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Rushana Sulaiman @ Abd Rahim, Wan Soliana Wan Md Zain

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Formalistic Analysis of *Siri Dungun* Artworks in Cultural Context

Rushana Sulaiman @ Abd Rahim, Wan Soliana Wan Md Zain
College of Creative Arts, MARA University of Technology, Malaysia
Email: rushana@uitm.edu.my, wliana411@uitm.edu.my

Abstract

This paper explains the visual identity aspect of the Malaysian Modern Painting. *Siri Dungun* Painting was chosen as the subject of discussion by describing its physical shape. Then this painting is analysed in a formalistic context. It is also clearly researched using the cultural concepts that exist through behaviour, values, necessity and environment in the field of art. The objective of the study was to identify the design aspects of the subject in the work of the *Siri Dungun* painting. The association between the formalistic of art in painting through the social cultural system is also explained through identity analysis that applies traditional Malay images using sculptural art to wood carvings. The written and visual data collection methodology in this study uses a descriptive qualitative approach based on empirical field work of the data obtained. Documentation, visual recording and observation methods are used to collect information related to the work of the studied painting. The findings showed that the *Siri Dungun* artwork by Ruzaika Omar Basaree has applied wood carving elements in traditional Malay constructions featuring cultural designs. The concepts used in the study underlie the subject, design and aesthetic meaning to classify the identity of the painting using a cultural approach. The implications of the research show that the paintings can not only be viewed from the formalistic point of view of art only, but can also be shown from the cultural context through the application of cultural characteristics and identities. This study contributes to understanding the meaning, concept and purpose of the design application that needs to be applied in shaping the image and identity of the paint based on Islamic scholars.

Keywords: Art Appreciation, Social-Cultural, Siri Dungun, Painting.

Introduction

Modern Malaysian art is an era of art from local artists in conveying ideas and expressions of feelings (Holed, 2014). It is to reflect the identity, aesthetic value, philosophy and techniques of work in the production of works. Modern paintings art has seen the painter's attempts to transform traditional and religious culture as an interpretation of beauty based on the Malay worldview.

Mahamood (2007) stated that the development of Malaysia's modern art has been greatly impacted in carrying out the call to create a national identity, especially local painters.

They need to refer to traditions that are based on turmoil and religion as a source of inspiration and reference.

As a result of the formation of the 1971 national cultural policy, local masterpieces began to shift their minds to the style of paintings. The processing of images capturing the local scenery has turned to the embodiment of images taken from traditional Malay-Islamic culture in the 1980s. The resulting art of painting refers to the cultural roots of each other's traditions in translating the question of values, morality and ethics (Mahamood, 2012). The breathable art of turmoil and Islamic calling for repercussions and glory has been highlighted (Shahir, 2013). It also marks the culture so important that the emergence of works based on traditional Malay iconography and Islam such as Ruzaika Omar Basaree's work, the *Siri Dungun*.

The convergence of studies through this work that incorporates the idea of traditional Malay art is significant to study as the embodiment of traditional images in their painting is worked out with an ornamental approach, inspiring the form and meaning based on Malay culture.

Jamal (1992) stated that in reference to Ruzaika Omar Basaree's work in the *Siri Dungun*, the "window in the window" became a reflection of the Malaysian image. The traditional element that Ruzaika Omar Basaree translated in her *Siri Dungun* work has depicted the work as a truly Malaysian art image.

Art is part of the cultural manifestations inherent in society based on its cultural influences that make up the personality of the painter (Mahamood, 2012). It exists within the scope of a society that reflects its culture. Among the young painters at the time who made an impression in the works in the 80s was Ruzaika Omar Basaree. He uses real situations, spaces and materials that contain cultural contexts.

Deraman (2005) states that the manifestations of culture are embodied in various forms, namely philosophy, art, material aspects and customs. Culture as a way of life that is the birth of the heritage of a society whether material or non-material is transformed from the thoughts and deeds of man in life. The culture also includes the whole aspect of life such as knowledge, beliefs, laws, code of conduct and customs (Deraman, 2005).

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this paper is to visually explain the art of the design of the subject in the context of understanding the social system of culture manifested by the workman. It is seen in the context of values, environment, needs and behaviours reflected in the production techniques of the works as follows:

1. Identifying the design and meaning in the painting of the *Siri Dungun*
2. Analyse the association between the formalistic aspects of art in the artwork of the *Siri Dungun* through the social cultural system of the community.

Conceptual Framework

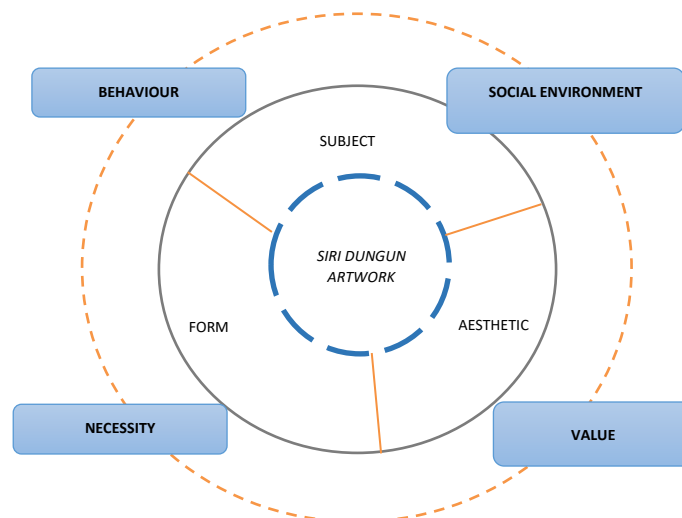


Figure 1: The theoretical framework is adapted from the formalistic concept of art, social and cultural systems

The combination of interdisciplinary approaches uses concepts in formalistic art and culture to see the design of motifs in the work of the *Siri Dungun*. The combinations of these concepts are adapted to form a conceptual framework that is thought in parallel with the analysis to serve as a reference for the questions in the study.




Research Methodology

The study approach is qualitatively descriptive with inter-disciplinary implementation using case study design of work analysis on cultural elements in traditional Malay painting. Cultural feature studies are carried out to classify the subject design of the painting. There are three data collection methods used which are observation, visual recording and documentation.

Data Analysis

Table 1

Siri Dungun artworks

Artwork 1	Artwork 2	Artwork 3
		
<i>Siri Dungun</i> (1981) Ruzaika Omar Basaree Wood carving and emulsion	<i>Siri Dungun</i> (1978) Ruzaika Omar Basaree Wood carving and emulsion	<i>Siri Dungun</i> (1979) <i>Jendela terbuka II</i> Wood carving and emulsion

Social Environment

In culture, environmental values exist indirectly when the use of an object in the production of a work is taken or influenced from the area around the workman.

The field of art is one of the platforms or mediums for humans to organize, think about and represent the experiences experienced themselves into visual form. Studies that connect works with the environment in cultural values are mostly the cause of the creation of traditional works.

The *Siri Dungun* painting produced by the painter Ruzaika Omar Basaree was produced when her emigrated to Dungun, Terengganu for 7 years (1975-1982). She was very interested in the design of patterns and motifs found in the art of wood carving in traditional Malay houses. The impetus of painters to find the origins of Malay identity was sparked when the 1971 national cultural congress and the 1979 indigenous arts root seminar outlined the expression of a love for national identity through its own traditional and cultural heritage (Basaree, 2016).

The influence of the environment, love and passion for tradition has resulted in the idea of the painter producing a window-concept work while in Dungun Terengganu. He had the opportunity to collect elements featuring the features of the sculptures in this *Siri Dungun*. The work has been produced in harmony with the use of old wood carvings to create the atmosphere that is often experienced in traditional Malay houses.

During his stay in Terengganu, the exposure to the environment and life surrounded by the local culture, the architecture of the traditional Malay houses filled with openwork carvings, resulted in the *Siri Dungun*. It was the basis of the work as this carving had attracted him to start learning the techniques of carpentry as well as to inspire him a lot. The combination of several carved patterns that highlight the local traditional carvings forms an identity-identified work (Basaree, 2016).

The old wood-making art by the local community has attracted the interest of the artists to undertake a reform in the art of painting to lift local values. The selection of the theme of the nation's heritage in carvings was modified to produce a more attractive quality of creativity.

Piyadasa (2000) the use of the original assemblage techniques and the depth of the images and illustrations is measured through a series of windows. Her work evokes feelings and recalls the experience of someone who has visited and seen through the traditions of this traditional Malay home.

The beginning for the construction of the work, he collected and purchased wood carvings from sculptors all over the surrounding areas, and the carvings were merged with a single construction until they formed an identity of turmoil. So it was from there that he began to produce works using wood carvings. Carpentry skills as well as being sensitive to environmental materials make them display 3D-shaped works well.

Value

According to koentjangingrat (2015) value is a thing that is held in high esteem and is a guide to the human being or society through behaviour, expressing love and beauty. The value of the art is understood in the sense of the qualities inherent in the work of art, either from the qualities seen from the naked eye or not. The values that a work of art possesses are a manifestation of the value that artist's value in the social cultural environment appreciate. It is then translated into a work of art to be conveyed to the appreciator. Its existence is guided by the cultural references of the local community which is based on the concept of Malay-Islamic values. It is as established by the 1971 national cultural identity based on ethics in the works.

Art cannot be separated from life, beliefs and religion. The design of patterns and motifs in wood carving became the subject material in the artwork of her work entitled *Siri Dungun*. She tends to produce traditional art with a touch of aesthetic philosophy.

Geertz (1980) stated that artistry is a cultural statement that reflects the values that becomes reference to the patterns of behaviour of his society.

The transformation of the concept of traditional art in the work of Ruzaika Omar Basaree features the architectural motifs of Terengganu tradition and is translated in the presentation of modern and contemporary art. The use of wooden materials in the form of window leaf construction structures and carved motifs stained with acrylic. The cultural style is highlighted in the styling of her artwork and the combination of openwork motifs is engraved according to the art of carving symmetrically with the method of repetition according to the principles of Islamic aesthetics (*awan larat*) (Basaree, 2016).

Rahman (2000) stated the use of original wood carvings from traditional houses on the east coast in the works of painters with traditional images between two-dimensional and three-dimensional mediums. The work of the *Siri Dungun* has shown the values of turmoil combined from the form of motifs and patterns taken from traditional Malay houses. It is applied with a few coloured paintings that show the landscape of the hilly terrain that can be seen from the half-open windows.

Jamal (1992) states that Ruzaika Omar Basaree insists that the *Siri Dungun* is a framed picture formed as a window, which depicts a person who is observing and looking at the outside world through a window that is raised in a cultural context.

Looking at the processing techniques and materials used by the artist has led us to a feeling of the value of the turmoil itself. The beauty of the carved art motifs inherent in the above traditional architectural works. The appearance of the cultural aspect as well as displaying the original Malay way of life which actually displays the storytelling of the values of the turmoil itself.

The artist also expressed his artistic expression of oneness to God. The choice of Islamic aesthetics is accurate given that the aesthetics of Islam is an art of submission to God. Examining the work of the window series, the meaning of the oneness towards God manifests its interpretation through the use of pattern design and design without beginning and without end (Basaree, 2013).

Zain (2003) stated that in the Islamic tradition, painters and carpenters have been bound by a certain principle in their work. First of all is the awareness of 'tauhid' or the concept of The One God. They believe their destiny has been determined by God Taala as the creator of nature. It is clear that an Islamic painter does everything according to the will set by his religion. The concept of naturalness and the concept of materiality form the foundations of art geared towards subtlety. Islamic art is basically the subtlety of the art form.

The aesthetic value in the motives and patterns found in her artwork exhibits an implicit value. Wood carvings that have been formed with flora, cosmos and geometric motifs are worked out in abstract or symbolic forms such as leaves and flowers using the method of penetrating punching or embossed perforations. The resulting motive is not only seen in the beauty of the work alone, but also refers to its functionality and usefulness. Emphasis on the basic nature of the principle of the concept of Malay beauty. In his work highlighted the principles of subtlety, tenderness, balance and unity.

Behaviour

Behaviour in ethnic culture can be understood through various approaches. It is studied based on his attitudes in religious life, personal social and relationships with nature. Each ethnicity has its own attitude in facing the challenges of life in its environment.

Koentjaraningrat (2015) states that behaviour is a way of acting or conducting in certain situations. Every human behaviour in society must follow the patterns of behaviour in its society. A pattern of behaviour is a way of acting in a society that has the same norms and culture. Man has his own rules in life, according to Rapl Linton in regulating relationships between humans needed design for living.

Awareness of the relationship between the behaviour of the painter and his work is based on the question of understanding, knowledge, and consistency of the work process. Awareness towards the search to understand a traditional painting artwork that exists in various forms of appearance, techniques, ideas, it influences the impact on the beliefs and way of life of an artist. The painter is skilled at painting such a virtuous person from his external point of view yet critics judge a person to be determined by his behaviour (Kamal, 2016).

Behaviour is a thing inherent in the painter himself. In the works of *Siri Dungun* an attempt to create its own symbol to convey the message. As a result of the environmental elements and value concepts highlighted based on the painter's behaviour, there is a distinctive artistic identity that is themed with a cultural identity. The interaction of works in everyday association with the community while producing traditional Malay works is also formed as a result of the behaviour inherent in the painter.

Her artwork uses subtle motif designs and images that touch the view of her life while venturing into the art of drawing.

The presentation of Ruzaika's artwork is supported by the use of mixed techniques and media that combine existing objects in the form of traditional wood carvings with drawn surface space. For her the use of natural wood carvings reflects a tribute to the sculptors of unknown identity.

Necessity

Culture is associated with a society striving to meet their basic needs. To meet these needs, culture has to do with the demands of a complexly evolving group of human beings that correspond to current demands (Mustapha, 2000).

The need in the context of the development of Malaysian art can be divided into three parts. First as a painter's tendency that meets the demands of the sociological need for oneself as an artist, secondly, the economic need for the suggestion of life and thirdly, the cultural need that is, the tendency towards cultural equality in society.

The display of forms of artwork physically demonstrates and clarifies the identity of the individual in the cultural-based community her represents. The need to express aesthetically in the needs of work and sensibility, the individual also meets the social needs towards community life and also performs his responsibilities as a member of a cultured society (Husain, 2014).

Aesthetic expression is one of the human needs that can be classified into cultural needs. This cultural need exists because there is an impulse in man who has naturally always wanted to reflect on his existence as a moral human being. Reasonable and callous. In meeting these aesthetic needs, art becomes an integral part. Art as an element in a culture or concept of culture. In the production of the artwork of the *Siri Dungun*, the symbol and meaning that exists through the subject and symbols are conveyed based on the continuity of history.

Khairuddin (2012) admires the artist's ability to select, filter and work out a perception of the processing of a unique shape. She explained that the purpose is not just to fill the needs of the new style but also to cover the sociocultural atmosphere as well as the distinctive circle of philosophical values (Kamal, 2016).

Conclusion

The processing of the resulting artworks has the design and motifs of carvings of flora and geometry. It takes place based on the core of beliefs and confidence supported by several cultural concepts of values, environment and behaviour. These three cultural values are applied in formulating the works studied. The placement of the arrangement of motifs and patterns is not made randomly however there is a discipline and layout.

In the production of the *Siri Dungun* painting, it is interpreted through the use of Malay wood carving art which has its own uniqueness and beauty. This art can mostly be seen in the architecture of traditional Malay houses. Motives and carving patterns in the architecture of traditional Malay houses are heavily influenced by natural and cultural elements.

Ruzaika Omar Basaree is constantly looking for new ideas and processes to produce more thorough and quality artworks so that the Malay carvings are always flattered and not chipped from any outside influences. The subtlety of the Malay carving art has its own

meaning as the inherent motive element has a function far from its external beauty and is able to express the life qualities of the local community through the process.

Arts and culture are inseparable; they are derived from human ideas and ideas. It is hoped that this research will encourage the community to appreciate the beauty of the artwork from different perspectives which is in terms of the beauty of the concepts, practices and cultural values It is seen in the motives and patterns embodied in the painting as well as the cultural abilities that are expressed and implied in the art itself.

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Corresponding Author

Rushana Sulaiman @ Abd Rahim

Fine Art Department, College of Creative Arts, Universiti Teknologi Mara, Kampus Machang, Kelantan, Malaysia

Email: rushana@uitm.edu.my

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