Thoughts on the Design Thematic Practice Teaching of “Inheritance and Innovation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Huangmei Cross-stitch”

Yi LI

Department of Industrial Design, Hubei Institute of Fine Arts, China
546787270@qq.com

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Abstract. The design course of “Inheritance and Innovation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Huangmei cross-stitch” aims to guide students to pay attention to Huangmei cross-stitch that are on the verge of disappearing, and actively explore the design innovation of it in the era background. The course is divided into four series: "Field Survey", "Theory Foundation", "Software Production" and "Design Practice". It adopts various forms such as field visit observation, traditional skill experience and famous lectures to let students complete the accumulation of the theory and software knowledge and turn it into a product or service solution. We encourage students to think about the design transformation ideas, strategies and methods of Huangmei cross-stitch in practice, and enhance their inheritance and innovation level of related derivatives design level. From the perspective of the innovation and development of art design, this course explores the campus inheritance model of the Huangmei cross-stitch, which can promote the inheritance and innovation of Huangmei cross-stitch, and finally promote the revitalization and development of the traditional craft culture industry.

The Course Origin

The Necessity of the Inheritance and Innovation of Huangmei Cross-stitch

Intangible Cultural Heritage (abbreviated as non-legacy) is an important feature of a nation's identification. The protection of it has attracted wide attention all over the world[1]. Huangmei cross-stitch, also known as shelf flowers, cross-flowers, originated in the Tang and Song Dynasties and matured in the late Ming and early Qing dynasties. It has a unique aesthetic concept that contains the aesthetic ideals of the ancestors to punish evil-doers and encourage people to do good, to pray for glory, and to cherish good wishes. In June 2006, Huangmei cross-stitch was selected as the first Intangible Cultural Heritage protection list in China [2]. As a Chinese traditional craftsmanship, Huangmei cross-stitch has rich cultural value and a huge market prospect. However, due to the rapid development of modernization and the dilution of traditional folk customs, the Craftspeople have serious lack of product innovation capabilities, and their operational management capabilities are extremely lacking. As a result, the added value of products is low. Fewer works can enter the market and integrate into modern life. The inheritance of Huangmei cross-stitch faces enormous challenges. It is urgent to train a group of innovative design talents. The exploration of relevant teaching modes has become a top priority in the reform of design education.

The Purpose and Significance of the Course

This course is based on the inheritance and innovation of Huangmei cross-stitch. The objectives of the course is to encourage students to think about the design transformation strategies and methods of Huangmei cross-stitch in practice, and guide students to understand the value of design in the context of social culture. This course can promote the cultivation of Huangmei cross-stitch innovative talents, improving their visual aesthetic ability, hand-making ability, software production level, learning focus and the creative level, etc. Finally, promote the revitalization and development of traditional craft and culture industry of Huangmei cross-stitch.

Victor Papanick advocated that designers should be responsible for the real needs of human beings and have social and ethical awareness[3]. In design practice, not only commercial interests,
but also environmental and social benefits should be taken into account. Therefore, it is more important to cultivate students' ability to think about social problems in this practical course. Huangmei cross-stitch folk art does not exist in isolation as "skill". It is closely related to historical, social and environmental factors, so students must go deep into field investigation to improve the ability to find, raise and analyze problems.

**Curriculum Design**

This course is scheduled for the graduation design phase of product design for 25 weeks. The main content is divided into four modules: “field investigation”, “theoretical basis”, “software production” and “design practice”.

**Field Survey**

The first stage of the course is to conduct field investigations in depth. Based on the previous literature research, the students selected Huangmei County Huangmei cross-stitch Museum, Hubei Huangmei cross-stitch Craft Co., Ltd., Hanyang Non-legacy inheritance garden -- Huangmei cross-stitch practice base. Field research methods can be divided into Participant Observation and In-depth Interview[4]. Participant observation requires students to go into the working and living environment of Huangmei cross-stitch artists. Students participate in local daily life as apprentices, photographers and daily activity recorders. In the process of participatory observation, students can experience the craftsmanship and creative process of Huangmei cross-stitch, and observe the other social interaction life of the artists. The in-depth interviewees included Shi Jiumei, the national inheritor of Huangmei cross-stitch, Tao Peifeng, the expert of Huangmei cross-stitch, and Pan Meijia, the director of Huangmei County Cultural Center. The interviews included the basic situation of the inheritors, the study of the skills, the practice of inheritance, the Non-legacy products and markets, and the social awareness and impact. In the end, the students draw the process steps, the needle method and the pattern composition of the Huangmei cross-stitch. The research results will provide the research foundation for inheritance and innovative design practice.

**Theoretical Basis**

**Pattern Theme.** The pattern theme course mainly explains the number and classification of the theme of Huangmei cross-stitch. At present, there are more than 400 patterns of Huangmei cross-stitch including more than 200 traditional patterns. There are many classification methods and classification standards for Huangmei cross-stitch. According to Professor Rao Pingshan's classification of the pattern by content, the theme of Huangmei cross-stitch can be divided into animals, plants, opera characters, entertainment, and characters. According to the classification of cultural connotation and meaning, it can be divided into totem worship, marriage and reproduction, and praying for life [5]. According to the distribution of pattern, it can be divided into main flower, side flower, flower filling, and horn flower [6].

**Pattern Composition.** This part mainly explains the composition of the Huangmei cross-stitch pattern and the pattern texture. Huangmei cross-stitch is composed of the main flowers, the side flowers, the intermediate flowers, and the corner flowers. It is commonly used in the up and down, left and right symmetrical (the corner of Butterflies playing with ornamental gourds, etc.), rotating type (such as Mandarin ducks playing with lotuses, Phoenixes chasing each other, etc.), centripetal (such as Double birthday peaches, cypress flowers, etc.), radial (such as Octagonal lotuses, Eight Trigrams patterns, etc.) structure, forming a pattern of squares in the circle, the circle in the infinite endless pattern. The main flowers is the main flower pattern located in the center of the cross-stitch pattern, which mainly includes ENGE flat peaches, The dragon and phoenixes bringing prosperity. Flowers of four seasons, Starry sky, Phoenixes playing with peonies, Four phoenixes carrying an emperor's seal, Four wings-spreadng phoenixes facing a stone mirror and other classic patterns. The side flowers is a decorative pattern that symmetrically distributed on the upper and lower sides of the main flowers, mainly including the classic patterns such as Two dragons playing with a pearl, The eight immortals crossing the sea, Oath of the Peach Garden, No.
One Scholar parading in the street, Mu Guiying Taking Command, Unicorns sending sons, five daughters offering felicitations and carps jumping over dragon door. The intermediate flowers is a decorative pattern between the group flower and the side flowers, mainly including chrysanthemum, plum, lotus, gourd, pomegranate, Ruyi Lotus, and other classic patterns. The corner flowers is a decorative pattern on the four corners of Huangmei cross-stitch, which mainly includes classic patterns such as butterfly pattern, water duck pattern, cloud head pattern, wishful pattern, lotus pattern, flower and bird pattern.

**Pattern Color.** The pattern color teaching mainly explains the color characteristics of the Huangmei cross-stitch. The color of Huangmei cross-stitch is beautiful and elegant. The traditional five elements theory holds that the world is composed of five elements: gold, wood, water, fire and earth. The color of the five elements (red, yellow, black, white, and blue) are traditional auspicious colors in China. They are considered to be perfect, harmonious, Natural, and widely used in the private sector. The main colors of "Cross-stitched" are black, white, red, yellow, blue, purple, and green. As can be seen, this also applies the five elements theory. Huangmei cross-stitch adopts the ultramarine coarse cloth as the base color, and the white line is used as the basic skeleton. The red, pink, water red and light red are the main colors, with orange, medium yellow and light yellow, forming the warm tone of the work. The interval is dotted with cool colors such as green, dark green, and lake blue, which makes the whole picture warm but not dry, complicated and harmonious [7].

**Software Production**

With the development of science and technology, social and academic circles have paid more and more attention to the digital protection of non-legacy, and digital protection has become a new hot spot[8]. The digital protection mainly refines the artistic features of the rich and symbolic auspicious graphics and elements in traditional handicrafts, and uses digital means to finely scan and redraw to form digital graphics, which are then summarized and stored in different categories to create rich content and convenient access graphic database[9].

![Figure 1. Huangmei Cross-stitching Digital Graphics Database.](image)

The core value of Huangmei cross-stitch is first embodied in the pattern itself. In-depth study of the pattern requires the establishment of a digital graphics database. In the software teaching stage, the main goal is to digitally restore the pattern, and teach students to draw the pattern by professional drawing CorelDRAW software. During the period, more than 50 pairs of works have been drawn, as shown in Fig. 1. In the digital graphics database, users can arbitrarily zoom, break, and recompose according to different needs to carry out innovative design. This breaks through the shortcomings of the single form of Huangmei cross-stitch, and creates a unique artistic pattern to realize the live-protection and inheritance effect. In the end, it will provide a good professional research foundation for the continuous development and improvement of the future research of Huangmei cross-stitch.
**Design Practice**

**Brand Design.** The brand image design team selects the traditional patterns of Huangmei cross-stitch for comparative analysis, and looks for the most representative artistic features. The team finally extracted the traditional elements of the "octagonal openwork lotus" symbol, as shown in Fig. 2. Lotus is a symbol of Buddhist art. Buddhism has a certain relationship with Huangmei County. The Wuzu Temple in Huangmei County was recognized as an ancestral home by the later generations. The large number of patterns in Huangmei cross-stitch reflected the influence of Buddhism on local culture. The lotus flower pattern in Huangmei cross-stitch is mostly the front octagonal lotus, which is composed of eight diamonds with the same shape[10]. In terms of brand color design, because the Chu people admire the red in artistic creation, they think that red also symbolizes life, strength, and light. Therefore, the students choose the most representative Chu Yun style peach as the theme color. The brand graphic design is also combined with modern aesthetics. In the end, a continuous array reconstruction style with abstract pattern of octagonal hollow lotus was adopted, which can be widely used in different cultural and creative products. Adopting this form will effectively enhance the brand image recognition and communication effect of Huangmei cross-stitch.

![Figure 2. The Brand Image Design of Huangmei Cross-stitch.](image1)

**Product Design.** The product innovation design team students carried out the exploration of the innovative design practice of Huangmei cross-stitch. They extracted the traditional pattern elements of Huangmei cross-stitch, and transformed them in form and content. They reconstructed the traditional elements of Huangmei cross-stitch and combined them with modern aesthetics to apply to various products. As shown in Fig. 3, the Huangmei cross-stitch the "rich and long life lock" jewelry design. The students extracted the traditional elements of the phoenix peony pattern and reconstructed it. It was applied to the design of the gold jewelry long life lock. The peony pattern extends four peony flowers from the center flower. The two phoenixes fly opposite each other, and the head faces the peony flower. It not only symbolizes the meaning of abundance and wealth, but also symbolizes the love of the husband and wife. The meaning is in line with the core appeal of the user.

![Figure 3. The Product Innovation Design of Huangmei Cross-stitch.](image2)
**Interactive Design.** The interaction design group designed the interface of Huangmei Cross-stitching APP, as shown in Fig. 4, providing diverse user experiences: ① Let users know about the professional knowledge about Huangmei Cross-stitching such as the historical origin, the humanities and customs, pattern characteristics and the cultural context. ② Introduce all kinds of materials and tools, like special earth cloth for flower-picking, various wires, scissors tools, etc, for Huangmei flower-picking in detail. And of course, it will also provide professional ways for people to buy the materials and tools for Huangmei Cross-stitching. ③ Users can choose their favorite patterns from the digital pattern library of Huangmei Cross-stitching and match them freely, creating their own custom patterns. And what’s more, the personal-made patterns also can be saved as wallpaper, and people also can choose customized services to make them into finished products. ④ Digital AR virtual reality is used to show the whole process from ancient fabrics to Cross-stitching. ⑤ Build a business platform of Huangmei Cross-stitching industry for brand promotion and operation management. ⑥ Establish learning-exchanging environment for Huangmei Cross-stitching and focus on the conservation between inheritors and experts of Cross-stitching. ⑦ Combine online communication with offline regularly, with holding various kinds of Cross-stitching learning activities to strengthen communication and study between Cross-stitching enthusiasts.

![Figure 4. The Interaction Design of Huangmei Cross-stitching.](image)

**Summary**

Design Thematic Practice Teaching of “Inheritance and Innovation of the Intangible Cultural Heritage Huangmei cross-stitch” promotes students' design ability on Huangmei Cross-stitching through various forms of courses. It broadens students' creative thinking and promotes the integration of traditional culture and modern aesthetic innovative design at the same time. In the future, we will further improve the relevant theoretical research, and construct a more systematic digital graphic database of Huangmei Cross-stitching. We will also build an open, shared and sustainable digital platform for protection and development of Huangmei Cross-stitching, and design more innovative products of Huangmei Cross-stitching in different professional fields that are more in line with the core needs of users. Finally, the design course will help to promote the revitalization and development of Huangmei traditional craft and culture industry.

**References**


