



Structure and Function of Pottery Production Process in Kampong Chhnang, Kingdom of Cambodia

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This article is part of a research paper on Wisdom and Identity of Cambodian Pottery to Contemporary Product Design. This research aims to study the role of people involved in the division of duties or works in the family in the pottery production process. This study is a qualitative research. Research tools include surveys, observations, and interviews of the people who are involved in the pottery production process. After the data was collected, it was analysed based on Talcott Parsons' structural and functionalism theory. The results showed that most of the pottery produced in the community in the present were used for decorations and for daily life. The manufacturing process and style of pottery were systematically passed down from one generation to another. Experience in making pottery had been accumulated until they are skilled. The skills had been developed and improved until the form and process of production settled down in terms of functionality and beauty, which have different characteristics depending on the role of people in the community. The systematic role of these people related to the social structure in the community. The process of producing pottery in each household was a systematic sub-process because there were clear divisions of family members' duties. In those sub-processes, duties or actions were the base of the system that was developed into the social structures in the community. There are also other main factors to motivate the community, which creates a societal and cultural diversity and process of creating social systems that usually

developed or changed to balance the society. Every factor mentioned earlier clearly indicated the existence of local wisdom in the pottery production in Kampong Chhnang community in the Kingdom of Cambodia.

Keywords: *Pottery, Cambodia, Kampong Chhnang, Structure and Function*

Introduction

Pottery has been produced for a very long time. It is assumed that the group of Neanderthals that lived in Eurasia around 70,000 - 35,000 years ago used fires and there's a possibility that they would mould vessels and burn them in the fire. Evidence from the prehistoric period found that people in those days produced pottery as a utensil used in the family. Most of the vessels had a round bottom and were commonly buried with corpses. Most containers were hand-moulded or made out of a simple mould and dried in the sun. There was a coating or an external ingredient to reduce porosity. In the prehistoric human agrarian society, food and ingredients containers were necessary. Based on the ancient drawings in China, archaeologists believe that humans made baskets covered with soil then burned in the fire to make pottery stronger. These baskets were used to keep small seeds. After the discovery of the fire, these containers were burned. This may have been caused by an accident from the basket being burned that led them to discover that the burnt utensil would be tougher, more durable, and more suitable for daily use. In the beginning, the containers were burnt on a low fire which makes it more porous and fragile before the glaze was discovered later on. Moreover, scrubbing the skin with gravel or smooth stones while the container was still moist was another popular method to make the containers stronger, make the surface smoother and waterproof, and less porous. In addition, they also used slip on Terra Sigillata. For example, some ancient Greek pots used leaves or boiled sap to paint over the pots that were still hot from burning, which was actually not a permanent coating, but made it more waterproof. This technique is still used nowadays among African potters (Leksawat, 2005, p. 33-34).

Pottery products has been developed by humans for a long time. These handicrafts are important to human daily life, that is, utensils such as pots, jars, dishes, bowls, as well as ornaments. Other pottery products are also important in terms of historical evidence that can be used to study human development, the prosperity, and human life in the past. Humans invented potteries as food containers, cooking utensils and ornaments they used in daily life since they were durable and beautiful. These ancient potteries or wares are testimony of the development of pottery technology. It is an industry that is widely run in the local area. They can be produced in a large quantity with good quality which makes these potteries qualified to be exported for sale and exchange within the community, in the country and abroad (Fine Arts Department, 1989).

Khmer porcelain was widely produced in the area along the royal road in Buriram province. However, the production could be found throughout the Southern Isaan provinces such as Surin and Sisaket. Khmer porcelain that have been found in the Southern Isaan region and in the Kingdom of Cambodia are known as Khmer ceramics.

Khmer glaze ceramics and kilns in the Southern Isaan area and Cambodia are believed to be made at the beginning of 13 - 14 Buddhist century. They are also believed to be influenced by culture - technology (wisdom) of the people in Southern China (Chinese influences) when they started to travel around the 8th Buddhist century through the South China Sea coastal zone, passed the Champa cultural group, and into the Mekong region in Khmer-Kampuchet culture, then spread into the high Khmer (South Isaan) area around the early 15th Buddhist century (Pongsachalakorn, 2011). In the beginning of Kingdom of Cambodia, it was believed that the Funan Empire was the first Cambodian kingdom. It was a wealthy empire before other countries in the region were born. At a later time, when the Funan Kingdom was about to collapse, a new kingdom that is considered the real Khmer empire, Chenla Kingdom, was born.

From Chenla, Cambodia gradually transformed into the Kingdom of Cambodia with the great kings, such as Jayavarman 2nd and Jayavarman 7th, who built Angkor Wat and Angkor Thom. People who have seen these world's great and wondrous buildings wonder how people who lived thousands of years ago could have a prosperous civilization and technology that could build these things. These evidence shows the development and the great prosperity of Cambodian people from the past (Anantapak, 2015, p. 13).

Kampong Chhnang is a city in the middle of Cambodia and is one of the nine cities adjacent to the Tonle Sap. Kampong Chhnang is considered as the main city of the province with the total area of 5,527 square kilometers. There are approximately 472,616 people in the province. The northern border is close to Kampong Thom Province, South to Kampong Speu province, West to Photsat Province, East to Kampong Cham Province. Kampong Chhnang is famous for producing clay pots which is the origin of the name "Kampong Chhanang," meaning the city of pottery.

Originally, Kampong Chhanang people made pots for sale because there was a quality clay source that was more suitable for potting than anywhere else. Nowadays, there is still a community that make potteries, but the techniques and methods have evolved over time. The pottery village, seven kilometers from the city, is a small rural village with wide rice fields located behind the hill. There are palm trees scattered everywhere. Most people work in a farm and make potteries as a side job. There is traditional moulding using hand moulding and then forging the pot by going forward-backward around the stump. However, only the elderly are still using the traditional forging method. The new generation tend to use a foot-pedal wheel moulding. This community is an old community living in the form of kin. Techniques and

knowledge of potting has been passed on since ancient times. The clay was originally taken from the shore of Tonle Sap, but now the clay is taken from the hillside near the village. It is clay mixed with yellow soil. They are dried and grounded, sifted, mixed together, then kneaded together before moulding. Most of which are moulded with foot-pedal wheel moulding.

Most of the houses in the village are houses on stilts. There are areas for various activities, including the turntable and a place to dry the pots. Every house has a storage place to keep clay and firewood to be used as a burning fuel. Both clay and firewood must be purchased from sellers in the village. In moulding, most manufacturers produce the similar designs, such as pots, jars, vases of different sizes, pumpkin, pig, or elephant shaped piggy banks. The clay used for moulding is earthenware clay which turns red-orange after being burnt. There are many decorating techniques: scraping, grooving, perforation, painting with light color clay water and then carving the pattern over it, sowing white clay in a convex line, and using a roller to create patterns. Decorative moulding that are to be stuck to various potteries do not have coating on yet. The villagers usually burn these potteries by firing up an open-air stove for the large pot forging. The pots that are moulded by the foot-pedal wheel are burned at the central stove. For press moulding, it requires a plaster mould that has to be purchased and made into a mould, then it can be moulded into a compression mould. The work of each house is marked with a sign on the bottom of the pot before they are burnt at the central stove. The family has to hire someone to burn and pay for the firewood by themselves. When the burning process is completed, the pots are placed in the courtyard and brought together at the village product centre for merchants to buy and sell them further.

Today, the technologies are developed quickly, which also change the form of pottery products from the original ones. There are many factors that affect the form and design of porcelain products, depending on the nature of use. All of which are factors that make up the modern form of pottery products to meet the various needs of consumers. Cambodian pottery is interesting and has a unique identity that stands out with form, shape and production process, such as clay preparation, moulding, decoration, and the burning process. These local products are very popular in the market around the world nowadays. According the foregoing, the researchers are interested in studying the present state of Kampong Chhnang local pottery production in the Kingdom of Cambodia that are still in production, how they divide the duties of potters and how they relate to each other. In addition, how these roles affects the structure of society in the Kampong Chhanang pottery community are also studied. The researchers have compiled data from the field study and set research questions from the objectives of study, using Talcott Parsons' structural and functionalism framework and the analysis of data from the field study. The conclusions can be drawn as follows.

Research Results

The researchers have divided the study area according to the research objectives about the source of pottery in Kampong Chhnang, Kingdom of Cambodia. The sources can be divided into two important sources.

Source 1: An Nong Rue Sei village pottery site. The An Nong Rue Sei village (the name of the village, means pond with bamboo) has a long history of pottery production and is a famous pottery production site of Kampong Chhnang, which consists of approximately 200 households. According to the elders' words, local pottery was originally produced in almost every household, but now there are about half of the village's pottery makers left. In total, of the 100 households that are making pottery, 80 of them are now make only a small to medium amount of pottery, while only 20 households do this as a main career. Originally, potters used clay from the hillside near the village, Phanom Krang Demi (meanings the mountain that has clay with gold fragments mixed in), as the main material. The clay is crushed, fermented, sifted coarse and mixed with rice husk ash or leavened soil. They mould a form by using ancient forming techniques which is squeezing and rolling to form the neck and mouth of the workpiece. The body of the workpiece is a cylinder and forging into a pottery or water basins. Nowadays, even though forming pottery by this forging technique is rarely found, old potters still use this method and burn the pottery in an outdoor coop.

The younger generation have been using foot-pedal wheel techniques to form the pottery. The clay has also been improved by using the clay from Dei Pri Khmer source, which is the clay source near the village where a group of people ground sift into powder and sell them in bags to village potters, to mix with the marinade and kneaded into cubes, then formed with a foot-pedal wheel. This process starts from adjusting the cube, drilling and pulling into a cylinder, and forming it into various shapes, then decorating beautifully.

Another method is to press the clay that has been kneaded into a mould, put them together, and then conceal all the joints before moulding or making decorative patterns. Moulding is another method that can produce a large-scale of pottery. However, the forms of the work are still not a variety. There are piggy banks in elephant, rabbit, and pig shapes. The piggy bank made of clay is burned with wood stoves which takes about 1 day to burn at temperatures around 700 - 800 degrees Celsius before letting it cool down. The color of the clay is orange mixed with soot from the combustion fumes on the workpiece, which is considered to be another charm of Kampong Chhanang local products.

Source 2: Pottery Career Development Center located in the hillside near the village. The Pottery Career Development Center is sponsored by the Nippon Foundation, from Japan in establishing the vocational center. Knowledge, as well as modern tools and machines such as clay mills, potmills, and clay rolling machines, are taught at the center. Stoneware ceramics

vocational training is also provided. They study about clay sources, clay textures, glazes, as well as building large firewood stoves. There are three burning chambers at the hillside and another small firewood kiln. Recently, a potter in the village tried to use a two-plate gas-fired kiln in the center area, which was in the burning experimental period.

All of the members who worked together in this center are villagers in the village and are kinship. They can make these products and sell to the tourists and other people through different channels. Moreover, they also train new potters who are interested in pottery. Currently, there are 9 main members who work in this center.

Product designs of this Kampong Chhnang Pottery Career Development Center are both inherited from ancient Khmer ceramics styles and the modern styles such as glasses, mugs, coffee mugs, tea sets, food containers such as bowls, as well as boxes, jars, and vases. Some of them are high-heated glazes but most of them are not due to material and manufacturing process limitations. As a result, most products are burnt with low-heat and without coating. Early pottery productions were burnt with firewood kiln; however, nowadays they are burnt with both gas kilns and firewood kiln, depending on the fuel price.

In addition, the many members also work on moulding and decorating pots when they go home after working at the center. These new potters are inspired and honored to create this once lost Khmer pottery art and bring income and pride to the Kampong Chhanang pottery village in Cambodia.

The distribution of Kampong Chhnang pottery products

Kampong Chhnang in Cambodia is one of Cambodia's well-known pottery production sites. There are both pottery products that can be used in daily life and pottery that can be used in rituals. There are two main types distribution.

1. Kampong Chanang Pottery Development and Distribution Center

This Kampong Chhanang Pottery Development and Distribution Center acts as a collecting place to collect village pottery products, categorise, and set the price so that the villagers who produce them know the middle price, which makes it convenient for distribution. These products are sold to various cities through merchants or tourists who come to see the life of a local potter at Kampong Chhnang. They would buy these potteries as souvenirs. In addition, a potter may sell directly to other villagers who want to buy pottery products for their daily use.

2. Distributing to other cities through merchants

Selling pottery products in this way, the merchants, who are also people in that community, would "ga mong" (Khmer word for 'order') or collect local pottery products from the villagers and load them until they fill a pickup truck and sell them in the other provinces in Cambodia. The collected data shows that there were merchants from Kampong Chhanang bringing and selling their products in Siem Reap because Siem Reap is one of Cambodia's tourist destinations. They would use a large towed motorcycle to sell a wide variety of pottery products. These merchants would take 5 - 6 days to collect the pottery. When the trucks were full, they would go out of the village to sell the products. They would decide which routes to go and in which provinces. For example, they were going to Siem Reap in this case, the merchant who collected it first would travel by riding a towed motorcycle and sell the pottery along the way. In the evening, they would sleep wherever they were. Most of them traveled in pairs with 2 towed motorcycle. It took them about 4 - 5 days to travel from Kampong Chhanang to Siem Reap. When they arrived in Siem Reap, they would go around the city to sell the pottery. In the evening, they would come to the meeting point at a castle entrance where there's a ticket booth. It is called route 60. There they gathered together and would stay overnight on their hammocks that were tied to their motorcycles. There were approximately 8 - 10 people in this particular group, which are kinship. It could take them about 20 days up to one month to sell all the pottery. These merchants also used to sell pottery in big cities such as Phnom Penh, Poipet, and many other cities, but the place they often go is Siem Reap.

From the interview, the advantages of a marketing like this is that sales people know what the market needs, which products can be sold well, and which products can be hardly sold, so that they can go back and tell the villagers what kind of products they should make more of and which kind of product should be suspended.

The Kampong Chhnang traditional pottery production process can tell the division of various duties in the process as well, especially the division of duties in working between husband and wife, siblings, or family members. The nature of such roles or duties corresponds to the individual's potential. For example, labour tasks such as digging, clay preparing, kneading, burning and selling are often done by men. On the other hand, moulding or forging pots are often done by women. The division of duties in the pottery production process between family members like this applies to every family that produces pottery. In the past, almost every household in the community produced pottery; therefore, the duty division has a similar system. The similar system in each family like this leads to the common characteristics in the social structure of the community.

Research Analysis

The analysis results based on the theory of structural and functionalism in the process of producing pottery in Kampong Chhnang, Kingdom of Cambodia

According to an interview with Mr. Seyhak Son and Mrs. So Khon, villagers who were potters in An Nong Rue Sei village, Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia, about the unique intellectual process of the community, the researcher found that the traditional pottery production process of An Nong Rue Sei village is a systematic process in which the duties are clearly divided, especially the roles of men and women or husband and wife. It is a small system or structure that is repeated in many families, creating a large systematic structure in the society. Such characteristics follows the theory of structural and functionalism. Understanding the structural and functional roles in cultural processes can well explain the origin of needs of people in a community or society.

The pottery production process consists of a systematic sub-process. There is a clearly divided duty which is also the division of duties of sub-processes. The processes are central to the development of social structures of the community. However, the pottery production processes need appropriate management system with the 2 key conditions, first, the doers must be motivated to act according to their status and role, and second, the social systems must try to avoid conflicts or behaviour that deviates from society.

Regarding Parson's theory of structural and functionalism suggested 5 important factors that can be used to explain the community phenomenon, including 1) relationship between doers 2) goal(s) 3) selecting the way to act 4) method selection 5) normative determinants. The said 5 factors can be guidelines to build an understanding of the structure system and division of duties in local cognitive processes, namely pottery production in An Nong Rue Sei village, Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia. The tools used in this study were both structured and unstructured interviews with those involved in the pottery production process. The interview identified the 5 important factors found in villagers as follows:

1. Relationship between the doers.

Currently, the estimated number of households in An Nong Rue Sei village, Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia is 200 households. According to the elders in the village, Mrs. Chea Muon and Mr. Seyhak Son, almost every household had been home to a potter in the past, but now only about half of them, or 100 houses still made pottery. Among these 100 houses, 80 of them made a small to medium amount of pottery, while the other 20 houses did this as a main career. Most of the villagers in An Nong Rue Sei village, Kampong Chanang, Cambodia were kin and most of them were also involved in the pottery production process. The villagers who were potters built a new type of relationship when they became one of the potters in the system, even though they came from different backgrounds. This new type of relationship was built from the adaptation that was occurring simultaneously. Such a relationship could also be found in the family system, such as the division of duties between husband and wife, siblings, or relatives who were family and community members. Since many families were kin, the division of duties or roles in the community system went smoothly and had mutual acceptance to a certain level where there is no problem or conflict between the villagers.

The goal was something that every family that produces traditional pottery in the community had been refined from the past until now. Meaning that the goal was the result of the needs of a particular time. Those needs were met by adopting a pattern which later on, had become a culture of making pottery, which is the main occupation of the villagers. According to an interview with 5-6 small potter families, namely Mrs. Srey Lax's family who had been working on pottery with her sister, Miss Somalai Pheng and 3 other family members, the pottery they were current making was enough to fulfill the needs of the family and they did not want to expand the business due to the insufficient production capacity. Currently, she lives with her husband, a son, and a sister. In contrast, Mr. Pol Mich who was a hardworking young man, the head of a potter family, and also a member of the Pottery Career Development Center located in the foothills near the village, said that his family's goal is to expand the business or production capacity because he was still young and had the energy to make money to provide for the family and to cover the expenses of business expansion. This indicates that this family's goal was a key factor in family persistence and is directly related to the persistence of the wisdom processes of each family. It can be concluded that the goals of each family were not the same; however, that every potter family had a common goal which was a better economic and social well-being, no matter if their families are big or small. (Interviewed on April 27th, 2019).

2. Selecting the way to do.

The division of duties in pottery production of each family in the community depends on suitability where each process also relates to each other. According to the interview with potters in the village, including Mrs. Chun Eng, Mrs. So Khon, and Ms. Srey Nhach, the researcher found that all of them were working with their family in this village. Their jobs included moulding and forging pots. They used the clay from Dei Pri Khmer source which was sold by a group of villagers. These villagers would ground and sift the clay into powder before filling them in bags and sell them to local potters in the village. Then, the potter would marinate the clay with water, knead them into cubes, and mould it with a moulding wheel or forge, as well as decorate them. After these pots dried, they would be burnt in a neighbor's kiln. The potters could pay for kiln in the form of firewood or in cash, depending on their agreement. This payment agreement shows the mutual acceptance of the conditions, which arises from an understanding of their own potential. In addition, Ms. Srey Nhach lived with her old parents; therefore, she chose to mould the pots by herself, burn the pots in a neighbor's kiln and waited for merchants to buy them. This way, she did not have to prepare the clay and make a kiln by herself. Similarly, Mrs. Chun Eng was a widow since her husband was lost a long time ago and she was not sure if he was still alive or not; therefore, she was the only potter in the family. She moulded the pots by herself, burnt them in a neighbor's kiln and just waited for merchants to buy them. However, she sometimes had some help from her relatives and neighbors during the burning process. It can be concluded that the way they do their roles, the way they negotiate

for exchange will be the social base after the socialisation of the doer, which inevitably stands on the basis of the necessity of the individual's or family's lifestyle.

3. A situation in which the doer has to choose a particular method.

The situation like this can be seen from the division of duties of the pottery production process from the family unit to the community unit. The division of duties was clear, mutually accepted, and is a continued practice until nowadays because most people in the community tended to have one or more jobs to make more money for their families. Almost every process of pottery production made income. Mrs. So Khon, the potter who made round-bottomed pottery by forging, stated that “It is more convenient to forge the pots and burn them in a neighbor's kiln like this” since other family members had to do other jobs such as farming, taking care of cows and buffaloes, or labouring. This represents a situation where one must choose whether they do something because of an agreement or necessity. This will eventually become a norm and form a guideline for the refinement of the doers and become a culture. Therefore, it is imperative that a doer has to choose a specific job to do. All of the above are phenomena that describe situations in which a doer has to choose one of the methods in the process of producing pottery at An Nong Rue Sei village, Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia.

4. Normative determinants.

The interviews with the elderly in the village revealed that the system of traditional pottery production process to make round-bottom pottery had been modified over time. For example, the younger generation began to use a foot-pedal moulding wheel to mould the pottery instead of forging them. The clay had been purchased from other villagers who took the clay from Dei Pri Khmer soil source, grounded it, sifted it into powder, and sold them in bags. The purchased clay was then mixed with water and kneaded into cubes before being moulded on a foot-pedal wheel. The moulding process started from the centre, form is created by using the thumb and the clay is pulled into a cylinder shape, moulded it into various shapes, then decorated beautifully. However, the traditional pottery moulding style where the pottery is forged into a round-bottom pottery still exists and the process has not changed at all. Such process of producing pottery is what people in the community have been doing for a long time until it has become the norm of society. These norms, in turn, regulate the actions between the people which leads to stabilisation. This can be seen from the village's pottery production process that continues to be passed down until today which also represents the stability of the village.

The theory of structuralism and functionalism can be used to explained the division of villagers' duties in the pottery production process in An Nong Rue Sei village, Kampong Chhanang, Cambodia by analysing 2 main elements that support each other, which are structure and function. These elements explains the social phenomenon of the community, meaning that there were various sub-sections within the pottery producing process that consistently worked together in a continuous process. The duties were clearly and properly assigned to different

people. The division of duties in this pottery production process made the overall community live together systematically and achieved the specified goals of the community.

5. Each pottery producing process consists of a unit act.

A unit act means smaller duties in each step, including clay preparation, moulding, and burning. Both potters and potters' assistants had their own things to do in every step of the pottery production process. These actions pointed out the nature of the actions which will eventually become a social or system norm. The social norm will then evolve into a social structure. Therefore, it can be concluded that every action of the pottery production process is the cause resulting in a system which eventually evolved into the social structure.

When analyzing the pottery production process with Parsons' framework, it can be seen that people in a community makes decisions on social actions based on 5 factors as follows:

1. Relationship between actors

This relationship could be clearly seen from the division of duties, which is the role that occurs between potters and their assistants in the pottery production process. Both roles were done by people who belonged to the same family. Therefore, actions between them were sometimes flexible since they supported each other as kinship. Besides, the actions between actors in the family have a broader impact on the community. For example, material preparation process such as digging a large amount of clay sometimes required labour from several families. Similarly, they sometimes burnt the pottery together with other families. All are relationships between people in the community as they required several families to do it together in a systematic way.

2. Goals

The people in the community who are responsible for the pottery production process had the same goal: to make pottery the main occupation that was able to make enough money for living rather than making pottery as a side job apart from farming like in the past. This was considered the ultimate goal in the social structure of the pottery producing community.

3. Means

In the process of making pottery, everyone had the same practice guidelines, both women and men. Women were responsible for moulding while men were responsible for the support. Once the means were assigned, they became duties that were counted as sub-unit of a system in a social structure.

4. Situational Conditions

Given this clear separation of duties between women and men, it was considered as an action that must be chosen without excuse or exclusion since it was a practice that has been

continuously passed down from the ancestors to today. It can be considered as a chain operation that clearly exists in the social structure.

5. Norms, values and other ideas.

These norms were voluntary and mutually accepted by the community, which can also be assumed that everyone in the community acknowledged the norms. The pottery produced could be regarded as valuable works in terms of history and identity of the community, including economic value which was an important factor of the existence of the social structure.

From the five factors mentioned above, we see the important conditions for making decisions on social actions of the community, which is in line with Parsons' framework. That is, it is necessary to respectively take the five factors into account in order to develop a system to become a social structure. These five factors are as follows.

1. When actors of different backgrounds join a new social relationship, the individuality of each person in the community can be adapted in order to work together in the pottery production process.
2. The actors has been socialised according to their needs. Those needs can be met by adopting community cultural patterns, which means the knowledge passing down of pottery production process of the people in the community.
3. The interactions such as role play, negotiation and exchange create a social base after they have been socialised with each other, which, in this case, is the division of duties in the pottery production process between the villagers.
4. These norms form a guideline for socialising of the actors. At the same time, these norms are also blended together and become a culture. Meaning that the process of pottery production affects the local cultures. For example, on important religious days such as the Holy Day, families in the community do not make any pottery which is a practice that has been in place that it has become a local culture.
5. Eventually, these norms regulate the actions between the people which help stabilise them. These norms maintain the existence of the pottery community.

The 5 factors stated above can be used to describe the phenomena that occurred in the nature of the structure and function of the system and the people in An Nong Rue Sei pottery village, Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia. Such structures and functions inherited a long tradition from their ancestors. It is something that they received and passed down until it became the norm of the society and make the society different from other societies in Cambodia.

Discussions

The social structure of the community that produced the Kampong Chhanang pottery arose from the duties of individuals in the community, especially those involved in the pottery production process, which could be considered as a sub-unit in the overall structure of society or community. These functions or sub-units interact with each other all the time. The sub-units could be as small as in family units, where the division of duties in pottery production were assigned to the family members, or as big as a pottery producing community which consists of potter families as sub-units.

Society is a system that consists of different parts. Each part supports each other. The consistency of the relationships of each part is a factor to create social equilibrium. All the societies are one system in which each of them is related. These relationships support each other logically. The social system is a movement towards equilibrium. When actions between each other become institutionalised, the system takes place as a system of society of any size. Parsons (1937) believes that in the study of social structure, it is necessary to study its components which are parts of an overall social structure because when combining those components systematically, they can reflect a clear overall picture of social structure and can explain the origins of society. (Talcott Parsons, 1937). This is in line with Srisantisuk (2009). He stated in Social and Cultural Studies which supported Parsons' idea that the establishment of social system or the structure must be based on 2 key conditions. First of all, the actors must be motivated to act according to their status and role. Secondly, social systems must try to avoid conflicts or behaviour that deviates from social norms.

Since the potters who were involved in material preparation were both family members and non-family members who were the sellers, buyers, and employees, what would motivate each other in the pottery production process was the motive. Therefore, motivation was important since it kept the people acting according to their status and role in society in different situations. Motivation can also refer to values, ideas, or beliefs that bonded individuals in society together. The motive variables in the pottery community were as follows.

1. Affectivity and affective neutrality. For example, the relationship between parents and children in family is affective. In contrast, the relationships between employers and employees, producers, sellers and buyers are neutral.
2. Specificity and non-specificity. For example, the relationship between employers and employees, or producers, sellers, and buyers are specific relationships. In contrast, the relationship between parents and children in a family is non-specificity because such relationships cover the whole society.

3. Universalism and particularism. For example, pottery usually can be moulded into any shape, most of which are the original shapes that are usually made and are known to public. This is considered as universal. In contrast, pottery moulding can be considered particular when it is a custom-made pottery according to an order.

4. Inborn quality, such as ethnicity, age, gender, and ascription, which includes the knowledge inheritance such as the knowledge in the production of pottery inherited from ancestors.

5. Self and collective orientation. This variable is evident in a potter who was considered an important person in both a small unit such as a family and a big unit such as a community.

In addition, each action members of the society do to each other in the said variables is also a key component of the social system creation process. The process are as follows:

1. Communication process. Potting skills in the pottery production process is an important medium of communication between them.

2. Maintaining social boundaries. This process maintains the equilibrium in society, as evidenced by the sharing of material such as firewood and kiln.

3. Personality, society, and cultural processes. These processes are a supportive system because the whole community has the same base of ideas and skills that has arisen from the pottery producing process.

4. Social control. This process prevents the members from violating social norms. It is a mutually accepted agreement. For example, the agreement of resources usage, or pausing pottery production on important religious days and go to a temple instead, etc.

5. Socialisation. It is a process where the spirit of society members is passed down to the members of the next generation, which is evident from the wisdom in the pottery production that has been passed down from generation to generation.

6. Social state change. This process arises when a person accepts values and beliefs and appreciates the personalities of people in the pottery producing process. This process consistently reinforces the personality and culture blending, and eventually changes the state of the society overtime.

The processes mentioned above must only come with consent and have certain values or beliefs that lead to a similar goal. Various situations will indicate the actions, roles, and status the actors are having towards each other. These things have been constantly done and changed to be suitable to the community. The important characteristics of this process are as follows.

1. The social system is made up of relationships between different people, such as the relationships within a potter family, the relationship between different potter families, as well as the relationship between the community and the government that support and promote the community. These relationships have to exist with each other for a fairly long time until the system emerges.
2. Social systems tend to maintain social boundaries in order to prevent complications or damage from other systems. This can be seen from the efforts to inherit the pottery production process through the development and improving of the wisdom by themselves in order to strengthen the community, especially the production of pottery that is the main foundation of society. If changes occur in some parts of the pottery production system, such as the government's effort to develop the production through technologies, the villagers will not completely reject them, but they will accept and adapt them to the original ways in order to survive or make their products better.
4. Each system in the pottery community serves to maintain social equilibrium. If the community cannot maintain the system, it will affect the social equilibrium, which might disintegrate their system and become part of another system, or even become an entirely new system. However, system failure is unlikely to happen in strong communities such as the pottery producing community in Kampong Chhnang, Cambodia.

In short, the theory of structuralism and functionalism suggests that there are subunits or subsystems within a society which arise from actions. Motivation plays an important role in driving an individual to act according to his/her status and role in the social system. Then, these subsystems are made up and perform various functions systematically. In order for the system to be evolved into a social structure, it is necessary to take into account the principles of action, so that the society can achieve the desirable goal of the society. Local wisdom or the traditional pottery producing process involves the division of duties within the family. It is a systematic sub-unit because the duties are clearly divided. Moreover, these sub-units are the key to the system to be developed into a social structure. This phenomenon can be explained by Parsons' theory of structural and functionalism, with a focus on the 5 factors mentioned earlier: 1) relationship between doers 2) goal(s) 3) selecting the way to act 4) method selection 5) normative determinants. These factors can be a guideline to apply with the local wisdom of pottery production in Kampong Chhnang, Kingdom of Cambodia.

Conclusion

The An Nong Rue Sei pottery village in Kampong Chhnang, Kingdom of Cambodia is a group of people who have produced traditional pottery that is similar to other pottery villages both in Cambodia and traditional pottery production in the Northeast and other regions of Thailand.



The traditional pottery productions have a unique process. With the aforementioned knowledge, pottery becomes a profession and leads to the formation of communities.

The traditional pottery moulding process is still ongoing in order to meet the needs of people of all ages. What shows the wisdom and experience of potters is the production process. The role of people in the pottery production process has a systematic function and is related to the social structure of the community. The process of producing pottery in each family, which is considered a systematic sub-process because there is a clear division of duties, causes the system to develop into a social structure. From the past to the present, the pottery production process is still inherited and continues with the adaptation of the people in the community, both in terms of the production process, way of life, concept, and culture according to the context around the community. These adaptations requires cooperation of the people in the community, starting with the smallest unit that is family to a bigger unit that is community. Therefore, the study of the pottery production process in An Nong Rue Sei village, Kampong Chhnang, Kingdom of Cambodia in today's conditions, in terms of both traditional and modern processes, maximises the understanding of the traditional and modern methods of pottery production which show the identity of the community. In addition, the unique pottery brings great pride to the villagers who are famous for the production of clay pots as reflected in the name "Kampong Chhnang," which means the city of clay.



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