

ARCHIVING A CULTURAL HERITAGE: THE NYONYA KEBAYA



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### TAJUK PROJEK : ARCHIVING A CULTURAL HERITAGE : THE NYONYA KEBAYA

Dengan hormatnya perkara di atas adalah dirujuk.

Sukacita dimaklumkan bahawa cadangan penyelidikan yang telah dikemukakan oleh tuan/puan bersama Encik Azhar Abdul Aziz dan Puan Anitawati Mohd Lokman telah diluluskan.

- i. Tempoh projek penyelidikan ini ialah 12 bulan, iaitu bermula **15 September 2005** hingga **14 September 2006**.
- ii. Kos yang diluluskan adalah sebanyak **RM16,000.00** sahaja. Diharapkan perkara ini tidak mematahkan semangat tuan/puan untuk menjalankan penyelidikan dan diharapkan kos tersebut dapat membantu pihak tuan/puan memulakan projek.
- iii. Tuan/puan perlu membelanjakan **50%** daripada geran penyelidikan yang telah diluluskan bagi projek tuan/puan dalam tempoh **6 bulan** pertama projek berjalan. Sehubungan itu, pihak IRDC akan memantau penggunaan geran penyelidikan tuan/puan untuk memastikan 50% daripada jumlah geran yang diluluskan telah dibelanjakan sehingga bulan **Mac 2006**.
- iv. Semua pembelian peralatan yang kosnya melebihi RM500.00 satu item perlu menggunakan Pesanan Jabatan Universiti Teknologi MARA (LO). Pihak tuan/puan juga dikehendaki mematuhi peraturan penerimaan peralatan. Panduan penerimaan peralatan baru dan pengurusannya, dilampirkan.
- v. Semua peralatan / kelengkapan penyelidikan yang dibeli adalah menjadi hak milik fakulti. Semua peralatan / kelengkapan hendaklah diserahkan kepada pihak fakulti setelah tamat penyelidikan untuk kegunaan bersama.
- vi. Seperti yang tuan/puan sedia maklum tuan/puan perlu membentangkan kertas kerja di Seminar Hasil Penyelidikan IRDC setelah projek tamat dijalankan nanti.
- vii. Kertas kerja boleh dibentangkan di seminar selain daripada yang dianjurkan oleh IRDC setelah 75% deraf awal laporan akhir projek dihantar ke IRDC untuk semakan. Walau bagaimanapun, tuan/puan perlu membuat permohonan kepada pihak kami.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.0 Project Background

Malaysia is a multicultural society with a rich cultural heritage. It has a total population more than 21 million consisting of the Malays, Chineses, Indians, Kadazans, Dayaks, Bajaus, Melanaus, Muruts, Eurasians and aborigines (Shahar, 2000). Malaysia is multiracial, and these races live together experiencing their own cultures and belief yet sharing it with others. Each of these cultures has vigorously maintained its traditions and community structures. They have also blended together to create contemporary Malaysia's uniquely diverse heritage. One example of the complexity with which Malaysia's immigrant populations have contributed to the nation's culture as a whole is the history of Chinese immigrants (Geographia; 2005). The first Chinese to settle in the straits, primarily in and around Malacca, gradually adopted elements of Malaysian culture and intermarried with the Malaysian community. Known as **babas** and **nyonyas**, they eventually produced a synthetic set of practices, beliefs, and arts, combining Malay and Chinese traditions in such a way as to create a new culture.

The history of these Peranakan or Straits Born Chinese is begun when a beautiful princess from the Chinese Ming Dynasty, called Hang Li Poh came into Malacca in the early fifteenth century. She was presented as a bride to the Malacca Sultan and part of her entourage included five hundred youths and several hundred women attendants of noble descent, to wait on her and keep the princess company in her new home. This people were placed in Bukit China in the Malay Archipelago and in the end, they intermarried with the local Malays. Later on, the population of this Straits Born Chinese

increased when the early Chinese traders from Kwantung province in China came into Malacca and intermarried with local women.

## 1.1 Problem description

Straits Chinese, Straits Born Chinese, Baba Chinese, Baba (and their womenfolk Nyonya) and Peranakan are term used interchangeably in Malaysia to describe the Baba Nyonya community, a subethnic group of the Peranakan Chinese community whose culture and life-style is fusion of predominantly Chinese and Malaysia influences (Mahmood, 2004). The Peranakan culture is consist of a synthetic set of practices, beliefs, and arts, combining Malay and Chinese traditions.

Unfortunately the esthetic of the Peranakan culture is dying slowly because of the modernization. The Late Datin Seri Endon Mahmood, wife of the Prime Minister of Malaysia was accredited with the revival of the dress of the female Peranakan known as Nyonya kebaya ([kakiseni.com](http://kakiseni.com)). In Malaysia many problem occurs when the government or individuals attempt to conserve cultural heritage information in the right place. The related problem is when organizing and storing the data in a systematic manner for easy access. The other problem is that, the availability of cultural databases that are accessible through the internet is lacking in Malaysia (Shahar; 2000). Researchers always face difficulties to get the data that is related to the cultural heritage because the information will be found in institutions such as archives, libraries and museums (Hedegaard et al, 2005). For the researchers who are not familiar with the institution they have difficulty finding the information. The data that is related to the cultural heritage like Nyonya kebaya should be documented in the proper manner. The data should be digitized so that it can be easily accessed, to ensure accurate, timely and integrated cultural information for the Nyonya kebaya.