

INTEGRATION OF THAI AND CHINESE CULTURE OF CERAMICS IN THAILAND

Teng Yue,¹ Chaiyot Vantitwatthanawanuwat²

Program of Doctor of Fine and Applied Arts, Bangkokthonburi University²
China,¹ Thailand²

Email: dpin25593@gmail.com;¹ yteng0518@gmail.com¹⁻²

Received: January 11, 2025; **Revised:** January 14, 2025; **Accepted:**
August 15, 2025

Abstract

The objectives of this research study are to (1) To study and analyze the integration of Thai and Chinese ceramic culture in Thailand; (2) To analyzes the characteristics of Chinese ceramic culture in Thailand. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, merging qualitative research with an extensive review of pertinent literature, secondary sources and data analysis. It further incorporates in-depth interviews five esteemed ceramic researchers, including Thai local ceramic artists who like Chinese ceramic culture, practitioners in related industries. **The research findings include**, identifying common themes and patterns that emerge from the data. 1. Glaze color (1) Sisachanalai Site in Thailand and Tai Po Yu Li kiln site, through the contrast of porcelain fragments, the same turquoise glaze and similar shape. The glaze is close to the surface color of the first group of green glazes, both colors are very light, and the glaze layer is thinner. (2) Decoration method from the specimen point of view, the decoration method is similar to the shape. The details are a little different. Comparison of fetal quality compared with specimens unearthed from the site, the bottom foot of the bowl type, more similar. Reviewing historical records with contemporary practices to assess changes over time. Discussing the significance of the integration of Thai and Chinese ceramic cultures in the broader context of cultural exchange and identity formation. 2. Highlighting unique characteristics of Chinese ceramic culture in Thailand and discussing their implications for understanding cultural dynamics and heritage preservation. Promote cultural understanding. Through research, the following research results are obtained: (1) The literature method is used to clarify the inheritance

of Chinese ceramic culture in Thailand and the relationship between Chinese ceramic culture and Thai ceramic culture (2) In -depth interviews with five experts; summarizing the cultural the inheritance and value of Chinese and Thai ceramic development in contemporary Thai ceramic culture.

Keywords: Integrating culture; Thai and Chinese Ceramic Culture; Multicultural Ceramic

Introduction

Initially, the interchange of Chinese and Thai ceramic cultures can be dated back to several centuries prior. Moreover, apart from the tributary system enforced during the early Ming Dynasty and the maritime expeditions led by Zheng He, the extensive exportation of Chinese ceramics via sea during other epochs was predominantly executed through non-official and private commercial endeavors abroad. Consequently, the vicissitudes of international trade were contingent upon the policies enacted by successive governments, influenced by either a stance of openness or inclusivity.

From a historical and cultural perspective, the origins of the exchange between Chinese and Thai scholars, as well as the contributions of foreign scholars in this field, provide a rich tapestry for inquiry. The political and diplomatic relations between Thailand and China during their respective eras represent another dimension of study. Economic forces have historically propelled cultural exchange, which is a critical aspect of scholarly research. Additionally, the movement of people and immigration cannot be overlooked. The integration of ceramic culture into Thai society through trade, along with its subsequent localization, is a significant area of interest. Finally, the impact of these historical exchanges in the modern era is also worthy of examination.



Figure 1: Route map of the Maritime Silk Road.

Regarding the historical and cultural angle, (Baron Ferdinand von Richthofen, 1877, P.) a German geographer, first proposed the concept of the Silk Road in his five-volume atlas published in 1877. This trade route originated in China, from the ancient capitals of Han and Tang dynasties such as Luoyang, extending through Gansu and Xinjiang to Central Asia, Western Asia, and Europe, connecting various countries around the Mediterranean. The Silk Road is commonly divided into maritime and overland routes. However, due to the inherent characteristics of ceramic products, including their weight and fragility, maritime transportation became the primary mode of transport, especially after the Tang Dynasty. The progress of overseas navigation during this period promoted the large-scale export of Chinese ceramics to Southeast Asia and Europe. The Maritime Silk Road is also known as the "Ceramic Road". While both land and sea routes are viable channels for ceramic exports, this article focuses on routes in the seaborne trade. Maritime Silk Road started in Quanzhou, and it was recorded in the Book of Han that the ships taken by the Chinese at that time were "all the countries to which they came were coupled by food, and the barbarian ships were transferred to them." The flow and connection of trade, and going back to modern times, the earliest shipwrecks and Chinese porcelain unearthed in many parts of Southeast Asia belong to Arab sailing ships in West Asia, dating from the late Tang Dynasty in 830 AD. It is enough to confirm the history of this part of trade exchanges. Another reason for the prosperous development of the Maritime Silk Road during the Two Song Dynasties was that the nomads in China occupied North China, which led to the



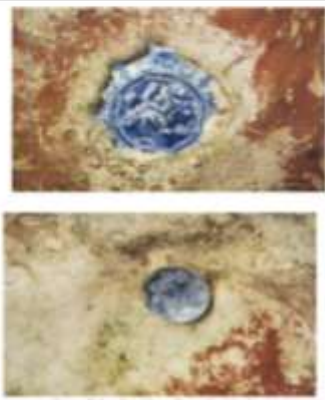

severing of the overland Silk Road. After entering the age of navigation, the dominant proportion of land and sea trade increased, and the categories were also rich and prosperous. The Silk Road on the sea has a clear route, the east coast of China has monsoon navigation in summer and winter, so it also increases the convenience of sea road to the European continent, etc. For the management of modern Chinese and Thai ceramic culture, we should absorb the study of Southeast Asian ceramic culture by scholars from many countries, through the textual data obtained, we can obtain some important artifacts data in shipwreck sites, including confirmed Chinese ceramics and porcelain fragments found in shipwreck sites such as Pattaya port, and ceramics excavated in Wat log and Chaiya temple.

This is described in detail in the form of a chart below. 2. In terms of political and diplomatic exchanges, Thai-Chinese scholars have different views from Chinese scholars. Here we should mention the "tribute system". From the perspective of Chinese culture, the country that pays tribute to the emperor means accepting the suzerain relationship, while from the perspective of Thai scholars, offering "gifts" to the emperor is a custom, just to facilitate port trade between the two countries. From 1371 to 1404, the king of Siam paid tribute to the Ming Dynasty 35 times, only to send tribute ships to enjoy the benefit of tax exemption. In modern times, China and Thailand have been in a cooperative relationship. On July 1, 1975, China and Thailand established diplomatic relations, and in 2001, the two governments issued the Joint Communiqué and signed a series of official documents. Although scholars of the two countries have different views on the situation of Sino-Thai relations, this "relationship" has laid the foundation for the friendly relations between the two countries for hundreds of years. Moreover, we have jointly cultivated the friendly relations between China and Thailand. In terms of economy and trade, the two countries have signed a number of friendly policies. The official website of the Embassy of the People's Republic of China in Thailand has a brief introduction of the relations between the two countries. Thailand, as the third largest trading partner of China in ASEAN countries, has maintained stable development of the relations between the two countries. In December 2014, the central banks of the two countries signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation in establishing RMB clearing arrangements in Thailand and renewed the Bilateral Currency Swap Agreement.

In terms of policy, the two countries will support economic trade. Iv. Population movement and migration, V. In terms of Sino-Thai ceramic exchanges, with the continuous in-depth understanding of the research on Southeast Asian ceramic culture by Thai scholars, Southeast Asian ceramic Association and European and American scholars, the Sino-Thai ceramic culture has been sorted out. In the study of scholar (Natalie V. Robinson, he pointed out the concentrated form of Sino-Thai ceramic integration. Bencharong and lai nam thong and a small number of T sculptural forms. Among them, Bencharong products catered to the needs of the society at that time. Bencharong was a unique vessel exported from China. It was made by the Thai royal family and the elite of the ruling class in the late 18th and 19th centuries, with decorative patterns of Thai characteristics and inspired by tropical plants in Southeast Asia. ordered in China, painted and fired in Thailand took the artifact to a peak. In the scholar's book, Influenced by Chinese porcelain art, the flower and bird patterns of porcelain from the same origin are similar, but different varieties are chosen to replace them.

(Yang Yongxi, 1993, P200) Source Thailand insider and academic paper.

Name	Period	Shape	Location
Tangsanat Qingci Qinghua	The middle of Tang 11-13 th 15-20 th		Songkhla
Yue kiln, Celadon, Blue and white kiln	8- 9 th 11-13 th 15-16 th		Surat Thani Wat Sing Chana
Tang Ceramics	8th		Nakhon Si Thammarat
Fragments, Geometric Inscript Pottery	Han		Khao Sam Kaeo
Green, brown glaze pottery, checkered matting pottery			The chu na district Khuan Lukpad
Tongguan kiln in Changsha, Hunan	Tang		Laem Pho, ko kho khao

Longquan kiln	11-13th		Tieraling Phra -wiang
Xing kiln Yue kiln Fragments of Changsha Kiln Celadon of Meixian County . Guangdong Sanshui kiln Gaoming kiln	Tang		Nakhon Si Thammarat
Longquan kiln Celadon	Yuan-Early Ming		Chunburi. Shipwrecks in the Gulf of Siam
Dehua Ceramics	Song Yuan		Satungpra , South thailand




			
<p>Blue and White .</p> <p>Longquan kiln, Northern</p> <p>Guangdong kiln (Red and Green drawing)</p> <p>Southern Fujian (Red and green drawing)</p> <p>Qinghua</p> <p>(Dehua kiln)</p>	<p>Yuan</p> <p>Yuan</p> <p>17th</p> <p>17th</p> <p>17-20th</p>		<p>(Ayur haya)</p>
Blue and white kiln	Ming		Saraphi Nanchang

Figure 2-4: Yangyongxi, 1993, p.200, Source: Thailand insider and academic paper.

From the above table, the resources are summarized from the Influence of Ancient Chinese Ceramics on Thai Ceramics. Yang Yongxi found a large number of ancient Chinese ceramics in the south of Thailand near the Gulf of Siam and the northern Sukhothai province. From the 8th century to the early 20th century, celadon, under-glazed porcelain, three-colored porcelain, white porcelain and black porcelain were mostly found in the National Museum of Thailand and Chiang Mai Museum. In the Southeast Asia Ceramic Museum, there are now collections of various historical periods after the Han Dynasty in China, sunken ships were salvaged, or ceramic products were excavated, especially after the Tang and Song Dynasties. In the 14th century, that is from the Song Dynasty to the early Ming Dynasty, the export trade of Longquan kiln ceased, probably due to China's sea ban policy. Correspondingly, in the 14th century, Thailand's ancient ceramics entered the development stage, and reached the golden age in the 15th century.

Integrating culture Integrating refers to the integration of ceramic traditions, artistic elements, technical characteristics, processes, of the two countries to create novel, unique and cultural characteristics of the ceramic works. This fusion may involve multiple aspects, including technology, design, cultural symbols, aiming to combine the ceramic traditions of the two countries to form innovative and cross-cultural works. It includes, technology fusion, in the process of fusion can absorb each other's ceramic production technology, combined with the firing methods of both sides, glaze technology, to create new production techniques. The fusion of design style, cultural elements and innovation is not only a simple inheritance of tradition, but also a creative integration and innovation. This integrating process aims to promote the uniqueness of the ceramic cultures of the two countries and provide a novel and rich cultural experience for a global audience.

Ceramic culture of China The earliest history of Chinese ceramics can be traced back to the Neolithic Age, after thousands of years of technological innovation, the development of Tang tri-color, white porcelain, celadon, blue and white porcelain, Wucui and other kinds of ceramic craft. In addition to the word "China" in English refers to China, another meaning is "porcelain", which can also see the close relationship between China and ceramics. Chinese porcelain was not only widely used in the ancient court, from the ancient shipwrecks found in the southeast coast of the Southern Song Dynasty, it can be

found that pottery has been used as one of the main trade goods at that time, and exported to Asia, the Islamic cultural circle, and European countries, its symbolic significance to China can be equal to silk. The road of foreign trade was once known as the road of ceramics, and the process of Chinese ceramics has gradually spread to all parts of the world in the long international trade, which has had a profound impact on the development of ceramic production technology in the world.



Figure 5: Benjarong ceramics in Thailand:

Research Objectives

1. To study and analyze the integration of Thai and Chinese ceramic culture in Thailand.
2. To analyzes the characteristics of Chinese ceramic culture in Thailand.

Review Literatures

Wang Wei, 2018, P2, Sawankhalok Kiln, Thai artisans due to long-term access to a large number of Longquan kiln (department) export porcelain, deliberate imitation. Second, Chaozhou kiln craftsmen came to Thailand to meet the local needs, using their own porcelain making technology, local materials and imitation. So Sawankhalok kiln was influenced by the Longquan kiln system

to some extent. In the research paper , *The Influence of Chaozhou Kiln on Thai Ancient Ceramics* by Chinese scholars Wang Wei who worked in overseas Chinese Publishing House and Wang Jianbao who worked in Ancient Ceramics major of China Collectors Association, it is not difficult to find that Chaozhou kiln has a certain connection with Thai ancient ceramics from the comparison of modeling, enamel color, texture, decoration methods and processing technology. Similarly, in the research of archaeologist Yang Yongxi, it was also confirmed that a large number of ancient Chinese ceramics were found in the Gulf of Siam, Pattani, Songkhla and Lokhun, Surat Thani Province. Sukhothai kiln site still called Thuriang kilns—it located around the old town's moat called "Mae Joan", the site comprises kilns dated back to Sukhothai Era or around 18th Buddhist Century. There are about 49 kilns which look like a cart's hood. Most of the potteries found in this area were large, thick dishes and plates with dense, yellowish-grey coating and black drawings in the form of flowers, fish, and wheels. Sawankhalok kiln: At one time, more than 200 huge pottery kilns lined the banks of the Mae Nam Yom in the area around Si Satchanalai. In China – the biggest importer of Thai pottery during the Sukhothai and Ayuthaya periods – the pieces produced here came to be called 'Sangkalok', a mispronunciation of Sawankhalok. Source from lonely planet. Several barely recognisable kiln sites can be found along the road that runs north of Si Satchanalai, and a local ceramic artist even continues to fire his pieces in an underground wood-burning oven.

(Baron Ferdinand von Richthofen, 1877, P.) a German geographer, first proposed the concept of the Silk Road in his five-volume atlas published in 1877. This trade route originated in China, from the ancient capitals of Han and Tang dynasties such as Luoyang, extending through Gansu and Xinjiang to Central Asia, Western Asia, and Europe, connecting various countries around the Mediterranean. The Silk Road is commonly divided into maritime and overland routes. However, due to the inherent characteristics of ceramic products, including their weight and fragility, maritime transportation became the primary mode of transport, especially after the Tang Dynasty. The progress of overseas navigation during this period promoted the large-scale export of Chinese ceramics to Southeast Asia and Europe.

(Natalie V. Robinson , 1983, P256-310), Sino -thai ceramics in the National Museum, Prince Damrong Rajanubhab wrote that Prince Wichaichan

had ordered it for short-term domestic use, as a gift, and was not intended for sale. Most of the porcelain is tea sets, and most of the patterns are made with Thai literary themes. Since this type of ceramic did not produce a form of trade, it was not patronized by the government in China, so the potter did not have to abide by the restrictions of the court in the design. Benjarong's inspiration, ceramic lines are similar to other types of Thai art motifs, including wood carvings, mother-of-pearl, ivory, textiles, stone, metal work, the motifs are also influenced by nature, Buddhist and Hindu deification, Taoist philosophy, Thai literature, textiles produced for the Siamese market, Chinese blue and white porcelain and Chinese figures, symbols and colors. The patterns of Chinese symbols rarely appear on the artifacts, because of homophones and Chinese riddles and so on, word games are not compatible with Thai. The author believes that Thai artisans have their own judgment and can design in combination with culture.

(Yoko Aoyagi , 2000, P104-107) Through the literature records, in addition to the materials of Chinese and Thai ceramic experts and the works of foreign scholars on this aspect, from the historical background, the important maritime Silk Road provides theoretical support for the research. This view, which is limited to porcelain, while "exchange and trade" covers other traded goods, has been preferred by Professor Robert B. Fox and other researchers at the National Museum Administration (Philippines) since the 1960s in favor of the broader scope and definition of this section. However, the name does confirm the distribution of Chinese, Siamese and Vietnamese porcelain throughout the Philippine Islands, reflecting the exchange of goods at that time and the mutual influence of national cultures.

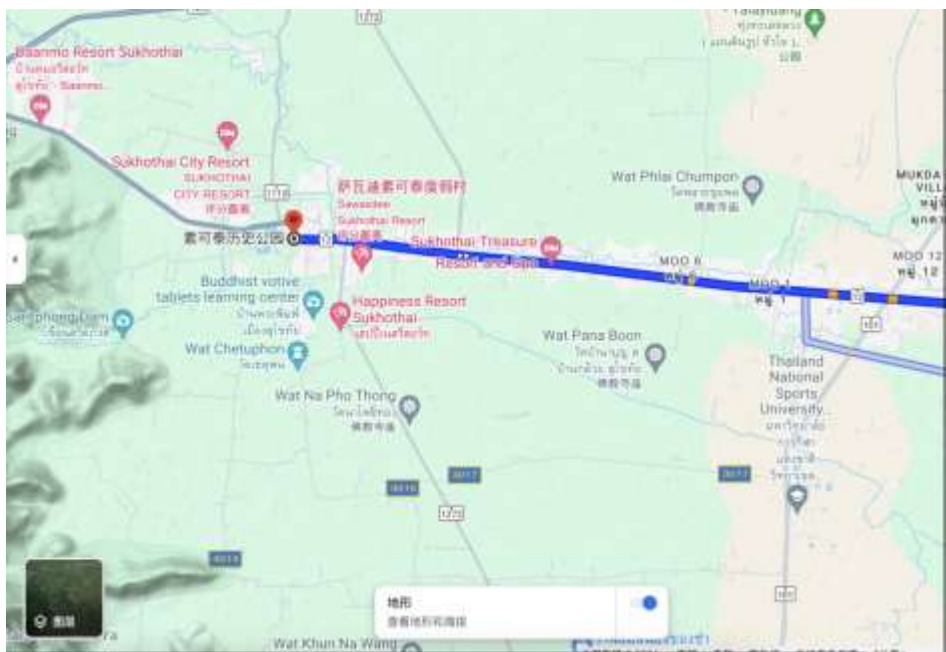


Figure 6: Thuriang kilns site location in Thailand.

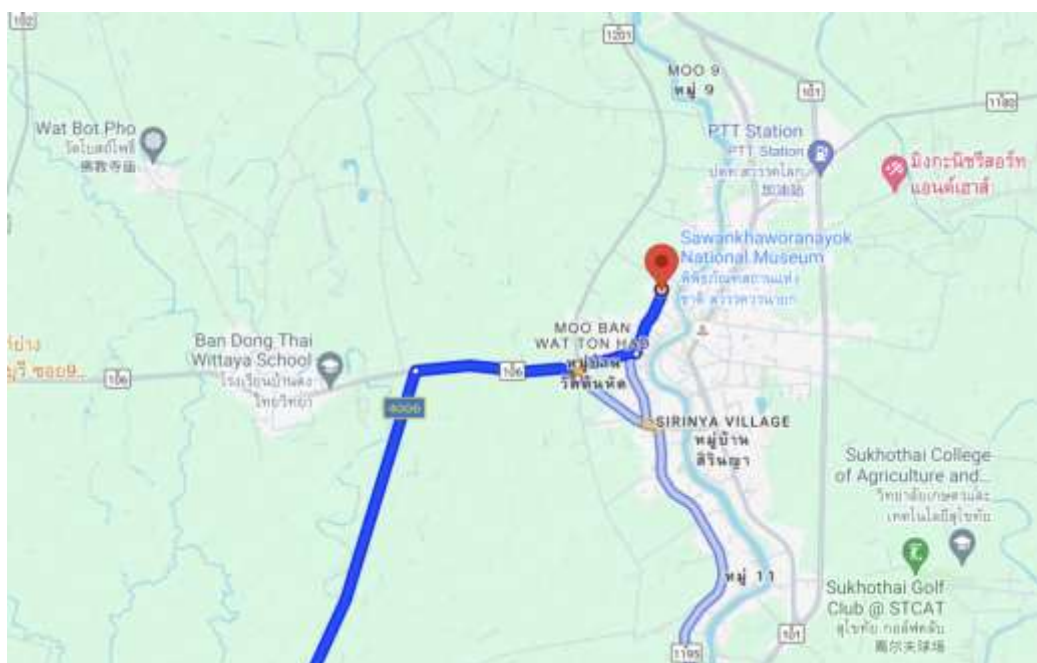


Figure 7: Sawankhalok museum location in Thailand.

Research Methodology

In this study, relying on the unique ceramic culture of China and Thailand, extracting the Chinese elements existing in the Thai ceramic culture, its handicraft, decorative style, and the inheritance of stories can prove that in Thailand, Chinese ceramic traditions are merging, which is a long-term and continuous process.

The methodology incorporated a mixed research approach in-depth expert interviews, combined with qualitative research .To carry out the study, and combine data collection tools such as literature analysis, case study, it also carries out in-depth analysis of the relatively mature regional fine cases of the integration of the cultural heritage of the field into the design of the products and summarizes them in an all-round manner, combining with the scope of the region of this study and . In addition, we will analyze and summarize the case studies in depth.

Results

Through the question of the study how is Chinese ceramic culture integrated and inherited in Thailand? In Thailand, what are the characteristics of integrating ceramic culture? Results of Research objectives:

From the 2023 Southeast Asia series of forums, through cultural dialogue and understanding to help us better understand the latest academic dynamics of the two countries, to better help us form a cultural understanding.

Results of Research objective 2: In the text, interview survey is also the main way of practice. Interviewing ceramic craftsmen and experts from museums and cultural institutions, we get the following conclusions: First, ceramic craftsmen learn the skills of Chinese craftsmen, firing techniques and drawing methods, and learn traditional techniques while carrying out innovative practices. Discuss the demand for Sino-Thai ceramic fusion products in the market, and design elements that are attractive to the market. Ceramic experts and museum personnel will discuss the promotion of Chinese and Thai ceramic culture by museums and other cultural institutions through exhibitions or educational activities to enhance public understanding of cultural relations between the two countries. The work of museums and cultural institutions has

played an important role in protecting and passing on the cultural heritage of Sino-Thai ceramics, and their activities have promoted public awareness and appreciation of this process of cultural integration. Interview results of the overall analysis, multi-level performance of cultural integration.

Discussions

The discussion will be focused on the integration and characteristics of Chinese and Thai ceramic cultures. Through historical analysis and fieldwork, it is clear that centuries of trade, we have selected Sukhothai ceramics from the 13th century to the 16th century, as well as Chinese celadon.

(Zheng Bingshan ,1984, P82-85) The Law of Mutual Market Ships in the History of Food and Goods of the Song Dynasty recorded: "Where (Dashi) Arabia, ancient Thailand, Kepa (Java in Indonesia), Accounted for the city (in Vietnam), Bo Ni (Borneo Brunei), Ma Yi (in the Philippines), three Buddha Qi (Indonesia's Palembang) Zhu Fan and trade, to gold, silver, thread money, lead, tin, variegated cloth, porcelain, city incense medicine, rhinoceros horn, ivory, coral, Xu Lang, beads and so on. Through field investigation and consulting materials, it can be inferred that the fusion of Chinese and Thai ceramic cultures and the styles displayed are also recorded in the history of sea exchanges.

(Zheng Bingshan ,1984, P. 82-85) During the Yuan Dynasty, "Dao Yi Zhi Lue" mentioned the situation of merchants and overseas Chinese in China at that time, and explained the trade situation of ceramics with more than 20 countries and regions, which also records the historical record of Chinese immigrants living in Thailand. The friendly diplomatic relations between China and Thailand have also influenced Thai ceramic culture, integrating Chinese ceramic manufacturing techniques and styles with local Thai technology and aesthetics.

Thailand has created its own characteristics of ceramics, this cultural integration is most obvious in the similar glaze color, modeling techniques, and exquisite skills. (Zhangyue, 2019, P136-139) Chinese culture represents the rich flower, Chinese dragon and other patterns into the Thai ceramic art. Future research could further explore the impact of ceramic production on the exchange of young people between China and Thailand, the impact on the environment, whether digital technology can play a role in preserving the diverse traditional

skills of ceramics, and comparative studies with other Southeast Asian countries or regions influenced by Chinese culture. Can provide a wider range of different insights into the integration of transnational ceramic cultures.

New Knowledges

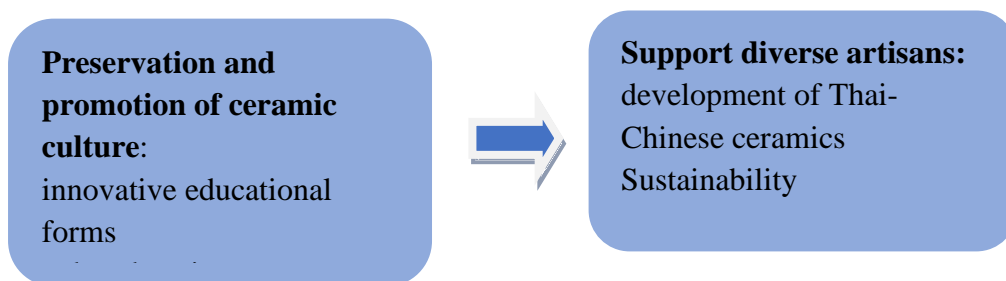


Figure 8: Diagram of integration of Thai and Chinese culture of ceramics in Thailand.

Conclusions

In conclusion, the integration of Thai and Chinese ceramic cultures in Thailand has led to the creation of a vibrant, diverse ceramic tradition that harmonizes both cultures' artistic expressions. This melding not only showcases the historical connections between the two cultures but also highlights how trade and cross-cultural interactions can foster innovation, resulting in a distinctive ceramic heritage that continues to evolve today.

References

- Charles Nelson Spinks. (1965). **The ceramic Wares of Siam** (Bangkok: The Siam Society, p. 15.
- Feng Xianming. (1990). **Thailand, north Korea from China ceramic. Chinese culture**, (01), p. 59-62.
- Natalie V.Robinson. (1983). **Sino-Thai ceramics in the National Museum, Asian Affairs** 5(3), pp. 296-310.
- Wang Wei, Wang Jianbao. (2018). **Oriental Collection**, (22), pp. 28-34.
- Yoko Aoyagi. (2000). Mei Wenrong, Wang Ning. **Chinese export porcelain unearthed in Southeast Asia. Cultural Relics of Southern China**, (02), pp. 104-107.
- Yang Yongxi. (1993). "The Influence of Chinese Ancient Ceramics on Thai Ceramics," Chinese Ancient Ceramics Research - the eighth volume, 200.
- Zhang Yue. (2017). **The communication and development of Sukhothai ceramic underglaze painting techniques. Oriental Collections**, (06), pp.66-70.
- Zheng Bingshan. (1982). **A brief discussion on the situation and reasons of Chinese ancient ceramics selling well abroad [J]. Fujian Forum**, (05), pp. 82-85.