

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**EURO-AMERICAN INFLUENCES ON
CONTEMPORARY MALAYSIAN
METAL SCULPTURES FROM 1960
TO 2010**

**ZAINUDDIN BIN ABINDINHAZIR @ ABD.
RASHID**

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

Faculty of Art and Design

December 2018

ABSTRACT

Western Influences in Contemporary Malaysian Sculpture is an issue that is often dealt with through the ages. However, there has never been any scientific study undertaken in regard to the historical development of sculpture in Malaysia. Recognizing this neglect, the study was conducted to document the influence of the West in the fabrication of local sculpture. However, the focus is strictly on sculptures that are made of metal from the 1960s to the year 2010. The objective of this study, aims to explicate the style, form, iconography, and content. This connection involves questions of influence, culture, similarities, distinctions, identities and manifestations of local sculptors. In order to make this study a reality, researcher has combined the theory of Iconology by Erwin Panofsky and the concept of knowledge by al-Imam al-Ghazzali. The study was conducted using the three stages of analysis (pre-iconographical description, analysis, and iconological interpretation) where the approach of Islamic understanding is taken into account. Findings conclude that the earlier artists were vulnerable to Western influences in terms of form, style, and technique. Comparatively, more recent sculptors are more influenced in terms of style and technique. In addition, factors of iconography and content were localized, triggered by cultural situations, issues, and goals. Discovered there as well, the concept of influences was short-lived and was not focused on any specific Western artist by each individual of the local artists. There are no works which indicate dependencies in maintaining the same form of their works afterward. It was seen as an entity that is inconsistent and changeable depending on different situations. The resulting works can also be built from the combination of the influence of several Western artists. The study also showed that artists are more affected when they start working from an early stage, and developed his talent on the experience factor. The study also showed that the pioneer artists are more influenced, especially in the construction of their early work. Factors of experience and skills upgrade later developed their talent. In all characteristics of independent variables, involving style, form and meaning have assimilated the local and Western traditions, making Malaysia as a platform of integration. Artists of all races consider the uniformity of form and style, which tends toward Islamic values in their sculptural works as manifestations of cultural integration. This situation also realizes the continuation of national political policies. These findings are significant as a visual verification by image comparisons.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the Name of ALLAH, the Most Gracious, the Most Merciful. All praises are due to ALLAH, God the Almighty. First and Foremost, I would like to express my utmost gratitude to ALLAH S.W.T., that by His grace, I have finally completed my research journey (Philosophy of Art and Design).

This dissertation could not have been completed without the generous support and guidance of the following people to whom I am greatly indebted.

It is my pleasure to express my heartfelt gratitude to my supervisor, Professor Dr. D'zul Haimi bin Md. Zain and my second supervisor, Prof. Dr. Mulyadi Mahamood for the stimulating discussions, invaluable suggestions and supervision.

I wish to express my gratitude to Sultan Idris Educational University (UPSI), Ministry of Higher Education (KPT), Public Service Department of Malaysia (JPA), for the study leave, financial and generous moral support.

I would like to record my appreciations to University Technology MARA (UiTM), National Art Gallery, Pelita Hati Art Gallery, Ruang Pemula (Rupë) Art House, Tuanku Nur Zahirah Gallery, Petronas Art Gallery and Library, University of Malaya Library; National Library, University of Science Malaysia Library; National Museum (Kuala Lumpur), National Museum (Taiping), National Museum (Penang), Institute of Language and Literature (DBP), National Archive, and all the artists and private art galleries for the support given during the research.

To the FSSR, UiTM Dean, and the faculty staff members, to the FSKIK, UPSI Dean, and the faculty staff members, especially to my friends, the late Dr. Roskang Jailani, Acc. Prof. Dr. Halim Hussain, Prof. Zulkifli Yusoff, Prof. Dr. Zakaria Ali and Mr. Fisol Ahmad, the photographer.

Very much thank you to Dr. Norazlin Hamidon (University Malaya), for ideas, advising the illustrations, technical and moral support.

Last but not least, my most sincere thanks and appreciations to my parents, Abindinhazir @ Abdul Rashid Awang and Zainab Shaari who always pray for me; my beloved wife, Azlina Mohammad Idris and my four children, Zuhaira Aqilah, Amier Zafran, Afieq Zakhwan and Arief Ziqry who have been extremely patient and supportive throughout the years that I took to complete this dissertation.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR' DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vi
LIST OF TABLES	xii
LIST OF FIGURES	xvi
LIST OF PLATES	xvii
LIST OF ILLUSTRATIONS	xxiv
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxvii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Background of Research	4
1.3 Problem Statement	7
1.4 Aims And Objectives Of The Research	12
1.5 Research Questions	12
1.6 Limitations And Delimitations	13
1.6.1 Limitations of Sculpture	13
1.6.2 Limitations of the Sculptors /Artists	15
1.6.3 Periodical Limitations	16
1.7 Significance of the Research	16
1.7.1 Implications of personal interest to the researcher	17
1.7.2 Contributions to the public institutions and artists	17
1.7.3 Contributions to education	17
1.8 Research Methods And Procedures	18
1.9 Preliminary Conclusion	19
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW I	20

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The term 'Euro-American' or 'Western' represents the conglomerate of European regions which dominated the global political, economic and technology since the 14th century. They have expanded their colonial territories up to the region of Asian Nations. During the 1500s and 1600s, Europeans were able to take control on the international trade of Asia. By the 1800s the Europeans were in a position of establishing their authority over much of Asia regions, particularly the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. In 1920s, the British had acquired effective control and direction of every state and settlement in Malaya¹.

Under the auspices of the colonialist rules, many Asian countries have been forced to submit and adhere to the legal policies, administrative and Western style of education for generations. The impact of this long occupation has transformed the local culture and socialization. Asian countries, such as China, India, Burmese, Vietnamese, Philippine, Indonesia, Singapore, and Malaysia are no exceptions enduring the dilemma rooted in the West as the focal reference in many paths from trivial to major. Colonialism is linked with the idea that the ways of life of colonizers are superior to colonize². Malaysia has had enormous influences of Western culture, especially in their dressing, and in the way they eat and speak.

In terms of socialization, modernization was and still influence by the Western ideology. There were some significant patterns of thinking especially in the development of art in Southeast Asia. The Western art ideologies or concept began as early as the 19th and 20th century of 'Realism', 'Impressionism', 'Expressionism', 'Abstract Expressionism', 'Surrealism', 'Cubism', 'Dadaism' and the 'Conceptual

¹ Milner, A. C., *Colonial Records History: British Malaya*, Modern Asian Studies, Vol. 21, No. 4 (1987), pp. 773-792, Cambridge University Press. p.778.

² Rey Ty., *Colonialism and Nationalism in Southeast Asia*, Web.10/10/2011.
<http://www.seasite.niu.edu/crossroads/ty.htm>