

# Transforming Indonesia Chinese descendants in Indonesia's cultural features into modern product design: A case study of a cross-cultural product design model

**Yi Ying and Jureynolds**

Chinese Department, Faculty of Humanities  
Bina Nusantara University  
Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

[yi\\_ying@binus.edu](mailto:yi_ying@binus.edu); [jureynolds@binus.edu](mailto:jureynolds@binus.edu)

**Ekky Imanjaya**

Film Department, School of Design  
Bina Nusantara University  
Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

[eimanjaya@binus.edu](mailto:eimanjaya@binus.edu)

**Arif Zulkarnain**

Hotel Management Department, Faculty Digital Communication and Hotel & Tourism  
Bina Nusantara University  
Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

[arief.zulkarnain@binus.edu](mailto:arief.zulkarnain@binus.edu)

**Hagung KS Wijasa and Inovensius HB Wicaksana**

Visual Communication Design, School of Design  
Bina Nusantara University  
Jakarta, Indonesia 11480

[hwijasa@binus.edu](mailto:hwijasa@binus.edu); [inovensius.wicaksana@binus.edu](mailto:inovensius.wicaksana@binus.edu)

## Abstract

Indonesia is rich in cultural diversity and traditions. Indonesia's unexpected cultural wealth ranges from tradition, art, tourism, and culinary. Indonesia is a country rich in culture. The relationship between Indonesian culture and Indonesian *Peranakan* culture is also very close. The arrival of the Chinese from mainland China to Indonesia around the 14th or 15th century AD settled and married the locals, combining the socio-cultural and culinary diversity of the two nations. The culture born due to intercultural marriage is Indo-Chinese or *Peranakan* culture. This intangible heritage needs to be protected and preserved. Digital transformation in the manufacturing sector plays an essential role in the era of the industrial revolution 4.0. In 2018 the President of the Republic of Indonesia, Joko Widodo, launched a road map of Making Indonesia 4.0 with the aspiration to make Indonesia into the top 10 of the world economy by 2030. At the same time, Indonesia's cultural and creative industries have developed, which play a significant role in promoting development. Indonesian economy. Indonesia supports creative innovation by deepening the concept that the cultural and creative industries encourage economic development. This paper raises the design of the *Peranakan* culture model to increase awareness of the *Peranakan* culture that can be sold in Indonesian tour packages. This model is expected to be developed to promote crossbreed tourism in other regions.

## Keywords

Chinese descendants, Indonesia, design model, cultural features

## **1. Introduction**

Indonesia is actual proof of a multicultural country. The factors that cause a multicultural society are geographical conditions, historical factors (1), the influences of foreign cultures, mixed marriages, and different climates. Indonesia is, indeed, a country rich in cultural treasures. Judging from Indonesia's geographical condition, thousands of islands are lined up from the west to the east, from Sumatra to Papua. Each island has its ethnicity, religion, and race. The historical factor is because Indonesia's geographical location and abundant natural products are very strategic; many traders from abroad and even colonizers eventually inhabited Indonesia.

Many of them were finally married to Indonesians and produced new cultural acculturation. Overviewing the influences of foreign cultures, such as the migrations of ethnic Chinese, Arabs, and Indians and their hereditaries, Indonesian people have different habits and various ways of life as well. Meanwhile, the different climate or weather in Indonesia makes people habit to cultivating different crops. This situation makes Indonesian society a multicultural society. Chinese Indonesian is divided into Totok and Peranakan. Peranakans are people of mixed Chinese and local ancestry who developed a hybrid culture incorporating elements from both cultures. The Totok Chinese people are the first-generation migrants who maintain a solid Chinese identity with their descendants (2). In general, Chinese Indonesians are influenced by the philosophy of Confucius, so the influence of filial piety on parents causes them to tend to conform to the preferences and expectations of their families (3).

However, over time, the influence of Confucius' philosophy has been eroded. Lack of understanding of ancestral traditions passed down from generation to generation is the main reason for the next generation to apply or pass on traditions to the next generation. Sometimes, tradition cannot be distinguished from religion by the younger generation. Because of their religious beliefs, they think this tradition cannot be explained logically, so they will not pass it on to the next generation. For example, the tradition of *sembahyang kuburan* (praying at graves) (2). If this continues, the Peranakan culture will become extinct due to the strong influence of foreign cultures. Therefore, it is necessary to preserve the Peranakan culture by relying on technological advances and innovation to produce a creative industry based on the Peranakan culture.

### **1.1 Objectives**

In recent years, the wave of modern Chinese style has been seen in different design applications, even in the film industry. The Chinese culture has attracted global attention (5). Indonesia, as a country heavily influenced by Chinese culture, can also take advantage of the opportunity of the rise of China to promote a culture that is a relic of Chinese immigrants to Indonesia. This culture is called the Peranakan culture. This research aims to preserve Indonesian Peranakan culture by relying on technological advances and innovation.

In this paper, innovation refers to introducing new technology or designs to a particular market, regardless of how gradual it is (4).

Thus, the researcher proposes a creative industry model that elevates the Peranakan culture. What kind of model of Peranakan culture can increase awareness of the selling value of Peranakan culture to be included in Indonesian tour packages? This model is expected to be developed to promote cultural tourism in other regions in Indonesia.

## **2. Literature Review**

Cultural elements play essential roles in the design field. In contrast, "cross" cultural design" will become the leading design evaluation point in the future. Designing "culture" into modern products will become a design trend in the global market. (6). In this research, "Chinese culture" focuses on studying cognitive traits, although they can be challenging to define, are, on the one hand, important, but on the other hand, immaterial concepts. The core of every culture is built on traditional concepts. Primarily it is a value system that contributes significantly to its normative nature. Value orientation, cultural cognition, and strategic integration are among the three main components that can support design theory. Cultural integration concerns the hybridization of certain cultures with contemporary Western or "global" cultures, which form a kind of artificial acculturation between the particular and the universal. However, the main problem is the choice of cultural elements (7).

Globalization has led to situations where product design teams from one culture or context often must develop products that will be used in (entirely) another cultural environment. Globalization also exposes companies to deciding between

'global' or 'local' product design features. As a result, it has become essential for industrial design education and the profession to take end-user contexts and cultures more seriously and to look for consequences regarding industrial design. (8)

Cultural designers must consider culturally sensitive user experience and thus develop better and more enjoyable products (9). The design of cultural products with a cross-cultural approach will be more in demand by today's young generation. Through product design, the younger generation will appreciate local culture more (10). Designers must understand what cultural norms and values can be integrated into product design. Thus, designers need to recognize that people are also cultural beings, and the process of integrating cultural factors into practice should be emphasized. (11). By using local features in design as a strategy for creating product identities in global markets, designers have noted the importance of linking products with cultural features to enhance the value of aesthetic experiences, meaningful experiences, and emotional experiences (12). Designing products with local features to emphasize cultural values has become an essential issue in the design process (13). Although product innovations usually combine technological and design aspects, they often emphasize one over the other. Thus, many new products can be characterized primarily as technological or design innovations. In this paper, for simplification, we use the terms "design innovation" and "technology innovation" to represent the dominant new product elements throughout the work and theorize on this basis. Evaluation and compatibility improvement) culture in a global brand that combines elements of China (14). Cultural tourism has the characteristics of culture and tourism. In a narrow sense, Cultural tourism is one type of tourism. In a broad sense, all tourism can be associated with tourism culture. (15).

### **3. Methods**

In this study, researchers conducted Focus Group Discussions (FGD) with several cultural experts in Semarang, Central Java, and Malang, East Java. A total of three informants were interviewed to get input on their opinions on the culture of the Indonesian role. The speakers felt the need for a visual product to represent the blend of local and Chinese culture in the lives of Indonesian people. Therefore, the steps taken by researchers are to collect some photos of buildings with oriental nuances. Then the researchers combine them into a poster design highlighting the Peranakan culture. The poster was designed by two students studying Mandarin under the guidance of a senior designer who produces a poster design model that aims to highlight tourist attractions with an oriental culture that enhances the life of Indonesian Peranakans.

### **4. Results and Discussion**

*Peranakan* culture has a wide range of influences from Indonesian culture. The cultural products include, but are not limited to, art forms and lifestyles, from design, fashion, and language to culinary.

To preserve and, at the same time, promote *Peranakan* cultures, one needs to understand the core values and basic knowledge of *Peranakan* and then transfer it into audio, audio-visual, and visual art products. In short, as mentioned below, conventional cultural products should be put into updated technological products familiar to the new generation.

The researchers conducted field research, in Semarang and Malang, by interviewing key figures and experts. We also visited several sites. Those data can be considered as the raw materials of data on *Peranakans* of the past and the present. The data collection was undertaken in February 2022.

The next step would be the creation of new artwork based on the data, which is still going on by the time we write the paper. The researchers will encourage several students across majors to undertake the workshop and create art forms. The authors challenge them using data value Ritual – Form – Meaning and challenge to create innovative ideas by using technology to create new sensations of experience in interpreting *Peranakan* culture for the present and the future. The whole step-by-step process can be shown as follows: (Figure 1)

**TO PRESERVE & PROMOTE 'PERANAKAN CULTURE' FOR THE NEW GENERATION**

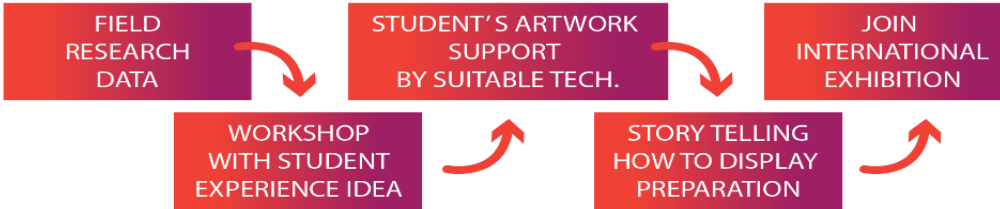
**Objective**



**Method**



**Activities**



**Result**



Poster, Arts, Film, Culinary, AR, Video Mapping, etc.

Figure 1. Preserve & Promote Peranakan Culture for the new generation

The students' creation of technological-based art forms is still progressing and is expected to be ready shortly. Related to the attempts to preserve and promote *Peranakan* cultures through technology, the authors map out the possibility of the high-tech art forms as follows:

**4.1. Video Mapping as Attraction**

Video mapping is an optical illusion with lighting and projections directed at areas that have been adapted to the video material. The objects displayed vary by displaying *Peranakan* culture icons, which are very interesting for the opening of a show.

**4.2 Augmented Reality Posters as the Art of storytelling**

Posters are the oldest communication media, telling concise stories as the meaning of short messages is solid for the audience to accept. Modern posters can not only be used as a nostalgic medium and to decorate space. By adding audio-visual content using Augmented Reality technology by using smartphone scanning, the poster can tell an experience. This sensation tells the *Peranakan* culture in Jakarta's center today. (Figure 2)



Figure 2. Poster with A.R. Tech

### 4.3 Barcodes on Culinary Product Packaging

Barcodes are a trigger to enter the *Peranakan* culinary stories about the origins of this confectionary created in the past. Often foods have a hidden history and meaning, either from the ingredients used or the naming that contains philosophy. By installing a barcode with an interactive story, visitors can enjoy food while enjoying a picture story presented visually through a mobile device.

### 5.4. Interactive Book and Film: 360-degree Virtual Reality

The technology of virtual reality (V.R.) is emerging with a 360-degree view. The participant can wear a V.R. mask (or smartphone). They can turn their head or phone on the right, left, up, down, and so on, and explore, for example, some fashion products (such as Kebaya Nyonya traditional outfit), Chinese-influenced architecture virtually, traditional rituals or prayers, or even mythical creatures from *Peranakan*'s folklores.

Another way to promote and preserve the *Peranakan* culture is by telling their stories in a new-fashioned and interactive way. First, in the post-production phase, the designer needs to choose which legendary stories they need to preserve, and then they create several alternative endings. Then, they shoot the films. Some *Peranakan* cultural products and icons should be part of the stories.

## 5. Conclusion

By designing technological products containing *Peranakan* cultures and arts, it is hoped that the younger generation can learn the importance of *Peranakan* culture in fun yet educational ways. By applying this approach, the *Peranakan* culture can be preserved and understood.

In general, there are still many *Peranakans* cultural products that can be brought up in the form of cultural products that can reach our hearts and enrich our lives. Therefore, the fusion of Chinese culture with Indonesian culture and widely accepted by the Indonesian people show an undeniable historical fact that the relationship between Indonesia and China has been very close since ancient times. Therefore, promoting more *Peranakan* culture in other areas is necessary so that the Indonesian people broadly understand history.

In addition, we must convey this historical fact to as many people as possible through design and creative thinking so that everyone can feel its charm and cultural value. Future research needs to collect large amounts of data on consumer responses to these *Peranakan* cultural products. Do products with cultural connotations affect them? Misinterpretation can be avoided when converting standard features into modern product designs. Furthermore, since interpreting and using culture is not an easy task, a comprehensive design process needs to be developed in the future. This will give designers clear instructions on how to design cultural products.

## **Acknowledgements**

This work is supported by Bina Nusantara University, as a part of Bina Nusantara University's Proyek Inisiatif 2022 entitled "PERANAKAN: Akulturasi Budaya sebagai Titik Tolak Penciptaan, Titik Temu Toleransi, Jembatan Dialog Peradaban Dunia" with contract number: 133/Proyek.Inisiatif/XII/2021 and contract date: Januari 5, 2022.

## **References**

- Agus Setiawan. TRANSFORMASI FITUR BUDAYA KE PRODUK DESAIN MODERN DINAMIKATEKNIK Vol. V, No. 2, 1 – 11 2011.
- Andre. A. Pekerti. The Interdependent Family-Centric Career: Career Perspective of the Overseas Chinese in Indonesia. *The Career Development Quarterly*, 56: 362-377 2008.
- Aykin N. (Ed.): Designing "Culture" into Modern Product: A Case Study of Cultural Product Design Usability and Internationalization, Part I, HCII 2007, LNCS 4559, pp. 146–153, 2007.
- David A. Griffith and Gaia Rubera A Cross-Cultural Investigation of New Product Strategies for Technological and Design Innovations *Journal of International Marketing* Vol. 22, No. 1, 2014, pp. 5–20 2014
- GLOBALIZATION AND CROSS-CULTURAL PRODUCT DESIGN J.C. Diehl and H.H.C.M. Christiaans INTERNATIONAL DESIGN CONFERENCE - DESIGN 2006 Dubrovnik - Croatia, May 15 - 18, 2006.
- Hsu, C.-H., Lin, C.-L., Lin, R.: A study of framework and process development for cultural product design. In: Rau, P.L.Patrick (ed.) IDGD 2011. LNCS, vol. 6775, pp. 55–64. Springer, Heidelberg (2011). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-21660-2\\_7](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-21660-2_7)
- He, J., Wang, C.L.: How global brands incorporating local cultural elements increase consumer purchase likelihood. *Int. Mark. Rev.* 34, 463–479 (2017)
- Johni Najwan, Darmawan Sutawidjaya, Hendra Yospin. Multi Culture and Its Implications Toward Various Social Conflicts in Indonesia. *Journal of Law, Policy and Globalization* www.iiste.org ISSN 2224-3240 (Paper) ISSN 2224-3259 (Online) Vol.39: 47-54 2015.
- Jiang, J., Kang, Y., Liu, C., Zhang, Y.: Elements analysis of Shaanxi' s cultural tourism products based on the perspective of the whole industry chain, pp. 970–976 (2016)
- Lachner, F., von Saucken, C., 'Floyd' Mueller, F., Lindemann, U. Cross-Cultural User Experience Design Helping Product Designers to Consider Cultural Differences. In: Rau, P. (eds) *Cross-Cultural Design Methods, Practice and Impact. CCD 2015. Lecture Notes in Computer Science*, vol 9180. Springer, Cham. (2015). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-20907-4\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-20907-4_6)
- Leong, D., & Clark, H. Culture-based knowledge towards new design thinking and practice - A dialogue. *Design Issues*, 19(3), 48-58. (2003).
- Lin, R.T.: Transforming Taiwan aboriginal cultural features into modern product design: a case study of a cross-cultural product design model. *Int. J. Des.* 1, 45–53 (2007)
- Liu, Y., Zhang, C., Zhou, L.: Adoption of Chinese ink painting elements in modern poster design inspired by innovation research on physical and chemical reactions. *Curr. Sci.* 108, 2017–2022 (2015)
- Lin, R., Sun, M.-X., Chang, Y.-P., Chan, Y.-C., Hsieh, Y.-C., Huang, Y.-C.: Designing "culture" into modern product: a case study of cultural product design. In: Aykin, N. (ed.) *UI-HCII 2007. LNCS*, vol. 4559, pp. 146–153. Springer, Heidelberg (2007). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-73287-7\\_19](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-540-73287-7_19)
- Moalosi, Richie and Popovic, Vesna and Hickling-Hudson, Anne R. Culture-orientated Product Design. In *Proceedings IASDR07: International Association of Societies of Design Research 2007, Emerging Trends in Design Research*, Hong Kong. (2007)
- Peter Ardianto et al Cross-Cultural Concepts in Cultural Product Design (Case Study of Shoe Design with Old Javanese Script) *Advances in Social Science, Education and Humanities Research*, volume 519: 146-149 2020.



- Wu, T. Y., Hsu, C. H., & Lin, R. T. A study of Taiwan aboriginal culture on product design, In J. Redmond, D. Durling, & A. de Bono (Eds.), *Proceedings of Design Research Society International Conference – Futureground* (Paper No.238), Melbourne: Monash University. (2004).
- Wu, T.-Y., Huang, W.-H.: Appearance–behavior–culture in creating consumer products with cultural meaning meant to evoke emotion. In: Rau, P.-L.P. (ed.) *CCD 2018*. LNCS, vol. 10912, pp. 245–253. Springer, Cham (2018). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92252-2\\_19](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-319-92252-2_19)
- Yan, F., Wang, S.: Research on the heritage and development of traditional cultural elements in product design. *Bol. Tec./Tech. Bull.* **55**, 554–560 (2017)
- Yang, L., Yu, W., Jiang, S., Jia, S.: The Application of “Emotion Retrospection” in the Design of Museum Cultural Creative Products. In: Marcus, A., Wang, W. (eds.) *HCII 2019*. LNCS, vol. 11583, pp. 547–556. Springer, Cham (2019). [https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-23570-3\\_41](https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-23570-3_41).
- Ying, Y., Garcia, F., & Novianti, Z. The Views of Younger- and Older-Generation Chinese Descendants in Indonesia Regarding the Selection of Auspicious Dates, *Translocal Chinese: East Asian Perspectives*, *14*(1), 115-131. (2020). doi: <https://doi.org/10.1163/24522015-01401007>
- Ying, Yi; Mursitama, Tirta Nugraha; Rumeser, Johannes A. A. A Glimpse of Chinese Culture in Betawi Bridal Dress. Volume 22, Numbers 5-6, May 2016, pp. 2016. 1718-1720(3) *Advanced Science Letters* DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1166/asl.2016.6746>
- Yikang Sun<sup>1</sup>, I-Wen Wu<sup>2</sup> and Rungtai Lin. 2022. Transforming “Ritual Cultural Features” into “Modern Product Forms”: A Case Study of Ancient Chinese Ritual Vessels. *Religions* 2022, *13*(6), 517; <https://doi.org/10.3390/rel13060517>.

## Biographies

**Dr. Yi Ying** is an Associate Professor in Curriculum Development at Bina Nusantara University. She obtained her master’s degree in Applied Chinese Linguistics from Xiamen University and Education Administration from the Christian University of Indonesia, Jakarta, Indonesia. She obtained her Ph.D. in Curriculum Development from the Indonesia University of Education. Her research interests include Chinese language teaching and learning, mobile-assisted learning, China Studies, and tourism.

**Eky Imanjaya, S.S., MHum, MA, PhD.** A lecturer at Film Study Programme, Bina Nusantara University. He earned his Ph.D. in Film Studies from the University of East Anglia (Norwich, Great Britain) with his research on the politics of taste and the global flow of Indonesian cinema exploitation in the New Order era. His last books are “Mencari Film Madani: Sinema dan Dunia Islam” (Komite Film Dewan Kesenian Jakarta: 2019) and *Mujahid Film: Usmar Ismail* (Storial-Kineforum, 2021). Email: [eimanjaya@binus.edu](mailto:eimanjaya@binus.edu).

**Arif Zulkarnain** is an Assistant Professor in Service Management. His current position is Head of Hotel Management at Binus University, Indonesia. His research interests are in service management, hospitality & tourism management. He has substantial experience working with various international hotel operators: Intercontinental Group, Hilton, Crociere Paquet, Archipelago International, and Discovery Hotels and Resorts. He has a Certified Hospitality Educator from AHLEI USA.

**Hagung KS Wijasa** is a senior lecturer in the school of design. He is Head of the Visual Communication Design Program at Binus University, Indonesia. His research interests are in art, design, and tech. Hagung has substantial experience working with various ads agency & publishers’ founder of graphic design & illustration firms. Hagung has shown his art & design in local & international events or exhibitions.

**Dr. Jureynolds, M.Litt.**, is an Assistant Professor, currently Head of the Chinese Literature Study Program at Bina Nusantara University. He received a doctoral majoring in International Chinese Language Education from Minzu University of China, Beijing, China. His current research interests include International Chinese Language Education, Chinese for Specific Purposes (CSP), Chinese E-Learning, Chinese as Second Language Acquisition, and China-ASEAN collaboration in Cultural and Educational Exchange.

**Inovensius Hugo Bima Wicaksana** is a lecturer and practitioner of video commercials in the industry. As a Lecturer Specialist at Binus University’s Visual Communication Design, his expertise in creating video mapping, AR VR, and Hologram tech is practiced in classroom teaching and is well received by students. Hugo’s professional

works have been broadcast on various TV stations and on Youtube in Indonesia. Hugo also assists the Ministry of Creative Economy projects in Indonesia.