



WESTERN INFLUENCES IN SOUTHEAST ASIAN PAINTINGS: A COMPARISON OF A BALINESE INK PAINTING AND TWO MALAYSIAN GRAFFITI ARTWORKS

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ABSTRACT: Balinese ink paintings started to be created in the 1930s only after Western influences created suitable conditions in Bali. Of major importance were the European painters Walter Spies and Rudolf Bonnet, who decided to live long term in Bali. The artwork discussed in this article is a Balinese ink painting collected by the Czech painter and collector Rosita Charlotta Urbanová and the other artworks are two graffiti paintings by the Malaysian graffiti artist Hafiz Ab Rahman aka KATUN.²

The dissemination of graffiti art into Malaysia was inspired and influenced by hip-hop culture, skateboarding and also through visits of Malaysians to Western countries. The latest trends in Malaysian graffiti art have shown artists trying to nationalize, localize and anchor graffiti art in Malaysian culture.

A comparison of the Balinese ink painting and the two Malaysian graffiti artworks highlights interesting parallels, especially the resemblance of the human profile faces in the selected artworks.

KEY WORDS: Bali – Kuala Lumpur – Ink Painting – Rosita Charlotta Urbanová (1888–1978) – Graffiti Art – Hafiz Ab Rahman aka KATUN (1986) – Indonesia – Malaysia – Western Influences.

At the center of this paper are Western influences and inspirations as they affected paintings in Southeast Asia, principally in Bali and in Kuala Lumpur. Taking Balinese ink paintings and Malaysian graffiti art as examples, it demonstrates how Western

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² The graffiti artists' anonymous names (tag names) are written in CAPITAL letters as is common practice in the graffiti art community and as already used by graffiti researchers: AUSTIN. Taking The Train: How Graffiti Art Became an Urban Crisis in New York City. 2001. SNYDER. Graffiti Lives: Beyond the Tag in New York's Urban Underground. 2009. The graffiti artists' citizen names are added, if known from various Malaysian newspaper articles. In Malaysia many of the graffiti artists are publicly known and not really anonymous.

influences and inspirations contributed significantly to the development of these art forms both in the past and present. In the last section of this paper a comparison between the above-mentioned Balinese ink painting and two graffiti artworks is made. The research was conducted in the Náprstek Museum in Prague, and field work was carried out in Malaysia.

The Collector Rosita Charlotta Urbanová

The Náprstek Museum's Indonesian collection was put together by several collectors and has over 4,000 objects (Pospíšilová, 2009). The collection includes over 500 objects from the Czech painter, writer, journalist, traveler and art collector *Rosita Charlotta Urbanová* (Růžena Marie Milfaitová, 17. 10. 1888 Pavlíkov u Rakovníka – 31. 3. 1978 Den Haag; Náprstek Museum, Coll. dpt., coll. R. C. Urbanová, Cart. 1, data sheet). The objects collected by Urbanová were acquired during her exploratory journeys and include textiles, performing arts masks, wayang kulit puppets, woodcarvings, kris, jewelry, vessels, shoes, paintings and other things. Urbanová undertook two journeys around the world and during her second she lived in Indonesia from 1938–1946 (Figs. 1–2). During this time she visited Amboyna (Ambon Island), Bali, Borneo, Flores, Halmahera, Java, Lombok, Madura, Makassar, Nias, Sumatra, Sulawesi (Celebes), Sumbawa and other locations (Ibid., cart. 2, no. 2.2). She also co-founded the Javanese Academy in Indonesia (Ibid., no. 2.17). From 1943–1945 Urbanová was detained in Indonesia by Japanese occupational forces and during this detention period Urbanová went through a difficult time.³ Furthermore, many of her possessions disappeared and were lost forever. Among other things, she lost her correspondence, drawings and paintings from her world journeys, finished manuscripts, a camera, around two thousand black and white photographs, colored photographs and a special anti-humidity zinc storage container.⁴

Urbanová must have shipped the objects now in the Náprstek Museum's Indonesian collection back to Europe before her detention. The shipped boxes would then have been cruising the seas before finally reaching Prague.⁵ Urbanová was not repatriated back to Czechoslovakia until 1946. Her paintings and objects from Indonesia were exhibited in the Náprstek Museum in Prague in 1948, one of the first exhibitions after the war (Ibid., no. 2.2). Some of the objects she collected in Indonesia – including the black and white ink painting discussed here – were also reproduced in 1948 in the academic journal *Nový Orient*.⁶ The whole Indonesian collection of *Rosita Charlotta Urbanová* became part of the Náprstek Museum's collection in 1955 (Náprstek Museum's collection documentation; Náprstek Museum, Coll. dpt., coll. R. C. Urbanová, cart. 3, data sheet). The Balinese painting examined here (Inv. No. 15.734)

³ Urbanová was at that time the holder of a French passport.

⁴ Urbanová's lost manuscripts included a complete description of herbs used to heal leprosy, a book for the purposes of identifying names of persons, and, finally, manuscripts on the Panama Canal, Martinique, Tahiti, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Borneo, Bali and other things.

For more information on the lost property inventory of R. C. Urbanová's in Java, Dentelstreet 41 during the years 1942–1944 see: Náprstek Museum, coll. dpt., coll. R. C. Urbanová, cart. 2, no. 2.25.

⁵ Personal communication of Dr. Dagmar Pospíšilová, curator of the Náprstek Museum, with a close relative of R. C. Urbanová.

⁶ The painting Inv. No. 15.734 and also the painting Inv. No. 48.881 was reprinted in: *Indonesie. Nový Orient*, 1948, vol. III, no. 10, 235–237.



Fig. 1: R. C. Urbanová painting in Bali.



Fig. 2: R. C. Urbanová with local people during her stay in Bali.

and five other paintings in traditional Balinese style (Inv. Nos.: 39.166; 48.880; 48.881; 56.013; 56.014) are part of Urbanová's collection.

Balinese Ink Paintings in the 1930s and their Example (Inv. No. 15.734)

In the 1930s ink paintings were a new form of art in Bali. Geertz dates the beginnings of the *Balinese paintings of Western-style pictures on paper* to around 1931.⁷ Local Balinese people started to paint these new artworks for the first time only after coming into contact with Western foreigners who decided to stay and live in Bali. This was towards the end of the 1920s (Kuhnt-Saptodewo, et al., 2010: 11). Two European painters who had a very important influence on the development of the Balinese ink paintings were Walter Spies (1895–1942) and Rudolf Bonnet (1895–1978). Spies and Bonnet inspired several locals to become painters themselves and provided them with the necessary materials in the form of paper, pens and brushes. Subsequently they also helped to sell their paintings to Western tourists. These ink paintings were painted by new, emerging Balinese artists. The paintings were created within Western pictorial conventions, but the depicted themes were almost completely inspired by the local Balinese culture (Geertz, 1994: 3–5). The aspiring Balinese artists also drew their first inspiration from Western advertisements and Western books (Kuhnt-Saptodewo, et al., 2010: 49). The best-known representatives of ink painting are probably the artists Gusti Nyoman Lempad (1862–1978), I Ketut Ngéndon (?–1948) and Ida Bagus Madé Togog (1913–1989).⁸

As an example of Balinese ink paintings one piece from the Náprstek Museum's Indonesian collection is used. The painting, Inv. No. 15.734, is a black and white ink painting on paper measuring 51.3 cm x 37.2 cm (Fig. 3). This artwork from Bali (Indonesia) was created probably in the 1930s and Urbanová must have purchased it while staying in Indonesia.⁹ The artist who created this painting is unknown. The artwork's name could be established as *"Village Scene with Running Hunters"*.

In the artwork we see a village scene from Bali. Hunters are running up a village street. The scene is shown from an above perspective, from a higher vantage point, so the viewer sees the whole event at once. The perspective is accurately drawn, showing the depth of the trees, buildings and human figures in appropriate sizes according to the distances depicted in the painting. The illusion of depth is further enhanced through gradients which build up volume in different objects (Wallschlaeger, et al., 1992: 307; 326). The whole image has several border lines forming a graphical frame around the depicted scene.¹⁰ The artwork was probably painted as part of the *"Balinese tourist art business"*, newly established in the 1930s. The researcher Geertz defined one of the three main themes for Balinese tourist art scenes from that time period as depictions of

⁷ In another research dates Werner Kraus the early days of the new *Balinese Art* into the year 1935 (KUHNT-SAPTODEWO, et al. 2010: 49).

⁸ On these three artists see: *ibid.*: 44–65.

GEERTZ, 1994: 18–24; 108; 114–119. Ida Bagus Made Togog. Wikipedia: The Free Encyklopedia. Accessed: 03 Feb. 2012.

⁹ Many paintings in the same style and execution are part of the Bateson-Mead Collection of 1,288 pieces of Balinese paintings. Many of these paintings are reprinted in: GEERTZ, 1994.

¹⁰ This kind of painting of "frames" around a painted scene was quite common, as is also highlighted in: KUHNT-SAPTODEWO, et al. 2010: 37: [...] *the painted imitation of a frame found on many other Balinese paintings of the period.*

"...landscape or panoramas busy with Balinese activities..." and therefore this piece, too, might have been painted as tourist art for Western travelers visiting Bali (Geertz, 1994: 17).

The whole painting is filled with elaborate details. The painting's main composition tends to the diagonal, but with a smooth curve. The painting as a whole is relatively light in color. The only rather small, dark areas – black in color – are the streets, the mountains and the sky behind the mountains. The rest of the work uses light colors in various shades of gray (Fig. 3). In the village street there is a group of fourteen men –



Fig. 3: Village Scene with Running Hunters. Inv. No. 15.734. Ink on Paper. Size: 51.3 cm x 37.2 cm.

nearly all of them are armed with spears. We see all the men from behind, but in the case of five we can see their faces in profile, while the others we see only completely from behind. The artist created the illusion of fast, dynamic movements through repetition of the men's bodies (see the men in the narrow street). For further identification purposes see Fig. 4 where the five profile faces are identified as nos.: 1–5. The group of fourteen men is obviously running out of the village towards the

mountains in the uppermost part of the painting. One of the group's armed men on the far left (Fig. 4: 1) is pointing with his right hand in the direction in which the other men are running. At the same time this man is explaining, with obvious excitement expressed through his facial expression, to some other village person (Fig. 4: 6), who happens to be in the street, that there is something happening at the other end of the village. The person who is being told what is happening (Fig. 4: 6) is depicted from the front view and we see the person's face in three-quarters view. All this action going on in the street is also being watched and observed by three additional persons from the safety of their houses (Fig. 4: 7, 8, 9). However, it is uncertain what exact message the artist was trying to communicate through this scene in the painting. To summarize, the whole painting "*Village Scene with Running Hunters*" depicts a stylized village scene from Bali with Western influences on the way the painting was painted.



Fig. 4: Identification Diagram of Fig. 3.

Western Influences in Balinese Ink Paintings

Balinese traditional arts were highly decorative and the ink paintings of the 1930s retained this richness of detail while incorporating new techniques and Western ways of painting. Western influences on the newly-emerging Balinese painting style were various, but of particular importance was the introduction of realism, composition, expressivity and perspective.

Geertz points out that the main thing that Balinese artists learned from Western pictures was how to be more "naturalistic" in their work, because traditional Balinese art was in a sense more "non-naturalistic". Traditional Balinese temple art paintings were composed of much more simply and firmly-depicted human figures on a single-color background (Fig. 5; Geertz, 1994: 6–13). The scenes and stories of the newly-evolved ink paintings of the 1930s were already showing anatomically more correct human figures and were as a result more realistic as a whole.



Fig. 5: Traditional Painting. Inv. No. 56.013. Paint on Canvas. Size: 165cm x 87cm.

Human figures were also depicted by the artists in a realistic environment, which was again the result of Western pictorial conventions. This makes the composition of the examined painting very different from the way in which traditional Balinese temple paintings told a story. The painting examined here is capturing only one exact moment of an event. However, older traditional temple art paintings relied on a highly-segmented composition in which various stories from the Hindu epics Mahabharata or Ramayana were often told at once (Fig. 5; Geertz, 1994: 6).

The new Balinese artists of the 1930s were also encouraged by the European painters Walter Spies and Rudolf Bonnet to freely express themselves. That was something new, because in Bali there was no preceding painting tradition mirroring the Western style of pictures free from religious context. Older Balinese paintings were always connected to ritual activities (Geertz, 1994: 1).¹¹

Lastly, the more realistic, elevated perspective present in this painting (Fig. 3) was innovative and new in Balinese painting. It was the result of the Western pictorial influence of the 1930s (Geertz, 1994: 10–13). The new perspective enabled architectural depth to be depicted more accurately, and helped the artists to communicate and express their intentions better, since traditional Balinese paintings in the so called *wayang* style were painted without any perspective or depth of background (Fig. 5; Cooper, 2005: 26).

Malaysian Graffiti Art and Western Influences

Graffiti art as a new urban art movement first started to develop in the 1960s on the east coast of the USA in Philadelphia and New York (Ley, et al., 1974). In the 1970s graffiti art continued to develop its iconography and elements on the New York subway cars (Stewart, 2009). In the 1980s graffiti art expanded to the whole of the USA and to Western Europe and Australia (Chalfant, et al., 1987). In the middle of the 1990s graffiti art spread to Southeast Asia and by 1999 also first started occurring and developing in Malaysia (Novak, 2011a: 93).

¹¹ On Sacred Balinese paintings see the detailed study: COOPER, 2005.

Malaysia is generally regarded as a melting pot of cultures. The main cultures in Malaysia encompass the Malay (Islamic), Chinese, Indian and nowadays also the Western culture. Historically, the arrival of modern art in Malaysia was attributed to Westernization. The western style of painting was introduced to Malaysia in the 19th century, but it was only in the early 20th century that local artists began to acquire this new Western style (Crafts and the Visual Arts. *The Encyclopedia Of Malaysia* 2007: 7; 105–106).

In the case of graffiti art it was similar. Graffiti art's dissemination channels in Malaysia were hip-hop culture, skateboarding and intercultural exchange (Novak, 2011a: 98–107). These three main channels acted in parallel to diffuse graffiti art into Malaysia. All three factors were connected to Western countries.

Hip-hop culture's origins are in New York City of the 1970s. Hip-hop culture consists of four elements: DJ-ing (disk jockeying), MC-ing (rapping), B-Boying (break dancing) and graffiti art.¹² Around the year 1999 there was a significant boom in hip-hop culture in the southern Malaysian peninsular city of Batu Pahat and also in the area of the Malaysian capital, Kuala Lumpur. Teenagers started to be involved in hip-hop culture and some also started creating graffiti art as one of the elements of hip-hop. The most important graffiti artists from this very early hip-hop period were Mohd Nazri Arman aka PHOBIA [BEE] (1983), Zulkifli Salleh aka KIOUE [BOB] (1984), Mohd Faiz Omar aka NENOK (1983), SUBWAY, VDS and others.

The urban extreme sport skateboarding was another dissemination channel for graffiti art. Skateboarding product designs often use graffiti art styles and graffiti art was also often featured in various graffiti art magazines. This inspired some skateboarding youngsters in Malaysia to start painting graffiti art themselves.

Graffiti art was also established in Malaysia by three Malaysians who traveled around the year 2000 to Western countries, where for the first time in their lives they experienced graffiti art at first hand, in Australia and France. The three Malaysian teenagers were highly impressed by their discovery of graffiti art, and after they returned to Malaysia they started to create graffiti art in the urban areas of the capital, Kuala Lumpur. The three graffiti artists were Andrew Yeoh aka DREW (1983)¹³ and MIST149, who encountered graffiti art in Australia, and SONA (~1988) who encountered graffiti art in France.

Malaysian graffiti artists were also strongly inspired in their graffiti art styles by Western graffiti artists. SONA stated, for example, that his wild style of graffiti art was rooted in French graffiti art styles. SONA's inspiration came about after he was given, in his earliest artistic days, some photographs of French graffiti art styles (Novak, 2011a: 106). The earliest graffiti artists in Malaysia, NENOK and PHOBIA, were also influenced and inspired by European graffiti art styles when they started out in graffiti art. Certain Malaysian graffiti art groups still follow developments in European graffiti art styles closely today, for example the graffiti art crew PHIBER WRYTE and especially their members NUKE and NENOK (Novak, 2011a: 116–117).

As was demonstrated above using the example of Malaysian graffiti art, Western art influences and inspirations still prevail in Southeast Asia today. The dissemination of

¹² For further audio-visual information on the early New York hip-hop movement see for example the film documentaries: CHALFANT, et al. 1983. CORRA. NY77. 2007.

¹³ <<http://www.drewfunk.com>> Accessed: 03 Feb. 2012.

graffiti art into Malaysia followed channels which were obviously connected with the Western world such as hip-hop and skateboarding from whence these activities originate. This is another example of the globalization process, where very remote parts of the globe are bridged and new influences cross from one culture to the other.

In recent years a new, nationalistic trend has emerged on the Malaysian graffiti art scene. It aims to incorporate local Malaysian traditional art expressions and local art forms into Malaysian graffiti artworks. This new stream in the Malaysian graffiti art movement has been led mainly by the graffiti artists Khor Zew Wey aka BIBICHUN (1983), Zulkifli Salleh aka KIOUE (1984), Mohd Mahfudz b. Abd Rashid aka SNOZZE (1988) and Mahathir Masri aka THEY (1982). Thus the graffiti artist BIBICHUN depicted shadow play puppets in his works and KIOUE drew inspiration from traditional batik art, shadow play, performance arts and Islamic art for some of his graffiti artworks (Novak, 2011b). SNOZZE sought his inspiration from traditional architecture and THEY again from batik art, architecture and in the local nature. These new trends serve as a tribute and show the need for the local graffiti artist to transform, localize and nationalize this art form *imported* from the West into something new and understandable to the local Malaysian public. The attempt to localize and nationalize graffiti art in Malaysia was quite successful and graffiti art gained in prestige in the country, since it received even more support from official institutions such as the Malaysian National Art Gallery and the Kuala Lumpur City Hall (Rosza, et al., 2010 and Aziz, 2012). However, to a certain extent graffiti art in Malaysia was *already fairly well established and recognized* by local authorities *before* the emergence of this recent trend. One of the reasons might have been the very common use of human figures in Malaysian graffiti art before the year 2009 (Novak, 2011, a: 198 and Dir. CANDYMAN, 2012). The Malaysian graffiti artist KATUN, introduced below, nearly always depicted human



Fig. 6: The artist KATUN working on his graffiti art profile face. Greater Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Photo by author: 30 November 2008.

¹⁴ KATUN is an important Malaysian graffiti artist: [...] *Ab Hafiz AbRahman, 25, aka KATUN [...] won first place in the international (KUL SIGN FESTIVAL 2012 graffiti art competition in Kuala Lumpur Malaysia).* In: CHEN, 2012.



Fig. 7: In the centre: Graffiti Art Profile Faces by KATUN. Greater Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.
Photo by author: 21 December 2008.

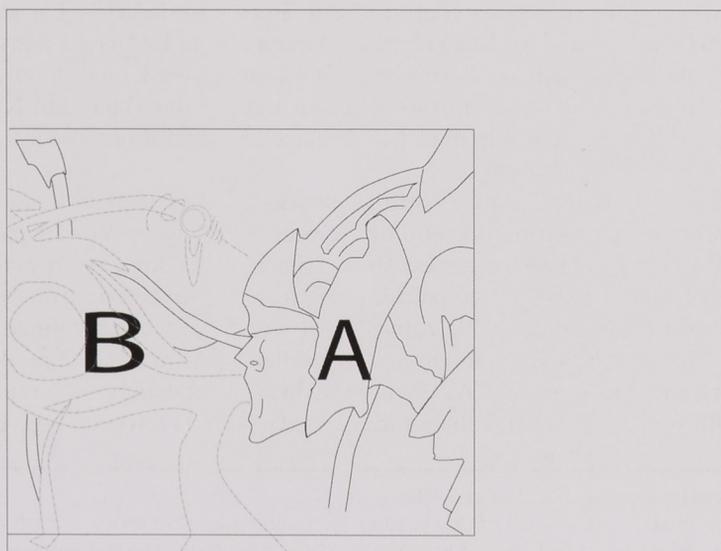


Fig. 8: Working Diagram of Figure 6. Black-solid lines show KATUN's artwork in comparison to a part of the artwork of the artist SLACSATU painting on the left.

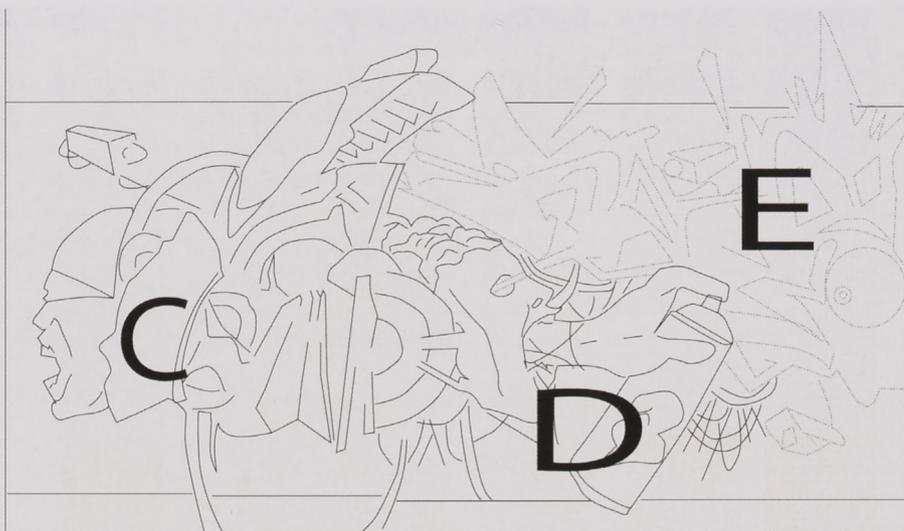


Fig. 9: Working Diagram of Figure 7. Black-solid lines show KATUN's artwork in comparison to the artwork of the artist SIEK painting on the top-right.

figures in his graffiti artworks.¹⁴

Two Graffiti Artworks by KATUN

The Malaysian graffiti artist Hafiz Ab Rahman aka KATUN (1986), who lives in the area of Greater Kuala Lumpur, started painting graffiti art as an adolescent.¹⁵ He did so for the first time in his life on the 25th December 2003, which was when he and other friends of his decided to paint a colorful proclamation saying "AMIGOS" on a wall in a back alley of Kajang, Malaysia (Katun, 2009). Since then KATUN has significantly developed his artistic skills, and also obtained a degree from Universiti Teknologi Mara (UiTM) in Shah Alam, Malaysia. Recently KATUN participated, on different occasions, in the creation of spray painted murals and canvases for the Malaysian National Art Gallery. He has also been featured and interviewed several times in local Malaysian newspaper articles (Ismail, 2009).

In this paper two of his complex graffiti artworks are examined. Both spray-painted artworks were created towards the end of the year 2008 (Figs. 6–7). The paintings are not only closely related to each other because of their theme, but they are actually a sort of variation of each other. The two paintings both show a futuristic fantasy where we see human heads wired up with cables with some type of undefined electronic technology. The paintings are quite large; the smaller of the two is 2.35 m high (Fig. 6). Both these two works of art by KATUN are the outcome of collaboration with another artist. Graffiti writers call such collaborations *productions*.¹⁶ However, here the focus is

¹⁵ KATUN was born on the 12th October 1986.

¹⁶ The graffiti artists combine their efforts to produce a unified looking artwork. Each artist usually *works for himself*, but the combined effort makes the final artwork look more pompous.

¹⁷ Fig. 8–9: The dotted and lighter lines are the other artist's work (B and E) and KATUN's work is represented by solid black lines. The graffiti artist collaborating with KATUN on the artwork in Fig. 6 was the Singaporean SLACSATU and in Fig. 7 it was SIEK from Malaysia.

only on KATUN's work. In the working diagram in Figs. 8–9 the work of KATUN is distinguished from that of other artists, for better understanding.¹⁷

For KATUN as an artist the paintings in Figs. 6–7 were experiments. He experimented in them with the theme of *machinery* and was interested in rendering metal in as naturalistic a way as possible so as to achieve the best metal-like effect (Katun, 2009). However, KATUN was not satisfied with the results of the paintings. In the artwork depicted in Fig. 7 he was not pleased with the outcome of the wiring, and also said of the profile face facing right (Fig. 9: D) that: "*The brain needs to be changed in some details*". In the photograph in Fig. 6 he did not like the rendering of the metal effects (Fig. 8: A). Because he was not happy with the outcome of these two artworks, KATUN painted a third such painting (not reproduced here) on the 9th–10th of January 2009 at the event "Youth 09" (Katun, 2009).

Comparison between the Balinese Ink Painting and KATUN's Artworks

First of all it is worth highlighting that Balinese ink paintings started developing in Bali under Western influences in the 1930s. In the 1930s the Malaysian art scene was also influenced by European (water color) painting traditions (Crafts and the Visual Arts 2007: 11; 106.). In the case of graffiti art a similar dynamic can be demonstrated. In Indonesia graffiti art has been developing since 1997 and in Malaysia since 1999 (Novak, 2011a90).¹⁸ As can be seen, Western influences and inspirations started to occur in Malaysia and Indonesia around the same time period of the 1930s and in the 1990s.

In the following five paragraphs of this section the focus is on the world views expressed by the artists in their artworks, on repetitions of patterns in the artworks, on the commerciality of one and at the underground spirit of the other artwork and then shifts to the temporality and durability of the artworks, before finally the striking similarities between a pair of profile faces is highlighted.

Paintings are modes of communication. Artists – painters – express their impressions and views of the world they live in. They moreover describe objects and environments from their experience (Wallschlaeger, et al., 1992:15). Balinese folk artists were encouraged in the 1930s to paint what they felt and to depict traditional daily life in Bali (Geertz, 1994:17). The unknown Balinese author of the "*Village Scene with Running Hunters*" probably painted a *fictional scene* with flowers, birds, village houses and village people. That was most probably the artist's world view in the 1930s. Some graffiti artists nowadays also express their feelings strongly in their artworks. The graffiti artist KATUN lived and created his artworks 70 years after the unknown Balinese artist, in a very modern world, in a world full of technological advancements. Where the Balinese anonymous artist depicted fictional scenes and the traditional lifestyle of the Balinese people in the 1930s, KATUN depicted in his two spray-painted artworks an almost post-apocalyptic utopian fantasy world, where the human person is no longer a part of nature, but where the human head is wired up into a sort of electronic technology through wires and cables. It seems as if there is pain and agony written in the faces of the individuals KATUN created. KATUN's humans appear to be victims, enslaved by the technological progress of the human race, used and ruled by some sort of unseen powers. KATUN's humans are also constantly being watched by security CCTV cameras (see Figs. 7 and 9). It can be concluded that both artist painted their perception, their emotions relating to the world around them at a moment in time. Nevertheless, the captured moments presented to the observer are two very different views of the world around them.

¹⁸ On some brief interview data from Indonesia see also: SANADA, et al. 2010: 105–125.

As far as the techniques of the ink painting and the two graffiti artworks are concerned, both artists relied on repetition of patterns to achieve an overall feeling of unity. Repetition of patterns is a common aspect of Asian art in general and can be found in Balinese art as well as in Malay (Islamic) art forms. In the ink painting, we thus find floral motifs spread evenly all over the scene and in the graffiti artworks one sees evenly-distributed cables along with wires throughout the two graffiti paintings. Visual interest was maintained in the artworks through surface treatments in the form of variations of line widths, of tones, surface textures and black and white contrasts (Wallschlaeger, et al., 1992: 26).

It is also of interest to look at the historical reasons for which these works were created. The ink painting was created probably for commercial purposes as tourist art. The Balinese artists understood that they could sell the paintings for *good money* to tourists (Kuhnt-Saptodewo, et al., 2010: 49). Therefore the depicted topic should be interesting and the buyer should be able to enjoy the scene shown in the image. The two graffiti artworks were created for non-commercial reasons, as a means of self-realization. KATUN did not take into account any potential buyers' opinions on the obscure theme he chose as his scene. The graffiti paintings were also created at wall locations that were not officially approved, and strictly theoretically the artist might have been prosecuted for his deeds. The artist did not earn any financial profit from creating these artworks; on the contrary, he spent money on the paint. KATUN gained "only" more skills, more artistic experience and more social capital in the graffiti artists' community through these two paintings. But his improved artistic experience and his social capital in the graffiti art community was an investment in the future, since, for example, it might help him to sell his future artworks.

It is also fascinating to highlight the short life span of KATUN's paintings. The graffiti artwork in Fig. 6 lasted at its location less than a month before it was painted over by another graffiti artwork.¹⁹ The only documentation of the existence of KATUN's artworks are photographs! By contrast, the above-examined Balinese ink painting from the Náprstek Museum's collection has remained in a very good condition for approximately 70 years.

Finally it is exciting to point out the striking similarities in three profile face pairs selected from the ink painting and from KATUN's graffiti artworks (Table 1: Figs. 10–15). Both artists depicted the human profile face in a very similar manner and they used comparable techniques of shading to build up the volume of the human face and to render light and shade effects. Even though the resemblances are to a certain degree astonishing, it is not completely surprising that artists who work with the depiction of human bodies tend to duplicate over and over again the human figure in similar poses. However, the pair in figs. 14–15 show an extraordinary resemblance in their artistic execution! *Cross cultural fertilization* as an explanation of the great resemblance between these two profile faces may be excluded in this case, since KATUN had probably never seen in his life the painting "Village Scene with Running Hunters". We therefore need to search elsewhere for a possible hypothesis.²⁰ Nevertheless, a comparison of the Balinese

¹⁹ In its short life span graffiti art is faintly reminiscent of the Balinese *lamak* temple offerings which are painstakingly produced, but a few days later are disposed of. "A *lamak* finds its reward in a single moment...after that, the offering strip has done its job...it becomes meaningless. This is art as a moment..." KUHNT-SAPTODEWO, et al. 2010: 67.

²⁰ In this case it might be worth considering the application of Jung's theory of *archetypes in dream symbolism*. Jung says that [...] *archetypes* [...] are without known origin; and they reproduce themselves in any time or in any part of the world [...] (JUNG, et al. 1968: 58).

ink painting and KATUN's graffiti artworks does highlight some very interesting parallels between works of art so distant from each other both geographically and also in time. Of particular note is the great resemblance between the depicted human profile faces in figs. 14–15.

Table 1: The Comparison of Three Pairs of Profile Faces



Fig. 10: Profile Face from the painting.
Inv. No. 15.734. (See Fig. 4.: Face no. 1.)



Fig. 11: Graffiti Art Profile Face by KATUN.
Date: 2008.



Fig. 12: Profile Face from the painting.
Inv. No. 15.734. (See Fig. 4.: Face no. 3.)



Fig. 13: Graffiti Art Profile Face by KATUN.
Date: 2008.



Fig. 14: Profile Face from the painting
Inv. No. 15.734. (See Fig. 4.: Face no. 8.)



Fig. 15: Graffiti Art Profile Face by KATUN.
Date: 2008.

Conclusion

As was discussed above, Western influences and inspirations were essential to the emergence of art forms as different at first sight as Balinese ink paintings and Malaysian graffiti art. However, both art forms acquired unique local features.

From this all it can be concluded that this is a topic which may bring further interesting discoveries in the future.

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Sources:

Náprstek Museum, Collection department, coll. R. C. Urbanová, cartons 1–3

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