

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**ART CRITICISM AND A
DEVELOPMENT OF IDENTITY
THROUGH MOHD HOESSEIN ENAS'
ARTWORKS IN THE CONTEXT OF
MALAYSIAN HERITAGE**

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ABSTRACT

This study of art criticism is about the art work by Malaysian prominent pioneer artist, Mohd Hoessein Enas. This research is focused on the local art critics' writings particularly the issues of society, culture and identity. In general, there were very rare documentations that highlighted the aspects of art criticism. This is due to the shortage numbers of a local art critic, their education background, the inclination of nation's major field and other related problems. As Malaysia is approaching to become a develop nation by the year 2020, the present situation of art criticism is still not adequate. In accordance to that, this research is to explore and analyze the art critic's aspects that comprise the types, approaches, thoughts and content. The analyses on art criticism is crucial in reviewing a new perspective of the national visual art, especially in the context of identity, society and culture. Therefore, all views and written documentations regarding art criticism are being reviewed as an important references in projecting the big picture of local visual arts in the context of the cultural and society. Through secondary research, this study is done with resources to textual data, archives and author's entries. From a number of critics, six (6) are selected as the subjects of primary analysis. These are used as the benchmark point for this study. It involves a qualitative method with descriptive and interpretive analysis of their writings. In order to gain clearer prespective and intepretation, interview is being used so that this research will engage the local art historians, academicians, artists and critics. Apart from being an important historical documentation materials, art criticism can become a valuable medium of education in strengthening critical thinking and intellectual culture among the society. Therefore, there are several suggestions and input to certain groups in order to design a more effective and comprehensive planning to improve the practice of art and cultural criticism. In a nutshell, art criticism is actually a very mind blowing practice, nourishes the knowledge as well as to boost a big impact in the world of visual arts in Malaysia besides nurturing the culture of intellectuality and impacting the visual culture in Malaysia as a whole.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|-------------|
| CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS | ii |
| AUTHOR'S DECLARACATION | iii |
| ABSTRACT | iv |
| ACKNOWLEDGEMENT | v |
| TABLE OF CONTENTS | vi |
| LIST OF TABLES | ix |
| LIST OF FIGURE | xi |
| LIST OF SYMBOLS | xiii |
| LIST OF ABBREVIATION | xiv |
| | |
| CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION | 1 |
| 1.1 Preamble | 1 |
| 1.2 Research Background | 1 |
| 1.3 Problem Statement | 2 |
| 1.4 Objective | 5 |
| 1.5 Research Questions | 5 |
| 1.5 Significance of Study | 5 |
| 1.6 Conclusion | 6 |
| | |
| CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW | 7 |
| 2.1 Preamble | 7 |
| 2.2 Brief History of Renowned Western Art Critics | 7 |
| 2.3 Brief History of Malaysian Art Critics | 11 |
| 2.4 Conclusion | 16 |

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 PREAMBLE

The first chapter is an introduction of Malaysia art criticism. The art criticism in the country is currently become a crucial topic in the contribution of knowledge to the field of art. It had begun since the involvement of the pioneer local artist such as Mohd. Hoessein Enas with his spectacular pieces of art work that struct most of the local art critics. There were numbers of feed back in terms of knowledge, providing the art reviews, articles and art discourse. Every aspect of critics came into sight in its own time, and aim was to inform, to convince and to influence people. Undeniably, Mohd Hoessein Enas works are rich and give rise to valuable meaning and content that manifested the Malaysian art and culture. The introduction will briefly provide general overview of Mohd Hoessein Enas art criticism in the aspect of culture, identity and society. This chapter also comprises the problem statement, the objectives of the research and the significance of the study.

1.2 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

There are many definitions about art criticism according to western and local scholars. According to Feldman (1994), art criticism refers to a discussion or writing about art that focuses on four key diciplines such as describing, analysis, interpretation and evaluation. David S. Natemen (1994) defines art criticism as a written or verbal response towards artworks that involve in-depth aspect from the perspective of one's sense of experiences and intellectuality. While Zakaria Ali's (1989) point of view stresses on the art appreciation as a part of art criticism. Briefly, the art criticism refers to a written or verbal discussion of arts (Feldman, 1994). Thus, making a point to summarize that art criticism is an organized and systematic art study. In other words, art criticism is a scientific and explorary research about arts.

In Malaysia, the art criticism scenario is still green and new. However the role and its importance are crucial. This is due to the lack of art critics writing in Malaysia. Art writing is a textual material that can be documenting as a nation's heritage.