



Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts

**EXPLORING TRADITIONAL CHINESE PATTERN
THROUGH CUT-OUT ANIMATION**

Tey Shun Yi

**Bachelor of Applied Arts with Honours
(Design Technology)
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THROUGH CUT-OUT ANIMATION**

TEY SHUN YI

This project is submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for a
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(Design Technology)

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(2015)

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Final Year Project Report

Masters

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ABSTRACT

Culture is a way of life common to and shared by a group of people. Traditional Chinese pattern is one of the folk arts of Chinese society. There are various Chinese style elements used to form a traditional Chinese pattern. The application of traditional Chinese patterns in this research will be visualized through cut-out animation. The characteristics and the beauty of the traditional Chinese patterns will be promoted and delivered to public. Besides that, traditional Chinese culture will be elevated to a higher level in Malaysia with the hope to make the Malaysians especially those who have forgotten their tradition or culture to appreciate the Chinese culture.

ABSTRAK

Budaya ialah cara hidup yang biasa kepada dan dikongsi oleh sekumpulan manusia. Corak tradisional Cina ialah salah satu seni masyarakat Cina. Terdapat pelbagai elemen gaya Cina digunakan untuk membentuk corak tradisional Cina. Pengaplikasian corak tradisional Cina dalam kajian ini akan dipamerkan melalui animasi teknik 'cut-out'. Ciri-ciri dan kecantikan corak tradisional Cina akan dipromosikan dan disalurkan kepada masyarakat. Selain itu, budaya tradisional Cina akan dinaikkan ke satu tahap yang lebih tinggi di Malaysia dengan harapan membuat orang Malaysia terutamanya mereka yang telah melupakan tradisi atau budaya mereka menghargai budaya Cina tersebut.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background Research

Culture is a way of life common to and shared by a group of people. Even though, not all the people sharing the same culture, but, indeed it is something that is very important to each and every one of us as it plays an important role in serving as our own identity. According to Lee (2006), China has formed and maintained its culture for thousands of years. However, Chinese culture is still rich and unique until today. Chinese culture is persistent because of its practicality and absorbing power.

The emphasis of this research is on traditional Chinese pattern. They originated from painted pottery pattern of primitive society and they have had a history of 6000 to 7000 years. The traditional Chinese pattern can be divided into primitive societal pattern, classical pattern, folk and folklore's pattern and also ethnic minority's pattern.

1.2 Research Questions

What are the characteristics of traditional Chinese pattern? How to apply Chinese style elements in designing pattern? How to visualize the application of traditional Chinese pattern? These research questions will be issued in this paper.

1.3 Problem Statement

Malaysia has been experiencing cultural diversity since the day it was independent. Therefore, the understanding of another culture is crucial. It helps maintain the stability in our country. When we live in a multicultural nation, we are required to have a high level of knowledge about other cultures (Badrul, n.d.).

According to Lee (2006), many people especially Chinese have little or no understanding of what certain tradition is about and many traditions have been forgotten by them. This is probably caused by many of these Chinese have moved to another countries, obtained new citizenship, and have absorbed or been absorbed into other races.

There were researchers doing research on Chinese culture but a few of them actually presented the outcome through animation and in the context of this research, the cut-out animation. Hence, this research is to present the beauty of traditional Chinese pattern and to elevate traditional Chinese culture to a higher level in Malaysia through cut-out animation. The researcher also hopes to make the Malaysians especially those who have forgotten their tradition or culture to appreciate the Chinese culture.

1.4 Objectives

The researcher aims to study the characteristics of traditional Chinese pattern and apply the elements of Chinese style in designing pattern. The researcher will produce a cut-out animation on application of traditional Chinese pattern.

1.5 Significance to Knowledge

The characteristics of traditional Chinese pattern could be studied and delivered to public. The Chinese style element could be applied successfully in designing pattern. The application of traditional Chinese pattern could be visualized through cut-out animation. There will be an understanding and appreciation of Malaysians on traditional Chinese culture especially its pattern through this research. There will be a potential for the message of traditional Chinese pattern to be delivered to public. Hence, the Chinese culture will be promoted.

1.6 Scope of Research

The research focuses on the characteristics of traditional Chinese pattern and ensures the messages could be delivered to the public through the visuals of the animation.

1.7 Conclusion

This chapter has discussed the background of the study. Besides, the research questions, problem statement and research objectives have been explained. In addition, this chapter has clarified the significance to knowledge and scope of research. Next chapter will discuss the literature review of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Pattern

According to Getty Villa (n.d.), pattern is the repeating of any object or symbol. Pattern is formed by repetition of unlimited shapes, lines, colours, or textures in a recurring and regular arrangement (The basic elements and principles of the visual language, n.d.). Pattern is often used to represent many things such as people, beliefs, the natural world, history, and tradition. Colours and shapes have distinct meanings that are passed down from generation to generation.

The pattern is important in establishing a historical tradition and cultural practice (*Design in art: Repetition, pattern and rhythm tutorial*, n.d.). Pattern also means a structure or in another word skeleton that organizes surfaces or structures in a consistent and regular manner (Cornell University, n.d.). According to Flyeschool.com (n.d.), there are ten types of pattern namely spheres, mosaics or nests, lattices, polyhedra, spirals (helixes & volutes), meanders, branching & circulation, waves, symmetry, and fractals.

2.2 Traditional Chinese Pattern

Traditional Chinese pattern originated from painted pottery pattern of primitive society. They have had a history of 6000 to 7000 years and can be divided into primitive societal pattern, classical pattern, folk and folklore's pattern and also ethnic minority's pattern (Baidu, n.d.).

According to Shigeki Nakamura (2005), many of the Chinese paintings especially those relate to fortune and longevity emphasize the symbols such as the dragon, bird, phoenix, *kirin* (Chinese legendary creature in China), fish among seaweed, peach, pomegranate, grapes, loquat, shelf fungus, cherry, apple, peony, lotus flower, rose, floral scroll, and chrysanthemum.

2.2.1 Primitive Societal Pattern

There were several methods to form the structures of the primitive societal pattern such as symmetry, balance, split, continuous, radiation, overlapping, binding, separation and combination (Baidu, n.d.).

2.2.2 Classical Pattern

Below are the histories of the pattern formed in the Dynasties of China many years ago and the pattern were of different characteristics (Baidu, n.d.).

Dynasty	Pattern
Shang and Zhou	bronze pattern
Warring States Period	lacquer ware and embroidery
Qin and Han	ancient eaves tile, portrait brick, stone inscription and brocade
Northern and Southern	rock caves' decorative pattern
Tang	painted pottery, bronze mirrors, stone tablet inscription, brocade, printing and dying
Song	porcelain, brocade and embroidery
Yuan	carved lacquer ware, woven gold brocade and red porcelain pattern

Ming and Qing	blue and white porcelain, cloisonné, brocade, embroidery, jade article and carved sculptures
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Table 1. Histories of pattern formed in the dynasties of China based on Baidu.com(n.d.).

2.2.3 Folk and Folklore’s Pattern

These pattern were created and circulated among the people with the same folk style and local characteristics. The pattern include folk custom designs which are according to the occasions of the people for example paper cutting, embroidery, blue cloth with design in white, illumination pattern in Lantern Festival, exorcising evil spirits’ top five pattern in Dragon Boat Festival such as scorpion, centipedes, snakes, geckos, toads and so on (Baidu, n.d.).

2.3.4 Ethnic Minority’s Pattern

These pattern were created and circulated over a long period of time and in the life of the minority nationality. For example, the Mongolian, Tibetan, Uygur and Kazak created the carpet pattern, Miao and Buyi formed the batik pattern, Zhuang, Dai, Li, Tujia, Gaoshan and the Dong initiated the textile pattern and Miao, Yao and Bai established the embroidery pattern, and etc (Baidu, n.d.).

2.3 Chinese Symbolism

According to Lee (2006), Chinese art is unique because it has a long history and it is rich in symbolism. There will be a meaning by itself and in its decoration for an art object no matter what forms it takes. The Chinese decorative art and symbolism can be classified into the following categories namely, lines and geometric design, design derived from ancient traditions, design derived from Taoism, design derived from Buddhism, trees and flowers and also miscellaneous.

2.4 Animation

According to Baek and Layne (1988) as cited in Yuan (2010), he defined animation as “the process of generating a series of frames containing objects so that each frame appears as an alteration of the previous frame in order to show motion” (p. 132).

While according to Gonzales (1996) as cited in Yuan (2010), he proposed definition of animation as “a series of varying images presented dynamically according to user action in ways that help the user to perceive a continuous change over time and develop a more appropriate mental model of the task” (p. 27).

2.4.1 Cut-Out Animation

According to Yuan (2010), cut-out animation is a technique that manipulated flat 2D ‘puppets’ under a camera pointing downwards onto a table top. The cut-outs made of paper, cardboard or fabric is joined with strings or tiny paper fasteners. This is to move them frame by frame using same methods as stop-motion animation. Much of early cut-out animation is produced in stop-motion technique.

Cut-out animation has been overshadowed by mass-produced cell animation. This has led to the under-appreciation of this animation form. However, cut-out animation comes with unique aesthetics and narrative characteristics that are not normally found in dominant cell animation. These special qualities deserve to be recognized and re-introduced. This animation form should be preserved and further developed (Yuan, 2010).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter describes the methodology used in conducting the research. The discussions include qualitative research which is using case study to conducted research on the artworks of artists. Besides, the analytic techniques and expected outcomes are also discussed.

3.2 Case study

This is a qualitative research whereby case study is conducted to study the artworks of artists and designs that are related to traditional Chinese pattern by Catalina Estrada, Atelier LZC and Beci Orpin.

The researcher refers to some design books which contain and compile the artistic works of several artists. Through the reference, the artistic works that focus on pattern or traditional Chinese pattern are obtained and selected to be used in this study.

3.3 Analytic Techniques

The researcher analyses the concept, style and techniques of the artists in designing pattern. The pattern produced by the artists could be pattern in general, or traditional Chinese pattern in specific which are much related to this study. Their works are to be discussed by the method of case study.

3.3.1 Catalina Estrada



Figure 1. Paloma

Designer: Catalina Estrada

Title: Paloma

Source: Vilaseca, E. (2008). *Cutting-edge: Patterns and textures*. USA: Rockport Publishers.

Colour Palette: 

Description:

Catalina Estrada lives and works in Barcelona, Spain. She loves colours and shapes very much. She always wanted to make them beautiful. Textures, details, shapes and beauty could be seen from her work. Her work combines the Latin American folklore's typical colour with the European graphic design (Vilaseca, 2008). From this observation, we could see that the influence of folklore in designs. In the chapter of literature review, the researcher has discussed the pattern formed by the folklore, but here it is about the typical colour of the Latin American folklore.