

**SEMIOTICS ANALYSIS STREET PHOTOGRAPHY ON THE BOOK  
“STREET PHOTOGRAPHY DENGAN PONSEL” BY PAUL ZACHARIA**

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**Abstract**

*Street Photography is one of the most popular photography genres in today's society. The camera on smarthphone became one of the alternative photographer in producing street photography works. The book became the media used to present the work of street photography by Paul Imam Zacharia. Street photography in this study focuses on public space. Semiotics analysis is used to read the meanings or signs present in this study by combining Charles Pierce's semiotic theory and public space theory Jurgen Habermas. Semiotics theory shows the existence of three signs namely icons, indexes, and symbols that will be understood in the public space. Data collection techniques using documentation, literature study, and interviews. The data validity uses three of nine formulas: communicator, physical and social context, and common sence. The results show that Paul Imam Zacharia's street photography works have meaning in depiction of activities in public space such as functional utilization of public space. In addition there are icons, indexes, and symbols that become a hint that the object taken by Paul Imam Zacharia is a public space. Signs and meanings formed in the work depict non-verbal communication that is visualized and will be represented by every individual who sees the work.*

**Keywords :** *public space, semiotics, street photography*

**INTRODUCTION**

Photography is not a difficult thing to meet, because to capture a moment does not require a complete set of cameras. Simply on the smart phone the best moments can be shot quickly. At this time almost all smart phones have a camera feature and develop a resolution that is almost the same as DSLR cameras (Digital Single Lens Reflex), so the camera features on the smartphone more desirable use. Camera function one of them is as documentation tool, either in the form of photo and video. While photography is useful as a social

documentation where photographs with human objects, goods or situations produced have contents, meanings or messages that can be stored as social documentation.

One of the most talked-about genres of even being a photography style is Street Photography. But actually this photography has been widely used since the beginning of the discovery and become a personal style of photographers in the world. His understanding of Street Photography makes a lot of diverse assumptions about what is Street Photography. Some think that Street

Photography captures everything on the streets, and some even assume that Street Photography is added with a model to fashion modeling photography that is on the street or commonly called Street Fashion by young people.

All these assumptions are actually not wrong but that deviates from some opinions of professional photographers. According to Michael Freeman in the book "Street Photography Dengan Ponsel" by Paul Zacharia explained that Street Photography is a form of photojournalism in which the photographer takes precedence is an unexpected moment, the uncontrollable situation of humans and the form that brings surprise.

Street Photography is essentially a recording of unique, exciting moments that are too fast to be captured by our usual perception. Photographs that can be said as Street Photography itself does not necessarily have a benefit or purpose, but the satisfaction of the photographer and the audience only, that's what can really be said as Street Photography. At a glance to see people making Street Photography look easy, but to get a work of Street Photography with the configuration and composition that exist in the activity is not easy. Spontaneity to move and think to produce the work of Street Photography this is the main attraction for the

audience. Not just a matter of spontaneity, now Street Photography can easily be done with the sophistication of the technologies on the phones we have.

The purpose of this research is to identify street photography semiotics in Street Photography book with Mobile phone by Paul Zacharia in giving understanding about street photography. In this study, the author uses two theories of Charles Sanders Peirce Semiotics Theories explain that by object, Peirce split the icon (icon), index (index), and symbol (symbol).

## METHOD

The type of research used is semiotics analysis that is the science or method of analysis that examines the sign. Semiotics as a model of social science understands the world as a relationship system that has a basic unit called a sign.

The object of research entitled Analysis of Semiotics Street Photography In the book "Street Photography With Mobile" Paul Zacharia's work, which examines the signs of icons (indexes), index (index), and symbol (symbol) contained in the photographs "Street Photography With Mobile Phone" by Paul Zacharia. There are 127 photos in the book with 15 photo albums represented by 15 photographs showing Street Photography

visuals by Paul Zacharia. The data obtained is the result of interviews with the author and street photographer who is domiciled in Malang.

There are 4 formulas taken by the researcher to know the validity of data in the research that is the first is taneous natural forms. Or in other words, an icon is a relationship between a sign and an object or a reference that is similar. Index is a sign that indicates a natural relationship between sign or marker that is causal or causal relationship, or a sign that directly refers to reality. While the mark can also refer to the denotatum through convention. Such a mark is a conventional sign commonly called a symbol. Thus, the symbol is a sign indicating the natural relationship between the marker and its signature. Relationships are arbitrary or arbitrary, relationships are based on conventions (covenants) of society. Then the second theory used is the concept of public space Jurgen Habermas. Habermas's public sphere is a space that operates on the basis of a practical moral discourse involving rational and critical interaction, constructed for the purpose of solving political problems. Although

Habermas's work focuses on the public sphere of bourgeois society, it is through that stepping stone that public space can be understood as a space that provides and engages the public more widely in discussing the existing reality.

The communicator, the second about the physical and social context, the third about common sense and the fourth is intersubjectivity. Communicator in this study is Paul Imam Zacharia as the author of the book studied. Then communicators consider the social values, norms and myths of trust in several places including Singapore, Surabaya, Ketapang, Jogja, and Jabodetabek in the form of photographs equipped with a caption as a short story or a brief description of the places used as a photo object by Paul Imam Zacharia In the photo book. In addition communicators also include social signs on the works of photos of each album, the mark can be any symbols, letters or other signs that are conventionally known by the whole community. Then there is the intersubjectivity received from one street photographer namely Ais Iqbal who will represent the work of Paul Imam Zacharia's photo.



**Figure 1. Akbar Trotoar**  
(Source: book “Street Photography dengan Ponsel” )

**Caption:** “Kebersihan dan leluasnya trotoar di Negara Singa ini membuat pejalan kaki sangat menikmati perbelanjaan di jalan utama ini. Kesibukan pekerja yang sedang pulang meramaikan berbagai imaji dan refleksi pada fasada dan estetika karya seni di ruang publik. Dengan disiplin para warga dan para pemakai jalan dalam budaya menjaga kebersihan dan etos antrian, maka tanpa polisipun ketertiban dan keamanan lingkungan bisa terjamin.”

Akbar Sidewalk is a photo title taken by Paul Imam Zacharia at Orchard Pedestrian, Singapore. According to Paul, the cleanliness and freedom of the sidewalks in the country made pedestrians enjoy spending on the main road. The discipline of citizens and road users in the culture of maintaining cleanliness keeps the order and security of the environment guaranteed even without the police. On the mapping

based on the splitting of the Pierce model marks.

Then it can be some existing indexes, icons, and symbols. The index on “Akbar Puddle 03” is a longitudinal shadow caused by both the woman and the yellow shadows on the water that exist beneath the arching architect’s shape. Shadows are the index of light or sunlight which means time is showing morning or evening. The two yellow ladies and architects can be called icons, because they are objects of Paul Zacharia’s photograph. Both objects are real objects, because the works of photography are real, recording a reality seen by the lens. Where the two women who walk can be interpreted as the main object, yellow architecture is called as foreground and shophouses behind him as background. Then there is the so called symbol.

From the photo titled “Akbar Sidot 03” there is a symbol that

symbolizes a place that is a yellow architect building (foreground on the photo) as one of the markers that the photo is in Singapore. Singapore is known as a country with unique and interesting architectural style. In addition, symbols are also shown on roads or sidewalks with evidence of two people walking on the street or on the sidewalk. As it is in KBBI that sidewalks can be referred to as where people walk.

Of the two objects in this drawing in the form of yellow curves and two women walking on a sidewalk can describe the large sidewalks that pedestrians can afford to spend. The position of the woman on the left and the width of the street in front of the woman is to show that the two women are moving forward. The sidewalks with these unique architectural decorations and the vastness of the sidewalk area for pedestrians show the comfort and order of sidewalks in Singapore State.

Akbar sidewalks can be interpreted with large and wide sidewalks, such as sidewalks in Orchard Pedestrian, Singapore. From some things it can be observed that the work with the title of this sidewalk shows the existence of a large pavement with a wide range of architectural works that make the sidewalk in Orchard is more has its

own beauty for the visitors plus the cleanliness on the sidewalks make the visitors comfortable. In Paul Imam Zacharia's photo book, there are 15 albums in which each album is represented by one photo in this semiotic analysis. In Paul Imam Zacharia's photograph, recording activities in the public sphere by emphasizing the point of view of Street Photography.

From fifteen photo data the meaning of visual semiotics conveys the activity of Paul Imam Zacharia from the point of view of the photographer's interest in the object, where the object is a public space. The public spaces are sidewalks, residential areas with street vendors and sellers of transportation services, markets, streets, parks, town squares, malls, places of worship, tourist parks and harbors. Of the many public space facilities, the authors use the mobile phone dipilihnya to take the moments on life activities that occur in the public space.

On the objects of Paul's photo work there is also the Intimate sphere, where there is a core in the public space. The core in the public space can be interpreted as meaning or message in Paul's photo work. The meanings in Paul's photo work are describing the functional or utilization of public space in

some cities by visualizing it through a photograph of the activity or activity taking place in that public space. Then on the fifteen photographs of Paul's work there are private persons or people who are components in Paul's photo work. Private persons can be the Intimate sphere in Private spheres, because in some works Paul Private persons are made as points of interest or focus objects in the photo.

In addition to the concept of public space, there is also a theory of semiotics by Charles Sanders Peirce where Peirce classifies signs into indexes, icons, and symbols. Therefore the meaning contained in Paul Imam Zacharias' photo work can be interpreted by connecting these signs with the reality and theories of photography. By linking indexes, icons, and symbols in this analysis can give meaning to Paul's photographs of street photography are done in public spaces with a variety of visuals depicted by showing activities in the public sphere. From the fifteen photographs of Paul's works, the signs of Peirce can be seen and interpreted by observing visual images that indirectly communicate the meanings in the work.

Methods of semiotic analysis are used to examine the meaning of Paul Imam Zacharias's photo work because

Semiotics is A study that discusses signs. Conducting an analysis in this method helps to give meaning to a photo work by looking at what is contained in the work. Paul Imam Zacharia photographs show signs related to activities in the public space such as activities or unique and interesting moments and can be recorded spontaneously in some areas. There are three formulas used by researchers in validity test of street photography semiotics analysis on Paul Imam Zacharia's photo book, the first is communicator, the second is about the physical and social context, and the third about common sense. Communicator in this study is Paul Imam Zacharia as the author of the book studied.

Then communicators consider the social values, norms and myths of trust in several places including Singapore, Surabaya, Ketapang, Yogyakarta, Malang, and Jabodetabek in the form of photographs equipped with a caption as a short story or short description of the places used as objects of photographs by Paul Imam Zacharia on the photo book. In addition communicators also include social signs on the works of photos of each album, the mark can be any symbols, letters or other signs that are conventionally known by the whole community.

## CONCLUSION

The work of Paul Imam Zacharia in his book *Street Photography With Mobile* is not the work of a photo shoot, but a work that was deliberately made to emphasize the street photography that is much-loved. In the making of the book Paul Zacharia curator system with the results of 172 selected photos and made into 15 albums consisting of 6 different areas. In this study, researchers chose 15 photos from 15 albums that represent books to be analyzed. Paul Imam Zacharia did only one shooting session at every place in his work, with 30 to 45 minutes in each session.

In his work, Paul Zacharia focuses on street photography approaches that have public space objects. In semiotic analysis this time the researcher uses Charles Pierce Semiotics theory and Habermas Public Space theory. Based on the methods and theories used, the street photograph in Paul Zacharia's book contains the meaning of depiction of activities in the public spaces in various

areas, in the form of social activities such as the depiction of the use of functional public space. In addition to the meanings contained in Paul Zacharia's works, there are also signs of symbols, icons, and indices on Paul Zacharia's photographic works showing that the object portrayed by Paul Zacharia is a public space. The arranged signs and meanings formed on each of the photographs examined depict non-verbal communication that is visualized and will be represented by every individual who sees the work. As a communicator, Paul Zacharia describes social activities in public space with mobile phones as a tool for photographing. Paul Imam Zacharia's book teaches the perpetrators and lovers of photography so as not to be afraid to make work with simple tools.

## REFERENCE

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