

AESTHETIC ANALYSIS OF CARVING THE ATMOSPHERE OF RURAL MARKETS IN THE MIDST OF THE DEGRADATION OF YOUTH INTEREST IN SENENAN VILLAGE

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Abstract. Jepara is known as the "City of Carving" and has been globally recognized since the 1990s. The people of Jepara primarily work as carving artisans, which is a local cultural identity that is globally competitive. This research is a case study type of research with a qualitative approach. The data collection techniques used are: observation, interviews, and documentation to gather data regarding the "Rural Market Atmosphere" carving. Observation was conducted at the location of the Yohanes Shefta Adinata carving art gallery, Senenan Village, RT.04 RW.02 on October 2, 2025. The interview was conducted by asking questions to Yohannes as the resource person. Meanwhile, documentation was done by taking photos with the resource person as support for the research. Data analysis techniques are carried out thru data reduction, data presentation, data verification, or drawing conclusions. The research results show: (1) The process of making wood carvings starts from the preparation stage, thru the creation stage, and ends with the finishing stage. (2) The aesthetic elements of lines, shapes, texture, space, color, and light and shadow are present in the wood carving "Rural Market Atmosphere". (3) There is interest among the younger generation in wood carving in Senenan village. The purpose of this research is to understand the wood carving process, identify the aesthetic elements in the "Rural Market Atmosphere" carving, and understand the interest of the younger generation in wood carving in Senenan village.

Keywords: Carving art, Young generation's interest, Esthetics, Culture

1. Introduction

Jepara is located in one of the districts of Central Java Province. According to Rifandi & Haryanto (2020) The city of Jepara has the nickname "Jepara Carved City". Jepara carvings are well-known among the local community and have been involved in international trade since the 1990s. The carving craft industry grows and develops in accordance with the local cultural values of the Jepara people and makes Jepara carving the identity of the city of Jepara (Indrahti, 2022). At the beginning of development, The art of carving in Jepara began during the reign of Ratu Kalinyamat in the 16th century as evidenced by the carving relics on the walls of the Mantingan Mosque (Masabdi, 2023).

At that time, the royal minister named Sungging Badarduwung had expertise in carving. This was proven when Sungging Badarduwung was asked by the Queen to carve the Mantingan Mosque and the Jirat Tomb is the tomb of the Queen's husband named Sultan Hadlirin to beautify the carving. Since then, Jepara carving has developed continuously from Kartini's time to the present day. According to Utami et al., (2021) Jepara carving artworks are inseparable from the skill and expertise of a sculptor in making patterns, nggetaki (transforming the lines in the pattern on paper on wood), ndasari (prying the base outside the motif), mbukaki (forming a sculpture on a stem, leaf, or flower motif), benangi (forming threads or curved lines on the motif), and finishing (smoothing the carving).

Based on the results of research at the location of the Yohanes Shefta Adinata Sculpture Art Gallery, Senenan Village RT.04 RW.02 on October 2, 2025, researchers found 2 workers who

were around 50 years old who continued to carry out their work as craftsmen. In carving, mastery of techniques and special skills is required by paying attention to the details of the object and the level of complexity of the object being made. The process of making carvings with a high level of complexity makes the interest of the younger generation diminish as seen from the carving craftsmen dominated by the older generation, with the majority over 50 years old (Rohmah & Salam, 2022). Thus, it is evident that there is a degradation of youth interest in carving at the location of the Yohanes Shefta Adinata Sculpture Art Gallery.

Previous research was conducted by Tomihendra Saputra (2020) examine the creative process and aesthetic expression of Kartono's work which focuses on planning, aesthetic elements and their completion. Meanwhile, the research conducted Rifandi & Haryanto (2020) focuses on the analysis of geometric elements' shapes, textures, and aesthetic value. Research by Alamsyah (2018) discussing the profession of relief carver has decreased because wages are not proportional to the skills and the loss of interest of the younger generation. The three studies above have similarities in the object of study of carving and relief art as cultural heritage that needs to be preserved by the younger generation. Although they have similarities in studying the art of carving, the difference in this research lies in the object, where the carving art of the Rural Market Atmosphere was not discussed in depth in previous research.

The formulation of the problem in this study: (1) what is the process of making carving art? (2) what are the aesthetic elements in the carving of the Rural Market Atmosphere? (3) what is the interest of the younger generation in the art of carving in Senenan Village? The purpose of this study is to find out the process of making carvings, find out the aesthetic elements in carving the Rural Market Atmosphere, and find out the interest of the younger generation in carving in Senenan Village. The benefit for the next research is to provide an overview of the role of the younger generation as the next generation so that it can increase the skilled workforce.

This research is a type of qualitative research using a case study approach. The qualitative method gives researchers the freedom to adjust the methods and techniques used during the data collection process, so that they can provide more in-depth and meaningful results (Insania & Pasaribu, 2024). In the case study method, the researcher focuses on the design and implementation of the research (Nur'aini, 2020). The case study in this study examines the age of the workforce, the process of making carvings, and aesthetic elements in carving the Rural Market Atmosphere.

Data collection techniques according to Khorida, (2022) namely interviews, observations, and documentation methods. Observation was carried out by direct observation at the location of the Yohanes Shefta Adinata Sculpture Art Gallery RT.04 RW.02. Interviews are a technique that involves asking questions to sources to collect the data needed in the research. Meanwhile, documentation is a technique of taking photos with sources as evidence and support for research.

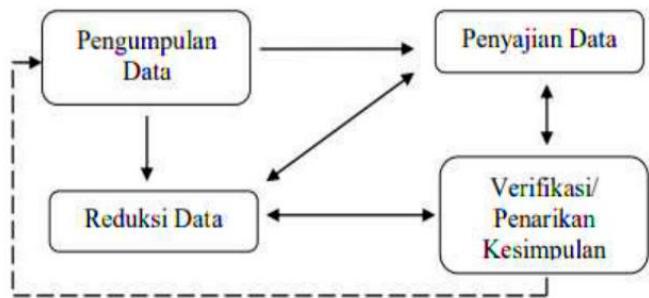


Figure 1. Miles & Huberman Data Analysis Techniques

Source: (Wasis Wijayanto, Nur Fajrie, 2023).

According to Miles & Huberman, data analysis consists of three streams of activity, namely: data reduction, data presentation, data collection, and conclusion/verification (Wasis Wijayanto, Nur Fajrie, 2023). Data reduction is a selection process to focus attention on all types of information that support research data. Data presentation is the preparation of information that concludes qualitative research, in the form of brief descriptions, charts and the like. Data collection is a collection of information to draw conclusions and take action. Data obtained from interviews, observations, and analyses can describe the manufacturing process, aesthetic elements, and interests of the younger generation. Conclusions are drawn from the data that has been analyzed and the data that has been checked based on the evidence obtained at the research site.

2. Results and Discussion

The results of this study show the manufacturing process, aesthetic elements in carving the atmosphere of the rural market and the interest of the younger generation has decreased. The process of making carvings with a high level of complexity makes the interest of the younger generation diminish as the carving craftsmen are dominated by the older generation, with the majority over 50 years old (Rohmah & salam, 2022). While aesthetic elements including lines, faces, textures, space, color and mass create aesthetic value in carvings. In creating aesthetic value, special skills of skilled labor are needed in the work "Rural Market Atmosphere" which not all craftsmen have these skills.

2.1 The process of making carvings of the atmosphere of a rural market

According to Prasetya & Wijayanto, (2024) The art of carving is the result of drawing using certain tools, so that the surface that was initially flat becomes uneven. According to Saputra et al., (2020) The carving process is a step that will be carried out in the making of a carving artwork. The first stage is to prepare the tools used in carving by sharpening them first. The tool for engraving consists of pCurved Polishing Chisel, Bent Cabbage Chisel, Small Bending Polishing Chisel, Bent Polishing Chisel, Large Doodle Chisel, Bent Nailer Chisel, Curved Polishing Chisel, and Large Polishing Chisel.

In addition, there are several tools such as palm brushes, wooden hammers (gandhen), and sandpaper. In the process of making carvings, Perhutani teak wood is placed on a table to make it easier for craftsmen to carve. Furthermore, the handle of the wooden tool (gandhen) is coated with rubber. Palm brushes are used to clean carvings from carvings (Saputra et al., 2020). Sandpaper is used to sharpen and smooth the surface of the carving to make it look neat and smooth. The next stage is the

process of making carvings which requires several stages ranging from preparation to completion, Here is the process of making carving art :



Figure 2. Engraving Equipment

Source : Researcher Documentation

Preparation is the initial stage of making carvings, by preparing Perhutani teak wood, digging tables, chisels, rubber wooden hammers, and other equipment such as grinders. Next, attach the pattern to the wood medium using paper/wood glue, then wait for it to dry so that the pattern does not shift during the sculpting process. The first stage of formation, nggetaki is the process of sculpting in the form of strokes/sculptures hit using a wooden knuckle / hammer to form according to the pasted pattern. The second stage, nggabahi/Globali is the process of sculpting according to a pattern roughly and cleaning the carvings behind or the backmost part of the pile that has not yet been finished (Saputra et al., 2020).

The third stage, matut is the process of sculpting roughly shaped carvings into a finer shape. The sculpting process uses a suitable chisel blade. The fourth stage, weaning and meching is the stage of sculpting decorative lines according to the design so that the shape of the carving/motif will look more dynamic. The last stage, finishing is the process of smoothing using sandpaper on the anatomy of the carving that has not been finished sculpting (Kasanah & Naam, 2023).

2.1.1 Aesthetic elements of the rural market atmosphere

The elements of carving motifs contained in the book entitled "Making Carvings from Cork Materials by Edij Kismartanto" (Kasanah & Naam, 2023). There are six elements that designers need to pay attention to in designing something, namely lines, textures, space, color and mass. A line is an elongated mark that is made so as to give a mark on the surface. Texture is a shape that shows the integrity of a part of the whole, texture is the surface property of an object by touching.

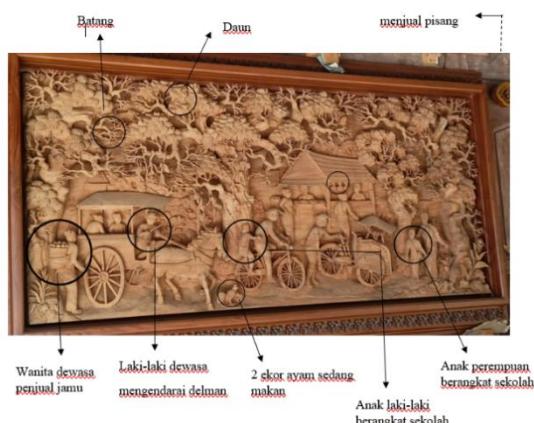


Figure 3. Carving the Atmosphere of a Rural Market

Source : Researcher Documentation

Color is used as a differentiator between one object and another that is identical in size, texture, and texture. Space is something that is easier to feel than to see. While mass is the content or volume of a room that limits the background and the frame. Rural reliefs tell about the life of the people in the countryside with simple natural nuances, such as the activities and traditions of the rural community in the past such as markets, traditional agriculture, horse carts, two chickens, baskets of herbal medicine carry, school activities, and so on (Saputra, 2020).

According to Utami et al., (2021) Jepara carving art is rich in philosophy, the philosophy in question is values, teachings, and beliefs, morals, and culture. The sculpture depicts a school boy being carried by an adult on a two-wheeled bicycle, while a girl walks in a full school uniform. In addition, there was also an adult driving a delman pulled on a fast horse, carrying two female passengers to the market. The carvings above have aesthetic elements such as broken lines to show the details of the leaves, straight lines on the carts and roofs of the house, and curved lines on the shapes of fruits, people, and animals that give the nuances of lively movement. The combination of the lines on the branches of the trees creates the illusion of depth and shape.

Geometric and non-geometric shapes can be seen from the shape of the roof and the objects in the carving. The geometric shape is found in the shape of circles and lines of a work. One of the characteristics is the pattern and motif of the carving (Sandhopi et al., 2020). The carving motif "Rural Market Atmosphere" dominates because human activities in the past in rural markets seem crowded while the tree motif has a high level of detail by paying attention to the depth of the sculpture. The brown color on the edges of the carving seems elegant, sturdy and strong. Color symbolizes beauty and simplicity.

The texture is not visible, yet palpable. If you look at it unevenly, it has a real impression and where the impression is rough on objects and on other parts such as trees, carts, markets. Based on the analysis above, the compiler of the principles and elements of fine art is attractive because it is dominated by the rhythm of fine art or the rhythm of flowing. According to Putri et al., (2025) Art is very important and cannot be eliminated, because art is a means to create all forms of expression of human creativity. Therefore, the carving of the Rural Market Atmosphere includes carvings with a good category in overall aesthetics.

Increasingly complicated carvings can of course be sold at a high price, this is related to learning to carve, it takes quite a long time to be able to carve with various motifs. The complexity in making these motifs resulted in youth being more interested in learning other skills. Sculptors are dominated by the older generation, with the majority over 50 years old (Rohmah & Salam, 2022). "If the carving of the Rural Atmosphere requires workers who have special skills, because not all craftsmen can make it. The level of complexity is high, especially in the part of the tree branch it is necessary to pay attention to the level of depth, and the detail" (Interview with Yohanes).

Seeing the level of complexity and precision required, the carving art of the Rural Market Atmosphere is marketed at a price range of Rp. 20,000,000 to Rp. 25,000,000. The process of working is carried out meticulously, and meticulously taking 2 to 3 months to produce the best quality carvings. Meanwhile, the carving of the Rural Market Atmosphere uses Perhutani Sulawesi teak wood which makes the carving expensive. Perhutani's teak wood is known as the best choice thanks to its management that follows strict procedures, ranging from structured logging governance, proper stock storage, careful nurseries, routine maintenance, to consideration of the ideal age of the tree before it is felled. This condition can lead to variations in the properties of the wood (By Luh Putu Yesy Anggreni et al., 2022).

This approach ensures that Perhutani's teak wood is the main material to produce durable carvings of superior quality. Perum Perhutani is one of the state-owned enterprises that has the authority and task to manage state forest resources such as Perhutani teak wood. Perhutani teak wood is known to have dense fiber properties and high durability, making it a superior choice to ensure that handicraft

products have a long life and premium selling value. According to Dewi et al., (2025) The difference in the properties of wood is what determines the usefulness of each type of wood according to the needs.

2.1.1.1 The interest of the younger generation in the art of carving in Senenan village



Figure 4. Portrait of Sculptural Art Worker

Source: <https://share.google/quj6wrlNkHnv0fUNN>

As many as 83% of the livelihood of the people of Senenan Village is in the field of carving craft industry, this work seems to be a work that has been passed down from ancient times to the present. Almost every house in Senenan Village is a place for carving crafts, the rest of the house terraces are used as carving storefronts for household industry traders in the village (Nikmah, 2020). But currently the carving business in Senenan Village is experiencing a setback. Sculptors are dominated by the older generation, with the majority over 50 years old (Rohmah & Salam, 2022). The setbacks that occurred were caused by changes in youth interests.

The role of youth is decreasing, which can be seen from the decreasing activities of nyantrik. This situation resulted in a shortage of carving craftsmen which resulted in the absence of the next generation to continue the carving business (Zulfa & Wijaya, 2020). Based on observations on October 2, 2025, at the Yohanes Shefta Adinata Sculpture Art Gallery was filled with workers, the majority of whom were elderly people, both men and women. They are doing an activity called natah, which is the process of scratching or scraping unwanted parts of the fabric to match the desired motif pattern. Interestingly, not a single young man was seen working in that place.

The activity is fully handled by this older generation, who painstakingly and diligently make the art of carving. The level of complexity and patience makes the younger generation no longer interested in learning to carve. As a result, the carving workforce is now reduced due to the lack of the younger generation who contribute to learning to carve. If the younger generation does not exist, then the sustainability of the carving business and preserving it to the next generation is quite difficult because they have no interest in carving at all. Moreover, not all young generations inherit or their parents' skills as carving craftsmen. The carving craft business died after the parents died because there was no one to manage it (Adib, 2020).

3. Conclusion

The art of Jepara carving is a cultural heritage that has developed until now and contains the local cultural values of the Jepara people. These values have an impact on representations of life in ancient times that display trading activities in the market. Meanwhile, these carvings have aesthetic elements such as broken lines to show the details of the leaves, straight lines on carts and house buildings, and curved lines on fruits, people, and animals that give a lively sense of movement. The combination of lines on tree branches creates the illusion of depth and shape as well as geometric and non-geometric shapes as seen from the shape of the roof and objects in the carving. Over time, Jepara carving art is threatened by the

diminishing interest of the younger generation in carving. Therefore, the number of skilled workers at the location of the Yohanes Shefta Adinata Sculpture Art Gallery, Senenan Village is limited and dominated by 50 years old.

Declaration of Conflicting Interests

The authors state that there is no conflict of interest in the publication of this article

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