

Hybridizing Heritage: Integrating Balinese Cultural Logic into Resilient Urban Identity in Semarapura, Bali

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Abstract

This research examines urban spatial and cultural identity in Semarapura, the former capital of Klungkung Regency, Bali, through the lens of resilient urbanism. It has three objectives of research to reach: (1) identifying some cultural and design key-elements referring to Balinese spatial philosophy; (2) investigating the breaking points in spaces and tensions due to the pressures of modernization; (3) suggesting a hybrid framework for identities that maintain continuity but also flexibility in spaces. A qualitative approach was used, based on fieldwork observations, semi-structured interviews with local actors (n = 30), and document analysis of planning tools and historical maps. The analytic tools were urban morphological mapping, thematic content analysis, and a comparative matrix of traditional and modern spatial intersections. It shows the persistence of symbolic structures (*Catuspatha*, *Tri Mandala* zoning, and Bale Banjar), residing in spatial memory and urban form. But a myriad of challenges, such as commercial overreach, scattered signage, and lax regulation, have disrupted ceremonial routes and architectural harmony. Yet, community-generated innovations and adaptive design practices signal cultural resilience through the adoption of *Asta Kosala Kosali* in the home, green infrastructure harkening back to *Tri Hita Karana*, and mural revitalizations that act as performative identity tools. The research introduces a hybrid identity model guided by cultural logic and calls for policy change to ensure that both spatial-cultural indicators are considered in urban policies. The Semarapura case demonstrates that situational design and local action can work together to create liveable and sustainable cities in heritage cities of the Global South.

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INTRODUCTION

Urban identity is a key element that ultimately defines a city's nature, resilience, and appeal. However, it is under threat from greater globalization, homogenizing building practices, climate change, and an unprecedented wave of urbanization. Urban Identity According to Lynch (1972), urban identity is a mental image that develops based on rhythm(s) between place and space, deeply associated with socioeconomics and cultural practices. In Indonesia, the identity of (most) cities is deteriorating since urban development rarely takes historical, cultural, or traditional spatial logic into account. This problem may be even more acute in secondary towns like Semarapura, Klungkung, Bali, where the conventional urban core has been compromised through commodification of space and architecture by tourism and investment (Wikantiyoso, 2007).

Bali is a well-known Indonesian island for its rich cultural heritage and its traditional crafts. Unfortunately, there appears to be a revelation of inauthenticity now. According to a 2023 Bali Province BAPPEDA report, two-thirds of recent southern-Bali urbanisation is neglectful of common zoning traditions – such as *Tri Hita Karana* and *Catuspatha*. Moreover, research by the Center for Urban and Cultural Studies Udayana (2022) found that 38% of people can recognize the cultural identity in newly developed urban areas. These results verified that the value of local wisdom was decreasing and not being used in design.

In Semarapura, formerly known as the political and cultural heartland of Klungkung Regency, cultural components, including the royal complex (Puri Klungkung), Kertha Gosa Pavilion, and ceremonial nodes like

Catuspatha intersections, play a pivotal role in shaping the identity of the city and its development. However, the absence of an overall planning system for connecting cultural heritage with contemporary infrastructure has led to spatial disintegration and reduced identity coherence. This situation highlights the need to revitalize an identity-based development planning approach to promote resilience and cultural preservation.

Urban erosion of local identity in Semarapura was the central question raised in this study, stemming from the underdeveloped cultural elements in urban design objects and subjects. Regulations such as Perda Provinsi Bali No. 5 Tahun 2005 on adherence to Balinese architectural norms and Perda Kabupaten Klungkung No. 8 Tahun 2016 on urban design exist. Still, their enforcement is often shallow, too focused on façade aesthetics rather than spatial and functional congruency.

Accordingly, the aims of this research are: (1) to analyse the local cultural and urban design elements depicting Semarapura identity; (2) to study the integration of these particular features into a hybrid urban identity model; and (3) to propose a model for resilient urban identity classified under cultural stability through time and spatial flexibility. This study aims to provide practical findings for urban policy, design practice, and community-based planning in heritage cities.

This research is essential because it may overcome the gap between spatial tradition and current urban resilience directions. Although urban form, memory, and resilience have each previously been studied in isolation (Rapoport, 1977; Rossi, 1982; Meerow et al., 2016), few studies have brought these perspectives together under the cultural context of this traditional Indonesian society. The gap revealed is that there is no city model of an integrated vision that operationalizes local wisdom as not just a decorative symbol but a core planning logic for building resilient urban identity.

This research is unique in that it establishes hybrid identity indicators of space based on spiritual zoning, ceremonial space, spatial hierarchy, and ecological elements, which are balanced on the philosophical foundations of *Tri Hita Karana* and *Tri Angga*. These indicators are synthesized into a theoretical model that makes them transferable and applicable, with some adjustment, to other culturally vibrant yet spatially fragile cities in Southeast Asia.

Expected results of the research are: (1) diagnostic mapping of culture-urban in Semarapura; (2) hybridization identity formulation model; and (3) policy recommendation related to cultural resilience on urban planning guidelines. Finally, the research also contributes to broader debates on empathetic and culturally responsive architecture in the Global South.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Urban Identity and Cultural Heritage

The urban identity is a complex phenomenon that incorporate the spatial, architectural, historical, and sociocultural features that characterise one city in relation to all others. Urban identity, according to Zahnd (1999), is the metaphorical vision that citizens capture through repetition patterns, symbolic connotations, and cultural bonding in relation to specific places. The ideas presented by Zahnd (1999) are based on ideas developed by Rapoport (1977), that the cultural context plays a crucial role in architectural and urban identity. Urban identity is more than visual aesthetics: it is inscribed in social practices, rituals, and shared memories that create a sense of community membership and spatial intelligibility.

Rossi (1982) takes this a step further by considering cities as “collective memory”, where architecture is the storehouse of cultural stories and folklore. From this viewpoint, monumental spaces, ceremonial nodes, spatial organizations, and historical continuation. Recent research has also emphasised that urban identity is a resource for resilience, supporting place attachment, community cohesion, and psychological well-being even under conditions of urban transformation (Dovey, 2010; Sepe, 2013).

Balinese Spatial Philosophy and Local Wisdom

Balinese spatial concepts—including *Tri Hita Karana*, *Catuspatha*, *Sanga Mandala*, and *Kaja-Kelod* orientation systems—encapsulate a unique traditional planning logic derived from cosmology and cultural ethics. This relationship is covered by the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*, where there is a human-nature god relationship seen in spatial arrangements, zoning, and ritual processions (Dwijendra: 2019; Ardika: 2020). It is this principle that guarantees architecture and town planning do not merely function, but additionally create a spiritual and ecological equilibrium.

Tri Angga divides space into three tiers (head, body, and foot), an idea used in architecture, settlement, and city planning that represents the hierarchies of a society and sacred order (Putra: 2018). Catuspatha—holy grid,

crossroads—is the organized and spiritualized open space at the heart of Balinese cities or towns that operates as both ceremonial ground and urban nodal point where worldly and sacred lives meet (Pitana & Gayatri, 2020). Though often bypassed in today’s urban era, traditional systems like this are now seen more and more as arenas into which we should be breathing new life, given what they represent for sustainable practices and encompass the goodwill of communities that have the flexibility to adapt and evolve (Suradewa, 2022).

Resilient Urbanism and Cultural Resilience

Resilient urbanism denotes the city's ability to absorb, adapt to, and be transformed by environmental/ecological-economic or social stress. Meerow et al. (2016) describe urban resilience as the capacity of an urban system to maintain or quickly return to desirable function in the face of a disturbance. Nevertheless, most resilience literature emphasizes physical and infrastructural aspects, leaving out cultural dimensions.

Cultural resiliency is increasingly recognized as a mainstay of sustainable development and urban design. According to Vale(2014), cities with strong cultural identity are best able to recover from the shock of disruption, as they experience stronger social connectivity and psychological stability. Indigenous knowledge systems and place-based narratives can serve as a pause to address both vulnerability and adaptive capacities, especially in cultural cities, as highlighted by Ibrahim (2021) and Abusaada & Elshater (2020).

"In a situation like this, the insertion of cultural heritage within urban planning is not just something as banal as to keep, but indicates a strategic way towards resilient futures." Hybrid models inspired by both local wisdom and modern planning tools are emerging in cities such as Kyoto, Fez, and Ubud and offering templates for culture-based resilience (Hosseini et al., 2022; Macleod & Carrier, 2021).

Synthesis and Research Gap

While much has been written about theories of urban identity, cultural heritage, and resilience, this talk considers models that have translated these theories into practical projects across a variety of Southeast Asian settings. There is, however, a disconnect between the traditional spatial logic of Balinese and urban design methods in current literature. Secondly, the cultural identity as a form of resistance is not adequately addressed in secondary cities like Semarang. Therefore, this paper attempts to fill the gap by developing a hybrid UIR model that integrates Balinese spatial philosophy with urban design, as one strategy to address current problems of identity loss and planning fragmentation.

METHODS

For this purpose, the paper uses a qualitative-descriptive methodology to examine how local cultural and urban design aspects of an Indonesian town can be integrated to create a resilient urban identity, as is the case in Semarang, Klungkung, Bali. An interpretive analysis informs this approach of cultural narratives, spatial formations, and planning policies within a historically dense yet space-contested urban setting. The method is appropriate, as it supports the purpose of this study: to combine socio-cultural aspects, such as urban design, through grounded data, narrative, and spatial interpretation (Creswell, 2013).

Study Area

The research is conducted in Semarang, an administrative and cultural center of Klungkung Regency, Bali. The town is characterised by urban assemblages of royal architecture, an heirloom of traditional Balinese compound structure, ceremonial squares, and evolving urban morphology. This city constitutes a paradigmatic case for the analysis of cultural resiliency in light of modernization and, more recently, rapid spatial-interest-based negotiations promoted by tourist-oriented economic development (Bappeda Klungkung, 2023).

Data Collection Techniques

The study follows a triangulated data collection approach, which includes:

- a. Field Observations were held for three months (March – May 2024) at selected sites such as Puri Agung Klungkung; Jalan Untung Surapati (the axis of cultural activities); and residential areas, particularly in the vicinity of traditional markets. The observations serve to contextualize spatial morphology, material articulation, public space use, and transformation of ceremonial infrastructure.
- b. Semi-structured interviews with thirty purposively selected respondents (n = 30), including traditional leaders (*pemangku* and *bendesa adat*), urban planners from Dinas PUPR Klungkung, local architects, and communities.

These interviews examined aspects of urban identity, spatial change, cultural symbolism, and the ongoing dilemmas of contemporary planning. Interviews were audio-recorded, transcribed, and thematically analyzed using Kvale and Brinkmann's (2009) approach.

- c. Secondary Data of Documents/Historical document: Various secondary data sources, among others, historic documents, spatial planning regulation, such as RDTR 2020–2040, and historical archipelago maps starting from the 1950s were collected. These documents were obtained from the Klungkung Regional Archives and regional/local planning offices. The later archival maps are important historical evidence of the study of form changes and patterns of city development.

Analytical Framework

In order to interpret the amassed data systematically and produce a degree of analytical rigor, three key techniques were utilized:

- a. The UM Mapping of the Semarapura was performed using sets of historical data and recent satellite imagery to observe spatial changes in the city. This finding described the shifting of identity nodes (for example, Catuspatha and Kertha Gosa complex), change in edge conditions as well as urban connections that were broken or sustained. We focused on analyzing the spatial relationship between vernacular buildings and modern additions, judging that they are consistent with local space and culture.
- b. An analysis was conducted of qualitative data sourced from interviews and planning documents using Content and Thematic Analysis. Data were analyzed using NVivo, coded into themes including symbolic space, ritual continuity, spatial memory, and adaptation in planning. This process followed the interpretative-analytical suggestions of Bazeley (2013) and, as a result, systematic interpretative competence was upheld alongside reliability in theme development.
- c. Comparative Matrix Analysis was used to compare traditional spatial principles (THK, Catuspatha, and Sanga mandala) with contemporary planning interventions such as one-way traffic systems, commercial zoning, and visual signage regulations. This matrix was used as a diagnostic instrument to detect spatial discordances, emerging overlaps, and potential hybrid indicators, which ultimately shaped guidelines for crafting a framework for the hybrid urban identity.

By merging spatial vernacular with ethnographic inquiry and documentary sources, this method enables a nuanced understanding of how urban identity in Semarapura is both created and contested — and can be imaginatively refashioned. By engaging culturally embedded urban resilience, this study brings local knowledge into the language of planning discourse.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The results of this study have been organized into three thematic clusters: (1) components of spatial-cultural identity, (2) spatial changes and conflicts, and (3) new hybrid models of identity, which are in accordance with the research objectives and questions defined through the literature review. These clusters are designed to fulfill the objectives of this research that intends to: (1) identify the iconic local and cultural value and elements in urban design that shape the Semarapura identity, (2) analyze how these aspects could lead to a hybrid form for urban identity model; and (3) develop an alternative resilient approach of urban identity with cultural continuity based on spatial adopts. The debate is situated within the broader framework of efforts to enhance urban policy, architectural design, and community-level planning in heritage cities.

Spatial-Cultural Identity Elements

Fieldwork, spatial mapping, and key informant interviews confirm that the urban morphology of Semarapura has preserved a durable attachment to Balinese cosmology and spatial philosophy. This collection includes contributions from international scholars who have written about space and place in Bali. These symbolic buildings are not just echoes from the past, but still inform socio-cultural existence and public spatial design. The central urban system is focused upon the *Catuspatha*, a holy four-sided intersection oriented axially and symbolically to the cardinal points. This node is still frequently used for religious processions during traditional ceremonies (e.g., Ngusaba Desa) and state functions.

Nearby are the Puri Agung Klungkung and Kertha Gosa complexes, anchor points for culture and government. Borobudur shows there what is called *Tri Mandala*, the trinitary and *nista* (periphery). The townscape along Jalan Untung Surapati creates a cultural axis in which civic (Kantor Bupati), religious (Pura Jagatnatha), and public spaces (*Alun-Alun Ida Dewa Agung*) are arranged in an unbroken pattern of space.

The inquiry also elucidates the crucial spatial and cultural elements within Semarapura's urban fabric, which relate significantly to the Balinese complex ontology. As shown in Table 1, these elements are not merely symbolic but also have functional, ecological, and ritual meanings. Tri Hita Karana manifests as green courtyards and water elements to promote a symbiotic relationship with the environment and spiritual tranquillity. The space of Tri Mandala is categorized into three inner, middle, and outer areas, which influenced the arrangement of buildings and activities according to sacred places and social functions. The *ekkasāta* (sacred spot or intersection with statues or monuments) is a ritual entry juncture and spatial marker for orientation, centring both processional parade formations and urban learning through the channels of approach. Located at the corners of temples and market areas, Bale Banjar is itself a kind of hall that brings people together, fostering harmonious living. Finally, the mainstreaming of Asta Kosala Kosali (traditional orientation and threshold guidelines in building) has led to residential architecture that adheres to cosmological and environmental beliefs. In combination, these spatial effects sustain Balinese identity and provide an operational platform for resilient, culturally inspired urban design. The empirical evidence from fieldwork and interviews indicates the continued importance of these structures in the construction of identity and legibility within Semarapura's urban fabric.

Table 1. Identified Balinese Cultural Elements and Their Spatial Manifestations in Semarapura's Urban Fabric

Cultural Element	Spatial Manifestation	Function
Tri Hita Karana	Green courtyards, water features	Harmony with nature and spiritual balance
Tri Mandala	Inner-middle-outer zoning	Hierarchical spatial order
Catuspatha	Sacred crossroad with statues	Ritual entry point, spatial orientation
Bale Banjar	Adjacent to temples and markets	Community gathering, spatial cohesion
Asta Kosala Kosali	Building orientation, entrance gates	House-to-environment and spiritual alignment

Source: Fieldwork and Interviews, 2024

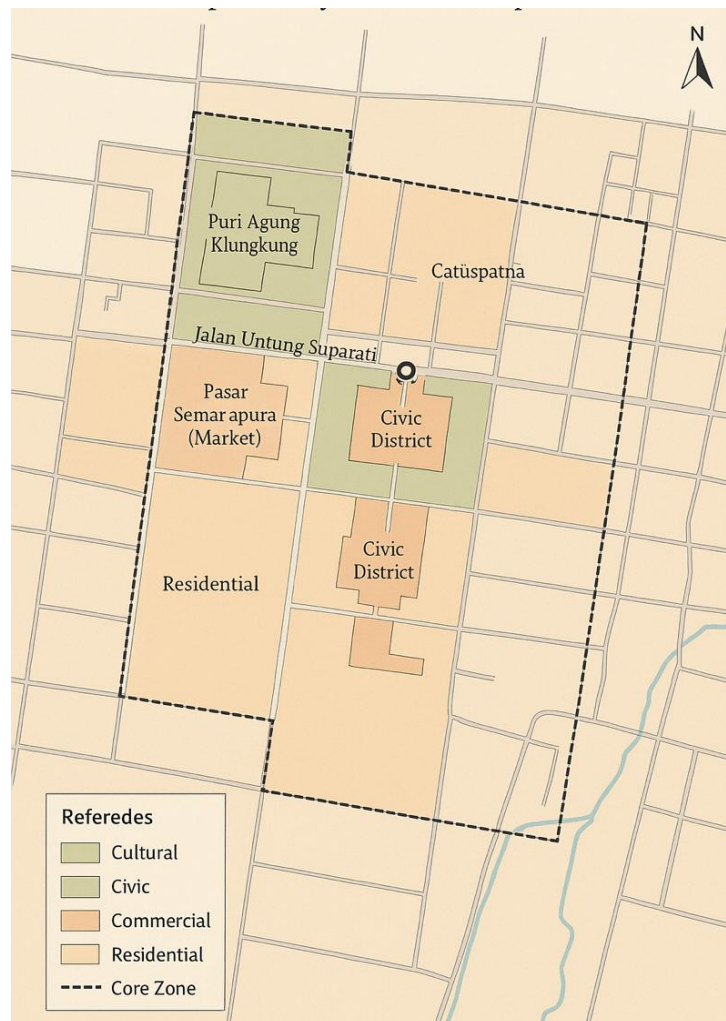


Fig. 1. Cultural-Spatial Layout of Semarapura Core Zone
Source: Author's Mapping, 2024

Figure 1 displays the organization of cultural and architectural aspects in the central urban system of Semarang. This map was created during the observation season (month) of Mar-May 2024, using a manual mapping technique and field verification, with drone imagery. The arrangement features the central *Catuspatha* – sacred cross-road, as a major nodal point around which significant civic-religious buildings (Puri Agung Klungkung, Kertha Gosa, and Bale Banjar) are hierarchically arranged in Tri Mandala and Tri Hita Karana model. The figure also illustrates the cultural axis along Jalan Untung Surapati, which serves as a ceremonial and civic spine connecting zones from *nista* to *utama*. This spatial logic is the physical embodiment of cosmological order and work zoning, furnishing a framework for understanding Semarang's semi-centrality and spatial accommodating nature.

These results directly pertain to Objective 1 by providing a List of Traditional Cultural Elements with associated traditional cultural properties and mapping those elements. They also shed light on the extent to which such fiery material has gone on to animate urban behaviour, social intercourse, and ritual performance. Tri Hita Karana, Tri Mandala, and *Catuspatha* are not merely detached temple layouts; they also permeate the broader urban logic. This is consistent with previous scholarship on the importance of cosmology for urbanism in Southeast Asia (Nas, 2011; Dwijendra, 2019) and serves as a reminder that cultural knowledge should be integrated into planning processes rather than relegated to purely symbolic facades.

In general, this section not only confirms the continuing role of cultural identity in shaping the spatial configuration of Semarang but also provides a backdrop against which we can understand processes of change and hybridisation.

Spatial Transformations and Tensions

Second, there are spatial tensions between traditional urban forms and modern-day development pressures. Observations and interviews provided insights into the complexities of preserving Semarang's cultural elements amid contemporary urban development.

A particular problem is businesses encroaching on ceremonial corridors, namely those along Jalan Diponegoro and Jalan Puputan. Small retail kiosks and café terraces clog green spaces in zones that have traditionally hosted temple processions and ritual parades, limiting both ceremonial access and procession linkages. This bodily barrier further disrupts the symbolic value of these processional ways (Interviewee 6, *Bendesa Adat Semarang*, 2024).

Another noted change is that traffic engineering solutions have been implemented in opposition to Balinese spatial logics. Boom and busts of one-way traffic (with corresponding road signs) block the traditional ceremonial lines walking or driving, blurring them for both pedestrians and vehicles alike, especially with a lack of adherence to cardinal-east axis / ritual alignments. As an urban planner with Dinas PUPR Klungkung (Interviewee 12) observed, these breaches “confuse citizens and break the sanctity.” This constitutes a type of space-time incoherence in which not only spiritual orientation but also community coherence is jeopardised.

Architectural consistency is also being challenged. Chinese façades have become victims of modernization, mainly due to the use of materials such as aluminium composite panels, tinted glass, and even monstrous LED advertising boards. These changes result in a heterogeneous appearance that disrupts the visual cohesion of established streetscapes. Even with regulatory tools like *Perda No. 5/2005* and *Perda No.8/2016*, which guide what a Balinese architectural form and urban space should look like, there is shallowness in their execution, where the focus of these regulations is largely ornamental rather than with spatial logic (Peraturan Daerah Bali, 2005; Klungkung Regency, 2016).

Figure 2 displays this territorial progression and confrontation by documenting the transformation of the Puri–Pasar corridor from 1950 to 2024, as composed through historical cartographic sources, satellite imagery, and GIS overlays. The axis of the corridor, which was historically marked by a gradual passage from Puri Agung Klungkung to Pasar Semarang and originally served both ceremonial and commercial purposes, follows the traditional spatial logic of Tri Mandala, with its sequence from *nista*, in honour of divinity, to *utama*, representing district commerce.

With increasing age, however, the map discloses several characteristic morphological alterations (Fig. 2). The first is that in the mid- and outer circles, commercial movement has expanded, altering the original experience of ritual movement and approach. Meanwhile, new urban insertions—ramps, infill buildings, façades altered beyond recognition of the original typology—have modified the linear spatial order and compromised the symbolic unity of the corridor. One-way traffic ensures that pedestrians, where official processions would be led on foot, are confused: for the new system lacks correspondence with traditional routes of sacred procession; it breaks with a traditional spatial logic. Moreover, green buffers and in-between spaces that once fostered social encounters have eroded into impervious surfaces and sign-laden commercial edges.

This layered perspective does not just emphasize the physical transformation; it also exposes, as cultural dissonance, the result of planning decisions that neglect to include traditional urban logic. It functions, in that sense (and thus the second objective of the study is here supported), to show how a superficial reception of regulations and

contemporary interventions may fragment cultural continuity. In this regard, Figure 2 is an important diagnostic tool for identifying threats and opportunities for reintegrating cultural-spatial values into present-day planning in heritage towns like Semarang.

The spatial transformation and land use change along the sacred axis of the urban corridor are shown in Figure 2. However, beyond illustrating changes in the landscape, this figure also represents problems and potential. Threats include the erosion of symbolic order, the disappearance of green communal buffers, and visual disorder caused by commercial signage. On the other hand, opportunities abound in the adaptive reuse of historic buildings, the rehabilitation of sacred spaces, and the revitalization of native urban contexts through green design principles. They became disenchanted with their involvement and struggled to contextualize these twin desires—decay and potential—to inform the design of nature in cities that are both provocative and respectful of heritage.

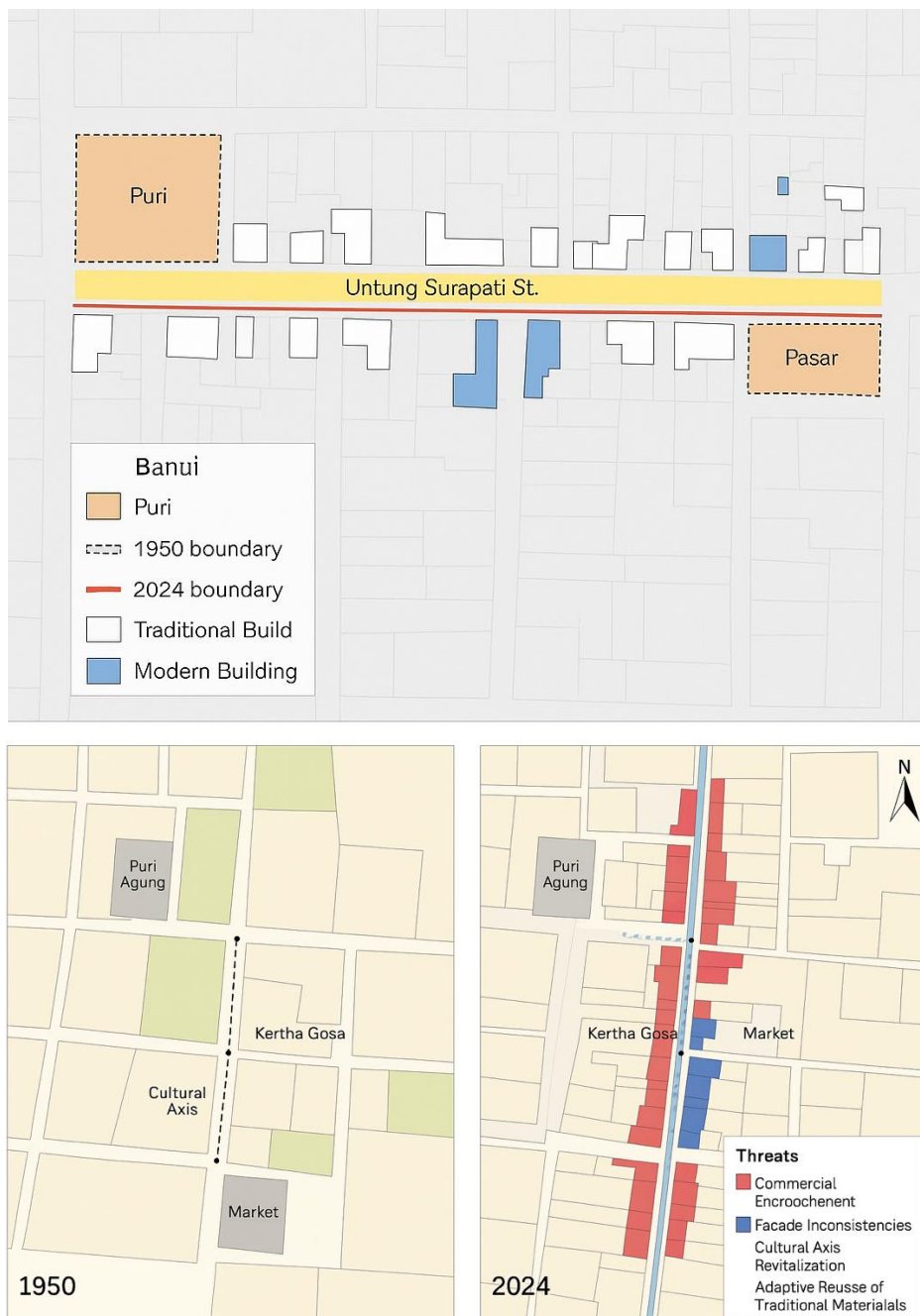


Fig. 2. Morphological Transformation of the Puri–Pasar Corridor from 1950 to 2024, Highlighting Threats (e.g., commercial encroachment, facade inconsistencies) and Opportunities (e.g., cultural axis revitalization, adaptive reuse of traditional materials) for Resilient Urban Identity
 Source: Author’s Mapping, 2024

These findings provide evidence for Objective 2, which seeks to explore how the inclusion—or mis inclusion—of traditional spatial logic into contemporary urban planning has led to both resilience and rupture. They also

corroborate the research problem that emerged on the erosion of identity due to partial or surface use of cultural cues. The conflictual relationships reported in this paper also confirm prior criticisms by Rapoport (2005) and Logan (2012) that accurate identity reproduction extends beyond surface mimicry and requires systemic incorporation into planning systems.

The thematic cluster thus finally emphasises that resilience is not only a technical matter but also a matter of cultural negotiation, seeking to mediate between the forces of modernisation and the sustained importance of cosmological order and collective memory.

Hybrid Identity and Adaptive Practices

In the face of such spatial tension and disturbance, a third set of themes points to hybrid identity practices as cultural and spatial resilience. Fieldwork results, based on interviews with community leaders, architects, and local planners, also suggest that adaptation is not an outright rejection of modernity but rather a form of selective engagement with old and new values.

Younger local architects are incorporating aspects of *Asta Kosala Kosali* into their contemporary housing designs. Such amalgamation involves turning inwards, ceremonial courtyards, and symbolic gateways that evoke traditional values yet respect modern-day ways of living. Interviewee 18, a young resident architect in Semarang shared, “We try to resemble spiritual logic without losing a sense of functionality too.

The municipality is also following this direction. The *Kantor Bupati* Klungkung does not look like an alien object in terms of both its volume and the materials it uses, which incorporate elements of *bata merah* (red brick), *batu paras* (limestone), *atap ijuk* (thatched roofs), and others, thereby signalling the continuity of these materials. These are not just decorative materials; they are also structural materials, indicating it has a high degree of cultural integration (Dwijendra, 2020).

At the ground level, community-based initiatives (some of which are culture-laden responses to space homogenization and identity loss) are also on the rise. An example is the Mural Revitalization Program in Banjar Gelgel, where young locals have been actively involved in re-visualizing Balinese identity through outdoor art. These murals address a host of culturally significant themes—mythological figures, ritual processions, seasonal cycles, and agricultural cosmologies—converting otherwise blank or overlooked urban surfaces into animate registers of popular memory and pedagogy. Operating beyond their decorative purpose, the murals are urban participatory actions that enhance cultural visibility, foster intergenerational conversation, and strengthen the spatial expression of immaterial heritage.

This program provides an example of what Knox (2008) calls the performative production of urban identity, in which symbols and practices, working together, point toward and produce the cityscape anew. Thus, in this case, cultural continuity is not maintained through conservation; instead, it is negotiated through hybrid interpretations that blend received values with new spatial programming. Embedded in these evolving processes are expressions of the cultural “resilience” (Vale, 2014) × and adaptive reuse that correspond with wider demands for empathetic and locally situated urbanism circulating through global South experiences.

In order to elaborate on these adaptations, Table 2 is included as a ‘glossary’ comprising traditional principles of space and the corresponding new readings. The table shows how concepts such as *Catuspatha*, *Bale Banjar*, and *Tri Hita Karana* are being recast through urbanism to generate hybrid spatial forms that *retain* symbolic integrity while embodying responses to emerging functional imperatives.

Table 2. Comparative Matrix of Hybrid Practices Bridging Traditional Principles and Modern Urban Adaptations

Traditional Principle	Modern Adaptation	Spatial Outcome
Catuspatha orientation	Traffic circle with statue monument	Retained symbolic function, altered geometry
Bale Banjar	Co-working spaces, civic hall extensions	Maintained communal function, updated programming
Tri Hita Karana zoning	Integrated into green infrastructure plans	Continuity of spiritual logic in ecological planning

Source: Fieldwork Observations and Interviews, 2024

These practices verify objective three by demonstrating how to incorporate cultural and spatial logics into a robust urban identity framework. This hybrid design aligns with modern theories of empathetic urbanism and cultural resilience (Vale, 2014; Knox, 2008), which posit that identity is constituted through a dynamic interplay between memory and novelty, form and function, and ritual and regulation.

In other words, the hybridity of Semarang is a result not of stagnant conservation but dynamic assimilation. This identity is shaped by a series of small decisions taken by those who plan and design, and by residents themselves, which integrate traditional knowledge into contemporary systems. Such strategies also offer transferable models for other heritage cities in the Global South where similar tensions of modernity and memory still reign.

CONCLUSION

It explores the dynamics of urbanity in Semarapura, Bali, through cultural heritage (cultural crust), spatial transformations, and new emerging hybrids. The research questions driving the study are: What local cultural and urban design elements shape Semarapura's primary identity? How do those elements construct a hybrid urban identity model? In what way does a resilient urban identity refer to cultural continuity and spatial adaptability?

The results further corroborate that Semarapura is underlain by a solid base of spatial and cultural identity that arises in the cosmology of Balinese life. Fundamental elements, including the Catuspatha, Tri Mandala layout, Bale Banjar, and cultural axis in Jalan Untung Surapati, still form a basis for spatial and social-ritual organization. However, it also highlights the deepening spatial strain yielded by commercial invasion, inefficient law enforcement, and gridlocked traffic engineering, which has already defied the traditional spatial dialectic.

“Despite these disruptions, hybrid and adaptive practices have emerged as acts of resilience.” These include incorporating the *Asta Kosala Kosali* concept into new housing typologies, applying vernacular materials to civic buildings, and community-led interventions such as mural restoration that reactivates cultural memory. These are examples of a dynamic balance between tradition and innovation.

This study makes several contributions. On the one hand, it proposes a diagnostic model to assess urban identity using Cultural-Spatial Indicators. Secondly, it presents a morphological model of hybrid identity as an approach to robust urban planning that not only inspires surface aesthetics but also redefines functional form, symbolic meanings, and ecological functions. Thirdly, it suggests that polity orientations can deepen the cultural logic of urban regulations and advance their participatory design.

Several recommendations to enhance the integration of cultural logic into urban planning in Semarapura are presented based on these research findings. First, local planning tools that are already included in the RDTR and Klungkung Regency Regulation No. 8 of 2016 need to be revised to include mandatory spatial-cultural logic as obligatory conditions for development control and zoning policy. Second, cultural references in Balinese spatial philosophy, especially Tri Hita Karana and Tri Mandala, should be institutionalized in the zoning evaluation and building permit assessment processes to preserve a culture-friendly urban environment. Third, the development of collaboration platforms among urban planning stakeholders, traditional (*adat*) chiefs, architects, and youth communities is important for stimulating inclusive, contextually situated adaptive co-design processes.

This framework could be tested for diversity and large-scale presence in other heritage towns in Bali and Southeast Asia, where new, questionable, or hybrid identity models may vary. A quantitative approach, such as space syntax, GIS-based cultural mapping, or a resilience index, will support the qualitative findings and yield more reliable predictive tools for planning interventions.

In the end, we believe this work helps move us toward a better understanding of how traditional spatial knowledge can be incorporated into contemporary planning processes. By considering identity as a static property rather than an adaptable entity, Semarapura offers much to think about in resilient urbanism rooted in cultural empathy and space intelligence.

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AUTHOR DECLARATION

The author declares that AI tools were used only to support language refinement and paraphrasing during the revision stage. All conceptual development, data analysis, theoretical framework, interpretation, and conclusions are entirely the author's original work. The manuscript has been manually reviewed and edited to ensure accuracy, originality, and compliance with academic integrity standards.

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