UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

CONTEMPORARY ISLAMIC PAINTING
IN MALAYSIA:
1980 TO 2000

AHMADRAISHIDI BIN HASAN

Thesis submitted in fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

Faculty of Art and Design

January 2010
Candidate's Declaration

I declare that the work in this thesis was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and the result of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any other degree or qualification.

In the event that my thesis found to violate the conditions mentioned above, I voluntarily waive the right of my conferment of my degree and agree to be subjected to the disciplinary rules and regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA.

Name of Candidate: AHMADRASHIDI BIN HASAN
Candidate’s ID No.: 570423055009
Programme: AD990 Ph.d. ART AND DESIGN
Faculty: ART AND DESIGN

Signature of Candidate

Date
ABSTRACTS

One important aspect that was neglected in the development of Modern Malaysian Art is the development of Islamic art. The decades of 80’s and 90’s appeared to be the most active period of the resurgence of Islamic art in Malaysia and this was marked by the numerous Islamic Art exhibitions, seminars and discussions especially in the 90’s. Nevertheless, literature on the subject seems scanty which in turn force the researcher to focus on the artwork itself as a visual document of its time.

This study is about the Islamic forms, substances, interests and the manifestations of the artworks. 83 samples were collected by using the judgmental sampling methods from a population of 520 artworks by Muslim artists of the 80’s and 90’s. Observations, by using the Content Analysis methods were carried out to analyze the form and content of these samples. Interviews were also carried out employing art historians and artists as respondents to collect additional and supportive data regarding development of Islamic Art in Malaysia.

It is established that there are at least three forms of Islamic manifestations used by Malaysian Muslim artists namely (a) The Explicit Islamic Manifestations, (b) The Implicit Islamic Manifestations and (c) Exclusive of Islamic Manifestations. These manifestations could be seen in the titles of the artworks, images and its content. Islamic art can be in any form or styles as long as they abided to the Islamic law (syāri’ah) or jurisprudence (fiqh). It is also found that in this period, especially in the 90’s, Islamic art had played a major role in the development of Modern Art in Malaysia. The continuous effort of the Muslim artists since pre-Merdeka plus the strong support by the government as well as the higher institutions, had contributed to the resurgence of Islamic art in Malaysia. The key terms for the research are Islamic Art, Islamic Art Resurgence, Explicit Islamic Manifestations, Implicit Islamic Manifestations, Exclusive of Islamic Manifestations
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Syukur, Alhamdulillah s.w.t. and the prophet Muhammad (pbuh). I would like to express my deep appreciation to many people who had contributed to the realization of this study. Without them this study could not have been completed and accomplished. Deep appreciation is extended to Associate Professor Dr. Dzul Haimi bin Md. Zain, who supervises, guides and motivates in the completion of this research. I thanked him for his patience, friendship and guidance throughout this study, a special debt of gratitude is expressed to him.

Special thanks to Associate Professor Datuk Mohd Sharif bin Mustaffa, the former Dean of the Faculty of Art and Design, Universiti Teknologi MARA who sparked the idea and the motivation to carry out this research, Associate Professor Dr. Baharuddin Ujang, The Dean of Faculty of Art and Design, Professor Dr. Muliyadi Mohamood and Associate Professor Haji Ponirin Amin, The Deputy Deans of The Faculty of Art and Design for the continuous advise and support towards the realization of this research.

I gratefully acknowledge the support of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Melaka, especially the Director, Associate Professor Datuk Dr. Mizan Haji Hitam, the Deputy Director (Academic Affairs), Associate Professor Sabariah Haji Mahat, the former Directors, Associate Professor Dr. Mohd Kamal Haji Harun and Professor Dr. Mohd Tahir Hamid and the Faculty of Art and Design Coordinators, Mr. Rosli Zakaria and Mr. Baharim Samuri@Khusil for all their supports and assistance through out the research. Thanks to fellow friends and staffs of the Art and Design Program, Universiti Teknologi MARA Melaka who understand and contributed to the accomplishment of this research. Appreciation is expressed to Human Resources Development Department, Universiti Teknologi MARA for offering the one-year sabbatical leave, the essential factor that led to the completion of the research.

I take this opportunity to thank all artists involved in this research for their willingness to co-operate, giving opinions and ideas regarding their art works. I gratefully acknowledge the assistance of the National Art Gallery, The National Archives, The Islamic Art Museum, Pusat Islam Malaysia and The National Museum for giving all their supports and assistance in tracing essential literatures, artworks and artists for the research.

Most importantly, I owed to my beloved family for their continuous support, patience and understanding, as well as my brothers and sisters for their unfailing love and support. Special thanks to my very dear wife, Musalmah Abdul Rahman and my beautiful children Nor Syuhada, Khairul Anuar, Khairul Aziem and Khairul Zamir for their continuous love, support and understanding. Without which this research could have not been accomplished.
# TABLE OF CONTENT

Abstract  
Acknowledgements  
Table of Content  
List of Tables  
List of Figures  
List of Plates  

## CHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION
1.1 Introduction  
1.2 Purpose of the Study  
1.3 Statement of the Problems  
1.4 Significance of the Research  
1.5 Objective of the Study  
1.6 Limitations and Delimitations  
1.7 Research Methods and Procedures  
1.8 Conclusions and Recommendations  

## CHAPTER 2 – RELATED LITERATURE REVIEWS
2.1 Introduction  
2.2 Literature on Islamic Art in Malaysia  
2.3 Islamic Art: Challenges of Definitions  
2.4 Art Analysis  
2.5 Related Theories of Art Appreciation and Art History  
2.6 Islamic Art History Methodology  

## CHAPTER 3 – BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY
3.1 Development of Art in Malaysia  
3.1.1 Pre Colonial Period  
3.1.2 English Colonial Period  
3.1.3 Post Colonial Period  
3.2 The Settings  
3.2.1 The Islamic Affiliation of the Malay Community  
3.2.2 Education System  
3.2.3 Nationalism and Islam  
3.2.4 Assimilation of Islamic Values  
3.2.5 MARA Institute of Technology  
3.2.6 The National Congress of Culture  
3.2.7 Government Administration  
3.3 The Resurgence of Islam  
3.4 The Resurgence of Islamic Art  

---