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From Transit Space to Third Space: A Critical Regionalist Study of Bus Stop Design in Bali

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ABSTRACT
Bali has experienced a significant increase in the use of public transportation in recent years. Public transportation systems require supporting infrastructure that functions as transit spaces for users transferring between modes of transportation. Bus stops are understood as transportation infrastructure that serves as temporary transit and waiting spaces. In Bali, bus stops exhibit diverse forms and design characteristics that extend beyond their primary function as transit infrastructure and have the potential to generate varied spatial experiences for users. This study aims to analyze the diversity of forms and design characteristics of bus stops in Bali and to identify their potential as third spaces through the perspective of Critical Regionalism. The study employs a qualitative approach using field observations, visual documentation, interviews with the Dinas Perhubungan Provinsi Bali and document analysis. The collected data are analyzed through three main stages: data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification. The findings are expected to demonstrate that the diversity of bus stop designs not only produces variations in architectural form but also contributes to different spatial experiences for users. Bus stops are therefore not merely regarded as transit facilities but also as public spaces capable of fostering aesthetic and social experiences, as well as a sense of place, through design responses that are sensitive to the local context of Bali.

KEYWORDS
Bus Stop, Third Space, Spatial Experience, Public Space

Introduction

Bali possesses distinct social and cultural characteristics, as its residents actively engage in various customary practices in their daily lives. The observance of these customs can lead to temporary road closures or traffic diversions. Such conditions necessitate a transportation system that is adaptive and responsive to the dynamics of community activity. Beyond customary activities, population growth and the rising number of tourists are also contributing factors to traffic congestion in Bali (Moi et al., 2023). As a tourism hub, Bali must provide a transportation system capable of meeting the mobility needs of local residents, as well as

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domestic and international tourists. One initiative aimed at optimizing mobility in Denpasar was launched by the Ministry of Transportation in 2020 through the "Buy the Service" (BTS) program. In Bali, this BTS program operates under the name Trans Metro Dewata (TMD) and is managed by the Ministry of Transportation. In addition to Trans Metro Dewata, there is also the Trans Sarbagita bus service, which is managed by the Bali regional government. The provision of public transportation must, of course, be accompanied by the necessary supporting infrastructure. One essential piece of infrastructure for facilitating public transport usage is the bus stop. According to technical guidelines for the engineering of public passenger vehicle stops, a bus stop is defined as a designated location equipped with a physical structure where public passenger vehicles stop to allow passengers to board and/or alight (Departemen Perhubungan, 2008).

Research conducted by Mahendra (2019) revealed that the condition and performance of Trans Metro Dewata bus stops do not fully meet Minimum Service Standards (SPM). This is reflected in user dissatisfaction regarding various bus stop facilities specifically security, cleanliness, lighting, and service information. Conversely, users expressed relatively higher satisfaction with the ease of accessing the stops (via stairs) and the duration of bus stops. Moi et al. (2023) also noted that difficulties in accessing the stops contribute to the public's lack of interest in using the Trans Metro Dewata service. Dissatisfaction with the condition and performance of the stops can be attributed to the diversity in their physical forms and states, which leads to disparities in the facilities provided and the quality of waiting areas. Such variations can result in differing waiting experiences and influence user comfort and satisfaction regarding the public transport service.

Table 1. The following are examples of the variations in the physical forms and conditions of bus stops across Bali

Trans Metro Dewata Bus Stops		
		
1. Ubud area bus stops Source: Bali-Backpacker (2020)	2. Ubud area bus stops Source: Bali-Backpacker (2020)	3. Baypass area bus stops Source: PosBali.net (2024)

Trans Sarbagita Bus Stops



4. Garuda Wisnu Kencana area bus stops
Source: Bali-Backpacker (2020)



5. Bualu area bus stops
Source: Bali-Backpacker (2020)



6. Nusa Dua bus stops
Source: Nusabali.com (2025)

The varied forms and physical conditions of bus stops in Bali reflect a lack of consistency in quality and the provision of supporting facilities. Issues include damaged or poorly maintained structures, a lack of roofing, limited seating, the absence of safety barriers, and a lack of accessibility features such as tactile paving, guiding blocks and ramps. These conditions indicate that most bus stops in Bali fall short of required standards. Essential features as outlined in the pedestrian guidelines issued by the Direktorat Jendral Bina Marga (2023) include shelters, seating, lighting, bus stop signage, schedule and route information, physical barriers (fences and bollards), guiding tiles leading to the bus entrance, and warning tiles at the sidewalk edge. Beyond meeting physical standards, bus stop design in Bali must consider local cultural contexts, given the island's urban characteristics, which are deeply intertwined with traditional values and local culture. Balinese spatial planning is inseparable from traditional philosophies rooted in local culture. Mahendra (2019) argues that urban development should not focus solely on physical construction but also on shaping a city's identity through the harmonious integration of various elements and by leveraging local architectural, climatic, and cultural assets in the planning and design process. This aligns with Kenneth Frampton's (1985) concept of Critical Regionalism, which posits that a connection to the local context is achieved not merely by applying traditional architectural forms or elements, but through a critical response to the character of the place, climate, materials, culture, and the community's way of life. Ultimately, such responses shape the user's spatial experience, as the quality of a space is defined not only by physical attributes but also by the interplay between space, context, and human perception of the place.

Bus stops in Bali can be understood not merely as transport infrastructure but as public spaces that shape spatial experiences through designs that respond to local character and foster a connection between users and their surroundings. Despite Bali's strong architectural and cultural identity, existing bus stops often appear as generic infrastructure objects because their designs fail to engage with the local context. Stops that serve solely as boarding and alighting points tend to exhibit the characteristics of a "non-place", whereas designs that establish a bond with the local context and user experience have the potential to create a genuine "place" a distinction explored in Marc Auge's (1995) concepts of "place" and "non-place." As transport infrastructure that directly interacts with the community in daily life, bus stops are used not only by locals but also provide spatial experiences for tourists, including international visitors. With Bali's rising popularity as a tourist destination, the availability of an efficient and

sustainable transport system is crucial for supporting visitor mobility (Adyatma et al., 2025). In this context, bus stops function not just as transit points but also as public spaces that shape the initial impressions tourists form when interacting with the local environment. Therefore, applying the perspective of Critical Regionalism, bus stop designs should respond to Bali's specific characteristics such as climate, culture, materials, and local lifestyles, to ensure that the development of modern transport infrastructure does not result in generic spaces detached from their local context.Studies on transportation infrastructure in Bali have predominantly emphasized aspects of function, service, and mobility, while the interrelationship between bus stop design, local character, and the user's spatial experience has received relatively little attention. This situation highlights the importance of examining bus stops as elements of public space that not only meet mobility needs but also foster a connection between users and the context of the place.

A lack of responsiveness to the local context risks resulting in bus stops that are generic spaces lacking a sense of place. Consequently, there is a need for research that views bus stops not merely as mobility facilities, but as public spaces capable of shaping users' experiences and their connection to the character of the location. Addressing this research gap, this study formulates the following research questions: How does the bus stop design respond to the local Balinese context from the perspective of Critical Regionalism? and How do the limitations of the bus stop design's response to the local Balinese context affect the user's spatial experience?

Based on the research question, this study aims to analyze the design response of bus stops to the local Balinese context through the lens of Critical Regionalism and to identify how the limitations of this response affect the user's spatial experience. The study is expected to broaden the understanding of the role of transport infrastructure as a component of public space one that not only supports mobility but also holds the potential to shape users' experiences, identities, and connections to the context of the place.

Methods

This study employs a qualitative approach to gain an in depth understanding of the phenomenon under investigation, based on empirical data gathered in the field. To understand and interpret meanings, events, interactions, and user behaviors at TMD bus stops specifically in relation to design, the local Balinese context, and spatial experience data were collected through document reviews, field observations, documentation, and interviews, followed by subsequent analysis. The bus stops serving as the research subjects were selected purposively based on variations in local and urban Balinese contexts, design characteristics, usage intensity, and the diversity of user activities. This selection strategy aimed to identify cases with distinct characteristics and varying degrees of connection to the local context, thereby enabling a comparative analysis of how bus stop designs respond to site conditions, culture, climate, and community activity patterns through the lens of Critical Regionalism. In selecting the research subjects, the author identified five selection indicators aligned with the study's objectives: 1. Relationship with the local Balinese context; 2. Context of the area; 3. Design characteristics; 4. Intensity of use; and 5. Diversity of activities and users.

Five indicators were selected to capture a range of cases representing the relationships among the area context, design, usage, user activities, and Balinese locality, thereby enabling a comparative analysis of how bus stop designs respond to the local context and spatial experience through the lens of Critical Regionalism. Based on observations across the entire Trans Metro Dewata and Trans Sarbagita networks, five bus stops were identified via purposive sampling: Titi Banda, Pasar Kreneng, Hanoman 1 Ubud, Pura Dalem Pura Peliatan Ubud, and Matahari Terbit 1. These specific stops were chosen due to variations in their area contexts and physical conditions, which illustrate diverse levels of connection between the design and the local environment. Following data collection, the analysis employed the interactive model proposed by Miles, Huberman, and Saldana (2014), comprising data condensation, data display, and conclusion drawing and verification.

Result

Bus shelters constitute transport infrastructure that forms part of the architectural environment and urban public space. Observations of five selected shelters reveal that their architectural expression does not fully respond to local cultural characteristics and environmental contexts. This situation indicates a gap between the shelter designs and the principles of Critical Regionalism, which emphasize the connection between architecture and the local context. Critical Regionalism serves as an approach capable of mediating the influence of universal civilization with the specific characteristics of a place. This approach underscores the importance of geographical context, climate, topography, and culture, as well as material and sensory experiences in architecture (Frampton, 1983). Architecture exists between the pressures of a consumerist civilizationn which consciously shapes the culture of a place and the need to present a reflective local expression. Such expression is not merely realized through visual symbols but through concrete, tactile sensory experiences rooted in topographical character and manifested through tectonic articulation (Frampton, 1983). Frampton’s perspective opens up the possibility of viewing bus shelters not merely as transit infrastructure or "non-places," but as spaces capable of fostering connections with the local context, user experience, and the identity of the place. Frampton (cited in Shirazi, 2013) notes that this realm of urban "non-places" gives rise to a hurried city that leaves no room for authentic places. The loss of a sense of place can be marked by various physical manifestations of mass culture, such as uniform shelter designs or designs that fail to emphasize the local context of their specific locations. In the case of TMD bus shelters in Bali, this tendency is evident in shelters that prioritize transit function with perfunctory designs, while their architectural expression fails to optimally respond to Bali's cultural character, environment, and local identity. The Critical Regionalism approach offers six key points that can serve as a framework for architectural analysis: Culture and Civilization, The Rise and Fall of the Avant Garde, Critical Regionalism and World Culture, The Resistance of the Place-Form, Culture versus Nature: Topography, Context, Climate, Light and Tectonic Form, and The Visual versus the Tactile (Kalvelage: 2016). The analysis of the bus stop as the object of study in this research employs six key indicators of Critical Regionalism to identify the extent to which the bus stop's design responds to local context, climate, materials, culture, and the user's spatial experience.

A. Titi Banda Bus Stop and Pasar Kreneng Bus Stop



Figure 1. Titi Banda Bus Stop (Left) and Pasar Kreneng Bus Stop (Right)
Source. Samudero (2026)

The Titi Banda bus stop is located at Jalan Bypass Ngurah Rai No. 90, Kesiman Kertalangu Village, East Denpasar District, Denpasar City, Bali. It is situated at a strategic three way intersection connecting traffic flows from the north (Gianyar), east (Klungkung, Karangasem), and south (Sanur, Nusa Dua). The Pasar Kreneng bus stop is located at Jalan Rijasa No. 12, Sumerta Kauh, North Denpasar, within the Pasar Kreneng market complex. Titi Banda and Pasar Kreneng were selected because their characteristics align with the five indicators established for the study's object selection. Regarding their relationship with the local Balinese context, the stops are situated in an urban Denpasar environment that possesses local Balinese character; however, the facilities themselves consist of non-permanent tents that do not strongly reflect or translate this local character. In terms of the area context, the stops are located in an urban zone that connects East Denpasar and serves as an integration point for several Trans Metro Dewata corridors; the Pasar Kreneng stop, in particular, is situated within a cultural area (the site of the Bali Arts Festival). Regarding design characteristics, the stops feature a relatively simple form a non-permanent tent with two long iron benches (Samudero, 2026) and a signage pole demonstrating a lack of diverse elements defining the waiting space. In terms of usage intensity, their role as integration points for multiple corridors gives them the potential for relatively high usage, as they facilitate passenger transfers between routes. Meanwhile, regarding the diversity of activities and users, this integration function allows the stops to serve users with varied needs and travel purposes, such as local residents and tourists. The forms of the Titi Banda and Pasar Kreneng stops indicate that the infrastructure is shaped solely by basic user needs. The use of tents for protection against heat and rain, along with benches as basic seating, merely fulfills functional requirements without offering architectural quality that responds to the character of the location.

From the perspective of Critical Regionalism, architecture is required not only to meet functional needs but also to mediate modern requirements with cultural character, the environment, and the experience of place (Frampton, 1985). When examined through Frampton’s six points, the condition of the Titi Banda bus stop reveals that the aspect of "Culture and Civilization" is represented primarily by modern transportation needs, whereas cultural character and local life have not been strongly translated into spatial quality. Regarding the aspect of "The Rise and Fall of the Avant-Garde," the use of tents and chairs as

a minimal solution demonstrates a substandard design tendency; consequently, the stop fails to meet basic adequacy standards or provide a meaningful spatial experience. In terms of "Critical Regionalism and World Culture," the bus stopas a component of modern transportation and culture necessitates the application of local context. Regarding The Resistance of the Place-Form while the Titi Banda and Pasar Kreneng stops differ in physical form, neither has optimally established a sense of place. The Titi Banda stop provides shelter and seating, whereas the Pasar Kreneng stop functions predominantly as a landmark element. These formal differences do not automatically generate a spatial experience for users, as both structures remain defined more by their role as transportation infrastructure than by a spatial form deeply connected to the local context. Finally, concerning "Culture versus Nature: Topography, Context, Climate, Light, and Tectonic Form," the tent at the Titi Banda stop can be understood as an initial climatic response, offering protection from heat and rain. However, this response remains purely functional and has not evolved into an architectural strategy that integrates climate, light, materials, construction, and context to shape the character of the space.The physical elements at the Pasar Kreneng bus stop do not yet reflect an engagement with the surrounding environmental conditions as part of the architectural expression, as they are limited to a mere marker post. Consequently, the environmental response at both stops has not fully attained the level of tectonic and place-conscious architecture emphasized in Critical Regionalism. Meanwhile, the interplay between the visual and the tactile suggests that the quality of a bus stop cannot be assessed solely by its visual appearance or physical elements, but also by the user's bodily experience. At the Titi Banda stop, the presence of a canopy and seating facilitates sitting and seeking shelter, yet it offers little in the way of sensory experience whether through materials, textures, light, temperature, humidity, sound, or the user's connection to the surrounding environment. These limitations are even more pronounced at the Pasar Kreneng stop, which is dominated almost entirely by its function as a marker. Thus, while both stops fulfill basic transportation functions, neither has fully developed the dimension of spatial experience.

B. Hanoman 1 Ubud Bus Stop and Pura Dalem Puri Peliatan Ubud Bus Stop



Figure 2. Hanoman 1 Ubud Bus Stop (Left) and Pura Dalem Pura Peliatan Bus Stop (Right)
Source. Author (2026)

The Hanoman 1 Ubud bus stop is located on Jalan Hanoman and serves as a stop for the TMD bus route heading toward Monkey Forest. The Pura Dalem Puri Peliatan bus stop is situated on Jalan Sukma Kesuma, Ubud. These two stops were selected due to their strong connection to the local Balinese context; located in Ubud an area renowned for tourism and culture, they reflect a unique character defined by specific architectural styles, activities, and social dynamics. The Pura Dalem Puri Peliatan stop, in particular, was chosen for its strong ties to the local Balinese context, specifically its proximity to cultural and religious environments that are integral to the lives of Ubud's residents. Regarding the area's context, the stops are situated in an environment where tourism, commerce, and residential functions converge, alongside accommodations, restaurants, and shops. In terms of design characteristics, the stops feature relatively simple facilities compared to the complexity of their surroundings, while limited pedestrian space and heavy traffic conditions influence the provision and configuration of the waiting areas. Regarding usage intensity, their location in a tourist area characterized by high traffic density and significant human movement suggests a high potential for frequent use. These conditions also foster a diversity of activities and users including locals, workers, domestic and international tourists engaging in activities such as traveling, waiting, sitting, and socializing. Beyond their location at the intersection of tourism, culture, and social life, the selection of these two stops is also based on the contrast they present between the richness of the local context and their relatively simple design.

The physical condition of the Hanoman 1 and Pura Dalem Puri Peliatan Ubud bus stops mirrors that of the Pasar Kreneng stop, featuring little more than a simple marker post. This situation reflects a trend in transport infrastructure provision that prioritizes the stop's identification function, while the specific character of the area has had little influence on the shaping of spatial quality. Such uniformity in bus stop design renders these urban spaces less distinctive, causing them to blend indistinguishably into one another (Pittaluga: 2020). This uniformity can be understood through the lens of "Culture-Civilization," where city centers have transformed into homogenized urban landscapes (Kalvelage: 2016). This is evident in the prevalence of stops consisting merely of marker posts; consequently, this standardized form fails to offer a spatial experience rooted in the environmental context. This tendency toward repetitive, standard forms can also be linked to the concept of "The Rise and Fall of the Avant-Garde," particularly regarding how architecture loses its critical capacity when form is dictated by basic functional needs rather than by an exploration of the surrounding environment. The Hanoman 1 and Pura Dalem Puri Peliatan Ubud stops are situated in areas where tourism, commerce, residential life, and religious worship converge, characterized by diverse traffic intensities and user activities. These characteristics offer a unique opportunity to create transit spaces that differ from those found in other areas. However, the current design marked only by a post fails to demonstrate a strong articulation between the stop's form and the area's specific character. Therefore, incorporating cultural context into bus stop design need not involve the reproduction of traditional forms; instead, it can be achieved by the way the space responds to the local environment and the community's patterns of life.

From the perspective of "The Resistance of the Place Form," the current situation suggests that the bus stop functions merely as a transit point and a location marker rather than as a space possessing a distinct "sense of place." The distinct characters of the surrounding tourism,

commercial, residential, and religious zones have not yet been translated into spatial qualities that encourage users to stop, wait, sit, interact, or truly experience their surroundings. Therefore, the provision of bus stops must go beyond meeting general standards for transport facilities; it must also consider how the form and spatial design of the stop can maintain a connection to the character of the place. A responsive approach to the site can be further developed by addressing the "Culture versus Nature" dynamic specifically through topography, context, climate, light, and tectonic form. In the specific context of the Hanoman 1 Bus Stop and Pura Dalem Puri Peliatan, the design can address the tropical climate through roof configuration, protection against heat and rain, ventilation, and lighting control. Materials and construction methods can be selected and adapted to align with the local environment; materials serve not merely as technical components but also help shape the architectural character of the bus stop. A response to the local context should not stop at simply adding visual elements perceived as "Balinese"; rather, it should be realized through the interplay of form, materials, construction, climate, light, and site conditions. Regarding the "Visual versus Tactile" aspect, the bus stop's proximity to the temple offers an opportunity to contextually consider Balinese cultural values and spatial arrangements for instance, by respecting spatial orientations (analyzed through sightlines, seating positions, entry points, and visual connections between the stop, the temple, and the surrounding area) without reducing traditional symbols or ornaments to mere decoration. Finally, the design approach can acknowledge that Bali is inseparable from the interconnected triad of Tatwa (philosophy), Susila (ethics), and Upacara (ritual) concepts that shape the relationship between values, behavior, and the lived practices of the community (Mahendra: 2019).

C. Matahari Terbit 1 Bus Stop



Figure 3. Matahari Terbit 1 Bus Stops
Source. Author (2026)

The Matahari Terbit 1 bus stop is located within the Matahari Terbit Beach area in Sanur, Denpasar, Bali. This location was selected due to its strong connection to the local Balinese context, specifically the character of the Sanur coastal area, which is closely linked to both tourism activities and the lives of local residents. In terms of its setting, the stop is situated

within a coastal, tourism, and residential environment; it serves as a key node for tourist movement toward various destinations and other islands such as Nusa Penida, Nusa Lembongan, and Lombok facilitated by maritime transport connections. Regarding design characteristics, the coastal location necessitates a response to the tropical climate, sun exposure, wind, and beach environment, making the site's character a crucial factor in how the stop's design elements are conceived. In terms of usage intensity, its role as a transit space linking local mobility with tourism activities and inter-island travel gives it the potential for high usage volume. Furthermore, regarding the diversity of activities and users, the area brings together local residents, workers, domestic and international tourists, and individuals engaged in waiting, transferring modes of transport, resting, and traveling to tourist destinations or other islands.

The physical condition of the Matahari Terbit 1 bus stop must be viewed within the context of an area that differs in character from stops located in purely commercial or residential zones. Situated in Sanur, the stop serves an area where tourism, residential living, commerce, and coastal activities converge. Its proximity to Matahari Terbit Beach places it in an environment characterized by a diverse mix of tourist movements and local community activities. From the perspective of "Culture and Civilization," this situation represents an intersection between modern transport infrastructure requirements and the local lifestyle and tourism character of Sanur. The stop is not merely a component of a universal transport system; it is also situated in an environment with distinct social, cultural, and economic characteristics. The design offers an opportunity to interpret these characteristics without resorting to a literal reproduction of traditional architectural forms. In the context of "The Rise and Fall of the Avant-Garde," elements such as the roof, guardrails, ramps, seating, and signage demonstrate that the Matahari Terbit 1 stop fulfills the fundamental requirements of a transport facility. While it meets standard criteria for a bus stop, these elements remain generic and have yet to evolve into an architectural expression that specifically responds to the character of the Sanur area. This relates to the concepts of "Critical Regionalism and World Culture," as the Matahari Terbit 1 stop functions as part of a modern transport system that bridges local mobility with tourist mobility. The proximity of the Sanur area to the coastline and its connectivity via sea travel positon the transit stop as a meeting point between daily commuting needs and tourism-related travel. This diversity places the stop at the intersection of broad mobility systems and a specific local context. In this scenario, a Critical Regionalism approach does not require the stop to abandon its modern character; instead, it encourages a mediation between the demands of contemporary transport systems and the character of the site, ensuring that the form and spatial quality avoid becoming generic. From the perspective of "The Resistance of the Place-Form," the location of the Matahari Terbit 1 stop along the Sanur coast offers significant potential for fostering a sense of place. The coastal character, tourism activities, local community life, and user movement patterns are integral to the area's identity and can serve as the foundation for shaping the stop's space. However, the mere presence of basic elements such as the roof, seating, fencing, ramps, and signage does not automatically create a distinct "place-form." The stop currently functions primarily as a transit space, while Sanur’s specific character has not yet been fully translated into spatial qualities that allow users to experience a connection with their surroundings.

Furthermore, the "Culture versus Nature" aspect encompassing topography, context, climate, light, and tectonic form is crucial given the bus stop's location in a coastal environment exposed to solar heat, rain, wind, and fluctuating environmental conditions. While the Matahari Terbit 1 bus stop already features a roof and protective elements that offer a basic response to the climate, this response can be further refined through the thoughtful handling of orientation, openings, ventilation, lighting, materials, seating, and construction methods that respect the character of the Sanur coastal environment. The roof and fencing should not be viewed merely as a means of meeting service standards; rather, they can be developed as part of an architectural strategy that bridges user needs with natural conditions and the site's unique character. Regarding the "Visual versus Tactile" aspect, the inclusion of seating, roofing, ramps, and fencing indicates that the user's bodily experience through facilities for sitting, seeking shelter, and moving has already been considered. However, this experience can be expanded beyond mere functionality to encompass a more holistic sensory experience. Qualities such as shade, temperature, airflow, material textures, light intensity, ambient sounds, and sightlines toward the coast all play a role in shaping the spatial experience. The diverse user base at Matahari Terbit 1 further underscores the importance of this spatial experience; locals, workers, domestic tourists, and international visitors utilize the stop for varying travel purposes and activity patterns. Within the framework of the "third space," this diversity creates the potential for the bus stop to fulfill the human need for social interaction (Oldenburg, 1999). The quality of the Matahari Terbit 1 bus stop should be evaluated not only by the completeness of its basic facilities but also by its ability to integrate cultural context, coastal environmental character, climatic conditions, material expression, and the user's sensory experience. Thus, the bus stop has the potential to evolve from a mere transit facility into a public space deeply connected to the character of the place.

Discussion

Analyzing the overall physical form of the bus shelter through the lens of Critical Regionalism aligns with the genius loci theory proposed by Norberg-Schulz (1980) which posits that architecture should respond to the character of a site and its surroundings to foster a sense of place attachment (Seamon, 1982). This responsiveness can be achieved through the selection of materials linked to the local context, the design of shading and ventilation elements suited to the local climate, and the articulation of joints and construction methods that respect local building logic (Frampton, 1985). Responsiveness to the local context can also be realized by carefully managing the shelter's orientation, boundaries, and visual connections to its surroundings, allowing it to integrate with the area's character rather than merely incorporating superficial traditional ornamentation. The sense of place evoked by the architecture can shape experiences that become embedded in the users' bodies and memories. This aligns with Pallasmaa’s (2005:72) theory that embodied memory memory anchored in the body serves as the foundation for recalling spaces and places through the human bodily experience. Such a contextual approach is crucial to prevent bus shelters from becoming generic infrastructure that lacks a connection to its location; without this connection, a shelter risks being perceived merely as a transit space, failing to establish a meaningful relationship between the user and the surrounding environment. Auge (1995) explains that spaces of transit and mobility in modern society have the potential to become "non-places" spaces that function primarily as

thoroughfares and fail to foster strong ties of identity, social relations, or history with their users. In contrast, space understood in the established, symbolically significant sense an "anthropological place"encompasses the journeys undertaken within it, the discourses articulated there, and the language that characterizes it (Auge, 1995). Strengthening the connections between bus stop design, environmental conditions, user activities, and cultural context can pave the way for bus stops to evolve into transit spaces that are more meaningful and possess the qualities of a true "place."

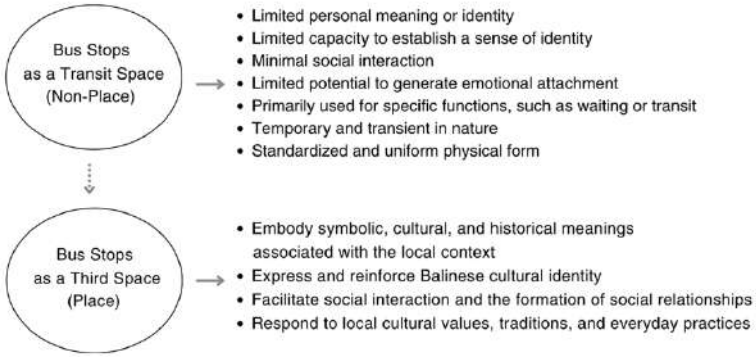


Figure 4. Non-Place to a Place
Source. Author (2026)

With this approach, the bus stop has the potential to evolve from a mere facility for waiting for transport into a public space that allows users to experience, recognize, and interact with their surroundings. Shifting the context from a "non-place" a mere transit point to a "place" a space for lingering offers the potential to create a "third place" within a public facility. In this context, the bus stop functions not only as a transit area but also as a third place that fosters activities beyond transit itself, such as sitting, resting, and conversing whether among locals, between locals and tourists, or among tourists themselves. Furthermore, this third-place environment accommodates activities like observing the surroundings while waiting for the bus, or even digital self expression through taking selfies against the backdrop of the bus stop’s physical structure and the local environment.

Conclusion

Visual pollution from outdoor media in Denpasar City manifests as urban spatial clutter, driven by the dominance of political power and market capitalism that deprives citizens of their right to a clean urban aesthetic. This spatial exploitation is characterized by aggressive commercialization, political narcissism, the widespread use of non-biodegradable materials, hazardous semi-permanent structures, and the systemic abandonment of expired electoral campaign materials and promotional displays. This condition is fueled by the logic of capitalism, which commodifies the urban landscape for economic profit. The issue is further compounded by asymmetrical power relations and opportunistic collaborations among capital owners, advertising agencies, and policymakers. Weak and selective regulatory enforcement, alongside the rampant exploitation of public space as a venue for recurring political branding every five years, constitutes the root cause of this urban decay ultimately undermining social functions,

architectural aesthetics, and the integration of local Balinese cultural values within visual communication design practices.

The implications of this burgeoning visual pollution erode the identity and core values of Balinese culture, ultimately diminishing Denpasar's prestige as a Cultural City and international tourist destination. Constant visual saturation and the relentless siege of consumerist signage progressively degrade the psychological well-being of residents. Furthermore, the chaotic accumulation of media triggers communication breakdown through information overload, forcing messages into friction and stripping them of persuasive force. The proliferation of illegal and obsolete media not only reflects fragile urban governance and erodes public trust in local authorities, but also poses severe hazards to road safety by distracting drivers' focus and obscuring essential traffic signage.

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