

Research Article

Gentrification and Adaptive Reuse: An Exploration of the Design Concept of Sustainable Urban Escape. Case Study: Pos Bloc and Pasar Baru Shopping Street, Jakarta

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Abstract.

This research aimed to explore the concept of sustainable urban escape through the lens of gentrification as a tipping point for adaptive reuse. The chaotic backdrop of a fast-paced city addresses a research gap at the intersection of urban culture and interior architecture design. This study revealed how the historical narrative could serve as the foundation for a concept of sustainable urban escape —gentrification, as a subset of adaptive reuse by reclaiming the glory of the past.

Keywords: sustainable urban escape, adaptive reuse, gentrification

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1. Introduction

Gentrification is frequently described as a relatively recent trend that emerged in opposition to top-down strategies, capitalism and planning, privatization, and commercialization of public areas, or as a reaction to specialist participatory frameworks¹. Moreover, Urban gentrification may result in the repurposing of land and buildings, altering the character of a traditional streetscape, displacing residents, and undermining the local economy². On the other hand, adaptive reuse is the process of modifying structures to improve uses other than those for which it was initially designed. Frequently, these modifications are characterized by substantial physical changes to the structure³.

Furthermore, Adaptive reuse is focused on the sustainability triangle’s environmental and economic development axes. Along this edge, there are beneficial interactions. The fact that the triangle of two corners is occupied by the same actors – the private and public sectors – who share common interests⁴.

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Figure 1: (A) An old postcard of Pasar Baru⁶, (B) Old Photograph of Pasar Baru area near to Glodog⁷, (C) Window shopping area in Pasar Baru⁸, (D) The central axis of Pasar Baru shopping street was used as pedestrian and parking street⁹.

This study aims to explore the design of sustainable urban escape, which needs to consider many aspects because "Each City is a complicated economic, social, cultural and ecological complexes within which all internal structures of the urban system interact inseparably."⁵ Furthermore, Hong⁵ asserts that holistic urban planning problems encompass comprehensive, systemic issues and internal planning issues of scientific rationality and system. The inclusive and holistic planning concepts are critical in urban planning because they contain a wide range of social issues. The holistic approach to urban planning is inextricably linked to systematic and scientific characteristics⁵.

As the study case, this research used Pos Bloc building in previous abandonly building named Gedung Filateli and Pasar Baru shopping street, Central Jakarta. Gedung Filateli is located in Pasar Baru, Central Jakarta, one of the oldest trading areas in Jakarta that was built in 1820.

Formerly the area was known as an elite shopping area because it is not far from the Rijswijk (Veteran Street) area, which is the area of wealthy people in Batavia⁶.

The postcard depicted in Fig. 1(A) shows the Pasar Baru from the location now occupied by the Pasar Baru busway stop. At the northern end of *komediebuurt*, photographers pose (Jl. Gedung Seni). *Sado* (left) was on his way to *postweg* (Jl. Pos), while the car (right) entered *schoolweg* (Jl. Dr. Sutomo). The New Market is densely packed with advertisements: *groesorientalemagazijnen*, O.B. Kissoomall & Co (owned by Pakistanis in the British East Indies), Bombay shop *en Japan*, K.A.J. Chotirmal & Co (owned by Pakistanis), milk Milkmaid, and so on. The area is densely packed with pedestrians and

automobiles. Numerous *sados* and cars pass through the Pasar Baru area. A person with a billboard works as a two-footed advertisement in the background (next to the tree)⁶. Fig. 1 B shows that Pasar Baru and Glodog area was a chaotic trading area since it was planned in the 1800s.

Pasar Baru shopping street is a window-shopping area of the Dutch elite (Fig. 1 C & D). It is dominated by a store owned by Chinese merchants, i.e., Toko Kompak, Lee le Seng, founded in 1873. The store is located in this Pasar Baru. We could trace Gedung Filateli's earlier existence as the Pasar Baru Jakarta Post Office Building through photos documentation. J van Hoytema of the B.O.W. Service designed the building in 1913¹⁰. The presence of this post office is inextricably linked to the history of the Weltevreden area, which developed into the center of Nieuw Batavia and shaped the modern City of Jakarta. If the city center was previously located in the old city, all government functions were relocated to the new city center after Weltevreden acquired Waterlooplein and Koningsplein¹¹.

According to Juwono¹¹, The Gedung Filateli was suspected to be the third generation of post offices built-in Post Weg (now Pos street) rather than Groote Post Weg (Pos Raya road) by governor-general Daendels for Java island transportation lines. This area was a Chinatown in the past. The Dutch elite shopping began to develop following the relocation of the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies' administrative office from Oud-Batavia (Old Town) to Nieuw Batavia-Weltevreden (now Lapangan Banteng area). The current building was the third generation of post offices built-in Post Weg (now Pos street) instead of Groote Post Weg (Pos Raya road) built by governor-general Daendels java island transportation lines. This area was a Chinatown area, and the Dutch elite shopping began to develop in the past after transferring the administrative office of the Governor-General of the Dutch East Indies from Oud-Batavia (Old Town) to Nieuw Batavia -Weltevreden (now Lapangan Bantengarea)¹¹.

2. Methods

This research employed the case study method. Using descriptive analysis to gather data about the old and new Pasar Baru area by combining images with a collection of narrative opinions, this research explored the design concept of sustainable urban escape through the lens of gentrification as a turning point for adaptive reuse. This research project uses the Pos Bloc building in Central Jakarta's Sawah Besar subdistrict as a case study. Sawah Besar, the Pos Bloc neighborhood, is one of the most chaotic

subdistricts in Jakarta and one of the city's most historic areas, with its memorable Pasar Baru, Gedung Kesenian Jakarta, and Gedung Filateli.

3. Findings and discussion

Fig. 2 shows Pasar Baru shopping street (A), Gedung Filateli, which is now termed Pos Bloc (B), and Gedung Kesenian Jakarta (C). All of these destinations are within walking distance. It used to be one of the elite areas of Jakarta, and its glory disappeared through time. Especially along Pasar Baru shopping street (A), it is full of street vendors who are not neatly organized. The remaining Chinatown-style buildings are just a few. The

The Dutch era, crossing the road to the South from A, was represented by Gedung Kesenian Jakarta (C). Next to this Jakarta Art Building is the Gedung Filateli (B).

Fig. 3(A1) depicted the splendor of Pasar Baru shopping street in 1930 when it was lined with branded stores selling high-quality products to the elite market. Seventy years after this photograph, the Pasar Baru has evolved into an irregular shopping street lined with street vendors, and this condition conceals Pasar Baru's elite image. The most recent situation is that the Pasar Baru shopping street fades away and loses its identity, as seen in Fig. 3(A2&3).

The significant buildings in Pasar Baru's golden age, as depicted in Fig. 3(B), appear to be neglected and left alone. The most delicate interior and architectural design details would be to incorporate historical architecture and interior detailing. It evoked memories and created an atmosphere reminiscent of classic contemporary design as a curative concept applicable to holistic design planning. Furthermore, Fig. 3(C) shows the Gedung Filateli in 1920 and its current situation in 2021. Before the site began to be cleaned up from 2000 to 2007, the glory of the past started to fade. It was reintroduced in 2021 with a new function for young generation meet-ups and collaboration and was renamed Pos Bloc.

The new Pos Bloc project depicted in Fig. 3(A4-10) demonstrates how far the transition to a new approach while retaining a sense of tradition worked. Pos Bloc is located in the original Gedung Filateli Jakarta, still in the same area as P.T. Pos Indonesia's functional head post office. The project transferred the function of the Gedung Filateli to a new concept through the collaboration of P.T. Radar Ruang Riang with P.T. Ruang Kreatif Pos, a subsidiary of P.T. Pos Indonesia. Pos Bloc was conceptualized in the same way as M Bloc, another young generation community space developed by the same company, P.T. Radar Ruang Riang, in Melawai area, Blok M, South Jakarta.

Pos Bloc was designed as a gathering place for young people, elevating the transition to a new level. It infuses the atmosphere with excitement. Fig. 4 shows the sleek logo of the Pos Bloc project represents the new approach to the colonial form silhouette of the Gedung Filateli. Additionally, Fig. 4 shows a collaborative space for young generations to socialize and loosen up. The new design and function have breathed new life into the forgotten area, elevating it with a new spirit. Referring to the function of the area's former shopping street, Pasar Baru, during Dutch colonialism, the study found that the top-down concept of Pos Bloc drew the elite to the cross street of Gedung Filateli. This point of departure could serve as a basis for the revitalization and adaptive reuse of the Pasar Baru shopping street and Gedung Kesenian Jakarta neighborhood. It was the contrary of what occurred during colonialism when the Pasar Baru shopping street served as the primary axis of development.



Figure 2: The 2017 map of Pasar Baru's regency¹².

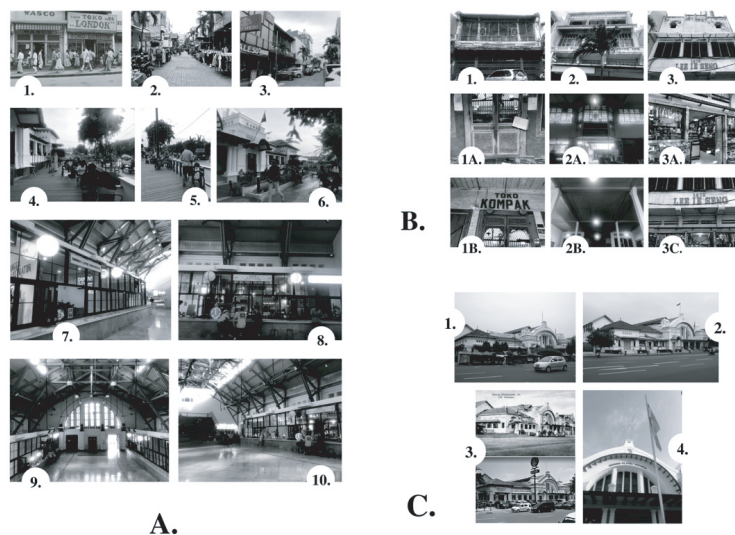


Figure 3: (A) Collage photos from (A.1) Pasar Baru shopping street in 1930⁸ to (A.2 and A.3) the current situation in Pasar Baru shopping street taken in October 2021 and the hype spaces of Pos Bloc (A.4 to A.10) – Gedung Filateli was taken in October 2021 during the research.

(B) Old buildings, i.e.,Kompak (B.1, 1A, 1B), Unnamed Building (B/2, 2A, 2B), Lee le Seng (B.3,3A,3C) in Pasar Baru's shopping street that has been forgotten and become unmanageable.

(C) (C.1, C.2) The Gedung Filateli before and after it was cleaned in 2000 and 2007, following the tidying up of street vendors¹³. (C3) The photos of Gedung Filateli taken in 1920 and 2018¹⁴. (C4) The current top façade of the Gedung Filateli took in 2021.



Figure 4: Pos Bloc signage and concept of collaboratingsitting area.

Baru continues to operate by selling collective items. If we refer to its glory during colonialism, this building has faded away in the present society. In contrast, we were referring to a new conception of Indonesian herbal beverage that shines due to its attempt to conform to the market hype in Pos Bloc. The traditional recipe breathes new life into the neighborhood by embracing a fresh approach to the interior design and menu.

Moreover, the research identified some potential buildings along the river across from the Pos Bloc building that could serve as an extension of the Pasar Baru revitalization area, as portrayed in Fig. 6. Jengki House and Antara building are two potential buildings in the Pasar Baru area that this study was looking for that are suitable for the concept of adaptive reuse.



Figure 5: The old store in Pasar Baru compares to a new concept of Indonesian herbal drink.

Fig. 7 illustrates the revitalization process by beginning with the Pos Bloc at the old Gedung Filateli. Furthermore, Fig. 7A captures the development with a full circular radius, while Fig. 7B captures the development with a quarter circular radius, with the central development along Pasar Baru shopping street. This study suggests that development should move in the direction represented in Figure 8 B, beginning in the Pos Bloc and concluding in the Pasar Baru area, focusing on the river and Pasar Baru shopping street.

Pos Bloc was strongly built by its independent thinking of the strength of the local wisdom through multi-local brands. The presents of the giant café chain, as seen in Fig. 8, is an antithesis of the idea. The giant chain café occupied a space adjacent to the Pos Bloc project's main entrance, in the same area as Gedung Filateli. The giant chain café's big signage appears to be dominant. Apart from its positive aspect of serving as a launching pad for revitalization, this study revealed the gentrification approach's arrogance and pessimism to occupying and switching the area.



Figure 6: depicts an old store on the shopping street of Pasar.



Figure 7: The potential building to be developed with the same genre with Pos Bloc.

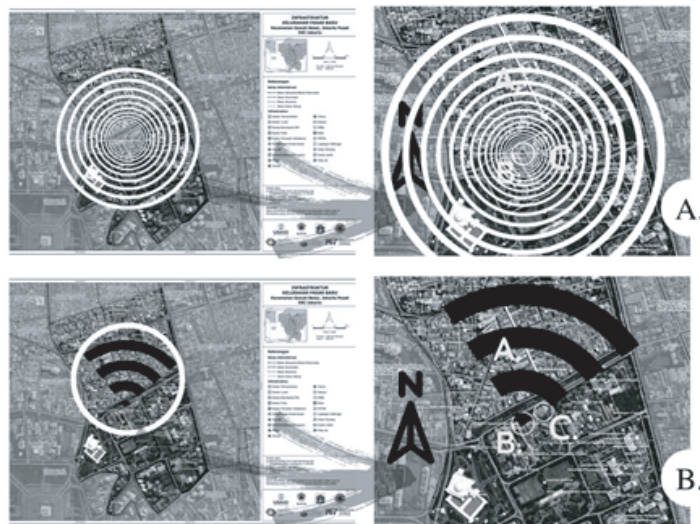


Figure 8: The suggestion of development area.

4. Conclusions

The evidence of gentrification is a top-down concept that refers to the state of Pasar Baru can be seen in the case of Pos Bloc. The Pos Bloc project was designed from the top down to bring the area back to life by adapting the previous success story of another place in Jakarta.

The design concept of a sustainable urban escape as a place to unwind the body, mind, and soul can be designed by appreciating the historic area and its development and reintroducing that value in a contemporary manner through an understanding of the market and the user's objective.

The historical narrative would serve as the foundation for the design concept for a sustainable urban escape. Gentrification, as a subset of the broader concept of adaptive reuse, may serve as a launching pad for reclaiming the glory of the past. Gentrification may represent a new phase in the appreciation of the glory of the past. Still, it may also represent an arrogant attempt to elevate the area if the plan is implemented in an unwise manner, which closely resembles the plan maker's pessimism based on the wisdom and approach of the locals.

This study may serve as the basis for future research that explores gentrification as a turning point to as certain possibilities of reclaiming the glory of the past and as the engine for the adaptive reuse design concept.



Figure 9: The giant coffee chain in the area.

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