



Every Day Practices and Experiential Urban Space

Himasari Hanan

School of Architecture, Planning and Policy Development
Institut Teknologi Bandung, Bandung, Indonesia

hanan@ar.itb.ac.id

Abstract

Strolling along Riau Street and shopping in Factory Outlet are major attractions to the visitor as well as to the small-scale entrepreneur for the experiential urban space and business opportunity being suggested. This paper will discuss the informal activities that constitute experiential urban space on pedestrian ways in front of the Factory Outlet, and the spatio-temporal arrangements being created through human activities and commodity transaction. Further on, the paper will summarize the physical and emotional aspects of urban spaces in attracting people and creating pleasurable experiences.

Keywords: urban spectacle; small-scale entrepreneur; pedestrian ways; Bandung

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1.0 Introduction

In the colonial times, the city of Bandung was branded as the Paris of Java and nowadays as the Factory Outlet city, and that magnetized people all over the country and overseas to come and shop at Riau Street, and to be part of the urban spectacle over there. In the last decade, the growth of Factory Outlets appears to go beyond expectation so that walking through the historic neighborhood of Riau Street is like walking through a commercial stripe of Factory Outlet. The rapid change of old colonial houses into shopping facilities in a way has contributed to the emerging creative economy and shopping tourism in Bandung. By then, shopping in Factory Outlet has become a leisure activity for domestic and overseas tourist, and Riau Street has become a national tourist's destination.

The majority of visitors come to Riau Street with the family or friends in groups and in certain circumstances visitors come as an organized group on a touristic program. For those visitors, the actual buying of objects of necessity might not be the primary purpose of shopping. The leisure while looking around and walking through the street from one outlet to the other is thus the primary purpose and activities for many who visit Factory Outlet. For them, Riau Street is a public space filled with exciting commodities but also packed with people moving around who are eager to embrace goods and services that provide pleasure in different shape and form. Visitors have fun walking along the street and bumping into different experiences through the crowd.

Riau Street at present reveals the achievement of the street and consumer culture in playing its role to the development of shopping tourism in Bandung. 'Leisure-shopping' is the recent trend of consumer culture in which mass participation and people movement is a prerequisite. The crowd and browsing activities become the pleasurable experiences that are being looked for by visitor. Pedestrian ways in this sense play an important role in the creation and establishment of street culture and 'leisure-shopping'.

2.0 Literature Review

Michel de Certeau has introduced the concept of strategy and tactics in everyday life. Strategy is normally imposed by the institution or structure of power, and opposed to that, an individual will use his/her tactics to response the environment that has been produced by the strategy (Certeau, 1988). His concept put forward the study of the way people reoriented themselves in an everyday situation and of the way ordinary people making up urban culture. Certeau argues that, it is the ordinary people who have plenty of chances and opportunities to confront the strategy designated upon them and without understanding of their action and activity, spatial consumption in urban practices will be misinterpreted.

The urban *flâneur* depicted by Walter Benjamin has inspired the process of reading and interpreting urban landscape and the experience of urban life through an amateur 'street detective', who moves effortlessly and invisibly through the urban spaces (Stevenson, 2008, p.63). The uniqueness and character of a place is the result of the relationship between a

particular building, the histories, culture and social practices embedded in that place. The work of Walter Benjamin introduce a new framework for studying the ways in which cultural identities and histories are inscribed in urban space, by which it is now possible to conceptualize many urban spaces and public places which have been constructed through use and experience.

Numerous actions of everyday activities or practices take place in public spaces within the existing spatial framework but remake the existing spaces as their own through placement of personal objects and spatial uses interpreted by them. De Certeau conceptualizes these actions as tactical ways of the less powerful to challenge the dominant class or power relation in the urban context. Through the ways it is occupied and used, temporal uses of space play an important role in framing and expressing the identity and uniqueness of the place.

Some research undertaken recently intensify the effort in revealing everyday public behavior in places such as streets, sidewalks, parks, plazas and other gathering places (Norsidah Ujang, 2010, Wan Hashimah Wan Ismail, 2010). Some research suggest that the informal rules of conduct in streets and other public spaces should be the object of inquiry to understand the diffuse forms of social organization that constitute everyday urban behavior (Gold, 2002, p. 132). Writings of Jane Jacobs in *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* 50 years ago has already been referring that places offering diversity of activities will draw people, because people always look for differing degrees of contact, excitement and enjoyment with many other people. Series of discussion in *Architecture and Urban Design Forum* has also promoted the subject of everyday urbanism to facilitate the understanding of complexity and contradictory meanings of urban spaces and urban lifestyle. All of the discussions emphasize the significance of human behaviour and experience as the basis in approaching urban planning, urban design, urban studies and urban theory (Chase, *et.al.*, 1999, Masahiro Shirotaki, Satoshi Otsuki & Miho Sonoda, 2010).

3.0 Methodology

This research is intended to study people's behaviour and attitude in making place on pedestrian ways within Factory Outlet context and Riau Street settings, with the assumption that uniqueness of the physical settings will support people's need of spatial and emotional experiences in place making. A field survey has been carried out to identify those activities that have been prearranged spontaneously by small-scale entrepreneur in response to the flourishing business of Factory Outlet. Factory Outlet's building and architecture here is considered as the unique physical setting that frame up the emotional aspect of an urban space which consecutively will give rise to the experience of an urban spectacle.

The method being applied for the field survey is to observe systematically the physical traces of spatiotemporal arrangement in place making. Observations have been made in the period of October 2010 – February 2011, on a weekly basis during the day: late morning between 11.00 am – 2.00 pm and afternoon between 2.00 pm – 5.00 pm.

Physical observation is randomly conducted to each activity for 30 minutes and the traces are recorded verbally, diagrammatically, and in photographs. The national holidays of Christmas and New Year, as well as the night activities, are excluded in the survey in order to obtain samples of common activities. The data acquired is then sketched out in spatial layout and visual images.

Out of all activities on pedestrian ways along Riau Street the most significant case is selected and then further scrutinized for the behaviour pattern and spatial arrangement. Hence a thorough observation is undertaken to identify activities that attract people to pass by and hang around on pedestrian ways, and activities that induce the changing of uses of public space to become a place. The key factor involved in this place making is thereafter classified upon the means of interaction among visitors, between the visitor and trader, as well as the spatial position to the adjacent Factory Outlet. The process of interaction is afterwards differentiated upon the business activities and the time of visit on pedestrian ways, e.g. weekdays and weekends, late morning and afternoon.

4.0 Results And Discussions

As the business of Factory Outlet has been set up, it did not occurred to the mind of the owner that their commodities have set off eagerness of people to experience a new style of material consumption that guide to the establishment of culture of consumption or consumer culture. On the other hand, the small-scale entrepreneur is intuitively aware of the potential growth of people coming to Riau Street and set up their business in correspond to the existing business of Factory Outlet. They locate themselves in the position of strategic points to visitor movements such as entrance way and parking lot in complement to what have been produced inside the building of FO.

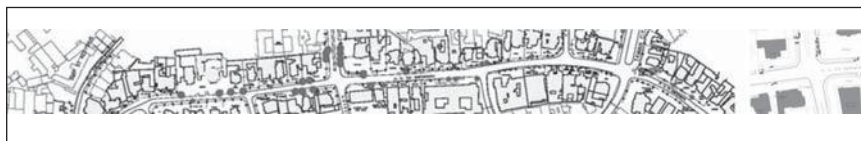


Figure 1 & 2: The concentration of informal activities in front of Factory Outlet along Riau Street

These entrepreneurs attract people to experience the culture of the street and 'event' shopping in addition to 'brand-name' clothing that have been introduced by the prior promotion of Riau Street. Along the Street, they set up a variety of other kind of activities on food consumption, especially noodles/ snacks and durian ice, nevertheless the most enlivening spot is at the crossroad of Riau and Banda Street in front of FO Heritage and Summit. The wide canopy of old trees at Banda Street, which build up green atmosphere and soothing shade in a tropical environment, has pulled many entrepreneurs to put their property in this

area. As it is depicted in Fig. 3 below, the most crowded informal activities are in front of Heritage and Summit, which is so happened to be the first two FO that have been established in the last ten years.

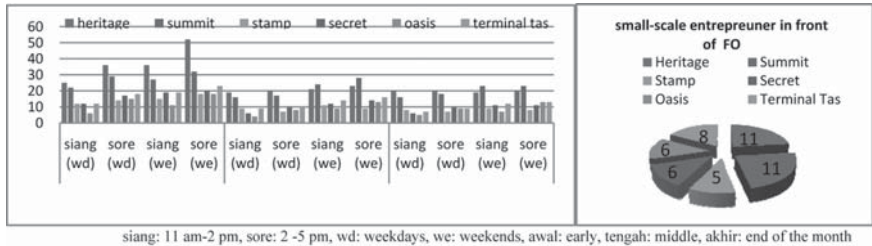


Figure 3&4: The business transaction of small-scale entrepreneur in reference to the FO

The small-scale entrepreneur set up their business in response to the popularity of existing FO hence Heritage and Summit are surrounded by more complementary business than any other FO. Its location at the street corner has advanced the potential as a referential context in making a profit and creating exciting experiences. The Heritage building is aptly in set back position to the passer-by on pedestrian ways and its open front yard is considerably right in diverting passer-by to stare the gorgeous colonial artifact in neo-classic style. Supposedly the pedestrian ways surrounding the building is the best position to liven up memories of high-style residential architecture and fashionable lifestyle in the colonial period. No visitor will fail to see the panorama of this magnificent place, and it is plausible that every visitor will likely grab hold the admiration in one and another way. Hence this specific location of street corner becomes major attraction of the Riau Street and people are keen to hang around and amuse themselves over there during their trip to Factory Outlets. The Summit that stands right opposite the Heritage on the same street does not have this attractive scene. The building stands in close distance to the street, and it does not have a distinct orientation to the pedestrian ways. The front yard of the building is not perceptibly directing passer-by to have a look to the building whilst the architecture is nothing special in style. The spatial layout of open space surrounding the Summit building is simply a logical response to the functional space for automobiles. There is no emotional aspect in the spatial arrangement. The dissimilar physical setting of pedestrian ways at both sides of Banda Street induces different human behavior and spatial experiences to the visitor as well as to the small-scale entrepreneur. Figure 3 illustrates the intensity of business transaction taking place on pedestrian ways in front of the various Factory Outlets, which confirms the urban spectacle people looked after in places full of emotional experience.

In general, business transactions of small-scale entrepreneur take place dominantly in the afternoon and on weekends the intensity increase extensively. In the late morning on

weekdays, most of the visitors are working people from the neighborhood who come for food consumption in lunchtime, but on weekends most visitors are domestic and international tourist who go for shopping and leisure activities. Local people are likely to go for food consumption in the afternoon on weekdays as leisure whereas tourist visitors are likely to stroll along the street in the afternoon after visiting some other touristic destination in Bandung. This emerging culture of consumption yet amazingly associate with the trend of domestic consumption in Bandung in that people spend money lavishly in early date of the month (25 – 5 of the month), and progressively less toward the end of the month (17 – 24 of the month). On weekends the figures of food consumption on pedestrian ways in front of FO are in compliance with shopping activities along the street, by which it confirms the assertion that 'leisure-shopping' is the major attraction of Riau Street.

Entrance ways to the FO are the strategic spots for small-scale entrepreneurs to build up interaction with the passers-by and herein the initial process of spatiotemporal arrangement proceeds. The entrepreneur firstly puts the business cart on the pedestrian way next to the entrance gate or entrance way and by positioning distinctly to other business in a distance which invites people to pass through. Eventually they facilitate people to stay longer and enjoy the service by setting up table and stool in the middle of pedestrian ways making a well-defined territory of the business. The new spatial arrangement is connecting two (2) entrances of the FO in that it creates an island of attraction to the people going in and out of the FO.

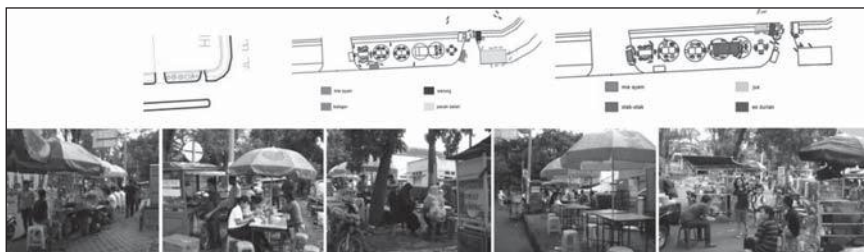


Figure 5 – 12: Informal activities in front of FO Heritage

The seating arrangement well expresses the best outlook to the architectural artifact. The layout of cart-table-stool and the historical frame at the background create an intimate and friendly ambience which encourage emotional experience no matter what being consumed at place. Tropical climate and green scenery nearby provide the desirable leisure and spectacle to be experienced by the visitor. Although the entrepreneur has brightly transformed the physical setting of FO to their advantage and profit, anyhow, they contribute a great deal to the making of place that accommodates the hunger of people to a pleasant and pleasurable ambience of street life, which have been abolished in modern cities. The attractiveness and reputation of FO as a tourist destination are appropriated by and used to serve the interest and

benefit of the small business. Michel de Certeau will define this process as the 'tactical' ways in which food consumption in particular are used by the less powerful entrepreneur to challenge the business power of factory outlet. The street culture, in this sense, demonstrates the popular practices of bottom-up tactical resistance in an urban environment. Through this use of pedestrian ways, it is then possible to discern and explain the process of place making, in which analysis of spatial practices might be carried out in the attempt to work out the formal and official approaches in urban planning and design.

The Summit is located at a street corner of Riau-Banda Street, and the lot has rather limited open space in front of the building that could attract people to come and visit the business. To lure visitor to come, the Summit open up its front yard at Riau Street and make it as an integrated place to the pedestrian ways. On the other side at Banda Street, a barrier to the pedestrian ways is being erected by which a place in passage structure is created. The temporary plastic tent is assembled along that passage to provide a shelter against sun and rain, however, the striking color and structure of the tent has emphasized the process of place making and spatiotemporal arrangement. In contrast to the place making in front of Heritage, the framework being used here is definitely physical rather than emotional aspect of a place. Horizontal and vertical elements of the roof and barrier structure construct the image of the space designated. Instead of connecting people's movement, in this case separation method is being applied by the entrepreneur. Flow of people are controlled and directed by the barrier structure, and seating arrangement is strictly dividing area of activities and circulation. As a consequence, pleasurable ambience of street life is here not remarkable. The spatiotemporal uses that have been introduced on the pedestrian ways in front of FO Summit do not facilitate the place making that contributes to the creation of urban spectacle as it is exposed at the opposite of the street (in front of FO Heritage). The changes made by the entrepreneur did not create a place that enables people to interact emotionally and leisurely. While the separation has blocked visual access to the building and physical movement of visitor around the building, the connection of the parking lot and pedestrian ways at the other side of the building has not introduced spatial experiences beyond utilitarian purposes. Nevertheless, the informal activities taking place are the most visited in the neighborhood. It seems that in this case, the food delivery has been the crowd-puller. Hence concentration of people is to be found at the entrance ways where all entrepreneurs locate themselves cooperatively to offer the best service to the visitor. All kind of food consumption is to be found, such as noodles, snacks, and durian ice, up to souvenir of Bandung such as T-shirt and Amanda cakes on mobile store. The sketches on figure 13-17 illustrate the high density of the crowd generation without meaningful spatial formation on pedestrian ways around FO Summit.

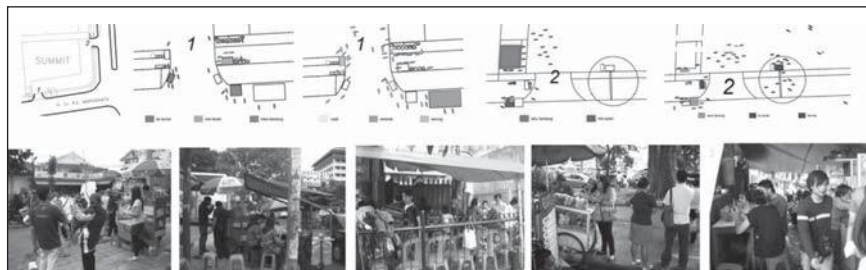


Figure 13 – 22: Informal activities in front of FO Summit

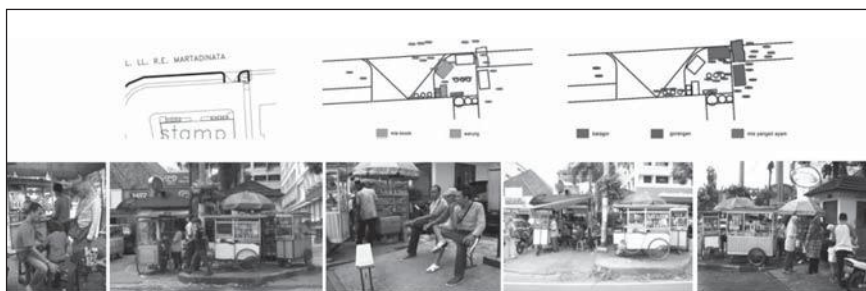


Figure 23 – 30: Informal activities in front of FO Stamp

FO Stamp stands on the opposite of FO Heritage and is established three (3) years ago in the podium structure of the multistory Office building of Indonesian Post Company. It is obvious that the establishment of this FO is taking advantage of the existence of Heritage and Summit. The business of consumption in this case is simply interpreted as the process of producing commercial activities and economic performances. There is no evidence of the desire to the origins of goods and services that they produce. The absence of an authentic origin in business indicates that the establishment of Stamp is merely to copy other successful FO wherein modernity or contemporariness is supposed to ensure the authentic-looking of originals. Therefore, the formal activities of FO did not accomplish to generate informal activities that converge public and private space, commercial and socio-cultural activities into a single, plural-like and dominant urban space. The Stamp has neither attractive building appearance nor space in front of the building, on the contrary people movement occur intensely in the area. The small-scale entrepreneurs act in response by locating themselves in the entrance way of the FO and delivering their services in adaptation to the available space. They put the property next to each other blocking the pedestrian way and getting in

the way of neighboring space. There is no enough space to explore spatial experiences in enhancing the business, in that they just make an enclosure on the pedestrian ways by setting up separation between informal activities and people's circulation. Out of the most available space is for food consumption and the rest is to allow people go through the way. The carts are put in a position to build up the enclosure and simpler furniture put in the space. The number of people who come by to the place is as limited as transit terminal of people in moving. People do other people watching become the main attraction of the place, but interactive activities do not happen. The enclosure of seating arrangement is giving the impression of staying away from the crowd and food consumption is undertaken in an efficient and functional way. In terms of spatial arrangement, a separation method is strongly exercised on the pedestrian way.



Figure 31 – 35: Informal activities in front of FO Terminal Tas

FO Terminal Tas stands at the opposite of FO Summit and is established six (6) years ago. The strategy of the business is to develop a distinctive commodity that is complementary to the existence commodities of FO, whereas it demonstrates evidently it's positioning to the existence of Heritage and Summit. Terminal TAS has an open space in front of the building and a direct access from the street, and as it stands in the middle of other FO's, there is a lot of people passing by. In response to its location, the small-scale entrepreneur set up over there more trade commodity such as T-shirt rather than informal activities that make leisure atmosphere. Spatiotemporal arrangement does not emerge at location because visitor stay for a short time at the place and the interaction among people is limited to business transaction. The entrepreneur put objects on the street to enable passer-by to identify them more easily, like a table with remarkable umbrella or noticeable delivery van. In this case the connectivity and interaction among people in urban space is being built through commodity trade and not spatially. Pedestrian ways have less meaning than traffic and roadways where the property is to be exposed and placed. Nevertheless the entrepreneur fill up the business niche in FO setting and context, in that it expand the market of various interest of visitor and tourism industry. The activities generated over here do not produce crowd of people that may attract more people to come, visit and enliven urban spaces, but, the other way around, the existing crowd produced demand of new commodities that creatively enliven the industry of locally characterized commodities.

The small-scale entrepreneur perceives any urban spaces as a business opportunity and redesigns it to accommodate informal activities. Pedestrian ways are adapted to their needs

by setting up connections or separations on the existing condition. They make an effort to express uniqueness and individuality by establishing attractive spatiotemporal arrangement and blurring the boundaries of public space. The most typical tactic to attract visitor to come by to their business is by putting their property in front of successful Factory Outlet and locating themselves on the entrance way to gain control of people's flow and movement. Movable seating is then placed in the areas of highest activity or where those using them can conveniently view interesting activities or objects. This art of place making, as well as the effective use of space introduced by them, are the basis for an active and interesting street life, which in turn will be an important factor to a vibrant and vital city.

6.0 Conclusions

The Riau Street has become a source of fascination because the way public spaces is lived and experienced is more interesting rather than on its structures and patterns. It has introduced the public space changed into an urban spectacle, and the significance of histories, memories and human interactions to the experience of urban space. The field research reveals a multiplicity of simultaneous public activities that are continuously redefining the meaning of both public and space through lived experience. Informal activities on pedestrian ways have restructured the meaning of public spaces, have opened up a new battle field of business competition in an urban context and have produced new forms of urban spatial patterns. The field research exposes the dynamics and socio-cultural relations in the uses of urban space, and every day practices of those regarded as being on the margins of business society. Key features of the experiential urban space are not the physical and environmental factors but the cultural expression of the informal economic practices. Through informal activities of the small-scale entrepreneur on pedestrian ways indistinct public spaces are transformed into places of meaning and memory. Within the pedestrian ways emerge multiple places which are defined through uses, imagination and cultural practices.

The Riau Street exhibits that urban space is defined by the way people relate to each other and patterns of food consumption. As a place of gathering people and consumerism, pedestrian ways have played a significant role in framing and facilitating urban culture. Food consumption and outdoor activities constitute an expanding part of the local culture everyday life. The understanding of urban space should be redefined by looking beyond the physical realms of public space yet everyday space that are relevant to local people and history of the place. An alternative way to understand a place is to look at everyday life with its spontaneity, difference and disorder, and a new way of reading street life and everyday spaces makes the reality visible and the existence in its entirety.

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