Public Domain and Cultural Legacy: The Governance of a Sacred and Vernacular Cultural Landscape in Bali

Gusti Ayu Made Suartika[1],
Alexander Cuthbert[2],
Gusti Made Putra[3], Kadek Edi Saputra[4]
1, 3, 4: Master Program in Architecture, Udayana University, Bali, Indonesia
2: Faculty of the Built Environment,
University of New South Wales, Sidney, Australia
ayusuartika@unud.ac.id

Abstract

This article focuses on bridging the gap between theory and lived experience, concentrating on historical facts and derived social meaning. It discusses critically how sacred structures represent, condense, and integrate culture, Nature and identity in landscape formation. In the process, the paper demonstrates various forms of communication emanating both from inherent and state-imposed roles and four dimensions of cultural significance associated with the landscape. The study reveals a process of depersonalization and commodification of a historical legacy whose symbolic significance goes beyond the state's political and economic agendas. Phenomenology is employed to research at Goa Gajah Temple in Bali. Due to the arcane nature of philosophizing on contemporary discourse in phenomenology, the paper combines basic facts and landscape properties and the existential experiences of 'others' with the authors 'lived experience' of the site. Based on the experiential nature of our observations and associations, the paper concludes with practical strategies for future governance of an iconic temple sanctuary.

Keywords: public domain; cultural landscape; cultural legacy & significance

Introduction

Each society goes through a series of journeys in its development. Collectively, they characterize its historical trajectory and graph its social progress (Unesco, 1972, Blake, 2000, Ceccarelli and Rossler, 2003). From generation to generation, this process leaves historical residues that are inherited and retranslated by future inhabitants. Such legacies often have a prominent physical existence in the form of landscape, the built environment and a material impact on memory, mythology and imagination. We adopt Denis Cosgrove's definition of landscape as a "a way of seeing, a symbolic construction" (Cosgrove, 1998: 27). Despite his commitment to historical materialism, his definition aligns with the phenomenological position of Merleau-Ponty (1962), who suggests that "to be a body is to be tied to a certain world…our body is not primarily in space: it is *of* it" (1962: 148). Such historical traces in memory are highly regarded not only within human sensibilities, but also by a wider audience coming from outside the territorial boundaries in which legacies are located. *Candi* (temple) *Borobudur* for instance is referred to internationally as a historical icon and heritage site in the spread of Buddhism in Java in the ninth Century. Other historical contingencies express a diversity of functions. These include their associations with symbolic meanings that possess the capacity to

unite communities (i.e. *Buraq* Wall/*Kotel* of Jerusalem Old City); to generate identity (i.e. the pyramid of Egypt); to encourage a sense of belonging (i.e. *Besakih* Temple of Bali); to offer a ground for politically driven actions (i.e. *Tiananmen* Square of China); to bestow space for memory and celebration (i.e. *Taj Mahal* in India); to provide a foundation for learning, knowledge and new experience i.e. (the Great Sphinx of Giza); as well as laying the groundwork for various economically oriented forms of development through tourism and other industries (Kim, Whitford, and Arcodia, 2019, Krauss, 2019). At risk is an undiluted experience of place, distorted by travelers searching for themselves in the authenticity of others (Domingo Quintero et al, 2020). The bottom line is that few such sites remain undisturbed, due to their potential for revenue generation (Brooks, 2001).

The Indonesian Archipelago or *Nusantara* where our study takes place is also well represented with a panoply of significant monuments and religious sites. The region is universally recognized for its cultural diversity and richness from *Sabang* Point - the archipelago's most Western spot, to *Merauke* Point on Irian Jaya Island - the archipelago's eastern limit. The cultural landscapes are breathtaking and include the world-famous Borobudur temple in Java; the melancholic scenery of the *tongkonan* (houses of Toraja in Sulawesi Island); and the world heritage listed Balinese traditional irrigation of *Subak* at Jatiluwih. Both Borobudur and *Angkor Wat* in Cambodia are considered to be the largest religious heritage sites of the Hindu and Buddhist eras in the Southeast Asian region.

These condensations of human existence did not invent themselves, and were contingent upon the ideologies, geography and economy that shaped their histories (Unesco, 1982, Sesana, 2018). Thus, a legacy is a reminder of time, space, and a memorandum for current generations to communicate with each other via a shared history (Suartika, 2010). This communication takes place in a diversity of forms depending upon how history has accumulated, and how it has been apprehended and interpreted (Fulbrook, 2002). The concentration of cultural elements in tourist sites usually serves government and businesses alike. But this has frequently generated damaging consequences with somewhat unquantifiable effects on local cultures. The latter are frequently unanticipated, especially when the process takes place in an open and friendly cultural exchange. While the economic benefits can be considerable, the global environment dictates that developing countries export their populations as labour while developed countries export their populations in search of pleasure (Wiktor-Mach, 2019).

This process of unequal exchange has been continuing for a century, with frequently negative effects on the cultural legacies of impoverished nations. Consciously generated mechanisms to protect historic and cultural legacies are too frequently ignored until problems arise. Mitigating undesirable effects is difficult. One can observe that the opening of cultural sites to visitors has frequently exposed them to theft, physical deterioration, degradation in meanings and values, social and political conflicts among parties which are supposedly in the position of their caretakers, and other forms of trauma, both physical and cultural.

Furthermore, an increasing number of sites are being listed in United Nation’s Heritage List, which means their existences are dictated by a larger force of an international control than that of a nation-state alone. Such denotation can actually destroy the object of conservation, ruin local communities and destroy any experience the site had to offer when it is not appropriately managed (Windia, 2019). Apart from the embedded cultural processes and values mentioned above, a cultural legacy also two dominant forms of occupation. Clearly the first is that of association (identity through shared knowledge and experience), the second is by imposition (by the state or other external forces). For instance, many historical sites have been abstracted away from the local communities of where they are located. But they are embraced within a national heritage list as part of a nationally treasured collection of condensed human

experience. This implies state intervention in local politics and ideology, as well as sub-contracting the private sector as the manager of local cultures whose sole function is to create profit and to satisfy the political and economic agendas of government in a burgeoning global cultural economy (Scott, 2000, Soutinho 2018).

Grounded in this context, our study of Goa Gajah outlines a vortex of forces that coalesce within a small religious site in Bali. It illuminates the specific forms of communication that take place and their manifestations in human experience that exist between a community and its historical template. In doing so, we adhere to the principle that communication is affected by an amalgam of ideologies, behavioral systems, and environment which constitute the essence of culture that binds a community to its origins (Hall, 1973, Koentjaraningrat, 2004). All of these factors manifest in the following study, where dealing with conflict appears to be a dominant concern in the overall process of cultural conservation and its objects.

Literature review

At the highest level of government cooperation, the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) proposed that the important meanings and roles associated with an historical legacy can be viewed in four groups of cultural attributes/significances including, (i) aesthetical, (ii) historical, (iii) knowledge, and (iv) socio and ritual values (ICOMOS New Zealand, 2010, Soutinho, 2018). But the turning of many historical legacies into tourist destinations has an uneven structure of costs and benefits to local populations (Kim, Whitford, Arcodia, 2019) This has created a value system locally that on the one hand supports local culture by economic transactions (tourism), but on the other sets up a series of conflicts that are difficult to resolve (Krauss 2019). In practical terms, many governments attempt to mitigate inherent problems using technological solutions (Hong, Jung, Piccialli, Chianesse, 2017). Although this may raise concern that the authenticity of the tourist experience is threatened, and that ‘’Tourism, human circulation considered as consumption, is fundamentally nothing more than the leisure of going to see what has become banal’’ (Debord 1967: section 168). Since Bali is a world-famous destination, it experiences the gamut of problems indicated above. In addition, Bali has been a focal point in academic research for nearly a century, and a brief account of this literature locates the current study in academic literature and serves to indicate both the context and value of our research.

So called ‘Bali studies’ have a long history dominated since 1937 by ethnographic research into village life. Paradoxically, the first significant text on Bali was not by ethnographers, but the painter Miguel Covarrubias in 1937, simply called ‘Bali’. Margaret Mead, described as the greatest living anthropologist of her time, was lauded for her pioneering work in photography. Forty years later, the world-renowned anthropologist and ethnologist Clifford Geertz was still writing about village life in *Kinship in Bali* (1975, 1980). By this time, anthropology was the driving force and ethnography was the overarching method (authors). Culture was its central object, one that dominated research for a period of some sixty years and remains so today – continuing the trend of *The Anthropological Romance of Bali* (Boon, 1977). But the greatest change to prevailing scholarship began in 1998 with the resignation of Suharto as well as the maturation of the informational economy. Meanwhile Bali Studies has continued paradigmatically with ethnographic research at the village level – its institutions, customs, social structure, art forms, beliefs, etc. (Reuter, 2002). More recently, and as a response to globalisation, research on conservation (Atmaja, 2010, Suartika, 2013) sustainability, ideology and aesthetics (Suartika, Zerby, Cuthbert, 2018) tourism (McRae and Arthawiguna, 2011), water quality (Cole, 2011), the environment (Cole, 2011), alternative lifestyles (McRae, 2015), urban planning (Suartika, 2010), resort development (Warren, 1998), architectural typologies (Suartika, 2013) have recently surfaced. Balinese identity also continues as a major issue, driven by Michel Picard (1996, 2008).

While the above research is extensive, it might appear that much has been written about sites such as Goa Gajah. In fact, this is not the case. To our knowledge this has never been undertaken. Alternatively, much has been written about famous Balinese temples, such as the classic text on Pura Besakih 'The Mother Temple' by Stuart-Fox (2002). Most of the papers have also been written from the outside looking in, rather than from the inside looking out, mostly by western scholars rather than native Balinese (Sudharta, 2006). To an outsider it might appear that Goa Gajah is yet another Balinese temple. Although it is not part of Sad Kahyangan (six sanctuaries amongst hundreds of other temples that exist on the Island) that include those of Besakih, Lempuyang, Goa Lawah, Luhur Uluwatu, Luhur Batukaru and Pusering Jagat Temple (Sudharta, 2006), Goa Gajah is an important temple and a national cultural heritage (*cagar budaya*). It is a crucial heritage site that serves the local community, but nonetheless constitutes a place of worship. The uniqueness of Goa Gajah is also due to its inclusion of both Hinduism and Buddhism, unlike most temples on the island, which represent only the Hindu faith.

Methodology

The philosophy and theory of phenomenology has been extensively documented (Smith, Flower, and Larkin, 2009, Moran and Mooney, 2002, Henriksson, Friesen, Saevi, 2012). It is an ongoing research practice in social science and we deploy its commitment to exploring the consciousness and beliefs of the local Balinese population. It has a broad theoretical base in the philosophies of René Descartes and David Hume, yet more generally in the writing of Edmund Husserl (1931) and his student Martin Heidegger (1962). Recent contributions have been made by Alfred Schutz (1899-1959) and Maurice Merleau-Ponty (1962) who defines phenomenology as 'the science of beginnings' (Merleau-Ponty in Micula 2008: 152). Ponty and others were also heavily influenced by Jean-Paul Sartre (1993), Claude Levi-Strauss (1978) and Saussurian semiotics (Sanders, 2005). However, it is Peter Berger, who is widely recognised as having introduced phenomenology as a method into social science (Berger and Luckman, 1966). Even at the most basic level, there is disagreement as to how phenomenology should be identified e.g. realist phenomenology (after Heidegger) and idealist phenomenology (after Husserl) (Burgess, 2015: online). Alternatively we can choose between descriptive phenomenology (Heidegger) or hermeneutic phenomenology (Husserl) (Tuffour, 2017). In addition, there is much debate as to whether phenomenology is fundamentally a methodology deprived of a singular theoretical focus.

Unlike science, phenomenology has no theoretical structure of universal laws and paradigms. Due to the internal inconsistencies and intellectual conflicts within the discipline, it is almost impossible to find a clear definition of phenomenology outside of individual interpretations of which the discipline is replete. So, the fundamental assumptions of a unified phenomenology are exceedingly difficult to access, and perhaps impossible to define since there is no material basis for its central focus–consciousness (Hennik, Hutter, Bailey, 2011). This allows each theorist to redefine what consciousness is and how it should be understood. We can also argue that phenomenology is anti-scientific. It has also been claimed that "phenomenology remains both marginal in sociology and is somewhat illusive" (Lewis, 2002: 59), reflecting the idea that phenomenology by its very nature is a method in search of a theory, a theory that may never eventuate due to the changing conditions of human consciousness.

We do not intend to debate the complexities or to explore the multitude of interpretations as to what phenomenology *is.* Instead, we accept the fact that unlike science, it is not explanatory but descriptive, and concentrates on how individual human consciousness absorbs the world and is affected by it. Hence, our research strategy is focussed on presenting *a clear and undistorted account of what exists*. Expanding on this idea, we also accept that phenomenology 'refers to the world as it is experienced by people in their daily lives as opposed to the construed and idealised world of science' (Mikula, 2008: 115).

Phenomenology does not seek to assemble 'data' in the abstract and then make general assumptions or deductions as to what the 'data' is supposed to reveal (Giorgi, 1997, 2010, 2012). It is an approach to qualitative research that concentrates in this instance on the commonality or shared experiences of a group - anything outside the immediate experience of the group is to be ignored. The goal of research is merely to describe events as they appear, suspending value judgements and dealing directly with the lived experience of the participants. Since the authors have a collective experience of 120 years 'being' in the spaces discussed, we consider this invaluable knowledge when combined with the participants in the Goa Gajah temple and their lived experience of place.

Given the somewhat unlimited variety of definitions of phenomenology, we suggest that the discipline comes into focus with the determination of an object, individual, place or experience. In this case, we need to mention a respected figure in phenomenology much lauded in the realm of architectural and urban space not mentioned above. Since we are dealing with the built environment as well as the existential experience of Balinese people, we refer to two classic texts on the subject, namely *Intentions in Architecture* and *Genius Loci* by Christian Norberg- Schulz (1965, 1980). While both texts are somewhat abstruse, their merit is that Schulz does not seek to define right and wrong, to be correct or incorrect, nor to measure human experience against some arbitrary abstract categories in social science (Norberg-Schultz, 1980: 5-8). These are also supported in Schulz (1971 and 1985). Given this attitude to scientific enquiry, to science, the normal processes of generating hypotheses, organising data to be tested, making assumptions or speculations about outcomes are all set to the side so that the reality of human experience can come to the fore. Thus, in the following paper, we try to condense the lived experience of Balinese people as they approach the sacred in the form of a major temple, the profane acts that threaten it, and the cultural landscape it generates. Whereas a phenomenological position is adopted throughout, we must deviate somewhat from a purist approach in two ways. First, in combining the experience of the research group where each own their own observations, and second when we enter the world of 'design' - or perhaps more accurately a more concrete representation of the phenomena experienced.

Goa Gajah Temple as a cultural heritage, public domain and cultural landscape

Context and origins

This study chooses the Goa Gajah Temple of *Desa Adat* (customary village) of Bedulu, Blahbatuh District, Gianyar Regency in Bali Province as an exemplary research case study (8^{o} 31' 24.44" S, 115^{o} 17' 12.71" E, see Figure 1). The temple is classified as a *cagar budaya* - cultural heritage. The object of study is located on a site, which is 16m below the road level. It is surrounded by various land uses including settlement; paddy fields; tourist facilities including souvenir shops, restaurants, parking; and miscellaneous commercial functions of local *warung* (stalls), a stone shrine shop and workshop, timber manufacturing, and building material shops. Thus the site doubles as industrial/ commercial use and integrates specialized on-site fabrication with religious and other functions.

At present, Goa Gajah Temple serves four major roles. It is first a place for worship for those who believe in Hinduism (in the majority) and Buddhism (to a lesser extent). The temple is looked after by community members of *Desa Adat* (customary-based village) of Bedulu. This part of communal duty is carried out under the direction of *Jro Mangku* (Priest) of Goa Gajah Temple. Second, the Temple is one of Indonesia's National Historical and Cultural Heritage Sites located in Gianyar Regency of Bali Province. Its existence comes under the authority of *Badan Pelestarian Cagar Budaya* (BPCB = Conservation Board for Cultural Heritages) of Bali and Lesser *Sunda* Islands Regions. In this part, the Temple is placed as part of national identities (nation-building) whose main function is to unite members of communities either locally or across the entire nation state (Wiktor-Mach, 2019). Third, Goa Gajah temple is a

religious constellation representing the local community (Bedulu - Gianyar), Bali (provincial level), and the Indonesian state. Fourth, the Temple is a well visited tourist destination, which accommodates an average of 303,065 visitors annually (both domestic and international) (Tourism Board of Gianyar Regency, 2018).

Fig. 1. Location of Goa Gajah Temple. Source: Google map

The latest role was initiated by the local government of the Gianyar Regency in order to generate revenue. This position has been reconfirmed by Local Government Regulation number 12 Year 2016 in regard to Spatial Plan for Gianyar Regency for the period of 2012-2032 (*Pemerintah Kabupaten Gianyar,* 2016). Two other archeological sites, Gunung Kawi and Tirta Empul Temple are similarly targeted and are also located in Gianyar Regency. While Goa Gajah Temple is located in Blahbatuh Districts, the other two temples reside in Tampaksiring District.

These four main roles were initiated by a series of preliminary observations conducted by L. C Heyting in 1923. This work was then continued by Stutterheim in 1925 and by Conrad Spies in 1931 (*Pemerintah Kabupaten Gianyar*, 2017). These early studies provided the Indonesian *Dinas Purbakala* Bali (a state assigned Board to guard archeological sites across Bali Island) with a substantial reason to excavate the site, which continued in concert with the reconstruction of the temple. These conservation attempts were executed between 1951 and 1979. Goa Gajah Temple was then denoted a cultural and historical heritage site open to the public. It gradually became part of the public domain, maintained by *Dinas Purbakala* Bali. Figure 2 demonstrates the whole spatial layout of this emblem of Buddhist and Hindu legacy.

The most important feature at Goa Gajah is undoubtedly the cave. The Cave is an archetype of human habitation and architecture with symbolism which goes far beyond its utility ‘Another earthly symbol is the cave, which extends into the motherly earth from which all life arises. ‘’The Goddess of the earth was honoured in the caves….Then the space was liberated from the earth and “artificial caves” were created’’ (Norberg Schulz 1966: 125). So, the significance of the cave surpasses its clear heritage position. In addition to its dedicated use as a place to pursue spiritual enlightenment (Kusmiati, et al., 1982), the site is all-encompassing as a cultural landscape.

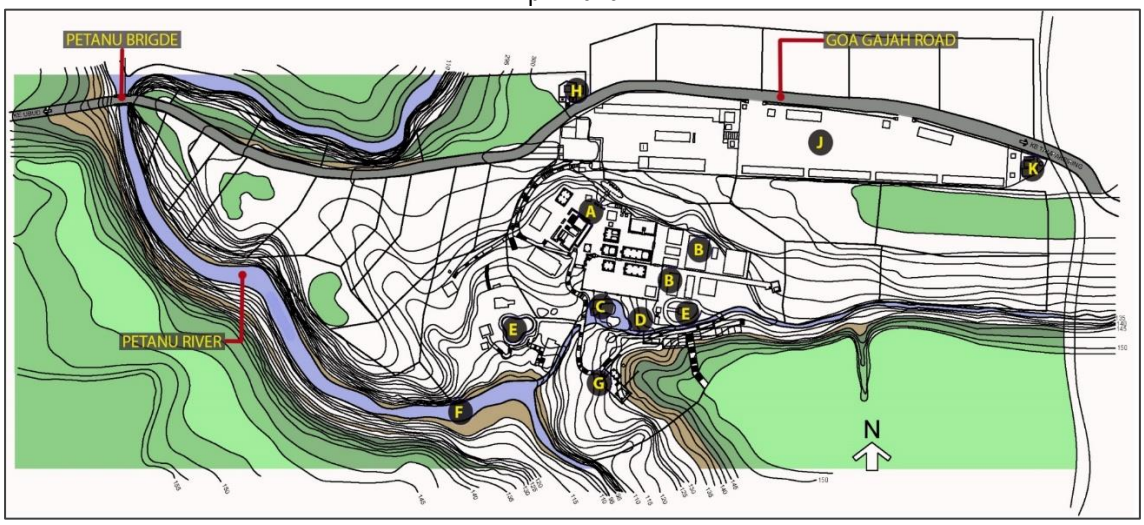
> "Cultural landscapes are cultural properties and represent the 'combined works of nature and of man' ...They are illustrative of the evolution of human society and settlement over time, under the influence of the physical constraints and/or opportunities presented by their natural environment and of successive social, economic and cultural forces, both external and internal"
>
> (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization-World Heritage Committee, 1999: Annex 4-1].

They represent the combined works of Man and Nature. Moreover, they are the places of peoples' livelihoods, identities and belief systems all over the world" (Ceccarelli and Rossler, 2003: 5). This Goa Gajah legacy is composed of a series of features derived from various interventions, both human and natural. Thus, its uniqueness is not singularly composed of a non-symmetrically carved and T shaped cave. It is compounded by several additional features.

These accompanying features include:

(1) holy water feature to the east side of the cave;
(2) a rectangular water feature situated on the southern part of the cave, and which is in this article seen as an area for bathing and water collection;
(3) a collection of stone figures which are at present located right outside the cave (both left and right);
(4) a series of individual shrines to worships different deities, which are located outside the cave to its east side;
(5) an open space (courtyard) right in front of the cave;
(6) Budha complex which is located outside the cave's main area, to its southeast direction;
(7) a couple of fish ponds;
(8) a relatively huge open area located adjacent to the Petanu river, outside the cave's main area and to its southern direction.

This zone was presumably used for food growing activities in the past. At present this area is classified as *tanah pelaba pura* (a type of communal land dedicated to support the operation of a temple (Suartika, 2010); and (9) Jempinis temple, which is located quite a distance from the cave zone. It is only accessible from the Goa Gajah Road. This legacy is rarely visited by tourists but is part of a place of worship for the Bedulu Desa Adat Community. Given these spatial relationships, one can clearly experience how this cultural landscape has been designed to achieve a maximum tranquilizing effect conducive to religious worship. Overall, the topography of the selected site was a significant determining element. This analysis can be clearly demonstrated in Figure 2.



Notes :

A. Main Goa Gajah landscape
B. Kitchen & storage
C. Rubbles of stone statues
D. Pangkung River
E. Fish ponds
F. Petanu River
G. Buddha complex
H. Jempinis Temple
I. Souvenir shops
J. Stalls and parking area
K. Melanting Temple

Fig. 2: The layout of Goa Gajah vernacular landscape
Source: Gusti Made Putra & Kadek Edi Saputra

Apart from prior features, there are also several newly erected structures built within the cave's main arena. These are made available to support the operation of the temple. Such structures include a *wantilan* (an open - multi-purpose building) and kitchen. There has been a controversy in regard to the location of the first structure. Many archeologists suggest that this wantilan has been inappropriately located. Since it is placed in between the cave's main area and its southern part, it has hindered the cave's orientation towards the water (Petanu River). Many archeologists view orientation towards water is an encompassing concept guiding the spatial formation of many temples across Bali (Kusmiati, et al., 1982, Suantra and Muliarsa, 2006, Suhartono, et al., 2017). The present kitchen (space used for food production related activities) however does not stimulate any concern since they are placed at the periphery of the site.

The view that says the Elephant Cave was a place for former kings to meditate in the aftermath of royal and leadership duties seems relevant for several reasons (Kusmiati, et al., 1982). First, the site offers a relatively a complete facility embracing functions for:

(i) ritual purposes (holy water features and various shrines and deities features);
(ii) meditation (the cave itself) and the Buddha Complex;
(iii) personal needs (the water features/fountains for bathing and water collection for consumption);
(iv) area for socializing (the courtyard); and
(v) food growing activities (the open area located close by the Petanu River) (Figure 2).

Second, as a centre for meditation the cave has more than one alcove which comes in different sizes and in different locations within a T shaped cave (see Figure 4).

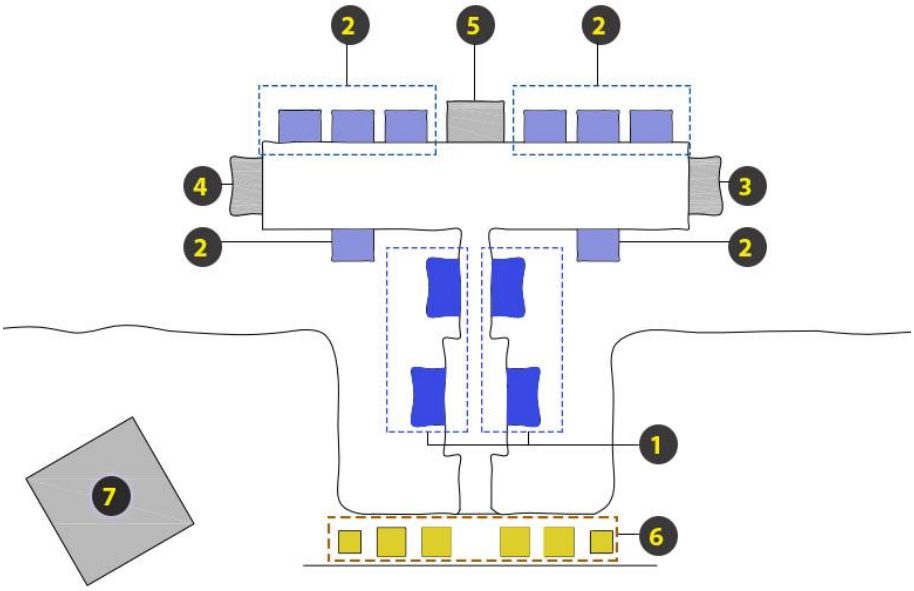
Notes:

1. Elephant cave
2. Holy water feature
3. Water feature
4. Buddha complex
5. Restaurant & cafe
6. Wantilan
7. Souvenir and food stalls
8. Kitchen and storage

Fig. 3: Detailed layout of the main zone of Goa Gajah historical legacy
Source: Gusti Made Putra & Kadek Edi Saputra

Within this arrangement, the king and each of his companions meditate in an individual alcove, rather than in a communal space. The larger alcove was presumably dedicated to use by royalty, with the outer alcoves use by guards. All alcoves are elevated from the cave floor. This was a defensive design to protect from natural consequences, for example from animals and flooding. The cave is prone to flooding because of its low elevation. Meanwhile the Buddha Complex might be used by yogi/s - spiritual guru/s - who accompanied the King's search for enlightenment (Figure 3 & 4).

The holy water feature located outside the cave in its northeast direction, is a common supporting element found in temples across Bali. An elaborated rectangular water feature which is found right in front of the cave has three different interconnected divisions which are accessible through stairs, from the western and southern sides. It seems this was also used as a bathing place as well as source for water consumption. There are also several stone receptacles which were presumably used to collect water for drinking. Nowadays, tourists are fond of washing their faces in this area, believing that a youthful appearance will result. In the process however they incur a profane act which local people avoid. Washing any part of a human body in such a site is a sign of disrespect which in consequence erodes spiritual meanings associated with the temple as a highly regarded place for worship.



Notes:

1. Outer alcoves
2. Inner alcoves
3. Lingga Yoni Deity
4. Ganesha Deity
5. Ratu Lingsir Deity
6. Outside statues representing various deities
7. Ratu Brayut shrine

Fig. 4: Detailed layout of the T shaped cave
Source: Gusti Made Putra & Kadek Edi Saputra

Derived cultural significances of Goa Gajah Temple

In identifying cultural vectors associated with the Pura Goa Gajah - Elephant Cave Temple, authors seek to deploy approaches outlined by the International Council on Monuments and Sites (ICOMOS) in regard to four important standards (ICOMOS New Zealand, 2010; Soutinho, 2018). ICOMOS is a worldwide professional body whose operation aims at protecting and conserving heritage and cultural legacies. It has its branches in many countries around the globe. It has proposed four overarching dimensions to be considered as paramount in the consideration of cultural significance and historical legacy, namely:

a. **Aesthetic value.**

ICOMOS suggests that this value can be embraced by examining qualities derived from forms; scale; proportion; colour; texture; materials in use; and artistic styles derived from certain cultural and historical referents. This value addresses sensory experiences that devolve from the legacy. The aesthetic value of the Elephant Cave cultural landscape can be defined in two layers. First, it is clear that the positioning of every single function demanded a cultured aesthetic philosophy. The result is a living environment that is not just functional but also psychologically pleasing and spiritually enlightening. Second, the aesthetic elements represented by the built structures are also revealing. These include carvings in the cave, the form and decorative elements of the water features, formation of various statues found on site that represent diverse deities in Hinduism. The use of natural materials available in its surroundings dominated by the use of soft river stones (*batu paras)* - introduce natural colors and textures that blend well with the proportions of landscape and its built structures.

b. **Historical value**

This value is a fundamental attribute built from the historical consequences and social developments that generated the legacy. The Elephant Cave cultural landscape undoubtedly possesses this meaning. The existence of Goa Gajah Temple goes back to the period of Ancient Bali (9th - 13th Century). Historical records of this era repeatedly mentioned Goa Gajah in forms of *Lwa Gajah*, *Er Gajah*, dan *Antakujarapada* (Susila and Tenaya, 2016). Word *Kunjara* means elephant (according to *Prasasti* (historical record written on a stone) *Pandak Bandung* dated in 1071). It was also listed that in this Lwa Gajah resides *Sang Boddadyaksa* (Buddha) (according to a *Prasasti* released during the leadership of *Haji Cri Dharmawangasawardhana* in Bali, dated in 1022) who is linked to the existence of *Arca Budha* - Buddha Complex - area. As explained earlier, this feature is located at an elevated topographic position in the southern part of the Goa Gajah cultural landscape. In 1324, the phrase *Lwa Gajah* is linked to a name of *pendeta Siwa (Rajadhyaksa)* - Siwa Priest - a phrase familiar in Hinduism. All of these historical records impact the view that Goa Gajah is an imprint of Buddhism and Hinduism cast onto the *Ibu Pertiwi* (Mother Earth) of Bali.

c. **Source of knowledge**

The Goa Gajah temple site also provides an educational experience across all age groups. First, it provides knowledge of part of Bali's past development. Second, it is a medium for learning as to how the built environment mutually interacts with nature to satisfy the human need for contemplation. Third, since the whole site is still in use, the landscape grants space for varied cultural discourse, especially when the site is used for ritual and socially related activities. Fourth, its role in revenue generation indicates how tourism impacts differentially on local communities. Fifth, since tourism brings more financial resources for the temple to spend on improving the temple's environment. In this process, the place also provides a fertile ground to study the consequences of conservation processes. Central to this idea is the problematic of authenticity. On the one hand, any change at all to the site may be viewed as creating the inauthentic. Improvements targeted at encouraging tourist visitors to increase revenue are debatable processes that do not necessarily complement or improve the *genius loci* of Goa Gajah. In so doing, the Balinese not only change the meaning of the place, they also change themselves in the process.

d. **Social and spiritual values**

Historically, the Elephant Cave's role as a spiritual place has been well explained. However, as time goes, social and spiritual values associated with this cultural landscape continue to be represented through its role as a well looked after and managed community temple. Its existence is overseen by the Indonesian Dinas Purbakala Bali, Gianyar local government, the Bedulu Desa Adat (as the *pengemong pura* - ommunity members who protect the temple), the krama adat Bedulu (as the *penyungsung pura* - community members who worship at the temple) and the Goa Gajah Priest (as the *pengempon pura* - community members who are responsible for the longevity of the temple). The temple is still well supported by yogis and groups of people from outside Bedulu community whose sole intention is to worship. In line with tradition, Goa Gajah temple is a place for community interactions. Religious purposes apart, it has a predominant function of social interaction and communication. It represents a precondition for social action, where politics, gossip and the whole range of informal social life takes place, as well as preparation for ritual ceremony.

e. **Politics – Material interests**

But the above attributes of aesthetic; historical; knowledge and social and spiritual values, we must add a comment on the material (political) evolution of the site based on the increasing number of vested interests encroaching on the spirituality of the genius loci. Since development of this cultural landscape now involves the state's economic interests, the site endows us with a collection of events as to how the commodification of an historical and cultural legacy takes place. In its recent denotation as a tourist destination, Goa Gajah Temple also inculcates the history of political struggle between local government of Gianyar Regency and the *krama* of *desa adat* (community members of customary village) of Bedulu over the share of revenues generated through the entry fees contributed by tourists. Goa Gajah site illustrates the consequences of depersonalizing communal property into a financial asset of the state that is operated, managed, and controlled by a body assigned by the government and whose first objective is profit. In its initial stage these revenues were shared between the local government (60%), the temple (25%), the Desa Adat Bedulu (12.5%) and the Indonesian *Dinas Purbakala* Bali (2.5%). And at present, the revenues are divided between, local government (60%), the temple (26%), and the Desa Adat Bedulu (14%). There is some disagreement as to the fairness of t5his income distribution.

Forms of communication between dimensions of cultural significance

This section may be viewed as somewhat redundant since the formation of a cultural landscape has already embraced the idea of communication and is wholly defined by it (Suartika, 2013). Nonetheless, discussion within this section may be justified in synthesizing the four dimensions of its cultural foundation. This section will therefore not perpetuate what has been explained in prior sections. Instead, it will cross refer between the four main roles of the temple and the four dimensions/elements associated with a cultural legacy. In other words, between structure (overall necessary features) and agency (how things get done) (Figure 5).

It is clear that the values inherent within the cultural landscape are synonymous with the shared values of the community that is of the Desa Adat Bedulu. In fact, Goa Gajah as a place for worship came before its other functions (historical legacy, identity, and tourist destination). It had been treated as a *pura* (temple) even before the Goa Gajah site was subjected to archaeological investigation. Being a community temple, it is well maintained. It is the main task of the Goa Gajah Priest and his family to make sure this happens. Thus, when the Indonesian State (through its assigned bodies) intervenes as the guardian of this cultural landscape, it is due to its interests either to nationalize cultural and historical local legacy and to control its potential for the maximum benefits of the state (Cuthbert and Suartika, 2014, Suartika, 2007, Suartika and Saputra, 2019). In other words, the state views the heritage of its people as a revenue producing totality, independent to the values that created it. Revenue conservation then subordinates cultural conservation, since ownership of the image has been abstracted away from local people.

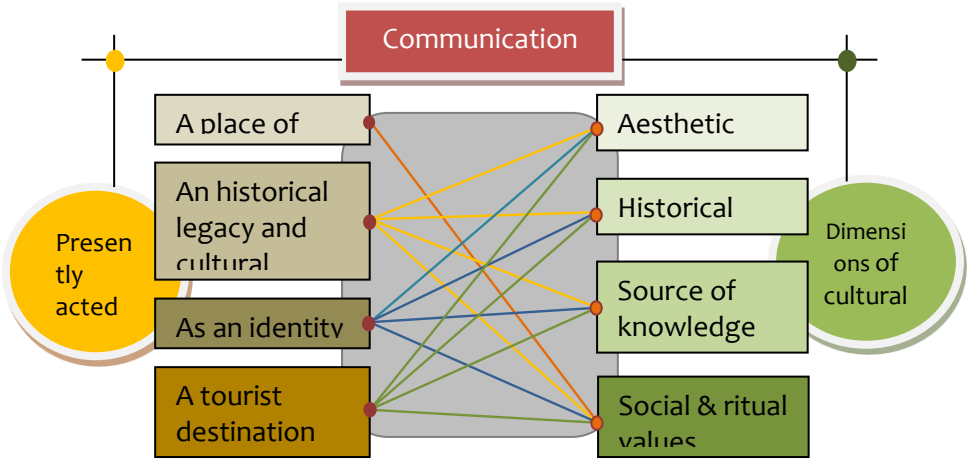


Fig. 5: Communication between acted roles and dimensions of cultural legacy
Source: Gusti Ayu Made Suartika

The communication pertaining to Goa Gajah position as a place for worship largely depends on time and perception associated with it. Unlike the Julian calendar which has a fixed, mathematical division of time, in Bali the temporal and the cultural are fully integrated events and vary according to an irregular division of time into segments of varying sizes. Indeed, the Balinese calendar is much more than a record of the passage of time. It governs the religious and social behavior of the people, days for ceremonies of different kinds, days when particular phenomena are to be celebrated, and appropriate days for the conduct of the entire panoply of social life. People usually come to Goa Gajah Temple on days which according to the Balinese calendar are for worship. The most common and regular schedule for prayers include *kajeng kliwon* day (comes when a *kajeng* day (a 3 day-cycle of a week) meets *kliwon* (a 5 day-cycle of a week), celebrated every 15 days; *tilem* (dark moon, comes at an average of every 15 days); *purnama* (full moon, comes at an average of every 15 days); *galungan/kuningan* (comes every 210 days); *odalan pura* (a ritual to celebrate the birth of the temple which depends on the cycle of a 10 Balinese months in a year and the cycle of the moon); or other days that provide specific reasons to serve offerings. Amongst all of these, the *odalan pura* day involves the most complex interactions, embracing a large number of community members; all kind of different offerings and rituals; and has the longest duration for celebration (9-11 days).

Communication between the role of Elephant Cave Cultural Landscape as a historical and cultural legacy and the four dimensions of cultural significance have been done in a complex and intense manner. The process is controlled by the Indonesian government at both national and local levels. The main actors in conducting this communication are the Indonesian Dinas Purbakala for Bali and the Indonesian *Badan Pelestarian Cagar Budaya* (BPCB = Conservation Board for Cultural Heritage) of Bali and Lesser *Sunda* Islands Regions (Undang-Undang Republik Indonesia, 2010). Communication between these organizations is ongoing due to the nationalization of the cultural landscape. It remains a public domain but its public-ness has been contracted. Local people (and Bali's wider community) often have to pay entry fees to enter the site, even though the purpose of the visit is for worship. This is clearly inacceptable.

Thus, the administration of the site involves various parties with different and perhaps competing interests. These include *pengempon*, *pengemong* and *pengayom pura*; tourists; and private sector organizations. The last one is those companies which include Goa Gajah Cultural Landscape into the list of places to visit on the northeastern tourist route of Bali. This group

also includes members and non-members of Bedulu community who have run business (kiosks) in Goa Gajah parking and entry areas for years now. This communication takes place literally daily, except on *Nyepi* day, the Day of Silence and the day before the Balinese people welcome the *Caka* New Year (Caka year is a year dated 78 years behind the Gregorian calendar). This is the day when Bali is completely shut down - no light, no traffic, no going out from one's compound, and no activity.

Unlike the other three roles and their associated forms of communication that take place within the cultural landscape, communication pertaining to tourism takes place both within and exterior to the site. The government designates an area at the entry point (parallel with the road level) as a place for souvenir shops and parking. However, there are many vendors sprouting right at the periphery of the temple, and even there, food vendors are allowed to operate at the *wantilan* and at the southern part of the temple. The latest development is the presence and operation of a cafe/restaurant right alongside the stairs heading towards the temple. Guests can enjoy their drink and meals while watching others passing up and down. On the other words, the whole landscape has been expropriated by state and local government to make it available for commercial functions. This process is unchallenged since the whole cultural landscape has no definitive physical boundary. More significant is the absence of legal control that is theoretically sanctioned by local government. This constitutes a dereliction of duty by those responsible despite revenue sharing, but the problem is that in this location the land is privately owned. However, the land is located adjacent to a temple. Such development should therefore be overseen since ownership is not a visible event, and spatially the two areas appear to be integrated.

Tirta Empul, Gunung Kawi Temple of Tampaksiring Distict, and Goa Gajah Cultural Landscape are popular tourist destinations (Susila and Tenaya, 2016). But as in the case of *Candi Borobudur* and *Prambanan* of Yogyakarta Province in the Middle of Java Island, Goa Gajah is not just a tourist destination. It is a living monument. These attributes will be absent when a place is merely depicted in physical isolation. When the *odalan* (birthday) of Goa Gajah Cultural Landscape arrives, the temple demonstrates a lively and vibrant landscape filled up with decorative elements, and a buzzing of community members preparing for everything required for the event and the conduct of all kind of ceremonies and offerings. Tourists, who happen to be around during this period, will be able to enjoy various ritual scenes whose significance lies outside of their own experience.

Apart from this special occasion, tourists also can witness people involved in rituals and meditation all over the temple precinct on a daily basis, a unique offering unlike that of Candi Borobudur or Prambanan Temples. The fact that the Goa Gajah is part of people’s daily life corresponds to a living heritage rather than a religious hierarchy or state revenues. On top of this, since belief systems and ritual practices are central to the Balinese people's way of life, the care of a temple as the spatial form accommodating this lifestyle is well supported. Thus, the existential experience of the participants is more significant than any denotation by the state which is unnecessary for temple maintenance. When the local community performs this duty, it comes with a true passion and attitude to a sacred place. Government intervention on the other hand, turns a sacred premise into a commodified space and profane activity for the sole purpose of revenue generation (Suartika, 2013). This practice is imposed on many temples across Bali Island, including Bali's Mother Temple of *Besakih* in *Karangasem* Regency. Unfortunately, certain local *adat* leaders of many *desa adat* simply conform passively to government mandates without considering the serious impacts such uncritical behaviour may bring to the temple, both physically and symbolically.

The immediate economic contribution generated from tourist entry fees for instance is well understood. However, the consequence of such a decision on the cultural landscape – is that it becomes submerged to the interests of financial viability rather than cultural amelioration. Significantly, there is no attempt to regulate the number of tourists entering either the Goa Gajah cave or the distinctive *petirtaan* (water feature) at the same time (Figure 6 and 7). Not only does this create insecurity, there is the potential for physical destruction as exists at other historic sites. So far, no controls have been placed on access to any part of the site, nor in regard to oxidation and damage from human presence. One can clearly observe that the stone which cover both the cave's and the *petirtaan* - water features' floor has been eroded due to frequent human traffic and loads exerted by visitors. Some visitors had to be rescued from the cave for a lack of oxygen due to the exceeding number of people present inside the cave at once time. Many tourists have fallen into the pool of the *petirtaan* - water feature - when trying to wash their faces in order to gain the magic youth effect. Some even slipped from the stone stairs when entering the *petirtaan* - water feature. This Goa Gajah Cultural Landscape also experienced a loss of the only fully recovered Buddha statue. It was stolen from the Buddha Complex in 1990. No one has been convicted for this crime and the figure has been missed since then.

Fig. 6: Elephant cave
Source: Gusti Made Putra

Fig. 7: Water feature
Source: Gusti Made Putra

Protecting the physical elements of the temple is a pivotal measure, but guarding values and meanings associated with these physical attributes is also of importance in order to guarantee access to the site in perpetuity (Cuthbert, and Suartika, 2014). This may sound illogical, especially to visitors who do not share the same values as the local community. But there are certain codes and norms to adhere to when entering the temple. For instances, a *pelinggih* (shrine) or a statue represent certain deities are holy and sacred structures. These demand certain behavioral norms that are often not understood by most tourists. Climbing on monuments, amorous behavior, unruly children and excessive noise are all unwelcome, as is inappropriate dress that exposes too much skin, shorts, revealing tops etc.

At the time of writing, there are no adequate, published sanctions in place (verbal and physical; manual or digital) to control tourists' behavior on-site. There is a written announcement displayed on a white board placed at the entry point to the temple to urge: (i) tourists to wear sarong plus *selendang* (a kind of light shawl tied around one's waist) before entering the temple; and (ii) women who are in menses must not enter the temple at all. There are however no further stated rules. It is logical to hear one say that the action to turn a sacred cultural landscape into a mass tourist destination has so far been one sided, with the economic benefits harvested from the process being paramount. The consequences of hundreds of thousands of people entering the landscape and structures are not in the equation. This is an alarming context that needs urgent attention especially from the government authorities and the

local community who are the custodians of such a sacred place (Cuthbert, and Suartika, in press, Suartika, Zerby, and Cuthbert, 2018, Suartika, 2019, Suartika and Saputra, 2019).

Ideas for future governance of Goa Gajah, the sacred cultural landscape

While the feelings are inter-subjective and, in many cases, personal, this does not inhibit the freedom to suggest positive action for this inordinately special place. Critical to the historic conservation of Goa Gajah is the relationship between the state, tourism and local people. While the role played by government appears to encourage an expanded public realm defined by processes of commodification, it actually reinforces Richard Sennett's fear of the loss of public life and culture (Sennet, 1977). The depersonalization of any cultural and historical landscape is a risky proposition. This is especially alarming when it is promoted for purely material reasons such as increasing state revenues on the back of sacred sites. Any such transformation ignores the fact that religion cannot be traded as a living human experience. The balance between the function of the sacred and the encroachment of faceless bureaucracy constitutes a process of depersonalization.

The fear is that the process of depersonalization promoted by the state will in turn dilute the four main dimensions (aesthetical; historical; knowledge/experience; and social and sacred values) that ground the cultural significance of the heritage. The government's justification to turn the temple into a democratic, responsive and meaningful place (Carr, Rivlin, Stone, and Francis, 1992), ignores the fact that the temple has existed as such for centuries, and the only dimension that is being added is the process of turning inherent human systems of belief and worship into commodified events that can have market values attached. While this process is difficult to reverse, we suggest certain immediate expediencies are needed to protect the site. Tourist intake should be restricted and confined to specific areas, with electronic and hard copy material available to enhance understanding. There should be strict enforcement of dress codes, forbidden areas and the enforcement of community approved development control over the entire site. Unlike economies, heritage sites cannot be infinitely expanded to accommodate desires. Uncontrolled development fueled by tax dollars will ultimately erode the majesty of the place. Norberg Schultz 'life world' is lost. Ultimately, if immediate action is postponed, Gertrude Stein's remark 'there will be no there, there' will prevail and everybody loses.

Conclusions

The use of phenomenology as a research approach has been justified not only by the subject matter, but through the experience of being immersed in the evolution of an important sacred site. It has allowed appearances to give way to the real life- world of the place. Being members of the Bedulu Community from one to four decades, the authors of this paper have witnessed the transformation of Goa Gajah in all its complexity. We cannot reasonably delete this experience of Heidegger's 'Being-in-the-World' from the dynamic of place and its occupation. Whether this constitutes a breach of phenomenological reasoning is for others to judge. The dictates of phenomenology, like any research method, has its limitations. But these limitations only become manifest if the wrong subject matter is tackled, where the 'real' or 'theoretical' object lies external to experience. But it in this case it is clear that a rejection of the 'logical' scientific method has enabled an understanding of the dynamics of the site without having to adhere to the objective bias of science, eloquently flayed in Feyerabend's great classic 'Against Method' in 1975. Indeed, the adopted inductive/subjective approach has enabled our own life experience to meld with that of the community. In the process we have been able to inform the semiotic process of producing meanings and associations with the hidden structures of daily life.

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