

**UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA**

**READING THE VISUAL FORM OF  
MALAYSIAN COMICS ART**

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

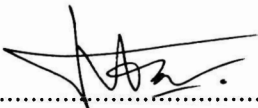
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## ABSTRACT

People nowadays lives in a convergence culture who witnessing how the meeting of old and new media open up new possibilities in the contemporary culture. One of cultivates popular culture in late nineteenth century is the medium of comics. The amusement of comics invited its reader – young or adult – to be immersed into its world. Taking underrated subject matter in popular visual culture such as comics is an intriguing task. While people would agree that cartoons are valuable reflection of society, yet it is an arduous task to take since it was not yet count as a truly significant scholarship. The lack of appreciation made the richness of local comics unseen and as an important contemporary visual culture remains undiscovered. Articulating the expression of contemporary Malaysian comics is not even more a lucid mission. Working pace by pace in this study begins with documenting to perform an initial reading/viewing of all sources and to take notes about the general ways the visually appears contents of four limited established and eligible comics' magazines at that time being such as *Gila Gila*, *Ujang*, *Gempak*, and *G3*, which consider to study its visual form and design. Second, researcher used semiotics analysis to generate the visual form categorization. Based on the contents of formal visual structure and semiotics visual analysis, researcher then finally gain insight from the phenomenology of the arts to explicate the findings. It is important yet meaningful to understand the perspectives in studying visual art such as the comics study; that researcher pre-reflectively involves as the first-person experience.

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# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 BACKGROUND OF STUDY**

Nowadays, in the contemporary culture, we witness how people ‘living in a convergence culture, with the meetings between old and new media, creating new possibilities (Murray, 2009)’. One of the modern cultures that emerged since the late nineteenth century is comics, and appeared in variety of design forms such as gag cartoon or editorial cartoon, comic-strips or graphic novel as part of the major mass-media inside such as newspaper and magazine. Even further publishes in form of book of its own format and design. In spite of the problem to overcome the avalanche of imported – often translated comics, the burgeoning demand of reading comics itself was quite a fascinating phenomenon. They shares content with vast varieties of drawing techniques stylization, along with far-reaching stories in various themes or genre.

There is massive loose open market of audiences suitable to a kid’s fantasy to adult life’s dramas and artistic comics as well. The amusement of comics seems inviting people – young or adult – to get immersed into the joyful world of comics. Regardless of the facts that common people often favour comics simply as a light reading material merely for leisure at their spare time; yet, the global interest in study the comics seriously began to grow in many universities day by day. It was first and foremost propagated by academics within diverse educational backgrounds as well as enthusiasm sprung amongst the serious comics fan base.

Meanwhile, within the time period, Malaysian cartoon and comics artists base on their practical seem to originate quite distinctive visual language in those comics artform. Contemporary Malaysian comics are a mix range of themes and shared artistic artform taking from the past, the present and to prepare the future dialog between the generation of local culture and the global influences.