



Heet-Kong Isaan (Isaan Tradition and Government):Problems and Potential of Natural Resources and Environment, Economy, Society and Local Wisdom of Isaan, Thailand

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ABSTRACT- Isaan or Northeast of Thailand is a region that has the unique culture and tradition of Heet-Kong (Traditions and Governments) which is good to be preserved, inherited, and adopted as a lifestyle practice especially the 12 Heet-14 Kong (12 Traditions and 14 Government Methods). These can be regarded as the traditions of the Isan people that have been practiced for a long time from generation to generation. Therefore, this research aimed to explore the problem condition and potential of natural resources and environment, economy, society, local wisdom Isaan (Heet-Kong). The instruments were observation, recording, interviewing the 20 key-informants. Combine both primary and secondary data, and perform content analysis.

The research results were found that the problem condition and potential of natural resources and environment, economy, society, Heet-Kong wisdom in Isan area has 3 aspects as follows; (1) Natural resources and environment: The main problems of the community are drought conditions, lack of fertility soil, not suitable for agricultural cultivation, sandy soil texture, not hygroscopic, thus lacking the potential for plant life as a basis. However, but with the familiar way of life of the community, it is not considered a hindrance, as it has long been used to such conditions for many ages, which has been improving and developing the quality of using natural resources appropriately. (2) the economic, it was found that the economic situation in the past relied on natural resources to make a living by relying on subsistence agriculture through rice cultivation, then, step towards the development of agricultural industrial society such as sugarcane, cassava, and monoculture. That brings raw materials to the factory to process products and services in response to social consumerism (mass production). And (3) Heet-Kong Isaan Local Culture, even if the economy, society, the way of life in the Northeast in the community have changed or the capitalist economic flows have been overwhelming, Heet-Kong Isaan was still the core that holds the mind, still has the belief and practice of Buddhism which was the center of faith in creating the happiness of love, rely on each other until it is regarded that the community receives good from nature and is a sustained family and community immunity.

Keyword: Heet-Kong, Isaan Culture, Natural Resources

I. INTRODUCTION

Isan, or Northeast, is a region that is unique and has a good Heet-Kong cultural identity that deserves to be preserved, inherited, and adopted as a lifestyle practice. Especially the Heet12-14 Kong(12 Tradition: *Twelve Annual Festival of Isan people observed one per month and 14 Government Method*), which can be regarded as a tradition of Isan people who have been practicing, passed down for a long time from generation to generation, etc. At present, Thai society is under the 20-year National Strategy, which has set guidelines for provincial, regional and urban development by applying principles, wisdom, and culture as the approach for developing their local communities in line with Vision Thailand 4.0. It is a vision of the country's development policy with an important mission in driving national reforms to adjust, organize, adjust direction. And create a way to develop the country to be able to cope with the rapidly changing new opportunities and threats in the 21st century, etc.

Maha Sarakham Province is regarded as one of the provinces in the Isan region that has established a provincial development strategy by bringing the existing local Heet-Kong as a guideline for local community development so that It was driven to be a virtuous society or to create immunity for family and community on the base of Northeastern culture. From pilot studying found that Nong Muang Sub-District, Borabue District,

Maha Sarakham Province is the community that the province wants to support, promote and develop, drive, and build family and community safety based on Northeastern culture. As well as situations and problems that arise in the community are facing many, especially social problems such as Family divorce, drug epidemic, severe threat in the community, burglary crimes, division of the people in the community, etc. Therefore, it can be considered as a good opportunity for research to bring knowledge to develop communities and establish a participatory research process in the local community as a model or guideline for developing and solving problems in the community through the research process

II. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

To explore the problem conditions and potential of natural resources and environment, economy, society, Isan local wisdom

III. RESEARCH METHOD

This research is qualitative research methodology is as follows. *Research area*: This research was conducted in Nong Muang Sub-District, Borabue District, Maha Sarakham Province, Thailand. *The target groups*: people living in areas at Nong Muang Sub-District, Borabue District, Maha Sarakham Province, and 20 persons involved. *Research data collection tools* were semi-structured interviews, recorded, and observation. *Data collection* includes (1) Primary Data was from field research processes such as Key-informant interviews, Focus groups, Workshop activity. 2) Secondary Data was data obtained from the compilation of documents such as textbooks, academic documents, research papers, and related electronic media, etc. and, *Data analysis* was as follows: after collecting data from both sectors, the researcher takes the data to be analyzed by Content Analysis and descriptive presentation.

IV. RESEARCH RESULTS

This research can classify the findings according to the research object as follows

1. Problems and potentials of natural resources and environment faced, especially problems of water resources and arable land that are not different in many areas. The geography is lowlands, with a height above sea level of 150 -180 meters, soil conditions that lack water, the type of the soil are Roi Et soil series, Korat series soil, Nam Phong soil with sandy soil or sandy loam soil, and in some areas, gravel is mixed with shallow soil which is not suitable for cultivation. The report from the Land Development Department classified soil conditions, soil depth, water retention capacity, plant nutrient content, found to be low and not suitable for cultivation. The important water sources with long-term relationships with community and cultural traditions are Dong Man Reservoir, Nong Khu Reservoir, River Siew, Muang Huai, Wang Rong Creek, Sok Bak Tu Creek, and Wang Khewa Creek. Nowadays, these conditions are shallow and change over time, however, the government has built reservoirs to support water use during the agricultural season, especially the dry season, experiencing a lack of water for consumption. In terms of economy, it was found that most of the people occupied agriculture, farming, most of them were farmers and cultivated rice, cassava, sugarcane, and fruits and vegetables, which required fertile soil and water resources. The main economic crop of the community is rice paddies with a cultivated area of 19,732 rai, which is rice with an area of 7,982 acres, Kg/rai, glutinous rice planted area 11,750 rai, yield 6,500 kg/rai, Cassava planted area 887 rai, yield 28,900 kg/rai, sugarcane planted area 599 rai, yield 35,000 kg/rai respectively. Besides that, land use is for agriculture as a residence and other uses.

1.1 Forest resources (Community forest) of the community found that there are 13 plots of public forests still maintained in the community forest with an area of approximately 279 rai, Ban Khok Sua Tao community forest 64 rai. The general forest resources in the community are degraded and should be conserved, restored, and replanted. Besides, there should be agencies and cooperation between people and organizations to manage the resources that are considered common areas together, in particular, to create understanding for people in the area not to invade and make benefits that degrade the forest. And must aware value of building a community forest which is the last green area of the local community to maintain its abundance through sustainable management.

1.2 water resources, it was found that there are two small water reservoirs built by the Royal Irrigation Department. Dong Man Reservoir is located at Moo 6 and Nong Khu Reservoir is located at Moo 1,

where the average annual water storage volume is insufficient to meet the demand for crops in the dry season. Many major natural creek sources, most of them dry, such as Nam Siew stream flows from the north into Nong Muang sub-district at Moo 4, Moo 13, Village No. 2, Village No. 3, Village No. 12, respectively. The Muang Huai flows from Village No. 8 through Village No. 11, Village No. 4, Village No. 13. However, most of the water resources in the community are utilized in agriculture such as Dong Man Reservoir, Nong Khu Reservoir, Nam Siew, Muang Huai, Huai Wang Rong, Huai Sok Bak Tu, Huai Wang Khewa, Weir Yai, and Nong Khu.

It can be seen that the main problems are arid conditions, lack of fertility, not suitable for cultivation, most of the soil texture is sandy, not hygroscopic, thus lacking the basic viability. But with a strong community way of life, it is not considered an obstacle to life due to the long-term habituation of the condition which there were management, improvement, and development of quality of life and using the natural resources always consistently.

2.Economic: Nong Muang community is a community with a history of economic development along with social development and others along the way. According to the historical records about the establishment of Borabue, although there is no clear record of the community's history, legends have been passed down between generations and appear in important events in the community or nearby communities such as Buamat community, Kampee or Borabue spoke about the history of Nong Muang community as an interview with the community elder said: *"In the past, I remembered, this area was a forest of hok, used to chase birds as well as various wildlife, people came to have pioneered the forest to occupy agricultural areas, the person with great strength can invade a wide area of forests without anyone to blame."* It is seen that clearing forests to occupy the land for arable or farming is a way of life for the Isan people, were expanding the area that is economically beneficial in the household is a simple life that relies on natural weather, and there was agricultural cultivation for sustenance. Then, when Borabue District became part of Maha Sarakham Province, the administration in this area was annexed. Later, the government-supported and promoted the production of rice for consumption and export in other areas such as Bangkok and Central regions, so that building a railway connecting the Isan, then the Nong Muang community's way of life that used to rely on the produce from the fields, herbs, food, and clothing, is essential for supporting members of the household and the natural community. However, the traditional Getting way of Nong Muang community found that During the rice farming season, it is an opportunity for each household to work together to help each other grow crops and find fish for food to conserve during the dry season, so, part of the harvested produce is stored for merit according to Heet-Kong tradition. The cultivation of flax and cotton is used for garments such as weaving, basketry as a natural foraging tool, cultivating animals for consumption, catching fish that have been preserved as fermented fish, sun-dried fish, smoked fish, until these become local food processing wisdom. However, due to the dry season, there will be a water shortage which is a "Do for Live, do for having", it has been circulating along the Isan way for a long time, which is a natural learning system that contributes to the intelligence, production, and preservation of food necessary for life. As well as the agricultural production system is also passed on to the future generations, which has changed a lot as the technology in the latter will increase convenience and speed, such as the steel buffalo for plowing fields. Consequently, the agricultural system began to change according to the shocking social consumerism trend, reflecting the process in which the people were not accepting and the values from the simple self-sufficiency fell into a self-centered society, the household was a fenced, single-family implicitly aligned.

In the next era, 1977-1995, the new capitalist economy marketed into the Nong Muang community due to the government's economic and social development policy promoted monocultural crops for industrial plants became more and more agricultural for business or industrial agriculture. The production of commercial household rice increases production with modern agricultural machinery, reflecting inequality in communities and access to natural resources. Folk technology that was once consistent with the socio-cultural conditions and environment in the past is technology brought elsewhere. More importantly, the technology does not derive from the inheritance of Isan wisdom, folklore or local technology plays a lesser role because everyone has turned to new technology. The manure and animal dung in the fields were quickly undermined, the production of fertilizers, pharmaceuticals, chemicals from companies in the capitalist system meet trade and investment needs. Therefore, the development of modern science and technology is not very consistent with the Isan area and Thai society, because we do not choose the benefits that will make the community strong and sustainable.

Noticeable changes when Nong Muang and its vicinity were raised to Nong Muang sub-district in 1994-1997, the natural resources and community forests, many streams have been redirected to the shallow path,

various state development projects have been excavated. The community has expanded due to the increase in population, the local government is governed by the called "Subdistrict Administrative Organization ", Nong Muang became a sub-district in Borabue district. The big problem for local community development is the lack of natural resources used for agriculture, especially during the dry season, affecting agriculture since planting requires water, so farmers have replaced farm crops, that is Sugarcane and Cassava, which are fast-growing plants and use less water. Under the government policy to promote agricultural development to distribute income and reduce inequality to communities. In the past, agricultural production and self-reliant economy were commercialized production, monoculture, flax, silk farming, and became sugarcane for distribution to industrial plants. the collected rice is gradually sold to capital entrepreneurs, some of whom have arrived in the area since they have not yet been harvested. The price of rice was pressed down, transportation was inconvenient, farmers brought their wagons to sell paddy in the city. Later, even worse, the capitalists had paid the farm ready for the homeless villagers to rent a place to live, in line with the senior retired teacher said *"Bringing rice to the cart to sell, dragging the wagon is very difficult already, get money, don't eat baht, go back from town to buy rice, food, mackerel, canned fish, however, now a day, any things are fine, they came to argue the field, but the money to pay for the alcohol is not enough as usual."*

From the aforementioned, community economy and subsistence production to the capitalist era infiltrated the Isaan and Nong Muang communities which reflects the problem of traditional and new ways of production that cannot be against the economic structure, the society that neglects the sufficiency economy and local technology. Can be seen from the working role of "Local culture" change has to do with the survival of society and species that can be seen clearly. Traditional technology with indigenous knowledge succumbs to the stimulating capitalist economy, trade, and marketing, the government has not seen the degradation of natural resource sustainability or the failure of the community economy. They understand just how to lead the community to grow the economy and society by focusing on increasing industrial plants, increasing their competitiveness, it is believed that when the industry reaches its maximum, prosperity will expand to the rural society itself. Therefore, it can be seen that the development must eventually develop in the West and therefore following the Western society that cannot keep up with it, at the same time the social and economic community collapse. Thus, Heet-kong, the local wisdom of Thailand is also affected. From the current Nong Muang community survey report, it was found that most of the population were agriculture, farming, farming, animal husbandry, general employment, trading, and others. There are units related to the economy, business, and service in the community such as bank, tire service shop, small gas station, building materials shop, rice mill, shop, place to rent cell phone antenna, restaurant, beauty salon, laundry service, community market, computer/gaming shops and others that have changed greatly from the past economic lifestyle. Consequently, it can be said that the community economy from the past relies on the dependence of natural resources as a subsistence agricultural system, cultivating rice, developing the industrial society, planting sugar cane, cassava and monoculture by bringing raw materials to the factory to transform the products, products, and services that meet the consumerism society like fast and instantly.

3. Heet-Kong culture, local society Isaan or "Heet-Kong" of Nong Muang has developed from Isaan local wisdom under a peaceful coexistence, all of which are based on learning in natural phenomena which Living a life that sometimes, facts are not always scientifically valued, be ghosts, occultism and religion especially in rituals involving ghosts and Buddhism, they are linked and are part of life. **"Twelve Heet-fourteen kong"**, this is a pattern of practice in the past, generations, over 12 months, there may be differences according to the area that has regular activities. Nong Muang community has established two levels of tradition, community level, and household level. However, with more people living in the area nowadays, there may be rituals and traditions carried out in the household. The traditions that are performed at the community level are calendar, month, or " *Twelve Heet-fourteen kong* " which activities regularly performed by the community as follows;

Tradition	Practice period/month	Activities
Make merit celebrate the new home	January	Offering alms to monks for the prosperity of the home and family.
Berk Fa Festival	February, 3 lunar months 3	Making merit-making ceremony, in case of opening the door to the rainy season to avoid seasonal rain forecast
Boon Khao Jee, Boon	February	A presentation of the Vessantara Chataka sermon, by

Tradition	Practice period/month	Activities
Pha Wet		monks 1 person, a preacher, and villagers made Grilled Sticky Rice for giving to the monks.
Songkran Festival	April	Sprinkle water on the Buddha statue, watering the ancestor's ashes, Watering adults, Monk/ adults bless, and splashing water for Songkran
Boon Bang Fai	May	Fireballs Ceremony Parade, and Fireballs ceremony to pray for rainwater
Boon Khao Phansa	July	Make merit for the 3-month Lent festival.
Boon Khao Pradap Din	August, Ram 14 lunar month 9	Making a banana leaf packet to dedicate a charity to the deceased.
Boon Khao Sak	September, 15 lunar months 10	Rice and food wrap, sewn with banana leaves, take it as the ceremony at the temple and then bring the package to the field to dedicate to the ghost.
Boon Ok Phansa	October, 15 lunar months 11	Make merit at the temple for the great merit of the End of Buddhist Lent Festival
Boon Kathin	November	Set up the Kathin Division and bring it to the monks at the temple and make merit for the Kathina Festival.

Source: Compiled from interviews with senior community members, 2020

[Detail Refers: <https://www.timsthailand.com/boon-khao-pradap-din/>]

From the table above, it was found that the community calendar that is still inherited together in the community is normal, Heet merit month is related to life, culture, and traditions which may have changed slightly. This community is rapidly changing as a result of external prosperity influences the economy, capitalism, consumer culture, values, and technology that resulted in the community being so irresistible that it blended so that it could not be able to distinguish what the original thing was. It is because modern cultural diffusion is easily attracted to imitation. The traditions of the community are as follows:

Make merit celebrate the new home: The celebration of the new home is carried on in January, a practice based on the universal calendar, which is considered the year of commencement by celebrating new things in life for good throughout the year. As the saying “When it starts with good things, there will always be good things following” This is a change in people, property, possessions, and new life, likewise, celebrating a new home is considered a new residence, a merit-making opportunity. By inviting the monks to receive food to dedicate merit to raising ghost houses, which are the beliefs of the Isan people. Offering alms to the monks is popular to invite the monks to pray and bless the new house for 1, 3, 5, 9 monks which is an odd number according to the faith power, but not more than 9 people. Items that can be offered to monks depend on the economic status and needs of the homeowners who believe in Buddhism.

Boon Berk Fa Festival: Boon Kwan Khao or known as “**Boon Khun Lan**”, is a merit-making that is successfully massaged in the rice field ready to be carried in the Shan Barn which scheduled to be made in February or the 2nd-month people call this month “**Boon Berk Fa**” believe that on the 3rd lunar, 3rd month of every year. The sky will begin to unlock the door with the sound of thunder and the direction of the thunder is a signal that determines the amount of rainfall that will fall to nourish agriculture in that year such as in **the East**, there was Garuda is the animal of the direction, if the thunder in this direction the rain will be good, the rice of the field will be abundant. **The Southeast** has a cat as the animal of the direction as the door, there will be little rain in this direction, the fields will be drought, the people will be famine and the epidemic. **The South** has a lion in the direction of the golden gate, the rain will be heavy, the water will flood the rice in the field, the lowland rice will lose, good nice plain fields, and there are abundant crabs, fish, and aquatic life. **The South West** of the door to the tiger, the thunder, the rain is good, water - soil - fruit is rich, abundant crops and people are happy. **In the West**, there was the Naga is the animal of the direction, the iron gate direction, in this direction the rain is drought, the water is less, the rice in the field is dry and dead. **The North West**, with rats as directional animals, a stone gate direction, moderate rain in this direction, half damaged rice, lesser aquatic animals - crabs - fish, sick people. **In the North**, there is elephants are animals of the direction, the silver gate direction, this direction the rain will be good, the rice in the field grows, the happy people all over the face. And **the North East**, there are cows are animals of the direction, the direction of the earth, the rain is good all year round, the food is rich, the people will be happy all around. For the rituals of

the villagers, 4 issues are popular as follows; the ceremony to Kwan Khao said "Making merit in the mouth of the house", Dust-picking ceremony (manure) using rice fields to nourish the soil, House Merit Making Ceremony, and the ceremony of bringing a whole basket of paddy gives to the Buddhist temple.

Boon Khao Jee: Boon the villagers usually hold mid to the end of the 3rd month, after the Makha Bucha Day merit-making, Khao Jee is the steamed sticky rice that is cooked and then molded into cubes, salt is thoroughly mixed and kneaded to be sticky, then skewered with a stick, then, grilled on a charcoal fire, turned around and scorched, after that, paint with egg whites which have beaten the egg white and yolk into a homogeneous consistency, then roast until golden and fragrant and repeat. The reason for Boon Khao Jee is because, during the break from the burden of farming and bringing rice to a new barn, the villagers, therefore, wish to organize a merit-making event for prosperity. The interesting of Boon Khao Jee, in addition to building unity in the Nong Muang community, it is also the third lunar month that Every household in the village prepares Khao Jee and invites the monks to gather in the sermon hall, everyone at the same time asks for the five precepts, completed offering Khao Jee, Bring Khao Jee to the monks' bowl, the monks finish chanting and have a portion of food that finished the ceremony of offering Khao Jee.

Boon Pha Wet: The word "Phawet" or Bun Phawes is pronounced according to the Isan accent, this word comes from the word "Phra Wes" which means Vessantara from Phra Vessantara Jataka (the past life of the Buddha). The **Boon Pha Wet** is merit to the great nation which is one of the twelve-month traditions or 12th Hett of Isaan region, the tradition was held in the 4th month as the aphorism that "*Until the end of the month, the monks look forward to receiving Khao Jee, then, at late 4th month, a little novice preached about Phawes*" The community will have consultations and prepare meals, both savory dishes, and desserts, to offer to the monks, and feasting guests who attended the event, prepare the sacrifices the sermons. Besides, monks from various temples will also be invited to perform the sermon, which will include an invitation letter with the title of the story to be preached, as well as invite the villager other communities to join in making merit activity as well. In general, when monks from different communities come to attend the event, there will be many villagers from that village come to listen to the sermons and make merit. It is generally invited to host a preaching offering according to the number of chapters of each preaching as well to prepare candles according to the number of preach chapters, and there are 1000 chapters in total. Before the Boon Phawet event one day, the villagers of Nong Muang will gather at the temple to make arrangements for the guests, decorate churches, sermon pavilions, dining hall with flowers and garlands, besides, provides one thousand sacrifices to worship the One Thousand Spell. For the first day of the event, there will be two important rituals: Invite Phra Upakhut Ceremony and Boon Phawet Parade Ceremony.

Songkran Festival: Boon Songkran is a merit "showering" known around the world as "Water festival" Thai society inherits and practices in each region, which the northern region is called "Boon Pee Mai Mueng". Isaan region has been scheduled from April 13 to April 15, like other regions across the country. In addition to splashing water into each other, the villagers in each community go to make merit at the temple near their home, the main activity is the washing of water for the Buddha image at their house and temple. Moreover, they prepare perfume for watering the monks, teachers, old people, community philosophers. Assuming the New Year's Day is the 15th lunar day, the 5th month is called "Songkharnlong" Or as the end of the old year, according to tradition, the Buddha images, sacred objects, and all sacred things will be cleaned. The next day, called "Mue Nao" is merit to relatives who have passed away. 2nd waning moon days, the 5th month called "Mue Sangkharn Khuen" or New Year's Day, there will be merit-making and giving alms to monks and respected old people for the prosperity of themselves and their families.

Boon Bang Fai: Popularly made during May, according to the Isan tradition, Nong Muang community will hold every year to worship the City Pillar Shrine and as a tradition to make merit to pray for Phaya Tan to implore for the correct rain according to the season as Traditions which have been practiced since ancient times and in some villages are believed to be held every year because if ignoring this merit, it is believed that it may cause disaster such as drought, man or cattle can become ill for unknown reasons. Therefore, after making such merit, it was believed that the rain would be plentiful and the villagers would be in peace because of the abundant rice-fish-food. During the 6th month, the community will make fireballs as an activity funded by local government agencies such as Nong Muang Subdistrict Administrative Organization and including private sectors such as the partnerships or the shops will join together to make merit as well. In the merit-making event, there will be a fireball parade competition for each village, where prize money is sponsored in the competition, the music band shows throughout the night, in general, it is preferable to hold an event for 2 consecutive days before the event, there will be sacrifices to inform the deities of the area or the village's grandfather ghost. The first day of activities will be the fireball parade in each village, sometimes

there will be a Thao Pha Daeng and Nang Ai Kham contest to participate (the protagonist of ancient Isan literature). Making a merit of fireballs, besides being a tradition for praying for rain, it also creates unity in the community, which involves from parents or guardians, including monks; pure persons with discipline perfectly. Heet-Kong is like the laws of Isan society that everyone must follow such as 12 Heet-14 Kong (12 Traditions-14 Governments), Heet-Jao-Kong-Khun (Governor Method), Heet-Wat-Kong-Song (Monks' Ethics), Heet-Phor-Kong-Mea (Parent's Ethics), etc.

Boon Khao Phansa: Merit about Buddhism and the monks who must reside in the rainy season (Buddhist Lent, it is to live in the temple for three months during the rainy season. The reason for Buddhist monks to reside at their temple because of During the time the Lord Buddha stay at Weluwan, Rajagaha City, there was monks traveled throughout the winter, the rainy season, and the summer did not stop at all, then, in the rainy season, they stepped on the rice-grass-small animals-little animals were dangerous, so, the public then reproaches general. After that, the Lord Buddha ordered that the monks reside for three months from the waning of the eighth month to the fifteenth lunar month, it has been a custom since then.

Therefore, Buddhism has grown in Isan society until it is connected with life until it is almost called "Breath of Life", The villagers who make merit with the Buddhist Lent will bring food and other utensils to the monks, such as offering light (candles, lamps, oil) will be regarded as a powerful virtue, such as the clairvoyance - excellent intelligence, at the same time, paying homage to good monks will bring prosperity to life.

Boon Khao Pradap Din: Popularly made on the waning days of the 14 lunar months, it is the Heet-Kong that connects humans and non-humans, i.e., "Soul" especially souls that have passed away, some people born as jinn or ghost. The ritual is to take a bowl of rice - sweet and savory food - betel nut - cigarette placed on the base of the tree or the ground at the temple, on the farmland. Then, summoned the soul to receive food. The cause of the tradition is because the Isan people and Nong Muang villagers believe that "**Boon Khao Pradap Din**" is the merit to share for animals. Therefore, **Boon Khao Pradap Din** Heet-Kong is considered a merit. Isan culture reflects beliefs, supernatural links between nature, sacred things, soul, livelihoods, giving others what is necessary to others, will bring rapture while alone also creates unity in the community, making it closer to the temple and the house.

Boon Khao Sak: Boon Khao Sak is the follow-up to Khao Pradap Din from the previous month, and the two are very similar. Boon Khao Sak is also a ceremony for the ancestors, but this time it's a farewell since it is time for them to return to the spirit world. In the morning, good food, such as fish, fruits, and sweets, is specially prepared for the monks. The featured food for this *Heet* is the old simple version of *Krayasat*, a Thai snack made of sweetened puffed rice. In the Isan language it's called both *Khao Dawk-Daek* and *Khao Sak*, hence this ceremony's name. In many (probably most) places, everyone giving alms at the temple that morning will write their name on a piece of paper, and then after praying and chanting, the monks and novices draw lots to see whose offering they will receive. After the monks get their share of the food, people put the rest of it out around the temple (usually on the ground under a tree, atop the boundary wall, or in a tree) for their ancestors. Then they do the standard *Gruad Nam* water ceremony to pass on merit to their ancestors. After the temple, people take food offerings out to their farm fields for the Phi Ta Haek land spirits and Mae Phosop, the rice goddess. Boon Khao Sak happens on the full moon day, 15 days after Boon Khao Pradap Din.

Boon Ok Phansa: Ok Phansa ("Leaving the Rains Retreat") is the final day of the three-month Buddhist Rains Retreat, which is fully explained with Boon Khao Phansa, the retreat's first day. Monks have special meetings with their abbot to confess any rules they broke during the Phansa period, while for lay people it's a day for making donations, listening to sermons, and in many places, racing boats. In Isan, this *Heet* used to be called Boon Jut Prateep ("Candle Lighting Ritual") because in the evening people make light displays with small candles or oil lamps. Usually, they are set on some sort of frame made of natural materials like bamboo, banana plants, and palm fronds, but they might also be placed on steps, laid out around a shrine, hung in trees, or just set on an ordinary table. Along the Mekong and other rivers, most famously in Nakhon Phanom province, the lamps are put on giant bamboo rafts, up to ten meters long, with thousands of lights making large, elaborate pictures. Nowadays, sometimes electric lights are used for these rafts. Okk Phansa is also the day of *bang Fai Pa-Yah-Nahk* ("Naga fireballs") which are seen in many places along Isan's stretch of the Mekong, but mostly it happens in Nong Khai province. Locals believe these are an offering from the resident Naga to the Buddha and they outright reject any suggestion of trickery. The fireballs do, however, look a lot like tracer bullets; but that's a story for another post. Boon Ok Phansa happens on the full moon day.

Boon Kathin: Nong Muang villagers will operate from the waning day of the eleventh month to the full moon of the twelfth month, and depending on the availability of the monks in the community. Faithful villagers will offer Kathin is going to choose a temple first, then, will be reserved in advance for the temple to know and prepare for the ceremony which according to the Buddha commanded that the monks must seek the yellow robes and receive the robe follow the schedule just only one month; from the waning day of the eleventh month to the full moon of the twelfth month.

V. DISCUSSION

Although the Nong Muang sub-district has a relatively arid natural resource and environmental condition, the soil does not hold water which is considered a moderate agricultural problem. However, the ancestors created the Heet-Kong culture from the base of natural resources valuable to the way of life of the people in the community which is following Chatthip Nartsupha and Others (2011) found that most of the resource conditions in the Isan region tend to have less salt and water conditions that are not suitable for cultivation. As well as the economy has been changed from a simple society that relies on labor, households, and communities to the widespread use of modern technology under a capitalist economy. Consistent with the research on the topic of *“Isan village economy, Isan economy history after World War II to the present (1945-2001)”* of Suwit Theerasawat (2002) It was found that although Isaan has changed, however, one thing that Nong Muang community still attaches to the Heet-Kong culture and society will continue to inherit each month such as Boon Pha Wet, Songkran Festival, Boon Khao Pradap Din and others. Even though some of the rituals of the merit-months may change somewhat, but the essence of the 12 Heets is evident. However, Issues that have changed will be seen in 14 Kongs (fourteenth government) more clearly, consistent with the research of Phrasukhee Jāgaradhammo (Srimart) (2010) found that the social and cultural changes are characterized by various factors such as social system, family, kinship, education, public health, beliefs, traditions as well as recreation all influences social and cultural change. Factors affecting the change in the Heet-Kong Isan traditions are; the new utilities, spreading of new cultures into the community, mass communication that spreads rapidly such as television, radio, internet, etc., corresponding to the work of Pattana Kitiarsa (2014) found that in addition to Isaan people preserving the Heet-Kong culture in their society, they also spread the Isaan culture abroad, namely In the Northeast, facing economic and social problems struggling for a good life, Isaan people have to leave their beloved land to find jobs in the big cities and abroad, where what they bring with them is culture such as food, clothing, ways of fighting and survival, expressions of emotions, longing for Northeastern habit, etc. at same research of Noppadol Prammanee (2013) found that the community values Heet-Kong in terms of community unity, the warmth of the family, and the regularity of the community. Heet-Kong’s relevance the Chamson community continues due to the Buddhist religion, traditional beliefs, and the adaptability of Heet-Kong to social change. Heet-Kong has changed because of constraints on Heet-Kong activities, limits on elders’ transfer of Heet-Kong wisdom, encroachment of other cultures, and the changing roles of family members. Heet-Kong’s influence on village life has declined due to: declines in the spirit of generosity in the community, changes in the roles of family relationships, and a decline in the levels of respect displayed by villagers. To keep Heet-Kong relevant and apply it to solving community problems requires the following three strategies: unity strategy, conservation strategy, and knowledge management strategy. Following these three strategies should enable Chamson village to be an example of a “best practice community” in terms of using Heet-Kong custom and traditions, allowing its adaption and continuing relevance to other communities in Thailand. A vibrant Heet-Kong community may also assist in creating employment opportunities. The same research result of Kanchana Khampha and Ratchadaporn Ketanon Naewheangtham (2018) found that 2) HeetSipsong tradition plays many roles in empowerment community: to maintain Buddhism, to enhance family and kinship stability, and to enhance relation system within and between the community. Socially, Heetsipsong encourages locals to have faith in local culture, empower the community’s budget management and give the community a sense of local pride. It is also valuable for community development in many aspects: economics, education, government, communication, technology as well as public health.

VI. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Problems and potentials of natural resources and environment, economy, society, Heet-Kong wisdom of Isan district in Nong Muang sub-district consists of 3 aspects which are; (1) Natural resources and the

environment: Most areas of the community are drought and poor soils, unsuitable for agricultural cultivation. The soil texture is sandy and does not hold water, therefore it lacks the viability of plants, However, the community is not considered an obstacle as it has become accustomed to the condition for several ages which there were continuous improvement and development of quality use of natural resources. (2) Economy: Community economy in the past was a type of natural resource dependence, livelihoods relied on agriculture and sustenance, become an industrial society, grow sugarcane, cassava, and single crops to deliver to factories for processing products and services to meet consumerism society (Mass production). And (3) Heet-Kong Northeastern culture: Although the economy, society, way of life in the Northeast in the community has changed, or the capitalist economy has been overwhelmingly overwhelming, Heet-Kong Isaan is also the essence of belief, practice, Buddhism is also the center of faith, create the happiness of love and depend on each other. It can be said that the community is blessed by nature and shield for immunity and protection for the family and sustainable community.

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