

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**A COMPARISON STUDY
OF MALAY AND NYONYA *KEBAYA*
IN THE PENINSULAR OF
MALAYSIA FROM 1910 – 2017**

ZARINA BINTI YUSOF

PhD


October 2021

AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results 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 degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Postgraduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

Name of Student : Zarina Binti Yusof
Student I.D. No. : 2015226478
Programme : Doctor of Philosophy (Art & Design)
Faculty : Art & Design
Thesis Title : A Comparison Study of Malay and Nyonya *Kebaya* in the Peninsular of Malaysia from 1910-2017

Signature of Student : 

Date : Oktober 2021

ABSTRACT

Baju Kebaya is a traditional costume worn by the ladies in the archipelago over the last 600 years. In Malaysia, it is worn with different styles by the Malay women, Nyonya *Peranakan* and Jawi *Peranakan*. However, the recent fashion style has somehow reformed its' concept due to some cultural changes among these Malaysians. Therefore, this research was conducted to examine the comparative design, style and features found in the *Baju Kebaya* based on the historical literature, journals and visual documentation obtained from the libraries, museums, National Archive as well as private collections. In performing this study, a systematic qualitative research is conducted to document the manufacture, measurement and selection of the *Baju Kebaya* from 1910 to 2017. The literature review of current trends and research on the *Baju Kebaya* successfully traced the chronological development of this costume in the Peninsular of Malaysia. Unstructured interviews with the relevant key players in the *Kebaya* industry, including academicians, traditionalists, dressmakers and appreciators were carried out as well. The identification of the traditional distinctiveness of the *Baju Kebaya* was addressed by categorizing the clothes into different groups according to their style and character. The *Baju Kebaya* has also undergone several changes, including the cut and shape, length of the dress, fabric, style, and coordination. The findings suggested that there are similarities; in terms of function and structure and differences; in terms of choice of fabric and ornaments between the design of the Malay and Baba Nyonya *Kebaya*. The finding of this research will be useful to strengthen the sense of identity among Malaysians specifically the Malay and Baba Nyonya community. It is anticipated that the results of this research can become a source of reference in preserving and documenting *Baju Kebaya* as a national attire or costume, as part of the country's cultural heritage and transmit the knowledge of intangible cultural heritage academically.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Thanks to Allah S. W. T. on His permission that I managed to complete my research successfully. It would not have been possible for me to finish writing this thesis without the invaluable assistance, support, advice, encouragement, and inspiration of several individuals. Hence, I wish to present my appreciation to all those who extended their support in many different ways.

First and foremost, I would like to express my deepest and sincere gratitude and appreciation to my principal supervisor, Dr. Asliza Binti Aris for her valuable guidance, comments, advice and support from the beginning of my research until the end of this thesis. Special acknowledgments also go to Prof. Dr. Norwani Binti Md Nawawi, my co-supervisors, for their superb intellectual support and ongoing encouragement.

I am also grateful to *Kementerian Pengajian Tinggi Malaysia* (KPTM) for funding my Doctorate Philosophical study and Faculty of Art & Design (UiTM) for their helpful and providing expert assistance support needed to complete this study. Particular thanks also go to the representatives from each participating institution for their assistance during the data collection. Not to forget, I would like to acknowledge my respondents for providing accurate and reliable information toward accomplishing the research objectives.

My great appreciation and enormous thanks also go to my family, especially to my parents Yusof Bin Ibrahim and Late Siti Zainab Binti Ahmad, for their constant prayer and encouragement throughout my postgraduate study. Special thanks also due to my husband, Norhafizan Bin Majid, and my children, Nurhadirah Zulaikha, Nurfirzanah Qaisara, and Muhammad Ammar Danish, who remain constant sources of encouragement, inspiration, and strength. Last but not least, many thanks to all my friends and colleagues, unfortunately, it is not possible to list all of them in this limited space, who directly or indirectly assisted me in any respect towards the completion of this research.

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