

**Creativity And Strategy:
Marketing The *Bangsawan Kampung* of Sarawak In The 1950s**

by

Nur Afifah Vanitha Abdullah
Department of Performing Arts
Faculty of Applied and Creative Arts
Universiti Malaysia Sarawak
anafifah@yahoo.com

The *Bangsawan* or Malay Opera was adopted from the professional *Bangsawan* touring troupes from Malaya and Singapore by the locals of Sarawak. Eventually by the late 1930s, *Bangsawan* performance was performed by the Malay of Sarawak. Its amateur performers and minimalist performance approach placed *Bangsawan* under the village *Bangsawan (Bangsawan Kampung)* category in Sarawak. Although *Bangsawan Kampung* in Sarawak could not outdo the professional and extravagant nature of *Bangsawan* from Malaya and Singapore, it managed to merge as a popular theatre amongst the Malay community members during the 1950s in Kuching. The local Malays intelligently altered the contents of 'extra turns' (among the vital aspects in *Bangsawan* performance structure) to attract audiences. Their efforts were fruitful and *Bangsawan* managed to retain its commercial nature, although its production mode was amateur.

This paper intends to magnify changes in extra turns of *Bangsawan* performance among the Sarawak Malays in the early 1950s. Detailed observation on new aspects of extra turn in *Bangsawan Kampung* will highlight the Malay organizers creative strategies in marketing the art form.