

Transformation Space Due To Conflict (A Case Study of Kuta, Bali, Indonesia)

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Abstract

Space transformation in architecture due to conflicts of interest has not been widely studied, irrespective of the use of architecture as a benchmark for understanding the quality and marking a group's space possessiveness. Therefore, this research aims to examine space transformation due to conflict using Kuta Bali tourist area as a case study and by applying the land reconstruction method. The result showed that the process of space transformation and its impact on Kuta in particular and for Bali tourism, in general, was caused by the status of this area as a major tourist destination. This research completes the theory on the description of the architectural change in the space process due to conflicts of interest. Furthermore, the inter-disciplinary research methods bridged architectural science with sociology, psychology, and anthropology. Architecture support an alternative concept in the process of space transformation due to conflicts of interest, as well as spatial planning that has undergone dynamic and multi-dimensional changes.

Keywords: Conflict, Kuta, Transformation, Space

I. INTRODUCTION

According to Smith [1], space transformation exists in areas inhabited by groups of people[2]. It is supported by unequal conditions due to conflicts of interest, thereby creating minority and majority groups. Furthermore, there is a degree of intensity regarding the space possessiveness by certain groups, which is also a source of worry and tension that arises because of the rivalry of different spatial characters tugs at each other. The tension in the space can be anticipated by eliminating one of the existing characters. However, in most cases, conflicts emerge due to their inability to resolve these issues, especially areas with great potential and are needed by each party[3].

Henri Lefebvre [4], David Harvey [5], and Manuel Castells [6] stated that urban studies focused on using a socio-spatial approach to explore space from a Marxian perspective. However, from a spatial perspective, the existence of contestation, negotiation, consensus, and conflict phenomenon in urban areas acts as a form of power relations of spatial planning actors, such as government, community and the market. Furthermore, the relationship between these three actors influences spatial practice. The socio-spatial approach views government involvement with its interests and political will as a means of spurring growth and an instrument of urban change in accordance with global metropolitan development.

Changes in spatial planning in urban areas comprise of the characteristics of a modern tourist city and its effect on people, as well as the presence of investors, developers, building constructors, public facilities, public spaces, etc investment forms related to changes and demands of the global economy.

Therefore, with a socio-spatial approach, changes in spatial planning in urban areas provide an understanding of the synergy between local (the tourist area of Kuta, Bali) and national (central) government with capital power (national and international) in developing industrial and real estate, 2020)[7][8].

This study explains that space is an area and a tool that preserves the economic-political order. This has an interactive characteristic from the investors/capitalists (entrepreneurs), the state (government), and the community (including non-governmental organizations concerned with ecology)[9]. Therefore, it is impossible to avoid conflict and contestation between actors in spatial planning practices[10].

This is in line with the research carried out by Lefebvre [11], which stated that space is a political product and an instrument for socio-economic change, therefore it is not neutral and passive. Space, as a political product, causes spatial planning practices that are inseparable from the actors' alignments that make spatial regulations. Furthermore, the actor's partiality or non-neutrality in exercising their power is reflected in the policies made by the regulator (government). The practice of spatial planning includes the activities of space production and reproduction with struggles from the classes to acquire and control the process [12]. Lefebvre further stated that various phenomena of class struggle over space are related to an area, territory, site, land, etc. Therefore, it has to be understood as part of the same spatial process[13].

The spatial process is a combination of three elements. Firstly, it comprises of spatial practices associated with individual routines for the systematic creation of zones and territories. Over time, this practice is manifested in well-ordered environments and landscapes. The most effective spatial practices in cities are related to the development of the property sector and other forms of capital operations [14]. Secondly, it comprises of a space representation, various forms of knowledge and practices that regulate and represent space, especially through planning techniques and the state government's involvement. Thirdly, there is a collective experience of space, which is related to the representational spaces experienced by everyone. In this context, the market builds a system for profits' creation and accumulation [15].

The problem of spatial planning in urban areas, particularly in the Kuta, can be explained using Lefebvre's socio-spatial approach offers a critical analysis of the modern capitalism operation that was later developed by David Harvey. According to Harvey [5][16], there is a complex process in modern urban spatial planning activities that produces profits from space. These profits cannot be stopped by capitalists, because individuals consume the success in building space due to their ability to construct buildings, such as houses, apartments, and hotels through a rental or purchase system. Harvey further stated that urban development is not a monolithic process of growth, rather it is a circuit. The capitals consist of various kinds of arrangements, each of which regulates the factors causing conflict and collaboration, including the possibility that determines the investment level and quality in the spatial development activity.

This second circuit of capital consists of a combination between private financial institutions, community-owned banks and government programs that support the construction of real estate complexes. Government involvement in real estate development is in the form of granting management and land acquisition permits to investors/developers. This category of people, carry out physical development and the evicted communities tend to cause problem raised in urban spatial planning. Therefore, it is necessary to create the government's attitude that is not neutral or in favor of capitalists. Beside capitalists also need the government's support and political will to operate the first and second circuits in the form of industrial development (manufacturing) and trade[17]. The capitalist class constantly tries to generate profits in terms of money and space. The government's interest in capitalism is as an investment as well as an engine for the growth of tourism city development. According to Harvey [5][18], the development or underdevelopment of an area is due to the presence or absence of investment flows from capitalists to produce profits, distribute capital flows, and consume space.

The development of the urban system under capitalism is a fundamental aspect of the analysis of space and cities. The basic idea of this study is in line with Lefebvre's [4] research, which stated that capitalism is defended through space conquest and integration. Space has long ceased to be a passive geographic environment or empty geometric space, rather it acts as an instrument and medium for capitalism development. This means that space is a system viewed as a scarce and homogeneous resource with quantitative commodities and exchange rates that are traded in the market.

Therefore, this research explains the close relationship between space and politics. It aims to provide answers to the following questions, such as is space a political instrument?, What are the interests of the government, entrepreneurs/investors, and community in constructing space? Is space an area or tool for the preservation of social and economic order (ideology)?. Furthermore, this study focuses on examining the space transformation caused by tourism and the politics of investors to generate profits from cultural preservation.

III. METHOD

A qualitative approach was used to explain the research problems. Direct observations of physical traces were carried out on spaces with changed functions. In addition, it also carried out a study on the documents regarding the transformation of Kuta traditional village into a famous global tourism area. In-depth interviews were also carried out with actors representing the government in urban planning and development (Bappeko Bali), spatial architects, academics, spatial planning practitioners and the community to obtain an overview of the practices.

Data were collected from 1) total population, area, green open space, city parks, and transformation in existing spaces, 2) issues causing interests contestation between actors in spatial planning and utilization, 3) statutory provisions on traditional village areas, 4) the condition of infrastructure, green open spaces and areas with function transformation, 5) directly observing the conditions of space development and utilization, which are not in accordance with the previous RTRW/National Spatial Planning. The obtained data were qualitatively analyzed through the verification process of the data source (informants). Furthermore, interview data from informants was interpreted according to the needs of the study using interpretive methods.

IV. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Space is the main element in understanding the survival of the capitalist system for it to metamorphose into various forms continuously. Lefebvre's spatial paradigm uses the space dialectic method. Lefebvre [4] stated that there are fundamental dynamics in-space production and reproduction due to the dialectics, which are in the form of movements, interconnections, as well as interactions of money, people and commodities.

Lefebvre's notion was re-explored by David Harvey [5], by stating that in the process of capital accumulation, space consists of produced and reproduced products. Harvey's argument was initiated by Tantivess [19] stating that urban structures and the concept formed, was socially obtained from a larger political-economic structure in order to preserve the interests of the dominant class, which has an ideology for the industrial capitalism sustainability. In this context, it was interpreted that the urban structure consists of an ideology created and fought for the capitalism interests. This does not only create space for the various parts to have an economic aspect, rather it becomes a political instrument for the homogenization of all parts of the community. Similarly, space also becomes an eternal model and prototype with a utility that rejects generalization of exchange rates in a capitalist economy.

Space has a fundamental utility that is equivalent to time and which cannot be ignored by the government[20]. This means that ideally, the government need to become a facilitator and regulator in bridging the interests between community and capitalists. The majority of the spatial layout in the Kuta tourist area has been controlled by a group of capitalists, such as developers, speculators, and investors. In space production, there is a recurring tension between spatial (in a geographic context) and social problems. This is an important contribution

to the development of interdisciplinary spatial analysis and its application for the study of spatial planning and development, which contains violence, conflict and persuasion. Harvey [5] stated that the current spatial analysis is inseparable from the development analysis, preservation and expansion of (modern) capitalism as well as the capital urbanization phenomenon.

According to Harvey, the geographic history of capitalism development in cities can be understood from representational space and spatial representation. Furthermore, they are related to the social practice of space, which means that spatial representations dominate spatial practice and representational space. However, assuming it is dominated by a class/group, and then the representational space flows from one's life experience. The spatial representation is the actual space used by the ruling party therefore, in the end, this fosters the truth of space.

Space plays several socio-economic functions. Firstly, it serves as one of the production forces. Secondly, it is in the form of various commodities, such as real estate/property, that are consumed. Thirdly, it facilitates control of the economic and political system. Fourthly, it strengthens the reproduction of productive relationships. Therefore, space is not only an empty geometric container and a place for the continuity of social life, it is also a social product [21]. Its sustainability aspect is comprehensively characterized by the union of three components, namely environment, society, and economy.

This affirms that space is a product from social interaction, and also a series of political interactions that occur simultaneously, between capital forces, government, and society. Therefore, it is actually part of the capital accumulation and circulation process.

Both Harvey and Lefebvre realized that the space constructed into physical and material spaces, such as buildings, roads, parks and bridges, provide hidden gaps in the distribution of political power, social resources and urban infrastructure. All of this is aimed at continuing capital accumulation.

The government, as a spatial planning actor has powers in areas of planning, utilization and supervision/control. This power is used to organize a city with metropolitan characteristics. This is in line with the research carried out by Angelidou [22] by viewing urban development in the 21st century as a metropolitan area that develops as a flow of capital. The metropolitan area referred by Angelidou has various characteristics, namely 1) urban sprawl destroying the historical boundaries of a city which extends over the surrounding rural areas through suburbanization, 2) functional specialization of space causing the intensification of social segregation, such as the simultaneous development of homogenous residential areas, more pressing neighborhood, zoning for single purposes, etc, 3) the spatial mobility of people and goods, which is the bloodstream of economic production and social reproduction of the urban system and 4) cosmopolitan localism, which is the mainframe of reference for city politics and culture, where global influence is considered important. Furthermore, in order to compete internationally, it has to be referred to be socially and politically accepted by the local culture.

IV. 1 Spatial Practice of Kuta Tourism Area

The growth of the economic sector triggers the emergence of space transformation, thereby leading to a more complex land problem, similar to the Kuta tourism area. The space control in the community continues to transform along with the changing times due to conflict radically. One of the forces that shape the environmental character of an area is the surrounding natural conditions. According to Alberti [23], some scientists have discussed the relationship between settlement developers, humans, and the natural environment [24]. The characteristics of the basic properties of the natural environment have influenced humans living standard, starting from choosing a location, using the right building materials that are considered appropriate to the local climate, and designing a building according to their surroundings. There are four physical elements of the natural environment, namely topography, climate, materials and technology.

Tourism in Kuta started in the 1930s under the Dutch colonial. During this period, the area was described as a fishing village near the coastal area with little economic or cultural activity for Bali.

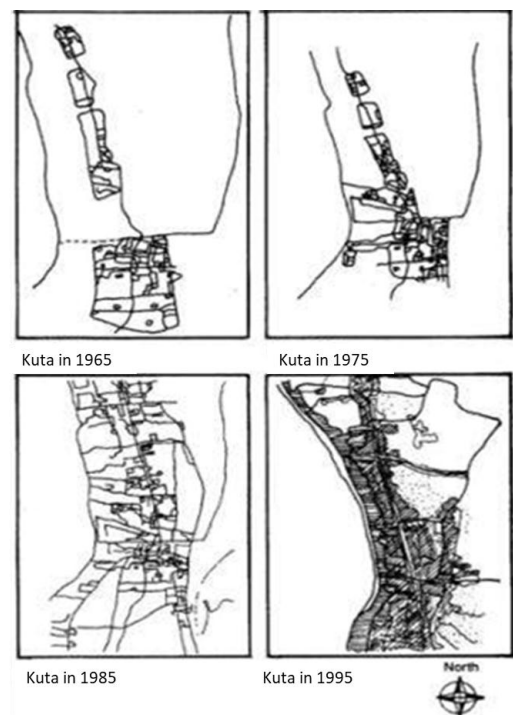


Figure 1: Transformation in building density from 1965 to 1995 in the Kuta area

Figure 1 shows that the most significant transformation happened between the 1980s and 1990s when the area expanded north to Legian and Seminyak and eastward, towards the Denpasar border. During this period, Legian and Seminyak villages experienced urbanization. This period was marked by the new concept of Kuta as a shopping and tourist destination, with the early development of the Kuta Square and Kuta Center retail areas in the early 1990s. Both projects are located in the main shopping area along with the development of the Kuta Art Market, which increased the number of visitors.

Mitra [25] , in the theory “Perspective of Designing for Safe Urban Public Place: Learnings from the Social and Urban Theorists.” stated that topography is a determining factor in the development of residential areas. According to Mitra, there are 2 considerations for people to choose their residence, namely the physical, local, and culture-social environment. The sea is a life source and a habitat for the people of Kuta.

IV. 2 Non-Physical Transformation of Community

Social and cultural changes in the community were identified through the reasons behind their evolution. Unsatisfactory attributes can be studied during the cause of change. Furthermore, several new factors led to the community demands as a substitute for inappropriate old factors. Nevertheless, the community can make changes due to the force to adjust one factor with others that have first undergone changes. The socio-cultural conditions of the people in the tourist area of Kuta presume the sea as a source of life, therefore, their existence is inseparable from the intervention of the local government in every policy. Meanwhile, changes in economic aspects are due to the sources that come from within and outside the community. The economic aspect of this discussion concerns the livelihood patterns of the Kuta tourist area, while the factors that cause change include the following

- a. The increase in population in the Kuta tourist area has a significant effect on efforts to meet family needs and to provide employment opportunities.
- b. New discoveries in the economic aspect tend to change the community's economy, such as the development of facilities for tourists.
- c. Changes that occur are not only from within the community, rather it also comes from outside and due to government intervention.

IV.3 Physical Transformation in Spatial Layout

Tourism as a core development activity affects the meaning and values of a community, particularly through good and bad business practices [26] . For instance, when tourism is practiced in Indonesia without planning, undesirable outcomes are experienced by local communities as in Kuta. However, due to the routine of Kuta community, traditional culture and tourism are juxtaposed with gamelan, chanting songs for religious rituals in Bali by screaming around village temples, and competing with loud live music or acoustic guitars from the surrounding pubs and cafes.

In some circumstances, tourists have a greater influence on the planning process than communities [27]. Therefore the level of community involvement can be explained as a form of passing wind, where existing decisions are determined by industry or government. Furthermore, answers are rarely provided to problems affecting peoples' quality of life. As an area full of tourist facilities, substantial inconvenience during the day and at night is felt by local communities. The operation of pubs, bars and nightclubs in this area undeniably creates tension for inhabitants.



Fig. 2. Night Club in Legian Area

The Kuta community are angered by the noise pollution caused by the nightclub located in an entertainment complex in Legian. They have requested that the nightlife be closed at 1am. However, the local government has agreed to close it by 2 a.m each evening. However, irrespective of this law, night clubs remain open till 3 a.m. due to competition between owners in Kuta and beyond, in a bid to provide better service to customers.

IV. 4 Loss of Balinese Identity in Kuta

Due to contemporary developments, Kuta has become a place with many buildings with post-modern design. It is clear that the tourism landscape in Kuta has also changed from the 'old' Balinese style that was popular in Bali hotels and resorts during the 1980s and 90s, to a 'modern look due to market demands and the transformation era. This condition led to the identity issue, where Bali maintains the idea of "cultural tourism." According to Hardianingtyas [28] globalization and the effects of post-modernism have played a significant role in creating cohesiveness in tourism, thereby leading to in the creation of an environment that overrides local values [29]. Current research reveals that tourist buildings, including hotels, are built with modern constructions without adopting Balinese cultural designs. This practice confuses the local cultural system, especially the local people on the perspective of these building in relation to the environment. In addition, the recent renovations to a number of old hotels in Kuta have new designs that are completely non-Balinese.



Fig. 3. The Old Design of Sahid Hotel



Fig 4. The New Design of Sahid Hotel

The developer deliberately ignored Balinese architecture in many aspects of the building. Communal identity was used to describe the people perspective on Balinese architecture in Indonesia related to the cultural landscape in Kuta. Figure 5 shows that the structures do not reflect the identity of Balinese architecture.



Fig. 5. Wave-like design from Kuta Beachside Shopping Center

The domain of issues related to ethnicity around the place has become a serious problem in connection with traditions and socio-cultural developments in modern times. According to Maleki (2020), ethnic identity plays an important role in the development of place attachments. Furthermore, Edmonds et al. [31] stated that emotional attachment to a place reflects the values and history of the cultural group, which need to be, encapsulated.

IV.5 Conflict In Spatial Practice

A strong place of attachment is indicated by the protective habits of the local community and their responses to the social and environmental fields [32] [33] Several members of the community in their response to the issue of recent conflict developments have also explained their individual opinions regarding the future of Kuta. Furthermore, local communities have also evaluated the positive and negative impacts of tourism development in their area and welfare. Kuta is an ecological area that denotes the culture and social meaning of a place. Some of the problems associated with the use of Kuta as a tourism area are as follows.

First: Public Life Security Law and Governance. The community's image as a safe tourist destination has been destroyed by a number of criminal activities mostly involving non-locals, such as cheating by unauthorized money changers, theft of ATM machines, pickpockets, fraud and other offenses.

Second: Housing and immigration problems. This is usually associated with unregistered migrants due to weak enforcement of laws and inconsistency in issuing sanctions. Therefore, awareness and attention are needed by the local community regarding this issue.

Third: Traffic management system. This problem arises due to violation of road signs by motorists and car drivers, inadequate parking space, use of pedestrian areas by motorists, irregular traffic by taxis and minibuses, as well as abandoned vehicles.

Fourth: Community and economy.

There has been a sharp decline in the local economy due to intense competition between local and non-local business owners. This is because the people are considered incompetent in managing their business, too busy with traditional rituals and activities, passive in promoting small businesses and have limited financial capital.

Fifth: Infrastructure development

Public roads were damaged due to the high level of usage. Furthermore, pedestrian areas, pathways and underground drainage are no longer in good condition. Similar to many other places in Bali, ad placement is distracting and creating a messy appearance in the Kuta area.

Sixth: Education and Human Resources. There is no agency in Kuta to document village history and maintain archives.

Seventh: Health and the environment.

Kuta is an endemic area of dengue fever and needs coordination and socialization to solve this problem, which is usually due to the poor disposal of sewage, as shown in figure 6. The foul smell from drains is harmful to the environment and affects the Kuta area as a tourist destination. n.



Fig. 6. Garbage Disposal in the Roadside

Eight: Controlling tourism activities.

Lack of interest in learning foreign languages is the reason for the low level of tourism employment among young people in

Kuta. This is because learning foreign languages is an absolute prerequisite for participating in this sector. Furthermore, pubs, restaurants, karaoke bars and discotheques in Kuta need to be controlled, as their number grows along with the problems they cause.

Ninth: Government Village.

Lots of works still need to be carried out in the administration of Kuta Village. Firstly, village boundaries are inaccurate. Secondly, there is a lack of coordination and communication between villagers with unclear legitimacy of important decision-making processes. Furthermore, the role and participation of senior members in the village does not allow them to share their ideas and experiences, with unclear development programs, and plans. The local community is confused on the disharmony between the village coordinators (Village Government and Community Empowerment Institution).

V. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the spatial transformation in the Kuta tourist area was due to conflict, therefore, the existing structuring practices show political-economic dynamics. Furthermore, actors representing the government, investors, and the community contributed to the inconsistency in the implementation of spatial planning. Subsequently, the Bali municipal government is a representation of the capitalist system, which regulates and rationalizes space for the production and reproduction of the social economy. This condition strengthens Lefebvre's research that there is a political aspect in a space, which is a political product and instrument that allows this area to develop. From this, a dominant partly owned by the dominant class (developer/investor/capitalist) and community emerged.

This study also strengthens Harvey's research that the configuration of spatial control in the Kuta tourist area follows the flow of the existing capital circuits, which comprises of primary, secondary and tertiary. These circuits can be seen from the domination of the capitalist/investor class, both in the realm of production and direct consumption, capital formation and fixed consumption. The capital circuit leads to an unequal proportion of control between the three actors in spatial planning. Apart from that, the Bali City Government also guarantees the creation of an institutional framework that supports the existence of capitalist forces that continuously accumulate profits through the political process.

In each interaction, the three actors go through a series of urban and political processes. This interaction determines the strategy used to organize spatial planning, which leads to conflictual relations or simply contestation. In this context, contestation and conflict are a dialectical continuity within the framework of production, reproduction and space consumption that strengthens the order for sustainable urban development. Therefore, the practice of spatial planning needs to be closer to the ideal level, to create, form, restructure, design and form the needed activities for all residents.

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