

The Image of the Gunung Padang Site as A Cultural Heritage in the Perspective of Pre-Iconographical

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Abstract. The Gunung Padang site is one of the cultural heritages in the Cianjur area of West Java. The existence of a terraced punden building from the Megalithic era holds a lot of historical value which is very useful for public knowledge. Visualization of the site through information media is needed so that its image as a cultural heritage can be better known by the public. Qualitatively, this study uses a visual communication design approach by paying attention to design elements as the formalistic aspects of pre-Iconographical. This is an initial study that describes one's own practical experience by observing various aesthetic aspects of cultural heritage objects, ranging from point, line, field, shape, color, texture, and design principles. By conducting this pre-iconographical perspective, it will be possible to determine the appropriate media design to form the image of the Gunung Padang site as a cultural heritage. The results of this study indicate that photo books, either in print or electronically, can be chosen as a medium of information because it has the potential to build the visual perception of the reader. Photo books can also be chosen as information media that can build the image of the Gunung Padang site by examining the design principles that influence it. This study is expected to be a scientific reference for visual communication design practitioners who want to produce visual images of cultural heritage objects.

Keywords: Image, Gunung Padang Site, cultural heritage, pre-
iconographical

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Introduction

Karyamukti Village in Campaka District, Cianjur Regency, West Java, is one of the places where prehistoric relics were found. In the village, the community can visit the Gunung Padang Site which has been designated by the government as a National Cultural Heritage Site since 2014, based on the Decree of the Minister of Education and

Culture Number 023/M/2014. The site which is located in the hills and is at an altitude of 989 below sea level is considered the largest megalithic site in Southeast Asia with an area of more than three thousand square meters (Ramadina, 2013).

This stipulation is in accordance with the Law of the Republic of Indonesia No. 11 of 2010 concerning Cultural Conservation, in Article 1 paragraph 1a which states that: "Cultural heritage is cultural heritage that is material in the form of Cultural Conservation Objects, Cultural Conservation Buildings, Cultural Conservation Structures, Cultural Conservation Sites, and Cultural Conservation Areas on land and/or in water whose existence needs to be preserved because it has important values for history, science, education, religion, and/or culture through the determination process.

At the location of the Gunung Padang Site which is divided into five terraces, there are remains of a terraced punden building with scattered stones from the megalithic era. Punden terraces are evidence of a place for worshipping ancestral spirits as an activity of civilization in the past. In these stone relics there are cultural values as part of cultural ideas. According to Hambali and Dewi (in Wardani, et al., 2019), the heritage of punden terraces is a form of cultural reality that includes cultural heritage and can be used as an individual guide in carrying out life activities.

As an object of the history of civilization, research from Yondri (2014) also shows a reflection of adaptation from the life of prehistoric societies, where humans at that time were challenged to face major natural disasters according to their knowledge. Without sophisticated equipment like today, they are able to process these natural stones into a medium for survival. This can be seen from the composition of the distribution of stones that still exist.

The relics of this prehistoric object are evidence that human knowledge about nature can be observed again from the visualization of the variety and arrangement of these stones. This visual object also becomes an attraction as unique prehistoric objects, especially the texture or shape of the scratches and indentations studied that contain symbols. As a product of civilization and culture, the relics of the Gunung Padang Site are able to control and direct the community to values that initially originate from visual interpretations of past copyrighted works, but eventually form beliefs or myths in society.

In a pre-iconographic context, the researcher's observations of the visualization of various stones at the Gunung Padang Site can be formulated as visual elements that carry cultural messages. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the formalistic aspects and design principles of the remains of the punden terraces that form aesthetic values. This is because the content of cultural elements that contain meaning can also build the image of the Gunung Padang Site as a cultural heritage.

In Nur Indah Puspita Dewi's research (2013), the understanding of image is described as the impression of a person or individual about something that appears as a result of his or her knowledge and experience. In addition, the image is also defined as a picture of reality and does not have to match reality, the image is a global picture according to perception. Thus, the image of the Gunung Padang Site as a cultural

heritage can be formed by understanding the visual strength contained in the visual signs of the arrangement and form of various stone relics of the terraced punden.

This study also formulates a research question, how to interpret the visualization of the distribution of stones at the Gunung Padang Site from a pre-iconographic perspective as a presentation of cultural heritage images? In the visual communication design approach, messages can be visually imaged through visual elements such as points, lines, shapes, fields, colors, and textures. All of these visual aspects can be understood. Visual communication design is communication that uses visual language, where the main strength in delivering messages is everything that can be seen and used to convey meaning and messages. In this case, the presentation of the stones found at the Gunung Padang Site becomes a series of visual signs. Schirato (2004) says it is visual signs that work analogously, when meaning and message are created through a combination of internal and external elements.

This study aims to provide an overview in understanding the potential of visual objects that can build the image of the Gunung Padang Site as a cultural heritage that deserves to be protected and preserved. This research is also expected to be a reference for future researchers, especially design practitioners in building visual perception through aesthetic values.

Methods

The study in this study will be described in a qualitative descriptive manner using an aesthetic approach. The aesthetic approach is an approach that specifically emphasizes aspects of art and design in relation to aesthetic appeal. This aesthetic appeal can arise from the aspect of form (formal), content (symbol) and emotional expression (expression) (Piliang in Walker, 2010).

The aesthetic approach in this study refers to Erwin Panofsky's thoughts, especially the early stages of aesthetic studies, namely the pre-iconographical description, a study that describes one's own practical experience by observing various aesthetic aspects, ranging from points, lines, shapes, fields, colors and textures.

In the pre-iconographic context, the remains of punden terraces in the form of an arrangement of megalithic stones can be referred to as the result of human art in prehistoric times. When a visual object already has values, especially cultural values as part of historical civilization, then the assessment is actually not only on the object. Said by Jacob Sumardjo (2000), a work of art is not actually an object, but a word. While value is something that is always subjective, depending on the human who judges it.

W. H. Mayall (1979) also said that every design has value principles. The characteristics of each visual object have different value relationships, depending on the different circumstances and times in which they are used.

Therefore, this pre-iconographic study is based more on the observations of researchers in the field. In its description, this study also uses the principles of visual

communication design, namely analyzing ideas or thoughts that are displayed visually by discussing design elements, so that ideas can be accepted as cultural messages.

Broadly speaking, the description of the analytical method in this study can be described in the following chart.

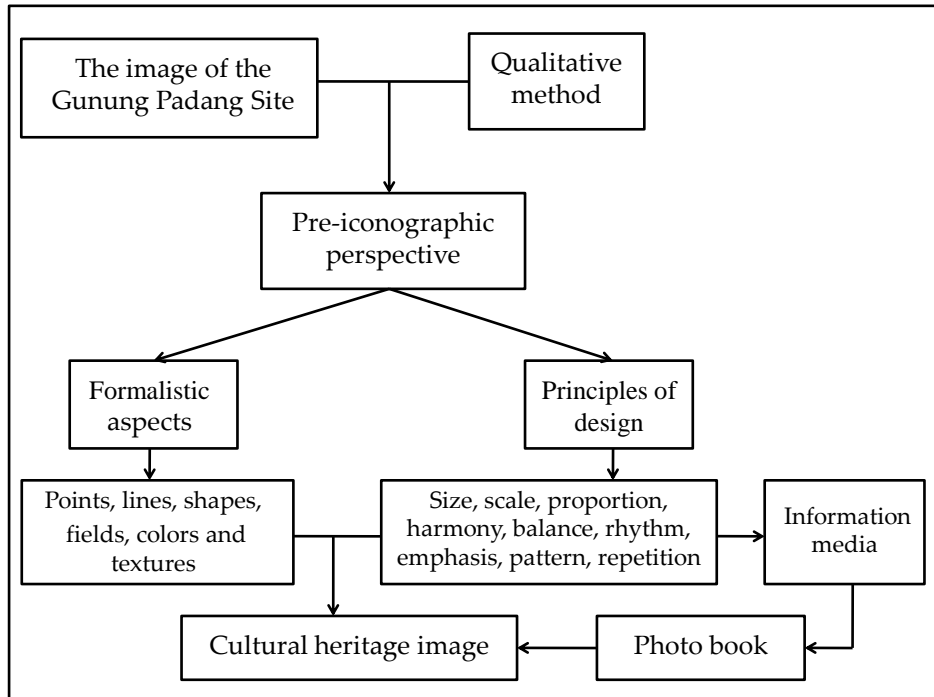


Fig. 1 Methode of Analysis

Result And Discussion

As explained in the introduction, the pre-iconographic discussion in this study is based on the formalistic aspects of design elements that are textual, and not contextual. Analysis of the arrangement of megalithic stones with various shapes on the remains of the terraced punden at the Gunung Padang Site can be discussed in terms of formalistic elements and design principles. The pre-iconographic perspective can help build a visual perception of the image of the Gunung Padang Site as a cultural heritage.

It should be explained in advance that the Gunung Padang site consists of an entrance gate area, two hiking trails, and a terrace area. This terrace is divided into five areas, each of which consists of scattered stones and the rest of the building. Terrace One is the lowest terrace in the form of a rectangle. On this terrace there are ten forms of the rest of the building with a vertical and horizontal stone arrangement. In addition, there are also stones piled up to form stairs, so that the surface of the terrace is less flat. Terrace Two which is smaller in size leaves the remaining six large and small buildings. On this terrace, the ground level is more even. Terrace Three shows an

area that is also smaller than the second terrace. On this terrace there are the remaining five buildings with the dominance of the stone arrangement that tends to be vertical. The stones were arranged to form a circular and rectangular space. Terrace Four is located slightly higher than the third terrace, connected by a stone arrangement in the form of stairs. The ground surface is also uneven. The terrace area which is not too wide leaves the remaining three buildings. The last slag is Terrace Five, which is the highest terrace, located higher than the other terraces, also connected by a wider array of stairs. This terrace leaves some remnants of a small building as a place for rituals. Therefore it is called the most sacred terrace (Yondri, 2012).

Image Through Formalistic Aspects

Understanding the formalistic aspects of the arrangement of megalithic stones can build a visual perception of changes in human civilization, especially about the cultural values that prevailed at that time, but its influence can still be seen today. The visual elements can be described as follows:

1. Point aspect of the stones

The arrangement and shape of the stones of the terraced punden is a type of distribution of megalithic stones that is not single-ended, because both the upper and lower ends can be maximized according to their function. The point aspect in the distribution of megalithic stones is not clearly visible. However, the type of distribution of megalithic stones usually has a rounded arch at the end, where there are no sharp edges.



Fig. 2. Point Aspects of the Stones

The point aspect does not clearly show a certain significant image. However, the point aspect can produce an imaginative image, as a signifier for many signifieds. According to Barthes (2010), the image layer is a sign activity that looks vague and incomplete, but gives rise to significant interpretations and images of the signifier. Therefore, the point aspect on the stones has the potential to build perceptions of diverse images.

2. Line aspect of the stones

The aspect of the line in the distribution of megalithic stones is very prominent, especially the longitudinal vertical and horizontal lines. Each line position on the stone when arranged in groups becomes a reinforcement and balancer. Vertical lines in stone can create a room divider or solid support. The function of the stones arranged vertically was to support the living space and worship space at that time.

Ridwan (in Yondri's research, 2013) writes that there is a reciprocal relationship between the environment and behavior. In the theory of human ecology, it is said that the environment can affect human behavior and vice versa. His research on the arrangement of stones that make up the terraces is assumed to be the ways of humans at that time to adapt to a vulnerable environment. The aspect of the line indirectly builds an image of the life of the megalithic community who struggles through simple technology to avoid landslides and earthquakes. The result of their efforts is a form of local wisdom and cultural values that can still be found in the remains of the terraced punden building.



Fig. 3. Line Aspects of the Stones

3. Shape aspect of the stones

The main shape of the punden stones is in the form of rectangular blocks. The shape of the arrangement of these blocks is large and some are small. The shape of the stone arrangement shows the existence of community activities as part of cultural values, where people's lives depend on natural resources. Cultural values indicate the existence of a belief system that is still embraced by the community today.

Therefore, cultural messages can be interpreted as a system of ideas, values, beliefs, structures and practices that are communicated from generation to generation (Hasan, et al., 2018). This image can be formed, with the discovery of, among others, the arrangement of stones that function as stairs, seats, places for pounding, guardrails, and others.



Fig. 4. Shape Aspects of the Stones

4. Field aspect of the stones

Wide fields in the arrangement and shape of the stone punden terraces are rarely found. The field here is more of a plane where the stones form a space. The space and time in which humans are located build certain meanings through the objects they create, as well as their interactions with the people around them. Humans with all the basic needs of their lives, encourage them to carry out their functions as cultural beings. Humans are also required to have sensitivity in dealing with changes that occur in space and time.

The study of space (Proxemic) according to Edward T. Hall (in Wardani, 2011) is a form of human use of space as a cultural elaboration. In spatial semiotics, three important elements in proxemic are: space-time-object (human). The space here acts as a sign. Space and time will produce a meaning. Space is where the object is located, while time will show the movement of the object. Semiotics, space is used to signify, including: individuality (privacy), values, lifestyle, feeling, excitement, and sociality (Piliang and Saidi, 2010).

The image formed from the field aspect of the stones at the Gunung Padang site shows the existence of activities from the lifestyle, likes and desires of humans to carry out self-actualization, both as individuals and groups in the various remnants of buildings that make up the space, so that the remnants of the space are can be interpreted as spaces for gathering and places of worship.



Fig. 5. Field Aspects of the Stones

5. Color aspect of the stones

The arrangement and shape of the terraced punden stones at the Gunung Padang site show white, gray and black colors. Stone color is more influenced by natural conditions. The arrangement of stones that are mostly whitish in color is seen on Teras Dua, while blackish stones are mostly found in the Teras Lima area. In this area, the color of the stone seems to symbolize the trials in life, where in this area is the center of ritual worship to ancestral spirits. The color properties of this megalithic stone distribution tend to be monochromatic.

Monochromatic colors are several levels of color gradation from one color to white (tints) or to black (shades) (Monica and Luzar, 2011). The brown color as the color of the earth, and the green color of the surrounding trees, are supporting colors that complement the monochromatic color nuances of the entire terrace.

Monochromatic colors are able to produce the impression of harmony and high depth. Another effect is calm and boring. The atmosphere of the Gunung Padang site which is dominated by stones as inanimate objects does produce a calm atmosphere, but not boring. The variety of stones builds a harmonious perception of local wisdom, where people in prehistoric times with their simplicity were able to establish social harmonization.

Samiyono (2017) said that local wisdom is the basis for building social harmonization. Local wisdom is trusted by the people in that place and has been followed from generation to generation and is binding. If someone violates it, there will be sanctions or consequences. Substantially local wisdom is the values and norms that apply in a society that are believed to be true and become a reference in acting and behaving daily. As Geertz said, local wisdom is an entity that greatly determines human dignity in the community. This image of harmony is formed in the area of the Gunung Padang site



Fig. 6. Color Aspects of the Stones

6. Texture aspect of the stones

The textures found in the arrangement of megalithic stones are very diverse. Texture is studied as a result of human processing and also the influence of nature. In prehistoric times, technology has not yet been discovered, but stone processing shows the progress of civilization even by using simple tools. Stone is one of the tools used. The texture aspects contained in these stones each have a meaning, including the texture that visualizes certain symbols

In the research of Wardani, et al. (2019), the visualization of the texture of the stones that carry messages about the existence of humans in the past is called the signifier stones. The texture of the signifier stones that represent cultural messages is called Kujang Stone, which is a stone that shows the visualization of the texture of weapons typical of West Java. Then there is the name Tapak Maung Stone, which is a stone texture that shows the arch of the tiger's footprints and is believed to be the footprints of the incarnation of Prabu Siliwangi in Sundanese belief. Furthermore, there is the title Stone of Ancient Human Foot, which is a stone that shows the arch texture of the prehistoric human feet. Then there is the name Gamelan Stone, which is a stone with a very slippery and smooth texture as a stone that is used to play musical instruments because it makes a sound like gamelan. Then the name for Gendong Stone which has a rough texture on each side as a very heavy stone and stuck in the ground. This stone is believed to be a stone to test the abilities of anyone who can lift it. In addition, there is the name Throne Stone, which is a stone with a flat surface whose sides are also rough in texture, showing patches of stone. This stone used to function as a hermitage for Prabu Siliwangi.

Overall, the distribution of textured stones is not slippery but smooth when touched. The texture aspect of these megalithic stones can be part of the visual appeal of the archaeological space that can be applied in the form of information media such as photo books.



Fig. 7. Texture Aspects of the Stones

Image Through Photobook Design Principles

Photo books are examples of the application of design principles that can build images. As a factor that also influences pre-iconographic studies, a description of design principles in the application of photo books is an option because of its potential to perpetuate historical information in the form of relics from past cultures. According to the American Library of Congress (in Akbaba, 2009), image sources such as photographs, films, videos and fine art, are among the main source groups that can be used in historical research. This is because the delivery of messages about history can be communicated to its readers through visual signs.

The visual elements in the design of the photo book still require a certain visual strategy, where design principles have an important function to process the narrative and layout. According to Hartel and Thomson (2011), the visual power of images in conveying messages can have a significant influence, so that people are encouraged to easily remember, pay attention, find out, understand more easily, build empathy, and build narratives and knowledge in their perceptions.

This study also held a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) activity to support a qualitative approach in assessing the potential of photo book designs to build the image of cultural heritage. Based on the results of the FGD, it can be concluded that: Photo book media can be an effective message delivery medium, as long as the photo display has good image quality, and can adapt to its target audience. Photo book media, according to the chosen genre, has the advantage of conveying messages about prehistoric sites by presenting a point of view that fits the theme. In addition, a communicative narrative text is needed to support the photo. Photo book media can also be influenced by the layout design view, so that users or readers are more interested in paying attention to the contents of the book.

In the context of the pre-iconographic study of the heritage stones at the Gunung Padang site, the design principles that need to be presented in the application of photo books to build the image of cultural heritage are as follows:

1. Size of the stones

In displaying stone photos, it is important to choose the display size of the stones. This means that not all stones are suitable for visualization in a photo book design. Megalithic stones which are generally about 1.5 meters in size can be immortalized with appropriate angles. This can result in more imaginative visualizations.

High angle shooting angle can build imagination about the position of the stones and the atmosphere in the past. While the angle of shooting with the eye level technique, is able to arouse the emotions of the reader because they feel close to the visual object. Readers are not invited to imagine the actual size of the stone, but are encouraged to build an image of the closeness of humans to nature at that time. According to Bonafix (2011), the position of the camera that points directly at the object will have a strong influence on the message to be conveyed.

2. Scale of the stones

To visualize the scale of megalithic stones, shooting from a low angle, with a lower view of the eye but pointing upwards, can produce the effect of rock size. The size of the stone can be compared with the scale of the size of an adult body.

This is in accordance with what Maathuis (2010) describes in his thesis on taking pictures with a vertical camera angle, that when an object is photographed from a low angle, the appearance of the object will give a more positive impression, such as looking bigger, bolder, stronger, compared to the high angle. In the context of the image of the Gunung Padang site, the scale of the stones can build an image of prehistoric human toughness.

3. Proportion of the stones

The proportion of stones seen from the rest of the terraced punden building visualizes an almost even distribution. On each terrace, the stone arrangement shows the proportions of the shape of the space and the path in the form of a staircase arrangement. The arrangement of the stones looks proportional, so that the image can be taken with the eye level technique.

In this technique, the arrangement of stones is displayed in an image that is at eye level, so that the reader seems to be looking directly at the object up close. The eye level technique helps to build a visual perception of the details and character of the object, so that the reader feels more intimate and acquainted. The eye level technique can be assisted with lighting effects, so that the image that appears is sharper.

4. Harmony of the stones

Harmony can also be radiated from the arrangement and shape of the punden stones which functioned as a place of worship of ancestral spirits. Harmony is built by perpetuating a series of stones that are arranged to form a line of walls, a line of stairs, a line of supports, all of which are arranged evenly. Harmony can be felt from

the regularity and accuracy in placing the stones. Visualization of harmony is also able to build the image of humans as cultural beings.

Culture is the result of human activity and the most basic property that radiates through human life. According to Herkovits (in Setiadi, et al., 2008), culture is part of the environment created by humans and the two can never be separated. Humans have a responsibility to fight for their lives to be more meaningful, both for themselves and the community around them. The basic needs of human life to create harmonization with other humans and the nature around them make them cultural creatures. This social harmonization can also be formed as an image in the visualization of photo book designs

5. Balance of the stones

The arrangement and shape of the terraced punden stones look solid and symmetrical. Vertical stones that are able to stand upright are done by being driven directly into the ground. While the horizontal stones that are laid evenly are also placed symmetrically. Symmetry indicates the similarity in size, shape, and location of the stones. Balance also shows a uniform distribution in the composition of the stones.

In the design of the photo book, the balance of vertical and horizontal stone arrangement can be presented to build an image of the connectedness of the community in working together to build "balance" in their daily lives.

Ma'ruf (2019) said that the balance of human life is the main key to achieving prosperity and happiness in life, when the conception of education about life in humans is not only aimed at achieving the interests of the world but also the hereafter. The image displayed in the stone arrangement of the terraces is to gain a sense of security and protection from their ancestors.

6. Rythm of the stones

The arrangement and shape of the stones of the terraced punden from the appearance does not indicate any rhythm, except for rigid vertical or horizontal straight lines. Even if there is a slight rhythm in the uneven shape of the stone, it doesn't look too prominent. The indentations of the carvings on the stone usually do not dominate, so the rhythm of the stones is more presented through an effort to "animate" inanimate objects in the composition. The composition places megalithic stones as a series of inanimate objects that are able to "story" in a space called a terrace. The image of the rhythm of the stone becomes a visual flow that builds imagination about the past setting.

7. Emphazise of the stones

In terms of emphasis on the composition and shape of the stones of the terraced punden, none of them stands out from one another. Each terrace on the Gunung Padang site shows the existence of spaces that are functioned according to the needs of its users. Therefore, the visualization on each terrace has the rest of the different building forms.

Images that can be presented through the principle of emphazise on stones can be helped through natural and artificial lighting. Natural lighting can be obtained

through taking photos of stones in the morning and afternoon by relying on sunlight. While artificial lighting is assisted by light effects from camera technology. The use of light to emphasize the impression you want to display from these stones is very important to create an atmosphere. Lighting quality, lighting direction, and lighting color can have an influence on the message to be conveyed (Tjin, 2011).

The image of cultural heritage through the principle of emphasis can be visualized through lighting games, so that the appearance of megalithic stones looks more dramatic. As is known, the age of these megalithic stones has been investigated by the Beta Analytic international laboratory in Miami based on the findings of the Ancient Catastrophic Team from the Indonesian government in 2011. The results show that they are between 14,500-25,000 BC. This age data exceeds the Pyramid of Giza in Egypt which is around 2,500 BC (Akbar, 2014).

8. Pattern of the stones

The prominent pattern is seen in the dimensions of the stones from the terraced punden. Prehistoric stones at the Gunung Padang site have almost uniform variations in shape with the dimensions of the stone shape resembling a cube or block, especially large stones. The pattern of the stone surface, generally has a rough surface with various stone veins, whether sharp, smooth, or irregular when touched. The dimensions of the stone pattern build an image of the religious activities that humans have done at that time.

The dimensional patterns of the stones that make up the remains of the terraced punden were built by prehistoric humans to avoid the dangers of traveling by the ancestral spirits which they believe can provide protection. The influence of the megalithic tradition, namely the worship of ancestors, gave birth to procedures that maintain all the behavior of people in the mortal world in accordance with the demands of life in the hereafter. Forms of worship to ancestral spirits in megalithic concepts tend to connote large stones. However, in practice it can also refer to small stones. This can be seen from the remains of the worship monument. The studies that have been carried out so far have proven that there is an unbroken relationship until now between ancestor worship ceremonies, whether using large stones, small stones, or no monuments at all. However, megalithic concepts in the behavior of the people are rooted through the burial system and the conception of belief in ancestral spirits (Geldem, 1945; Soejono, 1977; Wagner, 1962, in Prasetyo, et al., 2004). This is what is reflected in the stone pattern of the terraced punden.

9. Repetition of the stones

The element of repetition of stones is especially visible in the arrangement of stones. Stones that have the same shape and length are arranged according to their function. Most stones are used to make walls, stairs, and exterior or interior needs. The principle of repetition that is visualized builds an image of the consistency of the resilience of people's attitudes to life in the past.

Thus the description of the nine design principles that can be applied as a visualization of megalithic stones in photo book designs. Through a description of the formalistic aspects and design principles of the pre-iconographic approach,

photo books become a potential alternative medium of information because it has the advantage of packaging the image of the cultural heritage of the Gunung Padang site as a whole and in more detail.

Conclusion

This study concludes that the arrangement of megalithic stones in the Gunung Padang Site area can build a cultural heritage image because it is able to present various formalistic aspects in the archaeological space. Prehistoric buildings in principle are also able to embody aesthetic values, be it points, lines, shapes, fields, colors and textures.

According to pre-iconographic studies, the image from the point aspect encourages imagination and diverse image perception. The line aspect reflects the local wisdom of the megalithic community in survival. The shape aspect reflects the existence of community activities to utilize natural resources as part of cultural values. The field aspect represents self-actualization activities through lifestyle habits and religious traditions. The color aspect reflects the community's efforts to create social harmonization from local wisdom. Meanwhile, the texture aspect is an image of human existence which is marked from the markers on megalithic stones as symbols of belief. All these formalistic aspects can be applied in the form of information media such as photo books by taking into account design principles.

Visualization through the principle of the size of the stones can encourage photo book readers to feel the closeness of humans to nature. Visualization through the principle of the scale of the stone is able to build an image of the toughness of prehistoric humans. Visualization through the principle of the proportion of stones can carry a message of intimacy and acquainted. Visualization through the principle of harmony of the stones images the basic human need to create harmony with nature and each other. Visualization through the principle of balance of the stones represents a sense of security and protection obtained from ancestral spirits. Visualization through the principle of stone rhythm is able to present the storyline as the setting of space and time. Visualization through the principle of emphasize of the stones imaged dramatization with the help of lighting. Visualization through the pattern of the stones portrays the beliefs of prehistoric humans to always respect the ancestral spirits for protection. Visualization through the principle of repetition of the stones imaged the consistency of the behavior of the community against the prevailing norms.

Overall, it is also possible to visualize the relics of the terraced punden at the Gunung Padang site through photo book media, as an information medium that displays a lot of pictures. This study encourages an understanding of visual reading of cultural heritage objects as inanimate objects that are able to carry cultural messages, so that people are open to more appreciating and participating in preserving cultural heritage. The perspective of pre-iconographical in this study are expected to be used as

a reference to formulate the strength of the tangible and intangible visual elements in image formation.

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