

VISUAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL STUDY OF PHOTOGRAPHIC WORKS OF GUNUNG PADANG SITE AS A TOURIST ATTRACTION IN KARYAMUKTI VILLAGE, CIANJUR, WEST JAVA

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ABSTRACT

The results of the Ancient Catastrophic Team's research on the Gunung Padang Site in Karyamukti Village, Cianjur, West Java, in 2011 showed that the site was older than the Giza Pyramid in Egypt. The jumble of stones in the hilly area of the site is authentic evidence of the archeology of the Megalithic era. Prehistoric relics in this region are important because of the unique cultural values that are part of the principles of local tourism development in Indonesia. The potential of historical and cultural tourism is also inseparable from the participation of the local community. Therefore, knowledge about the cultural values of an area needs to be effectively disseminated through information media. This study aims to help preserve prehistoric relics through photography as a medium of visual communication. The combination method is used to analyze the attractiveness of the Gunung Padang Site as a potential tourist destination. Quantitatively, survey data show that 61 percent of people are interested in visiting the Gunung Padang Site because they want to know the background of prehistoric stones and take pictures with the natural scenery. Whereas qualitatively, the attraction of visual objects is described using a visual anthropology approach which is studying a culture through photography and the relationships associated with it. This study uses the principle of composition of the rule of thirds to present prehistoric stones on the Gunung Padang Site as images that carries a cultural message. The results of the analysis show that the photographic works that are focused on visualizing five stone structures as gates or entrances, streets and stairs, walls, spaces, and wells as a source of life can convey messages about the work of humans in building a place of worship to ancestral spirits as a civilization in the past. This study can be a reference in the field of visual communication design science about the Gunung Padang Site and is expected to help encourage public awareness to respect cultural heritage, as well as develop the tourism potential of the region.

Keywords: Gunung Padang, photographic works, tourist attraction, visual anthropology.

INTRODUCTION

Historically, the territory of Indonesia is home to Austronesian Megalithic sites. Therefore many prehistoric sites are found. Among these, the Gunung Padang Site in

Karyamukti Village, Cianjur Regency, West Java is recorded as the largest Megalithic site in the Nusantara region (Yondri, 2014). The rest of the terraced buildings in the hilly area is of concern to researchers from abroad, especially after the international Beta Analytic laboratory in Miami released the findings of the Ancient Catastrophic Team from the Indonesian government in 2011 which stated that the subsurface sample of Gunung Padang Site was 14,500-25,000 BC(Akbar, 2014).

This fact has led to further research on the relics of Megalithic culture that the rest of the arrangement of the stone blocks as a place of worship to the spirits of ancestors who became human civilization in prehistoric times. The terrace of the Gunung Padang Site is divided into five terraces and is located on a hill that extends to the southeastern northwest at an altitude of 885 meters above sea level. The volcanic stones that make up the rest of the building are generally in the form of rectangular blocks and originate from columnar joint (Yondri, 2012).

As authentic archaeological evidence, the rest of the buildings on the Gunung Padang Site can be considered as traces of the journey of life and human works at that time. Therefore anthropologically this region has the potential of a global-scale tourism region because it has a unique cultural value based on local wisdom. The tourist attraction at the Gunung Padang Site needs to be developed through ongoing research, reconstruction of the remains of prehistoric buildings, dissemination of information through visual communication media, as well as the participation of local communities. Community involvement is needed in supporting tourism, especially to meet the needs and social interaction of tourists when they visit. As mentioned in Sari's research (2017, p.142) when someone moves to a place to a destination outside their workplace and normal residence, then a good form of tourism work is to be able to provide facilities that can meet their needs.

Meanwhile, to encourage tourists to visit tourist sites, media are also needed to promote their attractiveness. Efforts to present tourist attractions have also been regulated in the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 10 of 2009, which states that tourist attractions can be explained as everything that has a unique, beautiful, and diverse value of natural, cultural, and man-made diversity, which is the target or destination of tourist visits (Hermawan, 2017) Therefore the potential of the tourist

attraction of the Gunung Padang Site needs to be communicated in communicative ways.

Destination needs for tourists can not be separated from the role of photography. This is because the basic motivation of tourists to travel to a place is to get panoramas, landscapes, buildings, and other photo objects, as manifestations of the places they hope to find through the presentation of visual representations, whether from advertisements, brochures, or books. (Garrod, 2008, p. 347). Thus, the existence of photos of attractions has the ability to signify itself as an original miniature of the real thing.

Information about the Gunung Padang Site is generally widely discussed in archeology, and is limited to visualizing its visual appearance. Research that discusses the visual is the writing of (Ramadina, 2013) which describes the Sundanese Wiwitan symbols of trust contained in the site construction. This research concludes that the ability of the people at that time to build a large Megalithic construction shows the mindset and aesthetic value of high culture.

Based on the results of a visual study of the Gunung Padang Site, this study was inspired to continue the discussion which emphasizes more on efforts to build visual perception through images, especially through photography.

In conveying messages, images also have significant advantages that conveyed words. According to the Dewan (2015, p. 2), images have a tendency to be easy to remember and easier to process in the mind than words. This is because images have two codes, namely visual and verbal, so that one of them becomes easier to remember.

The study of visual anthropology in the context of photography through the media conducted by Murdock and Pink (2005, p. 149) states that the publication of photos through the media can produce a better analysis of information about how the images are created to promote specific meanings on the page.

Thurnherr (2012, p. 32) said in his writing "Visual anthropology as a discipline of words", that in the field of anthropology, there are certain questions that are difficult to verbally examine, because they cannot be raised with oral questions or because it

cannot be understood and explained in words, so it requires stimulation in the form of photographs. Some data is not easily communicated, so visual aids are needed

In this case, the results of photographs as images can be considered as a visual aid that is able to present data that is difficult to tell. In addition, according to Weber (2008 Hartel & Thomson, 2011), the visual strength of images in photographic works has ten advantages, namely:

“Images can be used to capture the ineffable, the hard-to-put-into-words; Images can make us pay attention to things in a new way; Images are likely to be memorable; Images can be used to communicate more holistically, incorporating multiple layers, and evoking stories or questions; Images can enhance empathetic understanding and generalizability; Through metaphor and symbol, artistic images can carry theory elegantly and eloquently; Images encourage embodied knowledge; Images can be more accessible than most forms of academic discourse; Images can facilitate reflexivity in research design; Images provoke action for social justice”.

This is in line with the view of John Collier, Jr. and Malcolm Collier (1986, p. 5) in a book entitled *Visual Anthropology: Photography as a Research Method* that photographic works can be used to encourage further research that has not yet been explored by anthropologists. This is because visually the critical eye from the camera can capture and collect visual information more accurately to support weak observation.

Research from Christopher Pinney (1992, 2011 in Soukup, 2014, p. 538) concerning the relationship between photography and anthropology concluded that photography provided a foundation for anthropology as a science. The fact of the power of photography lies in the possibility that someone can capture reality relatively easily and quickly

Based on these previous studies, this study also aims to discuss the visualization of the rest of the Gunung Padang Site building through the rule of thirds photographic composition, especially in presenting the arrangement of stones from the rest of the terrace building as a way of conveying cultural messages through visual signs in the image. Anthropological visual approach is used because photography can also be a way to preserve prehistoric relics, as well as visual communication media to present the tourist attraction of the site.

In the context of photographs about prehistoric sites, this study also refers to the view of the potential that can build visual perception through images. According to Pauwels (2008, p. 79) seeing images become increasingly significant activities, because images and visual representations of all types contribute to various processes, be they for production, reproduction, or transforming goals.

RESEARCH METHODS

The combination method is used in this study to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data. For quantitative data needs, a preliminary survey was conducted through the public on Facebook social media to find out their views on the attractiveness of visual objects on the Gunung Padang Site as a tourist destination.

Based on the researchers' observations and interviews with Nanang as the site's coordinator, in February 2019, information was obtained that the tourist attraction for the public and researchers generally refers to prehistoric stone objects, and natural landscapes which are often used as selfies. The results of this quantitative data can be a reference in producing photography that carry cultural messages. Based on this quantitative data, the results of photographs are elaborated qualitatively using the visual anthropology approach.

Morphy and Banks (1999, pp. 1–2) said, currently the scope of visual anthropology is broader, not only for film ethnography, but also for analysis of photography, as well as other electronic media representations, because the discussion includes representations of one culture and people's lives. Visual anthropology as a research method is able to explain many things that can be observed and documented to reach an understanding as part of visual studies. Visual study means describing the visual meaning in the effort to disseminate anthropological knowledge itself.

Elkins (2003, p. 83) wrote James Herbert's thoughts on visual studies that could expand the area of professional art studies, making it possible to include research on artifacts from all periods of history and culture. Visual studies also provide ideas for interpreting visual images because each visual image is basically very connected to human attention and memory.

As said by Hand (2017 in Russmann & Svensson, 2017, pp. 1–2), visual images are often understood as supporting written or oral texts to communicate messages more quickly. Visual images can also create certain meanings through sign elements, so images often have multiple meanings.

Therefore, photographic works that present visual signs have the visual strength to carry cultural messages that are read through images. Pankee (2016, p. 4136) says that, "Photography is used as a way to see an unseen world, to document social issues and to raise public awareness and inspire action".

The creativity of photographs is included in the field of development of visual communication design science. Nowadays, the appeal of design is defined as the power to visualize information, communicate by presenting visual effects and design expressions (L. Zhang, 2017, p. 257).

The analysis of the application of photographic principles in this study refers to the composition of the rule of thirds. This composition divides the drawing room into three parts, vertically and horizontally by making imaginary lines where the points of the intersecting lines become the best focus of visual objects. Framing space from these points, then divided according to the type of composition, namely: symmetrical composition, asymmetrical composition, central composition, diagonal composition, vertical composition, and horizontal composition (Yuliadewi, 2000, p. 53). Framing compositions can also be grouped into left framing, right framing, middle framing, and full framing.

The composition of visual objects designed in the photo will be the language of the image. Toth (2011, p. 194) said, the basic idea that acting by the language of images is a creative act that has its own unique language. Language drawing can be read as a style of senior work with concepts that are tied together: ideas, elaboration and techniques.

In addition, the ability to compose visual objects through cameras also has another advantage, which is to inspire cultural criticism. Especially if the cultural object is an important national asset to be preserved, not just a tourist attraction. The combined capacity of the camera to build proximity and distance, identification and alienation, disjunction between the present, past and future has the advantage of

opening opportunities for criticism of culture (Otto et al., 2018, p. 315). This opportunity can encourage people to care more about the cultural heritage itself.

The samples of stone objects used as photographic works are focused on the arrangement of stones from the remaining terraces of buildings that are scattered on the five terraces in the hilly area. The choice of visual objects to the shape of the stone structure is based on the study of literature that it is evidence of past human work to fulfill their daily needs (Akbar, 2014), which is also evidence of civilization and technology in prehistoric times.

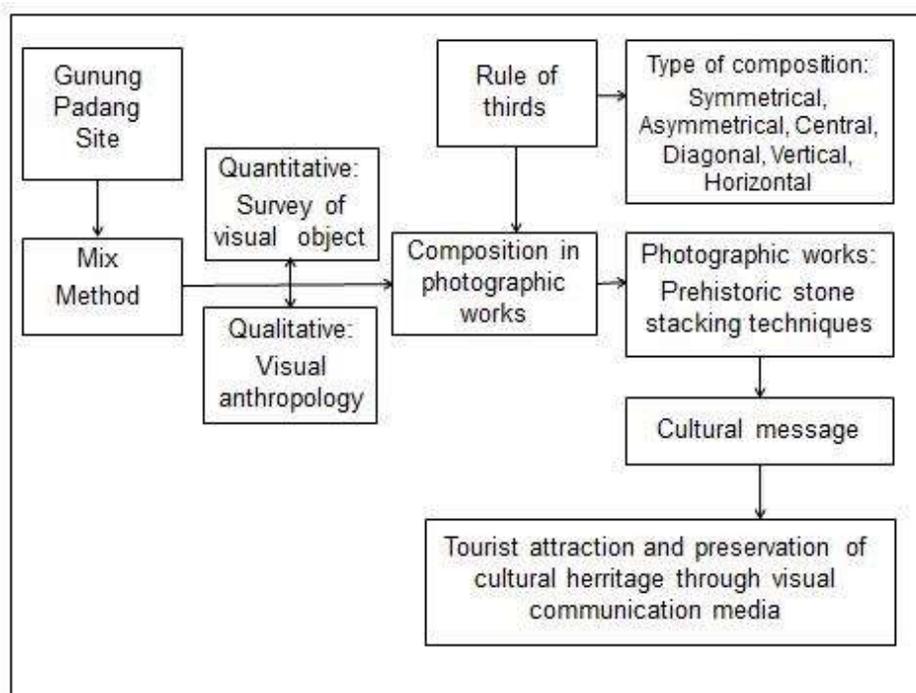


Figure 1
Analysis Method.

Photographs as a medium for conveying cultural messages are part of cultural studies. Through photographs, there is a process of delivering messages to the reader, which in this case is tourists who are invited to understand the symbols about the Gunung Padang Site as a tourist destination. According to Setiawan (2013, p. 168) understanding of cultural messages can be interpreted as practices and institutions of cultural texts through the understanding of symbols as part of the process of reading moments and imaginations of visual objects, which are then interpreted.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study conducted a survey through social media Facebook to determine respondents' views about the attractiveness of the Gunung Padang Site, especially for tourism needs. The study of photo aesthetics needed as a tourist destination shows that attractiveness is represented through full-color images, typical characteristics of the destination, and uniqueness which means projecting images in excitement and pleasure (Mackay and Fesenmaier, 1997 in X. Zhang, Wu, & Yan, 2018, p. 352).

In this study, respondents are major because those who provide answers to survey questions are those who already know about the Gunung Padang Site. Based on 166 responses of registered respondents, the results of this quantitative data show that 42 (25%) of respondents chose to want to know the story of prehistoric stones, 16 (10%) of respondents chose only to enjoy the natural scenery and photograph photos, 102 (61%) respondents chose to want to know the history of Megalithic stones while enjoying the natural scenery, while 6 (4%) respondents considered the Gunung Padang Site to be unattractive.

The percentage of respondents' data underlies the photographic work in this study to visualize prehistoric stones as a tourist attraction through the form of stone terraces of buildings.

Table 1
The Attraction of the Gunung Padang Site As Tourist Destination

	The story of prehistoric stones	Natural landscape site	The story of prehistoric stones and the natural landscape site	Not attractive
The attraction of the Gunung Padang Site as a tourist destination	42	16	102	6

Sources: Research Document

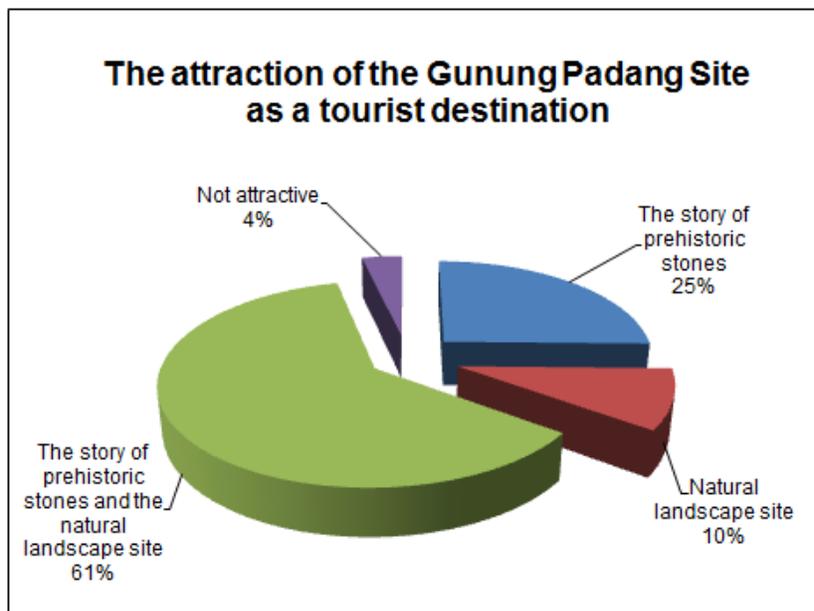


Figure 2
Chart of the Attraction of the Gunung Padang Site as a Tourist Destination

The choice of photographic works on this stone structure has an interesting history. Based on the results of research from Bronto & Langi, (2016, p. 49) it is said that Gunung Padang and its surroundings are the ancient volcano of Karyamukti. The area of Gunung Padang and its surroundings is located at the intersection of Cimandiri's active fault with Gede Cikondang. As a result of endogenous and exogenous processes, the stones columns collapsed scattered, then by humans in the past was arranged for a place of worship.

The jumble of stones that make up various arrangements on the five terraces of the Gunung Padang Site in Akbar's research (2014, pp. 115–138) is divided into 32 stone building techniques. Some researchers consider the arrangement of stones as the work of humans called structures, while some other researchers call them buildings. However, until now the rest of the terrace of the building from the columnar joint still leaves a research question, whether it is natural formations or entirely human-made pyramid buildings (Bronto & Langi, 2016).

The mystery about the relics of the building where the worship was part of the authenticity of the tourist attraction. Authenticity is at the core of cultural heritage and an important part of the lives of local people that has an impact on people's lives.

Authenticity is also an important element in cultural tourism and can be a major source of tourist attractions (Voda, et al, 2018). The existence of a jumble of stones with form and arrangement techniques in the Gunung Padang area is a fact of the authenticity of the cultural values possessed by this site.

Based on literature studies and researchers' observations in the field, this study focuses on the work of photography about the five stone stacking techniques that make up a building. Starting from the entrance or gate, the road to enter the building and stairs to climb, the walls of the building, the space as a place for people to do their activities, and wells as a source of livelihood. The following explanation:

1. Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Gate and Entrance

The gate or entrance in the terrace area of Gunung Padang is signed by two large stone blocks that are stuck to the ground. Its position is side by side, but there is a distance that can be traversed by humans. This vertical stone insertion produces visualization like an archway without top.

To present the gate-forming stone arrangement technique, the researchers used two compositions, namely symmetrical-central-horizontal composition, and symmetrical-central-vertical composition so that visualization of the two stones stuck as the rest of the gate can be seen. The vertical stone blocks are not only the entrance, but also as a barrier to the area. The first photograph presents a form of gate that can be perceived as the main entrance. While the second photograph presents the gate as a door to enter the terrace area.

The stone arrangement technique as a gate in the area of this site is a feature that is reminiscent of the architectural art of temples during the transition from Hinduism to Islam in Java. The gate is also a signifier before entering the holy area. The architectural style of the temple can be seen from its three parts, namely the foot as the foundation of the stairs, the body part as a doorway hole, and the roof-shaped structure equipped with mustaka (Wardani, L. K; Sitindjak, R. H. I; Sari, 2015, p. 3). Visualization of the remaining shape of the gate on this site also leaves the runway part, but the gate has no roof. The shape of this gate is an attraction that can build imagination when people cross the distance between them.

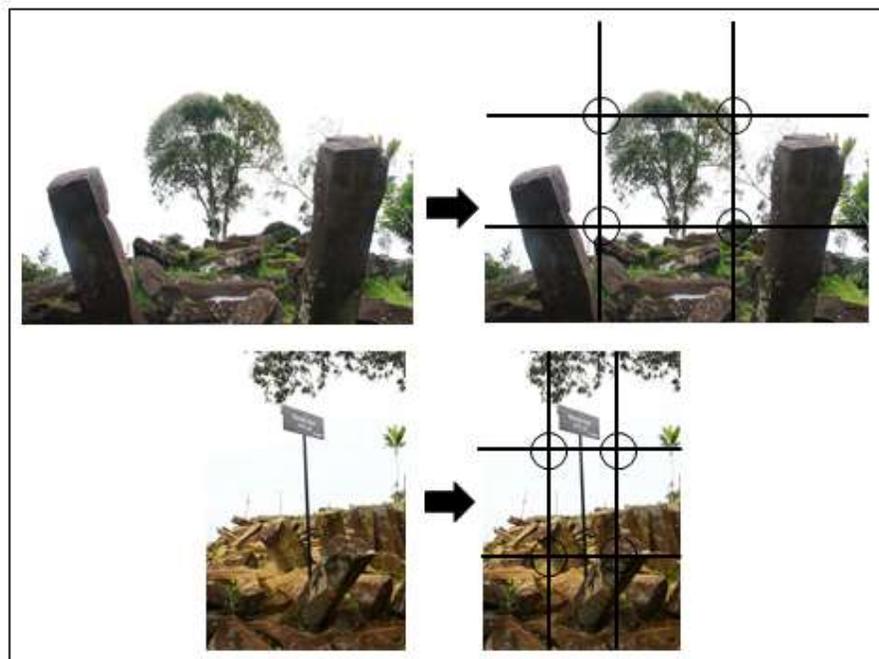


Figure 3
Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Gate and Entrance

2. Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Road and Stair

To present the stone arrangement technique as a road and staircase, the researcher visualized the photographic work in two compositions, namely asymmetric-horizontal composition and symmetrical-central-vertical composition. The first composition is to build a visual perception of horizontal road construction to enter the building, and the second composition is to build a visual perception of the construction of a climbing road that has been reconstructed.

The composition of stones as forming the stairs is arranged in a horizontal position and longitudinal. In the middle consists of several stone fragments that are placed in a longitudinal position, resulting in a flat plane. In addition, there is also a side of the stone that is mounted as a flat plane but not the same width and length. On the outermost side remain longer stone size, making the stone fragments not scattered. There are also long stones that lie flat in a horizontal position, especially for ground surfaces that are not too steep, whose function is as a stepping step. There are horizontal horizontal stones which are arranged in a tight way to produce a flatter plane.

Other horizontal longitudinal positions are placed on the edge as the stepping step boundaries (Akbar, 2014).

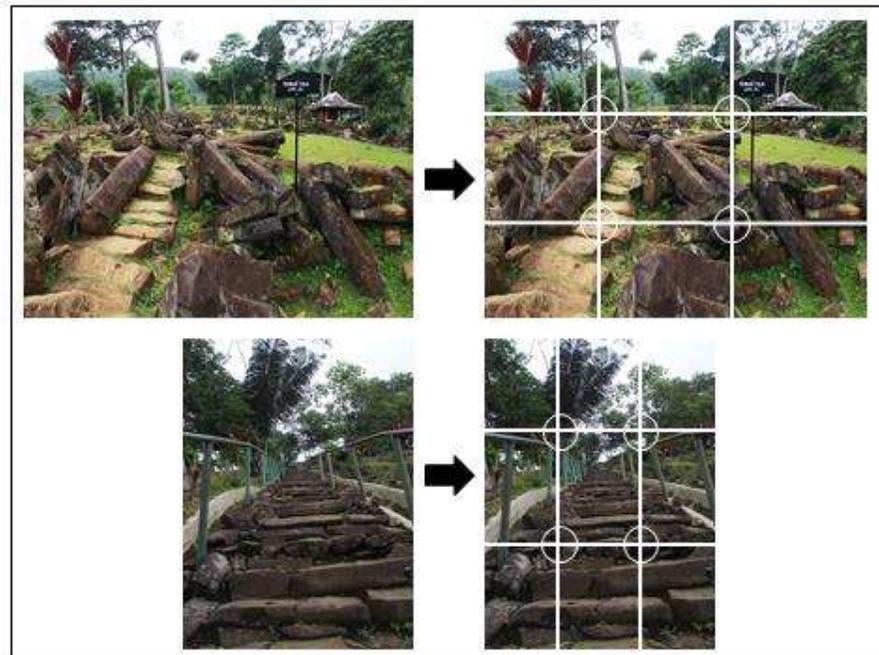


Figure 4
Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Road and Stair

In Yondri's research (2013, p. 172), it was also explained that the construction of stairs as a road to a building that was designed with a slope that was high enough, so that it was made more winding with the laying pattern of the longitudinal and transverse stone, where the transverse position became the lock of the stone blocks longitudinal. The pattern of the arrangement of the stones was studied quite effectively to prevent the occurrence of skidding because the stairway was often traversed by many pilgrims.

Laying stones as roads and stairs brings a message about the work of humans and simple technology in the past that do not use tools but rely on human strength to lift and lay stones to meet their needs to perform rituals to ancestral spirits.

3. Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Wall

Gunung Padang hilly areas including steep. To build a terrace structure of the building needed a field of walls that can hold the sides of the hill. This is to prevent landslides. In Akbar's record(Akbar, 2014)the construction of a retaining wall is done by

arranging stones which are stuck to the ground on the side of a hill. If there is an intermediate or cavity between the embedded stones, it is filled with smaller stones. The function of the stone stacking and sticking technique can produce a field of wall that supports the hillside. Based on the Independent Research Integrated Team, the construction of this stone stacking technique can also reduce earthquakes.

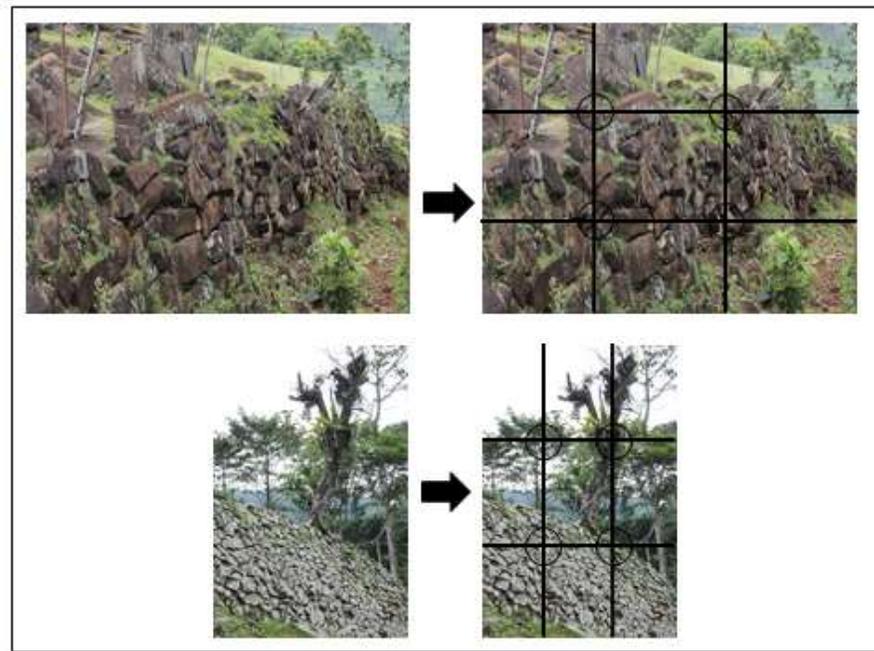


Figure 5
Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Wall

Research conducted by Yondri (2013, p. 168) also mentions that laying punden terraces on a hilltop surrounded by slopes that are quite steep and prone to disaster. The legacy of the remaining composition of the stone blocks forming the wall is a material for study and technological knowledge about human wisdom in prehistoric times to face the challenges of natural disasters, as is also experienced by humans today.

Visualization of the composition of the stone forming the wall as a photographic work in this study was presented in two compositions, namely asymmetric-horizontal and asymmetrical-vertical composition. This photographic work can build perceptions

about human work that requires hard work, patience, and great energy to produce a sturdy hillside wall and be able to withstand the challenges of nature.

4. Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Space

The composition of the stone forming a space visualized by a series of stone blocks that stand vertically lined up. To present the appeal of the arrangement of the embedded and lined stone blocks, the researchers produced a photographic work with two compositions, namely asymmetrical-horizontal and asymmetrical-vertical compositions.

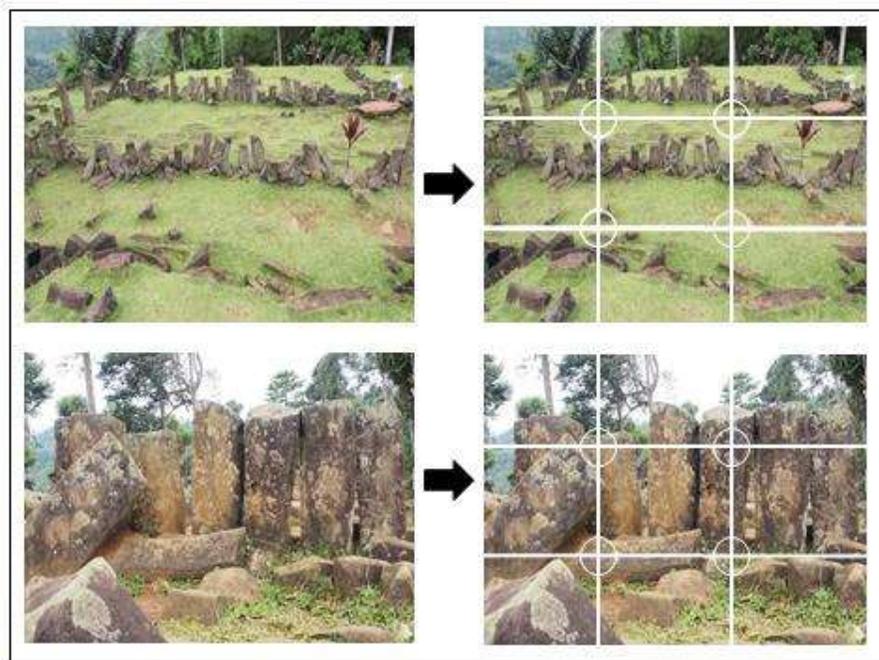


Figure 6
Visualization of the Stone Forming the Space

The meaning of space in a building is a place to gather. The existence of the remaining buildings that make up the space is also found on every terrace of Gunung Padang. Some form large spaces, there are small spaces. The visualization of the arrangement of the stones forming the space is intended to build perceptions about the space where people gather and hold meetings in the past.

As written by Akbar (2014, pp. 133–134), this technique of plugging a stone block vertically in line functions as a barrier and to produce a rectangular shape. Stone boundary spaces are lined up tightly and there is a distance. For the distance between

the two stone blocks wider, this can be intended as the entrance to a space that is the center of orientation.

In addition, the results of Yondri's study (2013, p. 167) also showed that the depth of the stone blocks that were stuck into the ground reached 45 cm from the ground surface. In other words, the effort to plunge a stone block into the ground is strongly suspected to require large amounts of energy, while the average stone weight reaches hundreds of kilograms. This visualization can build perceptions about the methods used by humans in the past to plant stones to the ground in vertical form. The process can only be done in mutual cooperation, starting from the excavation of the soil, positioning the stone until it stands erect to form a dividing wall space.

5. Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Well As A Source of Human Life

Water is the source of human life. Water can be obtained from rivers or land. But as a source of daily life, humans generally dig the ground to look for springs. At the Gunung Padang Site, there is also a stone structure that forms a well, named "Kahuripan Well" or the well of life. The source of water from this well is never dry, and the water is clear. Local people believe this spring has health benefits.

To present the technique of the formation of the well-forming stone, the researcher uses the central and vertical composition in order to develop perceptions about the shape of the wall and the depth of the well.

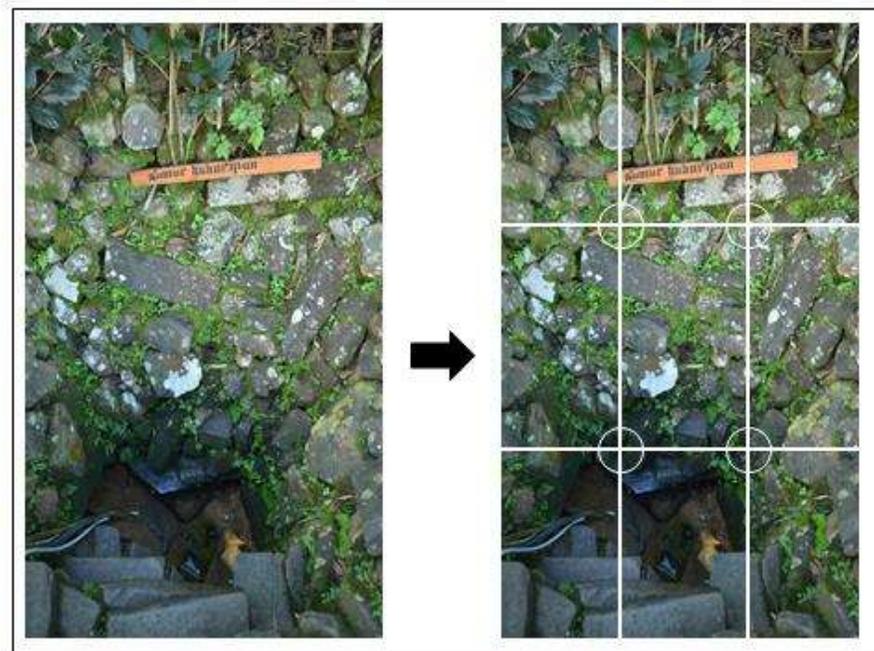


Figure 7
Visualization of the Stone Structure Forming the Well As A Source of Human Life

According to Susana (2003, p. 2003), groundwater is widely used for various purposes because it is not much contaminated by the surrounding environment. Contamination usually occurs due to poor collection techniques and the presence of cracks in the soil. Therefore, the source of the spring at the Gunung Padang Site is walls arranged with stones horizontally and tightly to prevent contamination.

This stone arrangement technique is in the form of stacking one stone on another stone. A pile of stones formed like a rectangular hole covered with stone at the edge of the wall. At the bottom of the walls it forms a narrow and smaller than the top (Akbar, 2014). With this stacking technique, the walls function to keep the soil from entering inside. This stone arrangement technique is to make it easier for humans to take water into the well.

Thus the discussion and visualization of the photographic work of the five visualizations of stone structures found on the Gunung Padang Site as a relic of the terrace of the building where ancestor spirits worship can be used as a tourist attraction.

Visualizations of prehistoric stones are placed as destination images for tourists. Destination images are defined by Cai's (2002, in Herle, 2018, p. 16) as

"perceptions about a place reflected by existing associations in the mind of the consumer".

Other than that, photographs as images can be enjoyed as part of historical literature. As said by Wright (1998, p. 210), the function of images in general in the span of history, is able to form an integral part of human culture.

This study can be part of the anthropological vision that is practiced through photographs with cultural messages. Jarema's (2013, p. 9) research on this matter also concluded that the visual field of culture is one of the most important features of humans and it is related to the process of building a certain worldview. Scientific discourse in issues of visibility develops and undergoes a paradigm shift, especially in the way of seeing things, or differences in perception that requires recognition among other social sciences.

These images also can build a visual perception of human civilization in prehistoric times. The cultural message that can be conveyed through the visualization above is the presentation of the work of humans who already have the technology to compose stone as a high civilization of the past, even though they are not yet familiar with sophisticated equipment like today.

CONCLUSION

This study concludes that the relics of prehistoric stones at the Gunung Padang Site, Karyamukti Village, Cianjur, West Java, need serious attention from the government. This site is a cultural heritage of high value about human civilization in the past. This site is also a potential for world tourism with a unique cultural heritage based on local wisdom. Revitalization efforts towards prehistoric sites and involving local community participation in their development must be a priority because this is included in the principles of managing national tourism. Authentic archeological evidence from the Megalithic era as a visual study of anthropology in the form of photographic works was designed using the rule of thirds composition which refers to six types of compositions. The photographic works are presented to build the visual perception of society, while at the same time conveying messages about the progress of human civilization in the past through stone composition techniques.

The photographic works in this study presented five main stone arrangement techniques that form a terraced building. The five stone structures are visualized based on the type of composition in photography to build a visual perception of the place of worship to ancestral spirits in prehistoric times. The five stone structures consist of: visualization of stone structures forming gates or entrances, visualization of stone structures forming road and stairs, visualization of stone structures forming walls, visualization of stone structures forming spaces, and visualization of stone structures forming wells as sources of human life. This study can be a visual reference in documenting prehistoric sites as a form of participation in preserving cultural heritage through visual communication media. The results of this study are also expected to arouse public awareness to participate in developing the tourism potential of the Gunung Padang Site at the world level.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

We greatly appreciate and thank the Directorate of Research and Community Service, the Director General of Research and Development Strengthening, the Ministry of Research, Technology and Higher Education who has financed the PDUPT activities in 2019 with the title: "The design of the Gunung Padang Megalithic site photo book with the genre of still life, landscape, and story as an effort to preserve the historical and cultural heritage in the village of Karyamukti Cianjur". Thank you also to LLDIKTI Region III Jakarta and the Institute of Research and Community Services at Universitas Indraprasta PGRI for assisting this research activity through the Research Contract: Number: 16 / AKM / PNT / 2019, March 27, 2019.

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