

DEBATING ASIAN VALUES: A CASE STUDY OF MALAYSIAN REALITY TV SHOWS

Zarina Zawawi and Faisal Ibrahim
SEGi University College
9, Jalan Teknologi, Taman Sains Selangor,
Kota Damansara, PJU5,
47810 Petaling Jaya, Malaysia
Email: zarina@segi.edu.my

ABSTRACT

The debates on Asian values have revolved around various perspectives which reflect shared values, collectivism and consensus. The concepts of Asian values such as Confucianism and Islam have been found to be in opposition to the Western approach to life. This paper examines and compares the debate on Asian values in the 1990s and those brought up in the 2000s, arguing that the Malaysian inflections of Asian values are skewed towards culture and religion instead of the commonly accepted values. The significant roles of Islam and Malay cultural values in the debates are also discussed.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Malaysia is considered one of Islamic world's most modern and open societies. Although most Malaysians fully embrace their own cultural and Asian values, influences from foreign cultures and values such as those of the West transmitted by the media are generally accepted. In Malaysia these influences from the media are considered part of the media globalization process. More influences from the West, which conflict with Asian values, began to be transmitted in forms of Western television genres with the launch of Malaysia's first government controlled satellite television station in 1997. Although the content is censored by the television station, there are still very strong Western influences in these programs which invite the Malaysian audiences to adopt Western practices. More often than not, these Western television genres which carry Western values are imitated, adopted and adapted to local context. These Western programs have been criticized by Malaysian elites and conservative parties as having values that "threaten [Asian] values, and steer viewers toward moral and cultural corruption" ("Reality TV", 2005, p.1).

The original debate on Asian values, which started in the 1990s, revolved around the core values of the Asian region which are shared values, collectivism and consensus. These values have been identified to be in opposition to the Western values that thrive on liberalism values (Heywood, 2007, pp. 23-27) such as individuality, upholding human rights and promoting freedom of speech. Although Asia consists of various ethnic cultures and religious beliefs, the core attributes of Asian values, shared values, collectivism and consensus, are the basis of most Asian cultures. However, this is where the similarities end. The heterogeneity of Asian cultures has brought about different inflections of Asian values and these have been interpreted differently by different ethnic and religious groups (Langguth, 2003, pp 25-42).

This paper will examine and compare the debate on Asian values in the 1990s - championed by Lee Kuan Yew, former Prime Minister of Singapore, and Dr Mahathir Mohamed, former Prime Minister of Malaysia - with the debates on Asian values that were brought up between 2003 and 2005 in regards to the Malaysian reality TV programs, *Mencari Cinta* and *Akademi Fantasia* by the Malaysian elites and conservative parties. The argument in this paper stands on the premise that Malaysia's own inflections of Asian values as reflected in the criticisms on the local reality TV programs (2003-2005) are skewed towards more cultural and Islamic values rather than shared values, collectivism and consensus. Therefore, Asian values are not homogeneous, but are diverse and specific to the nation. In the discussion of recent debates (2003-2005), the ambivalence about the portrayal of Asian values in the two programs is considered.

2.0 DEBATE ON ASIAN VALUES IN THE 1990S

The debate on Asian values in the early 1990s, brought up by the former Prime Minister of Singapore, Lee Kuan Yew, started because of arguments against human rights policies in Asian cultures. Lee believes that Asian cultures work differently from the West and therefore should be exempted from the global human rights policy (Barr, 2000, p. 309). Asian cultures thrive on the concepts of shared values, collectivism and consensus, whereby others' needs or collective needs are put before individual needs. Therefore human rights' policies, which uphold the rights of individuals, are not suitable to be implemented in Asian culture. The argument about the differences between Asian culture and Western liberalism values was supported by Mahathir Mohamad, former Prime Minister of Malaysia, by claiming that Asians have their own cultural and ideological practices that uphold the core values of shared values, collectivism and consensus. Therefore Asian nations should continue to conduct day to day lives upholding these values. Dr Mahathir frequently refers to 'eastern work ethics' (Khoo, 1995 as cited in Khoo, 1999, p. 182) as the pillar of Asian Values.

Coming from the Western scholars, Samuel Huntington in his populist book *Clash of Civilization and the Remaking of World Order* sees the opposition between Asian values and Western values as the new cold war (1993 as cited in Harper, 1997, p. 507). According to Harper (1997, pp 507-517), Barr (2000, pp 310-334) and Langguth (2003, pp 25-42), the concepts of Asian values such as Confucianism and Islam support the following thoughts, feelings and actions towards a more selfless approach; family and community over the rights of individual; consensus above dissent; and discipline above permissiveness. All of these are in opposition to the Western approach to life.

The debate on Asian values started in response to the demands of human rights policy and the quest to flatten cultural differences. Scholars such as Chua, Khoo, Langguth and Barr note that Lee promotes Asian values based on the teaching of Confucianism where emphasis is placed on collectivism, shared values and community orientation as opposed to the Western values that promote active competitiveness and individualism (Chua, 1998; Chua, 2004, Khoo, 1999; Langguth, 2003; Barr, 2000). Lee proposes that:

[There] has been a debasement of what I call Confucian values; I mean duty to friends and family and your extended family, and to be loyal and supportive of your friends. And you should do it in

[sic] your own private purse not from the public treasury. (Straits Times, 28 May 1998 as cited in Chua, 2004, p. 103).

Lee believes that ‘Confucianism’ values are the foundation of socio-economic prosperity in Asia (Chua, 1998; Chua, 2004, Khoo, 1999; Langguth, 2003; Barr 2000). However, realizing that Singapore has a multiracial mix of population of 77% Chinese, 14% of Malays and 8% Indian (“Population”, n.d.), Lee decided to take on a more holistic approach in mid 1990s. He began to change and promote the ideology of “shared values” in substitution of “Confucian” values to the Singaporeans (Chua, 1998 p. 215).

Lee believes that the Asian values derived from the bases of Confucianism have long reflected the social behavior of the communities in the Asian region which largely consist of the Chinese-Confucian, Malay-Muslim and Indian-Hindu practices (Chua, 2004, p. 99). According to Chua, the communalist spirit of Confucianism can be adapted to other Asian faiths such Islam and Hinduism. The Islamic faith, for example, which constitutes a big part of the Malay identity, has its own communitarian practices through the concept of *ummah*, the idea of Muslim unity, respect for one another and mutual cooperation in quest for community spirit (Zamani, 2002, p. 145). In the practice of ethnic-Chinese society, the notion of shared values is not only based on communalism, it is also based on concepts of relations and reciprocity. To illustrate this in the aspect of the family institution, parents provide for their children in return for the children’s unconditional loyalty and high obligation to the family which has provided for them (Chua, 2004, p. 99). The shared values practiced by the Chinese-Confucian community are non-exclusive whereby the Indian-Hindu and the Malay-Muslim communities have their own versions of ‘shared values’ which is a part of their lifestyle.

According to Harper (1997, p. 509), Mahathir Mohamad, sees Asian values as the “challenge to neo-imperialism of the West”. He perceives the West is taking their core values for granted and leaving interpretation of values in the hands of its market-driven society. These sorts of values are rejected by their Asian counterparts because, in their perspectives, huge forms of modernization and industrialization have led to social evil and moral decay in general (Harper, 1997; Barr 2000; Langguth, 2003; Chua, 1998; Chua, 2004; Khoo, 1999). However, Lee states that the Asian leaders have borrowed several Western socio-economic concepts to modernize their nations and their people (Langguth, 2003, p. 29). According to media and cultural studies scholars, these influences are in fact a form of modernization of the nation and its local culture (Richstad, 1998, p. 300; Hafez, 2007, p. 98; Barker, 1997, pp. 200-204; 1999, pp 35-36; Featherstone, 1996, p. 47).

Upon becoming the Prime Minister in the 1980s, Mahathir launched the “look east” policy which encouraged Malaysians to adopt the eastern work ethics of the “East Asian Tigers” (Khoo, 1999, p. 182) such as China, Korea and Japan, who have had political and socioeconomic success by keeping ‘true’ to their traditional values. Mahathir feels that:

The notion that a country must Westernize in order to industrialize is ludicrous. Asian modernization occurred as an inevitable state of its own history, not because we were colonized. The West would do well to learn from the success of East Asia and it should accept our values, not the other way around. (Mahathir and Ishihara, 1995 p. 77 as cited in Khoo, 1999, p. 186).

The debates on Asian values above centre on values attributed to the Asian societies, that are “in contradistinction to Western values” (Khoo, 1999, p. 182). These Asian values promote respect, social harmony and proclivity for consensus. These values, which are supposedly communitarian, suggest that Asian values place collective good of the community over individual rights.

In Langguth’s *Asian Values Revisited* (2003), he discusses the challenges of forming a common perspective or definition of Asian values. Being a multi-ethnic and multi-faith region, Asia faces further debates as to what Asian values are about in a diverse culture. It suggests that different inflections on Asian values exist under the common denominator of being ‘Asian’. As defenders of the debates on Asian values, both Mahathir and Lee have come to an agreement that Asian values are in fact in binary opposition to Western values and ideologies. Lee looks at Confucianism teachings as the basis of Asian values while Mahathir looks more to an exemplary working culture of the Eastern Tigers who defend their traditional practices in socio-economic dealings.

Langguth further argues that, and most of the writers cited in previous paragraphs, believe that the heterogeneity of Asian culture will possibly present different inflections of Asian values due to the different cultural values and religious values that exist in different ethnicities in the Asian region. This supports the notion that there could be different views on Asian values in the Malaysian context compared to notions of Lee and Mahathir. These different views are voiced by the Malaysian elites, conservative parties and mass audience in the criticisms towards several television programs, which will be discussed later.

3.0 DEBATES ON ASIAN VALUES IN THE 2000S (2003-2005)

Subsequently, the discussion continues with the criticisms about lack of Asian values in the 2000s from concerned Muslim parents, representatives of religious groups and also Malaysian elites as recorded in the newspapers and websites. These specific criticisms are on the locally produced Malaysian reality TV programs.

In Malaysia, recent claims that Asian values have eroded started when the reality TV program, *Akademi Fantasia*, first came on air on Malaysia’s government controlled satellite television station, Astro, in 2003. Concerns about this show from conservative parties, religious groups and parents of Muslim faith were expressed in a website petition in support of taking reality talent shows off Malaysian TV (“Reality talent”, n.d.). The concerns were based on the fact that these shows were demonstrating values, which are against the Islamic principles, beliefs and traditional practices such as “hugging between males and females” and “tactless comments from judges” (“Reality TV”, 2005; “Reality talent”, n.d.). The promotion of confrontation and harshly putting another down is against Malay values as it connotes lack of respect between fellow Malaysians. In conventional Malay practices, confrontations are avoided at all times and tolerance is practiced to suppress anger and dissatisfaction (Zamani, 2002, pp. 150-151). Therefore, when these reality TV programs allow ‘tactless comments from judges’, conventional Malay values are seen as violated.

A criticism cited in the aliran.com website states that Malaysian Deputy Prime Minister,

Najib Razak, commented that these shows “borrow extensively from Western culture which [he] feared could threaten Eastern values and lead to moral decadence” (“Malaysian”, 2005). In another report on abc13.com website, the Malaysian elite also commented on religious values. Najib notes that “hugging scenes are not suitable”, therefore contestants are ordered to “act decently” (“Reality TV”, 2005). In the same report Harussani Zakaria, who is a cleric with the Malaysian Council of Muftis representing religious groups, criticized the reality TV program *Mencari Cinta* as “promoting extreme behavior”. He also commented that “being Asian, we are risking our heritage when we borrow from the Western lifestyle” (“Reality TV”, 2007). Although the definition of “extreme behavior” is not elaborated, it indicates behaviors that violate Islam’s religious teaching.

The opinions on Asian values in Malaysian reality TV, which are highlighted in the *New Straits Time* groups of newspapers, differ between one person to another. Some agree that Malaysian reality TV programs lack in Asian values and threaten moral ethics of the Malay audience. It seems that Malaysian reality TV programs are labeled as a threat to Asian values and moral decadence because they are an adaptation of the Western television genres. Others, on the other hand, believe that these reality TV programs contribute to the overall growth of the Malay community and that Malay values had changed even before reality TV programs were produced in Malaysia.

The following analysis is on the comments retrieved from the *New Straits Times* groups of newspapers. The following parts examine the reaction of a range of audience including producers, academics and ordinary viewers.

Local historian, Ramlah Adam notes that economic success, entertainment and work-related aspects are attributes that contribute to the demise of traditional (Asian) values in the Malaysian society (Dinin, 2005, p. 16). She fears the excitement of the entertainment industry, which includes the reality TV phenomenon and influenced by the Western culture, would promote extreme behaviors that are in opposition to traditional values. What worries her most is that the older generation or the parents of these youngsters, who watch the programs, approve such programs and deem them to be suitable for their youngsters. In her opinion, the influence of Western values from the reality TV programs has weakened local values and lead to social and moral decadence.

Local academician Hamdan Adnan agrees with the argument that Malaysian reality TV programs are too eager to imitate Western genres and that they have gone beyond the Asian cultures and values (Badruddin, 2005, p. 10). According to him, Malaysian reality TV programs, produced and aired on television, are baseless and conflict with local values. To Hamdan, “hugging and crying” when other contestants are eliminated is shameful and should neither be promoted nor permitted. He condemns Malaysian TV stations which he thinks are more concerned with the program ratings than the content of the program. He adds that the quest for profit and commercial values will leave impacts on the younger generation and their outlook on the national and Asian values. Hamdan believes that not all Western programs are deemed negative, and questions why local producers and TV stations are more inclined to imitate the “negative attributes” rather than the “positive Western values”. Although he acknowledges the positive values from Western inspired

programs, no specific program or value was mentioned.

Berita Minggu columnist, Johan Jaafar (2003, p. 14) looks at the issue from the perspective of a parent. He states that parents are in dilemma with regards to the reality program *Akademi Fantasia* and suggests that the program promotes hedonistic values amongst the youngsters whereby they are glued to the television set all day long as they engage in scenes that have been criticized to be immodest and indecent, which threaten Asian values and Islamic religious values. On the other hand, these so-called Western influences seeped into the Malay-Muslim day-to-day conduct when the older generation were younger and engaged with 70s pop culture, “Hindustani” films and drugs. He asserts that parents should be aware that times have changed and that values are instilled not by the television contents. Instead parenting plays a vital role when it comes to inculcating values among the children. To Johan, these old inflections of Asian values have to be reevaluated to suit modern times which are influenced by the availability of the Information and Communication Technology (ICT). In agreement with Raymond William’s theory that culture is fluid and changes with time, Johan argues as well that the conventional Malay cultural values are fast becoming obsolete. The lack of Asian values in local TV contents, which have foreign influences, has been an on-going issue. According to Johan, parents or critics should understand that contents on television have changed and the attraction of these reality TV programs will allow parents to manage which values are instilled among their children.

A newspaper report, featured in a local daily, *Berita Harian* (2005, p.10) states that these reality TV programs have influenced audiences by instilling the Western values and, in fact, exuded hedonistic values which steer young audiences away from engaging themselves in their responsibilities such as study and prayer. The report states that the entertainment aspects of the programs have impinged on the social ethics and religious values of the Malay-Muslim community. This has been seen to have threatened Asian values and led to moral decadence (“Kaji”, 2005, p 10). Meanwhile, *Berita Minggu* (“Isu”, 2005, p.19) reports on an UMNO political gathering, where the issue of the dissemination of cultures which are against Islamic values and teachings were debated. The content of the debate includes discussion about the lack of religious values in talent show genres of reality TV programs. From the perspectives of the politicians, “hugging between male and female contestants during elimination does not reflect religious upbringing”. They pleaded to the government to view this issue seriously and to take necessary action with regards to the erosion of religious values in Malaysian reality TV programs.

An anonymous academic in *Berita Minggu*, states whether or not the Asian values are lacking in the local reality TV programs is subjective. S/he argues that the recent practices of Malay culture are different from those portrayed in P.Ramlee movie era in the 1950s. From the academic perspective, today, the minds of the Malays are open and expanding to the extent of having no shame. S/he states that the definition of Malay in the constitution where Malay is equal to Muslim is different than what we see today (Iszahanid, 2005, p. 15). S/he stresses further that cultural changes are adapted as time evolves. This is evident in the following statement: “there were no reality TV programs during the prophet’s time therefore how are we to know what is ‘Islamic’ and what is not” (Iszahanid, 2005. p. 15). Malay culture researcher Dr Wan Zawawi Ibrahim, quoted in *Harian Metro* believes that

these reality TV programs have some positive aspects as the talent show reality TV genre is a platform for the “hopefuls”. Talent-show such as *Akademi Fantasia* encourages youngsters to stay focused and achieve their dreams while steering them away from socially corrupt activities such as drug abuse and “engagement in close proximities” (Badruddin, 2005, p. 10). Communication lecturer Saodah Wok (Badruddin, 2005, p. 10) agrees with Ibrahim that the concept of talent show reality TV programs is not all bad. She believes that the programs can encourage self confidence and positive personality development.

Responses in an interview with members of the entertainment industry (conducted by *Malay Mail*) found that the talent genre of reality TV programs do not just imitate Western television culture, rather the genre should be viewed as adapting global “pop culture” to a local environment (2005, p. 2). In the same report, Malaysian singer Zainal Abidin notes that a great deal of Malaysian culture can be seen in these programs. One example is the traditional Malay songs that are sung. Music composer Roslan Aziz, in the same interview, observes that “things are changing” and that Malaysians are smart enough to know what is good or bad. Others, reported in the same interview, believe that a program like *Akademi Fantasia* provides a platform for young talents to be discovered and offers an entertainment for the Malay audience. Some argue that Malaysians are able to differentiate between “Western values and Malaysian values”, therefore concerns about reality TV should not have been debated in the first place. Even the secretary to the Puteri UMNO movement agrees to the comment above as she defends *Akademi Fantasia* by describing it as “fulfilling the taste of the younger generation” (“TV”, 2005, p. 5).

The ambivalence towards the portrayal of Asian values with regards to the local reality TV programs has been highlighted in the *New Straits Times* group of newspapers. Critics of the lack of Asian values in Malaysian reality TV programs are concerned about the erosion of conventional Malay-Muslim values, while the opponents of these criticisms believe that these reality TV programs give ordinary people the opportunity to achieve their dreams. Whether opinions are for or against the programs, the common denominator for shaping values in the Malay-Muslim society has been agreed to be Islam, followed by the conventional Malay culture, and not the core attributes of Asian values debated in the early 1990s.

4.0 CONCLUSION

As discussed above the concerns about Asian values in the 1990s championed by Lee Kuan Yew and Dr Mahathir Mohamed revolved around the core attributes of Asian values: shared values, collectivism and consensus. However, the debate on Asian values between 2003 and 2005 were concerned more with Islamic religious values and traditional social values of the Malay culture. These were the values which were prominent in the Malaysian reality TV programs of the talent genre and variety genre as opposed to the debate on Asian values debated in 1990s.

The concern about the erosion of Asian values in Malaysian reality TV programs were voiced by Malaysian elites who fear that local reality TV programs, which borrow extensively from Western inspired television genre, could “threaten Eastern Values and

lead to moral decadence” (“Malaysian”, 2005, p.1). The concern of religious and conservative parties was that these programs promote extreme behavior such as “hugging between males and females” which is against Islamic values.

Although Malaysian elites and conservative parties have expressed their views on the programs, there are signs of ambivalence coming from other critiques such as academics, politicians, entertainers and ordinary Malays. Some do agree that the lack of Asian values portrayed in the content of the local reality TV programs is the cause of the erosion of Asian values in today’s community, while others (Jaafar, 2003, p. 14) think that the erosion of Asian values started decades back with the influence of 70s pop culture and “Hindustani” films. Some parties believe that the contents portrayed contradict Islamic values. Others, on the other hand, comment that values projected in the reality TV programs could steer young audiences away from activities which are against Islamic teaching, such as engaging in close proximities. Meanwhile defenders of the entertainment industry view these reality TV programs as a platform for opportunities to find love and discover talents with regards to *Mencari Cinta* and *Akademi Fantasia* respectively.

A general theme emerges from the criticisms, comments and arguments with regard to the positive and negative values portrayed in the reality TV programs. It revolves around religious and traditional values of the Malay-Muslim community which is said to play a role in upholding and promoting Malaysia’s nation-building exercises towards a developed nation.

REFERENCES

Abdullah, H (August 17, 2003) *Gara-gara Kritikan Jujur Ramli MS... Berita Minggu – Berita POP*, p. 2.

Abdul Hamid, Z.L. (2005, August 31) *Mencari Cinta Tidak Langgar Budaya Melayu. Berita Harian*, p. 5.

Akademi Fantasia [Video]. (2003). Kuala Lumpur: Astro.

Althusser, L. (1971). *Lenin and Philosophy*. New York: Monthly Review Press.

Arbee, R (August 10, 2005) *Penerbit Programs Reality Tak Peka Budaya Tempatan. Berita Harian*, p. 11.

Australian Communications and Media Authority. (2006). *Reality Television Review*. Canberra: AGPS.

Badruddin, M. N (August 30, 2005) *Hiburan Reality TV Perlu Dihalusi, Harian Metro*, p. 10.

Bafana, M (June 22, 2005) *Negative Influence in Entertainment. News Straits Times*, p 20.

- Baharom, N (July 8, 2005). *Mencari Cinta Berlandaskan Budaya Timur*. *Harian Metro*, p. 4.
- Barker, C (1999). *Television, Globalization and Cultural Identities*. Buckingham: Open Unipress.
- Barker, C (1997) *Global Television: An Introduction*. Massachusetts: Blackwell Publishing.
- Barr, M. D. (2000). Lee Kuan Yew and The Asian Values Debate. *Asian Studies Review*, 24(3), 310-334.
- Berger, A.A. (2000). *Media and Communication Research Methods: An Introduction to Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches*. London: Sage Publications.
- Bignell, J. (2002). *Media Semiotics: An Introduction*. Manchester: Manchester University Press.
- Chua, B.H. (1998). Asian Values: Restraining the Logic of Capitalism. *Social Semiotics*, 8 (2/3), 215-226.
- Chua, B.H. (2004). Asian Values: Is An Anti-Authoritarian Reading Possible? In M. Beeson (Ed.), *Contemporary South East Asia: Regional Dynamics, National Differences* (pp. 98-117). New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Department of Statistics Malaysia. (2001). *Press Statement: Population Distribution and Basic Demographic Characteristics Report Population and Housing Census 2000*. Putrajaya: DSM. Retrieved May 16, 2007 from <http://www.statistics.gov.my/english/census/pressdemo.htm>
- Dinin, H (August 31, 2005). *Struktur Masyarakat Tidak Lagi Terikat Nilai Tradisional*. *Berita Harian*, p. 16.
- Fairclough, N. (1995). *Media Discourse*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Featherstone, M (1996). Localism, Globalism and Cultural Identity. In R. Wilson & W. Dissanayake (Eds.) (1st ed., pp. 46- 69). Durham & London: Duke University Press.
- Frith, T (2000). Ethno-religious Identity and Urban Malays in Malaysia. *Asian Ethnicity*, 1(2), 117-129.
- Hafez, K (2007). *The Myth of Media Globalization*. United Kingdom: Polity Press.
- Harper, T. N. (1997). Histogramical Review: Asian Values and the Southeast Asian Histories. *The Historical Journal*, 40(2), 507-517.

- Heritage, J & Atkinson, J.M (1984). Introduction. In J Heritage & J.M. Atkinson (Eds), *Structuralism of Social Action: Studies on Conversational Analysis* (1st ed., pp.1-16). London & New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Heywood, A (2007) *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*. New York: Palgrave.
- Isu Penularan Budaya Di TV Jadi Tumpuan*. (2005, July 24). *Berita Minggu*, p. 19.
- Iszahanid, H (August 14, 2005) *Dalam Hidup Ada Realiti Yang Tidak Boleh Kita Sorokkan*. *Berita Minggu*, p. 15.
- Jaaffar, J (August 24, 2003) *Akademi Fantasia dan Dilemma Ibu Bapa*. *Berita Minggu*, p. 14.
- Kaji Kesan Reality TV Kepada Etika, Moral*. (2005, August 3). *Berita Harian*, p. 10.
- Karthigesu, R (1998). *Transborder Television in Malaysia*. In A. Goonasekera & P. Lee (Eds), (1st ed., pp. 38- 77). Singapore: Asia Media Information and Communication Center.
- Khoo, B.T. (1999). The Value(s) of A Miracle: Malaysian and Singaporean Elite Constructions of Asia. *Asian Studies Review*, **23(2)**, 181-192.
- Langguth, G. (2003). Asian Values Revisited. *Asia Europe Journal*. **1**, 25-42.
- Lee, J & Tiong, J (August 2, 2005) More Good Than Harm. *Malay Mail*, p. 2.
- Machin, D & Leeuwen, T.V (2007) *Global Media Discourse: A Critical Introduction*. New York: Routledge.
- Malaysian Communications and Multimedia Commission. (n.d.). *Garis Panduan Penyiaran*. Kuala Lumpur: METM.
- Malaysian Idol, Akademi Fantasia and 'Asian Values'. (2005, August 5). *Malaysia Media Monitor's Diary*. Retrieved February 1, 2007 from the aliran.com website: <http://www.aliran.com/oldsite/charter/monitors/2005/08malaysian-idol-akademi-fantasia-asian-values/>
- McKee, A. (2003). *Textual Analysis: A Beginner's Guide*. London: Sage Publications.
- Mencari Cinta* [Video] (2005). Kuala Lumpur: Illusions Ska Sdn. Bhd. & TV3.
- Moy, T. Y., & Garma, R. (2006). Reality TV Programs in Malaysia: A Dream Come True? *Sunway Academic Journal*, **3**, 73-86.
- Population of Singapore (n.d.). Retrieved October 1, 2007 from: <http://www.focussingapore.com/information-singapore/singapore-population.html>

- Program TV3 Mencari Cinta Ikut Panduan*. (2005, September 24). *Berita Harian*, p. 6.
- Reality Shows Vetted for Negative Effects. (2006, June 27). *The Star Online*. Retrieved March 30, 2007 from: <http://thestar.com.my/services/printerfriendly.asp?file=/2006-6-27/parliament/146598>
- Reality Talent Shows Should Be Taken Off The Air of Malaysian TV Petition. (n.d.). Retrieved February 1, 2007 from: <http://www.thepetition.com/takeaction/731975559?tl=1170318964>
- Reality TV in Malaysia Stirs Controversy. (2005, September 9). *ABC.com*. Retrieved February 1, 2007 from the abclocal website: <http://abclocal.go.com/ktrk/story?section=entertainment&id=3427591>
- Richstad, J (1998). Asian Values and Transnational Television: The Battle in the Sky for Markets and Cultures. In A. Goonasekeran & P. Lee (Eds), *TV Without Border: Asia Speaks Out* (1st ed., pp. 287 - 306). Singapore: Asia Media Information and Communication Center.
- Roccas, S. (2005). Religion and Value Systems. *Journal of Social Issues*, **61(4)**, 747-759.
- Salleh, A. (August 14, 2003) *Akademi Fantasia: Pelihara Nilai Murni*. *Harian Metro*, p. 10.
- Shirato, T., Webb, J. (2003). *The Idea of Globalization in Understanding Globalization*. London: Sage.
- TV Reality Show Under Scrutiny Again. (2005, June 27). *Malay Mail*, p. 5.
- Waisboard, S. (2004). McTV: Understanding the Global Popularity of Television Formats. *Television & New Media*, **5**, 359-383.
- Williams, R. (1963). *Culture and Society 1780-1950*. Middlesex: Penguin Books in association with Chatto & Windus.
- Williams, R. (1981). *Culture*. Glasgow: Fontana Paperbacks.
- Williamson, T. (2006). *Culture of Malaysia*. Retrieved May 16, 2007 from: <http://www.everyculture.com/Ja-Ma/Malaysia.html>
- Wimmer, R., & Dominick, J. (2006). *Mass Media Research: An Introduction*. California: Thomson Wadsworth.
- Zamani, A. (2002) *The Malay Ideals*. Kuala Lumpur: Golden Books Center Sdn. Bhd.