

## **ABSTRACT**

**THESIS:** Tourism as Means of Development of Historic Rural Towns—A Comparison between Chinese and Thailand practice

**SITUDENT:** Ziyu Zhang

**DEGREE:** Master of Urban and Regional Planning

**COLLEGE:** Architecture and Planning

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This study demonstrated three different tourism-based rural development modes in three historic rural towns of China and Thailand through analyzing the way local government promoted tourism and the way local people participated in tourism activities. It focuses more on how tourism transformed local life and affect local culture. Two Chinese practices reveals the fact that rapid tourism development accelerated the proceeding of urbanization in rural areas of China but leave them with a dilemma whether to maintain its rurality for tourism or keep developing tourism resulting in losing its rurality. The Thailand practice shows the possibility of balancing the local needs and tourism development in rural area.