

A Global and Local Narrative Collide: Traditional Distribution of Land Rights in the Contemporary Cultural Landscape of Bali

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ABSTRACT

The southern portion of Bali has been characterized by rice-terraced landscapes for centuries. This part of the island has had a long and conflicting tradition of intensive agricultural land-uses coupled with high population densities (Vickers 1996). The picturesque qualities of southern Bali's landscape have increasingly trumped the productive capabilities as land owners are able to make a better income by selling or leasing their land, investing the proceeds and living on the interest, than by growing rice (MacRae 2003). This is all compounded by the soaring international real estate market that has been a de facto step toward facilitating the systematic transfer of land from adat control to that of formal tenureship (Basiago 1995). Thus, as land uses change and customary land tenure gives way to market pressures, development remains central to local Balinese concerns.

Prior to President Suharto's New Order government, Bali flourished under a traditional land tenure system, albeit complex, that was held relatively intact even after Dutch colonization in 1908 (Tsing 2005). This traditional tenure system is an intricate agreement between the visible and invisible, the social and political, and the ecological and economic that is typical of the Balinese relationship with any systemic organization (Matthews and Selman 2006). To understand these relationships it is important to explore two intertwined narratives specific to the island of Bali. The first narrative tells the story of internal or local forces that have shaped the land tenure system over the past 100 years. The second narrative is the elaborate tale of the external or global forces that have shaped the image of Bali during roughly this same 100-year period. Aligning these two narratives reveals the surprising intersections when the narratives collide in contemporary Bali, where both the local tenure system and the global image of Bali have contributed to the development pressures on the island's landscape.

As Bali grapples with the prospect of becoming an international piece of real estate in the face of globalization, many of these forces are no different than during the Dutch period of colonization, the scholarly and artistic explosion during the 1930s, and the ramifications from the New Order government from the 1960s onward. Thus, the island's contemporary development pressures beg the same question as each preceding historically-significant period: Can Bali's cultural landscape survive amidst these development pressures? It is precisely this question that contributes to the image-making process where Bali is seen as a paradise. Yet images of paradise are not that unless they teeter on the verge of loss. At each historically-significant intersection of local and global forces at work amidst the colonial/post-colonial transition in Indonesia, the image of Bali has been cast in relief against a fragile landscape. Deconstructing how this image of Bali was created and how this landscape has come to be conceived as fragile is best understood by layering the economic, ecological, social, and religious functions protected and promoted by the adat tenure system with the economic, ecological, social, and religious meanings associated with this landscape.

INTRODUCTION

The southern portion of Bali has been characterized by rice-terraced landscapes for centuries. This part of the island has had a long and conflicting tradition of intensive agricultural land-use coupled with high population densities. The picturesque qualities of southern Bali's landscape have trumped the productive capabilities as land owners are able to make a better income by selling or even leasing their land, investing the proceeds and living on the interest, than by growing rice. This is all compounded by the soaring international real estate

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market that has been a *de facto* step toward facilitating the systematic transfer of land from *adat* control to that of formal tenureship (Basiago 1995).

Loosely translated, *adat* is the customary law that governs how individuals interact with the land. *Adat* has evolved in rural communities throughout the Indonesian archipelago as a local response to the variability in the resultant supporting environments (Hirsh and Warren 1998). In its general application, *adat* is characteristic of environmental management. However, under the nation's second President, Suharto (1967-1998) and his New Order government, Indonesia became a nation "dedicated to the obliteration of local places, local land and resource rights, and local knowledge" (Tsing 2005, p. 68). Thus, as land uses change and customary land tenure gives way to market pressures, development remains central to local Balinese concerns. Prior to Suharto's "anti-local regionality" (Tsing 2005, p. 68), Bali flourished under a traditional land tenure system, albeit complex, that was held relatively intact even after Dutch colonization in 1908. Varying to some degree across the island, the traditional tenure system in Bali is an intricate agreement between the visible and invisible, the social and political, and the ecological and economic that is typical of the Balinese relationship with any systemic organization. To understand these relationships it is important to explore two intertwined narratives specific to the island of Bali. The first narrative tells the story of internal or local forces that have shaped the land tenure system over the past 100 years. The second narrative is the elaborate tale of the external or global forces that have shaped the image of Bali during roughly this same 100-year time period. Aligning these two narratives reveals the surprising intersections when the narratives collide in contemporary Bali where both the local tenure system and the global image of Bali have contributed to the development pressures on the island's landscapes.

Beginning with Dutch colonization in 1908, at each historically-significant intersection of local and global forces at work thereafter, the image of Bali has been cast in relief against a fragile landscape. Deconstructing how this image of Bali was created and how this landscape has come to be conceived as fragile is best understood by layering the economic, ecological, social, and religious *functions* protected and promoted by the *adat* tenure system with the economic, ecological, social, and religious *meanings* associated with this landscape. In the Balinese village Ubud, this progression toward land as capital derives precisely from the function of and meaning toward the same cultural landscape. The composite footprint of Ubud today approximates the ritual and political geography of the nineteenth-century kingdom of Sukawati. Characterized by diverse ecosystems and control over most of an irrigation watershed, the last traditional ruler of this kingdom capitalized on this landscape to create a land tenure system that has repercussions even today amidst the area's immense development pressures.

What follows is an exploration into two concurrent narratives: (1) the history of land tenure in Ubud, Bali at a local scale pre-determined by Balinese spatial-orientation and (2) reinforced by the global image of Bali. By way of bringing these two narratives together, this paper will address some of the surprising intersections of these two narratives. As Bali grapples with the prospect of becoming an international piece of real estate, part of its historical demise can be attributed to the evolution of the *adat* tenure system. A series of historical ironies have given way to the contemporary development pressures on Ubud's landscape. By exploring the two dominant narratives that have contribute to these development pressures, this paper will conclude by questioning how a number of these ironies resonate at the community level where participation is critical to addressing such development pressures.

NARRATIVE ONE (LOCAL): A BRIEF HISTORY OF TRADITIONAL LAND TENURE IN BALI

Development literature typically treats the village unit as a single, homogenous entity. Balinese village structure is spatially, politically, and socially much more complex than any homogenous generalization, particularly in Ubud where development has led to one composite village of many *banjars*. Thus, it is important to understand the administrative divisions of land and power at a local scale in Bali. The *banjar* is a delineation specific to Bali and translates into 'neighborhood'. The *banjar* is the primary secular social unit, whereas *desa* is the primary spatial and ritual unit (commonly, but somewhat misleadingly, translated

as ‘village’) that binds a local community to the local landscape through collective responsibility to local deities (MacRae 1997). In the case of Bali, the village or *desa* level is not necessarily a natural unit of analysis. Treating it as such is done at the expense of recognizing modes of organization beyond and between villages that are especially characteristic of southern Bali. Spatially, the *desa* are bounded laterally (north and south or *kaja-kelod*) by the untamed space of the parallel river gorges and in the uphill-downhill direction by a neutral zone of cultivated land.

Historically, land in Bali was understood to be ultimately the property of the gods. Worldly tenure was never achieved outright. Often the exchange of labor and obligation to kings and local authorities who acted as brokers for the gods could grant one access to land (MacRae 2003). Locals could occupy and use land on what may best be understood as a leasehold basis that is hierarchical nevertheless. In general, productive land is privately owned, a right established initially by clearing and cultivation, later by capture and redistribution by local rulers, and currently by sale and purchase (MacRae 1997). Originally, land was made available to farmers for their subsistence in exchange *not* for a portion of the crop yield, but for certain services to the *puri*². This mimicked a system of forced labor. Similarly, residential land was occupied subject to ritual obligations to the gods via the *desa*.

The table below roughly approximates the following (from left to right): *Column 1*: land use type, *Column 2*: the traditional Balinese name for this land use type, *Column 3*: the prescribed spatial orientation imposed on the landscape³, and *Column 4*: tenure rights. However, the far right two columns are the most telling insofar as they illustrate the relationship between access to land in exchange for paying ritual obligation. *Column 5* depicts the social organization that occupies the land (as defined by columns 1-4), and *Column 6* specifies to whom the particular obligation of those represented in *Column 5* is oriented. The complex system of land, spatial organization, and obligation not only dominates trends in twentieth-century land tenure arrangements, but is particularly manifested in contemporary development pressures on the cultural landscape of Ubud.

(1) Land Use	(2) Traditional Name	(3) Spatial Orientation	(4) Tenure Rights	(5) Management/ Occupation	(6) In Exchange for Obligation
Household	<i>Pekarangan</i>	Kaja-Kelod	Communal	Individual Families	Gods via <i>Desa</i>
Village	<i>Desa</i>	Kaja-Kelod	Communal	<i>Desa</i>	-
Productive Land on Temple Grounds	<i>Laba Pura</i>	Kaja-Kelod	<i>Puri</i>	Individual Farmers	<i>Puri</i>
Productive Land	<i>Tanah Pecatu</i>	Kaja-Kelod oriented to Mt. Agung	<i>Puri</i>	<i>Subak</i>	<i>Puri</i>
Public Spaces	<i>Setra</i>	Voids in Kaja-Kelod scheme	Communal	<i>Banjar</i>	-

History of Traditional Land Tenure in Ubud, Bali

Traditional land tenure in Bali is not consistent throughout the island. The foothill village of Ubud has an interesting history of land tenure and subsequent development, beginning with the charismatic late nineteenth-century ruler Cokora Sukawati. Through warfare, diplomacy and the exercise of personal charm, Cokora Sukawati steered the development of Ubud from the status of a small and peripheral village to the center of a vast strip of land from the sea to the lower edge of the mountain plateau (MacRae 1997). The death of Cokora Sukawati in 1919 marked the end of an extraordinary era during which Ubud moved from a local world of “seasonal rhythms and the ebb and flow of kingdoms” of a few square kilometers in size, to absorption into a vast colonial empire which brought it

² *Puri* refers to princely houses with zones of political control, which were thought to be a direct connection to the Balinese gods.

³ *Kaja-Kelod* is the most dominant spatial orientation in Balinese culture. It roughly approximates north and south, where north is always oriented toward Mt. Agung and south is always oriented toward the ocean.

in contact with even wider forces of influence and processes of change (Warren 1993, p. 67).

The Onset of Colonial Taxation

The Dutch took control of Bali in 1908 in their last attempt to tidy up their imperial hold on what is today the Indonesian archipelago. Ruling alongside the Balinese kingdoms for the most part, Cokora Sukawati was able to continue his tenancy/sharecropping arrangements with regards to land, as land continued to be granted to farmers in exchange for various services to Cokora Sukawati and the *puri*. A direct consequence of this system of labor management was that farmers during this time did not establish any rights to the land they were working. As a result today, few people own land in Ubud. Thus, Cokora Sukawati's legacy and the prosperity of Ubud during his reign is grounded in his ability to mobilize labor as well as control the resources, which included the productive, human, and ritual resources so integral to the culture of Ubud (MacRae 2003). In fact, what distinguishes Ubud today remains characterized by the abundance and geographical expanse of land held directly under the *puri*; the subsequent sense of loyalty to *Puri* Ubud throughout this area; and the landlessness of many Ubud residents coupled with their distaste for manual labor—yet their talent for ritual and cultural production (MacRae 1997, Vickers 1996). However, by the time of Cokora Sukawati's death in 1919, the Dutch increasingly imposed their rule, particularly with the customary land tenure system established in 1922 when a colonial taxation system was introduced. This system was especially burdensome on landowners in Ubud who were forced to pay in Dutch currency. This created a hardship even on those few who held land privately, as land began to be transferred from smaller to larger landowners. Cokora Sukawati's tenancy/sharecropping arrangement did work to protect those farmers in compliance, however, because the *puri* served as a collective buffer against the direct affects of taxation to individual farmers (MacRae 2003). Nevertheless, the people of Ubud lived in constant fear of taxation, especially with the onset of The Great Depression when the world-wide demand for crops—particularly rice—declined. In fact, it was during this time that possession of a land title was more of a liability than a subsistence asset (Hendriatiningsih et. al. 2009). Thus, an increasing amount of land was given back to the *puri* so that its landholding only continued to amass under the male heirs to Sukawati's legacy. While the death of Cokora Sukawati began a long exchange of his predecessors trying to hold fast to his momentum locally, Ubud was developing from an external momentum fueled by the interests of Western artists and scholars alike, eager to cast their new-found paradise as an image for global consumption.

NARRATIVE TWO (GLOBAL): CREATING THE IMAGE OF THE CULTURAL LANDSCAPES OF BALI

Expatriate residents developed and marketed to Europe and America Ubud's first enduring export product: The image of Bali as a natural, social and aesthetic paradise. Bali became an image that was exported all over the world, with cultural products as commodities and culture itself as a form of capital (Vickers 1996). Most of what is said and thought about Bali assumes a sort of genesis with Dutch colonization and official Dutch occupancy that dates to 1908. In reality, the mid-19th century was characterized by the Dutch and the Balinese coexisting on the island, but allowing the landscape to mark their separation. For the Balinese in the central and southern rice-growing, autonomous, village-based societies where the island's population was most dense, the division of the mountains created the illusion that the Dutch were not there (Vickers 1996). This division was short-lived once the Dutch seized control of the island at the turn of the twentieth century.

Tourism in Bali began at the turn of the twentieth century after Bali's independence was seized through a series of wars with the Dutch colonial powers that wreaked havoc on what was left of the traditional ruling kingdoms. Bali at that time was painted as "the ultimate tourist destination, culturally rich, with smiling people, an island of dances and temples to attract the wealthy of the world" (Covarubias 1937, p. 21). Lured by the culture and traditions of the island, Dutch boats brought in roughly one-hundred tourists per month in the 1930s. This image was perpetuated during the 1920s and 1930s by mostly American artists and scholars. Artists Walter Spies and Miguel Covarrubias, musician Colin McPhee, and

anthropologists Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson and later Jane Belo and Clifford Geertz (to name a few) became part of a large troupe of individuals, schooled and trained in the production of culture, who have been instrumental in further refining the image of Bali. The arrival of these artists and scholars coincided with the 1931 Colonial Exposition in Paris where gamelon players and Balinese dancers from a *banjar* near Ubud were on display for their exquisite music and dance. The connected artistic and academic elite, coupled with the overwhelming popularity of the Balinese at the Colonial Exposition in 1931, lured great numbers of privileged tourists from Europe and the US prior to World War II.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, the aim of the Dutch and then the Indonesian government has been to maintain the cultural image of Bali for the sake of tourism. The assumption has been that the landscape is more resilient than the culture. Even the World Bank experts who crafted the 1971 tourism master plan predicted that by 1983 the Balinese culture would succumb to tourism, but the image of Bali would remain as “a green and sumptuous garden” (Vickers 1996, p. 196). By planning for the economic potential of Bali as a cultural haven over the island’s fragile ecosystems, the World Bank and many other subsequent experts have failed to consider the inherent link and “complete feeling of harmony between the people [of Bali] and their surrounding” (Covarrubias 1937, p. 9). Unfortunately the Western tendency to divide nature and culture has been a difficult habit for many disciplines and professions to shake even in the twenty-first century (Mitchell and Buggey 2000, Fleming and Campbell 2007).

The Cultural Landscape of Bali

The idea of cultural landscapes has been popularized over the past twenty years to characterize place-based identity entrenched in a specific natural setting. Officially recognizing cultural landscapes as a distinct category on the World Heritage List in 1992 for the first time formalized landscape significance beyond the physical layers of land to ascertain the relationship *between* a culture and its surrounding environment. The World Heritage Committee’s definition maintains that cultural landscapes are “distinct geographical areas or properties uniquely representing the combined works of nature and man” (UNESCO 2008). There continues to be a need to understand the nuanced relationships to the land (and sea) that are tangibly and intangibly manifested in their interconnectedness (Matthews and Selman 2006).

The *concept* of cultural landscapes, then, is an intricate, systemic understanding of many sub-layers at work. Celebrating the patterns and processes at play in cultural landscapes, shaped at once by natural and cultural systems, shifts the focus away from a fragmented approach toward understanding the spatial organizations and land uses that are as much made possible by the human capacity to create, inhabit and maintain these as the natural systems at work (Longstreth 2008). Thus, by their very nature, cultural landscapes are not a model of stasis but a dynamic system in constant flux. This system produces layers of significance that call for ongoing interpretation in an effort to maintain cultural heritage. Often this interpretation is through the conscious and subconscious levels of community attachment. However, these layers of significance hold different meanings for different members of a community. Cultural landscapes are a collection of shared expressions, but not necessarily consistently held from one inhabitant to the next. Yet none of these layers is more or less significant than the others, and it is the collection that give meaning and ascribe significance particularly to these cultural landscapes of Bali. There is no “unit of analysis” for cultural landscapes (Groth and Bressi 1997, p. 143). The patterns and processes, community attachment, and collection of shared expressions cannot be understood at anything less than a systemic level.

Bali’s globally-fabricated cultural-natural divide disorients a world view that has been bound by the mountains and the sea for two thousand years. Exploring Bali in the context of varying scales—from the island to the *banjar/desa* (neighborhood/village) level—one can see just how difficult it is to separate the natural and cultural when speaking of the cultural landscape of Bali. The cultural landscape of Ubud is articulated through the *sawah*, or wet-rice terraced landscapes that the southern portion of the island supports. The cultural landscape of southern Bali—and particularly Ubud—is a landscape divided by traditional Balinese thinking into two primary categories: (1) wild forests and (2) land that has

been brought into human cultivation and ritual order. When this landscape is occupied by humans, “the forest is cut, social and spatial institutions are established and ritual processes initiated to maintain harmony between the human and the spiritual world” (MacRae 1997, p. 84). Scale, then, does not adhere to an exact measurement, but becomes a utilitarian product of human occupation, function, and use that varies as a culture adapts and evolves from external forces at work. In the contemporary cultural landscape of Ubud, scale is a spatial and cultural construct (but no less systemic) that closely aligns with traditional distributions of land and meanings associated with the landscape.

Definitions of Scale in a Spatially-Oriented Society

Today, Ubud is a global village, where people, ideas and money from all over the world come together as outside forces meet a local village community. The development of this global village has for over a century been inseparable from links with foreign people and distant places. Ubud’s contemporary economy is based upon massive flows of foreign currency through tourism and handicraft exports (MacRae 1997). However, the global Ubud and the local Ubud are not mere inversions of each other. The collision of global and local coming together in Ubud is an untidy process of understanding what different culturally-understood increments mean in defining and managing a place. In fact, as an “analytic tools with which to think about the global picture” the idea of scale is still very “rudimentary” (Tsing 2005, p. 58). Considering cultural influences on the making of scale, it is important to remember that scale is not “just a neutral frame for viewing the world” (Tsing 2005, p. 58). Rather, scale is at once inherited, influenced and informed by all of the competing forces to whom this scale matters. In critically considering a place such as Ubud where these competing forces have been at work for over a century, it is tempting to dichotomize the local and global scale where “distinctions between local reactions and global forces, local consumption and global circulation, local resistance and global structures of capitalism, and local translations and the global imagination” have clearly morphed Ubud into what it is today (Tsing 2005, p. 58). Yet in the end, Ubud is one place, with one teleological progression, albeit influenced by many players and events, that has delivered the composite village into its contemporary disposition. Ultimately, it is how the residents of Ubud reconcile this teleological progression in the face of development pressures that threaten Ubud’s cultural and natural heritage, that will narrate the tale of how this landscape fares.

A COLLISION OF TWO NARRATIVES: CONTEMPORARY PRESSURES ON LAND USES

Bali’s global and local scales come to heads when the narrative of traditional land tenure and the narrative of Bali’s global image collide. This process began in the 1960s with the institutional intervention by the national government as yet another scale placing its bias and jurisdiction over Ubud’s landscape. Leading up to this intervention, the waning agriculturally-based economy of southern Bali did little to support upholding customary land tenure arrangements (Geertz 1963). As the 1950s progressed, there were several steep rises in the price of rice, yet productive agricultural land was the only guarantee of food and income. Furthermore, the population of Bali (and especially Ubud) had increased, although average landholdings were a fraction of what they had been based on farmers’ avoidance of the Dutch taxation scheme in the earlier part of the twentieth century. As a result, the Balinese placed immense pressure on the provincial and national governments for a more equitable distribution of land. By 1960, the national government was persuaded to initiate a program of land distribution, or *Landreform* as it was commonly known.

Landreform was designed to reduce all large landholdings to a scale enabling landholders to still support their families while transferring legal title of the surplus to those, sharecroppers or tenants, who actually worked the land (Hendriatiningsih et. al. 2009). This system like many of the national initiatives, was marked by corruption and a lack of transparency. As a result, many of the largest landowners were able to circumvent the system, thereby retaining a high percentage—if not all—of their original landholdings. It is believed that approximately 75% of true landholdings in Ubud were reported under *Landreform* (Basiago 1995). While the allowable limit was seven ha. of *sawah* (irrigated fields)

and 9 ha. of *tegal* (dry fields), the majority of *sawah* plots range from .2 to .4 ha. which is just sufficient to feed a small family (Hendriatiningsih et. al. 2009). This system ensured that most farmers had access to land of their own, but never achieved real equality of landholdings. *Landreform* only exacerbated pressures on land, as Ubud's local population continued to rise and tourism began to replace agriculture as the most lucrative sector.

Current Land Crisis

The current land crisis in Bali can be attributed to confounding factors associated with the growth of tourism, increased population densities, and the emergence of a middle class as a result of the former and comprised of the latter. The 1980s was characterized by the development of tourism in conjunction with a growing resident expatriate community. Since then, this growth and development has had both direct and indirect effects on land use, land value, and land tenure in Ubud. The growth of the tourism sector has led to a comprehensive shift of both land and labor from agriculture subsistence to tourism-based commerce (MacRae 2003). In turn, this has created a demand for street-frontage land through which restaurants and shops could have the most direct access to tourists along main thoroughfares. Thus, while dominant land uses have transformed over the past century, so too have relative valuations of different categories of land been drastically transformed. Not only is this evident in the street-frontage property, but also the market for secluded residential sites along sloping river gorges—traditionally undesirable land for agriculture. Landowners now stand to make a profit from land strategically located, rather than historically productive lands.

Despite efforts at the national level over the past fifty years, a unified land tenure system seems unlikely for Indonesia's traditional and formal structures. In spite of shifting to decentralized governance, land tenure remains highly characterized by its centrality. This is attributed to languishing effects of *Landreform* and subsequent national laws where the State has jurisdiction over lands traditionally belonging to the *puri* (Basiago 1995). Not only does this pose an imminent threat to the security of these lands, but also to the sustainability of Balinese culture that has been linked to these lands for centuries.

LOCALLY ARTICULATED PRESSURES ON LAND USE

Understand the preceding two narratives in terms of those historical moments where they have collided brings into fruition the development pressures Ubud currently faces and those internal and external influences that have given rise to such pressures. Nevertheless, the collision of global and local has been anticipated. The traditional land tenure system and the external forces that have shaped the image of Bali as a tourism commodity collide as more of the wet-rice terraced landscape is consumed by the expanding tourism footprint. What this collision unexpectedly reveals is the potential layering of these two narratives, the scalar increments that coincide, and the moments of community identification that emanate from these concurrences.

Today, these highly engineered and ordered landscapes of southern Bali (Lansing 1991) resonate with more practical and even mundane challenges facing culturally-significant landscapes throughout the developing world. One issue of particular relevance to the island landscape today is the balance between development pressures brought on by the global narrative and cultural heritage management instrumental in maintaining the local narrative. The myth and mysticism of the Balinese landscapes are becoming increasingly juxtaposed with contemporary management practices, and the encroachment of tourism and development is the omnipresent threat to such historically-coveted landscapes (Lansing 1991). Balinese culture thus serves as an appropriate entry point into understanding the dynamic relationship between a culture that has been so inextricably tied to their landscape for centuries and how this heritage reconciles the collision of local and global today.

In the case of Ubud, the layers of significance tell a unique story of land ownership, use, value, and meaning that have cultivated the rice-terraced landscapes of southern Bali—particularly over the past century through two distinct narratives (global and local). *Figure 1* illustrates these layers of significance, and particularly how the history of land tenure in Ubud almost precisely overlaps the

function and meaning associated with the landscape over this same period in history. The local narrative is represented by the land tenure continuum from left to right that progresses from local access to land to the Balinese belief that land is ultimately the property of the gods. The global narrative is represented by the cultural landscape continuum from left to right that progresses from a highly engineered and cultivated landscape to that small bit of land that remains untouched by the development footprint mostly brought about by tourism encroachment. Reading this illustration comprehensively then, from the far left of the graphic depicts local access to the productive lands, which is a highly engineered and ordered landscape, with spatial organization supporting the complex irrigation system. Despite locals' access to land, though, the productive (and later monetary) yields from this landscape do not belong to those who cultivate the land. Instead, this privilege is held by the *puri* of Ubud, who still today own most of the productive land in the composite village of Ubud (inherited first from Cokorda Sukawati's entrepreneurial prowess, and later by systems of colonial taxation and national reform). Yet no matter how productive or financially viable these landscapes are, they are ultimately determined to be the property of the gods. Even today as these landscapes diminish and worldly good fortune is bestowed upon those who sell land outright to foreign investors, the Balinese harbor a cultural and spiritual obligation to keep this system in motion. The system requires the balance between land that is cultivated for the purposes of ritual obligation (by way of productive yields), and wild forests that complement and support the delicate ecosystem thought by the Balinese to teeter on the verge of imbalance as tourism and development looms. Scale is represented by the dashed line. This is to suggest that while there is no set scale at which this development can be offset, sustaining a portion of the existing landscape (cultivated and natural), Ubud's community interests lie in maintaining the cultural and natural heritage rooted in these landscapes.

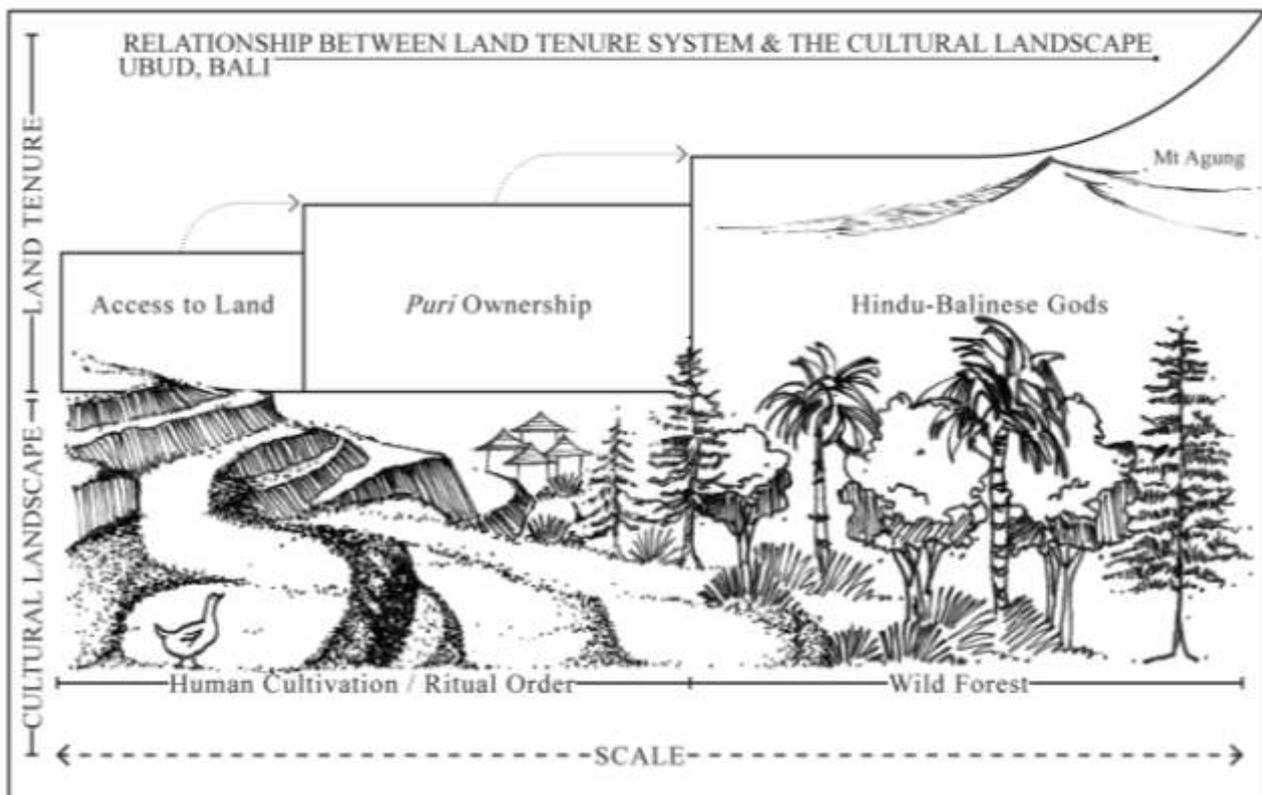


Figure 1

This process of layering continues to question what the Dutch did in the 1900s, scholars and artists did in the 1930s, the New Order government did in the 1960s, and development experts today continue to question: Can Bali's cultural landscape survive amidst these development pressures? In fact, it is this question that actually contributes to the image-making process where Bali is seen as a paradise. Yet images of paradise are not that unless they teeter on the verge of

loss. While there are no clear-cut answers to this angst that hovers over Bali and particularly Ubud, what is clear is that the scale of the institution should match the scale of the resource. In the instance of Ubud, the customary land tenure system has the capacity to do this, distributing lands spatially, socially, politically, and ecologically. Formal land tenure that champions the individual serves only to privatize and commodify land for interests external to those firmly rooted in the cultural landscape. If the cultural landscape of Ubud is to tell any other tale than a paradise lost, culturally-integrated methods need to be invoked so that the narrative is internally articulated from a voice that derives from the very landscapes it aims to sustain.

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