

Glorified Modernity to Nostalgic Resilience:
Reconstructing the Representational Space of *Taman Anggrek Mall*
through Social Media Narratives

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Abstract

The paper investigates the social production of space in Taman Anggrek Mall, a luxury mixed-use superblock built in 1996 in Jakarta, Indonesia, through social media narratives. Once the largest mall and home to the first ice rink in Southeast Asia, Taman Anggrek Mall was designed to embody modernity and the consumerist middle-class of 1990s postcolonial Indonesia and is a form of land commodification that is ever-present in urban Jakarta – a city flourishing under the culture of consumerism. As we are moving forward in digitalization, social media opens another dimension in the dynamic aspect of collective memory formation. In our content-starved society, the spatial dimension of social media archives introduces new pathways to mnemonic practices in reconstructing the memory of places, and in turn, shaping our perception of these places in lieu to the collective memory. This study aims to understand the relationship between the collective memory production through social media and its affect to our spatial perception in the lived space, through the context of Taman Anggrek Mall.

Keywords

Spatial production, mnemonic practices, social media, collective memory, digital history, modernity.

Introduction

Home to more than 96 listed malls, Jakarta is known as the shopping capital of Indonesia.¹ Coming back to my hometown after living abroad for six years, Taman Anggrek Mall was the first destination I visited. It was the mall of my childhood, the go-to-mall when my family did not have a particular leisure destination on the weekends. Pushing through the traffic amidst the hot tropical climate and traffic congestion, the cool oasis of shopping centers throughout the city provided a one-stop-for-all refuge for a weekend getaway. Taman Anggrek Mall is no exception. It has a supermarket, cinema, restaurants, and even an ice rink, among others. At some point in time, it was the go-to place when looking for western culinary adventure, with its curated restaurants back in the early 2000s. Yet when I step into the mall in 2023 since I have last visited it in 2018, a lot has changed. Gone are my favorite bookstore, game shop, and department store. The intricate rows of goods in my mental map have been replaced with new layouts, selling new goods. If retails are made up of its stores, then Taman Anggrek Mall has transformed functionally. It is no longer the same mall I frequented. "It is a dead mall," said a friend of mine who had resided in the mall since 2014, "not the same as before, because all the major tenants left." Resonating this opinion are numerous comments across various social media, comparing the current declining state of the mall to its heyday in absence of its iconic shops.² The circulating old photographs and footages of the mall in the internet largely gathered two opposing responses, either a pessimistic future outlook of the mall or accounts of nostalgia reliving the mall during its glory days.³ Between the contrasting representations of Taman Anggrek Mall and its actual physical space, how is the mall perceived collectively and how is its impact to our individual perception in experiencing the space? With the complexity of social media perception, how does studying it reveal more perspective in understanding the dynamic nature of representational spaces?

Covering a staggering 450 hectares of Jakarta's land, malls have overtaken a large part of the cityscape and experience. A simple search on the common tourism website Tripadvisor has shopping malls as the first and second top attractions in Jakarta.⁴ Clearly, malls are integral in shaping the lifestyle of Jakarta, as they have been iconic symbols of modernity and societal transformation in Jakarta,

¹ "Members," APPBI DPD DKI Jakarta [Indonesia Shopping Center Developer Association, Regional Representative Council of Jakarta], accessed January 19, 2024, <https://www.jakartashoppingcenter.com/members.php>

² Walids Journey, "Must Visit Mall Taman Anggrek!! Jakarta, Indonesia ID, December 4, 2022. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PSujo6lq4AM>.

³ ModarJayaAbadi, "ON THIS DAY: Mal Taman Anggrek Opens as the Largest Mall in Southeast Asia, 1996," Reddit Post, *r/Indonesia*, August 28, 2021, www.reddit.com/r/indonesia/comments/pd39kw/on_this_day_mal_taman_anggrek_opens_as_the/; ModarJayaAbadi, "TBT – Mal Taman Anggrek – August 17, 2006," Reddit Post, *r/Indonesia*, August 17, 2020, https://www.reddit.com/r/indonesia/comments/ifysof/tbt_mal_taman_anggrek_august_17_2006/; ModarJayaAbadi, "Mal Taman Anggrek, 1999 | from Tersayang (Sinetron)," Reddit Post, *r/Indonesia*, April 27, 2020, www.reddit.com/r/indonesia/comments/g8uhse/mal_taman_anggrek_1999_from_tersayang_sinetron/; ModarJayaAbadi, "Dapur Anggrek Food Court 1996-2007 | Mal Taman Anggrek (Pra-Renovasi Dapur Anggrek 2008-2018 & Lim5Lim5 2019-Sekarang)," Reddit Post, *r/Indonesia*, March 19, 2020, www.reddit.com/r/indonesia/comments/flf68o/dapur_anggrek_food_court_19962007_mal_taman/.

⁴ "Things to do in Jakarta," Tripadvisor, accessed January 20, 2024, <https://www.tripadvisor.com/Attractions-g294229-Activities-oa0-Jakarta-Java.html>

performing on one hand as social spaces and economic drivers, and on the other hand as spatial seclusion and segregation of communities.⁵

Malls in Indonesia evolved from symbols of national modernity to embodiments of spatial exclusion, as discussed by Dewi Tan, a masters graduate from Yale, through the lens of Sarinah, Jakarta's first iconic mall.⁶ The emergence of mall was first of cultural and political interest of Soekarno, the first president of Indonesia and an architect, as a statement of Indonesia's modernity.⁷ Following him was the second president Soeharto, whose liberal economic policies spurred the growth of middle class and the consumerist lifestyle,⁸ and gave more power to the private sector for property and land development.⁹ Soeharto's close relationships with some ethnically Chinese Indonesian businessmen fueled the anti-Chinese sentiment from the locals,¹⁰ which adds another layer of complexity in the socio-demographic of the shopping mall in Jakarta. This rang true for the study done by Harald Leisch, a geographer researching social factors of gated communities, urban ethnicity, and urban development, where he mentioned that the Chinese-Indonesians would choose malls in Chinese areas of Chinese-dominated shopping mall, one of which is Taman Angrek.¹¹ The policies in the following Reformation Era shifted favorably towards the private sector, pushing forward capitalism and speculative urbanism, marking the transition of shopping malls as a commercial development tool.¹² Following the trends of the public, malls evolved from retail centers to mixed-use retail podiums filled with diverse amenities and often linked to offices and apartments – a typology that continues to be developed until today.¹³ Covering leisure, work, and even home, it is no wonder that malls have a strong gripe on the urban livelihoods of Jakarta – from rising the comfort of middle-class to creating invisible social division to the lower-class¹⁴ and taking over allotted land for public green space.¹⁵

⁵ Dewi Tan, "Starting with Sarinah: Chasing Modernity through Indonesia's Iconic Shopping Mall," *Society and Space*, August 29, 2022, accessed January 30, 2024. <https://www.societyandspace.org/articles/starting-with-sarinah-chasing-modernity-through-indonesias-iconic-shopping-mall>; Rafael Judah, "Jakarta's shopping malls aren't the public spaces its citizens deserve," *Medium*, February 27, 2023. <https://medium.com/@rafaeljudah/jakartas-shopping-malls-aren-t-the-public-spaces-its-citizens-deserve-2fc8a43e5ac2>

⁶ Tan, "Starting with Sarinah."

⁷ Tan, "Starting with Sarinah."

⁸ Mohammad Ansori, "Consumerism and the Emergence of a New Middle Class in Globalizing Indonesia," *Explorations: A Graduate Student Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 9, no. 1 (Spring 2009):87-97. <http://hdl.handle.net/10125/10713>.

⁹ Bagoes Wiryomartono, "Urbanism and Superblock Mixed-Use Development in Jakarta: Politics of Gentrification of Post-Suharto Indonesia," in *Traditions and Transformations of Habitation in Indonesia* (Singapore: Springer, 2020), 201-221. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-15-3405-8_10.

¹⁰ Benny G. Setiono, *Tionghoa Dalam Pusaran Politik* (Jakarta: Elkasa, 2002), 1049-1070.

¹¹ Harald Leisch, "Perception and use of space by ethnic Chinese in Jakarta," in *Urban Ethnic Encounters: The spatial consequences* edited by Aygen Erdentug and Freek Colombijn (London: Routledge, 2002), <http://ndl.ethernet.edu.et/bitstream/123456789/33207/1/23.pdf#page=116>.

¹² Tan, "Starting with Sarinah"; Martien de Vletter, "Tradition and Modernity in the Netherlands East Indies," in *The Past in the Present: Architecture in Indonesia*, ed. Peter J.M. Nas (Rotterdam: Nai Publishers, 2007), 113-122.

¹³ Savills Indonesia, Market Trends: Jakarta Retail Evolution, January 2019. <https://pdf.savills.asia/asia-pacific-research/indonesia-research/jakarta-retail-evolution-jan-2019.pdf>.

¹⁴ Waleed Aly, "Jakarta malls: the cities within cities where the poor are invisible," *ABC*, June 5, 2013, accessed January 30, 2024. <https://www.abc.net.au/listen/programs/radionational-drive/jakarta-malls/4725338>

¹⁵ Dini Suciatingrum, "Menghilangnya Hutan Kota dan Kebun Angrek demi Mal Mewah Konglomerat" [The Disappearance of City Park and Orchid Garden for the sake of Luxury Conglomerate Mall], *IDN Times*, January 30, 2020, accessed January 2, 2024. <https://www.idntimes.com/news/indonesia/dini-suciatingrum/menghilangnya-hutan-kota-dan-kebun-angrek-demi-mal-mewah-konglomerat>

The orientation of shopping malls towards the middle-class is reflected in their accessibility and its function. Although malls are public spaces, they are owned by private entities. This raises the question of socio-economic barriers: physical accessibility, paywall, dilution of public life, and detachment from the outside.¹⁶ Mall acts as its own enclave, and exclusive bubble from the dirty outside.¹⁷ Even the main spaces are highly curated and controlled. Mall as performative and mediated public space, staged to host seasonal events and constantly monitored by security guards and CCTVs, shackling the impromptu and informal you would find in the bustling outside.¹⁸

The ethnographic study of the role of shopping malls as social spaces in middle-class Jakarta is captured by Leeuwen, where she explores how shopping malls in Jakarta serves more than retail spaces, but also as sites for social interaction, leisure, and cultural expression for the burgeoning middle class. Using personal anecdotes throughout the 1990s, Van Leeuwen examines how these malls became venues for a variety of public gatherings and celebrations. Going to the mall required some form of spatial understanding, where one could become an independent female when alone and a thrifty spouse and devoted housewife with her family. Navigating through these spaces, Leeuwen also included her interview with the manager of Lippo Supermal Victor Chan, who had plans in developing a miniature version of Lippo Mal to train consumers of lower class on the patterns of consumption, so they are socially adept when entering the Lippo Supermal.¹⁹

In trying to understand the time and personal layers of these public spaces, social media serves as a great tool for observation. Even more for Indonesia, with 60% of its total population of 276 million people connected to social media, with average daily media consumption nearing 8 hours.²⁰ The impact of social media was so huge for leisure attraction that the Jakarta's Department of Tourism and Creative Economy has job opening for 'Content Creator,' with criteria of owning *iPhone 13Pro* to compete in quality.²¹ Some studies has looked to the impact of media towards place attachment in Indonesia and shaping of customer society in Jakarta.²²

¹⁶ Judah, "Jakarta's shopping malls."

¹⁷ Judah, "Jakarta's shopping malls"; Tan, "Starting with Sarinah."

¹⁸ Judah, "Jakarta's shopping malls"; Jennifer Goodlander, "Plaza Indonesia: Performing Modernity in a Shopping Mall," in *Play, performance, and Identity (1st Ed.)* (New York: Routledge, 2015). <https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9781315780689-10/plaza-indonesia-jennifer-goodlander>

¹⁹ Lizzy van Leeuwen, "Chapter IV: Celebrating civil society in the shopping malls," in *Lost in Mall: An Ethnography of Middle-Class Jakarta in the 1990s* (Leiden: KITLV Press, 2011).

²⁰ Sue Howe, "Social Media Statistics for Indonesia [Updated 2023]," Meltwater, May 30, 2023, <https://www.meltwater.com/en/blog/social-media-statistics-indonesia>.

²¹ Muhammad Isa Bustomi and Jessi Carina, "Disparekraf DKI Buka Lowongan 'Content Creator', Syarat Pelamar Minimal Punya iPhone 13 Pro." *KOMPAS*, January 25, 2024. <https://megapolitan.kompas.com/read/2024/01/25/14385401/disparekraf-dki-buka-lowongan-content-creator-syarat-pelamar-minimal>.

²² Sushardjanti Felasari, Herybert Setyabudi, Djoko Setyohadi, and Sintia Dewi, "Exploring Collective Memory and Place Attachment Using Social Media Data," *IOP Conference Series: Earth and Environmental Science* 99 (December 1, 2017): 012015. <https://doi.org/10.1088/1755-1315/99/1/012015>; Yolanda Stellarosa and Andre Ikhsano, "Media and The Shaping of Consumer Society in Jakarta," *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 2nd Global Conference on Business and Social Sciences (GCBSS-2015) on "Multidisciplinary Perspectives on Management and Society", 17- 18 September, 2015, Bali, Indonesia, 211 (November 25, 2015): 407–10, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.11.053>.

In understanding the complex relations of modernity, social class, public space, and the role of social media in reconstructing the spatial history of Taman Anggrek Mall, this study will draw on several theories on spatial production, mnemonic practices, and digital history as its main theoretical framework. First, the social production of space by Henri Lefebvre, a French Marxist philosopher and sociologist, is fundamental to understand the dynamic relationship between the actual space of Taman Anggrek Mall as a representation of space that is formed through spatial production, building the representational space of the mall, which then continues to induce spatial practices across a time-space continuum.²³

As this study is looking at social media posts which frame the constant reproduction of the space at a particular point in time, and how these representation in social media is formed and could trigger reactions, I look into G r me Truc, a research fellow in CNRS and a political sociologist, in his analysis on Halbwachsian socio-ethnography of collective memory, based on theories fundamentally developed by Halbwach, a French philosopher and sociologist known for his conceptual development on collective memory, as a sociological tradition in understanding memory ethnography to analyze the dynamic nature of the reactions that together construct a collective memory. Truc, in discussing Halbwach, draws on theories on spatial frameworks of memory, how places aids in memory creation and creating two different frameworks, one that is real, faithful, yet vulnerable to changes, and one that is symbolic, simplified, yet more robust. The latter is particularly crucial in looking at social media reactions to nostalgia, in creation of an alternate places of memory when the place that creates the memory has been altered, and how the recording nature of social media to some extent prevents the total disappearance of memory of these spaces.²⁴

Whereas mental images of spaces used to come from oral histories, then books, then films, and photograph, social media creates an ever-dynamic avenue, consisting of a source media and reactions. To understand the relation between the formed mental images and memory, the study borrows theories of relations between memories and heritage by David Lowenthal, an American historian and geographer. His insight was crucial to understand social media as a form of digital heritage, through exploring the multiple relations between individuals and their perception of the past, examining individuals' engagement with the past and their interpretation on each representation of memory in both personal and collective contexts.²⁵

This research locates the production of collective memory through social media. For this, I draw on theories on digital history and its correlation to memory, an emerging and exciting area of study in our digital era. Elsherif, through her research looking at Facebook as media for middle-class Egyptians to collectively produce nostalgic narratives of their ideal nation, analyzed Facebook to try find its metonyms to the three concepts of archival theory from 20th century: the archivist, the forged account, and the hierarchy of credibility. She draws on earlier theory by Kunstman in seeing Facebook not as

²³ Henri Lefebvre, *The Production of Space* (Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, 1991).

²⁴ G r me Truc, "Memory of Places and Places of Memory: For a Halbwachsian Socio-Ethnography of Collective Memory," *International Social Science Journal* (2011).

²⁵ David Lowenthal, *The Past is a Foreign Country* (United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 257.

data repository, but an archive of feelings and popularity.²⁶ Jacobsen and Beer looked into the quantifying nature of social media in turning memories into metrics. The metrics kept people to be continuously engaged in the past, to thoughtfully select which memories to share and keep, thus enacting an active memory making practice. The nature of social media also draws on collective opinion, with its interactional properties, enabling some memories to reach a greater audience and be more visible and louder. Our memories might dull over time with lack of recall, but publicized memories are also subject to alteration. Reactions and metrics can go beyond the content and alter the initial feelings of those moments.²⁷

Social media opens another dimension in the dynamic aspect of collective memory formation, as its structure allows users to post. The curation of a space did not come from a single author, but multiple authors that are brought together by the algorithm. In a way, the ultimate curator is the organization servicing these platforms, and the ultimate narrator is ourselves, as these data are continuously tailored towards our personal preferences.

It is precisely due to the power of social media in Indonesia, that justify using it as a medium to evaluate the spatial impression of the mall. Through navigating social media, this paper aims to construct a spatial history of Taman Anggrek Mall through impressions and personal anecdotes taken from social media narratives, soap operas, and personal experiences, to construct a spatial history of Taman Anggrek Mall. Through examining the spatial production theory by Lefebvre, this paper will first look into the production of Taman Anggrek as mixed-use superblock targeted at the middle-class through examining the formal architectural expression, from the architectural drawings and vision, developers' renovation attempts, and the physical accessibility and barriers of the mall, to understand the typology that performs as the stage for spatial production. Then, the projection of this modernity will be analyzed through consumer media, drawing upon the mall depictions from 1990 soap opera *Tersayang* and social media posts. After that, delving deeper into these narratives through a selection of social media narratives, largely drawing from Facebook, Reddit, YouTube, TikTok, Instagram, Tripadvisor, and Foursquare. And last, to layer the conclusions and form an understanding of a collective digital space, to not only understand the role of shopping malls in Jakarta's urban landscape, but also in the memories of the urbanites. Arguing that the evolution of shopping malls is not limited to its physicality but shaped further by the collective perception of people. From understanding the relation of social media and public space, this study aims to understand the juxtaposition of the abstract digital space created through collective digital narratives of the mall and the actual lived physical space, and what it means to occupy such space and its effect on our perception of space.

²⁶ Nermin Elsherif, "Social Media, the Archives of Tomorrow," in *Digital Politics, Digital Histories, Digital Futures*, ed. Adi Kuntsman and Liu Xin, *Digital Activism and Society: Politics, Economy And Culture In Network Communication* (Emerald Publishing Limited, 2023), 25–38, <https://doi.org/10.1108/978-1-80382-201-320231003>.

²⁷ Benjamin N. Jacobsen and David Beer, "Quantified Nostalgia: Social Media, Metrics, and Memory," *Social Media + Society* 7, no. 2 (April 2021): 205630512110088. <https://doi.org/10.1177/20563051211008822>.

Chapter 1. Conceiving Modernity and the Consumerist Middle-class

Taman Anggrek Mall is part of a constellation of infrastructures built in the 1990s to embody the postcolonial identity of a modern Indonesia. Opened as the largest mixed-use retail podium complex in Southeast Asia in 1996 with 2900 condominium units on top of 360,000 square meters of retail complex spanning seven levels, the mall was designed to encapsulate modernity at that time.²⁸ To understand the evolving perceptions of the mall and the cultural, political, and economical background that forms the foundational imagery of Taman Anggrek Mall, this chapter will look into the underlying political agendas and visions of the mall to understand the embodied modernity and capitalism in Taman Anggrek Mall.

Deeply entangled with the vision of Soekarno, the first president who continuously put forward mega projects, the notion of modernity in Taman Anggrek Mall was part of building the postcolonial identity of Indonesia.²⁹ The cultural and political vision is further amplified in the reign of the second president Soeharto, with the national strategic policies focusing on economic development and modernization that pushes the surge of new Indonesian middle-class.³⁰ These agendas are materialized through the policy exemption in allowing Taman Anggrek Mall to be built on top of a designated urban green space and the resulting capitalization of the original green space into the current estate today as a form of spatial dominance.

The name “Taman Anggrek” literally translates into “orchid garden,” derived from the former function of the site. In a newspaper advertisement published in 1977, a hotel named Orchid Palace is specified to be located “behind *Taman Anggrek*”, which likely refers to an actual orchid garden, as Taman Anggrek Mall was built in 1996.³¹ Resonating with this history are comments under a YouTube video of the hotel in 1993, where users recalled lush green spaces around the hotel.³² Looking at Jakarta Spatial Plan for 1965-2005, the area was indeed allocated as an urban green space. Yet in the Spatial Plan for 2000-2010, the green space has been mysteriously converted to mixed-use. Rukmana critically reviewed cases where President Soeharto has made exemptions to spatial planning violations for stakeholders in his inner circle and conclude the fact that spatial planning in Indonesia, especially during the New Order, is compromised for economic growth.³³ The policy exemption likely applies to Taman Anggrek Mall, as Soeharto’s fourth daughter, Titiek Soeharto, was involved in the construction of the mall.³⁴ The elusive political connection of the mall to override the urban masterplan captures the strength and priority of the stakeholders in capitalizing the land, aiming to reach profit. The allocated green area was multiplied in vertical floor area of the mall and its apartment. The birth of the new “Taman Anggrek” creates a space of capital accumulation and commodification of public space.

²⁸ “About: Factsheet,” Mall Taman Anggrek, accessed April 14, 2024, <https://www.taman-anggrek-mall.com/about/factsheet>.

²⁹ Tan, “Starting with Sarinah”; Goodlander, “Plaza Indonesia.”

³⁰ Ansori, “Consumerism.”

³¹ “Hotel Orchid Palace,” Setiap Gedung Punya Cerita, last modified February 7, 2024, <https://setiapgedung.id/2020/05/hotel-orchid-palace.html>.

³² The Lens, “Hotel Orchid 1990an : Sebelum Mall Taman Anggrek.,” YouTube video, March 15, 2018, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5L9kp3Cmd8Y>.

³³ Deden Rukmana, “The Change and Transformation of Indonesian Spatial Planning after Suharto’s New Order Regime: The Case of the Jakarta Metropolitan Area,” *International Planning Studies* 20, no. 4 (2015): 350–70. doi:10.1080/13563475.2015.1008723.

³⁴ Redaksi Tempo, *Seri TEMPO: Soeharto, Setelah Sang Jenderal Besar Pergi* (Kepustakaan Populer Gramedia, 2022), page 87.

The spatial practice that formed the image of the mall goes beyond the physical space, creating a complex network of policy, economy, and social construction.



Figure 1. Advertisement of Orchid Palace Hotel from *Kompas*, 13 August 1977.³⁵



Hotel Orchid 1990an : Sebelum Mall Taman Anggrek.



@thelens3597 6 years ago
Tahun 1990an beneran ada taman bunga anggrek besar, dan blom ada gedung2 masi perumahan dan tanah merah. Suasanya masi hijau dan adem

1 Reply

English translation by author:

"In the 1990s there really is a big orchid garden, (...) The atmosphere was green and lush."

@NitaHair 6 years ago
Sori,tapi apa Ada update-nya istana slipi? Maklum,udh lama ga pulkam. Soalnya terakhir kali pas ngerjain proyek taman anggrek residence,merinding km di belakang TA udh pada ancur. Mo nangis sih km dulu rindang bgt disitu

1 Reply

English translation by author:

"(...) behind Taman Anggrek Mall, most have been destroyed. I want to cry because it used to be very lush there."

Figure 2. Orchid Palace Hotel in 1993 and the comments recalling the green urban spaces, TheLens in YouTube, 2018.

³⁵ Setiap Gedung Punya Cerita, "Hotel Orchid Palace."

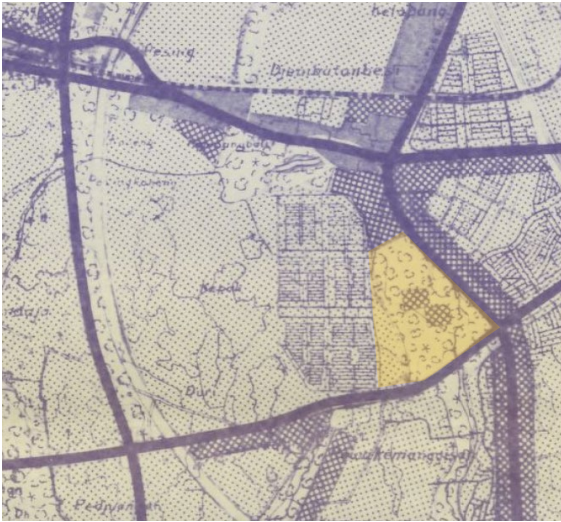


Figure 3. Taman Angrek Mall in Jakarta Masterplan 1965-1985 was designated as public green space.³⁶ Location annotated by author in yellow.



Figure 4. Green spaces in Jakarta Masterplan 1985-2005, with Taman Angrek Mall area labelled as 'green areas and recreation areas', Deden Rukmana (2015).³⁷

Chapter 2. Muted Changes, Nostalgic Reactions: The Iconic Ice Rink and Neo-classical Decorations

With the groundwork of creating the luxury image of the mall discussed in the previous chapter, the notion is captured and translated into physical space as an architecture. Oriented towards the middle-class, the mall boasts the first indoor ice rink in Southeast Asia, exclusive American chain restaurants, and one of the largest atriums at that time decorated with neo-classical features as a beacon of global modernity.³⁸ On its early days in 1999, Taman Angrek Mall attained the sixth spot as favorite place for 'Leisure and Window Shopping' and fifth spot for 'Recreation' in Jakarta. Within West Jakarta, Taman Angrek Mall slightly tops the less premium Ciputra Mall in the 'Leisure and Window Shopping' category. However, Ciputra Mall won by a landslide in the 'Shopping' category. Considering Ciputra Mall is also built in the 1990s and located just two kilometers away, it should be in proximity to the same neighbourhoods. Yet the drastic difference in the two categories shows that there is a strong distinction between 'shopping' and 'leisure and window shopping'. The experience value in entertainment spaces or simply from strolling along the corridors and enjoying the mall is in itself an appealing factor to visit, perhaps even

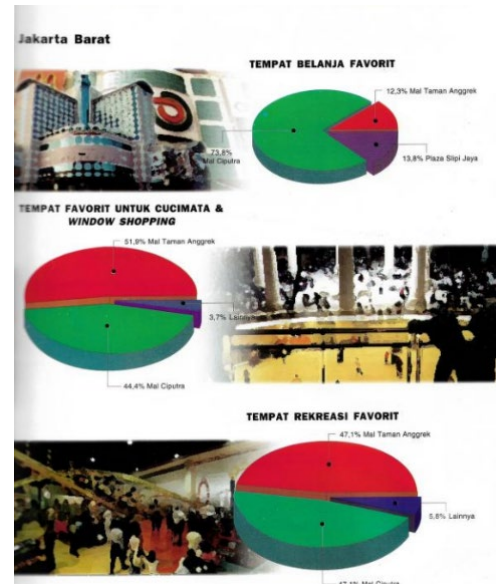


Figure 5. West Jakarta mall popularity pie chart in *Majalah Properti Indonesia* 38 (1997). The categories from top to bottom: Shopping; Leisure and Window Shopping; Recreation. Next to 'Leisure and Window Shopping' is a watercolor impression of the infamous ice rink in Taman Angrek Mall.³⁹

³⁶ Dinas Tata Kota, *Rencana Induk Jakarta 1965-1985 K 07040 Java (Res. Batavia)*, 1978, Leiden University Libraries Digital Collections, 1978, accessed April 20, 2024, <http://hdl.handle.net/1887.1/item:2694681>.

³⁷ Rukmana, "The Change and Transformation."

³⁸ Ronald A. Altoon, *Altoon + Porter Architects: Designing the World's Best Retail Centers*, (Australia: The Images Publishing Group Pty Ltd, 2004), 86-87.

more than participating in retail consumption, especially in the case of Taman Anggrek Mall. It reflects how going to the mall is not for shopping, but for leisure, entertainment, and subsequently, enacting a part of culture.⁴⁰

Within the symbolism of the mall, boasting itself as center of both retail and entertainment, the main attractions of the mall are depicted in the circular signage: sky rink, food court, and cinema. Through various anecdotes in social media, this section will deep dive into the culture of entertainment and exclusivity through the infamous ice rink and the collective impression of the neo-classical decorations by looking at the atrium and main circulation spaces.

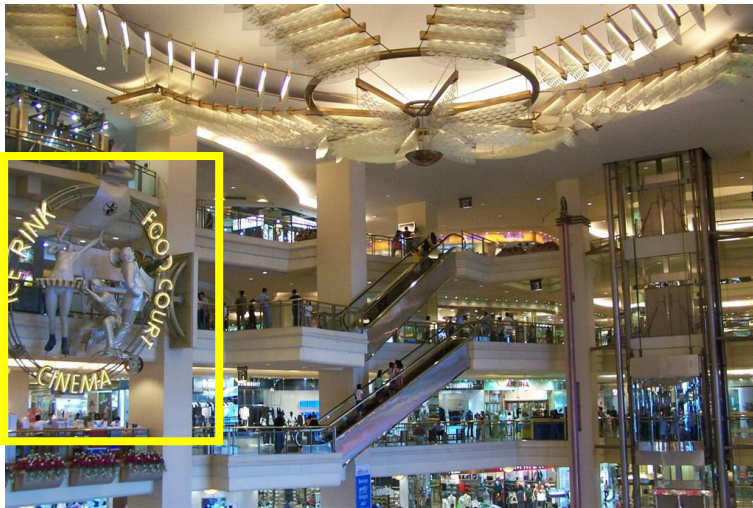


Figure 6. Circular signage on the left side of the photo, highlighted in yellow by the author.⁴¹

The pilot episode of the 1999 soap opera “Tersayang” unfolds the first meeting of the main male and female protagonist in the Taman Anggrek Mall. Raised in Yogyakarta, Mayang moved to Jakarta to start her undergraduate degree in *Universitas Indonesia*. On the day of her arrival, out of all the places in Jakarta, her friends took Mayang for a night out in Taman Anggrek Mall to experience ice skating,⁴² marking the cultural significance of the ice rink in representing the vibrant and modern Jakarta life. The first in Southeast Asia, the ice rink was more than a new experience. It was an experience from an entirely different climate. Previously foreign and unattainable, the ice rink made it possible. After all, what could be a more globalized modern than experiencing a glimpse of foreign cold climate in a tropical country?

The brief scene of Mayang in the ice rink proceeds with Dion, the male protagonist, falling in love at first sight with Mayang as he watches her skate while he was having dinner in Sizzler, an American restaurant bordering with the rink.⁴³ I have been in the same spot as Dion, eating my American dinner

³⁹ “Pusat Belanja Favorit Warga Jakarta,” *Majalah Properti Indonesia* 38 (February 1997), archived by InfoPapan Press in archive.org, <http://archive.org/details/propertiindonesiafebruari97>.

⁴⁰ InfoPapan Press, “Pusat Belanja Favorit.”

⁴¹ Dionisius Purba, “200606Jakarta 0711”, June 27, 2006, photo, 1024x683 px, available from: Flickr <https://www.flickr.com/photos/d10n2000/178275849/>.

⁴² MVP Entertainment ID, “Tersayang Episode 1 – Anjasmara Jihan Fahira,” YouTube video, uploaded October 10, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RkVBI2nBom0>

⁴³ MVP Entertainment ID, “Tersayang.”

while observing the figure skaters practicing behind the demarcating glass wall. Looking back at the successive scenes of the American diner and the ice rink, the spatial sequences are undeniably western. As discussed by Goodlander, where malls in America allows enactment of the nostalgic idea of community, in Indonesia, it becomes a place to showcase global modernity.⁴⁴ The ice rink goes beyond a space of experience to a space of performance. The direct view from the neighboring restaurants and seating surrounding the circling balcony indirectly transformed the ice rink into a stage. Just like the informal watchers of a neighborhood observed by Jane Jacobs – an American-Canadian urban theorist – formed a safe street, the constant activity in the skating rink draws interest of the people to view them and indirectly participate.⁴⁵ And, just as a place is important to locate a memory and a photograph is a tangible representation of our perception capturing a certain moment,⁴⁶ the abundance of the ice rink photographs taken from the overlooking balcony in various social media contribute further to the mental image of the ice rink as a performance space and second focal point of the mall aside from the atrium.



Figure 7. View of mall entrance, screenshot from “Tersayang” (1999), Episode 1, timestamp 15:48.



Figure 8. View from the balcony of Mayang in the ice rink, annotated by author in yellow, screenshot from “Tersayang” (1999), Episode 1, timestamp 16:20.



Figure 9. View from the restaurant of Mayang, annotated by author in yellow. Reflecting on the glass is the neon signage of “Sizzler”. Screenshot from “Tersayang” (1999), Episode 1, timestamp 17:55.



Figure 10. Dion pointing out Mayang to his friends from inside the restaurant, screenshot from “Tersayang” (1999), Episode 1, timestamp 18:18.

⁴⁴ Goodlander, “Plaza Indonesia.”

⁴⁵ Jane Jacobs, *The Death and Life of Great American Cities* (New York: Vintage Books, 1961).

⁴⁶ Lowenthal, “The Past is a Foreign Country,” 257; Truc, “Memory of places,” 148.



Zeynab91, September 2015.



Tenklooster_herman, January 2016.



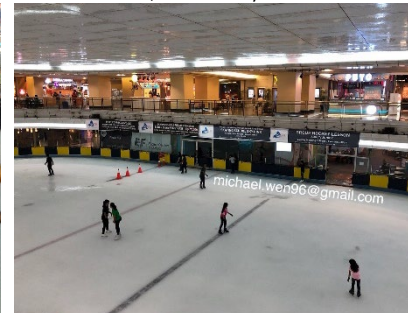
EKchan1625, February 2016.



Awalliu, June 2016.



Hihi M, December 2016.



Micwengeneral, July 2018.

Figure 11. Various photographs of the ice rink taken from the balcony, accompanying reviews of Taman Anggrek Mall in TripAdvisor.⁴⁷

As foreign experience was encapsulated in the modernity of the ice rink, undeniably the most iconic feature of the mall judging by the abundance of its photographs circulating across various social media platforms, another aspect of modernity in Taman Anggrek Mall was embedded in its neo-classical decorations present in the atrium. As its impact is less explicit and the spaces are continually transformed, instead of solely analyzing the original post, the next section will dive into the reactions to the photographs to read deeper into the image of the space.

Twenty-five years after Taman Anggrek Mall opened its doors on 28 August 1996, a user in Reddit posted a series of 20 pictures, reminiscing the mall in its early years. The post garnered 84 comments, some recounting their childhood memories of the mall, and some more specific responding to the spaces in the posted images.⁴⁸ Drawing on a comment thread in figure 12 below, a user remarked that the mall used to be livelier and questioned whether the renovated interior is the reason for the current blandness of the mall. Likely reacting to the last image in the photo carousel, the user listed down the removed features: chandelier, indoor waterfall, store name plate, wooden benches in corridors, and the large flowerpots. Across different threads, many reacted to the old photos recalling the atrium decorations and the overall build quality of the mall as a definitive part of their memory that shaped the premium image of the mall.⁴⁹ Emotions are often included in these comments, as seen in figure 13 where the user expressed sadness on the current emptier state of the mall, addressing it as a pity to the glorious old days.⁵⁰ The direct correlation and the act of comparison in these comments alludes to

⁴⁷ Tripadvisor, "Mall Taman Anggrek," accessed April 1, 2024, https://www.tripadvisor.co.id/Attraction_Review-g294229-d3845140-Reviews-Taman_Anggrek_Mall-Jakarta_Java.html

⁴⁸ ModarJayaAbadi, "ON THIS DAY."

⁴⁹ ModarJayaAbadi, "ON THIS DAY"; ModarJayaAbadi, "TBT", ModarJayaAbadi, "Mal Taman Anggrek, 1999."

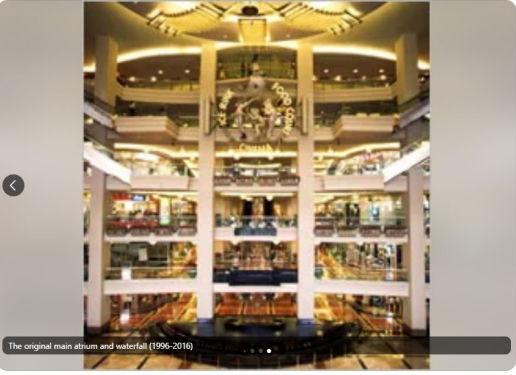
⁵⁰ ModarJayaAbadi, "Mal Taman Anggrek, 1999."

Halbwachsian socio-ethnography, where places aids recall to a memory.⁵¹ These photographs localized the spatial consequences of the memory of each user, providing a new medium to recall their memory of Taman Anggrek Mall. These memories do not necessarily have to be on the same day, unlike event-based memories often linked to monuments such as 9/11 tragedy or bombings.⁵² For Taman Anggrek Mall, the decorative features were iconic enough to be present in various memories, transcending time and even space itself, as these memories also do not have to take place in the exact same spot. A photograph representing a view of the mall does not only elicit responses on the specific area, but could also trigger memories taking place in other parts of the mall. Social media in this case has unraveled our sense of past towards photographs are in no way static.⁵³ A captured moment could trigger the dynamic act of recalling, sharing, and confirming – through comment replies and reactions – which is a tangible record of image creation, adding layers of memories to the photographs and thus create an imagined collective memory. Furthermore, in most of these cases, one could argue that the actual place does not exist anymore. The Taman Anggrek Mall still retains the same layout, but with the features changed, it is not the same space, which would explain the lingering sadness and nostalgia when comparing the constructed image of its heyday to the current state. The image of these memories has created a new symbolic place of memory.

← Indonesia • 3 yr. ago
Mondarlayakandi

ON THIS DAY: Mal Taman Anggrek opens as the largest mall in Southeast Asia, 1996

History/Throwback



The original main atrium and waterfall (1996-2016)

Archived post. New comments cannot be posted and votes cannot be cast.

👍 325 🗨️ 84 🔄 Share

User A • 3y ago

Wadaw MTA jaman dulu...

Jadi kangen masa kecil ane suka main playground di belakang timezone yg terakhir jadi matahari sebelum tutup(?) Terus kalo dah selesai main pergi ketemu badut teletubbies di seberang timezone (kalo gak salah itu tempat jual mobil deh) wkwkwkwk.

Btw ntah napa mta jaman dulu lebih hidup gitu, yang sekarang jadi rada bland gitu. Apa karena banyak dekor yg hilang disana? Kalau dari research ane:

- Lampu atrium berubah/lampu koridor hilang.
- Air terjun di atrium hilang.
- Plakat nama toko di depan toko hilang.
- Bangku2 kayu yang ada di koridor hilang(?)
- Pot2 bunga gede hilang.

👍 2 🗨️ 🔄 Share

User B OP • 3y ago

Hehehe we have the same childhood... Playground dibelakang Timezone itu afaik Alfa Zona, dulu mereka berdua sharing space sama Megakids (competitor Toys r' Us bikinan Matahari era Hari Darmawan). Tempat jualan mobil itu kalo gak salah Toyota? Since back in the day TA punya 2 large-size showrooms, Mercedes-Benz sama Toyota (Auto2000).

Pot-pot bunga gede kalo gak salah masih bisa ditemuin bbrp tapi emang udah gak sebanyak dulu sih (mungkin karena niat untuk maintain semua plantationnya berkurang hahaha). Bangku-bangku kayunya itu rata-rata diambil buat seating The Kitchen area semua, yang banyak kios-kios makanan di GF itu. Plakat nama toko kayaknya sekarang udah gak gitu dipake gak sih? Seinget Modar sebelum mereka dicopot rata-rata tenant baru udah gak pasang logo disitu lagi. And for the lost waterfall... Iya sih itu sedih wkwkwk, everything changed when they renovated the atrium with the new Hotel Mulia mini chandeliers (which just can't replace that mega chandelier) and only put one single water feature di tangga lobby (yang dulunya lebih kayak kolam, diubah jadi water fountain) and then destroyed that one as well just leaving amphi-theatre style seating and some funny wishing well thing which is shaped like an orchid (tumornya buat fengshui).

👍 2 🗨️ 🔄 Share

English translation by author:

User A

"Wow MTA in the past...
So I miss my childhood, I liked playing in the playground behind the Timezone, which was the last sun before it closed(?) Then when I finished playing, I went to meet the Teletubbies clowns opposite the Timezone (if I'm not mistaken, that was a car sales place) hahaha.
BTW, I don't know why in the past it was livelier, but now it's a bit bland. Is it because a lot of decorations are missing there? From my research:

- Atrium lights changed/corridor lights missing.
- The waterfall in the atrium is gone.
- The shop name plaque at the front of the shop is missing.
- The wooden benches in the corridor are missing(?)

User B

Hehehe we have the same childhood... The playground behind Timezone is afaik Alfa Zona, they both used to share space with Megakids (a Toys r' Us competitor made by Matahari in the Hari Darmawan era). Toyota, if I'm not mistaken, is that car sales place? Since back in the day TA has 2 large-size showrooms, Mercedes-Benz and Toyota (Auto2000).
If I'm not mistaken, you can still find a few big flowerpots, but there aren't as many as before (perhaps because the intention to maintain all the plantations is decreasing hahaha). The wooden benches are generally used for seating in all The Kitchen areas, where there are lots of food stalls at GF. I don't think shop name plaques are used that way nowadays, do they? As far as I remember, before they were removed, the average new tenant didn't put the logo there anymore. And for the lost waterfall... Yes, that's sad hahaha, everything changed when they renovated the atrium with the new Hotel Mulia mini chandeliers (which just couldn't replace that mega chandelier) and only put one single water feature on

⁵¹ Truc, "Memory of places," 148.

⁵² Truc, "Memory of places," 147.

⁵³ Lowenthal, "The Past is a Foreign Country," 257.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>The big flowerpots are gone."</i> 	<i>the lobby stairs (which used to be more like a pool, was converted into a water fountain) and then destroyed that one as well just leaving amphitheater style seating and some funny wishing well thing which is shaped like an orchid (rumored to be for feng shui).</i>
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Figure 12. Comment response to the Reddit post listing the removed features, highlighted in red. Reddit, 2021.⁵⁴


 <p>Archived post. New comments cannot be posted and votes cannot be cast.</p>	<p>User C • 4y ago</p> <p>Sad tho terakhir kali ke TA udah sepi banget. Literally kaya mall baru buka pag2 (padahal udah siang menuju sore). Granted waktu itu bukan weekend dan lagi awal2 munculnya COVID-19. Air mancurnya juga uda ilang kalo ga salah deh</p> <p>Ngeliatnya sedih banget, dari kecil kalo ke mall bolak balik ke sini mula. Masih ingat waktu kecil selalu lompat2 di ubinnya yang bentuk persegi panjang, kaya main floor is lava kwkw</p> <p>Sekarang udah banyak yang renov. Toko lantai 3 yang di pelosok belakang udah ilang semua (yang dulu isinya terminal game, figure2, toko DVD, elektronik, bakmi GM)</p> <p>User C</p> <p><i>"Sad tho the last time I went to TA it was really quiet (...) The fountain is also gone if I'm not mistaken. It looks really sad, since I was little I went to the mall and came back here all the time. I still remember when I was little, I always jumped on the rectangular tiles, like playing floor is lava hahaha Now many have been renovated. The shop on the 3rd floor in the back corner is all gone (which used to contain game terminals, figures, DVD shops, electronics, GM noodles)."</i></p>
---	--

Figure 13. Comment response expressing sadness, Reddit, 2020.⁵⁵

<p>User G • 4y ago</p> <p>Ah home sweet home... The iconic floor pattern, the escalator transition on lt2, and lot of good childhood memories</p> <p>User B OP • 4y ago</p> <p>Love TA's floor so much, in an era of malls only brave to use marble in the "expensive" zones of their mall, TA dared to use it in every section.</p>	<p>User H</p> <p>Wah angle nya iconic, tapi ane tetep paling suka lampu gantung MTA, patung2 keren yg di fountain, sama patung2 terbalik di foodcourt. Bener2 the best features of the old MTA</p>
<p>User H</p> <p>Ahhh that's the slogan. I remember an ice skater statue, a film director statue, tapi lupa patung 1 nya lagi... Koki atau tamu food court kali ya.</p> <p>Yah tapi buat anak barat emg ga ada yg ngalahin TA sm Puri sih. PI PS sama PIM ngga berasa homey lol.</p>	<p>User I</p> <p>MTA itu memang mesin waktu ke tahun 90-an.</p> <p>User J</p> <p>Another timeless shopping centre, that statue ring is so memorable.</p>

Figure 14. Collage of comments on the different decorative features, Reddit, 2020.⁵⁶

⁵⁴ ModarJayaAbadi, "ON THIS DAY".

⁵⁵ ModarJayaAbadi, "Mal Taman Anggrek, 1999."

⁵⁶ ModarJayaAbadi, "Dapur Anggrek"; ModarJayaAbadi, "Mal Taman Anggrek, 1999."

Responding to the nostalgic image of the atrium, it is also important to analyze how it was originally meant to be represented, as the constructed image of the place is first and foremost based on the vision of the space in its design stage before the conception. This representation is analyzed through the perspective drawing by the design architect Altoon+Porter as seen in figure 15.⁵⁷ The drawing is centered on the chandelier and highlights the flowers, patterned floors, and indoor fountain through vibrant use of color and selective composition by putting the features in the foreground. From both the architectural renders and social media comments, it was clear that the decorative features had a powerful presence in the atrium. The bareness of the atrium, as commented by the user in figure 12 could perhaps be best explained by putting together the original render, old photo, and the new condition of the atrium. Side by side, we can see the contrast and impact of taking away the decorative features. Take the centerpiece chandelier as an example. It was replaced in 2015 with a series of smaller luminaires to improve the lighting as part of the mall's renovation masterplan taking off in 2011.⁵⁸ Although the new fixtures maintain the same style, the size and quantity takes away the centrality of the lighting feature. For such a huge impact on the space, at least based on social media comments, there is not much news coverage or official statements regarding the renovation, only that it happened sometime in 2015 to 2016. Even for this information, pinpointing the time was only possible by tracking the upload date of photos in Foursquare, a popular location-based social network.⁵⁹ The strong reaction of the public towards the seemingly discreet renovation came in contrast with the unbothered civic reaction to the grand change of the LED façade which will be discussed in the next chapter.

⁵⁷ Altoon+Porter, "Taman Anggrek Mall," archived June 24, 1997, at the Wayback Machine,

<https://web.archive.org/web/19970624102152/http://www.altoonporter.com/projects/international/tamanang/intro.html>.

⁵⁸ Novi Nadya, "Ambisi Mal Taman Anggrek yang Kembali Akan Direnovasi," Liputan6, November 16, 2017,

<https://www.liputan6.com/lifestyle/read/3165392/ambisi-mal-taman-anggrek-yang-kembali-akan-direnovasi>

⁵⁹ "Mal Taman Anggrek," Foursquare, <https://id.foursquare.com/v/mal-taman-anggrek/4b4c4ed4f964a520c7b026e3?openPhotoId=57de1213498e2c2a947f6a98>.



Figure 15. Perspective drawing of the atrium by the design architect Altoon+Porter on their website, archived in 1997.⁶⁰



Figure 16. Photograph of the atrium by Erhard Pfeiffer, in *Altoon + Porter Architects: Designing the World's Best Retail Centers*, published in 2004.⁶¹

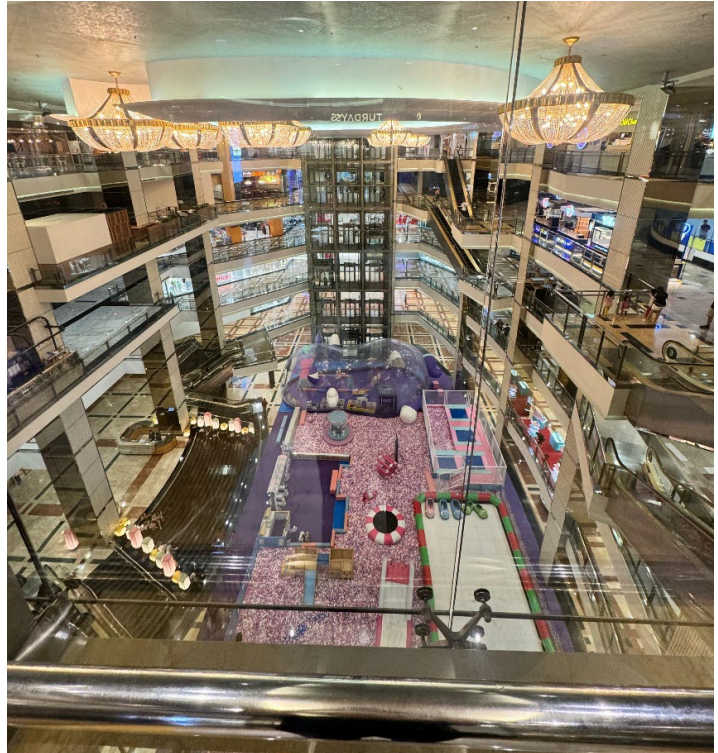


Figure 17. Photograph of the atrium taken on April 15, 2024 by an apartment resident.⁶²

⁶⁰ Altoon+Porter, "Taman Angrek Mall."

⁶¹ Altoon, *Altoon + Porter Architects*, 87.

⁶² La Myra Bening, personal photo, April 15, 2024.

Chapter 3. Celebrated Changes, Muted Reactions: The Forgotten Achievements of the LED Façade

Taman Anggrek Mall kicked off its major renovation masterplan conceived in 2011 by changing its iconic pink stone envelope into LED façade in 2012.⁶³ During that time, the mall made headlines for breaking the Guinness World Record with ‘The World Largest LED Illuminated Façade’. According to the mall manager, the innovation was done to keep TA in being relevant, that when people think of a shopping mall, they will first think of Taman Anggrek Mall.⁶⁴ However, despite the official achievements, the impact of the change seemed to be momentary, as analyzed through related social media posts. There is subsequent traffic in 2012 and 2013 in X – then called Twitter – where Jakarta was dubbed as the “world’s number one Twitter city”.⁶⁵ The mall management made a strategic move then, where it incorporated live tweets to be displayed in the interactive media façade, garnering over 2000 tweets of #AskTAMI – ask Taman Anggrek Mall Indonesia.⁶⁶



Figure 18. #AskTAMI social media campaign which directly links tweets to the mall LED façade, Kurnia and Chia, 2012.⁶⁷

Unfortunately, the LED façade only had this short period of recognition. A more recent Facebook post showing the before and after of the façade renovation pointed out its achievements, gathering 19 comments, but only one spoke about the LCD façade and that too negatively stating “The LED is ugly.”⁶⁸ On another post with 16 comments showing the overall view of the mall and its apartments, there are 3 comments stating “the color has faded,”⁶⁹ most likely referring to the apartment as it takes a lot of space in the image. It is interesting to see how despite stating the fading color which one user defended it is caused by camera effect – no comments are made on the LED façade. On a general throwback post

⁶³ Nadya, “Ambisi Mal.”

⁶⁴ Nadya, “Ambisi Mal.”

⁶⁵ Djohansyah Saleh, “ITL #15 Indonesia Falls for Social Media: Is Jakarta the World’s Number One Twitter City?,” *IPRA*, March 2013, accessed April 12, 2024, <https://www.ipra.org/news/itl/indonesia-falls-for-social-media-is-jakarta-the-worlds-number-one-twitter-city/>.

⁶⁶ Didit Putra Erlangga Rahardjo, “Bermain Twitter Di Papan Iklan Elektronik,” *Kompas*, November 26, 2013, <https://tekno.kompas.com/read/2013/11/26/1256450/Bermain.Twitter.di.Papan.Iklan.Elektronik>. Author’s note: netizens shared images of their tweets being displayed in the LED façade in Path, the social media linked to Twitter at that time to post pictures. However, Path shut down its website in 2018.

⁶⁷ Fajar Kurnia and Jeremy Chia, “Mal Taman Anggrek ‘#ASKTAMI,’” Fajar&Jeremy, accessed April 23, 2024, <https://www.fajeremy.com/mal-taman-anggrek-asktami>.

⁶⁸ Indonesia Tempo Dulu, “Mall Taman Anggrek di Jakarta pada tahun 1990-an dan sekarang,” Facebook Post, 3 September 2021. <https://www.facebook.com/100064674130233/posts/4922427441107478/>

⁶⁹ Indonesia Tempo Dulu, “Mall Taman Anggrek di Jakarta pada tahun 1990-an dan sekarang,” Facebook Post, 2 April 2021. <https://www.facebook.com/100064674130233/posts/4450747821608778/>

in Reddit, despite only showing image of the atrium, a user commented on the LED façade, stating its impact on the urbanscape, quoted “LED is very bright, almost making eyes go blind when passing through Inner City Toll”.⁷⁰ This comment shows the physical impact of the mall going beyond the building scale and into the urban level. Yet, despite the big change in the architectural feature of the mall, on a societal level, the façade does not really change the experience inside the mall, which perhaps contributes to the lack of nostalgic anecdotes from the public.

Indonesia Tempo Dulu added a new photo to the album: Jakarta - Then & Now 3. ...
 September 3, 2021 · 🌐
 Mall Taman Anggrek di Jakarta pada tahun 1990-an dan sekarang.
 Mall Taman Anggrek in Jakarta in the 1990s and present.
<http://www.latinamericanstudies.org/taman.htm>
<https://goo.gl/maps/pHHb3aCv8sy1tPNXA>



Figure 19. Facebook post comparing the façade in 1990s and 2021, posted in Facebook group ‘Indonesia Tempo Dulu’ [Indonesia in the Past], 2021.⁷¹



Figure 20. Comments on LED and dress code restrictions, Reddit, 2020.⁷²

⁷⁰ ModarJayaAbadi, “TBT.” Quote translated by author.
⁷¹ Indonesia Tempo Dulu, “Mall Taman Anggrek,” 3 September 2021.
⁷² ModarJayaAbadi, “TBT.”



Figure 21. Perspective render of the mall front entrance by the design architect Altoon+Porter on their website, archived in 1997.⁷³

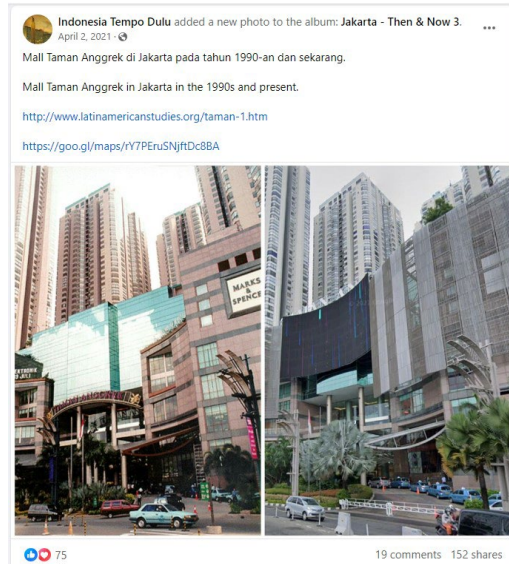


Figure 22. Facebook post comparing the façade in 1990s and 2021, posted in Facebook group 'Indonesia Tempo Dulu' [Indonesia in the Past], 2021.⁷⁴

Chapter 4. Social Seclusion and Spatial Exclusivity: The Main Entrance and The Parking Lot as Hidden Socio-economical Barriers of Accessibility

The discussions on image and formations of nostalgic memories in the previous chapters mainly offer perspectives from middle-class society. This chapter will investigate the more public space of the mall, namely the main entrance and parking lot, to uncover another perspective on the mall from the lens of the lower-class society, and contrasting it with the nostalgic modern image cultivated by the middle-class.

The 1990s was regarded as the glory period of Taman Anggrek Mall, and the depiction of this 'glory' and 'luxury' can be contributed to the mall policy at that time. According to exchanges of comments under a Reddit thread in figure 25, Taman Anggrek Mall imposed a dresscode of 'no flipflops', requiring proper sandals, on the period of 1996 to 1998.⁷⁵ This anecdote was also mentioned by Leeuwen through her friend Sissy, who complained that the security of Taman Anggrek Mall has become lenient after 1998 riots, allowing 'kampung' people, usually without proper shoes, to enter the mall.⁷⁶ Further noted by Leeuwen in her extensive anthropological research in the 1990s regarding shopping malls in Jakarta, those of lower class are often deterred from coming into the mall, as they are unsure in how to behave inside the mall.⁷⁷ Ultimately, this alludes to the socio-economical barrier in the main entrance.

⁷³ Altoon+Porter, "Taman Anggrek Mall."

⁷⁴ Indonesia Tempo Dulu, "Mall Taman Anggrek," 2 April 2021.

<https://www.facebook.com/100064674130233/posts/4922427441107478/>

⁷⁵ ModarJayaAbadi. "TBT".

⁷⁶ Leeuwen, "Lost in Mall," 154. Kampung people refers to lower-class society in urban Jakarta.

⁷⁷ Leeuwen, "Lost in Mall."

Going out from the shielded interior of the mall, the location of parking spaces in shopping malls across Jakarta inadvertently creates a social division.⁷⁸ The covered canopies are car roads, which then connect to the parking for cars. Motorbike parking is often located on the periphery. Additionally, Taman Anggrek Mall is disconnected from any forms of public transport – there are nearby spots, but you need to walk from the stop on a road that seemed to cater more for the cars – the pedestrian are not really designed, as it is frequently blocked by signages, and even one has to go through the hot exhaust to reach the lobby of the apartment. Without a car, the experience of entering the mall changes. Thus, the mall caters towards the specific economy level of the middle class that can afford cars.

From social media anecdotes, personal experience, and an informal interview with a current resident, entrance to the mall can be categorized in mainly three modes, each with varying levels of comfort. First, the car brings you to a comfortable sheltered drop-off or straight to the parking lot where you are sheltered from the heat and rain. Second, the motorcycle, it is only in 2023 that a dedicated parking space is created inside the enclosed car park.⁷⁹ Previously, motorcycle parking was located across the mall in an open space, shown in figure 23, where it is open to the onslaught of rain and heat. Furthermore, the driver needs to cross a major road to reach the mall, as shown in the video by an *ojol* in figure 24.⁸⁰ The *ojol* even suggested for drivers to cancel delivery orders from the mall, as the non-accommodating parking would add significant delay to their work.⁸¹ Third, the pedestrian. If you are coming from public transportation or the nearby mall and residences, walking would be the option. The path towards the mall goes through uncovered alleyways with some parts unpaved, with the nearest entrance located inside the parking lot, filled with sweltering heat from the cars. The different degrees of comfort and protection show that the mall is optimized to accommodate those with cars.



Figure 23. Photo taken from atrium of the mall facing outside, 2016. Between the street and the flyover in the background is the open motorcycle parking space.⁸²

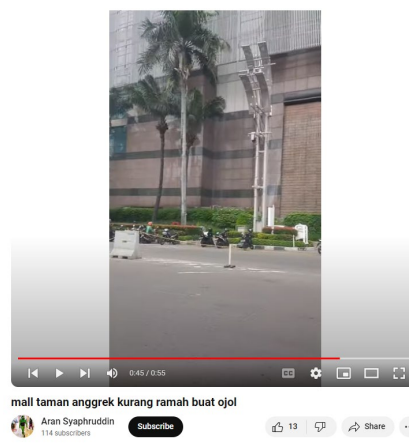


Figure 24. Taman Anggrek Mall is not friendly for *ojol*, YouTube, 2022.

⁷⁸ Leeuwen, "Lost in Mall."

⁷⁹ Yulius Motovlog, "Parkir Motor Mall Taman Anggrek Pindah Lokasi," YouTube Video, February 20, 2023, https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZSSD_wyYfI8.

⁸⁰ Aran Syaphruddin, "mall taman anggrek kurang ramah buat ojol," February 7, 2022, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhV6POp2vwA>. *Ojol*, shortened from *Ojek Online*, is a driver for online motorbike ride-hailing service.

⁸¹ Syaphruddin, "mall taman anggrek."

⁸² Regina Tania Tan, personal photo, 28 August 2016.

An interesting point to note is that anecdotes on motorbike parking have not appeared in Reddit, as of this research. Generally, the car park of Taman Anggrek Mall is quite well designed, even praised for using the unusually premium ceramic material.⁸³ In figure 25, a Reddit user remarked that the mall has taken great care of its maintenance, swiftly replacing the tiles every time it has cracked, so often that no one would notice the maintenance schedule of the floor.⁸⁴ It is after venturing into TikTok and other more local forums that I found some complaints regarding the motorbike parking, which was located outside of the mall. Through the nature of these social media, we can draw conclusions on the perspectives of each social class. Users in Reddit likely belong to the upper middle-class, as Reddit is banned in Indonesia and the thread are mostly in English. Meaning, the users would need to be tech-savvy enough to use VPN or living abroad, and proficient enough in using English. Meanwhile, visual-based media such as TikTok, YouTube, and Instagram are generally more popular amongst the locals.

From looking at the spatial aspects of the mall, we can see the influence of spatial planning in filtering certain social class from entering the mall. Although no hard rule is enforced on who can enter the mall, except for the short-lived dress code on the first two years of the mall, invisible barriers took place in form of physical design. Spatial exclusion does not have to be a hard line, it can sometimes take form in the small things. These small things lead to frustration and can add up to nervousness and disorientation on 'how to behave in a mall'.⁸⁵ The case of Taman Anggrek Mall is not exclusive. It applies to many large complexes of office towers and shopping malls in Jakarta. Built with comfortable drop-offs and parking lots for cars, the mall is a physical form of social exclusion, where the motorcycle riders – which form a large part of Jakarta's urban community – are often ignored.



Figure 25. Comments on the material quality used by the mall, Reddit, 2021.⁸⁶

Chapter 5. A Dying Mall?

Taman Anggrek Mall has steadily served its nearby residents, even through the 1998 riots and 2008 financial crisis. The true threat to Taman Anggrek Mall came in 2009, when Central Park Mall was built adjacent to it. Promoting its 1.5 hectares of open green space,⁸⁷ together with its up-to-date tenants

⁸³ ModarJayaAbadi, "ON THIS DAY."

⁸⁴ ModarJayaAbadi, "ON THIS DAY."

⁸⁵ Leeuwen, "Lost in Mall."

⁸⁶ ModarJayaAbadi, "ON THIS DAY."

⁸⁷ Natalia Ririh, "Konsep Hijau Jadi Andalan Mal Central Park," *Kompas*, February 9, 2011, https://properti.kompas.com/read/2011/02/09/14031944/~Kawasan_Terpada~Ritel.

and accessibility to public transportation, boosted Central Park Mall to grow steadily in popularity over the years. In figure 27, various users mentioned they have shifted their preference from Taman Angrek Mall to Central Park Mall for the reasons above. Most of these comments also remarked that Taman Angrek is now a dead mall, with the declining shops and lack of public accessibility, with some suggestions to add a bridge connecting the mall to Central Park.⁸⁸



Figure 26. Transformation of the mall surroundings over the years, Google Earth.

Aside from the direct competition with Central Park, the larger retail scene has forced Taman Angrek Mall to adapt to changes. Over the years, Taman Angrek Mall has changed its major tenants. Although the 1999 survey show there is lower figures in coming to the mall for shopping, from various social media comments in figure 27, it is apparent that the presence of the shops are prominent in experiencing the mall. A lot of the nostalgic comments reminisce about their high school and college days – as the mall is near several campuses – moments of going out with friends and partners, or visiting the mall as a family, with specific list of stores to visit. Notably, *Hartz Chicken Buffet*, an American franchise restaurant and *Samudra Suki*, a Asian hotpot restaurant, both offering all-you-can-eat experience. Recently, *Gramedia*, a popular bookstore franchise, closed its branch in 2020. Despite having other branches, a user expressed disappointment, explaining that the *Gramedia* in Taman Angrek Mall was his definition of *Gramedia*.⁸⁹ It is interesting that despite it being a franchise, offering similar products across branches, people do link a specific branch to their mental map of the store. Aside from these are personal anecdotes on smaller shops, also accompanied by mental images often

⁸⁸ komunitasjakarta, “Fix bikin nostalgia!” TikTok, February 28, 2024, accessed April 8, 2024, <https://www.tiktok.com/@komunitasjakarta/video/7340608580703309061>; Simpenan Pejabat [@BanyuSadewa], “Satu2 nya akses yg biasa dipake jalan dari CP ke TA tuh cuman jalan ini,” X Tweet, November 22, 2023, <https://twitter.com/BanyuSadewa/status/1727312718003323293>.

⁸⁹ ModarJayaAbadi, “TBT.”

referring to specific location, adding details such as the floor level or reference to another shop, a form of mnemonic practice creating places of memory that is no longer there.⁹⁰

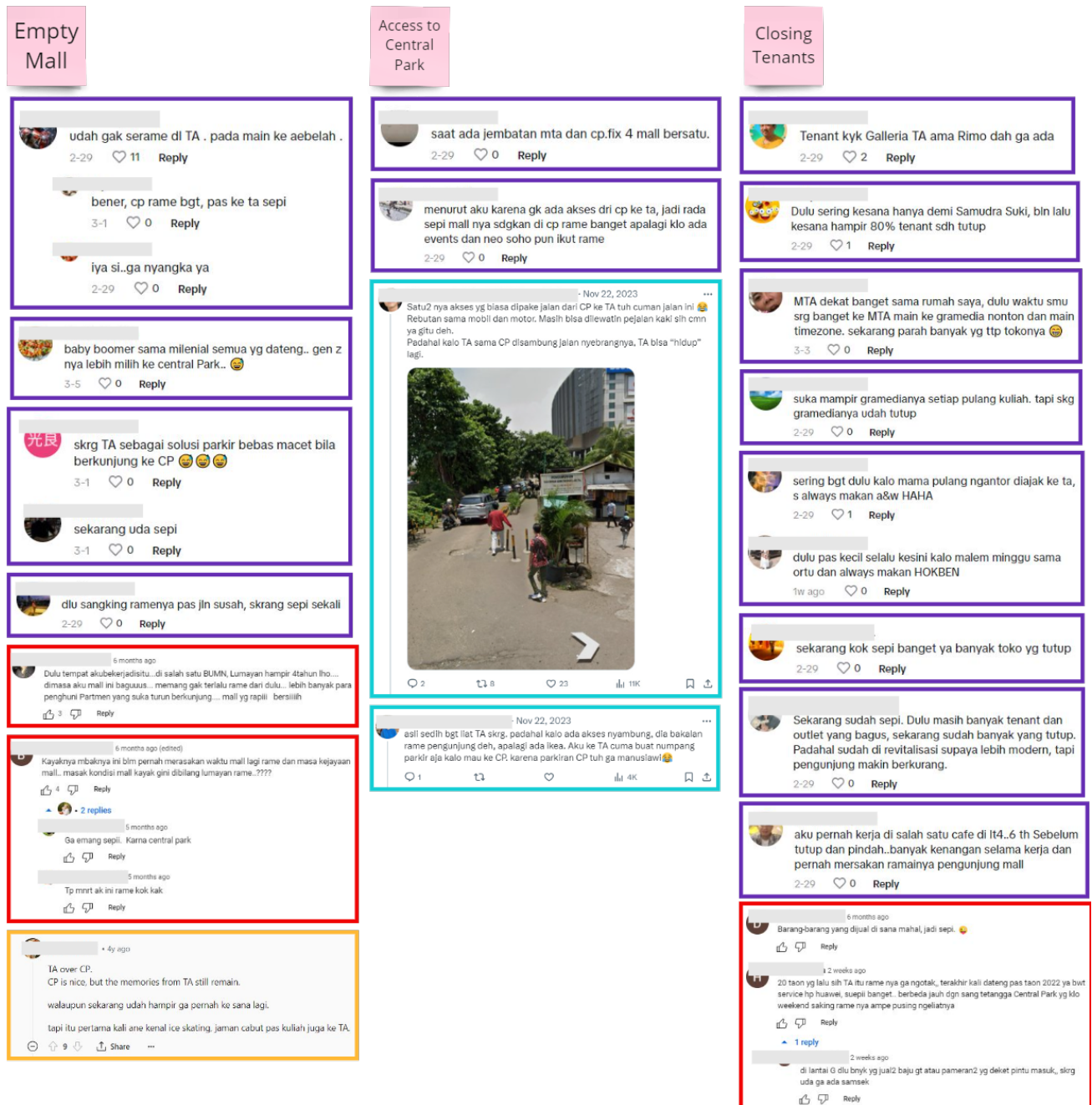


Figure 27. Reasons Taman Anggrek Mall is dying across social media platforms. Bordered in purple is from TikTok post “This mall will definitely give you childhood flashback”,⁹¹ in red from YouTube video “Condition of Taman Anggrek Mall now”,⁹² in orange from Reddit thread “TBT”,⁹³ and in blue from a tweet in X.⁹⁴

⁹⁰ Truc, “Memory of places.”

⁹¹ komunitasjakarta, “Fix bikin nostalgia!”

⁹² Miifta rambe, “KEADAAN MALL TAMAN ANGGREK SEKARANG!! | MAKIN SEPI??” YouTube Video, August 2, 2023, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pP8rSbt2ww0&t=405s>.

⁹³ ModarJayaAbadi, “TBT.”

⁹⁴ Simpenan Pejabat, “Satu2 nya akses.”

Deeply ingrained in the culture, almost everyone has a favorite mall, to the point where someone made a “Jakarta mall tier list” and anthropomorphize malls to link it towards a certain persona. In this case, Taman Angrek Mall is depicted as ‘cici influencer’, referring to a specific group of young adult Chinese-Indonesian influencers who typically comes from upper middle-class families. The two illustrations reflect the strong mall culture amongst Jakartans. The mall you frequented could be considered as part of your personality. When familiar shops get replaced, it attracts a different community. Leeuwen observed one could act out multiple roles when behaving inside a mall. Thus, even if the mall garnered the same number of visitors, if it attracts a distinctively different social class, it would change the identity of the person going to the mall, making it no longer “my mall”. If it is no longer familiar, it might as well be dead.

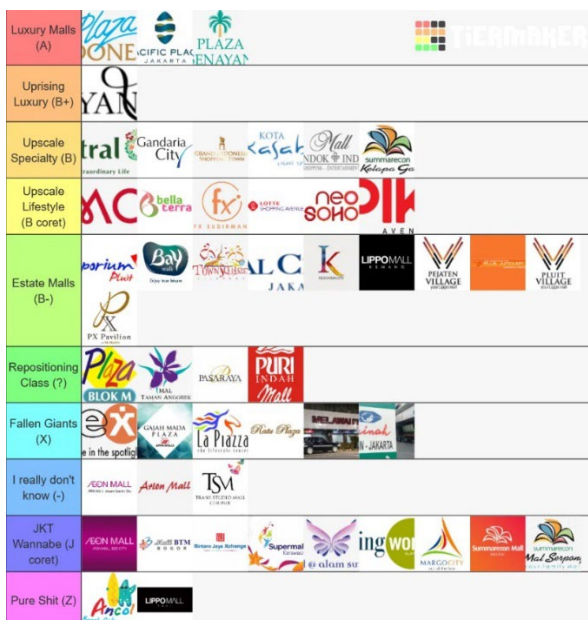


Figure 28. Jakarta malls tier list, Reddit thread, 2020.⁹⁵



Figure 29. Instagram post “If Jakarta Malls Were People,” WKWHYTHO, 2024.⁹⁶

The unfamiliarity of the mall’s branding and each individual correlation to the mall is greatly reflected in social media comments reasoning why the mall is dying. Change of tenant, inaccessibility, and comparison to the nearby Central Park Mall are amongst the most frequent reactions. From this and the previous sections, we can conclude that the concept of dying also means changing, turning into the unfamiliar. We started in the second chapter, contrasting the removed decorations and the eternal ice rink, showcasing the death that happened in the atrium would not happen to the ice rink despite the rising competitions, precisely because it is kept alive. To some extent, the removal is the catalyst of death. In the third chapter, changes to the façade did not really induce reactions, as it is less perceivable on a personal scale. The fourth chapter delved deeper into the social control and barriers, acknowledging that barriers in the 90s would not work the same today, that the mall should be

⁹⁵ arn26, “Definitive™ Jakarta Malls Tier List + Template,” Reddit Post, *r/Indonesia*, April 27, 2020, www.reddit.com/r/indonesia/comments/g923z2/definitive_jakarta_malls_tier_list_template/.

⁹⁶ WKWHYTHO, “Y’all Jakartans love malls more than people, so by anthropomorphising them, we hope y’all find a new pastime,” Instagram Post, March 9, 2024, slide 7, https://www.instagram.com/p/C4Rj_2KyGrg/. Cici means older sister, adaptation of the Chinese language ‘姐姐’.

adaptable to the current demand in access and work with the urban fabric more. In this last chapter, the change of tenants created the unfamiliar. With a different target market, the mall could as well be dead, as it is unfamiliar. Through looking at each space and their memories in detail, multiple perspectives are unraveled on the relation of an individual and collective memory to a place. The associated nostalgia and symbolized image created representations of the space. When contrasted with the representational space – the actual lived space as it is today – depending on one's information of the represented space, the disconnection between the perceived actual place and the place of memory creates a disconcerting separation. The lived space is constructed through multiplicity of spatial practices and representations over time, a form of social production. Through this study, we can see that social media has proponents to make a mental space, a new place for these memories. In a way, there arises a new form of lived space. As nostalgia enters in reaction to the old photos, there is a notion of the supposed lived space. Yet, as the users of social media are reacting photographs from the past, with their perception of the mall based on the past, their mental perception of the lived space will differ from the actual, physical lived space. This can happen due to moment of detachment, as these users are likely not continuously living in Taman Anggrek Mall. When this disparity collides, the physical lived space is dead in contrast to the more ideal, mental lived space.

Conclusion

Looking at the different social media revealed a larger systemic archive in scale. The history is not recorded in a single archive but composed of collective stories of different authors with their own autonomy. Unlike official statements, publications, or anonymous street surveys, social media platforms allow us to view dynamic interaction encompassing certain timelines. In recounting history, it provides a unique feedback loop of users with the reply and react features. Through the algorithm of the social media itself, viewers can directly see the information curated based on the collected statistics.

The study revealed social media as a powerful participatory tool going forward into the future. In learning and verifying histories, to uncovering unpublished stories. Although the actual reasons behind different changes and design decisions within the mall could only be revealed by the owners, the implications of these changes and public perception could be accessed virtually anywhere through the power of social media.

The use of image is inherently powerful, as users often recall the old image into their constructed memories and current experience. These anecdotes do not come out of blue, but they are gathered from “throwback posts”, postings on social media where the original user posted a photo of the past, with information in the caption. The live reaction of different people created a collective history. Unlike traditional archives where reactions are perhaps only recorded through review articles and papers, or in the case of oral history, digital media has created an interesting avenue where these reactions can be reacted, and to some extent, accessed publicly. In a consumerist society where the type of mall you frequented also forms your identity, each mall has a strong associated symbolic image. As it stands through time, the strong image of the 1990s Taman Anggrek Mall has prevailed. Juxtaposing the newer changes, drastic changes with a different concept of modern could potentially end up stripping the

mall of its character, thus questioning the intent of rebranding when the collective opinion already formed a strong image.

Spatial imaginary formed by each social media platform could be different, based on the accessibility of the social media in terms of language, popularity, paywall, and the nature of each platform. For posts calling back on nostalgia, platforms such as Reddit and Facebook groups gathered targeted comments, as the users are based on a community with similar interests. In more video-based and popular fast consumption platforms such as YouTube and TikTok, there exists a greater variety of users across different social class and interests, giving more diverse comments. Websites based on check-ins and reviews such as Tripadvisor and Foursquare offer a different kind of functionality in understanding the collective spatial perception. Instead of curation, the dated and live update of the reviews allows the glimpse of direct impression of the users at that time. Whereas mental images of spaces used to come from curated mediums, this study in capturing the various perceptions of Taman Anggrek Mall through social media opens further research avenues in our visual-based digital era for further analysis on the impact of various social media platforms in forming our spatial perception of a space and the related complexities of forming a dynamic collective memory.

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