

EXPRESSION OF MASTERLY AESTHETIC VALUE IN BALINESE SARAD ORNAMENTS

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ABSTRACT

Bali is known for its various beautiful decorative motifs. The variety of ornaments, decorations engraved on wooden statues, carved on stone, on silver and on a series of coconut leaves, as well as to the basic material for flour for cakes is also a touch of Balinese artists. Therefore, to express a work of art is not limited by the basic material. We will discuss the expression of aesthetic value in Sarad's artwork, which is made from cake flour as a basic medium. Sarad is an important part of the form of sacred offerings to the Balinese Hindu community. Sarad's beauty can be seen from the very striking colors, themes, various shapes and arranged into very large sizes reaching 3-7 meters. The making of Sarad's artwork is usually done by a group of women from a Banjar and is led by a Banten artisan. Undagi are usually led by a Pedanda, an expert who masters everything how to form ornaments, color compositions to assemble them into a story theme. The series of Sarad ornaments also has symbolic values that are important to be expressed and known by the younger generation. The purpose of this research is to find out the creative process of the banten undagi in providing aesthetic values to Sarad and to provide education, literacy to the public about the importance of understanding the aesthetic value of Sarad's artwork as Balinese cultural heritage. This study uses a qualitative descriptive method that can objectively explain an event in the form of data by presenting it in the form of photo documentation then analyzing and interpreting it.

The results of the study reveal 3 relationships between the Creator Subject or known masterly, Objects and Values so that it is revealed that Sarad's aesthetic value elevates the expression of the universe/Bhuwana. As a undagi, understanding the microcosm and macrocosm is the most important essence that must be expressed in the form of sacred symbols and various color compositions and stories, such as the story of Gods, plants, and animal figures.

Keywords: *Masterly, Sarad, Sacred offerings, Undagi.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

Bali is very well known for its many traditional religious ceremonies with the appearance of various signs such as Penjor, gamelan music from temples and traditional houses, women in kebaya carrying dulang offerings above their heads (Gebogan), a series of coconut leaves with colorful flowers and the smell of incense. As well as many more visual signs that we can see. When we visit religious

ceremonies in Bali, there is one form of offering that is very different and unique, namely Sarad or Pulagembal / Pregembal. For the Balinese Hindu community, Sarad is a form of sacred offering that is full of symbolic meaning. The beauty of Sarad becomes one of the special offerings for certain ceremonies or major level ceremonies, such as marriage and death.

Visually Sarad is manifested in various colorful shapes with very large dimensions and has a height of more than 2 meters. Sarad's basic ingredients are made of colorful cake flour dough which is then shaped into an ornament. The basic shape of Sarad varies in size, for example in the shape or frame of a circle, rectangle, square, triangle, and other organic shapes, approximately 10 cm x 10 cm. In each of these basic forms, there are ornaments that show the forms of fauna, flora, humans and other decorative elements. Sarad's ornaments are very beautiful, fulfilling the basic aesthetic elements, very detailed and various decorative elements, some of the ornaments are inspired by folklore, Ramayana, Dewata Nawa Sanga and Hindu religious symbols. The pattern of laying these ornaments refers to the philosophy of the universe or the concept of Bhuwana Agung and Bhuwana Alit. Therefore, the final form of Sarad shows the form of Kayon or Gunungan, as the opening of the Wayang show.

The making of Sarad's artwork is usually done collectively by the women in the house of an elder/penglingsir who understands traditional ceremonies. The collective activity of making offerings is usually done by many people, depending on the size of the work, the complexity and specificity of the theme. A person called artisan offerings or a figure who is an expert in offerings is in charge of making from beginning to end until this work is presented in a traditional ceremony.

The main form of Sarad is in the form of Kayon or gunungan in wayang art. Made from cake flour, then colored and then shaped into various ornaments. Sarad is an important part of the means of offering for the Hindu community in Bali. What makes Kayon Sarad interesting and amazing is the height that reaches 3-7 meters.



Figure 1. Kayon/Gunungan shaped Sarad

In its development, will Sarad's art experts continue to be able to preserve the traditional culture of making Sarad's artworks, in the midst of the rush of modern culture that can distract young women, especially to do contemporary activities. Socio-cultural conditions greatly affect the development of a collective activity that requires creative support from the environment. There are not too many role models/experts (serati banten) in their fields (expert figures/masters), because they doesn't only require skill in making, but also have other abilities such as ideas, understanding the concept of symbols, philosophy of placing ornaments.

The purpose of this study was to find out the creative process of undagi (artisan) in providing aesthetic values to Sarad and provide education, literacy to the public about the importance of understanding the aesthetic value of Sarad's artwork as Balinese cultural heritage. The benefits of this research are so that the preservation of Sarad's artwork can continue to grow, understand and inspire every generation of Balinese people, especially to continue, to pursue this profession.

B. METHOD

This study uses a qualitative descriptive method to describe, explain and summarize various conditions, situations, phenomena based on events. This research was also carried out by means of interviews, observations, photo documentation of various events with the same topic, researchers were directly involved in the process of making Sarad which consisted of an expert or character, participants in this case the women who helped, and the object of Sarad itself. This research also gets references from social media YouTube, which is very helpful in showing how the central figure in this study, the Banten worker called undagi, works together with the father (volunteered).

YouTube media was used as part of a field survey which was blocked due to the pandemic, this religious ceremony in Bali was carried out during the covid-19 pandemic so it was not possible for researchers to attend and there were restrictions on the number of visitors who could come to the temple. According to Tesch (Deddy Mulyana, pp. 158 – 160:2002), qualitative research generally includes naturalistic and ethnographic research, covering several approaches including: case studies, action research, field studies, phenomenological research and interpretive interactionism. With the characteristics of one of them; focuses attention on the study of human action and socially situated artifacts, using humans as the primary research instrument. Naturalistic research is identical to phenomenological research which emphasizes logics in action, namely the logic of the individuals being studied, the individual is assumed to be active, planning, aiming and interpreting their own behavior and the behavior of others.

This qualitative research uses an Art Expression approach. According to Agus Sachari in the Design Dictionary (page 60) expression is essentially a way of interpreting a design issue into a form of personal expression that is in line with the 'mission' of planning. The personal expression approach is a way of expressing creative ideas both in realizing shapes, colors or other visual aspects, in fact many activities often create new ideas that are widely accepted. In contrast to the expression of Rupa in art, expression in design should not conflict with its main function or conflict with the main aspects of design, for example, how an artist/designer can express the spirit of his era in various works, so that the work can be accepted by the wider community. Sometimes the expression approach is used to answer certain themes that are the 'wants' of consumers or producers, for example expressing splendor, sadness, suffering, love and so on.

The research location is in Klungkung Regency, Bali. The difficulty of this research in 2020-2021 is that it is still in a state of the covid-19 pandemic, so there are restrictions on large numbers of people. To get the opportunity to know the creative process of Sarad's maker/creator, the researcher had the opportunity to visit a family of a Pastor/Pedanda to see how undagi tells how to make Sarad's offerings. The manufacturing process takes quite a long time, so to get the overall data the researchers visited several other families, came to the temple and saw videos related to the assembly process, building Sarad through the YouTube channel.

C. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Sarad is part of the offerings in the form of symbols at religious ceremonies for Hindus in Bali. As a yantra (symbol, image) to give the focus of worship to Sang Hyang Widhi which is impossible to

reach by human ability. Through symbols, Hindus try to express devotion, prostrate gratitude and ask for the grace of Hyang Widhi (Triguna: 2013, 297). Worship, offering and service are the most important yadnya (yajna) according to Hinduism. Yajna comes from Sanskrit, the origin of the word Yaj means to worship, pay homage or make holy. Yajna can also be interpreted to respect, sacrifice, serve, do good (virtue), give and surrender sincerely. According to Triguna, in the word Yajna there are values: 1. a sense of sincerity and purity, 2. a sense of devotion and worship (respecting) Hyang Widhi, Gods, Bhatara, Ancestors, State, Nation, and Humanity, 3. The implementation is adjusted to the abilities of each Hindu, according to the place (desa), time (kala), and circumstances (patra), 4. Implementation of the teachings of the Catur Weda.

Based on field observations and interviews, the yajna activities are realized in the form of religious events or rituals, either individually, family or collectively. The event is a spiritual ritual to get closer to Hyang Widhi. In the event there is a ceremony which means everything related to handwork. The handwork in question is offerings or offerings, which will be offered to five types of yajna (Panca Yajna), namely to Gods (Dewa yajna), Ancestors (Pitra Yajna), holy people (rsi yajna), humans (manusa yajna) and living beings. Others (Bhuta Yajna) as an expression of gratitude to the universe.

Offerings can be seen everywhere in Bali, an offering is a kind of self-sacrifice. According to Eiseman (216-218:1990) Offering in Bali are always made of natural things, objects of everyday use and life. They may be purchased, but they are never made of anything other than items that the Balinese use or consume themselves. They may be articles of food, may be objected 'sewed' together from palm leaves, maybe flowers. An offering is something tangible, presented to God (in some manifestation or another) at the time of prayer. Offerings to the higher aspects of God must be beautiful, nicely made, appealing objects that would delight the senses.

Through traditional artists, the activity of making Sarad's offerings looks like imitating or mimesis like what is taught or exemplified even ordered by the elders. Mimesis or imitation of something is very Sarad ornaments, such as: imitating fauna and flora, imitating human figures and other organic forms and other symbolic forms. Traditional artists or Undagi/Pengarombo (Balinese language) in a culture that has not gone through formal education are currently still around indigenous peoples, even though their numbers are not many and these undagi are already old. They get their expertise from the process of seeing, listening and practicing directly (self-taught), they get it from generation to generation through the process of ngayah activities (volunteered).

The creativity of Balinese women is very well honed due to the ritual culture that always exists in their lives. Women as mothers and as wives have other important roles in religious activities providing them the opportunity to *ngayah* or dedicate themselves to giving an offering in the form of the best works of art.

According to Selo Soemardjan (in Utami Munandar, p.186,1999) truly creative people have their own value system and life appreciation system which may not be the same as the values adopted by the general public. Creativity is a personal trait of an individual and is not a social trait that is internalized by society, although individual creative abilities cannot be separated from the influence of culture and the society that surrounds them. The emergence and growth of creativity and the subsequent development of a creation created by the creator does not escape the influence of the community where the creator lives and works.



Figure 2. Creator/Undagi is teaching women to make Sarad ornaments



Figure 3. Creator/Undagi is teaching women to make Sarad
 Source : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3_3uEwXSsmU , Mei 2022

Aesthetic values according to Junaidi are seen from two points of view, namely expression and position. The expression point of view examines how the aesthetic value is manifested or expressed in an object. Expression of an aesthetic value can be in the form of order, chaos, sublime, or deception. The order is obedience that can be categorized with canon, harmony, mimesis, and masterly expressions. From the point of view of position, coverage of the relationship or position of aesthetic value with other values. The discussion of this paper is specifically for the expression of aesthetic values, namely the embodiment of aesthetic values in objects, how these values 'express themselves'. Expression of aesthetic value is used in the context of the creation of works of art, as an artist's strategy to get the attention of spectators or art connoisseurs. According to Dharsono (2004:25), beauty is a type of expression and expression is the 'content' or 'content' of art. Contents and Contents can be named based on sensory and emotional senses that are distinguished according to pleasant tastes such as humor and reflection.

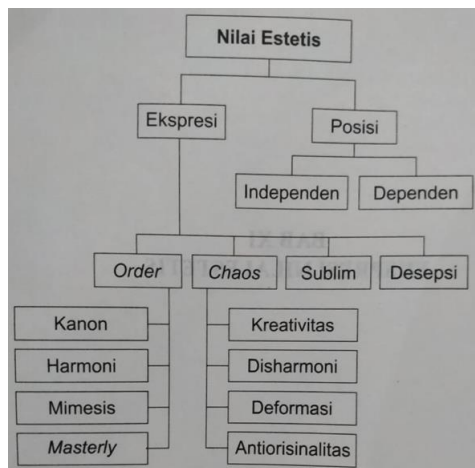


Figure 4. Aesthetic Value coverage
 Source: Deni Junaedi (Pg.218:2021)

This study only discusses how the Order process as regularity and obedience is applied to an object to attract the attention of the audience. This controlled aesthetic value is based on the canon, whose object is manifested in harmony and mimesis, while the presentation is masterly. The first element is canon or standard which is a standard guide used to evaluate aesthetic objects. From an artist's perspective, canons are the rules used to create works of art. Kanon (canon, Greek) means rules, in Javanese and Balinese it is called Pakem, which refers to the book of Wayang stories, for example the standard of the Mahabharata story, the standard of the Ramayana story, the standard of the Wayang Purwa. Umar Kayam in Junaidi (page 220: 2021), Pakem is a set of rules, express or implied, spoken or written, regarding one or more elements of the performing arts of a particular style. The Pakem is not limited to the story that is delivered but also to the visual appearance.

The second element is harmony, which is the harmony between one element and another that is different in a composition. The presence of the essence of harmony aims to produce beauty. In ancient Greek history harmony became another name for sound (music), equivalent to symmetric for visual beauty (fine arts). The development of the word harmony in the field of design is a combination of several units that have similarities. Similarities that do not always suggest regularity and repetition. Similarity as a condition of harmony almost always succeeds in bringing beauty. This strategy is applied to most ornaments, the existence of an ordered and structured pattern becomes part of the harmony value that still pays attention to unity, balance, and rhythm. Unity is related to the management of dominant and subordinate visual elements. Balance is the completion of all the forces in one structure in order to get balance, while rhythm is the regular repetition of elements. Dharsono (page 2, 2007) Beauty is basically a number of basic qualities contained in a thing, these basic qualities are often referred to as unity, harmony, symmetry, balance and contrast. In the series Sarad fulfills all the essential qualities of beauty.

The third element, mimesis is the imitation of something, with different materials or media, so that art connoisseurs will know that the artwork is an imitation. Imitating a form or theme with various considerations, including culture, ritual, admiration for an object, whether it occurs in nature or in a story. Many of Sarad's ornaments are inspired by imitating the beauty of nature, the story of Dewa Dewi as a form of respect for God.

The fourth element, Masterly is the aesthetic value that is reflected in an object that represents the mastery or skill of a creator. Engraving that contains Masterly value means that the carving reflects the skills and expertise of the carver (Junaidi, p. 234: 2013)



Figure 5. Assembly process

Source : https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v3_3uEwXSmU , Mei 2022

The idea is related to concepts in Hindu religious philosophy, such as Hindu cosmology which has 5 elements, namely: earth (solid), water (liquid), air (gas), fire (plasma) and ether. In Laksemi (pages 257-258:2013) and according to Eiseman (pages 229: 1990) the understanding of the cardinal directions is related to the omnipotence of the Gods who guard for sacred directions such as Dewata Nawasanga, such as: Brahma in the South with red color, Vishnu in the North with Black, Shiva in the Center/Axis with Panca/Five colors, Iswara in the East in White, Mahadewa in the West in Yellow, Sambu in the Northeast in Blue, Mahesora in the Southeast in Pink, Rudra in Northwest in orange, Sangkara in the northwest in Green.



Figure 6. Canon/Pakem, the depiction of God and Goddess symbols based on 3 categories

The depiction of symbols of Hindu gods is generally described in 3 categories, first anthropomorphic (shaped like a human with various advantages) such as thousand eyes, four faces (chess face), three legs, many arms. The second depiction is Semi Anthropomorphic (half human or half animal), such as the human god Ganesha with the head of an elephant. The third depiction is Unanthrophomorphic (not as a human, but as an animal) such as Garuda, as a plant/Soma. Triguna

stated that symbols of Hindu society are full of status and role meanings, symbols are seen as individual and group identities. Similar to Dharsono's view (24-25:2007), that value is related to something that is considered valuable, while symbols besides having certain functions can also be used as community identities.

According to Hegel, beauty is an idea embodied in the senses (Beauty is the Idea as it shows itself to sense). According to him, the material of art is an idea, while its form is contained in the sensory and imaginary images. (Dharsono, pages 65-66:2004)



Figure 7. Delusions of the senses depiction of the forms of flora and fauna

Based on the description above, if you look at Sarad's artwork, it can be seen that the use of canons/Pakem/rules; 1) Relating to the central characters in the wayang story, 2) The color provisions of the Gods of Nawasanga, 3) The direction of the winds of the Gods of Nawasanga, 4) The stipulation that Sarad is in the form of Kayon or Gunungan which means 'start a story', 5) The size scale rules that high and large reaching 3-7 meters into the hallmark of Sarad. Here, it can be seen that undagi is very dominant in form, content and content. The canons/pakem by the supporting community are obtained from a long journey, taking tens or even hundreds of years, from generation to generation to reach the peak stage of creation. The pakem is said to be social, because an undagi who works to create his own style/character then follows that style and is imitated by his followers. It can be said that the process of creation like this is considered a classic work, socially these undagi can be called as skilled artists or masters. The impression of Harmony is expressed by Undagi as a creator by placing a story line, colorful, colors in each part of the contents of the ornament so that it looks like there is unity, balance in the composition. The application of striking colors in accordance with the color philosophy of Dewata Nawasanga does not interfere with the work as a whole, instead it makes this artwork always different, unique and novelty. The impression of mimesis is very clearly

seen in the expression of the final form of Sarad, which is in the form of Kayon or Gunungan of a wayang story. The imitation is also seen in how the ornaments that are the contents are arranged based on the themes and stories that are displayed.

D. CONCLUSION

Cultural results as cultural expressions are represented as artifacts, in the form of pictures on stone reliefs, wood, cloth, leaves and even in other media such as cake flour that contains symbolic values. Sarad's craft as part of a sacred work of art made from cake flour is not meant to be eaten by humans, but to be presented to God Hyang Widhi Wasa. These aesthetic values are born because of the artist's personal expression or undagi in creating art, values that are born because of objective demands, may also be born because of market tastes, trends or because of the use of new technology or materials.

The very strong expression of Sarad's work lies in three factors, namely the Creator (Undagi), Sarad as a medium and the Beauty/aesthetic Value (value). The first factor, the undagi (masterly) as a creator has the spiritual ability to translate natural beauty such as bhuwana alit and bhuwana agung in the form of symbols. Bhuwana Alit is expressed in forms such as flora and fauna forms, human forms. Bhuwana Agung is expressed in the form of symbols of Hyang Widhi Wasa, the Hindu God and Goddess, the natural form of Bhuta Kala. Another important expression is in the form of a story into a work of Sarad/Pulagembal, for example the story of the Ramayana, Dewata Nawa Sanga, and the ability to transmit these symbols to the community (customary village). The quality of Sarad's artwork can be seen from the 'how' to present it, not the 'what' that is presented, because the appearance of Sarad's form always looks new, so it can be said that if it is presented in new ways, the old object will become new. Undagi as a creator/subject has an aesthetic experience that is continuously reproduced, through a process of intuition mediation. Herein lies the existence of undagi, trying to make it interesting.

The second factor is Sarad as an object of art consisting of Form and Content. Sarad's form is a series of ornaments of various sizes that have messages and meanings, there are educational and moral aspects that contain content, has the main form of Kayon or Gunungan, has very beautiful colors with reference to the sacred colors of Dewata Nawa Sanga. Aesthetic qualities are invoked in a series of small ornaments so that they tell stories, convey messages and meanings.

The third factor is the value of beauty, which lies in the essence of Sarad as a form of offering how Hindu society has a spiritual and cultural bond between itself as a human being and the creator.

With very bright and striking colors, it signifies the joy of the people to give a sense of the beauty, sincerity, and majesty of God. Sarad describes the Hindu community's understanding of the philosophy of the Vertical Horizontal relationship, the philosophy of the microcosm and macrocosm relationship between the underworld and the world above.

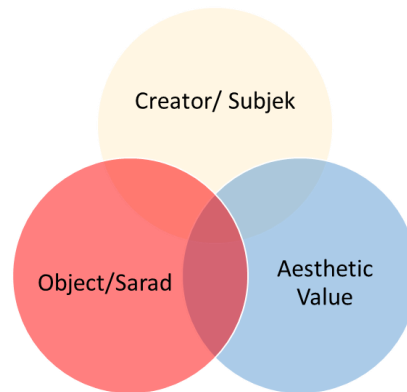


Figure 8. Masterly Embodiment Factor

The expertise of an artist Sarad as a subject's creator lies in the ways to process the world of ideas, the world of imagination, until it can be said to give birth to new innovations, this ability can be categorized as imagination. Creators are able to imagine something beautiful with sublime appreciation. The value of beauty is not solely from a beautiful form but a beautiful idea. For example expressing Idea: splendor, majesty, holiness, sacredness, gratitude, togetherness.

The existence of the undagi/Pengarombo can be said to be masterly because it is reflected in their expertise in representing their mastery of skills as a creator of traditional arts. Not only masterly personally, but his ability to invite, gather the younger generation to preserve and develop one of their cultural identities, namely Sarad which is very beautiful and majestic to be presented to Hyang Widhi.

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