

SINIPAK COSTUME OF THE DUSUN TINDAL WOMEN FOLK OF SABAH

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The *sinipak* traditional costumery is a centuries-old heritage inherited by the *Dusun Tindal* ethnic community located mainly in the flatlands of Kampung Bangkahak, Kampung Tempasuk and Kampung Piasau in the Kota Belud district of Sabah, Malaysia. The designs and accessories exhibited in the *sinipak* costume of the *Dusun Tindal* womenfolk are representative of natural materials and elements integrated with human creativity, and are traditionally perceived as symbols of wealth and social status within the community. Findings of this study were derived from fieldwork data and analysis of the design concepts of the *sinipak* female costumery.

Keywords: *Dusun Tindal*, design, *sinipak*, costume, and accessories

1. INTRODUCTION

An ethnic group or community could be identified through the culture that the people in that grouping practise such as their traditional costumes, dances, and language or dialect spoken. For the *Dusun Tindal*, their traditional costumery is one of the most distinctive and unique attributes of their heritage. These ornate costumes, rich in traditional adornment and steeped in cultural significance, are commonly donned during festivities and important events such as weddings, welcoming of visitors, and other social events.

The Dusun Tindal ethnic has two types of traditional costumes known as *sinipak* and *rinagang*. These two types of costumes were recorded by I.H.N Evans in year 1953 and John White in 1893. Recorded images of both traditional costumes in the form of photographs proved their existence in the history of Dusun Tindal ethnic. Changes in costume designs can also be seen from time to time until today. The *sinipak* costumes are worn by Dusun Tindal ethnic who lived in flat area while the *rinagang* costumes are worn by Dusun Tindal ethnic lived on the hillside.

The focus of this study is the *sinipak* costumes, which have a design dominated in black colour and decorated with red *dastar* [Table 1 (i)]. According to informant 1 (Pahau, personal communication, Feb 4, 2016) due to the time transition, these costumes are decorated by attractive accessories and beads embroidery to make them more attractive [Table 1 (ii)]. Among the transformation are the changes in the size of the embroidery *dastar* fabric, the geometric motifs were embroidered with smaller size and more attractive. Today's costume design is more complex with the use of more comfortable fabrics and the addition of the embroidery motifs to the *sinipak* costume [Table 1 (iii)].

2. BACKGROUND

The traditional costumery of the *Dusun Tindal* consists of the *sinipak*, *rinagang* and *sinuranga*. All three are black in colour and would usually be embellished with colourful embroidery patterns, motifs or decorations. The *sinipak* itself has male and female versions; this study examines specifically the *sinipak* for womenfolk in terms of its functions and accompanying accessories.

3. METHODOLOGY

Photography is used in practice-based research or other research situations or environments for the acquisition of visual data, storage or management of visual