

Abstract of Dissertation

**Traditional Urban Community and Its Roles in Heritage Planning, A Case of Bangkok Heritage Core**

文化遺産保全計画における伝統的都市コミュニティの役割に関する研究

—バンコク歴史都心部を事例として—

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Since the 1990s, concepts of architectural and urban conservation have shifted to be heritage planning that means the management of heritage resources in the contemporary uses of the past for present purposes. The communities have been encouraged to take part in heritage planning processes, aiming at reducing conflicts in wide-range uses of heritage between various groups of stakeholders. In heritage approach, the communities have changed their actions from being controlled, according to legal tools, preservative conservation plans and subsidies from the national and local governments in the conventional conservation, to the initiation of community controls and management of heritage resources.

Followed the international trends and inner socio-economic factors, conservation concepts in Thailand have been transformed from preservation planning to conservation planning and to heritage planning since the late-1990s. The concepts have been combined the controls of the public rights over properties by the public-sector organisations and the market oriented heritage planning. Additionally, they supported the involvement of local communities in management of heritage resources. Thanks to the changes of the conservation concepts, new community structures were created in Bangkok, in the forms of community organisations, overlaid on the original ones. The ‘chumchon’ were laid down on indigenous communities, while the ‘prachakom’ were laid down on the districts, yarn. The community organisations – the prachakom and chumchon, have performed two specific roles: participating in decision-making and involving in benefits of heritage commodity.

In Yarn Banglamphu, a district in the Northern part of the Rattanakosin heritage areas, it still left traces of historical backgrounds and significant tangible and intangible heritage resources. Furthermore, it has served for heritage commodity activities. In the district, two kinds of community organisations were created. ‘Prachakom Banglamphu’ was created by the local government policy as a civic group or a community-networked organisation, covering the district by assembling the leaders of communities in the district. At the same time, six ‘chumchon’ were registered on the indigenous communities, covering the concentrated housing areas in the urban blocks. The leaders of the formal organisational subsystems of the communities, namely, the committee of chumchon, were established.

The study revealed that today, the communities’ residents in Yarn Banglamphu still have closely related to the communal organisational subsystems – the neighbours, ethnic groups and occupation groups, based on persisting old community structures and specific historical backgrounds. Moreover, they still have strong relationships with the formal organisational subsystems – the committees of chumchon, the gov’t-lead voluntary groups and Prachakom Banglamphu. The old and new community structures in various kinds of groups have worked together in heritage planning; however, they still have some conflicts in such works.

The effectiveness in performing the roles in heritage planning, in the other word, the extents of involvements of communities in the heritage plans and practices in Yarn Banglamphu, was found that the community involvements in participating in an opposition of conservation master plan and organising local festivals were in high levels, while the community involvements in two stated-led heritage plans were in low levels. Moreover, the communities with strong relationships with Prachakom Banglamphu were in high participation, gained high social and economic benefits and had positive attitudes in heritage conservation. From the results, two significant factors, leading to high levels in community involvement are: i) the community organisation, working as a collaborator, specifically, Prachakom Banglamphu; and ii) the connection between community organisations and other stakeholders.

Those two factors brought about two policy implications to improve efficiency in performing the roles of community organisations in heritage planning, which are: first, the policy implication to re-organise community structures, including: i) re-organise the registered communities, 'chumchon' by enhancing sense of community as it is a living heritage, re-defining the persisting registered communities, 'chumchon' and re-defining definitions of 'chumchon' under the law; ii) re-organise the community-networked organisation, 'prachakom' or other civic groups that work as connectors between communities by re-creating extensive networks between the prachakom and community organisational subsystems inside the communities and re-defining definitions of 'prachakom' under the law. Second, the policy implications to re-create the connection between community organisations and other stakeholders in a public-private partnership, including: i) re-create the mediator in the public and private sectors; and ii) re-create the coordinator between the government sectors.

Based on the practices of heritage planning with community involvement in Bangkok heritage core, the communities were created and performed two main roles, which are the role as it is the cultural heritage place and the roles in managing and planning heritage resources. Their practices provoked two significant points that can be implied to heritage planning with community involvement in Thailand and developing countries. First, the traditional urban communities should be accepted as 'cultural heritage place', due to persisting tangible and intangible heritage resources. In the case of Bangkok and other developing countries, they face the situations of: lacking the concern from heritage plan; being in the trends of losing their identities; and being in imbalances between communal needs, stated-led conservation and commodity activities. Second, the community organisations should take part in a public-private partnership in heritage planning processes, with the sharing of the powers in managing heritage resources and making a balance between heritage conservation and heritage commodity.

However, the public-private partnership with the involvements of local communities in heritage planning in Bangkok, as well as some developing countries, have some constraints, caused by: the centralisation in authority; lack of co-ordination mechanism; and lack of appropriate legal system in encouraging and strengthening community organisations. If these constraints can be coped and the local communities can share powers in managing heritage resources and balancing heritage conservation and heritage commodity, heritage planning with community involvement might help to maintain economic, social and environment aspects, relating to the ways of sustainable development.