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Designing Human Interest Photography: The Role of Gunung Padang Site Keeper as Cultural Heritage Guard

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ABSTRACT

Punden terraces on the Gunung Padang Site, Cianjur, West Java is archaeological evidence about the existence of prehistoric humans. This Megalithic Age heritage building is a form of cultural reality that must be cared for and preserved. During this time, there have been many acts of vandalism against cultural heritage objects, so that a site guard is needed called a keeper. The role of the keeper includes establishing social interaction with tourists to socialize the importance of prehistoric sites as a national asset. This study aims to visualize the activity of keepers as a form of self-actualization through human interest photography. Quantitatively, the data shows that 62% of tourists consider that media information is still limited in the area of the site, so 92% of tourists consider the importance of a keeper. Qualitatively, the discussion of photography design uses a visual narrative theory that refers to elements of plot, viewpoint, character, event, time and place, and causal relations. The human interest photography presents a variety of self-actualization of keepers in interacting with nature and humans, as a choice, responsibility, intentional nature, search for meaning, value, and creativity, which are included in humanistic postulates. The study results can be a reference to the application of visual language in conveying messages about the values of social life keepers in carrying out their role as cultural heritage guard.

Keywords: Human interest photography, keeper, cultural heritage guard.

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1. Introduction

1.1 Background

The Gunung Padang site in Cianjur, West Java, is known for its jumble of terraced stones from the Megalithic era. The existence of historic relics where the ancestors worshipped was an

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archaeological evidence of human activity in its efforts to meet the basic needs of life. This assumption is based on the results of research from Yondri (2014), that the construction of punden terraces, which has been recorded by N.J. Chrome in the *Rapporten Oudheidkundige Dients* in 1914 and then rediscovered by local farmers in 1979, is an illustration of human efforts to survive, as a reflection of adaptation to environmental conditions, and anticipation of facing potential landslides in the hilly area.

The results of human activities at that time became a legacy of cultural values that must be maintained and preserved, because they contain a history of knowledge about local wisdom. Quoted from Hambalie and Dewi (in Winny Gunarti Widya Wardani, Wulandari, Rezha Destiadi, 2019) cultural values are part of cultural ideas that can be used as guidelines for individuals in behavior. Evidence of places of worship for ancestral spirits is a representation of prehistoric human traditions, while the remnants of the rest of the building are forms of cultural reality that include cultural heritage.

1.2 Problem statement

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

Therefore, the Provincial Tourism and Culture Office through the Regional Cultural Management UPTD always coordinates human resources who can work in the field to help care for, preserve, and maintain the safety of cultural heritage, as has been applied to the Gunung Padang Site. The fieldwork is carried out by people who act as keepers. Based on information from Mr. Nanang, as the Mount Padang Site Keepers Coordinator, there are currently 33 Keepers from the Banten Preservation Cultural Center, the Cianjur Regency Culture Office, and volunteers from the West Java Tourism Activists Group (Kompepar).

The responsibility of the keepers is not only to care for cultural heritage objects routinely, but also as a provider of information for visitors. According to Zaki Munawar (2015), the keeper is also responsible for maintaining the safety or protection of cultural heritage objects from potential damage caused by natural and human factors. In addition, keepers also have the ability to work closely with district coordinators and cultural heritage areas to monitor sites, provide information from the Cultural Preservation Center, and guide and explain to tourists, both local and international. Plus the keepers must make a monthly report to the local Cultural Preservation Center and the Regional Government that handles the field of culture, about the conditions of cleanliness, safety, and maintenance of cultural heritage, data on the number of visitors, and other supporting activities.

The job descriptions and responsibilities show the role of keepers who are very important as the front guard of historic sites. During their service in the field, they are usually equipped with information media, identity cards, as well as ethical guidelines, especially to serve the visitors. They not only carry out their duties according to established rules, but also need to do a variety of creativity to meet the needs of tourists.

The obstacle often experienced by keepers is to monitor the movements of visitors during crowded visits. As Pak Nanang revealed, the keepers of the Gunung Padang Site must focus attention on the main site area covering 900 square meters, which is divided into five terraces, and the most difficult thing to do is prevent visitors from climbing the large Megalithic stone blocks. In fact, these stones must be kept so as not to be damaged, shifted, let alone collapse, while tourists usually like to take pictures on the rocks (Setiawan, 2014).

Another obstacle that must be faced by keepers is the limitations of printed information media that can be shared with visitors, so they must have sufficient knowledge to provide an explanation of matters related to the site. The activities of these keepers indirectly become a form of self-actualization as cultural beings who are bound by social values in the community.

2. Literature review

The need for self-actualization in the context of humanistic psychology is included in the hierarchy of human needs that must be met. Maslow said (in Rachmahana, 2008), the need for self-

actualization is the need to develop self-potential with certain tendencies, namely as growth needs whose fulfillment depends more on humans themselves.

The potential fulfillment of humanistic needs is possible, because so far there have been many acts of vandalism on cultural heritage objects, either done by the surrounding community who do not know its importance, or by tourists who do not have a sense of responsibility towards historical assets.

Therefore, keepers who are directly involved in the field are often demanded to help encourage public awareness to participate in protecting cultural heritage objects. The keepers who generally come from the area around the site often feel that they share this historical place as part of their lives, and believe in their work as a form of respect for ancestral heritage. This attitude is part of traditional cultural values. As Hasanuddin said (2016), human life is generally controlled by beliefs.

The formulation of the problem in this study is how to design the role of the keeper as a cultural heritage guard through human interest photography? This study aims to visualize the self-actualization of the Gunung Padang Site keepers as a humanistic need in their role, both when interacting with nature, and fellow humans. As a visual communication design work, human interest photography is a type of photography that presents the human side of the photographer's personal experience, as well as conveying existing emotional messages. This type of photography is related to human interaction with the environment, especially with nature, and other humans (Way, 2014).

The results of human interest photography in this study are expected to be a reference to the application of visual language in conveying messages about the values of social life of keepers as a form of self-actualization in carrying out their role as guardians of cultural heritage on the Gunung Padang Site.

3. Methods

This study uses a combination method, which is to collect and analyze quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitatively, this study conducted a preliminary survey of tourists at the Gunung Padang Site location, to find out their views on the role of the keeper and its relation to the availability of information media in the area of the site. The results of this quantitative data then become the basis of qualitative analysis with data collection techniques through the study of literature, observation, interviews, and the use of visual narrative theory, especially in visualizing the elements of signs as messages in photography.

Schirato and Webb (2004) mention the existence of six elements in the processing of visual narratives through the presentation of images or visual text, namely:

1. Plot, explain about what happened and why.
2. Narrator viewpoint, the point of view from which it is told.
3. Characters, who participated in the story, human or otherwise.
4. Events, everything in the story that happens to or because of the characters.
5. Time and place, in which those events take place.
6. Causal relations, which links the events together.

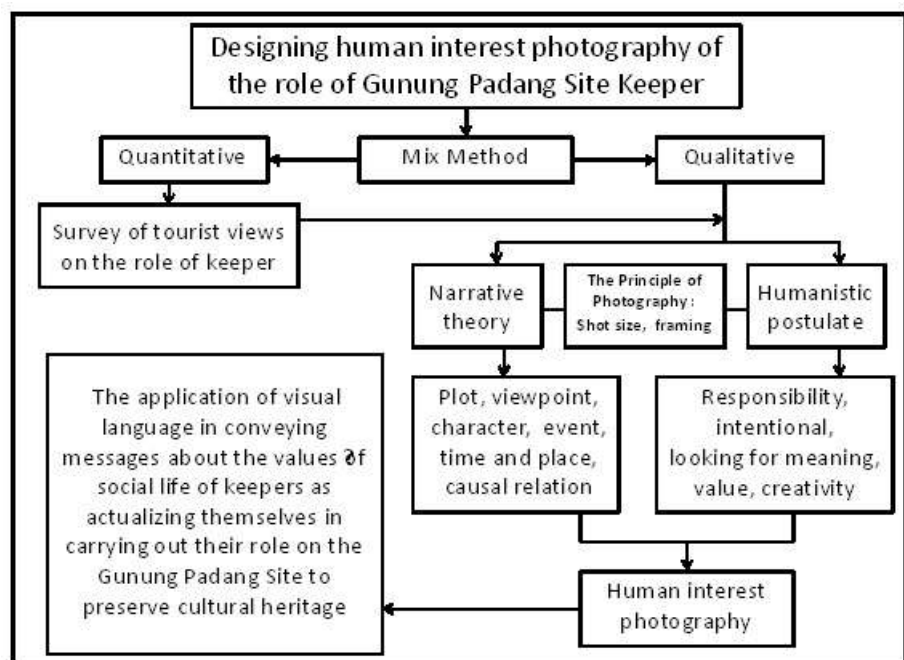


Figure 1. Analysis method

While reading messages about self-actualization through visual signs can refer to the humanistic postulate elements of James Bugental (in Medika, 2017) which among them focus on activities that indicate choices and responsibilities, as well as human needs that are nature intentional, looking for meaning, value, and creativity.

These two relations are also bound by two principles in photography which include shot sizes, consisting of wide shot, medium shot, medium close up, close up, and extreme close up. Then framing consists of composing visual objects into the rule of thirds, in the form of vertical and horizontal imaginary lines that position the image on the left framing, right framing, middle framing, and full framing. Broadly speaking, the analytical methods of this study can be illustrated in the following chart.

4. Discussion

This study conducted a preliminary survey of tourists on the Gunung Padang Site. Data on the views of tourists is needed because this prehistoric site is a cultural heritage that needs to be preserved, which is useful to be passed on to the next generation as a source of socio-cultural knowledge. To do this, it needs the support of all elements of society, both local people, creative communities that develop tourism related products, and tourists who have the potential to bring in income to encourage the sustainability of the site's tourist area. Indirectly, this can also improve the economic welfare of the surrounding community.

This is consistent with what was stated by Nafila (2013) in her research on the Gunung Padang Site tour that sustainable cultural tourism is one that can be sustained (Ahimsa-Putra), or that heritage tourism usually depends on elements of life (Timothy and Nyaupane). The results of quantitative data collection in this study used a Likert scale questionnaire of 165 tourists who were visiting the Gunung Padang Site in February 2020. This survey aimed to find out their views on the availability of information media in the site area and the need for keepers.

The survey data on the availability of information media which is still very limited in the Gunung Padang Site area shows the following data: 24 (15%) tourists strongly agree, 75 (45%) tourists agree, 36 (22%) tourists doubtful, 27 (16%) tourists said they disagree, and 3 (2%) tourists expressed strongly disagree.



disagree.

Figure 2. The view of tourists about the limited media information

While the results of survey data on the need for keepers in the Gunung Padang Site area in the view of tourists show the following data: 78 (48%) tourists strongly agree, 72 (44%) tourists agree, 9 (6%) tourists expressed doubtful, 3 (2%) tourists stated disagree, and no tourists stated strongly disagree (0%).

The results of quantitative data about the views of tourists are the basis for analyzing the reading of messages in human interest photography. Efforts to visualize the role of the Gunung Padang Site keepers through their self-actualization activities can be discussed as a visual

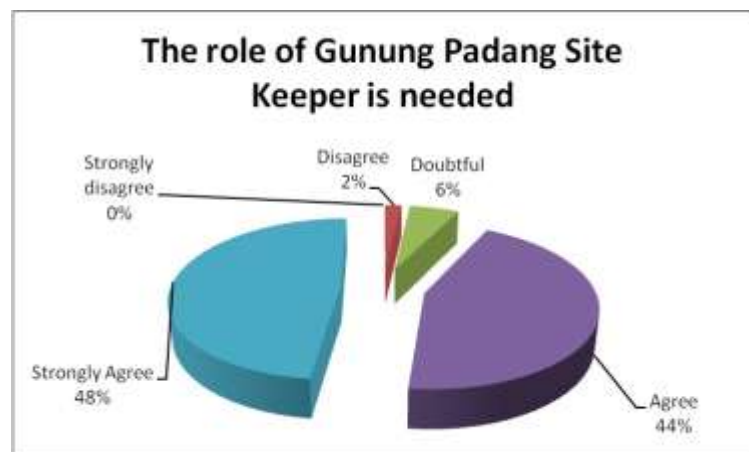


Figure 3. The view of tourists about the need for the role of keepers.

narrative attraction that carries messages about social values in their roles and responsibilities.

4.1 Human interest photography of keepers

The human interest photography design in the discussion of this study featured six photographs that were divided according to two types of activities, namely: the activity of the keeper when interacting with visitors or tourists, and the activity of the keeper when interacting with himself and nature. Visualization of these two types of activities is the main activity of their daily lives in carrying out their roles and responsibilities. Photographs are taken candidly to be able to produce natural visualizations in body visual language, as a form of nonverbal communication that also has visual power. According to John Fiske (2007), delivery of nonverbal messages can be presented through presentational codes, and can also be displayed representatively, as long as the intended presentational code can be conveyed in representational messages, so that a photo can be just be a messenger about sorrow or joy.

In other words, visualization of keeper activities through human interest photography can be designed as presentational nonverbal codes to represent a form of self-actualization with the contents of local wisdom values as part of cultural heritage. The issue of cultural values becomes an important discourse because it is often considered to be limited to historical records. This was also revealed by Asfina and Ovilia (2016), that "people often define culture in a narrow concept; they see culture as just a tradition. However, culture has broad concepts that cover many things related to human life".

Photography is one of the media that can be an alternative to convey cultural values. In the context of communicating messages about human objects in human interest photography, a blend of the application of the principles of photography with the emotional connection of the photographer is needed. This is because the shooting of human interest photography does not merely process visual elements to form objects in order to be "enjoyed" when presented, but it must be able to attract the attention of the audience in ways that touch the soul and mind. That is why designing human interest photography is not only able to build imagination but also evoke feelings. Human interest photography can display simple-looking images, but it can convey complex human problems.

As said by Noddings (2010, in Kim Ping Yim, 2012) in his review of James Nacthwey's journalistic photo works, showing that human interest photography can influence moral education. He argued that the photographic work could invite people "to care for those they encounter directly and to care about the suffering of people at a distance". Based on the potential visual power of the human interest photography, this study further elaborates on the reading of message signs on the six photography works about the role of the Gunung Padang Site keeper according to elements of visual narrative and humanistic postulates, as explained in the analysis method.

4.2 Visual narrative design and humanistic meaning

Based on the results of interviews with Mr. Nanang, Keeper Coordinator, every day the Gunung Padang Site is visited by tourists around 100-300 people on weekdays, and can reach almost 1000 visitors on holidays. Generally they come to enjoy the beauty of the scenery, take pictures, relax with family, find out about prehistoric stones, and do spiritual activities, such as praying at night. Therefore, not a few visitors who took the time to stay at people's homes are also used as homestays. However, the most common reason for visiting is because they want to take pictures among large rocks.

As a discussion, the design of the following photographic work refers to the high view of tourists towards the role of the keeper, which is a total of 92 percent. The following six photographs are visualizations of the main activities of the keeper that are carried out every day, namely:

1. The activity of the keeper when interacting with visitors or tourists. Visualizing the role of the keeper in the first part includes:

a. The keeper provides an explanation to school students

Based on the plot element, photos visualize the narrative of student visits to the Gunung Padang site. From the viewpoint element, this photo is visualized using a left-leaning framing with a medium-size shot, showing a half-tree trunk. From the elements of character, this photo shows the social interaction between the keeper and teen tourists. From the elements of the event, this photo builds an event about the desire of teenagers to study at prehistoric sites. From the elements of time and place, this photo visualizes the daytime atmosphere under a large tree, which is between the

terraces. From the element of causal relations, this photo visualizes the social interaction of the keeper with the younger generation.

b. The keeper helps tourists take pictures

Based on the plot, the photo visualizes the keeper helping tourists take pictures, and the whole family looks smiling. From the viewpoint element, this photo uses full framing, with a wide shot that displays all the figures intact and close. In terms of character, this photo tells the social interaction between the keeper and a family of fathers, mothers and children. From the event element, this photo tells a family tour that prioritizes educational values. From the elements of time and place, this photo visualizes the atmosphere of daylight between two terraces. This can be seen from the stones that make up the stairs. From the element of causal relations, this photo visualizes the harmonization of a family, where the keeper plays a role in supporting that happiness.

c. The keeper do a demonstration in front of foreign tourists

Based on the plot, the photo visualizes the keeper serving the group of foreign tourists through a demonstration in front of a rock. From an element of point of view, this photo is visualized using right-leaning framing, with a wide shot size, so that large trees are seen as a panoramic background. From the elements of character, this photo builds a character that is capable of keeping foreign tourists. From the elements of the event, this photo tells the visit of foreign tourists who have an interest in Indonesian cultural values. From the elements of time and place, this photo visualizes the atmosphere of daylight on the fourth terrace. From the elements of causal relations, this photo builds information about the important cultural historical value of this site, so that it can attract the attention of foreign tourists.

2. The activity of the keeper when interacting with himself and nature. Visualizing the role of the keeper in the second part includes:

a. The keeper carries out spiritual activities

Based on the plot, the photo visualizes the keeper observing spiritual activities. From an element of point of view, this photo uses a framing center, with a medium size shot, so that it shows the body of the keeper rather close. From the element of character, this photo shows the character of the keeper who has faith in the Lord of the Universe. From the event element, this photo tells the activity of praying to be part of the routine. From the elements of time and place, this photo visualizes the atmosphere of dusk and the area of the site that began to quiet. From the element of a causal relations, this photo builds perceptions about the trust held by the keeper.

b. The keeper cleans the site area from trash



Figure 4. The keeper provides an explanation to school students



Figure 5. The keeper helps tourists take pictures.



Figure 6. The keeper welcomed the group of foreign tourists.

Based on the plot, the photo visualizes the keeper who is cleaning the site area from rubbish. From the viewpoint element, this photo uses a wide-shot right framing, so it shows the background of the forest behind the site. From the elements of character, this photo builds the character of the keeper who is responsible for maintaining the cleanliness of the site. From the event element, this photo tells the story of the interaction of the keeper with nature that must be maintained.

Figure 7. The keeper carries out spiritual activities.

From the elements of time and place, this photo visualizes the atmosphere of dusk near the hut which is usually used to rest for visitors. From the element of causal relations, this photo builds a perception of the love of keepers with nature.

c. The keeper raised the country's symbol, the red and white flag

Figure 8. The keeper cleans the site area.

Based on the plot elements, the photo visualizes the keeper raising the red and white flag. From the viewpoint element, this photo uses left framing, with a medium size shot, so that the keeper's body parts are not displayed intact. From the elements of character, this photo builds character as an Indonesian citizen. From the event element, this photo tells the task and responsibility of the keeper to always mark the prehistoric site as an asset of the nation. From the elements of time and place, this photo visualizes the atmosphere of the morning on the fifth terrace which can be seen from the background of the upper trees. From the element of causal relations, this photo builds a perception of love for the motherland.



Figure 9. The keeper raised the flag as a symbol of the country.

4.3 Humanistic meaning

The six works of human interest photography above are designed to build perceptions about the routine role of keepers as their life choices and responsibilities. The visualization presented is simple, but most people do not realize it as another side of human life that needs to be appreciated. It was said by van Peursen (in Wardani, 2011), the meaning of culture is sediment from human activities and works. Humans become people who are able to change nature, make the nature of culture something that is considered more dynamic, and become a manifestation of everyone's life.



Human activity with all its problems in life becomes the reality of space and time, which can be realized in photography with the ability to simplify it through visual elements that carry messages. Thus, the design of human interest photography in this study can be placed as part of a cultural context because of its ability to represent meaning and value, so that visual objects about the role of the keeper can be read as cultural texts.

Keesing (2014) in theories about culture mentions among them the ideational component of the cultural system that has adaptive consequences in helping livelihoods, and at the same time helping to protect the ecosystem. For the people of Karyamukti Village, where the site is located, work as a keeper is the main choice, because they can depend their lives on the site for a living. This also encourages a high sense of ownership because they share a sense of ownership of the place. They can even develop other creative potentials to improve the economy. As Erus Rustandi did, in addition to being a keeper, he also made palm sugar as a souvenir that visitors could bring.

In humanistic postulates, the nature of intensity is understood as the totality of the keeper's role in managing their choices and responsibilities as guardians of cultural heritage. Their ability to carry out social interactions with various people -- who are heterogeneous and come from various countries -

- is the potential of human resources that can still be developed. Identity of the attributes of the keepers in the form of typical clothing of ordinary people of West Java, namely black loose pants tied with a belt, also black tops combined with T-shirts, then added a typical Sundanese iket or headband called Totopong. Most of them walk in sandals or barefoot. This is combined with Sundanese-style speech, so that their intensity becomes a manifestation of local wisdom. Quoted from Keraf (in Sari, 2015) local wisdom not only contains the knowledge and understanding of indigenous peoples about humans and their interactions with other humans, but also how to build relationships among all the ecological community members.

Based on the work of human interest photographs about keeper interactions with other humans, it can be seen that self-actualization of keepers in efforts to build communication and relationships with tourists from the younger generation, contributes to creating harmony with family tourists, and build closeness with foreign tourists. While their interaction with themselves and nature, in an effort to find meaning and value in life, can be seen from the activity of praying to the Lord of the Universe on a rock on the fifth terrace which was used as a place of worship for ancestral spirits. Then the activity of cleaning the site area from various rubbish, and sticking a red and white flag that marks the prehistoric site area as a national treasure.

All the behavior of the keeper is a form of self-actualization. In Maslow's thought, this is the fulfillment of the fifth level of the basic human needs hierarchy, where humans are always moved to understand and accept themselves as much as possible as a psychological dimension of human survival (Isfada, 2018).

The message about human psychology is a complex message about the idea of human life as a cultural being. Research on human interest photography that has been done shows that simplifying the complexity of ideas about human life through photography in practice is widely used by war journalists as a record of their journey in chasing events. As Allan (2011) said, the photos of journalism have the capacity to record the sad truth in order to be noticed. There is a challenge to make photographs as a witness of conflict over violence, documenting events related to humans with all the consequences that can build problems of perspective, judgment, and interpretation.

Thus, human interest photography on the role of the Gunung Padang Site keeper can also be witnesses of their performance which may be devoid of news. Yet their duties as field officers and guardians of the forefront of cultural heritage are a big responsibility and require support and attention from the government. Broadly speaking, the essence of the humanistic message in the visual narrative of human interest photography in this study can be seen in the following table.

Table 1.

Visual narrative of human interest photography

No	Visual Narrative	Messages of human interest photography
1	Plot	Simple visualization of the role of the Gunung Padang Site keeper as a field officer, guard of the forefront of cultural heritage, who has a great responsibility to help preserve prehistoric sites, thus requiring support and attention from the government.
2	Viewpoint	The role of the keeper is another side of human life that needs to be appreciated, but most people do not realize it, because its work is rarely reported.
3	Character	The identity of the attributes of the keeper who is dressed in the typical style of the people of West Java, combined with Sundanese-style speeches, is a representation of the intensity of local wisdom
4	Events	Meeting the basic needs of human life is a complex idea but can be visualized through photography as an event documentation that is able to build meaning and value.
5	Time and Place	For the people of Karyamukti Village, work as a keeper is a daily livelihood. This encourages a high sense of ownership, and encourages them to develop other creative potentials in order to improve the economy.
6	Causal relation	Their ability to conduct social interactions with various people who are heterogeneous and come from various countries is the potential of

human resources that can continue to be developed, because it combines knowledge and understanding, as well as the ability to build relationships within the community.

5. Conclusion

This study concludes that photography can be an alternative medium for conveying socio-cultural messages. Designing human interest photography can be a creative choice for academics in the field of visual communication design studies. The results of the study successfully demonstrated the process of reading messages through visual narrative, starting from the plot, point of view, characters, events, time and place, and their causal relations. The human interest photography works in this study can show the activity of the keeper in his role and responsibility for social interaction with other humans, himself and nature. Human interest photography can arouse emotions and build imagination, while indirectly encouraging public awareness to better understand the role of the keeper as a guardian of the cultural heritage of the Gunung Padang Site.

The application of the angle of shooting in the framing of visual space supports the visualization of humanistic narratives that carry messages about the values of social life. This can be seen from the activity of the keeper who is cleaning the site area, helping visitors take pictures, explaining to foreign and local tourists, flying the symbol of the country, and contemplating with himself, complete with all the attributes that characterize his identity, as well as presenting the background, so as to produce a photo which is interesting.

This visualization of the role of keepers can also build perceptions of the responsibilities of caretakers, where they do so as a choice of life based on belief and love of work, to find the intensity of their totality, find meaning from their social interactions with visitors, gain value -the value of life from everyday experience, and develop the potential of creativity as a cultural being to continue to participate in the preservation of cultural reserves. The results of human interest photography can be a reference in presenting messages about the values of local wisdom as cultural values that can be developed as an attraction for tourism promotion with a humanist approach.

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