

Topic 7 Pat II

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9:53 AM

Tourism Impacts on Hmong Women and their handicrafts in Fenghuang, China

Traditional Hmong Women's Handicraft

- Pass down through generations from mother to daughter
- Handicraft throughout Hmong women's life
 - As a young girl
 - Reach puberty
 - Married as wife
 - Gives birth as a mother

Handicraft in tourism context

“From the point of view of ensuring their survival, they [peasants] may wish to produce the many different things they need themselves and to reduce their dependence on the market. From the point of view of obtaining money, they will try a mix of strategies that will yield money.”

Wolf 2001: 257

Resistance to tourism influence

- Maintaining ethnic and personal identity
- Secure their valued traditional resource as important tourist attraction
- Handicraft skills as one of the traditional criteria for Hmong women's virtue

Accommodation to tourism influence

- Greater economic opportunity offered by tourism
- Loss of young inheritors
- Loss of traditional ceremonial context

Tourism Influence on Design



The design “Mouse Marrying its Daughter” (*lao shu jia nu*) is made up of two pieces of cut-paper. The fourth mouse (from left to right), with a ribbon tied as a flower on his chest and a hat on his head, was the groom, and the bride was in the sedan chair (Photo by X. Feng).

Tourism Influence on crafting on crafting methods

Aspect	Change
Time	Less on per item
Quantity	Produce more handicraft items per unit time
Quality	Lower (less stitch numbers; simpler designs, etc)
Design	Some new design reflecting the Han culture occur
Purpose	From self-use to fore-sale

Competition: The Market in Shanjiang Town, Fenghuang





2002



2005

VS



Tourism Influence on Local Hmong Women

- Contributor of household cash economy
- More independence
- Improving status in both domestic and public areas

What do you think of the changes brought by tourism on local women's traditional handicraft in Fenghuang County of China? Since culture is always changing (dynamic), how can we understand cultural authenticity?

I think that the changes that tourism brought is a mix bag depending on how you look at it. On one side it is a good that women's handicrafts are sought after and the Fenghuang County is growing economically, having the community grow with the rest of China. On the other side it feels like the handicrafts are not what they use to be, losing cultural influence and traditions, with more and more to produce the quality and time that is traditionally put into these crafts diminishes and loses cultural value.

Culture will always change and grow, we can feel bad for being a tourist because tourism brings lots of changes. Growing and adapting is what culture needs, in order to survive. As tourist and humans we must understand culture through the

order to survive, as tourist and humans we must understand culture through the eyes of the people who live there, and research more of the authentic traditions rather than going for the tourist trap.

