ABSTRACT

The title of this thesis is "Anthropological Perspective on the Brass Gong Culture of Bamar National (Myanmar)". The main purpose of this thesis is to explore the tradition of the brass gong culture of Bamar from the anthropological point of view. The specific objectives are to describe how the brass gong handicraft is inherited from generations to generation, to elicit the brass gong production process and to identify the role and functions of the brass gongs in Bamar culture. The researcher would like to study brass gong in Bamar society through 3Ps, from the standpoint of property, prestige and power of brass gong. It means that having the "brass gong handicraft" in Bamar society as a property has some kinds of prestige and powers in Bamar society by that time. The study site is in Tampawady quarter, Chanmya-tha-zi Township, Mandalay Region, upper Myanmar. The informants were included brass gong craftsmen and their families, those who sell gongs in stairway at pagodas, monks, Buddhists, musicians who experienced, knew the background history of brass gong. The study was conducted with qualitative methods such as case study, interviewing and participatory. To collect the data of some background history of handicraft and traditions, non-participant observation, direct observation, key informant interview, focus group discussion, and in-depth interview were used. To study populations were 139. Brass gongs are still used in religious, administrative, economical and social functions, and as musical instruments in some societies in Myanmar. Brass gong still takes wide area as the tools and instruments in the Myanmar society, that the people still value brass gongs, and that ethnic groups in Myanmar somehow share common relation to brass gongs. Therefore, it is suggested that, craftsmen are required to promote their idea, knowledge and way of thinking sensible and appropriate to keep their cultural tradition of brass gong handiwork.

Key words: culture, society, handicraft, craftsmen, role, functions, religious, economic, musical, social activities, property, prestige, power