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IJAD serves as a nexus for researchers, fostering collaboration and knowledge exchange across diverse disciplinary boundaries. We welcome original research papers and state-of-the-art reviews that contribute to the evolving discourse in art and design.

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A Systematic Literature Review (SLR) on Yixing Zisha Teapot Design as Intangible Cultural Heritage

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ABSTRACT

Promoting traditional culture and intangible cultural heritage has always been a hot topic for the Chinese government, which has also formulated a series of policies to support the development of intangible cultural heritage. As the first batch of intangible cultural heritage recognized by the Chinese government, Yixing Zisha teapot-making techniques have gradually spread in design theory and practise with the promotion of the government and artisans. Therefore, this article systematically reviews the design of Yixing Zisha teapots from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, emphasising design concepts and design thinking. Critical thinking of bibliometric analysis and literature review was conducted to achieve the research objectives. The results show preliminary design concepts and thinking that emerged in the Yixing Zisha teapot design. However, there needs to be a systematic design theory and framework to promote future design research, pointing out that the research gap can help promote the development of the Yixing Zisha teapot design.

Keywords: *Intangible cultural heritage, Systematic literature review, Teapot design, Yixing Zisha*

INTRODUCTION

Yixing Zisha teapots are a category of traditional Chinese design that are world-famous for more than just their unique clay structures. Historical documents show that the rise of Yixing Zisha teapots was also due to changes in how tea was consumed during the Ming Dynasty. As early as the late Ming Dynasty, Shi Dabin established the production paradigm, and Yixing Zisha teapot artisans already understood how to use homemade tools to make handmade Zisha pots. With the development of the times and technology, a series of moulds and machinery have emerged to assist the production of Yixing Zisha teapots, which is beneficial from the perspective of industrial product manufacturing. Based on the perspective of intangible cultural heritage (ICH), the design technology is also limited in the design practice. Using machinery to produce Yixing Zisha teapots with avant-garde shapes is impossible. The products need to conform to traditional Chinese aesthetics. To explore and find the design content of the Yixing Zisha teapot from the perspective of ICH, this article proposes a systematic literature review to elaborate on the fields involved in the development of the Yixing Zisha teapot. Therefore, the researcher proposes two research objectives in this article: To explore the status of the theory on Yixing Zisha teapot design and to find the gaps in Yixing Zisha teapot design.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Yixing Zisha Teapot Becomes Intangible Cultural Heritage

Yixing Zisha, as one of the intangible cultural heritages, shows simplicity, elegance, and vividness in its shape and craftsmanship. It is famous for its teapots and is highly praised by the world. As China vigorously develops its cultural industry, Yixing Zisha, as a typical representative, needs to innovate and provide direction for development from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage. Some researchers have systematically analysed the reasons for the development of Yixing Zisha technology from the perspective of the overall evolution of technology and society, starting from the unique geographical environment of Yixing Zisha, and sorted out the impact of social needs and traditional cultural values such as Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism on its development (Hu, 2012).

The central core of Yixing Zisha is the unique clay material. The Zisha teapot is a kind of unglazed pottery made mainly of brown clay and sandy raw materials. It is a typical product from Yixing, Jiangsu Province, made by hand and with special tools. Zisha is not a natural science material name but a title that combines the colour and texture of the material with a humanistic spirit. It should be purple as the colour and sand as the quality, vision, and touch. Combining two words, there are vivid features (Yang, 2018a). Several studies have found that Zisha teapots have a fine texture and high iron content and do not need to be glazed on the surface. It is russet, light yellow, or purple black.

Yixing Zisha craftsmanship has attained such a superb status because Zisha is famous for its technical process. The meanings of craftsmanship and technology are scientific, practical, and consistent with objective reality, forming a complete technical system. Gao (2021) pointed out that although the Yangxian Teapot Series has only more than a thousand words, it has established a new paradigm for studying handicrafts from the perspective of art form, styles, origins, and aesthetics into history Genealogy. Yangxian Famous Pottery Record follows and enriches the research paradigm of the Yangxian Teapot Series. Yang (2009) believes a relationship exists between the whole and the part in any creative design or craft production. In philosophy, whole and part are relative and constitute a pair of dialectical categories. The value of Yixing Zisha as an intangible cultural heritage lies in exploring clay and craft technology.

Design of Yixing Zisha teapot

Zisha teapots have mysterious material characteristics and a complete moulding and decoration process system. The intervention of literati groups and the promotion of functional utility have formed a unique teapot art form and aesthetic interest (Zhang, 2017). Yixing Zisha teapot design has a collection of classic shapes that have been developing for over 500 years.

As early as the Wanli period of the Ming Dynasty, teapot makers represented by Da Bin continued to explore and experiment, forming a complete, unique, and reasonable craftsmanship method. During the Kangxi and Qianlong years of the Qing Dynasty, famous pot-making artisans represented by Chen Mingyuan and Hui Mengchen integrated the ideas of literati and life interests, developed the artistic expression of Zisha teapots, increased the variety of shapes, and improved the production skills. During the Daoguang period, Chen Mansheng infiltrated literati's lifestyle and aesthetic consciousness into Zisha through pot-making masters represented by Yang Pengnian. They developed the tea-drinking culture advocated by literati in the Tang and Song Dynasties and pushed Zisha teapots to their peak. Zisha teapot making has been developed since the Ming and Qing Dynasties and has a distinct artistic style and cultural attributes. Through the artistic form of utensil shapes and patterns presented by exquisite and delicate craftsmanship, people can appreciate the interest in life and spiritual enjoyment that Zisha brings to us.

Tea culture is the foundation of Yixing Zisha teapot design. It is precisely the way of drinking tea that gives Yixing Zisha teapot design a broad space. Beginning in the 15th century, a new method became popular during the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). After tea was brewed, a new container became particularly needed, and the teapot was born (Ströber, 2014). Zisha tea sets are specially used for tea drinking. Due to their particularly excellent storage and steeping functions and good plasticity, they are in harmony with tea culture (Luo, 2016).

Ströber (2014) believes that when using Yixing Zisha teapots, the texture of the teapot and the unglazed surface are beautiful. While studying the shape of Zisha teapots, she compared the Ming Dynasty and Qing Dynasty shapes. She found that the Zisha teapots of the Qing Dynasty tended to be more naturalistic, while the Zisha teapots of the Ming Dynasty were more elegant. It is not difficult to find that the design of Yixing Zisha teapots emerged because of tea culture. After meeting the needs of use, it integrated aesthetic consciousness and concepts from different social backgrounds, thus promoting the development of the shape and decoration of Yixing Zisha teapots.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Systematic Literature Review (SLR) is a method of literature review that is different from narrative literature review, qualitative literature review, and comprehensive literature review. The focus of this method is to prove to researchers the usefulness of systematic literature review (O'Brien & Mc Guckin, 2016). Through a systematic literature review, this study aims to investigate and analyse the status and gaps of the Yixing Zisha teapot design from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage and find a potential framework for the design of the Yixing Zisha teapot.

To achieve the objectives, this study set up relevant steps according to the methodology, such as determining the central theme and research questions and establishing methodological procedures, including clear search strategies and inclusion and exclusion criteria, to quantify the literature results and content. Conduct a detailed analysis (Dresch et al., 2015). SLR cannot eliminate bias in this study because

selecting databases, formulating exclusion criteria, and analysing articles involve the researcher's subjectivity.

Methodological Procedures

The keywords were locked through the research topic, and three categories were determined: intangible cultural heritage, Yixing Zisha teapot, and Zisha teapot design. To clarify the search scope of publications, intangible cultural heritage, Yixing, Zisha teapot, and Design were initially used in the search engine to obtain more accurate documentation. According to the search results of three keywords, intangible cultural heritage can be expanded to cultural value, development path, protection measures, etc. Yixing Zisha teapot can be expanded to Zisha teapot ideas, Zisha teapot decoration, Zisha teapot export, tea culture, Mansheng Zisha teapots, process flow, Zisha clay, Zisha pot culture and Zisha pot shapes, Zisha pot design can be extended to ceramic Design, design paradigms, design principles, design methods, design aesthetics and product design, etc. There are four translations of Yixing Zisha Teapot during the search process, namely Yixing Zisha Teapot, Yixing Clay Teapot, Purple-Clay Teapot, and Purple Sand Teapot. When we collect literature statistics, they are uniformly displayed as Yixing Zisha Teapot.



Figure 1. Keywords used in search engines

With the search and expansion of research topic keywords, the language of literature is locked into Chinese and English in the Web of Science, Scopus, Google Scholar, and China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI).

The researcher imported references into Mendeley and conducted keyword searches, examining 664 documents, including journal papers, conference papers, and doctoral theses. During the screening process, 607 documents were found after excluding remarkably similar and worthless journals. Since the research topic of this paper needs to be combined with the three keywords of intangible cultural heritage, Yixing Zisha teapot, and design, by reading the abstract and the relevance of the research, after excluding the literature that is not related to the three major topics, there are 213 documents in total. After examining journals' impact, quality, and reliability factors and selecting high-quality documents such as CSSCI, 33 articles were left in the CNKI. After reading the documents, the researcher found that 23 journals were not published in high-quality journals. However, these documents still contributed valuable knowledge and were used as references for this study. In the end, the researcher determined that 78

documents met the standards. In the end, 78 documents met the standards. Figure 2 shows the process of the literature search, screening process, and results.

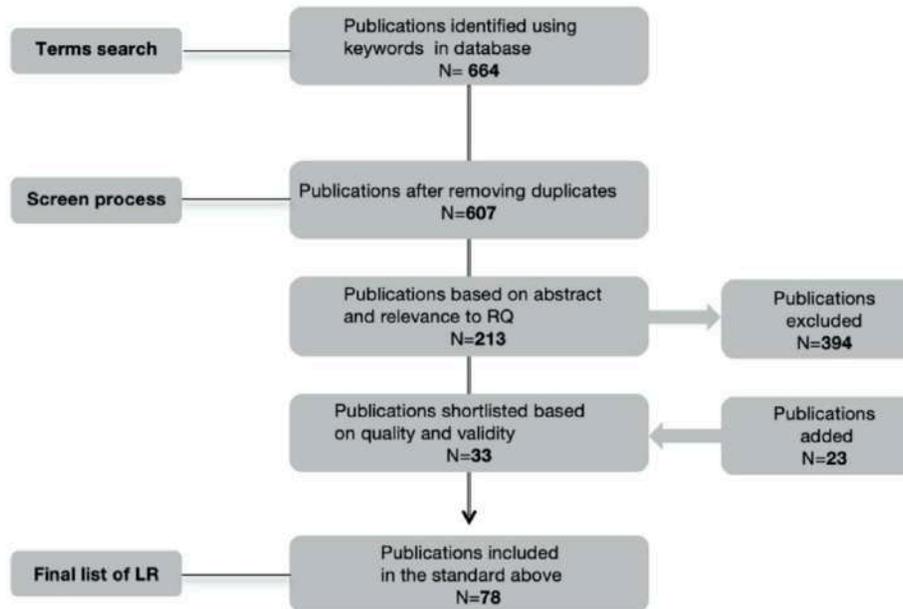


Figure 2. Number of publications found before and after exclusion criteria

Bibliometric Analysis

It is essential to display the literature digitally, which allows us to visualise the status of literature retrieval and research. Regarding the research on the design of Yixing Zisha teapots from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, the researcher selected the literature range from 2013 to 2022. There are six documents in the Web of Science and five in Scopus, which are excluded from Google Scholar. There are 19 documents after the same articles as the above two searches and 49 documents in China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). According to the quantitative results of the search, we can intuitively see that the Yixing Zisha teapot design documents have high local and regional characteristics; 61% of the documents come from China National Knowledge Infrastructure (CNKI). The number of documents in the WOS and Scopus search tools is rare, and even the number in the Emerald Insight search is 0. Figure 3 counts the specific numbers under the four search tools quantitatively.

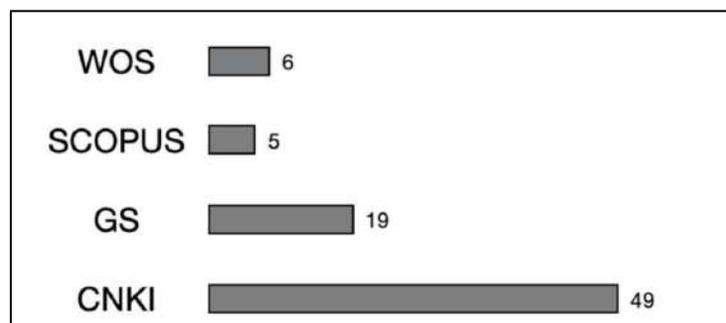


Figure 3. Number of publications found in databases

The design of the Yixing Zisha teapot was listed as one of the first batches of intangible cultural heritage in China in 2006. There was a Zisha crisis in 2010. The reason was that unscrupulous merchants mixed harmful chemicals into the Zisha clay mud during commercialization to achieve bright colours, smooth texture, and other effects. To eliminate crisis problems, the government has promoted a series of measures to develop Yixing Zisha teapots. One of them involves colleges and universities participating in the design, which is why more and more researchers are participating. According to the ten-year literature distribution, it can be found that in the seven years from 2013 to 2019, the number of documents fluctuated gently. In the three years from 2020 to 2022, the number of documents showed an apparent upward trend, showing that more and more researchers began to study the relationship, application, and theoretical research on intangible cultural heritage and Yixing Zisha teapot design.

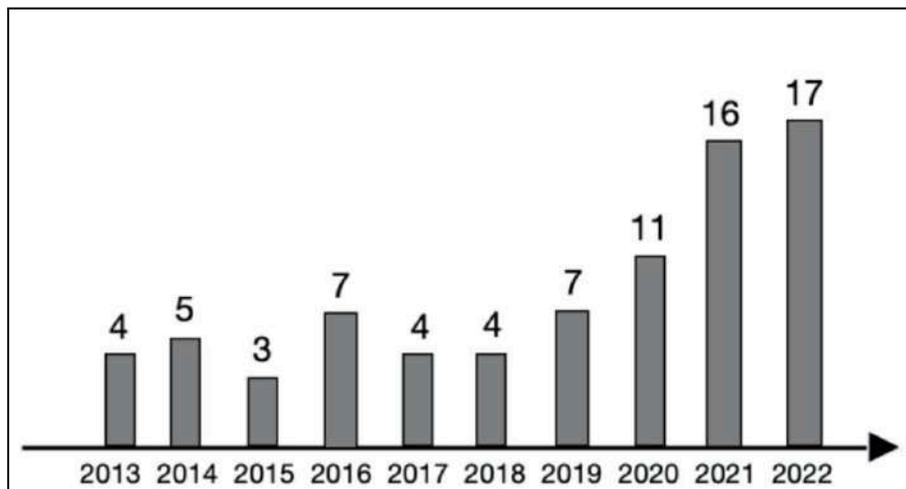


Figure 4. Number of publications in per year

The growing number of documents also reflects the research interest in Yixing Zisha teapot design. For example, the 47 journals listed in Table 1 all belong to the humanities and social sciences field. They are distributed in ceramic-related journals, including ceramic technology, Journals related to ceramic art, handicrafts, art and design, and some in interdisciplinary fields such as art education, culture, design science, etc. This provides a broader scope and direction for the literature exploration of Yixing Zisha teapot design.

Table 1. Number of publications in per journal

Publication Title	Number
International Conference on Education, Language, Art and Intercultural Communication	1
Ceramics-Technical	1
Ceramics International	1
Journal of Modern Craft	1
Advances in Social Science Education and Humanities Research	1
Proceedings of The International Conference on Education, Language, Art and Intercultural Communication	1
Mobile Information Systems	1
International Journal of Sustainability in Economic, Social, and Cultural Context	1
Lecture Notes in Computer Science	1
E3S Web of Conferences	1
2018 4th International Conference on Education & Training, Management and Humanities Science	1

Anthropological Forum	1
Ceramics: Art and Perception	2
A Journal of Decorative Arts, Design History, and Material Culture	1
The University of Western Australia(Doctoral Thesis)	1
The Australian National University(Doctoral Thesis)	1
Journal of Graphics	1
Frontiers in Art Research	1
International Conference on Human-Computer Interaction	1
Innovative Computing	1
International Journal of Social Science and Education Research	1
Journal of the Science of Design	1
International Journal of Frontiers in Sociology	1
Asian Culture and History	1
A New Phase of Systematic Development of Scientific Theories in China	1
Chinese Semiotic Studies	1
Chinese Handicrafts	1
The History of Chinese Ceramics	1
Ceramic Studies	1
China Ceramics	12
Journal of Nanjing Arts Institute(Fine Arts & Design)	3
Packaging Engineering	3
ZHUANGSHI	2
Southeast Culture	1
Journal of Inner Mongolia Arts University	1
Fujian Tea	1
Art Panorama	1
Hundred Schools in Arts	2
Art science and technology	1
Agricultural Archaeology	1
Art Observation	1
Jiangnan University(Doctoral Thesis)	1
Journal of Ceramics	3
Jiangsu Ceramics	10
Ceramics	3
Art Education Research	1
Shandong Ceramics	1

During the search process, due to the limitation of "Chinese" and "English," 78 documents were distributed in Asia (China, Japan, Malaysia), Europe (UK), America (USA), and Oceania (Australia). Yixing Zisha, from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, is still mainly led by Chinese researchers. For Chinese researchers, it is more convenient to obtain primary resources. Moreover, Yixing has solid regional and traditional characteristics in local culture. It is difficult for users who are not in China to communicate with local artisans. Therefore, most researchers from other areas who designed Yixing Zisha teapots only studied the cultural connotation and aesthetic value of Yixing Zisha teapots. Most researchers from other areas also study the export products of Yixing Zisha teapots. Most of them understand that the Zisha teapots in the region require fieldwork, which significantly increases the research difficulty.



Figure 5. Publications by country of the author

FINDINGS

The cultural connotation and value of Yixing Zisha teapots

From the perspective of social development, traditional handicrafts, especially those that can be regenerated, are the cultural heritage of the whole society, and the production of handicrafts is full of passion and potential. When the river of life becomes more comprehensive, cultural heritage will move forward like the powerful still water, filling the river with energy. Currently, the historical and cultural district is a platform for value inheritance and a place to create conditions for new development (Wei, 2021). Yixing has become the hometown of Zisha Clay. On the one hand, it is due to its unique mineral resources and long history of pottery-making experience; on the other hand, the profound humanistic accumulation in the Jiangnan region is also why Zisha art emerged (Ming, 2017).

As the first batch of China's intangible cultural heritage, Yixing Zisha Teapots, researchers have focused more on the cultural value of Yixing Zisha to conduct in-depth research on the promotion and significance of Zisha culture. Due to the strong local characteristics, the locality carries unique customs, local character, and imagination; it contains three levels of meaning. The first level of meaning is the natural conditions. The geographical environment of Yixing's mountains and water is suitable for building dragon kilns on the mountains, which facilitates water and land transportation. The second level of meaning is the historical accumulation, the process of the Zisha craft factory cultivating artisans, resulting in a group of Zisha artists in the local area. The third level of meaning is the social culture, the cultural atmosphere of Yixing, the pottery capital, the local geography and culture, Beliefs, and legends, etc., have more cultural connotations than the first two local material carriers (Qian & Hong, 2011). Regarding the understanding of cultural connotation, Geoffrey Gowlland, an anthropologist at the London School of Economics and Political Science in the United Kingdom, focused on analysing the personal style, technology, and tradition of Zisha production and explored why style is so important to artists in the modern context.

Some researchers believe that the emphasis on the origin of Zisha production only in Dingshu Town strengthens the connection between materials and space and highlights the sacred status of the Huanglong mountain Zisha mine and the product mineral materials in the industry. As a result, local elements and raw materials are attached to the products, and the geo-cultural advantages further strengthen consumers' recognition and loyalty to the brand (Qian & Hong, 2011; Zhi, 2017) emphasised in sociological interactionism that branding is a process of constructing sign values. Allen J also recognized that it relates to the embedded values in products. Symbols are closely linked. From the perspective of commodity science, greater efforts should be made to improve and popularise consumers' commodity knowledge and identification abilities. As Zisha cultural communication institutions and scholars, we should vigorously promote and research. Specifically, the following measures can be taken: 1. Actively implement the inheritance of national intangible cultural heritage, 2. Strengthen research on the industrialization of Zisha pottery and the protection and innovation of artistic works, 3. Build a pottery cultural tourism product system and highlight the brand influence of the World Pottery Capital, 4. Based on inheriting traditional craftsmanship, increase the artistic innovation of purple clay teapots (Hu, 2011).

Some researchers believe that as an intangible cultural heritage, its essence and characteristics need to be clarified, including Inheritance, Intangible, Oral, Plasticity, and Popular character (Yi, 2017). In the process of inheritance, we have encountered the Impact of the living environment, Heritage loss, Overexploitation, Underinvestment, Lack of unified planning, imperfect Laws and regulations, and other crises. Some researchers have proposed relevant solution models from other theoretical perspectives. This research holds significant theoretical implications. Firstly, it asserts that the transmission of Intangible Cultural Heritage (ICH) constitutes an economic activity governed by corresponding economic principles, making it amenable to examination through the lens of game theory. Secondly, it addresses a lacuna in the existing literature by investigating the factors influencing ICH knowledge transfer, the game model dynamics between mentors and apprentices, and the incentive mechanisms and strategic choices involved in the transmission and development of ICH. Thirdly, it constructs a theoretical framework grounded in game theory to elucidate the transmission of ICH, scrutinising participants' incentive mechanisms and strategic choices in diverse situations. Lastly, data simulation elucidates how key factors impact the likelihood of successfully transmitting ICH while maintaining the original meaning (Sun et al., 2021). Jingdezhen ceramic crafts artists in ceramic culture in the process of inheritance, we pass on the skills through the traditional master-apprentice system, cooperate with ceramic companies to develop new projects, make full use of ceramic materials to engage in horizontal scientific research projects, set up ceramic skills training classes, and go to ceramic tourist attractions to demonstrate traditional ceramic skills and promote ceramic culture (Wu, 2012).

Over the past decade, there has been a notable surge in interest in cultural designs (Irwin, 2015). Conversely, the inexorable forces of modernization and globalisation have relegated design practices imbued with culturally significant elements, such as traditional crafts, to the peripheries across the globe (Twigger Holroyd et al., 2017).

Yang (2009) emphasised that cultural heritage constitutes a multifaceted, intricate, and dynamic value system integral to humanity and historical legacy, representing a global repository of traditional cultures. However, the advent of high-tech factory equipment driven by the rapid strides in modern industrialization has supplanted numerous skills associated with ICH (Xue et al., 2019). Robbins & Christopher highlighted the digital technology framework for ICH, primarily involving using existing information technology to digitally preserve and present ICH through various mediums such as pictures, audio, videos, and interactive displays. Lindgren et al. and other researchers underscored the growing significance of digital communication technologies in communicating and safeguarding ICH. These technologies encompass database technology, digital imaging technology, 3D imaging technology, Virtual

reality (VR) technology, and Augmented Reality (AR) technology, all of which have seen increased applications in this context.

Concept analysis in the design of Yixing Zisha teapot

Based on in-depth research on keywords and topics in the literature, the design of the Yixing Zisha teapot includes a series of design concepts, including social culture, process flow, design elements, design principles, methods and ideas, design aesthetics, etc. Through the pie chart data, researchers can intuitively understand the research fields of Zisha teapots that have been involved in the past ten years.



Figure 6. Percentage of fields of the study

Due to the rising trend of tea drinking, literati in the Ming and Qing Dynasties began to combine artistic creations with Zisha teapots. Among arts and crafts, the Zisha teapot has more cultural value due to the participation of the literati (Zhu, 2022). Some researchers usually analyse the works of Zisha teapots to reflect the principles and ideas embodied in the design. Some researchers analysed the Jiajing persimmon pattern and high-handle Zisha teapot in the Ming Dynasty. In addition to its functions, this pot has also evolved with the development of society, especially the participation of literati and officials in the Ming Dynasty, forming a social culture closely related to tea ceremony culture (Liang, 2012). Zisha teapots have practical functions and five aesthetic characteristics: material, shape, craftsmanship, decoration, and artistic conception (Wu, 2012).

At first, the Zisha teapot was just a daily necessity for folk. Later, under the influence of drinking tea and playing by literati, they participated in the production and design, wrote poems and paintings, and gradually rose to handicrafts (Shen & Sun, 2011). For the design and creation of Zisha teapot makers, the melding process is completing a standard artwork and a creative activity that reflects the design intention. Therefore, they are both producers and artists involved in artistic expression. In completing the production, it is necessary to comprehensively grasp the quality of craftsmanship and art (Yang, 2009). The process of craftsmanship also determines the paradigm of Zisha teapot production. What Zhou Gaoqi calls "making" refers to the craftsmanship of Zisha teapots, including shape, principles, artistic style, etc. Zhou Gaoqi believes that "making" is the reason and merit of the rise of Zisha teapots in the Ming Dynasty and is the key to studying Zisha pots (Gao, 2021). Buyers of Zisha teapots often need help to see their actual value. To promote the traditional craftsmanship methods, Gowlland (2009) explored the relationship between the vision and value of Zisha teapots, thereby deepening the connotation and meaning of the craftsmanship.

Design elements are diverse in Yixing Zisha teapot design. They can not only show in colour but also show the design effect through the expression of texture. Yixing Zisha has unique properties. The most memorable thing about Zisha clay is not its mineral content but the "sand" in the mud. The performance of Zisha clay lies entirely in the sand. A good Zisha teapot is a work of art. The most intuitive feeling is that the Zisha clay's colour, the clay's feel, and the natural, earthy fragrance should all be high quality (Luo, 2016). The texture of Zisha is uniform but only partially flat. Subtle changes in texture are one of the essential characteristics of Zisha materials. The colour control of the Zisha material needs to be adjusted. You can see the changes in colour and their subtlety from the existing twisted tire works (Yang, 2018). People usually evaluate a Zisha teapot from several aspects such as clay, shape, workmanship, and style. This shows the importance of Zisha material (Zhang & Li, 2022).

Analysing the form of the traditional Zisha teapot and integrating the literati's aesthetic ideas into the form, often the literati and artisans reached a consensus on the shape, structure, decorative form, material, and colour in making the teapot and finally achieved a consensus on the shape, interest, and concept of the teapot - a reasonable balance between performance and practical functions. Sometimes, to achieve the spirituality of the allegorical meaning without sacrificing the function and structure, the surface of the teapot body would be decorated with text to express the spiritual aspirations of the literati. Regarding decoration, the literati's ideas and aesthetics are directly expressed on the Zisha teapot through calligraphy and paintings. This kind of craftsmanship, which presents images on the surface of objects and performs calligraphy, seal cutting, and drawing in the form of carving and dyeing, has become the decorative pattern of Zisha carving and is also a direct and convenient way for literati to participate in. The cooperation between Zisha artisans and famous literati in the pot making pioneered since the late Ming Dynasty has jointly pushed the Zisha art to the peak of culture and art. Combining the literati's aesthetic taste and exquisite craftsmanship gives the Zisha teapot rich artistic connotations and forms a unique style, such as the theme and shape that symbolises the literati's character (Xiao, 2022).

Some researchers have proposed design principles to study the shape of Zisha teapots, which all follow universal aesthetic principles. Usually, the aesthetic principles involved mainly include symmetry and balance, proportion and scale, contrast, and harmony (Zhao & Liu, 2016). In addition, some researchers have sorted out and analysed the characteristics and trends of the shape evolution of Zisha teapots at various stages of development from the Ming Dynasty to modern times and preliminarily summarised the characteristics of the shape evolution and innovation of Zisha teapots. Fifty-nine samples of Zisha teapots from the Ming Dynasty, Qing Dynasty, the Republic of China, and modern times were selected to evaluate and collect data on seven quantitative and qualitative attributes related to their modelling innovation. Finally, the SPSS software factor analysis method was used to analyse the data and summarise the Zisha teapots in each period. Characteristics and trends of evolution and innovation in pot shape (Wang et al., 2017). Other researchers also found through the Qing Dynasty Puhe's "Seventy-Three Pots" manuscript that 13 models were derived from flower and fruit themes, accounting for nearly 1/5 of the classic pot types at that time, using the bionic design of flowers, melons, and fruits has become one of the three creative themes of Zisha teapots (Zhu & Yang, 2021). The methods and ideas for the design of Zisha teapots will also come from other craft categories, such as ancient bronzes, wood carvings and bamboo carvings, clothing, folk patterns, etc., which are all fertile ground for the creation of modern Zisha artists. Inheriting tradition and exploring innovation are also the creative models of modern Zisha artists (Yong, 2014). Traditional Chinese philosophy significantly influences the design of Zisha teapots (Liu & Gu, 2019). From the clay materials, colours, shapes, and decorations of Zisha in the Ming Dynasty, as well as the artistic quality and design concepts of Zisha craftsmen Starting from six aspects, combined with Taoist simple aesthetics, it is demonstrated that the creations of Zisha craftsmen in the Ming Dynasty were based on a "Wuwei" mentality and used natural techniques to express a simple beauty.

The exploration of the morphological art of Zisha teapots has continued. Hong (2018) combined with the method of Kansei Engineering, starting from the correlation between the morphological elements and visual images of traditional Zisha teapots, using the factor analysis method to extract the morphological image vocabulary suitable for traditional Zisha teapots, and then summarising five types of visual images of Zisha teapots that users have.

Knowledge gaps of Yixing Zisha Teapot

The goal of this study is to explore the current status of Yixing Zisha teapot design from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, including the current status of design theory and design practice, and try to find the gap in Yixing Zisha teapot design, thereby providing beneficial design guidance for Yixing Zisha teapot practitioners. Although the findings in the literature point out existing problems in the research, integrating concepts from the Yixing Zisha teapot design through a systematic literature review can promote the establishment of a design framework.

The design of the Yixing Zisha teapot from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage can be concluded from the classification of literature; 1. The development path of Yixing Zisha from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage or the value of Yixing Zisha teapot, 2. The concept of the Yixing Zisha teapot, including clay materials and craftsmanship, and 3. The principles, ideas, elements, and aesthetics of Yixing Zisha teapot design

The topics of intangible cultural heritage and Yixing Zisha do not all come from the fields of art and design but more from history, sociology, and humanities. Some researchers have focused on the value and method of inheritance. In response to the problem of the weakening of traditional culture, they have proposed new designs for intangible cultural heritage that align with modern Chinese society's development (Liu, 2019). In recent years, the Chinese government has proposed the "rural revitalization" strategy, which has a good role in promoting the inheritance and development of traditional culture. Lu (2017), Zhu (2020) and Wang (2023) all pointed out that there are problems in the protection and inheritance of Yixing Zisha, and a series of solutions have been proposed, including calling on the government to propose a better protection bill, suggesting that the industry associations establish better protection mechanisms, and establishing a Zisha art inheritance base. Other studies also rely on the representative intangible cultural heritage of the region to propose the main characteristics of the intangible cultural heritage, strengthen the principal value of the intangible cultural heritage, and propose a series of protection measures and new methods of inheritance.

The literature review on the concept and design of Yixing Zisha teapots is relatively scattered. Few literatures directly study how to design Yixing Zisha teapots from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage. This has also become a significant research gap and a challenging area of research to explore. The literature is mainly concentrated in China, a limitation caused by the regional issue of the Yixing Zisha teapot. The content of most of the literature reflects the elements, methods, ideas, etc., used in a Zisha teapot work. This category has the problem of being too subjective and not universal. It is a summary and outlook of a type of design work. Researchers such as Xu (2013) and Yong (2014) all draw design-related conclusions through a category or a work. Other researchers started from the Zisha teapot itself, the clay material, and craftsmanship and pointed out that the clay material can be mixed with colours to create different visual experiences. It can also be pointed out through the process flow that Zisha teapots need functional principles, and form depends on function (Yang, 2009; Zhang, 2017). Other researchers pointed out that traditional Chinese philosophical ideas are applied in the design of Zisha teapots (Gu, 2013), including Taoist simplicity, square and round concepts, and other traditional Chinese ideas. These studies can better discover the profound meanings in the design of Zisha teapots, open a

broad space for theoretical research on Zisha teapot design, and provide more convincing explanations for some shapes.

During the SLR research process, it was discovered that the main themes of some documents were ceramic art, product design, industrial design, and traditional Chinese design. However, the Zisha teapot was selected as the research carrier. For example, Kansei Engineering is used to explore the aesthetic feelings of Zisha teapots (Hong, 2018), and shape grammar methods are used to deal with the shape and decoration of ceramics (Benros et al., 2015; Costa & Duarte, 2015), which provides research on other ceramic products. Some researchers have also analysed the application and significance of semiotics in ceramic works and Zisha teapots based on semiotic theory (Xiao et al., 2005; Zhang et al., 2012). It is a standard method for researchers to study practical paths through design theory. Although these literature reviews did not directly mention the specific design methods and guiding principles of Yixing Zisha teapots, they provide the possibility of expanding the practice of Zisha teapot design.

Through this SLR, the researchers found the following knowledge gaps in Yixing Zisha teapot design from the perspective of intangible heritage. Firstly, Yixing Zisha teapot, as an intangible cultural heritage, needs relevant literature to explain the concepts emphasised in the design. Secondly, Yixing Zisha teapot's design from the perspective of intangible heritage has no relevant theories and knowledge to explain the main design principles that have been retained. The main design principles are shape characteristics, methods, form, and aesthetics. Thirdly, from the point of view of design thinking, there needs to be a relevant theory and knowledge to explain the design process of the Yixing Zisha teapot.

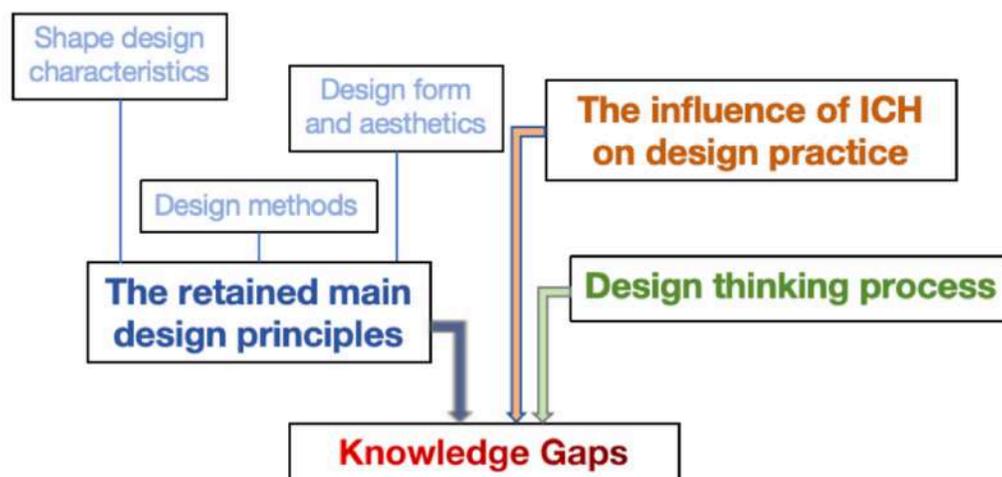


Figure 7. Flow chart of knowledge gaps in Yixing Zisha teapot

CONCLUSION

This Systematic Literature Review (SLR) enables an in-depth analysis of the design of Yixing Zisha teapots from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage, especially in design. Although there is no direct data on the design title, it summarises various Yixing Zisha teapot design knowledge and can clarify the Zisha teapot design system and concepts. It is worth noting that intangible cultural heritage is usually an essential local and representative culture that is intangible and needs to be passed on. Therefore, the scope of Yixing Zisha teapot design from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage lies

in using Yixing Zisha clay and unique craftsmanship. The research excludes the use of colour mud mixed from other regions and the production of Zisha teapots using moulds and machinery. Standards, the significance of this study will be lost.

The number and content of the articles analysed by this SLR demonstrate the need for research in this area. Researchers found that the shape design of Yixing Zisha teapots lacks written characteristics. They need to elaborate on the main retained design concepts within the Yixing Zisha teapot design system from the perspective of intangible cultural heritage. Future research can combine scattered Zisha teapot design concepts, verify their feasibility in practice, and establish an identity for the Zisha teapot shape and characteristics, thereby providing a framework and theory for future design.

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An Analysis of Elementary Musical Creativity Contents in China

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to examine and analyse the musical creativity content of elementary school music textbooks in China through qualitative document analysis. The selected materials are textbooks published by the People's Music Publishing House and People's Education Press for Grade 5 and 6 students. The frequency and percentage of musical creativity contents were recorded, and the corresponding musical elements and mediums were analysed. The results showed that the musical elements with the highest frequency are rhythm and melody, while the musical mediums with the highest frequency are vocal, body, instrument, and notation.

Keywords: *Musical creativity, Music textbooks, Elementary education, Music education*

INTRODUCTION

Music is an individualised art form that requires creative thinking. Creativity is a vital aspect in the process of music performance, appreciation, and developing musical talents. Music education is teaching music to reflect people's thoughts, emotions, and social life. Music education aims to develop a strong interest in music, the ability to feel and appreciate music, and the initial ability to express and create (Bai, 2018). The cultivation of creativity needs to be initiated from an early age, and its development should be promoted in elementary school education. A series of cross-sectional studies by Smith and Carlsson (1990) discovered that creativity in elementary school students dropped to a low point in grades 2 to 3 (ages 7 to 9) and peaked in grades 5 to 6 (ages 10 to 12).

Within formal education, the music subject is indispensable for cultivating creativity among students. Although the cultivation of musical creativity is given much attention worldwide, it remains one of the most difficult aspects of teaching and learning (Teng, 2017). Past research has shown that creative teaching is the most troubling item for teachers in music teaching (Wu, 1993; Chen, 1995; Chu, 2019). The music content in textbooks is dominated by singing activities, with a low percentage of sound sense and creative activities (Liu, 2013).

In 2011, the government of the People's Republic of China promulgated the "Compulsory Education Music Curriculum Standards" 2011, including creativity as one of the main curriculum content areas. The curriculum focuses on cultivating students' imagination and thinking potential, encouraging students to practise musical creativity and explore creative thinking skills, and cultivating innovative talents (Ministry of Education of China, 2011). This initiative has, to some extent, raised the status of music education in society and led to changes in the curriculum syllabus. In accordance with the new curriculum standards, a series of new music textbooks was published in 2013.

This study aims to examine and analyse the creative content within China's elementary music textbooks. The research questions for this study are: (1) What are the creative contents introduced in China's elementary music textbooks? (2) How are the creative contents introduced in China's elementary music textbooks?

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Value of Musical Creativity

Musical creativity refers to the output process or concrete presentation of musical acts, including the explicit behaviour of creating music and the inner mental activity (Chen, 2022; Lee, 2006). The explicit behaviour of creating music consists of singing, performing, appreciating, and composing. At the same time, the inner mental activities manifest the music creation, consisting of observation, attitude, self-efficacy, and other affective expressions (Chu, 2019). Musical creativity activities in the education for elementary students should be varied and developed gradually (Nikolić & Kodela, 2016; Reimer, 2002).

Musical Elements

Musical elements are the constituent elements of a piece of music. The musical elements can be divided into single concept musical elements, such as rhythm, dynamics, melody, timbre, harmony, articulation, and texture; and integrated concept musical elements, such as expression, form, and time and place. All of these elements cannot exist in music alone but must alternate and merge through the principles of unity and change to develop a variety of musical forms (Boardman, 1988; Liao, 2010; Ji, 2016). The different combinations of musical elements make up the unique character of each piece of music, allowing one to understand the structure, expression, and even the ethnic group, region, era, and genre. Teaching students to analyse and summarise musical elements is essential in musical creativity education (Werry, 2020)

Musical Mediums

Musical mediums are the means of transmitting music and play an important role in the dissemination of musical information. Musical creativity teaching connotes the freedom to express

emotions, improvise, or compose based on available knowledge and using various mediums. Effective use of musical mediums such as notation, graphics/tone painting, vocal, body, instrument, and digital creativity can be used to enhance students' creative level and mastery of musical elements (Su, 2010; Sungurtekin, 2021).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

To determine and analyse the creative content in China's elementary school music textbooks, an empirical, qualitative study was performed using the document analysis method. Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents (Bowen, 2009).

Materials

This study focuses on China's elementary school music textbooks for grades 5 and 6. The textbooks that were analysed are two versions of Music (Books 5A, 5B, 6A, and 6B), published by People's Music Publishing House (PMP) and People's Education Press (PEP) in 2013.

Instruments

The creative content from music textbooks was intercepted and classified accordingly into ten different musical elements and six musical mediums. The ten musical elements are rhythm, dynamics, melody, timbre, harmony, articulation, texture, expression, form, and time and place, while the six musical mediums are notation, graphics/tone painting, vocal, body, instrument, and digital creativity.

Procedures

The musical creativity contents from each textbook were first identified and then classified according to the ten different musical elements and six musical mediums. For instance, the activity to "change the rhythm and pitch of this black bamboo tune and record it in the score" was considered creative content since it requires students to use their imagination to compose the piece. The musical elements identified for this activity are rhythm and melody, and the musical medium used is notation. Another example is the activity to "choose a suitable percussion accompaniment for a song and perform it while singing." In this case, the musical element identified was expression, and the musical mediums used are instrument, vocal, and body. The percentage of pages in which the musical creativity content appears in the textbooks, the frequency and percentage of musical elements, and the frequency and percentage of the musical mediums used in the creativity contents were integrated using Excel 2021 software. Tables and graphs were utilised for analysis and comparison.

FINDINGS

People's Education Press (PEP)

The total number of pages in the PEP Book 5A is 53, including nine pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 16.98%. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm,

melody, timbre, expression, and time and place, of which rhythm (6 times, 35%) and expression (6 times, 35%) are the most featured, as shown in Figure 1. The musical mediums used are notation, graphics/tone painting, vocal, body, and instrument, of which body (3 times, 28%) and instrument (3 times, 27%) are the most featured, as shown in Figure 2. The total number of pages in the PEP Book 5B is 55, including 12 pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 21.82%. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm, melody, timbre, expression, and time and place, of which expression (11 times, 52%) is the most featured as shown in Figure 3. The musical mediums used are notation, vocal, body, instrument, and digital, of which instrument (4 times, 25%) and vocal (3 times, 19%) are the most featured as shown in Figure 4.

The total number of pages in PEP Book 6A is 57, including four pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 7.02%. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm, melody, expression, and time and place, of which expression (3 times, 50%) is the most featured, as shown in Figure 5. The musical mediums used are notation, graphics/tone painting, and vocal, of which vocal (2 times, 33%) and notation (2 times, 33%) are the most featured, as shown in Figure 6. The total number of pages in PEP Book 6B is 55, including six pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 10.91%. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm, melody, expression, and time and place, of which expression (6 times, 60%) is the most featured as shown in Figure 7. The musical mediums used are notation, graphics/tone painting, vocal and digital, of which vocal (2 times, 25%) is the most featured, as shown in Figure 8.

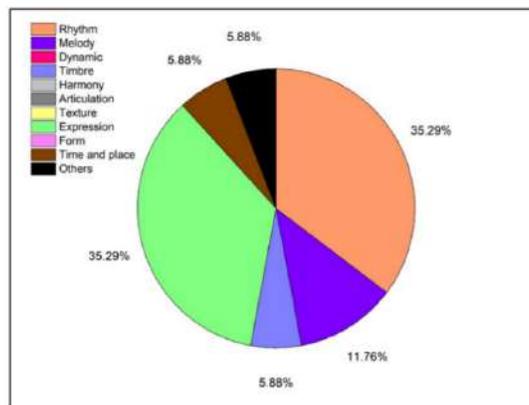


Figure 1. Musical Elements of PEP Book 5A

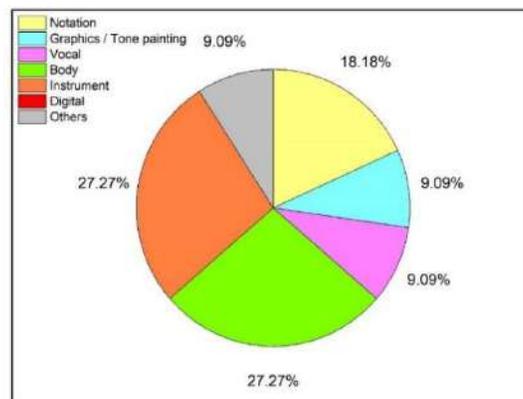


Figure 2. Musical Mediums of PEP Book 5A

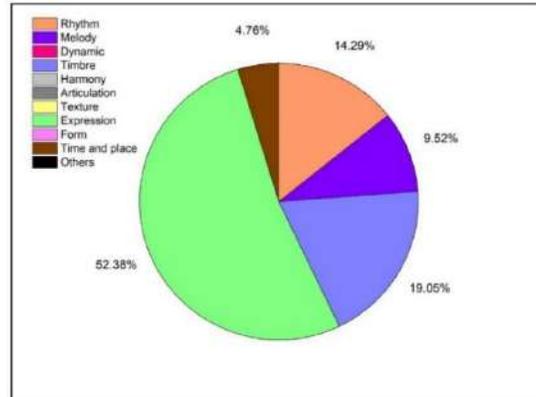


Figure 3. Musical Elements of PEP Book 5B

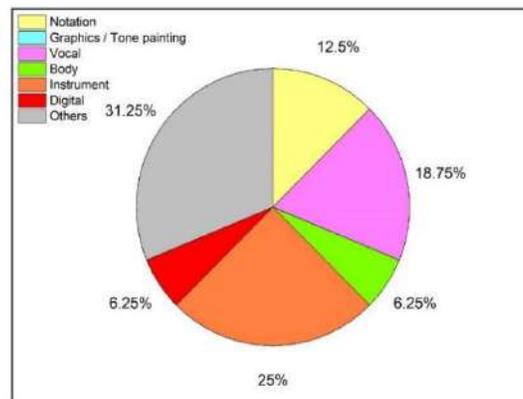


Figure 4. Musical Mediums of PEP Book 5B

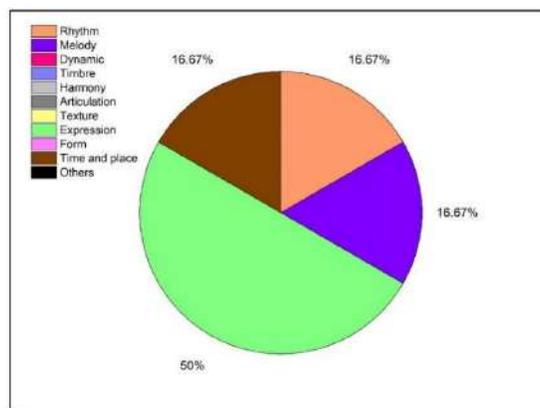


Figure 5. Musical Elements of PEP Book 6A

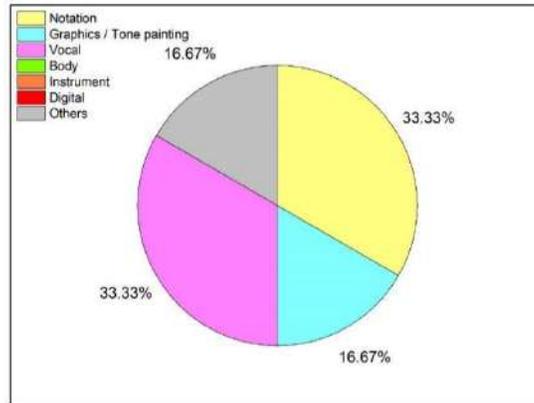


Figure 6. Musical Mediums of PEP Book 6A

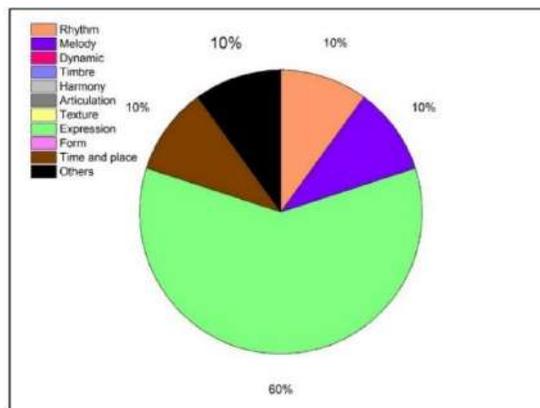


Figure 7. Musical Elements of PEP Book 6B

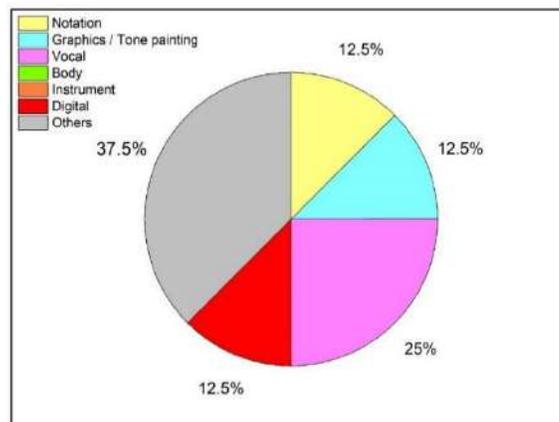


Figure 8. Musical Mediums of PEP Book 6B

People's Music Publishing House (PMP)

The total number of pages in PMP Book 5A is 59, including 14 pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 23.73%. This textbook's creative content is repeated frequently, with "choose

percussion instruments to accompany the song." repeated five times. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm, melody, timbre, expression, and time and place, of which expression (9 times, 39%) and rhythm (8 times, 35%) are the most featured as shown in Figure 9. The musical mediums used are notation, graphics/tone painting, vocal, body, and instrument, of which instrument (5 times, 33%) and notation (4 times, 27%) are the most featured as shown in Figure 10. The total number of pages in PMP Book 5B is 59, including 11 pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 18.64%. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm, melody, expression, and time and place, of which expression (12 times, 52%) and rhythm (7 times, 31%) are the most featured as shown in Figure 11. The musical mediums used are notation, vocal, body, and instrument, of which instrument (6 times, 26%), body (6 times, 26%), and vocal (6 times, 26%) are the most featured as shown in Figure 12.

The total number of pages in PMP Book 6A is 59, including 13 pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 22.03%. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm, melody, dynamics, expression, and time and place, of which expression (10 times, 44%) and rhythm (7 times, 30%) are the most featured, as shown in Figure 13. The musical mediums used are notation, vocal, body, and instrument, of which vocal (6 times, 32%) is the most featured, as shown in Figure 14. The total number of pages in PMP Book 6B is 59, including 17 pages of creative content, accounting for a total of 28.81%. The musical elements used in the musical creativity contents are rhythm, melody, dynamic, timbre, expression, and time and place, of which expression (16 times, 49%) is the most featured, as shown in Figure 15. The musical mediums used are notation, vocal, body, instrument, and digital, of which vocal (5 times, 23%) and notation (5 times, 23%) are the most featured as shown in Figure 16.

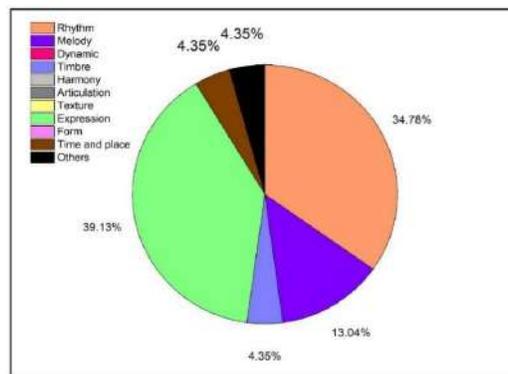


Figure 9. Musical Elements of PMP Book 5A

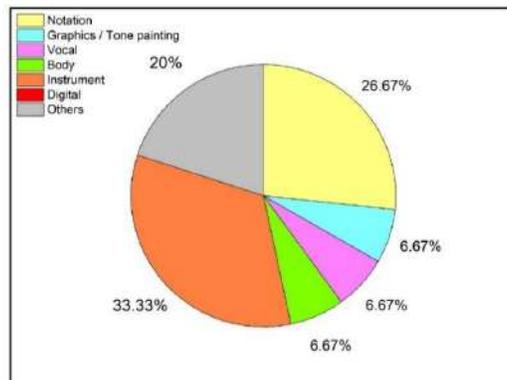


Figure 10. Musical Mediums of PMP Book 5A

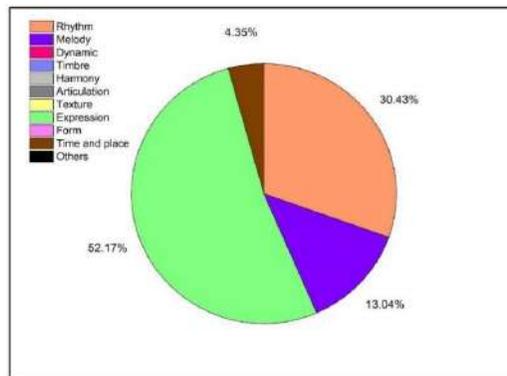


Figure 11. Musical Elements of PMP Book 5B

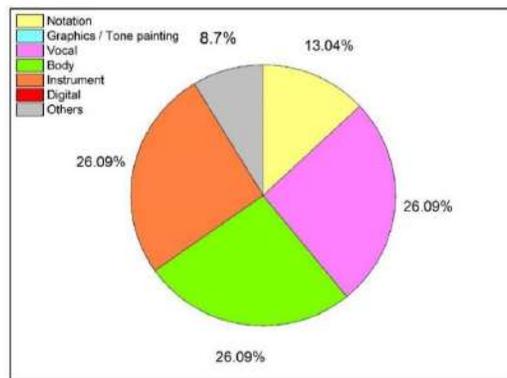


Figure 12. Musical Mediums of PMP Book 5B

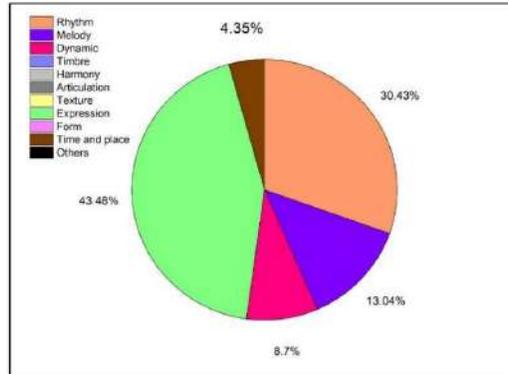


Figure 13. Musical Elements of PMP Book 6A

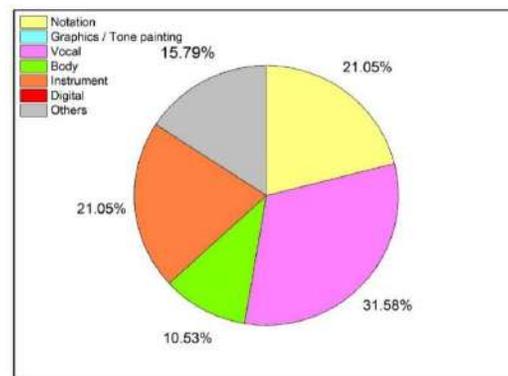


Figure 14. Musical Mediums of PMP Book 6A

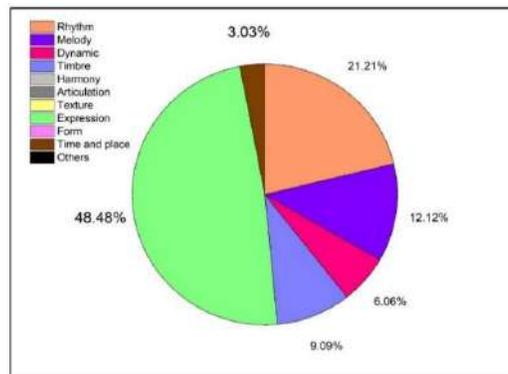


Figure 15. Musical Elements of PMP Book 6B

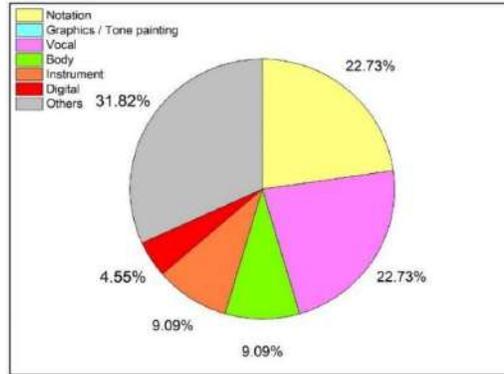


Figure 16. Musical Mediums of PMP Book 6B

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to examine and analyse the creative content within China's elementary music textbooks. The research questions proposed were: (1) What are the creative contents introduced in China's elementary music textbooks? (2) How are the creative contents introduced in China's elementary music textbooks?

Table 1. Comparison of Musical Creativity Contents Frequency in PEP and PMP

Version	Total pages	Pages of musical creativity contents	Percentage (%)
PEP	220	31	14.09
PMP	236	55	23.31

Table 1 shows that PMP (23.31%) has the highest percentage of musical creativity contents among the two versions, appearing once every 4.3 pages on average, while the PEP (14.09%) has a lower percentage with musical creativity contents appearing once every 7.1 pages on average. In terms of page count, the PMP has the most pages and is the most even, with 59 pages each, followed by the PEP with 31 pages.

Table 2. Comparison of Musical Elements Used in Creativity Contents in PEP and PMP

Version		Musical elements										
		Rhythm	Melody	Dynamic	Timbre	Harmony	Articulation	Texture	Expression	Form	Time and place	Others
PEP	Frequency	11	6	0	5	0	0	0	26	0	4	2
	Percentage (%)	20.37	11.11	0	9.26	0	0	0	48.15	0	7.41	3.70
PMP	Frequency	29	13	4	4	0	0	0	47	0	4	1
	Percentage (%)	28.43	12.75	3.92	3.92	0	0	0	46.08	0	3.92	0.98

In relation to the first research question, Table 2 shows that, excluding the musical elements that cannot be clearly defined (others), the PEP textbooks featured more musical creativity contents with expression (48.15%), rhythm (20.37%), and melody (11.11%). Similarly, the PMP textbooks also featured more musical creativity content with expression (46.08%), rhythm (28.43%), and melody (12.75%). This

indicates that both versions of the textbook place more emphasis on the musical elements of rhythm, expression, and melody in the design and use of musical creativity contents. The use of the expression in the musical creativity contents is mostly to create a certain atmosphere, to play a role, to set the soundtrack according to the style of the song and the plot development of the story, to express personal creative ideas and emotions, such as creating lyrics and designing performance forms for the song. The use of rhythm in the musical creativity contents is mostly the practice of rhythm adaptation and creativity, using percussion instruments or the body as an instrument to accompany songs, creating rhythms for a certain situation, such as "sports" and "walking animals". The use of melody in the musical creativity contents is mostly for creating melodies with the given tones, continuing to arrange the melody, creating melodic fragments according to the given rhythm, and changing the original pitch to create new melodies. In actual teaching, the use of these elements is also relatively simple. For instance, students are asked to use percussion instruments to accompany the songs. Most of the percussion instruments are unpitched, unlike piano and violin, which require fundamental playing skills. Students are only required to create their rhythms to participate in the musical expression activity, which is easy to understand and execute. The two versions of the textbook did not utilise all of the ten musical elements in the creativity contents. The elements of dynamic, harmony, articulation, texture, and form were not used in both versions.

Table 2. Comparison of Musical Elements Used in Creativity Contents in PEP and PMP

Version		Musical mediums						
		Notation	Graphics/ Tone painting	Vocal	Body	Instrument	Digital	Others
PEP	Frequency	7	3	8	4	7	2	10
	Percentage (%)	17.07	7.32	19.51	9.76	17.07	4.88	24.39
PMP	Frequency	16	1	18	11	17	1	15
	Percentage (%)	20.25	1.27	22.78	13.92	21.52	1.27	18.99

In relation to the second research question, Table 3 shows that, excluding the musical mediums that cannot be clearly defined (others), the PEP textbooks featured more musical creativity contents through vocal (19.51%), notation (17.07%), and instrument (17.07%); while the PEP textbooks featured more musical creativity contents through vocal (22.78%), instrument (21.52%), and notation (20.25%).

CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

Elementary school music textbooks in China emphasise more on rhythm, expression, and melody in the use of musical elements while lacking in the use of dynamics, harmony, articulation, texture, and form. This result is similar to the findings of Wei-Chen Yeh (2012), which examined the musical creativity contents of secondary school art textbooks in Taiwan. The results of Yeh's study showed a higher percentage of expression, rhythm, and timbre and a lower percentage of harmony, dynamic, articulation, texture, and time and place. Through this study, it is hoped that the use of dynamic, articulation, texture, harmony, and form will be increased in the design of musical creativity content for future music textbooks. Some suggestions for the application of these musical elements are using body movements to express dynamics, using different playing techniques on musical instruments to express articulation, and creating a variety of ostinato groups to incorporate texture.

In terms of musical mediums, elementary school music textbooks in China cover all six mediums in their musical creativity contents. However, there is more use of notation, instrumental, vocal, and body, and less use of graphics/tone painting and digital. This result is similar to the findings of Jining (2016),

which examined the musical creativity contents of secondary school textbooks in Taiwan and China. The results of the study showed that both regions had the highest percentage of notation, with China having the lowest percentage of graphics/ tone painting and digital. As an auditory medium, graphics/ tone painting can stimulate students' subconscious thoughts and inspiration and provides more freedom for expression in comparison to only using notation. With the advancement of technology, the digital medium will soon become a more popular and powerful auxiliary tool. In teaching, the software can be used to allow students to create simple music and feel the fun of musical creativity.

This study presents certain limitations, thus the need to be cautious with the observations. For instance, this study only conducts a comparative analysis of textbooks and does not analyse the actual applications and effectiveness of musical creativity education. In addition, China's Ministry of Education may launch a new music textbook in 2024 in lieu of the latest adjustment on the curriculum standards in 2022. Therefore, this study provides direction for future research, such as observations of the effectiveness of musical creativity contents and analysis and comparison of new textbook editions.

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A Study on the Colour Elements and Symbols of Foshan Awakening Lion Head

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ABSTRACT

This paper studies the colour symbolism of the Foshan awakening lion head, a key element of Foshan's cultural heritage and the lion dance. The lion head's colours are closely tied to the region's history, culture, and community beliefs. The study examines various colours and their meanings, exploring how they contribute to the lion head's visual and symbolic impact. Using qualitative methods, including literature reviews, artisan interviews, and field observations, the research looks at traditional and evolving colour schemes in Foshan Awakening Lion Heads. The findings show that each colour and pattern holds specific cultural significance, symbolising values like auspiciousness and prosperity. The paper stresses the importance of preserving these colour symbols to maintain the cultural identity of the Foshan lion dance, while also recognising the need for respectful evolution in response to contemporary tastes.

Keywords: *Foshan Awakening Lion Head, Colour Element, Colour Symbol*

INTRODUCTION

Foshan Lion Dance, a representative of the Southern Lion, has captivated audiences both domestically and internationally with its unique visual art form and rich cultural connotations. Since 2006, eight Guangdong lion dances have been officially listed as China's intangible cultural heritage, including Foshan Awakening Lion Dance, Suixi Awakening Lion Dance, and Guangzhou Awakening Lion Dance. The Foshan Awakening Lion Head, integral to Foshan Lion Dance, carries the historical and cultural heritage of Guangdong's Foshan region. Lion head making and lion dance activities are interdependent,

with both listed as intangible heritage. In 2008, the Foshan Awakening Lion Head was included in the national intangible cultural heritage list for traditional arts.

This article focuses on the colour elements and symbols of the Foshan Awakening Lion Head mask. The study aims to explore these colour elements, understand their composition and characteristics, and reveal their deeper cultural meanings. By examining the colours used in six traditional lion head roles, this research enhances the understanding of traditional culture enthusiasts, designers, and cultural workers regarding the symbolic significance and artistic language of this traditional art. It also provides valuable data for studying the craftsmanship of Foshan Lion Dance culture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The lion dance popular in the Pearl River Delta region of Guangdong, known as the “Southern Lion”, is a unique form of Chinese lion dance deeply rooted in the spiritual soil of Cantonese culture. Social customs greatly influence regional artistic styles. Zhang and Geng (2008) note in their work “Chinese Art Folklore” that lion dance is a significant element in exploring Cantonese culture. They focus on the historical development and current status of Cantonese culture, highlighting the lion dance as an important branch of it and emphasising its historical and present status.

Gong (1999) specifically emphasised the lion dance in his exploration of Cantonese culture. He studied the history and current situation of Cantonese culture, clearly stating that lion dance is an important subculture within it. Similarly, Zhang and Li (2023) pointed out that lion dance, as a representative cultural symbol of the Cantonese region, possesses its unique cultural connotations and symbolic features. They note that lion dance in Cantonese culture carries multiple functions and serves as an important vessel for cultural inheritance. Through the spread and participation in lion dance activities, Cantonese culture continues to thrive, acting also as a bridge for cultural exchange, showcasing Cantonese and even Chinese cultural characteristics to the world.

Foshan, situated in the Cantonese-speaking region, is the birthplace of the lion dance. This study examines the colour craftsmanship of Foshan lion heads. Yu (2015), a Foshan folklore expert, detailed the origins and rise of the Foshan lion dance, highlighting its significance in celebrating prosperity and embodying the Guangdong people's belief in traditional Chinese culture. This study focuses on the Foshan lion dance, lion masks, and colour symbols, emphasising the connection between colour elements, cultural beliefs, and regional customs.

Although lion head masks are significant in art and cultural studies, research on their colour symbols is sparse. Most studies only describe the basic shapes or colours. Li (2017) linked the colours of Foshan Awakening Lion Heads to Cantonese opera makeup, describing Liu Bei's lion as primarily white with yellow and pink accents. However, this contrasts with Zeng-(2017) who noted Liu Bei's lion is mainly yellow, symbolising imperial status. Xie (2023) described it as “yellow-faced with a white beard”. Yin (2018) listed colours as “white, yellow, pink, and liver”, but the images differed. Research often overlooks initial data collection, and challenges in lion head making include material scarcity and fragmented data.

In the preceding research, the researcher conducted a detailed analysis of the visual elements of Suixi region, with a particular focus on the selection and proportion of colours(Zhan, S., & Wan, J.). The basis for this comparison was also determined by the colour choices of Foshan Lion Head, which is the primary subject of this study.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs qualitative research methods, as outlined in the following process (Figure 1).

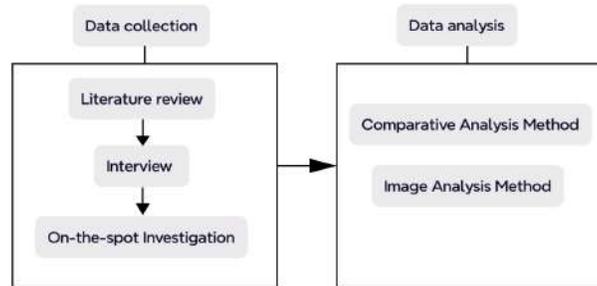


Figure 1. Research methodology framework diagram
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

After focusing the research on the colour symbols of the Foshan Awakening Lion Head, the first step is data collection, including literature reviews, interviews, and field investigations. The goal is to identify the specific colour elements in the Foshan lion mask. An initial analysis of documentary materials provides background information and direction for further data collection. Next, interviews with artisans skilled in making the Foshan Awakening Lion Head masks are conducted. These interviews and field investigations are performed concurrently to ensure comprehensive data collection. Interviews were planned with eight practitioners in the Foshan area, and contacts were established through official websites and museums. All interviews were conducted face-to-face, and some interviewees were anonymised using letters A to H. Main observation locations include workshops of various inheritors, intangible cultural heritage workstations, exhibitions, and museums, such as the Foshan Ancestral Temple, Wong Feihong Culture Museum, Wong Feihong Memorial Hall, Li Wanzhen’s Workshop, and the Foshan De Sheng Musical Instrument Craft Factory. Finally, a comparative analysis of data from literature reviews, interviews, field investigations, and images will help define the colours of the Foshan Awakening Lion Head and understand their cultural meanings and connotations.

FINDINGS

The researcher utilised Nvivo analysis software to create a detailed information table of the colour elements of the awakening lion heads in the Foshan area (Table 1). This comprehensive appendix table clearly displays the colour elements of the lion heads in the Foshan region, achieving the objective of “identifying the specific colour elements”.

Table 1. Keyword List of Foshan Awakening Lion Head Colour Elements

Traditional	Icon	Yellow: golden, Red: Fire, Black: dark night, Green/Cyan: nature in general
	Index	Yellow: treasure, Red: Angry, Black: visual information, Green/Cyan: Green plant
	Symbol	Yellow: Rich/Power/King, Red: good fortune/prosperity, Black: Brave/Power, Green/Cyan: Undefeated, Blue: Funeral/Sadness

Modern	Icon	Yellow: golden, Red: Fire, Black: dark night, Green/Cyan: nature in general, Blue: sea, White: Snow, Pink: Cute/Soft/Romantic, Fluorescent colour: Shine
	Index	Yellow: Sun/Sunshine/Gold, Red: Hot, Black: ban sign, Green/Cyan: fresh things, Blue: good weather, White: Clean, Pink: Shyness/blushing, Fluorescent colour: bright light
	Symbol	Yellow: Happiness/Hope/Money, Red: Good fortune/prosperity, Black: Misfortune/Bad luck, Green/Cyan: health/Jealousy, Blue: Honourable, White: Pure/Tidy/Death, Pink: Female/feminization, Fluorescent colour: Cool and dazzling
Attributes	Innovation should carry auspicious meanings	Develop direction
Relationship	According to customer’s preferences or requests	Develop direction
	Customer don’t pay much attention	Develop direction

As shown in the table above, the colour visual elements of the Foshan Awakening Lion Head mask are complex. The colour elements listed in the table are derived from a combination of data from literature, interviews, and field observations. In this step, the author refers to this information as visual elements rather than visual symbols, because visual elements refer to the “visual reflection of the observed object”, which does not involve the audience’s attitude, interpretation, or the deeper cultural connotations. The author needs to conduct a detailed comparative analysis of the aforementioned colour visual elements to achieve the research objective of investigating the cultural meanings conveyed by the colour visual symbols corresponding to the lion head mask’s colour visual elements”.

“Tying, pasting, writing, and embellishing” are the four major steps in the handcrafting of lion heads. “writing” here can also be understood as drawing. The patterns drawn on the lion head masks are composed of various colours. Compared to modern lion heads, the colour selection for traditional lion heads follows more specific rules. These choices are not only for aesthetic purposes but also carry much of the traditional culture and the artisans’ understanding of their craft. The main characters of the traditional Foshan lion masks are the Liu Bei Lion, Guan Gong Lion, Zhang Fei Lion, Zhao Yun Lion, Ma Chao Lion, and Huang Zhong Lion. Each character has its own thematic colour, each with its own significance. There is a strong correlation between the colour scheme of these lion masks and the facial masks used in drama. The colours of the lion masks are also imbued with emotions and characteristics by the creators.

Liu Bei Lion’s Colour Scheme

The Liu Bei lion mask is uniquely characterised by a yellow base adorned with a multicoloured pattern, symbolising the gathering of five fortunes and the five directions: east, west, south, north, and centre (Figure 2). According to the inheritors, this multicoloured pattern reflects not only five colours but many, incorporating even fluorescent colours. In the ancient Chinese Yin Yang and Five Elements theory, the universe is composed of metal, wood, water, fire, and earth, corresponding to the colours white, green, black, red, and yellow. However, the colours of Liu Bei lion masks go beyond these traditional elements. Innovations in the colours should be seen as craftsmen’s personal insights evolving with customer preferences and cultural changes.

The main hue of the Liu Bei Lion is golden yellow, symbolising land, territory, and the emperor, who was historically associated with this colour (Wang, 2007). Golden yellow and yellow-orange lion

masks resonate with Chinese associations of wealth and prosperity. In “Romance of the Three Kingdoms”, Liu Bei, depicted as the Yellow Emperor, symbolises wealth, honour, and power. Liu Bei as a benevolent and strategic ruler, aligning with this portrayal. Guan (2023) defines Liu Bei's image more precisely, suggesting that during the late Ming and early Qing dynasties, Liu Bei embodied the political ideal of “reviving the Han dynasty”. This theory aligns with the notion that the lion dance symbolised the political ideal of “overthrowing the Qing and restoring the Ming”, making the Liu Bei Lion a symbol of national revival.



Figure 2. Foshan Liu Bei Lion Head and Colour
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

Huang Zhong Lion’s Colour Scheme

The Huang Zhong Lion, symbolising loyalty, predominantly features the colour yellow. As mentioned earlier, Huang Zhong is a respected veteran general, so in the traditional image of the Huang Zhong Lion, it should have a visual image with a yellow base, black eyes, white eyebrows, and a white beard.

Although both Liu Bei Lion and Huang Zhong Lion share a yellow colour scheme, there are differences in the types and proportions of yellow used. As shown in Figure3, the yellow used in the Huang Zhong Lion is primarily a medium yellow, visually different from the golden yellow used in the Liu Bei Lion. Lemon yellow, bright yellow, and golden yellow are lighter and clearer yellows, with a high level of brightness and saturation. Because of their high brightness, they are often used in eye-catching designs, suitable for the design of Liu Bei Lion, who is the emperor. Medium yellow is a deeper, richer yellow with an orange tone, giving a more stable feeling, making it particularly suitable for the design of Huang Zhong Lion. To demonstrate the characteristic of Huang Zhong as an “old general”, white fur is used for the hair and beard decoration.

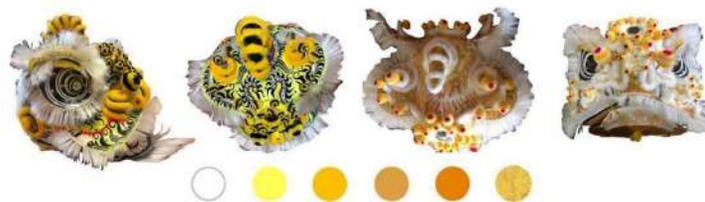


Figure 3. Foshan Huang Zhong Lion Head and Colour
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

According to Interviewee C, based on his colouring experience, the colour design scheme of the Huang Zhong Lion's head has a colour proportion of approximately 60% yellow, 30% white, and 10% other colours (mainly black, with a touch of red for embellishment). However, in artistic creation, this is not the only standard, and artisans can create based on their understanding of the character.

Guan Gong Lion's Colour Scheme

Guan Gong, also known as the "Martial God of Wealth", is noted for both his bravery and accounting skills. The "Shenxian Tongjian" records that Guan Gong attracts exam luck, wealth, and merchant protection. Ren (2010) mentions that 23 industries regard him as their patron deity, symbolising successful business and fulfilment of wishes. This title explains the red face of Guan Gong. The Guan Gong Lion's primary design features a red base with black patterns, inspired by Beijing Opera masks and used in Cantonese opera. In "Romance of the Three Kingdoms", Guan Gong is described with a red face, symbolising loyalty and valour. Figure 4 shows the lion's design with dark and bright red, paired with black fur, aligning with theatrical makeup. Artisans use turquoise on the nose to represent anger, similar to the Zhang Fei Lion. Red in the Guan Gong Lion symbolises loyalty, valour, and financial prosperity. The lion is often used in store opening performances, symbolising good luck and business success.



Figure 4. Foshan Guan Gong Lion Head and Colour
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

Colour Schemes of Zhang Fei Lion and Zhao Yun Lion

Xu (2021) conducted an analysis on the "signified" meanings of the colours in Chinese opera facial masks, positing that these hues symbolise the character's personality. The audience can discern the character's traits through these colours: red signifies a man of loyalty, valour, and justice with robust vitality; black denotes an individual characterised by bravery and sincerity, albeit with a touch of impulsiveness; while green represents a person with a tempestuous and coarse disposition.

Although Zhang Fei Lion and Zhao Yun Lion both belong to the warrior category, these two characters do not have the same personality. However, in the colour spectrum of lion dance heads, both of them use a combination of black and green. The traditional opera shows the character design of Zhang Fei, whose colour only has black and white. The eyes are depicted with large blocks of black, with the corners of the eyes lifted, creating a sense of valour. The black part of the mouth is connected to the beard, showing his momentum as a general. This colour combination accurately expresses Zhang Fei's brave, sincere and reckless character traits. In the design of the Zhang Fei lion head (Figure 5), the green nose emphasises his "hot-tempered, rude" personality flaw. It's evident that the artisans have a deep artistic understanding of the character of Zhang Fei.

Figure 5 shows the colour combination of Zhang Fei's lion head. In the colour scheme of the lion head, the colour of Zhang Fei is not limited to black and white, and the proportion of green is also

significant, forming a rich pattern decoration with black and white. In the colour combination, the creators also added grey as a finishing touch. It is said that the grey part occasionally uses silver because it will shine when it moves, making the stage effect better.



Figure 5. Foshan Zhang Fei Lion Head and Colours
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

Interestingly, the colours used by the Zhao Yun Lion and the Zhang Fei Lion are the same. However, the proportion of colours used is different. Figure 6 shows the colour of Zhao Yun Lion's head, where the proportion of green is more significant. Zhang Fei Lion is mainly black and white, with green as embellishment; Zhao Yun Lion is mainly black and green, with white as decoration.



Figure 6. Foshan Zhao Yun Lion Head and Colours
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

In Beijing Opera, Zhao Yun is portrayed as a likeable character. Zhao Yun's bravery and righteousness are shown through his costume and movements, without using bright colour blocks. Notably, Zhao Yun's costume lacks green elements, featuring blue instead. Interviewee A explained that Zhao Yun, known as the invincible general in "The Romance of the Three Kingdoms", is metaphorically described as "evergreen" in Chinese culture, symbolising perpetual victory. The Zhao Yun Lion, with its green colour, reflects the lion head maker's interpretation of Zhao Yun's noble image. Despite differing from the Beijing Opera costume, this artistic choice effectively conveys his character as the invincible general.

Ma Chao Lion's Colour Scheme

Ma Chao is also a brave and good warrior, but he carries a tragic hue. He was a prominent general born in a famous family during the Three Kingdoms period. However, his father and younger brother were beheaded by Cao Cao on the grounds of conspiracy, which killed more than 300 people in their family. Ma Chao vowed to avenge his family and tried to kill Cao Cao, but ultimately did not succeed. He

later joined Liu Bei's camp but was not trusted, and he died in depression. (Tang, 2023). His costume in the Beijing Opera is mainly white and blue, and his character is still shaped to be brave and valiant.

China News Network published a news story in July 2013 titled "Funeral of Liu Jialiang, a Generation of Hong Fist Master and Famous Kung Fu Director". According to the news footage, three filial piety lions and nine plain lions performed a mourning performance on their knees at the funeral ceremony that day. The filial piety lions sometimes wailed and sometimes knelt down, making the atmosphere on the scene sad and solemn. After the ceremony, the three filial piety lions were burned in front of the spirit position (Figure 7).



Figure 7. Screenshot of the video at the funeral of Hong Fist Master Liu Jialiang
(Source: bilibili.com, 2023)

Ma Chao Lion is known as the "Filial Piety Lion". The whole lion is white, occasionally adorned with blue, looks haggard, and its dance steps are sad, with a slow drumbeat. Since the "Filial Piety Lion" generally only appears at the funeral of highly respected people, it is also called the "Funeral Lion". The props of the filial piety lion will be burned after the ceremony, so traditional Ma Chao lion heads are not common. The Ma Chao lion shown in Figure 8 has some differences from the traditional "Filial Piety Lion". Different lion head makers have different understandings of this. Interviewee C believes that the Ma Chao lion, which combines blue and white, represents funerals. Traditional lion heads basically do not use blue, because blue is not an auspicious colour. Interviewee B, on the other hand, believes that today's lion dance is a mascot, so whether it uses blue or not, it can still represent auspiciousness. Interviewee H remained neutral on this point, because innovative lion head masks can be designed according to the customer's preferences, but completely deviating from traditional practices would indeed lead to cultural misunderstandings.



Figure 8. Foshan Ma Chao Lion Head and Colours
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

The Ma Chao lion that appeared in the funeral ceremony in Figure 8 is mainly white, with black and blue as auxiliary colours for embellishment. The Ma Chao lion in Figure 9 uses a large area of blue, with white and black as auxiliary colours, and some patterns are drawn with orange to dilute the meaning of "mourning". This design is more aligned with Interviewee B's statement. The meaning symbolised by

colour in the visual elements of the lion head is the most complex. Factors such as region, experience, and crowd will change its meaning. Therefore, there is a dispute over the use of blue in the lion head.

CONCLUSION

Foshan, the birthplace of lion dance culture, makes analysing the colour symbols in its lion heads essential. Each visual symbol on the Foshan Awakening Lion Head reflects local culture and concepts, with every colour and arrangement holding symbolic meaning. These colour symbols not only enhance the mask's aesthetics but also convey its symbolic spirit and the unique lion head culture to the public.

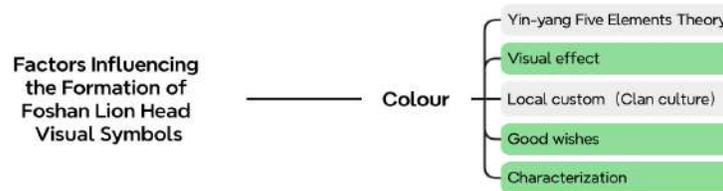


Figure 9. Factors Influencing the Formation of Visual Symbols in Foshan Awakening Lion Heads
(Source: Zhan, 2023)

Figure 9 displays an analysis diagram of the factors influencing the formation of visual symbols in Foshan Awakening Lion Heads. Through analysis and sorting, it can be determined that the factors listed in the diagram impact the visual elements of the Foshan Awakening Lion Head. The parts marked in green represent more open factors, indicating that the content in this section changes over time, audience preferences, and the creators' conceptualization. The light grey sections represent unmodifiable factors, which are the cultural core of the Foshan Awakening Lion Head. Any alteration to these core values of representative significance could lead to the culture facing issues of lost identity and meaning. However, even though factors like "visual effect" or "auspicious wishes" can be changed, these changes should not be revolutionary. They need to adhere to a certain internal logic and evolve gradually. Only in this way can the traditional culture embodied by the Foshan Awakening Lion Head be well-preserved and its developmental vitality maintained.

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Artistic Conception in Meticulous Chinese Flowers and Birds Painting

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ABSTRACT

Chinese painting has its own unique form of artistic expression, which aims to convey the inner emotion and spirits of each one and other. With more and more people being fond of Chinese meticulous painting, their aesthetic views on it are also constantly improving, and they are increasingly emphasising on feeling the spirit of Chinese meticulous painting of flowers and birds through the expression of their own works. Chinese meticulous painting is an inheritance of Chinese excellent traditions, and the images displayed through the paintings can allow viewers to feel the true emotions of the creators. Artistic conception is the soul of meticulous flowers and birds painting, the rich connotation of meticulous flowers and birds painting art in various periods, and also the source and core of creating it. In spite of this importance, there are deficiencies in the analysis of artistic conception in contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting in the current literature. This study attempts to fill up the deficiencies by analysing the relevant content of artistic conception, focusing on the analysis artistic conception of Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting.

Keywords: *Chinese Painting, Flowers and Birds Painting, Artistic Conception, Expressive*

INTRODUCTION

As an important art form of Chinese painting, flowers and birds painting, together with landscape painting and figures painting, are three major art forms of Chinese painting. Of all the forms, the meticulous form of flowers and birds painting has been the most Chinese featured one. With the development of society and the exchanges and integration of various cultures, contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting has undergone rapid changes (Wang, 2022). Chinese meticulous painting has various forms of expression, including line drawing, heavy colour, light colour, pure ink, and so on. Its main function is to be a way for

artists to express personal emotions, as well as to spread and innovate Chinese culture. Meticulous flowers and birds painting continuously promotes the sustainable development of Chinese painting art by integrating other art forms, concepts, and attempts. The aesthetic ability and taste of the general public are constantly improving, which requires artists to have higher levels of aesthetic ability and expression. The significance of meticulous flowers and birds painting is reflected in that it enriches the aesthetic value and educational value of Chinese culture, and promotes people's pursuit of beauty and reflection on the meaning of life.

In China, meticulous flowers and birds painting plays an important part in various major national exhibitions, art investment collections, and interior decoration of people's homes. As an art form to improve people's aesthetic value and cultural significance, its value has been recognized by the people all over the country, and there are diverse national exhibitions, local exhibitions, and individual exhibitions of meticulous flowers and birds painting with the strong support of the government. For example, the national art exhibition once every five years includes almost all art categories (Chinese painting, oil painting, printmaking, sculpture, murals, watercolour, powder painting, lacquer painting, pottery, art design, animation, comprehensive painting, etc.), the national meticulous painting exhibition, the national flowers and birds painting exhibition, the national meticulous painting exhibitions, and various local exhibitions. These exhibitions include many different themes, which also provides a strong guarantee and promotion for the development of flowers and birds painting. For example, the theme of the National Art Exhibition in 2024 is Harmonious Coexistence between Man and Nature (Zhejiang Art, 2023).

Most of the flowers and birds paintings are hung in different spaces (such as art galleries, conference halls, empty walls of art centres, empty walls of living rooms, etc.) It is both a decorative element and a platform to showcase Chinese culture. The uniqueness of Chinese painting makes this art form universal, and under this effect, the expression of artworks can better show the inner thoughts of artists, so artists often express their emotions and thoughts by this form. They often integrate their own life feelings into their works, in order to express their feelings of things and life, to express the inheritance and innovation of Chinese culture. They use meaning as the tool for expression, express different mental states with different concepts of artistic conception. Therefore, Chinese painting, with meaning in mind, focuses on the unity of emotional images and rational concepts (Zhang, 2018).

In the process of creating Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting, the performance of artistic conception directly determines the final quality of the work (Liang, 2018). At the beginning of the creation of meticulous flowers and birds painting, Chinese artists learned and inherited traditional creative skills and concepts, thus laying a solid practical foundation for the creation of flowers and birds works in the future. In their works, we can see their exquisite skills and keen observation of nature, perfectly expressing the charm of flowers and birds through the grasp of details and the use of color. This is only based on traditional learning, and there are many reasons for questioning the creation of art, without truly thinking or understanding. Many artists have limited understanding of the importance of artistic conception in the creation of meticulous flowers and birds painting. Therefore, they tend to ignore it, although they also pay attention to innovation and flexibility in their works, and do not adhere to traditional painting styles and techniques, they try to use different ways of expression to make their works more vibrant and contemporary. This is a shallow and superficial understanding. Thus, given the importance of artistic conception in the creation of meticulous flowers and birds painting, the way of their understanding may provide a negative misleading impression for future generations.

In order to address this issue more clearly and comprehensively, this study aims to analyse the expression of artistic conception in the creation of meticulous flowers and birds painting. This study particularly focuses on the matter of artistic conception, constituent elements, expressive techniques, and appreciation of expression in the creation of meticulous flowers and birds painting.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The emergence of the term artistic conception was first seen in the Tang Dynasty. In *Poetry Style of Wang Changling (698-757)*, stated that there are three kinds of conceptions of poetry, the artistic conception, the material conception, and the spiritual conception. Pre-modern scholar Wang Guowei (1877-1927) established a relatively systematic theory of artistic conception combining the achievements summarised by previous scholars and the relevant theory from the West, and using artistic conception as the sole criterion for the art of poetry. According to the definition of Baidu Encyclopedia, artistic conception refers to an artistic realm formed by the integration of life scenes depicted in literary works and the expressed thoughts and emotions of them (Chen, 2022).

Nowadays, artistic conception is an important category of traditional Chinese aesthetics, and it constitutes one of the indispensable factors of artistic beauty (Chen, 2022). Artistic conception is expressed in various forms, from poetry, music, drama, to painting. According to Liu (2022), artistic conception is a kind of feeling that can only be understood and cannot be expressed to humans through artistic forms. It is a combination of emptiness and reality, generated in works but drifting outside of creation.

One of the most important functions in the creation of meticulous flowers and birds painting is to create a work of greater artistic value, making it a symbol of new ways, new goals, and culture in the field of art. Ding (2023) believes: "There are generally two views in the current research on the issue of artistic conception in the art community: one is the Fusion of Emotions and Scenery Theory, and the other is the Imagination Association Theory, the former leans towards the aesthetic effect generated by the interaction between subjective emotions and external scenery, while the latter leans towards the total sum of all imagination triggered by the author and the viewer after receiving the real-life image, and leans towards the active recreation activity of the aesthetic subject. Meanwhile, Chen (2010) believes that the metaphysical has the meaning of spirit, and the physical has the meaning of tools. Painting is composed of pen, ink, colour, water, and the techniques composed of these factors, they are all physical, they are the tools. While the spirit of metaphysical, is the painter's ideological consciousness, which is manifested as the artistic conception of painting. This has clearly pointed out the issue of artistic conception in creation.

Understanding the performance of artistic conception can help solve many problems encountered in the process of creating, and clarify the key and core issues of creating artistic conception. In her new exploration of the artistic conception of contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting, Wang (2022) stated that the expression of artistic conception in meticulous flowers and birds painting is the process of the painter's perception, understanding, and refinement of the meaning of the flowers, leaves, grass, and birds in the nature, and ultimately evolved into their beautiful works. Compared with other art forms, meticulous flowers and birds painting is more and more suitable for artistic conception in different aspects, including colours, shapes and other issues, for example, the 2019 Pinzhen Gewu National Youth Fine Meticulous Painting Exhibition held in Tianjin, China, by analysing the form, quantity, content, style, and other aspects of the works, and found that it has been recognized by the public as the best form of artistic conception, which can best reflect the different levels of artistic conception and no longer as an incompatible relationship with other forms.

Although the creation of meticulous flowers and birds painting has many forms of expression, artistic conception as the core problem is always facing challenges. According to Li (2000), from ancient times to modern times, the aesthetic relationship between man and nature has always been the core content of traditional Chinese aesthetics, on which a complete theory of artistic conception has been formed. Another scholar believes that in the long-term development, Chinese painting has continuously absorbed the nutrition and aesthetic consciousness of traditional culture, forming the aesthetic characteristics of poetry, and the relationship between man and nature is an important content of traditional Chinese art theory and expression, so nature has become an inexhaustible source of artistic conception of Chinese

painting (Hong, 2000). To understand the concept of artistic conception, it is necessary to analyse its formation and development process, so as to ensure a complete theoretical basis and analysis method. In the case that different perspectives may form different views, some scholars may argue whether these analysis points or the display of the form of work are appropriate and relevant to the literature.

Artists' awareness of artistic conception directly affects the success of their works, so it is crucial for artists to have a deep understanding of the process of the creation of their works. It means the artist's own thinking and participation in the process of creating, expressing and displaying artistic conception. According to Liu (2022), Mei Zhongzhi believes in his book *On the Artistic Conception Beauty of Flowers and Birds Painting*, that the artistic conception is a kind of artistic realm formed by painters integrating the objective reality of life they want to express into their works in beautiful forms according to their own aesthetic ideals. This artistic realm generates emotions for the viewer, resonates emotionally with the painter, and the resulting scene is the artistic conception of Chinese painting.

The artist's understanding of artistic conception has a significant impact on the development of artistic works. Artistic conception, as an aesthetic concept, has an inevitable impact on Chinese painting. In spite of this, the creators of art often lack the awareness of the expression and contribution of artistic conception in different forms, which makes it difficult for artists to resonate through the expression of their works and the perspective of viewers' appreciation, and even leads to different feelings of one work. As a result, it is difficult for artists to spread their ideas through their works.

The artistic conception of contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting is not only a matter of aesthetics, but also a matter of the artist's thought, the technique of the work, the viewers' response and so on. In this case, the beauty of art is the unity of the subjective thoughts and the objective environment, the unity of feeling and reason, forms and spirits, ultimately forming a natural and integrated artistic conception of beauty. Painters can express their feelings for natural scenery through images, such as mountains, water, flowers, birds and so on. Emotions flow through the painter's brush, flowing in the eyes of the audience Kandinsky (1987) believed that harmony in form must completely rely on the purposeful response of the human soul.

In another case, according to Su (2015) and others, people have different views on the understanding of artistic conception, and generally believe that artistic conception is the combination of emotion and scenery. Those who agree with this statement believe that the subjective experience and objective scenes can both form a kind of beauty, and the pursuit of this beauty originates from the consciousness of the creative subject and the appreciative subject, which is a profound and lasting beauty. When people see an artwork, the first thing they think of is not its technology, but the unique atmosphere it contains. Therefore, it is often difficult for people to accurately express their emotions through language. This also indicates that the artistic conception of meticulous painting contains very rich connotations, just like the soul of a work (Liu, 2022).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this study is to explore the artistic expression of flowers and birds painting in the contemporary background. It reveals the importance and application value of contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting in artistic creation. This paper analyses artistic conception through the following aspects: the analysis of constituent elements and expression techniques, and the expression of artistic works' pursuit of artistic conception. The analysis process is as follows: Firstly, an overview of the meaning of artistic conception was provided, followed by an analysis of the constituent elements and expressive techniques of the artistic conception in Chinese meticulous painting. Finally, the artistic conception in the creation of Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting was conducted. The results of

this research show,artistic conception of Chinese contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting is not only a reflection of objective things, but also a creation of the unity of mind and scene, of the unity of meaning and context that integrates with the artists' personal feelings, and is a total embodiment of the combination of the viewer's inner expectation of artistic conception.In order to complete the above research and analysis, this paper will adopt qualitative research methods, and adopt the form of interpretation research method and image analysis to analyse the artistic conception expression in the creation of flowers and birds painting, and analyse the constituent elements respectively, from the first meaning to the painting, and the integration of form and spirit. The expression of artistic works' pursuit of artistic conception is analysed from two aspects: the artist's pursuit of artistic conception and the viewer's resonance of artistic conception.

Analysis of Constituent Elements and Expression Techniques

According to the literature review above, it can be known that traditional and contemporary definitions of artistic conception are mainly reflected in literature, while there are shortcomings in the expression and data collection in painting. Therefore, this study focuses on the analysis from the perspective of painting ontology. Therefore, the artistic conception of meticulous flowers and birds painting is realised through the comprehensive application of various expressive elements and techniques. Painters need to choose the right expression elements and techniques according to their emotional experience and aesthetic ideal to create a unique artistic atmosphere.

Analysis of Constituent Elements

Flowers and birds in nature, as the subject of painting, play a great role in expressing the beauty of nature, expressing emotions and aspirations through things, and then achieving the wonderful state of forgetting things and fusion scenes (Zhou, 2014). Artistic conception is manifested as a psychological state or a level of visual aesthetics. In ancient times, the connotation of artistic conception mainly includes: (1) natural artistic conception: When ancient people created art, they often focused on nature as the theme. Whether it is natural flowers and plants, or natural birds and beasts, they can form the most beautiful images; (2) Life Realm: People change with the progress of the times, and when they appreciate painting, they gradually realise that there are many emotions in their hearts. Contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting use objects as carriers, with animals and plants as the main objects, and use their unique methods to express a spiritual beauty. So all beautiful light comes from the source of the soul: without the reflection of the soul, there is no such thing as beauty (Zong, 1943).

From this, it can be understood that the artistic conception of meticulous flowers and birds painting is composed of four elements: emotion, imagination, understanding, interest, and so on. According to Li (2006), the most important aspect of Chinese meticulous painting is the artistic conception, which emphasises expressing oneself with one's own emotions and conveying one's understanding and feelings of objects in their works. For example, the following small-sized paintings in the form of Song dynasty palace fan, (Figure 1),these paintings with different themes, such as blooming seasons, dynamic fish, subtle grasses and insects, or happy expressions, both vividly reflect the normal states of natural creatures and are full of subtle tension, and use simple colours to express the natural beauty of different themes. The author used the image of birds, the beauty of flowers, the swimming of fish, to express their interest, to convey their own lyrical beauty, from which we can also see the attitude of life shown to good things.



Figure 1. Small-sized paintings of Song dynasty palace fan
(Source: Chinese Art Gallery)

In the constituent elements of artistic conception, it is not just a true portrayal of nature, as Kandinsky (1987) explained in art. A natural imitation, if it comes from the hands of a true artist, cannot be a pure replica. To some extent, it can also emit the sound of the soul. So it requires a process of secondary creative thought creation in order to achieve the expression of artistic conception.

Analysis of Expression Techniques

The artistic conception, due to the difference of people, places and situations, shows a variety of colours, such as Moni beads, creates a variety of beauty (Zong, 1943). The image processing in meticulous flowers and birds painting is that the creator identifies, refines, and sublimates the flowers, plants, trees, and various animals in nature as backgrounds, and then presents them as art on the screen. The expression of these works is not a direct representation of natural scenery, but requires their thinking in order to recreate the artistic conception of nature. Creators can divide the spatial position of the scenery you see and adjust its size, colours, shape, etc. as needed to achieve certain visual effects that they want, which is the performance of artistic conception.

Contemporary meticulous flowers and birds paintings not only innovate traditional works, but also incorporate many new languages, bringing them to a new level. The artistic conception of a painting is mostly composed of various factors and is not directly expressed. The basic structure of Chinese painting is a visual art formed by the combination of brush, ink, colour, water, and techniques composed of these elements, as well as several main forms of art such as themes, ideas, style expression, material forms, etc. According to the book *Yi Jing Xi Ci*, the metaphysical is the Dao, and the physical is the tool. Among them, the metaphysical is the intangible level of Dao, while the physical is the surface of all things, which has already reached the surface of things, this is the artist's ideology, and this is the artistic conception expressed as painting (Chen, 2010). Physical is a tool, but also can be used for the metaphysics. Artistic conception refers to the transformation of natural scenery by painters based on their own personality, habits, preferences, and other factors, while also considering the design composition of the picture to integrate and optimise the language of the screen, in order to achieve the best effect, it is an artist's thinking, and these are the fundamental meanings of Chinese painting (Wang, 2022). The absorption of contemporary elements and the processing of artistic language make the development and expression of contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting have a new look.

In addition, the presentation of artistic conception is also reflected in the deep analysis of the artistic essence. According to Zong's (1943) viewpoint, the fusion and infiltration of emotions and scenery of artistic conception reveal the deepest emotions, deeper and deeper, while also penetrating the deepest scenery, with each layer becoming more and more crystal clear; the scenery is full of emotions, which are embodied as scenery. Therefore, a unique universe and new images have emerged, adding rich imagination to humanity and opening up new horizons for the world. And he quoted Yun Nantian (1633-1690) as saying, they are all unique in their spiritual thoughts, so unique that its like they are not from the world! This is my so-called artistic conception. Learning from the outside, gaining the source from the heart. The two teachings of Tang Dynasty painter Zhang Zao (birth and death years unknown) are the basic conditions for the creation of this artistic conception.

Analysis of meaning before painting

In Wang Wei's *On Mountains and Rivers* of the Tang Dynasty, he said that "When painting mountains and rivers, meaning is before painting". In Zhang Yanyuan's *Records of Famous Paintings of Past Dynasties*, it was also said that "the backbone and situation are all based on the meaning and return to the use of the brush".

Although meticulous flowers and birds painting pursues the meticulous depiction of flowers and birds in the creation process, there is no doubt that the meaning should be the first, that is, the meaning to guide the work (Li, 2006). From this, we can understand that meaning is a spiritual concept, it is closer to the connotation of the superstructure, which is metaphysics, and the work may be directed towards material aspects such as instruments. However, from the philosophical concept of dialectical materialism in Marxism, there is a material world first, then a spiritual world, so does material determine consciousness? The answer to whether meaning is before painting here contradicts this theory is, of course, negative, and can be explained in two aspects:

First, the source of an artist's creation, first of all, is the real things in real life, or thoughts of the artist's own feeling through a phenomenon or image. Therefore, before starting to create, an artist must consider their own ideas and techniques, have their own feelings, and then express their true feelings. This is the prelude to scenery and expression. This is the first picture that the painter sketched in mind, and after repeated thinking and refinement, the final image is formed.

Second, after the concept has been formed, the painter can use his familiar painting method to create, he can put all the emotions he wants to express into the painting. It is the crystallisation of the author's own experience and thinking, the product of social influence and edification as a social person (Li, 2006). Painting creation, on the other hand, is a secondary creation of images, that is, the painter already has his own meaning before he paints. But its production process is after a long practice of training and edification.

Analysis of the fusion of form and spirit

The combination of form and spirit is the basis for Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting to highlight the inner charm of the subject (Liang, 2018). The modelling problem in painting creation refers to the painter's depiction of the appearance and characteristics of things. Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting has a strong subjective willingness to express flowers and birds (Wang, 2022). The explanation of subjective will here is mainly due to the process of artistic creation, which includes the pursuit of aesthetic expression of Chinese culture. Gu Kaizhi (348-409) in the ancient Eastern Jin Dynasty put forward the theory of Expressing the Spirit by Physical Form. Posterity has been the pursuit of the highest artistic conception.

It can be understood that the implication of Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting lies in its perfect combination of form and spirit. When designing works, painters respect the natural form of things, aim to create the form of the artist's inner beauty, and achieve the processing method of natural creation and no human trace (Guo, 2010).

Due to the ability of painting form to convey the spirit, the spirit can endow the viewer with a certain aesthetic taste, and painting form is a spiritual need and a carrier of expression. The biggest characteristic of Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting is that it is full of human nature. Painters can express their infinite emotions towards nature and life through meticulous depiction, whether calm or poetic. Therefore, in the past few thousand years, the widely circulated Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting has proven a form of spiritual harmony and unity. As Zhuangzi (approximately 369-286 BC) stated in his book "On the Unification of Things," the concept of heaven and earth coexist with me, and all things are one with me, which marks the core of Chinese philosophical research. Therefore, humans are also a part of nature and naturally integrate the form of things with the gods they pursue in nature. If analysed from this perspective, meticulous flowers and birds painting is a true manifestation of the highest level of artistic conception that pursues taking form as the essence and combining form and spirit.

The Presentation of Artistic Conception Pursuit in Works of Art

Artists' Pursuit of Artistic Conception

Chinese painting conveys the author's thoughts and views on nature through images, among which flowers and birds painting uses flowers, animals, grass and insects to show the painter's attitude towards life, and is the expression of their inner emotions.

Only by expressing the artistic conception of the work can the artist allow the viewer to experience the artistic conception of the work when they see it, or rather, they have already wandered in the work's artistic conception. The ways of artistic creation are also diverse. For meticulous painters, a good meticulous painting, whether it's flowers or scenery, does not require too much skill, only a certain artistic conception. Initially, meticulous painting often focused on depicting natural landscapes, depicting the forms and expressions of flowers and birds. Of course, this is just a form of realism towards objects. After so many years of development, most Chinese flowers and birds paintings still admire a form of visual beauty. For example, Lin (2021) wrote in his evaluation of Professor Jia Guangjian, "His lotus are not only derived from the reproduction of large-scale scenes like lotus ponds in reality, but also a subjective expression that blends surreal poetic mood." (as shown in Figure 2).



Figure 2. Works of Professor Jia Guangjian
(Source: Chinese Art Gallery)

From these two works, it can be seen that although the artist chose the same theme when expressing his thoughts, the artistic conception performed varies depending on the season. It has the characteristics of poetry and the romanticism of real life. From here, it can be understood that this is the artist's initial psychology in creating artistic conception. Renowned art critic Xia (2022) commented on *Creek and Pond Over Snow*, the main tone of the painting is greyish green, with snow falling on the pond and creating a strange and radiant atmosphere. While the thriving business of nature and the chill after the snow create an inherent conflict between the natural forces, it also highlights the stunning wonders of the natural ecology. This painting is highly traditional and contains modern consciousness, with unique scenery and meaning. Beyond heaven and earth, it forms a unique spiritual wonder (Fang Shishu's Notes on Tianlouan from 1692-1751), which can be considered a masterpiece of the times. With the prosperous development of contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting and the establishment and competition of diverse styles, meticulous flowers and birds painters are more focused on determining their own artistic style, which of course also emphasises the uniqueness of artistic conception. This expression technique has pushed it to a peak. For example, when commenting on Su Baijun, Zhang (2018) said, "His works have a dark and profound style, with an unexpected sense of decorative beauty." From different works, we can see the traditional techniques and creative ideas of Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting. Although it is only a meticulous painting, it can reflect many things. Every excellent flowers and birds painting creator has an extremely rich spiritual world. For the creator, there is not only the reality he saw at the time, but also an emotion in his heart towards nature.

The Resonance of Viewers With the Artistic Conception of the Work

The presentation of artistic conception is precisely a life experience that people are pursuing. For creators, a beautiful flowers and birds painting allows viewers to imagine the real scene the artist is facing from the shape of the flowers and the expressions of the birds, making people associate the entire nature from a painting. When creating a moving realm on the screen now, it constitutes an artistic conception. Those who appreciate the heart are the top, those who are pleasing to the eyes are the bottom. Without exerting force on the artistic conception, there is no implied meaning or sound beyond the context. So when painters create, they can only rely on the moving artistic conception of the work in order to make it exude a moving artistic charm, and make the viewer stop in front of the painting and linger (Ding, 2010).

Contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting is manifested in the new era by utilising aesthetic principles such as coordination, balance, contrast, and order in plane composition, constantly creating new artistic forms and providing people with updated visual enjoyment. Applying the concepts of Deconstructionism and Decompositionism in western art to contemporary meticulous flowers and birds paintings has elevated people's impression and evaluation standards of meticulous flowers and birds paintings from being true, delicate, and profound in artistic conception, promoting attention to the appreciation and formal meaning of flat visual language. Breaking away from the simulation of objective objects in traditional meticulous flowers and birds paintings, enhancing subjectivity in modelling, perfectly combining image modelling with modern composition consciousness, and presenting objective objects with geometric attributes. Through analysis and application, diversified unity is achieved. Its focus has formed a new artistic image and spatial expression, forming a painting form with strong characteristics and atmosphere of the times.

Artistic Conception in Contemporary Meticulous Flowers and Birds Painting

Emphasis on The Performance of Modeling Artistic Conception

Realistic meticulous flowers and bird works have their own unique characteristics in shape, composition and brush use. In the process of learning excellent modern works, we can draw the essence from ancient works and increase the connotation of works, so as to achieve the purpose of creating creative scenes. At the same time, the author can also comprehensively discuss the two aspects of brush and ink, so as to deeply analyse the relationship between brush and ink. Such a practice can make the meticulous painting more precise. To create the artistic conception of flowers and birds painting, we should pay attention to the expression of the form. Flowers and birds painting prefers to pursue the likeness of spirit, and be good at using all generalisation techniques, attaches importance to the likeness of appearance but does not stick to the likeness of appearance, and even pursues the difference between similarity of dissimilarity and similar while dissimilar, so as to realise the spirit of the object and the feelings of the author. The freehand style advocated "It is childish if we only pursue similarity in painting" and later "do not seek the likeness of shape". However, in the view of Jia Guangjian (2021), painting in an extreme similar outside and expressing an extreme similar inside leads to the spirits of all wonders. He claimed that an extreme similar form rather than an extreme true form, which is actually the image of Chinese painting aesthetics. Image is an emotional image, a mental image, image can be similar, can be different, can be real, or can be not real, when Jia Guangjian's meticulous colouring of lotus flowers presents the ethereal lotus pond, which is both real and imaginary, as well as poetic. Lin (2021) in his word, argues that that we can experience a surreal poetic realm through the reconstruction of the mind

Emphasise on the Presentation of Artistic Conception of Techniques

Chinese literati painting focuses on the unity of emotional images and rational concepts by incorporating meaning into the painting (Zhang, 2018). However, in the view of Ding (2019), contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting continuously draws on the techniques of other painting genres and draws reasonable inspiration from other forms of artistic expression in the development process, enhancing the artistic expression of contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting and winning more people's love. However, in the process of creation, as Chen Yanqiu (2006) mentioned, the ultimate pursuit is not in reality, but in meaning. The concept of seizing nature advocated in the creation at that time was an extension of the theory of learning from nature, then epitomising in mind proposed by Zhang Zao (n.d) of the Tang Dynasty in his *Painting Realm*. The so-called source of mind is the state of mind, which is the initial driving force behind the expression of artistic conception. It is not difficult to see from this that the technical expression and application of Chinese meticulous painting, like the form, are not the main pursuit form of creation.

Guo (2010) believes that contemporary meticulous painters attach great importance to the role of colour language in their paintings. They have intentionally avoided the singularity and routinization of colours, updated the concept of colouring according to items, changed the program of three times of alums and nine times of dyeing, absorbed some of the expression languages of Western painting in colour processing, enriched the colours of traditional meticulous paintings, and created forms and expression techniques that are more suitable for modern people's aesthetic taste. However, in Guo Ruoxu's *Picture Observation and News*, he proposed that the present-day paintings, while valuing their elegant and beautiful appearance, are pleasing to the public and do not meet the principles and interests of painting. From this, it can be seen that the application of contemporary technology and the citation of western painting require a degree of mastery (Guo, 2010). However, we cannot excessively apply the expression methods of western oil painting light and colour, the use of backlight effects, as well as the abstract treatment of light and colour and the decorative techniques of light and colour realism, to the creation of Chinese painting.

As Guo et al. (2010) were concerned, the attempt to use various new materials, tools, and techniques has brought about exciting and diverse new images, but the excessive use of these things has greatly weakened the unique charm and spirit of traditional Chinese meticulous painting, making it easy to fall

into the category of craftsmanship. The creators have worked hard in both flowers and birds designs, and have developed their own artistic techniques based on this. At the same time, this is also the creator's interpretation of the anthropomorphic or personification of flowers and birds in nature, indirectly expressing the artistic conception and emotions he wants to express.

Emphasise on the Expression of The Artistic Conception of Color

Personalised colour expression can increase the aesthetic effect of a work and showcase its artistic value (Ding, 2019). When learning and creating realistic meticulous flowers and birds paintings, attention should be paid to coordinating and unifying colours and structures. This can not only enhance the freehand brushwork of meticulous painting, but also give people a deeper understanding of the author, colour, and composition considerations. Flowers and birds painting is a reflection of natural forms, which embodies the author's emotions towards life and nature. The natural environment is diverse and colourful, with various colours combined to form a unique style that can also reflect the creator's mood. Over time, one will develop their own style. For example, when creating works with meticulous patterns or flowers and birds themes, creators should pay attention to the integration of colour and shape to achieve a harmonious and in-depth performance of the picture.

Taking Jia Guangjian's flowers and birds paintings as an example, just like the *Blue Water and Golden Lotus* published in Chinese Painter on January 1, 2019, in 1997, and *The Moon is Always Brighter At Hometown*, in 1996, (as shown in Figure 3) these two works were his representatives, and his use of colour throughout the entire painting reached a vertical state. The large expanse of turquoise above contrasts with the light yellow patches, giving a strong visual impact. The blue tone above the painting appears calm and profound, and the blooming white lotus is both dynamic and serene, showcasing auspicious and peaceful elements. This visual effect fully unleashes the expressive power of colour language. From these works, we can fully realise that the formal language conveyed by the beauty of colour in the work is completely different from the composition and use of lines. It is a supplement to the first two and has been further strengthened.



Figure 3. Works of Professor Jia Guangjian
(Source: Chinese Art Gallery)

It can be seen that when the creator of meticulous painting takes a certain part as the main body to represent a whole, he first considered the overall shape and layout, and then the overall composition problem. This can make the realistic meticulous flowers and birds painting picture more clean and coordinated, and also lay the foundation for the colour distribution of the subsequent picture. Liu & Li (2016) cited Hegel's (1770-1831) prophetic assertion in *Aesthetics* The peak of vividness in painting can only be expressed through colour. The magic of colour can eventually become dominant, so that the content becomes insignificant compared to it. This makes painting a fragrant atmosphere, a magical technique of colour tones, and its correspondence, mutual radiance, and playful harmony begin to cross the boundary to music, just as relief sculpture starting to get close to painting during the rapid

development of sculpture. However, according to Chen (2022), any colour can cause us to have different feelings and psychological associations, and colours with the same hue can produce different psychological associations.

Emphasise on The Expression of Poetic Artistic Conception

The expression of poetic artistic conception in Chinese painting is similar to Ni (2021) in that literature and art are interconnected. Since ancient times, there has been a saying in China that poetry and painting are not separated from each other. The Greek poet Simonides (c. 556-468 BC) stated that poetry is a painting with sound, and painting is a poem without sound. During the Song Dynasty of China (960-1279), Su Shi (1037-1101) mentioned in his comments on others' paintings that poetry and painting are essentially the same, with natural craftsmanship and freshness. And another example, Wang Guowei (1877-1927) believed in his *Lyrics Of The Human World* that there is a realm with self and a realm without self, tearful eyes asking the flowers, they do not say a word, countless dropped petals drifting in the wind, then there is nothing left, how do I stand the empty chamber in the cold spring, while the sunset is setting in the sound of cuckoo, this is a realm of self. Picking up asters near the Eastern fence, my gaze upon the Southern mountain rests. The cold waves rise in a plain, and the white birds leisurely descend, this is a realm without self.

The focus of both classical poetry and meticulous flowers and birds painting is on the treatment of artistic conception. However, in order to enhance the overall effect of flowers and birds painting, it is necessary to pay attention to the organic combination of artistic methods, techniques, and means. Therefore, contemporary paintings not only emphasise the use of brush and ink techniques, but also emphasise the treatment of the poetic imagery in meticulous flowers and birds paintings. They use methods such as line drawing, meticulous light colour, meticulous heavy colour, and Mogu techniques to enhance the artistic conception of the painting, with a focus on shaping the poetic imagery of the painting, ensuring that the artistic conception of meticulous flowers and birds paintings is poetic.

Another view, as proposed by Wang Bi (226-249), is that one forgets the words when one gains the image, and forgets the image when one gains the meaning, thus achieving the state of words are finite while the meaning is infinite. This refers to the concept that the artistic conception of Chinese painting also emphasises the essence beyond the rhyme, which is an infinite transcendence of beauty. This indicates that artists since the Wei and Jin dynasties have fully understood the philosophy of life and the concept of beauty in life's taste (Liu, 2013). It is why Chinese painting pursues the meaning outside the painting and the poetry inside the painting. It was pointed out that painting should have the charm of poetry, so that poetry and images can blend together, and through the expression of painting images, infinite meanings can be realised from the limited painting. Just as Pan Tianshou (1897-1971) proposed in *Essays On TianGeHua Tan* that painting must have a brush outside the brush, ink outside the ink, meaning outside the meaning, that is, the essence of perfection.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study discusses the artistic conception of contemporary meticulous flowers and birds painting, and reveals its importance and application value in artistic creation. We can see as Lao Tzu in *Tao Te Ching* put forward the philosophical concept of the nature of Dao and Fa, a profound influence on the development of Chinese painting, especially on flowers and birds painting. Flowers and birds symbolise the static and dynamic beauty of life respectively, and the combination of the two shows the harmonious picture of nature. The life spirit of Chinese painting is rooted in the thoughts of Lao Tzu and Zhuang Tzu, pursuing the beauty of artistic conception, nature, innocence and simplicity.

This study also specifically analyses the artistic conception in the aspects of modelling, creative technique, colour and poetry. It reveals the artistic conception of contemporary flowers and birds painting and emphasises the importance of immersive painting creation, which reflects the harmonious relationship between natural beauty and the artist's soul. This paper expounds that the artistic conception of Chinese painting is the integration of objective things and subjective emotions of the author, meaning is its core, and pursues the unity of mind and scene, meaning and environment.

In modern society, the connotation of Chinese meticulous flowers and birds painting is more rich because of the influence of aesthetic concept, and artistic conception has become people's special pursuit of this art form. Excellent meticulous paintings not only show the painter's skills, but also convey the overall atmosphere of his ideas and pictures, and its highest state is reflected in the heart of poetry. Looking forward to the future, meticulous flowers and birds painting will continue to explore and innovate on the basis of inheriting the tradition.

Globalisation will inject more international artistic elements into it and shape the style of the times. Technological progress will promote the integration of flowers and birds painting with digital art and virtual reality to provide a richer art experience. At the same time, with the promotion of environmental awareness, flowers and birds painting is expected to play an important role in the construction of ecological civilization. In addition, more attention will be paid to its education and dissemination, in order to train a new generation of artists and ensure the continuation and flourishing of the flowers and birds painting tradition.

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Malay Cultural Heritage Preservation Through *Seni Tekat Motif On Kerongsang Tok Design*

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ABSTRACT

Seni Tekat is a Malay intangible cultural heritage, not only popular in Kuala Kangsar Perak but other Malay communities in Indonesia and Thailand. This study focuses on the integration of *Seni Tekat* motifs into the design of *Kerongsang Tok*, a traditional Malay brooch, aiming to both innovate and preserve this cultural heritage. The primary objectives of this research are to create an innovative source of inspiration for *Kerongsang Tok* design and to preserve Malay cultural heritage through new design inspirations. The ideation process, directly linked to the fundamentals of *Kerongsang Tok* design, forms the core of this research. Starting with the initial design, the process incorporates traditional Malay patterns to develop a modern interpretation that remains true to its cultural origins. A comprehensive survey was conducted, gathering input from academics, students, goldsmiths, and jewellery designers to identify the most favoured design. Based on the survey outcomes, a novel *Kerongsang Tok* design was created, reflecting both innovation and cultural preservation. This study not only aims to preserve Malaysia's cultural legacy but also serves as an educational resource for future generations. By promoting awareness and appreciation of our unique cultural heritage, this research contributes to sustaining the relevance of traditional Malay art forms in contemporary design. Preserving *Seni Tekat* motifs in *Kerongsang Tok* design serves as a testament to Malaysia's rich cultural heritage, ensuring that this exquisite art form continues to be celebrated and cherished by future generations.

Keywords: *Seni Tekat, Kerongsang Tok, Malay cultural heritage, design innovation, cultural preservation*

INTRODUCTION

Heritage is belonging that is or may be inherited and has an inheritance value that is worthy of being preserved for the nation. Heritage is defined as a unique and irreplaceable legacy not only of each nation but also of humanity. This valuable legacy is brought from the past, where people are living today, and what will be passed to future generations (UNESCO, 2015; Zuraidah & Aliza, 2010). *Seni Tekat* or Embroidery is a sort of activity that attempts to restore or enhance the beauty of various materials, including clothes, accessories, handicrafts, and fabrics. Needlework utilising thread and machine proficiency. Embroidery also emphasises the beautiful variety of decoration because its design motifs will appear to emerge from the surface of the fabric. Embroidery is rich in various techniques and these motifs also experience currents of change according to circulation times (Saemah and Muliyadi, 2015).

Kerongsang Tok, a traditional Malay brooch, is another significant cultural artefact. Traditionally worn as part of Malay attire, it holds both aesthetic and symbolic value. Combining these two elements, *Seni Tekat* motifs and *Kerongsang Tok* design presents a unique opportunity to innovate while preserving an integral part of Malay cultural heritage. *Kerongsang Tok* is a traditional brooch worn by Malay women in Malaysia. The brooch is usually made of gold or silver and is worn to complement the traditional Malay attire known as the *Baju Kurung*. The *Kerongsang Tok* is a highly decorative piece of jewellery that is composed of three pieces: the *Kerongsang Ibu* (the largest brooch), *Kerongsang Anak* (a smaller brooch), and *Cincin* (a ring). The *Kerongsang Tok* is a symbol of Malay heritage and is often passed down as a family heirloom. It is still commonly worn by Malay women during special occasions such as weddings, cultural events, and religious celebrations. *Kerongsang Tok* are traditional brooches used to fasten garments like *Kebaya* and *Baju Kurung*. These brooches are both functional and decorative, featuring intricate metalwork, and are often embellished with gemstones.

This research aims to explore how the incorporation of *Seni Tekat* motifs into the design of *Kerongsang Tok* can create a new source of inspiration while preserving Malay cultural heritage. The process begins with understanding the historical and cultural contexts of both *Seni Tekat* and *Kerongsang Tok*, followed by the development of new designs that marry tradition with modernity. Through a comprehensive methodology involving literature review, design development, and feedback from a diverse group of stakeholders including academics, students, goldsmiths, and jewellery designers the study aims to identify designs that are both innovative and culturally authentic. A survey conducted among these stakeholders provides critical insights into design preferences, ultimately guiding the creation of final designs that reflect a successful blend of tradition and contemporary aesthetics.

This research underscores the importance of cultural preservation through innovative design. By bridging the past and present, it ensures that the rich traditions of Malay artistry continue to thrive, inspiring and educating future generations. The cultural value and history of *Seni Tekat* can be conserved for the enjoyment and appreciation of future generations by incorporating traditional themes into contemporary designs. One of the most significant benefits of heritage preservation is that it allows us to connect with our past and appreciate the sacrifices made by our ancestors. By studying and preserving our heritage, we can gain a deeper understanding of the struggles and triumphs of those who came before us.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Malay cultural heritage encompasses a broad spectrum of traditions, arts, and crafts. *Seni Tekat*, a traditional form of embroidery using gold and silver threads on velvet, is a prominent example. This craft is traditionally used for ceremonial attire and royal regalia, showcasing the intricate craftsmanship and aesthetic values of the Malay community. Preserving Malay cultural heritage is crucial to maintaining the identity and unique characteristics of the Malay community. It also plays an important role in promoting cultural diversity and understanding in Malaysia. To ensure the preservation of Malay cultural heritage, it is essential to educate and raise awareness among Malaysians about the importance of cultural heritage. This can be done through various means, such as cultural festivals, exhibitions, and educational programs. Additionally, the government can implement policies to support the preservation of Malay cultural heritage, such as providing funding for cultural organisations and heritage sites. It is the responsibility of all Malaysians to work together to preserve and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Malay community for future generations to enjoy (Ministry of Tourism, Arts, and Culture Malaysia, 2019).

Seni Tekat motifs often depict elements from nature, such as flowers, leaves, and animals, which are imbued with cultural symbolism and meanings reflecting Malay beliefs and values. The preservation of these motifs is crucial for maintaining the cultural narratives and social values they represent in the past. Both our natural and cultural history are priceless sources of inspiration and life. Heritage is divided into two, namely tangible and intangible which revolves around the process of identifying, maintaining, and preserving heritage assets based on the goal of public interest. On the other hand, the sharing of heritage identity can create a sense of belonging in the people, thus instilling a spirit of love for Malaysia's cultural heritage (Suraya, 2022). Cultural heritage is the legacy of physical artefacts and intangible attributes of a group or society that are inherited from past generations, maintained in the present, and bestowed for the benefit of future generations. The best way to preserve our cultural heritage, whatever it may be, is to share it with others. Cultural heritage has a very high value and is unique (Chiong, 2022). Therefore, cultural heritage assets need to be well preserved and looked after to ensure the sustainability of our identity as Malaysians. The community needs to be aware that they need to appreciate their heritage.

Seni Tekat is a significant part of the Malay cultural heritage, and efforts have been made to preserve this art form. Despite its popularity and cultural significance, *Seni Tekat* is in danger of disappearing as younger generations turn away from traditional crafts in favour of modern pursuits. Efforts are being made to preserve this ancient art form, including through educational programs and initiatives that aim to promote the craft to a wider audience. Another way to preserve *Seni Tekat* is to encourage its use and to support the artisans who create these works of art. By purchasing and displaying *Seni Tekat* pieces, people can help sustain the demand for this craft. Additionally, supporting local artisans who create these works can help ensure that the skills and knowledge are passed down to future generations (Saemah & Mulyadi, 2015; Saemah, 2015; Aziz, 1985).

Modernising traditional Malay accessories to appeal to contemporary tastes while preserving their cultural significance is a growing trend. Integrating *Seni Tekat* motifs into *kerongsang tok* design blends tradition with modernity, making these pieces relevant to today's fashion while retaining their cultural roots (Hema Zulaika Hashim, 2020). HABIB jewellery brand elevates the beauty and uniqueness of *Tekat*'s traditional heritage through the Raya collection, '*Rantaian Kasih di Aidilfitri 2023*'. HABIB Group Executive Chairman, Datuk Sri Meer, said this year HABIB pays tribute to the heritage of *Tekat* art, through motifs inspired by nature and local plants. He said, HABIB takes inspiration and features the traditional heritage of *Tekat*, which is a Malay embroidery decoration produced by embroidering gold thread on a rich velvet background. "Proud to be a local brand, HABIB always upholds the beauty and uniqueness of cultural heritage (Suraya, 2022).

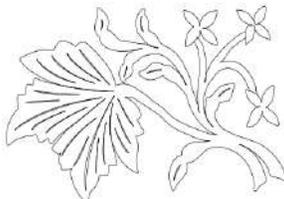
Design innovation not only preserves traditional craftsmanship but also ensures that these cultural practices remain vibrant and relevant in a rapidly changing world. By taking inspiration from *Tekat* art motifs, designers and creators can create works that are not only aesthetic but also appreciate and promote Malay art and cultural heritage. The integration of traditional *Tekat* art with contemporary design can create harmony between natural beauty and innovation, enriching the treasures of Malay art and culture.

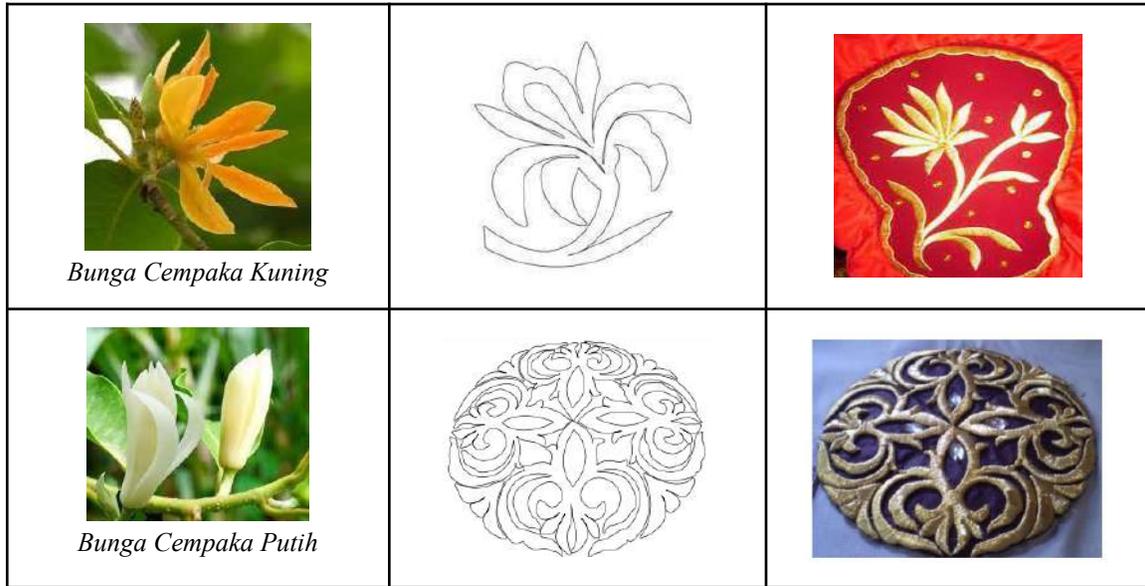
Seni Tekat Motifs

The selection of floral motifs also depends on the sealer or needs of its users. Often plants that are useful to humans are chosen as inspiration motives. Such plants are used in various ways such as in traditional medicine other than food sources. For example, are *Pokok Sireh*, *Daun Senduduk dan Ketam Guri*. Some trees are chosen because of their beautiful, fragrant, and uniquely shaped flowers. This prompts Malay craftsmen to perpetuate their love for these flowers in the form of motifs in their carpentry. An example is flowers *Cempaka* (*Michelia champaca*), *Kananga* flower (*ylang-ylang* or *Cananga odorata*), cape flower (*Mimusops elengi*) and others (Saemah and Muliyadi, 2015). This plant motif is manipulated and modified into interesting variations. Examples of commonly used flora motifs are *Bunga Cempaka*, *Bunga Kekwa*, *Daun Asam Batu*, *Bunga Bakung*, *Bunga Bercula Kelopak Pecah Lapan*, *Bunga Kenanga*, *Bunga Pecah Lima*, *Bunga Raya*, *Bunga Teratai*, *Bunga* or *Buah Delima*, *Daun Bunga Jermin*, *Daun Keladi*, *Daun Peria*, *Daun* or *Buah Padi* and *Daun* or *Pucuk Paku*.

Five examples of *Tekatek* art motifs were chosen that have the potential to be developed into a new inspiration in *Kerongsang Tok* designs. The development of the idea will be the implementation of the motif to create new inspiration for *Kerongsang Tok* design (Harozila et al., 2021)

Table 1. Seni Tekatek Motifs – The new inspiration for *Kerongsang Tok* design

Flora	Motif	Seni Tekatek Product
 <p><i>Bunga Kekwa</i></p>		
 <p><i>Daun Asam Batu</i></p>		
 <p><i>Daun Asam Batu</i></p>		



Kerongsang Tok Design

According to Zubaidah (2022), the *Kerongsang Tok*, a prominent piece of Malay jewellery, is highlighted in these texts. It comprises a larger "mother" brooch and two smaller "children" brooches, typically crafted from gold, silver, copper, or pewter. This jewellery is traditionally worn with *baju Kebaya Labuh* or *Kebaya Pendek*, reflecting the cultural and historical significance of the Malays, Portuguese, Nyonya Peranakan, and the Ceti in Melaka. The author emphasises the importance of preserving this cultural heritage, noting modern adaptations like those by Habib Jewels, which incorporate contemporary design elements such as diamond stones while maintaining the traditional aesthetic and cultural essence of the *Kerongsang Tok*. Habib Jewels takes on the role of a giant jewellery company in Malaysia this *Kerongsang Tok* was designed to preserve the old Malay heritage from being lost over time. This product was marketed around 2019 by maintaining the original design concept of *Kerongsang Tok* which was given a new lease of life. The use of diamond stones is applied in the design (Figure. 1).



Figure 1. An old heritage is given a new inspiration for preservation. of Malay cultural heritage
 (Source: Habib Jewels website, 2019)



Figure 2. Malay Cultural Heritage (Traditional Malay Jewellery *Kerongsang Tok*)
 (Source <http://enticz.blogspot.com/2011/03/kerongsang-brooches.html>, 2011)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative method that refers to the case study approach. The case study will further detail the traditional motifs found in *Seni Tekat* art based on various decorative motifs that will also be used in the creation of *Kerongsang Tok* design. Qualitative research is essential for understanding the intricate cultural and social dimensions of preserving Malay cultural heritage through *Seni Tekat* motifs in *Kerongsang tok* design. This methodology focuses on gaining deep insights into the cultural significance, craftsmanship, and contemporary relevance of these traditional arts. There has been a survey conducted to determine which design fits most closely the primary title. The most important characteristic of *Kerongsang Tok* was present in the finest design that was selected. A specific survey was administered to academics, students, goldsmiths, jewellery designers, and practitioners. This qualitative research methodology aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of how traditional Malay crafts can be preserved and revitalised through innovative design practices, ensuring their continuity for future generations.

This design research is based on the ideation process that is related directly to the purpose of appreciation of our cultural heritage. The process is a series that substitutes any findings or data into any type of result (Ulrich et al., 2012). A product development process is an arrangement of data that a designer needs to achieve from a design into something marketable or functional (Ulrich et al., 2012). A survey method was used to assess the marketability, necessity of the research, demand, and analysis of findings (Glasow, 2005). One of the crucial elements of making jewellery is design. To address the needs of the end user, developing creative design methods, approaches, strategies, and procedures is far more important. Designers and jewellers should concentrate on client requirements and current trends throughout this stage (Hema Zulaika et al. 2020). The next step of the process is to determine if the design concept can be used to create a piece of jewellery product. From the initial concept to the final jewellery manufacture, the design of jewellery requires various steps. The five key steps of jewellery design, according to (Galton, 2012) are ideation, sketching, rendering, modelling, and prototyping. The ideation process will take over once the research on the selection of *Seni Tekat* motif is done. The section of the motifs is based on the suitable and has the potential to be created as a new inspiration for *Kerongsang Tok* design.

The process goes through 5 key steps.

Phase 1 (Ideation)

Ideation is the initial step in the jewellery design process, where designers produce concepts for their creations by brainstorming and inspiration-seeking. Based on the market survey the design chosen from the survey will be conducted to get suitable inspiration for *Kerongsang Tok* Design. Five *Seni Tekat* motifs were chosen to create new inspiration for *Kerongsang tok* design.

Table 2. *Seni Tekat* Motif design on product

Selection of <i>Seni Tekat</i> Motif that has the potential to develop as a new creation of <i>Kerongsang Tok</i> design to preserve Malay cultural heritage (<i>Seni Tekat</i> and <i>Traditional Malay Jewelry</i>)				
Motif <i>Bunga Kekwa</i>	Motif <i>Bunga Raya</i>	Motif <i>Daun Asam Batu</i>	Motif <i>Bunga Cempaka Kuning</i>	Motif <i>Bunga Cempaka Putih</i>



Phase 2 (Design Process)

Design Process - called sketching, designers make quick drawings of their ideas on paper or a computer. This design process sketching approach ensures that the integration of *Seni Tekat* motifs into *Kerongsang Tok* designs is thoughtful, respectful of cultural heritage, and aesthetically appealing. By combining traditional craft with modern design principles, we can create unique pieces that celebrate and preserve Malay cultural heritage. Quick hand-drawn sketches with various motif arrangements with the chosen motifs. The development of the idea to create a new design of *Kerongsang Tok* is to create rough sketches of initial ideas, exploring various combinations of traditional motifs and modern design elements. Develop more detailed and polished sketches of the selected concepts. Focus on the intricacy of the motifs, the overall shape of the brooch, and practical considerations like size and functionality.

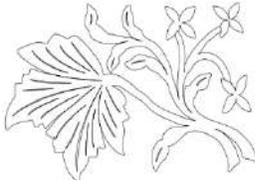
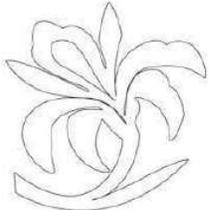
Table 3. The development of the idea to create a new design of *Kerongsang Tok*

Brainstorming the ideas of <i>Kerongsang Tok</i> design from the selection of motifs that are chosen			

Phase 3 (Rendering)

Rendering, which takes place in the third stage, entails producing an intricate visual depiction of the design. Designers produce digital renderings of their designs, complete with colour, texture, and other elements. Rendering in the design process bridges the gap between concept sketches and physical prototypes, providing a clear and visually appealing representation of the final designs. This approach ensures that the integration of *Seni Tekat* motifs into *Kerongsang Tok* designs is both aesthetically pleasing and culturally respectful, aiding in the preservation of Malay cultural heritage.

Table 4. The design proposal

Design	Motifs	Seni Tekat	Kerongsang Tok Design
Design Proposal 1	 <p><i>Motif Bunga Kekwa</i></p>		
Design Proposal 2	 <p><i>Motif Bunga Raya</i></p>		
Design Proposal 3	 <p><i>Motif Daun Asam Batu</i></p>		
Design Proposal 4	 <p><i>Motif Bunga Cempaka Kuning</i></p>		

			
Design Proposal 5	 <i>Motif Bunga Cempaka Putih</i>		

In this step Survey was conducted to get the result of the Final Design proposal. Five Design Proposals were proposed via Google Forms. A survey has been conducted to determine which design is the best, with input from academics, students, goldsmiths, and jewellery designers. Based on the poll outcomes, an innovative inspiration for the *Kerongsang Tok* design was created. The final design has already been chosen through the results of the survey. From 5 design proposals that are proposed to the survey Design Proposal 1 is the highest ranking with the motif from *Bunga Kekwa*.

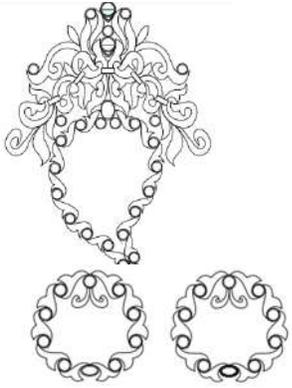
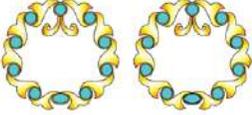
Table 5. The design proposal incorporating with *Seni Tekat* motif

Design	Motifs	<i>Seni Tekat</i>	<i>Kerongsang Tok</i> Design
Design Proposal 1	 <i>Motif Bunga Kekwa</i>		

Phase 4 (3D Modelling)

The fourth stage is 3D modelling when jewellers use sophisticated software to build a virtual model of the jewellery. Before the final manufacturing, this stage enables designers to view the design from many perspectives and make any necessary revisions. The other alternative is production with manual techniques.

Table 6. The final design proposal – result from a survey

STEP	Modelling/ Master Mould/ Custom Made		
Final Design Proposal 1			

Phase 5 (Prototyping)

Prototyping is the last step, where a physical design is created. The new design needs to go through the fabrication process, and selecting suitable materials, such as precious metals, is an essential matter at this stage.

Table 6. The fabrication process to make a final design proposal for *Kerongsang Tok* product.

STEP	Manufacturing/ Fabrication		
1	<p>PIERCING PROCESS</p> <p>To cut metal follow the final design</p>		
2	<p>SOLDERING PROCESS</p> <p>To solder every part of the cutting design to be as 1 part of the brooch</p>		

3	<p>TEXTURING PROCESS (PAHAT)</p> <p>To enhance the design on the surface of the metal</p>		
4	<p>STONE SETTING PROCESS</p> <p>To set the gemstones to enhance the beauty of the design</p>		
5	<p>FINISHING PROCESS / FINAL PRODUCT</p> <p>Finished product</p>		

FINDINGS

The integration of *Seni Tekat* motifs into modern *Kerongsang tok* designs exemplifies the Malay philosophy of harmony and balance. Designers strive to create a balanced blend of traditional and contemporary elements, ensuring that the cultural essence of the motifs is preserved while adapting them to modern aesthetics. Many *Seni Tekat* motifs are inspired by natural elements, reflecting the Malay belief in living harmoniously with the environment. This philosophy is evident in the design process, where artisans draw inspiration from nature to create motifs that symbolise balance and tranquillity.

The study explained the development of new inspiration for *Kerongsang Tok* design, along with a couple of ideas for how its design might be enhanced. The study has shown how jewellery designers can create unique and significant pieces of jewellery while still working within the limitations of the original shape, extra components, and cultural importance. The study has also shown how, by utilising traditional motifs to enhance traditional Malay jewellery, may be revived and modified to fit modern trends and needs.

The latest design proposal, the inspired *Kerongsang Tok* still maintains a total of 3 brooch shapes and the design concept still has the concept of floral motifs. The latest design proposal inspired by *Kerongsang Tok* design still maintains the original characteristics of the brooch, which is the flower design but has been developed and given a new lease of life with a wider selection of motifs from *Seni Tekat* motifs. This inspiration fits with the original concept of *Kerongsang Tok's* design which is interesting and unique.

Table 7. The motif and the design proposal that was chosen from the survey

		
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Table 8. The design process involves the ideation, sketching, rendering, modelling, and prototyping of the final product. Final design produced by the result of the survey.

Sketching	Computer Rendering	Prototyping/Product
		
<p>Sketches of Kerongsang Tok Design inspired by Seni Tekat motif (Motif Bunga Kekwa)</p>	<p>Computer Rendering is created based on a manual actual design done by CorelDraw</p>	<p>Final Design Fabricate follow the design chosen by the survey result</p>
		

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, preserving Malay cultural heritage is viewed as a collective responsibility. Community members, artisans, designers, and cultural organisations work together to promote and safeguard traditional crafts, ensuring that the cultural legacy is preserved for future generations. The implementation of *Seni Tekat* and the design of *Kerongsang Tok* are deeply rooted in Malay customs and traditions. Artisans and designers who honour traditional methods and motifs uphold the cultural integrity and historical continuity of Malay heritage. The incorporation of *Seni Tekat* motifs in *Kerongsang Tok* design not only enhances the aesthetic appeal of these traditional accessories but also plays a vital role in preserving and promoting Malay cultural heritage. By continuing this practice, artisans and designers

ensure that the legacy of *Seni Tekat* and its symbolic significance remain alive, serving as a source of pride and identity for the Malay community. By creating replicas of traditional clothing, teaching *Seni Tekat* to others, and incorporating it into modern designs, the art of knotting can remain an integral part of Malaysian culture for years to come.

In summary, the use of *Seni Tekat* motifs in *Kerongsang Tok* design contributes significantly to the preservation and promotion of Malay cultural heritage in addition to improving the traditional accessories' aesthetic appeal. By carrying on with this tradition, designers and craftspeople make sure that *Seni Tekat's* legacy and its symbolic meaning endure, giving the Malay community a sense of pride and identity. Preserving Malay cultural heritage is crucial to maintaining the identity and unique characteristics of the Malay community. It also plays an important role in promoting cultural diversity and understanding in Malaysia. To ensure the preservation of Malay cultural heritage, it is essential to educate and raise awareness among Malaysians about the importance of cultural heritage. This can be done through various means, such as cultural festivals, exhibitions, and educational programs. Additionally, the government can implement policies to support the preservation of Malay cultural heritage, such as providing funding for cultural organisations and heritage sites. It is the responsibility of all Malaysians to work together to preserve and celebrate the rich cultural heritage of the Malay community for future generations to enjoy.

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Circular Economy Strategies for Small Domestic Appliance Design in China

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ABSTRACT

China is the world's largest home appliance manufacturer, and the increased production of small domestic appliance (SDA) goods is leading to rising carbon emissions. Therefore, there is a need to upcycling SDA due to this phenomenon in China. The purpose of this research was to investigate the optimal circular economy (CE) strategies for SDA that would reduce the carbon footprint caused by this type of manufacturing. This study examined the current SDA design characteristics, usage features, CE concept, and circular product design. Then, based on a comprehensive examination, a circular product framework (CPD) and CE strategies for SDA design were recommended. The results indicate that when designers incorporate a CPD framework into the early stages of SDA design, product integrity could be enhanced, thus reducing carbon emissions. The research will benefit manufacturers by enabling improved SDA circularity, as well as supporting the reduction of e-waste and carbon emissions in China and worldwide.

Keywords: *Small domestic appliance design, Circular economy, Circular product design, Carbon emission, R-strategies*

INTRODUCTION

Since the 1980s, China has become a significant consumer and producer of appliances, with a wide range of small domestic appliances (SDA) having entered Chinese homes. In 2012, China's SDA market was valued at 262 billion RMB, which had increased to 372.1 billion RMB in 2020 and is projected to reach 574.1 billion RMB by 2026 (Qianzhan Industrial Research Institute, 2022). In addition, the household appliance manufacturing industry in Guangdong accounted for over 40% of China's total SDA production

in 2022. Due to this extensive SDA production and consumption, the country is currently facing a peak disposal period for these products. Discarded SDAs become e-waste (any discarded electrical or electronic products that have not been reused or refurbished become e-waste). However, only 20% of this was formally recycled: the majority of e-waste generated (80%) was sent to regular garbage (Suppipat & Hu, 2022). In 2019, 4% entered household trash bins and 76% were casually treated (Forti et al., 2020). Both human health and the environment are threatened by the improper disposal of SDA as e-waste, which can contain over 1,000 harmful substances, including toxic elements like lead, mercury, arsenic, cadmium, and flame retardants, which can result in brain damage and tumors. Even when using advanced dismantling processes, environmental problems remain due to the heavy metals content and persistent organic matter. E-waste processing requires resources and poses risks, especially in countries lacking proper management, with health, air, and water all affected (Forti et al., 2020).

Despite accounting for approximately 28% of global carbon emissions, China has pledged that its carbon emissions will peak before 2030 and that it will attain carbon neutrality before 2060. To achieve these goals, China has emphasized the need to transition to a green, low-carbon economy while promoting green recovery and development (Huaxia, 2020). Therefore, SDA circularity in China must be enhanced to reduce e-waste and mitigate the current high carbon emissions.

CIRCULAR ECONOMY AND SMALL DOMESTIC APPLIANCES DESIGN

This section discusses small domestic appliance design and circular economy strategies. Firstly, the study focuses on small domestic appliance designers, as well as product development and usage. Secondly, the CE concept and related barriers are discussed, after which the impact of circular product design methods in terms of improving SDA product design is discussed. Finally, there is a synthesis and outline of three key points of departure (POD).

Small domestic appliance designer

The Ellen MacArthur Foundation indicated that two megatrends - artificial intelligence (AI) and the CE - would intersect in the future due to the consumption of finite resources and a systemic shift (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, n.d.). Design plays a crucial role in both changes. In this study, the term 'designers' refers to those responsible for a product's appearance, architecture, and structural design. The following sections discuss the design, product development, and usage of small domestic appliances. Designers are vital in the early stages of product development, shaping relationships between products and consumers and offering disposal alternatives for discarded products (Lofthouse, 2004). The Ellen MacArthur Foundation noted that over 70% of a product's environmental influence is established in the design stage. Decisions made at that point can have lasting impacts, shaping a product's trajectory for years (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, n.d.). Design for the CE is an upcoming, independent field in the sustainability domain that requires a specific approach and a specific set of competencies and tools. Maszura and Rahinah (2018) identified that trans-disciplinary practices during the early design stage could enable lost time and manufacturing waste to be avoided. Meanwhile, Shahbazi and Jönbrink (2020) noted that CE adoption might be hindered by a lack of both designer awareness and incentives for corporations to invest in circular product design. Boorsma et al. (2022) pointed out that the limited readiness among designers to create circular products represents an improvement opportunity. Hailemariam and Erdiaw-Kwasie (2022) emphasized aligning CE targets with business interests, while effective internal communication could boost employees' circular knowledge and subsequently reduce a company's environmental impact. Van Dam et al. (2020) indicated that design education for the CE is essential for industrial designers. However, CE design capabilities have not been extensively discussed,

while designers might prioritize a product's usability and functionality to meet customer needs, which creates barriers to designing low-carbon SDAs. Specific circular strategies must be developed across the concept, structure, and detailed design stages, while new trans-disciplinary skills should be promoted to prompt SDA circularity. During the design stage, a designer makes critical decisions about necessary processing inputs, which affects the product's life cycle. In the SDA design context, it is crucial to understand the CE capabilities, knowledge, and experience needed by designers during the design and development stages.

Small domestic appliance product development

Product development is a comprehensive process entailing a series of activities intended to produce and bring to market a product that meets customers' needs (Ulrich et al., 2020). Haessler (2020) highlighted that firms might prioritize only short-term profit maximization, leading to negative environmental impacts; in other words, some managers choose profitability over sustainability. To reduce the carbon footprint created through product manufacturing, scholars have recommended collaboration between and coordination among different company functions (Ulrich et al., 2020)—including product architecture, material composition, industrial design, product structure, green consumers—and the avoidance of over-design, while schemes have been devised to reduce the number of production steps (Diaz et al., 2022). However, few scholars have discussed product development, despite the comprehensiveness and significance of this process. Additionally, previous studies have primarily focused on optimizing SDA design at the micro-level of product design rather than adopting a systemic perspective. Therefore, during the initial product development phases, the priorities should be conceptual design, material selection, modular design, product integrity, upgradability, and disassembly. Enhancing circularity becomes considerably more complex once a product transitions into mass production. Concurrently, the transition to a circular economy demands collaboration between different stakeholders, such as enterprises, policymakers, users, and waste management entities. Enhanced cooperation between and the integration of various departments and stakeholders could support the transition of small domestic appliance manufacturing to a circular economy.

Small domestic appliance usage

Studies have revealed that consumers' cognition of and consumption behavior toward circular products and services are influenced by product design (Mugge, 2018). In recent years, consumer behavior has been researched from different perspectives and with various results, including green consumer behavior and consumer awareness of product recyclability. Examples of these outcomes include the need to promote the CE concept in educating and nurturing the younger generation of consumers; a correlation between consumer behavior and waste discharge forms; consumer behavior barriers in terms of the CE; the impact of consumer cultural levels; the application of behavior theory in consumer substitution transformation; behavioral intention and the trend for buying energy-saving appliances; and consumer emotional durability (Testa et al., 2020). However, in-depth analysis of user needs and preferences regarding product design is required. Consumer behavior affects how SDA products are purchased, used, and disposed of. This process is closely associated with the circular economy and significantly impacts the SDA industry's carbon emissions. Consumer behavior and design for behavior change (DfBC) must be accommodated in the circular product design framework.

Based on this literature review, it was concluded that the CE capabilities of designers, small domestic appliance product development, and consumer behavior significantly impact a product's environmental footprint and have led to the high carbon emissions created by China's appliance manufacturers. Greater comprehension is needed of the complex interplay between consumer behavior

and the CE capabilities, knowledge, and expertise of designers working in the SDA industry. Achieving this would involve collaboration between SDA development and design process stakeholders; the application of previously gained knowledge; and an understanding of the difficulty of acquiring concepts in CE, the usefulness of these techniques, as well as the drivers of and barriers to SDA product development.

Circular economy concept

The CE concept was alluded to in 1966 when Kenneth Boulding proposed a circular association in the environment in his essay ‘The Economics of the Coming Spaceship Earth’. In 1989, economists Pearce and Turner proposed the CE concept itself, which gained theoretical support in the field of industrial ecology (Pearce & Turner, 1989). Since then, various related theories have emerged, including ‘industrial ecology’, ‘regenerative design’, ‘biomimicry’, the ‘performance economy’, and ‘Cradle-to-Cradle’. Meanwhile, CE strategies have been evaluated at the macro (national), meso (city, supply chain), and micro-levels (enterprise, product) (Neves et al., 2020). The widely adopted definition of CE is that it is a restorative and regenerative framework that aims to preserve the maximum utility and value of products. The concept is guided by three principles: designing out waste, designing out pollution, and regenerating ecological systems (Ellen MacArthur Foundation, n.d.). Other definitions of the CE have been developed, as Table 1 shows. However, none have been universally accepted, and no specific common themes and principles have emerged from the explanations provided by organizations and research institutions. Above all, the CE aims to mitigate the environmental impact of economic growth by redefining the traditional linear model. Therefore, the current authors regard the CE as constituting a production and consumption system that primarily emphasizes sustaining the continuous circulation of products, components, materials, and energy. Through these principles, the CE should preserve the maximum utility and value of products.

Table 1. Circular economy concepts proposed by institutions

Authors & Institutions	Concept Focus	Year
Circular Economy Promotion Law of the People's Republic of China (PRC)	Reducing, reusing and recycling activities	2008
European Commission (EC)	Product, materials, and resources value, minimizing generation of waste	2015
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)	Reduce by design, From a user-to-user perspective, From a user-to-business intermediary perspective, From business-to-business	2019
World Economic Forum (WEF)	A deliberately designed industrial system that restores or regenerates	2022
United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)	Elimination of waste through the superior design of materials, products, and systems	2022
Circularity Gap Reporting Initiative	Use less, use longer, use again and make clean	2023

Based on the discussion above, it was concluded that the CE is a production and consumption system aimed at promoting the circulation of products and components, maintaining their value for longer or generating new value. The CE concept remains nebulous and lacks a clear, universally accepted definition. Moreover, the ambiguous delineation of its boundaries poses challenges to advancing CE practices within the SDA manufacturing sector. A more nuanced understanding necessitates an exploration of CE applications from the diverse perspectives of various stakeholders.

Circular product design

Numerous studies have emphasized the importance of circular product design (CPD) in the transition to a CE, with proposed frameworks like R-strategies (which involve actions like rethink, reduce, reuse, repair, refurbish, remanufacture, repurpose, recycle, and recover) aiming to enhance circularity by minimizing resource consumption (Morseletto, 2020). R-strategies are named after the ‘re’ prefix of the English language designations of the individual strategies. This prefix originally comes from Latin (meaning ‘again’ or ‘back’) (Mast et al., 2022). R-strategies can impact various aspects, such as the system, product, component, and material levels (Diaz et al., 2022). A range of strategies and frameworks have been proposed based on 3Rs, while 6Rs strategies, 10Rs strategies and frameworks (Morseletto, 2020), and even 60Rs principles have been posited (Uvarova et al., 2023). Both tangible (material, architecture) and intangible (service, business model, ecosystem) aspects have been incorporated (Diaz et al., 2022). R-strategies involve maximizing product integrity, thus enabling the continuous use of a product by the consumer until its eventual disassembly for material recovery and waste recycling. However, further research is essential to examine precisely how R-strategies can improve product integrity. For example, in the case of the repair strategy, designers encounter challenges due to the absence of specific guidelines for its implementation and the need for indicators to assess its effectiveness. Moreover, these claims primarily hinge on theoretical explorations and literature reviews, requiring further empirical validation and examinations of rebound effects, thus adding complications and hazards to the system or product manufacturing.

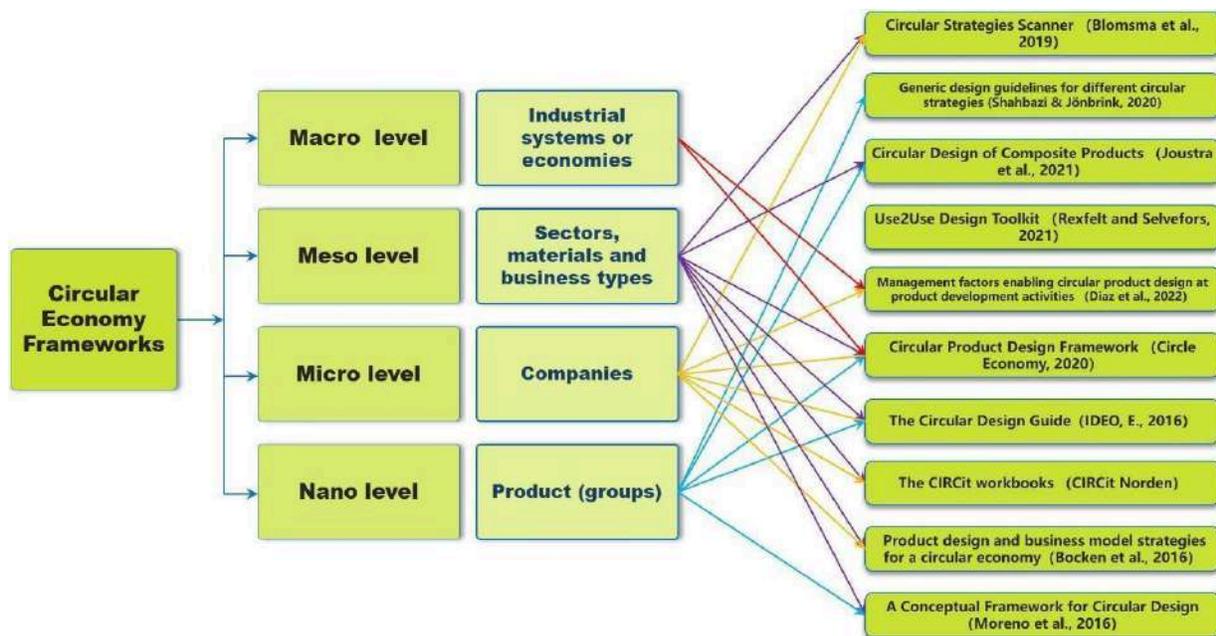


Figure 1. Circular Product Design Frameworks
 (Source: Author's illustration)

The limited literature on CPD guidelines includes work on design for sustainability, such as a circular strategies scanner (Blomsma et al., 2019), a CPD framework for composite products (Joustra et al., 2021); a Use2Use Design Toolkit (Rexfelt & Selvefors, 2021), and CIRCit workbooks. Three dimensions (product material, architecture, and product ecosystem) have been linked to the corresponding R-strategies (Diaz et al., 2022), as illustrated in Figure 1. These CPD frameworks focus on ‘system’ improvement, which is confusing for SDA designers to adopt, especially in product design and

development, and requires more detailed planning. In summary, design for the CE is an upcoming, independent field in the sustainability domain that needs a specific approach and a specific set of competencies and tools. However, many scholars have proposed strategies or CPD methods based on systems, services, products, components, and material levels. The lack of an obvious border between the design for each CE strategy has led to design guideline overlaps, while identical design principles might be used in specific strategies. In general, CPD focuses on product integrity to improve circularity, but more specific product design steps are needed, requiring more actionable guidance and empirical validation. The most effective CE strategies must be identified to enhance the circularity of SDAs in product design processes.

Circular economy barriers

The implementation of CE practices in manufacturing industries is facing numerous challenges. These include a lack of financial capability, insufficient collaboration between stakeholders, a dearth of governmental information, inadequate technical and supply and demand networks, and a shortage of CE expertise (Melati et al., 2021). The hindrances are multifaceted, encompassing environmental, economic, social, technological, and management factors (Tura et al., 2019), all compounded by risk aversion among business leaders (Tan et al., 2022). One example of this is the deficient assessment of an enterprise's progress in realizing circularity. Collectively, these complex challenges impede the widespread adoption of CE practices within the manufacturing sector. Promoting CE practices requires consumer education measures, stakeholder alignment, assured economic benefits, responses to regulatory pressures, and the garnering of government support.

In conclusion, various drivers and barriers must be identified when implementing the CE in manufacturing. These encompass technological, economic, managerial, regulatory, and social factors, with risk aversion, a lack of technical skills, and poor information being notable hindrances. Stakeholder cooperation is regarded as especially crucial for successful CE adoption. Meanwhile, CE drivers include mitigating environmental impacts, addressing resource scarcity, improving business performance, and ensuring effective policy actions. Moreover, these barriers must be overcome through, for example, promotional measures such as providing green education to stakeholders, as well as collaboration and support from multiple stakeholders. Consumers' education, stakeholder alignment, economic benefits, regulatory pressures, and government support are needed to drive CE practices.

Key Points of Departure (POD)

Table 2 (below) summarizes the key results as points of departure (POD), based on the systematic literature review and synthesis process reading related to the topics of small domestic appliance design, the circular economy concept, and circular product design.

Table 2. Key Points of Departure (POD)

POD	Construct Description	POD Results
POD 1	Small Domestic Appliance Design	Designers' circular economy capabilities, knowledge, and experience, and consumer behavior are essential to small domestic appliance design during the design and development phases.
POD 2	Circular Economy Concept	The concept of the circular economy remains nebulous, lacking a clear and universally accepted definition.
POD 3	Circular Product Design	The Circular Product Design focuses on product integrity to improve circularity, but it needs more specific steps for product design, requiring more actionable guidance and empirical validation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study utilizes the "Systematic Literature Review Synthesis Process" (Ibrahim & Mustafa Kamal, 2018) to locate pertinent literature and provide a theoretical foundation for generating research ideas. Employing Ibrahim's (2011) research question (RQ) construct taxonomy technique for identifying subjects, three separate RQ constructs - "Who", "What", and "How" - were identified in developing the main research question. "Who" refers to the elements impacted by the research; "What" refers to the information or knowledge base required to solve the problem; and "How" refers to the research's targeted impact. In this study, the "Who" refers to small domestic appliances design, the "What" refers to the circular economy concept, and the "How" here refers to the circular product design. Figure 2 shows the flowchart of the review methodology.

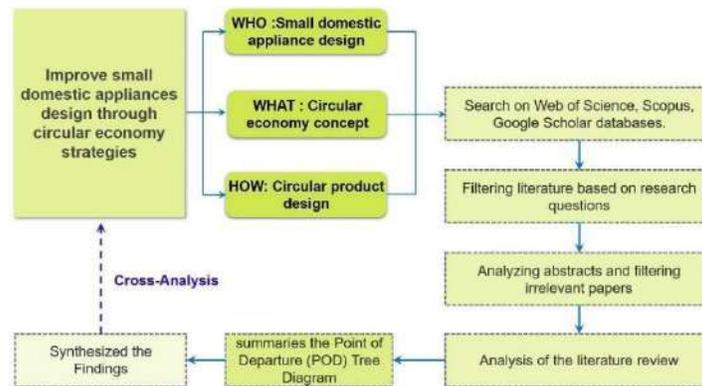


Figure 2: Workflow of the systematic literature review and synthesis process.

The following process phases were followed during this study. Firstly, a comprehensive search for relevant literature was performed using the Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar databases, with keywords connected to the selected RQ constructs, such as product design and development, the circular economy concept, and circular product design. This systematic review produced synthesized summaries of each topic, which were then subjected to additional cross-analysis. Potential approaches were integrated, and prioritization allowed the identification of high-probability solutions with CE strategies for SDA design that could be used by China's appliance manufacturers. Subsequently, the researchers examined the synthesis of small home appliance design, the circular economy concept, and circular product design, thereafter proposing three main points of departure (POD). Ultimately, through a series of cross-analyses, a POD tree diagram showing circular economy strategies for small domestic design was obtained. The POD tree diagram was based on the work of Ibrahim and Mustafa Kamal (2018); shown in Figure 3, the diagram illustrates the key outlines formed. The synthesis process was documented using the EAGLE System (Ibrahim & Mustafa Kamal, 2018).

FINDINGS

The review results informed several conclusions based on the sub-topics of the three POD. These refer to small domestic appliance design, the circular economy concept, and circular product design. The conclusions integrate and prioritize the three synthesized POD. The first specific step was a cross-analysis of the previously generated POD1, POD2, and POD3. POD4 synthesizes information from POD1 and POD2; POD5 synthesizes information from POD2 and POD3; and POD6 synthesizes information from

POD1 and POD3. This process involved comprehensively analyzing POD4, POD5, and POD6. Similarly, POD4 and POD5 were further cross-analyzed to synthesize POD7, and POD5 and POD6 were used to synthesize POD8. POD9, the final theoretical proposition is defined as follows: analyzing the circular economy capabilities, knowledge, and experience of designers to develop an actionable circular product design framework to enhance product integrity in SDA design. Figure 3 depicts the step-by-step inferential process followed.

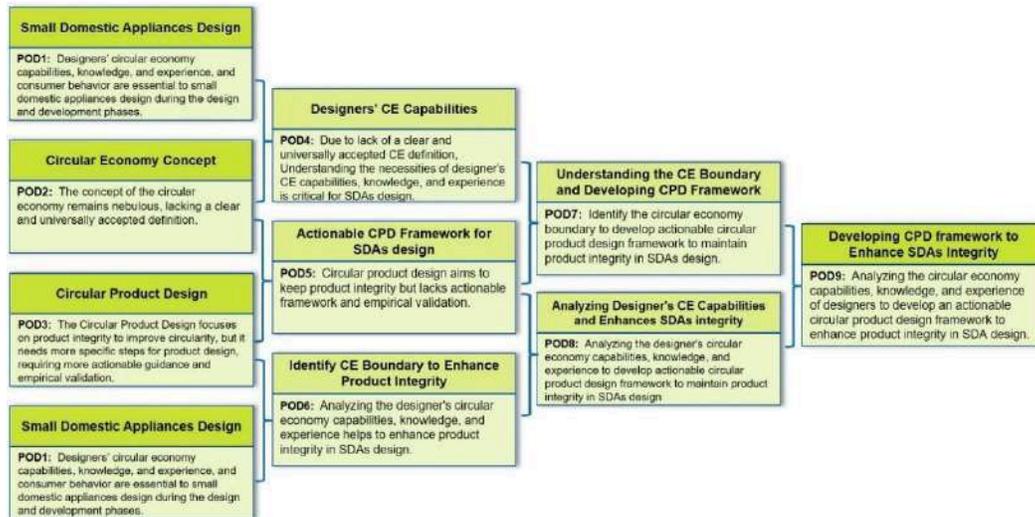


Figure 3. POD tree diagram of CE strategies for SDA design
 (Source: Author's illustration)

Analyze the circular economy capabilities of designers

SDA designers are highly important in shaping a circular future for product design and consumption. They must comprehend entire product life cycles, making critical decisions during the design stage. These might involve choosing environmentally friendly materials; emphasizing recyclability, biodegradability, and low-carbon design; and exploring innovative design techniques. These capabilities include circular design proficiency, material selection expertise, life cycle assessment, modularity design, and innovation integration. Concurrently, a framework should be tuned to the practical skills, knowledge, and experience of designers. The proposed circular product design-small domestic appliance (CPD-SDA) framework aligns with the practical expertise and experience of designers, and it was structured so it could be seamlessly integrated into product design and development processes.

Identify circular economy concept and boundary

The circular economy (CE) lacks a universally accepted definition despite numerous scholarly efforts to provide one, leading to varied interpretations across contexts and disciplines. In different disciplines such as ecology, economics, and management, various definitions of and strategies for the CE have been proposed at the macro, meso, and micro levels, complicating the already expansive scope of the CE. Additionally, most research has been theoretical and conceptual, making it difficult for designers to use it in practice as they require specific competencies, methods, and tools. Effective CE strategies could keep products, components, and materials in the loop for extended periods, preserving the maximum value of products and materials. Pivotal to this exploration are defining and delineating the boundary of the circular economy, as well as elucidating the stages when circular principles should be applied. These

boundaries must be identified so that actionable CPD-SDA frameworks can be developed that maintain product integrity in SDA design. Concurrently, potential rebound effects of the CE are being considered, while the challenges and opportunities associated with transitioning to the CE are being addressed.

Develop an actionable circular product design framework

Academic investigations suggest that enhancing stakeholder collaboration would facilitate product circularity and the transition to the circular economy. Enhancing product integrity, which is related to products, parts, and materials, could extend the lifespan of the economic system, while improving the product integrity of SDAs could minimize their environmental impact. These factors contribute to extending the life cycles and resource efficiency of products, thereby reducing their environmental impact. However, further empirical research is needed to validate the current research, as well as to develop an actionable CPD-SDA framework and methodologies for achieving the CE in the SDA industry. Developing such a framework that prioritizes circularity is a complex and multidisciplinary task that requires collaboration between designers, manufacturers, policymakers, consumers, and other stakeholders. A CPD-SDA framework should apply directly to the stages of product design and development, thus providing reliable support for these industry aspects. This type of comprehensive approach would contribute to enhancing product integrity in the context of the CPD-SDA framework. Figure 4 presents the conceptual CPD-SDA framework.

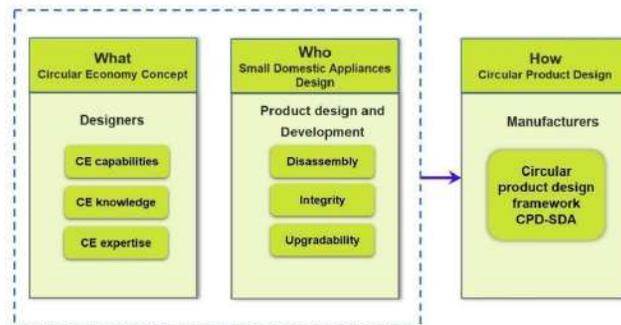


Figure 4. Proposed conceptual circular product design framework for SDA design
(Source: Author's illustration)

Overall, improving design that ensures product integrity can enhance circularity and reduce carbon emissions in manufacturing by enabling better durability, performance, quality, and reliability, all of which preserve product value. Adopting a systematic and holistic approach would enable the development of effective and practical CE strategies for reducing the carbon emissions of China's appliance manufacturers while improving product circularity. Further development is needed of the circular design assessment tools that would assist designers, inventors, innovators, and decision-makers in implementing the identified strategies. Future researchers should explore strategies for fostering positive stakeholder relationships and mitigating the impact of conflicting interests on CPD initiatives. Above all, CPD is a critical component of the CE, focusing on the design approach of product disassembly, integrity, upgradability, and recyclability. CPD emphasizes collaboration between designers, engineers, and other stakeholders to ensure the successful implementation of CE strategies. Concurrently, the CPD frameworks need more specific product design steps, for which more actionable guidance is required.

CONCLUSION

This paper systematically reviews and synthesizes the small domestic design and circular economy; discusses the design characteristics of SDAs, as well as the definition and boundaries of the CE; and analyzes the existing CPD frameworks. The blurred boundaries and lack of a widely accepted definition of the CE increase the complexity of formulating a CPD-SDA framework. No clear line exists between the design for each circular strategy and the similarities between circular strategies, making it difficult for SDA designers to implement these in the product design and development stages. Moreover, the current CE strategies and CPD frameworks need more empirical research and enhanced applicability.

Enhancing SDA circularity in terms of disassembly, upgradability, and integrity with the CE strategies, as well as changing consumer behavior, could ensure that products, components, and materials are utilized for extended periods and that carbon emissions are reduced. SDA designers could incorporate a CPD framework into the early stages of SDA design, thus enhancing product integrity. This review of SDA design reveals that various CE strategies could be applied to maintain product, component, and material continuity over extended periods. Product circularity can be improved by enhancing product integrity as much as possible during SDA design, as well as maintaining the integrity of products, components, and materials to extend their service time. Furthermore, material selection, structural design, waste minimization, zero toxic waste, and emissions should be considered during a product's concept development and system design stages. Identifying the CE capabilities, knowledge, and experience of designers is critical to developing an actionable CPD-SDA framework.

It is essential to understand the application of CE methods during the SDA design process and the stakeholders involved in SDA development. It is also necessary to comprehend the complex interplay between consumer behavior, CE capabilities, and the knowledge and expertise of designers working in the SDA industry. Therefore, actionable CPD-SDA guidance needs to be developed to maintain product integrity in SDA design, based on the actual skills and knowledge characteristics of SDA designers. This research could be applied in SDA manufacturing and academia so that SDA industry stakeholders can identify their circular economy opportunities and activities, understand the various business processes, and then develop optimal CE practices. This would also support the reduction of e-waste and carbon emissions in China and worldwide. Although this study is limited by the subjectivity inherent in keyword screening and sample selection, it offers valuable insights for manufacturers and designers eager to progress toward circular strategies in product design and development. Future researchers should aim to deepen the theoretical explorations of design strategies that enhance product circularity.

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The Catalytic Role of Soft Cities in Urban Development Systems

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ABSTRACT

In the context of Industry 4.0, the development of global cities has shifted from large-scale industrialization to intelligent and sustainable development. Contemporary urban researchers classify urban systems into three categories: hard cities, soft cities, and resilient cities. A hard city refers to the physical framework and infrastructure of urban space, while a soft city encompasses aspects of urban life such as art, culture, civilization, aesthetics, and humanities. On the other hand, resilient cities reflect the necessary plasticity for sustainable development. This article employs case study methods and comparative studies to analyse the positive impact of the development of soft city systems on hard and resilient cities. Through analysis, the following conclusions can be drawn. The development of soft cities has promoted the transformation of physical space planning and design in hard cities, promoted the renewal of resilient cities, and accelerated the integration of soft and hard cities, laying a foundation for the sustainable development of the entire city.

Keywords: *Soft cities, catalyst, urban development*

INTRODUCTION

The world's urban population is rapidly increasing, and urbanisation processes in countries around the world are accelerating at a swift pace. The urban development departments of various countries have shifted their focus to the construction of spiritual spaces within cities. Compared to the construction of physical urban spaces, the spiritual space of a city shapes its soul. How to make the soul of a city interesting is a topic of interest to every urban scholar. According to the chairman of the London City Research Centre, the development and improvement of soft city systems is capable of promoting the coordination and integration of physical and spiritual spaces in contemporary cities (Ma, 2021), . Through the study of the article, explore the positive effects of different types of public art in the development of

soft cities, and explore the significance of the integration and symbiosis of soft cities, hard cities, and resilient cities.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study of soft cities has been extensively researched by urban scholars, architects, and public artists in both China and Europe. In 2017, Professor Wang Zhong from the China Central Academy of Fine Arts introduced the concept of "soft cities" in his speech titled *Art Leading Urban Innovation*. Wang (2017) believes that "soft cities focus more on the soul of the city, and when it comes to the soul of the city, art undoubtedly plays a spiritual role." Professor Wu (2018) from the Communication University of China argues that the core of soft city culture lies in inheriting urban memory, activating urban vitality, changing urban quality, and enhancing people's happiness. Chinese urban scholar Tai Jie (2016) believes that the significance of constructing an art city lies in the integration of art and the city, making the urban art space system flexible and variable.

In 1999, the UK's Urban Task Force, led by renowned architect Lord Richard Rogers, completed a research report titled *Towards an Urban Renaissance*, also known as the *Urban Yellow Book*. The core content of the report focuses on how to maintain urban sustainability under the dominance of culture, and it encompasses the characteristics of a soft city system. This article draws on the perspectives of the three scholars mentioned above, but primarily analyses the positive effects of the development of soft city systems on urban development through case studies of public art in soft cities.

METHODOLOGY

As mentioned above, this paper is a comprehensive academic study that thoroughly reviewed a large amount of literature. It collected extensive background data to examine the current development status of the soft city and to demonstrate the logic and rationality of the integration of soft cities with hard cities and resilient cities, thereby laying a foundation for achieving the research objectives of this article.

Through the comparative analysis of typical public art cases in different countries around the world, this method aims to demonstrate the value and significance of public art as the spiritual carrier of the soft city. In conducting this research project, the researcher primarily employed the comparative research method. Firstly, with a clear comparative objective in mind, the researcher selected typical cases as the focus of this study. These cases originate from diverse countries and regions, representing distinct cultures.

The purpose of the comparison is multifaceted: to uncover the commonalities and differences among these public art pieces, evaluate the effectiveness of different design or implementation strategies, explore the adaptability of public art in varying environments, and delve into their roles in the development of soft cities. Based on practical considerations, the researcher identifies the comparative dimensions or criteria. These encompass artistic form, creative concept, social impact, audience interaction, funding investment, geographical location, and cultural background, among others.

For each selected public art case, the researcher gathers relevant data and information to facilitate subsequent comparative analysis. This data encompasses artist profiles, work descriptions, implementation processes, audience feedback, media coverage, and social impact assessments. The researcher then proceeds to organise and analyse these public art cases. This involves quantitatively or qualitatively assessing each case's performance across the selected dimensions and employing appropriate statistical methods or theoretical frameworks to compare the differences and similarities among different cases.

In the results presentation and discussion phase, the researcher conveys the outcomes of the comparative analysis in written form and engages in an in-depth examination and interpretation of the findings. During the inference process, given the specificity of the research objects, the researcher refers to expert opinions and literature reviews to enhance the reliability and persuasiveness of the conclusions. By further contrasting the research outcomes with existing research achievements, the researcher validates and deepens the conclusions, analysing the reasons behind the differences among cases, elucidating the position of public art in soft cities, and exploring the significance of soft city development for contemporary urbanisation.

ANALYSIS

The birth of "Soft city".

In April 1919, the Bauhaus School was founded in Weimar, Germany. Despite its short existence of only 14 years due to various reasons such as war and politics, the core philosophy of Bauhaus has continued to influence architecture until today. The "internationalism" architectural design concept and style of Bauhaus have gained worldwide popularity, directly impacting the process of global urbanisation.

In 1937, the first and third directors of the Bauhaus School, Hannes Meyer and Ludwig Mies van der Rohe, respectively, visited the United States and introduced the Bauhaus architectural design principles. Subsequently, these ideas spread worldwide. In particular, Mies van der Rohe's promotion of the Chicago skyscraper model marked a new beginning in urban planning in the United States, which was later emulated by many countries around the world. Additionally, Bauhaus students also played a significant role in promoting Bauhaus-style architecture worldwide. For example, the establishment of the White City in Tel Aviv, Israel in the 1930s was influenced by a group of Bauhaus graduates who visited Israel and spread the Bauhaus architectural style in Tel Aviv. Among them were students of Hans Meyer, Le Corbusier, and Erich Mendelsohn. Not only that, but this Bauhaus architectural model and style have also influenced Asian countries such as South Korea, Japan, Singapore and the cities in China such as Shanghai, Beijing and Hong Kong.

As the modernist architectural complexes continue to be constructed, new postmodernist architecture is emerging in rebellion. The process of global urbanisation is accelerating at an even faster pace in the 21st century. While humans are constructing physical and hard spaces in cities, developed countries such as the United States and some European countries are facing the dilemma of "urban malaise," such as gentrification and hollowing out of cities. Of course, such problems also exist in cities in Asia, the Americas, and Africa. In this historical period, soft cities have emerged as a remedy for various problems in contemporary urban development. In other words, the birth of soft cities is a product of the highly developed global urbanisation in the 21st century.

The Definition of Soft City

The concept of soft city was formally introduced by the Dutch firm, Van Gellecum in their publication titled *Soft City: Building Density for Everyday Life*, authored by renowned Danish urban planner David Sim and published on August 20, 2019. This book closely aligns with the subject matter of my research and describes how, in the context of rigid urban planning and prioritisation of physical space, the "soft" elements of soft cities can be utilised to enhance the well-being, quality of life, and future aspirations of urban residents (Sim, 2019). However at the 2016 Beijing International Design Week, Ma (2021) explained in Chinese cultural terms what "soft cities" and "hard cities" are through the project "Exploring the possibility of urban renewal and regeneration through the practice of Qinglong Hutong." Cities, being at the forefront and serving as living places for human civilization, not only bring joy to people but, more importantly, provide a sense of security. The two factors of 'safety and happiness' have been defined by Aristotle as the purpose and significance of city (Lefebvre, 2008).

Undoubtedly, soft cities are built upon the foundation of physical hard cities. The physical aspects of a city provide us with buildings, urban transportation systems, and more. Soft cities, on the other hand, encompass the cultural, historical, artistic, customs, traditions, and heritage elements. These elements are not abstract but exist in the form of urban activities, public art, and aesthetic education. They can provide much-needed spiritual comfort to urban residents navigating through high-rise buildings and crowded traffic.

Additionally, soft urban design has a strong artistic creation attribute, emphasising the integration of human sensory experiences to establish a city image and atmosphere that is structurally cohesive and easily recognizable (Guo & Qin, 2002).

The Spiritual Vehicles of Soft Cities

As mentioned earlier, the definition and characteristics of soft cities have been discussed. The value of soft cities is realised through their spiritual carriers, which serve as both the foundation and the soul of soft cities. These spiritual carriers can be materialised through urban public art or manifested in the form of process-driven urban activities. Wu (2018) believes that soft city culture integrates deep cultural exploration with the innovative expression of art, infiltrating urban construction and development from six aspects: art brand, art space, art facilities, art industry, art activities, and art policies. This approach aims to inherit urban memory, revitalise urban life, enhance the quality of the city, and elevate people's sense of happiness.

Urban Public Art

Strictly speaking, public art is not solely a product of urban civilization. It can also be found in many rural areas, wilderness, and deserts. However, in order to maximise its public nature, urban spaces serve as excellent vehicles for public art. In a broad sense, public art refers to the art that exists in public spaces and places, such as sculptures, murals, installations, and photography within these spaces.. Sun (2022), a renowned Chinese theorist and practitioner of public art, mentioned in his book *Concepts and Methods of Public Art* that, firstly, the premise of public art is civic society and public space, which emerged only after modern times. Secondly, public art is a contemporary cultural form, and its emergence is directly related to the rise of contemporary popular culture. Thirdly, the social function of public art is reflected in maximising public participation and interaction, which is highly consistent with the changes in contemporary cultural and artistic values. Lastly, from the perspective of the art system, due to its close relationship with society and the public, public art can be considered an institutionalised art form .

As a spiritual embodiment of the soft city, how can public art in the city realise its value? In his book *The Third Way: The Renewal of Social Democracy*, British sociologist Giddens (1998) stated, "The overall goal of the politics of the Third Way should aim to assist citizens in navigating the major transformations of our time, including globalisation, the transformation of personal life, and our relationship with nature."

In conclusion, urban public art is not just about beautifying and decorating urban spaces but serves as a medium that enhances the individual value of urban residents in the context of contemporary culture and integrates their individual worth with the places they live. With this mindset and approach, public art becomes a beacon that illuminates urban life, bringing brightness and hope to urban spaces, and fostering the vitality and sustainable development of the city .

Analysis of Sculptural Urban Public Art Case Studies

‘Cloud Gate’

Cloud Gate is a public art sculpture located in Millennium Park in Chicago, USA. It was designed by British-Indian artist Anish Kapoor and is named "Cloud Gate" because its shape resembles a bean, symbolising the gateway to Chicago.

Cloud Gate is made up of 168 stainless steel plates that are assembled, welded, and polished to create a seamless, smooth surface. The craftsmanship is nearly perfect, giving the sculpture the appearance of a misplaced extraterrestrial bean or a transparent water droplet. Standing at 9 metres tall, the sculpture features an arched entrance that allows visitors to walk into it. As they approach the sculpture, they can also appreciate the artwork in its entirety, as its perfect form, craftsmanship, and design have garnered international acclaim.

However, the uniqueness of Cloud Gate extends beyond its form and craftsmanship. The entire public art piece resembles a three-dimensional funhouse mirror, reflecting both the urban landscape and the greenery of the park on its curved stainless-steel surface. Three-quarters of its exterior reflects the sky, while also reflecting the skyscrapers of Chicago and the figures of visitors. When people stand in the appropriate position in front of Cloud Gate, their reflections overlap and appear to flow like liquid, adding vitality and energy to the entire park plaza.



Figure 1. Cloud Gate Public Art

(Source: https://www.sohu.com/a/162294264_743985, 2017)

‘1.8’ at Oxford Circus in London

If Anish Kapoor's *Cloud Gate* public art piece represents the fusion of humans, cities, and nature, the American public artist Janet Echelman creates a new space in the sky above cities. She creates a paradise that belongs to humanity, where the sky, clouds, and the city come together. As the artist herself said, "The sky of nature is the canvas of my artwork, because my art is born and exists outdoors, breathing the fresh air like we do (Echelman, 2017). Especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, it provides a place for people to share authentic experiences while staying safe."

Janet Echelman's public art creations primarily use fishing nets as the main material, along with lighting equipment, cables, and other auxiliary materials. Her creative team consists of a diverse group of experts, including artists, scientists, software engineers, textile developers, landscape lighting designers, urban planners, architects, structural engineers, aerospace engineers, and data computing engineers.

In 2016, Janet Echelman's team created the famous public art piece "1.8" at Oxford Circus in London. This artwork not only emphasises the relationship between the city and nature in a novel way, but also offers the public the opportunity to interact with it. People can use their smartphones to select colours and patterns for the artwork and even create mesmerising ripples by sliding their fingers. This remarkable piece of art allows local residents and visitors to open their hearts and freely and joyfully spend time in the city square, enjoying rare comfort and happiness.



Figure 2. Public art named 1.8
(Source: <https://zhuanlan.zhihu.com/p/33923000>, 2018)

A Day in the Life of Shenzhen People

In Shenzhen, China, there is a famous public art case worth exploring and analysing, and this public art piece is called *A Day of Shenzhen People*. It was planned, designed, and created by the Shenzhen Sculpture Academy. The sculpture group and relief wall are located in the southern residential area of the Yuanling Community in Shenzhen, China. It is enclosed by Hongli Road, Yuanling San Road, and Yuanling East Road, covering an area of 6487 square metres. Holding significant influence not only within China but also in the global public art community.

This public art installation showcases the social life and events related to the social life of various industries and social classes in the city of Shenzhen on November 29, 1999. The artwork consists of a group of realistic statues and graphic reliefs that vividly depict the diverse range of individuals in the city, including high school students, job seekers, bank employees, elderly people doing morning exercises, janitors, insurance agents, public servants, stock investors, doctors, children, women holding dogs, and foreign software engineers.

Each sculpture is a replica of a real person who served as a model, and they are made of bronze, meticulously crafted to be lifelike. Beside each statue, there is a plaque that displays the person's real name, age, occupation, place of origin, and when they arrived in Shenzhen, providing personal information about each individual. The background of the group sculpture consists of several differently sized black polished granite reliefs, which were computer-carved and duplicated. The reliefs mainly depict the life details of "that day," such as the layout of the Shenzhen Special Zone Daily newspaper, the weather forecast, air quality report, stock market trends, prices of agricultural and sideline products, TV

program schedule, Chinese football league results, foreign exchange rates, as well as a map of Shenzhen, etc. This is the second part of the content of the main sculpture of "A Day in the Life of Shenzhen People." The theme of this sculpture strongly aligns with the goal of public art—serving the masses in civic society. The sculpture of each ordinary citizen enables the residents to search for their own reflections in the artwork, filling the modern metropolis with warmth. Through the artwork itself, the behaviour, language, and art of the city are preserved, giving it the function of recording urban history.



Figure 3. Public Art of “A Day in the Life of Shenzhen People”
(Source: https://news.sohu.com/a/579260698_121123778, 2022)

Activity-based Urban Public Art Analysis

According to Liu et al. (2011) the concept of art cities is to improve human's ability to regulate, restore, maintain, and grow urban culture and civilization systems. This is done by integrating people, culture, environment, and art, and achieving mutual benefit and symbiosis. Art activities are one of the effective ways to make cities full of vitality

Comprehensive Category: Edinburgh International Arts Festival

The Edinburgh International Arts Festival was founded in 1947 and is the oldest and largest arts festival in the world. It invites top professionals and talented newcomers from various fields such as music, dance, and theatre to participate. The annual international arts festival takes place in Edinburgh, United Kingdom, in August. It is a comprehensive festival that encompasses music, theatre, dance, and visual arts. It attracts a large number of tourists and is considered one of the world's top five arts festivals. During this grand artistic event, Edinburgh not only benefits from an economic revenue of 20 million pounds but also provides 4,000 job opportunities for its residents. Additionally, cultural squares, the Scottish National Gallery, and the Scottish Royal Museum in Edinburgh showcase and accelerate updates of exhibitions during the festival to present a more vibrant city culture and exhibits to tourists. The author believes that public participation in art festivals has brought positive development to the city's economy, culture, activities, and the emotions of residents.



Figure 4. The Edinburgh International Arts Festival

(Source: <https://news.cri.cn/2022-09-06/2929f612-dee0-809a-730d-bfe0cd3cd08c.html>, 2022)

Art Category: "Infecting the City" Cape Town Public Art Festival, Münster Sculpture Festival

In the theme slogan of the Cape Town Public Art Festival, it is evident that the festival is closely connected to the city. Since its inception in 2007, the festival has adopted the slogan "Infecting the City" and has attracted numerous artists and the public. The festival showcases a wide range of creative and exhibition formats, including performance art, public art installations, and performing arts. The aim of the festival is to actively engage the public in public activities and often presents challenging, innovative perspectives on political, racial, and gender issues.

Although the theme of the Cape Town Public Art Festival is somewhat linked to current events, during the week-long event, various forms of art such as performances, music, dance, theatre, visual arts, installations, and other forms of art migrate from theatres and galleries to public spaces in the central business district of Cape Town. These artworks are displayed in squares, street corners, parks, and other locations, offering free displays for the citizens and striving to involve the widest range of people possible to share the inspiration and creativity that art brings. The Cape Town Public Art Festival not only fosters a sense of pride among Capetonians for their city but also prompts them to reflect on urban development and the concept of the "city of tomorrow."



Figure 5. Cape Town Public Art Festival

(Source: https://www.d-arts.cn/article/article_info/key/MTE5ODczNDczNDiEz4msr6mgcw.html, 2019)

The Münster Sculpture Festival and the Cape Town Public Art Festival have some differences. The Münster Sculpture Festival is solely dedicated to the dialogue between public sculpture works and the city. This art event, related to public art, started in 1977 and was founded by Kasper König, a German. It enjoys a worldwide reputation.

The theme of the exhibition, City Public Art Program, has been in use since its creation in 1977. Artists from around the world use the artistic language of contemporary sculpture to explore and analyse the impact of outdoor sculpture works on physical space. They also reflect on the connections between public art, the city, city residents, and nature. Moreover, the Münster Sculpture Festival also provides forward-thinking considerations for the city's development. Many artists participating in the sculpture festival envision future spaces and propose thoughts on future human life through their art.

Throughout its development, the Münster Sculpture Festival has not only used public art works to awaken people's attention to future life and future cities but the artworks themselves have also become a unique landscape of Münster. They have even become the city's symbols and distinctive geographic landmarks.



Figure 6. Münster Sculpture Festival

(Source: https://www.sohu.com/a/164070823_99928580, 2017)

Music Category: Primavera Sound Festival in Spain

The Primavera Sound Festival takes place every year at the end of May and beginning of June in Barcelona, the second-largest city in Spain. Many famous bands from around the world such as Lou Reed, Motorhead, The White Stripes, Neil Young, The Cure, and Jamiroquai participate in this music festival. The festival creates an atmosphere that permeates the entire city. It not only features melodic music, live performances by bands, energetic dancing, and enthusiastic activities by the audience but also brings about a sense of longing for a better life and anticipation for the future for the city's residents and spectators. Additionally, the lighting prepared for the festival allows the people in Barcelona to see their city and streets in a whole new way, sparking thoughts on the development, planning, and evolution of future spaces in the city.



Figure 7. Primavera Sound Festival

(Source: <https://www.smalloranges.net/primavera-sound-barcelona-2022/>, 2022)

FINDINGS

Through the analysis of public art and urban activities, which symbolise the carriers of the soft city spirit, it can be understood that a soft city increases urban vitality through art or artistic activities, shapes the city's brand, records the city's history, and encourages residents to actively care for their living space. This brings a sense of honour and pride to the city's residents. Moreover, the soft city also has a unique catalytic function.

The Chinese scholar Lu (2017) compared the role of the soft city system in the development process of the entire urban system to the "catfish effect." This term originally described how catfish, by agitating the environment for their smaller fish prey, also invigorate the survival instincts of these fish. Similarly, in the context of urban development, the catfish effect represents how the growth of soft cities both spurs and complements the advancement of "hard cities" and "resilient cities." The convergence of these three city types aims to foster a harmonious and stable urban ecological civilization.

Promoting the transformation of physical space planning and design in hard cities

In the preceding sections of the article, the author has discussed the concept and significance of hard cities. The physical space of hard cities provides residents with the necessary foundations for survival. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, human needs progress from basic physiological needs to self-actualization needs (Maslow, 1943). The development of human urban civilization has spanned a long period of time. Whether it be the ancient city of Memphis in Egypt, the cities of Mesopotamia in Iraq, or the ancient cities of the Shang Dynasty in the Yellow River Basin of China, all serve as witnesses to the dialogue and integration between humans and cities. In his book *London: The Biography*, British writer Peter Ackroyd (2016) writes, "London is a human body, a strange and remarkable form. This image can be traced back to the image of the city god, a mysterious body with the head of Jesus Christ and the rest made up of citizens. London is also imagined as a young man, stretching out his arms in a gesture of liberation. This image, though derived from a Roman bronze statue, vividly depicts a city with grand ambitions and an ever-present spirit of exploration and confidence. The phrase 'London's heart beats warmly' may find its validation here. The city's streets and alleys resemble tiny blood vessels, while its parks are like vital organs. In the autumn mist and rain, the stones and pebbles of the old streets glisten like blood flowing. While this passage metaphorically portrays the city as a living being, it emphasises that a truly warm-hearted city has both spirit and soul."

The development of a city is similar to the growth of a person. The spiritual well-being of individuals can enhance their physical immunity and promote overall health. In modern hard cities, the physical space is generally composed of existing buildings, transportation networks, as well as continuously updated and reconstructed structures and roadways. Almost every modern city is a reconstructed historical narrative. In the process of urban renewal and reconstruction, the core elements of a soft city play a determining role in shaping the city's spatial structure. Firstly, the core ideology of a soft city determines the scale and direction of physical space renewal. The historical and cultural aspects, as well as urban customs and habits, influence the construction of physical space in hard cities. Whether a city's physical space is entirely modernised or blends modern and traditional elements depends on the core elements of a soft city. Moreover, the creation of a city's skyline is closely related to these elements. Taking the ancient city of Xi'an in China as an example, thirteen dynasties had their capital there. Since the acceleration of urbanisation in China, Xi'an has been constructing high-rise buildings. The original low-rise buildings in the city, such as the Bell Tower and Drum Tower, city walls, and the Big Wild Goose Pagoda, are prominent features of the city's skyline and iconic landmarks. However, the construction of mid-rise and high-rise buildings has disrupted the traditional city skyline and obstructed visual corridors. From this perspective, the core elements of a soft city should guide and correct the creation of physical space in hard cities.

Promoting the regeneration and sustainable development of resilient cities

It is important to ensure their adaptability and ability to withstand environmental changes, climate variations, natural disasters, and the spread of infectious diseases within an industrialised context. Chinese urban scholar Tai Jie (2016) believes that constructing an art city is significant because it allows for direct interaction between art and urban form. Art is not only a "non-standard" tool for improving the quality of urban space but also influences urban daily life behaviour, creating an urban art space system full of elasticity and variability. Resilient cities serve as the foundation for creating a sense of security for urban residents, which is a fundamental requirement for each individual. Simply constructing buildings and solidifying their foundations does not guarantee a sense of security for a city. It is a collective effort that involves various interconnected aspects of the urban system. Guided by the principles of a soft city, the values and humanistic ideas of a city will influence the planning processes, such as determining the city's scale, expansion progress, and rate. They will also impact the division of residential, commercial, and industrial areas, and even influence the construction of social and public healthcare buildings within the city. The global outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020 has served as a warning for the need to prioritise the construction of public healthcare facilities within urban development systems. Every resilient city, focused on health and sustainable development, should find answers within the core principle of a soft city - the concept of putting people first. This involves integrating public healthcare buildings with preventive and treatment functions into the physical planning of the city.

Promoting the integration and development of soft cities and hard cities

From the perspective of dialectical materialism, the world is a constantly evolving and changing whole, which is composed of contradictions and opposites. In the process of urban development, soft cities and hard cities are also a combination of opposites and unity. Hard cities encompass the physical aspects of cities such as buildings, public transportation, and infrastructure, which are purely material forms. On the other hand, soft cities consist of elements like history, culture, art, and philosophy. Soft cities are predominantly shaped by ideology, but they are not purely ideological. Within the soft city system, art, for example, is a material attribute, as seen in public art that includes architecture, sculptures, paintings, installations, and urban events. How to transform from a functional city to a humanistic one is a question that our urban builders should prioritise today (Wang, 2016, p.28). Through the analysis of samples from the world's urban development systems, it can be concluded that soft cities and hard cities are inseparable. The ideological aspect of soft cities changes with the development of the times, directly influencing the planning and implementation of hard city construction. This ideology promotes the formation of a combination of healthy, eco-friendly, and safe cities. As human civilization advances, the development of soft cities will exert a strong attraction, drawing hard cities towards them and forming a harmonious and intelligent city that modern civilization requires.

CONCLUSION

The development of cities hinges on urban design, which plays an essential role in constructing "rationality" and "legitimacy" for the behaviour of urban governments in their development efforts, ultimately contributing to the smooth operation of the development process (Yang, 2016). However, urban development is a comprehensive process. This article mentions the concept of the catfish effect, originally used to describe how catfish disturb their environment to enhance the survival skills of other fish. To some extent, this concept is not entirely appropriate when discussing soft cities. The development of soft cities does not create a sense of crisis for hard cities or resilient cities. Instead, it acts as a catalyst, organically integrating soft cities, hard cities, and resilient cities as a whole. Therefore, in the urban development process, it is crucial to prioritise and strengthen the development and renewal of the soft city system. A well-functioning soft city system can guide and lead the construction of hard cities and resilient cities, ensuring the continuous, healthy, and stable development of the entire urban system. Ultimately, this will create a healthy and intelligent city for human civilization.

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Batik Blocks: Alternative Use of Recycled Mechanical Fastener Nut Materials

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ABSTRACT

Batik blocks are tools used by batik makers to apply and shape pattern designs on fabric. The production of batik patterns is usually done using resist techniques such as batik blocks, batik canting, and batik screens. Batik blocks are among the earliest forms of batik introduced and produced in Malaysia. This study aims to apply recycled mechanical fastener nuts material as an alternative to batik blocks. The primary focus is on producing blocks using recycled fastener nuts material in the making of batik blocks. The block production process follows the same method as traditional copper blocks but uses fastener nuts as a new alternative material. The aim of exploring this new material aims to assess the potential of recycled mechanical fastener nuts material for reuse. This can provide ideas and innovation to the batik industry enriching motifs and pattern designs in Malaysia, as well as helping to find the identity of

Malaysian batik. Data was collected from observations and the gathering of recycled mechanical fastener nut materials from vehicle and motorcycle workshops. Several block production processes were conducted in stages. The research findings indicate that mechanical fastener nuts have the potential to be used as batik blocks. Hopefully, this research can assist batik entrepreneurs, especially the younger generation, in promoting the batik industry by exploring more material uses in block production.

Keywords: *Alternative Blocks Batik, Recycled materials, Mechanical fasteners nut*

Blok Batik: Alternatif Penggunaan Bahan Kitar Semula Pengikat Mekanikal Nat

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**Penulis ini terlibat sepenuhnya dalam artikel ini*

ABSTRAK

Blok batik adalah alat yang digunakan oleh pembatik untuk menerap dan membentuk reka corak pada kain. Kaedah penghasilan corak batik biasanya dilakukan menggunakan teknik resis seperti batik blok, batik canting dan batik skrin. Batik blok merupakan antara batik yang terawal yang diperkenalkan dan dihasilkan di Malaysia. Kajian ini adalah untuk mengaplikasi bahan terpakai pengikat mekanikal nat sebagai alternatif blok batik. Fokus utama adalah penghasilan blok dengan menggunakan bahan terpakai nat dalam pembuatan blok batik. Proses penghasilan blok adalah mengikut kaedah yang sama seperti blok tembaga konvensional, namun menggunakan nat sebagai bahan alternatif baru. Eksplorasi bahan baru ini adalah untuk melihat potensi bahan terbuang pengikat mekanikal nat untuk diguna pakai semula. Ini dapat memberi idea dan inovasi kepada industri batik dalam memperkaya motif dan reka corak di Malaysia, serta membantu mencari identiti batik Malaysia. Data dikumpulkan daripada pemerhatian dan pengumpulan bahan terpakai pengikat mekanikal nat dari bengkel kenderaan dan motosikal. Beberapa proses penghasilan blok telah dilaksanakan secara berperingkat. Hasil kajian menunjukkan pengikat mekanikal nat berpotensi dijadikan blok batik. Harapannya, kajian ini dapat membantu usahawan batik terutamanya golongan muda untuk menggalakkan industri batik dengan menerokai lebih banyak penggunaan bahan dalam penghasilan blok.

Kata kunci: *Alternatif blok batik, Bahan kitar semula, Pengikat mekanikal nat*

PENGENALAN

Memelihara alam sekitar merupakan tanggungjawab bersama, jika sifat ini menjadi perhatian semua individu maka proses pembuangan sisa terpakai dapat diuruskan dengan baik. Salah satu matlamat *Sustainable Development Goals* (SDG) adalah untuk memelihara sumber asli seperti tanah, air, udara dan lain-lain. Menurut R Syamwil (2021) bentuk bahan buangan dikelaskan kepada pepejal, cecair dan bentuk gas. Ia juga melibatkan usaha pemuliharaan yang mengandungi konsep 5R (*Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, Replace, Replant*) iaitu, kurangkan, guna semula, kitar semula, ganti dan tanam semula. Penyelidik memilih bahan terpakai daripada bengkel khususnya pengikat mekanikal nat untuk dijadikan blok batik. Ini kerana bahan terpakai ini tidak dapat digunakan dibengkel namun masih kekal cantik pada bentuk luaran. Bahan ini berpotensi direka bentuk menjadi bahan guna semula iaitu blok batik.

Batik merupakan salah satu tekstil kraftangan tradisional yang terkenal di Malaysia. Individu yang bertanggungjawab membawa batik ke Tanah Melayu adalah Haji Che Su bin Ishak dari Kelantan. Terdapat kepelbagaian produk kraf batik yang telah dihasilkan bertujuan menarik lebih ramai penggemar batik dalam menggayakan batik sebagai pakaian harian. Seni batik bukan sahaja terdapat pada pakaian tetapi terdapat juga pada kraftangan lain seperti perhiasan dalaman dan luaran, cenderamata serta perhiasan diri. Terdapat pelbagai alternatif yang telah dibuat untuk menghasilkan corak batik yang menjadi faktor utama pemilihan semasa memperagakan batik. Proses pembuatan dan penyediaan blok batik sebelum bahan logam adalah bermula dengan bahan semulajadi seperti umbuk pisang dan ukiran motif pada ubi kentang. Terdapat pelbagai usaha untuk menggantikan tembaga dengan bahan lain seperti kayu, kertas kadbod dan aluminium. Usaha-usaha yang dilakukan ini bertujuan mempelbagaikan inovasi yang dapat menjana lebih banyak reka corak batik di Malaysia. Blok batik dapat dibentuk dan dihasilkan dengan menggabungkan ciri-ciri yang ada pada logam pengikat mekanikal nat. Blok batik perlu diberikan nafas baru seiring dengan perkembangan teknologi semasa.

Terdapat pelbagai alternatif yang telah dijalankan bertujuan memberikan pilihan kepada generasi muda untuk terus memupuk minat dalam menceburi bidang batik. Kreativiti diperlukan untuk mendapatkan hasil yang lebih halus, tepat dan kemas. Menurut Torrance (1988) definisi kreativiti sukar diungkapkan dalam bentuk perkataan malah ia melibatkan setiap deria yang dimiliki oleh manusia. Menurut beliau lagi, kreativiti didefinisikan sebagai proses dalam menyelesaikan sesuatu masalah yang tidak pasti dengan menghuraikan, menyunting dan menganalisis. Menurut Norlelawaty (2014). Penggunaan bahan logam dalam proses pembuatan blok batik memerlukan individu yang berkemahiran tinggi dalam mengendalikan bahan logam di samping mempunyai ilmu kesenian yang mendalam bagi memvisualisasikan setiap corak batik kepada blok kerana ia melibatkan proses yang agak rumit. Batik dapat dihasilkan dengan pelbagai usaha, tidak terkecuali semua bahan yang berpotensi yang ada di sekeliling kita. Menurut Mohd Azhar Samin (2018) alatan alternatif berasaskan kegunaan harian seperti berus periuk, span dan kertas renyuk juga boleh digunakan dalam menerap lilin bagi menghasilkan reka corak batik khususnya yang berkonsepkan abstrak.

KAJIAN LITERATUR

Bahan Kitar Semula Pengikat Mekanikal Nat

Bahan kitar semula adalah bahan yang telah digunakan ataupun bahan yang boleh diguna semula. Bahan terpakai juga adalah bahan yang telah diubahsuai kepada sesuatu produk yang baru dan lebih baru. Definisi menurut Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka kitar semula adalah kaedah atau teknik memproses bahan seperti tin, botol dan kertas yang telah digunakan supaya dapat digunakan semula.

Secara zahirnya sampah adalah sisa yang terhasil daripada aktiviti seharian manusia. Sampah dianggap sesuatu yang tidak berguna, namun jika diuruskan dengan lestari ia mampu menjadi bahan yang boleh digunakan semula untuk pelbagai tujuan dan lebih mempunyai nilai, jika digunakan kena pada tempatnya tersendiri. Penggunaan semula bahan terpakai ini merupakan salah satu usaha dalam membantu, melindungi dan memulihara alam sekitar. Bahan logam pengikat mekanikal nat terpakai mempunyai nilai seni estetika yang tersendiri. Nat ini berpotensi dijadikan blok batik kerana mempunyai bentuk yang menarik dan logam yang boleh menyerap lilin. Selain itu, nat juga boleh disusun membentuk corak. Tujuan penyelidikan ini adalah untuk meneroka bahan pengikat mekanikal nat yang dikitar semula sebagai alternatif blok batik.

Keunikan batik dapat dilihat melalui motif yang dilakarkan pengiatnya mengikut kreativiti dan ilham daripada persekitaran. Namun dalam menghasilkan blok tidak terdapat lagi pengiat dan pereka yang ramai. Keadaan ini berlaku apabila generasi kini tidak berminat dan kurang terdedah kepada kaedah penghasilan blok. Menurut Junaidi (2023) kebergantungan kepada teknik pembuatan batik tradisional semata-mata akan membantutkan perkembangan inovasi reka batik di Malaysia. Ini mendapat perhatian pihak pengkaji dalam mencari alternatif penghasilan blok yang lebih mudah, murah dan cepat. Malah coretan Kamaliza Kamaruddin (2023) menyatakan orang mudah tidak berminat kerja dalam industri batik. Menurut Nur Amalia binti Mohd Zaki (2021) masyarakat kini makin melupakan tentang kewujudan blok batik yang pernah menjadi keunggulan suatu masa dahulu. Perkara ini perlu ditingkatkan semula bagi memelihara warisan batik di negara ini. Selain itu kos bahan mentah dah proses pembuatan juga tinggi menyebabkan segelintir individu kurang menceburi bidang ini.

Oleh itu alternatif perlu bagi penyelesaian kekurangan dan bahan mentah yang mahal, mengurangkan sisa sebagai satu penyelesaian masalah alam sekitar dan membangunkan produk berasaskan bahan tanpa kos dan penggunaan kos yang lebih rendah. Sisa bahan terbuang juga merupakan isu yang besar di Malaysia. Pengurusan sisa terbuang yang tidak terurus dengan betul akan memberikan impak negatif kepada alam

dan persekitaran. Menurut Carmen Llatas *et al* (2021) bahan-bahan yang tidak dapat di gunakan perlu di lupuskan dengan cara yang betul untuk menjamin kelestarian alam sekitar bagi kawasan tapak pembinaan yang terlibat. Ini merupakan salah satu mengapa bahan terbuang pengikat mekanikal nat menjadi faktor dalam pemilihan bahan pembuatan blok. Dengan menjadikan bahan terbuang nat ini sebagai bahan utama, reka bentuk blok batik dapat menyumbang kepada pengurusan bahan buangan yang boleh diguna semula.

Batik

Batik merupakan kaedah menghasilkan corak dengan menggunakan lilin sebagai medium rintangan dalam membentuk motif. Menurut Junaidi Awang (2023) proses mengaplikasikan lilin ke atas permukaan kain dengan reka corak tertentu dipanggil sebagai teknik dalam pembuatan batik. Lilin merupakan medium utama untuk memastikan penghasilan motif batik dan menjadi pemisah antara warna. Di Malaysia, terdapat pelbagai teknik dan cara dalam pembuatan batik antaranya adalah penggunaan canting, blok logam dan skrin. Batik blok juga dikenali sebagai batik cap, batik terap atau batik pukul. Menurut Nur Amalia (2021) penggunaan blok batik kini telah diperluas dengan mengetengah gaya inovasi dan idea rekaan rumah seperti hiasan dinding, alas meja dan alas tilam serta bantal.

Blok batik merupakan bahan utama yang digunakan sebagai alat penerap lilin untuk mencorak pada fabrik sebagai penghalang semasa proses pewarnaan. Fungsi blok adalah menerap lilin pada permukaan kain sekaligus menghasilkan corak. Pembuatan blok telah mengalami inovasi di mana telah mula dibuat dengan menggunakan mesin. Pada dasarnya teknik menghasilkan blok batik ini mempunyai tekniknya yang tersendiri yang mana melibatkan proses lakaran, lenturan, pateri dan pemasangan. Proses ini memerlukan kemahiran teknikal dan kesenian yang tinggi pada pembuatnya kerana nilai sesebuah seni kraftangan ini bergantung kepada keistimewaan kemahiran ini. Penghasilan blok memerlukan tukang yang mahir dan teliti semasa proses pembuatan.

Batik blok atau lebih dikenali sebagai batik terap merupakan salah satu teknik penghasilan kaedah menerap atau mencetak, menyusun, dan mengolah reka corak dengan menggunakan peralatan yang berukir atau bercorak melalui kemahiran serta kreativiti pembatik.

Ciri-ciri batik blok adalah:

- a. Mempunyai susunan corak dan warna yang jelas
- b. Mempunyai warna dan corak yang sama pada bahagian hadapan dan belakang kain
- c. Proses pengulangan reka corak terapan hingga tepi kain
- d. Terdapat kesan warna pada garisan retakan corak yang dihasilkan melalui proses melilin.

Menurut Wan Nurul Hassyati (2018) seni batik mula dijadikan sebagai medium representasi idea dalam arus perkembangan seni lukis moden di Malaysia. Melalui eksperimentasi terhadap fungsi, alatan, bahan dan kaedah. Fungsi batik kini lebih meluas di mana dapat digunakan dalam kehidupan seharian seperti alas tilam, tas tangan, kasut, skaf dan hiasan dinding. Batik kini dilihat seiring dalam cabaran globalisasi semasa membentuk evolusi dunia batik. Menurut Nur Amalia (2021), seni batik bukan sahaja terdapat pada pakaian tetapi juga dalam kraftangan lain seperti cenderamata, perhiasan dalaman dan luaran. Namun begitu terdapat pelbagai jenis bahan digunakan dalam penghasilan blok.

Bermula dengan bahan seperti umbut pisang, ubi kentang diikuti dengan blok daripada bongkah kayu yang diukir dan seterusnya bahan daripada kepingan logam, besi, zink dan tembaga digunakan. Kenyataan ini disokong Noor Hafiza (2021) yang mengatakan pemilihan bahan dalam pembuatan blok adalah bergantung kepada kesan tindak balasnya ia merujuk juga kepada beberapa langkah yang perlu diambil kira dalam mengenalpasti nilai manfaat dan fungsi gunaan dalam penghasilan sesuatu seni batik.



Rajah 1: Proses terapan batik blok
Sumber: (Alif Batek)



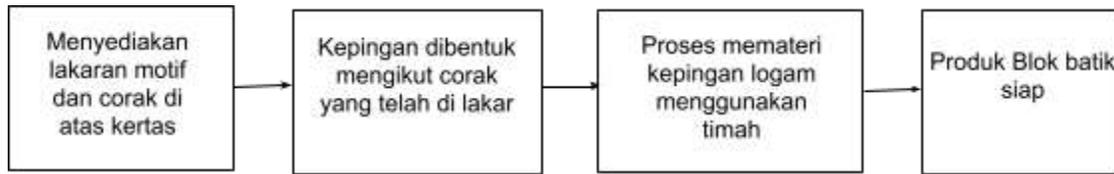
Rajah 2: Antara Corak Batik Blok
Sumber: Koleksi Fluerbatikofficial

METODOLOGI

Penyelidik menggunakan kaedah pemerhatian dan pengumpulan bahan terbuang yang telah dipilih iaitu pengikat mekanikal nat. Beberapa kaedah kajian serta proses telah dijalankan untuk menjadikan pengikat mekanikal nat sebagai bahan alternatif reka bentuk blok batik. Proses penghasilan reka bentuk blok masih mengekalkan kaedah penghasilan blok tradisional. Pengumpulan data melalui kaedah pemerhatian dan pengumpulan bahan adalah untuk menjawab kepada objektif kajian. Pemerhatian dijalankan di bengkel-bengkel kereta dan motosikal. Aktiviti memfokuskan kepada bahan pengikat mekanikal nat yang telah dikenalpasti bagi menghasilkan blok. Menurut Kawulich (2005) kaedah adalah aktiviti yang memfokuskan kepada objek atau sampel untuk [untuk] menggambarkan situasi sedia ada dengan menggunakan semua deria. Penyelidik menjalankan pemerhatian terhadap bengkel-bengkel kenderaan dan motosikal. Ini melibatkan pemerhatian jenis barangan yang dibuang dan tidak dapat digunakan lagi di bengkel. Barangan ini telah dikenal pasti dan penyelidik melihat kepada potensi guna semula nat berfungsi untuk kegunaan lain. Barangan ini dipungut disisih dan disusun semula mengikut kualiti barangan tersebut. Peralatan yang dilihat adalah jenis alatan skru, dan juga alatan kenderaan yang lain. Pemerhatian seterusnya adalah di lokasi bengkel batik dengan mencatat semua langkah dan melihat proses pembuatan blok konvensional. Penyelidik menggunakan teknik yang sama seperti pembuatan blok konvensional dengan beberapa penyesuaian untuk bahan baharu.

Proses pembuatan blok batik menggunakan bahan terpakai pengikat mekanikal nat adalah secara berperingkat. Bermula dengan pengumpulan bahan terpakai pengikat mekanikal nat, pembersihan untuk menanggalkan karat, pengasingan nat mengikut saiz dan penyusunan nat membentuk motif. Faktor yang utama adalah memilih nat yang masih elok dan mempunyai bentuk yang sempurna. Teknik penghasilan

blok pengikat mekanikal nat adalah sama seperti teknik tradisional iaitu masih mengekalkan kaedah memateri menggunakan timah.



Rajah 3. Carta aliran pembuatan blok batik

Proses pembuatan blok batik menggunakan bahan yang diperbuat daripada kepingan zin dan logam. Terdapat dua jenis blok yang dihasilkan dalam proses blok batik iaitu corak yang jenis padat dan *artline*. Perbezaan kedua design ini adalah jenis padat iaitu tidak dapat diwarnakan manakala jenis design dalaman *airline* dapat diwarnakan. Proses membuat blok adalah perlu mencetak corak terlebih dahulu di atas kertas sebelum memulakan proses membuat blok. Ini bertujuan untuk memastikan corak dapat dihasilkan secara sistematik, kemas dan tepat. Seterusnya membentuk kepingan tembaga mengikut reka corak yang dihasilkan.



Rajah 4. Blok batik daripada bahan besi dan tembaga

Sumber: (Koleksi Ayu Fashion)

DAPATAN

Penggunaan blok dalam proses membatik dengan menggunakan pelbagai alternatif yang telah dicadangkan telah membuka ruang yang luas bagi penggiat seni batik untuk menghasilkan rekaan yang lebih kreatif dan menarik. Pembuatan blok batik daripada pengikat mekanikal nat bermula dengan mendapatkan bahan terbuang iaitu pengikat mekanikal nat daripada bengkel untuk diguna semula. Dapatan awal merangkumi kesesuaian bahan pengikat mekanikal nat yang dikitar semula menunjukkan potensi untuk digunakan sebagai blok batik, dengan sifat pengikat yang memadai untuk membentuk corak pada kain. Bahan nat yang dikitar semula menunjukkan kekuatan dan kestabilan yang mencukupi apabila diikat sebagai blok batik, membolehkannya digunakan dalam proses pembuatan batik dengan berkesan. Penggunaan bahan nat yang dikitar semula dapat menghasilkan corak yang unik dan tidak terduga, memberikan elemen kreativiti yang tambahan dalam rekaan blok batik. Pada peringkat terakhir, reka bentuk blok batik diperincikan dengan penetapan saiz nat yang dikehendaki serta saiz blok yang diinginkan. Berikut merupakan dapatan proses dan peringkat penghasilan blok menggunakan pengikat mekanikal nat.

Peringkat Penghasilan Blok Daripada Pengikat Mekanikal Nat

Pengumpulan bahan terpakai pengikat mekanikal nat

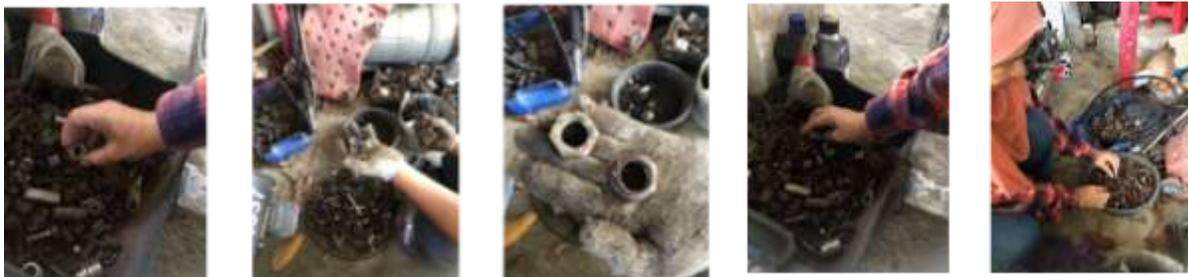
Proses ini merupakan langkah awal dalam penyelidikan iaitu mengenalpasti dan mengumpul bahan terbuang yang terdapat di bengkel kenderaan dan motosikal. Penyelidik memfokuskan kepada bahan pengikat mekanikal nat selain bahan lain yang terdapat di bengkel seperti skru, paku, logam, besi, spanar dan playar.



Rajah 5. Pengumpulan bahan terpakai daripada bengkel-bengkel kenderaan
(Sumber: Koleksi penyelidik)

Pengasingan saiz dan bentuk nat

Proses pengasingan mengikut bentuk nat penting, kerana nat berbeza-beza dalam bentuk seperti serpihan, serbuk, atau hirisan. Dengan melakukan pengekstrakan nat berdasarkan saiz dan bentuk, penyelidik dapat menyusun dan menguruskan nat dengan lebih sistematik untuk proses seterusnya pengitaran semula.



Rajah 6. Pengasingan nat mengikut saiz dan bentuk
(Sumber: Koleksi penyelidik)

Pembersihan pengikat mekanikal nat

Pengikat mekanikal nat akan dibersihkan terlebih dahulu menggunakan kertas pasir dan air tawar untuk menghilangkan kesan karat. Selepas itu ia akan dijemur hinkering.



Rajah 7. Proses pembersihan nat menggunakan air tawas
(Sumber: Koleksi penyelidik)

Penyusunan pengikat mekanikal nat

Proses penyusunan nat dilakukan untuk membentuk rekaan corak. Nat tersebut disusun mengikut corak yang dikehendaki. Ia boleh melibatkan susunan nat dalam bentuk lingkaran, segi empat, atau corak lain yang diinginkan.



Rajah 8. Penyusunan nat mengikut reka corak yang dikehendaki
(Sumber: Koleksi penyelidik)

Blok yang telah siap

Setelah corak nat dibentuk, proses pateri dilakukan dengan menggunakan logam timah, rajah 10 menunjukkan nat yang telah siap dipateri membentuk corak lingkaran. Blok ini siap untuk digunakan bagi proses terapan pada kain.



Rajah 9. Blok yang telah siap dihasilkan
Sumber: (Koleksi penyelidik)

KESIMPULAN

Nilai kreativiti dan inovasi adalah teras kepada kemajuan dalam industri batik. Ini kerana seni batik adalah warisan seni tradisi dan reka bentuk yang terhasil mempunyai keunikan tersendiri. Kemahuan dan kehendak masyarakat dalam menggayakan batik sentiasa berubah mengikut peredaran semasa. Alternatif penghasilan blok batik daripada bahan terpakai pengikat mekanikal nat mempunyai potensi besar untuk terus memartabatkan industri batik. Model blok daripada bahan terbuang pengikat mekanikal nat berjaya dihasilkan. Model awal yang dihasilkan perlu diperhalusi dan melalui pengujian dan soal selidik yang melibatkan usahawan. Penghasilan inovasi model ini diharap dapat memberi panduan kepada usahawan dan pelajar dalam menggunakan bahan kitar semula dalam industri batik di Malaysia. Pendekatan inovasi yang dilakukan sekaligus dapat meningkatkan produktiviti perusahaan batik. Ia mesti dimulakan dari proses awal penyediaan blok batik dengan mengadaptasikan penggunaan teknologi dan bahan-bahan terkini yang dapat mengalih kebergantungan kepada kemahiran tukang-tukang pembuat blok. Jika usaha ini diteruskan ia akan berkembang, dimiliki dan diwarisi oleh masyarakat daripada satu generasi ke generasi seterusnya.

PENGHARGAAN

Ucapan terima kasih kepada semua ahli kumpulan yang terlibat dalam penyelidikan dan juga kepada mereka yang memberi sumbangan bahan terbuang pengikat mekanikal nat semasa proses pengumpulan. Semoga hasil penyelidikan ini memberi manfaat yang besar kepada semua pihak yang terlibat. Penghargaan juga diberikan kepada Kolej Pengajian Seni Kreatif UiTM Cawangan Melaka untuk insentif penerbitan yang disediakan.

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Wood Carving Motifs in Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan

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ABSTRACT

The sustainability of Malay wood carving motifs in the present era is at stake. The lack of effort to identify and document the motifs led to the weak preservation of this national heritage. This indirectly poses a threat to the Malay identity that has existed since a long time ago. Thus, this research aims to provide additional documentation on Malay wood carving motifs through the observation in Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan. This mosque was chosen because there is minimal research on wood carving motifs in the southwest coast states of Malaysia. The study's objective is to identify the motifs of wood carving and its categories. This research employed a qualitative method that involved data collection from site observation, in-depth interviews with six selected respondents, and library research. As a result, the findings have identified 16 motifs, 12 inspired by the element of flora, one from fauna, one from calligraphy, one from geometry, and one from still life. This research recommended that more in-depth wood carving studies should be carried out especially in the southwest coast states of Malaysia to promote the Malay identity and to prevent this national heritage from being overwhelmed by contemporary trends.

Keywords: *Flora, Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Motifs, Negeri Sembilan, Wood carving*

INTRODUCTION

Malay Heritage Mosque is one of the significant Malay architectures in Malaysia. Some of the mosques were decorated with unique wood carving motifs to enhance the value of the beauty of the building. These motifs created by the past Malay craftsmen have added cultural value not only to the mosque but also to the Malay community itself. Abdul Halim (2016) believed that these traditional motifs cannot be challenged by the modern generation as the quality produced is high.

The Malay people carved applied motifs in the mosque as a medium to express ideas and feelings. These ideas were generated from meticulous observation of the surrounding landscape elements (Ismail,

2001). Syed Ahmad (2007) mentioned that geometry, flora, living creatures, calligraphy, and cosmic are the famous elements applied in Malay wood carving. This design is also inspired by the Malay lifestyles such as norms, customs, beliefs, and values. Among other elements, the motifs that refer to flora are the most famous motifs used in Malay heritage mosques. This is because Malaysia is a tropical country that is rich in plant species and therefore the flora element became the primary source of inspiration for the Malay craftsmen.

The tradition of Malay carvings was inherited from one generation to one generation. Besides Malay traditional houses, the heritage mosques also became the targeted building for the Malay community to promote the culture of wood carving motifs and this culture has expanded to many Malay heritage mosques in Malaysia. Hanita et al. (2021) emphasized that these motifs should be identified and documented to prevent them from being vanished. Therefore, this research will play a significant role in identifying the wood carving motifs found in Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan.

The Malay heritage mosque in Negeri Sembilan was chosen because there is a scarcity of the study of motifs in the southwest coast state of Malaysia. Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin which is located in Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan was selected due to some peculiarities such as the uniqueness of Seri Menanti as a royal town, this mosque was gazetted as National Heritage by Akta Warisan Kebangsaan and constructed by Raja Melewar who is the first Yang di-Pertuan Besar of Negeri Sembilan. Since the left verandah has a proper entrance design, this study only concentrated on the two pillars of this space. Thus, the motifs decorated on these pillars were taken as the research samples.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Malay Wood Carving Motifs

A motif is an arrangement of decorative elements that form a pattern (Muhammad Afandi, 1995) while wood carving is an activity utilizing tools such as chisels and knives to tear off the surface of wood (Hamdzun et al., 2014). Mohd Nasrulamiyazam and Asyaari (2018) claimed that Hinduism influenced the formation of original Malay motifs during the ancient Malay kingdom. After the advent of Islam, the motifs were carved based on the value of Islam. Malay wood carving motifs are created using the stylization approach, which was adopted by the Malays as a means of appreciating beauty. The fundamental components in Malay carving motif designs such as the roots, stems, leaves, fruits, and flowers were employed to create an ornamental variety. These elements can be stylized in various forms as long as the aesthetic standard is upheld (Norhaiza Noordin, personal communication, November 01, 2023).

Malay motifs exhibit many styles from Malay lifestyle, religion, belief, the surrounding environment, climate, and topography. The craftsman himself can creatively interpret the motif design to comply with the demands of the community as well as their own needs. Regardless, this design must comply with Malay customs and laws (Mohammad Nazzri, 2016). The patterns in wood carvings also interacted with the thoughts and personalities of the wood carvers. The expressions generated from the carvers' pure hearts aimed to convey any kind of message that no one would likely be able to fully comprehend. Thus, beauty emerged as the central idea and flora served as the prominent motif in Malay carvings (Norhaiza Noordin, personal communication, November 01, 2023).

The Elements in Malay Wood Carving Motifs

According to Mohammad Nazzri (2016), the design of Malay carvings developed from the customs, environment, religion, topography, and climate. It is also inspired by plants, animals, calligraphy, cosmos,

and geometry (Abdul Halim, 2016). In Malay heritage mosques, Ismail and Ahmad Saifuddin (2001) claimed that the motifs of plants, calligraphy, and geometry are the most popular motifs found. Table 1 shows the elements in Malay wood carving motifs.

Table 1. The elements in Malay wood carving motifs

No	Element	Description
1	Flora	The motifs of flora in Malay Heritage Mosques are dominant. This is due to the abundance of plant species grown in Malaysian forests (Abdul Halim, 1986) and the influence of Islam which limits the imitation of animals (Perbadanan Kemajuan Kraftangan Malaysia, 2009). Flora motifs frequently imbued the creeping and flowering plants. <i>Ketumbit, Ketam Guri, Labu, Kerak Nasi, Seroja, Bunga Tanjung, and Peria</i> are some synonymous flora motifs (Abdul Halim, 1986).
2	Fauna	Fauna motifs imitate the positive behavior of animals such as roosters and a group of ducks to deliver moral values (Abdul Halim, 1986). Before the attendance of Islam, flora motifs were highly preferred by the Malay craftsmen, but after they adhered to the principles of Islam, the action of copying the image of living creatures like animals was strictly prohibited. As a result, fauna motifs were abstractly carved. Some fauna motifs still can be seen today are <i>Itik pulang petang, Ayam berlaga, Badak mudik</i> and <i>Kuda laut</i> (Abdul Halim, 2016).
3	Calligraphy	The calligraphy motif applies the verses from the Quran, Arabic words, and <i>Jawi</i> script as the subject matter. The calligraphy was manifested by the artists into wood panels written in Arabic styles (Ismail, 2002). This motif is sometimes engraved together with flora, cosmos, and geometry to devote a story's lesson, advice, reminder, rules, and laws (Perbadanan Kemajuan Kraftangan Malaysia, 2009).
4	Geometry	Halim Nasir (1986) mentioned that geometric motifs refer to shapes with pointed features and borders. It also can be identified in the form of straight, diagonal, and horizontal lines (Zuliskandar et al., 2014) and common shapes such as triangles, squares, and circles (Khairul Azhar, 2017).
5	Cosmos	The Cosmos motif is a representation of the hill, mountain, star, moon, and sun. It is the least visible motif in Malay carvings (Khairul Azhar, 2017). This motif is usually decorated on a roof front cover, and it was creatively consolidated with the element of flora (Hamdzun et al., 2014) and calligraphy (Mohammad Nazzri, 2016).

Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan.

Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan (Figure 1) was built in 1892 and it is located in Kampung Tanjung Beringin with lot number 2450 (Azizul Azli, 2015). Ibrahim Abd Latif (personal communication, 08 December 2023) claimed that the mosque's land was initially equipped with wild forest, and it was owned by a villager. The ownership of the land was then handed over to the king. In the past year, this heritage mosque carried out many activities such as social gatherings and *Adat Bersiram* which is a traditional event to crown a Yang di-Pertuan Besar Negeri Sembilan.

Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin portrays an image of a Malay heritage mosque through a tiered, *meru* roof, and square layout in its design. Raja Nafida Raja Shahminan (personal communication, 08 December 2023) claimed that this mosque began its construction with only the main prayer room and a mihrab before it extended to the verandas to promote large social activities. The original entrance of the mosque also faced the river instead of an existing paved road (Raja Nafida Raja Shahminan, personal communication, 08 December 2023). Figure 2 shows the original plan of Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin

that comprised five spaces namely, a) back veranda, b) right veranda, c) left veranda, d) main praying room, and e) mihrab.

The mosque was supported by 10 fully carved pillars. Six pillars are located on the outside and four on the inside. The pillars consist of three different parts namely, top, middle, and bottom, and each part is carved with different wood carving motifs (Ruslinda & Hasnira, 2022). The four pillars in the main prayer room are called *Soko Guru* (Raja Nafida Raja Shahminan, personal communication, 08 December 2023) and it was brought from the Bakar Mosque (Ibrahim Abd Latif, personal communication, December 8, 2023).



Figure 1. Front view of Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin
(Source: Author's personal collection)

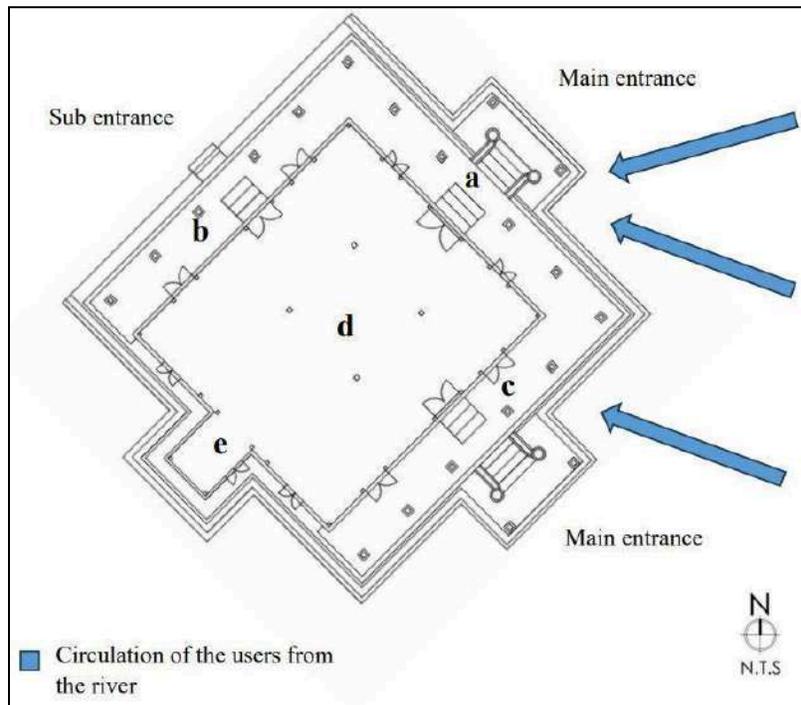


Figure 2. The original floor plan of Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin
 (Source: Author's personal collection)

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research adopted the qualitative approach to collect the data as it can provide a wealth of information to understand people's beliefs, attitudes, experiences, and interactions (Pathak et al., 2013). An observation of Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan was carried out to collect all the wood carving motifs found. These motifs were captured through an iPhone 13 Pro. Face-to-face scheduled interviews with Adiguru Norhaiza Noordin (wood carver) and Adiguru Abd Muhaimin Hasbollah (wood carver) and an online interview with Drs Bentrizal (academician and wood carver) from Kota Padang, Minangkabau was organized to verify the motifs observed. Another face-to-face interview was arranged with Raja Nafida Raja Shahminan (academician), Ibrahim Abd Latif (Resident of Seri Menanti since 1959), and Abdullah Salleh (The head of Kampung Tengah, Seri Menanti from 2001 to 2018) to garner the history of Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, and Negeri Sembilan. The data from the interview was analyzed using thematic analysis with constant comparison. This research also employed library research as the secondary data to support the literature study. Library research helped the researcher in triangulating the findings from observation and interview sessions conducted. Table 2 provides the list of selected informants in this research.

Table 2. List of informants

No	Name	Profession / Position
1	Adiguru Norhaiza Noordin	Woodcarver
2	Adiguru Abd Muhaimin Hasbollah	Woodcarver
3	Prof Raja Nafida Raja Shahminan	Academician
4	Abdullah Salleh	The head of Kampung Tengah, Seri Menanti from 2001 to 2018
5	Ibrahim Abd Latif	Resident of Seri Menanti since 1959
6	Drs Bentrizal Sutan Bagindo	Woodcarver and academician

FINDINGS

In the traditional era, the position of the left veranda and back veranda was close to the river, and these spaces directly acted as the main entrance to welcome the attendance of the users. In this regard, the motifs found in these spaces were considered special and more unique compared to the motifs seen on the right veranda. However, this research only highlighted the motifs carved on the two pillars on the left veranda. Figure 3 shows the location of wood carving motifs taken as the research samples. The right pillar was labeled as Pillar 1 and the left pillar was labeled as Pillar 2.

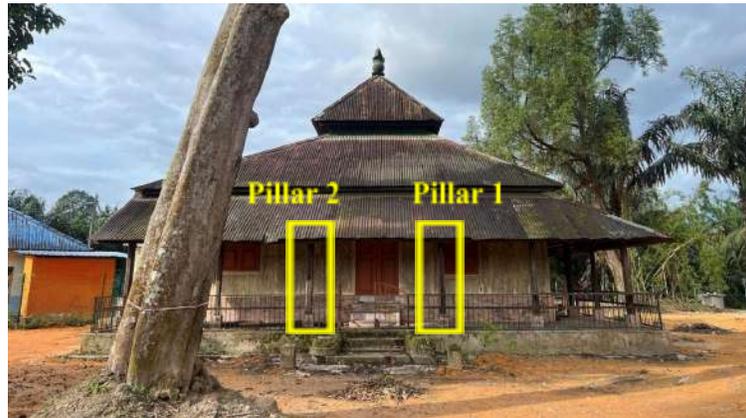


Figure 3. The location of research samples at the left veranda
 (Source: Author's personal collection)

The Motifs in Pillar 1

Table 3 shows the names of motifs and their categories found in Pillar 1.

Table 3. The motifs in Pillar 1 and their categories

Motif	Image	Name of motif	Category
A		a) <i>Bunga kiambang</i> (Verified by Informant 2) b) <i>Bunga lada</i> (Verified by Informant 6)	Flora Flora
B		a) <i>Bunga kiambang</i> (Verified by Informant 2) b) <i>Sulur kacang</i> (Verified by Informant 2)	Flora Flora

C		<i>Benih and Sulur kacang</i>	Flora
D		<i>Dokoh</i> (Verified by Informant 1)	Still life
E		<i>Sulur kacang</i>	Flora
F		<i>Sulur kacang and benih</i>	Flora
G		<p>a) <i>Corak garisan</i> (Verified by Informant 6)</p> <p>b) <i>Buah cemara</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p> <p>c) <i>Sulur kacang</i></p>	<p>Geometry</p> <p>Flora</p> <p>Flora</p>

H		Jawi script	Calligraphy
I		Sulur kacang and benih	Flora
J		a) Bunga ketumbit	Flora
K		Bunga keladi (Verified by Informant 2)	Flora

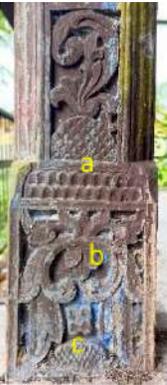
L		<i>Sulur kacang</i>	Flora
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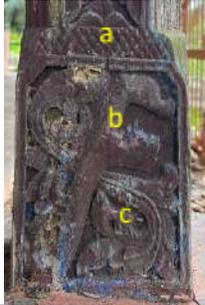
The Motifs in Pillar 2

Table 4 reveals the names of motifs and their categories found in Pillar 2.

Table 4. The motifs in Pillar 2 and their categories

Motif	Image	Name of motif	Category
A		a) <i>Bunga kiambang</i> (Verified by Informant 2) b) <i>Pucuk rebung</i> (Verified by Informant 2)	Flora
B		<i>Daun bayam peraksi</i>	Flora

C		<p>a) <i>Corak garisan</i> (Verified by Informant 6)</p> <p>b) <i>Corak dedaun</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p> <p>c) <i>Bunga kemunting cina</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p>	<p>Geometry</p> <p>Flora</p> <p>Flora</p>
D		<p><i>Bunga kemunting cina</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p>	<p>Flora</p>
E		<p><i>Bunga ketumbit</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p>	<p>Flora</p>
F		<p>a) <i>Corak garisan</i> (Verified by Informant 6)</p>	<p>Geometry</p>
G		<p>a) <i>Corak dedaun</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p> <p>b) <i>Bunga kemunting cina</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p>	<p>Flora</p> <p>Flora</p>

H		<p>a) <i>Daun sayap</i> (Verified by Informant 2)</p> <p>b) <i>Buah cemara</i> (Verified by Informant 2)</p>	<p>Flora</p> <p>Flora</p>
I		<p><i>Bunga tanjung</i> (Verified by Informant 5)</p>	<p>Flora</p>
J		<p>a) <i>Corak garisan</i> (Verified by Informant 6)</p> <p>b) <i>Tumbuk lada</i> (Verified by Informant 1)</p> <p>c) <i>Corak dedaun</i></p>	<p>Geometry</p> <p>Still life</p> <p>Flora</p>
K		<p>a) <i>Rama-rama</i></p> <p>b) <i>Bunga lada</i></p> <p>c) <i>Corak garisan</i> (Verified by Informant 6)</p>	<p>Fauna</p> <p>Flora</p> <p>Geometry</p>
L		<p><i>Sulur kacang</i> (Verified by Informant 2)</p>	<p>Flora</p>

M		a) <i>Corak garisan</i> (Verified by Informant 6) b) <i>Benih and Corak dedaun</i>	Geometry Flora
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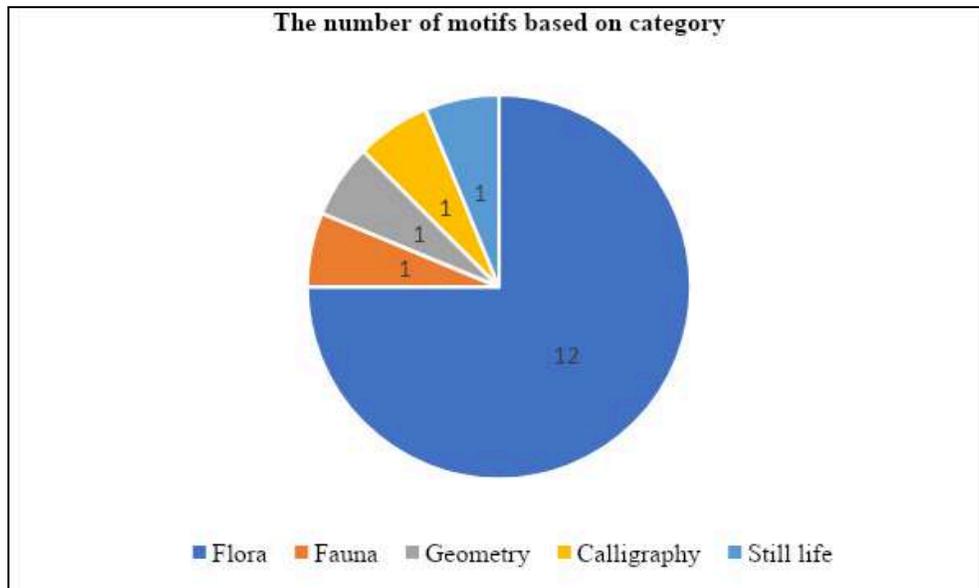


Figure 6. The number of motifs based on category

Based on Figure 6, the total motifs of wood carving found are 16. Out of the total number of motifs, 12 were inspired by the element of flora, one from fauna, one from geometry, one from calligraphy, and one from still life. This finding shows that flora acted as the primary source of inspiration for the traditional Malay craftsmen to develop their ideas for designing the motifs. This finding is also indirectly justified by the results made by the previous researchers which mentioned that flora motifs are dominant in the art of wood carving in Malay heritage mosques.

CONCLUSION

Wood carving is synonymous with the life of the Malay community. This art has been around for a long time and has been passed down from generation to generation. To appreciate this traditional Malay art, wood carving has been made as one of the national heritages. However, the lack of effort to identify and document the Malay motifs is one of the issues that could jeopardize the sustainability of this heritage art. As a solution, the researcher has chosen Masjid Lama Tanjung Beringin, Seri Menanti, Negeri Sembilan as a starting effort to record the Malay motifs. 16 wood carving motifs have been identified and these motifs are categorized into five categories namely flora, calligraphy, geometry, fauna, and still life.

Among all the categories, motifs inspired by flora have dominated the overall motif design in this mosque and it directly justified the intimacy of plant species with ideas and expressions of the Malay craftsmen in the traditional era. This research recommended that more in-depth wood carving studies should be explored especially in the southwest coast states of Malaysia to promote the Malay identity and to prevent this national heritage from being overwhelmed by contemporary trends.

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Relationship between Digital Color Image and Semiotics in Peace Posters

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ABSTRACT

Even with the development and progress of science and technology, peace has always been a topic to be explored, and many design competitions about peace had appeared, with people showing what harmony was and the beautiful vision of peace from different perspectives. This paper attempts to analyse from a semiotic point of view what elements of peace symbols the creator's creations were made up of, the reason being that the selection of symbols and the application of the symbolic elements were an indispensable presence in the creation of posters and are utilised for communicating the subject. Therefore, this study adopts a unique children's perspective to explore the direct or indirect relationship between symbolic elements and colour through the software to quantify the selection of poster samples systematically and ultimately to summarise and collate to explore the relationship between colour and semiotics of the analysed posters, hoping that this research can be more effectively used in the subsequent creation of the posters or symbols and colours to assist and help the role of the poster.

Keywords: *Colour, Semiotics, Poster, Peace poster*

INTRODUCTION

For many years, peace has been a topic of common importance to all of humankind. After world wars, rapid socioeconomic growth, and the gradual development of human society and civilization, it does not mean that peace will come forever. According to BBC statistics for 2023, there have been at least 13 armed conflicts and wars around the world since 2020, and most of the injured are civilians. In response to this persistent challenge, Killelea (2020) introduced the Global Peace Index. This index systematically measures the structure of peace, moving beyond war as a simplistic indicator and offering a quantitative assessment of peace levels.

In the face of a world that requires more complex thinking, posters have the functionality of examining issues and can also take on the tasks and presentations given by the new era (Yan, 2020), while scientific evidence shows that 80 percent of information is captured visually, suggesting that images are more receptive to people from different cultural backgrounds (He, 2022).

The theme of peace holds significant importance in the field of design, particularly in the creation of posters that frequently serve as regular themes in international competitions. However, the production of excellent peace posters over the years has also created another problem, as most authors inevitably encounter bottlenecks in creating posters on the theme of peace, which they were unable to overcome in their previous works (Matwick, 2022).

Therefore, this study hopes to explore the work of child creators selected for analysis in an environment where there is a large and rich body of peace-themed posters available, to analyse and research the theme of peace from a unique child's perspective, and hopefully to inspire other creators to create new work.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theory of Semiotics Analysis

The attention to "symbols" began in ancient times, especially the enrichment and development of words, which makes people begin to examine and examine more concepts and semantics to summarise the vast world (Ding, 2023). Ferdinand de Saussure was a Swiss linguist who pioneered modern linguistics. The semiotics he founded is called "semiology" (1916), a term derived from the Greek word "sign" (Eco, 1986). Saussure emphasised the importance of the vein between a sign and other signs, which determines the sign's meaning, and he argued that Saussure emphasises the importance of the vein between the sign and other signs, which determines the meaning of the sign, and he argues that the proper form of semiotics is that "the sign must be interpretable by other signs", which is concerned with the relationship between the sign and the objective (Chandler, 2001). A single sign is divided into two parts, Signifier and Signified, the former being the colour, sound, and image of the sign, the latter being the content of the sign and determined by the culture to which it belongs, and a body composed of these two parts is called a sign. The expression and dissemination of symbolic meaning is a narrative process with obvious characteristics, and there is also the interaction between subject and acceptance (Zhou, 2020). For example, the pronunciation of the rose "rouz" refers to the surface and appearance of the rose itself, and the rose can symbolise the cultural meaning of "love". Symbols have concepts that are recognized by cultural and linguistic systems (Hsu, 2021).

The relationship between symbols and other symbols is then divided into paradigm and syntagm. The human living environment is full of symbols, from language to patterns to words, from figurative to abstract, and objects, furnishings, and habits in life are understood as a kind of symbol from the perspective of semiotics (Hawkes, 1997). In the theory of linguistics, the former becomes the vertical axis, which is a kind of "selection"; each symbol present in the paradigms has its characteristics, while the syntagm is called the horizontal axis, which is the relationship with the combination of the selected elements of the paradigm with other elements so that the selected symbols may be influenced by other symbols and their meanings may be influenced by other symbols. Other symbols of the same syntagm partially determine the meaning of other symbols (Bouissac, 1998).

Axis	Syntagm	Paradigm
Principle	Proximity principle	Similarity principle
Symbol	Indicative symbols	Similar symbols
Rhetoric	Metonymy	Metaphor
Structure	Surface structure	Deep structure

Figure 1 Semiotics of Saussure

(Source: Organised and drawn by the author)

Theory of Colour Image Analysis

Colour is regarded as a part of the culture, and the meaning and function produced will change according to the different environments and use methods. When colour is applied in life, in addition to a direct effect on our eyes and visual changes, colour will also influence our hearts, thus making people have symbolic associations (Chen, 2000). The eye, the brain, and our life experience all describe colour as a visual perceptual feature (Wyszecki et al., 2000). Colours elicit different sensations due to variations in hue, lightness, and chroma, and when people encounter different colors, their brains generate different associations or psychological effects (Lu, 2007).

Colour image is the psychological feeling and emotion that colours produce in people. Colour image is to match the psychological level, the comprehensive consideration of the different attributes of the colour feeling, and colour association is closely associated with, but more important in the abstract symbolism (Masahiro, 2021). From the spirit, color can be discussed by the symbolic meaning, historical and religious role of colour (Horrocks, 2012). Based on my personal experience, I associate the name of colour with anything in my memory, in short, colour association (Yamanaka, 2003). Colour association and colour symbolism will fuse different colour intentions among groups. The adjectives people use for colour imagery are very rich, starting from value judgments, such as beauty and ugliness, likes and dislikes, etc., and then gradually expressing sensual aesthetic vocabulary (Lin, et al., 2021). People's adjectives for colour imagery can be sorted into "evaluative imagery", "activity imagery" and "power imagery" through Semantic Differential Technique (Osgood). "power imagery", containing a range of adjectives and their antonyms. Colour has properties that cannot be replaced by words and language in the process of expressing information, and colour can transcend language barriers, cognitive differences, and even deficiencies caused by different geographic regions, ages, and cultural levels (Zheng et al., 2021). This study concentrates on the ternary colours (red, green, and blue), thereby summarising their colour imagery.

Table 1. Red, Blue, and Green Color Image

RED	Red represents excitement, vitality, enthusiasm, and action in Western culture. In Asian culture, red is a very important color. It symbolizes good luck, change, prosperity, celebration, and longevity because red is an auspicious color. , brides usually wear red dresses at weddings, and there is also the custom of giving red envelopes to each other during the New Year.
BLUE	Blue represents trust, security and authority in North America and Europe, and is also regarded as soothing and peaceful. In some countries, blue symbolizes healing and exorcism, and is believed to fight evil. In places such as Turkey, Greece, and Afghanistan, blue Blue is a very common color. In Eastern cultural sites, blue symbolizes eternal life, in Ukraine it represents health, and in Hinduism blue represents love and joy for religious reasons.
GREEN	Green represents good luck, nature, freshness, environmental protection, and spring in Western and Eastern cultures. At the same time, green is also the representative color of Ireland. Ireland is called the "Emerald Isle" precisely because of its green landscape. In the Middle East, green represents fertility, wealth and good luck, and is also regarded as the traditional color of Islam.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study primarily utilises the content analysis method, initially subjecting the gathered samples to colour quantization. ImageJ is a Java-based image processing software developed by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). It is extensively utilised in the early stages of medical research. Nevertheless, as science and technology progress, there is an increasing prevalence of multidisciplinary studies, with ImageJ frequently employed for image analysis. Thus, this project represents a novel endeavour to integrate posters with ImageJ. The ImageJ software has the capability to perform various image processing tasks such as scaling, rotating, distorting, and blurring. Additionally, it can determine a range of geometric properties of the examined item inside a specified area, including length, angle, circumference, area, long axis, and short axis. The content analysis method employs impartial and methodical approaches to examine the content of the poster. The findings will be evaluated based on the data acquired from the ImageJ analysis. Subsequently, the proportions and relationships between symbols and colours will be extracted from the analysis results using the generated numerical values. Ultimately, we conducted a rigorous statistical analysis to examine the correlation between signs and colours.

Date Collection

Lions Clubs International hosted an art competition in which young contestants created peace posters to convey their vision of peace and inspire the world through art and creativity. The poster was titled "LIONS", with "L" representing Liberty, "I" representing Intelligently, "O" representing Our, and "D" representing Ours. We have completed the design of a poster sample titled "LIONS" for Lions Clubs. In this design, the letter "L" represents Liberty, "I" represents Intelligently, "O" represents Our, "N" represents Nation's, and "S" represents Safety. The Peace Poster Competition (2006–2023) has announced the winners of the Grand Prize. Out of a total of 15 entries, the international panel selected the poster samples as the winners.



Figure 2. Poster Sample Collection
(Source: Organised by the author)

Color Quantification of Samples

For this study, we utilised ImageJ software to conduct region and pixel counting of images, measure digital image analysis, and tally the frequency of the three major colours in each sample.

Biomedical image analysis software primarily uses ImageJ to automatically count the number of cells or count the number of stained cells. This software was developed by the National Institutes of Health using the Java programming language. It allows for use across many platforms and calculates the number of tertiary colours in an image by computer calculations.

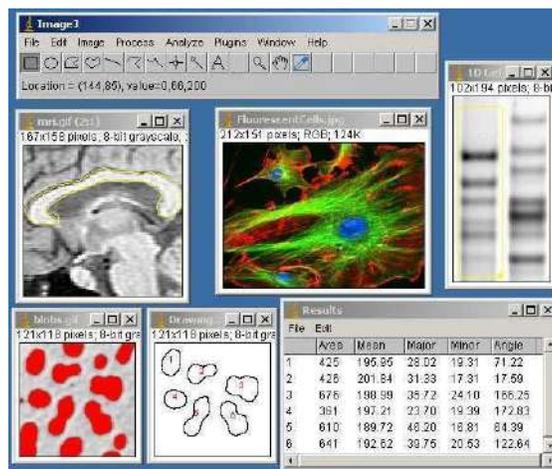


Figure 3. ImageJ Software Page
(Source: <https://imagej.net/ij/docs/concepts.html>)

Qualitative Analysis of Samples Based on Semiotic Theory

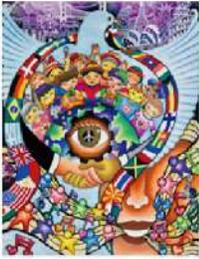
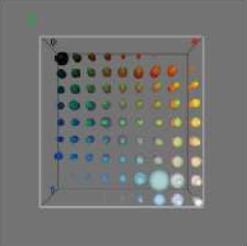
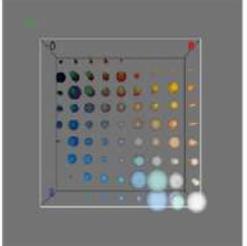
Additionally, we examined whether these symbols belonged to the paradigm or syntagm and provided a concise description of the sample's utilisation of colour. This analysis delved into the connection between colour imagery and symbols. Ultimately, we tallied the symbols that were examined from the samples, quantified the number of symbols employed for each symbol, organised them into a table according to the count, and compared the colours associated with the greatest frequency of usage. We compiled the results and derived inferences from them by organising them into a table.

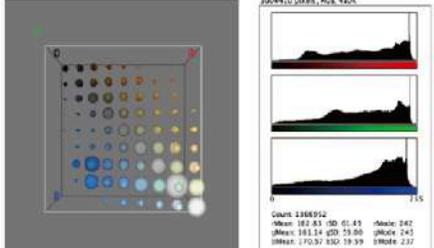
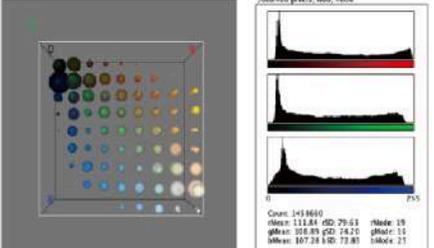
FINDINGS

Sample Analysis Results

The qualitative analysis of the sample and the quantified color data were established in a table due to limited space and listed 4 items.

Table 2. Sample Analysis Case

 <p>Title: Children Know Peace</p> <p>Concept: Children all over the world gather together to praise peace. They shake hands regularly, hoping that what they see in their eyes will always be peace.</p>	 <p>Title: Imagine Peace</p> <p>Concept: The child holds a peace sign, with the president and doves in the background, representing that only the world can work together to create peace.</p>																								
<p>Signifier: children, flag, pigeons</p>	<p>Signifier: Peace sign, Presidents, flags, pigeons</p>																								
<p>Signified:</p> <p>The dove of peace is used as the main background to highlight the desire of children around the world to yearn for peace.</p>	<p>Signified:</p> <p>Compare children with adults, decorate with doves of peace and national flags.</p>																								
 <p>200x132 pixels, RGB, 480%</p> <p>Count: 1349984 rMean: 148.651 rSD: 78.57 rMode: 236 gMean: 133.726 gSD: 70.098 gMode: 218 bMean: 131.848 bSD: 71.555 bMode: 227</p>	 <p>300x412 pixels, RGB, 480%</p> <p>Count: 887880 rMean: 156.544 rSD: 66.335 rMode: 192 gMean: 155.383 gSD: 71.534 gMode: 216 bMean: 168.150 bSD: 71.563 bMode: 218</p>																								
<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>parameter</th> <th>red</th> <th>green</th> <th>blue</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>mean</td> <td>148.651</td> <td>133.726</td> <td>131.848</td> </tr> <tr> <td>std.dev</td> <td>70.566</td> <td>70.098</td> <td>71.555</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	parameter	red	green	blue	mean	148.651	133.726	131.848	std.dev	70.566	70.098	71.555	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>parameter</th> <th>red</th> <th>green</th> <th>blue</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>mean</td> <td>156.544</td> <td>155.383</td> <td>168.150</td> </tr> <tr> <td>std.dev</td> <td>66.335</td> <td>71.534</td> <td>71.563</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	parameter	red	green	blue	mean	156.544	155.383	168.150	std.dev	66.335	71.534	71.563
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<p>Brief description of color application: The background is mostly light blue.</p>	<p>Brief description of color application: The blue color is used in a large area of the picture, transitioning from light blue to dark blue.</p>																								

 <p>Title:Peace, Love and Understanding</p> <p>Concept: Children from various countries wore traditional costumes and played traditional musical instruments. Children and angels worked together to create sculptures of doves of peace and painted national flags.</p>	 <p>Title: Our World, Our Future</p> <p>Concept: A huge dove of peace is holding children in a tree hole. The children are painting the world with paint brushes. The tree trunk is composed of national flags.</p>																								
<p>Signifier: children, flags, pigeons, musical instrument</p>	<p>Signifier: children, tree, flags, pigeons, earth</p>																								
<p>Signified: The poster uses traditional costumes and musical instruments to highlight the differences in cultures around the world, but the desire for peace is the same.</p>	<p>Signified: The dove of peace is personified to protect children, expressing the appeal for peace and the innocence of children.</p>																								
 <p>300x410 pixels, RGB, 480K</p> <p>Count: 1888512 rMean: 162.83 rSD: 61.43 rMode: 247 gMean: 161.136 gSD: 79.06 gMode: 242 bMean: 170.567 bSD: 59.586 bMode: 237</p>	 <p>300x410 pixels, RGB, 480K</p> <p>Count: 2418600 rMean: 111.839 rSD: 79.63 rMode: 19 gMean: 108.890 gSD: 74.197 gMode: 16 bMean: 107.279 bSD: 72.830 bMode: 21</p>																								
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<p>Brief description of color application: Blue and white are the main colors.</p>	<p>Brief description of color application: The background is blue and the main visual is white.</p>																								

Color Analysis

Statistical quantification of the colour can be found in the selected 15 works; the use of red is the most, compared to the total number of green and blue, which are higher than 111.097 and 116.846 levels, respectively; the average 0 to 256 levels higher than green and blue are 6.8 and 7.78 levels, respectively; and the difference is not significant.

Table 3. Color Analysis Results

Color	Total (up to 156*15=3072 levels)	Average (rounded to the second decimal place)
Red	2389.121 levels	159.27 (Total level 256)
Green	2287.024 levels	152.47 (Total level 256)
Blue	2272.275 levels	151.49 (Total level 256)

In addition, from the colour mode of each analysis, it can be observed that each poster mainly uses secondary colours and, less often, direct red, green, and blue, so the three basic primary colours have a probability of being used. Red is the most used colour because red itself has the colour imagery of courage and strength; many national flags and other colours must be used; the colour association of red is also related to ideals and hope; followed by green because red and green are complementary colours, and using them in the same picture can make the picture coordinated; and some creators use olive leaves, which are a symbol of peace, to create their work, so they need to use green. Some creators used olive

leaves, a symbol of peace, and the natural environment to create their work, thus requiring the use of green. Creators primarily use blue, the second most used colour after the first two, to express the colour scheme of the sky and the earth.

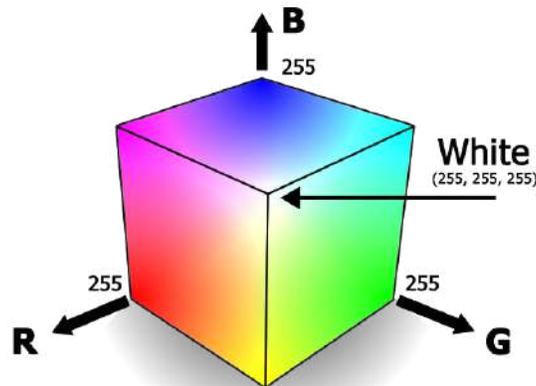


Figure 4. Color Mode
 (Source: Antoniadis, 2014)

Signifier Analysis

From the signifier analysis statistics in Table 4, it can be observed that more than five items are the flag, dove, earth, and child, which are signifiers themselves belonging to the relatively direct and commonly used elements of peace on the genealogical axis, and most of these signifiers are composed of red colour in the flag and the child's clothes, so that it can be observed the reason for the comparatively high usage of red colour. The rest of the signifiers, from highest to lowest, are earth, peace sign, olive branch, green leaf, president, sun, love sign, sky, candle, musical instrument, and others. Most of these symbols are also directly associated with peace. Cake and kettle, on the other hand, are syntagm signifiers that are only associated with people who have thought about them or shared experiences with them. There is only one signifier for DNA: feathers, cakes, dogs, ribbons, paint, helicopters, woollen needles, and other unique peace elements. Additionally, the creators no longer focus on peace elements like flowers and trees, despite their frequent use in the past.

Table 4. Signifier Analysis Statistics

Unit Project	Quantity	Unit Project	Quantity
Flag	12	Candle	3
Dove	12	Musical notes	3
Olive branch	6	President	4
Peace sign	2	Rainbow	3
DNA	1	Ribbons	1
Earth	8	Doctor	2
Feathers	1	Firefighter	2
Electronics	1	Policeman	2
Sun	3	Helicopter	1
Knitting needle	1	Sky	3
United Nation logo	2	Robot	3
Child	13	Musical Instrument	2
Love logo	3	Paint	1
Green leave	4	Panda	3

Kettle	2	Lion	3
Cake	1	Dog	1
Total: 119			

CONCLUSION

This conclusion explores the relationship between Saussure's semiotic theory and colour; in the design of peace posters, the colour imagery of red is the most direct and often chosen, and it is a paradigm of the peace symbol; the colour imagery of red is a colour with greater visual stimulation and higher luminance, which is solid and exciting to the human psyche, and the colour red contains emotional meanings such as blood, courage, faith, perseverance, yearning, and hope. Red carries emotional meanings such as fervour, courage, faith, persistence, aspiration, and hope, among others. People also view it as a symbol of vitality. By quantifying the colours and comparing them with the signifier analysis, it becomes clear that the flag, dove, child, and other related paradigm signifiers remain the primary signifiers of the peace theme. Additionally, creators often combine these selected elements from the syntagm with other elements to complete their creations. Therefore, this study reveals that creators seeking to deviate from previous peace theme works must employ the syntagm's signifier, resulting in a relatively reduced use of green and blue colours, although the difference is not statistically significant.

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Exploring the Element of Form Based on Traditional Chinese Auspicious Patterns

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ABSTRACT

Chinese traditional auspicious patterns, which date back more than 5,000 years, are a vital component of national art and traditional culture. These patterns have special meanings and are often associated with good wishes and blessings. Their development reached its peak in the Ming and Qing Dynasties. This research on auspicious patterns focuses mainly on the creation method and classification, with few forms. It seeks to ascertain the features of the traditional auspicious pattern form in China. This study adopts qualitative analysis, specifically in analyzing patterns by observation. Based on Panofsky's theory of iconography, the study selected six common Chinese traditional auspicious patterns and analyzed them to determine their classification, layout, composition and elements. It can be concluded that their form is characterized by various elements, specifically figurative and complete, complex pattern formations, full layout designs, balanced or symmetrical compositions, and single or fit patterns. Thus, this study summarized the pattern form analysis model or the PFC-Model. By addressing this gap in knowledge, the study enhances understanding of auspicious patterns. At the same time, the pattern analysis model can be used to analyze similar patterns, which makes it easier to analyze other pattern forms and brings the study of traditional Chinese patterns to a new height. In the meantime, this research only studies the external form of auspicious patterns. In this regard, as form and color is the first layer of research mentioned in Panofsky's image theory, it needs to be more comprehensive. In the future, researchers can continue to explore its color characteristics and extend the research into the content of the first layer of the theories. Undoubtedly, researchers can also expand the analysis of auspicious patterns using the theory's second and third layers.

Keywords: *Chinese tradition, Auspicious patterns, Form characteristics, Elements.*

INTRODUCTION

A vital component of traditional culture and national art, Chinese traditional auspicious pattern art is the outcome of the nation's five centuries of cultural accumulation. "Auspicious patterns" are patterns that contain good wishes or blessings. Its history dates back to the primitive age, and several components of the pattern's unique importance first emerged during the Song Dynasty. The Ming and Qing periods produced the most well-known and common patterns that are still in use today.

There are numerous studies on auspicious patterns. However, they mainly focused on their meanings, creation methods and themes, with little research on their formal characteristics. Yuan (2021) defined auspicious patterns as expressing the meanings of fortune, auspiciousness, happiness, wealth, promotion and longevity. The method of its creation can be summarized into the harmonic method, the symbolic method and the literal method. Harmonization refers to the replacement of words with the same pronunciation; for example, in Mandarin, the word 'bat' and 'happiness' are both pronounced 'Fu', and in this context, bat is used instead of happiness. In the meantime, symbolism means that an object has a symbolic meaning. For example, as cranes and turtles have a long lifespan, they are commonly used to symbolize longevity. Lastly, the literal method refers to the use of words to directly express the meaning. For instance, the word "Fu" is used directly in the pattern to express happiness (Han, 2022). Its subject matter is often based on auspicious animals, plants, auspicious and terms. These include auspicious animals such as mandarin duck, bat, deer, crane, magpie, fish, dragon, phoenix, and unicorn, auspicious plants such as osmanthus, lotus, peony, orchid, plum, bamboo, and pine, and auspicious words such as longevity, happiness, fortune and promotion (Wang, 2020). Auspicious patterns are composed of several elements with different graphic elements and combination forms. They also have different external forms, and their formal characteristics are worth studying.

This study is based on Panofsky's theory of iconography, one of the most influential methods of studying artworks in the 20th century. The theory interprets works of art from the perspective of iconography, restores them to an actual historical environment, and studies them from the visual and cultural standpoint (Wang & Ma, 2023). Panofsky divided the theory of iconography into three levels. As shown in Figure 1, the first level is the pre-iconographical description, which refers to the natural theme of describing the image. It is understood by recognizing pure forms. This level mainly focuses on visual elements such as image, shape, color and composition in artistic works. To obtain an accurate interpretation at this level, the researcher must understand the work's elements and confirm the expression theme to clarify its natural meaning. The second level is iconographical analysis, a traditional theme based on the description of the first level. It mainly refers to the traditional cultural level of images or artistic works, that is, to analyze the meaning of images by understanding the elements and themes in image works and combining their historical and cultural characteristics. The purpose is to analyze the subject-matter source and explain the image's traditional meaning. The third level is iconological interpretation, which is the inner symbolic meaning of the works of art. It refers to the deep meaning that the artist wants to express in his works, that is, the symbolic significance, which requires the viewer to have integrated cultural knowledge and understand how the spiritual tendencies of human nature under different historical conditions can express their symbolic meanings through specific themes and images. The goal is to determine why certain artists present certain subjects in certain styles and ways at certain times and places (Wang & Ma, 2023).

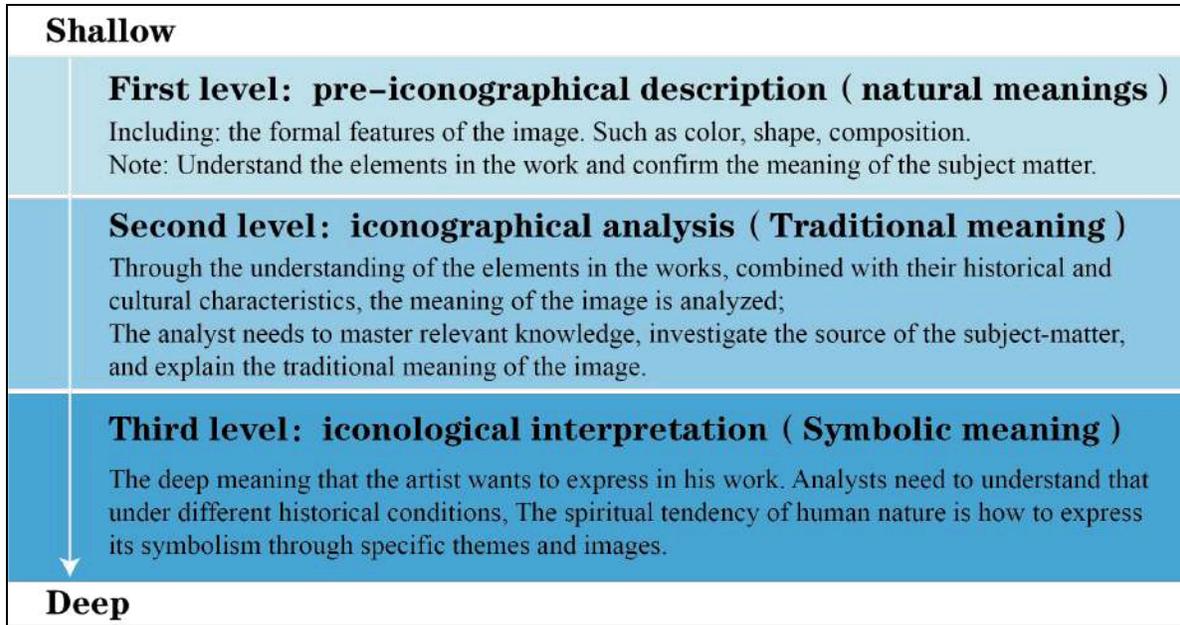


Figure 1. Panofsky's theory of iconography
(Source: Researcher, 2024)

Chinese traditional auspicious patterns are works of art left by Chinese folk artists, and they can be analyzed using iconography. According to the theory, there are three levels of analysis. The visual representation of auspicious patterns can be identified in the first layer, known as the pre-iconographical description. It seeks to describe the form variants of auspicious patterns in different eras in order to understand the historical background for their performance. This study examines the formal properties of traditional Chinese auspicious designs. This study falls within the first of the three-level analysis in this theory. The first level is known as the pre-image description, which is the visual representation of auspicious patterns. Four factors are used in this study to examine the form's characteristics: elements, composition, arrangement, and classification. The purpose of this work is to analyze and synthesize their formal qualities to construct a model for pattern form analysis.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Research Status

There is a vast literature on the characteristics of traditional Chinese auspicious patterns. However, the existing literature mainly focuses on the characteristics of its creation method and classification without studying the characteristics of its color and form. The creation method and classification of auspicious patterns are essential as they reflect the difference between auspicious patterns and other traditional patterns. Thus, understanding them can accurately understand the cultural connotation of auspicious patterns (Yuan, 2021). Therefore, books and literature on auspicious patterns will introduce these characteristics. For example, Wang (2020) detailed the creation methods and classification characteristics of auspicious patterns. According to the literature, auspicious patterns have meaning, homophony, symbolism, and analogy in their expressive forms (Han, 2022), which clarifies its creative process instead of its formal attributes. In short, current research on the characteristics of auspicious

patterns has mainly focused on their creation methods and classification, and the research on their form characteristics needs to be more comprehensive and in-depth.

Auspicious Pattern Form Classification

Patterns are classified differently from different perspectives. In this study, they can be divided into four types: single pattern, suitable pattern and continuous pattern (Yang, 2020).

A single pattern is the most basic pattern and organizational form in pattern design, mainly referring to the absence of external outline and bone restrictions in shape, and structure can exist independently, with unquestionable integrity of the decorative pattern. Meanwhile, a fit pattern refers to the pattern composition suitable for a specific shape, among which the common forms are triangle, round square, hexagonal, semicircular, plum, plum blossom, peach gourd shape, and other shapes. The next is a continuous pattern, where the most prominent feature is the continuity of the pattern, with a sense of rhythm and rhythm.

Auspicious Pattern Form Composition

The pattern form is the most commonly used composition method to arrange the composition elements of patterns in a reasonable, orderly, and beautiful way. Commonly used composition methods are Balance, Expansion and Symmetry (Wang & Ding, 2022). Balance refers to the composition elements of different sizes added to the design that can make the whole picture balanced. Next is expansion, where the composition elements in the pattern appear in the picture in the form of extension, which brings the viewer a sense of continuous extension of the pattern from the sense of sense and attracts the viewer's attention in a unique visual form. Another composition method is symmetry. It refers to composing an image around a central point or on both sides of a Central Line, the upper and lower left and other directions of the modeling factors in the same shape, equal configuration, forming a symmetrical form; such a form has a strong sense of unity and a sense of integrity, but also bring the viewer a stronger sense of law.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts the qualitative analysis method. It combines observation with professional knowledge of pattern form and analysis of pattern form. The purpose of this study is to summarize the formal characteristics of auspicious patterns, based on the first level of Pannovsky's theory of iconography, and analyze aspects of shape, elements, layout, and composition. The classification of the pattern method is based on the shape of the pattern and is divided into individual patterns, suitable patterns, and continuous patterns. Therefore, the form analysis of auspicious patterns can be carried out based on pattern type, composition, layout, and elements. The following table specifies the elements analyzed in these four areas

Table 1. Analysis Aspects in the Form Characteristics of Auspicious Patterns

Aim	Aspects	Analysis Detail
The form characteristics of auspicious patterns	Classification	Single, fit, continuous, corner
	Layout	Full, Not full
	Composition	Balance,Expansion, Symmetry.

	Element	Kind (People, Animals, Plants, Object, Landscapes and Chinese characters) Number (The number of element kinds and the total number of elements) External form (figurative, abstract, partial, complete)
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The classification includes single, fit and continuous patterns. Traditional auspicious pattern layout is generally categorized into full and unfit, which is judged according to the white space left (Liu et al., 2020). The ordinary pattern composition methods include Balance, Symmetry and Expansion (Wang et al., 2022). The elements can be analyzed based on the quantity, kind and external form of elements. Species are people, animals, plants, landscapes, objects and Chinese characters. Quantity refers to the number of varieties and the total number of elements. External form refers to whether the element is abstract, figurative, local, or complete.

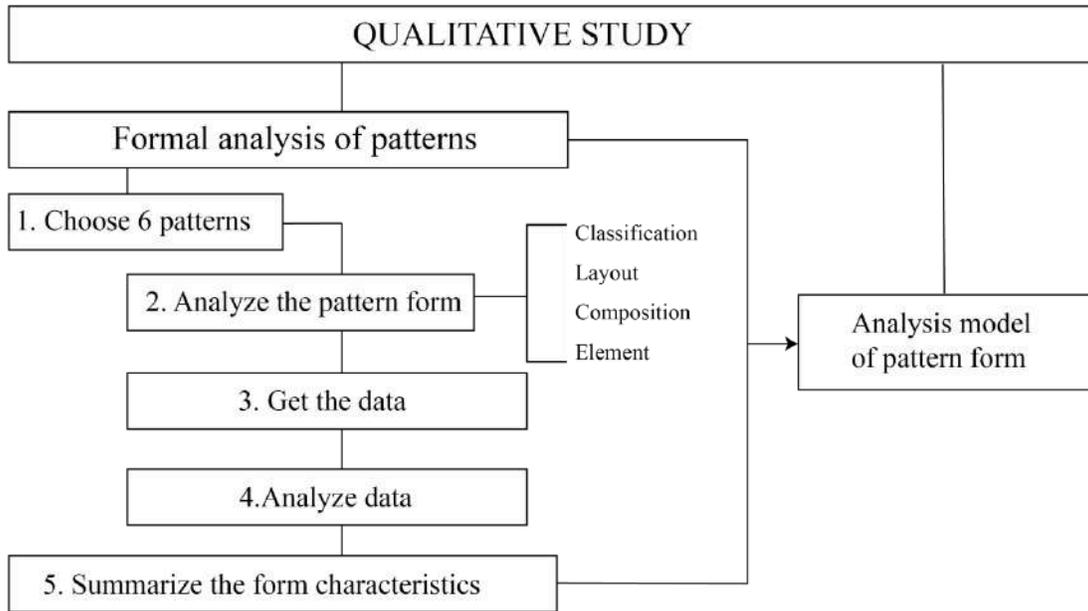


Figure 2. Research Framework
 (Source: Researcher, 2024)

The research framework of this study is shown in Figure 1. Qualitative analysis is used to analyze the pattern form, which is divided into five steps to complete the characteristics of pattern form analysis. The first step is to collect six auspicious patterns. Six distinct categories and style of auspicious patterns are chosen as study subjects. They were chosen, and the types and forms were as comprehensive as possible to ensure the accuracy and comprehensiveness of the analysis results. The second step is to analyze each auspicious pattern from classification, layout, composition and elements. The third step is to get the data of classification, layout, composition and elements; the fourth step is to analyze these data, and the fifth step is to summarize the form characteristics. Finally, the pattern form analysis model will be summarized based on the analysis of auspicious patterns.

FINDINGS

Pattern Form Analysis

Six auspicious patterns are analyzed from four aspects, namely, pattern classification, composition, layout and elements, and the characteristics and analytical models of the formal analysis of auspicious patterns are summarized.

Table 2 Xi Shang Mei Shao (A magpie on a branch of a plum) Pattern Form Analysis

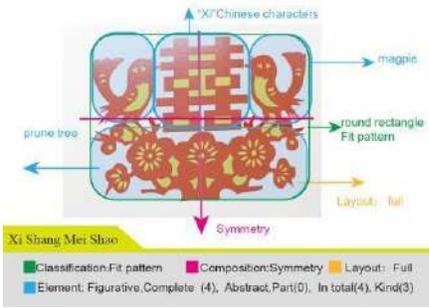
 <p>(Source: Researcher, 2024)</p>	Classification: Single pattern	It is a separate pattern, with several elements, composed of a whole figure.
	Composition: Symmetric	In the middle of the pattern is a double happy word, left and right a magpie, two magpies standing in a plum tree. It can be seen that the pattern is entirely symmetrical, so it belongs to the symmetrical composition.
	Layout: Full	Elements in the pattern fill almost the entire rectangle, so the layout is full.
	Elements: Figurative complete (4) In total (4), Kind (3)	The main elements are the magpie, plum tree and double happiness character 3. They are in complete and figurative form, of which two magpies, so the total number of elements is 4

Table 3 Nian Nian Da Ji (Every year is very auspicious) Pattern Form Analysis

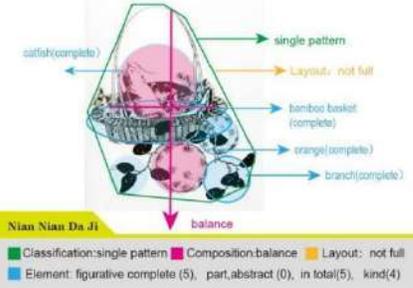
 <p>(Source: Researcher, 2024)</p>	Classification: Single pattern	A pattern consists of several images forming a whole and belonging to a single pattern.
	Composition: Balanced	The basket is in the middle of the pattern; it is upper and lower and left and right, and the distribution of elements can be seen through the central axis so that the picture is stable, so it is a balanced type.
	Layout: Not full	The shape of the pattern is irregular, and the surrounding white area is large, which does not belong to the full version.
	Elements: Figurative, Complete (5) In total (5), Kind (4)	There are four elements: catfish, bamboo basket, orange and its branches and leaves, all of which are complete figurative forms, of which two separate oranges count as two elements, so the total number is 5.

Table 4 Sui Han San You (Three friends of the cold) Pattern Form Analysis.

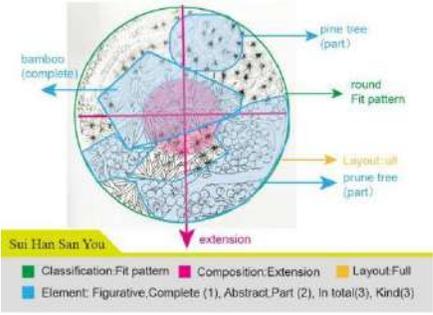
 <p>(Source: Researcher, 2024)</p>	Classification: Fit pattern	The shape of the pattern is circular, and all the elements belong to the fit pattern within it.
	Composition: Expansion	People can see that the elements in the pattern are local, and there is a sense of stretching around the pattern, so it belongs to the expansion type.
	Layout: Full	Its elements are arranged so tightly that they fill the whole circle. The composition is full, with almost no white space, and belongs to the full plate.
	Elements: Figurative, Complete (1) Part, Abstract (2) In total (3), Kind (3)	There are three kinds of elements: plum tree, bamboo and pine. Except for the bamboo in the middle, which is a complete piece, the others are local figurative forms. Because the graphics are interspersed together, there are many small elements which are not easy to count.

Table 5 Qi Lin Song Zi (The Kirin brings forth a child.) Pattern Form Analysis

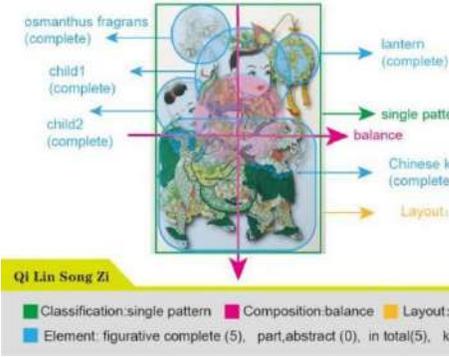
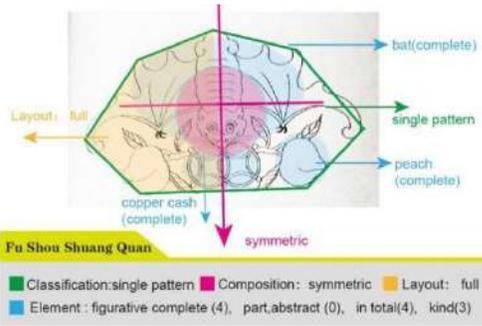
 <p>(Source: Researcher, 2024)</p>	Classification: Single pattern	It is a complete image belonging to a single pattern.
	Composition: Balanced	Children ride the kirin as the main body of the pattern, holding osmanthus flowers and lanterns in their hands so that the whole picture is balanced, belonging to the balanced type.
	Layout: Full	Its composition is complete, with a bit of white space around it, belonging to the full plat.
	Elements: Figurative, Complete (5) In total (5), Kind (5)	There are two characters: a unicorn, a flower branch and a lantern. A total of 5 elements and four types. The elements are complete and figurative graphic elements.

Table 6 Fu Shou Shuang Quan (Good luck and longevity both) Pattern Form Analysis

 <p>(Source: Researcher, 2024)</p>	Classification: Single pattern	It has an irregular shape and is a complete image of a single pattern.
	Composition: Symmetric	One can see from the central axis that the pattern is perfectly symmetrical on the left and right sides.
	Layout: Full	A little white space surrounds it and belongs to the full layout.
	Elements: Figurative, Complete (4) In total (4) Kind (3)	There are three elements: bats, copper coins and peaches, of which copper coins are attached as one element, and peaches are separated as two elements, so there are four elements in total. They are both complete and figurative graphic elements.

**Table 7 Yu Tiao Long Men (A fish jumped the dragon gate and became a dragon)
 Pattern Form Analysis**

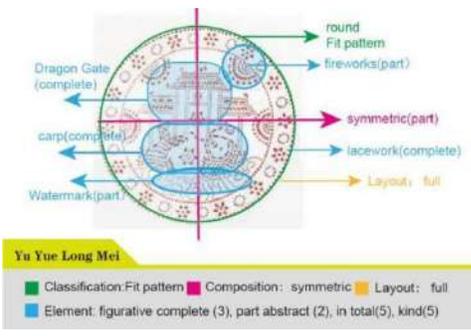
 <p>(Source: Researcher, 2024)</p>	Classification: Fit pattern	All its elements are inside the circle and belong to the fit pattern.
	Composition: Symmetric	One can see from the central axis that the pattern is basically symmetrical on the left and right sides.
	Layout: Full	All elements almost fill the circle and belong to the full plate.
	Elements: Figurative, Complete (3) Part, Abstract (2) In total (5) Kind (5)	In the middle of the circle is a fish, a dragon gate, and some water ripples (the expression of water is generally part and abstract); in the circular's inner space, incomplete fireworks are added. Its outer ring is composed of patterns of circular lace elements. So there are 5 elements, 2 partially displayed and 3 complete figurative elements.

Table 8. The Data Analysis Based on the Form Characteristics of Traditional Chinese Auspicious Pattern

Number	Classification	Constructs	Layout	Element				
				Figurative complete	part, abstract	Content	Kind	In total
Xi Shang Mei Shao	Single	Symmetric	Full	4(100%)	0	Magpie, plum tree and double happiness	3	4
Nian Nian Da Ji	Single	Balance	Not full	5(100%)	0	A catfish, a bamboo basket, two oranges and their leaves	4	5
Sui Han Shan You	Fit	Expansion	Full	1(33.3%)	2(66.7%)	Plum trees, bamboo and pine trees	3	3
Qi Lin Song Zi	Single	Balance	Full	5(100%)	0	Two characters, a unicorn, a flower branch and a lantern	4	5
Jin Yu Man Tang	Single	Balance	Full	5(90%)	1(10%)	A goldfish, some water plants, lotus flowers, lotus leaves and water	5	6

Yu Tiao Long Men	Fit	Symmetric	Full	3(60%)	2(40%)	A carp, a gantry, some water ripples, fireworks and lace	5	5
Proportion Analysis	Fit: 34%, Single:66%	Balance:50% Symmetric: 33% Expansion:17%	Full:83% Not full: 17%	82%	18%	The content of pattern elements is rich, and it includes human, animals, plants, objects and Chinese characters. The kind is very complete; there are no characteristics.	More than three 67%	More than three 83%
Form Characteristic	Mainly Single and a little fit pattern	Mainly for equilibrium and symmetry	It is almost always full	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Figurative and complete element • Almost always more than three element • The elements are more complex 				

After analyzing ten distinct types and contents of auspicious patterns, the above table shows that 80% of the layout is made up of the full plate, 83% is made up of a single pattern, 66% is made up of compositional balance, 33% is made up of symmetry, and 17% is made up of expansion. When it comes to elements, the abstract local elements make up 17% of the total, while the group of complete concrete elements makes up 82%. The rich material of the pattern elements consists of Chinese characters, objects, animals, and plants. The kind lacks any traits and is incredibly comprehensive. Additionally, more than three different element kinds make up 67%. Around 83% are made up of more than three parts. Therefore, the form attributes of auspicious patterns can be summed up as follows: The pattern is a complete plate with basically a single pattern and a small amount of appropriate patterns. The composition is primarily balanced and symmetrical, with more than three elements. Nearly all of the elements are concrete and complete, and the graphic elements are also somewhat sophisticate.

Pattern Form Characteristics Analytical Model

In conclusion, the formal characteristics of traditional Chinese patterns are dependent variables, which are summarized through the analysis of the four independent variables of 10 auspicious patterns, classification, layout, composition, and elements. This analysis technique is equally applicable to the formal properties of other patterns. Figure 3 displays the pattern-form characteristics analysis model.

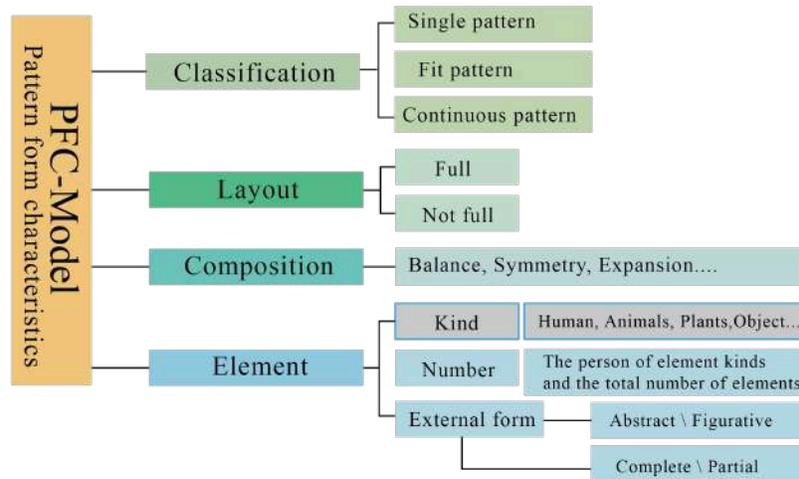


Figure 3. Analysis mode of pattern form characteristics(PFC-model)
 (Source: Researcher, 2024)

As shown in the figure, the characteristics of pattern form (dependent variables) can be analyzed based on the pattern classification, layout, composition, and elements (4 independent variables). The patterns can be divided into four classifications: single patterns, fit patterns, continuous patterns, and corner patterns. The layout can be distinguished from whether it is full. However, it is not limited to this because there are many layout forms, such as skeletal layout, segmented layout, triangular layout, axial layout, symmetrical layout, the center of gravity layout, free layout, and curve layout, which should be analyzed according to the characteristics of the layout of specific patterns. The composition can be classified according to commonly used composition forms. However, it is not limited to these, such as balance, symmetry and expansion. Elements can be analyzed regarding the kinds, numbers, and external elements. Kinds can be distinguished from humans, animals, plants, landscapes, and objects. The number of elements contains the number of element kinds and total elements. The external form of elements includes whether the elements are abstract or figurative, complete or partial.

CONCLUSION

This study has several theoretical and practical significance. Through the analysis of the classification, layout, composition, and elements of 10 ordinary auspicious patterns, the paper concludes with 5 notable findings on the form features of auspicious patterns. First, auspicious patterns are commonly used in full-plate form layouts. Second, pattern form is generally single and fit pattern and the pattern is mainly balanced and symmetrical, with a few expansions. Next, the form and number of elements are generally more than 3, indicating a complex pattern. Lastly, the external form of an element is generally complete figuratively. The study was able to develop the pattern analysis model, which can be used to analyze a single or similar pattern. These findings can fill the gap in formally characterizing auspicious patterns and enrich the content and scope of the study of auspicious patterns. In addition, the study derived patterns of pattern form analysis to guide the analysis of the form characteristics of similar patterns, which presents its practical significance.

Notably, this study only analyzed the external form of the patterns. As the first layer of Panofsky's image theory entails the visual image also includes color, future studies can present a more comprehensive analysis by focusing on the color characteristics of auspicious patterns and studying them in detail. Future studies can also expand into studying the second and third layers of the theory and continue to explore related elements of auspicious patterns.

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A Conceptual Framework in Curatorial Practices in New Media Art in the Malaysian Art Scene

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ABSTRACT

In Malaysia, technological devices such as computers were introduced as one of the art mediums to be used in the 1980s. New media art in Malaysia is often equated with electronic art, digital art, video, and media art. Thus, the objective of this paper is to identify the curatorial practices in new media art practice by the curators in the Malaysian art scene. This paper aims to construct a conceptual framework of curatorial practices in the new media art. This conceptual framework aims to highlight the main attributes and factors in curating new media art in Malaysia's art scene. The method used in this research is the Kawakita Jiro which extracts the keywords related to the curatorial practices through the literature reviews. The result shows that the curatorial practices in new media art disciplinary, application, concept, perception, production, integration, and awareness are the curatorial practices in new media in the Malaysian art scene, and the conceptual framework shows that the interrelation between each attribute of curatorial practices has contributed to facilitating the production of new media art.

Keywords: *New media, Curator, Perception, Awareness, Art scene.*

INTRODUCTION

New media art flourished in the 1990s as part of cross-disciplinary projects and performances in the field. This new modern art was introduced with the presence of Western painters who introduced the art movement to Malaysia at that time. The creation of visual art on canvas is the beginning of the wide development of visual art in Malaysia. Early art in Malaysia was considered unrefined because there was

no guidance or education in art, so travellers from the West, namely Europe and England, influenced Chinese or Malay painters to paint pictures of the environment to expand the field of art widely. For example, in 1983, Kamaruzaman Md. Isa used the same programming platform at Commodore 64 to produce his work entitled 'Self-Portrait', to be exhibited at the Faculty of Art and Design, ITM. Therefore, the development of electronic art in Malaysia was introduced rapidly following the wave of modernity around the 90s.

Behind the development of new media art, besides artists, some curators help artists introduce their work to the public. Curators are managers or supervisors of cultural or artistic heritage institutions, such as museums, art exhibitions, photo galleries, and libraries, but half of the curators are painters or artists. According to Mohamad Faizuan (2020), curators are also often tasked with selecting and managing museum objects or works of art on display. However, some think that art curators are people who work in the implementation of art exhibitions and other art events that are usually done in groups or form teams but are rarely done individually.

The issue that happened in the galleries is the preference of exhibiting artworks such as paintings and sculptures as major artworks to represent the gallery. It seems like the curator has faced challenges in handling the new media artworks. In this case, local artists are questioning the art institutions because the institutions are against exhibiting and presenting non-traditional artworks Shanken (2011). Therefore, there is a need to identify the practice of curatorialism in the Malaysian art scene, where the art scene is used to curate artworks that involve painting and sculpture.

LITERATURE REVIEW

New Media Art in Malaysia

As early as the 1980s, technological devices such as computers were introduced as one of the art mediums in Malaysia. The important thing is that the use of high-tech tools is not only aimed at making work easier but also able to produce images that reflect the cultural identity of Malaysia. New media art is often associated with the use of applications such as computers, laptops, or tablets and forms of work that are processed using software tools commonly used in word processing. New media art is also a medium that is often used in computer technology, especially in digital technology such as distribution, advertising, visual communication, or exhibition. Additionally, new media art flourished in the 1990s as part of cross-disciplinary projects and performances in the field.

New media art was introduced in the 1980s by local artists such as Ismail Zain, Hasnul Jamal Saidon, Ray Laganberg, and Baharudin Mohd Arus. The late Ismail Zain was the first painter in Malaysia who started using new media art in Malaysia and was then followed by Hasnul Jamal Saidon, Ray Laganberg, and Baharudin Mohd in developing new media art in the Malaysian art scene. According to Sarena Abdullah and Siti Khadijah Elham (2019), and Nur Hanim et al. (2013), one of the first new media art exhibitions in Malaysia was held in 1997 whereby many visitors came to see the collection of new media artworks such as computer art, light art, and video art.

According to Hasnul Jamal (2023), the virtual tour uses an existing location simulation, consists of a sequence of interesting videos or images, and uses the sound of music, narrative, and text in the work. In this regard, Google Art and Culture were introduced as an online platform that allows the public to view high-resolution images and videos of artworks around the world in order to see the works in the curator's exhibited collections more closely at home.

The new media art exhibition in 1997 made the articulating style of new media art a choice to introduce new media artworks among the new artists of the time. Thus, the exhibition in 1997 has provided evidence that the local art trend has experienced a modern change. The development of new media art in Malaysia began in the 1970s with the introduction of computer technology from foreign

countries, only through a small experiment in the production of artworks with the support of machines or computers. Nevertheless, according to Siti Khadijah (2020), video art is the first new media art; the beginning of Malaysia is marked by works produced digitally and then printed as an early exploration project around the 1980s. In addition, the development of new media art makes extensive use of computer devices in practices that integrate media and technology for software in manipulating images for production in the form of printing, digital, photography, and video presented on television.

For example, Ismail Zain's "Digital Collage" was created in 1988, which has included works such as "Al Kesah", "Magic Marker", and 'Nasyid', is a notable example of a digital print produced using a computer. Therefore, digital printing became a new way of creating Malaysian art, although a similar work was produced by Kamaruzaman Md. Isa using ASAS programming in "Self-Portrait" (1984). In addition, according to Issarezal and Setiawan (2019), new media is often associated with telecommunications, mass media, electronics, and digital in introducing artworks in Malaysia that begin with elements of painting, starting from conceptual art to new media art, performance, and exhibition at the art stage in Malaysia. For example, the first artist to go digital was Ismail Zain, who started producing his artwork using his Macintosh computer. Because of the use of technology in his artwork, he is called the forefather of new media art in Malaysia.

Curatorial practices

Art curators are described as developers and managers of new media artworks and other works of art in art galleries, museums, or institutions. Curators also play a responsible role in public relations and fundraising by implementing a programme of exhibitions of artworks, especially new media artworks, for the general public.

Curatorial practices in new media in Malaysia play an important element in curating works of art and new media, such as exhibiting high-quality and interesting art in international exhibitions at galleries or exhibitions. In addition, well-organised and successful art exhibitions by curators can increase awareness or understanding of art. According to Hasnul Jamal (2003), curatorial practices by curators play an important role in running exhibitions to give artists satisfaction in introducing artworks to the public. In 2016, Contemporary Young Talent 2016 (BMS '16) repeated history with the Contemporary Young Talent 2016 (BMS '16) award. According to Baharuddin (2019), new media art is electronic art that uses a lot of media production to advance the art, but galleries or museums benefit from the development of new media art. In addition, according to Mohd Yuszaidy and Muammar Ghaddafi (2015), new media art is less maintained because the selection of high-potential works is only important, such as "Wayang Utama" by Fairuz Sulaiman.

Curators' perceptions of new media practices in Malaysia play an important element in managing artworks and new media, such as exhibiting high-quality art exhibitions and attracting international exhibitions in galleries or exhibitions. In addition, according to Nazmine et al. (2021), in foreign countries, most artists shift direction from materials, media, tools, techniques, themes, or concepts in proposing ideas towards new media to facilitate their preparation. This is because new media art technology has the facilities or equipment to produce materials or works in new media. Moreover, this scholar mentions that most Western artists always have the imagination to practise and concentrate on the production of their work carefully. In Western countries, some artists have begun to use the natural environment combined with residential materials in designs that use new media art technology. Through new media art, the artist or artists use their work made using new media art as a curatorial communication tool for teaching or content. A Canadian-born artist named Les Levine has shown artists who create and create new media art. Around the 1960s, Les Levine worked in various fields of social, mass media, and mass communication channels. He often works with videotape, photo, and billboard technology. Nevertheless, in the age of sophistication in Western countries, artists mostly explore and innovate new media art technologies, consisting of virtual art, computer graphics, computer animation, digital art, interactive art, sound art, the Internet, video games, robotics, 3D printing, and cyborg art. However, curators are considered important to

artists in introducing and developing works of art, such as making exhibitions in galleries and museums. According to Mohamad Faizuan (2020), curators will manage, categorise, and be responsible for collecting and exhibiting art, especially new media works. Art curation is also considered an activity related to galleries. In addition, curators are seen as caretakers or researchers in the gallery. Art curator management is to preserve, care for, organise, and treat artworks in galleries or exhibitions.

In addition, according to Mohamad Faizuan (2020), curators often play a role in ensuring that everything always runs perfectly and smoothly without the knowledge of art lovers or the general public. However, according to Mohamad Faizuan (2020), the duties and roles of curators are still vague to the public. Many stated that the task or role of the curator is considered to be ‘hanging’ the artwork to be exhibited to the public. According to Mohamad Faizuan (2017), curators also play an important role in improving the development of art, especially in new media art. However, no one knows about curatorial management inside or outside media art galleries.

Therefore, in this study, the researcher wants to examine the curatorial practices of new media in the Malaysian art scene. Based on a local news article, curators bear a heavy responsibility in managing the services of those who are considered “great entertainers” and ‘defenders’ representing artists when a work of art is presented or exhibited (Latifah, 2015). Curators collaborate with artists by providing such spaces to work and interact. Various challenges face curators in new media art, such as dynamics in new media art and common problems in preserving new media artworks. In conclusion, this study will focus on curatorial practices in the context of new media art in Malaysia, paying attention to the responsibilities, challenges, and strategies used by curators in managing and presenting new media artworks.

<p>Disciplinary</p> <p>i. Knowlegde</p> <p>ii. Experience</p> <p>iii. Skills</p>	<p>Application</p> <p>i. Rules</p> <p>ii. Method</p> <p>iii. Concepts</p> <p>iv. Principles</p> <p>v. Theories</p>	<p>Concept</p> <p>i. Theme</p> <p>ii. Idea</p> <p>iii. Social</p>	<p>Perception</p> <p>i. Awareness</p> <p>ii. Understanding</p> <p>iii. Comprehension</p>
<p>Production</p> <p>i. Creative</p> <p>ii. Exhibition</p>	<p>Integration</p> <p>i. Teaching</p> <p>ii. Content</p>	<p>Awareness</p> <p>i. Practice and focus</p> <p>ii. Imagination</p>	

Figure 1. The attributes of curator perceptions in new media art in the Malaysian art scene.

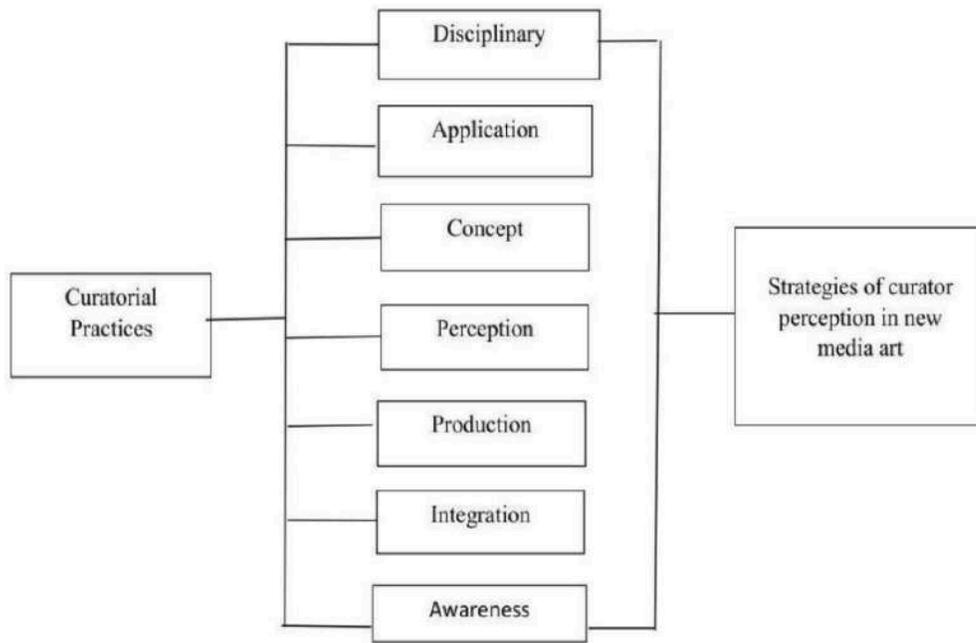


Figure 2. The diagram of new media keywords through the findings from the literature review.

Figure 2 highlights the diagram of new media keywords through the findings from the literature review. According to Mohamad Faizuan (2020) only prepares exhibitions. However, some parties only see curation as a creative activity and there is an overlap of roles between the artist and curator, for example, the artist becomes a curator, curator becomes the artist.

In terms of discipline, disciplining oneself in the production of new media artworks with the use of technology can help an artist transform or reintroduce old artworks using art technology that can provide new experiences. Additionally, self-discipline in skills can improve and facilitate an artist in the production of new media artworks, in 2020, Muhammad Khizal Saat created a work that uses digitally printed materials, ready-made printed materials, and collage on paper, titled “Fenomena 1”, measuring 23.4 x 33.1 inches. Through the curator’s perception, researchers will know about the meaning of discipline in general or in art. In terms of discipline, Gill (2013) mentioned a discipline is defined as a combination of content knowledge, experience, and skills combined with the ability to read, write, listen, speak, think critically, and perform in a meaningful way in a specific field context. New media art can be combined with old media such as painting based on how a painter uses self-discipline with knowledge in a combination of new and old media.

According to Gruyter (2016), an application is a computer program that is designed for a particular purpose. Meanwhile, Li (2019) suggested the application of one material to another or on another surface. Application in art is more of an act of placement, for example when a mark is left by a paintbrush, by an eye dropper loaded with dye, or by a crayon, pencil, or pen. Application in art can also refer to the application of knowledge or theory in new and concrete situations such as rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws and theories. The term application in art also refers to computer software, which also includes applications used in the field of art. Applications are rules, methods, concepts, and themes; for instance, ‘rules’ in the application are a comparison of work production methods such as old media, which use more conventional media and techniques, which are basic tools and media, and use less technological assistance. Examples of works are paintings, drawings, prints, and sculptures. As for new media, more technology-based new media and techniques are used. Examples of design are technology design graphics and multimedia. In addition, the method in the application is more about the use of technology or electronic equipment, for example, “Music from Inner-Outer” by Kamal Sabran in 2007 used interactive media installation materials. In the application, there is also a theory involved which is

the curator's theory which also explains the procedures for exhibiting works and discussing artistic considerations in making an impression in an exhibition.

The concept of curatorial practice is important in the new media practices. Hoede (2021), stated that a concept meaning in art is an important aspect of the work. For example, when an artist uses a conceptual art form, all planning and decisions are made in advance and the execution is important. The concept in the application is a theme or idea that is independent of the artist or curator. For example, concept themes from the past to the present in Malaysia are more Malay themes or ideas such as Hasnul Saidon works *Kedek Kedek Ong* (1994) and *Malam Hati Celik* (2022) and some also use Malay proverbs. In the production of new media works in the past, many electronic tools were used, and nowadays, the production of new media artworks can be combined with electronic tools and advanced technology such as the use of "Augmented Reality" (AR). For social concepts related to social issues, for example, Warung Wayang: DA+C Festival 2015 using material installation, live visuals, performances, and video animations.

Meanwhile, from a perception perspective, Demuth (2013) stated that perception in art means the complex relationship between visual stimulation and personal understanding of a work. It is a theory that aims to explain the relationship between a work of art and a person's opinion and evaluation. Perception is awareness and understanding. Consciousness in perception is more for artists who are now more sensitive and meticulous in producing new media works than before because nowadays there is a lot of use of electronics or technology. In this research, it is important to understand the perception, the curator must understand how to use electronic equipment and manage the artist and the artwork.

The same goes for 'production', the activity of organising the practical and financial matters relating to the preparation of a film, play, or television or radio program. Roy (2024) stated that the meaning of production is a creative professional who is responsible for producing a work or a product to be presented or exhibited to the public. Creativity in production is to generate the artist's creativity to work because now there are many tools or technologies that make it easier for artists, especially new artists. For exhibitions in production, artists or non-artists can also follow or participate in competitions or exhibitions such as the "Bakat Muda Sezaman" (BMS) competition.

The awareness of curatorial practices is also important in managing the new media art in the Malaysian art scene. According to Reinhardt (2012), awareness is knowledge and understanding of a particular activity or subject. Meanwhile, McQuire & Radywyl (2010) stated that it is more about exploring how to apply the tools of arts professionals' imagination, practice, focus and point of view. Practice and focus allow an artist to combine low technology with high technology such as AR, AI, PS, and others for practice and focus on the production of works. Imagination in consciousness is to create the artist's imagination and art practice. Therefore, through the curatorial practices, the researchers identified 7 keywords namely disciplinary, application, concept, perception, production, integration, and awareness that practices in the new media art. Furthermore, the researcher has proposed a conceptual framework for curatorial practices in new media art in the Malaysian art scene.

METHODOLOGY

In this study, the researcher employs the Kawakita Jiro (KJ) method, a technique known for its effectiveness in analyzing and emphasizing ideas, particularly within unstructured information (Scupin, 1997; Munemori & Nagasawa, 1991). The KJ Method, also referred to as the Affinity Diagram, was developed by Japanese anthropologist Jiro Kawakita in the 1960s. It is widely utilized in fields such as business, project management, and design to organize ideas, data, and insights into meaningful clusters or groups. The researcher applies the KJ method by focusing on selected keywords from the Literature Review (LR). In Figure 3, the process involves extracting these keywords from journals and catalogues, where they are identified as attributes. New main attributes are then categorized based on the grouping of

these attributes, which were derived from the literature review. The primary objective of using the KJ method in this context is to construct a conceptual framework for curatorial practices in new media art within the Malaysian art scene.

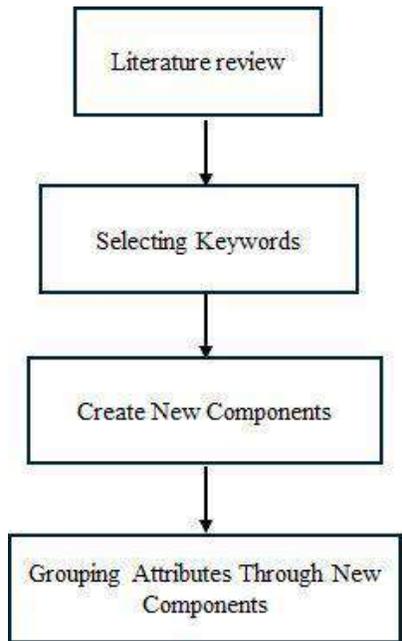


Figure 3. The process of extracting new attributes

FINDINGS

Tables 1: The new components of curatorial practices and contributions from the literature reviews.

Authors	Curatorial Practices	Type of literature review	Contribution
Gruyter (2016)	Application	Narrative review	Based on the application researcher's view, there is a theory involved, which is the curator's theory, which also explains the procedure of exhibiting works and discusses artistic considerations in making an impression in an exhibition.
Hoede (2021)	Concept	Systematic review	Based on the research, curating new media art involves an extensive understanding of conceptual theories of art along with the technological possibilities that may be harnessed to provide an impactful and thought-provoking encounter.
Demuth (2013)	Perception	Narrative review	It is important to understand the perception, the curator must understand how to use electronic equipment and manage the artist and the artwork.

Roy (2024)	Production	Narrative review	The production of new media art and curatorial roles are closely intertwined, with curators playing an important role in shaping the final presentation of technologically complex artworks. Their involvement ensures that the conceptual and technical aspects of the artwork are seamlessly integrated, resulting in a cohesive and effective exhibition.
Reinhardt (2012)	Awareness	Narrative review	Awareness of curatorial practices is crucial for the effective presentation and interpretation of art, particularly in the dynamic and evolving field of new media. This awareness involves understanding the multifaceted role of the curator, the impact of their decisions on the exhibition, and the broader cultural and social implications of their work.
Gill (2013)	Discipline	Narrative review	Discipline as defined here reflects a comprehensive approach to mastering a field. It's about more than just acquiring information; it's about the ability to use that information effectively, think critically, and perform competently within a specific context, while continuously growing and adapting.

Based on Table 1, the main attributes are discipline, application, concept, perception, production, integration and awareness are the main attributes that represent curatorial practice. Additionally, other attributes were extracted from the literature review. For example, in a discipline, attributes consist of content knowledge, experience, and skills equated with the ability to think critically and perform in a meaningful way in a specific field context. Application in art refers to the application of knowledge or theory in new and concrete situations, such as rules, methods, concepts, principles, laws, and theories. The concept in the application represents a theme or idea that is independent of the artist or curator. Perception in art refers to understanding in awareness and perceptual understanding. Creative in production for exhibition. Integrated content teaching about art from curators or artists. Awareness in the art of imagination, practice and focus.

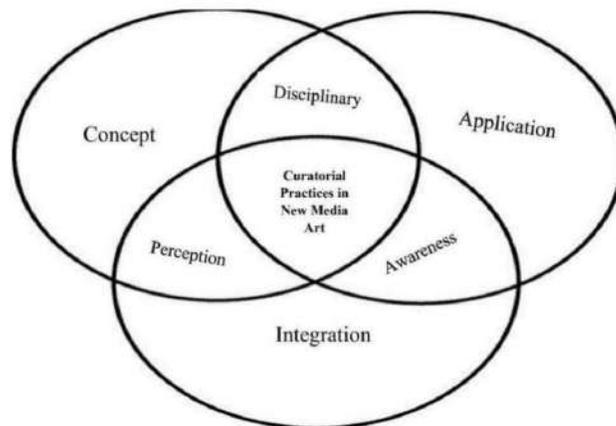


Figure 4. Proposed conceptual framework of curatorial practices in new media art in the Malaysian art scene.

Based on Figure 4, the conceptual framework is constructed based on the concept, discipline, application, perception, integration, and awareness and these attributes are integrated. Through this framework, this practice would create a relationship with the attributes and form new knowledge in new media art. Nevertheless, between concepts and applications, there is a discipline in the production of new media artworks in the use of technology that can help an artist transform or reintroduce old artworks using art technology that can provide new experiences and initiate the development of new media art in Malaysia's art scene. This would encourage the curators to combine the traditional and modern ways of curating new media exhibitions. The integration of the attributes and relating them to contemporary art in the Malaysian art scene have led to curatorial practices in new media art. In addition, this also motivates the curator to become more responsive to technological innovations and the changing of new media art throughout the years.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, new media art has challenged curators to handle the new media as there would be more modern and technological tools in creating the artworks. Besides, the curators need to encourage the artists to work more closely, especially in the use of new media technology in the production of works. This is because the collaboration in the production of art with technology has given birth to artists who deepen the use of new media technology as an important tool in producing their works in the art scene in Malaysia. Nevertheless, the sophistication of new media technology in Malaysia in producing new media artworks can change the design or processing of traditional artworks such as paintings, photographs, and sculptures to be modernised as a new form by using advanced technology or called new media that makes it easier for painters to create works. New media art is more digital art or electronic art such as use on the internet, graphic art, and many other arts that involve new media technology artistically and practically. Curators should work together to help artists and the curator is considered the leader in every public art exhibition and also promote artworks to the public.

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Short videos of Great Artists on the Douyin platform: Content Analysis and Value

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ABSTRACT

Modern Chinese artists differ significantly in terms of their dissemination power. Some famous artists' short videos can receive hundreds of millions of likes, while others can only get sporadic likes. Xu Beihong, a Chinese modern painter and art educator, played a pivotal role in the history of contemporary Chinese art. The study aim is to explore the common value characteristics of great artists' short videos and fill the research gap by analysing the content, subject matter, and presentation forms related to the artist. Based on the theory of art economics, the study takes the top 100 liked short videos of Xu Beihong on the Douyin platform as the research object. First, the accounts that posted these short videos were analysed. Second, content analysis is used to categorise the content of these short videos. Finally, the value behind the data was assessed. Research has found that many short video accounts featuring artists include commercial windows, and many of these short video contents involve commercial aspects. Favourable evaluations of artists are often associated with higher commercial value of the artworks. The results indicate that audience participation and interaction with artworks offer considerable value on short video platforms. Artworks presented through these new channels provide aesthetic and experiential value. The commercialisation of these artworks represents the value derived from audience behaviour and engagement.

Keywords: *Artist short videos, Art economics, Content analysis, Art dissemination*

INTRODUCTION

With the rise of China's digital technology, short video platforms have gradually become one of the essential channels for contemporary art dissemination as an emerging form of digital media. As of June 2023, the number of Chinese Internet users reached 1.079 billion, and the number of online audiovisual users reached 1.04 billion, surpassing instant messaging and becoming the most extensive application of the Chinese Internet (China et al. Center, 2023). The development trend in this digital era is shifting from one-way communication to interactive engagement, and knowledge creation and commercial operation have become widely focused research areas in the dissemination of short video art. Douyin, known as TikTok internationally, is a music-centric creative short video social app incubated by ByteDance. Due to cultural and regulatory differences, Douyin and TikTok have particular distinctions. According to the 2022 Douyin Knowledge Data Report, the volume of knowledge-related content on Douyin increased by 35.4%, with humanities knowledge being one of the fastest-growing content domains for creators with tens of thousands of followers (Developers of the QQ instant messaging platform, 2022). Artists and cultural institutions actively use short videos as a new avenue for contemporary art dissemination and seeking commercial opportunities. Researchers have found that artists and cultural institutions actively use short videos as a new avenue for disseminating contemporary art and seeking commercial opportunities. Based on this background, this study focuses on the short videos of the renowned Chinese artist Xu Beihong on the Douyin platform. By employing content analysis methods, this study aims to explore the cultural and commercial values embedded in disseminating art through short videos.

Mr. Xu Beihong, a great and respected artist and art educator, played a pivotal role in modern Chinese painting history. He studied oil painting in France and later became the Central Academy of Fine Arts president upon his return to China. His painting style was deeply influenced by traditional Chinese culture while incorporating Western realistic techniques, resulting in a unique personal style. This research focuses on short videos featuring the renowned Chinese artist Xu Beihong. It employs content analysis to conduct an in-depth analysis, aiming to identify the common value characteristics of these short videos. To better understand the methods and significance of art dissemination of Xu Beihong's works on short video platforms, this study aims to identify the common value characteristics and expected outcomes of renowned artists' dissemination in the digital age through the historical and cultural significance of the artist's short video works. This is mainly reflected in audience interaction and feedback after viewing, the effectiveness of art dissemination methods, and the commercial operation models of artists' short videos.

However, achieving artistic value requires commercialising art dissemination on short video platforms, which presents challenges. Therefore, in-depth research on the value of art dissemination on short video platforms contributes to integrating and developing digital media and art and provides new ideas and pathways for promoting and disseminating contemporary art.

As an emerging science, art economics combines the development of art and economics. Its research scope includes the cost of art production, operational rules, etc., with a critical task being to elucidate the particularity of art consumption and the realisation of artistic product value. This study explores the commercial operation of short video platforms and their cultural value as contemporary art dissemination channels against China's rising digital technology. However, there still needs to be a research gap in the in-depth analysis of specific characteristics of renowned artists on short video platforms. This study attempts to fill this gap and provide a more comprehensive empirical analysis of this field. Research on the commercial and cultural value of artists on short video platforms has yet to be a focus in previous studies within art economics. This study aims to fill this gap. It will conduct an in-depth analysis of the specific characteristics of renowned artists on short video platforms. This approach provides a unique opportunity for disseminating these artists' works and educates the public about art and culture, contributing to the value transformation of art commercialisation. In the continuously evolving

landscape of digital art dissemination, this research is crucial for promoting effective and innovative methods among artists, cultural institutions, and policymakers.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Artistic and commercial value

Australian scholar Throsby (2000) argues that culture is a unique commodity with non-economic attributes such as artistic, historical, and cultural identity, and its value encompasses commodity, social, and cultural value. The secondary dissemination of cultural products can bring new benefits and opportunities, but it may also harm the original creators' or producers' economic and moral interests. Swiss scholar, Bruno (2013) discusses the differences between the cultural and artistic field and other financial fields, addressing market mechanisms in the cultural and artistic sector, incentives for artists, and the impact of cultural and artistic activities on society. Horowitz proposed that Western cultural and artistic economics form the basic framework for digital art economics, which has practical significance in analysing the digital art industry's economic development, business models, and market operations (Noah, 2014). These three books focus respectively on the intrinsic and social value of cultural arts, the relationship between finance and the market, and the role and particularities of culture in the economic market. However, there are some differences and similarities in viewpoints between artistic and commercial values. With the support of the internet and digital technologies, the integration of art and commerce has become an inevitable trend.

Value of Short Video Art Communication

Integrating art economy and technology, particularly in the internet and digital technology, presents breakthrough points for innovative development (Xi et al., 2021). The commercialisation of art products and the inevitable trend of art "marrying" business involve historical, artistic, and economic values. Seeking economic value from art and artistic value from economics helps elucidate the value discovery of art products (Lin, 2006). Moreover, digital content creation and the development of social media can foster a new group of active cultural participants (Russo & Watkins, 2008). These studies suggest that integrating the art economy and technology provides a new impetus for commercialising and marketizing art. The growth of social media offers new opportunities for artists and cultural institutions, serving as new avenues for cultural dissemination and engagement.

Further investigation into the functionalities and usage of social media platforms like TikTok is emphasised, highlighting the significant changes in our digital society and the art market brought about by social media (Gerlieb, 2021). From a historical perspective, re-examining and redefining art experts from ancient times to the present explores popular notions about social media engagement and professionalism in the art world (Russo & Watkins, 2008). Additionally, the life experiences of artists and their interactions with followers positively impact the popularity of their artworks. However, these interactions have minimal effect on their artistic creation despite artists' expectations for more likes (Kang et al., 2019). These studies demonstrate that social media changes the modes of art dissemination and influences interaction behaviours and creative motivations. Technology and social media are increasingly important in the art economy market. New interaction and dissemination methods are expected to evolve, driving the art commercialisation process.

Audience Engagement in Fine Arts Short Videos

During the pandemic, the online dissemination of art has demonstrated advantages such as speed, broad coverage, three-dimensionality, and vividness, enabling art to overcome restrictions of time and space and gain wider attention and recognition (Zhou, 2022). Short video platforms play an essential role in promoting the dissemination and innovative promotion of traditional culture. They can achieve instant recording and information replication across time and space and utilise social media for interactive communication and node diffusion. They seek cross-domain cooperation to demonstrate the connotation and extension of excellent traditional culture (Huang et al., 2023). Short videos in the field of fine arts need to adapt to the development of the times, where the audience is not only the appreciator of short videos but also the disseminator and re-creator. Through interactive interactions such as comments and exchanges, the audience can gain a deeper understanding of artworks and mutually promote creators, forming a virtuous cycle and jointly promoting the development of short videos in fine arts (Wu, 2022). Short video platforms serve as new carriers for art communication, providing broader opportunities and platforms for disseminating and marketing artworks while providing more convenient and comprehensive ways for interaction and communication between the audience and creators. The audience's active participation increases the social value of short video art communication, helping creators and audiences better understand, appreciate, and create art, thus bringing more value to the platform.

Xu Beihong, a significant figure in modern Chinese art history and a pioneer in contemporary Chinese art education, has a unique commercial potential due to his significance in Chinese art history. The audience's interaction with Xu's engaging artworks on short video platforms creates an emotional resonance. This resonance enhances the cultural connotation of the works while also bestowing them with commercial value. On TikTok, American painter and sculptor Bartosz Beda uses the platform to promote his work. In just one month, he gained thousands of followers and numerous orders. This study employs effective data sources, such as high-frequency words and sentiment analysis, which reflect the audience's commercial interest and cultural recognition of renowned artists. By combining art economics theories, this study elucidates the economic value of artists and their artworks on short video platforms. Additionally, communication theories are used to explain the role of artists' short videos in cultural dissemination.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research will focus on the highly praised short videos of Xu Beihong, a well-known Chinese artist on the Douyin platform. The sample selection follows two principles: relevance to the artist and high dissemination and influence on social media. By manually searching for keywords on the Douyin platform using the artist's name and sorting the results based on the number of likes, 213 data entries were obtained. During data cleaning, duplicate data and data unrelated to the research topic were excluded, resulting in a final selection of 100 short video samples with over 500 likes for further study in the past three years. The data collection period was until November 20, 2023, to ensure the timeliness and reliability of the data. directly import collected. This text data is collected from online tool 'GooSeeker' for Chinese word segmentation and sentiment analysis. The tool automatically segments the text and generates word frequency tables, which can then be used to create word clouds. This online tool comes with a built-in sentiment dictionary and supports custom dictionaries. According to the dictionary, each segmented word is classified into positive, neutral, or negative sentiment categories. One-click sentiment analysis calculates the sentiment tendency of sentences, which can be downloaded into sentiment analysis tables.

The data processing methods primarily employ a combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches. This includes statistical and content analysis of account categories, text descriptions, title word frequencies, sentiment, audiovisual content, and categorise the top 100 most liked short videos (Table 1). The goal is to reveal the value and impact of outstanding artists' short videos in art dissemination from an art economics perspective. The analytical framework of this study includes the following aspects: First, Analysing the types of short video accounts and their commercial attributes to understand the account holders' impact on the dissemination effectiveness of short videos. Second, conduct word frequency and sentiment analysis on the titles of published short videos to comprehend the perceived value expressed in the video content, and third, Investigate the visual and auditory content of the short videos to explore how production quality and creativity affect dissemination effectiveness and audience response. Finally, from the perspective of art economics, high-view short videos by prominent influencers are analysed to determine the value manifestation in art dissemination and draw corresponding conclusions.

Table 1. Sample of Short Video Images – The Content Analysis

NO	Short Video Images	Classification of Video Content	Image Source
1		Paintings	Douyin Account: Yajian Cultural Relics and Artistic Masterpieces (雅鉴文物艺术臻品)
2		Video Bloggers	Douyin Account: Zhao Jian's Reading Diary (赵健的读书日记)
3		Old Photos Of Celebrities	Douyin Account: Third Young Master Trendy Wind (三少爷潮风)

4		Celebrities Films & TV Shows	Douyin Account: Celebrities' affairs (名人那些事儿)
5		Real & Fake	Douyin Account: Shangzhen Calligraphy and Painting (尚真书画)
6		Copying Process	Douyin Account: Minghua168888
7		The Auction Scene	Douyin Account: Home of Artworks (艺术品之家)

(Source: Short video images by author, 2024)**

FINDINGS

Analysis of Short Video Account Situation

This research analysed the account situation of 100 famous short video bloggers. The commercialisation ratio of these accounts is shown in Figure 1. Among the short video bloggers engaged in artistic evaluation on the Douyin platform, many accounts with enterprise certification are involved in commercial art businesses. In comparison, a higher rate of personal and other accounts has set up art product showcases. The percentage of accounts engaged in commercial activities is 70%. This indicates that artistic dissemination on short video platforms is a purely cultural and creative expression with commercial value and market demand.

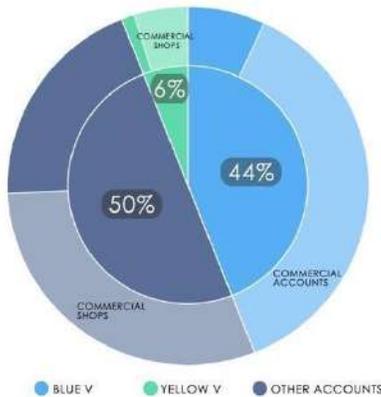


Figure 1. Account types as a percentage
 (Source: by author, 2024)

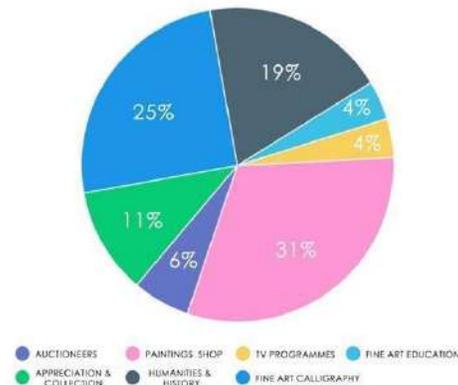


Figure 2. Short video account content classification
 (Source: by author, 2024)

At the same time, this research classified the textual introductions of the 100 short video blogger accounts into different content categories. The percentage distribution is shown in Figure 2. It can be seen that the percentage of accounts related to the commercial field, such as "calligraphy and painting stores" and "appreciation and collection," is relatively high, indicating the level of activity in the art market and the pursuit of art collectors. The percentage of accounts related to the cultural field, such as "fine arts and calligraphy" and "humanities and history," is relatively high, reflecting the audience's interest in art disciplines and cultural and historical fields. On the other hand, the percentage of accounts related to the service field, such as "art auction companies" and "art education," is relatively low. Still, it reflects the demand for art market and art education in art economics.

Analysis of Title Word Frequency and Sentiment

This research used an online word cloud tool to analyse the frequency of words in the titles of popular short videos. The phrase cloud analysis in Figure 3 shows that the larger the font size of a word, the higher its frequency of occurrence. Analysing the high-frequency words, the following characteristics of short videos in terms of titles can be observed: Firstly, they emphasise the value of traditional Chinese art and culture, with words such as "Chinese painting," "traditional," and "China." Secondly, they focus on the collection and appreciation of artworks, with words such as "collection," "appreciation," and "calligraphy and painting." Thirdly, they pay attention to artists and their works, with words such as "Xu

culture, the short videos featured many artists' artworks, TV dramas, and old photographs, reflecting the audience's attention and love for the personal stories behind the artists and their works. On the other hand, from a commercial perspective, this study found that the highly rated short videos included personal evaluations and opinions from short video bloggers, reflecting the interactive and social nature of secondary dissemination of art on short video platforms, which helps to promote the vibrancy and development of the art market.

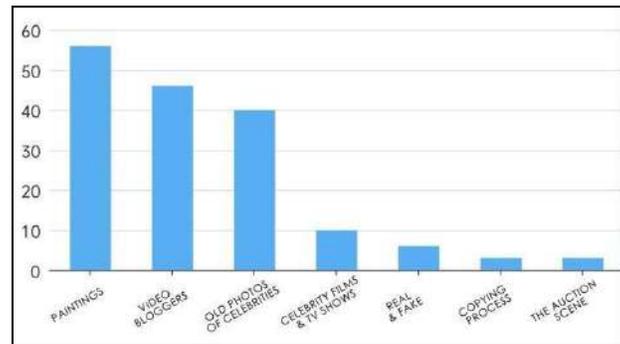


Figure 5. Content and frequency of short video Images
(Source: by author, 2024)

Simultaneously, this research also conducted a statistical analysis of the auditory content in 100 highly rated short videos, revealing that 88 videos had background music, 89 videos had voice-over narration, and 82 videos had subtitle displays. This indicates that in short video production, the synchronisation of sound and music is crucial. It is mainly achieved through background music, voice-over narrations, and subtitles, which add emotional, atmospheric, and informational elements to the videos, enhancing the audience's understanding of the narrative and improving the artistic and informational conveyance of the videos.

DISCUSSION

Art generates extensive positive externalities for society, referred to as "non-user benefits." These benefits are directed toward the overall public and include "option value," "bequest value," and "existence value" (Bruno S, 2013). Short videos can provide wide-ranging positive externalities for disseminating art and artists. The audience is not limited to individuals who consume specific cultural activities but encompasses the public.

Value of Participation and Interaction

As cultural forms transition into postmodernity, the value of art is shifting from "exhibition value" to "participation value." Interactive participation has become the focus (Li, 2013). Short video platforms provide a convenient way for audiences to appreciate art, expanding the reach of art to a broader audience and facilitating the understanding and exposure of art to more people, thereby promoting the inheritance and development of art. For artists and their works, it helps encourage interaction and communication between artists and the public. Interaction, sharing, commenting, and other forms of engagement increase the artistic influence, driving the diversification and globalisation of art.

Value of Aesthetic and Experiential

The dissemination of art through short videos highlights the significance and influence of artists like Xu Beihong in the field of visual arts in contemporary society while also promoting the development and innovation of the art industry. On the one hand, art creators utilise new media channels to promote and showcase their works, experiencing fulfilment through transcending time and space, as the infectious power of artistic aesthetics can still be experienced through the internet (Zhou & Ren, 2022). On the other hand, the art content disseminated through short videos allows the public to access and appreciate art quickly, experiencing the unique charm of art through the scenarios, expressions, and knowledge created by artists.

Value of Behavior and Records

From the perspective of art economics, exploring the concept of "value" is the starting point and motivation for human economic behaviour (Throsby, 2000). Human and financial behaviour patterns permeate every corner of short video art dissemination and the art market. Short video platforms provide a virtual space for behaviour records for the public, respecting and maintaining art's independent and original nature. It facilitates diverse behavioural records of different viewpoints, comments, and insights, promoting the diversity and innovation of artworks and cultural activities. At the same time, it digitises valuable materials such as artists' paintings, old photos, daily life, and film and television content. These precious materials serve as behavioural records that reflect the artistic mindset, social environment, and spiritual connotations of artists, providing important references for historical investigation (Wang, 2010). The artistic records in the form of short videos fulfil the psychological needs of the audience to understand the artist's creation and showcase the diversity of comments and viewpoints from short video bloggers, demonstrating the significance of short videos in the secondary dissemination of artists' work.

CONCLUSION

Through a multi-dimensional analysis of content about renowned artists on short video platforms, researchers have found that short videos significantly promote art education and participation. A substantial proportion of accounts related to artists on these platforms are engaged in commercial activities. Short video content also involves commercial actions such as auctions, collections, and shops. Positive evaluative words about artists are more likely to enhance the commercial value of their works. In the word cloud of short video titles, high-frequency words predominantly revolve around the artist's creation, life, and culture. From the perspective of art economics, short video platforms provide a virtual space for recording public behaviour and participation. These records reflect the aesthetic essence of the artist's creations and offer diverse historical and cultural research viewpoints.

This research primarily analyses the artistic dissemination value of highly rated short videos by renowned artists. However, this study has limitations and areas for improvement. This study only explores the artistic dissemination value of Xu Beihong's highly rated short videos, while research on other artists or artworks remains to be further investigated. Future research can compare and analyse the artistic dissemination values of different artists or artworks, revealing the dissemination characteristics and mechanisms of other artists and artworks, further enriching and expanding the research field of art economics.

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Traditional Chinese Cultural Elements in Ceramic Tea Set Design Based on Morphosemantics

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ABSTRACT

The evolution of ceramic tea sets continues to the present day. The integration of traditional Chinese cultural elements into the design of ceramic tea sets serves to enhance the aesthetic function of the design and expand the design elements, while also improving the cultural connotation of the tea set products. This study employs the theory of morphosemantics to examine the integration of traditional Chinese cultural elements into ceramic tea set design. It proposes a methodology for combining conventional cultural elements with modern design in novel ways, thereby facilitating the inheritance and innovation of cultural heritage. Guided by the theory of morphosemantics, this study presents a synthesis of the morphological principles, meanings, and design methods associated with traditional cultural elements in ceramic tea set design. It underscores the value of innovative design based on inheritance and advocates for the effective integration of cultural inheritance and modern design.

Keywords: *Morphosemantics, Ceramic tea set, Chinese traditional culture elements*

INTRODUCTION

This paper initially elucidates the connotation and style of traditional Chinese cultural elements, enumerates and expounds upon these elements, and seeks to demonstrate the significance of traditional cultural elements in the design of ceramic tea sets in internationalisation. To this end, it examines the shortcomings of the existing design of ceramic tea sets. This study introduces the theoretical basis of morphosemantics and takes ceramic tea sets as the object of study. It explores the application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in the design of modern ceramic tea sets and provides innovative ideas for the design of ceramic tea sets. The research is divided into two distinct sections. The research is divided into two parts. The first part analyses the cultural connotation of the design elements of ceramic tea set and summarises the style and main features. The second part studies the design method of introducing traditional Chinese cultural elements. The application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in the design of modern ceramic tea sets is explored under the morphosemantics, to provide innovative ideas for the use of traditional cultural elements in the design of ceramic tea sets and offer broader directions and information for subsequent research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Yang (2008) examined the integration of traditional auspicious elements in the design of ceramic tea sets. They analysed traditional Chinese ceramic tea sets through the lens of traditional Chinese ceramic tea sets, combining the connotation of traditional auspicious elements and specific forms of expression. Their study aimed to elucidate the correlation between traditional Chinese auspicious elements and the design of traditional ceramic tea sets. Additionally, they explored the potential for re-creation through the utilisation of traditional auspicious elements in modern ceramic tea set design. This study takes the traditional Chinese auspicious elements as its point of departure, which constitutes a crucial element of traditional Chinese cultural heritage and is also the element most frequently employed in design.

In conjunction, Wang (2023) highlights that Design Representation Theory provides further insight into the symbolic content, the "rhetorical" sources, and the realisation of the creative potential associated with Chinese ceramic tea sets. The symbols employed in the design of objects derive from a multitude of sources and are subject to a set of established conventions, which inform the deeper connotations associated with these symbols. The design philosophy under discussion is, in fact, the ideology of Chinese ceramic tea set design, which encompasses the content of the traditional Chinese cultural spirit and its influence on design. Xiao (2023) analysed the application of Confucianism, Taoism, Buddhism, and Mingma beliefs in soft ceramic design. This was presented in an article on the innovative application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in soft ceramic design. The analysis considered the fundamental influence of these elements on the style and expression of traditional cultural elements. It also discussed the impact on the development of soft ceramic design from the perspective of ideology and culture. Yu and Zhu (2024) conducted a study of the application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in art design. This was presented in an article on the development and evolution of soft ceramic design. In their article, "Chinese Traditional Cultural Elements in Art Design," Yu and Zhu (2024) examined a range of art design fields, including graphic, architectural, environmental, and clothing design, and discussed how traditional Chinese cultural elements are integrated into contemporary art design. The aforementioned articles collectively examine the impact of traditional Chinese culture on art design.

Sun (2023) examined the integration of traditional Chinese cultural elements in contemporary ceramic art. They analysed traditional patterns, modelling techniques, and colours, with a particular focus on the exploration of traditional Chinese cultural elements in modern ceramic art. In his thesis on the

inevitability of the integration of traditional cultural elements and modern ceramic art Cheng (2022), the author explores the inevitability of the integration of traditional cultural elements and modern ceramic art from a variety of perspectives, including pattern, colour, shape, and so forth. It was concluded that the traditional Chinese cultural elements of the art design have established a robust foundation. The articles in question primarily focus on the core aspects of ceramic art and do not delve into the utilisation of traditional cultural elements in ceramic tea sets.

In a study, Yu (2009) provided a comprehensive account of semiotics as a method of analysis in the study of furniture forms, situating their approach within the broader theoretical framework of semiotics. The development of semiotics theory in the field of design can be traced back to the mid-to-late 20th century when American philosopher Charles William Morris first divided semiotics into three parts: morphology, semantics, and pragmatics. The scope of the study later involved several disciplines. In 1950, the Ulm School of Modelling was the inaugural institution to apply semiotic theories to product design. In 1982, Stuart K. Card, a design scientist, educator, and writer, was the first to apply semiotic theories to product design in a paper entitled *The Semantics of Form in Design*. In a paper entitled "The Semantics of Form in Design", Stuart K. Card, a design scientist, educator, and author, first introduced the concept of product semantics, emphasising the relationship between form and meaning in product design and how product form communicates signs and symbols. This paper is regarded as a seminal contribution to the field of product design, particularly in terms of elucidating the relationship between product form and meaning. Liu (2019) initiated the process by constructing corresponding design reflections from the cognitive, emotional, and symbolic levels of product form semantics, beginning with the product design of nixing pottery. Additionally, some articles adopt a morphosemantic perspective to examine cultural and creative products, such as Huizhou wood carvings and Liangzhu artefacts. These studies collectively contribute to the research on the application of morphosemantics in design from diverse perspectives.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research methodology employed in this study was qualitative, and the process undertaken is illustrated in Figure 1.

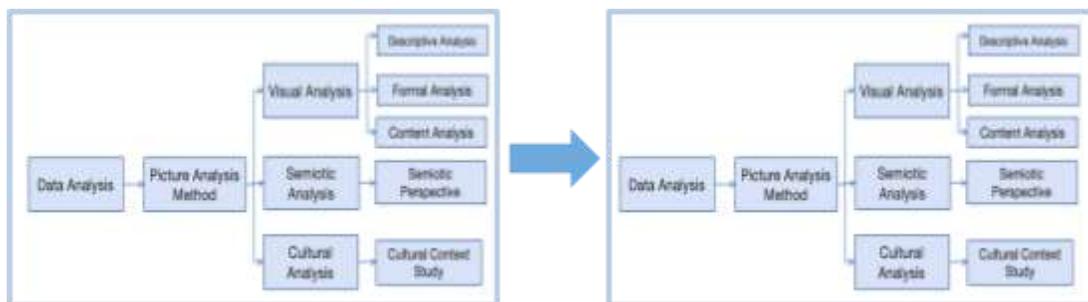


Figure1. Research methodology framework diagram
(Source: Zuo, 2023)

Following an initial focus on the stylistic application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in the design of ceramic tea sets, the first step was the collection of data, which included a literature review, a field survey, and visits. The objective is to ascertain the precise manner in which traditional Chinese cultural elements are employed in the design of ceramic tea sets. The basis, background, and scope of the data collection were determined through the collation and organisation of relevant literature. During the fieldwork, visits were conducted to the manufacturers of ceramic tea sets, and photographs were taken

and catalogued of pertinent ceramic tea sets in museums and markets. The data collection and fieldwork were conducted concurrently to ensure the comprehensive nature of the data set. A field survey of the market in the Jingdezhen area is planned, as well as a study of the ceramic tea sets in the collections of eight major museums in China. The principal observation sites comprise a range of Taoxi Chuan, Tao Yang Xin Chuan marketplaces, ceramic factories, the Jingdezhen Ceramic Museum, the Palace Museum, the Nanjing Museum, the National Museum of China, and the Sichuan Museum. Ultimately, the visual and cultural analyses of the documentation, field surveys, visits, and images assist in defining the methods by which traditional Chinese cultural elements are employed in ceramic tea sets, and in comprehending their cultural contexts, meanings, and connotations.

FINDINGS

The researcher conducted a literature review, using the Knowledge Network, to identify relevant papers on the application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in modern art design in China. The review yielded 20 papers on the application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in ceramic art, 1300 papers on traditional Chinese patterns, 11 papers on the design of traditional Chinese auspicious patterns in ceramic art, and 3 dissertations on the design of traditional Chinese auspicious patterns in ceramic tea sets. Three doctoral dissertations have been published on the topic of the design of traditional Chinese auspicious patterns in ceramic tea sets. A review of the dissertations and journal articles published in the last five years revealed that dragon patterns, phoenix patterns, flowers (peony, lotus, pine, and bamboo), auspicious clouds, eight treasures pictures, and pictures of auspicious beasts are the most frequently used traditional Chinese cultural elements in the research descriptions of patterns. A comprehensive table has been compiled to provide detailed information on the application of these traditional cultural elements in ceramic tea sets. The accompanying table provides a clear illustration of the diverse range of drawing styles employed in traditional ceramic tea sets, showcasing the incorporation of an array of elements.

Table 1. Traditional Chinese cultural elements and application

Name	Dragon Pattern	Phoenix pattern	Lotus pattern	Cloud pattern	Longevity peach pattern	Bat pattern	Bird and flower motif	Auspicious animal
Pattern								
Application								
	Ming blue and green incised Waves and dragon in pear shape	Ming dynasty jar with clouds and Phoenixes in blue and white	Ming dynasty blue and white lotus bowl	Qing dynasty five-colour cloud-patterned and box with strap	Qing dynasty famille-rose enamelled porcelain bowl with falling branches	Qing dynasty blue and white porcelain nine peaches' dragon's ear flat vase	Qing dynasty famille-rose enamelled bowl with lotus flower on a gold ground	Yuan dynasty blue and white porcelain dish with bamboo and stone unicorn design.

Elementary semantic analysis of traditional Chinese patterns

Yan and Zhang (2013) stated that Cultural Semantic Analysis of Traditional Patterns The dragon and phoenix pattern, fish pattern, peacock pattern, magpie pattern, and other patterns have a common point in that they all have positive, auspicious symbolism. This can be traced back to the earliest known examples in the Zhuangzi. Tang Cheng Xuan Ying offers the following interpretation: the auspicious, the good things; auspicious, the signs of Jiaqing. The combination of numerous auspicious patterns creates a visually appealing and festive image, which is used to convey the idea of seeking good fortune and driving away evil spirits.

In traditional Chinese culture, the dragon and phoenix are regarded as auspicious objects. These creatures frequently feature in the work of designers. The dragon represents imperial power and authority and was used by emperors in ancient China. The phoenix symbolises auspiciousness and happiness. These two creatures often appear together in ancient times, as evidenced by their depiction together in symbols. The dragon and phoenix together represent the auspiciousness of these symbols. The "fish pattern" has a traditional cultural meaning of life. The "fish" pattern signifies life, abundance, and richness in traditional culture. For instance, during traditional Chinese festivals, blessings are often bestowed upon the populace, and window lanterns are inscribed with the words "yearly surplus". In this context, the term "surplus" and the image of the fish within the pattern serve to represent the abundance and prosperity associated with the fish pattern. Peacock patterns are frequently observed in conjunction with dragon and phoenix patterns in ancient Chinese art, as the latter symbolises good fortune. In traditional Chinese culture, the fish pattern signifies a life characterised by richness and abundance whereas the peacock is regarded as a symbol of good fortune. The peacock pattern can be used to embellish a tea set, signifying luxury and prosperity. Magpies are associated with joy and celebration, and their image is often used in patterns that convey joy and good fortune, such as the "joyful eyebrows" style, which features the traditional magpie image on branches. In the selection of patterns, the image of a fuller, more rounded, and more colourful design is often chosen. This can be decorated with other elements of the image simultaneously or independently. The composition and layout of the design can also be considered. In the design of modern ceramic tea sets, traditional patterns can be used as a foundation for integrating modern technology and incorporating traditional elements.

In the plant's traditional cultural pattern style, used more is the lotus flower not only with the Buddhist ideology but also has pure and elegant, fresh and modest representatives; traditional landscape painting patterns are often used in the design of tea plates and tea trays, so that the design of the pattern to show the large rivers and mountains, so that it seems as if people travelling between the mountains and the water; Chinese literati have always loved the flowers, through the flowers and plants to express their feelings, from ancient times, the expression of flowers and plants is also colourful, such as idyllic poet Wang Wei's poetry, known as "poetry has a painting, painting has a poem", Tao Yuanming picking chrysanthemums under the hedge, the painting has a poem, "poetry has a poem". The expression of flowers and plants is also colourful, such as the idyllic poet Wang Wei's poetry, known as "poetry in the painting, painting poetry", Tao Yuanming picking chrysanthemums under the East Fence, leisurely looking at the South Mountain of leisure, which reflects the aesthetic sense of literati and refined people to flowers in the poetry, flowers in the paintings, flowers in the ceramics, which are the most commonly used decorative elements; Such as "The three friends of the year" are pine, bamboo, plum, these three decorative themes often appear in painting and poetry, but also in the design of ceramic tea sets, different times to express the different ways, but the expression of these three objects has never stopped. Decorative art with flowers and plants as the main body, in the cultural atmosphere of the Chinese nation, naturally becomes the object of expression, and penetrates the spirit of traditional Chinese culture and aesthetic awareness of the idea that Confucianism, the expression of flowers and plants is a relay of their ideas, their interest in expression. The elements with auspicious cultural connotations are integrated into the design of the tea set through design methods. These image elements are embodied in shape, colour,

pattern, craftsmanship, text, material, symbols, form, etc., which reflect the beauty of the shape, texture, and structure of the artefacts (Liu & Zhang, 2023). Combined with the history, mood, connotation, charm, and thought in the intentional elements, it reflects the beauty of harmony and rhythm. In form, ceramic tea is set in the visual embodiment of the form of beauty, so in the expression of the content of the visual way to externalise the display, based on the law of formal beauty, through the shape of the curvature of the changes in the proportions of the proportions and the balance of the form of beauty, in the application of traditional elements of auspicious culture in the design of ceramic tea set, designers will choose a festive and auspicious symbol of the graphic image, reflecting the desire for good things in the Chinese people's heart. Chinese people's hearts desire and wish for beautiful things.

There are clouds and water ripples is a common decorative elements of traditional culture, representing the clouds, water ripples of the mood, such patterns can often be used as a rich image of the elements, often play a role in supporting the layout of the atmosphere, fill the image effect of the composition of the layout of the role of these traditional elements of Chinese patterns are rich in the design of ceramic tea set decorative motifs, but also enriched with the cultural connotation of the ceramic tea set.

The elements with auspicious cultural connotations are integrated into the design of the tea set through design methods. According to Liu and Zhang (2023, these image elements are embodied in shape, colour, pattern, craftsmanship, text, material, symbols, form, etc., which reflect the beauty of the shape, texture, and structure of the artefacts. Combined with the history, mood, connotation, charm, and thought in the intentional elements, it reflects the beauty of harmony and rhythm. In form, ceramic tea is set in the visual embodiment of the form of beauty, so in the expression of the content of the visual way to externalise the display, based on the law of formal beauty, through the shape of the curvature of the changes in the proportions of the proportions and the balance of the form of beauty, in the application of traditional elements of auspicious culture in the design of ceramic tea set, designers will choose a festive and auspicious symbol of the graphic image, reflecting the desire for good things in the Chinese people's heart. Chinese people's hearts desire and wish for beautiful things.

A semantic analysis of traditional modelling functional forms

In the analysis based on morphosemantics, patterns, colours, materials, composition, and graphics are visually analysed. Morphosemantic analysis is conducted through morphological identification, semantic interpretation, and design style. These three aspects of pattern characteristics are summarised.

Table 2. Analysis Methods List

Visual Analysis	Patterns	Dragon pattern, phoenix pattern, flower pattern, auspicious clouds, eight treasures pattern, animal face pattern, auspicious animal pattern
	Pattern	Flat pattern : Dragons, phoenixes, beasts and flowers
	Colour	Yellow, gold, red, green
	Material	Celadon and white porcelain
	Composition	Bottle, Cap, Cup
Morphosemantic Analysis	Morphological Recognition	Dragon and phoenix, lotus flower, auspicious clouds, birds and animals.
	Semantic Interpretation	Authority, auspiciousness, noble temperament, good blessing

	Design Style	Realistic style
Cultural Analysis	Confucian thoughts	Benevolence, righteousness, courtesy, wisdom and faith
	Buddhist thought	Compassion and Love
	Taoist Thought	Taoism and Nature

In the context of art and design, modelling is typically understood to refer to the shape, structure, and appearance of an artwork or object. This visual expression is formed through a range of techniques, including sculpture, painting, architecture, and craftsmanship (Yan & Zhang, 2013). It encompasses various aspects, such as shape, structure, proportion, line, surface treatment, and others. In essence, modelling represents the outward image and form of an artwork. In the context of ceramic teaware, the manipulation of points, lines, surfaces, and body blocks serves to display visual forms through modelling. This process emphasises the organisation of shapes and structures, as well as the aesthetic and coordinating aspects of these elements as a whole. In the design of a ceramic tea set, modelling encompasses the overall shape of the teapot, teacup, tea bowl, and other objects, the design of handles, lid knobs, and other localities, as well as surface decoration, carving, etc. Through the application of an effective modelling design, the ceramic tea set not only fulfils its functional purpose but also exhibits a distinctive artistic sensibility and cultural connotation.

In the modelling design of a ceramic tea set, the application of traditional Chinese cultural elements can be reflected in the shape, structure, decoration, and other aspects, thereby creating a tea set that is imbued with the distinctive flavour of traditional Chinese culture (Liu & Yan, 2018). The design may be classified as belonging to the traditional classical style. In such a case, it is important to ensure that the centre of gravity is stable, that the shape is full and rounded, and that the lines are smooth and natural. This principle may also be applied to other artefacts, such as teapots, teacups, and tea cups. The modelling of ancient bronze and porcelain evinces an atmosphere of traditional elegance. The handles of ceramic tea sets, as well as other parts such as knobs, are crafted with traditional sculpture techniques or with the addition of mythical beasts, including dragons, phoenixes, and unicorns. The beasts frequently signify auspicious, righteous, and sacred concepts. The engraving of traditional cultural patterns or classic stories on the surface of the ceramic tea set not only endows the tea set with a distinctive decorative quality but also serves to convey the heritage of traditional culture.

As documented in the Book of Examination and Craftsmanship, there exists a temporal dimension to the creation of art, wherein the heavens and the earth, the materials and the craftsmanship, each play a distinct yet complementary role. The combination of these four elements is essential for the creation of a superior work of art. The quote emphasises the importance of aligning the timing of the sky, the quality of the earth's atmosphere, the aesthetic appeal of the materials, and the ingenuity of the craftsmen to achieve a harmonious and exceptional outcome. The idea conveyed in this quote emphasises the necessity of following nature, paying attention to the texture of the materials, maintaining a suitable working environment, and ensuring that the craftsman possesses the requisite skill level to produce an excellent piece of craftwork. This illustrates a comprehensive creative philosophy that posits excellent craftsmanship should result from a combination of elements, including the time of day, the weather, the material, and the skill of the craftsman. Consequently, in the design of a ceramic tea set, it is essential to adhere to these design principles, prioritise functionality and aesthetics, and integrate contemporary design concepts and principles, aesthetic considerations, and the utilisation of needs, with traditional cultural elements of modelling and decoration. This approach enables the creation of a ceramic tea set that aligns with the needs of modern users.

A critical examination of the cultural components of traditional cultural elements

The traditional cultural elements are based on the spirit of traditional Chinese culture, and their composition of morphological symbols encompasses both the material and the spiritual levels. From the perspective of morpho-symbolism, the components of traditional cultural elements can be broadly classified into three categories: semantic association, symbolism, and cultural inheritance.

Semantic Associations

The term "semantic associations" is used to describe the connections between concepts that are based on their shared meaning. It is possible that there are substantial semantic links between traditional cultures, due to the existence of analogous morphological structures, comparable vocabulary combinations, or shared cultural connotations within their respective cultural heritages. The field of morphosemantics can assist in the elucidation of these semantic connections and the establishment of links with modelling. In the book *The Beauty of Creation* by Li Yanzu, it is observed that: The construction of modelling is the construction of beauty. The key difference between the modelling of designers and the structural modelling of engineers is that the modelling of designers is a form of art. This includes not only decorative elements such as patterns, symbols, and colours on the surface but also the modelling of rational functional structures. Styling elements, including patterns and colours, serve as carriers of cultural information. They facilitate the dissemination of cultural elements, convey aesthetic interests, and present traditional cultural elements through symbolically marked graphics and styles.

Symbolism

It is frequently the case that traditional cultural elements possess a wealth of symbolic meanings, which may have their origins in historical, religious, mythological, or other cultural factors. By analysing the morphological structure and semantic associations of traditional cultural elements, the symbolic meanings behind them can be revealed, thus facilitating a deeper comprehension and transmission of traditional culture. Once the design objectives have been defined, designers can reuse and reinterpret traditional cultural elements, abstracting, refining, and reconstructing them in a manner that aligns with contemporary aesthetic principles and requirements. This enables the traditional cultural elements to be presented to users in a novel manner.

Cultural Inheritance

Traditional cultural elements play a significant role in the process of cultural inheritance. The constituent elements of traditional cultural elements are influenced and shaped by cultural inheritance, as are their morphological structure and semantic associations. The incorporation of cultural elements imbues the ceramic tea set with a distinctive narrative and intrinsic quality. This represents a synthesis of material and spiritual civilizations. During the design process, designers delve deeply into traditional elements, combining them with innovative techniques to preserve and evolve traditional cultural elements. This enables users to appreciate the allure of these elements while also presenting them in a novel context.

CONCLUSION

The application of traditional Chinese cultural elements in ceramic tea set design is inseparable. By summarising and integrating the resources of traditional cultural elements and applying the theory and method of morphosemantics, these cultural elements can be transformed into a design language to enhance the functionality, aesthetics, and modernity of ceramic cultural elements. Chinese traditional cultural elements as semantic symbols, Chinese traditional cultural elements as ceramic tea set design and decoration of figurative expression, and traditional cultural elements of the shape of style and vessel shape, to ensure the functionality of the tea set under the premise of the use of the principles of morphology will be integrated into the functional design of traditional cultural elements, the use of traditional cultural elements of style and design methods in the shape of the tea set, the pattern and the decorative art way of presentation, not only to create a tea set shape with traditional cultural characteristics, so that it has aesthetic connotation and cultural significance;

The integration of traditional Chinese cultural elements into the design of ceramic tea sets necessitates adherence to established design principles, contextual expression, the selection of appropriate materials, and consideration of functional requirements. This approach enables the effective enhancement of traditional cultural connotations and aesthetic value, while simultaneously expanding the channels of cultural dissemination and promoting innovation and development within the tea set product category.

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Public Art and Cultural Identity: Analysing the *Keris* Sculpture under Municipal Hang Tuah Jaya, Melaka

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ABSTRACT

In the Malay community, the *Keris* served not only as a self-defence tool but also as a significant symbol reflecting the Malay community and cultural heritage. This study explores the symbolic meaning and cultural significance of the public sculpture *Keris* at Jalan Air Keroh, installed by the Municipal Hang Tuah Jaya, Melaka Councils. Applying Feldman's art criticism theory, which encompasses four main aspects - description, analysis, interpretation, and judgement, this research seeks to investigate the design and meaning of the sculpture. Despite its prominent visibility and visual solid impact along the roadside, its deep cultural significance and influence on the local community remain enigmatic. By providing a comprehensive analysis of the symbolic and artistic elements of the *Keris* sculpture, this study aims to bridge this knowledge gap by utilising a systematic descriptive qualitative approach based on Feldman's theory. The findings of this study are expected to provide comprehensible information that can enhance both local and tourist understanding and appreciation of the sculpture. It can also strengthen interactions and appreciation of Malay culture in Melaka. Findings showed the potential of public sculpture in Melaka, which serves as an aesthetic element and a crucial component to bringing a closer understanding and appreciation in promoting the cultural and historical significance of the Malay community to the general public.

Keywords: *Public Sculpture, Keris, Symbol, Malay Community, Cultural Heritage*

INTRODUCTION

Public sculpture is a dynamic and expressive art form, effectively imbuing urban spaces with vitality. It reflects a city's cultural heritage, historical significance, and prevailing social values (Meyer, 2020). Melaka is a state in Malaysia that depicts Malaysian culture, consisting of various looks and forms obtained from various ethnicities, ethnicities and historical events (Iliyani et al., 2023). One can be seen in the formation of public sculptures in Melaka that present an enjoyable visual experience and provide an overview of the historical narrative of the state of Melaka.



Figure 1. Keris Sculpture at Jalan Air keroh, Melaka
(Source: Researcher's personal collection, 2023)

The city of Melaka is adorned with a prominent public sculpture known as the *Keris* sculpture. This significant work of art is installed along Jalan Air Keroh, a significant road leading to the city centre of Melaka. The installation of this sculpture was commissioned by the Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Council, which reflects their commitment to enhancing the city's cultural and aesthetic landscape. Jalan Air Keroh serves as the main route, connecting travellers and residents to the vibrant centre of Melaka. The Keris sculpture, with its conspicuous presence, not only adds the aesthetic appeal of this vital route but also symbolises the rich cultural legacy of the Malay society. The *keris* possesses significant cultural importance in Malaysia, representing both a traditional Malay armament and a manifestation of values such as honour, courage, and cultural legacy (Andaya & Andaya, 2016). The Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Council emphasises the role of public art in honouring and preserving regional culture by erecting this sculpture in such a prominent location; this sculpture not only beautifies the urban environment but also serves as a reminder of the historical significance of Malacca and the various cultural influences that have shaped the city over the ages. This prominent sculpture commands the attention of individuals passing by, enticing them to explore its narrative.

The *keris* sculpture is a homage to the time-honoured craft of fashioning the traditional Malay weapon, renowned for its unique undulating blade. It holds profound cultural significance within the

region, exhibiting design variations that reflect its geographical origin and familial lineage. As Emil (2009) points out, the *keris* holds a significance that transcends its utilitarian function as a weapon. It also embodies the distinctiveness of the Malaysian state and evokes pride in cultural heritage and ancestral values. Malaysians view the *keris* as representing the state's distinct identity, eliciting a sense of pride in their cultural legacy and the principles upheld by their ancestors.

Consequently, the presence of the *Keris* in Jalan Air Keroh Melaka accentuates the town's historical significance and role in Melaka's broader context as a hub for trade and cultural integration. The artwork represents both a visual depiction of the historical and contemporary aspects of the city, encouraging viewers to connect with the principles and customs that have contributed to Melaka's development as a captivating tourist spot. This initiative fosters a more profound appreciation among residents and tourists for the significance of cultural heritage and the narratives that form the foundation of their existence.

Despite the prominence of the *Keris* sculpture in Jalan Air Keroh, its more profound cultural significance and impact on the local community still need to be made more explicit. Comprehensive research is needed to explore these aspects thoroughly. The primary objective of this study is to analyse the symbolic meaning and cultural significance of the *Keris* sculpture using Feldman's theory of art criticism. This approach will help uncover the intricate layers of meaning and cultural symbolism embedded in the artwork. Understanding elements of the sculpture offers insight into the emotional and intellectual responses it elicits from viewers.

Additionally, the study aims to document the symbolic representation of Malay cultural identity as conveyed through this three-dimensional artwork. While the *Keris* sculpture is an excellent example of traditional Southeast Asian craftsmanship and has great historical and symbolic value in Malay culture, its design, artistic features, and complex cultural symbolism need to be studied more deeply in the specific context of the area under the Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Councils. A thorough understanding is required to grasp how this public sculpture can convey the narrative of local history, traditional values and cultural identity.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Feldman's Model of Art Criticism

Art criticism is more than just an artistic review or a literary narrative in which the art critic observes the events of artistic activity. Instead, it is a process emphasising a realistic and thorough examination of art issues. Therefore, art critics need to understand multiple forms of criticism while emphasising the creativity and skills contained in art. Experts, artists, or academics should do art criticism with relevant art knowledge. This is because expertise is the most important and valuable in all matters related to art criticism (Duaa, 2021, p.880).

Feldman's method enables anyone with no prior understanding of art to critique any work of art by relying on the basic principles and elements of art and design. Feldman's method considers an easy way to criticise a work of art, which is the evaluation stage, based on visual elements that make it objective. The relevance of criticism to art is closely related by focusing on the artwork and demonstrating the critic's ability to understand the artist's technique (Feldman, 1967).

Feldman (1970) stressed that impartial observers view the artwork through a step-by-step description. Using words or expressions that can reveal his feelings is avoided at this stage. Feldman (1967) argues that the audience does not have to be neutral toward artwork and has no distinct ratings for

the evaluation. Feldman contends that later phases of art criticism should implicitly include the appraisal. Barrett (1994) asserts that description and analysis are closely related to the interpretation and cannot be separated.

Public Art

Works of art displayed in public spaces, typically outside buildings or in places accessible to the public, are called public art (Blandy & Boudon, 2018). Public art encompasses various forms of art created for public use and enjoyment. The availability and accessibility are one of the main aspects of public art; it is exhibited in public spaces such as parks, squares, streets, and public buildings, making them more accessible without visiting art galleries or museums (Miles, 2021). Since public art promotes social and community function, it is often designed to foster social interaction and fortify community ties. These artworks may attract attention at community events and serve as a hub for interaction with locals and tourists alike. In addition, public art serves as an educational tool by conveying historical and cultural messages or narratives, helping to raise public awareness of significant issues and cultural heritage (Brown & Perkins, 2021).

In terms of creativity and expression, public art allows artists to express their creativity on a large scale and in unconventional spaces through sculptures, murals, art installations, and various other art forms. Apart from its social and educational purposes, public art also plays a role in beautifying public spaces. It enhances an aesthetic element of the environment, making it more alluring and pleasant (Jones, 2018).

Finally, public art often reflects a place's cultural identity and history. These artworks can honour significant historical events, notable figures, or unique elements of local culture and preserve and showcase cultural heritage. Overall, public art is a way to bring art into everyday life, making it more relevant and directly related to the community, as well as enriching the public space with a reflection of the culture and values held by the community (Hall & McArthur, 2021).

Public Art and Cultural Identity: The Role and Impact of Art in Shaping Local Characteristics

Public art plays a vital role in shaping and reflecting cultural identity by incorporating artistic expression into public settings (Miles, 2021). It serves as a canvas to depict local traditions, historical events, and cultural symbols, capturing and conveying the spirit of the community's legacy. Public art, including murals, sculptures, and installations, not only enhances the aesthetic quality of the urban environment but also fosters a sense of community among residents. Local culture visually portrayed in public settings can boost community pride and inclusivity, ensuring that diverse cultural groups feel recognized and acknowledged (Gibson & Connell, 2019).

Furthermore, public art acts as a catalyst for social engagement, frequently the subject of events and discussions held in the community. It also functions as an educational tool by providing information to residents and visitors about a place's cultural and historical context. However, challenges can be overcome, such as ensuring inclusive representation and keeping artworks over time (Smith, 2018). Public art has a significant role in enhancing cultural identity, promoting the aesthetic appeal of public settings, and enriching community bonds.

The Origin of *Keris*

This *Keris* has been rooted since the maritime merchant kingdom along the Silk Road. This road facilitated the relationship between the Indian continent, China, and the Malay Archipelago that started in the early centuries of the early era. Miksic (1990) stated that the maritime trade network was necessary to facilitate the transfer of commodities, concepts, and cultural customs among geographically distant areas. Meanwhile, the Malay Archipelago is used as a strategic position because it is the main route for traders, and through this, there is an emergence that combines culture and ethnicity.

In this dynamic cultural milieu, blade production and metallurgy craft discovered a conducive environment for prosperous development. The frequent interactions among traders, artisans, and explorers who navigated the maritime trade routes facilitated the exchange of knowledge and technological progress. Hill (1956) stated that the spread of knowledge and skills related to the production of weapons such as *Keris* and swords occurred due to this interaction. At that time, the maritime trade kingdom in Southeast Asia was widely recognized for having exceptional expertise in navigation. Consequently, they have experienced and experienced a maritime network that extends across the Indian Ocean to the South China Sea. The trading kingdoms, namely Srivijaya and Majapahit, were instrumental in advancing the *Keris*, as noted by Manguin (1993).

The *Keris*, characterised by its unique undulating blade, gradually emerged as a pioneering innovation that distinguished it from contemporaneous weaponry. The *Keris* possessed a distinctive and remarkable aesthetic due to its asymmetrical design, characterised by a sinuous blade. This particular attribute eventually emerged as a defining characteristic of the *Keris*. The design of this particular artefact was not solely motivated by aesthetic considerations but also served practical functions during combat, enabling more efficient execution of slashing and thrusting techniques (Shahrum, 2009).

The precise historical chronology of the *Keris* evolution poses a considerable challenge, yet archaeological findings have gleaned valuable insights. Numerous instances of early *Keris* blades have been discovered in archaeological sites, suggesting that the utilisation of the *Keris* can be traced back to prehistoric eras within the geographical area (Miksic, 1990). The chronological antiquity of these artefacts serves as evidence for the profound historical origins of the *Keris* within Southeast Asia's cultural customs and practices.

The *keris* held a significance that transcended its mere practicality as a weapon. Over time, it transformed, becoming a representation of social standing, religious beliefs, and cultural heritage within Southeast Asian societies. Creating a *Keris* was regarded reverently and involved elaborate rituals, typically carried out by proficient craftsmen called "emu." The production of a *Keris* blade necessitated the application of metallurgical proficiency and the integration of sacred components, invocations, and spiritual benedictions, thereby imbuing the weapon with symbolic potency (Sedyawati, 2014).

The historical roots in the maritime trading kingdoms that flourished along the maritime Silk Road in the early centuries of the era. The convergence of different cultures at these crossroads provided a conducive environment for exchanging knowledge and technological innovations, ultimately contributing significantly to developing the *Keris* as a uniquely crafted dagger with asymmetrical design. The profound significance of the *Keris* in Southeast Asian societies, serving as both a tool of combat and a representation of cultural heritage, highlights its lasting impact within the region.

Keris as Art Form and Craftsmanship

The *Keris*, an emblematic dagger characterised by its undulating blade, occupies a singular role as a utilitarian weapon and an exquisite artistic creation within diverse Southeast Asian societies. The *Keris* has garnered significant admiration throughout history due to its refined aesthetics and meticulous artistry, elevating its status beyond a utilitarian implement. This section examines the artistic elements of the *Keris*, investigating the exceptional abilities of expert artisans and the customary techniques transmitted across successive generations.

Zainuddin et al. (2022) thoroughly studied the artistic attributes inherent in the *Keris*. The author sheds light on the intricate patterns and designs meticulously etched onto the blade, providing valuable insights into this aspect of the artefact. The artistic embellishment of the blade frequently incorporates elaborate motifs, referred to as "*pamor*," that are produced through the amalgamation of iron and nickel layers during the forging procedure. The above patterns possess aesthetic and spiritual significance, as they are widely believed to encapsulate mystical powers and safeguard the individual who possesses them. He emphasises the artistic skill and meticulousness required in creating these patterns, exemplifying the refined expertise developed and refined over numerous centuries.

In addition, the research conducted by Gardner (1973) explores the enduring craftsmanship traditions transmitted across generations in Southeast Asian societies. Creating a *Keris* entails a painstaking and methodical procedure, carefully curating superior-grade materials, including iron, steel, and valuable metals. The forging and *pamor*-making stage is considered to be a highly significant phase in the process of crafting a *Keris*. The blacksmith employs a meticulous technique of layering various metals to fashion distinctive patterns and motifs, which are chosen based on the *Keris*'s desired spiritual or symbolic attributes. The successful execution of this technique necessitates meticulous management of temperature, utilisation of specific hammering techniques, and adherence to a meticulous process of metal layering. This skill has traditionally been transmitted from a master to a pioneer in an apprenticeship system that is given recognition.

The *Keris* hilt is carefully designed and given full attention in its production because it focuses on the details and finesse of its art. Objects made from various materials, including wood, ivory, and metal, will feature intricate carvings and depict cultural and symbolic motifs. The design of the hilt often reflects the identity and culture of an ethnic group and hints at the genealogy of this *Keris*. Making this *Keris* often involves a form of work that features subtlety and a balance between technical and artistic expertise. Skilled artisans will demonstrate their competence in producing a form of art with attractive aesthetics and practical utility. A perfectly produced *Keris* will display the craftsman's ingenuity, skill, and prowess.

Beyond the function of a weapon made into a *Keris*, it is a medium for skilled artisans to display their technical expertise in producing it. *Keris*'s position in works of art is unique because its production requires subtlety, and complicated patterns require a deep appreciation. The *Keris* remains a lasting emblem of artistic heritage in the region due to the preservation and perpetuation of traditional craftsmanship practice.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative and descriptive approach based on Feldman's (1967) theory of art criticism, which offers a structured approach to understanding and evaluating art. This theory consists of

four different categories: widespread criticism, journalistic criticism, scientific criticism, and educational criticism. Each category has its purpose in the discourse on art. *Keris* sculpture at Jalan Air Keroh was chosen because of its cultural and symbolic significance. Moreover, the sculpture's prominent location on a busy roadside makes it an obvious and relevant landmark for studying public art and its impact on local identity. Therefore, Feldman's scientific art criticism approach is used because it emphasises the evaluation and interpretation of art based on knowledge and expertise on the art of *Keris* sculpture. The process of scientific art criticism involves four main stages:\

Table 1 : Feldman's Model of Art Criticism (Feldman, 1982)

Stage	Description	Art Work Analysis
Description	It is the first step of art criticism. This stage is about gathering information about the work of art, such as the artist's name, title, date of creation, size and medium (Duaa, 2021, p.880; Feldman, 1982)	Studying the essential elements of the <i>Keris</i> Sculpture in Jalan Air Keroh, including size, material (ferrocement and wire mesh), and colour
Formal Analysis	It is the second step of the art crisis. Analysis means the way the work of art has been organised. This step also involves an analysis of the principles and elements of design. The design elements include line, shape, form, space, colour, texture, and value. The design principles include emphasis, rhythm, movement, pattern, balance, proportion, and unity (Duaa, 2021, p.880; Feldman, 1982)	Examines the structure and design of the statue, as well as how it is integrated with the urban environment of the circle.
Interpretation	This is the third step of the critique process. Interdating is finding the meaning of work or expressive qualities, such as mood, feelings, or emotions. This stage uses the previous description and analysis stages of the work to explain the critic's interpretation (Duaa, 2021, p.880; Feldman, 1982)	Understanding the meaning and symbolism of the <i>Keris</i> Sculpture, as well as its impact on the cultural identity and community of Jalan Air Keroh, Melaka
Evaluation	The fourth step of critical analysis is judgement. This step is about evaluating the work about aesthetic excellence and other works of its type. The judgement is a conclusion drawn from the previous stages, what qualifies as aesthetic excellence is based upon the critic and the type of critical judgement they use (Duaa, 2021, p.880; Feldman, 1982)	Assess the aesthetic and cultural value of the statue, including its impact on community pride and local identity.

The data was collected through a literature review and direct observation to understand the cultural and social implications of the representation of *Keris* sculpture in Jalan Air Keroh, Melaka.

FINDINGS

This study demonstrated that Feldman's method was applied to evaluate works of art. His model of criticism has served four steps to make a statement about a work of art. Feldman believed that people would fully comprehend and appreciate art if they could discuss and talk about art (Feldman, 1982). In order to evaluate public art and the cultural identity of *Keris* sculptures under the Hang Tuah Jaya Municipal Council, Feldman's method offers a critique model consisting of description, analysis, interpretation, and evaluation.

Description

This piece of public sculpture adapts the shape of *Keris*, the Malay weaponry. The *keris* is constructed vertically on a marble stone, with the head of the *Keris* pointing to the front of the road, and nature is the background of the *Keris*. There is a foliage motif with a twist on the *Keris's* body. The dimensions of the *Keris* are 12 feet in height x 140 in width x 140 cm in length. This significant work of art is installed along Jalan Air Keroh, a significant road leading to the city centre of Melaka. The golden yellowish was applied to both the head and the sheath of the *Keris*, and white was used for the decorative motifs on the sheath and *sampir*. Cement concrete is used in the part of the *Keris* base that is constructed and decorated with marble.

Analysis

This public sculpture replicates the shape of the *Keris*, consisting of the head of the *Keris* (1) and the sheath of the *Keris* and *sampir* (2)— the upper part of the *Keris* (1) known as *Hulu Pekaka*. *Hulu Keris* is presented with *sarong Keris* and *sampir* (2) in the shape of a classical boat and embellished with ornamental patterns. Curving foliage designs are used as decorative elements on the body of the *Keris*. A golden yellowish colour is applied to the head of the *Keris* (1), the sheath and *sampir* (2), and decorative motifs in the form of a circle. While the raised and coloured decorative motifs on the sheath of the *Keris* and *sampir* (2) are white, creating a striking contrast with the golden background and drawing attention to the intricate details. Cement concrete is used in the *keris*-based part, which provides stability and durability. The base is decorated with marble, enhancing the overall presentation's aesthetic appeal. The *Keris* sculpture is situated alongside the Jalan Air Keroh and is a significant lead to Melaka's heart. Space where both locals and tourists can appreciate it, such as a central plaza, cultural district, or near historical landmarks. In terms of interaction with the environment, this sculpture should blend in with the surrounding urban setting. In Melaka, a city with a blend of colonial and traditional architecture, this sculpture needs to harmonise with the existing structure while standing out as a cultural landmark.

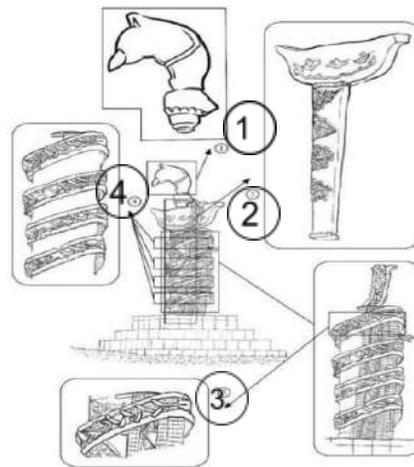


Figure 2. 1. Keris Hilt (*Hulu Keris*)
2. The *Keris* Sheath and Boat- Shape Crown (*Sarung Keris* and *sampir*)
3. Wavy Leaves Motives decoration
4. Ornamental pattern that wrap around the surface of *Keris*

(Source: Researcher, 2023)

Interpretation

Keris is one of the prevalent weapons and is associated with Malay symbols. In general, *Keris* is a stabbing weapon used for self-defence (for example, during martial arts) and the greatness of the royal tool (Yub, 1991). It comes in a range of shapes: some long and some short, curved, sharp and covered with sheaths. The meaning behind the dagger implies a philosophy, aesthetic value and the greatness of the Malays, symbolising the strength and majesty of a kingdom and the Malay nation (Yusof et al., 2022).

The function of *Keris* in ancient times was as a weapon for self-defence. In modern times, however, *Keris* are used as accessories for official clothing on occasions such as royal ceremonies and ornaments in homes, offices and others. This *Keris*, a Malay symbol, has its origin and history (Mohamed et al., 2012). In Malaysia, there are many types of *Keris*, but the most popular during the Malacca Sultanate was the *Keris Taming Sari* (Yusof et al., 2022).

In *Hikayat Hang Tuah*, *Keris* are used in significant ceremonial practice within the palace and play a role in the King's dignitaries. *Keris* was often crafted by the King and given as a gift to whomever desired. It symbolises the King's gratitude for the loyalty and devotion given by his dignitaries or subjects. One notable *Keris* is Taming Sari, who was wielded by Admiral Hang Tuah while serving as admiral of Malacca. This particular *Keris* is very well known for its reputed magical properties, which means that when fighting, the owner is not impervious to the opponent's weapon or invulnerable (Frey, 2003). According to legend, this *Keris* could hover in the air, allowing it to chase down enemy regardless of their escape.

"..... pun suka melihat Tun Tuah bertikam dengan Taming Sari itu. Maka Tun Tuah pun fikir dalam hatinya: 'Apa juga dipakainya maka tiada lut kuparang? Tetapi pada firasatku sebab kerisnya inilah maka ia tiada dapat ditentang lawan dan tiada lut kuparang tubuhnya ini. Jikalau demikian, apa juga kehendaknya? Baiklah kerisnya ini Kuperdayakan' (Tengku Marlina & Salina, 2013).

Keris has been designated by UNESCO as a Masterpiece of Oral and Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity since 2005 (Galeri Seni Tuanku Jaafar, 2024). This recognition is based on its profound philosophical value; it is a cultural icon of human civilization that has endured since immemorial. Therefore, the role of the *Keris*, which is related to the culture of the Malays, has been highlighted by the Municipality in consideration of the cultural environment of Malacca.

Evaluation

The shape of this *Keris* is intended to replicate the shape of the original *Keris*. However, the characteristics of *Keris* need to be clearly defined. The *Keris* does not appear to represent a type of *Keris* that symbolises the state of Melaka or is related to the state's history. While Admiral Hang Tuah is widely celebrated as a Malay legend, and the story of his greatness is often associated with the mystical properties of the *Taming Sari Keris*, which is claimed to grant its owner immunity, however, the research found that the shape of the *keris* presented does not resemble the *Taming Sari Keris*. Specifically, its upper part is elongated and finely carved, differing from the traditional depiction of the legend *Taming Sari Keris*.

Research findings indicate that the head of the *Keris* in question resembles an ivory *Keris* head with a fauna (bird) motif. Furthermore, the appearance of this *Keris* is not related to those used by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong or the Yang Di Pertuan Negeri Melaka. This also includes the *sarong Keris* (*Keris* sheath), which serves as the *Keris* attire and acts as a protective garment for the human body. It also has its role and task during the fight and protects the dagger's point. However, the *Keris* sheath also does not clarify the design, making it difficult to determine its association with the *Keris* used by the Yang Di Pertuan Agong. Therefore, the Municipal Council should carefully consider the type of *Keris* design being presented. Cultural experts, particularly those specialising in *Keris*, must be consulted to ensure the traditional *keris* is presented correctly, reflecting its function, significance and connection to Melaka.

For this work, the applied colours have faded and become mossy. This indicates that it has been neglected and is in need of proper maintenance. The local authorities should take serious action to commit to conserving this work to prevent a negative impact on the community and the environment. The value of the beauty of heritage and culture should be taken seriously and prioritised by local authorities, especially for masterpieces recognized by UNESCO.

In order to integrate the evaluation of *Keris* with the cultural identity of Melaka, particularly in Jalan Air Keroh, several necessary steps are crucial. First, emphasise the historical and cultural significance of *Keris*, especially its connection with Admiral Hang Tuah and the history of Melaka. Engage residents to understand their views on the *Keris* and collaborate with local artisans to ensure the design reflects traditional craft. Prioritise conservation efforts to maintain the historical integrity of the *Keris* and develop educational programs to raise awareness of its cultural importance. Integrate the *Keris* into local events and public exhibitions to strengthen its connection with the community. Address any design discrepancies by consulting with experts and considering community feedback. These initiatives will help strengthen the *Keris* and integrate it into the cultural identity of Melaka and Jalan Air Keroh.

CONCLUSION

The public sculpture of the *Keris* along Jalan Air Keroh has been evaluated using Feldman's method, showing its artistic and cultural significance and areas needing improvement. The sculpture, which aims to replicate the traditional *Keris*, displays the cultural reverence for this iconic Malay weapon, which has significant historical and symbolic meaning, particularly about Admiral Hang Tuah and the legacy of Melaka. However, the evaluation indicates that the sculpture's design needs to reflect the specific characteristics or historical context of the *Keris* intended to depict.

The discrepancies between the sculpture and conventional representations of the *Keris*, particularly the Taming Sari *Keris*, indicate that the design must be carefully evaluated to better align with historical authenticity and cultural meaning. The sculpture's current condition, with faded colours and mossy-covered surfaces, underscores the urgent need for proper maintenance and conservation efforts to preserve the work's artistic and cultural significance. In order to integrate *Keris* sculpture, particularly in Jalan Air Keroh, into Melaka's cultural identity, it is necessary to emphasise the historical and cultural significance of the *Keris*, involve residents and artisans in the design process, and prioritise preservation. Education activities and public exhibitions must be developed to enhance awareness and strengthen the community's relationship with this cultural symbol. Consulting with experts and incorporating community feedback will ensure that the *Keris* statue displays traditional skills and underscores its significance as part of Melaka's cultural heritage.

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Symbolic Geometry In Sulaiman Esa Paintings Through The Principles Of Islamic Art

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ABSTRACT

This paper explains geometric motifs through Islamic aesthetic point of view in the painting Garden of Mystery VI (1992) by Sulaiman Esa. Islamic art prescribes the whole way of life and all the activities that humans carry out in *syumul* (complete togetherness), including in the study of art. Islamic art is one of the advances in the civilization of the Islamic world and geometry is among the three motifs of Islamic art that are highly praised by the world community apart from calligraphy and Arabes. Islam has established those religious aspects play an important role in determining the basis and foundation to produce an element in the arts. It can be identified in geometric motifs through shape, meaning and symbolism that tend to have the concept of 'Shari'a'. The main purpose of the study was to identify the types of geometric motifs and patterns in the painting artwork Garden of Mystery VI (1992). Explore the relationship between formalistic aspects of Islamic art and aesthetics through the production of Sulaiman Esa's

paintings. This study also aims to see the aesthetic value of Islam which involves the pronunciation of symmetry in the context of mathematical culture. The written and visual data collection methodology in this study uses a qualitative approach that involves the design of case studies based on fieldwork empirical data obtained. Methods of observation, documentation and visual recording were used for the collection of research information. The findings of the study show that geometric motifs are decorations in Islamic art that comply with Islamic law and have their own privileges. An understanding of the form, purpose, philosophy, concept and purpose of geometric design application should be applied in Islamic painting artwork to form Islamic images and identities. Once again guide Islamic painters to internalise, understand and try to stimulate painters to dignify the true motives of Islam.

Keywords: *Geometry, Islamic Arts, Paintings*

Simbolik Geometri Dalam Catan Sulaiman Esa Melalui Prinsip Seni Islam

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ABSTRAK

Kertas kajian ini menerangkan tentang motif geometri melalui sudut pandangan estetika Islam dalam karya seni catan Garden of Mystery VI yang dihasilkan pada tahun 1992 oleh Sulaiman Esa. Islam menentukan cara hidup yang menyeluruh dan segala kegiatan yang dilakukan manusia secara syumul, termasuklah juga di dalam kajian kesenian. Kesenian Islam merupakan salah satu kemajuan dalam peradaban dunia Islam dan geometri merupakan antara tiga motif kesenian Islam yang disanjung tinggi oleh masyarakat dunia selain dari khaligrafi dan arabes. Islam telah menggariskan ketetapan bahawa aspek agama memainkan peranan yang penting dalam menentukan dasar dan teras bagi penghasilan sesuatu unsur dalam bidang kesenian. Ianya dapat dikenal pasti dalam motif geometri melalui bentuk, makna dan simbolik yang cenderung dengan pemilikan konsep syariat. Tujuan utama kajian adalah mengenal pasti jenis motif dan corak geometri

dalam karya seni catan *Garden of Mystery VI*. Meneroka hubung kait antara aspek formalistik seni dan estetika Islam menerusi penghasilan karya catan Sulaiman Esa. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk melihat nilai estetika Islam yang melibatkan pengucapan simetri dalam konteks budaya matematik. Metodologi pengumpulan data secara bertulis dan visual dalam kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif yang melibatkan reka bentuk kajian kes yang berasaskan kepada kerja lapangan secara empirikal data yang diperolehi. Kaedah pemerhatian dokumentasi dan visual rakaman digunakan untuk pengumpulan maklumat kajian. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan motif geometri merupakan hiasan dalam kesenian Islam yang menepati syariat Islam serta mempunyai keistimewaan tersendiri. Pemahaman tentang bentuk, maksud, falsafah, konsep dan tujuan aplikasi reka bentuk geometri perlu diterapkan di dalam karya seni catan Islam bagi membentuk imej dan identiti bercirikan Islamik. Sekali gus membimbing pelukis Islam menghayati, memahami dan berusaha merangsang pelukis memartabatkan motif Islam yang sebenar.

Kata kunci: *Geometri, Kesenian Islam, Catan*

PENGENALAN

Geometri merupakan satu daripada tiga motif seni Islam selain daripada motif kaligrafi dan arabesque. Ia tidak menggunakan bentuk figura yang bersifat realistic yakni bertentangan dengan ajaran Islam (Ros Mahwati et al., 2018). Sebenarnya, perkataan geometri berasal daripada bahasa Yunani yang mana 'geo' bermaksud bumi dan 'metri' bermaksud ukuran. Ukuran adalah sebahagian dari matematik yang antara lain tumpuan kajiannya mengenai saiz, bentuk dan kedudukan relatif dari rajah dan sifat ruang (De Risi, 2015). Menurut Annenberg Foundation (2017) pula, geometri adalah ilmu matematik berkaitan bentuk dan ruang yang terhasil dari bentuk asas seperti bulat, segi empat dan segi tiga secara pengulangan bagi menghasilkan corak yang kompleks dan mengagumkan. Bentuk-bentuk asas geometri dikenali sebagai poligon iaitu berdasarkan pada jumlah tepi (sisi), bersudut serta mempunyai simetri garis dan simetri pantulan. Terdapat tiga rupa asas geometri iaitu bulatan, segi empat dan segi tiga. Ketiga-tiga rupa ini merupakan nadi kepada pembentukan rupa geometri lain seperti oval, trapezoid, pentagon, pentagram, parallelogram, heksagon dan oktagon.

Geometri adalah matematik yang menyelesaikan tentang kajian garis, sudut, bentuk, perimeter, kawasan dan isi padu. Dalam setiap rupa bentuk geometri, terdapat perbezaan dalam struktur yang melibatkan dua perkara iaitu garisan dan sudut. Garisan ditakrifkan sebagai satu dimensi yang mempunyai ukur panjang tetapi tidak mempunyai lebar atau tinggi manakala sudut ditakrifkan sebagai mempunyai dua sinar atau dua ruas garis yang bertemu di satu titik pangkal yang sama. Setiap dua titik akan menghasilkan sudut tegak, sudut lancip dan sudut tumpul. Segi tiga ialah bentuk asas geometri.

Geometri dalam seni Islam pada dasarnya adalah suatu pengucapan langsung kepada Allah SWT sebagai suatu bentuk penghayatan, pujian dan kesyukuran melalui ciptaan seni visual yang unik dan kreatif. Idea dan ciptaan visual yang datang kepada seseorang adalah lahir atau terbit daripada sumber inspirasi yang mendalam. Dalam kesenian Islam, ragam hias yang menggunakan elemen ulangan seperti poligon bulatan, segi tiga dan segi empat adalah cerminan kreativiti seniman Muslim terutama dalam menggabungkan unsur-unsur geometri dalam pendekatan matematik. Oleh sebab itu, seni Islam lebih bercirikan matematikal melalui penggunaan motif geometri seperti yang terdapat dalam penghasilan karya seni. Menerusi kesenian Islam, terdapat susunan yang membentuk keseimbangan, kesemeterian dan pengulangan menerusi motif geometri lalu mewujudkan keharmonian dalam karya (Wan Soliana et al., 2020).

Seniman Muslim lazimnya memperoleh sumber inspirasi dengan merujuk kepada sumber alam semula jadi seperti, flora, fauna dan kosmos. Hasil daripada kaedah observasi dan penakulan tersebut maka diolah dengan menampilkan suatu rekaan rupa bentuk, motif dan pola baharu melalui proses

denaturalisasi atau pengayaan iaitu memisahkan dari sifat fizikal sebenar sesuatu objek. Pendekatan untuk menghilangkan sifat fizikal sebenar objek, mendorong seniman Muslim menghasilkan motif-motif geometri berteraskan corak abstrak yakni memaparkan objek-objek tersebut dalam rupa bentuk seperti bulatan, segi tiga dan segi empat yang diulang, digabung atau ditindan. Oleg Grabar yang merupakan seorang sejarawan dan arkeologi terkemuka dalam bidang seni dan seni bina Islam menyatakan fungsi penting geometri dalam hiasan Islamiah adalah sebagai pengantaraan antara jambatan antara duniawi dengan ketuhanan (Zand, 2019).

Menurut Ismail Raji al-Faruqi dan Lois Lamya al-Faruqi (1986), seni Islam adalah satu manifestasi estetik yang berpaksikan al-Quran dan hadis sebagai panduan dalam menyampaikan sesuatu mesej berkenaan kesenian Islam. Konsep kesenian dalam perspektif Islam ialah membimbing manusia ke arah tauhid serta diterjemahkan sebagai suatu bentuk pengabdian diri kepada Allah SWT. Maka, seni Islam dibentuk untuk melahirkan manusia yang berakhlak dan beradab serta tidak lari dari batas-batas syariat. Justeru, seni Islam bertitik tolak dari akidah Islam yakni berpegang kepada doktrin tauhid iaitu pengesaan kepada Allah SWT lantaran direalisasikan dalam karya-karya seni.

Sehubungan itu, dapatlah dinyatakan bahawa kesenian Islam adalah hasil karya tentang keindahan yang wujud dalam jiwa seseorang Muslim selaras dengan aturan dan makna yang menghubungkan aspek keindahan dan kebenaran tentang kebesaran Allah SWT. Bagi memastikan setiap ciptaan, penghayatan dan tingkah laku manusia tidak bertentangan dengan syariat, kesenian Islam amat mengambil berat aspek seperti niat, kaedah mencipta, bahan, motif, penghayatan, imej, mesej dan matlamat (Muhammad Khairul Hafiz et al., 2019).

Di Malaysia, seni Islam dikatakan bermula di antara tahun 1971 hingga 1990 dan boleh dianggap sebagai era kebangkitan yang menjadi salah satu gerakan seni utama dalam perkembangan seni lukis moden. Perkembangan tersebut boleh menelusuri akan pembabitan beberapa seniman Muslim dalam pelbagai pameran seni Islam dalam dua dekad tersebut antaranya seperti Syed Ahmad Jamal, Ahmad Khalid Yusof, Sharifah Fatimah Zubir, Ismail Mustam, Ibrahim Hussein, Fatimah Chik, Sulaiman Esa, Ruzaika Omar Basaree dan lain-lain (Muhammad Faiz Sabri et al., 2019).

Rujukan estetika menerusi kesenian Islam wujud adalah hasil daripada perkembangan positif terhadap Islam sebagai nilai dan gaya hidup yang sempurna. Ini dapat dilihat dalam karya-karya seni lukis moden di Malaysia di mana penggunaan bentuk dan motif Melayu-Islam dapat dilihat dalam karya-karya seni catan Sulaiman Esa. Beliau banyak mengetengahkan bentuk-bentuk geometri dalam karya (Mulyadi, 2007). Karya catan yang bercirikan kesenian Islam adalah sinonim dengan pelukis Sulaiman Esa yang mula diperkenalkan dalam catan beliau pada sekitar tahun 1980an lagi. Beliau merupakan penggerak utama seni Islam yang mengangkat karya yang berimejkan motif Melayu-Islam. Motif ini diinspirasi dari kraf Melayu yang menampakkan ciri-ciri identiti bagi masyarakat.

Sulaiman Esa cuba untuk mengetengahkan dan menghubungkan kerohanian Islam dengan paparan yang menonjolkan tradisi Melayu-Islam dalam karya di samping mengelakkan nilai sekular di dalam karya (Khatijah, 2016). Wujud anjakan paradigma ke arah kesedaran dan pembangunan seni Islam di Malaysia iaitu di sekitar awal tahun 1980 an lalu sambutan oleh Sulaiman Esa dengan komitmen tinggi dan pendekatan berani. Kesenian Melayu-Islam dikenali melalui penciptaan motif dari sudut hiasan dan reka bentuk yang memperlihatkan kecenderungan pengaplikasian unsur alam semula jadi dan unsur geometri ke dalam karya seni (Rahmah Bujang dan Nor Azlin Hamidon, 2008). Menerusi karya kesenian Melayu-Islam, konsep geometri berkembang dengan meluas berpandukan kedudukan reka bentuk yang seimbang menerusi olahan susunan corak secara pengulangan yang seimbang dan harmoni. Perhubungan di antara bahagian-bahagian tertentu menghasilkan irama yang menenteramkan jiwa (Syed Ahmad, 2012).

KAJIAN LITERATUR

Di Malaysia terdapat banyak penyelidikan yang dilaksanakan oleh para sarjana berkaitan geometri menerusi seni visual, kebudayaan dan seni bina. Kebanyakan penyelidikan tentang geometri adalah tertumpu pada seni bina, tenunan, anyaman, ukiran, batik dan permainan tradisional (Wan Muhammad Afiq & Sharifah Kartini, 2018). Terdapat elemen dan corak geometri dalam kesenian Islam yang berteraskan aspek fungsional dan bernilai estetik secara fizikal dan spiritual (Norliza, 2021). Penyelidikan tersebut membicarakan tujuh simbolik di sebalik penggunaan geometri Islam iaitu tauhid (pemusatan dan keesaan kepada Allah SWT), perpaduan dan penyatuan (*unity*), keseimbangan dan keharmonian alam semester, aturan (*order*), penentuan arah (*sense of direction*), keindahan serta budaya Islam dan praktikaliti dalam Islam. Penyelidikan beliau telah menyumbang kepada pemahaman maksud, konsep dan tujuan aplikasi reka bentuk geometri yang perlu diterapkan di dalam membentuk imej dan identiti berciri Islamik.

Cromwell (2021) dalam penyelidikannya menyatakan bahawa corak geometri Islam merupakan susunan kompleks bintang dan poligon yang saling bertautan. Menurutnya lagi, geometri adalah artifak budaya dan bukannya rangsangan yang direka khusus untuk tujuan eksperimen saintifik. Apabila seseorang manusia yang tidak biasa melihat corak geometri, mereka juga tidak akan melihat sama ada garisan, sudut dan lintasan.

Penyelidikan oleh Rushana dan Halim (2019) terhadap karya seni catan Ruzaiqa Omar Basaree bertajuk *Siri Dungun* (1981) menunjukkan bahawa pelukis menerapkan elemen binaan tradisional Melayu yang menampilkan reka bentuk simetri melalui penggunaan motif geometri. Pemetaan kerangka konsep yang digunakan dalam penyelidikan yang mendasari reka bentuk subjek dan makna estetika bagi mengklasifikasikan reka corak karya seni catan dengan menggunakan proses transformasi simetri. Hasil penyelidikan menunjukkan karya seni catan bukan sahaja boleh dilihat daripada sudut formalistik seni sahaja, malahan boleh diperlihatkan dalam konteks etnomatematik menerusi penerapan ciri-ciri simetri dalam penghasilan karya.

Jelasnya geometri adalah salah satu motif kesenian Islam tentang keindahan yang tercipta dan lahir dari jiwa seseorang yang menghubungkan aspek keindahan dan kebenaran tentang kewujudan Allah SWT. Kreativiti seniman Muslim menghasilkan reka corak geometri melalui penggunaan rupa bulat, segi tiga dan segi empat memberi gambaran akan ketinggian tahap pemikiran anugerah Tuhan. Matlamatnya adalah untuk membimbing manusia ke arah berkonsepkan tauhid dan pengabdian diri kepada Allah SWT. Menurut Roxane Zand (2019), dari awal abad ke-19 sehingga ke hari ini, telah membolehkan kita melihat pengkhususan budaya dan ajaran matematik yang terlibat dalam pembangunan geometri dalam seni Islam. Ini dapat dilihat pada aspek pertukangan mahupun kejuruteraan yang tepat untuk menutup ukuran dinding, gerbang dan kubah yang luas dalam seantero dunia Islam. Sehubungan itu adalah wajar untuk memastikan setiap ciptaan, penghayatan dan tata laku manusia tidak bertentangan dengan syariat Islam. Ini kerana kesenian Islam amat mengambil berat aspek seperti niat, kaedah mencipta, bahan, motif, penghayatan, imej, mesej dan matlamat (Muhammad Khairul et al., 2019).

METODOLOGI KAJIAN

Pendekatan kajian ini adalah berbentuk kualitatif deskriptif dengan pendekatan antara-disiplin. Reka bentuk kajian ini adalah kajian kes dengan analisis pengkaryaan ke atas seni catan yang melibatkan motif geometri dalam *Garden of Mystery VI* (1992) oleh Sulaiman Esa. Penelitian terhadap konsep geometri Islam ini dijalankan bagi mengklasifikasikan reka bentuk corak dalam catan. Skop penyelidikan adalah melibatkan subjek, rupa bentuk dan makna dalam memahami konsep geometri dan simbolisme dalam konteks kesenian Islam. Terdapat tiga kaedah pengumpulan data yang digunakan dalam kajian ini iaitu pemerhatian, rakaman visual dan analisis kandungan (content analysis). Data dikumpul adalah berasaskan kepada lapangan secara empirikal yang diperoleh ketika berada di tempat kajian.

ANALISIS KARYA

Pemilihan sampel kajian adalah karya catan bercirikan estetika Islam iaitu 'Garden of Mystery VI' yang dihasilkan oleh tokoh pelukis terkenal Malaysia iaitu Sulaiman Esa. Beliau merupakan salah seorang penggerak utama seni Islam yang berupaya mengangkat karya berinspirasi Islam dengan menentengahkan motif yang beridentitikan Melayu-Islam semenjak 1950-an hingga kini (Raja'ah, 2011).



Rajah 1. Garden of Mystery VI

(Sumber: Koleksi Seni Visual Negara (Malaysia), 2022)

'Garden of Mystery VI' dihasilkan pada tahun 1992 dan merupakan koleksi seni visual negara Malaysia. Karya ini adalah bersegi empat sama, berukuran 216 sentimeter tinggi dan 157 sentimeter lebar dengan satu panel format menegak dipamerkan tergantung pada dinding yang mengungkap ruang simbolik persis permaidani Islam. Reka bentuk tersebut seakan seni sejadah dan taman syurgawi tamadun Islam. Pelukis menggunakan media campuran iaitu daripada buluh, kertas buatan tangan, potongan kertas biasa, benang, kanvas, pencilup warna, cat minyak dan akrilik. Dalam catan ini, tumpuan adalah pada olahan warna serta sisipan anyaman. Keseluruhan permukaan catan yang diolah adalah menggunakan sistem grid yang mempunyai sifat-sifat matematik. Terdapat pelbagai olahan motif geometri dalam catan tersebut, antaranya ialah poligon bulat, segi empat tepat, segi empat sama, oktogon, heksagon, trapezium dan bintang yang diolah secara berulang-ulang. Interpretasi secara intrinsik tentang syurga yang digambarkan penuh keindahan dalam 'Garden of Mystery VI' adalah pengaruh daripada tasawuf (Khatijah, 2016). Karya catan ini mempunyai makna tersirat dan tersurat menerusi prinsip estetika dengan olahan simetri berbentuk pengulangan (Ruzaika, 2016).

Subjek permaidani yang menyerupai sejadah dalam catan ini memperlihatkan penggunaan sistem grid pada permukaan catan dengan warna-warna yang terang berbentuk poligon, bersimetri, pengulangan serta mempunyai unsur-unsur infiniti. Kombinasi motif tersebut bukan hanya membentuk identiti sesebuah karya, tetapi menunjukkan kreativiti seseorang pelukis. Menurut Jasman et al., (1996) menyatakan bahawa bentuk bulatan, bunga pecah lapan atau segi empat belah ketupat dihasilkan melalui corak garisan dalam motif geometri. Terdapat garisan berpaksi di tengah-tengah catan secara menegak dan melintang, separuh bulatan serta bulatan turut mendasari keseluruhan karya catan. Motif-motif ini dikenal pasti dan dianalisis sebagai catan yang kaya dengan unsur geometri menerusi subjek, bentuk dan makna serta simbolismenya.

Jadual 1. Motif Reka Bentuk Geometri

Garden of Mystery VI (1992)		
	Motif Flora	 Motif Belah Ketupat
	4-Titik	Motif Bunga Pecah Empa
		Rombus

Jadual 1 menunjukkan bentuk poligon yang tidak sekata iaitu rombus yang turut dikenalkan sebagai motif belah ketupat atau motif bunga pecah empat yang biasanya dikaitkan dengan estetika Melayu. Dalam kumpulan matematik, poligon dikenali dengan nama rombus cekung yang mempunyai empat sisi, empat sudut dan empat titik. Ia boleh dilihat dari pandangan sisi atau pandangan atas. Motif gaya geometri ini bersumberkan alam semulajadi iaitu flora berdasarkan rangka dasar bunga. Pilihan bunga pecah empat dapat diolah menjadi bunga pecah enam dan bunga pecah lapan. Konsep bunga pecah empat juga merupakan reka bentuk dasar bagi kebanyakan reka corak dan motif dalam kebanyakan karya catan tempatan. Ia turut memaparkan konsep simetri dua paksi pantulan pada motif bunga pecah empat. Proses ini menghasilkan empat sudut putaran iaitu masing-masing 90° . Ia membentuk corak yang mempunyai keseimbangan sudut melalui imbangan susunan simetri. Bunga pecah empat melambangkan tanah, air, api, dan angin iaitu empat unsur kosmologi utama dalam falsafah masyarakat Melayu. Keseimbangan empat unsur ini adalah merujuk kepada kesempurnaan dan keseimbangan terutamanya dalam bidang perubatan dan kesihatan. Keseimbangan empat unsur ini juga dapat menentukan keserasian keperibadian antara seseorang dengan seseorang yang lain terutamanya dalam menentukan pasangan (Arba'iyah, 2018).

Jadual 2. Motif Reka Bentuk Geometri

Garden of Mystery VI (1992)		
	Kosmos	 Motif Rombus / Motif Berlian
	4-Titik	Motif Segi Empat
		Trapezium

Jadual 2 menunjukkan rupa bentuk poligon sekata iaitu rombus yang juga dikenali sebagai motif berlian. Poligon jenis ini dikenali dengan nama rombus cembung. Dalam istilah matematik, rupa bentuk ini dikenali sebagai segi empat sama dengan empat sisi yang berukuran sama panjang, dua sisi selari, empat sudut pedalaman yang sama 90° , empat bucu yang sama kecerunan, empat garis simetri dan empat titik dengan jarak yang sama. Motif ini memenuhi ruang kiri dan kanan serta atas dan bawah pada seluruh permukaan catan. Segi empat sama juga boleh terbentuk dari dua, empat atau lapan segi tiga sama sisi. Ia memperlihatkan konsep simetri daripada empat paksi pantulan pada motif rombus. Proses ini menghasilkan empat sudut putaran berukuran 45° pada setiap satunya. Ia membentuk corak yang mempunyai keseimbangan berpenjuru menerusi gubahan imbangan simetri. Karya catan di atas

memperlihatkan asas rupa bentuk segi empat yang mendominasi keseluruhan karya. Susun atur reka corak segi empat melalui penggunaan geometri seperti saiz, ulangan, tindanan, arah dan simetri menunjukkan aspek kesatuan yang baik dalam catan. Motif segi empat atau trapezium mempunyai simboliknya yang tersendiri dalam budaya Melayu. Ia membawa maksud akan hubungan keakraban dalam masyarakat. Maka adalah menjadi kewajipan bagi setiap orang dalam komuniti untuk melaksanakan tugas mereka membantu antara satu sama lain (Wan Norliza et al., 2022).

Jadual 3. Motif Reka Bentuk Geometri

Garden of Mystery VI (1992)		
	Fauna	 Motif Siku Keluang
	6-Titik	Motif Huruf V
		Heksagon

Jadual 3 merupakan motif fauna iaitu keluang dari spesies kelawar. Gambaran pada depan sayap kelawar yang lebar jelas menampakkan motif siku keluang yang juga menyerupai huruf V. Penggayaan keseluruhan sifat fauna kepada bentuk geometri ini menandai akan ketinggian pemikiran kreatif dan adunan penciptaan inovasi seniman Muslim. Motif ini menampakkan gaya geometri daripada poligon yang tidak sekata dari jenis heksagon yang mempunyai enam titik atau sisi. Dalam seni ukiran kayu, istilah siku keluang digunakan sebagai gambaran pada sesiku yang berfungsi sebagai sangga pada struktur binaan rumah. Dalam seni anyaman kelarai pula, motif geometri yang membentuk corak kekisi bersiku dikenali dengan nama kelarai siku keluang. Dalam konteks ini, ia menunjukkan konsep simetri dua paksi pantulan pada motif huruf V atau dipanggil siku keluang dalam seni Melayu. Ia membentuk corak yang mempunyai keseimbangan sudut melalui susunan imbangan simetri. Reka bentuk motif huruf V ini disusun secara mendatar dan berurutan mengelilingi permukaan catan. Motif huruf V atau siku keluang mempunyai simbolisme yang tersendiri dalam budaya Melayu dan kesenian Islam. Jelasnya, rupa bentuk geometri ini mempunyai nilai dari sudut rohani atau spritualiti. Huruf V atau segi tiga adalah tanda dalam corak Islam yang mewakili identiti Melayu dan ia digunakan untuk menyampaikan ucapan terima kasih, tauhid (tunduk) pada Allah SWT (Aiqa Afiqah & Mohamad Kamal, 2022).

Jadual 4. Motif Reka Bentuk Geometri

Garden of Mystery VI (1992)		
	Kosmos	 Motif Bintang Lapan
	8-Titik	Motif Bunga Pecah Lapan
		Oktagon

Jadual 4 menunjukkan keunikan dan daya kreativiti penggunaan motif kosmos dalam kategori poligon bintang. Motif ini juga dikenali dengan nama bunga pecah lapan ataupun kelopak lapan atau oktagon yang dikelaskan sebagai corak geometri 8 titik atau motif geometri berbucu lapan. Bintang lapan adalah satu bentuk geometri dari dua segi empat sama yang saling tumpang tindih dengan garis pusat yang sama iaitu pada sudut 45°. Terdapat banyak penggunaan rupa bentuk bintang lapan di dalam catan ini. Antaranya ia terhasil dari dua poligon segi empat sama yang bertindanan lantaran menjadi identiti sumber penciptaan dalam catan pelukis. Bintang lapan adalah bentuk geometri yang sering digunakan oleh para seniman Muslim di seluruh dunia dalam pelbagai dimensi seni seperti dalam tekstil, seni bina bangunan, seramik, kraf, kulit buku dan lain-lain.

Bintang merupakan lambang atau simbol sejagat atau universal orang-orang Islam di seluruh dunia. Penciptaan motif dari unsur kosmos diinspirasi pada elemen cakerawala iaitu bintang-bintang yang bertaburan di langit. Manusia lazimnya amat terpesona atau terkesima apabila melihat keindahan ciptaan Allah SWT terutama bintang-bintang yang bergemerlapan di langit pada waktu malam lalu mengucap syukur akan limpah rahmatNya. Justeru, simbol bintang diabadikan yang dapat dilihat penggunaannya pada bendera-bendera negara Islam tertentu di seluruh dunia seperti Turkiye, Pakistan, Algeria, Brunei dan juga Malaysia. Gambaran ini menunjukkan bahawa bintang merupakan unsur kosmos yang penting sekali gus menjadi lambang identiti bagi kebanyakan negara Islam di dunia.

Dalam konteks pemilihan motif-motif Melayu, bintang ataupun bunga pecah lapan biasanya dikaitkan dengan bunga kelopak lapan dari sudut pandangan atas atau pandangan sisi yang diinspirasi dari bunga lawang. Di dalam budaya Melayu-Islam, bintang mempunyai falsafah atau makna yang tersendiri iaitu sebagai tanda harapan, keberhasilan dan kemasyhuran. Tidak hairanlah masyarakat Melayu sering menggunakan sebutan bintang kepada seseorang yang dianugerahi kejayaan seumpama bintang emas, *the star*, bintang hati, bintang popular, laksana bintang dan sebagainya. Symbolisme bintang juga amat popular untuk menunjukkan kedudukan atau 'ranking' iaitu suatu ukuran penilaian, prestasi atau ulasan terhadap pencapaian pada sesuatu produk, perkhidmatan atau pengalaman. Penilaian ini adalah untuk menjelaskan mengenai tingkatan dalam pencapaian tertentu seperti istilah lima bintang yang lazim digunakan oleh masyarakat kita dalam sesuatu perkara.

Jadual 5. Motif Reka Bentuk Geometri

Garden of Mystery VI (1992)		
	Motif Geometri	 <p>Motif Segi Empat Sama</p>
	4-Titik	Persegi

Jadual 5 memperlihatkan rupa bentuk motif segi empat sama. Pengolahan rupa bentuk ini pada keseluruhannya adalah bersudut tepat dengan garisan sisi yang sama panjang serta mempunyai empat paksi simetri. Secara keseluruhannya motif ini mendominasi akan keseluruhan ruang dalam catan. Pelbagai olahan segi empat terlihat menerusi saiz, arah dan susunan sekali gus menggambarkan kreativiti pelukis. Catan ini juga menunjukkan paksi pantulan yang memperlihatkan kesan 'reversible' iaitu imej seperti dalam cermin. Setiap satah pada imej yang dipantulkan mempunyai jarak yang sama dari paksi pantulan. Pemilihan motif ini dikategorikan sebagai bentuk yang mudah tetapi menarik untuk dilakarkan dalam catan. Jelasnya, segi empat sama mendasari karya catan Sulaiman Esa. Ia merupakan suatu paparan

mengenai garisan grid yang menjadi perkiraan matematik dalam catan ini. Beliau banyak menggunakan garis grid ini kerana kerangka keilmuan seni Islam menjelaskan akan intipati kerohanian juga disisipkan oleh grid dengan berpandukan sistem pengiraan matematik khusus dalam membentuk corak arabes dan geometri. Dalam menghasilkan catan ini, Sulaiman Esa mementingkan penerokaan dan pengolahan di atas permukaan rata kanvas dengan penggunaan sistem pengukuran dan grid bagi mendapatkan ukuran yang tepat untuk mencapai motif geometri seperti keseimbangan, pengulangan, simetri dan infiniti (Raja'ah, 2011).

RUMUSAN

Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk melihat pendekatan analisis geometri yang mendasari karya catan seni Islam melalui karya catan *Garden of Mystery VI* (1992) oleh Sulaiman Esa. Catan ini menggunakan corak geometri yang kaya dengan aspek simbolisme dan falsafah prinsip seni Islam. Motif geometri adalah hasil pengamatan pelukis dari alam semula jadi terhadap elemen flora, fauna dan kosmos lalu mengalami proses denaturalisasi, pengayaan dan abstraksi. Walaupun Sulaiman Esa berpandukan sejadah sebagai inspirasi, beliau memilih hiasan sejadah yang dipenuhi motif geometri berdekoratif dalam pengkaryaan. Bintang merupakan motif kosmos berbentuk geometri banyak digunakan terutama dalam karya-karya pelukis Islam di seluruh dunia. Menariknya, ia memberi maksud pencapaian yang tinggi, lambang Islam dan perdamaian. Ciri utama motif geometri merangkumi prinsip pengulangan yang diulang untuk membentuk satu reka corak yang berkonsepkan dunia infiniti. Ini bermakna, motif geometri itu diulang meliputi ke segenap ruang. Simetri akan tercipta bilamana reka bentuk geometri melalui prinsip pengulangan dapat terhasil meskipun kompleks pada rekaan. Dalam seni Islam, reka bentuk corak geometri yang berulang-ulang menunjukkan ciri-ciri kesenian Islam.

Corak geometri yang terkandung nilai estetik dan falsafah terdapat dalam semua proses reka bentuk dan kesenian Islam (Mohammad Abdullah Almandrawy et al., 2020). Geometri mempunyai struktur simetri sama ada secara nyata atau tidak secara umumnya mempunyai aturan dan makna (meaning and order) tertentu berteraskan perkiraan matematik yang membentuk karya limpahan nilai estetik. Alam semula jadi bagi seniman Muslim sering dijadikan sumber inspirasi atau aspirasi dalam menggayakan pelbagai corak motif dengan menghilangkan sifat dan bentuk asal sehingga membentuk pola atau corak yang bersudut dan bersegi. Adalah diharapkan bahawa kajian ini dapat dilihat sebagai satu landasan akademik bagi mendorong masyarakat umum untuk melihat karya catan dalam konteks dualisme iaitu dari sudut formalistik dan juga menghayatinya dalam konteks estetika Islam menerusi pengucapan geometri

PENGHARGAAN

Penulis ingin merakam penghargaan kepada semua penulis yang telah menyumbang kepada penulisan ini

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Traditional Craft Meets Contemporary: Exploring the Potential of *Kelarai Bertam* Weaving Technique in Modern Furniture Construction

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ABSTRACT

Kelarai Bertam is a traditional weaving method that has been used for ages to make comprehensive weaves for usage both indoors and outdoors in Malaysian homes. This traditional practice, however, is being explored as an innovative method to build modern furniture in response to the increasing need for unique and environmentally friendly designs. Using this detailed weaving technique, designers construct patterns and motifs that combine aesthetic appeal with practicality out of organic materials like rattan, bamboo, and pandan leaves. When applied to contemporary furniture, the outcome's combination of traditional craftsmanship and modern style is fascinating. This combination provides an opportunity to preserve and acknowledge traditional techniques while also emphasising the strength of Malaysian innovation in the present era.

Keywords: *Kelarai Bertam, Weaving Technique, Furniture Construction*

INTRODUCTION

This study looks at how the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method could be used to make modern furniture by

finding new ways to use traditional weaving methods in modern design. Traditional crafts are becoming more popular again, and people are becoming more aware of how mass production influences the environment and past generations. This has led to a focus on using traditional elements in modern design. The *Kelarai Bertam* method, which uses natural materials and complex weaving patterns, is a one-of-a-kind way to create amazing, sustainable furniture that is both modern and traditional (Mariam et al., 2021). By looking at how this weaving method could be used in modern design, this study hopes to help create a more sustainable and culturally interesting way to make subjects.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Extensive research has been carried out in order to investigate the possibility of using the weaving technique known as *Kelarai Bertam* in the production of contemporary furniture. The study team investigated the history of traditional techniques used in the art form and experimented with various materials and processes in order to identify ways to incorporate the technique into construction. In addition, they studied the history of traditional techniques used in the art form. The unusual and textural weavings of *Kelarai Bertam* were the focus of this research, which also looked at the potential design applications of these weavings. The team discovered via their investigation that this method has significant promise in the design and manufacturing of furniture, bringing together traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics.

Handicraft

Products of this nature are known as handicrafts, and they are typically crafted not only by hand but also with the assistance of a few simple and straightforward instruments. They serve a number of purposes in our day-to-day activities. In most cases, individuals utilise it both as a decorative element and for the practical value it offers, such as a wall mat hanging on the wall to display the drawing room in a more attractive manner, dolls for the younger children, a rug for decorating either the floor of the drawing room or the bed that is on the floor of the room, and others. The nature of handicraft items, their designs, the kinds of materials used to make them, and the aesthetic interests and feelings that went into making them make them one of a kind. As defined by Dash (2011), handicrafts are the exclusive representation of a community or culture through the use of local craftsmanship and materials.

The *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique is a traditional skill that has been practised in Malaysia, particularly in the state of Kedah, for many generations. The method involves the use of dried and split bertam leaves, which are then painstakingly intertwined in order to produce elaborate patterns and textures. This method of weaving was historically utilised in the production of traditional items for the home, such as rugs and mats. In recent years, designers and those who build furniture have shown an interest in *Kelarai* weaving because they recognise its potential for use in the construction of contemporary furniture. The weaving technique known as *Kelarai Bertam* offers a one-of-a-kind combination of technical and aesthetic attributes, in addition to a significant amount of possibilities for the production of furniture that is both practical and aesthetically pleasing. The technique's merits lay not only in its longevity but also in its capacity to produce stunning and unique spaces that give a touch of tradition to modern spaces. These strengths allow the technique to create striking and uncommon spaces that add a touch of tradition to modern spaces.

The Sources of Craft Field: Forest-Based

The country of Malaysia is extremely privileged in that it has a variety of natural resources, each of which contributes to the national income and economy. Local craft industries, ethnic communities in Sabah and Sarawak, and the Orang Asli community all work precisely to produce forest materials such as wood, bamboo, rattan, pandan, bemban, coconut shells, and serdang leaves. These products are used in the creation of handmade goods. Over 2,000 people are engaged in the handicraft business in the state of Sabah, making it the state with the highest concentration of entrepreneurs in this sector. In addition to Sabah, Sarawak is home to a sizable number of business owners who are actively engaged in the production of a wide variety of handicrafts that are derived from forest materials and are fundamentally rooted in traditional ways of life. These handicrafts are made from a variety of materials including wood, bamboo, Rattan, and Mengkuang.

Handicraft Materials-Bertam

Various kinds of natural materials are utilised in the manufacturing of handicraft products. Raw materials are, without a doubt, preferable to those found in products that utilise the use of a manufactured material. One of the advantages of using natural materials is that they have more advantages for the environment. The examples of natural handicraft material are Bertam, Bamboo, Nipah Palm, Rattan, Coconut Shell and Bemban.

Hopes (2021) describes *Kelarai Bertam* weaving as a traditional craft technique that combines chequered weaving employing symmetrical squares to form patterns of motifs. This technique is said to have originated in Malaysia. It is a frequent practice to utilise it as a decorative technique on woven mats, and different patterns have different connotations attached to it (Mariam. et al., 2023).

The *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique has the potential to be explored in the context of contemporary furniture construction. Unique and aesthetically pleasing furniture can be made by fusing this age-old skill with today's cutting-edge design techniques. Consider these avenues for research into the use of Kelarai Bertam weaving to contemporary furniture design:

Seat Weaving

Kelarai Bertam weaving can be used to construct woven seats for chairs and benches (Bohnhoff Furniture and Design, 2016). This is an application that is quite similar to that of Danish corded benches or cane chairs. The incorporation of this can provide contemporary furniture designs an air of time-honoured craftsmanship.

Panels and Surfaces

The weaving technique of *Kelarai Bertam* can be used to decorate the panels and surfaces of furniture, such as table tops and cabinet doors. This has the potential to generate elaborate patterns and textures, which will add visual interest to the piece of furniture.

Innovative Design

Innovative and modern furniture designs are possible for designers since they are able to draw inspiration from the traditional patterns used in *Kelarai Bertam*. According to Zheng and Zhu (2021), it is possible to make one-of-a-kind and aesthetically arresting pieces of furniture by fusing traditional features

with contemporary aesthetics.

Material Selection

Traditional *Kelarai Bertam* weaving is done with natural materials like bamboo or rattan; however, modern furniture creation is free to experiment with the use of a variety of materials. For instance, synthetic fibres or metal wires could be utilised to create a finish that is both contemporary and long-lasting.

Collaboration with Craftsmen

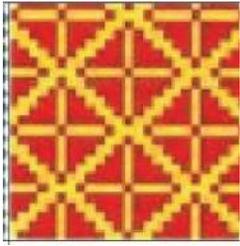
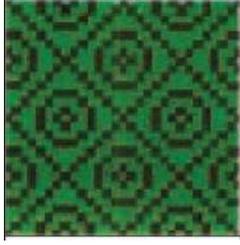
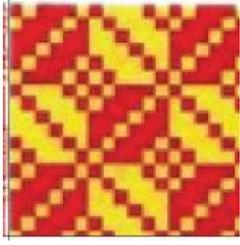
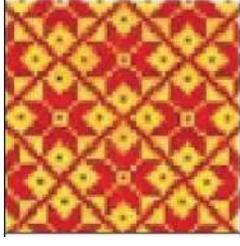
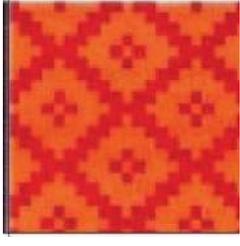
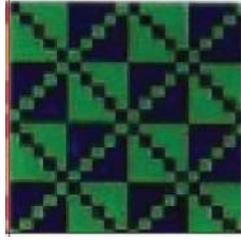
It is possible to ensure the authenticity and quality of the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving process when it is used for the creation of modern furniture by working in collaboration with expert craftsmen who specialise in the technique. This partnership presents an opportunity to maintain and showcase old forms of workmanship, which is another benefit.

It is possible for designers to produce one-of-a-kind and culturally significant pieces of furniture using the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique by combining it into the building of modern furniture. These pieces of furniture merge the aesthetics of traditional craft with those of contemporary design. This not only increases the worth of the furniture, but it also contributes to the maintenance of traditional workmanship and helps to promote its use.

Kelarai

Kelarai is a technique of chequered weaving that develops a pattern of motifs using local flowers, fruits, and animals (Nur Syahidah et al., 2022). This pattern is produced using a straightforward but attractive pattern of continuous squares that are symmetrical. Since its inception, the arrangement of simple patterns has developed into a large number of unique *Kelarai* designs. These designs are distinguished from one another by the use of distinct methods of production or weaving. *Kelarai* is utilised in the production of a variety of products, including those that are used on a daily basis such as mats and food coverings, as well as those that are used as decorative elements in traditional architecture such as walls and windows

Table 1: Malay traditional *Kelarai* weaving pattern of motifs

			
1. Kelarai Tampok Manggis	2. Kelarai Mak Mek	3. Kelarai Jari Kedidi	4. Kelarai Empat Sebilik
			
5. Kelarai Bunga Cengkih	6. Kelarai Cik Kedah Ketapang	7. Kelarai Tepak Anjang	8. Kelarai Bunga Pecah Lapan
			
9. Kelarai Bunga Cina	10. Kelarai Cik Kedah Berakar	11. Kelarai Mata Ketitir	12. Kelarai Sambas

(Source: Author's collection)

Kelarai Bertam

Kelarai Bertam handicrafts are made in a process with several steps. Even though the exact steps depend on the object being made, here are some general steps in the production process in Table 2 below:

Table 2. Bertam Handicraft Production Proses

 <p>(i)</p>	 <p>(ii)</p>	 <p>(iii)</p>
<p>Choose Bertam stems that are mature enough to cut down</p>	<p>Remove the thorns off the stem of the Bertama plant with great care</p>	<p>After the Bertam stick has been tied together, it is ready to be used</p>
 <p>(iv)</p>	 <p>(v)</p>	 <p>(vi)</p>
<p>Weaving by hand with Bertam sticks that have had the bark peeled off of them</p>	<p>Use a cleaver to scrape the inside of the stem of the Bertam's plant</p>	<p>Bertam's stem should be cut into four half equal in size.</p>

(Source: Author's collection)

The process of manufacturing *Kelarai Bertam* handicrafts is challenging and time-consuming, which demands a high level of skill and attention to detail from the craftsmen involved (Table 2, i, ii, iii.) The final result, however, is a product that is not only original but also physically appealing, and it reflects the cultural heritage of the Malay people

Kelarai Bertam Weaving Technique

Kelarai Bertam weaving technique is a traditional craft originating from the states of Kedah, Terengganu, and Kelantan, Malaysia. This weaving technique involves the intertwining of strips of soft rattan or bamboo, with the aim of creating intricate patterns. Historically, *Kelarai Bertam* weaving was used to create products such as baskets, mats, and hats. However, the potential of this weaving has grown in modern times, and artists and designers are exploring new ways to incorporate it into furniture construction. *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique is characterised by its unique pattern texture, which adds a touch of elegance and sophistication to contemporary furnishings.

Description of the technique

Malaysians have practised the *Kelarai Bertam* technique of weaving for centuries. Using a specialised loom, strips of young bertam leaves, a form of palm plant, are woven into intricate patterns. The mat-like weave that results is known for its flexibility and natural aesthetic (Table 2, iv). In recent years, the technique has been adapted for contemporary furniture construction, with designers such as *Kelarai Bertam* weaving chairs, tables, and other pieces to add a touch of traditional craftsmanship to modern designs. A combination of traditional and modern elements has resulted in a distinctive and fashionable approach to furniture construction, highlighting the potential of archaic craft techniques for modern applications.

Description of the technique Materials used in the process

The *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique is an ancient tradition that has been passed down through Malaysia. This technique involves putting together strips of bertam, a type of palm leaf that is abundant in Southeast Asia. The weaving process produces a durable and intricately patterned material that can be used for various purposes. In modern furniture construction, *Kelarai Bertam*, a unique and eco-friendly material, can add character and texture to contemporary designs. To create *Kelarai bertam*, craftsmen first select the best-quality bertam leaves, then soak them in water to soften them (Table 2, v). The softened leaves are then woven together using a combination of special techniques and tools. The resulting material is versatile and visually stunning, showcasing the skill and artistry of the weavers.

Description of the technique Materials used in the process Steps involved in the weaving process

The *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique is a Malay traditional craft that has been passed down from generation to generation. This sophisticated weaving technique involves creating complicated designs with strips of bertam leaves, a form of palm (Table 2, vi). The bertam leaves are soaked and stripped before being woven together in a precise design using a little wooden needle. Bertam leaves, thin rattan sticks, and a wooden needle are utilised in this method. The weaving process entails repeating a certain pattern throughout the width of the material, which can be time-consuming and demanding. However, the resulting woven material is long-lasting and suitable for a variety of uses, including furniture construction.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A mix of qualitative and quantitative study methods were used to figure out how the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique could be used to make modern furniture. At first, a review was done to learn more about the traditional skill and what it meant in the past. After that, interviews and surveys were done with *Kelarai Bertam* weavers and designers to find out what they thought about the method and how it could be used to make modern furniture. Experiments with 3D modelling were done to see if the method could be used to build furniture. Based on the results, these methods taught us a lot about how the *Kelarai Bertam* process can be used in modern furniture design and how it can be used technically and creatively.

The objective of the research design and methods used in this study was to find out how the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving process could be used to make modern furniture. A qualitative study design was used to find out more about the craft and how it is used today. Traditional weavers and furniture designers were interviewed in a semi-structured way to find out what they thought about putting traditional weaving methods into furniture designs. Participatory Action Research (PAR) was also used to make it easier for the weavers and designers to work together to make samples of furniture. Cornwall and Jewkes (1995, as cited in Vaughn & Jacquez, 2020) suggest that Participatory Action Research (PAR) is a research methodology emphasising direct engagement with local priorities and perspectives, focusing on a research-to-action approach. In this context, PAR aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of the cultural heritage of the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique and its potential for contemporary design.

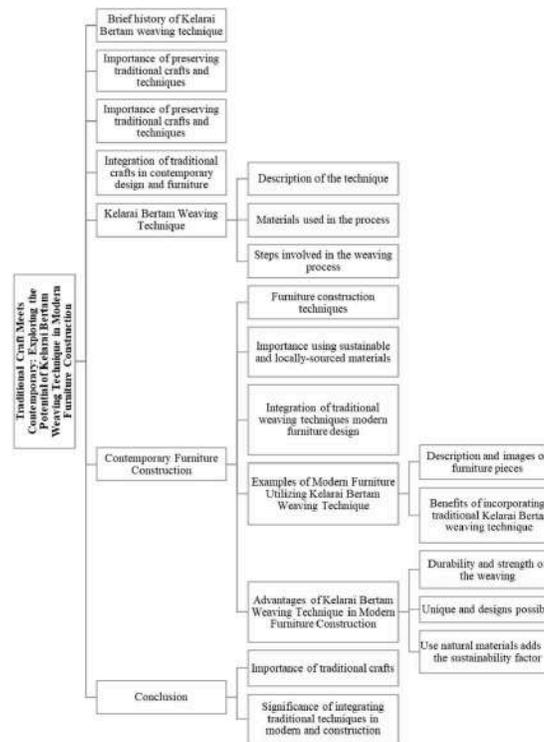


Figure 1. Research Design
Qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis

The collection and evaluation of both qualitative and quantitative data are important parts of any research project. According to Creswell (2014), qualitative research constitutes an approach aimed at delving into and comprehending the significance that individuals or groups attribute to social or human issues. This method usually entails gathering and scrutinising non-numerical data such as interviews,

observations, and focus groups. In contrast, quantitative research involves the collection and analysis of numerical data such as statistics and polls. On the other hand, quantitative research encompasses data collection that can be quantified and subjected to statistical analysis, serving to either substantiate or challenge alternative assertions of knowledge. Hence, by looking at both qualitative and quantitative data, the study aims to get new ideas, find trends, and arrive at conclusions. Both ways are useful for getting a full idea of the research question, and they can work well together. Which method to use depends on the study question and the kind of data that is collected. When researchers use both qualitative and quantitative methods, they can learn a lot about the thing they are studying. This lets them come to strong conclusions. When both ways are used to find out how the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique could be used to make modern furniture, it gives a deeper understanding of the subject.

Surveys and interviews

Surveys and interviews with artisan and consumers were conducted to gain insights and perspectives on how the traditional *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique can be incorporated into modern construction. An artisan is a skilled craft worker who makes or creates material products by hand, either partially or wholly. Furniture, decorative art, sculpture, apparel, food items, household things, and instruments and mechanisms such as a watchmaker's handmade clockwork movement are examples of these objects. Artisans practise a craft and can achieve the expressive levels of an artist via experience and aptitude. They shared their expertise and knowledge of the technique in furniture design. Consumers also provided valuable feedback on preferences and interest in furniture pieces made with *Kelarai Bertam* weaving technique. The surveys and interviews give a deeper understanding of the market demand and potential for this weaving technique in the modern furniture industry, and it can be used to unique and culturally-rich furniture pieces that appeal to a wide of consumers.

INTERVIEWEE		
NURUL SYAFIQA BINTI SAID		
INTERVIEW DATE		
9 JUNE 2023 & 6 JULY 2023		
TIME SET		
10:00 A.M & 8:00 A.M		
TIME ESTIMATION		
4 HOURS		
PARTICIPATIONS		
PUAN NAIMAH BINTI KASA		
MEDIUM		
FACE TO FACE INTERVIEW		
Dialogue Between Syafiqe and Puan Naimah On 9 June 2023	Dialogue Between Syafiqe and Puan Naimah On 5 July 2023	Dialogue Between Syafiqe and Puan Naimah On 5 July 2023
Syafiqe: Sebelum bertam dengan lebih lanjut, saya nak tanya adakah lembam dan bertam sama?	Syafiqe: Puan saya nak tanya untuk penyempurnaan batang bertam ni ada sara khas ke? Mungkin ke sama dalam rumah je ke?	Syafiqe: Puan saya nak tanya untuk penyempurnaan batang bertam ni ada sara khas ke? Mungkin ke sama dalam rumah je ke?
Puan Naimah: Bertam dan bertam tidak sama, saya menggunakan Bertam untuk pengisian kerajinan.	Puan Naimah: Kalau batang bertam ni dia tak boleh geti cara simpan, tapi kalau batang bertam yang dah diapap ya ke, alomg juga elok-elok sikit lah webat batang bertam boleh kewa air tapi yang dah diapap mat tak boleh.	Puan Naimah: Kalau batang bertam ni dia tak boleh geti cara simpan, tapi kalau batang bertam yang dah diapap ya ke, alomg juga elok-elok sikit lah webat batang bertam boleh kewa air tapi yang dah diapap mat tak boleh.
Syafiqe: Batang bertam ni boleh disimpan berapa lama ya?	Syafiqe: Kenapa ye? Apa yang akan jadi kalau terpa kena air?	Syafiqe: Kenapa ye? Apa yang akan jadi kalau terpa kena air?
Puan Naimah: Batang bertam ni lama boleh dala baru boleh simpan lama kalau tak nanti dia dah keping dah susah nak belah.	Puan Naimah: Boleh nye dia akan jadi warna hitam maknanya tompok-tompok hitam. Tapi kalau kena minyak pon boleh jadi hitam dia hitam.	Puan Naimah: Boleh nye dia akan jadi warna hitam maknanya tompok-tompok hitam. Tapi kalau kena minyak pon boleh jadi hitam dia hitam.
Syafiqe: Batang bertam ni kita owh amik mana-mana bahagian ke?	Syafiqe: Ouh kalau kita warna kan pun dia akan jadi benda yang sama ke?	Syafiqe: Ouh kalau kita warna kan pun dia akan jadi benda yang sama ke?
Puan Naimah: Tak jugak, lah alomg pilih batang bertam yang dah matang je untuk penghasilan kerajinan ni.	Puan Naimah: Haha, lagipun kalau warnakan nanti bahagian yang gelap ni lama lama cat belah kerajinan, nanti akan jadi bunak.	Puan Naimah: Haha, lagipun kalau warnakan nanti bahagian yang gelap ni lama lama cat belah kerajinan, nanti akan jadi bunak.
Syafiqe: Batang bertam ni memang tak nak dapai?	Syafiqe: Kalau bertam ni kan belah-hutan dia sama ke macam buluh?	Syafiqe: Kalau bertam ni kan belah-hutan dia sama ke macam buluh?
Puan Naimah: Oia betul je dalam hutan tu tapi susah lah nak amik.	Puan Naimah: Fah tak lah, bertam ni dia lagi lembut dr buluh.	Puan Naimah: Fah tak lah, bertam ni dia lagi lembut dr buluh.
Syafiqe: Kalau sekali masuk hutan berapa batang yang berjaya di ambil?	Syafiqe: Mena proses anyaman ni kenapa tak buang je bahagian hujung dia?	Puan Naimah: Mena proses anyaman ni kenapa tak buang je bahagian hujung dia?
Puan Naimah: Dataran 40-50 batang je sebab bawa motor jadi tak boleh nak amik banyak.	Puan Naimah: Yang hujung ni tak buang supaya nanti dia tak seret, jadi lebih mudah untuk menganyam tu.	Puan Naimah: Yang hujung ni tak buang supaya nanti dia tak seret, jadi lebih mudah untuk menganyam tu.
Syafiqe: Kerajinan bertam ni boleh diwarnakan ke?	Syafiqe: Ouh macam tu, agak-agak berapa lama masa yang di ambil untuk menganyam?	Syafiqe: Ouh macam tu, agak-agak berapa lama masa yang di ambil untuk menganyam?
Puan Naimah: Saya tak sarankan untuk warna sebab nanti lama-lama dia jadi bunak. Kalau nak sapu elok boleh, sebab nanti dia akan jadi lagi cantik.	Puan Naimah: Kalau macam satu dh x dh boleh siap dua minggu satu hari.	Puan Naimah: Kalau macam satu dh x dh boleh siap dua minggu satu hari.
Syafiqe: Kalau kerajinan bertam ni boleh tahan berapa lama ye?	Syafiqe: Saiz bilah ni memang ada specific saiz ke?	Syafiqe: Saiz bilah ni memang ada specific saiz ke?
Puan Naimah: Lama, saya ada simpan satu kerajinan bertam ni dah lebih stail 60 tahun dan masih elok lagi.	Puan Naimah: Fah tak jugak, bilah nak bunga kecil belah pon hene kecil.	Puan Naimah: Fah tak jugak, bilah nak bunga kecil belah pon hene kecil.
Syafiqe: Paling kecil saiz yang boleh di hasilkan berapa ye?	Syafiqe: Boleh seukuran bunga berapa bilah?	Puan Naimah: Sekuntum biasanya 13 bilah je.
Puan Naimah: Kalau kecil dh x 6, sebab motif dia boleh saiz ni je kalau paling kecil.	Puan Naimah: Kalau tak cukup saiz, maka kerajinan bertam dia tak cukup panjang.	Puan Naimah: Kalau tak cukup saiz, maka kerajinan bertam dia tak cukup panjang.
Syafiqe: Boleh saya tanya motif apa yang digunakan?	Puan Naimah: Puan buat macam mana?	Puan Naimah: Puan buat macam mana?
Puan Naimah: Biasanya saya guna motif yang manggil tapi kalau ada pelanggan yang hantar design sendiri pon saya boleh buat.	Puan Naimah: Kalau tak cukup saiz kita tambah je, selit kan je bilah yang baru.	Puan Naimah: Kalau tak cukup saiz kita tambah je, selit kan je bilah yang baru.
Syafiqe: Ada boleh ke Kodah punya kerajinan bertam dengan negeri lain?	Syafiqe: Yang barang dia bawah tu boleh tukar benda lain ke?	Syafiqe: Yang barang dia bawah tu boleh tukar benda lain ke?
Puan Naimah: Saya rasa tidak sebab memang biasa orang guna motif yang sama je.	Puan Naimah: Boleh je arahkan dia boleh supaya senang nak gerakkan.	Puan Naimah: Boleh je arahkan dia boleh supaya senang nak gerakkan.
Syafiqe: Boleh saya tanya motif apa yang digunakan?	Syafiqe: Yang bahagian cerah ni memang kene rust ke? Kenapa yang gelap ni pun tak rust?	Syafiqe: Yang bahagian cerah ni memang kene rust ke? Kenapa yang gelap ni pun tak rust?
Puan Naimah: Boleh saya tanya motif apa yang digunakan?	Puan Naimah: Yang bahagian cerah ni saya saja je rust supaya dia jadi lagi cantik, kalau bahagian gelap ni dia sama je kalau rust don.	Puan Naimah: Yang bahagian cerah ni saya saja je rust supaya dia jadi lagi cantik, kalau bahagian gelap ni dia sama je kalau rust don.
Syafiqe: Boleh saya tahu tak alatan apa je yang digunakan untuk penghasilan kerajinan bertam?	Syafiqe: Ouh faham, kalau nak menganyam kan, ada cara susah bilah bertam ni ke?	Syafiqe: Ouh faham, kalau nak menganyam kan, ada cara susah bilah bertam ni ke?
Puan Naimah: Dua benda je pasang untuk meraut dengan ganding getah untuk rapatkan bertam ni.	Puan Naimah: Ada, sebelum anyam skoun kepala dengan kaki selang seli. Kepala yang bahagian atas stail ni Bertam.	Puan Naimah: Ada, sebelum anyam skoun kepala dengan kaki selang seli. Kepala yang bahagian atas stail ni Bertam.
Syafiqe: Sama nak tamok, dekat Kodah ni ada pengusaha lain ke untuk penghasilan kerajinan bertam ni?	Syafiqe: Kenapa ye kene buat macam tu?	Syafiqe: Kenapa ye kene buat macam tu?
Puan Naimah: Untuk kawasan sekitar ni ada saya dan adik ipar saya je.	Puan Naimah: Sebab saiz ada ada bene sikit hujung dengan pengkil jadi nak kurangkan banyak perbezaan tu, kita kena susun macam tu.	Puan Naimah: Sebab saiz ada ada bene sikit hujung dengan pengkil jadi nak kurangkan banyak perbezaan tu, kita kena susun macam tu.
Syafiqe: Ouh okay, saya rasa itu sahaja soalan untuk hari ini. Terima kasih ye puan.	Syafiqe: Batang bertam ni kan tak mudah pasang ke?	Syafiqe: Batang bertam ni kan tak mudah pasang ke?
Puan Naimah: Sama-sama.	Puan Naimah: Tak mudah pasang tapi jangan tarik kuat sangat tapi kalau pasang khabr oleh ganti atau sambung je boleh.	Puan Naimah: Tak mudah pasang tapi jangan tarik kuat sangat tapi kalau pasang khabr oleh ganti atau sambung je boleh.
	Syafiqe: Ouh faham, basikal terima kasih.	Syafiqe: Ouh faham, basikal terima kasih.

Figure 2. Interview Transcribe Data
 (Source Author's collection)

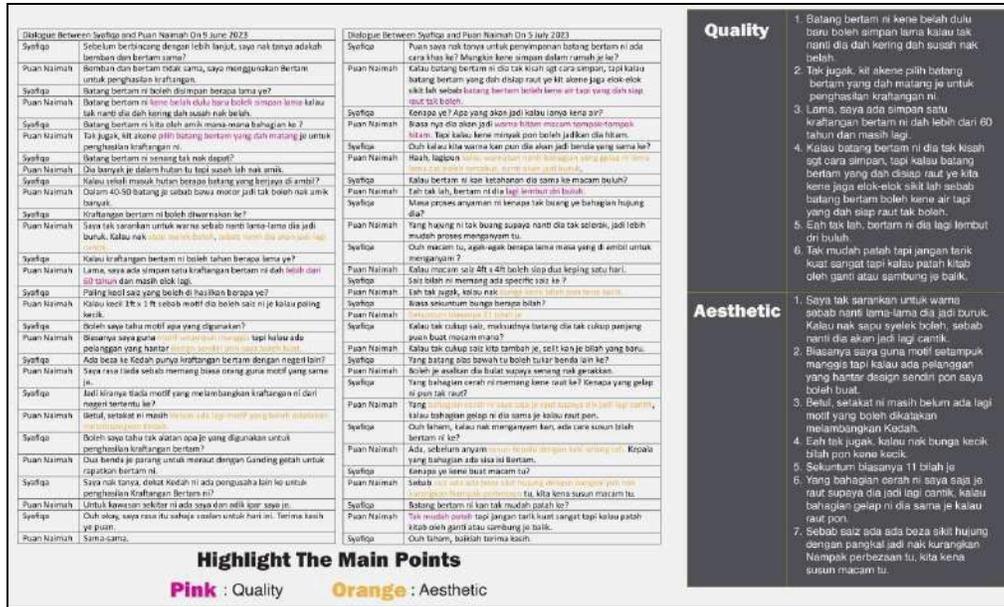


Figure 3. Manual Familiarisation
 (Source Author's collection)



Figure 4. Interview Analysis

FINDINGS

The results of using the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method to make modern furniture and the discussions about it show how traditional crafts can be used in modern design. The exploratory study looked at the unique qualities of *Kelarai Bertam* weaving, like how durable and flexible it is, which makes it a good choice for many modern furniture uses. The discussions also showed the challenge it is to keep crafting

remaining in the modern world and how much innovation is needed to do so. Also, the study gives artists and designers a chance to make furniture designs that honour traditional crafts but are also new and eco-friendly. Overall, the results and talks show that the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method has a lot of potential to fill a need in modern furniture, where designs that are both unique and good for the environment are highly valued.

Technical and aesthetic potential

Kelarai bertam weaving is a traditional craft that has a deep place in Malaysian culture. It has a lot of technical and aesthetic possibilities for making furniture. Thin pieces of bertam leaves, a type of palm leaf that grows in Southeast Asia, are woven together to make intricate patterns and textures. Weaving with natural fibres is a way to make things that are long-lasting and good for the environment. The intricate and natural designs that are made by weaving are a unique and interesting part of furniture design. *Kelarai bertam* weave is not only a great example of traditional craftsmanship, but it is also a good example of how modern furniture can be made and used in a way that is good for the environment.

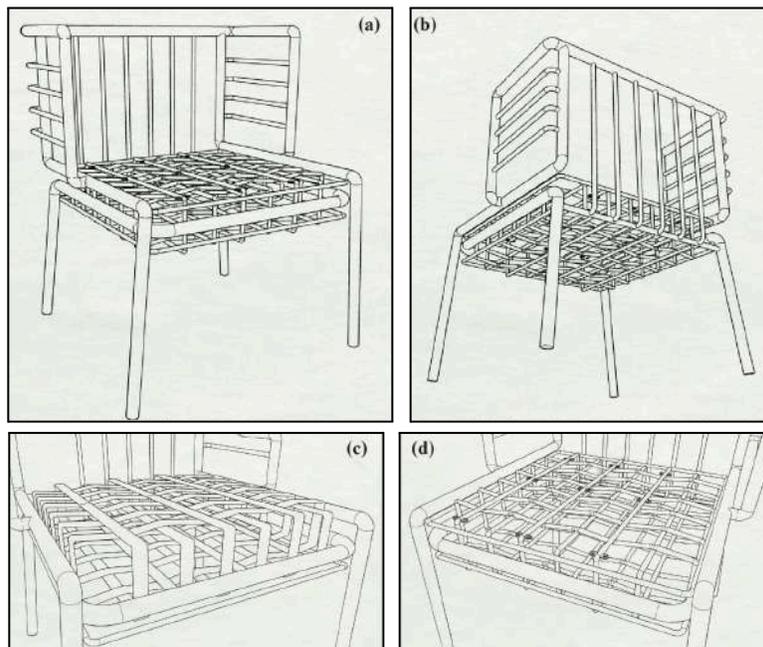


Figure 2. Designers illustrate images of (a), (b), (c), and (d) potential technical and aesthetic uses of the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method in furniture construction

(Source: Author's collection)

Strengths and weaknesses of *Kelarai Bertam* weaving in furniture construction

For years, the *Kelarai Bertam* technique has been employed in furniture manufacturing, producing distinctive, detailed patterns that display the talent of local artisans. However, as with weaving, its application in furniture has advantages and disadvantages. One of the advantages of *Kelarai Bertam* weaving is its durability, with a tight weave that can sustain the weight of heavy furniture. It also provides a natural quality to any piece, which may be quite effective in modern furniture design. However, weaving may be time-consuming and needs a high level of expertise, making mass production

challenging. Furthermore, because natural materials are used in the weaving process, it is prone to dampness and sun damage, which may limit its use in certain areas.

Design strategies for integrating *Kelarai Bertam* weaving with modern materials and for

The design strategies for integrating *Kelarai Bertam* weaving with modern materials and forms involve gaining a comprehension of traditional weaving techniques and determining how to incorporate them into modern furniture designs. This requires knowledgeable artisans who can convert traditional patterns and textures into new forms that complement modern themes. Exploring the potential of the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving process in modern furniture construction can be aided by 3D design illustration software. Designers can use this software to experiment with novel materials, create unique designs, increase production efficiency, and visualise the finished result. By creating digital models of the furniture piece, designers can also experiment with different colours, textures, and finishes to achieve the desired effect. In addition, designers must use materials that complement the weaving technique and create a unified aesthetic with current furniture trends. To create an elegant and distinctive design, a balance must be struck between traditional and contemporary elements, and the manufacturing process must be contemporary.

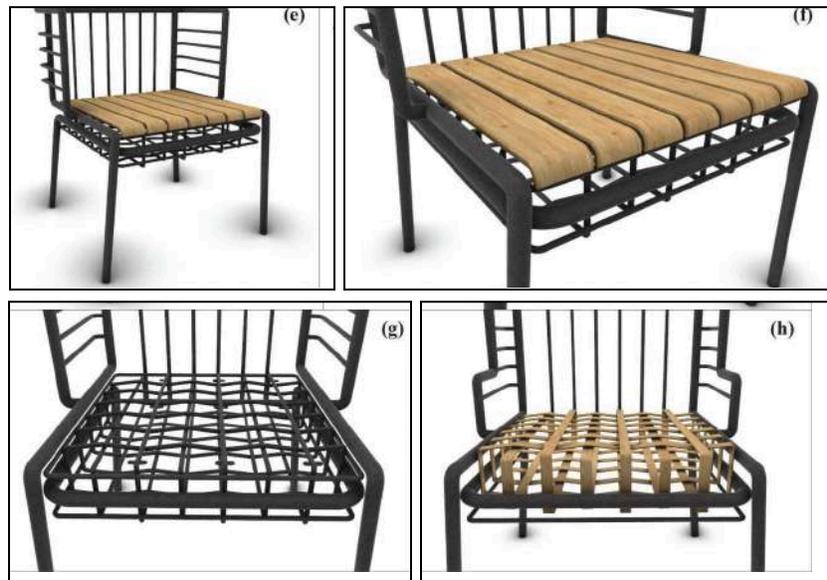


Figure 3. Designers illustrate images of (e) 3D design illustration software can be used to create innovative and contemporary furniture designs by drawing inspiration from traditional *Kelarai Bertam* patterns, (f) an elegant and distinctive design with the combination of hybrid materials, (g) Synthetic fibres or metal wires can be used to achieve a modern and durable finish, and (h) combining traditional elements with modern aesthetics, unique and visually striking furniture pieces.

(Source: Author's collection)

CONCLUSIONS

As the article has shown, the *Kelarai Bertam* technique has a lot of potential as a way to make modern furniture that combines traditional craft with modern design. This study has not only shown how attractive and helpful weaving can be, but it has also shown how important it is to keep traditional crafts

and cultural traditions present. The conclusion to draw from this study is that combining previous skills with modern design leads to new and sustainable ways of completing various things. So, it is suggested that more study and promotion of these techniques be supported to keep traditional crafts alive and help modern design move forward. Overall, this study looks at how important custom is and how it could be used in modern practices.

In Malaysia, the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving style has a rich cultural legacy and history (Mariam et al., 2021). Designers and artisans can now apply this traditional craft to modern furniture development. The further development of this technique's technical and aesthetic expertise is essential for its success in current design. This involves experimenting with new materials, enhancing the weaving process, and researching design approaches that might emphasise the unique properties of the technique. The idea is to establish a new and exciting way of thinking about furniture design while maintaining tradition and cultural identity. Designers may produce distinctive furniture elements that embody both the traditional and contemporary by furthering their technical and aesthetic knowledge of *Kelarai Bertam* weaving, giving value and excitement to the world of design.

Kelarai Bertam weaving is important to local cultures. In recent years, this traditional craft has declined due to lack of awareness. Education and promotion of *Kelarai Bertam* weaving are needed to boost local communities' cultural worth. *Kelarai Bertam* weaving's potential in contemporary design and ecological textile production should be studied in the future. *Kelarai Bertam* weaving can be passed down to future generations through maintaining and promoting it. Even though the current study has shown that the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method could be used to make modern furniture, there are still some problems and questions that need to be answered. For example, there hasn't been much study done on how long the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method lasts or how it affects the environment. Also, more research needs to be done on how the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method can be used to make different kinds of furniture and how it works with different kinds of materials. Understanding these problems and gaps will not only help the *Kelarai Bertam* weaving method get better, but it will also make it more likely that it will be used to make modern furniture.

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Thank you to Mr. Asrol Hasan and Ms. Nurul Syafiqah from our team for their advice and assistance during the study process. They gave me priceless input on my research proposal, assisted me in clarifying my research topic, and offered a wealth of insightful and practical advice on how to carry out the study, analyse the data, and write the report.

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Research on Innovative Design of Regional Cultural Tourism Souvenirs in Penang

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ABSTRACT

Regional culture souvenirs are the combination of regional culture and souvenirs, the purpose is to enhance the value of souvenirs and inherit the local traditional culture. Regional culture is the most important part of tourism and one of the key links in people's travel experience. The aim of this paper is to explore the problems and opportunities in the design of souvenirs in Penang. Observation was adopted to analyse the status quo of souvenir design in Penang. Meanwhile, case analysis is used to deeply study the design characteristics of the most popular souvenirs among tourists and understand the needs of tourists. The results show that tourists prefer souvenirs that are beautiful with practical value and reflect the local characteristics of the culture. However, souvenir design in Penang has some problems such as fewer types, lack of creativity and regional characteristics. Souvenir design is still in the initial stage of development in Penang, and there is a large market vacancy. This paper puts forward the innovative design suggestions for souvenirs in Penang and hoped to provide designers with new ideas for the combination of regional culture elements and modern tourism souvenirs and provide a better tourism experience for tourists.

Keywords: *Cultural Tourism souvenirs, Penang, Regional Cultural, Souvenirs Design*

INTRODUCTION

With the rapid development of the social economy, people's consumption levels and life quality continue to improve, tourism has gradually become one of the significant ways of leisure. Until 2020, tourism is one of the world's highest economic contributors (McCabe & Qiao, 2020). As we all know, Malaysia is a multicultural country, Penang is one of the thirteen federal states of Malaysia which is located in the northwest of Malaysia. In reality, Penang is well-known for its multicultural and harmonious development with the rapid development of tourism. It is worth mentioning that George Town of Penang is listed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site so that Penang's tourism industry has been more prosperous (Connolly, 2017). However, with the integrated development of culture and tourism industries, the development of cultural tourism consumption has gradually begun, and people gradually have a deeper pursuit of the content and form of tourism consumption. As an important link between tourism consumption and promoting tourism economic growth, tourism souvenirs have gradually become the key to tourism design and planning in various cities.

Penang has unique natural resources and culture resources with a strong competitiveness as a global tourism city (Dina Miza Suhaimi, 2024). Nevertheless, the development of tourist souvenirs in Penang is unchanged with very few types and lack of creativity. More importantly, most souvenirs do not reflect the distinct regional characteristics of the culture of Penang. As a result, these problems have led to the disconnect between local souvenirs and tourist needs that are unable to attract tourists and seriously affect the design and development of tourist souvenirs in Penang. Actually, combining the regional culture with souvenirs creativity is very helpful to enhance the regional tourism economy and competitiveness (Kunasekaran et.al., 2015). This study combines the exploration of regional culture elements in Penang with the development of tourist souvenirs to explore the innovative design methods of culture tourism souvenirs and bring breakthroughs to the tourist souvenir market in Penang.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Previous scholars have studied the definition of regional culture and tourist souvenirs, and some studies have deeply explored Penang's cultural resources. As a matter of fact, most of the literature on Penang culture tourism souvenirs focuses on the analysis of tourists' consumption motivations or travel motivations. On the basis of understanding the research conclusions of souvenir design, we shall try to collect and analyse tourists' consumption needs and design challenges from this various information.

Regional cultural tourism souvenirs and design

Regional culture is a cultural branch of a national culture that refers to a regional culture with local characteristics formed in a fixed area over a long historical period. Regional culture can be caused by differences in climate, food customs, living habits, and others, different places carry different cultures (Duan et al., 2023). In recent years, regional culture tourism has gradually become one of the important pillar industries in various countries.

Lots of literature shows that the development of the tourist souvenirs are an essential carrier of regional cultural dissemination and one of the significant sources of tourism economic income (Lacher, 2011). In general, culture tourism souvenirs should have the function of conveying regional culture. The integration of unique regional traditional culture and souvenir design not only promotes cultural exchange and inheritance but also drives the development of the local tourism economy (Chang, Hung & Tang,

2022). Therefore, to make souvenirs more valuable, designers must integrate them with local regional cultural elements and think about how to reflect local characteristics (Zeng, 2017).

Ardani et al. (2020) pointed out that product quality and process are the biggest factors affecting satisfaction. Masset & Decrop (2021) suggests that designers should focus their souvenir design on practicality and convenience, which can be used in various scenarios. Tourism souvenir design is a process of symbolising local cultural elements (Huang & Sun, 2006). Yang (2020) pointed out that the design of cultural souvenirs should not only fully consider the interaction, materials, structure and shape, but also pay attention to the communication and expression of culture. The stronger the cultural characteristics of souvenirs are more attractive to tourists to improve the purchase intention, with a higher market value.

Penang Tourism Souvenirs

Penang is a popular tourist destination in Malaysia due to its unique culture, architectural identity, and diversity of heritage arts and crafts (Connolly, 2020). In the tourism industry, Penang is known as 'The Pearl of the Orient' (Chai, 2011). A large amount of literature about Penang's tourism focuses on the study of tourist consumption motivation factors or tourist motivations for travelling. A study adopted in 2015 by Yousefi and Marzuki used the push and pull motivation theory as a conceptual framework to determine the travel motivations of international tourists to Penang. The results show that knowledge exploring and historical culture are regarded as the most important push factors and the most important pull factors respectively. At the same time, an analysis of tourists' consumption motivation factors at Penang night market found that the most significant motivating factor is the product itself, and the opportunity to interact with locals and understand local culture are also important factors among tourists (Som et al., 2010). A study showed that most international tourists visiting Penang tourist attractions are young people around the age of 20. The desire to explore knowledge and innovation is the driving factor attracting tourists to Penang, and the main attraction factor is the regional historical and cultural heritage possessed by each state (Hasnizam Ab Dulhamid and et al., 2022). According to many studies on Penang tourists' consumption motivations and tourism motivations, it is not difficult to find that tourists attach great importance to the uniqueness of regional culture.

Although most of the literature indicates that souvenir design should pay attention to cultural connotations, there are few studies focusing on Penang tourist souvenirs, especially the design. Some of the literature focuses on Malaysian tourism souvenirs. Ibrahim (2007) proposed that designers should strive to show Malaysian characteristics in product design, such as buildings, gates, statues, lamp posts, craft items such as pewter and jewellery. Razali, Barkauskait & Naivkas (2021) conducted research on the characteristics of product design that can represent Malaysian culture, aiming to find general keywords related to the components of culture, and the research conclusions are religion, fashion, food, festival, architecture, art and craft, etc as well as traditional sports and games. Rakhim & Vermol (2020) Preserving and promoting Malay folklore through memorabilia.

To sum up, the research on culture tourism souvenirs in Penang has not formed a system, and the academic content is relatively scattered. There are very few studies on Penang's regional culture elements from a design perspective. Therefore, further discussion and research are necessary to conduct an in-depth analysis of Penang's regional culture elements to explore innovative souvenirs design methods.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study adopts a qualitative method. In order to achieve the overall aim, this research was done by; (1) field observations on the current Penang souvenir design and tourists' demand for souvenirs, (2) verify the hypothesis through case studies. Denzin and Lincoln (2011) argued that qualitative research researchers study things in their natural context in an attempt to give meaning to phenomena. For this project, observation is useful to acquire the characteristics and purchase intentions of tourists. What's more, the feel, texture and smell of products that cannot be captured by online data. In addition, the case study is an effective way to find the differences and commonalities of souvenirs from excellent cases. The entire corresponding steps are explained briefly (shown in Figure 1):

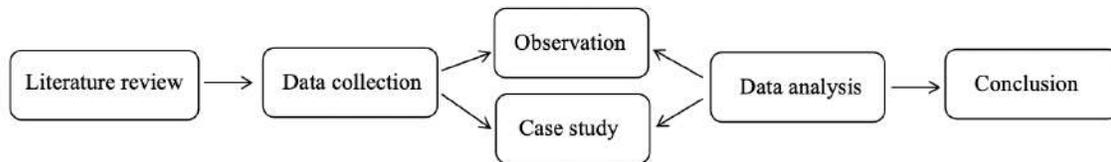


Figure 1. Procedure of methodology
(Source: Author)

Field observation

An initial observation of the current design of cultural tourism souvenirs in Penang was conducted by researchers. Firstly, The researchers looked for places in Penang that had a large number of souvenirs for sale. Then, select the popular shops to observe the souvenirs and consumption behaviours of tourists. Finally, chosen high-sales of souvenirs for design analysis from an appearance, function and cultural perspective (shown in Figure 2). Actually, field observation is a qualitative research method borrowed from anthropology, which refers to intuitive and partial investigation on the spot in order to understand the truth and development process of a thing (Mulhall, 2003).

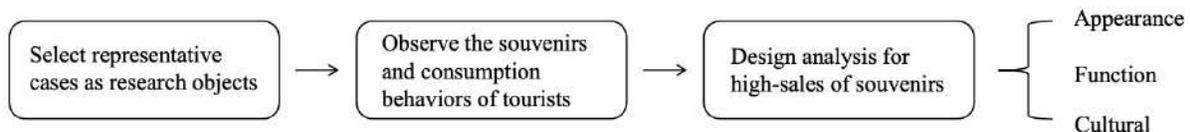


Figure 2. Procedure of observation
(Source: Author)

The researchers conducted third times of field observation to souvenir shops and tourist consumption behaviors near the art street in Penang from 2 p.m. to 6 p.m. :

2023.11.20-2023.11.25: The first time to acquire the souvenir sales of souvenir shops in the form of non-participation observation; According to the initial observation, some popular shops were selected as the research samples, which is conducive to the accuracy of the conclusion.

2024.03.01-2024.03.03: The second time is to participate in the observation and interacted with tourists and owners of souvenir shops, asked about relevant information and understood their views and experiences.

2024.03.10-2024.03.15: The third time is structured observation, which is revisited to verify the accuracy of the information collected in the previous two stages.

In the first non-participatory observation, more than 30 souvenir shops were visited, and 12 popular shops were selected. Specific stores are shown in Table 1:

Table 1. Popular souvenir shops in Penang

Nala	Betterthanblouses	Shop Howard	Misbuyit	14 Living Story	Sukha
Reroran	Tropical Batik Collection	Paradise Craft	Artlane	Tai Keh Ho Trading	Love Lane

(Source: Author)

The author summarised the souvenirs sold in Penang shops into four categories by design: daily necessities (refrigerator magnets, postcards, notebooks, pens, bowls and other daily necessities); decorative souvenirs (pendants such as key chains, ornaments, jewellery, etc.); shoes and clothing (T-shirts, hats, canvas bags, clothing); food and local specialties. According to the analysis, 21 souvenirs with high sales were identified (shown in Table 2). It is not difficult to see that colourful souvenirs and regional patterns are the most popular.

Table 2. Souvenirs with high sales in Penang



(Source: Author)

The second observation adopts participatory observation and communicates with tourists to evaluate their views on the souvenirs design from the aspects of appearance, function and cultural. The results are shown in Table 3:

Table 3. Tourists feedback of souvenirs in Penang

Souvenir appearance:	Modeling:	Lack of creativity
	Color:	Colorful type is more popular
	Patterns:	Batikt patterns, Nyonya patterns and mural patterns are the most popular
	Material:	Most of the materials are mainly ceramic, metal and cloth
Souvenir function:	Just for decorations, lack of practicality, daily necessities are more popular	
Souvenir cultural:	Few types of regional culture and simple ways of cultural expression	

(Source: Author)

According to the first and second observations, tourists prefer souvenirs with regional cultural characteristics, such as Nyonya culture and products with local batik cultural patterns. This survey has further clarified the importance of regional culture in influencing tourists' consumption behaviour. From a design point of view, colourful patterns with local characteristics are more popular. Because of the rich local batik patterns, the sales of souvenirs made of cloth materials are higher. However, most tourists pointed out that the souvenirs lack innovation and practicality, and fewer categories to choose from.

In the third observation, researchers narrowed the sample range and selected the 3 most popular online and offline stores for observation (shown in Table 4). The products of these three shops are mainly based on local culture, with strong regional cultural characteristics such as batik and Penang Old Street architectural culture. The main forms of culture expression are characteristic regional patterns and rich colour design, and the materials are mainly cloth batik.

Table 4. Some of souvenirs in Nala, Rerotan and 14 Living story

Nala				
Rerotan				
14 Living Story				

(Source: Author)

Case study

Starman (2013) pointed out that case study is a continuous investigation of an individual, a group or an organization over a long period of time to study the process and characteristics of its behavioral development and change. In this project, researchers selected the two popular souvenir shops for in-depth analyze on characteristics and consumer needs from the perspective of product design.

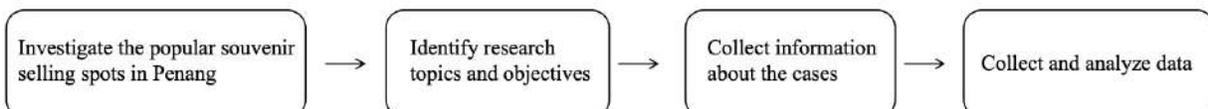


Figure 3. Procedure of case study

(Source: Author)

According to the author's market research, several brands in the Penang tourist product market integrate regional culture and souvenir design are very popular among tourists. The extremely popular one by tourists must be “Nala Design” which is a chain brand in Malaysia. In fact, Nala is a relatively successful case of using Malaysian traditional cultural elements to design and produce related cultural and creative souvenirs. Nala is a lifestyle brand specialising in pattern design, everything is hand drawn and all designs and colours reflect the diverse style of Southeast Asia (shown in Figure 4). Nala's souvenirs are rich in colour, high saturation and high quality. Inspired by Asian culture and traditions, these patterns are translated into different products such as fabrics, wallpapers, handbags, clothing, accessories, homewares, and stationery with high practical value and suitable for daily life. It is worth mentioning that the mural in the Nala store in George Town, Penang is a hand-painted representative flower of the 13 states of Malaysia. It is full of a regional cultural atmosphere and provides a good introduction to Malaysian culture to tourists. Inspired by Malaysian creative culture and patterns, and using fabric design as a carrier, Nala designers have produced many excellent cultural creative products and tourism souvenirs. According to observations, some practical products such as passport holders, small wallets, and clothes have the highest sales volume. Nala integrates its textile patterns into the clothing and accessories in modern people's lives, allowing more people to wear the products, which has spread Malaysia's traditional culture well and spread beyond Southeast Asia, to the whole of China, and worldwide.

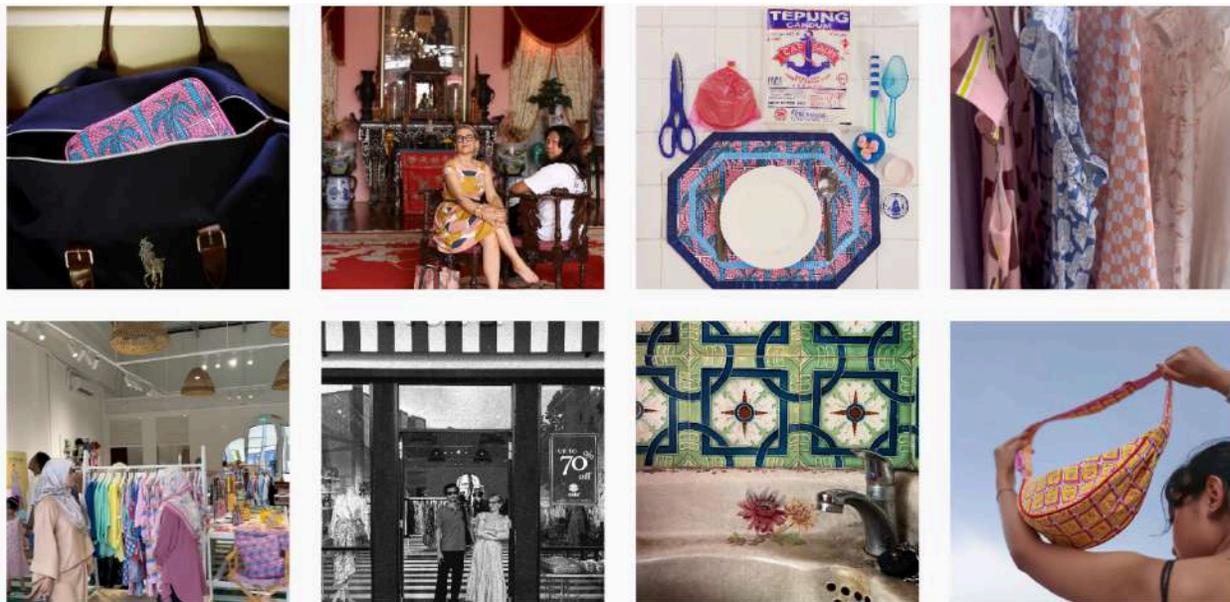


Figure 4. Products of Nala brand in Penang
(Source: <https://naladesigns.com/>)

As we all know, one of Malaysia's famous crafts is batik, a traditional technique of dyeing fabrics by hand that also references the decorative classic natural motifs, and is the most popular souvenir (Tourism Malaysia, 2017). There is a popular Batik Store named Misyalbuyit in Penang with a large number of tourists daily, the store is not big but has a rich variety of souvenirs with regional batik products (Figure 5). Refrigerator magnets (Figure 6), Nyonya bricks (Figure 7), clothes, ties, bags, accessories, backgammon and others, some of the tiles are made by local people with disabilities. Nyonya bricks and refrigerator magnets have very high sales. The Nyonya bricks sold in this store are combined with local Nyonya patterns, and the refrigerator magnets are combined with local architectural styles, which are full of cultural charm.



Figure 5. Batik products



Figure 6. Batik magnets
(Source: Author's collection)



Figure 7. Nyonya bricks

Through the case analysis of Nala Design and Misyalbuyit, There is no doubt that if regional traditional cultural elements can be used properly and well combined with local special elements, excellent cultural tourism souvenirs can be created and popular with tourists. But the current problem is that there are few types with single cultural elements in Penang's souvenirs. Innovation is needed in terms of shape, materials and functionality, and cultural elements need to be explored, rather than staying in batik, Nyonya and architectural culture. If Penang's unique regional culture and souvenirs can be integrated better, cultural tourism souvenirs in Penang will have a very broad market prospect.

Analysis

Cultural space is the state and structure of a certain culture in a certain time, which will change the level of division of culture according to the different application fields. Leong and Clark (2003) proposed the concept of combining cultural product design with cultural space theory, and divided culture into three levels from low to high: external tangible layer, intermediate behavioural layer and internal intangible layer. The author applies it to the design field for souvenirs design analysis, as shown in Figure 8.

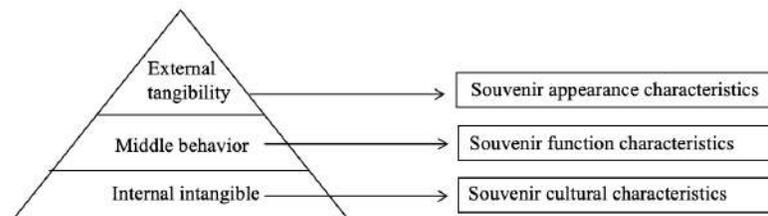


Figure 8. Theory of cultural space and transformation of design field
(Source: Author)

Souvenir appearance design

It has to be said that the current appearance design of Penang souvenirs products lacks some innovation. Most of the souvenirs are traditional and dull, the only innovation is that some refrigerator magnets or postcards are modelled from architecture. In fact, Penang architecture combines the features of Western and Southeast Asian architectural styles and has a unique style, which is a veritable tourism business card (Dina Miza Suhaimi, 2024). However, in the shape design of souvenirs, some of the

products related to architectural culture are similar, these products can only be distinguished by material (shown in Figure 9, Figure 10 and Figure 11):



Figure 9, Figure 10, Figure 11: Souvenirs with similar architectural shape
(Source: <https://xiaohongshu.com/>)

In addition, the element of colour is the main way to produce visual impact of cultural souvenirs. Colour can not only assist the overall presentation of the product, but also deepen the impression of consumers on the destination and improve the awareness of the product (Hsiao, 1995). At present, Souvenirs in Penang are coloured, but many souvenirs lack design and thinking. Manufacturers copied the batik or Nyonya related pattern into the product so that most souvenirs have similar patterns and colours (shown in Figure 12). Just like the Nala design, perhaps the design of colours and patterns can also bring more possibilities to the Penang souvenir market.



Figure 12. Souvenirs with similar colour and pattern
(Source: <https://xiaohongshu.com/>)

During the observation of souvenir materials in Penang, the researchers found that most souvenirs were made of cloth, ceramics and paper. In addition, there are also some wood products, but the sales are not ideal. Researchers believe that there can also be more innovation in material design, such as combining modern technology or local crafts, Eco-friendly materials are also a good choice. To sum up, whether in the design of colours, patterns, shapes or materials, there is still a lot of room for innovative design in the design of Penang tourist souvenirs.

Souvenir function design

Actually, there are fewer categories of souvenirs for consumers to choose in Penang. What is more worth thinking about is that most souvenirs in Penang can only be used as decorations, lacking added value and practicality.

Nowadays, the concept of cultural products consumption is different from the past, and tourists are more willing to accept more participatory experiential consumption, that is, to meet certain realistic needs by using a cultural and creative product in real life. The reason why the cultural souvenirs can be accepted by the consumer market is that these products are given cultural attributes, but also practical attributes (Masset & Decrop, 2021). In the design and development of cultural tourism souvenirs in Penang, the focus of product design should consider product types, processes and materials. Secondly, the direction of product design should also be in people's daily life. Taking the regional cultural elements as visual symbols into the design of daily products, let the product convey the cultural characteristics of the arcade through its own attributes, meet the cultural needs and practical needs of consumers, and improve the quality of life of consumers.

Souvenir cultural design

The most important characteristic of cultural tourism souvenirs is cultural value, excellent cultural tourism souvenirs must be rooted in culture and spread to the public. According to the observation of the consumption of tourists, some souvenirs containing unique regional cultural characteristics such as refrigerator stickers, Nyonya brick and batik clothing are the most popular. However, the extraction of Penang regional cultural elements from most tourist souvenirs still remains on the surface, lacking in-depth exploration and transformation of design creativity. Many of them are hand-drawn postcards, key chains, T-shirts, hats or fridge magnets with pictures of famous Penang attractions or the word "Penang" printed on them. The carrier of these tourist souvenirs is similar to other tourist cities in Malaysia such as Malacca and Kuala Lumpur (shown in Figure 13). Apart from the name of Penang, these souvenirs do not have any elements related to Penang. Tourism souvenir products with weakened cultural originality and local identity may indirectly lead to a decline in the attractiveness of tourist destinations, where tourists always pursue unique cultural subjects different from themselves (Nurbaidura Salim and et.al, 2021).



Figure 13. Souvenir in Penang
(Source: <https://xiaohongshu.com/>)

Excavation of more cultural elements of Penang

As we all know, Penang is known for its multicultural society which is formed by Malays, Chinese, Indians, and other people of different races with diverse traditions. Therefore, tourists can experience different cultures during their trip to Penang. In fact, Penang's diverse architectural landscape has become one of Malaysia's most valuable assets. Walking on the narrow old streets in Penang, the inner city of

GeorgeTown takes everyone back through time (Chai, 2011). Penang also has beautiful natural landscapes, such as the blue sea, lush green mountains, and forests, and the most famous one is Penang Hill. There are many local religious celebrations in Penang including Chinese Lunar New Year, Muslim Eid al-Fitr, Indian Deepavali, Tamil Thaipusam, Sikh Harvest Festival, Sri Lankan Vesak Day, and Thailand's Songkran Festival, and others. In addition, Penang also has special traditional handicrafts, such as batik, wood carving, ceramics, and others. The most worthy to mention is Penang's food culture which combines the flavours and practices of Malaysian, Chinese, Indian, Thai, and other countries and develops delicacies with unique local characteristics, so it is known as "Asian Food" (Austin, 2015).

McKechnie (2011) pointed out that the characteristic of Penang cuisine is the unique fusion of culture and culture. The flavour of local food is proof of the harmonious fusion of different races and has become an important symbol of local characteristics. At present, most food souvenirs in Penang are mainly food specialties. Combining local food culture with the design of tourism souvenirs with practicability in daily life, there will be breakthroughs for Penang's tourism economic income. The following cases shown in Figure 17-19:



Figure 14. Food pendant
(Source: <http://xiaohongshu.com/>)

In the design concept of food culture souvenirs, local food can also be integrated with other regional cultures, as shown in Figure 18 which is a typical case of the integration of food and local regional architectural shape. In addition, combine the special materials or spices of regional cuisine with the form of souvenirs as shown in Figure 19.

In fact, despite the regional food culture, Penang also has many cultural elements that are worth exploring in design. Similarly, Extract some classic elements from other regional traditional cultural elements as materials for pattern design, and apply these patterns to various graphic design souvenirs, such as USBs, headphones, desk calendars, mobile phone cases, mouse pads, playing cards, badges, and other cultural souvenirs to form the creative characteristics in cultural souvenirs in Penang. In addition, refining the characters, scenes, and other elements in folk festivals to design a set of souvenirs that are consistent with Penang's traditional culture is also a good design direction.

FINDINGS

At present, the categories of tourist souvenirs in Penang are relatively simple, and almost every souvenir shop sells popular products such as refrigerator magnets, postcards and clothing, which are more traditional in shape and lack innovation and added value. Besides, the most popular culture of local food product still has lot of room for improvement like packaging design and others. According to the survey,

souvenirs with bright colours, local characteristics, high practical value and distinctive regional characteristics are more popular with tourists. I have to say, local batik souvenirs sell like crazy. In fact, there are many traditional crafts worth exploring in Penang, such as wood carving. Traditional craft materials can be combined with modern life to create innovative designs and broaden the variety of design carriers. More importantly, in order to arouse the emotional resonance of consumers, the design of tourist souvenirs must consider the cultural connotation and the emotional needs of consumers.

Through the above analysis and discussion, the innovative design methods of Penang regional cultural tourism souvenirs are summarised: Firstly, the rich regional cultural resources are screened to select the most representative and symbolic visual elements, which are appropriately simplified and subtly refined, so as to extract the most critical image elements to reflect the essential connotation of regional culture. Secondly, by refining the visual image elements of the representative tourist attractions, the transformable design points are sorted out and concretely applied in the design. Finally, by means of design, traditional materials and traditional handicrafts are extracted and applied to tourist souvenirs that can integrate into modern life, so as to rejuvenate the design of tourist souvenirs with new forms and ways of expression and give full play to its unique traditional charm.

The design of souvenirs should adhere to the harmonious unity of innovation and tradition, the principle of aesthetic and practical mutual benefit, in addition to the control of modelling function, design elements, materials and technology, but also to focus on regional cultural exchanges.

CONCLUSIONS

With the development of globalisation, many precious traditional cultures are being forgotten. Regional culture wants to integrate into global development as soon as possible and must pay attention to the combination of culture and tourism. Integrate regional culture into commemorative products and convey local culture to the world through souvenirs. Cultural souvenirs must have their characteristics instead of emphasising cultural differences. Therefore, they must reflect the national personality to be more competitive. Except for reflecting the core cultural connotation of the region, most importantly, the design of cultural souvenirs must be perfectly integrated with the needs of the target consumer group. In other words, the region meets the spiritual needs of consumers through souvenirs, and consumers increase the economic value of the region through their loyalty to souvenir purchases. The significance of this study is to provide design practice theoretical reference for souvenir designers and improve tourists' satisfaction with their tourism experience. The practical significance is to enhance the value of the regional cultural tourism economy and inherit excellent regional culture.

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