

The Structure and Function in the Local Pottery Making Process, Khon Kaen Province

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Abstract: This study is part of a research on the application of wisdom in the pottery production process in Khon Kaen Province to the creation of ceramic art works. The research was conducted under the new researcher development project for Khon Kaen University, the budgetary year, 2018. The goal of the research was to study the local wisdom or the traditional production process of the pottery in the communities within Khon Kaen as well as the role of the people related to the production and how the roles are assigned within a household. The research was conducted using qualitative research methods through the following tools: field research, observation and interviews. The participants of the research were people who are related to the pottery production process. The collected data were then analyzed using Talcott Parsons and Radcliffe-Brown's theory. The result from the research shows that at present, the production process of pottery in most communities are aimed at producing household containers. The production process and the forms of the pottery were systematically passed down from generation to generation. The amount of experience acquired created the skills which helped developed and improved the forms and the production process that goes hand in hand both in their utility and beauty that varies between the different roles of people within the community. The roles of the people involved with the pottery production process are systematic and relate to the social structure within the community. The pottery production process within each of the household is a systematic sub-process, since, the different roles were clearly defined. Within the sub-process, the functions and the actions are the main parts that affect the development of the system into the social structure, according to the theory of structural functionalism by Radcliffe-Brown and Talcott Parsons which can explain the phenomenon that had happened within the communities. The focus is on the five essential factors that affect the decisions on the social actions of the people within the community. Also, there are also five other essential factors that create motivations within the communities as well as the process that had created the system within the society and the characteristics of the social process that are continually changing in finding the suitability. These are the things that illustrate the survival of the local wisdom in producing pottery in the communities in Khon Kaen.

Key words: Pottery, local pottery, pottery making process, social actions, wisdom, Khon Kaen

INTRODUCTION

Making pottery is one of the oldest technology that man had invented. They are a kind of craft that related to human beings' way of life, since, 10000-4000 years ago (Boonlop, 2008). At the moment, it is still being practiced in every part of the world. The pottery that are being produced today still use the technology and the production process that are not different from the past (Charleston, 1968) such as paddling using clay anvil and wood to shape the pottery or to do the open firing process. These process were created through human's local wisdom with the purpose of maintaining their livelihood without having to depend on high technology. Through the historical study, pottery were classified as one important evidence in studying about the livelihood,

the living conditions, the beliefs, and the culture of the different ancient communities, for example, the location of the communities or the trade and transportation routes that can show the relationships between the communities through the communications as well as the developments of those communities.

Shor (1988) mentioned the starting point of pottery in South East Asia by stating that around the 14th-16th century, Solheim (1984) studied the communities that produced pottery in the Northeast of Thailand to accompany his interpretation of the ecosystem around the pottery along with his historical research. Various forms of the containers were found such as water containers or cooking containers. The use for each of the container can be distinguished by its shape and mouth. Especially, the mouth of the container which can be used to identify the

maker due to the fact that the mouth of the containers were formed using thumbs, pressing and flattening out the clay. Therefore, the size for the edge of the container's mouth equals to the size of the potter's thumbs. Later on, Louise and Lefferts (2000) conducted a research on pottery in Southeast Asia and found that pottery was a secondary career while rice planting was the main career. These process was passed down from through many generations. This kind of knowledge is called chains operatories which is the chain that has existed alongside the human society and was passed on years after years. Currently, many pottery makers had transitioned to other careers that provide more income such as construction workers both domestically and in other countries, hiring labors in sugarcane farms and factory workers. When compared to other regions of the world such as India, China, Europe, Japan, North American, Africa, Australia and New Zealand all those countries still maintain their production of pottery and continuing their chain operatories which is opposite of Thailand, especially, in Isaan where the number of communities that produce pottery have been decreasing more and more.

The above result on the process of creating Isaan local pottery shows that this process is part of the local wisdom that consists of the methods that are not that different from the past. Most of the process are simple process with no technological complications. This process is also a good reflection of the agricultural livelihood of the community. At the same time, the process also reflects the community local wisdom that demonstrates the identity of the local products.

The development of the Isaan local pottery of Thailand is directly related to the settlement location of the communities. One main factor considered when choosing the location for the settlement are the water sources that people use for agriculture. Later on, human beings learned from their experience in living alongside agriculture and the land and used the knowledge in creating clay into various shapes and using the fire to harden the clay and later on evolved into pottery. The first generations of pottery around the world contain some similarities, all the containers were earthenware that were fired using the open firing method. These clay used within these pottery were still rough due to the fact that they were made from the mixture of clay such as sand or quartzite and plants. The decoration of the pottery were done through the impressed and inlay techniques. These goes in line with the research by Narasaki *et al.* on the process of pottery making in the Northeast of Thailand. The research grouped the pottery makers in the Northeast, Isaan, according to their dialect which can be

categorized into three following ethnic groups: Thai-Korat dialect group, Thai-Lao dialect group and Suay dialect group. The shapes of the potteries from the three groups have the same similarities: the potters were women while men provide support in other process such as preparing the clay, the firing process and the selling of the potteries. It could be noticed that the pottery production process from the three groups were similar, especially, the production process where the women will be the potter while men help with other process such as prepare the soil, firing and selling the pottery. When consider the different functions within the pottery making process from the three groups not many differences were found in the production process using clay anvil and wooden paddles. The mouth of the containers were formed on wooden platforms and decorated with the imprinting of pattern technics. The last few steps were to fire the clay containers and sell them.

Today, the process for making pottery in Isaan is mostly for households containers. The pottery making process and the different forms of the containers are the accumulation of work experience that helped create the skills and the clarity for the pottery makers themselves. This experience was systematically passed down from generation to generation. There were some improvements and changes to the forms and the production process that goes hand in hand with the usage and the beauty as well as their uniqueness depending on the different roles of the people within the communities. Therefore, the pottery found in various sites can explain the history and culture, from the past to the present of those communities. Furthermore, they can also help explain the roles of people within the communities. The pottery making process has a system that relates to the structure of the society, especially, in Khon Kaen Province. Khon Kaen Province is considered the center for the production of pottery from the past to the present with many traces left to be learned and studied. The potteries here also have their own local uniqueness and very popular in Isaan region. From the reasons and the importance that were mentioned above, the researcher became interested in studying the current roles of the pottery makers within the pottery making process and the relationship between the two. Apart from this, the research also wants to find out how the different roles affect the social structure within the communities that produce pottery in Khon Kaen Province.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Current status of the communities that produce pottery within Khon Kaen Province: Khon Kaen is one of the provinces in the Northeast of Thailand. An interesting

fact about Khon Kaen Province is that the terrain in Khon Kaen is very suitable for pottery making. This region also has enough raw materials to make pottery (Arnold, 1958). The production normally happens in the hot season and stops during the rainy season. This is the normal situation for most communities within the tropical area. Currently, there are still communities that make pottery from natural clay in Isaan. Within Khon Kaen Province, there is only one community that continuously make pottery and pottery making remain the main occupation for people within the community. The name for this community is Wangtua village, Wangchai sub-district, Namphong District, Khon Kaen Province. This village has continuously been making pottery for a very long time and has considered the knowledge to be one of the local wisdom.

From the study of Chantaree (1996), it was found that there are only three areas that are still making pottery in Khon Kaen province: Hua Beung village, Pohtak village and Wangtua village. Later on, Ruaisungnoen and Chantaree (2008) found that there were only two areas left that were still making pottery: Wangtua village in Namphong District and Huabeung village, Muang District. These two communities were from the same ethnic group, the Thai-Korat group which originated from Dankwian District, Nakhon Ratchasima Province, that had migrated from their original area while selling pottery along the way. Therefore, the current status of the two communities are very similar, especially, the traditional pottery making process that still relies on the traditional local wisdom such as how the clay should be prepared, how to form the pottery and how to fire the pottery. This process is still very similar to the traditional process from the pre-historic era, that can still be seen within the South East Asian Region.

From the field visit, it was seen that Wangtua village, a community that has continuously been making pottery are using both the new and traditional process. This is different from Huabeung community where the process will only happen if there are orders from the customers. Additionally, villagers in Huabeung village will only make the pottery during the cold and hot season and not in the raining season. This is different comparing to Wangtua community where the villagers there make pottery throughout all seasons but producing less quantity in the rainy season. The reason is that Wangtua village has its own closed-kiln with roof which allows them to be able to make pottery all year long and not having to worry about the rain. Currently, Huabeung village almost no longer makes pottery. Therefore, most of the data come from the observation in Wangtua village, since, the different process can still be clearly observed. Furthermore, the

relationship of the people under the structure and the different functions for pottery making can still be clearly observed when compared to Huabeung village.

The traditional process of pottery making has been the uniqueness of the people within the community, especially, in Wangtua village. It could be said that the traditional process of pottery making is the identity of the local wisdom of the people within the community. From the words of the elders within the community on the different process of pottery making, the process starts from: finding and preparation of the clay, clay mixing, preparing grog, clay wedging, creating form by making a hole in the middle of the clay use the hand to widen the hole, adjusting the shape, creating the rim of the pottery, close the bottom of pottery, final step in adjusting the form of the pottery, sundry, preparing for the firing, firing, storing (prepare for the pottery to be sold) and selling the pottery.

The process for making the traditional pottery of the Isaan community from start to finish reveals the different functions within the process, especially, the functions between the husbands and wives, the siblings or people within the family. The characteristics of the roles and functions go in line with the capability of each person. For instance, any functions that require a lot of strength normally falls under the roles of men such as digging, preparing the grog, wedging the clay, firing the pottery and selling the pottery. Forming and smoothing the pottery falls under the role of the women. These different functions related to the process of pottery making within the families occurs in every family that makes pottery. In the past, most families make pottery with similar functions within each family. The result from assigning different functions created the social structure within the communities due to the similar functions within the families.

The structure and function within the pottery making process in the communities in Khon Kaen Province:

From the interview with Mrs. Lai Saengsai, Mrs. Pok Buapoo and Mrs. Thongbai Wuttisane who are all pottery makers in Wangtua village on the process of the local wisdoms which is considered the uniqueness of the community. It was found that the traditional process of pottery making in Wangtua village is the process that systematically incorporate different functions between the people in the families, especially, the role of men and women or between the husbands and wives. This is the small system or structure that has been duplicated in different families and thus, created the big social structure. This goes along with the structure and function theory. Understanding the roles according to the

structure and the function within the cultural process can provide the explanation for the origin of the need of people with the communities or societies.

The process of traditional pottery making of the community relates to the different function or different working roles that every family have in similar. Due to the fact that the pottery making process is a systematic sub-process, there are clear functions that help separate the functions of the subunits. The process of those subunits is the heart that helps develop the social structure within the society. These process came from the acceptance and the appropriate management. For this social structure system to happen, it will need to rely on two main conditions: the first condition is the actor will need to have enough motivation to act, according to his or her own status and role. And second, the social system needs to avoid the conflict or the behaviors that don't go in the same direction.

If, the structural and function theory was used to help explain the phenomenon within the community according to Parsons (1937) by focusing on the five important factors: the relationship between the actors, the goals, the chosen methods, the situation where the actors had to choose a method and the indicators for the norm. These five factors can be used as the path to create an understanding of the structural system and the different functions of the local wisdom; in this case, the pottery making in Khon Kaen Province. From both the structured and non-structured interviews with people who are related to the pottery making process, the result revealed five factors that occur with the people in the community.

As for the factor concerning the relationship between the actors, currently, there are 80 households in Wangtua village. The 20 households make pottery. About 2 of the 20 households are big producers of pottery. People in Wangtua village are mostly relatives and most have some relationship to pottery making. Even though villagers, who are the actors, came from different background but once they enter into this relationship within the same process, a new relationship was formed as people adjusted themselves to the social system. This can be seen within the family system such as the different functions between the husbands and the wives between the siblings or relatives within the family or the community due to the fact that most people are related, the roles and functions within the community went smoothly and were accepted to the point that doesn't create problems or conflicts between people in the communities.

The goals are what every family who makes traditional pottery in the community had been molded, since, the time of their ancestors. In other words, the

goals result from different needs, according to different eras. Those needs are responded through the acceptance of the norm until they become part of the culture in pottery making and thus became the main occupation of the community. From the interviews with three families who are small scale pottery makers an interview with Mrs. Pok Buapoo's show that the goal in conducting a business or continuing the career in pottery making already meet the needs of the family and found no need to expand the business to be larger considering their own capacity. The interviewee is living with only her husband and one grandchild. From the interview with Mr. Kampa Jai-kwang, the head of a family that makes pottery as well as one of the largest pottery makers in the community, it was found that the goal of the family is to expand their business or increase their production capacity. This is because they need to find the money to pay off the loan that they got out to expand their business the first time as well as preparing for all the expenses that will occur once they increase their production capacity. This shows that the goal that the family has is the main factor in the survival of the family and directly relate to the survival of the local wisdom of each of the family. This shows that each family has different sets of goal. From the interview, it can be concluded that the needs of each of the families that make pottery both as small scale and big scale are aimed towards improving the economy and social status.

The chosen method: The different functions in pottery making in each of the family depend on the appropriateness which is the process that is done between one another. From the interview with Mrs. Tawin Tongdee and Mrs. Thongbai Wuttisane, pottery makers from Wangtua village, it was found that currently, these two pottery makers get hired to help with smoothening out the pottery for Mr. Boonsuan Saen-kaew's family which is large scale pottery maker within the community. This shows the acceptance of the condition that they can accept considering their capability and the person who hires them. From the interview, it was found that if Mrs. Tawin Tongdee and Mrs. Thongbai Wuttisane decided to start their own business, no one would be opposed to that. But the reason they chose not to do that was that they don't have any helper. Mrs. Tongbai lives by herself after her husband passed away several years ago. As for Mrs. Tawin, even though her husband is still alive, he has other jobs to do as a construction worker. She also, believes that the construction work pays more than pottery making. Therefore, performing the role, the negotiation and the exchange was formed as a base for the society after having gone through the refinement of the actors based on the necessities in life.

The situation where the actors had to choose: This phenomenon in Wangtua village appears after the different functions in pottery making were assigned; starting clearly from the family system to the community system and had been accepted through generations. People within the community need to have one activity or another to help find income for the family. Every process in the pottery making has to do with the income that will follow. Mrs. Lai Saengsai said in the interview that “The more I do, the more money I make. The less I do, the less money I make”. What Mrs. Lai said was the situation that she needs to choose whether it’s an action that both parties agree or the acceptance in the situation that she chose and eventually became a norm and the path for the adjustment and the refinement of the actors. At the same time, everything was mold into part of the culture. Therefore, it is crucial that the actors choose an activity or a method to carry out. There were some phenomenons that help explain the situation where the actors need to choose a method and that was what happened in Wangtua village.

The indicators of the norm: From the interview of the elderly in the community, it was found that the different systems that were created during the traditional pottery making process (round pot) only have had minor change; one can even say that there had been no changes at all. The pottery production process is the thing that people have been practicing until it had become norms within society. These norms function to control the actions that happen and to make them stable. It can be seen from the pottery production process of Wangtua village that has been passed down for a very long time until today. That shows the stability of the community.

In the past, the pottery making process of Wangtua isn’t based on self-reliance and still lacks the collaboration with between the producers and the government or with people from the outside. The villagers never had any support in the development of the pottery making process. The products are still not up to the standard of endurance due to the lack of the appropriate technology which affects the quality of the pottery. Especially, the firing process that happens in the open and is not considered to be the appropriate standard since the heat was not enough and there is no way to control the temperature. This cause the pottery to not be as durable because the firing process isn’t able to draw out the full heat. Besides, the styles of the pottery also lack in terms of drawing interest.

Because the pottery made by villagers were only produced for real use, there is no variety in the design. Even though the pottery making skills were passed down

from the people of the old generations who had their own forms and technics but in the situation where pottery is not very popular, there needs to be a change in the styles and the production technics to create more satisfaction to the customers. Most customers want the pottery only as souvenirs or for decoration. Another problem was the lack of planning. The villagers still use the method of going to different places to sell the pottery. They would put the pottery in a truck and drove to different places to sell them. This means there is no potential market and cause more expenses in transportation. Furthermore, the fact that villagers have no production plan cause the imbalance between the buyers and the amount of pottery being produced. Sometime, villagers would produce too many potteries and took a long time to sell them all due to the lack of having a supporting market. This caused an unnecessary expense. These problems are caused by the lack of understanding in the management system and accounting. Villagers still make pottery through the method of finding raw materials and selling the final products without calculating the expenses and income or making any kind of estimation. This had caused a lot of money to be spent outside of the production process and sometimes, led to the losses; for instance, spending a lot of money on transporting and selling the product instead of just spending money on the production process. Sometimes, the amount of pottery being produced exceeds that amount of buyers. The reason why the villagers cannot determine the amount to produce was that there is no stable market. The price of the pottery is also not stable. Even though the price for the kind of products the village were similar, there had never been any about the price on the community level which caused some people to sell the pottery at a higher price and led the conflict within the community. But at present, after interviewing the two communities, it was found that the communities are receiving support from government organizations and offices in terms of the production technology and community business. This had helped the community to address the need of the market. For instance, an kilnnerator was built in Wangtua village, the wheels are now electrical wheels and the wedging is done through machines. This development had cause changed in the production process. As for Huabeung village, even though there are different organizations going in to provide the knowledge and production technology because many families had abandoned the pottery making, investing in some technology to improve the production process might not seem worth it. But there are still some government offices that went in to help develop the products but they didn’t get a much collaboration, since, the social status and the livelihood that involves pottery making are fading away.

The development in the production process led to the new form of products and high quantity in Wangtua village. From the interview with Mrs. Tongyu Buapoo, it was found that currently in the community, Mr. Boonsuan Sean-kaew's family is the biggest producers of pottery in the community and uses all the modern machines such as the electronic wedging machine, the electronic wheels and huge kiln. However, these production process also led to many changes to the process of the local wisdom and the social structure; for instance, the raw materials, the pottery makers, the forms and the firing process. The followings are the detail.

From the interview with Mr. Boonsuan Saen-kaew and Mr. Kampa Jai-kwang, it was found that the raw materials that are used in the preparation of the clay were changed from grog to sand. This was caused by the change from an open-firing to a closed-system one. Pottery fired in the closed-system kilns are under better-controlled temperature and there is no need to add the grog in case of the sudden contraction of the clay which mostly happened with the pottery fired through the open-system firing due to the changed status of the clay. Adding sand helps with the hardening process of the pottery in high temperature from the closed-system kiln. Apart from the changes in the ingredients of the clay, the wedging process which was normally done manually by feet are now done with electronic wedging machines and no longer depending on manual labor, especially, for the big scale producers.

Pottery makers: The family of big scale pottery makers can produce a large quantity of pottery because there are pottery makers who are familiar with the electronic wheels from other provinces who came to get hired which contribute to the large quantity of pottery production each day. The traditional pottery makers are now less important because of the lower quantity that they can produce per day. From the interview with Mrs. Thongbai Wuttisane, she revealed the reason why many pottery makers decided to stop making pottery. From the observation, Mr. Boonsuan Saen-kaew, the head of the family who is the biggest producer of pottery in the community had been trying to practice using the electronic wheels and realize that it was a sign that big changes is coming. To elaborate, most pottery makers were women but men are starting to do more of that. Additionally, the use of clay anvil and wooden paddle to the use of electronic wheels. These changes had never happened in Wangtua village before and will definitely directly affect the process on the local wisdom and the social structure of the community.

The changes in the forms of the pottery made with electronic wheels instead of the traditional method contribute to the changes in the form of the pottery especially the bottom part of the pottery where it is now flat instead of being round because they need to be placed on the platform on the electronic wheel. It also limits the imagination of the pottery makers since the forms are only limited to the forms that work on the wheels. This limitation is the significant difference when compared to the pottery made by hand where the sky is the limit in terms of the form and design.

The firing method that had changed from the opened-system firing process to the closed-system kiln made from bricks that can be used to fire the pottery even in the rainy season. However, it also requires more investment in terms of finding the fuel and the amount of the pottery needs to be in huge quantity. This had caused a delay since villagers need to wait for other people to be done with their pottery to be able to use the kiln at the same time. However, from the interview, villagers are satisfied with that process because they can do it any time of the year. Also, it was found that in Wangtua village, the families of the current small scale pottery makers are also producing for the large scale producers while the large scale producers will be responsible for the firing and the selling of the pottery.

If the functions of villagers in the process of pottery making in a community in Khon Kaen were to be analyzed through the structure and function theory, the phenomenon within the community could be explained through the relationship between the two supporting characteristics:

- The structure
- The functions

Within the process of pottery making, there are sub-process that works accordingly in different steps and clearly assigning different functions to different people. Assigning different functions in the process of pottery making helps create a picture of a unified community that lives together in harmony while achieving the goals the community had set out to.

Action: Within the process of pottery making each time, there are always the unit actions which are the different smaller functions that are integrated within the process of preparing the materials, the forming of the pottery and the firing. The pottery makers and their helpers have their own roles within the different functions in each step. The idea in the actions or functions point out the

characteristics of each action. Eventually, any action within the process of pottery making will become a norm or a system. From a system, it can develop into a structure. Therefore, it can be concluded that every step in the process of pottery making is the source of all the factors that helps create a system that develops into the community social structure.

If all the process for pottery making were to be compared with Parson's idea, it would be found that any action from the people within the community depends on five following factors.

The factor concerning the relationship between the actors: From the observation, the functions within the process are the roles that happen between the pottery makers and their helpers. The people doing these functions are from the same family. Therefore, the actions are flexible through people within the same family, helping out with one another. Apart from this, the relationship between the actors within the same family also affect people in a wider circle; for instance, digging for clay can occur with the help of people from different families as well as the firing process where potteries from different families are sometimes fired together. These are the relationship between people in the community relying on the labor from each family helping out systematically.

The factor concerning goals: People who are making pottery all have the same goal of making pottery as the main occupation as opposed to in the past where making pottery is a secondary occupation after farming. This goal is the ultimate goal of the social structure of a community that makes pottery.

The factor concerning the means: In the pottery making process, everyone has the same mean, both men and women. In other words, women are the pottery makers while the men are the supporter of the process. Once the mean is chosen, it became a function and that function is a subunit of the social structure system.

The factor in the situational conditions: Due to the clear separation of the functions between men and women, the situational conditions were the accepted as action without any excuse or exception since it is how people have been practicing since the time of their ancestors. Situational conditions occurred and were passed down to the present. They are the chains operators that exist clearly within the social structure.

The factor concerning the norms, values and other ideas: These norms exist through acceptance within the

community where everyone is fully aware. The pottery that was made the have value in both historical values and the identity of the community as well as the economical value which is an important factor for the survival of the social structure.

These five factors are the important conditions for people in the community in making decisions which go in line with Parson's idea where he believes that for a system to be developed into a structure, the five following principles need to be considered: when actors with different background enter into a social relationship, it means that the individualism of people within the society need to be adjusted for them to be able to work together in the pottery making process. The actions of the actors were refined through the needs and those needs have to be addressed by receiving the cultural patterns of the community which is receiving the pottery making process that has been passed down in that community. The actions between one another such as the roles, the negotiations and the exchange, build the base of the society through the refinement of the actors. In other words, these are how the different functions within the pottery making process are defined. The norms help create the refinement process of the actors working together which eventually mold into part of the culture. In other words, the pottery production process affects the local culture; for instance on important Buddhist holidays, none of the families will be making pottery, since, it is prohibited, since, the past and had become a unique culture for the community.

Eventually, these norms will control the actions between the actors and create stability which is also how the pottery making communities have been surviving until today.

The five essential factors and principles can be used to explain the phenomenon that happens in the structure and functions within the system and the people of the pottery making community in Khon Kaen Province. The structure and functions have been passed down from the time of their ancestors and have been the things that they received and pass on to the next generation and had become the primary practice of the society, a society that is unique and different from other communities within Khon Kaen Province.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The social structure of the communities that make pottery was formed by the functions of the people with the community that is related to pottery making. This structure is like the sub-system within the overall social structure or community. The functions and this system

always interact. This sub-system starts from the smallest unit within the families; for instance, the different functions within the families in terms of making pottery to the bigger sub-system in the community such as within the community that makes pottery consist of a sub-unit of families who make pottery.

Once the action between one another becomes an institution, a system is formed. The system can be at any size. Parsons (1937) believes that in the study of the social structure, it is needed to study the subcomponents that form that social structure as well, since, when things are formed into a system, they can reflect the overall picture of society through a clear structure and how societies are formed. At the same time, Sat-sa-nguan (2008) talked about the structure and function theory by referring to Radcliffe (1940), who believes that every social system consists of the structure and the activities. The social structure is a pattern that lasts for a long time. The people within the structure have a people-to-people relationship and a people-to-environment relationship. The people-to-people relationship consists of acceptance and conflicts but was dealt with through a system until the conflicts were at a level of coexistence. From the idea of the two sociologists shows the different emphasis on the components of the structure and function theory. Parson emphasize on the functions and actions while Brown emphasizes on the structure and the system. Both of them agree that this theory consist of the two supporting parts which go in line with Srisontisuk (2009) who wrote in his book on the study of society and culture that supports Parson's idea by saying that the social system and the social structure needs to be built on two important principles:

- The first principle is that the actors need to have the motivation to carry on their actions according to the status and roles
- The second principle is that the social system needs to avoid conflicts or the behaviors that don't go in line with the rest of society

Because people in the families that make ceramics consist of both people within the same family and people who are hired. Therefore, the things that stimulate the interaction within the pottery making process is motivation. Therefore, motivation is an important thing that helps people carry on their actions according to their status and roles. In other situations, motivation can mean the values, ideas or the beliefs that connect people within society. The variables that create the motivation for within the communities that make pottery are as follows:

The variables that concern the feelings that focus on the connectedness and non-connectedness such as the

social system between the husband and the wife will have the relationship that relates to feelings. However, in the social system between the employer and the employee, there will be no relationship that relates to feeling like in the husband and wife relationship.

The variables that relate to the specific relationship and the non-specific relationship with diffuseness. For example, the relationship between the employer and the employee is a specific relationship while the relationship between the husband and the wife in non-specific because that kind of relationship covers everything within the society.

The variables that relate to the social unit as an actor as a universal unit with the actor in a particular unit. For example, the forming of the containers which can be made into any shapes. However, most of the shapes will be the similar shapes that they have been making and the shapes that people are familiar with. Forming the containers is an action that is a universal unit. Forming as a particular unit is when the forming of the shape of the containers comes from specific orders.

The variables that relate to the inborn quality or the quality that they received from when they were born. For instance, nationality, age, gender and ascription. This also involves the actions that come from the passing on of the knowledge of pottery making that was passed down from their ancestors.

The variables that relate to the self-orientation unit and the variables that focus on collective orientation. These variables can be found in individual persons both in the family unit and the larger unit in the community. Apart from the variables that show the interaction between the members of society. These actions are also the main components of the process that help create a social system. The process are as follows:

The process of communication that uses the skills in the process in pottery making is important in the interaction between one another. The process in preserving the social boundary is a form of control and preservation of balance in a society which can be seen from the communal use of resources such as soil or firewoods.

The process in the personality, society and culture is a supporting system because a community has both the thinking and skill base that comes from a similar process of pottery making. The process of social control to prevent the member of the society from violating the norm. This is the agreement that the community agrees upon without any enforcement such as the use of the resources and not making pottery on religious holidays.

The social refinement process is the passing on of the expressions of social members to the next generation.

This can be seen in the process of passing on of pottery making from generation to generation. The process of transitioning from status to society is a passing down of expression from a generation of members to the next. This can be seen from the passing down of the local wisdom of pottery making from one generation to the other.

These process needs to come from the agreement and the values or the beliefs that will lead to the same destination. Different situations are the indicators the identify the behaviors of the actors, the roles and the status of the individuals that were carried in until they became a system or a social process that are continuously changing to find appropriateness with similar characteristics:

The social systems were formed from the relationship between each unit, for example, the relationship between people in the families that make pottery and the relationship between the community and the government units that came in with continuous support for a certain length of time until a system was created.

The social system that has a trend to preserve the social boundary to prevent the intervention and the destruction from other systems. This can be seen from the effort in passing down the knowledge of pottery making to through the development process and the improvement of the local wisdom to strengthen the community, especially, the pottery making which is the base of society. If any changes happen in the pottery making process such as the coming in of the technology of the government. Villagers are not denying but on the opposite, villagers accept the things that they receive and apply those to the existing local wisdom for the survival or better status.

Each system within the society of the communities that make pottery tries to preserve the social balance because if the community can no longer maintain the system, it will affect the social balance. This can be dissolved into other system or changed to a new system. This is difficult to happen in communities that are stronger such as the communities that make pottery in Khon Kaen Province.

From all the information mentioned, it can be concluded that the structure and function theory has a hypothesis on a society that there are smaller units within a society or smaller units that come from the actions through motivations that helps people within the members within the society to act according to the status and the role within the society. These sub-systems will eventually form and function in order. For the system to form the structure, the importance of actions needs to be considered for the community to sustain according to the

objectives of the society with the characteristics that the community wants. The local wisdom or the traditional process of pottery making of the community relates to the different functions or the work designated within the families. For this sub-process, the functions and the actions are the main principles that affects the system to develop into the social structure within the community through the structure and function theory to help explain the phenomenon within the societies according to Parson by focusing on 5 variables:

- The relationship between the actors
- The goals
- The means
- The situations where the actors need to choose
- The designator of the norm to use as the direction to adjust or apply the local wisdom in making the pottery of the community in Khon Kaen Province

CONCLUSION

The pottery making communities in Khon Kaen Province consists of groups of people who make pottery like other groups in Isaan. There are components in the traditional process of making pottery which is local wisdom and unique knowledge. These knowledge help them to make a career until a community was formed. The traditional pottery making still goes on as a response to the need of human beings for every era. One aspect that will help show the local wisdom and the experience of the pottery makers is the production process. The roles of the people who are in the pottery making process have different functions that relate to the social structure within the community. The pottery making process within each family is considered a sub-process within the system because there are clear actions. These sub-process contributes to the development of the social structure that happens within the community from the past to the present. At present, this pottery making process is still being passed down and continue along with the adjustment of the people in their livelihood, idea and cultural aspects, according to the context within the communities. These rely on the collaboration between people within the communities starting from the family, the smallest unit. After that, the relationship expands to a bigger society, a community society. Therefore, the study on the pottery making process of the communities in Khon Kaen Province in its current status based on the forms and the traditional pottery making process is an important thing that will help people understand the pottery making process in the past and helps reveal the identity of the communities. The information can be used

as an explanation and help created the pride for people with the village as a pottery making community of Wangtua, Khon Kaen Province.

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