



# Punden Berundak of Pura Penulisan Supporting the Bali Tourism Industry

I Gede Mugi Raharja<sup>(✉)</sup>

Department of Interior Design and Postgraduate Design, Indonesia Institute of the Arts  
Denpasar, Denpasar, Indonesia  
mugi5763@yahoo.co.id

**Abstract.** After the Covid-19 Pandemics began to decline and Bali became the venue for the G20 Summit, the Bali tourism industry has bounced back from adversity. One of the attractions that support Bali tourism is the Pura Penulisan in Kintamani. Pura Penulisan is an ancient relic with the peculiarity of its architectural space which has a *punden berundak* pattern. Pura Penulisan is located on the remains of Penulisan Mountain at ancient Mount Batur Caldera, which has been designated by UNESCO as a member of the Global Geopark Network. The research method of this paper is a case study, which can add value to knowledge, among others, to understand complex socio-cultural phenomena. The Pura Penulisan on the ancient Mount Batur caldera, is a local indigenous heritage, which support Sustainable Development to meet community needs, without compromising the needs of future generations.

**Keywords:** Tourism, *Punden Berunda*, Socio-Cultural, Indigenous

## 1 Introduction

After the Covid-19 Pandemic began to hit and Bali became the venue for the G20 Summit, the Bali tourism industry has bounced back from adversity. One of the attractions that support Bali tourism is the Writing Temple in Kintamani. The Pura Penulisan is located in the caldera area of Mount Batur Purba, which was designated by UNESCO as a member of the Global Geopark Network in 2012.

Built on the hilltop of the former Penulisan Mountain, the Pura Penulisan is a holy site with a *punden berundak* design. The original Indonesian idea of a sacred location, continuing the megalithic history, is a spot with a *punden berundak* pattern. According to the megalithic tradition, the *punden berundak* building represents the stage of the ancestor spirits' trip to the sacred world, which is represented as the peak of a mountain and is accessible only by terraced stairs. As a result, the Pura Penulisan is a holy site with a unique Balinese *punden berundak* space pattern that can only be accessed by climbing the terraces on the ruins of the once-great Penulisan Mountain. Indigenous refers to something that only grows, lives, develops, and exists in a certain region [1].

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## 2 Method

This paper was prepared based on the method of case study research and field research, to study intensively the background of the object under study, and the environmental interactions of a social unit, particularly regarding the concept of the *punden berundak* space of the Pura Penulisan on the remains of the ancient Penulisan Mountain. The case study research method, among other things, can be used, if the research focus concerns contemporary phenomena. Case study research can add value to knowledge, among other things, to understand complex social phenomena. A single case study can be used for explanatory purposes and can be applied to other situations [2].

In this case, case study and field studies were carried out in depth about the concept of the *punden berundak* space at the Pura Penulisan, which is related to Balinese culture since prehistoric times, which still continues today (Living Monument). The concept of a *punden berundak* space in the Pura Penulisan is a single case, but this case can also be used to explain other cases of the *punden berundak* space concept in Bali, or in Indonesia in general.

Pura Penulisan is now included in the Batur Geopark Area since September 2012, so that the natural beauty and geology of the Mount Batur area, as well as archaeological traces at the Pura Penulisan and the cultural peculiarities of the people in the Mount Batur caldera environment, have entered the global cultural network with its contemporary phenomena.

## 3 Result and Discussion

In the Sukawana Village neighborhood of Kintamani District, Bangli Regency, Bali Province, is where you can find the Pura Penulisan. At a height of 1,745 meters above sea level, the Pura Penulisan is situated atop a hill northwest of the Mount Batur caldera. This hill is a mountain peak that wraps around Mount Batur's crater. The ruins of the former Penulisan Mountain are this hill. In ancient Balinese writings, this hill was also referred to as Bukit Tunggul, which means a hill that stands alone, because it is the tallest point in the caldera region of Mount Batur [3]. This hill is situated on the east side of the Kintamani-Singaraja route, 6 kilometers north of Kintamani and 74 kilometers from Denpasar City.

At the Pura Penulisan, many prehistoric statues were found, several statues from the ancient Balinese period, up to the early Bali Madya era. Bali Madya is the era after Bali was influenced by the Majapahit culture. Because many archaeological remains have been found, the Writing Temple is also a historical and archaeological tourist attraction in Bali (Fig.1).



Fig. 1. Prehistoric Statues and Ancient Balinese Statues at the Pura Penulisan

### 3.1 A glimpse of the Temple of Writing

According to the Sukawana A-1 inscription from the year 804 Saka (882 AD), there was a religious structure called Ulan atop Cintamani Hill (Kintamani) [4]. The word "Ulan" means "upstream," or "the most honorable place." Following that, the words *Ulan* or *Ulon* became *Hyang* or *Kahyangan*, both of which also imply holy. The term "temple" was first used to refer to a sacred location in Bali during the reign of Dalem Waturenggong (1458–1550). The word temple was converted to *puri* from its original usage of the king's residence. At that time, the term "*pura*" was first used to refer to the Most Holy [5].

The true name of the Pura Penulisan complex is Pura Tegeh Koripan, which translates as a sacred location that is close to a wellspring of life and wealth [6]. Due to its elevation, this sacred site is also known as Pura Tegeh. Due to the fact that the main structure is located on the hill's highest summit in the vicinity of the former Mount Batur caldera, it is also often referred to as the Pura Tegeh Penulisan [7]. This temple was once known by the names Panarajon and Ukir Padelengan, which signify a hill or mountain to look at or turnabout in ancient times. because you can turn around or observe the stunning mountain scenery around Pura Penulisan from the summit. The terms "*penolehan*" and "*penulihan*," which later merged into the word "*penulisan*," were derived from this word [6].

Although the precise year of construction of Pura Penulisan is unknown, the celebration of the temple's opening, known in Bali as *piodalan*, has never been forgotten by its devoted community. On each full moon in October (*purnama kapat*), the *piodalan* day occurs. But when the full moon occurs on a Sunday, Tuesday, Thursday, or Saturday, the new *piodalan* ritual is conducted on those days.

As an architectural work, the Pura Penulisan is designed with the concept of a *punden berundak*. *Punden berundak* is a sacred place from the megalithic tradition that is often found in Indonesia. *Punden* in Javanese means a person who is glorified [9]. Meanwhile, the definition of *punden* means multilevel [10]. Therefore, *punden berundak* are sacred buildings where the worship of ancestral spirits takes the form of steps. This indicates that the ancestors were on the top of the mountain. The steps are intended to show the stages of the journey of the spirits of the ancestors to the world of spirits, namely on the top of the mountain which is symbolized by menhirs.

There are eleven storeys in the Pura Penulisan's stairs. There are two minor temples called Pura Dana and Pura Taman Dana on the third terrace's western side. The Pura Ratu Penyarikan was constructed on the fourth terrace on the eastern side. Pura Ratu Daha Tua is located on the sixth terrace on the western side. The Pura Tegeh Koripan was built as the primary temple on the eastern summit terrace (Fig. 2).



**Fig. 2.** Lay out Pura Penulisan (Source: Bali Historical and Archaeological Heritage Sanctuary, Komang Cahyadinata, and Capture Video Documentation Nyoman Wardi, et al.).

The highest point of a mountain, or its peak, is extremely holy in Balinese culture since it is said to be where the gods sit. Traditional Bali traditions hold that Lake Batur is the Heaven of Betari Uma and Mount Batur is the location of Dewi Danuh, who has given safety and prosperity onto the people of Bali [11]. A sacred sanctuary, known as *Ulon* in ancient Bali, is said to be located on the tallest point in the northwest of the old Mount Batur caldera.

The old Penulisan Mountain's ruins are in the form of steep slopes; thus a circulation plan was created to ascend through terraces that matched the hill's morphology. By doing this, the people who would pray won't get weary of climbing the slope to the main courtyard of the Pura Tegeh Koripan. An open area, a sort of plaza, is given at each level of the terrace for resting. There is a sizable plaza to facilitate religious events at Pura Ratu Dahan Tua on the sixth terrace. The circulation is intended to turn right from this plaza over further terraces and then up a hill to the main courtyard of Pura Tegeh Koripan. The steps from the first terrace to the sixth terrace, which contains a plaza, are climbed in a manner akin to climbing the landing stairs in a contemporary multi-story structure. After turning right through a few terraces and ascending to the top of the holy place, the steps from the first terrace to the sixth terrace serve the same purpose. As a result, the Pura Penulisan's *punden berundak* architectural space has a highly unique design that may be used to learn about native Balinese architectural space design and the history of ancient Balinese culture.

### 3.2 Discussion

What and how is the specialty of the Pura Penulisan? The Pura Penulisan is one of the tourist objects that support Bali tourism, the first to be visited by Europeans (1881), before other ancient relics were discovered in Bali [12]. After that, local residents rarely allow foreigners to visit the Pura Penulisan, so that the sanctity of the temple is maintained. The Pura Penulisan is one of the Living Monuments, because the Pura Penulisan still functions as a place of worship for Hindus, from prehistoric times to the present.

It is mentioned in the Bali Regional Regulation Number 3 of 1991 (an upgrade to Regional Regulation Number 3 of 1974) that the type of tourism that has evolved in the Bali Region is cultural tourism. According to Lester Borley and others, cultural tourism is an activity that enables travelers to learn about and experience the contrasts in other people's lifestyles while considering their traditions, customs, and intellectual underpinnings. Because the Pura Penulisan contains numerous archaeological artefacts of educational, artistic, symbolic/associative, and commercial value, it is possible for it to attract tourists despite being a sacred location [13].

According to Leiper, tourism consists of three components, namely tourists, elements of geography and the tourism industry. Tourists are a very important element, because tourism is essentially a human experience, something that is enjoyed, anticipated and remembered throughout his life. Geographical elements include markets or areas that can encourage interest in traveling, tourist destinations and transit areas of a tourist route/travel. The third element is the tourism industry which concerns businesses or businesses and organizations that regulate tourism products. With the model put forward by Leiper, the three elements mentioned above are interrelated with one another, as a whole system, namely tourism [13].

Based on the opinion of Lester Borley and Leiper, it is clear that the Pura Penulisan can support the tourism industry in Bali. Because of this, it has a unique concept of *punden berundak* architectural space, storing many remains of ancient statues and supported by beautiful natural landscapes. The Pura Penulisan, which is included in the Batur Geopark Area, is a local indigenous heritage, which supports sustainable development to meet community needs, without sacrificing the needs of future generations.

## 4 Conclusion

Pura Penulisan is a Living Monument, because it still functions as a sacred place for Hindus in Bali, from prehistoric times to the present. Even though it is a holy place, the Pura Penulisan can support the Bali tourism industry, because it is a tourist attraction with a distinctive architectural space with *punden berundak* pattern, storing many ancient statues and supported by beautiful natural landscapes, which were built on the remnants of the ancient Penulisan Mountain. Therefore, as one of the tourist destinations in Bali, the Pura Penulisan has informative, aesthetic, symbolic and economic values, and supports sustainable development, without sacrificing the needs of future generations.

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