

# Exploring the Wisdom and Cultural Identity of Thai Muslim Pottery in Pattani Province

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## Abstract

This research delves into the history, wisdom, and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province. The study's objectives are as follows: 1) To investigate the historical context of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, and 2) To explore the wisdom and cultural identity embedded within Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province. The qualitative research methodology was employed, with the target demographic consisting of pottery producers and individuals involved in the production process. The research focused on two specific locations: Ban Kubang Badok, Sakam Subdistrict, Mayo District, and Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province. The study involved 10 knowledgeable individuals, 10 practitioners, and 5 relevant stakeholders. Data collection methods encompassed surveys, observation forms, interviews, and data analysis, employing conceptual frameworks such as Wisdom, Cultural Diffusion Theory, Functional Structure Theory, and Identity Theory, with findings presented using descriptive and analytical approaches, supplemented with illustrative examples.

The study yielded valuable insights into the history of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province. Historical records pointed to the presence of urban settlements in Pattani Province, with references to the Mayo District. Within Mueang Yaring Subdistrict, Pattani Province, the region was home to diverse indigenous communities including Malays, Persian, Arabs, South Indians, Javanese, and Zhuang people. Consequently, a unique and culturally rich Malay-Muslim social structure emerged. In terms of the wisdom embodied in Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, it was evident that these ceramics were crafted from locally sourced clay, employing a low-fired pottery technique devoid of glazing. These pottery items played a pivotal role in various aspects of daily life, and their production methods remained steeped in tradition, passed down through generations.

Regarding the identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, it was identified as possessing distinctive characteristics closely intertwined with personal, social, and cultural aspects. This was evident through the usage of Thai Muslim pottery in various contexts, including as containers for consumer goods, architectural elements, and utensils for rituals within specific faith groups and regions. These artifacts provided valuable insights into the evolving lifestyles of Thai Muslims in Pattani Province over time, reflecting the cultural and societal changes that have transpired.

In conclusion, the wisdom and identity encapsulated in Pattani's pottery serve as invaluable tools for understanding the history, society, and culture of Thai Muslims in Pattani Province. Furthermore, these artifacts offer a window into the evolution of cultural beliefs from the past to

the present, facilitating intergenerational communication and a deeper appreciation of the region's rich heritage.

**Keywords:** wisdom, identity, Thai Muslim pottery

## 1. Introduction

Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province is considered to be related to the culture and the way of life of people in the south of Thailand. The region's diversity in terms of religious beliefs, with both Buddhism and Islam practiced, is well-documented [Amara Kongkapitch, 1998]. In terms of ethnicity, there are Thai Buddhists, Thai Muslims, Chinese, Chinese-Malays (Yaya), and laypeople living together in this region. This coexistence is evident, especially among the original inhabitants, such as Malays, Arabs, Persians, South Indians, Javanese, and the Zhuang people. They have contributed to the region's identity as a melting pot of cultures, with a traditional way of living [Ekawit Na Thalang, 1997]. Archaeological evidence indicates that in prehistoric times, people in this area sustained themselves through hunting, fishing, and gathering various plants for food. They possessed the knowledge to craft pottery containers for food storage and preparation, using fire or heat for cooking. The arrival of various religions and peoples in the South influenced ideas, beliefs, and superstitious rituals, including beliefs about personification or sacred life, which reflects the uniqueness of society and a distinctive culture (Ekawit Na Thalang, 1997).

In the present day, the professions of pottery making, brick making, and clay tile making continue to thrive in Pattani Province. These professions are still found in the region due to connections with trade with nearby provinces and neighboring countries. The availability of quality materials for pottery making and a diverse culture of ethnicities and religions contribute to their persistence. The pottery found in the region still retains its original form in terms of wisdom, which has been passed down from ancestors through generations to the present day (Leedom Leffert and Louis Allison Court, 200).

Native pottery found in the southern region of Thailand dates back to approximately the 13th to 18th Buddhist centuries. In 1978, the Fine Arts Department undertook significant excavations at kiln sites located in Khlong Pa-o, Ban Pa-o, Muang Ngam Subdistrict, and Wat Khanun Subdistrict, Singha Nakhon, Songkhla Province. These excavations revealed several kiln sources, including Tao Mor 1, Tao Mor 2, Tao Mor 3, Tao Khok Mor, and Tao Khok Fai. Interestingly, other types of pottery were also discovered in the Sathing Phra District, Songkhla Province, even though no kilns were found. It is likely that an outdoor firing method was employed for these pottery items, as they are simple clay containers that do not require very high heat. Notably, pottery from Ban Pa O includes significant products such as the “khonthi” (water pot) and pots with pedestals. These products from the kiln at Ban Pa O found their way to various important cities in southern Thailand. They represent a unique form of pottery wisdom that is distinct to the region (Korakot Bunlop, 2008).

Additionally, pottery discovered at archaeological sites in the southern border provinces, including Pattani Province and Songkhla Province, holds historical and cultural significance. This region is characterized by its cultural and religious diversity, given its historical role as the location of the “Tambralinga” Kingdom, which held sway over the Malay Peninsula during the 13th to 16th Buddhist centuries. Archaeological sites are dispersed throughout the region, including the ancient ruins of Krue Se Mosque and Raya Cemetery in Pattani Province. The Yarang source of civilization, which existed between the 13th and 15th centuries, bore the influence of the Dvaravati civilization. Notable sites include the ancient Ban Dee kiln and the production site of Ban Pa O pottery in Sathing Phra District, Songkhla Province, as well as Sriwichai and Tamphon Link pottery. These artifacts exhibit specific characteristics unique to the region, particularly the knowledge of pottery wisdom with significant historical value [Nithi Aewsriwong, 2011]. Therefore, pottery in the southern border area holds pivotal importance in fostering relationships in an

area teeming with diverse cultures, races, and languages. It represents the traditional wisdom of our ancestors, passed down over generations, and bears a distinct cultural identity within the Malay Peninsula. From an examination of research related to pottery in Pattani Province, it becomes evident that most studies have focused on the research and development of the local pottery industry. These efforts often entail modifying formats, adding techniques, or experimenting with materials and equipment to boost production rates and increase income within the pottery community. The most common research areas revolve around pottery communities located in the upper to central southern region, such as Surat Thani Province, Nakhon Si Thammarat Province, and the upper part of Songkhla Province. However, the wisdom of pottery in the lower southern region, particularly in Pattani Province, has been relatively neglected in terms of systematic study, data collection, and preservation. Furthermore, the lack of comprehensive government oversight in this area threatens the preservation of this unique cultural heritage, which may soon fade into obscurity. It is imperative to undertake methodical conservation and development efforts to promote the value of this heritage, which contributes to the region's identity and cultural richness [Apinya Fueangsakul, 2000]. Identity, in this context, arises from both personal identity and social and cultural identity, driven by interactions, meanings, social values, and spatial relationships. Recognizing the uniqueness of pottery in Pattani Province, a captivating and valuable handicraft, the researcher believes it warrants in-depth study before this invaluable traditional wisdom vanishes from the community.

Given the background and significance outlined above, this study focuses on exploring the wisdom and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province. The research encompasses an examination of the history, wisdom, and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, employing the structure-function theory, cultural diffusion theory, wisdom concept, and the concept of identity as analytical frameworks to illuminate the wisdom and identity embedded within these exceptional ceramics.

## 2. Objectives of the Research

2.1 To investigate the historical evolution of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province.

2.2 To explore and analyze the wisdom and cultural identity inherent in Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province.

## 3. Research Methods

In this research study focusing on the wisdom and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, the primary objective is to delve into the historical and cultural aspects of Thai Muslim pottery in this region. Pattani Province, renowned for its traditional communities and distinctive pottery culture, also plays a pivotal role as a significant cultural conduit along the Malay Peninsula route, thereby making it inherently connected to culture, wisdom, and multiculturalism.

The target group for this study comprises two key categories: a knowledgeable group comprising 10 academic experts well-versed in the history of Thai pottery, and local craftsmen who serve as bearers of pottery wisdom. Data collection tools encompassed surveys, observation forms, and interviews, allowing for the comprehensive gathering of information. This data was collected from documents and through fieldwork.

To analyze the gathered information, a two-fold approach was employed:

**1. Document Data Analysis:** This method involved scrutinizing and validating concepts and theories by reviewing various documents. The accuracy of the information was assessed by cross-referencing multiple sources.

**2. Field Data Analysis:** This entailed the examination of data collected using a variety of research data collection tools. It aimed to draw conclusions and analyze data by comparing events or phenomena. The data was presented using a descriptive analysis method, complemented by photographic evidence.

#### 4. Research Results

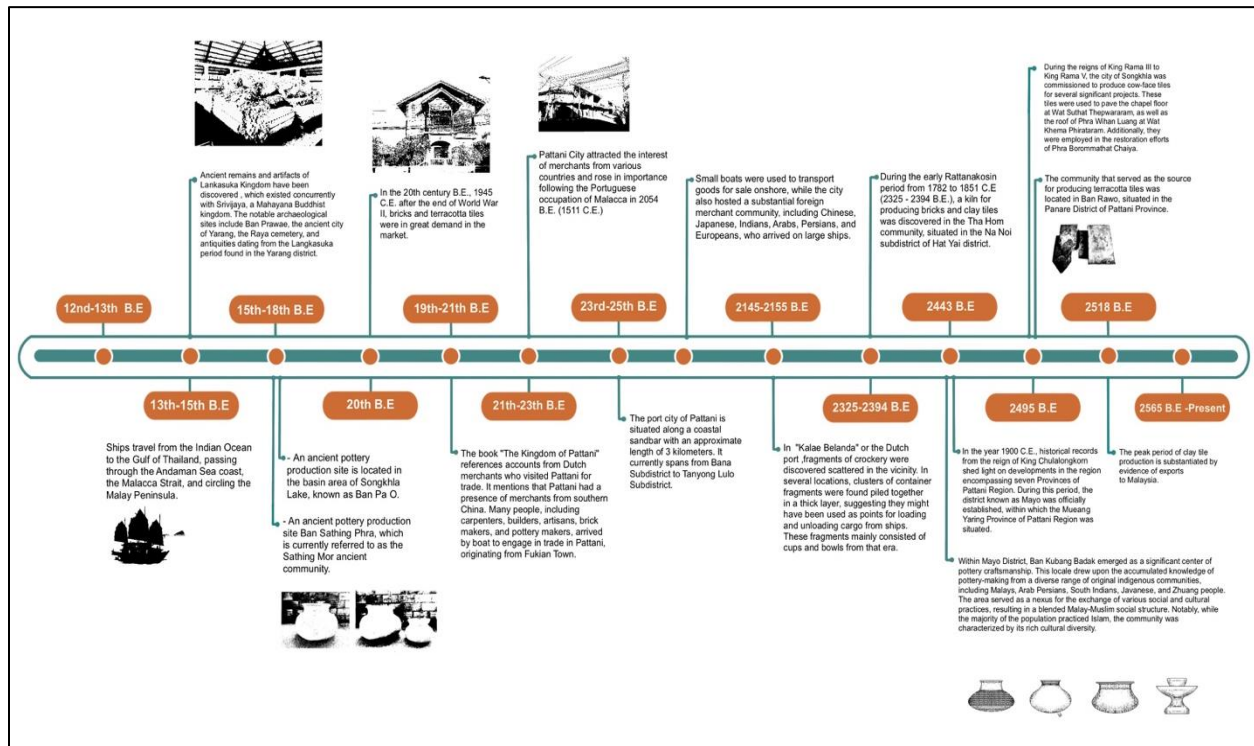
In the study of the wisdom and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, the researcher meticulously analyzed field data acquired through surveys, observation forms, and interviews, aligning the analysis with the predefined research objectives. The outcomes of this research are as follows:

##### 4.1 History of Thai Muslim Pottery in Pattani Province

The exploration of the history of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province draws upon the framework proposed by Edward Tylor (Edward Tylor, 1897) regarding the evolution and dissemination of culture. The data analysis reveals that the primary source of ancient kilns in the southern region was the Ban Pa O kiln, located in Songkhla Province. Historical evidence suggests that these ancient kilns were situated in the area along the Pa-O canal, within Wat Khanun Subdistrict, Muang Ngam Subdistrict, Singhanakhon District, Songkhla Province. This area, historically, was a hub of prosperity dating back to the early history of the southern region. It served as an ancient prehistoric community and was prominent during the Srivijaya period when numerous ports were established. This led to the development of towns-turned-houses and the city of Sathing Phra, which became a crucial port city and a center for local houses and towns. Moreover, it was a key stopover for ships transporting goods across the Indian Ocean to the Andaman Sea coast, passing through the Straits of Malacca and entering the Gulf of Thailand. Consequently, this region emerged as a significant hub for pottery production, giving birth to the ancient city of Sathing Phra, which thrived during the 15th to 18th Buddhist century. Presently, traces of the ancient Khlong Pa-o community are somewhat obscured, with notable remnants found primarily in areas dedicated to pottery production and pottery-making yards. The remnants include kilns arranged in groups on both sides of Khlong Pa-O in Wat Khanun Subdistrict and Muang Ngam Subdistrict, Singhanakhon District, Songkhla Province.

In 1978 archaeological evidence emerged during surveys and excavations. This evidence included the discovery of four ancient kilns and low-fired earthenware vessels, typically of the ordinary clay type (Earthenware) dated back to 19<sup>th</sup> Buddhist century. Additionally, tools employed in crafting clay pots, such as "clay figurines" or "stone figurines" were uncovered. Insights from interviews with knowledgeable individuals about the wisdom of Sathing Mo pottery, within the Sathing Mo Community in Sathing Mo Subdistrict, Songkhla Province, revealed a historical narrative interwoven with the establishment of Ban Sathing Mo. Chinese immigrants played a pivotal role in teaching pottery-making in this community for over a century. The hallmark of this community's pottery identity is the crafting of pots without bottoms, shaping the pots by beating the bottom using wood or welt. This practice has been handed down through three generations to the present day, signifying the community's rich heritage. Historically, pottery-making was the primary occupation in this community, and the distribution network was facilitated through maritime routes. This led to trade via boat routes connecting Pattani Province, Yala Province, and Narathiwat Province.

Furthermore, historical records dating back to 1900, during the reign of King Chulalongkorn, indicate reformation in seven districts of Pattani Precinct. Notably, the name of Mayo District appeared in Mueang Yaring Province. Pattani Precinct emerged as a region known for producing ancient terracotta tiles. This region has a longstanding tradition of crafting clay tiles, also referred to as the source of ancient terracotta tiles. For generations, this craft has been a significant livelihood for the villagers of Rawo and Ban Kubang Ba Dok, although precise historical documentation regarding the commencement of pottery-making in these areas remains elusive. Nevertheless, it is well-established that the local villagers have possessed the knowledge and skill to create this form of pottery for many centuries and generations. These areas comprise a diverse population of original indigenous peoples, including Malays, Persian, Arabs, South Indians, Javanese, and Zhuang people. This diversity serves as evidence of the region's role as a nexus for various cultural societies. Consequently, the inhabitants have developed a blended Malay-Muslim social structure, with the majority of the population practicing Islam to this day.



Picture 1: A timeline illustrating the history of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province.

## 4.2 Wisdom and Identity of Thai Muslim Pottery in Pattani Province

### 4.2.1 Thai Muslim Pottery Wisdom in Pattani Province

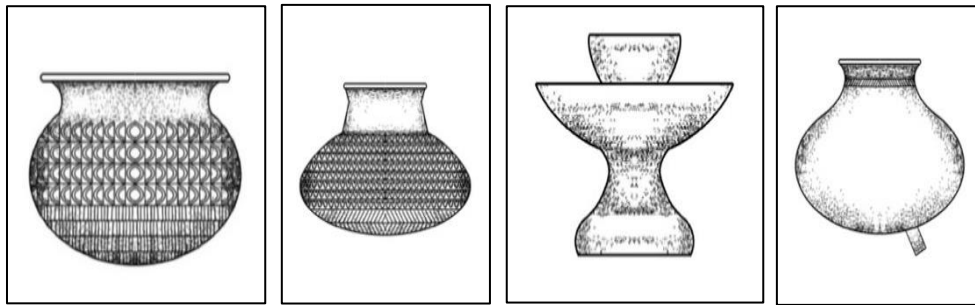
The researcher delved into the sources of wisdom behind Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, focusing on two remaining sites: Ban Kubang Badok, Sakam Subdistrict, Mayo District, and Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province. Using the conceptual framework developed by Prabh Leemuadpai (2000), the study categorized pottery wisdom into three types: form designing wisdom, material wisdom, production process wisdom. The research involved an exploration of historical documents up to the present condition, resulting in the following findings.

Regarding the survey in form designing wisdom, it was revealed that in Ban Kubang Badok, Sakam Subdistrict, Mayo District, Pattani Province, the prevalent pottery form is characterized by round-bottomed pot containers. These containers share similarities in form and features with pottery containers unearthed at various archaeological sites across Thailand. They typically feature a wide and short mouth and often exhibit wood-imprinted designs on the shoulders and around the container. These pottery pieces are primarily made from unglazed ordinary clay. They have been historically used for various purposes, including cooking and in activities related to the lifestyle of the local population. For instance, they have been employed in circumcision ceremonies, as cauldrons for medicinal preparations, or as "jira," containers for pouring water during prayers. The round pot design incorporates a wide and short mouth, and some containers feature patterns on the isthmus. The bottom of the pots is designed with a drainage pipe, and there are "kueto bako," containers for incense. These containers have been thoughtfully shaped to serve specific functions and align with the cultural, religious, and belief contexts of the local people, particularly within the framework of Islam. However, with changing times, some

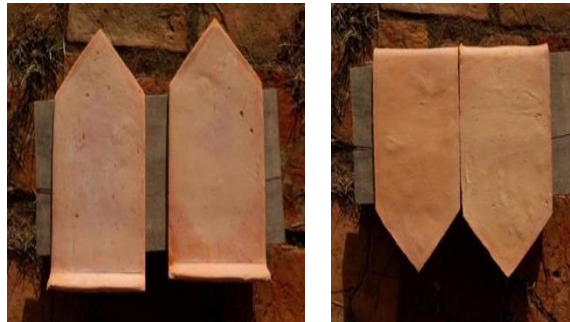


adjustments have been made to their forms to align with contemporary usage, leading to a reduction in their popularity.

In Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province, a distinctive style influenced by Chinese roofing tiles is prevalent. Roof tiles with hooks and triangular tails continue to be produced. These tiles are well-suited for the roofing style of traditional southern Thai houses and are still widely used today, particularly for decorating resorts in tourist cities, where they remain popular and in demand.



**Picture 2:** A container meticulously crafted with a functional form that aligns with the cultural beliefs and religion of the local people in the area, in accordance with the principles of Islam.



**Picture 3:** Display of the roof tile pattern from Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province.

From the examination of production process wisdom, it was discovered that the current production process in the community of Ban Kubang Badok, Sakam Subdistrict, Mayo District, Pattani Province, still employs the traditional method utilizing wood. The process involves using "Gue Tae Bunga," a smooth-patterned wood, to strike the external surface, while "Gue Tho" or stones are placed on the inside. The pot mold, initially formed, is gradually shaped by repeated strikes to achieve the desired pot type, using a patterned wooden stick known as "Gue Tae Bunga." This method has been inherited from ancestors, with some individuals owning and sculpting the tools themselves based on personal ideas. The majority of patterns observed are floral, featuring various circle and line patterns.

In the case of Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province, the tile-making process involves molding them through a plate printing method. Clay, well-kneaded and mixed with rice husk ashes, is pressed onto the mold socket. This prevents the clay from sticking to the mold socket. By stepping on every side of the mold socket in a sequential manner, the clay is effectively shaped

to fit snugly into the mold socket. This reveals that both sources of wisdom exhibit production techniques that have endured, maintaining their form even in the era of agricultural society. This era represents a period when human culture did not advance significantly. The wisdom of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province emerged with the establishment of the community, steadfastly adhering to traditional styles and methods of pottery production, passed down through generations.



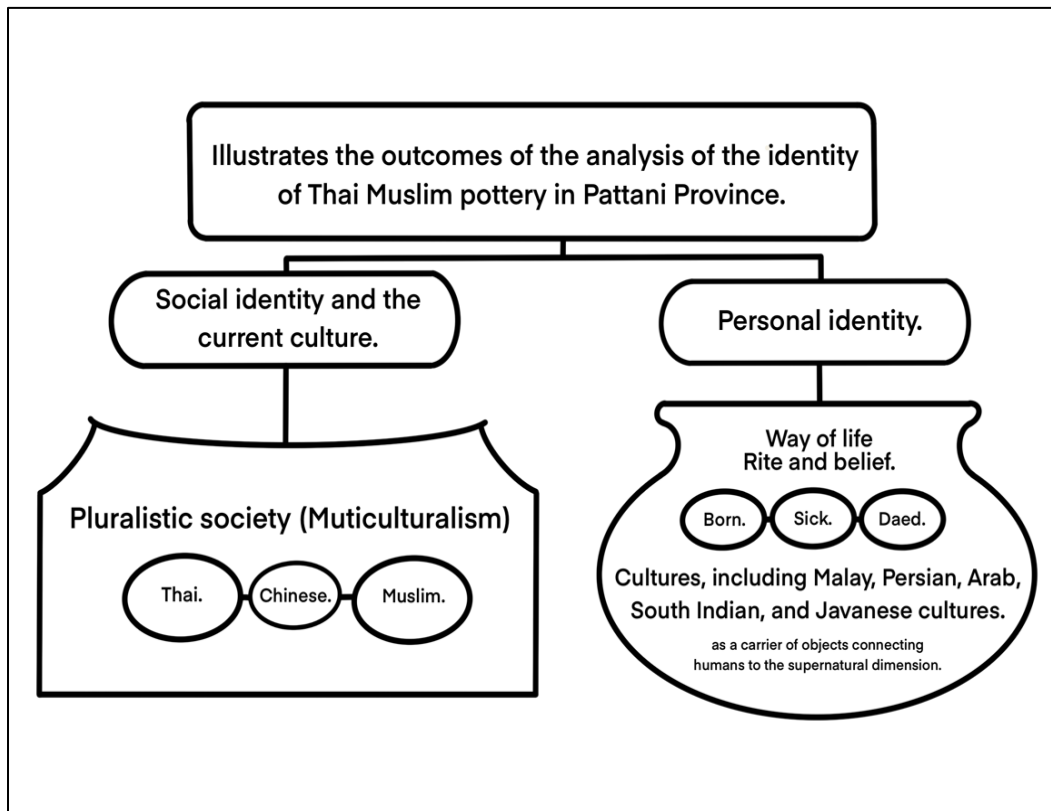
**Picture 4:** Illustrates the wisdom of crafting pottery through traditional production styles and methods.

From the examination of material wisdom, it was observed that Ban Kubang Badok continues to utilize soil sourced from the mountain slopes within the village. The majority of this area is mountainous, featuring low-lying regions known as peat, interspersed with coastal areas resulting from uplift. The district is adjacent to Panare District, which encompasses a coastal region. Upon surveying Panare District in Pattani Province, an ancient pottery production area was identified approximately 5-6 kilometers from the coast. During excavations, numerous sea shell remains were discovered, along with the remnants of an ancient barge dating back at least 200 years, found in the deeper layers of soil. The resulting soil is rich in sand and shellfish remains, high in calcium. The clay obtained before firing is completely black, transforming into white, fine, and easily moldable clay after the firing process. The burning process is efficient, with no wastage of fuel.

In contrast, Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province, sources its soil from areas traversed by rivers and streams in Mueang District, Sai Buri District, Panare District, Pattani Province. The raw materials exhibit distinct characteristics and qualities between saltwater and freshwater clays. Saline soil appears in white, black, and yellow hues, producing white and red tile products. In the case of freshwater, if the clay is black, the resulting tile product will be red. Each type of soil possesses unique color and aesthetic characteristics, impacting quality, durability, and strength. Tiles produced in the Ban Rao area are often more favored by users than those from other areas due to their thin properties, influencing the weight of structures when used for roofing. This underscores the high quality of the clay tile production wisdom in Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province, which has remained popular with consistent orders over the years, serving as a significant source of income for the community and nearby areas.

#### 4.2.2 Identity of Thai Muslim Pottery in Pattani Province

In the examination of the identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, the researcher employed the conceptual framework proposed by Choengkwan Phutchong (2006). This framework serves to define and interpret pottery within the Pattani province context in relation to its social value and connections with space. These connections encompass personal identity as well as social and cultural identity.



**Picture 5:** Illustrates the outcomes of the analysis of the identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province.

From the analysis of personal identity in Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, it was observed that Pattani is a province characterized by cultural diversity, serving as a crossroads and melting pot of various cultures, including Malay, Persian, Arab, South Indian, and Javanese cultures, as indicated by historical sources. Consequently, this region exhibits a blended Malay-Muslim social structure, despite the predominant Muslim population. It can be viewed as a pluralistic society (multicultural), contributing to the distinct significance of Thai-Muslim pottery. This significance manifests in its functional role, serving not only as a container for consumer goods but also as a tool employed in rituals or as a carrier of objects connecting humans to the supernatural dimension. For instance, it is used in circumcision rituals, serves as a pot for boiling medicinal concoctions for disease treatment, functions as a jira (water container) for prayers, or acts as a khetobako (incense container). Both types of containers are meticulously crafted to embody forms that align with the cultural beliefs and religious concepts of the people in the region, particularly in accordance with Islamic principles. These items are utilized by specific belief groups and in particular areas. To summarize the analysis of personal identity, the aforementioned information provides valuable insights into the role and significance of Thai Muslim pottery in reflecting the diverse cultural landscape of Pattani Province.





**Picture 6:** Personal Identity Analysis of Thai Muslim Pottery in Pattani Province

From the analysis of social identity and the current culture of consumer goods containers, there has been a technological evolution, and new tools have taken their place. This change is evident in Pattani Province. However, what is still prevalent in the province is architectural pottery pieces. Analyzing this phenomenon using the identity theory of Apinya Fueangsakul (2003), it is observed that there is a connection with multiculturalism in the Pattani province. This expression of social conditions in the past, ways of life, and society reflects the acceptance of various traditions and cultures, presenting unique characteristics of multiculturalism specific to the local area. These characteristics possess their own distinctive charm, rooted in historical stories.

In the past, the region of Pattani Province was a Hindu-Buddhist or Hindu-Javanese land where people of various nationalities interacted and lived together, including Siamese, Malay, Javanese, Indian, Arab, and Chinese. This diverse mix led to the development of a unique culture. Subsequently, with the assimilation of Islamic beliefs, these cultural elements have endured until the present day. During the period when Pattani held the status of a port city, there were trade contacts with various nations, a tradition that continues to the present day. This multicultural influence is visible in everyday life, manifesting harmoniously in the architecture of the region. The ancient palace of the ruler of Pattani, situated along the banks of the Pattani River, exemplifies this cultural fusion. The road along the Pattani River, connecting the city on both sides, features wooden buildings in the Malay vernacular architectural style.



**Picture 7:** Social and cultural identity related to Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province.

In Pattani Province, architectural pottery serves as a manifestation of social and cultural identity, influenced by four local factors. These factors encompass residences, as well as places of religious ceremonies, and are characterized by a style rooted in the diverse cultural influences, languages, and religions within the Malay art form. Consequently, the architecture in Pattani Province carries a distinctive local identity shaped by the unique wisdom and influences of beliefs, traditions, and the culture of specific groups. This influence is reflected in architectural styles, marking the identity and shared

characteristics of the local architecture. The enduring presence of Donpao pottery further attests to this cultural legacy.

## **5. Summary of Research Results**

The exploration of the concepts, wisdom, and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province has yielded the following key findings:

### **5.1 Study of the History of Thai Muslim Pottery in Pattani Province**

From the historical information gleaned from Pattani, it is evident that the province held significant prosperity as the capital of the Langkasuka Kingdom. Situated on the eastern coast of the southern region adjacent to the South China Sea, Pattani emerged as a crucial port city and a hub for government, trade, culture, nature, historical sites, and cultural traditions. Surveys conducted in Panare District, Pattani Province, which revealed an ancient pottery production area situated far from the coast, unveiled archaeological sites across diverse cultural and religious landscapes. This diversity is distinctly expressed through the unique style and identity of pottery wisdom, playing a vital role in showcasing the cultural richness influenced by the Malay Peninsula. The origin of Kubang Badok pottery wisdom in Mayo District, Pattani Province, further emphasizes the multicultural nature of the area, where the majority of the population practices Islam. This diversity is reflected in the local culture and way of life, with historical traces of prior religious practices, such as Hinduism and Buddhism, persisting even after the conversion to Islam. The integration of these diverse influences is evident in local wisdom and architectural styles.

### **5.2 Study of the Wisdom and Identity of Thai Muslim Pottery in Pattani Province**

Examining Ban Kubang Badok pottery in Sakam Subdistrict, Mayo District, Pattani Province, reveals a commitment to traditional styles and methods of pottery production. However, the pottery is designed to embody forms that align with the cultural beliefs and religious concepts of the local population, in accordance with Islamic principles. Despite a decline in popularity due to changing times, Ban Kubang Badok pottery maintains its cultural significance. In contrast, the wisdom of crafting clay tiles at Ban Rawo, Don Subdistrict, Panare District, Pattani Province, continues to embrace a Chinese-influenced roof tile style. The production of roof tiles with hooks and triangular tails persists, utilizing traditional wisdom in the production process. These tiles are still widely used today, especially in decorating resorts in tourist cities.

The wisdom and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province are deeply rooted in cultural connections, serving as the foundation for community life. The distinctive styles and practices associated with pottery-making, whether in Ban Kubang Badok or Ban Rawo, contribute to the rich identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province. This identity is noteworthy and deserves preservation due to its uniqueness and valuable cultural meaning, reflecting the community's way of life, traditions, and cultural heritage.

## **6. Discussion of Research Results**

The investigation into the wisdom and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province, specifically in Ban Kubang Badok, Mayo District, Pattani Province, revealed a community deeply rooted in the practice of Islam. This religious affiliation has significantly shaped the area, fostering a distinctive culture and way of life. The historical ties within the administrative region have persisted for a considerable duration, dating back to the establishment of the city of Patani in the 19th Buddhist century. This region, formerly associated with the Hindu-Buddhist or Hindu-Javanese kingdom, underwent a cultural transformation with the conversion to Islam. However, remnants of the original beliefs are still evident, integrated into the fabric of a shared culture characterized by both concrete and abstract elements.

The study delved into the practices, beliefs, and ideas of Ban Kubang Badok villagers, highlighting a cultural amalgamation that distinguishes them from other southern cultures. This

distinctiveness is observable in fundamental aspects of life, including cultural practices, language and writing, as well as the utilization of weaponry—all of which retain a Hindu-Buddhist flavor or a Hindu-Javanese influence. The integration of these elements into the contemporary way of life reflects the enduring impact of historical beliefs on present-day practices.

The research findings align with the concept of social change, particularly Franz Boas's theory of cultural diffusion, which posits that cultural elements are more likely to spread from external influences than through internal innovation. The cultural diffusion observed in Pattani Province suggests a process wherein external cultural elements are introduced and merged with existing cultural components, resulting in the emergence of novel cultural expressions.

Moreover, the discussion incorporates the notion that culture is inherent in individuals and, consequently, follows individuals wherever they go (Niyapan (Phonwattana) Wannasiri, 1997). The spread of culture, according to this perspective, relies on the behavior of individuals and is facilitated through cultural space grouping. This involves various units with physical and developmental characteristics that align with the region's basic and climatic attributes, historical context, and language.

In its early stages of development, Ban Kubang Badok pottery primarily focused on crafting utilitarian containers like plates, bowls, and pots. The initial technique involved molding clay into shapes and firing them. As time progressed, the community innovated its pottery-making methods, resulting in containers that differed significantly in form, pattern, color, and quality. Notably, the spoon-cleaning process was refined for enhanced efficiency, aesthetics, and improved pattern quality. The evolution of pottery in Ban Kubang Badok reflects a commitment to simplicity, beauty, and functionality, aligning with contemporary usage needs.

Despite broader changes in pottery production influenced by environmental factors, some villagers steadfastly maintain the traditional methods passed down through generations. The unchanged, simple, and aesthetically pleasing containers are created using natural materials available in the village. The distinctive firing method, performed directly on the ground without visible kilns, serves as a testament to the village's ancient technology. This preservation of traditional methods embodies the concept of local wisdom—an accumulation of knowledge and ingenuity passed through ancestral lines and adapted to social circumstances, culture, and the environment.

Local wisdom, deeply embedded in the traditional way of life, transcends isolated aspects of living. Instead, it interconnects various facets of life, encompassing livelihoods, community living, religious practices, rituals, and traditions. It serves as a virtue guiding positive relationships between individuals, nature, and supernatural elements. Folk wisdom, grounded in overcoming natural obstacles and driven by social necessities, plays a vital role in shaping the production and lifestyle of the villagers.

Ban Kubang Badok pottery stands as a crucial variable reflecting the community's culture and uniqueness. It illustrates the basic concept of folk wisdom, emphasizing the balance of life in relationships among people, between people and nature, and between people and the supernatural. However, the income from pottery production has dwindled, and the younger generation's changing perspectives on inheriting traditional knowledge pose challenges to its preservation.

This shift in mindset, coupled with the overarching influence of multiculturalism, raises concerns about the future visibility of Ban Kubang Badok's distinctive practices. The analysis aligns with Talcott Parsons' structure-function theory, where the relationships and interactions within society are essential elements in understanding social phenomena. It underscores the potential impact of evolving social dynamics on the traditional practices and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province (Suphang Chantawanich, 2010).

The expression of creativity and diverse imagination in Ban Kubang Badok pottery aligns seamlessly with the theory of cultural evolution, as posited by Edward Tylor (1897). This concept elucidates the persistence of cultural characteristics from past societies, indicating that societies undergo an evolutionary process, progressing from simplicity to complexity over time. The development of wisdom in the style of pottery at Ban Kubang Badok, Sakam Subdistrict, Mayo District, Pattani Province,

exemplifies this evolutionary trend, notably in the distinctive round-bottomed pots. Despite geographical distances, the pottery's form and characteristics bear resemblance to artifacts found in various archaeological sites across Thailand. Local materials and narratives tied to the local way of life further influence this evolutionary process, sparking creativity and imagination in crafting pottery. This echoes Seri Phongphit's (1993) research on "Local Wisdom," emphasizing the knowledge passed down among villagers, coupled with individual ingenuity, contributing to the enhancement of local villagers' quality of life through the gradual progression from simple to more intricate cultural practices.

Thai Muslim pottery not only serves functional purposes but also stands as a rich source for studying the social history, culture, and way of life in Pattani province. The uniqueness and individuality of the social identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province reflect its role in a pluralistic society. Historical sources highlight the diversity of cultures, including Portuguese, Chinese, Malay, Arab, Persian, South Indian, and Javanese, contributing to the formation of a Malay-Muslim social structure in the region. Despite the majority practicing Islam, the area fosters a social blend, making Thai Muslim pottery a significant bearer of social identity.

The social identity of Thai Muslim pottery is classified into three distinct groups: consumer containers, architectural pieces, and ritual items. Each category emerges from the overlapping influences of diverse cultures and societies, creating a captivating social beauty unique to the region. This observation aligns with Apinya Fueangsakul's (2000) identity theory, which categorizes identity into two types to avoid redundancy or intersection. Furthermore, Choengkwan Phutchong's (2006) conceptual framework is employed to define and interpret pottery in Pattani Province in terms of social value, incorporating personal identity, and social and cultural identity. The study and analysis of the identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province reveal the province as a melting pot of cultures, forming a mixed Malay-Muslim social structure and a pluralistic society of historical and cultural significance, making it a distinctive part of Thailand's identity.

## **7. Suggestions**

### **7.1 Suggestions for Applying Research Results**

The study on the wisdom and identity of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province holds significant potential for the creation of contemporary terracotta art. To harness the research outcomes effectively, the following recommendations are proposed:

#### **7.1.1 Utilization in Historical Studies of Pottery**

The research findings can be incorporated into the study of the history of pottery, serving as a valuable resource for both students and the general public. Integrating this knowledge into educational curricula and public awareness campaigns would foster a deeper understanding of the historical and cultural significance of Thai Muslim pottery in Pattani Province.

#### **7.1.2 Establishment of a Database for Developmental Guidelines**

The acquired knowledge should be shared with governmental bodies and communities to establish an informative database. This database can serve as a foundational guide for the development of historical and tourism initiatives in Pattani Province. By generating interest among locals and tourists alike, it can contribute to the preservation and promotion of the region's unique cultural heritage. This information is vital for future generations, ensuring the continuity of cultural awareness and appreciation.

### **7.2 Suggestions for the Next Research Study**

#### **7.2.1 Exploration of History, Earthenware Pottery, Beliefs, and Community Relationships in Other Arts**

Future research endeavors should delve into the history, beliefs, and community relationships associated with earthenware pottery, particularly in other artistic domains that remain underexplored. Focus on locations that were once prominent cities or thriving centers of civilization in the



past. Numerous areas hold rich cultural significance and are deserving of in-depth research and documentation.

### 7.2.2 Application of Research Process for Cultural Preservation

Individuals with an interest in the subject matter can apply the research process employed in this study to investigate further aspects of wisdom. This expansion of knowledge can create a network dedicated to the preservation of culture. By embracing this approach, researchers and cultural enthusiasts can contribute to the comprehensive understanding and safeguarding of diverse cultural heritages.

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