.

3) Performance elements Performance elements

The performance consists of a script that continuously arranges historical events, music, and sound effects that help create the atmosphere and emphasize the emotions of the story, as well as a presentation in the form of a play with light, color, and sound. In some years, it may incorporate projection technology on historical sites. Additionally, using historical sites as performance venues enhances realism and connects the content with the cultural context, organizing events to honor and promote historical tourism.

4) Activities accompanying the event Event activities

The activities include a retro market and local shops showcasing food and cultural products, cultural performances to promote Thai identity, as well as lighting decorations and photo spots to create a nighttime tourism atmosphere. These activities help promote cultural learning and create opportunities for income distribution to local entrepreneurs.

5) Details of the event organization Detailed arrangements for the event

The event organization covers area management, public relations, facilitation, and ensuring the safety of participants to support the proper conduct of performances and tourism activities, while also promoting the participation of the public and local entrepreneurs.

2) Community Identity

The cultural panorama event along the riverside, "Yol Ratri Sri Ayutthaya, the City of Rivers," showcases the beautiful atmosphere of "the City of Rivers" through the transmission of valuable cultural stories and the way of life of the riverside community that has been passed down for generations. This is achieved using performers, costumes, music, and props that align with the content and atmosphere of the event. The arrangement of the performance area in relation to the river context and cultural space helps create an atmosphere where the audience can tangibly perceive the characteristics of "the City of Rivers." Additionally, the lighting and sound design play a role in creating the atmosphere and setting the mood of the performance, used in conjunction with the arrangement of the space and surrounding elements to enhance the audience's experience. At the same time, the exhibition of local food, cultural products, and activities related to the riverside way of life serve as supporting elements that connect the performance with cultural tourism, making the event a space for learning and experiencing local identity alongside entertainment.

1) Concept of performance Concept of the performance

The cultural riverside perspective event "Yol Ratri Si Ayutthaya, the City of Rivers" aims to showcase the cultural identity and way of life of the riverside communities in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province. It uses performances to convey the relationship between people and the rivers, alongside promoting cultural tourism and learning about local wisdom.

2) Content of the performance Performance content

The content of the performance reflects the bond between the waterways and the lifestyle, traditions, and wisdom of the community. It combines movement art, music, and costumes in harmony with the concept of the work to convey the identity of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya as a city with a long-standing relationship with the waterways.

3) Performance Elements Performance elements

The performance uses a script to convey the way of life and activities of the riverside community, linking them with local art, culture, and identity. It integrates performing arts with the arrangement of space and environment in line with the concept of the "City of Water." The performance venue thus plays a role in creating an atmosphere and conveying the relationship

between the community and the river, helping to connect the audience with the cultural context of the province.

4) Activities accompanying the event Event activities

The activities include exhibitions that disseminate knowledge about history, lifestyle, and community wisdom, local restaurants and shops selling local products that help promote the community's economy, as well as activities related to riverside lifestyles that provide participants with opportunities to learn about and experience local culture through experiences that align with the area's context.

3) Local Performing Arts

The 4th Annual Nattadun Music Festival: The Legend of Likay Performance is organized to preserve and promote the art of Likay, which is an important cultural heritage and identity of the central region. The event showcases the history and uniqueness of Likay through performances by renowned Likay troupes and artists from the region, reflecting the distinctive aspects of storytelling, singing, dialog, and performance style. The event also utilizes cultural capital to extend the concept of Soft Power, promoting cultural tourism, stimulating the economy, and distributing income to the community while continuing to sustain the traditional performing arts.

1) Concept of performance Concept of the performance

The "Mahakarnatdtrai" event, marking the 4th year of the "Legend of Likay Performance," is organized by the Ministry of Culture and the Upper Central Region Provincial Group, with Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province as the operational area. The event aims to preserve and promote the art of Likay performance as a cultural heritage, while also building upon cultural capital in line with the Soft Power concept to boost tourism and create economic value for the community.

2) Content of the performance Performance content

The content aims to showcase the uniqueness of Likay through performances by Likay troupes and regional artists, reflecting specific characteristics in storytelling, singing, dialog, and performance style. This is to promote folk performing arts and encourage cultural learning among the audience.

3) Performance Elements Performance elements

The likay performance consists of a script and storyline that blend dialog with singing, with songs and music helping to create emotions and convey meanings. The costumes and accessories are vividly colorful, while the props and sets are adjusted to fit the storyline and style of each troupe. Meanwhile, light, color, and sound help create an atmosphere and enhance the interest.

4) Activities and other elements within the event Activities and other components within the eventThe activities within the event aim to connect performing arts with tourism and the creative economy through the promotion of learning and the dissemination of cultural arts, as well as the establishment of spaces for selling community products and goods to support the local economy.

5) Event details Event details

The event aims to promote the art of Likay performance to a wider audience, encourage participation from artists and the local community, increase economic opportunities from tourism, and support the preservation of cultural heritage for future generations.

Krung Si Khon Festival

1) Concept of the performance Concept of the performance

The Krung Si Khon Festival is held at the plaza next to Wat Phra Ram within the Ayutthaya Historical Park to promote the art of Khon as a high classical dance and an intangible cultural heritage, alongside promoting historical and cultural tourism. The ancient site is used to create performance experiences and stimulate the economy.

2) Content of the performance Content of the performance
The performance presents a story from the Ramayana epic, conveying events and character roles through dance movements, gestures, music, and dialog. This reflects the unique identity of Khon performance art while connecting cultural values with the historical context of Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province.
3) Performance elements Performance elements
The performance uses the Ramayana as its main storyline, conveying dialog through voice acting. The cast includes characters such as gods, goddesses, giants, monkeys, and other characters according to the story, using dance poses, acting, and movements to express personality and emotion. Costumes, headdresses, and props are designed to align with the characters' roles, while light, color, and sound help create the atmosphere and emphasize key moments. The performance is held in the courtyard beside Phra Ram Temple, utilizing ancient sites as elements that connect the art of performance with the cultural landscape.
4) Activities and other elements within the event Activities and other components within the event
The festival aims to promote cultural tourism and nightlife tourism by using Khon performances as the main activity to attract locals and tourists. It also supports travel and overnight stays in the province.
5) Event details Event details
Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province supports the organization of activities to preserve and promote art and culture by linking performances with historical tourist attractions. Using ancient sites as venues enhances the value of the viewing experience and encourages participants to learn about cultural heritage alongside tourism.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Tourism Authority of Thailand (TAT) Emphasizing the use of Thai identity and cultural capital to promote tourism by linking history, performing arts, traditions, lifestyles, food, and local wisdom with activities and festivals to create interesting experiences and stimulate travel. This approach reflects that tourism is not only focused on visiting important places but also on learning and experiencing the culture of each area. For example, the "Tourism Festival of Thailand" showcases the cultural and tourism diversity of Thailand through performances, food, local products, and activities that allow tourists to participate. This approach can be connected to Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province, which has outstanding historical and cultural capital, including ancient sites, the story of Ayutthaya, performing arts, and community lifestyles (Tourism Authority of Thailand, 2026).
The study of five major festivals, namely (1) the "Yoyos Yingfa Ayutthaya World Heritage" festival, (2) the "Cultural Perspective by the Riverside: 'Yol Ratree Sri Ayutthaya, the City of Water'" festival, (3) the "Grand Performing Arts Festival: The Legend of Likay" festival, (4) the "Commemoration of King Naresuan the Great" festival, and (5) the "Khon Festival of Krung Si" at the Rama Temple courtyard, found that performances can be an important tool in presenting the province's identity to tourists. This is especially true for activities that transform historical and cultural stories into experiences that visitors can perceive and participate in. Additionally, the organization of performances uses the province's historical and cultural capital as the core, conveying the stories of Ayutthaya, the heroic deeds of kings, Khon, Likay, performing arts, riverside lifestyles, food, and local wisdom through performances, light, sound, music, and accompanying activities. The organization of these events is not limited to stage performances but is linked to retro markets, local food, OTOP products, cultural products, exhibitions, wisdom demonstrations, traditional clothing, and photography activities. This makes the performances a part of cultural tourism, providing tourists with opportunities to experience culture in a holistic manner, in line with the Tourism Authority of Thailand's

approach of integrating culture, tradition, lifestyle, food, wisdom, and performing arts. That integrates culture, traditions, lifestyles, food, wisdom, and performing arts together (Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Provincial Public Relations Office, 2026).

The organization of cultural performances and festivals in Phra Nakhon Si Ayutthaya Province is linked to the use of culture to generate interest and promote the area's image. Particularly, the festival aspect emphasizes festivals and activities that can create soft power, attracting people to experience the culture. Presenting history, Khon, Likay, traditional dance, Thai music, food, and local lifestyles through festivals makes culture, which may exist in the form of knowledge or traditional performances, more accessible to audiences and generates interest in visiting the actual locations. Additionally, if these activities are linked with promotion, the sale of cultural products, and the continuous development of tourism services, it can help leverage cultural capital into economic opportunities and support creative economic development. However, merely organizing festivals does not automatically create soft power; it requires quality presentation, continuous communication, and management that makes culture recognized and valuable in the long term.

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