

## GUIDELINES FOR DEVELOPMENT AND INHERITANCE OF COMMUNITY BRASS BAND TO PROMOTE THE CULTURE AND ECONOMY OF COMMUNITIES IN THAILAND AND PHILIPPINES

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### ABSTRACT

Community brass bands are music ensembles created for social services for the general public and regal services. Community brass bands have been passed on from generation to generation with the main purpose of providing musical services for religious rituals, culture, and tradition, auspicious and inauspicious proceedings. This research aims to 1) study the current status of community brass bands in Thailand and Philippines 2) study the factors and tradition of community brass bands of rural communities in Thailand and Philippines and 3) examine guidelines on the development and inheritance of community brass bands to promote culture and economics of communities in Thailand and Philippines. The development and inheritance of community brass bands in cultural and economic promotion for rural communities in Thailand and Philippine is to create a local musical vocation within the community, guide youths in the aesthetics of music, promote and support quality musical instruments, promote community awareness and support of music, perform popular musical themes while incorporating enthusiasm and awareness of the value and benefit of music and for government offices and institutions be sincere in their efforts to promote and support local community music. The continued development and support from local and central governments will create a systematic development and inheritance of community brass bands so that local youths and musician have a strong foundation of musical basics and talents which will facilitate the identity of the community, commercial progress and create pride within the community and become a valuable, sustainable community culture and livelihood.

**Keywords :** Brass Band, Ensemble, Community, Community, Inheritance, Development

## INTRODUCTION

Brass bands originated from western music and have become widely popular musical ensemble in society in Thailand and Philippines. Brass bands in Thailand provide social services and accompany Thai orchestras in religious rituals, cultural events such as festivals, weddings, engagements and celebrated activities. Brass bands are an important part in the livelihood of Thai communities that have origins from western culture and have become a part of Thai life and are popular and included in most musical performances (Charnsuk, 1996: 10). The very first brass bands to influence Thai culture came during the reign of King Rama IV where English teachers were hired to train western music and songs to the Royal Thai military. The popularity of brass bands and adaptation in military parades increased the number of foreign musical teachers from western countries into Thailand (Pidokrajt, 1999: 23). During the reign of King Rama VI and King Rama VII there were great advancements in the development of brass bands and were transmitted to local communities nearby. Brass bands were very popular and there were professional training and practices by both the military and general public. The general public applied brass bands in many social events where the musical themes and songs were the same as those performed by classical Thai orchestras. Many local brass bands were created and eventually community brass bands become a part of the social livelihood of regional communities throughout Thailand (Amattayakun, 1994: 77). The origin of brass bands in Philippines started in the 20th century according to Johnson (2004 : 75-78) came from the Philippines military band, the Philippine Constabulary Band and influenced by bandmaster Wade H. Hammond who worked closely with the band at Tuskegee Institute and conducted a special massed military musical group in the Philippines.

## RESEARCH AREA and METHODOLOGY

Data analysis was applied in this research and field data collected through interviews, observations questionnaires and workshops between April 2009 and June 2011. The sampling group consisted of 40 individuals in Northern, Northeast, Central and Southern Thailand and from the capital city of Manila in Philippines. Field data was also collected from the study of 5 community brass bands in Thailand and Philippines.

## RESEARCH RESULTS

The origin of community brass bands in Thailand comes from western musical influence imported by the Thai military which was transmitted and inherited by the public sector and eventually rooted in community communities throughout Thailand in providing numerous social services which varied from community to community. Musicians of community brass bands were made up of individuals who already had full time occupations and participated in the brass band to gain additional income. The origin of community brass bands in Philippines share similarity to those in Thailand where both have origins from western music and military foundation. Youths who show aptitude and musical talent receive promotion and support from the navy in the form of enlistments and scholarship funds. This is consistent with the Cultural Diffusion theory by Linton (1936: 88) where the adaptation and borrowing of culture from other societies for an extended period of time will result in the acceptance and adaptation as their own culture where the diffusion of culture spreads from one society to another. This is also consistent with Sukasem (1999), where the study of community brass bands of local communities is the amalgamation of western and eastern cultures and eventually developed into a cultural identity of rural communities since the era of King Rama VI and continues to this day.

**Current Status:** Community brass bands in Thailand and Philippines continue to face obstacles and adversity in opportunity, musical instruments and promotional support. Community brass band performances in Thailand face shortages in musicians, community brass bands are small and musicians must be able to perform in both parades and on stage. The songs and themes performed are similar to each other but may differ from community to community and without standard procedure. In Philippines, there are a lot of local musicians and most perform in large ensembles. The types of performances or social services provided are similar to those in Thailand except that community brass bands in Philippines have a clear and defined performance procedure and musical guidelines. There is currently a shortage of senior musicians in community brass bands in both Thailand and Philippines because many of these professionals have died and retired. Community brass bands in both Thailand and Philippines have decreased in numbers and many musicians are self taught and have no direct training or teachings from qualified instructors, lack a systematic transmission and inheritance process which increases the problem of maintaining correct musical notes and efficient practices. Many of these deficiencies have led to decreased interest from youths and lack of quality instruments.

**Factors and Culture of Community Brass Bands:** The 5 community brass bands there were closely studied in the research varied in performance factors. Only the community brass band of Khana Traewong Noi and Khana Su Nisa had a full set of performers, musicians, stage or theatre, backdrop and stage equipment, musical instruments, performance accessories and regular training practices. The remaining 3 bands of Khana Ajarn Turong Saman Suk, Khana Luk Pet Lukkai and Khana Tai Tai 2 were incomplete. This is in congruence with Structural Functionalism of Brown (1965) where the factors of society must be in balance with each other. Therefore the traditions, customs and institutions should be responsible for continuous support and organize efficient social activities. The inheritance and transmission of musical talent and knowledge of community bands are done primarily through *Muk Patha* (oral tradition) to children and youths. This is consistent with Deenanlarp (2006: 54-55) in which the transmission and inheritance from ancestors in regards to musical and performance technique is passed down through the family system and through close relatives and also through the teachings and tutoring of patrons and senior musicians.

**Development Guideline:** Currently there are development guidelines in Thailand implemented towards the development of musical talents and expertise for musicians of community brass bands and to increase the numbers of musicians. The development currently includes a systematic teaching and learning curriculum utilized in creating motivation and incentives in community members and youths so that they are interested in learning. Good quality instruments are sincerely supported by government sectors which is in congruence with the guidelines in cultural strategy and development of Wasi (2538: 1-27). The 7 guidelines are 1) creating a truthful understanding which include a stage for continuous exchange of deliberation, accumulation of information, knowledge and syntheses of the accumulated data and research results leading to a higher level of knowledge, create multimedia mediums such as text books, CD's, DVD's, radio and television broadcasts, and organize seminars and workshops with individual groups and an annual cultural conference from all 4 regions in Thailand. 2) Support cultural arena for rural communities, 3) Support of the family institution, 4) Support community organizations and education system of citizens, 5) Adjust the educational system to bond with the culture of Thailand, 6) Culture and economy and 7) Funds and administration of culture.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the guideline towards the development and inheritance of community brass bands in cultural and economic promotion for rural communities in Thailand and Philippine is to create a local musical vocation within the community, guide youths in the aesthetics of music, promote and support quality musical instruments, promote community awareness and support of music, perform popular musical themes while incorporating enthusiasm and awareness of the value and benefit of music and for government offices and institutions be sincere in their efforts to promote and support local community music. The continued development and support from local and central governments will create a systematic development and inheritance of community brass bands so that local youths and musician have a strong foundation of musical basics and talents which will facilitate the identity of the community, commercial progress and create pride within the community and become a valuable, sustainable community culture and livelihood.

## SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Community leaders in various establishments such as temples, schools, universities, provincial cultural centers, private organizations, principalities, and local administrative should apply knowledge from this research and apply it in their development plans for rural communities. Community leaders should realize the importance of the traditions and customs of their local community and be an example in the development and inheritance in promoting the culture of their community while nurturing awareness, respect, and personal merit so that community members recognize and appreciate the merits and benefits of their own community which will help create unity and highly value their community's heritage.

Schools and temples should realize the importance of local community culture and tradition of everyone within the community. Schools and temples should act as a center in promoting the study of community culture, research studies and create indigenous curriculums to teach in every level of education within the community.

Universities in each region should support the study and research of cultural arts and the livelihood of every ethnic in their respective areas to fortify community strength in every aspect including economics and spiritual security of community members. The strength and security of local communities will determine and promote the unity of the nation through individual cultural identities of every ethnic within the country which creates diversity and cultural transmission and inheritance.

Private organizations related to cultural conservation should implement and apply the research knowledge into current and future conservation plans in the development and promotion of regional culture and create opportunities for youths and the general public to apply the knowledge and guidelines in their profession and create additional income which in turn will increase the economy and raise the livelihood of the community to a better, brighter future.

Provincial cultural centers should study the knowledge and guidelines of this research in creating an action plan in promoting and inheritance of regional culture and the transmission of culture and tradition within the community. Cultural centers should also monitor and provide guidance in regards to the intellectual rights of local philosopher's so that the development is systematic and that local philosopher's receive just full benefits.

Principalities and Municipalities should apply knowledge in the development and promotion of profession for rural community members. Rural vocational development is essential due to the wide diversity of

culture, natural and human resources of each community. Continued and sincere development is required in order to create a sustainable economy where the utilization of local resources must be efficiently applied. A strong economy and systematic development within the community is a necessity in preventing the migration of local talent and resources and will also maintain warmth in the community and families.

The department of cultural promotion and the community development department should carefully examine the knowledge from this research study in regards to the possibility in their surveys, data collection of community data in each region and screen prospect communities with the potential to become a cultural community and find ways to promote and support each individual community in relation to the community's strength and resources, especially in regards to the economy of the community.

The ministry of education should apply knowledge from this research and application into education guidelines and development roadmap in the development and inheritance of culture at a national level.

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