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PENSIRI CHARTNIYOM : GUIDELINES FOR HANDICRAFT DEVELOPMENT : SUPPORTING
INTANGIBLE HERITAGE AS A KEY STRATEGY FOR PRESERVING CULTURAL HERITAGE
SITES IN THAILAND'S CAPITAL, BANGKOK. THESIS ADVISOR : PROF. ROSS J. KING. 224 pp.

Handicraft is one of the significant intangible heritages of Thailand as a country of craftsmanship. The dissertation investigates the survival of the handicraft communities in Bangkok in the context of globalization and industrial thinking in the 2010s. The objective is to study the factors involved in the development of Thailand's handicrafts, to study the changes in intangible heritage and in handicraft, related to the global culture and economic strategy of the twenty-first century and to study the possibility of using intangible heritage as a key strategy to preserve the community (tangible heritage).

The study has concentrated on three handicraft communities of Bangkok. They are Ban Bu community, Pradittorakan community and Ban Batre community which are located in Bangkok and known as old, craft-based communities. Ban Bu is a bronze craft community which produces the traditional bronze water jars. The Pradittorakan community has also produced handicraft from bronze but in forms of cutleries, with the mini-factory production system rather than the usual behavior of local handicraft production. And lastly, the Ban Batre community works on the religious craftwork in the form of the monk's alms bowl which is, apart from its function, an object embedded in national culture by means of a strong belief in Buddhism.

The researcher uses site visits and open-ended questions for in-depth interviews for the data collection, to explore those communities regarding their evolution, succession and the survival of the handicraft community and actions for its preservation. The key informants are heads of craft houses, craftsmen, locals, handicraft sellers and buyers, and also the government officers who interact with such communities. The researcher uses qualitative analysis methods. The conclusion deals with various topics such as authenticity and nostalgia, impact from industrialization technology and globalization, competence of craftsmen, strength of product development, opportunity in earning from handicraft, craft transformation as luxury craft and souvenir craft, transmitting craft, and awareness of handicraft as heritage asset. The study includes suggestions on the role of community and nation by which to direct these intangible cultures of community to achieve success in raising awareness of value and to lead to habits of preservation.

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