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## INTRODUCTION

**ARTE: Art and Expression** is a biannual book chapter, published under collaboration of Department of Fine Arts, Faculty of Art & Design, UiTM Perak Branch with Galeri Al-Biruni under the supervision of Universiti Teknologi MARA, Malaysia. 'ARTE' is an amalgamation of english word 'Art', and malay word, specifically Perak slang 'Ate' which translate as conversation starter. 'ARTE' uses the concept of book chapter that platform art enthusiasts to express their inner-creativity in the form of literacy conjecture

## VISION

Art and expression as aspiration towards stylistic and artistic practices

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- To enhance the culture of research and academic publication among academician and artist for international recognition
- To promote intellectual, cultural and knowledge sharing through artistic expression
- To celebrate the diversity and differences in arts practices thus creating and intellectual platform for artist to express their interest in art

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# A JOURNEY TO REMEMBER

*Malay Traditional Costume Inspired*

*a chapter by*

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## Abstract

A journey to remember is a fashion design collection that is inspired by traditional Malay clothing. This adaptation is taken from various angles of wear, the way of wearing as well as the pieces of clothing that are changed through the resulting idea as a new design. The creation of this design work through the observation of the history of traditional Malay men's and women's clothing. The history of the beginning of use in the Malay world expands from the concept to the changes of civilization through certain influences such as trade, religion and technology. Old photos of Malay clothes are used as a reference in sketching new designs and also as a transformation of new ideas in fashion design. From the process of carrying out the design through the method of drawing as well as up to 3D prototype will be the findings of the final study of a design.

**Keywords:** *Traditional Malay Clothing, fashion design, New design*

## Introduction

Clothing is one of the most important basic needs that humans wear to live a more perfect life. During prehistoric times, humans began to create clothing when driven by the surrounding conditions as well as weather factors. The awareness of the potential of basic materials such as bark and even animals is prominent in the creation to cover the human body. However, over time following the progress and revolution of human civilization - from the use of basic materials such as goat hair and silk - clothing choices had moved directly to the creation of synthetic materials such as nylon and polyester. The purpose of dressing is not just to look attractive; it is also a place for

nations of various civilizations to show their creative art and level of technological achievement. The clash of international cultures also played an important role in the clothing revolution according to time and civilization. Again, when trade, assimilation and international relations were recorded in books such as *Sejarah Malay*, cultural influences involved in the changes in the dress of the Malay race.

## Literature Review

### Early History of Malay Clothing

Sarong is the basic clothing worn by Malay women and men. It is very synonymous with sarong by wearing as "berkemban" of Malay women. According to Zubaidah Sual in the book *Busana Melayu* said that "berkemban", the way of wearing was practiced in the early 15th century. Men are also not left behind in wearing sarongs as daily clothes. This is evidenced in the book *Kelantan-A State of The Malay Peninsula* by M.A. Graham stated that Malay men wear three pieces of sarong as basic clothing that covers the human body. Cik Siti Wan Kembang is the ruler of Kelantan, a woman who clearly shows the characteristics of wearing the concept of development. Changes and influences in the wearing give an impact in the way of wearing as after the advent of Islam this growing wear is no longer used to the public but the concept of sarong is still used to this day.

### The Influence of Traditional Dress

The development of Malay traditional clothing; culture is an interesting phenomenon as it meets the theme of design production entitled "A journey to remember". The Malay community from

the beginning was known as the archipelago which covers the Malay world widely, therefore the influence around plays an important role in changing the way of wearing and also the design of clothing. The emergence of the Malay kingdom of Melaka in the 15th century has placed it as a strong centre of government in terms of influence, trade, politics and economy. Melaka's position as a port city made it a strategic place to be an emporium of merchandise from the east and west. Among the popular merchandise at that time under the influence of clothing was textiles. Silk cloth from China and cloth embroidered with gold thread and Cindai cloth or known as Patola from India. In Malay literature books there is a record of the Sultan of Melaka bestowing a copy of the dress to the dignitaries to them. Foreign guests facing the sultan were also often presented with cloth and clothing.

In the seventh century there was an influx of Islamic influences brought in by Arab and Persian traders. Apart from conducting trade, the spread of Islam was also brought into Malaya. This is indirectly changing the form of clothing and the way the Malay community wears according to the Islamic way. Culture and customs play a role in the context of the change of a culture such as Malaysia which is known for its various races. The Baba and Nyonya race are also one of the historical effects of the influence brought by the Chinese state. As you know, the Baba and Nyonya kebaya dress is no stranger to the Malay community in Melaka, while in Penang, it is known as the Chetti community. From the point of view of food, culture and art are also indirectly influenced by the effects of this cultural transformation.

Influences from other countries such as Indonesia also have similarities in terms of usage, customs and others. If in the state of Perak, it is known as Baju Puteri Perak while in Indonesia it is known as Baju Adat Aceh. The shape of the dress and also the way it is worn are the same, only the name has changed. There are many more similarities in terms of Malaysian and Indonesian traditional dress because in the past it was known as the Malay cluster. Customs and cultures such as Negeri Sembilan also have the same influence from Indonesia which is known as Minangkabau.

The influence of colonialism also made changes in the dress of the Malay community. Among them, the influence from the British gave an impact in the dress of Malay men who made the meeting of two cultures east and west. As a result of this influence, a trend of wearing known as "Pakaian Kehormatan Barat". Various pictures of aristocrats and kings dressed like this are some of them taken in London. Because there are various influences that beautify Malay culture in terms of usage that makes the identity of the Malay race quite unique.

### Types of Malay Clothing

Malay traditional clothing is divided into two; Traditional Malay Clothing for Men and Women. There are several pieces or names of this traditional Malay dress:



Figure 1: Classification of Malay Traditional Clothing

### Designer Reference

Design Collection	Description
	Guo Pei's Chinese Blue Porcelain Dress helped Miss China 2012 and Miss Universe 2012 finalist Ji Dan Xu take top prize in the national costume segment of the pageant.
	This richly patterned, jewel-encrusted gold "tour de force," is fit for an empress. It took thousands of man-hours to embroider.
	The painstakingly executed, detailed embellishment is proof of the needle workers' skill.; These haute couture works of art are influenced by both Western and Asian fashion sensibilities.

Figure 2: Table of Guo Pei Collection.

The designs produced by designer Guo Pei are strongly influenced by traditional Chinese clothing and culture. The details produced are Haute Couture with decorative embroidery art that is inspired by the richness of Chinese art. The king's clothing was taken as a reference by Guo Pei in his designs from various dynasties, especially the Ming and Qing eras (1369-1911). In 2012 during the Miss Universe 2012 competition when Miss China wore a Costume dress that resisted the idea of inspiration from Chinese pottery art, had her winning the Best Costume category. Taken from the Chien dynasty, the details of the pattern produced by the use of white and blue in Guo Pei's design.

### Methodology



Figure 3: The process of research and design.

The process in producing a design is divided into several parts before the final evaluation is selected. For a designer it is very important to get an identity in every design and also as one of the specialties of a garment that is created. This process involves a variety of research methods. Fashion forecast also plays an important role as a reference in current trends and also according to the four seasons of the world because this involves market trends and also the power of buyers according to the current circulation.

“Research is about creative investigation; it’s about recording information for use now or in the future”

In the book Basic Fashion Design written by Simon Seivewright (2007) explains the importance of conducting a study in clothing design starting

from collecting data and then the processes of sketching the initial ideas and experiments are carried out based on the source of inspiration obtained.

“working on fabric, colour and inspiration, garments go hand at the beginning of season as each on inspires the other.”

Michele Manz, senior director of womenswear for Converse by John Varvatos describes the fabric, colour and inspiration need each other for the creation of each fashion season there are four seasons where the design is designed depending on the inspiration chosen. The importance of fabric in fashion design is very important where a certain method is carried out and also the suitability of the fabric used for consumer. Here, the experiment process is also carried out to get the suitability where the person needs to be skilled in the fabric from the point of view of character and also the form, so that the process of designing the fashion design is in accordance with the suitability.

### Designer Fashion Statement



Figure 4: A design collection by the theme A Journey to Remember

Journey to remember is a theme for a collection of the design inspired by traditional Malay men’s and women’s clothing. The design takes up the enchanting ways of how the old Malay traditional attire are worn. The process of making up this collection was taken from the pattern making and

also the creative art of the ancient Malay community such as the way of tying fabric such as “sarong” or “berkemban”. The headpieces as known as “tengkolok”, “Destar” and “kelubung” is one of the art pieces in Malay traditional attire and the art of jewellery is also taken into interpretation in this design. This traditional clothing is modified from a rectangular element that is part such as “kekek” and “pesak” which is transformed into a new dress pattern that suits each design that is produced. Another idea is what the foreign traders brought with them that influence the Malay world, as we already know the influence from Arabs into Malay Archipelago. So, the design features that are collection display the influence of “Abayya” and not forgetting the British influence that takes the elements of western clothing that is changed and combined together.

The colour selection used in this design is white and admiral blue. Even though yellow is considered as the colour of aristocracy, the chosen admiral blue can also symbolize the colour of the aristocracy. The combination of white colour is as a catalyst and symbolizes purity in the theme of this dress. While the fabric used is taffeta, Thai silk, raw silk and also songket fabric. In order to maintain the Malay characteristics, songket is chosen as it is hugely synonymous to portray Malay identity.



Figure 5: Fashion Photoshoot with the styling Avant-guard

## Conclusion

As a conclusion, this design is an adaptation to bring back the dignity of traditional Malay clothing that is modified with modern and contemporary designs. And this design is also in the category of evening wear that is suitable to show off luxury and also to certain occasions only. The designer just wants to draw back the art and Malay beauty of this traditional Malay clothing so that this dress is not categorized as not outdated.

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*Setuju.*

*27.1.2023*

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