

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**IDENTIFICATION OF MALAY
AESTHETIC CONCEPT IN VISUAL
ARTWORKS**

NURATIKAH BINTI ABU HASSAN

Thesis submitted in fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Art and Design

Faculty of Art and Design

May 2019

ABSTRACT

Aesthetics is classified as an intangible matter that cannot be seen from the naked eyes but can be felt through our sensory perception. According to Imam Al- Ghazali, aesthetic is considered as a beauty, “*Allah is beautiful and Allah loves beauty*”. In addition, aesthetic values can be seen through different perspectives especially in visual artworks. In Malaysia, the Malay identification was abandoned in the development of Malaysian art. Certain groups of Malaysian artists nowadays tend to discuss their artworks based on the reflection from the current and social issues that view the impact and problems. This research seeks to investigate the characteristics of Malay aesthetics that are embodied in local painting in Malaysia from the 1970s to the 1990s. Then, to analyze the selected samples of artworks, a theory of Malay beauty concept by Zakaria Ali (1989) is used. The method of this study is based on data analysis from previous and current studies and is interlinked to the visual artworks. Indeed, by compiling the analysis on the artworks, the outcome of this study will serve as a useful contribution to the Malaysian art scene related to Malay aesthetic concepts.

Keywords: Identification, Malay Aesthetic, Concept, Visual Artworks.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

“In the name of Allah, the Most Gracious and Most Merciful”

To begin with this, I wish to express the most gratitude towards Allah Almighty, who has given me guidance throughout this whole research process. I thank to Him for the blessing of giving me strength throughout this journeys and without it, I may not be able to complete this task on the dateline.

Most of all, I would like to thank both of my supervisors, Encik Suhaimi Bin Tohid and Prof. Madya Haji Ponirin Bin Amin, for their supervision as well for their patient guidance and encouragement throughout this study. I thank to them for allowing me to learn and gain a valuable knowledge, for the sharing of ideas, suggestions and for their undivided attention, their time and their patience in seeing me throughout the duration of me completing my research. I humbly thank to my beloved family, especially my parents for their continuous moral support. Thank you so much. My special thanks go to National Visual Art Gallery, Textile Museum, National Archive, Gallery Shah Alam, State Museum Terngganu, Desa Ukiran Besut Terengganu and other public and private gallery.

The experience along the completion of this task had gained a new knowledge and experiences. My gratitude thanks to the Al Mighty.

Thank you.

TABLE OF CONTENT

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	v
TABLE OF CONTENT	vi
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Research Background	1
1.2 Significance of Study	6
1.3 Scope of Study	6
1.4 Research Limitation	7
1.5 Statement of the Problem	7
1.6 Aim	9
1.7 Objectives	9
1.8 Research Questions	9
1.9 Theses Outline	10
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	12
2.1 Introduction	12
2.2 Definition and Terms of Aesthetics	13
2.3 The Development of Malay Philosophical Thoughts	18
2.4 The Influence of <i>Tawhid</i> Concept in Visual Artworks	19
2.5 The Concept of Malay Sufism	29
2.6 The Characteristic of Malay Aesthetics	29
2.7 The Concept of Aesthetics in Malay Traditional Arts	33

2.7.1	Traditional Malay Woodcarving	35
2.7.2	The Aesthetic of Malay Traditional Batik and <i>Songket</i>	44
2.8	Theory of Malay Beauty Concept: Zakaria Ali (1989)	48
2.9	Malay Aesthetic Concept in Visual Arts	55
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY		60
3.1	Introduction	60
3.2	Research Design	61
3.3	Research Process	62
3.3.1	Stage I & II: Review of Literature and Analysis Data	63
3.3.2	Stage III: Visual Analysis Research	64
3.3.2 (a)	Interview	64
3.3.2 (b)	Research Site	65
3.3.2 (c)	Selection of artworks	65
3.3.3	Stage IV: Analysis of the Design in Visual Artworks	67
3.3.4	The Phase's Guideline in the National Cultural Policy (1970)	70
3.4	Theoretical Framework	71
CHAPTER FOUR: DATA ANALYSIS		73
4.1	Introduction	73
4.2	Theory of Art Criticism: Edmund Feldman (1994)	74
4.3	Theory of Malay Beauty Concept: Zakaria Ali (1989)	77
4.4	Analysis of the Visual Artworks	80
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION		154
5.1	Introduction	154
5.2	Representation of Motifs in Visual Artworks	155
5.3	Identification of Malay/ Islamic Motifs in the Visual Artworks	157
5.4	Representation of Geometric Shape in Visual Artworks	158
5.5	The aesthetics of <i>Pucuk Rebung</i> motifs	159