Transformation of Mengkuang Weaving Motifs

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Abstract. Craft is one of the elements that require understanding and appreciation for those who are involved in heritage site. The documentation data of craft is essential in order to understand its culture of a certain places and to preserve the benefits for the Malaysian heritage for the present and future generation. In Malaysia, there are many types of crafted goods that have been made by the ancestors such as weave (*mengkuang* and *songket)*, weapon making (*keris*), dance (*mak yong*), pottery, woodcarving and others. In Malay traditional craft, motif acts as a messenger to deliver the thinking of the artisan because the motif itself contains inner meaning, the use and philosophy which can benefit, give a lesson and reminder to Malay society. The aim of this paper is to focus on 15 out of 51 motifs of *mengkuang* including their four main elements which are flora, fauna, abstract and people's name. This study measured the transformation of shape attributes of weaving motifs and the size of the motifs. The results suggested that the types of motifs of mengkuang determined were influenced by environments and socio-cultural aspects of the Malay society.

Introduction.

Motif is defined as an image or feature used for a base or pattern in some visual art works. In other word, a motif will be repeated or combined with various motifs to generate pattern. [1] states that motif is the most important art element in producing pattern on Malay traditional craft surface. In Malay traditional craft, motif acts as a messenger to deliver the thinking of the artisan because the motif itself contains inner meaning, the use and philosophy which can benefit, give a lesson and reminder to Malay society.

According to [7], a Malay weaver/scholar, Norwani Nawawi, believes that the motifs were largely influenced by the observation on the environment surrounding of the weaver's everyday life, such as insects, flowers, seas, sky, and the mountains. These show how observant and creative the weaver was in designing the motifs. The motif is produced by the design that be braided alternately until leave the geometrical effects. The name of motif will differ based on the size, shape and the arrangement of the design. Today, there are about 51 types of motif based on natural phenomenon like flora and fauna also come from people's name and abstract motifs [2]. In this paper I have selected 15 out of 51 motifs to be analysed and discussed. The chosen fifteen motifs are *Bunga Tanjong* motif, *Bunga Cengkih* motif, *Bunga Cengkih Beranak* motif, *Bunga Api* motif, *Tampok Jantung* motif, *Pucuk Rebung* motif, *Bunga Cempaka* motif, *Bunga Durian* motif, *Tampok Manggis* motif, *Bunga Melur* motif, *Tapak Anjing* motif, *Anak Ikan* motif, *Buntut Siput* motif, *Sisik Kelah* motif and *Belah Ketupat* motif that will be discussed on the shape and the size of each.

1. BUNGA TANJUNG motif

Bunga Tanjung is a medium-sized evergreen tree with white in colour flowering plant that has a sweet scent to it. It scientific name is mimusops elengi and also known as Spanish cherry, medlar and bullet wood. The transformation of the real *bunga tanjung* (Spanish cherry) to *Bunga Tanjung* motif can be seen at Figure 1. The real image has eight petals, the weavers has simplified to four petals which two petals combined as one.

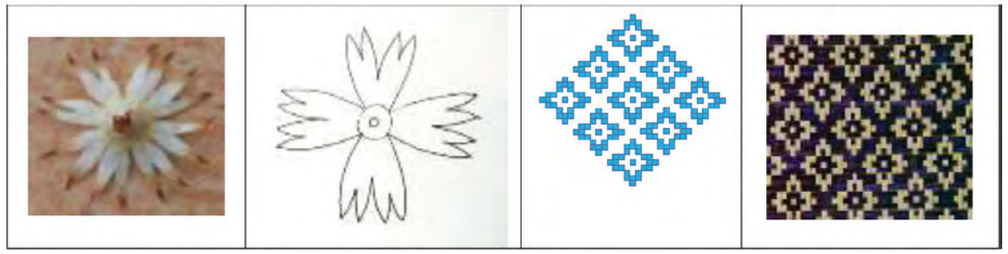

Figure 1: Transformation of Spanish cherry to *Bunga Tanjung* motif.

Bunga Tanjung motif has a square shape. The square shape has four equal sides and two pairs of parallel. Diagonals are congruent and also have a perpendicular bisector and it has right angle (900) each. The size of the Bunga Tanjung motif is $5x5$.

2. BUNGA CENGKIH motif

Bunga Cengkih Beranak motif inspired from the dried cloves. When the cloves became dried they will be categorized in herbs and spices which will enhance the flavour in cooking. The transformation of dried cloves *to Bunga Cengkih* motif can be seen at Figure 2.

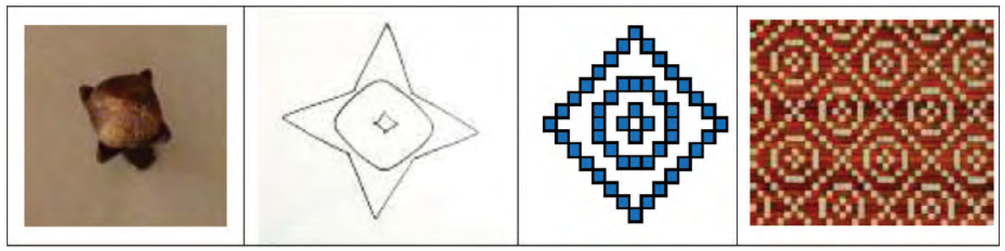

Figure 2: Transformation of dried cloves to *Bunga Cengkih* motif.

Bunga Cengkih has a fence which size is $8x8$ for outer part and inside the fence has the transformation of dried clove upper view.

3. BUNGA CENGKIH BERANAK motif

Bunga Cengkih Beranak motif inspired from *Bunga Cengkih* motif with extension with a bouquet of cloves. The transformation of dried cloves *to Bunga Cengkih Beranak* motif can be seen at Figure 3.

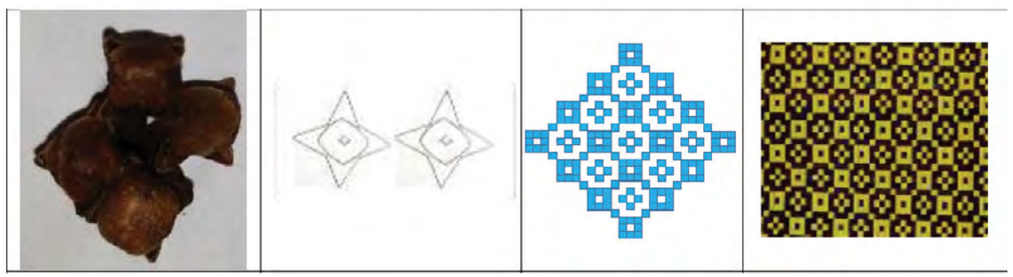

Figure 3: Transformation of a bouquet clove to *Bunga Cengkih Beranak* motif.

Bunga Cengkih Beranak motif has two types of square shape which are square 1 act as petal and square 2 act as inner layer. The square shape has four equal sides and two pairs of parallel. Diagonals are congruent and also have a perpendicular bisector and it has right angle (900) each. The overall size of the *Bunga Cengkih Beranak* motif is $11x11$ while the size of petal is $3x3$ and the inner layer is $5x5$.

4. BUNGA API motif

Bunga Api is a species of flowering plant in the bean family and is noted for its fern like leaves and beautiful red or orange flowers. The transformation of flower *to BungaApi* motif can be seen at Figure 4.

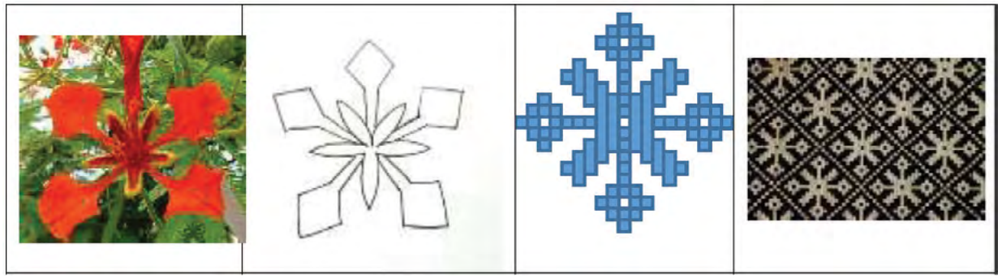

Figure 4: Transformation of flower to *Bunga Api* motif.

Kelarai Bunga Api has the shape of a rhombus. The rhombus has four sides of the same length, two parallel sides, two opposite interior angles of 900 and four symmetrical lines.

5. TAMPOK JANTUNG motif

The idea of *Tampok Jantung* motif came from the banana inflorescence (flower). The flower of banana is purplish in colour. The transformation of banana inflorescence to *Tampok Jantung* motif can be seen at Figure 5.

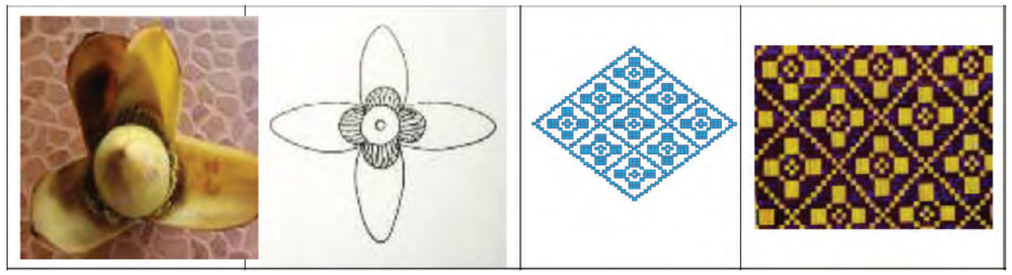

Figure 5: Transformation of heart of banana to *Tampok Jantung* motif

The shape of *Tampok Jantung* motif is square. Basically there are three types of square in this motif. Firstly is the big one as the main layout, secondly the petals and lastly the inner layer. The sizes of these three squares are different which the first square is$10x10$, the second square is $3x3$ and the third square is$5x5$.

6. PUCUK REBUNG motif

Pucuk Rebung motif was inspired from the bamboo shoot. The transformation of bamboo shoots to *Pucuk Rebung* motif as in Figure 6.

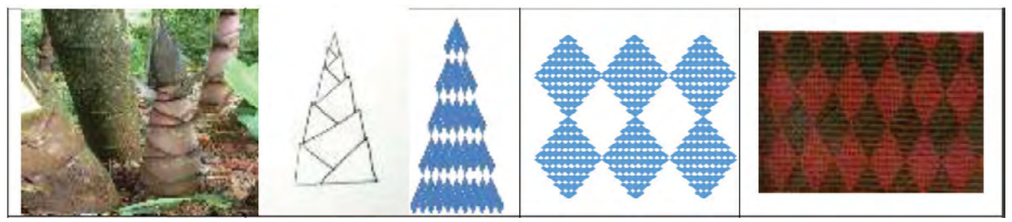

Figure 6: Transformation of bamboo shoot to *Pucuk Rebung* motif.

The shape of *Pucuk Rebung* motif is rhombus. Rhombus has two pairs of parallel sides, four equal sides, opposite angles are congruent and diagonals are perpendicular bisector. The size of the rhombus is 20 for the length and 11 for the width.

7. BUNGA CEMPAKA motif

Bunga Cempaka flowers are fragrant and orange in colour and it grows on a large evergreen tree in the Magnoliaceae family. The transformation of champak flower to *Bunga Cempaka* motif can be shown in Figure 7.

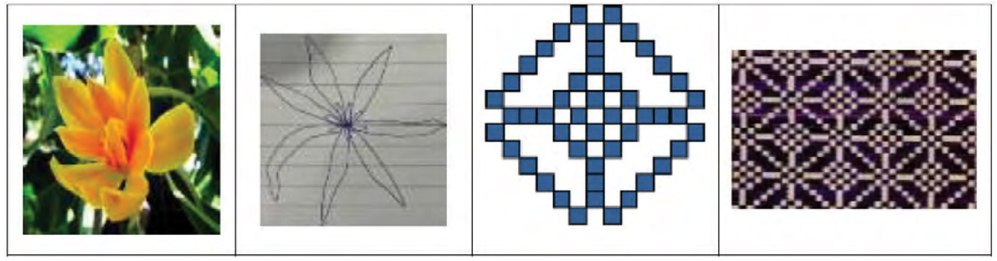

Figure 7: Transformation of champak flower to *Bunga Cempaka* motif.

Bunga Cempaka motif has a shape of rhombus, square and circle. Rhombus has four sides of the same length, two parallel sides, two opposite interior angles of 900 and four symmetrical lines. The square shape has two pairs of parallel sides and four equal sides. Diagonals are congruent and also have a perpendicular bisector and four right angles. Besides, the circle has a closed curve consisting of points which are equidistant from a given point.

8. BUNGA DURIAN motif

Durian is known as king of fruit in Southeast Asia. Its flower is yellow in colour. The transformation of this motif can be seen in figure below.

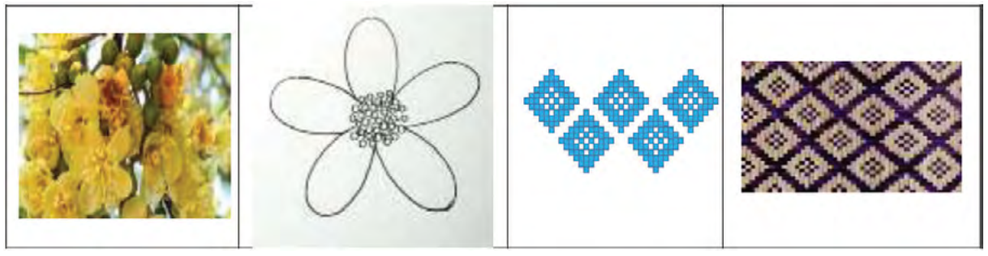

Figure 8: Transformation of *Bunga Durian* motif.

The *Bunga Durian* motif is square in shape. The size of it is $6x6$. The characteristic of square is the diagonal of the square bisect each other and meet at 900. While opposite site of the square are both parallel and equal in length and all four angles of the square are equal.

9. TAMPOK MANGGIS motif

Manggosteen is a tropical evergreen tree which commonly grows in Southeast Asia. The fruit of mangosteen is sweet, juicy and deep reddish-purple coloured when it ripe. Garcinia mangostana is a specific name of mangosteen. This *Tampok Manggis* motif is inspired from the bottom of fruit itself. Figure 9 shows it transformation.

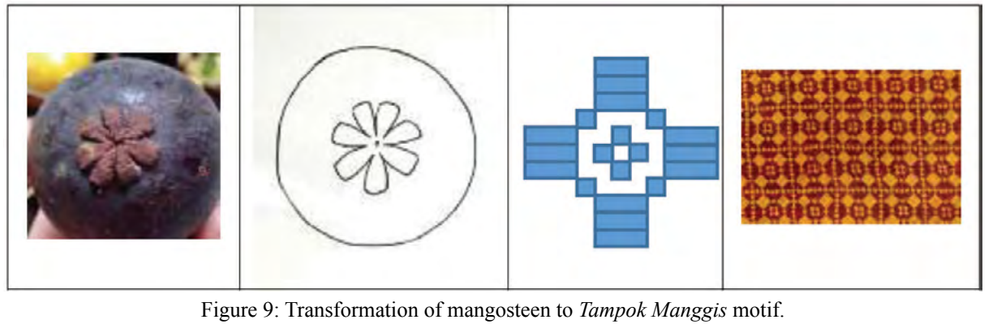

Figure 9: Transformation of mangosteen to *Tampok Manggis* motif.

There is a fence covering the *Tampok Manggis* motif with $9x9$. Inside it there are four small squares surround one big square. The size for each small square is $3x3$ and the size of big square is $5x5$.

10. BUNGA MELUR motif

Jasmine usually can be white or yellow in colour and rarely can be found in red. It have sweet scent. Figure 10 is the transformation of jasmine to *Bunga Melur* motif.

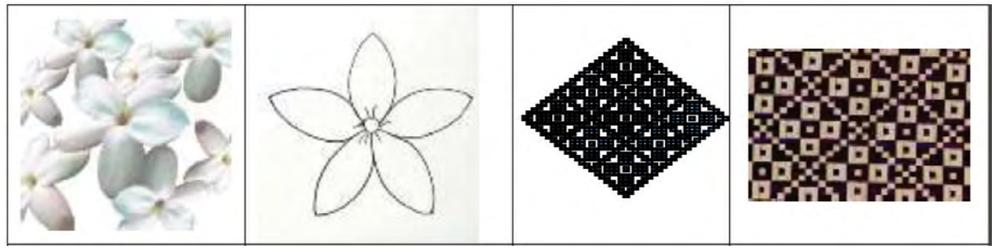

Figure 10: Transformation of Jasmine to *Bunga Melur* motif.

There is a fence covering the *Bunga Melur* motif with $8x8$. The four square which each square size is $3x3$ resemble the petals of the jasmine.

11. TAPAK ANJING motif

The motif is inspired from the dog's paws which only include three digital pads and metacarpal pad. Figure 11 below shows the transformation process from dog's paws to *Tapak Anjing* motif.

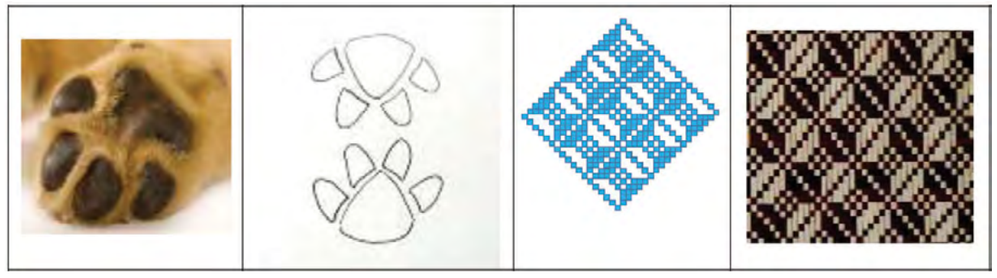

Figure 11: Transformation of dog's paw to *Tapak Anjing* motif.

The shape of this motif is rectangle. A rectangle is a four sided flat shape where every angle is a right angle (900). The size of the *Tapak Anjing* motif is$7x6$

12. ANAK IKAN motif

Anak Ikan motif also named as *Anak Ikan Sekawan* motif. The transformation school of fish image to *Anak Ikan* motif as shown in figure 12.

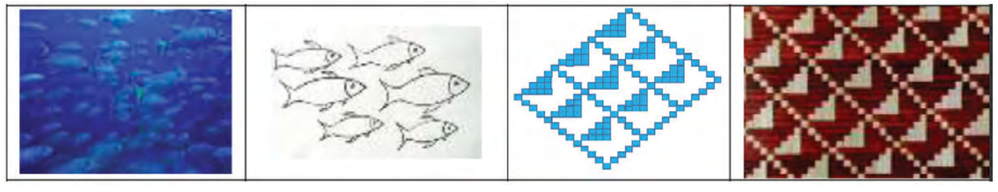

Figure 12: Transformation of fish to *Anak Ikan* motif.

The shape of *Anak Ikan* motif is rectangle. A rectangle is a four sided flat shape where every angle is a right angle (900). The size of the *Anak Ikan* motif is $6x5$.

13. BUNTUT SIPUT motif

Snail is an animal that covered up with shell. Usually snails stay at humid place as their body is wet. People likes to use their shells as decorative object like transform the shell into the motifs and incorporated into jewellery. Below is the transformation of the snail's shell to *Buntut Siput* motif.

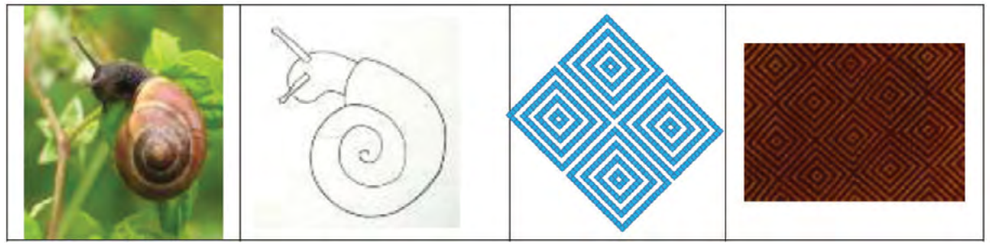

Figure 13: Transformation of snail's shell to *Buntut Siput* motif.

Buntut Siput motif is made up of repeated four squares which differ in size. Size of the most inner square (square 1) is $3x3$ followed by square 2 is $7x7$; square 3 is $11x11$; and the size of the biggest square is $15x15$.

14. SISIK KELAH motif

The scale of the Malaysian red mahseer usually can be found in Malaysia and Indonesia. Mahseer inhabit in both lakes and river for easy breeding as the rocky surface. It is an omnivore fish which eats insect and fruits that fallen into the surface of water. Figure 14 shows the transformation of Mahseer to *Sisik Kelah* motif.

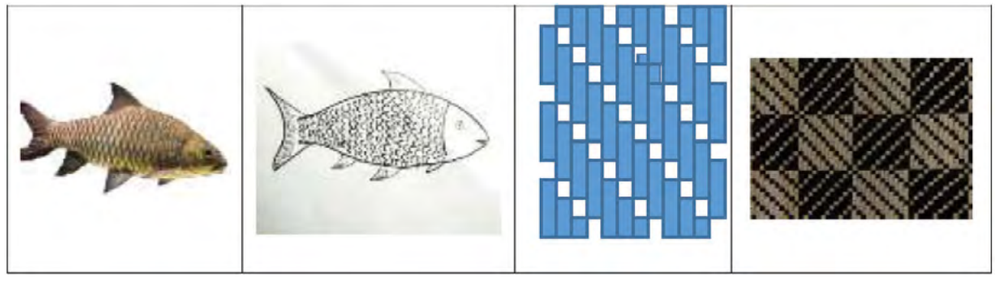

Figure 14: Transformation of fin of mahseer to *Sisik Kelah* motif.

The feature of *Kelarai Sisik Kelah* consists of a rhombus line and square. The Rhombus has four sides of the same length, two parallel sides, two opposite interior angles of 900 and four symmetrical lines. While the square has four equal sides, diagonals are congruent and it also has a perpendicular bisector.

15. BELAH KETUPAT motif

Ketupat is an occasional dish for Malay peoples during their eid; Hari Raya Aidiladha and Hari Raya Aidilfitri. *Ketupat* is in diamond shape which is made from woven of coconut leaf. This woven *ketupat* is three dimensional shapes that can act as container to put rice in it. After putting the rice, this *ketupat* will be boiled in water in order to cook them. Figure 15 shows the idea of the weaver to create a motif from the woven coconut leaf into *Belah Ketupat* motif.

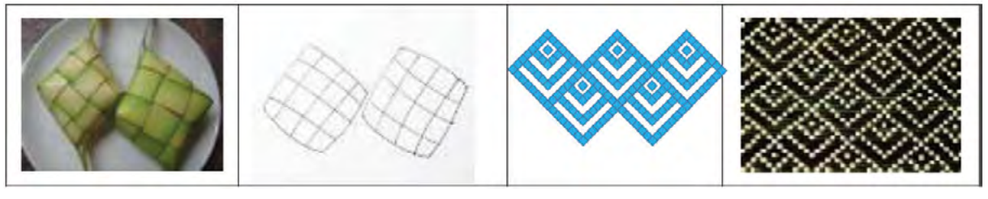

Figure 15: Transformation of *ketupat* into *Belah Ketupat* motif.

The feature of *Kelarai Belah Ketupat* consists of rhombus. Rhombus has four sides of the same length, two parallel sides, two opposite interior angles of 900 and four symmetrical lines.

Conclusion

Mengkuang motif is one of the Malaysian heritages. Knowledge of this heritage is important in order to make this craft beyond not only in this country but also can be distributed to abroad. So the youngster should show their interest and concerned about this kind of work so that foreigners will also be able to appreciate this fascinating cultural asset of the nation. Further research may include in proper educational aspect like in mathematics or arts in their research so that this can be apply at institution.

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