The International Journal of Social Sciences World
TIJOSSW is Available Online at:
https://www.growingscholar.org/journal/index.php/TIJOSSW
Vol. 4 No. 2, December 2022, pages: 317~324
DOI: https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.7426054
ISSN **2690-5167**
Growingscholar Publisher

The Image of Flora and Fauna Painting in Batik Craft: Phenomena in Ubud, Bali

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Article history:
Received: October, 03 2022; Accepted: December, 01 2022; Displayed Online: December, 12 2022; Published: December, 30 2022

Keywords

Representation;

Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings;

Batik crafts;

Ubud;

Bali;

Abstract

The high consumer interest in Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings of the 1980s was one supporting factor for representing this painting in several arts and crafts in the Gianyar region. The craft representing themes, techniques, and visual objects of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting, is the art of batik craft in Ubud district. This research reviews explicitly the process of this representation, the underlying factors, and the socio-economic impacts on the supporting community. This qualitative research uses aesthetic and representation theories to uncover research problems. The results show that the visual objects of Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings are represented in batik art products in Ubud district, as seen in themes, techniques, and visual objects attached to these batik art products. The representation is influenced by the painting image of Pengosekan's flora and fauna as a trendsetter of art products. Moreover, it is also supported by the artisans' motivation to create innovative forms of their products. Some of these factors are inseparable from the influence of tourism development and the developed market at that time.

1. Introduction

Ubud district in Bali- Indonesia is famous among domestic and foreign tourists for its natural beauty, as well as for its diverse arts and culture (Hakim et al., 2009, Antara & Sumarniasih, 2017). The development of art and culture in Ubud area can be said to be very fast and advanced, even the

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pulse of people's lives cannot be separated from art (Martana, 2002, Vickers, 2022). Along the way around Ubud, there are many galleries selling various works of art by Ubud community, whether in the form of paintings, crafts, or fashion products. The center of painting production in Ubud is Pengosekan Village. Since the early 1980s, Pengosekan's painting began to find its characteristics, which can be seen from the paintings of flora and fauna. The widespread of production and sale of Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings of 1980s era motivated several artisans to innovate similar craft products. The purpose is to embrace the painting market. The representation of themes, techniques, and visual objects of Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings are created in the form of batik art in several villages in Ubud. Some of these villages include Kedewatan, Sayan, and Lungsiakan village. Specifically, the urgency of this research is the development and preservation of Balinese arts and culture, related to painting and crafts.

2. Materials and Methods

This research is a qualitative research, using aesthetic and representation theories in uncovering research problems. Data sources used in this study are primary and secondary sources. The primary data were obtained from interview to several informants and direct observations of Pengosekan's painting and batik arts in Ubud District. Secondary sources were obtained from various documents, writings, research reports and literatures related to this research. The secondary sources are used as a supporting data to improve the primary source.

Data collection methods are observation and interview. Field observation was used to gather visual data regarding the characteristics of Pengosekan painting inherent in the art of batik in Ubud District. Field observations were carried out by visiting several villages, namely Pengosekan, Kedewatan, Sayan and Lungsiakan Villages which are still included in Ubud District area. The obtained data from several villages were then analyzed to find out the answers of research problems. The interview method was used to obtain data in the form of oral information regarding the history of batik arts development in Ubud District, from artisans, community leaders, and cultural observers as a complement to the developed analysis.

3. Results and Discussions

Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting is a traditional Balinese painting style that has been developed since the early 1980s, which was born from the creativity of painters, the result of experimentation and innovation and the development of ideas provided by consumers. The theme of surrounding plants and animals is visualized in the form of paintings. At the beginning of its emergence, the Pengosekan's painting in themes of flora and fauna still sources from Balinese folklore, namely Tantri or Tantri Kamandaka stories. The stories are a collection of animal tales with animal characterizations which is full of moral messages. Paintings with Tantri theme had developed previously, but they only became popular in the 1980s. I Dewa Putu Manggis and I Dewa Putu Mokoh are two painters who originally used the Tantri theme in their works.

The famous image of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting has experienced a long creative process by Pengosekan's painter who built his identity as a painter with personal characteristics influenced by the collective situation in the painter's environment. The high level of consumer interest in the Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings in the 1980s was one of supporting factors for the practice of representing flora and fauna paintings in several arts and crafts in Gianyar. The craft that represents the visual art of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting is in the form of batik art in Kedewatan Ubud.

The presence of flora and fauna painting as the identity of Pengosekan Village, then it is represented in the arts and crafts, is inseparable from the practice of producing cultural meanings. Struat Hall (1997) shows that the act of representation is inseparable from two important components, namely thought and language. It is really important to understand the relational of these two components in order to observe how far the representation of Pengosekan's flora and fauna in several arts and crafts has been practiced. The presence of abstract or conceptual thoughts requires language as a translator for the existence of these conceptual thoughts. Therefore, Hall (Setyowati, 2019:93) concludes that representation can be said to be a symbolization act that reflects the world of independent objects. Meanwhile, to carry out this symbolic action, the role of language is important to convey the meaning of mind abstraction to other subjects. It means that the real role of language is as a medium of objects representation in the conceptual mind of object's meaning to be conveyed to the recipient.

Based on Struat Hall's point of view regarding the representation above, it can be understood that the conceptual idea of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting is translated through a different medium, that is in the form of batik crafts. Thus, it is ensuring the object independence of flora and fauna paintings which present incompletely in a different medium. Therefore, the craft that adopts and is inspired by the visual objects of Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings is an effort to build a new image of craft to meet personal needs as well as consumers who have an interest in crafts with their renewal.

This representation occurs from a socio-economic perspective, which is confronted with the importance of maintaining economic stability against the scope of needs of craftsmen. The emergence of various crafts that visualize the art of flora and fauna paintings can actually be understood as a practice of representation. It is an effort to transform the visual art of painting into a different medium. Unknowingly, the identity image of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting has experienced an incomplete displacement of space that was previously in canvas media, turning into other mediums such as stone, wood and cloth which is used as fashion.

The practice of Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings in the art of batik can be seen from the created products. These handicrafts are mass or periodically products as part of consumer needs for functional purposes and contain aesthetic value. Batik as one of the fashion icons in Indonesia, each region has its own characteristics. These characteristics indicate the diversity of ways to produce art works in accordance to the spirit of regional culture. Especially in Bali, the development of batik becomes a product that is growing rapidly. It can be seen from the various batik artisan industries that can be found quite a lot in several areas in Bali. Interest in batik as a traditional fashion is not only glimpsed by the local community, but various layers of society both nationally and globally have a high interest in using Balinese batik handicraft products.

The rapid development and consumer demand for Balinese batik has made batik produced in many varieties. The various types of production seem to be an effort by distributors and owners of batik industry to avoid a decrease in consumer interest in monotonous motifs, so that dynamic development is prioritized in batik. Finally, various motifs in Balinese batik present to meet market needs and tastes.

The development of this type of batik craft production is not only from the direct awareness of entrepreneurs and Balinese batik craftsmen, but also the interest among consumers to provide input and ideas has received a positive response from batik craftsmen. Therefore, various types and motifs in Balinese batik have developed. This development also makes the art of flora and fauna painting represented in the art of Balinese batik.

The presence of the flora and fauna painting image in Balinese batik is inseparable from various efforts to build creativity of the craftsmen. This creativity give reflection on Balinese batik craftsmen that the development of various motifs in craft needs to be pursued as a basis in providing support to

the motif's diversity of consumers interest. Technically, batik artisans generally use several techniques in their work, including written technique, written batik technique and stamped technique, which in fact each of these technique produces a variety of aesthetic impressions.

The artisans of Balinese batik with flora and fauna theme can be found in Lungsiakan, Sayan and Kedewatan village, which are still part of the Ubud district. Before the existence of batik with flora and fauna theme in Kedewatan village, Ubud, another batik product called the Ubud Pucuk style had developed, which is owned by Mudita, but the craftsmanship was still in simple techniques. Then, it is developed to be Balinese batik with innovative motifs and techniques.

Some products have reached and entered the market industry throughout the world. The various Balinese batik handicrafts such as: beach sarongs/cloths, dresses, and clothes. On its way, the production has experienced ups and downs which are influenced by several factors. One of the batik businesses in Kedewatan Village that still survives and keep producing today is the Mawar's Batik Dewata Bali business or it is familiarly called Mawar Batik. This business is owned by Mrs. Ni Nyoman Sekar who is also a craftsman. Mawar Batik has grown rapidly, and has become an economic pillar for artisans and people who work in it. The batik market in Bali is indeed not as busy as in Java, especially since the Covid-19 pandemic that hit the world over the past few years and has had a huge impact on all work activities, including Batik crafts. Its existence needs attention in order to support tourism in Ubud area. The representation of Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings is also inseparable from its presence as a motif that is included in various products of Balinese batik crafts.

Table 1. Types of Balinese Batik Arts and Crafts Products

No.	Types of product	Product image	description
1.	Beach cloth		The beach cloth is made from a special batik cloth of a type of cotton, with *abur* or gradation coloring technique, resembling the rubbing painting technique.

			
2.	Bed cover	 	Apart from beach cloth, other types of batik products are bed covers or blankets. Made by adding a special ingredient, namely Dacron for stuffing in the bed cover to make it thicker.

Balinese batik crafts also develop very fast. The various products are inseparable from the artisan's efforts to express their ideas, especially in designing their own products. This is based on the emergence of principle to attract consumers' interest to the work results. The presented designs are also inseparable from various parties who wish to recreate various entities of originate Balinese nature in a traditional way. It means that various aspects that build the natural beauty of Balinese traditional life become references for batik craft motifs. Considering that, the developments occurred in the social life in Bali had experienced quite massive growth, such as developments that were continuously being carried out by the government and individuals, so that the image of Bali which was always described as a paradise of world with natural views that were typically countryside had turned into a metropolitan city. This becomes the impetus to revive the images of Bali which are well-known in the world sight, especially in ecological destinations that are full of knowledge about the natural beauty of Bali. Therefore, various motifs of Bali's natural beauty appear as objects in batik

crafts, and then flower motifs appear with the perspective that rituals or ceremonies in Bali are inseparable from the presence of flower elements, which seem to give the impression of beauty to religious activities in Bali.

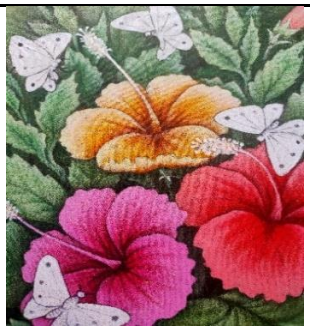
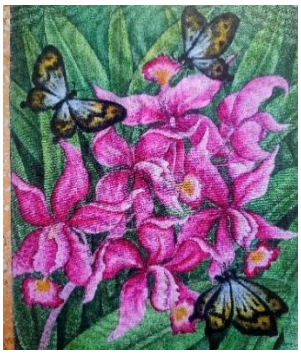
The awareness to build an autonomous design with an effort to not imitate the designs of other Balinese batik crafts, presents an attitude of the importance of creativity value in building a business through the craft sector. In addition, to forming the image of a separate batik craft industry, this aspect is said to be able to attract consumer interest in the craft products. Moreover, the skill of creating a design is also inseparable from several Balinese batik artisans who were previously painters, so that several traditional painting techniques are also applied to create batik design. Then finally, its own characteristics are obtained in the works of Balinese batik crafts.

The main capital applied as a batik craftsman cannot be separated from the awareness to present its own characteristics to its products. This characteristic reflects the identity of batik crafts which explicitly gives a touch to further efforts to act as a craft entrepreneur. It means that the competition principle is not the main choice, but rather builds identity towards creativity in the art of batik which is adapted to market interests.

Thus, the presence of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting in the practice of representing some developing art and craft products is inseparable from the glory of flora and fauna painting in the world sight. Among the many enthusiasts of typical Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting style, many are represented in several arts and crafts. This is an alternative or other choice for consumers in enjoying the image of Pengosekan's flora and fauna paintings. Due to the various influences and consumer interest which is quite high in arts and crafts as their needs. It has led to the efforts made by craftsmen to be able to build their creativity as a response to follow the trends of the times.

Table 2. Representation of Pengosekan's Flora and Fauna Painting in Batik Arts

Category	**Pengosekan's Flora and Fauna Painting**	**The Art of Batik Painting**	**Description**
Form	 I Dewa Made Bawa, *Lotus*, ink and acrylic on canvas, 90x60 cm, 1997.	 Product of Batik Painting	From the two images, one can see the similarity in shape of the visual object of the artwork.
Colour			In terms of color, there is a similarity in the color nuances

	 I Dewa Nyoman Batuan, *Pucuk*, ink and acrylic on canvas, 90x60 cm, 1985.	 Product of Batik Painting	used, as well as the coloring technique that applies the gradation technique
Line	 I Dewa Nyoman Batuan, *Anggrek* ink and acrylic on canvas, 90x60 cm, 1985.	 Product of Batik Painting	From the visible lines of the two products, they show firm and rigid lines, so that both objects seem decorative

4. Conclusion

The visual objects of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting are represented in batik art products in Ubud district. This can be seen in terms of themes, techniques, and visual objects attached to these batik art products. The occurred representation is influenced by the existence of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting image as a trendsetter of art products. Apart from that, the visual object representation of Pengosekan's flora and fauna painting is also supported by the artisans' motivation to create innovative forms of products. Some of these factors are inseparable from the influence of tourism development and market demand that developed at that time.

Acknowledgements

The authors would also like to thank the manager of the journal The International Journal of Social Sciences World who has prepared reviewers for this manuscript.

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