

FOLKLORE MUSEUMS AND THEIR ROLES IN
DISPLAYING AND PRESERVING COMMUNAL
CULTURAL HERITAGE: THE CASE STUDIES OF
YAOWARAT CHINATOWN HERITAGE CENTER, BANG
LAMPHU MUSEUM AND BANGKOKIAN MUSEUM



A Thesis Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Thai Studies

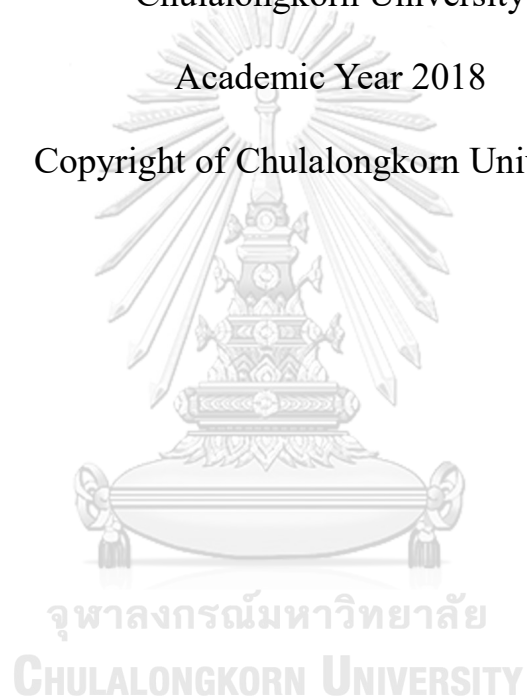
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CHULALONGKORN UNIVERSITY

พิพิธภัณฑ์คีตชนและบทบาทในการจัดแสดงและอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมชุมชน: กรณีศึกษา

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AND BANGKOKIAN MUSEUM) อ.ที่ปรึกษาหลัก : ดินาร์ บุญ
ธรรม

มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมชุมชนแสดงให้เห็นความหลากหลายทางวัฒนธรรมของประเทศ ที่มีบทบาทสำคัญในบริบท
ร่วมสมัย นำมาใช้จากผลการส่งเสริมแนวคิดของมรดกที่จับต้องได้และจับต้องไม่ได้และการแสดงของมรดกพวกนี้ในชุมชน
แนวคิดในการอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมชุมชนได้ขยายเครื่องมือไปยังสาขาต่าง ๆ และรูปแบบที่แตกต่างกัน ภายในเครื่องมือ
การอนุรักษ์มรดกต่าง ๆ พิพิธภัณฑ์คดีชนท้องถิ่นมีบทบาทที่แทนไม่ได้ในการจัดแสดงและการอนุรักษ์เอกลักษณ์ทางวัฒนธรรม
ของชุมชนท้องถิ่น ในการวิจัยครั้งนี้มีการเลือกพิพิธภัณฑ์ชาวบ้านสามแห่งในกรุงเทพฯ เป็นกรณีศึกษาเพื่อตรวจสอบบทบาทของ
พิพิธภัณฑ์คดีชนวิทยาในกระบวนการแสดงและอนุรักษ์มรดกทางวัฒนธรรมของชุมชน ในการวิจัยครั้งนี้ พิพิธภัณฑ์คดีชนสาม
แห่งในกรุงเทพฯ ได้เลือกเป็นกรณีศึกษาเพื่อตรวจสอบบทบาทของพิพิธภัณฑ์คดีชนในกระบวนการแสดงและอนุรักษ์มรดกทาง
วัฒนธรรมชุมชน ก่อนอื่น การตระหนักถึงคุณค่าทางวัฒนธรรมของพื้นที่เป็นจุดเริ่มต้นของการสร้างพิพิธภัณฑ์คดีชน หลังจาก
ความเข้าใจบริบททางประวัติศาสตร์และวัฒนธรรมของพื้นที่อย่างถ่องแท้แล้ว พิพิธภัณฑ์คดีชนถึงสามารถจัดตั้งขึ้นเพื่อแสดง
เนื้อหาให้ผู้เยี่ยมชม ในระหว่างกระบวนการนี้ บริบททางวัฒนธรรมและวิธีการแสดงมรดกที่แตกต่างกันจะส่งผลสะท้อนให้เห็นถึง
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Center, Pipit Bang Lamphu, Bangkokian Museum, Communal
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Xie Xiaoran : FOLKLORE MUSEUMS AND THEIR ROLES IN
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BANGKOKIAN MUSEUM. Advisor: DINAR BOONTHARM

Communal cultural heritage as the embodiment of cultural diversity of the nation, plays more significant roles in the contemporary context. Adopted from the definitions of tangible and intangible heritages and their displaying in communities, the idea of preserving communal cultural heritage has extended its instruments to various fields and different forms. Among them, local folklore museum plays irreplaceable roles in the displaying and maintaining the cultural identity of the local community. In this research, three folklore museums in Bangkok, Thailand are chosen as study cases to examine the roles that folklore museum plays in the process of displaying and preserving communal cultural heritages. First of the first, the realization of an area's cultural values is the starting point of forming a folklore museum. After a fully understanding of the historical and cultural context of the area, the folklore museum is established to display its content to visitors. During this process, different cultural context and displaying approaches lead to the diverse outcome image and in a way reflect the diverse cultures in Thailand.

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Chapter I: Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

Recent decades, culture has become a significant factor in contemporary society. Distinguishing from hard power, for example military industry and other forces, culture serves as a kind of “soft power” to appeal shared value and attractiveness of a nation or state. (Schreiber 2017) In addition, under the globalization trend, culture also shows its significance by emphasizing identity of nations, communities and sometimes individuals. In this permit, the concept of cultural heritage was introduced to represent and embody a certain cultural identity of specific group of people. (Ashworth 2003) The term “cultural heritage” has been adapted and developed with its instruments by the UNESCO. It encompasses three categories including tangible cultural heritage, intangible cultural heritage and underwater cultural heritage. While some people consider cultural heritage as production from the past, in the academic field, more and more scholars argue that cultural heritage also plays significant roles in contemporary context. For example, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett points out five propositions to explain cultural heritage as the cultural production of present time that has discourse to the past (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995); Jafar Rouhi defined the value of heritage to individuals in the context of contemporary world. (Rouhi 2017)

“Culture consists of the beliefs, behaviors, objects, and other characteristics common

to the members of a particular group or society.” Adopted from culture’s sociological definition, the term “communal culture” can be considered as its collective embodiment among any small group of people. According to the UNESCO’s definition to cultural heritage, communal cultural heritage can be divided into two categories in a similar framework: tangible communal cultural heritage and intangible communal cultural heritage.(UNESCO 2016) In case of Thailand, because of the population distribution characteristics of small population bases, diverse ethnics and many other defining factors, community is still one of the common forms of human’s settlement. Thus, diverse communal culture in Thailand shows its vitality in contemporary Thai society in forms of villages, towns or urban neighborhoods, and contributes to the maintaining of cultural diversity within the nation by presenting their uniqueness in contemporary Thailand.

In contemporary context, communal cultural heritage can be represented by several instruments including folklore festivals, performing arts, digital medias and so on. Museum is one of the important and most well-known instruments of presenting cultural heritage. The use of museums cannot be separated from contemporary tourism which serves as an important junction to build up a connection between human beings and their heritages. The UNESCO also give importance to the role of museums in safeguarding cultural heritage. A position paper for the expert meeting based on the 2003 convention pointed out that museums have “significance of creativity, adaptability and the distinctiveness of peoples, places and communities as the framework in which

voices, values, traditions, languages, oral history, folk lives and so on are recognized and promoted in any museological and heritage practices” (Kurin 2004), and recommended museums as “facilitators of constructive partnerships in the safeguarding of this heritage of humanity”. Based on the laid down foundations, there are two main concerns about preserving certain cultural heritage in museums: 1) What approaches do museums apply to display the forms of cultural heritage? 2) How can museums contribute to preserve the identity and continuity of living heritages and local communities? Scholars, heritage safeguarding agencies, other relevant organizations and individuals are searching for appropriate ways to apply these theories in the field of heritage management. However, most of studies still stop at the theory level or only focus on the case studies of national level’s museums. In addition, some studies didn’t associate the displaying contents of folklore museums with the presentation of communal cultural heritage. Moreover, the appearance of local folklore museums now has become a social phenomenon across the world. These folklore museums can well represent the cultural identity and be the storage of precious objects which represent local communities. (Museums 1994)

In the case of this research, contemporary Bangkok is the context. As a city of fusion and integration, it is not only the residence for Thai elites and commoners, but also the area opened for ethnic group people from all over the world. For example, a big number of traders from China and Vietnam migrated into Bangkok since Thonburi Era (1767-1782). After the establishment of Krung Rattanakosin at the city of Bangkok, except

the former citizens of royal servant families and Thai noble families, several ethnic groups such as Burmese, Khmer, Mon, and Malay Muslim and Indonesian moved into Bang Lamphu area. During the reign of King Rama IV, for the sake of political and diplomatic demands, some Western people were recruited to work as consultants in the Thai government, this group of people became the inhabitants of Bangkok city as well. In the reign of King Rama VI, Bangkok city was divided into three residential districts: Yaowarat for Chinese; Bang Rak for Westerners and Bang Lamphu for Thai people. (Akagawa 2012) On the ground of their common identities as Bangkok's diverse cultural urban spaces, the three communities formed into their unique cultural characteristics, inherited by different generations of local people and still play their role as tourism attractions in contemporary context. In this trend, the study-gap of small-scaled local museums are still needed to be fulfilled. This research is inspired by outstanding researches of relevant topics and the increasing awareness of preserving diverse communal culture of government and individuals. The research will focus on three representative folklore museums in Bangkok, analyze the significance of folklore museums in the process of communal cultural heritage preserving as well as critically discuss the missions and more possibilities of folklore museums in Thailand.

1.2 Significance of the Study

With the developing and the changing of human society, the evaluating principles for a nation's power shifted the hot spot from "hard powers" to the cultural force. In this

permit, communal cultural heritage, no matter the tangible or intangible form the representation of the cultural identity of local communities, has significance in emphasizing cultural diversity of a state or a nation in contemporary context. The inclusion of intangible form of communal cultural heritage made the existence of communal culture “context dependent”. Not only the objects, but also its instruments and other invisible forms of cultural characteristics are needed to be given importance. As a reaction, the flourish of communal culture should also be signified to preserve the identity of local communities and their people. (B. 2000, Kirshenblatt - Gimblett 2004, Burden 2007)

According to the definition adopted by the International Council of Museums, museum is an institution devoted to the procurement, care, study, and display of objects of lasting interest or value. (Lewis 2004) In the field of heritage safeguarding, the role of museums have been given importance in recent years because they are used as the location of displaying heritage from the past and the place of educating to visitors. Museums as a tourism spot attracts visitor with specific or different cultural motivations. In another word, museums contribute to the formation of the connection between human beings and local heritages in both visible and invisible forms. However, at the first place, museums have a lot of limitations on the choice of displaying heritage. The definition of heritage, the principles of choosing exhibited items and approaches of exhibition, all of these elements did influence the presentation and exhibiting effect of museum exhibitions. With the development of society and human’s ideology, the

concept of cultural heritage has been adjusted into a wider range, the introduction of different types and levels of museums is gradually popped into people's horizon. Distinguished from national level or provincial level's museums, folklore museum's exhibiting content is more accessible and it is more inclusive for visitors from different backgrounds. As a chain reaction, in the field of heritage management and museum tourism, a number of folklore museums have been opened in order to display and preserve communal culture heritage in specific communities. The study of folklore museum's displaying contents is significant in finding out the preserving approaches of communal cultural heritage, discuss the usage and significance of folklore museum in contemporary context and explore more possibilities of folklore museum's roles in Thai society.(Arinze 1999, Harvey 2000)

1.3 Objectives

To analyze the roles played by Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, Banglamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum in displaying and preserving communal cultural heritage. The above mentioned three museums as the representatives of Thailand folklore museums reflect ways of life of different communal culture of communities in Bangkok. Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center represents the lifestyle of Chinese dominated ethnical groups in Yaowarat historical community, Bang Lamphu Museum reflect the culture of Bang Lamphu Community as a river-side diverse culture community, while Bangkokian Museum concentrating the local lifestyle of middle class

families in Bang Rak Community during post WWII period. However, with the trend of globalization and cultural integration, more and more cultural communities are losing their unique cultural characteristics and cultural identities. Facing this dilemma, local folklore museums share the responsibilities in playing multiple roles in the preserving of communal culture.

1.4 Research Methods

This research paper mainly use following 4 research methods as below:

- A- Observation method. In this research, Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum will be selected as study objects to explore the management approaches that each folklore museums applies and their contributions to communal cultural heritage preserving. Folklore museum as a social institution and cultural unit contains various forms of displaying information, the observing method is considered as the suitable way to collect and choose the useful information for this research. In the preparation process of this research, I will use observing method to collect basic information and study cases in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum. During the observation, I will take note of the forms of displaying heritage and analyze the different approaches which these three museums use to displaying the heritages and investigate the exhibiting effect to visitors.
- B- Interviewing method. The benefit of interviewing method is to help researcher gain

the perspectives from different groups of people and various angles, so that researcher can analyze main issue from multiple aspects. In the case of this research, background information of the three folklore museums including their history, organization and management system will be known. However, only the perspective of outsiders will be difficult to understand the operation of each folklore museum as a whole. On the other hand, interviewing tourists can be another good way to know people's motivations of visiting museums as well as to verify the exhibiting effect of folklore museums. Hence, interviewing people who have knowledge about the folklore studies or management of the museum will enable me to understand the role of folklore museums as a cultural unit. In this research, I will interview relevant staffs and people who took part in the formation process of the three museums as well as some tourists and visitors in order to collect more useful information from the three folklore museums.

C- Literature research method. The foundation of a thesis is theoretical framework. Theories on the same or relevant topics from former researchers provide the logical structure and reference for my research. In this research paper, I will examine literatures and academic articles concerning the definition of communal culture, cultural heritage, heritage management, museum and contemporary tourism as well as cultural authenticity and identity in general. After reviewing, a summary of the theories and arguments from each of them will be made. To be able to make this summary, I will apply the relevant theories, for example, five propositions from

theorizing heritage by Barbara Gimblette and the role of museums in living heritage safeguarding from the position paper of the UNESCO conventions. In this research, the study to folklore museums is a starting point, the final research purpose is to find out the role of folklore museums in safeguarding intangible cultural heritage. For the sake of the complexity of humanities, to solve problems and to reach conclusion in any single field of study is impossible. Hence, the study and investigation of multi-disciplinary theories are necessary, for example, social science, folklore study and heritage management.

D- Comparative research method. Comparative method is a common research method in cross-cultural studies. This method can be understood as a method of investigating more than one object according to the certain criteria in order to exploring the similarities and differences of specific objects. Comparing is the clearest way to show the differences and the common points among objects, on the foundation of the listed comparative result, researchers can analysis the in-depth cultural reflection behind these phenomenon. In the case of this research, the study objects are Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center reflects the lifestyle of Chinese dominated immigration community, Bang Lamphu Museum exhibits river-based community's lifestyle in the past and Bangkokian Museum display the Thai middle class family's way of life in a real Thai house. The compare will focus on the differences of the contexts, the content of exhibitions, the principles of identifying heritage, the way that the museums can connect themselves with relevant

communities, as well as management approaches on their own features. In this research, I will compare Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum from the scope of communal cultural heritage preserving in several angles to find out the differences and commonalities of the roles of folklore museums in Thailand in order to prove the hypothesis.

1.5 Hypothesis

Folklore museums play significant roles in displaying and preserving communal cultural heritage at both local and national levels. At the local level, folklore museums maintain communities' cultural identity and sense of belonging; at the national level, folklore museums encourage public appreciation of cultural diversity in contemporary Bangkok.

1.6 Research Questions

- A- What are the main characteristics of communities represented by Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum?
- B- What were the purposes of the founding of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum?
- C- What cultural contexts do Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum represent?
- D- What approaches do Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum

and Bangkokian Museum use to display the forms of communal cultural heritage?

E- What are the roles played by Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu

Museum and Bangkokian Museum in the preserving of communal cultural heritage?

1.7 Chapterisation

1 Introduction

1.1 Background of the Study

1.2 Significance of the Study

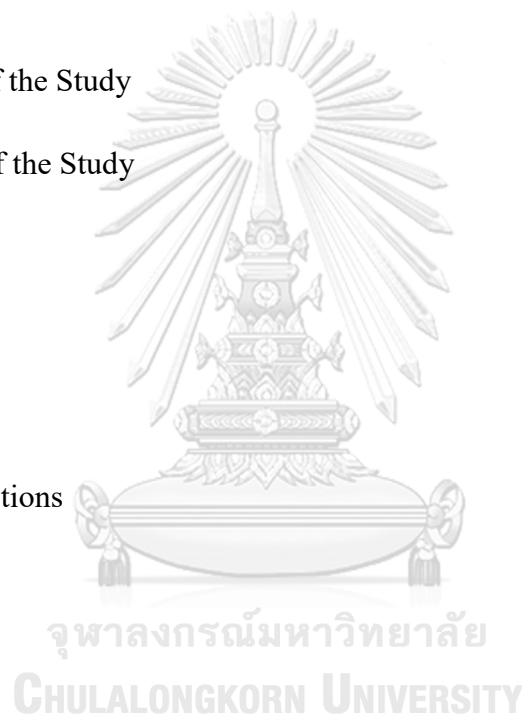
1.3 Objectives

1.4 Methodology

1.5 Hypothesis

1.6 Research Questions

1.7 Chapterisation



2 Definition of Terms and Folklore Museum's Roles in the Preservation of Communal Cultural Heritage

2.1 Definition of Terms and Theoretical Framework of the Research

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Chapter II: Definition of Terms and Folklore Museum's Roles in the Preservation of Communal Cultural Heritage

This chapter aims to discuss the concepts of communal culture, communal cultural heritage and folklore museum from their definitions and the adoptions of these concepts in the scope of this research. In the second part, an overview of the significances and roles played by folklore museums in contemporary context will be discussed.

The definition of term “communal culture” will be adopted from Beat Kümin’s book “The Communal Age in Western Europe, c.1100-1800: Towns, Villages and parishes”.

The understanding to the term “communal cultural heritage” is based on the concept of tangible and intangible cultural heritage defined by UNESCO. At first place, the concept cultural heritage was studied only as an abstract academic term but with the expanding influence of cultural diversity in a globalized world, the adoption of these concepts will explore more functions and values in different industries and fields of contemporary society.

Another study subject of this research is the folklore museum. In this chapter, the feature of the folklore museum will be highlighted by distinguishing it from those of national and regional museums. In addition, this chapter will also discuss the roles played by folklore museums in the contemporary context and the ways these roles have interact with different fields of the society.

2.1 Definition of Terms and Theoretical Framework of the Research

2.1.1 Definitions of Communal Culture and Communal Cultural Heritage

“The Communal Age in Western Europe, c.1100-1800: Towns, Villages and parishes” written by Beat Kümin presents the long term development of Western European communities during High Middle Age to 18th century in historiographical approaches. Throughout the study, communities in 18th century Europe were categorized into three forms: towns dominated by market exchanges, villages providing protections for peasants and parishes as religious unit for Christian believers. In his book, communal culture as a key concept to the comprehensive studies of community, was explained in following dimensions: community formation, membership, inner coherence, resources, values, political life and communication patterns. (Kümin 2013) Combining Kümin’s study approaches to communal culture with the interpretation to the sociological definition of culture in general, the concept of communal culture in this thesis consist to the common worldview, beliefs, behaviors and other characteristics shared among the members of a small-scaled topographical unit. In the case of this research, Yaowarat, Bang Lamphu and Bang Rak are defined as three communities exist in the urban area of contemporary Bangkok. During the long process of establishment of the communities, each of them formed the unique cultural identities base on the historical and cultural context, which becomes the starting point of forming corresponding local folklore museums.

The studies of cultural heritage have been lasting for several decades and already formed into a mature academic system. In the field of cultural heritage studies, the UNESCO plays its significant role as the milestone of the studies' fruit of the specific period as well as the "wind vane" for relevant studies in the next period. In the UNESCO's definition, "cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artifacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present and bestowed for the benefit of future generations.(Kasper Rodil 2015) Cultural heritage includes tangible culture, intangible culture, and natural heritage." As an interpretation to this definition and link it to the scope of communal cultural heritage, Firstly, "Cultural heritage" does not only mean the concept in the national level. In smaller scaled social units such as regions, provinces, areas or communities, there are also plenty of cultural heritages urgently needed to be preserved, no matter in the tangible or intangible forms.(Bouchenaki 2003) Secondly, communal cultural heritage has a strong connection to the "local past" and "local inhabitants" because in the process of "inheriting", these two requirements need to be fulfilled at the same time. Thirdly, adopting the UNESCO's safeguarding criteria to intangible cultural heritage, the preservation to intangible forms of communal cultural heritage concentrates on those which still "alive" in the communities for the sake of the "context-dependent" nature of intangible cultural heritage.(Howard 2003) In the case of this thesis and on the ground of the adoption to the UNESCO's definition, the term "communal cultural heritage" refers to both tangible and intangible cultural heritages

inherited within the scope of a community. For example, the site of Wat LengNeiYi Temple or Wat Mangkorn Kamalawas is the tangible cultural heritage of Yaowarat Community, while the dragon dance performance during Chinese New Year is considered intangible communal cultural heritage of the local community. (Bauman 1992, Bendix 1997, West 2010)

2.1.2 Definition of Folklore Museum

The origin of museums can be traced back to 3rd BCE. The museum of Alexander the Great in Egypt was considered the very first institution to collect and displayed sculptures, medical tools, and historical materials. (Hagen 1876, E. 1992, E. 1999) During the long history of human civilization, the museum tradition had developed and spread all over the world. “Museum” becomes a common concept to almost every nation and state. According to the common agreement of museology scholars, “the traditional role of museums is to collect objects or materials of cultural, religious and historical importance, preserve them, research them and present them to the public for the purposes of education and enjoyment.”(Arinze 1999) However, in the past, museums were considered only place for educated people, while general public was excluded. In contemporary society, the exploration of multiple roles of museums has become a global trend. This shift also mirrors the change of museums’ social function from the institution of education to the storage of cultural identity.(T. 1995, P.B. 2006,

Smith 2011)

Folklore museum or folk museum is a genre of museums focusing on the theme of folk culture and heritage, which is closely related to the local communities or the specific group of people. Usually, this type of museum exhibits the items and objects reflecting the everyday lives of local communities such as craftsmanship, costumes, tools and so on. According to different cultural and historical contexts as well as the different concepts of folklore, folk museums can outcome with diverse approaches and displaying contents of specific folklore themes. The exhibiting content or theme sees the main principle of defining a folklore museum. (Hagen 1876) For example, Beijing Folklore Museum of China and Museum Siam of Thailand, both of the two museums can be counted as folklore museums, because their main exhibiting themes display the folklore cultures and ways of life of corresponding areas. Based on the different historical and cultural contexts, however, the outcome images of Beijing Folklore Museum and Museum Siam are different. The site of Beijing Folklore Museum is a famous Daoism temple named Dong Yue Temple. Nowadays, the Beijing Folklore Museum inherited this historical site and changed its religious function into the Daoism folk belief exhibition halls. The museum used wax dolls and text introductions to simulate the Daoism cosmology, some exhibition halls display items to be used in Daoism religious activities. Chinese folklore is a huge and complicates cultural system which covers almost all aspects of Chinese society from ancient time until present. In the field of Chinese folklore studies, scholars and experts tried to categorize the concept

of Chinese folklore in different ways. Daoism is the traditional ideology system original from China, the history of Daoism lasts for around 2000 years. Daoism as the folklore culture have been deeply influenced Chinese people's ideology, lifestyle and even personal character. Another example is the Museum Siam in Thailand. Visitors can observe, the influence of Theravada Buddhism as one of the most significant elements of the museum's displaying contents. To begin with the introduction to Theravada Buddhism's cosmology, the design concept of the Thai royal throne, Thai folk belief of "Nang Kwak" and so on. Theravada Buddhism deeply influences the forming and developing of Thailand through the nation's long history. As a result, in most of museums in Thailand, the contents related to the influence of Theravada Buddhism cannot be ignored. To compare Museum Siam and Beijing Folklore Museum, the different traditional religion and social contexts lead to the different outcome of displaying exhibitions.

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Figure 1: Beijing Folklore Museum, Beijing, China

(Source: <https://lvyou.baidu.com/beijingminsubowuguan>)



Figure 2: Museum Siam, Bangkok, Thailand

(Source: <https://www.amazingcouple.net/cr-museum-siam/>)

In Thailand, museums can be divided into three levels by the covering range of their exhibiting contents: the main national museums in Bangkok, the regional or provincial national museums and specific local folklore museums. Normally, the national museums both in Bangkok and different provinces display the most precious and iconic relics significant to the nation, and the sites of the museums usually located in the capital city since the capital represents the official image of the whole country. The Bangkok National Museum, contains archaeological craftworks, clothing, textiles, and objects in the functions of royal services, religious and traditional lifestyles and ancient civilization. All of these exhibits can be concluded in the term of “high culture”. The Royal Thai government, however, also established several regional national museums located in the urban areas of different main cities across the country. (Dicks 2003) Ban

Chiang National Museum in Udon Thani is one of the examples. Ban Chiang Pottery represented the pre-historical lifestyle in the region of Mekong River area which essentially shows the long-lasting human civilization in Thailand. Another case is the Buddhist sculptures. Buddha images in Bangkok National Museum and many other regional national museums take quite a place in the main exhibition halls which emphasize the important position of Buddhism religion in Thailand. (Jiewjinda 2014)

The regional museums or provincial museums contains heritages and highlighted cultural traditions in a specific region, usually divided by administrative provinces. Distinguished from the “highest” National Museum in Bangkok, exhibitions in regional national museums aim to display diverse culture of Thailand. This level of museum concerns the traditional lifestyles of some symbolic groups and communities within the region, while taking the responsibility of storing relics of corresponding provinces. A good example is a regional national museum in Suphanburi province, the Suphanburi National Museum. Although the museum is under the care of the Department of Fine Art, which is a national department of Thailand, under the Ministry of Culture, the museum still can be defined as a regional museum. The site of the museum locates next to Suphanburi Government’s Office building. The displaying contents of the museum basically include three themes: the history and archaeology of Suphanburi in general; the typical customs and traditions of the province such as the rice farming culture of Suphanburi; and the highlighted diverse cultures in Suphanburi province such as Chinese migrants’ trading traditions, the forest people worshipping the guardian spirits

in the nature and Khmer people's "three golden gods" worshipping ritual during Loy Kratong festival. According to the previous definition to folklore museums, most of the regional or provincial museums in Thailand can be defined as a folklore museum since it contains quite a number of exhibiting sections concerning the folklore culture of local people. Compared with the specific local folklore museums, the provincial museums use the same displaying approaches to reproduce the daily lives of local people and represent overlapping exhibiting contents of local communities' lifestyles. However, the provincial museum is not effectively able to focus on one specific cultural unit in details or can closely link with the community as specific local folklore museum does. For specific local folklore museums, they only focus on the communal cultural heritages in a small scale of an area or a specific community. The overlapping content between regional national museums and specific folklore museums determines the different ways of selecting the displaying items and exhibiting approaches. However, for specific folklore museums, as the representative of communities' cultural identity, people can find some contents which are not shown in national museums. For example in Yaowarat Heritage Museum, Chinese traditional elements such as the Chinese style restaurants model, the images of Chinese gods can be easily found for the sake of it is the iconic cultural characteristic of Chinese immigrant community in Thailand. However, this part of the contents cannot be found in any national museum since it is not considered as the official image of the whole country.



Figure 3: Ban Chiang Pottery in Thailand National Museum

(Source: <https://zh.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Frieze-group-3-example1.jpg>)



Figure 4: Exhibition in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center

(Source: Photo taken by the author)

In this research, small-scaled folklore museums displaying the communal cultural heritages of specific communities are chosen to be study cases. Compared to other two higher levels of museums, roles of this type of museums in the preservation of

communal cultural heritages deserve more attentions and discussions. In addition, in a rapidly changing world, there are more missions of local folklore museum to be discovered as one of the approaches in the revision of communal cultures.

Key themes of local folklore museums include the communities' tangible and intangible cultural heritage, the sites of museums as the storage of cultural soul of communities, usually located within the range of communities and the site of the museum as a local historical heritage. In some cases, folklore museums act as a part of people's cultural lives. Some museum-based activities like folk festivals, interactive activities, and local craft markets are arranged as the extension of local folk life. In this term, museums do not contain only the "freezing" heritages but also help keep those "alive" communal cultural heritages and lifestyles. (Catherine Mills 2018)

2.1.3 Theoretical Framework of the Research

When people talk about "cultural heritage", its very first concept refers to something not contemporary. However, in reality, the concept of cultural heritage can never be separated from the contemporary context. (George S. Smith 2010) In 1995, Barbara Kirshenblatt-Gimblett points out five propositions to explain cultural heritage as a cultural production in a contemporary context. Her ideas need to be explained in details for the sake of these five propositions as the scope and most significant theoretical frameworks of this research.

1) Heritage is a new mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) Heritage is the carrier of history. One of the most significant functions of heritage is to contain the specific identity and attachment values of the past. To make a site, architecture, practice or an object the "heritage", there are some necessary conditions. First one is the span of time. For example, the inscription of King Ramkhamhaeng was only an object or we can say the "honorable" masterpiece of the era of Sukhothai, but once it was found and exhibited in a modern and contemporary context, it turned into a heritage. The second necessary condition is the interaction between heritage and viewers. Once the heritage is exhibited in front of the viewer and viewers interact with it, no matter mentally or physically, the process of produce a heritage is finished.

2) Heritage is a "value added" industry. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) Barbara pointed out that heritage in danger of disappearing because there is no longer value to be survived in that specific social context. To maintain the vitality of heritage, what we need to do is to "add value". First is the value of the past. Heritage is a medium connecting past and present day. In other words, heritage has the function of the historical container. Secondly is the value of the exhibition. The survival of heritage needs economic value. Once their value as an object no longer exists, they need to continue creating the value as heritage—— "representations of themselves". Think about heritages represented in many different occasions: the Buddha image sculpture in the museum, Khon drama performed in theater and traditional festivals held in the

historical park. The forms and displaying instruments of heritages can be diverse, however, the eventual goal of these approaches and activities is to represent heritages in front of people as the fruits of human civilization and the carriers of history as mentioned previously. Thirdly is the value of the difference. The rarity of the heritage adds their cultural and economic value by distinguishing them from others. In the context of heritage tourism, the attraction or the exhibition which attached the feature as "the only one" can immediately stand out from the "sameness".

3) Heritage produces the local for export. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) According to the definition, the heritage industry means "an industry that manages the historical sites, buildings, and museums in a particular place, with the aim of encouraging tourism". The heritage industry exports the product through tourism. The production of heritage is far more than the "heritage" itself but the cultural and historical context behind it. In the case of tourism, what heritage attractions are actually selling can be described as the "foreignness" or "exoticness".

4) A hallmark of heritage is the problematic relationship of its object to its instruments. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) The heritage industry produces something new and its instruments are the key to this process. If the object of heritage is "what" to produce, an instrument of heritage determines "how" to produce it. For example, the location and form of a traditional dancing exhibition matter the emotional resonance and the feedback of the audience. An instrument is an important point to create a "context" for the heritage representation. The problematic relationship between the

object and its instrument is, in fact, reflects the underlying purpose of re-produce the suitable cultural context in contemporary society.

5) A key to heritage productions is their virtuality, whether in the presence or the absence of actualities. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) One of the significant conditions of the heritage industry is "authenticity". However, Barbara pointed out another case which is irrelevant to the authenticity and this case leads us to think in terms of virtuality and actuality. Nowadays, many museums and tourist attractions are doing the business of virtuality but claim to be an actuality in order to make the conception of "hereness". For example, some Chinese historical attractions are actually "reproduced" according to the record of historical literary works and are gave the historical value by promotion approaches. In a word, actuality and virtuality are different approaches to the production of the realness, both of them operate in heritage productions.

However, in contemporary society, cultural distancing is the dilemma that cultural heritage especially intangible form of heritage is being apart from the contemporary lifestyle and society. This dilemma and such a misunderstood needs to be revised in an account of cultural heritage have significant cultural and social functions not only in the past but also keep contributing to the contemporary context. "Cultural heritage is one of these defining factors of a person's identity."(Skrzypaszek 2012) This theory emphasizes the relationship between cultural heritage and personal identity. As a human being, nobody can be separated from the specific cultural context and its identity, heritage as the carrier of culture and civilization usually plays the role of communicator

between culture and individuals. Heritage represents history. (Neyrinck 2017) However, in many terms, people misunderstood this as the reason to abandon or ignore the significance of heritage in contemporary society. "Selective past materials become cultural, political and economic resources for the present." Indeed, the value of heritage in the contemporary lifestyle is not only to remind people what happened in the past but create an interaction between the past and present.(D.C. 2001) Interaction defines the identity of a culture's uniqueness. This is the key and the starting point to maintain the cultural diversity of human civilization in the globalizing world.(Henry 1971, Bronner 2000)

2.1.4 The Nature of Forming a Folklore Museum in the Preservation of Communal Cultural Heritage

The nature of forming a local folklore museum is actually the collective embodiment of the community's communal cultural heritage and their cultural identity. A folklore museum displaying the objects or intangible traditions aims to maintain this specific culture as the "communal cultural heritage" and remind both local citizens and visitors outside the cultural context to aware and preserve them as a diverse culture. In this research, the discussions and analysis of folklore museums' roles in the displaying and preserving of communal cultural heritages will follow the sequences of the forming process of the folklore museums in the perspective of cultural and contemporary

tourism.

- 1) The process of realizing the value of a communal cultural identity. The recognition of an object or a cultural unit's value is always the starting point of preserving the heritage. This kind of realization endows the specific community a new value distinguished from its original social or economic function but rather a cultural identity as the "communal cultural heritage". (Hardy 1988) For example, the realization of Yaowarat Community as a Chinese dominated ethnical community has significance to communal cultural heritage preserving to individuals, community and the nation at the same time. Individually, the realizing of Yaowarat Community's value identifies local people as "a member of the Chinese minority cultural community" and makes them have a sense of belonging. To the community, this process is the adding of cultural and social value to neighborhoods in the Yaowarat Community. Finally, to the nation, the value of Yaowarat Community promoted the establishment of "Chinatown" as a representative tourism production, as well as its role in the maintaining of diverse ethnic cultures of Thailand. (Min 1992)
- 2) The process of background researching and the choosing of museum's site. The research process is a complicated and long-lasting work, in the academic level, it has the significance of the rediscovering and re-understanding to communal cultural heritage. With the paperworks and the field researches to local communities, researchers have to set a clear overview of the historical context and cultural

characteristic to the community. After that, the choosing of the museum's site has the significance to the contextualizing of communal cultural heritage. Usually, the site of a folklore museum is the historical architecture or a "meaningful place" in the community. A site has historical or cultural significance to the local society is able to build an emotional connection between the museum and the local community, create a sense of "hereness" for its visitors, which is an important approach that makes the heritages in museum "contextualized".(Butcher-Youngans 1996)

- 3) The process of selecting displaying contents. This process is the most "difficult" one since it involved several factors and needed the cooperation among different agencies. To the defining factors, on the one hand, the displaying contents have to base on the research result of experts for its accuracy. On the other hand, in another hand, as a tourism production, museums also need to consider of the authentic demands for the visitors. (N. 1998, Barry Lord 2001) To the cooperation agencies, the participation of the local community is necessary since the displaying contents should reflect their cultural identity. In an ideal status, local people cooperate with experts who can arrange the exhibitions, choose what can be included of the displaying content and what should be excluded as well. In addition, this process signifies the sustainability of the communal cultural heritages for the sake of it is able to raise local people's awareness to preserve and to inherit their unique culture. (McNulty 2014)

- 4) The process of visualizing and arranging exhibiting content. The nature of this process is to transfer cultural heritages in the invisible form into an accessible form to visitors. There are two key points of this process: Firstly, displaying content needed to be embodied in a proper way in order to reflect the whole cultural context but not stop at exhibiting of items. For example, the simulation sense of Sampeng market in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center is the reflection of Chinese migrants' occupation, costumes, eating habits and ways of life during the early Rattanakosin Era. Secondly, the choosing of displaying instruments is also important. Considered of museums' roles as more than the storage of heritages but also a tourism attraction, "bringing the sense of entertainment to visitors" is another significant criteria for museums to visualizing cultural heritages.(Eric Hobsbawn 1983, Herreman 2004)
- 5) The process of presenting outcome images. After all the preparation works, the last process of forming a folklore museum is to exhibit the contents in front of visitors. The nature of this displaying in the perspective of contemporary tourism is a process of value adding to the heritage. For example the displaying contents of flags making skill in Bang Lamphu Museum: before it was discovered as an intangible cultural heritage of the local community, in contemporary Thai society, this skill almost lost the economic and social value because nowadays, more and more flag-making factories dominated the market so that the living space for hand-made flags is reducing. But after it was presented as a traditional handcraft skill of the community,

the cultural value was added to it and let the flag making tradition exist as a communal cultural heritage of the Bang Lamphu community.

2.2 Roles of Folklore Museums in the Preservation of Communal Cultural Heritage in Contemporary Society

2.2.1 Museum as the Storage of Communal Cultural Heritage

Through the discussions to the museums' functions, museums act as the storage of heritage. This role has always been the very first impression. In the past, the mainstream museums collected and displayed antique objects. Each of the exhibited objects attached to historical, economic and cultural values. These museums exhibit cultural relics in order to emphasize the greatness of human civilization and the wisdom of human ancestors. Because of the feature of items emphasizing, exhibitions in these museums are less dependent on location and context. Visitors can realize their values as long as they observe the objects. But on the contrary, this kind of museum attracts limited types of visitors. Only the visitors who have the specific motivation or educated persons are willing to visit this kind of museums, because knowledge in history, archaeology or culture are required. Some outstanding cases of this kind of museums are The British Museum in Britain, The Palace Museum in China, The Louvre in France and the New York Metropolitan Museum in the United States.

Recent decades, the trend of re-understanding heritage and the adopted concept of

communal cultural heritage lead to the shifting function of museums as well. As the cultural characteristic summarized by scholars and folklorists, the nature of communal cultural heritage are “community-based” and “alive”. These features make the value measuring principles of communal cultural heritages are different from the traditional criteria of evaluating relics. The values of preserving communal cultural heritage have been re-realized by states and nations, then, more and more folklore museums influenced some traditional museums to improve their principles of choosing exhibiting items. Not only historical items related to monarchy are selected to be exhibited, objects or even some invisible traditions reflecting common people’s lifestyle are given importance and can find their places in museums as well.

As the storage of displaying communal cultural heritage, there are two main challenges for folklore museums: 1) the approaches of displaying communal cultural heritage, and 2) the missions of museums in the preservation of communal cultural heritage. For the first challenge, the approach of simulating the context of objects is widely used. Using wax characters with true objects in order to simulate the old ways of life of the community, this approach is a good way to fulfill visitors’ imagination and make a linkage between the object and lives of local people. (Herreman 2004) The second approach is to fulfill the item with information. In the folklore museum, visitors are expected to concern not only the displaying items but also the information behind them. For example, an exhibition at Lanna Folklife Museum, the flower worship offering is not a brilliant fine art, however, the use of colors and the designated shapes of the

offering reflect the traditional beliefs and the worldview of Lanna people. The third approach is to arrange traditional folklore activities such as folklore festivals, dancing performances, craftsmanship markets and so on. The second challenge to the preservation of communal cultural heritage is distinguished from traditional relic museums. Folklore museums give importance on the choosing of museums' site. Most of the folklore museums locate in the historical sites of the specific community or area. A meaningful site provides the atmosphere of "hereness", and makes the displayed heritage integrate into the historical context. This is because the historical architectures are considered as the carriers of the history, telling the stories in the past and creating a kind of emotional connection to its visitors. Another significant role played by folklore museum of the preserving communal cultural heritage is to emphasize the museum's relationship with local community. The understanding and supports of the community emphasize the museum's role as the representative of their cultural identity and context. Besides, more and more museums started to use modern medias such as video and audio materials in order to simulate the original environment in multiple dimensions.



Figure 5: Lanna Worship Offering in Lanna Folklife Museum
(Source: Photo taken by the author)

2.2.2 Museum as the Embodiment of Cultural Identity of the Community

As mentioned above, one obvious difference between specific local folklore museums and national museums is that local folklore museums give more importance to the linkage with local communities. Local communities play significant roles during the forming and operating of folklore museums. On the one side, folklore museums focus on tangible and intangible communal cultural heritage in a specific community or a group of people, the displaying contents are not only the exhibitions to educate or enjoy people. Another significant function of folklore museum is to represent intra-cultural identity of the community. In other words, compared to national museums, folklore museums have more emotional connections with people inside the community. For example, at the Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, one of its exhibition sections

displays the interviews and pictures of families and individuals who have connections with the community. Some of them inherited the family business since the first generation are still running the business in Yaowarat Chinatown. Some of them married with Thai people and started their careers in the community. Some of them even stepped out of the community when they were young but still have connections and contribute to their homeland. The migrant Chinese people are proud of this museum because it represents their culture's soul and their common identity. On the other side, local communities can well play their roles as motivation and consulting agencies of folklore museums. In the case of Bangkokian Museum, the owners of this museum are the members of Bangkok commoners, and the site of the museum is their ancestral house. They arrange and manage the exhibitions according to their own understanding of Bangkokian lifestyles, because they are part of the community. Another case is Phanom Rung Historical Park of in Buriram Province, Northeast Thailand which can also be counted as one folklore museum. During the formatting of this historical park, Phanom Rung Festival was introduced to reproduce lives of people living in the area of Phanom Rung longer than a thousand years ago. Local communities participated as the consultants of the inherent values of their traditional beliefs. (Denes 2012) The interaction between folklore museums and communities also reflects of the idea of community-based communal cultural heritage preserving in contemporary context.



Figure 6: Exhibition of Community Members in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center

(Source: <https://www.urbanaffairsmagazine.com/yaowarat-soul-chinatown/>)



Figure 7: Phanom Rung Festival in Phanom Rung Historical Park

(Source: <https://www.tatnews.org/2018/03/phanom-rung-historical-park-festival-2018>)

The participation of local communities in the forming of folklore museums and other safeguarding occasions can both benefits the community and the nation. Firstly, all the living intangible cultural heritage of the specific communities have functions to all members of the communities. The participation of local communities can fulfill the

cultural context of the heritage. In other words, any communal cultural heritage cannot be separated from its local people. Secondly, the folklore museums, landmarks, traditional lifestyles, local festivals and other forms of communal cultural heritage exhibitions as the embodiment of local communities' cultural soul, have a significance in maintaining the cultural identity and the sense of belongings to community's members. Thirdly, the support of governments and other organizations does encourage local people to keep following and inherit the traditional practices or skills from the old generations, so that the safeguarding of these communal cultural heritages can be well sustainable. And finally, from the national level, the community based communal cultural heritage maintains the cultural diversity of the country.

However, it's difficult to find a balance between the participation of communities and the support from the government. The problematic concept of community and community's ownership to communal cultural heritages were discussed after the 2003 UNESCO convention. Dorothy Noyes challenged the idea of completely community ownership of intangible cultural heritage because first at all, in the field of anthropology studies, a community is the symbolic concept which cannot be recognize and identify by experience. In this permit, she points out that the "community controlled" tradition protection system will undermine one of its important functions of negotiating intra-community conflict. (Noyes 2006) A community is a cultural based social unit which means in most of the time, culture plays its role as the order maintainer. In this case, the tradition will be adjusted and changed from time to time in order to meet the cultural

and social demand within the community, some intra-community conflict can be solved in this way. However, if a community takes responsibility of watching over the tradition, it means they have to treat it as a "foreign" object or practice, the function of balancing intra-community conflicts has to be abandoned. Secondly, in the context of commercialized society, folklore and cultural tradition are becoming one of the depended export income of undeveloped countries. In this process, some communal cultural heritages compromise to make changes in order to meet the demands of consumer and tourism, cause the destruction of cultural heritage.

Furthermore, facing the problem of global inequality, culture integrate is the irreversible tendency. More and more traditional craftworks of communities are taken place by modern mass products. In this context, the community heritage safeguarding becomes more complicate and “supervision needed.”

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2.2.3 Museums' Roles Expanding in Other Fields of Contemporary Society

In the contemporary context, cultural heritage cannot be separated from tourism. In Barbara Kirshenblatt- Gimblett's article, she argues that heritage is created through a process of the exhibition. Exhibition endows heritage thus conceived with a second life.(Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) The process of the exhibition is actually the interaction between heritage and viewer, tourism has the function to bring viewers in front of heritages. In this permit, folklore museums as the tourist attractions play

important roles in contemporary tourism. First, heritage is a mode of cultural production in the present that has recourse to the past. The term "cultural production" can be made in different ways and levels. In any context, the "re-defined" and "re-contextualized" heritage can be considered as a kind of cultural production in contemporary. In this process, the linkage between present and past is emphasized to maintain the heritage's function to recourse to the past. Secondly, heritage is a "value added" industry. In the contemporary world, the new value can be attached to cultural heritages in folklore museums as the new cultural context creates the occupation for heritage in new ways and new forms. 1) Heritages have historical functions as the carrier of the specific history. By investigating the existing heritages in folklore museums, visitors can look back into the past. (C. 2000) 2) The representation of cultural heritage creates value as well. In this term, value refers to social and economic value. When we talk about the representation of cultural heritage in the tourism context, derivations of tourism such as visiting attractions, performances and souvenir industries are included. For example, the Grand Palace of Bangkok existed as the political center in the history, but in the reign of King Rama IX, the Grand Palace was officially opened to tourists so that its political function partly transferred into cultural and economic functions. 3) Different cultural contexts, cultural heritage creates value as "uniqueness". In the tourism industry, the core selling hotspot is always the uniqueness of a place or culture. Cultural heritage as the representation of a chosen cultural unit plays a significant role in distinguishing its culture from any other cultural units in the world.

Thirdly, in an economic term, tourism can be seen as an export industry. In most of the occasions, the communal cultural heritage only makes sense when it happens within its context. Folklore museums are the places to create or simulate the sense of “hereness” for tourists. This feature makes the folklore museum an attractive destination to attract people outside the cultural context to buy this "local product".

However, the development of globalization and mass production also left some problems in the forming and managing of folklore museums. (D. 1991) First is the lack of cultural context. Indeed, museums are trying to use different instruments and displaying items to reproduce the context from the original time period and community. However, for the sake of the span of time and social background, it is impossible to 100 percent reproduce the cultural context in the past. The second problem is the inflow of contemporary mass production. Tourist art now is a popular product in heritage tourism. Think about the souvenirs selling around tourist attractive sites. Most of these art products are produced at a low price and less- contextual but open to mass production and meet the mainstream authentic preference. In a globalized world, some people consider this as the innovation or development of the tradition, however, the impact of cultural hegemony cannot be ignored as well. Another drawback is the lack of sustainable development.

Apart from contemporary tourism, folklore museums also motivate the forming of different research groups and fulfill the academic gaps in relevant fields. Scholars and relevant organizations realized the significance of the historical areas or communities

and actively formed research groups to discover their cultures. This kind of researching work is necessary because, in the most of time, people within the community never realize their “daily life” as cultural heritage, unless an “outsider” with relevant knowledge pointed it out. A typical case was the “Master Plan” supported by the Thai government in the 1970s. (Phyllis Mauch Messenger 2010) When an expert team found the precious “hybrid temple” in the Northern East region of Thailand, the local people still considered it as a functional religious area. After the research team’s discovery of that temple, more and more tangible and intangible communal cultural heritage in Northern East Thailand were safeguarded. Numbers of folklore museums and historical parks were built on the grounded of the research results conducted by these academic research groups. (Po-Chou Chan 2008)

Folklore museums as the extension of the community’s folk life also influence the tendency of human mobility inside the community. Before the adoption and promotion of the concept of preserving communal cultural heritage, a lot of young generations in local communities choose to leave their homeland and make living in the big cities, as a result, fewer people inherit the practices, skills, and worldviews. The introduction of folklore museums shifted the dilemma by forming the consultant committee in the community and offering local people relevant occupations. Gradually, local people raised awareness of preserving their own culture and identity and finally they have a will to inherit their traditional practices and skills. (Waraporn Ngamsomsuke 2011, Denes 2012)



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Chapter III: Case Studies: Historical Background and Cultural Context of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum

This chapter is a discussion to the historical backgrounds of the forming of communities, representative communal cultural heritages and cultural identities of Yaowarat Community, Bang Lamphu Community and Bang Rak Community. This chapter will explain the first three processes of the forming of folklore museums. The discussions divided into three aspects including the geographical and historical background of the specific communities, the cultural identity represented by corresponding communities and the forming and the significance of the three folklore museums.

In the cases of Yaowarat Community, Bang Lamphu Community and Bang Rak Community, historical architectures, landmarks, religious traditions and daily lifestyles as heritages are urgently needed to be safeguarded before they lose the social function and cultural spirit. Carrying such a responsibility, local folklore museums of these three historical communities are formed and aimed to maintain the cultural identities and communal cultural heritages.

3.1 The Forming of Cultural Identity and Communal Cultural Heritages of Yaowarat Community

3.1.1 The Forming of Yaowarat Community and its Cultural Identity

“Yaowarat” is a Thai name originated from Sanskrit word means “the young king” which refers to King Rama V. Obviously, the origin of the Yaowarat Community is related to the Thai royal family. Yaowarat Road was built during the reign of King Rama IV. In order to expand Sampeng commercial hub to meet the demand of city planning strategy of Bangkok, King Rama IV had a new business street to build took place of old Sampeng road. Later, Yaowarat Road was officially defined as the new commercial center of the local area by King Rama V until 1891. Benefited from the expanding of the area and the support from the Thai royal family, the 1.5 kilometers length avenue soon prospered as one of the most important business areas of Bangkok. After the rapid development over one hundred years, Yaowarat Road as a central point, surrounded areas has become a mature community with the strong Chinese ethnic characteristic. Today, this area has designated as one of the world’s famous Chinatown and still functional as a business district and residential area for local citizens.

In Bangkok’s official urban division, Yaowarat area is not an administrative district, most of its area belongs to Samphanthawong District. In this permit, Yaowarat area is usually defined as a cultural community which has a blurred geographical boundary. Yaowarat Road as the central axis of the Yaowarat Community started from Tri Mit Road and ended by Phra Pokklao and Maha Chai Road near the Grand Palace. On the

North side, the Charoen Krung Road can be considered as the boundary of the Yaowarat Community because most of the allies extended from Yaowarat Road ended by this avenue. On the opposite, the bank of Chao Phraya River is the southern edge of the community. The canal Klong Phadung Krung Kasem merged into Chao Phraya River becomes the eastern boundary of Yaowarat Community while Chakara Petch Road can be seen as the western edge of the community. The scale of Yaowarat community is not that large but contains the complex of functional areas and abundant of ethnic cultural elements.

Yaowarat community is considered as the predecessor of Chinatown for the sake of its establishment was closely related to Chinese migrant groups in history. Chinese immigrants' history in Thailand can be dated back to the 13th- the 14th century. At the time period, maritime trading was prosperous between China, India, and South East Asia. Benefited from the convenience of maritime traveling and the opening policies of the Ming Government, a number of Chinese traders those lived by Chinese mainland's southern coastline traveled for trading activities to portals of the Kingdom of Siam. The frequent trading activities became the starting point of the forming of Chinese immigrant communities in Thailand. To the 16th century, the Ayutthaya Era, scaled Chinese immigrant communities could be found in Siam. Thonburi Era is another time period for Chinese immigrants especially the Hokkien and the Suatao Chinese flow into the territory of Siam. During this time period, not only traders, a number of Chinese labors left their homeland and searched for more opportunities in Siam. At that time,

compared to the heavy tax policies of the Qing government, the open attitude and the inclusive social atmosphere of Siam society, these Chinese labors and traders intermarried with local women along the bank of Chao Phraya River and became Siam's citizens. In an account of the accumulated wealth and political activities, some of this kind of intermarriage families integrated into the upper class of Siam and closely connected with the Siamese elites even the royal family. Gradually, during the longtime human mobility and cultural integrating, Chinese migrants became legally Thai citizens and perfectly fused into Thai society. After the establishment of the city of Krung Rattanakosin, Chinese immigrants had grown into scaled and mature communities located in different areas of Thailand territory. In 1782, King Rama I relocated the residential zone of Chinese immigration community to Sampeng area and designated Sampeng as one of the trading areas in Bangkok. Soon, Sampeng developed into one of the largest commercial zones in the city and became a significant commercial and social center in local people's daily life. Later in the 20th century, the development of maritime technology brought more commercial opportunities to both China and Thailand. And as a response, more and more Chinese migrates flowed into Thailand. As an example, the population of Thai-Chinese immigration reached 1.3 million during the World War I. (Akagawa 2012) Later, because of the expansion of the city landscape and the economic development, the Thai king re-designated the residential zone and the location of the commercial hub from Sampeng to Yaowarat.

Look back at the forming of Yaowarat Community, different ethnical groups settled in

the range of Yaowarat area and formed into small neighborhoods and left their cultural impact during the culture integration of the community. Among these ethnical cultural units, Chinese exotic cultural context dominated the forming of cultural identity in Yaowarat Community: the building of Chinese style architectures and constructions, the selling of representative Chinese goods such as silks, china containers and gold, the establishment of Chinese traditional religious spaces and the holding activities of Chinese traditional festivals such as the dragon performance during Chinese New Year and activities celebrating Vegetarian Festival. Except the internal conditions, external conditions also contribute to the maintaining of Yaowarat Community's cultural identity: Tourism Authority of Thailand promoted Yaowarat Community as Thailand's "Chinatown" to tourists all over the world and benefited from Thai government's support, more and more Chinese exotic elements flow back to the community and contribute to the revival of Yaowarat's communal cultural heritage.



3.1.2 Significant Communal Cultural Heritages in Yaowarat Community and Their Current Status

In the context of a community, the investigation of the types and forms of religious centers is necessary because religion is the reflection of a group of people's worldview and cultural identity. In the case of Yaowarat Community, various types of religious areas mirror the mixture of cultural origins and the ways they fused with each other

until became the unique cultural symbols in the local community.

First of all, there are four significant Buddhism royal monasteries in the community.

Wat Samphanthawong Saram Voraviharn located near the eastern bank of Chao Phraya River, between Songwat Road and Yaowarat Road. It is a 3rd class royal monastery.

The temple existed since the Ayutthaya era but there is no evidence shows the information of its builder. Later in Rattanakosin Period, after the capital established,

King Rama I ordered to reconstruct several temples around the Phra Nakhon area and

Wat Ko as the predecessor of Samphanthawong Saram was one of them. After the re-

construction, King Rama I changed its official name into Wat Kokewlangkaram and

raised its status as the royal temple. During the reign of King Rama IV, the temple was

renovated and finally changed the name into Wat Samphanthawong Saram Voraviharn

until today. (Samphantawong 2019) The second significant temple is Wat

Pathumkongka which located between the eastern bank of Chao Phraya River and

Songwat Road. The site of the temple established in the Ayutthaya Era and was re-

constructed and re-named as Wat Sampeng after the establishment of Rattanakosin's

capital city. Later the temple was re-constructed and re-decorated for the second time

during the reign of King Rama II and the king gave the official name "Wat

Pathumkongka" to the temple and this name lasted until today. (Pathumkongka 2019)

The third one named Wat Chakrawat Rajawat or the former name well known as Wat

Sam Pluem. Wat Chakrawat located near the west part of Yaowarat Road and right

beside the former location of Sampeng Market. Similar to Wat Pathumkongka

mentioned previously, Wat Chakrawat is a Theravada Buddhism temple established in the Ayutthaya era and it had been several times reconstructed since the establishment of Krung Rattanakosin. The last temple called Wat Trimit Wittayaram Voraviharn. It is one of the most famous temples in Yaowarat community for the sake of its multiple roles as the community's religious center, tourist attraction, and the site of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center. Beside the Buddhism temples in Thai style with royal status, there are several Chinese and Vietnamese Buddhist temples founded in Yaowarat community as well. For example, Wat Leng Noei Yi located aside the middle part of Yaowarat Road. It is a typical Chinese style Mahayana Buddhism temple. The temple plays a significant role in Chinese immigrant people's religious life in Yaowarat Community. Wat Leng Noei Yi was built in 1871, the time period of King Rama V and it is significant as the first scaled temple established by a Chinese immigrant in Bangkok. The site of temple designed and constructed in typical Chinese Qing Dynasty's architecture style and it kept the rules of Mahayana temples in China such as the reading Chinese Buddhist scriptures and the worshipping several Buddhist deities at the same time.

Wat U Phai Rat Bamrung Temple represents the Vietnamese cultural impact in Yaowarat Community. It is a Vietnamese style Mahayana Buddhism temple located in Talad Noi neighborhood, Yaowarat Community. The original name of the temple was in Vietnamese called Wat Kan Yoeng Toe, or known as Wat Yuan Talad Noi by Thai people, which means a Vietnamese temple in Talad Noi. The temple was built during

the reign of King Rama I by a Vietnamese immigrant named Ong Chiang Sua. After the establishment of this temple, a Vietnamese immigrant community was formed around this religious center. A few years later, another Vietnamese temple Wat Poek Toe or Wat Yuan Bangpho was established by the community. Afterward, in the reign of King Rama V, the temple was given a new name of Wat U Phai Rat Bamrung and lasts until today. At the first glance of the temple, people may consider it as a Chinese Mahayana Buddhism temple for the sake of those dragon decorations and plaques in Chinese text. These elements reflected the Chinese historical impact on Vietnamese culture. But in a detailed observation to the Wat U Phai Rat Bamrung Temple, although after over three hundred years' cultural fusing, the chanting ritual in this temple still uses Vietnamese language and the Buddha images in the basilica have typical Vietnamese style. (kanwap 2019)

Except for the Buddhism temples for Buddhist believers, in Yaowarat Community, there are a number of functional areas designated in order to satisfy people's multiple religious demands. Such as Matzu Temple and Kuan Teh Shrine worshipping Chinese Daoism gods or goddess, Shrines for family ancestors and Roman Catholic churches for Catholic people. (Putimahtama 2015)



Figure 8: Leng Neoi Yi Temple

(Source: <https://cityseeker.com/zh/bangkok/685663-wat-mangkon-kamalawat-wat-leng-noei-yi>)



Figure 9: Wat U Phai Rat Bamrung Temple

(Source: <https://www.anamnikayathai.com/index.php>)

There are several significant landmarks such as roads, piers, residential areas, and markets in Yaowarat Community. These places are important to the local community because they always have social function in local people's community life. Although with the development of technology, transportation and the shifting of landscapes, the

function of these spaces have changed to fit in contemporary context, one of their roles as the communal cultural heritage is always maintaining.

Talad Noi is a historical neighborhood inside Yaowarat community's landscape. Talad Noi is the transliteration of a Thai word means "little market". However, Talad Noi is a complex of neighborhood functional places includes not only market but also a resident, religious space and so on. The forming of Talad Noi can be traced back to 1769. After the fall of Ayutthaya, a group of Portuguese resettled in this area and built a roman catholic church named Holy Rosary Church. Talad Noi as a Portuguese neighborhood didn't last for a long time since Chinese and Vietnamese migrants moved in and introduced Chinese cultural elements into the neighborhood. For example the So Heng Tai Mansion, a Chinese style historical mansion built by nobility Chinese under King Rama III and some Daoism shrines such as Chow Sue Kong Shrine and Hon Wong Shrine.(Chuapram 2013)

Another significant landmark of Yaowarat community is Talad Sampeng, known as the former resident and commercial zone of Chinese and other ethnic groups. Originally, during the Thonburi Period, several scaled Chinese neighborhoods located along the eastern bank of Chao Phraya River. Then, after the establishment of Krung Rattanakosin, because of the plan of constructing the Grand Palace, King Rama I negotiated with Phraya Rajasetthi, the head of these Chinese neighborhoods, and finally resettled them in the area of Sampeng. Soon, Sampeng Street became a prosperous commercial zone of Bangkok city and the areas around developed into a Chinese ethnic

community. After the second time's resettlement and the expansion of the community, the original Sampeng Street now is known as Soi Wanit 1 and the old Sampeng neighborhood was also included into Yaowarat community. (Crawford 2000)



Figure 10: So Heng Tai Mansion

(Source: <http://www.bangkokriver.com/place/sol-heng-tai/>)

Traditional Hokkien Suatao Chinese folklore activities held in Yaowarat Community are another type of communal cultural heritage. In contemporary society, the losing and changing of traditional festivals is the reflection to globalization tendency. In the case of Yaowarat Community in Bangkok, the holding of grand festival fairs during Chinese festivals in contemporary context is not only the “inheriting” of intangible communal cultural heritage but also the “reproducing” of the past in present. For example, the grand fair held in Yaowarat Road’s area during the Chinese New Year. The fair is inherited and adopted from traditional Chinese temple fairs and Yaowarat Community

contextualized it into an unique activity exclusive for local community: both Chinese and Thai street foods even some fast food can be found in the booths, on the central stage, not only traditional Chinese opera, Chinese and Thai pop songs are also welcomed by audiences. (Min 1992)

Similar to the activities, the religious traditions to Chinese gods and deities such as Guanwu and Guanyin in Yaowarat Community also shows the strong cultural characteristic of “Chinese dominating”. Apart from Chinese Mahayana Buddhism temples, shrines and temples dedicated to Chinese gods and deities are easily to be found in the community. This religious tradition as communal cultural heritage contributes to the building of cultural context of Yaowarat Community, and on the contrary, the Chinese dominated cultural context motivated the flourish of Chinese religious spaces as well as the worshipping tradition.

3.1.3 The History and Significance of Forming Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Museum

Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center is the exhibition center displaying the concentrated history of Yaowarat area as well as the Chinese migrant community especially the Chinese ethnic groups in central Thailand area. The museum located in Wat Traimit Temple, in the eastern part of Yaowarat community. The site of the museum is one of the biggest Buddhist temples in Yaowarat area and it is famous for the three

meters height, five and a half tons weight golden Buddha statue originated from the Sukhothai Period. The 1st floor of Wat Traimit is a meeting hall for religious activities, the 2nd floor is the Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, the 3rd floor is another exhibition hall displaying the history of golden Buddha statue and the top of the temple is the worshipping hall housing the statue of Golden Buddha named Phra Sukhothai Traimit.

At the first place, the Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center was a private museum which established through the support of the Crown Property Bureau and the Samphanthawong Business Community. (Wongsurawat 2017) The support of the Thai royal agency explained the displaying of the Thai king's large image in front of the exhibition hall and also reflects the museum's standing point as royalist historical narrative. Today, Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center runs as one of the exhibition centers of Wat Traimit and mostly attracts visitors with specific cultural and religious motivations. As one of the most significance landmarks in Yaowarat Community, Wat Trimit Temple has multiple functions in local community. Apart from its role as a religious space, it also takes social responsibility as a common area for local people and a tourism spot for visitors. The inclusive atmosphere of the temple as a community's common area and its geographical location at the beginning of Yaowarat Road became two main reasons to establish the site of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center in Wat Trimit Temple.

3.2 The Forming of Cultural Identity and Communal Cultural Heritages of Bang Lamphu Community

3.2.1 The Forming of Bang Lamphu Community and its Cultural Identity

Bang Lamphu in Thai language means the community of mangrove apple trees. In the past, there were abundant of mangrove apple trees grew along the river banks surrounded this Bang Lamphu area and this natural characteristic became the origin of this historical area's name. Unfortunately, suffered from several big floods in Bangkok, there is no more mangrove apple tree survived in the area anymore, but the name of Bang Lamphu is kept until today.

Same as Yaowarat area mentioned previously, Bang Lamphu area is not the administrative district, hence, it is difficult to define a specific geographical range for the historical area. Bang Lamphu area located along the Eastern bank of Chao Phraya River in Phra Nakhon District. The merged part of the bank of Chao Phraya River and the Klong Bang Lamphu Canal can be seen as the north and east boundaries of Bang Lamphu area. On the West, the Somdet Phra Pin Klao Bridge became the boundary line between Bang Lamphu and Sanam Luang Square. On the Southern side, the Banphanthom Alley behind Wat Bowonniwet Viharn Temple is defined as the Southern edge of Bang Lamphu Community. Compared with Yaowarat Community, the layout of Bang Lamphu Community is more organized and clear partitioned. For example, the living areas located in the North part and commercial zone is designated in the South part of the community.

Compared to the Chinese exotic in the Yaowarat and the Western impact of Bang Rak, Bang Lamphu Community inherited the typical waster-side Thai style landscape and architectures. The forming of the Bang Lamphu Community can be traced back to the establishment of Krung Rattanakosin. After the fall of the Thonburi Dynasty, King Rama I moved the capital from the Western bank of Chao Phraya River to the Eastern bank. For the sake of political and military strategy, an inner city named Rattanakosin Island was designated as the “heart” of the capital city. The central area including Grand Palace and Sanam Luang Square inside Rattanakosin Island established as the political center of the kingdom and the residence of the king and his family. The capital city as a miniature likeness of the kingdom, the aristocracy and nobility gathered in the citadel and surrounding walled city. (Roy 2017) Followed the hierarchical designation of the city, Bang Lamphu area served as the resident communities of royal servants or Thai noble families, significant commercial zones and government offices. At the same time, outside this peripheral area, King Rama I had the city walls and 14 forts build around the rivers and canals to protect the whole inner city. Bang Lamphu area is one the significant part of the protection zone. Located by the north part of Rattanakosin Island, Bang Lamphu area safeguarded the junction of Chao Phraya River and Klong Bang Lamphu Canal. This geographical feature brought big water transportation convenience as well as economic benefit to Bang Lamphu Community. The advantage of transportation and the support from the Thai government speeded up the development of the commercial zone in Bang Lamphu Community and made it became one of the

most important commercial areas of Bangkok. As a reaction, the grown economic demand motivated the forming of residents based on ethnic origins and occupations. The historical context of cultural integration, water-based geographical features and other social and cultural forces became factors of forming Bang Lamphu Community's cultural identity as a water-based multiple-cultural community which included diverse origins of people and cultural identities.

3.2.2 Significant Communal Cultural Heritages in Bang Lamphu Community and Their Current Status

In Bang Lamphu Community, the distribution of religious area reflected Bang Lamphu Community's role as the royal given land and a mixture ethnic community. There are two significant royal Theravada Buddhist temples and several scaled Muslim Mosques, besides, shrines worshipping Daoism gods also can be found in the community.

Wat Bowonniwet Vihara Rajavoraviharn Temple is the largest and most significant temple in Bang Lamphu Community. The site of the temple and relevant architectures located in the central part of the community, the block between Phra Sumeru Road and Bowonniwet Road. This Theravada Buddhism temple serves as a Thai royal monastery holding important Buddhist ceremony and the monkhood serving a place for royal family members. Except for its royal status, the ancient Buddha statues and mural paintings also show the historical and art values of this temple. To Bang Lamphu

Community, Wat Bowonniwet Temple is the representation of the Thai elite's religious tendency and the religious linkage between the Thai royal family and common people.

Wat Chana Songkhram is another significant Theravada Buddhist temple of Bang Lamphu Community which represents the religious context of the Mon ethnic group.

The temple located on the west side of the community, aside Khaosan Road and Rambuttri Alley. The site of the temple was built before the establishment of Krung

Rattanakosin and at the first place, this temple called Wat Klang Na, which means the temple in the middle of the rice field. Later in the reign of King Rama I, this temple

was given to Mon monks as their resident and the king changed its name into Wat Thongpu, which originated from a town's name of Myanmar. Several years later, after

1787, in order to remain the Mon monk troops' contribution to the victory of 3 time's warfare between Siam and Burmese, Wat Chanasongkhram was given as the official

name of the temple, means the victory of the war. (Chanasongkram 2019)

In Bang Lamphu Community's cultural context, Muslim is another significant ethnic group which has its own distinctive religions. Chakkraphong Mosque and Ban Tuk Din

Mosque are two typical Islam worshiping places located inside the range of Bang Lamphu area and active as religious areas for faithful Islam worshippers. Although

these two mosques are hidden in the narrow allies, the typical Islam style domes and ethnical decorations can be easily distinguished from the traditional Thai and modern

style architectures. (Askew 1993)



Figure 11: Wat Bowonniwet Vihara

(Source: <https://www.shutterstock.com/zh/video/clip-16596337-bangkok>)



Figure 12: Ban Tuk Din Mosque

(Source: <https://www.bangkokpost.com/lifestyle/social-and-lifestyle>)

Compared to Yaowarat Community and Bang Rak Community, Bang Lamphu Community is neither the community with the obvious single ethnic characteristic nor the one strongly influenced by Westernization. Bang Lamphu is like a miniature of Bangkok city, hierarchical, fusion and always developing. Since the layout of the Bang

Lamphu Community has a clear division, significant landmarks of the community can be explained in three parts: the riverbank area, residential area, and commercial area.

As the community has close linkage with Thai monarchy and ruling class politically and geographically, Bang Lamphu Community has its military and strategic significance as the defense area of the Rattanakosin Island. In the early Rattanakosin era, the area around the river and canal bank had the responsibility to protect the inner city. Government offices, city walls, and forts were designated in this area. The historical site of Phra Sumeru Fort is one of the 14 forts built during the reign of King Rama I and it is one of the four remained forts until today. It locates right beside the junction of Chao Phraya River and Klong Bang Lamphu Canal, around the historical site of Phra Sumeru Fort is a public park named Santi Chai Prakan Public Park. It served as the defensive structure for safeguarding the northern part of the inner city. Phra Sumeru Fort structured in 10.5 meters high, 45 meters in diameter and topped by a roofed heptagonal. (Unknown 2001) Nowadays, Phra Sumeru Fort and its surrounded area have become a famous cultural tourism attraction of Bangkok city, moreover, to the local community, the fort reminds the glory of Rattanakosin Kingdom as well as the proud of Thai elite of Bang Lamphu Community.

The Northern part of Bang Lamphu Community was the given land of nobilities, Thai governors and royal servants. These groups of people can be seen as one group of original citizens of the Bang Lamphu community. Later, in an account of the rapid commercialization of the community, more and more ethnic groups, traders and skilled

persons entered this area, made Bang Lamphu a diverse ethnic community. During Rama IV and Rama V reigns, benefited from the modernization policies, a number of modern entertainment venues were built to enrich the cultural life of local residents. Nowadays, most of the place in the resident area transferred their function into hotels restaurants and coffee shops served for tourism.

The Southern range from Chakrapong Road to Banphanthom Alley is the commercial area of the community. This area is also signified as a storage of intangible communal cultural heritages of Bang Lamphu Community. At the very first place, Bang Lamphu area's commercial economy was dependent on the trading activities along the river and canal. Afterward, groups of skilled people moved in and opened small workshops around the area such as flag makers, goldsmith and basket weavers. These skilled people brought not only their outstanding workmanships but also ethnic-based authentic characteristics to Bang Lamphu Community. For example, the works made by a Muslim goldsmith and a Chinese gold shop are different. However, influenced by local authentic preference, costumers' demand and many other factors, the outcome craftsmanship gradually formed into a fixed style unique for Bang Lamphu Community.

(Gisèle Yasmeen 2014) In the reign of King Rama IV and King Rama V, the national economy of Thailand rapidly increased, the old inner city started to expand outward of the city walls. Based on this city planning strategy, the old city walls were dismantled and several new avenues and high-speed roads were built or repaired in Bang Lamphu area. The occupation of old city walls turned into Phra Athit Road and Phra Sumeru

Road, some minor streets such as Khaosan Road and Sibsam Hang Alley were opened as commercial streets attracted costumers from all over the country. The built of modern urban constructions speeded up the prosperity of Bang Lamphu commercial hub, changed the layout of Bang Lamphu Community as well as the lifestyle of local people from based on water transportation to road transportation. (Askew 1993)

Recently, a project named “Bang Lamphu Canal Cultural Heritage Corridor” aimed to revive the water-based communal cultural heritages including housing and public spaces along the canal sides. From the perspective of this research, this project is a case of visualizing intangible communal cultural heritages into tangible forms. By reproducing the landscape and housing into “old Bang Lamphu” style, the canal-based way of life as intangible communal cultural heritage is revived and will explore other usages in local people’s daily life. In addition, from a perspective of tourism, its economic value as a “selling hotspot” of canal visiting can be emphasized as well. (Nation 2016, Department of Architecture 2019)

3.2.3 The History and Significance of Forming Bang Lamphu Museum

Bang Lamphu Museum located right next to the Fort Phra Sumeru, Bang Lamphu historical area. The site of the Bang Lamphu Museum includes the main building, a wooden house, and a small front garden. In 1925, the Ministry of Education of Thailand decided to increase the budget of merchandise textbooks. Hence, the first printing

school constructed and opened in Bang Lamphu named Wat Sangwet Printing School. The main building of the Bang Lamphu Museum was built in 1932, served as classrooms of the school. For the wooden house, it was the workshop and textbook store of the Printing School. (Chukaew 2014) Later in 1985, the printing school moved out of the community and this place was wasted for 10 years until 1995 Phra Nakhon district government re-organized the site into the exhibiting hall of Bang Lamphu community. In 2001, the site of Bang Lamphu Museum registered as a historical monument by Thailand's Fine Art Department and it has become a welcomed cultural tourist attraction of Bang Lamphu Community.

The site of Bang Lamphu Museum has cultural significances to its community and perfectly reflected the cultural characteristics of Bang Lamphu Community. Firstly, the historical site itself as Thailand's first printing school is one of the communal cultural heritages of Bang Lamphu Community. Secondly, its location next to the monument site of Phra Sumeru Fort well highlighted Bang Lamphu's role as Rattanakosin Island's protecting zone. Thirdly, the museum set right next to the junction of Chao Phraya River and Bang Lamphu Canal reflect the water-based lifestyle of local community.

3.3 The Forming of Cultural Identity and Communal Cultural Heritages of Bang Rak Community

3.3.1 The Forming of Bang Rak Community and its Cultural Identity

The origin of the name Bang Rak is related to a plant scientifically named *Calotropis*. In the Thai language, this kind of flower named “Dok Rak”, means the flower of love. Dok Rak is a tropical flower with white or purple petals, it usually grows along the rivers and streams. In the past, the water area around Bang Rak naturally grew plenty of Dok Rak flowers, and this natural characteristic became a part of the area’s name.

If have an overlook to Bang Rak, the whole area is in the shape of triangle, roads, and allies inside crisscrossing in a well-organized way. Bang Rak area located by the eastern bank of Chao Phraya River and Klong San Canal. The northern boundary of the area is Phra Rama IV Road and the southern boundary is Sathon Road, one of the significant roads linking the areas on both sides of the Chao Phraya River. Inside the range of Bang Rak, there are three main east-west roads, respectively named: Si Phraya Road, Surawong Road, and Silom Road, and one north-south road named Maha Seti Road.

Distinguished from Yaowarat Community and Bang Lamphu Community, before the reign of King Rama IV, the land of Bang Rak area was rice field named Tung Wua Lamphu and even wasn't a part of the old capital. Around a century later, with the rapid development of Thai society, a new capital city planning came out, Phra Nakhon area as the central point, the range of capital city was going to expand outward. For the sake of the city construction strategy and political demand, on 3rd June 1972, Bang Rak was

announced to be one of the new sub-district. Later, it raised its state and became one of the eight administrative districts of Bangkok.

The history of the Bang Rak Community is closely related to the keyword "modernization" or "westernization". The modernization of Thailand motivated the development of area construction and landscape, on the other side, the changing of the area reflect the occurrence of a historical process at the same time. The full speed developing and technological explosion in the Western world made Western countries took the initiative in the process of modernization, on the contrary, for those countries out of western context such as African and Asian countries, modernization usually inextricably linked with colonialism and migration. (Bernstein Henry, 1971) In Thailand's context, although it avoided the destiny as a colony of Western countries, Western culture and ideology left an impact on the whole country. Bang Rak Community can be considered as a miniature of Thai society during modernization process especially during the highlighted periods from Rama IV to Rama VI because it served as the diplomatic zone as well as a trading area of Western people and directly influenced by Western cultural context. During that period of time, Bang Rak Community gradually developed into the residential zone for Western traders and diplomats, Chinese migrates as well as some Thai elite families. Thai- Western style hybrid architectures, fancy restaurants, and Christian churches are the pieces of evidence reflect Bang Rak Community's historical and cultural roles as a Western trading hub and diplomatic zone. Until the reigning of King Rama VI, the process of

modernizing and urbanizing developed rapidly under the strong leadership and the open attitude towards western technology and lifestyle, series of financial and education reforms processed in Thailand society. A number of Thai-Western hybrid architectures were constructed in Bang Rak community and some middle-class and upper-class neighborhoods formatted during that time period, the processor of Bangkokian Museum were included as well.

One of the emphasized characteristic of Modernization in Thailand is the blending of foreign ethnical cultures with Thai identities. Phillip Cornwell-Smith pointed out that the Thainess is keeping its ancient ways while some “unplanned collision of values” is also blended into Thai culture. (Cornwell-Smith 1997) This character can be observed from the formation and development of Bang Rak community. As an outcome of Bang Rak Community’s cultural identity, the diverse cultural community left strong impact of Western cultural context would be the most suitable description for it.(Wyatt 2003)



3.3.2 Significant Communal Cultural Heritages in Bang Rak Community and Their Current Status

As analyzed previously, before the expanding of old Bangkok city, the area of Bang Rak Community was the undeveloped rice fields. During the reign of King Rama IV, the modernization process and the grown political communications between Thailand and Western countries endowed Bang Rak area a second life.(Chris Baker 2005) The

area developed into the diplomatic and resident zone for Western countries thus a number of churches, embassies, entertainment areas established in order to meet the political and social demands of local people. The inflow of western culture also triggered the vitality of diverse ethnical cultures in Bang Rak Community such as Hindu, Vietnamese, Chinese, Muslim culture and so on.

The Assumption Cathedral Church is a significant Roman Catholic church located by the Chao Phraya River bank, next to the site of the French embassy. Originally, it was built by a French missionary in Thailand during the reign of King Rama II. Later in the 19th century, because of the religious significance of the Assumption Cathedral Church, it became the largest religious center of the local community. Furthermore, the surrounded areas became the extension of local people's religious context, for example, the missionary school in convent alley, church hospitals, and Assumption Printing Press. During the Second World War, the site of the church was seriously damaged because of the warfare, however, considered of its significant role in community's religious life, it was reconstructed twice in a very short time and the church still maintains its religious function until today. Except for Assumption Cathedral Church, there are a number of churches, missionaries, and relative religious organizations still operating in Bang Rak Community, most of them located around the diplomatic area and resident zones of Western people such as Holy Rosary Church mentioned previously, Catholic Mission of Bangkok, Sathorn Church and so on.

Most of Bang Rak Community's landmarks were built during the reign of King Rama

V and King Rama VI, especially after the time period of the Second World War. At that time, these landmarks represent the pioneer medical technology, transportation, and lifestyle of Thailand.

Bangkok Christian Hospital's establishment was highly correlated with its religious background. 19th century, a number of Christian missionaries came to Thailand with their religion missions and medical technology. With the establishments and expansion of the missions and churches, Western medical clinics opened around the areas of religious centers, aimed to provide medical help to local citizens. 1840, the Presbyterian Mission established in Thailand and soon expanded its branches and clinics in the territory. The processor of Bangkok Christian Hospital was one of them. After the Second World War, the Presbyterian Mission and the Church of Christ in Bangkok founded the Bangkok Christian Hospital in Bang Rak Community and the cutting-edge facilities and the complete department arrangements made it became one of the first general hospitals in Thailand.

The Grand Postal Office is the monument of Thailand postal system. The Grand Postal Office located by Charoen Krung Road in Bang Rak area and near to the Chao Phraya River. The architecture is in a post-war western style, but on the corners of the roof decorated with Garuda sculptures, which is a typical Thai element. Before a professional postal system appeared, the mailing service of Thailand was inconvenient and only limited for the royal family. After the Second World War, the high-speed development of the economy increased the demand for postal service in the whole

society. In 1858, Thailand and Britain signed up a treaty that authorized British Consular Post Office for Thailand's mailing service. Until 1885, Thailand joined the Universal Postal Union and finally took over the postal system of its own country. In 1940, the site of the Grand Postal Office moved to the former Britain embassy building and last until today.

The British Club located by the Silom Road is another impressive landmark witnessed the changing of Bang Rak Community. The history of the club can be dated back to 1903. By that time, the club for westerners was not only a place for casual activities but also an important social occasion. British elites in Bangkok founded a committee and decided to establish their own British Club on 24th April 1903. A wooden house by the Suriwongse Road in Bang Rak area was chosen as the site of the British Club and soon opened for its founders and guests. By that time the British Club only accepted very limited numbers of guests, for example, senior managers of British companies, British diplomatic governors and western elites in Bangkok. At 1910, because of the increase of club members, a larger and a more luxury mansion was constructed as the new site of the British Club. In the reign of King Rama VI, the king donated the land of the club to the owners and the British Club gradually developed and lasts until today. Now, the British Club is inclusive for members from all over the world and it becomes a significant landmark of Bang Rak Community. (Club 2019)

Apart from these landmarks, Bang Rak Community's tangible communal cultural heritages mentioned above, the community also inclusive for diverse religious

traditions and ethnical lifestyles as intangible cultural heritages. For example, the Hindu temple Wat Phra Si Maha Utama Devi located by the Silom Road, it was established by Indian immigrants during the reign of King Rama IV and it served as the religious center of Indian people in Bang Rak Community. Similarly, in Bang Rak area, it is not difficult to find Muslim Mosques (Bon Oou Mosque), Chinese temples (Wat Bamphen Chin Phrot) and of course traditional Theravada Buddhism temples. Despite compared to the other two historical communities, Bang Rak Community is the "youngest" one, the inclusive atmosphere maintains the cultural vitality of the community and its citizens. The conflict and negotiation between Eastern and Western reflect the cultural characteristic of the community, and the lifestyles formed in this context became the unique communal culture of Bang Rak Community. However, in contemporary Bangkok, Bang Rak as one of the main economic and business centers of the city is gradually losing its original residents who inherited traditional ways of life and has emotional connection with local community.



Figure 13: Assumption Cathedral Church

(Source: <http://www.bangkokriver.com/place/assumption-cathedral/>)



Figure 14: The Grand Postal Office

(Source: <http://www.bangkokriver.com/place/grand-postal-office/>)



Figure 15: The British Club

(Source: <http://www.britishclubbangkok.org/site/en/eating-drinking/functions-events-facilities/>)

3.3.3 The History and Significance of Forming Bangkokian Museum

Bangkokian Museum located next to Si Phraya Road, by the Eastern bank of Chao Phraya River. In the early Rattanakosin period, this area was the residential area for foreigners and common people. Houses of the neighborhood are all historical buildings styled in Thai-Western hybrid type which has the strong characteristic of the architectures built during Rama V and VI period. Bangkokian Museum is one of them. The site of the museum built in 1937, was originally the family house of Surawadee family. Decades later, the house owner Waraporn Surawadee, a former Associate Professor to Srinakarin Wirote University realized the value of the area and her old family house as a communal heritage, she crowds funded more than 15 million Bath bought the nearby lot in order to kept the original architectural style of the neighborhood and re-arranged the house into a folklore museum. After Waraporn Surawadee donated the site of the museum to Bangkok government, the Bangkokian Museum re-constructed and established by the Culture, Sport and Tourism Department of Thailand on 1st October 2004. (TAT 2019) Now, Bangkokian Museum runs as a local folklore museum of Bang Rak District, displays heritages and reproduces the way of life of middle-class Thai people in Bang Rak community during WWII.

Chapter IV: Case Studies: Displaying Approaches and Roles Played by Museums in the Preserving of Communal Cultural Heritage of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum

This chapter is an in-depth analysis to the adopting of displaying approaches in three study cases base on the field researches. After analyze the “visualized part” in the museum, the hidden meanings of these exhibiting content and the roles played by these three museums in the preserving of communal cultural heritages will be discussed.

Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Museum, Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum as three use various approaches to display the different content and aspects of communal cultural heritage. Although there are distinctions of historical contexts, contents and embodiments of community’s cultural identity among these three local areas, the logic of arranging the displaying content and the choosing of exhibiting approaches in a museum can be concluded in several systematically categories. The following tables show the overview of displaying contents and approaches in the three museums, which will contribute to a better understanding of the terms in chapter 4’s in-depth analysis.

Content Category	Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center	Bang Lamphu Museum	Bangkokian Museum
History of the Local Area	Y	Y	Y
Significance of the Local Area	Y	Y	Y
Intangible Cultural Heritages of the Local Community	Y	Y	Y
Displaying of Individuals' Life in Local Community	Y	N	Y

* Y= Yes; N= No

Table 1: Overview of Displaying Content in Three Museums

(Source: Base on the field research)

Approach Category	Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center	Bang Lamphu Museum	Bangkokian Museum
Displaying Board (Traditional Instrument)	Y	Y	Y
Display of Items (Traditional Instrument)	Y	Y	Y
Reproduction of Historical Sense (Contemporary)	Y	Y	N
Videos (Contemporary Instr.)	Y	Y	N
Audio Effect (Contemporary Instr.)	Y	Y	N
Interaction Media (Contemporary Instr.)	N	Y	N

* Y= Yes; N= No

Table 2: Overview of Displaying Approaches in Three Museums

(Source: Base on the field research)

4.1 Displaying Approaches, Outcome Content and Roles Played by Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center in the Preservation of Communal Cultural Heritage

4.1.1 Displaying Approaches of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center

- Displaying Content of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center:

Stepped into the second floor of Wat Traimit's front door, the reception desk decorated with national flags of Thailand and China pops into eyes. All the visitors are required to take off their shoes before getting inside exhibition halls. Although Chinese ethnic communities formed in Thailand since the ancient time, the displaying content of the first exhibiting hall started from the timeline of year 1782, the reign of King Rama I. The exhibition hall introduces the forming of the earliest Chinese immigrant community in Thailand by listing the historical context, relevant policies such as tax systems and their ways of life in text or illustrations. The second exhibition hall is a long and narrow space which simulates the sense of an old cabin in a Chinese cargo ship. Shelves beside corridor contain the typical trading goods of a Chinese maritime caravan: timbers, foods, hardware tools and so on. The most interesting part is the video played above the cabin's ceiling: the digital screen played the simulating sense on the ship deck, cabin crew's condition and the weathers' change. The most dramatic sense is the moment that the ship caught the storm and how they went through it. The dawn after the storm is not only a metaphor of Chinese migrants' brand new life but also a connecting point for the next exhibition hall. In the third exhibiting section, the sense changes from cargo ship to a portal market. Vendors, street food shops, craftsmanship

workshops listed on both sides of the street. 1:1 sized wax models also arranged into the designated sense: some of them simulated the labors carrying heavy products, some played a role of vendors and food sellers, some were customers or craftsmen. Another impressive detail is that when visitors walk through the “market street”, they can hear the audio of the noisy and lively background sound of the street as well as the sound of selling, bargaining and chatting in Teochew accent. It is because that at that time, Chinese from Teochew and Suatao areas were two dominated groups of immigrant people resettled in Thailand. Then in the next exhibition hall, the exhibition content’s timeline was covered the time period from 1851 to 1957. In this section, the Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center combined the history of the Chinese immigrant community with the modernization process of Thailand. The popularization of the steamship and the technology innovation motivate the global trade activities and also contributed to the economic growth of Thailand. This prosperity attracted more and more Chinese migrants to leave their hometown and resettle in Bangkok. To Chinese immigrant communities during this time period, an iconic affair was the establishment of Yaowarat Road. During this period of time, the residential community and trading area of Chinese migrants expanded from Sampeng to Yaowarat, several years after, Yaowarat became one of the most important trading zones as well as the biggest scale of Chinese immigrant communities in Thailand. Excepted from the development of trading activities, Chinese lifestyle gradually blending into its context: the establishment of Daoism temples, the tailor-made postal house, fresh markets sold Chinese goods and

foods, Chinese style restaurants and abundant of Chinese cultural elements fulfilled the cultural context of Yaowarat community. All of these traditional practices, significant moments and the prosperities are represented by miniature cartoon characters, construction models, historical photos and text introductions. Stepped into the next exhibition hall, a large image of King Rama X titled “His Majesty the King’s Compassion” pops up into visitors’ eyes which pointed out one of the main elements of this section which is Thai royal family’s significance to Yaowarat Community. During the reign of King Rama IX, Yaowarat Community became one of the significant diplomatic visiting areas between Thai government and the government of China. Thai royal family’s visits to Yaowarat Community reflects the attitude that all races and backgrounds of people equally under the protection and compassion of the Thai King. In this section, iconic events and memorable moments of two countries such as the official meeting between King Rama IX and former Vice- Prime Minister of China’s government Deng Xiaoping in year 1978 are introduced by exhibiting boards and videos. The last exhibition hall is designated as the conclusion of all the previous exhibiting contents and also the reflection of Yaowarat Chinatown in present days. The displaying contents mirror the rapid change of Yaowarat community in globalized Bangkok, for example, the changing types of trading goods from daily necessities to tourism mass products, such as Thai style clothes and souvenirs, and after the Tourism Authority of Thailand’s recognition of Yaowarat area as the Chinatown, the adding functions of local area as the tourism zone. In this section, except the text and picture

introduction, visitors can watch the documentary videos about the way of life of the representative local families. For example, one of the stories tells a third-generation Suatao family's life in Yaowarat Community, from their ancestor migrant to Sampeng as a labor to the young generation opened their own street food shop aside the Yaowarat Road.



Figure 16: The Stimulation Sense of Sampeng Market in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center

(Source: Photo taken by the author)



Figure 17: The Models of Traditional Chinese Lifestyle in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center

(Source: Photo taken by the author)

- **Displaying Approaches of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center:**

Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center applies different approaches in displaying the communal cultural heritages in Yaowarat Chinese dominated ethnical community.

Traditional practice as intangible communal cultural heritage in Yaowarat community cannot live without its context. One of Barbara Gimblett's intangible cultural heritage propositions pointed out that a key to heritage productions is their virtuality, whether in the presence or the absence of actualities. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) The simulation sense of cargo ship and Sampeng market are virtualities because no one really captured the same sense and moment by their eyes. However, this kind of virtuality is built in the purpose of presenting the actualities. According to the records of academic literature, historical pictures and other factual evidence, the history of Sampheng market and the

lifestyle of Chinese immigrants in this historical area are real.

Another approach that Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center uses is the combination of the displaying sense or item and text information. In a museum, the most important part is not the exhibiting item itself, but the hidden information behind it. Item is the embodiment of the history but sometimes the text can create the context. Item and text inter-influence each other. For those visitors outside the cultural context of Yaowarat Community, the text introduction is the auxiliary tool which can help them access the cultural background of the local community. For example, the exhibition hall displays a model of a tailor-made postal office. For visitors outside the Yaowarat community cultural context or people not familiar with the history of Chinese immigrants group in Thailand, they have no idea what this model stands for and why it was chosen as the exhibited item. With the help of introduction text, visitors are able to know that in Thonburi and early Rattanakosin periods, a number of Chinese workers and traders immigrated to Thailand, and every month, they would send money back to families through the tailor-postal office. It represents the Chinese migrants' emotional connection with their homeland.

In contemporary tourism system, heritage is a way of producing hereness. (Kirshenblatt-Gimblett 1995) Instead of displaying relics in the glass-made shelves and attach a simple text introduction, Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center used sense simulating approach to reproduce the ways of life of Chinese immigrants community in Thonburi and early Rattanakosin period. The combination of historical sense and

contemporary technology such as the video and audio effect successfully creates an atmosphere of “time traveling” for visitors. One of the highlighted content of the Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center is its simulation areas of the Chinese cargo ship and Sampheng market. The designation of the exhibition area, real size wax dolls and the adding of video and audio effects simulate the historical sense from different dimensions and sensory. All of these elements successfully reproduce the sense of realistic for tourists.

Displaying content of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center also gives importance to the linkage between the museum and local individuals. In Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center’s last exhibition section, the documentary videos of local families’ life and the exhibiting board displays the photos of Yaowarat citizens and their daily life sense in Yaowarat Community. This part of exhibiting content directly reflects the close linkage between individuals in the local community and the museum.

Exhibition Section	Displaying Content	Usage of Approaches
Exhibition Section 1	Early history of Chinese migrants since King Rama I Era	Displaying Boards
Exhibition Section 2	Lifestyle of Chinese migrant people in Portal area and Sampeng Market	Reproduction of historical Sense; Video of cargo ship; Audio effect of Sampeng market; Displaying of items such as commercial products (china, silk)

Exhibition Section 3	The development of Yaowarat and Chinese migrant people during 1851-1957	Displaying boards; Reproduction of historical sense of tailor-made postal house and the model of Yaowarat Road
Exhibition Section 4	Yaowarat's significance after the establishment of diplomatic relations between Thailand and China	Displaying boards
Exhibition Section 5	Yaowarat Community in contemporary Thai society and the displaying of individual's life in local community	Displaying boards; Video of local families' introduction and interviews; Displaying of item such as gold products

Table 3: Displaying Contents and Approaches in Each Exhibiting Section of Yaowarat Chinatown

Heritage Center

(Source: Base on the field research)

4.1.2 Outcome Image and Roles Played by Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center in the Preserving of Communal Cultural Heritage

Exhibitions in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center include the content of 1) The history of Chinese ethnical migrants in Thailand; 2) Lifestyles of local people in Yaowarat Community; 3) The relationship between Yaowarat Community and Thai society and 4) The connection between local Chinese families and Yaowarat Chinese dominated ethnic Community. Interestingly, if combined these embodied contents with the recorded history of Sino-Thai immigration, we can find out the shaped image and hidden attitude towards the museum. The exhibition started from the history of Chinese immigration since Thonburi Period. During that time period, Siam was described as a

friendly, inclusively and prosperity country, an ideal place for Chinese trader and worker' settlement. After that, for the sake of city landscape expansion and economic demand, Yaowarat Road was built and designated as the resident and trading hub of the Chinese immigrant community. Besides, the exhibition also emphasizes the memorizing diplomatic moments between Thailand and China, which shows the friendly political atmosphere between the two countries and their people. To the history of time period King Rama IX, the compassion and caring of Thai royal family tried to emphasize that Yaowarat community as a part of Thai society and Chinese immigration people as Thai citizen are inclusive and well-integrated in Thai society. In a word, the Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center tried to represent Yaowarat Community as a significant part of contemporary Bangkok city, not only a contemporary tourism production. The Yaowarat Community formed by migrant people from different ethnical origins and backgrounds. These exotic cultures didn't disappear because of the localization process but absorbed and fused Thai culture for over a hundred years, in the end, this cultural complex of Yaowarat Community developed into an unique cultural identity as a whole.

Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, as the storage of communal cultural heritage monument the "past" of local community, at the same time it updates the image of the present day Yaowarat for visitors. In the perspective of heritage tourism, Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center is a part of the "Yaowarat cultural tourism complex", a collective representation of local community's communal cultural heritages and a tool

to reproduce Yaowarat's exotic atmosphere for visitors. During the process of presenting communal cultural heritage in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, the significance of the museum does not only stop at the adding economic and cultural values to exhibiting heritages, but it also motivates the revision of traditions in the community. For example, the displaying of dragon dance performance during Chinese New Year, it is not only a record to the phenomenon, but rather to define and standardize this communal cultural heritage.

4.2 Displaying Approaches, Outcome Content and Roles Played by Bang Lamphu Museum in the Preservation of Communal Cultural Heritage

4.2.1 Displaying Approaches of Bang Lamphu Museum

- Displaying content of Bang Lamphu Museum:

Bang Lamphu Museum located near the Chao Phraya River's bank, right next to the historical site of the Phra Sumeru Fort. Walking through the front yard, visitors can see the reception room in brown and golden colors. Brown is the representative color of ancient wooden Thai house and golden represent the color of royalty. Having considered the logo of Bang Lamphu Museum, the symbol of Bang Lamphu museum inspired from the shape of mangrove apple flower, represents the origin of the Bang Lamphu community. After entering the exhibition halls, a long corridor as the first visiting section display some exhibiting boards concerning the historical changes of

Bang Lamphu. In this section, comparative photos of the same spots are displayed to reflect the changes happened in the Bang Lamphu area. For example the photo of Fort Phra Sumeru took during the WWII period and the photo of the Fort took after decades later. Next, a large exhibition hall on the 1st floor is the exhibition hall of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit. Exhibiting boards on the wall record the highlighted content of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's speeches and memorable photos of the queen in different occasions. The next section on the 1st floor represents the establishment of old city walls and fortresses during the early Rattanakosin Period. The history can be traced back to the reign of King Rama I, the King Phra Buddhayodfa ordered the new capital established by the East bank of Chao Phraya River. Afterward, 14 fortresses and city walls were constructed to protect the inner city. In an account of the military and strategic consideration as well as the convenience of both on land and waterway transportation, the Bang Lamphu area became the residential area of Thai noble families, royal servants, and ethnic craftsmen and businessmen. In the exhibition section on the 1st floor, there is a multimedia interaction screen for visitors to get known about the stories of the fortresses and the old city, for example, the origin of "Ghost Gate" near Fort Mahakan, the history of Fort Phra Sumeru, the establishment of city wall and so on. Interesting design in this exhibition section is that visitors can interact with the reproduced model of the city wall and city gate, this playfulness design helps maintain Bang Lamphu Museum's value as a tourist attraction as well. Most of the exhibition contents are set on the 2nd floor which includes craftsmanship, heritage, and ways of

life of local people in Bang Lamphu community. On the 2nd floor, a surprising design of the museum is all the exhibition areas are perfectly combined with Thai style architecture. For example, the exhibiting boards introducing main industries of Bang Lamphu community are mosaicked in Thai-style wooden windows. Walk through the first section is a room playing the video introducing the history and organization of the Bang Lamphu community. Combining the videos with the showing of pictures, Bang Lamphu Museum also displays items of representative Bang Lamphu industries such as goldsmith, flag making, fabric making, and water-based trading to show local people's ways of life. In the next exhibition section, the model of the Bang Lamphu area's landscape uses the technology of combining a realistic model with digital light and shadow effect. Except for the exhibition sections mentioned above, there is a bridge connecting the front building and the wooden house area in Bang Lamphu Museum. Remarkably, the Thai style wooden house also opened as the exhibition area. The theme of Bang Lamphu Museum wooden house's sections named "Lively Bang Lamphu". Pulling down a bookshelf looked gadget in the corner, visitors can open the door of a hidden room which is decorated in a typical Thai house terrace. A screen in front of the terrace plays the short video shows the life sense of local people in the past: the shadow of a man on a small boat row through the rivers and canals in Bang Lamphu area.

The next theme called "Clues of the Shore". In this section, visitors can learn about the changes in different fields of the Bang Lamphu Community since the reign of King Rama V. This time period is the golden age of modernization in Thailand, the inflow of

western lifestyles and ideologies influence the ways of life in Bang Lamphu community such as the establishment of the first cinema and music recording studio in Thailand, first train in Bangkok, the forming of Thai coffee culture and so on. In addition, another important concept that Bang Lamphu Museum tries to represent to its' visitors is that Bang Lamphu as a multi-cultural communities includes several smaller neighborhoods according to different origins, ethnics occupations or religions such as Laotian, Vietnamese, Khmer, Chinese, Muslim people and so on. These diverse cultures and intangible cultural heritage in some way share the same cultural identity as Bang Lamphu citizen as well.



Figure 18: The wooden house of Bang Lamphu Museum

(Source: <https://www.tour-bangkok-legacies.com/pipit-Bang-Lamphu-museum.html>)



Figure 19: The exhibition of flag making skill in Bang Lamphu Museum

(Source: [https://www.tour-bangkok-legacies.com/pipit-Bang Lamphu-museum.html](https://www.tour-bangkok-legacies.com/pipit-Bang-Lamphu-museum.html))

- Displaying approaches of Bang Lamphu Museum:

The first approach that Bang Lamphu Museum applies is a comparative approach. By observing the differences and the common points of a pair of comparative objects, viewers can receive deeper information behind the visible objects such as the change of social environment, the effect of technology development, the shift of ideology and so on. In the 1st floor's exhibition section, the comparing of photos taken in the past and the photos of today's Bang Lamphu shows the strong visual impacts to visitors, the change of Bang Lamphu community presented to its viewers directly and clearly.

Similar to another folklore museum mentioned above, Bang Lamphu museum also makes use of contemporary technology especially the interaction screens, projectors and videos to visualize intangible communal cultural heritage. Videos are able to bring

direct visual impression to viewers, watching the video is one of the most effective ways to help visitors receive information. However, in a museum, contemporary technology is not only the source of information but also the media of sense reproduction. In Bang Lamphu Museum, visitors can find digital products in almost every exhibiting section. For example, the 1st floor, interaction screens lead visitors to learn about the history and stories of old city walls and forts; the models of ruined ancient city walls are located in the middle of the corridors and digital screens playing the light effects from the top of models, this transform of sense makes visitor a feeling of walk through the real city wall; on the 2nd floor's exhibiting sections, the minimized model of Bang Lamphu landscape added digital light and shadow effects; and the Bang Lamphu old lifestyle video reproduces the historical sense in Bang Lamphu community. In Bang Lamphu Museum, the combination of interaction technology and models is the key to reproduce communal cultural heritages as well as the entertaining effect for visitors. For example, in the old city wall section, the model of ruined ancient city wall with the video projection effect makes visitors a feel like "time traveling" from today back to Bang Lamphu during the early Rattanakosin Era. In the wooden house exhibition sections, an interesting bookshelf gadget is designed for the visitors. When a visitor pulls down the "book" on the shelf, a hidden door is opened correspondingly and a new sense of Bang Lamphu local life pops up into visitor's eyes. Except for these designs, the interaction photo shoot spots also create an atmosphere of participation for visitors.

Another significant approach which Bang Lamphu Museum uses to create cultural context is the making use of the site of the museum. In Bang Lamphu Museum's case, the architecture as the former site of the first printing school in Bangkok is a historical heritage of Bang Lamphu community. Historical architecture as exhibition hall creates an exotic Thainess atmosphere for visitors especially those who outside Thai cultural context. The hidden bridge connect to the wooden house, the typical Thai wooden windows and corridors, as well as old stairs, helps the museum displays the local life of the Bang Lamphu community in an immersive way.

Finally, the use of an iconic symbol makes the museum has an emotional connection to its local community. In Bang Lamphu Museum, visitors can find the symbol of Bang Lamphu in two places: the first one is the logo of the museum, a symbolic image of Lamphu flower; another one can be found at the last exhibition section of the museum, an ancient Lamphu tree. The symbolizing of Lamphu tree is actually the embodiment of an invisible concept: the cultural identity of the Bang Lamphu community.

Exhibition Section	Displaying Content	Usage of Approaches
Exhibition Section 1 (1 st Floor)	Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's life and highlighted speeches	Displaying boards; Interaction Media; Videos of Her Majesty Queen's speech

Exhibition Section 2 (1 st Floor)	History of old city walls and fortresses of Bangkok	Displaying boards; Reproduction of old city walls; Interaction Media introduce the origin of city walls and fortresses
Exhibition Section 3 (2 nd Floor)	Origin and history of Bang Lamphu Community	Displaying boards; Video of Bang Lamphu's origin; Interaction Media
Exhibition Section 4 (Wooden House)	Local people's ways of life in Bang Lamphu Community	Displaying boards; Displaying of items such as goldsmith products and straw made craftsmanship Video of local's daily life sense

Table 4: Displaying Contents and Approaches in Each Exhibiting Section of Bang Lamphu

Museum

(Source: Base on the field research)

4.2.2 Outcome Image and Roles Played by Bang Lamphu Museum in the Preserving of Communal Cultural Heritage

Exhibitions in Bang Lamphu Museum contain more than one specific theme of contents. The museum tends to include various displaying contents such as the exhibition of Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's life, the history of Bangkok old city, fortresses and the intangible cultural heritages of Bang Lamphu community. In addition, the exhibiting theme in Her Majesty Queen Sirikit's memorial hall does not have much relevant to other sections. Therefore, in this part, only displaying content about folk life of Bang Lamphu Community and old city walls which refers to the exhibition sections of a part of the first floor, the second floor and a wooden house section will be mentioned.

Under the supervision of the Treasury Department of Thailand, the outcome image of Bang Lamphu Museum meets the mainstream national promotion strategy: a historical community inherited the lifestyles of people lived by the Chao Phraya riverside, influenced by Thai royalty of the Rattanakosin Period and a harmony community inclusive for diverse cultural identity. These core elements can be found in all the exhibition sections. For example, in the section of old city walls introduced city wall and fortresses' role as the protection of the royal palaces and resident zones for the royal family, as well as the inner part of the capital. Another example is the exhibition content in a wooden house. Inside the Bang Lamphu Community, local people formed into some smaller neighborhoods according to their jobs, skills, and religions. At the same time, all of these people shared their identity and history of Bang Lamphu community as a larger unit. The most significant concept reflected from Bang Lamphu Museum's outcome content is the expression of cultural diversity in a common context. The museum didn't avoid the "differences" in the community but rather make use of them, stress the agreement after negotiation, the commentary within the differences and fulfilled the comprehensive image of Bang Lamphu Community.

Bang Lamphu Museum plays multiple roles in the preservation of communal cultural heritage in the community. As the historical site of first printing school in Thailand, the school's architecture itself is a communal heritage. The exhibition hall contains the communal cultural heritages of Bang Lamphu Community in both tangible and intangible forms. As a part of Bang Lamphu's local tourism system, the displaying of

traditional skills re-motivated the inheriting of the craftsmanship as an intangible communal heritage and keeps them still exist and gradually given importance in a contemporary context.

4.3 Displaying Approaches, Outcome Content and Roles Played by Bangkokian Museum in the Preservation of Communal Cultural Heritage

4.3.1 Displaying Approaches of Bangkokian Museum

- **Displaying Content of Bangkokian Museum:**

Without the fancy gate or huge indicator, the Bangkokian Museum is hidden in a quiet corner of Bang Rak neighborhood. The predecessor of Bangkokian Museum was the private house of a Thai middle-class family. The layout of museum kept the original design of the family house and divided exhibition content into three sections: one is the old house and furniture exhibition of post-WII Bang Rak middle-class family, another one is the family collections and the last section is the exhibition introducing the forming of Bang Rak Community.

Entering the front door of the Bangkokian Museum, the enthusiastic staffs briefly introduce the whole exhibition areas for visitors. The first impressive area of Bangkokian museum is its front yard. Tropical plants, stone corridor, and a beautiful water pool make visitors a feeling of “visiting a Thai family” but a museum tour. Some exhibition items are set in the garden such as the old bench and swing. The first

exhibition hall is designated on the ground of the main building of Surawadee family. The original design and decoration are kept and some furniture and items have significant meanings to the family are selected as displaying items. 1st floor was the living area of the family. On the left hand of the 1st floor are a living room and piano room. An old piano and some beautiful wine glasses as exhibiting items are kept in the rooms and they in a way reflected the Surawadee family's ways of life influenced by Western cultural elements. The next room functioned as both dining room and TV room. The interior design of the room combined the European and Chinese style. Another room contained a big bookshelf and functioned as the library and guest room of the family. 2nd floor was the bedrooms and private area of Surawadee family. Compared to the exhibition area of the 1st floor, the displaying content on the 2nd floor is full of the previous owner's memories and emotions to her family members. For example, the "Pha Mung Tha Med Prik Thai" which is a Southeast Asian style fabric used as a mosquito net and Bencharong bowls in ancestor's room. In the introduction of this item, the owner not only introduced its usage and function but also told the story of her own childhood experience and her emotional linkage to the item.

The next exhibition section is located on the right side of the garden. 1st floor contains themed family collections. In the theme room of King Rama IX displaying the items show respect to the Thai king such as commemorative coins, flags, and books. Another area displays the daily necessities of Thai common families during the post-WWII time period such as cooking pots and tools, bamboo basket, home decorations and so on. 2nd

floor is the exhibition section of Bang Rak Community. The whole area divided into several parts according to the specific themes and each of them surrounded by the content boards and showcases. First part is the brief introduction to the Bang Rak Community, including the origin of the name “Bang Rak”, the history of the forming of Bang Rak administrative district as well as landmarks of Bang Rak District. Second part introduced the different ethnic groups in Bang Rak Community and how they influenced the culture of the local community. First, Western culture’s impact has become one the label of the Bang Rak Community because, since the King Rama IV’s reign, the riverside area in Bang Rak was designated as the diplomatic zone and residential area for Western people. Secondly, a number of Chinese businessmen opened banks and companies in this area and formed into Chinese ethnic neighborhoods. Thirdly, Indian people and Muslim people settled down in Bang Rak Community and established Hindu temple and Mosques as their religious common areas. Excepted from ethnic groups mentioned above, Laotian, Vietnamese and other groups are inclusive for Bang Rak Community as well.

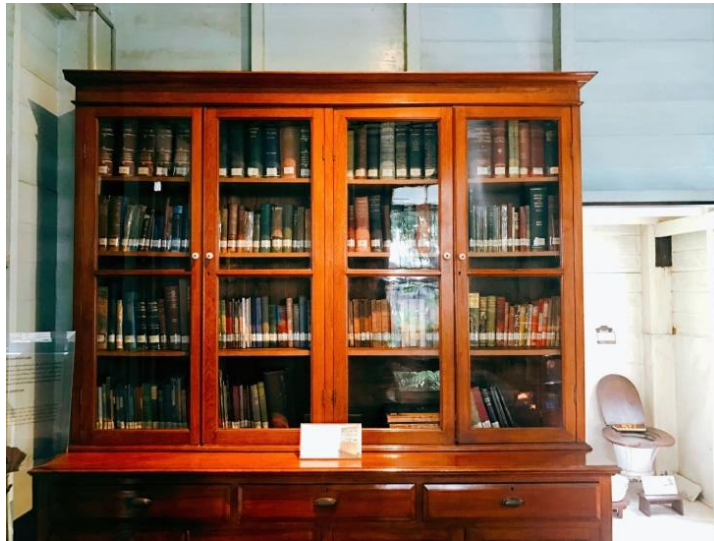


Figure 20: Exhibiting section in the previous Surawadee family house
(Source: Photo took by the author)



Figure 21: Exhibition section of Bang Rak Community on 2nd floor
(Source: Photo took by the author)

- Displaying Approaches of Bankokian Museum:

Bankokian Museum's exhibiting approaches are "simpler" than Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center and Bang Lamphu Museum mentioned previously: without any fancy

contemporary technical instruments, the Bangkokian Museum presents the contents in an extremely simple way. However, it still can remind visitor's emotional resonance because all the displayed items here are based on the real background and memories. However, the museum finds another way to display the communal cultural heritage of Bang Rak community: reproduce the old ways of life by displaying representative items such as antique furniture, musical instruments and daily necessities, and give importance to individuals inside the cultural context.

In the Bangkokian museum, visitors are able to gain knowledge about the traditional practices and lifestyles of local people in the community by viewing their daily-used items and stories behind them. Distinguished from relics-based museums, exhibiting items of Bangkokian Museum may not have such high economic value but each of them embodied the lifestyles of local people in Bang Rak Community. For example, the Western and Chinese style dining decoration represents that Bang Rak community received cultural impacts from both Western and China. The themed exhibition section about King Rama IX also represents the Thai king's status as a spiritual idol of Bang Rak people during the post-WWII time period.

Another advantage of Bangkokian museum is that the site of the museum was actually functional as a Thai family's house and it perfect integrated into the original neighborhood. From the starting point of giving respect to the former owner, the Bangkokian Museum kept the original design of the family house and introduces the stories of this specific family to visitors. The giving importance to the individual's life,

which refers to the Surawadee family in this case, creates a sense of actuality to visitors and makes visitors feel like these “real stories” just happened in this specific place.

Exhibition Section	Displaying Content	Usage of Approaches
Exhibition Section 1 (1 st Floor of the Main Building)	Exhibition of Surawadee family's house after WWII	Displaying of items of Surawadee family's furniture, decorations and collections
Exhibition Section 2 (2 nd Floor of the Main Building)	Exhibition of Surawadee family's house after WWII	Displaying of items of Surawadee family's furniture, decorations and collections
Exhibition Section 3 (1 st Floor of the Side Building)	Exhibition of Surawadee family's item collection	Displaying of items of Surawadee family's collection such as the King Rama IX themed coins and books
Exhibition Section 4 (2 nd Floor of the Side Building)	Exhibition of the origin and history of Bang Rak District	Displaying boards; Displaying of items

Table 5: Displaying Contents and Approaches in Each Exhibiting Section of Bangkokian Museum

(Source: Base on the field research)

4.3.2 Outcome Image and Roles Played by Bangkokian Museum in the Preserving of Communal Cultural Heritage

On TAT's official website, the Bangkokian Museum is described as a museum reproduces the middle-class Bang Rak family's lifestyle during the post-WWII period.

(TAT 2019) After the year 2004, the Bang Rak District re-organized the museum, added

the exhibiting section of Bang Rak Community to display the image and historical significance of Bang Rak District. Now, these two parts exhibitions are the main displaying content of the Bangkokian Museum.

From the exhibition of Surawadee's family house, visitors can get known about a well-educated middle class Thai family's way of life several decades ago. It is the miniature of Bang Rak Community's local life but still, it unable to reflect the culture context of Bang Rak historical area comprehensively. In this permit, the exhibiting section on the 2nd floor of side building bearing the responsibility of fill the gap of Surawadee family house exhibition and fulfill the museum's status as the museum of Bang Rak Community or Bang Rak District. This part of exhibition includes the origin, history, significant architectures and person as well as the diverse population structure of the local area. According to the displaying content, Bang Rak community is identified as a diverse cultural residential, strongly influenced by Western culture during the modernization time period.

The most obvious role of Bangkokian Museum in the preservation of communal cultural heritages is to be the storage of heritage. Although as analyzed in previous paragraphs, items displayed in the museums are neither the relics of long history nor the fine craftsmanship attached high economic value, the museum aims to present the lifestyle formed of a Bang Rak family's actual life details and authentic characteristic as the communal cultural heritage of local community.

In addition, Bangkokian Museums acts as a tourism production in local cultural tourism

system, contribute to the keep and preserve of the surrounding neighborhood. Before Ms. Surawadee organized the family house into a folklore museum, the land of nearby neighborhoods was designated for other usages. For the sake of the opening of Bangkokian Museum, the local government of Bang Rak District tried to preserve and reproduce the original atmosphere of Bang Rak Community for visitors. The surrounding neighborhoods of the museum then could survived.

Exhibiting contents, displaying approach and the final outcome image are the three most significant processes of forming a folklore museum but not the end of it. To clarify the relationship among these three processes: exhibiting content is the directly presentation of communal cultural heritages in front of visitors, including exhibition items, pictures, models, simulation senses, videos and so on. Displaying approach plays the role as a channel transfer the academic data into the accessible contents to visitors, after that, it also helps visitors have a better understanding of the heritages and finally transfer it into the knowledge and cognition. For example the reproduction sense of Bang Lamphu shoes maker's studio several decades ago. Scholars and people arranging the exhibition collected sources from academic works, after the art processing, these data presented in Bang Lamphu Museum in the form of models and paintings. For the sake of all the efforts and preparation works mentioned above, visitors have chance to get known of communal cultural heritages in Bang Lamphu Community in a less education-dependent way. Finally, the outcome image is not only a conclusion of

displaying content but rather an identity of the culture context which represented by the museum. For example, the outcome image of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Museum shows “Yaowarat Community as a Chinese dominated integration community in Thailand”; Bang Lamphu Community represented by Bang Lamphu Museum is “a diverse ethnic culture community inherited the lifestyle along Chao Phraya river bank” and Bangkokian Museum represents the Bang Rak Community as “a newly developed (from the reign of King Rama IV) ethnical cultural area and administrative district which influenced by Western culture’s impact”. During the forming of a folklore museum, the ideal status is the maximum of the transaction from basic data to accessible content, however, in reality, there are always some unexpected difficulties such as the lack of financial support or the overlapping content with other agencies. Thus, the agencies or departments run the folklore museums need to face this situation and find their ways out for the drawbacks in museums’ operation and vacancies of the content.



However, Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum, lack part of their values to the local communities. In the hypothesis of this research, one of the significant roles played by folklore museums is the “embodiment of cultural identity of local community and the sense of belonging for local people”. Yet, through the field researches, the links between the three museums and the local communities are weaker than it was expected. In these three cases, folklore museums effectively show their focuses to local communities by displaying the

communal cultural heritages such as Bangkokian Museum's family house section; the reflection of individual's lifestyles on the exhibition boards of local community's families in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center and to symbolize the cultural identity of the community such as the theme of "the only Lamphu Tree" in Bang Lamphu Museum. But on the contrary, in this two-way relationship, these museums' efforts are not paid back by the communities. There are two main reasons: Firstly, the human mobility within the community. One of the most significant elements of a community is local people. The term of "local people" means the group of people who share the common traditions, beliefs and cultural consensus of the community, but those newly move in people who live without emotional connection to the community. However, in the era of globalizing, fewer and fewer genuine "local people" still live in the community. Although the younger generations of the genuine "local people" still remain living in the community, they do not inherit the communal cultural heritage as people have expected. Secondly, the disappearing of communal cultural heritages can always happen in contemporary context. Another dilemma of building connections between local community and folklore museum is that, a number of communal cultural heritages are losing their social values at the present time, for example, tailor postal offices in Yaowarat Community. In the past, the existence of this kind of social institution was necessary because it functioned as both postal office and bank. However, in contemporary world, traditional tailor postal offices are already replaced by modern postal offices, financial institutions and electronic payment method, the only reason for

their existence is the role as “dead cultural heritage” of Yaowarat Community.

A successful case of the link between local communities and folklore museums is the Museum of Santa Fe, located in New Mexico. The museum represents the folklore culture of surrounding Native American communities. At the same time, the museum willingly takes more responsibilities in local people’s daily life: as the space holding Native American craftsmanship markets. This measure provided occupation for communities’ people, made the museum become an extension of local people’s communal life and in a way maintained the cultural contexts and authoritative of the museum. (Evans-Pritchard 1987) This case can be seen as an inspiration for folklore museums in Thailand to explore more possibilities of building connections to local communities.

Folklore museums in Thailand can link with local communities in different levels. The first level sees the exhibitions of the communities’ past or “dead heritage”. The second level, the museums can help safeguarding or preserve any intangible cultural heritage in the communities. In case of the three folklore museums, they are successful only in the first level, due to all the reasons which have been mentioned.

Chapter V: Conclusion

Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum as three study cases of folklore museums in Bangkok, reflect the current status of folklore museums in the displaying and preserving diverse communal cultural heritages in Thai society.

Firstly, Folklore museums in Thailand exist in a variety of forms, scales, based on different cultural contexts, and perfectly fitted in to people's everyday life. Large-scaled and well-organized case like the Lanna Folklife Museum in Chiang Mai, is highly commercialized and well-promoted spot, as well as Baan Bang Khean Museum in Bangkok. Each folklore museum has different outcome features which reflects the historical contexts, cultural characters as well as social and political forces behind it.

For example, the displaying content of Muslim culture is highlighted in Taksinkadee Museum located in Kho Yo Island, Songkhla Province. However, in Lanna Folklife Museum in Chiang Mai, this part of the content is not included at all. (Porananond 2015)

The different outcome contents can also reflect the regional cultural differences in Thailand. Another example is the Bangkokian Museum. Before Ms. Varaporn Surawadee, the former owner of the museum donated her family house to Bang Rak District, Bangkokian Museum only exhibited the items owned by the Surawadee family and aimed to "reproduce the lifestyle of Bangkok people during WWII period". After

Bang Rak District took charge of the museum, Bangkokian Museum started its function as an exhibition hall of Bang Rak historical community as well.

Secondly, the definition of folklore museums in Thailand is controversy. According to the explanation to the terms and the definition of folklore museums in previous chapters, it can be argued that there is no such a specialized category of folklore museum in Thailand. In order to define, the main reference dimension is the exhibition theme which reflect folklore culture of a specific group of people or community. Apart from the only one national museum in the capital city, most of provincial museums in Thailand play roles as both relic museum and folklore museum. Small-scaled local folklore museum as the main research subjects are more fit in the definition of folklore museums in Thailand. Apart from the three study cases, local administrative museums are also fulfilled the conditions. In Thailand, there are over 50 administrative museums presenting the history and lifestyle of specific communities such as Udon Thani Museum, Bang Khen Museum, Bang Na Museum and so on. Although local administrations intend to promote folklore museums as local tourist attractions, they still lack competitiveness, compared to national level museums or specific category of museums.

Thirdly, folklore museums in Thailand see the lack of local communities' respond. As a permit, folklore museums, especially small-scaled local museums, are highly dependent on specific communities. The forming and operating of a local folklore museum is difficult because of short of financial support, the lack of exhibition objects

and the overlapping contents with regional museums. Apart from these unfavorable factors, the strong connection between folklore museums and local communities should be the biggest advantage of communities-based folklore museums. In an ideal status, folklore museums take advantage of the contextualizing feature, highlighted its significance to local communities. On the other hand, the highly community dependent features encouraged local people to get involved in the process of re-discovering and re-contextualizing of their own culture identity. As a chain reaction, this process in a way provide extra work opportunities for local peoples and somehow improve the sustainability of communal cultural heritage in a community. However, in reality, this kind of linkage seems to be a “one-way relationship” from folklore museums to local communities. Most of the folklore museums in Thailand still exist as the communities’ memorable hall and a parameter of local tourism rather than an irreplaceable part of local communal cultures.



Indeed, it is clear that, the forming of folklore museums in Thai society plays positive roles in the preserving of communal cultural heritage, there are still several drawbacks and problems needed to be noticed and improved.

- 1) Displaying contents in most of folklore museums has become the “pipeline products”, lack of innovation no matter from the angle of the displaying content or approach. After a series of observation and investigation of folklore museums in Thailand, I found that although each museum shows differences

on the presenting approaches and outcome contents, the arrangement of exhibition sections and themes still can be seen as the fix formation. In Thailand, most of the folklore museums exhibit history, the development of local administrative districts and local peoples' ways of life. Designers of folklore museums aimed to display a macroscopic picture of the whole historical area or community, including as much information as possible within a limited space. (Herreman 2004) This principle caused these folklore museums to lose their vitality and attractions as tourism productions. Fortunately, there are still several exceptions providing some new ideas and pointing a way out for all the folklore museums facing the dilemma. One case is Baan Bang Khen Museum located at the North Bangkok. This museum perfectly integrated its exhibition contents with the "90s generation atmosphere" and welcome visitors with a strong interest in "vintage style". Another case is the Andaman Cultural Center in Krabi. This museum runs by local administrative agency, the content mainly focuses on displaying fine artworks of the the coastal area of Andaman Sea. This arrangement helped highlight the key theme of the whole museum and added the authentic value to exhibitions as well. Two abovementioned cases provide some inspirations for improving the presenting contents of other folklore museums. Baan Bang Khen Museum's idea is to combine the exhibiting contents with authentic hot spot while Andaman Art Museum tried to adjust displaying items' categories.

However, no matter how to change the instruments or promotion strategies, the core principle to “meet the public’s demands of gaining knowledge, entertaining and authentic while keeping the cultural spirit of communal cultural heritage” never changed.

- 2) The limit and missing point of exhibiting contents. For example, the Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center excluded some historical facts as well. Since the predecessor of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center was a private museum supported by the Crown Property Bureau, the displaying contents of the museum then reflect the mainstream images of Chinese immigrant community in Thai society. For example, there is none of any exhibition section mentioning Thailand’s anti-Chinese policies during WWII and cold war period. Besides, Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center is a small scaled museum located in a Buddhism temple. As a result, the limitation of the space, more or less, influenced the arranging contents of the whole exhibition sections. Similar problems can be observed from Bang Lamphu Museum and Bangkokian Museum as well. Bang Lamphu Museum plays multiple roles at the same time. The multiple exhibiting themes and limited space caused a problem: the displaying contents of the Bang Lamphu Museum is not concentrated enough and sometimes may confuse the visitors. The 1st floor of Bang Lamphu Museum displays the contents about Heri Majesty Queen Sirikit’s life and the history of ancient city forts, while 2nd floor and the

wooden house play their roles as exhibition halls displaying Bang Lamphu community's folklore culture. From the standing point of a visitor, this arrangement causes the "over output" of information since there is too much contents of different themes and levels for visitors to receive. For Bangkokian Museum, its predecessor was a private museum owned by the Surawadee family. Inside Bangkokian Museum, two of three parts of items are the memorial furniture and items belonged to the Suawadee family, the section of Bang Rak Community exhibition only takes a very limited space on the 2nd floor. This content arrangement caused the imbalance of the exhibition contents: the 2nd-floor exhibition area can only present a general history of Bang Rak Community but without enough details.

- 3) The disorder usage of displaying approaches. In Bang Lamphu Museum, the over use of technical instruments such as light and audio effects may cause negative influences to visitors' museum tour. Indeed, the use of moderate contemporary technology is able to positively influence the visitor's experience and sometimes can make up the disadvantage of the lack of exhibiting items in the museum. On the contrary, the overuse of contemporary instruments confuses visitors as well. In Bang Lamphu Museum's case, the messy light effects on Bang Lamphu area's model distract viewers' attention during their visits. In Bangkokian Museum's exhibitions, another drawback is the single formed displaying approach of exhibiting. Opposite from Bang

Lamphu Museum's case, Bangkokian Museum includes very limited use of contemporary technical instruments. Especially in the case of Bang Rak Community section, the display of text and pictures on exhibition boards does reduce the viewers' sense of participation. During my observations in Bangkokian Museum, I interviewed two visitors about the impression of the exhibitions in the museum, one of them thought "the exhibition of Bang Rak Community seems separated from other sections" while another person said he "didn't visit the 2nd floor's section in detail because it was not as interesting as other parts"

- 4) The lack of human's assistance inside the museum. During my field researches, I faced this problem in Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center. During my observations in the museum, only two staffs worked in the reception desk but there was no staff or exhibition guide in the areas. In a museum, the introduction of text and video is not the only source of information. Apart from those assistant approaches, the help from visiting guide is also important to visitors.
- 5) The short of promoting strategy and cooperation with other agencies. As mentioned in previous chapters, a museum as the representation of a specific community and an educational agency has significance to the whole society. In case of Yaowarat Chinatown Heritage Center, only very few visitors know about this museum and fewer of them willing to visit it due to the lack of

promoting channels. (Khlaikaew 2014) In my personal viewpoint, this situation will turn better had the museum's promoting strategy would not only focuses on its role as the storage of Yaowarat communal cultural heritages. The museum should also expand their roles to link with the community. In Bang Lamphu Museum's case, from the perspective of contemporary tourism, the museum's location holds high advantages. It locates in one of the most popular historical tourism areas in Bangkok, right next to Phra Sumeru Fort and the Chao Phraya River. Every day, thousands of tourists from all over the world come to visit this historical area, but very few of them ever noticed Bang Lamphu Museum. It is not because the contents of the museum are not attractive enough, but the lack of cooperation with other tourism spots. Bang Lamphu Museum does not have to compete with other tourist attractions, but even rather fully takes the advantage of location and cultural contexts, cooperate with other famous spots such as Khaosan Road, the site of Phra Sumeru Fort and so on, plays the role as "part of local tour packages" rather than an isolated attraction.

The forming of folklore museum is the final point of this research's outcome analysis, but not the end of folklore museum's mission in contemporary Thai society. Apart from the roles played by folklore museums already discussed in previous discussions, there are some more responsibilities expected to be fulfilled by folklore museums in the near

future.

The first one is the mission to promote communal cultural heritage to general public. According to the significance of museums mentioned in Chapter 2, a museum should play its role as a public institution, both for education and enjoyment. On the ground of this recognition, folklore museums can potentially take the responsibility for visitors to provide them knowledge about the communal culture of particular local community. The visit to folklore museum should not be a one-way action of the visitors. Museums are expected to cooperate with other institutions, organizations or agencies, in order to get access to a larger range of potential visitors. For example, folklore museums can also serve as the field trip destination of primary or middle schools; the site of holding folklore activities or the venues for academic communications and so on.

The second “mission possible” for folklore museums is to revive communal cultural heritage and make them “alive” again in the community. To visitors, the displaying contents in the museum can be seen as a kind of introduction or presentation. However, from the viewpoint of local community, the displaying of local folklore museum is also the identification to the heritage. In case of Bang Lamphu Museum, the displaying of different kinds of craftsmanship is not just the “displaying”, but rather to certify the exhibiting contents’ role as a heritage. Once the certification of communal heritage is completed, museums should continue taking positive actions to revive the heritage outside the museum, at least to make them appear in public’s horizon again. In contemporary context, these communal cultural heritages may completely lose their

social functions, but they still can be reproduced as a “virtuality approach” to create actuality to visitors. Traditional activities’ revival in Yaowarat Community and Bang Lamphu Canal Heritage Corridor Project can be considered two role models and also reminders for folklore museums. Reviving communal cultural heritage is not only the government’s task, folklore museum as a social institution also has ability and responsibility to “take care of” their communal culture and find appropriate ways to preserve them.

The globalization and urbanization as two unstoppable tendencies of human civilization left their impact on all the nations and states including Thailand. Since the 20th century fast-speed regional constructions in Thailand brought rapid urban and economic development, it also causes problems of decreasing cultural vitality and diversity in the nation. The appearance of local folklore museums met the social requirements of preserving diverse cultures in Thai society. In this permit, a number of folklore museums have been established based on the regions, provinces, and communities. The forming of these museums benefits Thai society on different levels, especially it played a significant role in the maintaining of diverse cultures of the nation.

It is expected that, 1) More regions, areas and cultural communities’ value will be realized and re-discovered, which will lead the increasing amounts and categories of local folklore museums in Thailand. 2) With the deeper understanding and discussing on the principles of the preservation of communal cultural heritage, as well as the

innovations of exhibiting approaches, folklore museums in Thailand will improve their quality of displaying contents into a new level and can well better integrate with other cultural-based industries such as education, tourism, heritage management and so on.



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