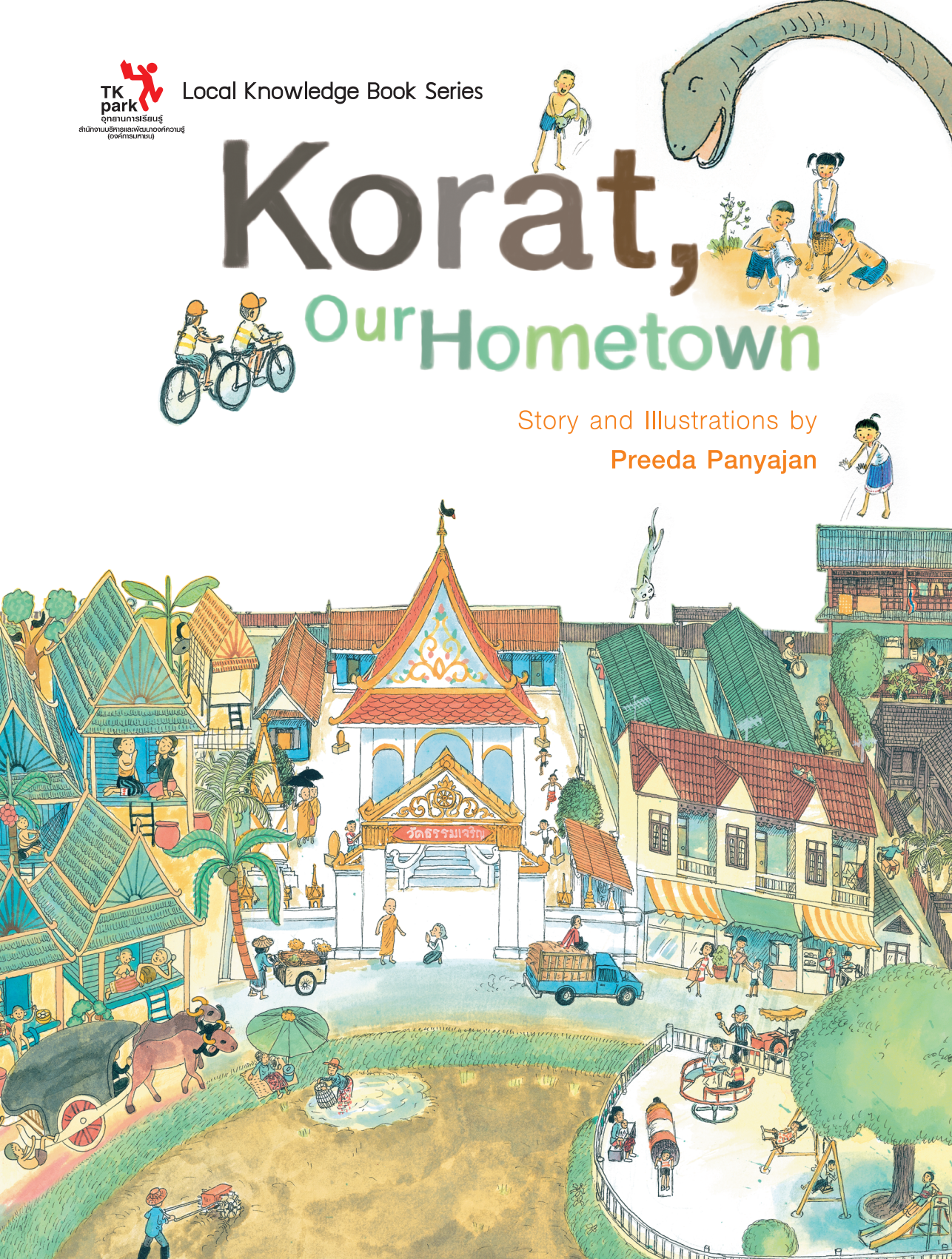


Korat, Our Hometown

Story and Illustrations by
Preeda Panyajan



Local Knowledge Book Series



Korat, Our Hometown

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Preface



TK Park's important mission in society is to develop a love of reading and give people equal opportunities to experience modern learning centers which speak to their interests. Thailand Knowledge Park has been cooperating with local administrators in many regions of Thailand to build living libraries as a way to achieve its mission.

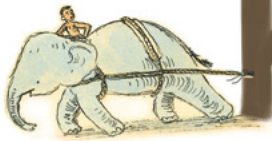
Bringing local knowledge to children, in a modern and fun way, is an important tool to inspire them to read and explore. The idea is to create books which reflect local wisdom, together with morality and ethics, for children aged 0-12.

The books in the Isaan Adventure Set were developed by TK Park, scholars, and local writers. Children and adults will get to know about the northeastern region of Thailand and be proud of the unique traditions found there. Moreover, the books also foster better understandings and tolerant attitudes toward others from different cultures and societies.

Thailand Knowledge Park hopes the books will be another learning tool to help encourage Thai people to read more and maximize their learning. TK Park aims to make the books fun and easy to read. Readers can enjoy them and appreciate their own hometowns, regions, and Country.

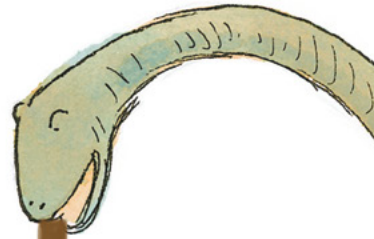
Thailand Knowledge Park





Korat,

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Isaan in the past







The Gateway to Isaan



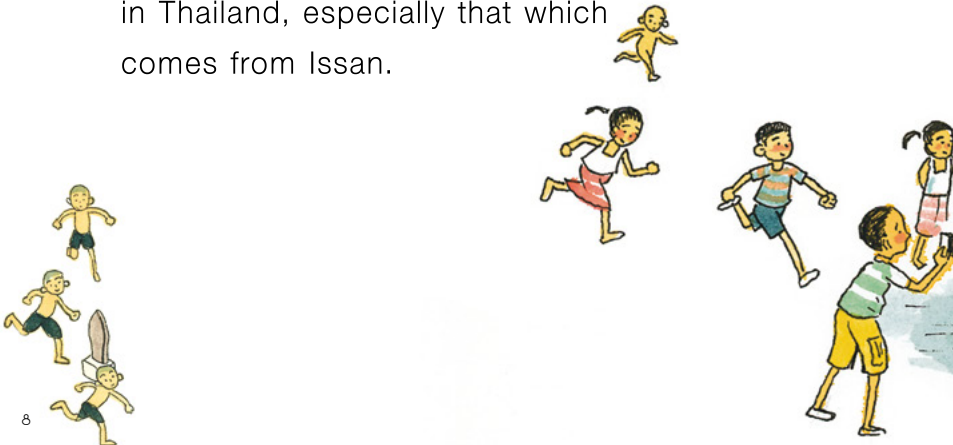
“The Gateway to Isaan” is what people called Nakhon Ratchasima province, which is presently nicknamed Korat.



Have you heard of the Korat plateau?

The Korat plateau stands about 250-300 meters above the level of the surrounding area.

The Korat plateau covers a large area of the northeastern Thailand. There are 20 provinces in ‘Isaan’ (the northeastern region of Thailand) and it is covered in mountain ranges. The Isaan area is one third of Thailand, so it is a huge region.


During the summer, Isaan is very arid. However, this region also grows the most delicious jasmine rice in the world! We are proud of the jasmine rice produced in Thailand, especially that which comes from Issan.



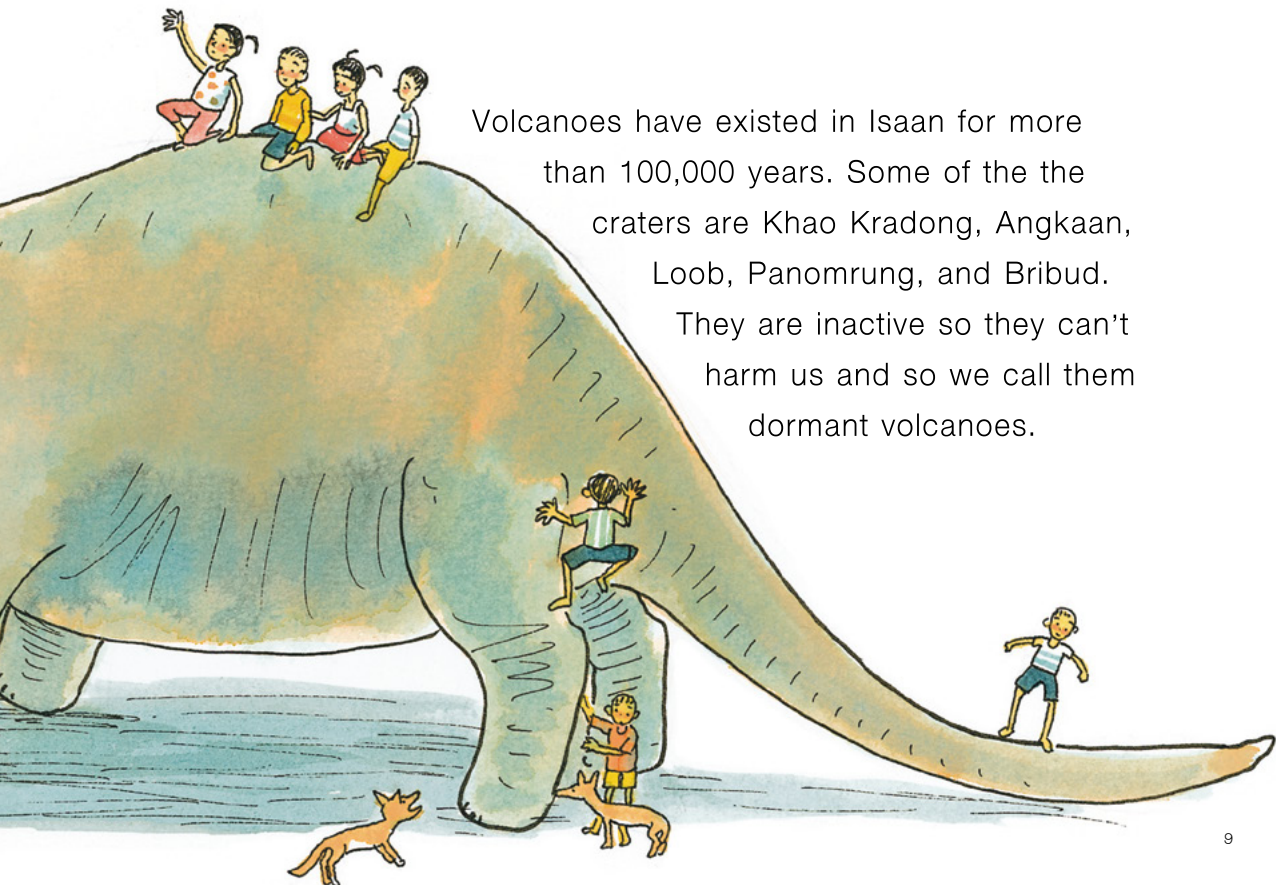


Volcanoes and Living Dinosaurs!

Long long ago, the Earth's crust shifted and the Korat plateau was formed. We know that many dinosaurs had lived here because dinosaur fossils were discovered in the soil.



Volcanoes have existed in Isaan for more than 100,000 years. Some of the the craters are Khao Kradong, Angkaan, Loob, Panomrung, and Bribud. They are inactive so they can't harm us and so we call them dormant volcanoes.





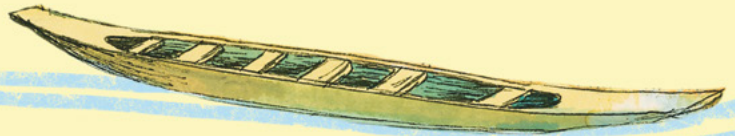


The River of Life



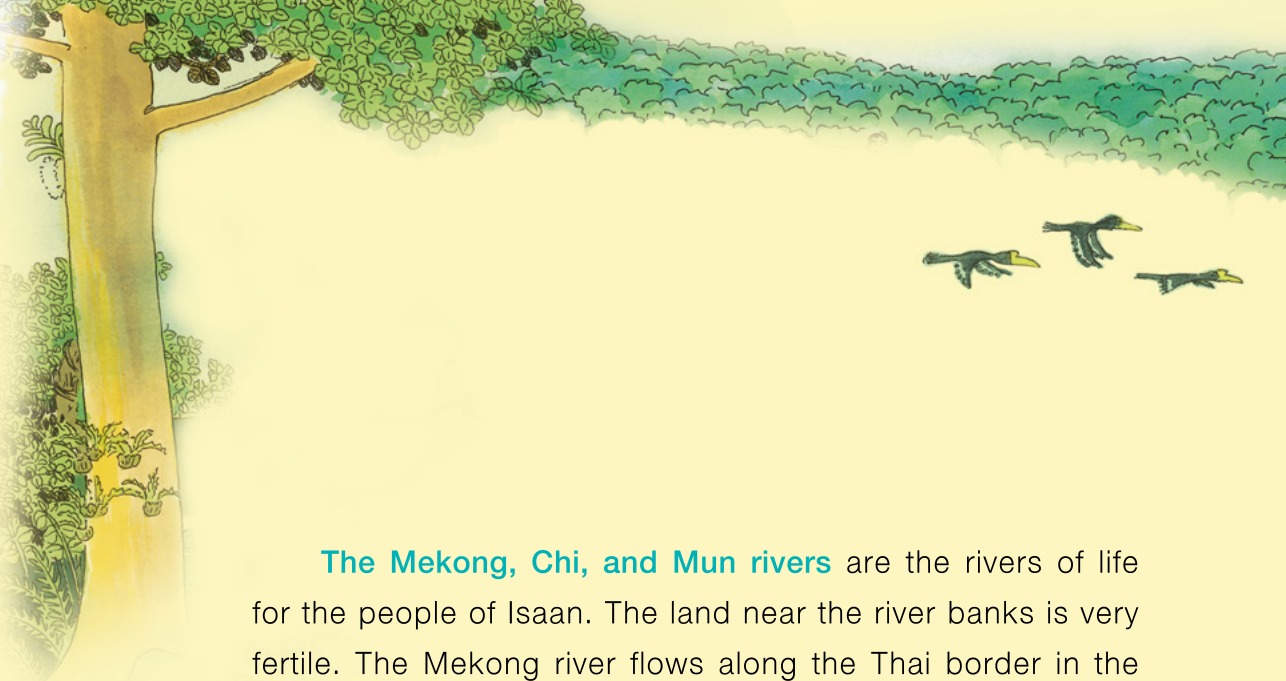
Isaan is very hot and dry in the summer, so bodies of water are very essential.

The Mun and **Chi rivers** are considered the rivers of life for the people of Isaan. They flow through most provinces, giving liveliness to the land and its people.

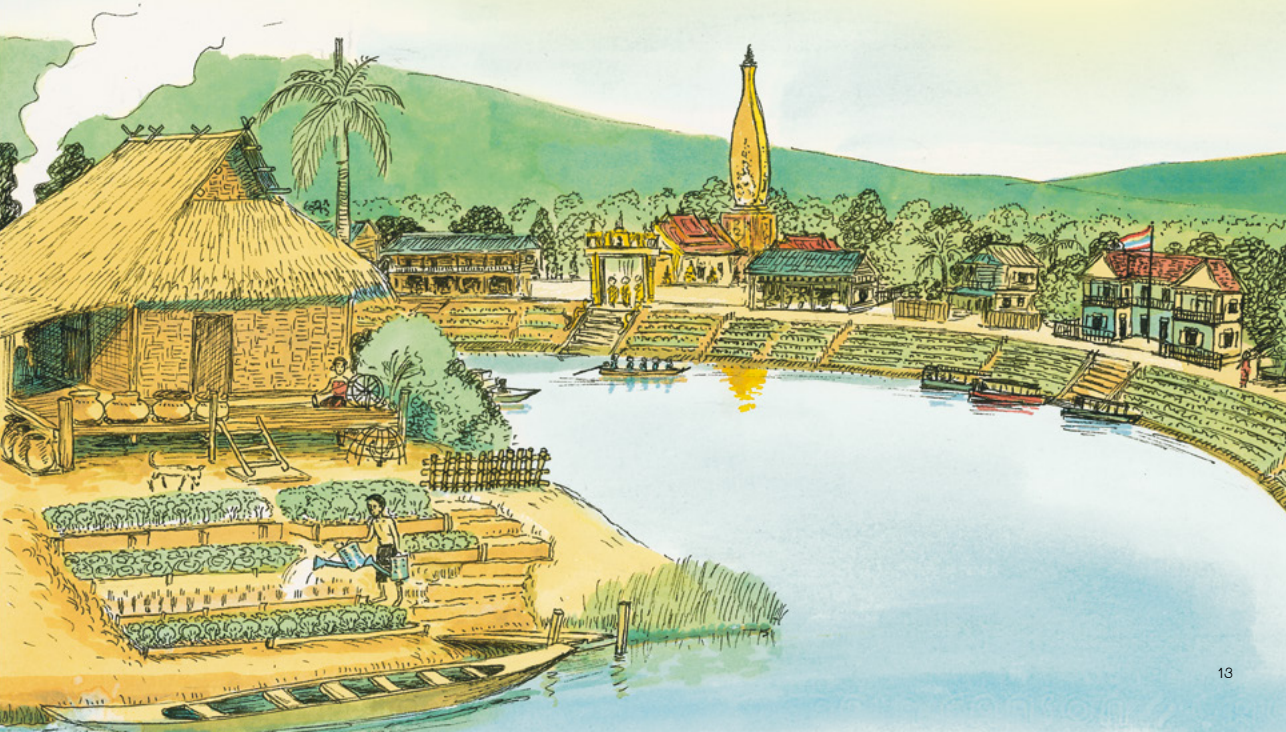


The Mun river's headwaters are located in the southern reaches of the mountain ranges of Nakhon Ratchasima. It then merges with more than ten tributaries along the way through the southern Isaan—from Nakhon Ratchasima to Buriram to Surin to Sisaket, and finally meets the Chi river in Amphoe Warinchamrab, Ubon Ratchathani. They then flow into the Mekong River at Amphoe Khong Jiam, Ubon Ratchathani.

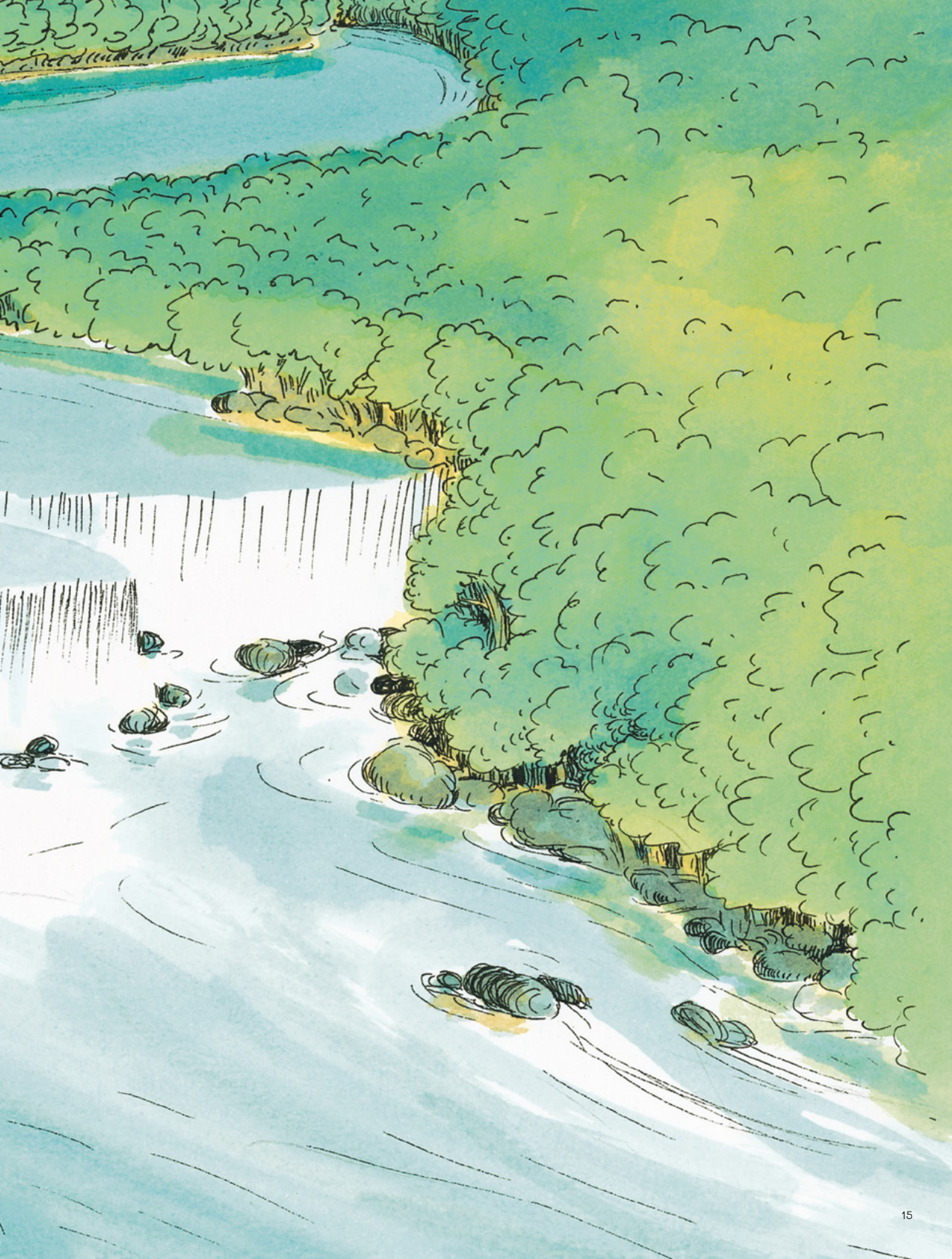




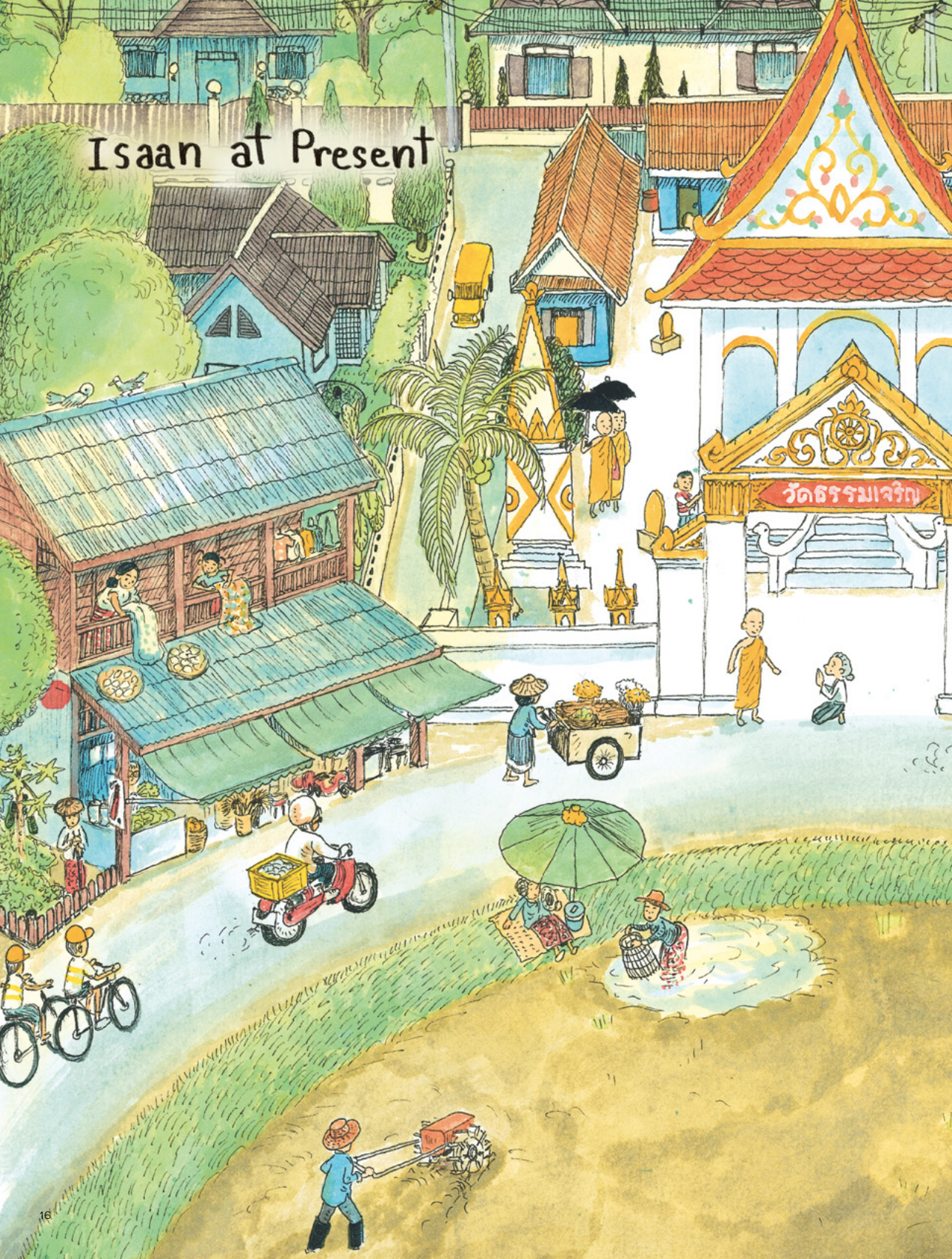
The Mekong, Chi, and Mun rivers are the rivers of life for the people of Isaan. The land near the river banks is very fertile. The Mekong river flows along the Thai border in the north of Isaan to form the boundary between Thailand and Laos. It then flows through Cambodia, Vietnam, and into the South China Sea.







Isaan at Present



Ya Mo City



The people of Korat call themselves **'Lan Ya Mo'** (Granny Mo's grandchildren). Ya Mo was a heroine whom the people highly respect. The people of Korat are proud to be her descendants.

Ya Mo City and Korat are colloquial names for **Nakhon Ratchasima**. It has the second largest population in Thailand. (Bangkok being first) The people of Korat feel Ya Mo is a figure that represents their unity.



Korat and ASEAN



In 2015, the ASEAN Economic Community (AEC) will be fully established and Isaan will become a very important region because it is bordered by the Kingdom of Cambodia and the Lao People's Democratic Republic.

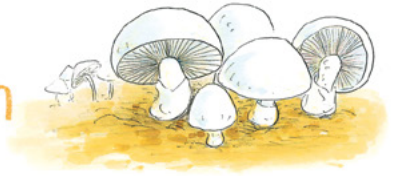


Not only being the gateway to Isaan, Korat will become the gateway to Thailand's neighbors.

Korat, as well as Isaan, will be packed with tourists. Are you ready to be a part of the ASEAN community?



Making a Living in Isaan



Although Isaan is hot and dry, there are plenty of food sources. Most kids in Isaan are skilled at living outdoors; they have fun finding food.

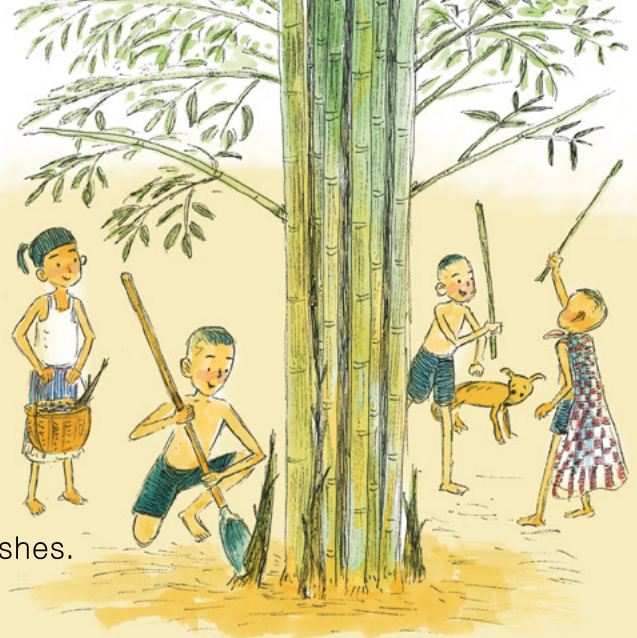
In the rainy season, after the rain has stopped for a while, kids walk into the forest to find various types of mushrooms. Some are edible; some are dangerous. The kids just happen to know which is which.



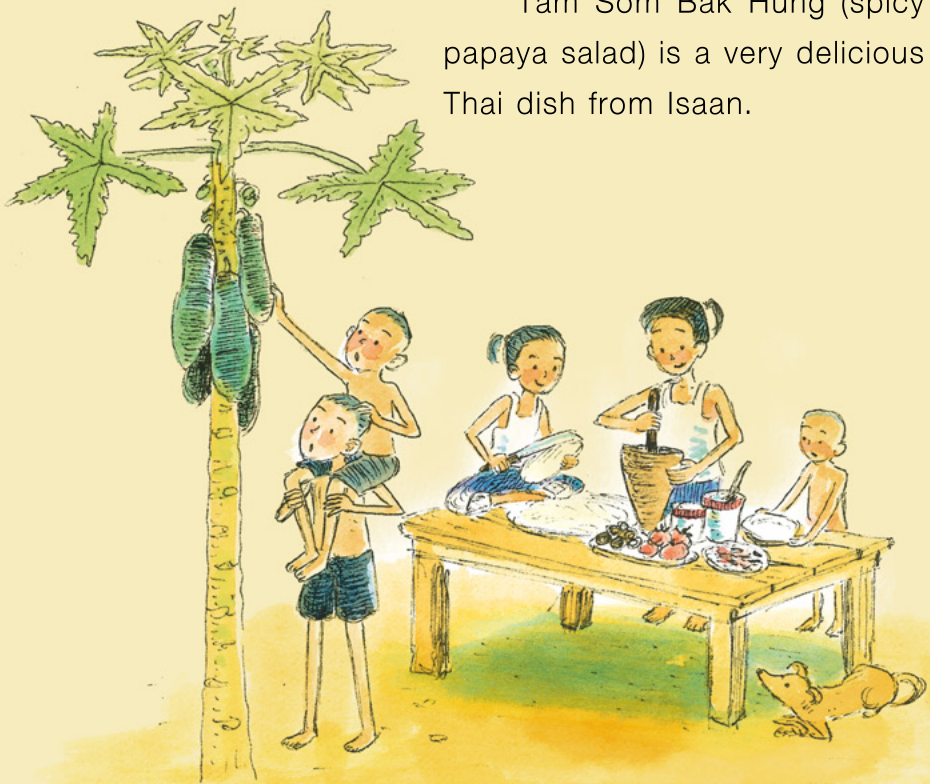
Insects are a good source of protein. There are many ways to catch insects. Sometimes the kids drop some water in a hole as a trap to catch insects.



Just walk a little further
and we might find some
bamboo shoots. They can be
put into many of our favorite dishes.



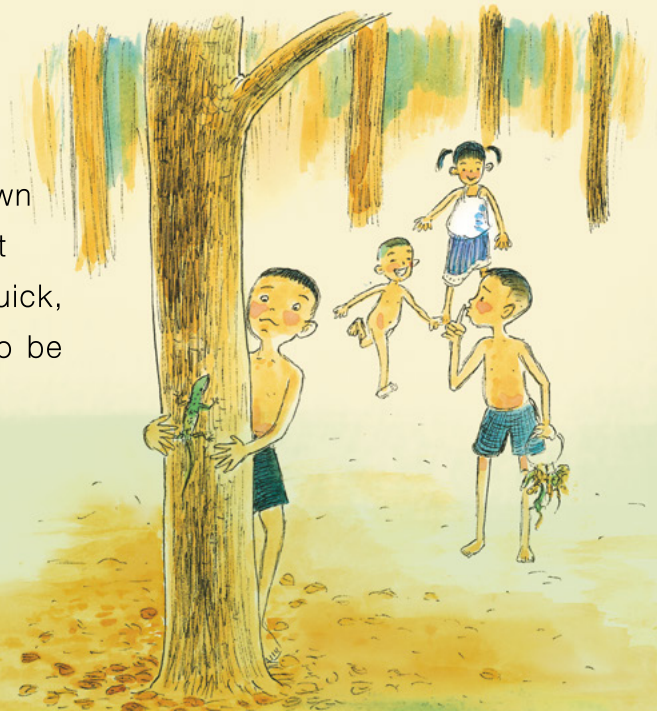
Tam Som Bak Hung (spicy
papaya salad) is a very delicious
Thai dish from Isaan.





We find food in the trees; leaves, flowers, and fruits are edible. Sometimes food is hidden in a tree! For example, we can take risks to get some ant larva!

Chameleons, also known as 'Kapom' in Isaan, are not hard to find. They are very quick, though. The hunter needs to be very fast to catch them.





Sometimes we go fishing in the ponds. Climbing perches, gouramis, and minnows can be easily found there.

We are brave enough to find food for ourselves and we find it fun to hunt for food with friends!



Salt Farms in Isaan

In the past, there were many salt farms in Isaan and much historical evidence of salt farming has been found.

How the people in the past extracted salt:

1. Put some saline soil in a box. Pour some water in and leave it for one night. (some rice straw could be added)
2. Filter the soil out of the water.
3. Boil the water until there are gray salt crystals.



Cloth Weaving in Isaan



Cloth weaving is a common hobby in Isaan when the people aren't rice farming.

In the past, there was a loom in almost every house in Isaan. They weaved their own clothes for daily wear and for special occasions.

These are easy steps to take when weaving cotton. First, plant cotton. Then remove the seeds from cotton balls and beat the cotton balls to make them smooth. After that, spin the beaten cotton by hand to make it cotton candy-like before sending it to the spinning wheel. Finally, color it and weave it into cloth. In fact, it takes a lot of time, patience, and expertise to get it done.

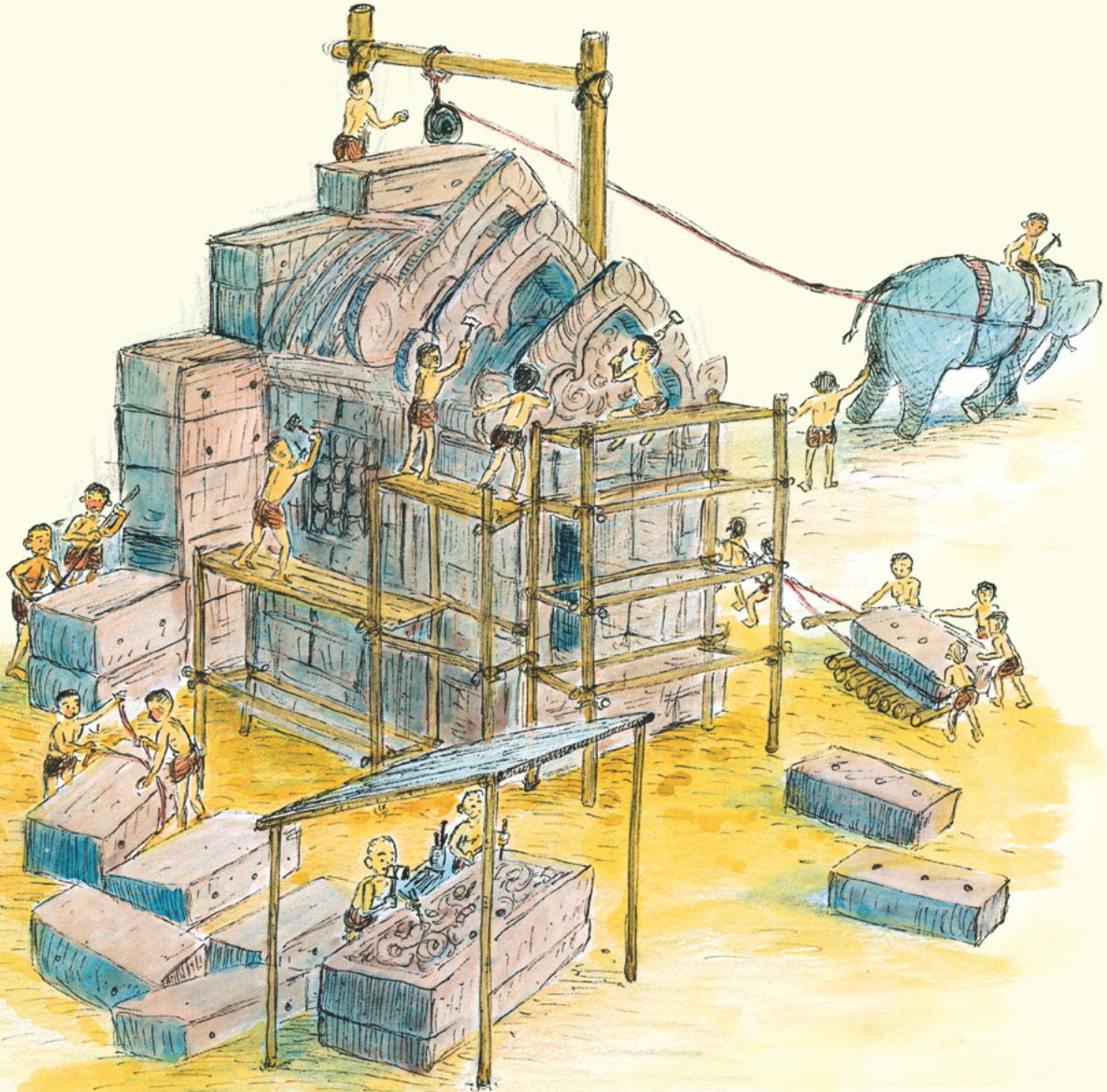
Cloth weaving is a tradition of which the people of Isaan are proud.

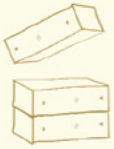
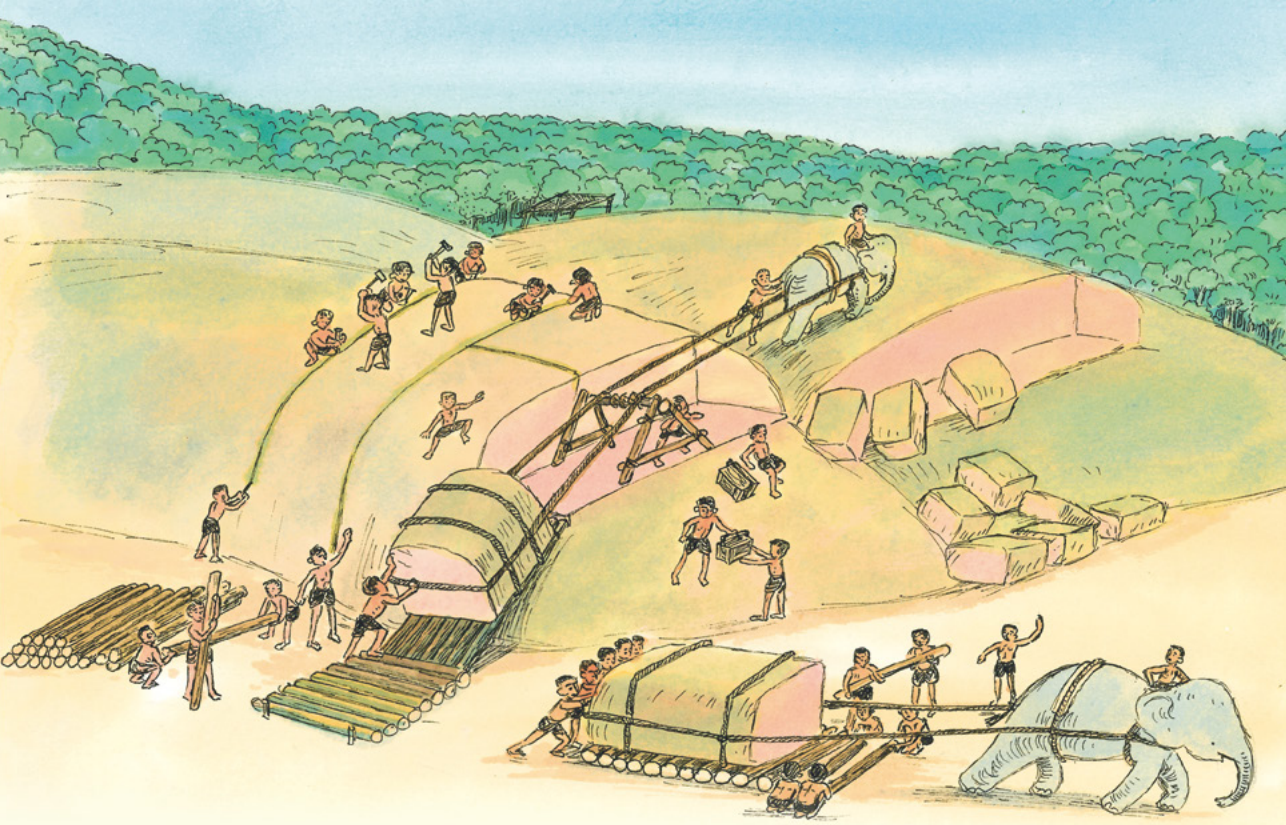




Stone Castles in Isaan

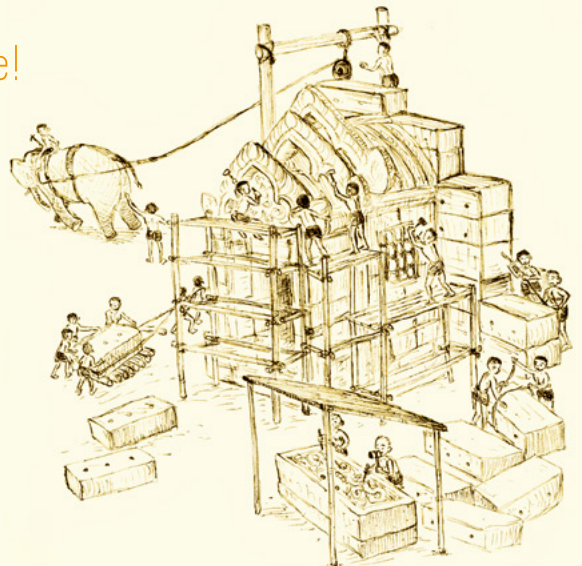
There are many ancient stone castles in Isaan.





How could our ancestors carry a lot of heavy stones over long distances to the highlands?

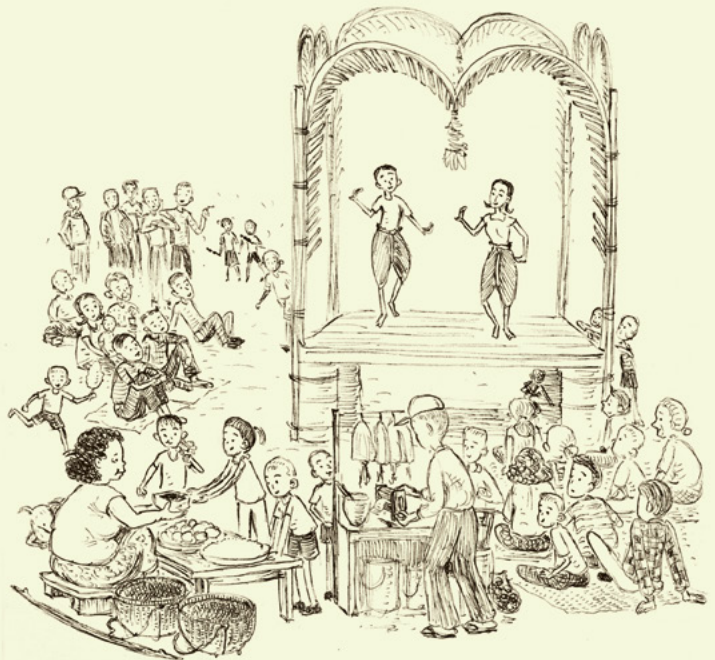
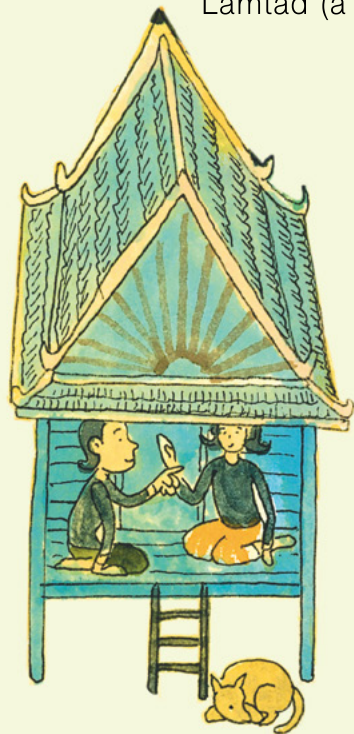
Let's imagine!



Our Heartwarming Traditions



In the past people in Korat had fun singing songs, which have unique genres. People in Korat sang and danced to their own music without any other musical instruments, so the singers were considered very talented. Korat songs sound like Lamtad (a song in the central part of Thailand).





Korat songs were very popular during the early Rattanakosin era. We are very proud of this heartwarming tradition.



Korat, Our Hometown is a documentary book whose illustrations are spectacular. The content suits the interests of fourth to sixth graders. Pictures play the key role of conveying the message and encouraging the readers to find out more. **Korat, Our Hometown** is not meant to be an encyclopedia, but it aims to create a sense of fun which will eventually bring the readers to the more difficult documentary books.

The book is divided into short episodes. For example, the Gateway to Isaan tells Korat's story. The other episodes are Volcanoes and Living Dinosaurs, the River of Life, Isaan in the Past, Ya Mo City, Making a Living in Isaan, Salt Farms in Isaan, Cloth Weaving in Isaan, Stone Castles in Isaan, and Our Heartwarming Traditions. Each episode is simple and straightforward yet different from ordinary documentary books.

Korat, Our Hometown is suitable for kids who are old enough to read by themselves. Preeda Panyajan, the illustrator, included some gags in the stories. The kids will enjoy reading as well as gazing at the pictures.

How to Make Use of **Korat, Our Hometown**

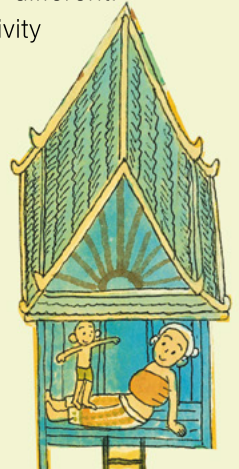
It may not be fun to let the kids read **Korat, Our Hometown** by themselves. Adults can help by devising plans to encourage them to read and explore more. For example, the kids may enjoy group reading, drawing from the stories, or researching further.

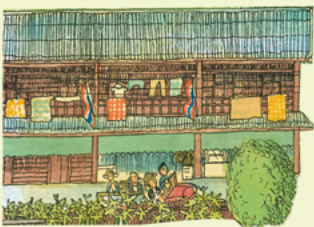


The activities suggested above are different from taking notes, which can be dry and boring. To illustrate, teachers can play a key role in motivating students to create and shape their own activities.

Another activity to motivate students to read more is to have them answer the question “**If you like this book, how will you persuade your friends to read it?**” The product is the same as that of taking notes but the process is different. Students will have freedom to write as well as feel challenged. This activity works best when another student works with a student who has read the book.

Drawing can encourage kids to read as well no matter how old they are. Teachers can switch from giving instructions to persuading, motivating, and challenging students a bit. This will have a huge effect on them. For example, the teacher may say ‘Let's redesign the cover!’ or ‘Let's make a poster to promote this book!’. The kids will be engaged in the activity and the teacher will see an astonishing result.





Preeda Panyajan



Preeda Panyajan was born and grew up in Nongkai. When he was in Muttayom 5, he went to study art at Srinakharinwirot University, Prasarnmit Campus. He started drawing children's books at university. After he graduated, he became an art teacher in a kindergarten as well as an illustrator.

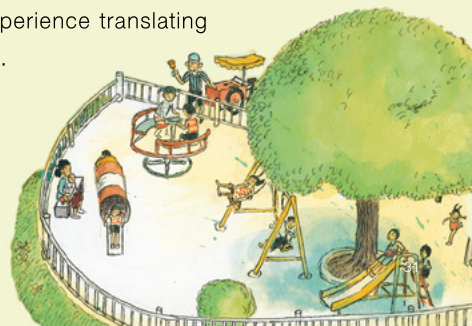
Preeda Panyajan has written more than a hundred children books. His work has been given many awards in Thailand and internationally. For example, **Ton-mai-nai-suan** (The trees in the garden) won the Noma prize in Japan. **Men-lob-fon** (the porcupine who hid from the rain), **Ton-mai-klai-tua** (The common trees), **Len-rim-nam** (Playing near the river bank), **Sara-sanook** (Fun vowels), **Racha-ka-ruesee** (The King and the hermit), and **Chuan-pien-ma-pun-krieng-pun-din-pao** (Let's make clay pots!) received awards from national book fairs in Thailand.

At present, **Preeda Panyajan** is a children's book editor and a part-time lecturer in juvenile literature at Srinakharinwirot University and at Mahidol Wittayanusorn School. He is also a primary school teacher trainer in the field of kindergarten art, story telling, and educational material development.

Translators

Peeriya Pongsarigun got a master's degree in English linguistics from the Faculty of Arts, Chulalongkorn University. She teaches English at the University and is also the deputy head of the extracurricular activities unit. She leads her students to play and to learn English outside of the classroom. She has a passion for children's books. She wrote one book called "**Chan ja keb bang na**" (I'll take some too!) and now she writes for "Realparenting Magazine/Thailand" and it's one of her favorite hobbies.

John Viano first came to Thailand as a Peace Corps volunteer in 2006. Since then he has used his passion for the Thai language to communicate with Thai people via English language training. He has used his Thai skills to write a short grammar textbook for Thai English language teachers. John has taught English at most levels of the Thai education system and at Thai businesses. He was a coach at the creative writing camp and has been an editor of the Children's Day book for two years. He has experience translating many kinds of documents from Thai to English and vice versa.



Local Knowledge Book Series

