

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1. Background of the Study

This dissertation is based on the development of kimono in Japanese civilization from the beginning of 17th until the present modern days. The title of this dissertation is the development structure of kimono, rather than a complete history of either dress or fashion. It revolves between politic, economic and social aspects. And we could see how these three aspects influence each other throughout the centuries in the making of kimono by not neglecting the spiritual foundation of kimono culture: love, beauty, courtesy and harmony.

By looking at the development of kimono, we could see how kimono can have meaning in other civilizations or countries besides Japan. Even kimono beauty has already been recognized in the world of fashion and fashion industrials. The writer believes wearing the kimono is a kind of understanding that will lead to a discovery of traditional cultural values and the Japanese identity clearly.

Kimono, meaning clothing in Japanese, is perhaps one of Japan's most beautiful treasures. The writer would like to share with you the beauty of Japanese kimono, kimono fabric and pattern, types of Japanese clothing, kimono culture, and the history as well as the development of kimono in Japanese civilization.

Kimono grew among the Japanese, passing from hands of one artisan to another. Through centuries the kimonos have been bequeathed to us today. While preserving the national costume of Japan and at the same time taking advantage of new synthetic materials, Japanese have kept the kimono as a part of modern life and civilization.

1.2. Significance of the Study

The study hopes to provide some insights on the development of kimono in Japanese culture from 17th century until the present modern days. The findings indicate that there is a significant relationship between the developments of kimono not only to the Japanese but the whole world nations. With the understanding of kimono culture, the writer feels a strong urge to bring kimono into the attention of many.

The study may be able to contribute some positive implications, exposure and comprehension in the development of kimono in Japanese civilization by getting closer to the fashion, culture and style in the making of kimono since 17th century until today and how the Japanese preserve and view the value of kimono.

One of the significance of the study is that, with the understanding of culture and arts it will equip us with the knowledge and at the same time enlighten society views on how important to appreciate the making and development of kimono. Another significant of the study is that it can be used as a tool to understand the history, development of clothing in Japanese, also integrating the developments, both in materials and designs, in other culture.

1.3 Objective of the Study

Briefly the objectives of this research and specifically aims are as follows:

1. To study the development of Japan's kimono since 17th century until the present modern days through its historical background, artistic, volume and quality.
2. To study the significance of kimono to the world of civilization and fashion.
3. To measure the contribution of Japan's kimono to the development of politic, economic and social from the history, civilization, globalization and Western world point of view.
4. To check the adverse and favorable effects in kimono development throughout 17th century to the modern days.
5. To determine how the kimono development as a bridge building attempt in the world of fashion between Japan and Western civilization.

1.4 Scope of the Study

Like other research or study that had been carried out in the past, this study too has its limit in subject and area. One of its limitations would be that the study would focus on the significance development of kimono in Japanese civilization from the 17th century until the present modern days. This study not taking into accounts those of the significance development of kimono in Japanese civilization way back to 16th century.

This study looks at the response led to the rise, development and emergence of kimono in Japan civilization from the 17th century until the present modern days.

The writer would like to see and observe how the Japanese preserve kimono as their most proud national costume, and at the same time taking advantage of new synthetic material, Japanese have kept the kimono as a vital part of modern life and civilization.

1.5 Research Methodology

The dissertation is an effort means of library research. The procedure of “read-contemplated-write” is employed to sheave through the overwhelming data as well as organizing a meaningful research upon kimono development in Japan beginning of 17th century until the present.

The reading materials are mainly sources from two libraries, namely the Main Library of the University Malaya and the Library of Japanese Foundation. Besides, books loan from lecturers and friends as well as personal encyclopedias collection constitute the rest of needed materials for the dissertation.

The type of materials from the original texts translated work of the original texts, commentaries, and general guidebooks. The writer’s reading on some kimono original work was facilitated by translated texts both English and Japanese.

Lastly, as the writing of dissertation gets going, the writer monitors that each sections of the dissertation ends with a paraphrased summary of conclusion. It is so in order to present thoughts clearly and that the goal of this research can be achieved. The deduction skills are employed to elaborate on where and what the findings or conclusions of the research would lead to the readers too.

1.6 Difficulties Encountered

The writer encountered several difficulties while working on this dissertation. The problem rose from vagueness and ambiguity of concept, terminology, and translation problems.

While the original books mainly are in Japanese respectively, the effort bring it together with English relies on good translation work. The writer is relying on the English and Malay translations to grasp the exact words and Japanese writing.

The writer, after weighing on the matter, decided to take the freedom to rephrase translation or even employing the writer's own version of translation, as language style is difficult to follow.

It would be lovely if the writer could take a trip to Japan and have a closer look at the development of kimono in the present days and collect some useful data, reading materials and information from Japan itself but the cost would be way too expensive.