

ORNAMENTAL DESIGNS OF PENANG CHINESE  
SHOPHOUSES

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KUALA LUMPUR

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**ORNAMENTAL DESIGNS OF PENANG CHINESE  
SHOPHOUSES**

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **ORNAMENTAL DESIGNS OF PENANG CHINESE SHOPHOUSES**

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This paper is a study of ornament designs on the facade of Penang Chinese Shophouses. Most of these Shophouses were built between the years 1824-1957, during the period under the British administration. Thus, there are ornamentation and decoration of colonial style on the facade of these Shophouses that is rarely seen on present day Shophouses.

The scope of study involves a few selected Chinese Shophouses located at Love lane, Jalan Muntri, Lebu Armenian, Lorong Macaliser and Jalan Kedah. These Shophouses are selected according to their history, location and facade treatment. The studies on the selected buildings from the Penang Shophouses are in “Early Straits” Eclectic Styles and “Late Straits” Eclectic Style during 1890s-1930s. The study focuses on the doors, windows, vents, column, corbels and eaves of buildings.

This research studies the functional and symbolic importance of the ornamental design found in Penang Chinese Shophouses in hopes of preserving the heritage of Penang Chinese Shophouses. In the last 50 years, many of Southeast Asia cities have undergone rapid change due to the complicated political situation and the burgeoning economic development. Many Shophouses have been demolished to make way for construction of hotels and modern concrete office buildings in the 1970s -80s. Consequently the UNESCO<sup>1</sup>, World Heritage Committee has already put Penang on the list of the most-endangered heritage sites.

The results showed the ornamental design of architectural of selected Shophouses, the history of the ornamental, the element of ornamental design of the building , the

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<sup>1</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

influence of ornamental designs and its origin, the functionality of the elements adopted in the climatic region, the essence of the ornamental, and the classification of architectural ornamental. The findings of architectural ornamental can be clearly divided into three basic categories: the mimetic ornament, the applied ornament, the organic ornament. The Shophouses facade analysed consists of ornamentations of various form, colours, meanings and expressions.

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## **ABSTRACT**

### **ORNAMENTAL DESIGNS OF PENANG CHINESE SHOPHOUSES**

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Kertas kerja ini merupakan kajian reka bentuk hiasan di muka depan Kedai Rumah Cina Cina. Kebanyakan Rumah kedai ini dibina antara tahun 1824-1957, semasa tempoh di bawah pentadbiran British. Oleh itu, terdapat hiasan dan hiasan gaya penjajah di muka bangunan Rumah-rumah Rawat ini yang jarang dilihat pada hari ini Rumah kedai.

Skop kajian melibatkan beberapa rumah kedai Cina yang terpilih di Love lane, Jalan Muntri, Lebuh Armenia, Lorong Macaliser dan Jalan Kedah. Rumah-rumah kedai ini dipilih menurut rawatan sejarah, lokasi dan fasad mereka. Kajian mengenai bangunan yang dipilih dari Kedai Runcit Pulau Pinang berada di "Gaya Awal" Gaya Eklektik dan "Gaya Selat Ekstrem" Selat sepanjang 1890-1930an. Kajian ini memberi tumpuan kepada pintu, tingkap, lubang, lajur, corbels dan atap bangunan.

Kajian ini mengkaji kepentingan fungsional dan simbolik reka bentuk hiasan yang terdapat di Rumah kedai Cina Pulau Pinang dengan harapan untuk memelihara warisan Kedai Runcit Pulau Pinang. Dalam 50 tahun yang lalu, banyak bandar raya di Asia Tenggara telah mengalami perubahan pesat disebabkan oleh keadaan politik yang rumit dan perkembangan ekonomi yang berkembang pesat. Banyak rumah kedai telah dirobohkan untuk membuat jalan untuk pembinaan hotel dan bangunan pejabat konkrit moden pada tahun 1970-an. Akibatnya, Jawatankuasa Warisan Dunia UNESCO telah meletakkan Pulau Pinang pada senarai tapak warisan yang paling terancam.

Hasilnya menunjukkan reka bentuk hiasan seni bina rumah-rumah yang dipilih, sejarah hiasan, elemen reka bentuk hiasan bangunan, pengaruh reka bentuk hiasan dan asalnya, fungsi unsur-unsur yang diterima pakai di rantau iklim, intipati hiasan, dan klasifikasi hiasan seni bina. Penemuan hiasan seni bina boleh dibahagikan kepada tiga kategori asas: ornamen mimetik, ornamen yang digunakan, perhiasan organik. Fasiliti Kedai Depan yang dianalisis terdiri daripada perhiasan pelbagai bentuk, warna, makna dan ungkapan.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

- UNESCO : United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization  
WTWHI : George Town World Heritage Inc

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## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction

The colonists had adopted their architectural styles in the construction of buildings to tailor to the local climate context which is warm & humid. These colonial buildings in Malaysia also have combinations of styles from other migrant cultures such as Indian and Chinese and from the local Malay traditions (Chun, 2005). This paper will discuss the ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse. Many Shophouses have been preserved until today, owing to their heritage value with unique architectural motif and style. Additionally, this research also looks into their influences on both a smaller and larger scale – as this has shaped the identity of Malaysia's architecture. There has been same contention about the true identity that represents Malaysia's architecture. This identity matter has recently become a main factor to consider when deciding the style of architectural decorations to be integrated into building design. On the contrary, there is also an urgent need to develop new appropriate designs linking with the past and present. A synchronized awareness by both architects and planners taking into account the historical and cultural perspective of a place and its architectural precedence provides a firmer basis in the pursuit to relate new designs with the local technology and socio-economic development.

Penang shop houses are now threatened by urban development which involving the conversion of the image and the change of the urban fabric (Baroldina & Dina, 2013).

The evolution of architectural style evolution in Malaysia from pre-colonial years through colonial times and later to independence has become one of the triumphant stories for its development in the post-colonial period. Without any doubt, the colonial focuses in the past had apparently exerted their influences on the local architectural development. Besides, Malaysia is a multi-racial country with its population consisting

of the predominantly Malay race followed by the Chinese, Indian and other minor races. Consequently, the architectural development of Malaysia is also influenced by these various cultures due to the migration of Chinese and Indians during colonial era. As their determination in seeking for political status and economic roles increased impact of the immigrant's culture and customs on the local architecture also grew alongside. Many foreign cultural heritage and legacies that existed in colonial times had significantly influenced the country's cultural development and design of heritage buildings. These influences remain visibly till today.

Shophouse is one of many Malaysian heritages that should be preserved. The existing architectural typology is a precedent study of climatic design in terms of local design context. This paper is a study of ornament designs on the façade of Penang Chinese Shophouses. Most of these Shophouses were built during between the years 1824-1957, during the period under the British administration. Thus, there are ornamentations and decorations of colonial style on the façade of these Shophouses that is rarely seen on present day Shophouses. To meet the need of critical local architecture, the art of architectural composition & semantics present in these shophouses façade should be considered as a reference in the pursuit of futuristic and hi-tech design in current design trends.

## **1.2 Statement of Problem**

Since independence, Malaysia has undergone rapid development . Consequently, there is growing conflict between urban development and the need heritage consevancy. This conflict is obvious in all the towns and cities in Malaysia today. The force of rapid urbanisation has brought new problems. Resulting not only in the demolition of almost all the heritage buildings. This will not only affect Malaysia's urban landscape architecturally and environmentally but also socially and culturally.

More and more new generations of young people are more interested in new cultures, Westernized lifestyles and new things, thus ignoring respect and understanding of traditional culture, including understanding of traditional Shophouses. In view of this, there is a pressing need for solutions in the development of contemporary and appropriate designs that are connected to both the past and present. By studying the functional and the elements of ornamental of traditional Shophouses and showing their values, So that more people can understand the cultural connotation and value of the Shophouses.

This research studies the functional and symbolic importance of the ornamental design found in Penang Chinese Shophouses in hopes of preserving the heritage of Penang Chinese Shophouses. In the last 50 years, Penang has undergone rapid change due to complicated political situation and burgeoning economic development. Many Shophouses have been demolished due to the construct of hotels and modern concrete office building in the 1970s -80s. Penang is already on the list of the most-endangered heritage sites.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

1. To identify the different ornament designs on the selected Penang Chinese Shophouses.
2. To study the significance of ornament designs on the selected Penang Chinese Shophouses.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

1. How to identify the different ornament designs on the Penang Chinese Shophouses?

2. What is the significance and meaning of the different type of ornament designs on the Penang Chinese Shophouses?

### **1.5 Scope of Research**

The scope of study involves a few selected Chinese Shophouses located at Penang George Town Love lane, Jalan Muntri, Lebuah Armenian, Lorong Macalister and Jalan Kedah. These Shophouses are selected according to their history, location and its facade treatment. The buildings of the selected studies will be the Penang Shophouses which are in “Early Straits” Eclectic Styles and “Late Straits” Eclectic Style during the 1890s-1930s. The study focuses on the symbolism of the ornamental designs on doors, windows, vents, column, corbels and eaves of the buildings.

The Chinese population in Malaysia generally and particularly in Penang, mainly came from Southern China. The tradition architectural of the Baba Nyonya Museum at Heeren Streets follows a modified version of the ‘Chinese National’ or Northern Style. This architecture embodies the spiritual notion of harmony with nature. This is manifested in the symbolism of the ornaments that are used to convey luck, directions, seasons, the winds and constellations. Structurally, the walls are of the brick and plastered with lime, the roof structure is of timber (Baroldina & Dina, 2013).

### **1.6 Significance of the study**

From my research title “The ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouses”, the related question will be “What is the significance of the ornaments design on the Shophouses?”

Historical building and environment need conservation for a number of reasons. They are: aesthetic value, value for architectural diversity and contrast, value for

environment diversity and contrast, value for functional diversity, Resource value, value for continuity of cultural memory and heritage, economic and commercial value (Fitch, 1990). Fitch and Carmona identified a series of levels of intervention (types of change) to historic building and environment (See figure1.1).

No	Level of Intervention	Definition
1	Preservation	Maintaining of the artefacts in its current physical condition
2	Restoration	Returning the artefact to the physical condition it had at some previous stage of its life
3	Refurbishment (Conservation, consolidation)	Physical intervention in the fabric of the building to ensure its continue performance
4	Reconstitution	Piece by piece re-assembly of a building, either in situ or on new site
5	Conversion (Adaptive reuse)	Adaptation of a buildings to accommodate a new site
6	Reconstruction	Recreation of vanished buildings on their original site
7	Replication	Construction of an exact copy of an existing building
8	Façadism	Preservation of the façade of an historic building, with a new building behind it
9	Demolition and redevelopment	Demolition and clearance with new development on the site

**Figure 1.1: Levels of intervention to historic building and environment, Source: <http://www.sciencedirect.com>**

Lorien Holland has mentioned “Penang is a treasure house of colonial and Asian architecture. For many Malays, though, that translates into an alien culture, which they see little point in preserving” in *Whose Heritage*. As a precious heritage culture, the Shophouses deserve conservation. As a result of numerous renovations, the original balance of materials and elements in the building began to change (Jenkins, 2015). This study aims expected to gain an understanding of the symbols and iconography of the ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse. The symbolism of the ornament elements will help newcomers, half-way practitioners or experts to gain a better understanding as well as a greater appreciation of the authenticity and integrity of Penang’s heritage Shophouses.

## 1.7 Literature review

This research focuses on the Penang Shophouses, founded by the Chinese who migrated from China to Malaysia. Therefore, this study will base on the following categories:

- (a) Background of Penang Chinese and Penang Chinese Shophouses,
- (b) Ornament design theories,
- (c) Relevant ornament designs of Penang Shophouses architectural studies,

Under each group, a briefly reviewed of some of the literature used will be briefly reviewed.

- (a) Background of Penang Chinese and Penang Chinese Shophouses

Before reviewing subject of ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse, the history of the Penang Chinese deserves a look into. Therefore, *the Chinese in Penang: a pictorial history* by Tan Kim Hong, *Chinese architecture in the Straits Settlements and western Malaya* by David G Kohl and *the straits Chinese house : domestic life and traditions* by Peter Lee, Jennifer Chen are used as main reference.

*The Chinese in Penang: a pictorial history* by Tan Kim Hong, has mentioned “the growth of the promising settlement and the genesis of a colonial economy in the Malay Native States and Dutch Sumatra led to a further phenomenal influx of Chinese immigrant coolies during the last two decades of 19th century.” Pioneer Chinese immigrants in their quest for trading and employment opportunities sojourned to the island and its adjacent appendage, Province Wellesley. They earned the compliments of early colonial administrators as an industrious and thrifty people. They were mostly engaged in urban-based labour and retailing activities but some toiled as agricultural planters cultivating sedentary spices and sugar. Emigrants left China for Southeast Asia in search of economic opportunities primarily because of social instability, economic depression, natural calamity, and war and population



pressure in the homeland. The Chinese emigrants were in demand as cheap labour for Southeast Asia's developing colonial economies. Chinese migration to the Nanyang followed two broad patterns-free immigration and indentured labour. By and large, the Chinese population in early Penang was not homogenous. They were particularised and categorised to a host of speech groups and territorial origins. Tan presents the five major dialect groups by order of size: Hokkien 54.2%, the Teochew 22.3%, the Cantonese 11.7%, the Hakka 7.2% and the Hainanese 1.9%. In his book, Tan clearly presents the Penang Chinese's ethnic group's origins occupation, their religion and activities. these factors affect the space where they live and how they build a house which will come in subsequent times as Tan describes "Hakka territorial associations based on the principle of place of origin appeared as early as the beginning of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, the Kar Yin Fee Kon on King Street enlisted Hakka brethren from the five associated districts of Meizhou, Xingning, Wuhua, Pingyuan and Jiaoling as its members, the Tsen Lung Fui Kon on King Street was jointly built by Hakka immigrants from Zengcheng and Longmen, Soon Tuck Wooi Kwon (Shunde Huiguan), a Cantonese Territorial association, was founded in 1838 at 60 Church Street." All these clan temples (Huiguan, Zhongchi) are the epitome of earliest Shophouses. Some of these clan temples have been sold out as a Shophouse of personal estate. Shophouse neighbourhoods still center around mosques or clan temples built one hundred years ago (Fels, 1994). Here, one can found the stories of immigration, economic success and accommodation among diverse cultures.

*Chinese architecture in the Straits Settlements and western Malaya* by David G Kohl, states that architecture is one of major permanent, visible and tangible cultural identification of a society. Exteriors and interiors of homes, community structures, and religious edifices bear witness to the affinities of taste, physical requirements of occupation or residence, and the symbolic manifestation of cultural values of the society.

The introduction contains information of the regions to the south of China known to the Chinese for millennia as the Nanyang, or “the southern region,” migration to these regions has been prompted at various times in history for a variety of reasons. Chinese communities in the Nanyang, and particularly in Malaya, are close-knit socially and economically. To varying degrees, this closeness also applies to cultural and political aspects of Chinese activity. The Chinese in Malaya came from peasant backgrounds in China. All architecture rest upon the past and embodies the ideas of earlier generations (Edkins, 1986). Their architecture reflects folk tradition, which is the “direct and unself-conscious translation into physical form of a culture, its needs and values, as well as the desires, dreams, and passions of a people” (Rapoport, 1969). Buildings found in society are physical expression of values shared by the community. Lots of woodcarving and stuccowork of the ornament designs on Penang Shophouse show the symbols expressed from the daily life of Chinese.

*The Straits Chinese house: domestic life and traditions* by Peter Lee, Jennifer is a book that primarily about the house in old days showing domestic life and tradition of the Straits Chinese from Mandalay Villa and Emerald Hill revisited in category by architecture functions. The reception hall, ancestral hall, bridal chamber, living and dining room and kitchens are discussed in one chapter. The important features of each function are emphasized together with details regarding ritual and festival activities. The book has mentioned:

*The house can be said to symbolise Peranakan culture. It is the setting in which Peranakan art; ritual and tradition are most clearly expressed. Through several centuries of change and refinement, the culture is an example of how a Chinese community came to adapt to its environment without losing its identity. The traditional Peranakan house, with its formal Chinese arrangement and eclectic mix of furnishings, reveals how the unique Baba community has enjoyed a lifestyle both*

*deeply rooted in Chinese tradition, and receptive to the cultures of other local communities.*

The house of the Peranakans up to the time of the Pacific War were the settings in which the most important social, cultural and religious values of the community were articulated. Religious ceremonies, births, deaths, marriages and anniversaries were all solemnised or celebrated in the house. The wealthy Peranakans took the lead in the lavish enactment of these rituals, which they observed strictly, despite the fact that other Chinese communities, influenced by the tide of modernisation and revolution sweeping China from the late nineteenth century, were gradually abandoning such practices.

(b) Ornament design theories,

The primary literature utilized as main reference mode in this study of the ornament design is Owen Jones *the grammar of ornament: illustrated by examples from various styles of ornament, one hundred and twelve plates*. This book is a classic encyclopaedia of design and decorative art. It shows a very detailed analysis illustrated by examples from various styles of ornament. General principles in the arrangement of form and colour, in architecture and the decorative arts, are highlighted throughout this work. The general principles are proposition 1: decorative arts arise from, and should properly be attendant upon. Proposition 2: Architecture is the material expression of the wants, the faculties, and the sentiments, of the age in which it is created. Proposition 3: As architecture, all works of the decorative arts should possess fitness, proportion and harmony, the result of all which is repose. Proposition 4: True beauty results from that repose which the mind feels when the eye, the intellect, and the affections, are satisfied from the absence of any want. Proposition 5: Construction should be decorated. Decoration should never be purposefully constructed. Proposition 6: Beauty of form is produced by lines growing out one from the other in gradual undulations: there are no excrescences. Proposition 7: The general forms being first cared for, these should be

subdivided and ornamented by general lines; the interstices may then be filled in with ornament, which may again be subdivided and enriched for closer inspection.

Proposition 8: All ornament should be based upon a geometrical construction.

Proposition 9: As in every perfect work of Architecture a true proportion will be found to reign between all the members who compose it, so throughout the Decorative Arts every assemblage of forms should be arranged on certain definite proportions; the whole and each particular member should be a multiple of some simple unit.

On harmony and contrast which involves Proposition 10: Harmony of form consists in the proper balancing and contrast of, the straight, the inclined, and the curved.

Proposition 11 comes in surface decoration where all lines should flow out of a parent stem. Every ornament, however distant, should be traced to its branch and root.

Proposition 12: All junctions of curved lines with curved or of curved lines with straight should be tangential to each other.

The Proposition 13: Flowers or other natural objects should not be used as ornaments, but conventional representations founded upon them sufficiently suggestive to convey the intended image to the mind, without destroying the unity of the object they are employed to decorate.

In Proposition 14 colour is used to assist in the development of form, and to distinguish objects or parts of objects one from another.

Proposition 16: These objects are best attained by the use of primary colours on small surfaces and in small quantities, balanced and supported by the secondary and tertiary colours on the larger masses.

Proposition 17: The primary colours should be used on the upper portions of objects, the secondary and tertiary on the lower.

Proposition 18: When a full colour is contrasted with another of a lower tone, the volume of the latter must be proportionally increased.

The Proposition 19: When a primary colour tinged with another primary is contrasted with a secondary, the secondary must have a hue of the third primary.

Proposition 20: In using the primary colours on moulded surfaces, we

should place blue, which retires, on the concave, on the convex; and red, the intermediate colour, on the undersides; separating the colours by white on the vertical planes. In Chapter 14: *Chinese Ornament*. Owen Jones has mentioned Chinese in their ornamentation, the general forms of many of the Chinese porcelain vases are remarkable for the beauty of their outline, the pure form of the Chinese vases is often destroyed by the addition of grotesque or other unmeaning ornaments, built up upon the surface, not growing from it: from which we argue, that they can possess an appreciation of form, but in a minor degree. His illustrated analysis of Chinese ornament is based on Chinese classic vases or ceramics that serve as building ornament design and not just wood carving. However, from general principles of ornament can good guide to a better understanding of the ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse.

The second literature utilized in this study of Chinese ornament is Jessica Rawson's *Chinese Ornament: The Lotus and the Dragon*. This book utilizes slightly different approach, namely investigating the sources of flower and animal designs that are widely displayed in Chinese art and especially on Chinese porcelains, involves the architectural decoration in Asia, lotus and peony scrolls, animal ornament, flowers and frames, Chinese motifs in Iranian and Turkish art. Two other writings by authors Hakan Saglam, Anca Mistrache respectively provided an overview of ornament in architectural design. The *re-thinking the Concept of "Ornament in Architectural Design"* by Hakan Saglam, summarized and compared the various theories of architect or theorist. Such as, Gottfried Semper, who considers ornament as a process concerning the essence of construction of buildings, believes that fabrication lies at the root of ornament and that ornament is the actual beginning of architectural style. Architecture may actually be defined as an activity of ornament. John Ruskin has also argued that ornament is about the essence of architecture rather than being a robe put on from the outside and that

apart from revealing directly the relationship of humanity with god, it reflects the internal beauty of architecture. Louis Sullivan had suggested that ornament added liveliness and individuality to buildings. For the creator of the motto, “form follows function”, this approach alone is enough to indicate how important a role has ornament in the construction of buildings. Frank Lloyd Wright considered ornament as an integral part of construction by saying that “elements of decoration and even musical instruments are integral parts of buildings, not annexes”.

(c) Relevant ornament designs of Penang Shophouses architectural studies,

Several of the works are directly related to the ornaments designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse. *Penang Shophouse: A handbook of Features and Materials* by Tan Yeow Wooi, explains the evolution of the architectural styles, materials and designs used in each style in an accessible manner. This book offers a better understanding as well as a greater appreciation of the authenticity and integrity of Penang’s heritage Shophouses. The handbook shows the Penang Style. In great detail: category by roofs, area of wall openings which involve doors, shutters and windows, air vents, air well shutters and windows and air well central opening, floors and staircases, paints and colours. Tan Yeow Wooi categorised the Shophouse into six main typologies: between 1790s-1850s, the style Early Penang; between 1840s-1910s, the style Southern Chinese Eclectic; between 1890s-1920s, the style Early Straits Eclectic; between 1910s-1930s, the style Later Straits Eclectic; between 1930s- 1960s the style Art Deco; and between 1950s- 1970s, the style Early Modern. The Early Straits Eclectic Style and the Late Straits Eclectic Style are most related to the study of the ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse because of they involve richly ornaments of Shophouse. This book clearly portrays the Shophouse styles and presents general conservation guidelines for the restoration of Shophouse.

However it does not focus on the ornament design in Chinese Shophouse, offering no in-depth discussion of the symbolism of ornament designs.

*The Peranakan Chinese home: Art and Culture in Daily Life, Chinese houses: The Architectural Heritage of a Nation, Chin's Living Houses: Folk Beliefs, Symbols, and Household ornamentation*, these three books by the same author Ronald G. Knapp. These books as the main reference most directly related to the study ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse.

*Chinese houses: The Architectural Heritage of a Nation*, discusses the architecture of Chinese house through the selected China's fine heritage houses, involving 20 Chinese houses from 12 province of China. They are "A Beijing Courtyard House", "Northern Mountain House Beijing", "Jiangnan Canal Houses", "An Educator's Residence of Jianshu", "A Scholar's Study of Shaoing", "A Millionaire's Home of Henan", "A Three- Story Ming Dynasty House of Anhui", "A Merchant's Residence of Anhui", "The Five Phoenix Mansion of Fujian", "A Round Fortress Ramparts in Fujian", "Hakka Encircling Dragons in Guangdong", "Mandarin's Mansion in Hong Kong", "A Country Farmhouse in Hunan", "A Landlord's Village Home in Hunan", "Urban Dwellings in Northern Sichuan", "A U-Shaped Farmhouse in Sichuan", "A Grand Qing Manor and a Simple Ming Courtyard House in Shanxi", "The manor of Bean Curd Maker in Shanxi", "Walled City Residences in Shanxi" and "Cave Dwellings of the North in Shanxi". Although this book discusses the general aspects of all the Chinese traditional house, it also offers some detailed studies showing the relationship to the ornament design of Penang Shophouse, such as the same carved surfaces, the reveal auspicious ornamentation on the door panel, the same symbolization, the quest for good fortune and the several similar elements – fish, lotus, peaches, and the *fu* character.

In *The Architectural Heritage of a Nation, Chin's Living Houses: Folk Beliefs, Symbols, and Household ornamentation*, Knapp shows us a Variety of Chinese houses

across time, space, and social class. In Part I, "In Quest of Spatial Harmony," he explores the ways in which Chinese families structure their dwellings as templates for social harmony and for asserting hierarchical distinctions. In chapter 3, "Fengshui" Knapp presents the essential elements of "fengshui", that relate to Chinese houses. In chapter 4 he describes Chinese ritualized "building magic" such as offerings, charms, and talismans whose purpose is to ensure harmony, prevent adversity, and summon good fortune. Chapters 5 through 8 make up the heart of this book. Each chapter focuses on the abundant ornamentation of Chinese dwellings. "In Pursuit of Good Fortune," consists of chapters 6 through 9. In chapters 6 and 7 Knapp argues on the basis of abundant evidence that the pursuit of good fortune continues to be a predominant sentiment in Chinese life. In chapter 8 Knapp suggests that an important component of household ornamentation is the use of didactic narrative tales to communicate moral principles as well as to express the elements of a happy family life. He mentions Fu Lu Shou, or the Stellar Triad and Baxian, or the Eight Immortals as folk heroes. Knapp not only shows the physical ornaments but also tries to interpret their social meanings by using various social studies on Chinese society.

*The Peranakan Chinese home: Art and Culture in Daily Life* by Ronald G. Knapp, attempts to describe the range of beautiful objects which the Peranakan Chinese created and enjoyed in their daily lives. Each chapter focuses on a different area of the Peranakan home and presents objects used or found in shoes spaces, many of which are uniquely Peranakan. These are described in the context of their utility as household objects, as part of periodic celebrations to mark the Chinese Yew Year and other festive occasions. The rich meaning of the symbolic and ornamental motifs found on the objects is discussed in detail and key differences are highlighted between Peranakan objects and similar ones found in China. There is no single house



type that can be described as exclusively Peranakan Chinese. Peter Lee and Jennifer Chen in *The Straits Chinese House* adroitly demonstrate the adaptability of the Peranakan Chinese that made it possible for them to enjoy “a lifestyle both deeply rooted in Chinese tradition and receptive to the cultures of other local communities”. In chapter 1 “House forms and facades”, Knapp explores the Shophouse, terrace houses, the courtyard mansions, the bungalows and villas, discussed the western and Chinese elements appear on the facades of Shophouse, shows the different facade of Shophouse, the detail ornamentations of doors, windows, the vents, the ceramic tiles and the column. In chapter 2, Knapp mentions that “even a cursory glance at the exterior of old Peranakan Chinese residences (as Shophouse) reveals an abundance of apparent ornamentation.” In this chapter, the focus on symbols and iconography, is organized around two broad themes that express the nature of this symbolic vocabulary-the Quest for Harmony and the Pursuit of Good Fortune-and looked at the walls, floors, ceiling, doors, and screen, as well as many types of furnishings and objects, including those that are decorative or utilitarian, found in Peranakan Chinese homes throughout Southeast Asia. Chapter 4 to chapter 8 discussed the internal space categorized by: The Reception Hall, The Courtyard, The Ancestral Hall, The Living Areas, The Bedroom, and the Kitchen, each one arranged by their own chapters. In this book, Knapp has presents the meaning of the symbols and iconography involving “*Feng Shui, Long Fei Fen Wu, Yinyang, Yasheng, YaXie, ZaoShen, Niannian You Yu, San Yang, Fu Dao Le, Bian Fu, Wu Fu, Shou, Ji,Shou, Shuan Xi, Song, Ju,*”. Penang Chinese Shophouse has a richly ornamented design drawing influence from a variety flowers, different animals, Chinese character, and ethnic myth; aspect of which not are not discussed by Knapp.

*The Spatial Organization in Chinese Hui – Style Architecture and Chinese Architecture in Penang: Religious Architecture and Residential Architecture* by Guo Xiaowei is a comparative research study, focusing on the different types of Chinese

architecture in Huizhou and Penang. In this research, Hui-style architecture represents the original and classical example of Chinese architecture in China. Penang Chinese architecture represents an imitation. It is also an art history architectural study incorporating cultural theory of diaspora as an approach to the investigation of Chinese architecture in China and in Penang Chinese migrant society. This study compares Hui-style architecture with Penang Chinese by the building's form and function. This study offers little relevance on the history and Shophouse background of Penang Shophouse, with relation of the facade or ornament design of Penang Shophouse.

*Manifestations of Malayan Chinese: Diasporic cultural identity: A Visual Analysis on the Evolution of The Chinese Shophouse Facades in 19th and 20th century British Malaysia* by Fiona Wong E Chiong. This is a full research academic thesis, the study focusing on the facade of Shophouse of Malaysia, by looking at the distinction of Shophouse typology and facade ornamentations between the clannish Chinese *sinkeh* (newcomers) immigrants from Southern China, and the early- assimilated Peranakan Chinese (or Straits Chinese). This study is related closely to the study of ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse. Firstly, Chiong's work is based on a wider range of building not just Penang Shophouse, only a few Penang Shophouses have been mentioned by her work. Although her works cover a number of streets in George town, Penang, namely Lebu Nelayu, Lebu Kimberly, Penang Street, King Street, Lebu Pesgrave, Lebu Noordin, Lebu Pantai, Lorong Pintal Tali, Lebu Melayu, Lebu McNair, but every street she selects only one or two Shophouses on every street are discussed, unlike the extent of coverage afforded by the study of the ornament designs in Penang Chinese Shophouse. Secondly, Chiong's study focused more on the formal and stylistic analysis of the Straits Eclectic

Shophouse facade instead of in-depth analysis on the meaning symbolism of ornament designs on Shophouse.

## **1.8 Research Methodology**

The methodology of this research through qualitative methods refers to “*Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative & Mixed Methods Research by Creswell*” involves the use of both primary and secondary sources. Primary research contains photo documentation of the Early Straits Eclectic Styles and the Late Straits Eclectic Styles Shophouse located at Lorong Macalister, Jalan Kedah, Lebu Armenian, Love Lane and Jalan Mutri, of George Town, Penang. The photo collection of primary research fieldwork helps in searching, recognition, selecting, and locating of richly ornamentation facades Shophouse in various streets of George Town. Photographs as reference material are taken by the author himself and also collected from others sources. And do category and analyzing for this study. The primary research also included interviews with selected or available informants. The former interview includes: JB Lim, PL Thum, Kenny Wong, Ngo Thye Aun.

The secondary sources comprise of related publications, books journals, news articles, and dissertations by former researchers and electronic sources from libraries, resource centers and GTWHI<sup>2</sup>. Library research was conducted at the following libraries:

1. Universiti Malaya Central Library,
2. Built Environment Faculty Library, Universiti Malaya
3. Culture Central Library, Universiti Malaya
4. Universiti Sains Library
5. The resource room of GTWHI

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<sup>2</sup> George Town World Heritage Inc

As for electronic sources, the official website of Penang Shophouse, Capturing Penang, Building Conservation: Malacca UNESCO<sup>3</sup> World Heritage City and Travel Tips were major reference for this study. The topics discussed on these platforms focused on Shophouse or Heritage building of Malaysia. Unfortunately there was a lack of research directly related with the ornament designs on Shophouse.

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<sup>3</sup> United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

## CHAPTER 2: THE DEVELOPMENT OF PENANG CHINESE SHOPHOUSES

### 2.1 Introduction

This research focuses on the Penang Chinese Shophouses, established by the Chinese during the migration of Chinese people to the Malaysia. Therefore, the 5 studies will be addressed. “*Most of Penang Shophouses were built by Chinese immigrants*”, it’s explains who build these historical buildings that has now become a cultural heritage? “*The time of the generation of Chinese immigrant to Malaysia*”, it’s explains when did the first generation of Malaysian Chinese come to Malaysia to begin their own business. “*The main reason for Chinese immigrants migrating to Malaysia*”, its states why after hundreds of years, the Chinese came to Malaysia. “*Most Penang Chinese came from Southern China*”, its talks where do the Malaysia Chinese come from, which part of China are they coming? And “*The early activities of the Chinese immigrants*”, what do they do in Malaysia, the development of architectural culture, the differences in culture between east and west , the basic architecture feature of the building, and analysis of the Shophouse and the ornamental designs of the Shophouse.

### 2.2 The history of Penang

This part is talking about a Penang history from the early “*Ping-lang-yu*” to the independence which involves the period of Straits Settlements, Penang at war, the colonial period by British and the independence of Penang.

#### 2.2.1 The early days of Penang

“*Ping-lang-yu*” was the earliest name of Penang; this geographical term first appeared in the period of Yong Le of Ming dynasty. This name was found in a hydrographical book named “*Shun Feng Xian Shong*” which was used by warship force as a navigation of voyage in the 15th century. It records the sailing guide from Pulo

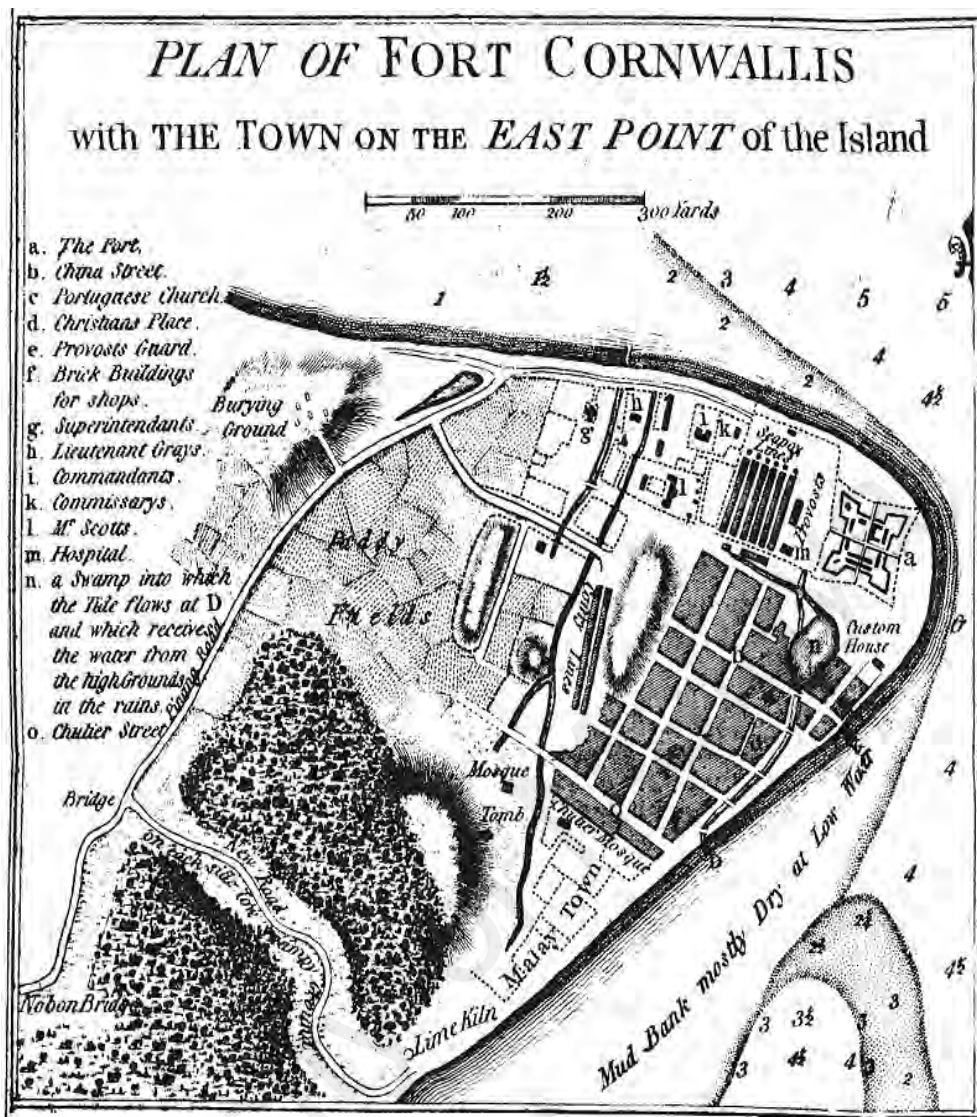
Condore of Malay Peninsula to Ping Lang Yu. It is obvious that Penang has already started trade with China in the 15th century.

Portuguese found a small island to refill their water supplies in the 16th century during when they traded for spices between Goa of India to the Far East. At that time, Penang was called Pulo Pinaom by the Portuguese. In 17th century, trade exchanges become more frequent at the Malacca Straits; due to Penang's location at the northern entry to the Strait of Malacca gradually becoming a sheltered harbour for Chinese, India, Arabia and European ships during the monsoon months.

The trader - navigator Sir James Lancaster was the first British who arrived at Penang. He has had in command, Edward Bonaventure sailing from the East Indies of Plymouth on 10 April 1591 and reaching Penang on June 1592.

Penang was originally a part of the Sultanate of Kedah originally before 1786. In 1786, Sultan Abdullah Mukarram Shah decided to cede Penang to the British East India Company because he was promised by the British military, protection from Siamese and Burmese armies. The Union Jack flag hoisted was in a formal ceremony by Captain Francis Light whom the founder of Penang as we known on 11 August 1786. And Penang was renamed as Prince of Wales Island in honour of Prince's birth (Wikipedia, 2015a).

Penang Island was set as a natural harbour and anchorage for trading ships, and as a naval base for the British East India Company. In view of the excellent location of the island facing the Straits of Malacca, George Town was named as a settlement on the North-eastern tip of the island, after King George III of the United Kingdom.



**Figure 2.1: The Map of Early Penang Showing the Malay Town on the South of the Town Center. Source: Popham, Home Riggs**

The original four streets of George Town were Beach Street, Light Street, Pitt Street (now Masjid Kapitan Keling Street) and Chulia Street, all of which still form the main thoroughfares of the modern city. Other early roads include Church Street, Bishop Street, China Street and Market Street; and by the early 19th century, Armenian Street and Acheen Street.

### 2.2.2 The period of Straits Settlements

The Straits Settlements were a group of British territories located in Southeast Asia originally established in 1826 as part of the territories controlled by the British East India Company (Chisholm, 1911).

Penang was became a part of Straits Settlements in 1826. The other two cities were Malacca and Singapore. These cities were controlled by the British administration in India. In 1867, Penang became a Crown Colony of British and George Town became the capital of the Straits Settlements. Subsequently due to its rapidly growing influence and more strategic location Singapore became the capital of the Straits Settlements.



**Figure 2.2: Map of British India and the Straits Settlements by English**

**mapmaker W G Blackie, 1860. Retrieved from:**

**[http://www.antiquaprintgallery.com/ekmps/shops/richben90/images/british-india-s-pegu-tenasserim-straits-settlements-singapore-maldives-1882-map-](http://www.antiquaprintgallery.com/ekmps/shops/richben90/images/british-india-s-pegu-tenasserim-straits-settlements-singapore-maldives-1882-map-203560-p.jpg)**

**203560-p.jpg**



In 1867, the two principal Chinese secret societies namely Ghee Hian Kongs and Hai San society were in conflict over commercial profits linked to the tin-mining industry. This led to what later became as a nine days heavy street fighting and bloodshed. The fighting spiralled out of control resulting in the despatch of reinforcements from Singapore by the British.

The Suez Canal opened to navigation in 1869 has helped the British trade expanded in the Far East. Colonial Penang benefited from the prosperity and development through exports of tin and rubber to Britain then undergoing industrial revolution. The rapidly developing Penang attracted many people from both far and near, making Penang an inclusive multicultural city. There were a big number of ethnic groups which included Acehnese, Arabs, Armenians, British, Burmese, Bengalis, Chinese, Eurasians, Germans, Japanese, Javanese, Malays, Mandailings, Portuguese, Punjabis, Tamils, Thais, Malays and others. Although many of them no longer live there today, their legacy lives on in the form of names of places such as Siam Road, Armenian, Acheen Street and others.

Cosmopolitan Penang was already a thriving colony of the British Empire in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century (Wikipedia, 2015a).

### **2.2.3 Penang at war**

As a British Crown Colony, Penang was often used as a harbour by merchant ship and allied naval. Shortly after World War I, a cruiser was sent on a solitary raiding mission from the base of German East Asia Squadron located at Tsingtao of China. The cruiser named SMS Emden was commanded by Karl von Muller.

The German navy launched an attack on 28 October 1914 in Strait of Malacca. There was two Allied warships has been sink by German cruiser SMS Emden (“His Majesty’s Ship Emden”).

#### **2.2.4 Colonial Period**

Penang was Britain's first colony in South East Asia, established in 1786 by Captain Francis Light of the Honourable East India Company. It was intended to support the Company's lucrative export trade in tea and opium with China. At the time, the British was battling the French for European and global ascendancy, and colonial wealth and power was an integral component of this struggle. (Barber, 2010)

#### **2.2.5 The independence for Penang**

In 1914, Penang had been pulled out of the slump by rising tin and rubber prices and was enjoying a period of prosperity. The Chamber of Commerce noted that "Trade throughout the year has generally been good...the prices of Tin and Produce [commodities] generally were maintained at a comparatively high level". Flows of inward labour, both Indian and Chinese, were at high levels and building and construction work was buoyant. This prosperity led to a certain "spring in the step" of the business community and an increased willingness to "bang the Penang drum" (Barber, 2010).

As with many small inward looking communities with strong bonds of self-interest, Penang's British and European businessmen had little compunction in viewing Penang as the centre of colonial interest and being somewhat surprised and concerned when others did not share their perspective. In an address to the Chamber in 1914, the veteran Penang businessman and mason August Huttenbach noted that Penang had a reputation for being chippy and seeing grievances around every corner. He then reinforced this stereotype by listing a range of failings of the Straits government towards Penang and lambasting the settlement's leading lights for being "too timid" in their defence of Penang interests. Huttenbach noted an under-investment in port facilities- in sad contrast to Singapore's modern facilities- while

claiming that Penang was in deficit to the tune of \$1,200,000 to the Straits Settlement's coffers. This sense of outrage led Huttenbach to the rousing cry that Penang should seek "Home Rule"-as was then being advocated for Ireland- noting that it was "our duty to the place not to rest till Penang be made a separate Crown Colony allowed at least to work out her own salvation with her own resources" (Barber, 2010).

But, far from moving towards independence, there were increasing signs that Penang's autonomy and freedom of action were being downgraded to the wider interests of Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. Major decisions concerning interests of direct concern to Penang such as the transfer of Prai port to the FMS railway, were being made behind closed doors in Singapore, with little or no consultation with Penang. However as much as its leading merchants might huff and puff, Penang was the second port of British Malaya, and sat a long way behind Singapore, the seat of government of the Straits Settlements. This second rate status would only grow after the First World War, when Singapore was declared a "Fortress" and the main British naval base in Asia (Barber, 2010).

### **2.3 The background of the Chinese migration**

In a dispatch of 1794, Francis Light said that the Chinese constituted the most valuable and largest group acting as traders, carpenters, masons, smiths, shopkeepers and planters on the island. From an early date, the Chinese specialised in the production and trade of tin. Some emigrants from the provinces of Guangdong and Fujian involved themselves in sugar-cane and pepper cultivation, in which the native Malays had shown no interest. Others acted as middlemen merchants (functioning more or less in the nature of agency house) for foreign traders engaged in export-import activities. Their contributions lay in shipping merchandise for various foreign destinations. Still other

Chinese worked in the importation of ethnic foods which they cooked and sold to other recent settlers.

### **2.3.1 Most of Penang Shophouses were built by Chinese immigrants**

Most of these Penang Shophouses were built by the first generation of Malaysia Chinese. These historical buildings have now become a cultural heritage and an integral part of the history of Malaysia architecture with Chinese elements. The people who build the houses are important, because the building always take on the builder's customs and practices.

Categories and Styles of Shophouses and Townhouses in Penang, Malaysia.

Within the Core Zone of the Historic City of Penang there are more than 600 Shophouses and town houses of different styles and influences, which can be divided into several categories, depending on their façade designs and such as: Dutch Style(17th - 18th century), Southern China Style(18th early- 19th century), Early Shophouse Style(1800 – 1850's), Early Transitional Style(1840 – 1900's), Early Straits Eclectic Style(1890 -1920's), Late Straits Eclectic Style(1890 -1920's), Neo-Classical Style(19th – early 20th century), Art-Deco Style(1930-1950's), Early Modern Style(Post War) and Southern China Style .

The Chinese population in Malaysia generally and in particularly Penang, mainly came from Southern China. The architectural tradition of the Baba Nyonya Museum at Heeren Streets follows a modified version of the 'Chinese National' or Northern Style. This architecture embodies the spiritual notion of harmony with nature. This is manifested in the symbolism of the ornaments that are used to convey luck, directions, seasons, the winds and constellations (Baroldina & Dina, 2013).The fundamental concepts of Chinese architecture are the courtyard, emphasis on the roof,

exposure of structural elements and the use of colour. Structurally the walls are of brick and plastered with lime, the roof structure is of timber (Kamal, 2013).

### **2.3.2 The time of the generation of Chinese immigrant to Malaysia**

When did the first generation of Malaysia Chinese come to Malaysia to begin their own business? Though out of long course of Chinese history spanning hundreds of years, there are numerous reasons why the Chinese have chosen to leave China. This large expanse of time with their different architectural styles has contributed to the different ornament design of builders.

It was during the British occupation of Penang (1795-1818, 1824-1957) in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century, with the departure of Dutch merchants and families that the rich Chinese started to dominate the area. The displacement of the Dutch by the ethnic Chinese shows that Penang in the nineteenth century underwent a drastic change and became a town dominated by Asian migrants (Jorge, 2006).

Modifications were carried out to accommodate the social and cultural traditions of the new owners. From plain Dutch facades, these row of houses emerged to have a distinct architectural form characterized by an eclectic combination of Western Classical, Chinese and Malay elements. Some of the row of houses were also transformed to shop houses that were integral to the evolution of the city's streetscapes (Ismail & Hashimah, 2012).

### **2.3.3 The main reason for Chinese immigrants migrating to Malaysia**

For a long time, China as a superpower country has had a profound impact on the world. In the early Qing Dynasty, there were many western foreigners who come to China to do business, and in the period of Ming Dynasty, Zhen's seven voyages to the western seas to help Sultan of Penang to resist foreign aggression had a profound

influence on the ancient kingdom of Penang. Why after hundreds of years, the Chinese came to Malaysia as a large number of Chinese people fled from their loved ones and find home in Malaysia

In early 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries Malaysia was one of the leading countries in Asia with strong influence of investor from foreign countries. Malaysia's vibrant event in the economy and political affairs is a promising development that had encouraged labourers from China, India and Java to migrate to Malaya. Tom Harrison in his research proved that the Chinese settled in Malaya since thousands of years before, living in caves at Gua Niah, Santubong and Kota Batu at Sarawak before the arrival of Iban people from Kalimantan. During 15<sup>th</sup> century, 2500 Chinese were staying in Penang. In the year of 1700s there are about 1000 Chinese living at Johor Lama in a population of 3000 people living in Penang. In the mid of 19th century, there were more Chinese at Perak Kelian Putih; about 40,000 people and at Sungai Unjung; nearly 10,000 Chinese people worked at tin mines. There were about 100,000 Chinese mainly living in Johor. This was mainly driven by the encouragement from Temenggung Ibrahim who aimed to grow the state's agricultural sector. The Chinese were given a letter called by the "Surat Sungai" as an authorized to Chinese leaders to open their own farms river side. The Chinese leaders at the river side were known as 'Kangcu'. Some of the Chinese people were offspring from Hakka people were brought to Sabah to work at tobacco farms. Hokkien and Teochew people were involved in business and Cantonese people lived at Sandakan Town, KotaKinabalu and Tawau.

The migration of Chinese from China was lesser during the Japanese occupation of China at World War Two. Most of the Chinese entered to Malaya with a contract system prepared by their respective agents. Eventually the system was abolished because most of the Chinese were started to migrate individually. A number of

factors contributed to the Chinese migration to Malaya. Besides looking for work, the main factors were distress of living in China due to increasing population, natural disasters and limited natural resources. Following political instability at South China being ruled by the Manchu Dynasty, some of the locals resented the Kingdom because Manchu rule is considered as foreigners. In Malaya, there was opportunity for wealth due to development in the tin and rubber industry. That means plenty of labour were required. The migration process was easy because the transportation system used was steamships. The politics at Malaya then was very stable under the rule of British. This calls for an increase in labour force when the tin and rubber prices shot up. The influx of Chinese migrants was welcomed as they are well known to be hard working.

Waves of Chinese emigration (also known as the Chinese Diaspora) have happened throughout history. The mass emigration known as the Chinese Diaspora, which occurred from the 19th century to 1949, was mainly caused by wars and starvation in mainland China, as well as the problems resulting from political corruption. Most immigrants were illiterate, or poorly educated peasants and manual labourers, historically called coolies (translated as "hard labour"), who emigrated to work in countries such as the Americas, Australia, South Africa, Southeast Asia, and Malaya.

According to Lynn Pan's book *Sons of the Yellow Emperor*, the Chinese coolie emigration began after slavery was abolished throughout the British possessions. Facing a desperate shortage of manpower, European merchants looked to replace African slaves with indentured labourers from China and India. A British Guinea planter found what he was looking for in the Chinese labourers "their strong physique, their eagerness to make money, their history of toil from infancy".

Labour recruiters sold the services of large numbers of unskilled Chinese in the coolie trade to planters in colonies overseas in exchange for money to feed their families; this type of trading was known as *Mai Zhu Zai* by the Chinese. The labourers' lives were

very harsh. Some labour recruiters promised good pay and good working conditions to get men signed onto three-year labour contracts. It was recorded on one pepper estate that out of the 50 coolies hired, only 2 survived in half a year. Most coolies were treated badly, and many died en route to South America and South Africa because of bad transport conditions. Usually, they were cheated of their wages and were unable to return to China after their contracts expired.

### **2.3.4 Most Penang Chinese came from Southern China**

Penang Chinese mostly came from southern China and the provinces near the sea side. Among them, there are the people of Min, Hakka, Cantonese and Wu. And how they burgeon and harvest in the future with a cultural composite? Because the building ornamental design often influenced by the regional culture.

#### **2.3.4.1 Min people, Hokkien, Heng Hua Min Dong**

The Min people's ancestors came from Fujian province and speak one of the Min languages. They form the largest dialect group in Malaysia.

The Hokkien is the largest Chinese dialect group in Malaysia. Chinese settlers from the southern regions of Fujian constitute the largest group and generally identified as Hokkien. The bulk of Chinese settlers in Malaya before the 18th century came from Quanzhou, Amoy, and Zhangzhou and settled primarily in Penang, where they formed the bulk of the local Chinese populace. More Hokkien settled in Malaya from the 19th century onwards and dominated the rubber plantation and financial sectors of the Malayan economy. The bulk of the Hokkien-speaking Chinese settled in the Malay Peninsula and formed the largest dialect group in many states, specifically Penang, Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, and Perlis. In Borneo, Hokkien makes up a sizable proportion within the Chinese community and are primarily



found in larger towns, notably Kuching and Sibuan. The Zhangzhou Hokkien migrated to the North Peninsula and the Quanzhou Hokkien migrated to the South Peninsula.

The Henghua part of the Hokkien people came from Putian. Their numbers were much smaller than the other Min Chinese from Fujian and they were mostly involved in the bicycle, motorcycle, and automobile spare parts industries.

Min Dong settlers from Fuzhou and Fuqing also came in sizable numbers during the 19th century and have left a major impact on the corporate industry in the 20th century. They speak a distinct dialect and are classified separately from the Hokkiens. A large number of Min Dongs in Malaysia are Christians. The Min Dongs form the largest dialect group in Sarawak – specifically in areas around the Rajang River, namely the towns of Sibuan, Sarikei and Bintangor. They also settled in large numbers in a few towns in Peninsular Malaysia, notably Sitiawan in Perak and Yong Peng in Johor.

#### **2.3.4.2 Teochew**

Teochew immigrants from the Chaoshan region began to settle in Malaya in large numbers from the 18th century onwards, mainly in Province Wellesley and Kedah around Kuala Muda. These immigrants were chiefly responsible for setting up gambier and pepper plantations in Malaya. More Teochew immigrated to Johor at the encouragement of Temenggong Ibrahim in the 19th century, and many new towns were established and populated by plantation workers from the Chaoshan region. The Teochew constitute a substantial percentage within the Chinese communities in Johor Bahru and principal towns along the coasts of Western Johor (notably Pontian, Muar, and – to a lesser extent – Batu Pahat) as well as selected hinterland towns in the central regions of the state. Many of them are the descendants of plantation workers who came to set up gambier and pepper plantations, following the administrative pattern of their countrymen in Johor. Smaller communities of Teochew can also be found in other states,

notably in Sabak Bernam in Selangor, where many Teochew settled down as rice agriculturalists, as well as in the hinterlands of Penang.

#### **2.3.4.3 Hainanese**

Chinese immigrants from Hainan began to migrate to Malaya and North Borneo from the 19th century onwards, albeit in much smaller numbers than the aforementioned speech groups. The Hainanese were employed as cooks by wealthy Straits Chinese families, while others were engaged in food catering business or the fishery business and formed the largest dialect group in Kemaman district of Terengganu and Pulau Ketam (Selangor) as well as sizable communities in Penang and Johor Bahru. Smaller communities of Hainanese are also found in Sarawak and Sabah, where they work as coffee shop owners and are mainly found in large towns and cities.

#### **2.3.4.4 Hakka**

The Hakka people literally 'the Guest people' came from both Guangdong and Fujian provinces. They form the second largest group of people after the Min people. Large numbers of Hakka settled in the western parts of Malaya and North Borneo and worked as miners in the 19th century as valuable metals such as gold and tin were discovered. Descendants of these miners formed the largest community among the Chinese in Selangor and very large communities in Perak (specifically Taiping and Ipoh), Sarawak, Sabah, and Negeri Sembilan. As the gold and tin mining industries declined in economic importance in the 20th century, many turned to the rubber industry, and large numbers of Hakka settled in Kedah and Johor (principally in Kulai and Kluang). In Sabah, where the majority of ethnic Chinese are of Hakka descent, many of them were involved in agriculture. They cut down the forests to

make way for tobacco, rubber, and coconut plantations. In time, the Hakka community also dominated the state's industry and economy. However, even today, many Sabahan Hakkas are still involved in agriculture, especially those living in rural towns such as Tenom and Kudat, where they are often the backbone of the local industry.

#### **2.3.4.5 Cantonese, Guangfu, Sei Yap, Guangxi, Wu people**

The Cantonese people who speak the same Cantonese language came from both Guangdong and Guangxi provinces and they can be subdivided into the following three subgroups. They form the third largest group of people after the Hakkas.

The Guangfu came from the area around Guangzhou. They settled down in Kuala Lumpur of the Klang Valley, Ipoh of the Kinta Valley in Perak, Pahang as well as Seremban in Negeri Sembilan and Sandakan of Sabah. They started development and turned these early settlements into principal towns. Most of the early Cantonese worked as tin miners. From the late 19th century onwards, as the tin mining industry declined in economic importance, the Cantonese as well as other Malaysian Chinese gradually shifted their focus to business and contributed much to social and economic development in Malaya.

The Sei Yaps are actually part of Guangfu .They came from Sei Yap and speak the Sei Yap dialect. Sei Yap districts include Taishan, Kaiping, Enping and Xinhui. Sometimes Heshan County is included.

The Guangxi people from Guangxi came in much smaller numbers than those from Guangdong. The largest concentration settled in Bentong, Mentakab and Raub, Pahang.

The smallest group of people who came during the third wave are the Wu people from Zhejiang, Jiangsu and Shanghai. They were mostly involved in Chinese education, tailoring and construction.

**Table2.1: Malaysian Chinese Historical Demographics .Table by Author**

<b>Malaysian Chinese Historical Demographics</b>							
1947	1957	1961	1970	1980	1991	2000	2010
38.4%	45%	36%	37%	33.9%	28.1%	26.1%	24.6%

### **2.3.5 The early activities of the Chinese immigrants**

Malaysian Chinese as the fifth generation of Chinese are now already well-established in Malaysia: in military, political, education, businesses, cultural, sports, and all sectors of society. But in the long time ago, as the first generation of Chinese, how they were living in Malaysia, and what kind of cities are suited for them?(architecture is always depends on function and service)

**Table 2.2: The 2000 Population and Housing Census Report (continued).**

**Table by Author**

<b>State</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
Johor	549,200	35.4%
Kedah	125,690	14.9%
Kelantan	25,750	3.8%
Penang	223,920	29.1%
Negeri Sembilan	224,050	25.6%
Pahang	147,490	17.7%
Perak	611,750	32%
Perlis	9,920	10.3%
Penang	443,230	46.5%
Sabah	691,096	13.2%

Sarawak	852,198	26.7%
Selangor( includingPutrajaya)	166,018	30.7%
Terengganu	2,641	0.3%
<b>Federal Territory</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>% of Population</b>
Kuala Lumpur	710,819	43.5%

Overall ethnic share of total employment in Malaysia is roughly proportionate to the number of Chinese in the Malaysian population. The Chinese are more likely to be involved in commerce and the modern sectors of the Malaysian economy. Between 1970 to 1995, Malaysian Chinese share of the white-collar labor force fell from 62.9% to 54.7% in the administrative and managerial category.

Malaysian Chinese have a large presence in many skilled occupations that is disproportionate to that of the general Malaysian population. Despite comprising nearly a quarter of the Malaysian population, 54.7% of Malaysian Chinese work in administrative and managerial jobs, while their presence in professional and technical fields was proportionate to the percentage of Chinese in the Malaysian population. In 1988, Chinese Malaysians made up 58% of the Malaysian white-collar workforce, providing a disproportionate percentage of Malaysia's doctors, lawyers, veterinarians, accountants, and engineers well exceeding their respective population ratios compared to bumiputera. Ethnic Chinese are estimated to comprise the bulk of Malaysia's professional and educated class, as well as accounting for 61% of private-sector administrative and managerial positions.

According to a February 2011 study, in 2008, 46.2% of Chinese Malaysians worked as registered professionals compared to 41.2% for Bumiputera. Chinese Malaysian participation in the white-collar labor force showed a significant decrease from 61.0%

in 1970 to just 48.7% in 2005 but the overall 2008 Figureure remained the highest registration percentage among all major ethnic groups in Malaysia.

#### **2.4 The influence of traditional culture on Penang shophouses**

Penang's Shophouses are repositories of culture. They reflect people's daily life, hope and even dreams. They are integral to a way of life and small-scale work places; a building can be either a shop or a residence, these two functions get the perfect combination in one structure. Shops and residences are located near (sometimes even above or behind) each other and they comprise an image unique to Southeast Asia(Fels, 1994).

Penang is a treasure house of colonial and Asian architecture. For many Malays, though, that translates into an alien culture, which they see little point in preserving. (Holland, 2001).

In the last 50 years, many of Southeast Asia cities have changed much due to the complicated political situtaion and rapid economic development. The cities unprecedented expansion rate, along with the rapidly growing population have influenced the urban planning and building structures. Many Shophouses have been demolished to make way for the construction of hotels and modern concrete office building in the 1970s -80s. Penang is already on the list of most-endangered heritage sites maintained by the independent New York UNESCO-based World Heritage Watch, which describes Georgetown as a city "with no peer among the region's ports" (Holland, 2001).

Some of these Shophouses have been built for almost 200 years. These unique type of architecture. Demonstrate clearty the fnfluence of Chinese, Malay and Indian cultures. From the Chinese came the courtyard plan, the rounded gable ends and the fan-shaped air vents; from the Malay came the carved timber panels and the timber

framework; from the Indian, urban construction techniques, including a hard-wearing plaster; from the Europeans, French windows and decorative plasterwork(Fels, 1994).

The typical Shophouse is a two or three story building. The ground floor is for commercial activity as a shop and the second or third floor used as a residence. Due to the year-long sunny and rainy tropical climate of Southeast Asia, the Shophouse has a covered walkway along the road within the Shophouse property line for public use serving as a sheltered arcade from sun and rain. A key development was the Raffles Ordinances (1822) for Singapore which stipulated that “all houses constructed of brick or tiles have a common type of front each having an arcade of a certain depth, open to all sides as a continuous and open passage on each side of the street”. This practice spread to other States in British Malaya and by-laws with requirements for “verandah-ways of...at least seven feet measuring from the boundary of the road .....and the footway within any verandah-way must be at least five feet in the clear.”(Lim, 1993)

The culture of the residents was evidently palpable from the Shophouse. There are many Chinese culture elements used in Penang Shophouse buildings. The name “Shophouse” directly shows the functional aspects of the building, as a shop as well as a house. In reality, “Shophouse” as a terminology is originally from the Hokkien term *tiam-chhu*; the word “Shophouse” has a connection with storekeeper and traders. It means a shop and a house inosculate in a building. Most shops have been managed by single Chinese male migrants in the early days; the ground floor functions as a shop and the top floor functions as lodging for workers. This means, some of Shophouse owners run a family business. They live in the house together with their family and employees.

Penang Shophouse was built almost a hundred years ago around Mosques or clan temples. The Shophouses are used as residence by some wealthy Chinese businessmen or used as repositories for trade in spices from Sumatra, Arabia and China. Other variations see the Shophouse serving as Chinese clan houses.

For other Chinese immigrants who are not in business and not wealthy. Would not have it easy in a foreign and strange land. Many Chinese immigrants survived and worked as downtrodden coolies. The fortunate ones survived and managed to save enough to send remittances to their families in China, while the less fortunate died in a foreign land (Tan 2007). Despite life's hardship, these Chinese immigrants quickly formed a closed-knit community, and help each other to settle in the foreign land. Eventually, the Chinese community settled down and rapidly established streets of Shophouses interspersed with Kongsis (clan houses) and temples (Nasution 2001).

The Chinese in Malaya came from peasant backgrounds in China. Their architecture reflects folk tradition, which is the "direct and unself-conscious translation into physical form of a culture, its needs and values, as well as the desires, dreams, and passions of a people" (Rapoport, 1969).

Buildings found in a society are the physical expression of values shared by the community. Religion, commerce, craftsmanship, and art are all part of the physical structures visible in the Chinese communities of Malaya (Seow, 1968).

In fact, the Shophouse is still a widespread architectural form in Southeast Asia. This form of Shophouse buildings is still common in major commercial towns in Malaysia. Before World War II, the commercial centre of every Malaysian town comprised of at least one main street lined with Shophouses that were usually two storeys in height (Ch'ng, Khoo, & Chin, 2014).

## **2.5 The ornamental design of architectural**

In architecture and decorative art, ornament is a decoration used to embellish parts of a building or object. Large figurative elements such as monumental sculpture and their equivalents in decorative art are excluded from the term; most ornament does



not include human figurative, and if present they are small compared to the overall scale (Wikipedia, 2015b).

### **2.5.1 The history of the ornamental**

The most commonly used materials for architectural ornament are wood and stone. Sometimes precious metals can also be carved, painted or impressed onto a surface as applied ornament formed with plaster or clay.

Ornament implies that the ornamented object has a function that an unornamented equivalent might also fulfil. Where the object has no such function, but exists only to be a work of art such as a sculpture or painting, the term is less likely to be used, except for peripheral elements. In recent centuries a distinction between the fine arts and applied or decorative arts has been applied (except for architecture), with ornament mainly seen as a feature of the latter class (Wikipedia, 2015b).

The history of art in many cultures shows a series of wave-like trends where the level of ornament used increases over a period, before a sharp reaction returns to plainer forms, after which ornamentation gradually increases again. Styles of ornamentation can be studied in reference to the specific culture which developed unique forms of decoration, or modified ornament from other cultures. Their ornament takes the forms of the natural world in that climate, decorating the capitals of columns and walls with images of papyrus and palm trees.

### **2.5.2 The element of ornamental designs of the building**

The elements of facade is a very important part of the building system. The first impression of viewing a building always matters. This impression influences one's esthetic experience as much as it influences one's functional usage of the building. Similarly, green buildings uses the facade treatment of buildings to save or to utilize a

natural resources besides ensuring an aesthetically pleasing front for the visual senses. The various elements of facade treatment and structure of building could also affect its space.



**Figure 2.3: Façade of Penang Shophouse in different periods. Source: Noorfadhilah Mohd Baroldin**

### 2.5.3 Influence of ornamental designs and its origin

Even before the Second World War, European style had greatly influenced the architecture of Malaya, especially seen in the buildings style in Penang, Kuala Lumpur as well as Perak. The styles were modified according to the tropical climate and combined with architecture influence of Malay, Classical Portuguese, Dutch, English and Chinese. Since 15th Century, when Chinese merchants came to the Straits Settlement of Penang, they had brought with them the Straits Eclectic styles. Besides, the British architecture was also altered to cope with the tropical climate and combined with the influence of Malay, European, Portuguese and Dutch. It has created a unique style in urban architecture, such as Shophouses and terrace houses. This architecture style was very initially very influential in Penang and Singapore but

later spread to all the town and cities in Malaysia. These styles have a few variations from one region to another where large numbers of Chinese populations have settled predominantly in Penang, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur. As stated by the Heritage of Malaysia Trust (1990), within this general style, several building periods can be identified as: Penang Town Houses, Kuala Lumpur Shophouses and Kuala Lumpur villas.

#### **2.5.4 Functionality of the elements adopted in the climatic region**

Building is closely related with climate. Any period of buildings, are clearly showed to adapt to the climate characteristics. The essential attributes of a building are to allow for the blocking of wind, rain and act as a shelter from heat and cold. A building is a highly adaptable product in response to varying climate conditions. In different times, the life of people, behaviour, concepts, aesthetic attitude of different people led to a different understanding of architectural form and requirements; it is a comprehensive reflection of emotion, economy, technology and culture. How does the Penang Shophouse combine varying social background to build special architectural form that suits the tropical climate?

#### **2.5.5 The essence of the ornamental**

Ornamental design is an art form; it belongs to the category of art. Art is a social phenomenon or social activities, a social ideology, but it is also the superstructure of society. It is a reflection of the social economic base and the reaction to the economic base.

The ornamental is a complex historical and cultural phenomenon. The cultural identity of ornamental relates to nationality, culture, folklore, religious, historical, aesthetic, and psychological and other various categories.

Art is a reflection of life with images. It is a form of the understanding of reality; the essential characteristic of ornamental is the iconicity. The iconicity of ornamental is an aesthetic activity with emotions, because the creation of imagery is an activity of human behaviour, and people are always emotional. The process characteristic of creation of ornamental is always associated with strong emotions. Readers or viewers who look at the ornamental would react emotionally.

British aesthetician Clive Bell proposed that the essence of art is "the significant of form". He suggests that in visual arts, the lines, colours and aesthetic emotion a together body combine to make a meaningful form of argument.

#### **2.5.6 The classification of architectural ornamental**

Architectural ornamental can be divided into two categories: functional ornamental and symbolic ornamental. A building's function is to determine the structure and configuration. Decorative and functional building is close to the body; the body of the building is decorated conducted. Symbolic ornamental is in addition to building the body, in order to increase the beauty or convey meaning may from decorative construction body.

##### **2.5.6.1 The functional ornamental**

The decor is functional for a narrow construction of the function is to be able to form an accurate expression of the structural characteristics of the building functional spaces, symbolic ornamentals non-interference space the substance of the building, which attached to the building structure or a non-structural components, causing transfer the symbolism and meaning, to give life and strength building.

Eliel • Saarinen get inspiration from nature, in the "form and ornamental," a book put forward the "functional ornamental," saying that the produce from the use of

decorative and functional needs rather than surface , in the form of imitation. Sullivan clear that the ornamental of the building is subordinate to the building, but in a sense they are independent.

Function body building by space, structure and construction and other architectural elements, all of ornamental materials, forms, and methods are regression and performance features body building. Structure is important functional elements of the building, but also a very important form of building elements, decorative form of creation is based on the rational structure of the form.

#### **2.5.6.2 The symbolic ornamental**

This paper presents the concept of symbolic ornamentals. The "Encyclopaedia Britannica" mentions that "Applied Ornament" (additional ornamental) has the same meaning; symbolic ornamental is to increase the beauty of the structure and the applied ornamental, it emphasizes visual effects expression and symbolic meaning, together with unstructured and functional expression. The difference between the symbolic ornamental decorative and functional: the former is applied, regardless of the decorative object itself, which is by the function (ie structure) decision, and decorative objects became one.

The decor is functional and serves a load-bearing function with materials, construction, construction-related ornamental being a modification of the building itself and the artistic process. Symbolic ornamental deals with the main body of the building, on the function of decorative building non-structural components, and its members cannot afford the function of the structure itself, its purpose is to enhance the aesthetic effect, or to convey some sense, in fact, No frills practical function. Functional ornamental decorative concept referred to herein is based on the basis of functionalist architecture; its primary feature is "useful", instead of "beautiful," the US here, though

not the first, but did not completely exclude. Symbolic ornamental on the contrary, it is the primary feature of being "beautiful" with "meaning." Functional decorative and symbolic ornamental than two opposing dualities, but interdependent, interoperable presence of an intermediate state of coexistence, functional decor and in many cases also express the meaning of a symbol of something.

It refers to the symbolic ornamental architectural ornamental can break off relations with the main building, with only a purely symbolic role. Symbolic of all arts have in common. The building is a symbol of Art; it is the architectural symbol of the vitality of expression. As a symbol, it can interpret many aspects of building primitive, history, society and culture. Symbolic building can exist independently, as independent functional ornamental to independent self-contained systems.

John Ruskin's decorative structure is considered to be the creation of some of the actual structure does not exist; it is a fraud and should be condemned. He said: "The building is not required to demonstrate its structure is not, we cannot complain that it hides the structure, just as we do not regret the body's exterior hides most of the bones, like Still, if like animal bones, like those structures. Although secret careless observer might see, but in a pair of eye, but sweeping the building, is the most spectacular in the Gothic vaults in the force applied to the rib arch, so just to be in the middle of the dome skeleton, this is not cheating.

During the thousands of years that China has been one of the world's great artistic centres, its vocabulary of design motifs has expanded to phenomenal proportions (D'Addetta, 1981).

Vernacular design processes are based on the use of fundamental models. Basic models may be modified in each particular structure, but the type of building remains the same. Within any society, these basic models should be easily identified. It is possible to identify distinct house forms among the Chinese in Malaya. Temples,

Clan houses, memorial structures, and Shophouses may be classified in a similar manner (Kohl, 1978).

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## CHAPTER 3: THE ANALYSIS OF SELECTED PENANG CHINESE SHOPHOUSES

### 3.1 Introduction

*“The Shophouse is an urban building form with multiple functions – residential, commercial or mixed use. Historically, Shophouses were usually arranged with a shop or business premises on the ground floor (often a family business and accommodation above, thus providing convenience, shelter and security...the Shophouse design continues to function well in the modern world. It is now valued both for its heritage significance and for its contemporary green values. It will continue to be functional and liveable with good maintenance, care and respect for its functional feature...the Shophouse is one of the most important building forms in the Malaysian state of Pulau Pinang (comprising the island of Penang, formerly Prince of Wales Island, and the mainland known as Seberan Prai formerly Province Wellesley). It is also found in various configurations all over Southeast Asia and southern China. Penang is thought to have the largest collection of traditional Shophouses in any one location.” (Tan, 2015)*

The above quote represents the current situation of the current Shophouse of Penang. George Town as a historic city located at the northeast tip of the island has 7,000 Shophouses in six main styles has around the area. There are 5 streets will be selected for this research area, according to the Shophouse styles and the richly ornamentation design on the façade of Shophouse. From my research will select the 5 streets are: Jalan Kedah, Jalan Muntri, Lebuhr Armenian, Lorong Macalister, Love lane.

### 3.2 Penang Chinese Shophouses concept

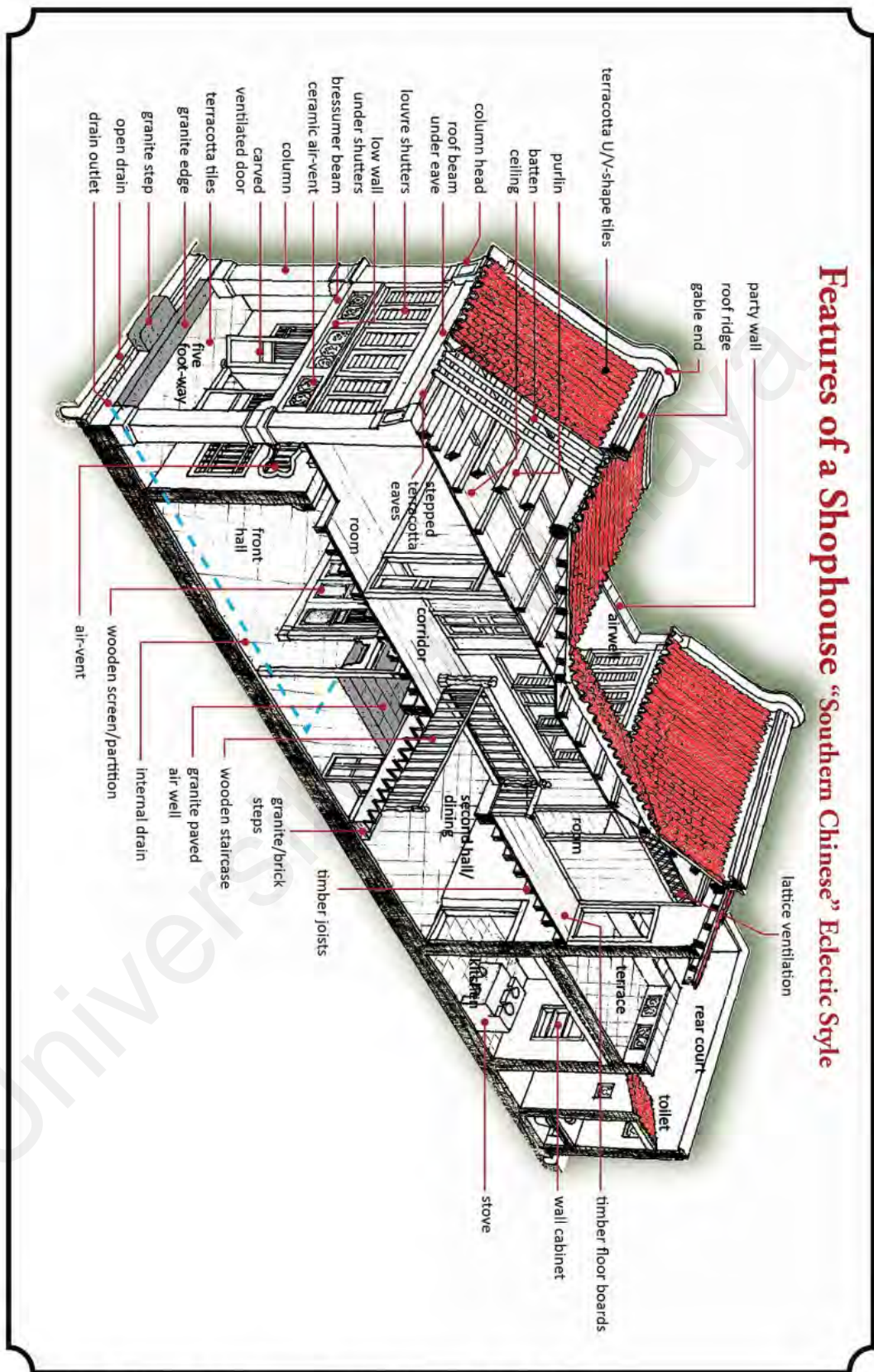
The Shophouse therefore contributes significantly to the special character of the historic city.



### **3.2.1 Shophouse styles**

There are six main Shophouse styles in George Town, Penang. Each style has distinctive architectural and decorative features which is representative of the different periods in George Town's history. Each style also reflects the introduction of new technologies and influences of global architectural traditions fashions and building techniques over different time periods (Tan, 2015).

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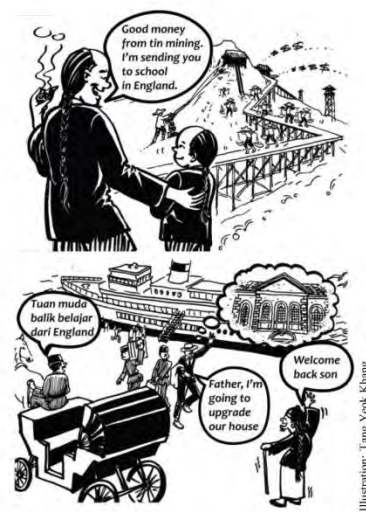
Shophouse Illustration : Tan Yeow Wooi

**Figure 3.1: Features of a Shophouse “Southern Chinese” Eclectic Style. By:**

**Tan Yeow Wooi**

For a description and explanation of each of these styles, please refer to

a) “Early Penang” Style (1790s-1850s)



Wealth from the tin boom enabled occupants to upgrade their decorative facades.



Education and exposure to European culture resulted in the import of decorative styles and materials of Western architecture.

**Figure 3.2: Early Penang Style 1790s-1850s. By: Tan Yeow Wooi**

Simple and highly practical, the Early Penang Shophouse was rarely decorated with moulding, paintings or cut-and paste porcelain shard work. These decorative features would appear in later styles.

b) “Southern Chinese” Eclectic Style (1840s-1910s)

This Shophouse design outlined above was based on imported southern Chinese architecture and an eclectic mix of other elements and features (Tan, 2015). This style, practical and simple, increased in height towards the late 1890s and continued to be built in Penang for the longest duration of any variety, from at least the 1840s to the 1910s. As a result, it is the most commonly seen Shophouse style still in existence in George Town.



Influx of Chinese labour from South China to work in George Town and tin mines in Perak, Malaysia.

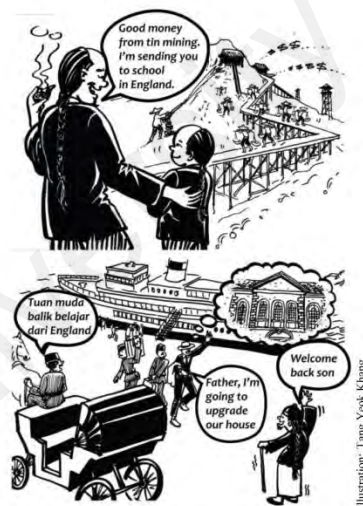


Southern Chinese architectural details and building materials introduced by Chinese masons began to make an impact on the cityscape.

**Figure 3.3: “Southern Chinese” Eclectic Style 1840s-1900s. By: Tan Yeow**

### Wooi

#### c) Early “Straits” Eclectic Style ( 1890s-1910s)



Wealth from the tin boom enabled occupants to upgrade their decorative facades.



Education and exposure to European culture resulted in the import of decorative styles and materials of Western architecture.

**Figure 3.4: “Early Straits” Eclectic Style 1890s-1910s. By: Tan Yeow Wooi**

According to the “*Penang Shophouses, a handbook of Features and Materials*”: in the early development of this style. The column at the eaves often ended with a Chinese pillar head (Chi tou) rather than a European column capital. The ground-

floor facade of Early Straits Eclectic style Shophouses remained similar to that of the Southern Chinese Eclectic Shophouses, except that European tessellated and encaustic floor tiles were introduced to the five-foot way, replacing the traditional terracotta tiles.

d) Late “Straits” Eclectic Style ( 1910s-1940s)

The Late Straits Eclectic buildings seem to be by far the most eclectic creation, in which Chinese vernacular and Western architectural vocabularies sat side by side; a fusion of diverse ideas. Decorative features became bolder and more three-dimensional. The *chi tou* column head, for example, which earlier had fused with the Tuscan capital, was now replaced by a projecting and decorated console bracket, linked in design features with the new soffit to the roof overhang (Tan, 2015).



Rubber boom further encouraged more elaborate decorative façade.

Illustration: Tang Yeok Kheng



Photo: Tan Yeow Woon Culture & Research Studio

Material catalogues and shipping allowed the import of decorative building materials such as glazed tiles and cast iron from Europe.

**Figure 3.5: “Late Straits” Eclectic Style 1910s-1930s. By: Tan Yeow Woon**

e) Art Deco Style (1930s-1960s)



Illustration: Tang Yook Kheng.

Wealthy local businessmen influenced by their overseas schooling and exposure to Western popular culture (cinema) popularized Art-Deco style architecture.



Photo: Tan Yeow Woon Culture & Research Studio

The hybrid Shanghai Art Deco Style was also popularized by Chinese cinema. Some commercial shophouses replaced their facade with the fashionable Art-Deco style.

**Figure 3.6: “Art Deco Style” 1930s- early 1960s. By: Tan Yeow Woon**

Art Deco embraced influences from Greek and Roman classical architecture, ancient Egypt, Asia and South America in its geometric designs. The tropical Art Deco style was popular in Penang and throughout peninsular Malaya from the 1930s to early 1960s, after which the international style of Europe and the United States began to show its influence in the Early Modern style.

f) Early Modern Style ( 1950s-1970s)

The Early Modern Style Shophouse no longer used Shanghai plaster for the wall surface, but instead returned to lime plaster or used a weak cement plaster, coloured white. Monochromatic ceramic wall tiles or coloured mosaics decorated the front facade dado walls. At the same time, the air vents above the windows continued with the series of slots or circular portholes, first introduced with Art Deco.



Illustration: Tang Yeok Kheng

Post-war economic recovery resulted in a building boom. To meet popular demand, Early Modern Style was simple in design, economic in materials and fast to build.



Photo: Tan Yeow Wooi Culture & Research Studio

Influx of European and overseas-trained architects who were influenced by functional style of the modern movement.

Introduction of new building technology and materials enabling corner buildings and balconies to be curved.

**Figure 3.7: “Early Modern Style” 1950s- early 1970s. By: Tan Yeow Wooi**

For my research, on the ornament designs on Shophouse, which the “*Early Straits Eclectic Style* and the *later Straits Eclectic Style*” reference is more appropriate for the discussion at hand. According to (Tan, 2015) during the 1930s and 1940s, the Shophouse’s upper-floor facade shutters became sill height once more, rising from low walls above the bressummer beams, highly decorated with stucco motif. The ground-floor facade also became more elaborate, with dado panels of imported, decorative majolica wall tiles on either side of the entrance door.

### 3.2.2 Shophouse Characteristics

A typical Shophouse has these characteristics:

- 1) Facing a street
- 2) Built in a row, next to one another along a street, with no gaps or spaces in between
- 3) Contains a single party wall separating Shophouses on either side
- 4) Low rise, 2-3 storeys
- 5) Narrow and long, sectioned by air-well

- 6) 5 foot way/kaki lima/Goh kha ki
- 7) Multi-functional, combining residential and commercial use
- 8) The ground floor of Shophouses were typically used for business and trading
- 9) Proprietors lived on the upper floor



**Figure 3.8: Five foot way as the public aisle beside the street, Shophouse at Jalan Kedah. Photograph: Author**

### **3.3 A General Survey of the selected region**

#### **3.3.1 The concept of architectural ornamental**

The architectural ornamental is generally described as follows: It is any building element added to an otherwise merely structural form, usually for their decoration or purpose of beautification.

Architectural ornamental can be clearly divided into three basic categories and: the mimetic, the applied ornament, the organic ornament.

##### **3.3.1.1 The mimetic ornament**

The mimetic ornament refers to the form of which has a certain meaning or symbolism.





**Figure 3.9: A mimetic ornamental on Penang Shophouse. Photograph: Author**

Mimetic ornament is by far the most common type of architectural ornament in primitive cultures, in Eastern civilizations, and generally throughout antiquity.

For example, most common building types in antiquity, such as tombs, pyramids, temples, and towers, began as imitations of primeval house and shrine forms. An obvious example is the dome, which developed as a permanent wooden or stone reproduction of a revered form originally built of pliable materials.(Britannica, 2015)

### 3.3.1.2 The applied ornament

The applied ornament, increases the extrinsic aesthetic of a structure but extrinsic.



**Figure 3.10: An applied ornamental on Penang Shophouse. Photograph: Author**

Applied ornament is an appendage which intended to add the aesthetic feelings, which lacks either symbolic meaning or reference to the structure on which it is placed.

The Doric frieze is a good case: its origin as an imitation of the effect of alternating beam ends and shuttered openings in archaic wood construction remained evident, but it came to be treated as a decorative sheath without reference to the actual structural forms behind.(Britannica, 2015).

### **3.3.1.3The organic ornament**

The organic ornament refers to the related inherent functional or building materials.

By the early 20th century a preoccupation with the proper function of architectural ornament was characteristic of all advanced architectural thinkers; by the mid-20th century what may be called an organic concept of architectural ornament had been formulated. In the United States, Louis Sullivan was the chief contributor to the new architectural expression. Sullivan's urban architecture was largely based on an emphasis of the dynamic lines and patterns that were produced by modern steel-frame construction, but he retained interspersed bands and patches of naturalistic ornament on parts of his buildings' facades, applied with studied discipline.(Britannica, 2015)



**Figure 3.11: An organic ornament on Penang Shophouse. Photograph: Author**

### **3.3.2 A study of Shophouse in the selected region**

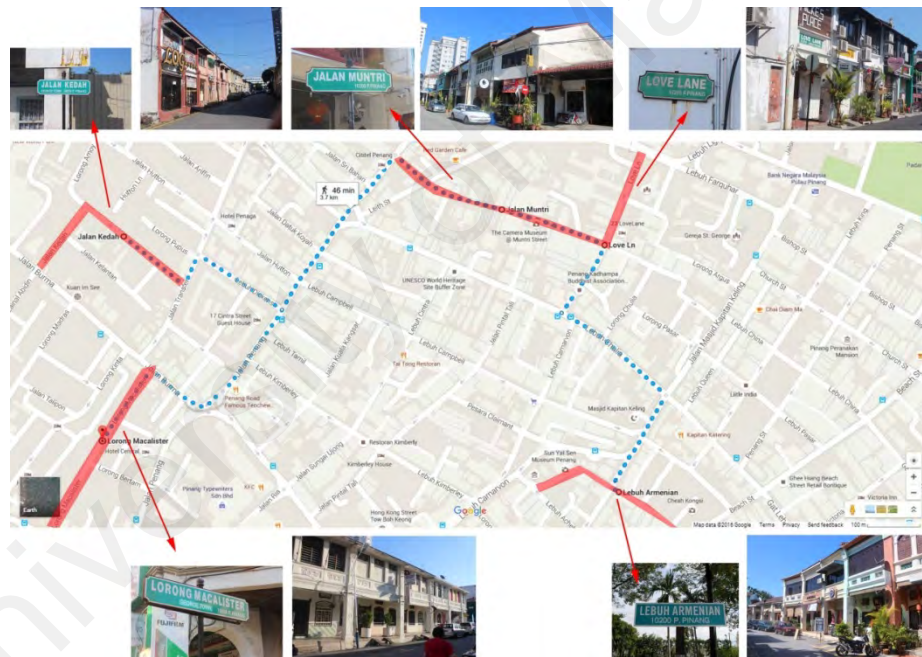
Macalister Lane, or Lorong Macalister (Traditional Chinese: 姓王公司後巷, Simplified Chinese: 姓王公司后巷), is the first in a series of side roads running parallel to Penang Road and Anson Road. It connects with Macalister Road on one end and Burmah Road on the other. As with Macalister Road, Macalister Lane was likewise named after Norman Macalister, the Lieutenant Governor of Penang in the 19th century.

Kedah Road still retains many of the pre-war Shophouses, their styles a mix of Straits Eclectic with the 19th century style. Unlike elsewhere in the city, the Art Deco style is under-represented here, giving the impression that Kedah Road managed to be frozen in time, leap-frogging the architectural development of the early 20th century.

Armenian Street, or Lebuah Armenian, is a street in the inner city of George Town and within the core zone of the George Town Unesco World Heritage Site. It derives its name from an Armenian family who once stayed at the junction of the now Armenian Street and Beach Street in the early part of the 19th century. The street is the venue of the weekly Armenian Street Fair.

There is no complete agreement as to how Love Lane got its name. There is a belief that it was named after a British officer named Love, but this has not been verified. Another belief is that it was the site for early 19th century brothels for sailors and soldiers. The adjacent road, Muntri Street, was where the rich Straits Chinese lived, and it is widely believed that these men kept their mistresses along Love Lane.

Muntri Street has one of the best preserved Straits Eclectic houses in George Town. Many of these houses are being carefully restored to reflect the early 20th century style of the time it was built.



**Figure 3.12: A map shows the relation in Muntri Street, Armenian Street, Kedah Road, Macalister Lane, and Love Lane. Photograph: Author**

The streets mentioned above have quite a number of well-preserved Straits Eclectic-style townhouses, many of which still retain their frontage in well-preserved state.

1. Category Doors

Doors are the main entrance and exit points at the ground floor of a Shophouse.



**Figure 3.13: The different doors with richly ornament designs. Photograph:**

**Photograph: Author**



**Figure 3.14: The different doors with richly ornament designs. Photograph:**

**Author**

## 2. Category Windows



**Figure 3.15: The different windows with richly ornament in woodcarving.**

**Photograph: Author**



**Figure 3.16: The different windows with richly ornament in woodcarving.**

**Photograph: Author**

### 3. Category vents

Vents are additional wall openings independent of windows or door. They are usually smaller in size than transom windows or fanlights and often located above the windows, doors and transoms to accentuate the design of the elevation.



**Figure 3.17: The different vents in ventilation function with simply ornament design. Photograph: Author**



**Figure 3.18: The different vents in ventilation function with ornament in woodcarving and ceramic. Photograph: Author**

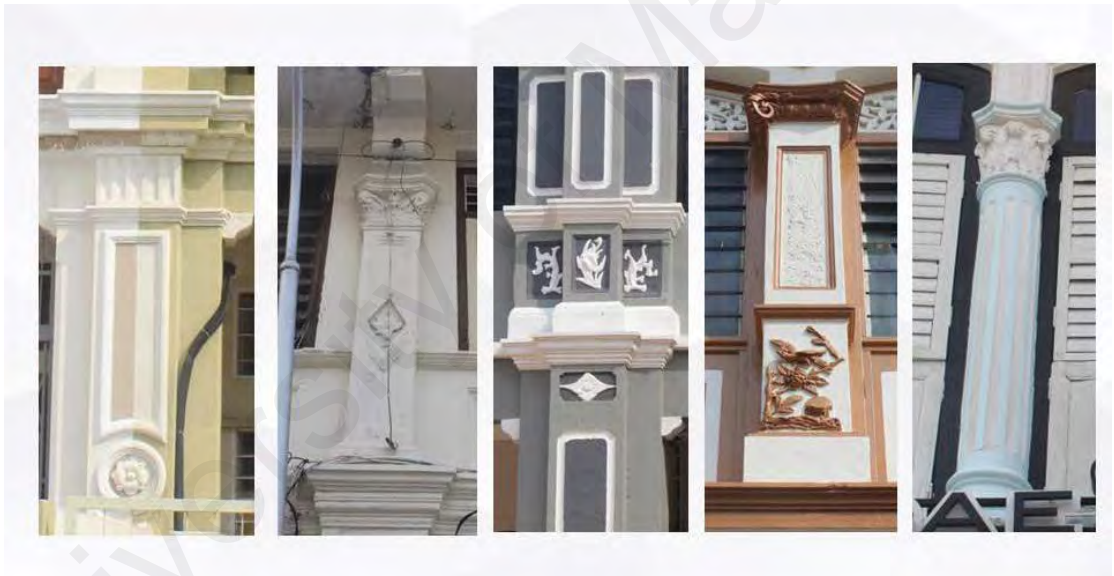
#### 4. Category columns or pilasters

Columns or pilasters are commonly found at the front of the Shophouse structure, supporting the upper floors and forming a colonnaded “five-foot way”.



**Figure 3.19: The different columns & pilasters with ornament designs.**

**Photograph: Author**



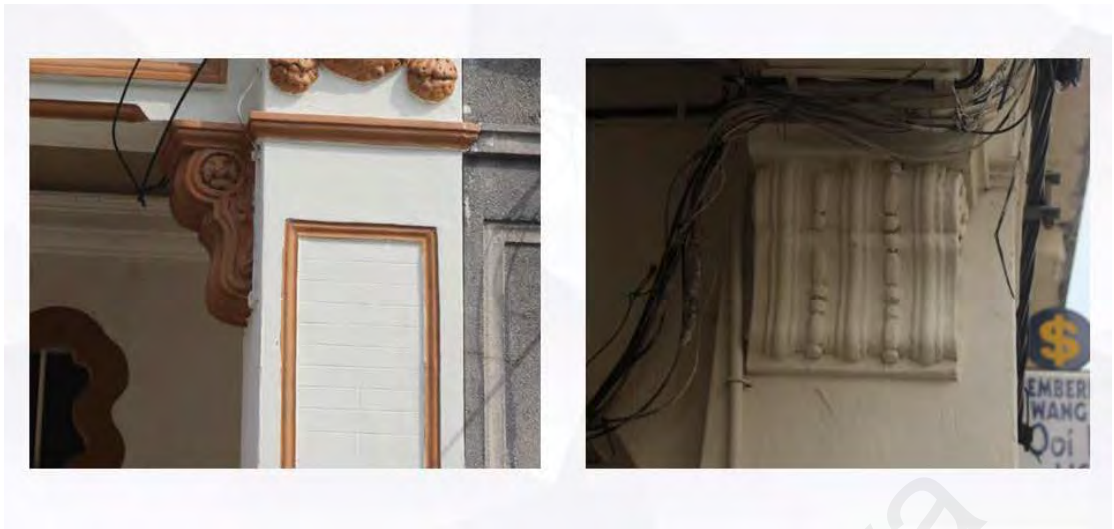
**Figure 3.20: The different columns & pilasters with ornament designs.**

**Photograph: Author**

### 5. Category Corbels

Corbels are short projections that serve to facilitate the connection of beams with columns and support protruding elements such as roof eaves. There are usually ornamented with carvings or moulding and occasionally is part of the overall.





**Figure 3.21: The different corbels with a simple ornament designs. Photograph:**

**Author**

#### 6. Category eaves

The eaves are the edges of the roof which overhang the face of a wall and, normally, project beyond the side of a building.



**Figure 3.22: The different eaves with a richly ornament designs. Photograph:**

**Author**

## CHAPTER 4: THE SYMBOLS AND ICONOGRAPHY STUDY OF THE ORNAMENT DESIGNS IN PENANG SHOPHOUSES

### 4.1 Introduction

Auspicious imagery constitutes one of the deepest and most enduring traditions of Chinese visual culture in that it traverses class, wealth, education and place (G.Knapp, 2012). The symbolic system found also within Chinese Shophouse is also found also within and about their temples, and ancestral halls, and gravesites. As the book *The Peranakan Chinese Home: Art and Culture in Daily Life* by Roanld G.Knapp reveals, there is a remarkable consistency in the range of pictorial and calligraphy symbolic vocabulary with both Peranakan Chinese and non- Peranakan residences of more recent Chinese immigrants. Patricia Bjaaland Welch reminds us, “the array of motifs and designs employed by the Peranakan Babas and Nyonyas is so broad in scope and rich in colour and flavour that few will miss those classical Chinese motifs that didn’t survive the cultural journey” from their continental homeland. Moreover, beyond the symbolic attributes and associations of “the Peranakan palate of decorative motifs” as Welch terms them, which is the subject of this chapter, some subjects found patterned on surfaces and objects are nonetheless only ornamental, noteworthy essentially for their vibrant colours and idiosyncratic themes borrowed from beyond Asia.

### 4.2 Analysis of Shophouses

The eclectic Shophouse facade consists of ornamentations of various form, colours, meanings and expressions. The display of ornamental elements on the Malaya Chinese Shophouse facades of the 1900s have witnessed a significant evolution and culminated in a highly complex form of intricacy and syncretism by the 1930s. The application of facade ornaments on Malayan Chinese Shophouses

particularly by the Chinese only came about in fervour when improving economic conditions of the early 20th century environment permitted them to make time and pursue other interests in life.



**Figure 4.1: Double Leaf Timber Doors. A common type front entrance door shows at the lower façade, Lorong Macalister Shophouse. See the iconographic analysis at the following chapter. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.2: Two fanlight windows with wood carving grilles on both sides of the main door. Shophouse at Jalan Muntri. See the iconographic analysis at the following chapter. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.3: The vents with ventilation functional opening on the wall of the Shophouse or upon the windows. Lorong Macalister Shophouse. See the iconographic analysis at the following chapter. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.4: The common columns with animals and plants ornament designs seen on the Shophouses at Lorong Macalister. See the iconographic analysis at the following chapter. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.5: The common columns with simple plant ornament designs shows on the Shophouses at Lorong Macalister. See the iconographic analysis at the following chapter. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.6: The eave with ornamental plant design seen on the Shophouse at Jalan Muntri. See the iconographic analysis at the following chapter.**

**Photograph by Author.**

### **4.3 Iconographic Analysis**

Iconographic analysis is organized around two broad themes that express the nature of this symbolic vocabulary - the Quest for Harmony and the Pursuit of Good Fortune. The analysis will look at the walls, floors, ceilings, doors, and windows, as well as many types of objects, including those that are decorative or utilitarian, found in Penang Chinese Shophouse.

#### **4.3.1 Magpie**

Magpie symbolic meanings are numerous and varied. This stands to reason because the magpie herself is a varied creature. Her plumage is also symbolic. With striking colouration, the magpie is symbolic of flamboyance, expression, and glamour.

It is a symbol of good luck and good fortune, symbolizing the imminent good things. Two magpies perched on trees portend good news.

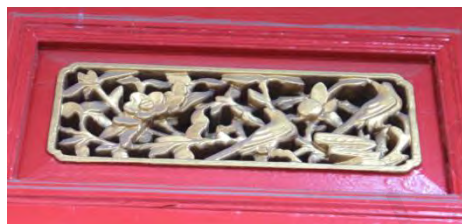


**Figure 4.7: An illustration of magpie. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**

Magpies around flowers or plants ornament designs are seen on the door panes.



**Figure 4.8: Jalan Muntri. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.9 & 4.10: Lorong Macalister (Continued). Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.11 & 4.12: Love Lane. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.13 & 4.14: Love Lane. Photograph by Author.**



**Figure 4.15, 4.16 & 4.17: Love Lane. Photograph by Author.**

Magpies around plants and other animals ornament designs shows on the columns.



**Figure 4.18 & 4.19: Lorong Macalister. Photograph by Author.**

The Chinese character 喜 pronounce “*xu*” resembles magpie in Chinese dictionary. Both of magpie and 喜 are similar symbols denoting for good fortune.





**Figure 4.20: A Chinese character “喜, *xu*”. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**

Chinese character 喜 pronounce “*xu*” with bats ornament designs shows on the columns.



**Figure 4.21& 4.22: Lorong Macalister. Photograph by Author.**

#### **4.3.2 Deer (*Lu*)-Emolument-Longevity**

The emolument of office is termed *lu* 禄 and is generally represented by the character for deer because of the homophonous resemblance since deer is also pronounced *lu* 禄. Deer thus do double duty as emblems of official wealth and longevity. Consequently, the combined meaning represents a prosperous long life. In Chinese art the deer is depicted with court officials; it is said that this signifies a wish for fame, recognition and a long, successful career.

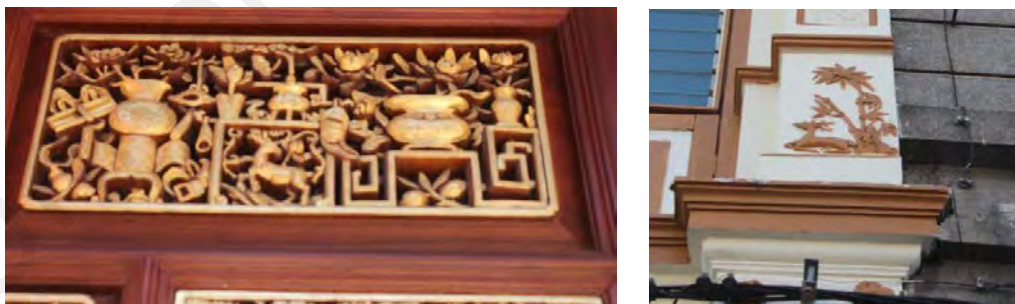
A deer standing under a pine tree or bamboos plants ornament designs are seen on the door panes and columns.

The deer is “believed by the Chinese to live to a very great age, and has therefore become an emblem of long life” and “the only animal which is able to find the sacred fungus of immortality” (Williams,1976).

The deer is Chinese symbol for longevity. The word for deer in Chinese is “Lu” which translates to mean income. Consequently, the combined meanings represent a prosperous long life. Consequently, the combined meaning represents a prosperous long life.



**Figure 4.23 & 4.24: Lebuh Armenian, Love lane. Photograph by Author**

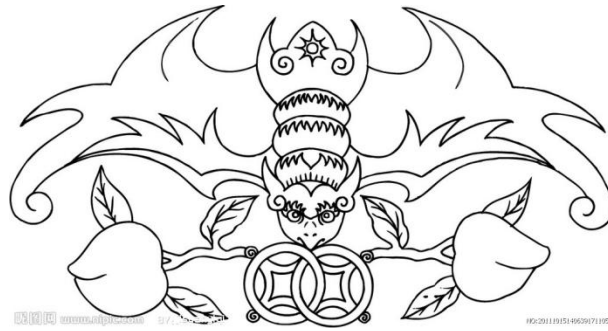


**Figure 4.25 & 4.26: Lebuh Armenian, Lorng Macalister. Photograph by Author**

### **4.3.3 Bat (*Fu*) - Happiness**

Bats are among the most common representations of *fu* since one component of the word for bat, *Bianfu* 蝙蝠 is a homonym for *fu* in Chinese

Bats are frequently portrayed ornamentally hanging upside down, just as they do naturally when they roost. Thus, just like the inverted “*fu* has arrive.” bats are often depicted ornately with graceful lines.



**Figure 4.27: An illustration of bat. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**

Four bats with Chinese character 喜 (*Xu*) and Chinese ancient copper ornament designs are seen on the vents.



**Figure 4.28 & 4.29: Jalan Muntri, Lebu Armenian. Photograph by Author**

#### **4.3.4 Crane (*He*) - longevity**

There are four types of cranes in Chinese myth: White, yellow, blue and black. The black crane is thought to live the longest - up to 600 years. When a crane is shown among the clouds it stands for longevity, wisdom and nobility. When shown among pine trees, the crane symbolizes determination, wealth and power. When two cranes are shown together, it is the ultimate depiction of longevity.



**Figure 4.30: An illustration of cranes (Continued). Source: www.baidu.com**



**Figure 4.31 & 4.32: Lebu Armenian. Photograph & sketching by Author**



**Figure 4.33 & 4.34: Lebu Armenian. Photograph & sketching by Author**

Crane mixed with flowers, vase, other wood carving motifs, two cranes standing under bamboo ornament designs shows on the door pane.



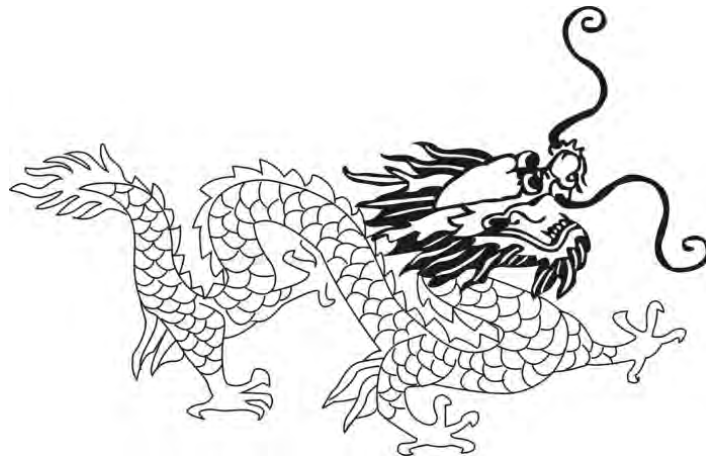
**Figure 4.35 & 4.36: Lorng Macalister. Photograph & sketching by Author**

Crane with pine tree and lotus embossed stucco ornament designs on the column.

#### **4.3.5 Dragons (*Rong*) & Phoenix (*Feng* or *Feng Huang*)**

Ancient Chinese Dragons are ultimate symbols of cosmic Chi (energy). It is said to be the most potent symbol of good fortune in the Chinese pantheon of symbols. The Dragon also has the power to release water to parched lands, an act denoting for abundance and relief. Continued success with high achievement, and prosperity are also listed among the Dragon's arsenal of good qualities. The phoenix (*feng* or *feng huang*), is a magnificent bird which is frequently paired up with the dragon to “announce and to tell about happiness and good luck.

Together, the dragon and phoenix symbolize Yin and Yang together: perfect balance. Standing alone, each symbol is hugely powerful. Together they represent a power-packed union of success, prosperity, friendship, love, and enlightenment.



**Figure 4.37: An illustration of dragon. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**



**Figure 4.38: An illustration of phoenix (Continued). Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**



**Figure 4.39: Jaalan Muntri. Photograph by Author**

Dragons and Phoenix with flowers embossed stucco ornament designs on the beam eave.

#### **4.3.6 Rat (*shu*) and Fish (*Li or Yu*) – Good fortune**

Rats of all kinds have an innate intelligence. They know how to Figure things out. The symbolic meaning of rats denotes the gathering of resources to be ready for whatever that comes. The rat hoards things because they always want to be prepared. It can bear up to a dozen pups every four to six weeks. This is symbolic of fertility, abundance and expansion.



**Figure 4.40: An illustration of rats. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**



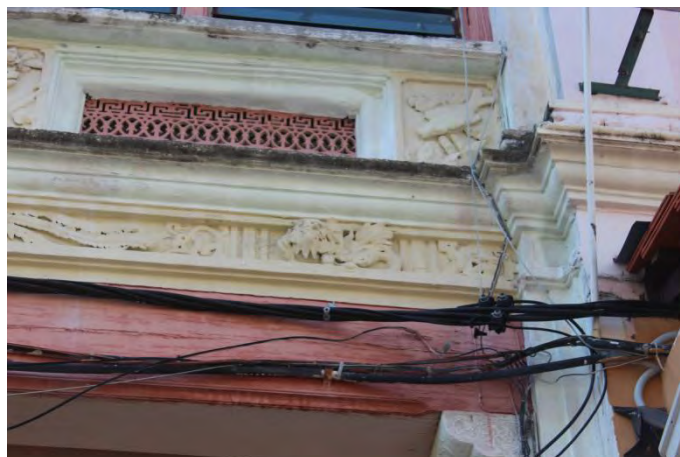
**Figure 4.41 & 4.42: Jaalan Muntri, Lebu Armenianm. Photograph by Author**

In addition, a punning relationship between *li* 鲤, the Chinese word for “carp” and “benefit” 利, also li, is accepted by many Chinese.

A fish must battle river currents in order to swim upstream to reach *Longmen* which means the dragon gate. Sometimes shown pictorially or verbally by the phrase *Li Yue Long Men* (also *Li Yu Tiao Long Men* 鲤鱼跳龙门)



**Figure 4.43: An illustration of carp (Continued). Source: www.baidu.com**



**Figure 4.44: Jaalan Muntri. Photograph by Author**



#### 4.3.7 Lion-(*Shi*)-Amulet and *Unicorns-(Kilin)*-Good fortune

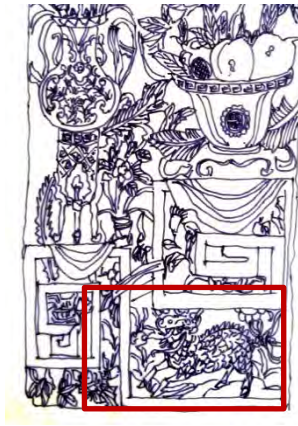
Chinese people believe that lions protect humans from evil spirits; hence the Chinese New Year lion dance to scare away demons and ghosts. The lion wood carving used as Chinese guardian lions in the form of a sculpture stands in front the house. *Kilin* is very special to the Chinese. Its appearance is always considered a sign of good fortune.



Figure 4.45: An illustration of *Kilin* (Continued). Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)



Figure 4.46: An illustration of Lion. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)



**Figure 4.47 & 4.48: Jaalan Muntri, Lebu Armenianm. Photograph & Sketching by Author**



**Figure 4.49: Lebu Armenianm (Continued). Photograph by Author**



**Figure 4.50: Jaalan Muntri. Photograph by Author**



**Figure 4.51 & 4.52: Jaalan Muntri. Photograph by Author**



**Figure 4.53: Love Lane. Photograph by Author**

#### **4.3.8 Peony flowers**

Leaf scrolls, running in single lines, looped together, or packed into vertical rows were fashioned by Chinese craftsmen first into lotus and then into peony borders (Rawson, 1984).

Esteemed as one of the most exquisite flowers, the peony is a symbol for nobility and value. The peony became popular in the imperial palaces during the Sui and Tang dynasties, and earned the title of the "king of flowers." A symbol of spring, it is also used as a metaphor for female beauty and reproduction. Pictured in full bloom, the peony symbolizes peace.

The Chinese believes it to be a symbol of wealth and honor.



**Figure 4.54: A peony flower. Source: www.baidu.com**



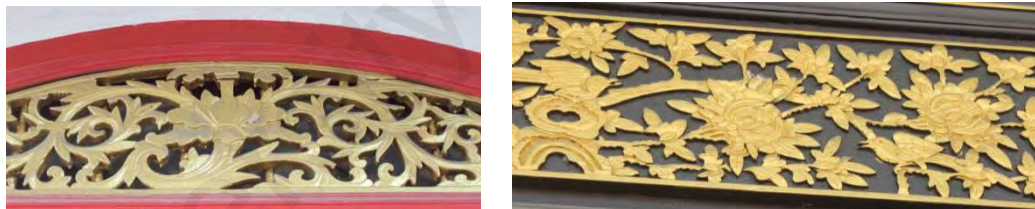
**Figure 4.55 & 4.56: Jaalan Muntri. Photograph by Author**



**Figure 4.57 & 4.58: Jaalan Muntri (Continued). Photograph by Author**



**Figure 4.59 & 4.60: Jaalan Muntri. Photograph by Author**



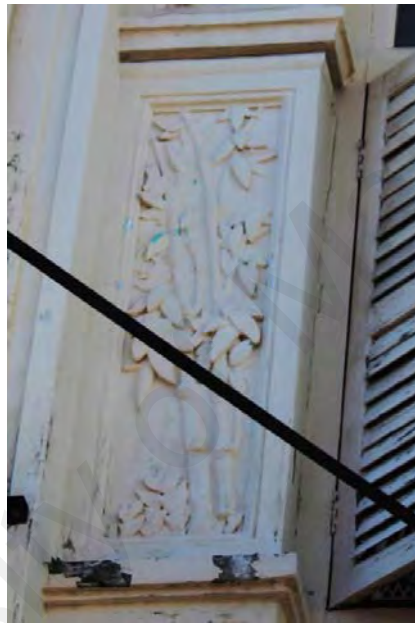
**Figure 4.61 & 4.62: Lorong Macalister. Photograph by Author**

#### **4.3.9 Bamboo shoots**

Bamboo is another Chinese symbol for longevity because of its durability, strength, flexibility and resilience. In another meaning Bamboo in Chinese is “*Hu Gui Zhu*” which translates to mean wealthy and healthy people.



**Figure 4.63: Bamboo shoots (Continued).** Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)



**Figure 4.64: Janlan Muntri.** Photograph by Author



**Figure 4.65 & 4.66: Lebu Armenian.** Sketching by Author

This vertical portrait on the column frames a brown deer at playing among bamboo shoots.



**Figure 4.67: Lebu Armenian. Sketching by Author**



**Figure 4.68 & 4.69: Love Lane. Photograph by Author**

#### **4.3.10 Pine trees**

A crane perched on a pine tree on the column of Shophouse.

Pine trees are honoured Chinese symbols for long life. Because of their steadfastness even in the most harsh weather conditions, having pine trees on property is said to be highly auspicious.



**Figure 4.70: Love lane. Photograph by Author**

#### **4.3.11 Orchid and Lotus**

Orchid is unabashed. She flaunts her stuff. She boldly expands her beauty. She emits her fragrance as if the world is depending on it.

Emblematic of fertility, this flower encourages plenty of progeny. Also a symbol of perfection, abundance, and higher growth, focusing on the endless loveliness of this flower opens up the flow of exotic beauty and prosperity in our lives.

Key word for Orchid Flower Meanings:

Class, Purity, Passion, Status, Nobility, Equality, Elegance, Pleasure, Sexuality, Harmony, Creativity, Attraction Expression, Refinement, Connection.



**Figure 4.71: An illustration of Orchid. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**



**Figure 4.72: Janlan Muntri. Sketching by Author**

The lotus flower has a wealth of symbolic portent. It's born from murky mires, miry and slimy water. Lotus is a plant that belongs to the *Nelumbo* genus, and it has long been associated with purity, rebirth and divinity. The lotus flower symbolism means different things across different major cultures. For instance in Buddhism it is seen as a sign of purity, while it is associated with beauty in Hinduism. A thing that is striking about the lotus is that although it often grows in the mud, and returns within it at night, it always blooms the following days; this makes it a great item to use for a metaphor.

The lotus is also known as the water lily. That means these blooming beauties thrive in water (Avia, 2005). The key significance of this lies in the water. Water is an often overlooked element, but it has powerful influence on our minds, souls and bodies. Water is a symbol of the goodness of fluidity in our life alluding to the psyche of emotions, intuition and dreams.





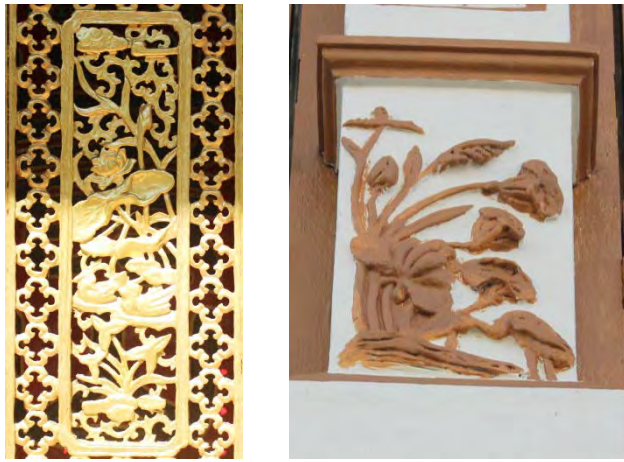
**Figure 4.73: A painting of Lotus. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**



**Figure 4.74: Janlan Muntri. Sketching by Author**



**Figure 4.75: Janlan Muntri (Continued). Sketching by Author**



**Figure 4.76 & 4.77: Lebu Armenian, and Lorong Macalister. Photograph by Author**

Wood carving with lotus motifs ornament design seen on the door panes.

#### **4.3.12 Plum blossom and Magpie**

The plum blossom symbolizes of a gentleman who has nobility, personal integrity, fortitude and a heroic quality that does not retreat from adversity. In modern China, Mr. Mao Zedong's lyric "*Yong Mei -- Ode to the Plum Blossom*", endowed the plum blossom with some of the spirit of the times, clean breath, steadfastness in the cold season, faithfulness, constancy, firmness, independence and self-reliance.



**Figure 4.78: An illustration of Plum blossom. Source: [www.baidu.com](http://www.baidu.com)**

In folk art, you can often see a picture of a pied magpie on a plum blossom, this means:

-- 喜报早春 *Xi Bao Zao Chun*: the pied magpie is reporting that spring has come early;



**Figure 4.79: Lorong Macalister, Love lane. Photograph by Author**

There is another version in folk tradition: “梅开五福 -- *Mei Kai Wu Fu*”, meaning The Plum Blossom has five petals symbolizing: Delight, Happiness, Longevity, Smoothness and Peace.



**Figure 4.80: Lorong Macalister, Jalan Muntri. Photograph by Author**

## CHAPTER 5: CHANGE AND DEVELOPMENT

### 5.1 Introduction

*“The evolution of the Shophouse reflects a fusion of cultural influences from many parts of the globe, including the Malay Archipelago, India, China and Europe. This combination of elements has helped create a unique architecture. In Penang, this development spanned a period of about 170 years, from the late eighteenth century to the 1960s. Very often changes in the architecture of buildings reflected evolving social and cultural trends, as well as economic and technological developments, such as the introduction of new building materials. This classification of styles refers mainly to the changes in the external appearance and height of the Shophouse, especially the facades. Until the 1920s the internal hierarchy of spaces and use of spaces changed little over time, although the interior decorative elements showed small changes reflecting the architectural language of the facade” (Tan, 2015)*

The above quote alluded to the change and development surrounding the Penang Shophouses. This chapter will discuss the comparison of the elements has been changed and developed in terms of colours and position using of motifs used between China Hokkien, Hainan, Chaoshan traditional residential buildings and Penang Shophouse.

### 5.2 The comparison in the colours of motif used between Chinese architecture and Penang Shophouses

Most of the Penang Shophouses were built by the first generation of Malaysia Chinese. The people who built the house are important, because the buildings are always is affected by customs and practices. The Hokkien are the largest Chinese dialect group in Malaysia. Chinese settlers from the southern regions of Fujian constitute the largest group and generally identified as Hokkien. The bulk of Chinese

settlers in Malaya before the 18th century came from Quanzhou, Amoy, and Zhangzhou and settled primarily in Penang and Penang, where they formed the bulk of the local Chinese populace. Teochew immigrants from the Chaoshan region began to settle in Malaya in large numbers from the 18th century onwards. Chinese immigrants from Hainan began to migrate to Malaya and North Borneo from the 19th century onwards, albeit in much smaller numbers than the aforementioned speech groups.

The Hokkien, Hainan and Chaoshan people are the three big groups of Malaysia Chinese. In this study, we do a comparative research between the Chinese architecture selected from these three different regions and Penang Shophouse.

Chinese traditional architecture has the formation of a variety of external and internal colour because of the times, grades, geographical and cultural differences. Since the Ming and Qing Dynasties a series of different social hierarchy for the formation of the provisions of the building colour, on the current discovery of residential and high-grade building colour have an impact, especially the impact of external colour is very obvious.

"The yellow, red, blue, white and black" five-colour are most popular colours for traditional Chinese architecture. The yellow and red colour generally are used on the royal architecture or the office building in the old society, because the gold represents nobility and supreme right, the red represents the serious and unquestionable authority and system. Among the remaining three colours "blue, white and black", white and black are the most popular for China traditional residential building.



**Figure 5.1: A motif on the roof ridge of traditional Hainan residential building.**

**Photograph by Author**



**Figure 5.2: A top view of traditional Hainan residential building. Photograph**

**by Author**

White parapet, white gable end and white wall, after many years turn black in colour.



**Figure 5.3: A top view of a traditional Hokkien residential building. Source:**

**<http://www.baidu.com>**

Red colour brick wall, black colour gable end and white colour windows, the building looks more vivid than traditional Hainan residential building.



**Figure 5.4: A front view of a traditional Chaoshan residential building. Source:**

**<http://www.baidu.com>**

White colour brick wall, mix colour gable end and roof ridge and green colour windows frame, altogether make for a vivid and diverse impression.

Chinese immigrants in Malaya were not bound by the social hierarchy associated with the building colours as normally governed by the Ming and Qing Dynasties back in China. Consequently, the Malaysian Chinese began to use gold and red colour in the architectural design of their homes as auspicious emblem for family and business. This

more relaxed adoption of “forbidden” colours was primarily driven by the more open colonial society and multi-ethnic culture.



**Figure 5.5: A door with full motif in gold colours at Jalan Muntri Street.**

**Photograph by Author**



**Figure 5.6: A wood carving of door in red colours at Love lane. Photograph**

**by Author**





**Figure 5.7: A mix colour “Jiannian” of roof beam under eave at Lebuah  
Armenian. Photograph by Author**

University of Malaya

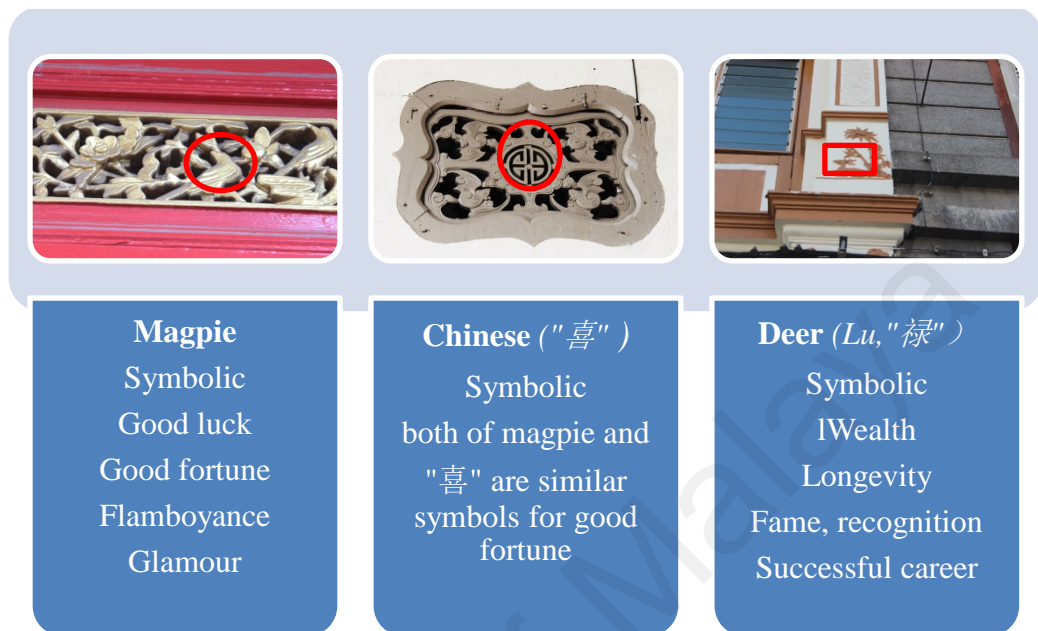
## CHAPTER 6: RESULTS, IMPLICATIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

This research which aims to study the ornament designs of Penang Chinese Shophouses. In order to discover the functional and symbolic importance of the ornaments of selected Penang Chinese Shophouses . The different ornament designs on the selected Penang Chinese Shophouses were identified. Before their significance were studied. This research focuses on the following five streets, namely Love lane, Jalan Muntri, Lebu Armenian, Lorong Macalister and Jalan Kedah. These Shophouses are selected according to their history, location and facade treatment. They are in “Early Straits” Eclectic Styles and “Late Straits” Eclectic Style 1890s-1930s. The research focuses on the doors, windows, vents, column, corbels and eaves.

The results of the study discuss about the ornamental design of architectural, the history of the ornamental, the element of ornamental design of the building , the influence of ornamental designs and its origin, the functionality of the elements adopted in the climatic region, the essence of the ornamental, and the classification of architectural ornamental. The findings of architectural ornamental can be clearly divided into three basic categories: the mimetic ornament, the applied ornament, the organic ornament. The Shophouses facade analysed consists of ornamentations of various form, colours, meanings and expressions.

Secondly the uncovering of the symbols and iconography of the ornamental designs in Penang Chinese Shophouses are generally categorised into two broad themes that express the nature of this symbolic vocabulary-the Quest for Harmony and the Pursuit of Good Fortune. This is evident from the walls, floors, ceilings, doors, and windows, as well as many types of objects, including those that are

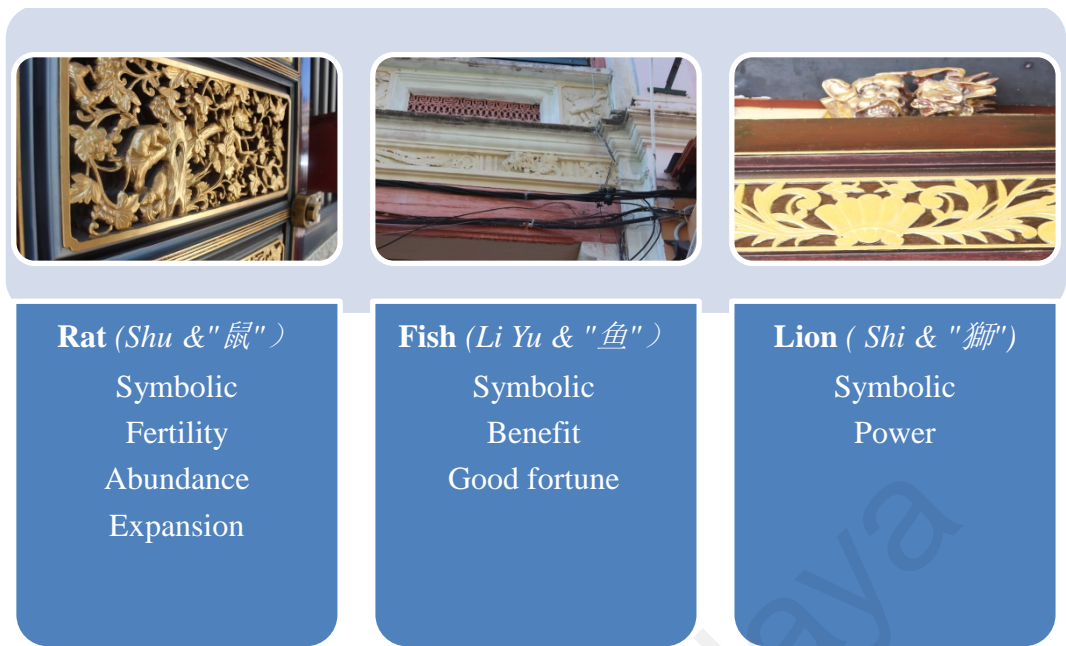
decorative or utilitarian, found in Penang Chinese Shophouses. The findings of results are showing in the following figures.



**Figure 6.1: Interpretation of Results 1. Photograph by Author**



**Figure 6.2: Interpretation of Results 2. Photograph by Author**



**Figure 6.3: Interpretation of Results 3. Photograph by Author**



**Figure 6.4: Interpretation of Results 4. Photograph by Author**



**Figure 6.5: Interpretation of Results 5. Photograph by Author**

Finally, the more significant findings point to Magpie is symbolic meanings alluding to of flamboyance, expression, and glamour. The Deer (*Lu*)-Emolument-Longevity, do double duty as emblems of official wealth and longevity. Consequently, the combined meaning represents a prosperous long life. In Chinese art the deer is depicted with court officials; it is said that this signifies a wish for fame, recognition and a long, successful career. As for the Bat (*Fu*)-Happiness; Chinese Bats are frequently portrayed ornamentally hanging upside down, just as they do naturally when they roost. Thus, just like the inverted “*fu* has arrive.” Bats are often depicted live the longest - up to 600 years. When a crane is shown among clouds it stands for longevity, wisdom and nobility. When shown among pine trees, the crane symbolizes determination, wealth and power. When two cranes are shown together, it is the ultimate depiction of longevity. Together, the dragon and phoenix symbolize *Yin* and *Yang* together: perfect balance. Standing alone, each symbol is hugely powerful. Together they represent a power- packed union of success, prosperity, friendship, love, and enlightenment. Rat (*shu*) and Fish (*Li* or *Yu*) –Good fortune. Rats of all kinds have an innate intelligence.

They know how to Figure things out. The symbolic meaning of rats deals with gathering resources to be ready for whatever comes. A fish must battle river currents in order to swim upstream to reach *Longmen* which means the dragon gate. Sometimes shown pictorially or verbally by the phrase *Li Yue Long Men* (also *Li Yu Tiao Long Men* 鲤鱼跳龙门) . Lion-(*Shi*)-Amulet and *Unicorns-(Kilin)*-Good fortune. Chinese people believe that lions protect humans from evil spirits; hence the Chinese New Year lion dance to scare away demons and ghosts. The wood carved lion used as Chinese guardian lions like a sculpture stand in front the house. Kilin was very special to the Chinese. Its appearance was always considered a sign of good fortune. Peony flowers, the Chinese believes it to be a symbol of wealth and honor. Bamboo is another Chinese symbol for longevity because of its durability, strength, flexibility and resilience. In another meaning Bamboo in Chinese is “*Hu Gui Zhu*” which translates to mean people wealthy and healthy. Pine trees are honoured Chinese symbols for long life. Because of their steadfastness even in the most harsh weather conditions, having pine trees on property is said to be highly auspicious. Orchid and Lotus, Also a symbol of perfection, abundance, and higher growth, when we focus on the endless loveliness of this flower we are able to open the flow of exotic beauty and prosperity in our lives. Plum blossom and Magpie, the plum blossom was the symbol of a gentleman who has nobility, personal integrity, fortitude and a heroic quality that does not retreat from adversity.

Future studies can potentially look into a comparison between Penang Chinese Shophouses and Chinese traditional architecture from a functional, technical material and ornamental position.

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