

Preamble constituted under the auspices of the *Roundtable Cloth, Culture and Development* held at Chiang Mai University, Thailand from 24-25 August 2014

PREAMBLE: We open this declaration of the importance of crafts by recognizing the shared interests of all interested parties – artisans, entrepreneurs, local and ethnic communities (rural and urban), NGOs, and the state, and with full acknowledgment of the role of gender, class, caste, land-ownership, and other social groupings – in the promotion of artisanal knowledge and practice, including full recognition of traditional and innovative practices, and of conducting future discussions and other activities in venues and languages accessible to all concerned. We wish to see full recognition of the impact of the economics of production and distribution; the importance of acknowledging different temporalities and local perspectives for understanding the production of crafts; multiple strategies in the ways in which we live as spurs to memory practices, especially as these ways of being in the world enter into crisis and collision around the world – an urgent situation that requires active intervention, especially in view of the already serious loss of supporting structures and knowledge. The continuing process of the decolonization of knowledge, in combination with the massive expansion of communication forms, provides both opportunities and challenges, as does disaster intervention; sites of mobilization and mediation must be explored and, where consistent with these goals, expanded. Above all, human dignity, enshrined in crafts, requires a recognition of the rights and living and working conditions of all concerned as well as various forms of citizenship and of the importance of the restitution of knowledge to its sources as well as the importance of encouraging such knowledge and associated practices among the rising generations.

Sites of mobilization and mediation

- 1) Sources of knowledge drawn from discursive repositories that may be marginalized, hidden and quotidian.
- 2) Existing sites of production of handmade (including those described as mass produced ‘craft’) goods both commercial and cultural.
- 3) Alternative spaces of production and knowledge transmission that have the potential of assaying innovative arrangements from below.
- 4) Sustainable livelihood and working conditions that will ensure the salience of environmental and health concerns in 1, 2 & 3.
- 5) Spaces of intercultural engagement that have been forged under national and international exchange programs; trans-local initiatives; and those spaces that traverse old and new trajectories of ritual and trade relations.
- 6) Inserting craft education at the school level as well as devising legitimate certification for the pursuit of craft as a viable modern-day occupation for contemporary youth.
- 7) Civic and popular education outside of the schools/ Consumer education on the value of craft work and craft products.
- 8) Engaging local youth, art, design and engineering students and professionals, with craft practitioners in common projects and public installations at various levels.
- 9) Current industry practices that use craft practices significantly without acknowledgement or active engagement with practitioners.

- 10) Recognition and respect for different ways of knowing and producing is important especially in the context of industry practices that deliberately eclipse or undermine craft knowledge and experience as 'backward'.
- 11) Processes of self-determination, especially among local and ethnic communities, in particular to offer critical alternatives to top-down discourses of 'cultural/national policies' as promoted or endorsed by UNESCO, the World Bank, nation-states and corporates.
- 12) Immigrants and diaspora who engage in diverse forms of memory practices of the homeland.
- 13) The co-production of life-histories of 'people without histories' in non-hegemonic frames through various media (visual, print, cyber) and fresh historiographies.
- 14) Influence government's policy through well researched and constructive critiques of existing programs as well as the encouragement of interactive and inclusive platforms involving local communities and state representatives.
- 15) Environmental policy to be more locally grounded and integrated with goals for sustaining craft production.
- 16) Resilience of communities who subsist and sustain themselves through craft-based production.
- 17) Rights of communities who claim their identities through craft whilst being mindful of gender biases from within and without.