

# Establishing Identity of Tourist Resorts through Vernacular Metaphors and Construction Technologies: The Case of Bali's Resort Hotel Designs

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## Abstract

*Incredible geographical wonders, fantastic landscape, and bold culture, bring the dynamic interaction that positioned Bali as one of the best tourism destinations in the world. Over the last few decades, interest in globalization has prompted all aspects, including resort architecture in Bali, equally with the resurgence of cultural identity. This research aims to find how globalization and cultural identity can work side-by-side, complementing each other for the built environment's greater good. One way is to use a metaphor concept of vernacular architecture that needs construction technology to develop promptly.*

*The metaphor of vernacular plays a considerable role in affecting the perception of thinking, even adding a unique experience to the user. The paper employs a case study method, and the lobby of some of the beach resorts in Nusa Dua have been examined in this research. Using visual metaphor theories linked to Bali's identity of vernacular, it investigated the structure, technology, and materials used. The paper indicates each resort's reinvigoration through the case studies. The research finds that most resort hotels have infused a cultural identity of vernacular through various aspects of the lobby, mainly through a form of roof construction modified in terms of materials used. Reinvigorating tradition through the use of metaphors from vernacular is effective, and construction technology can be used to extend the cultural identity of Bali in response to globalization.*

**Keywords:** Identity, Metaphor, Construction, Bali, Resort Hotel

## Introduction

Bali, known as the island of God, was so dubbed by the Dutch since the colonial era. An island with enormous cultural value, a fantastic landscape and a rich culture is a tourism destination and has been the best tourist spot in the world. In addition to that title, the accommodations in Bali are always on the list of one of the best accommodations, hotels, or resorts due to architecture, environment, structure, services, landscape background, or tourist's perspectives. Landscape and culture play a prominent role. Nowadays, where modernism and globalization serve as an essential aspect, culture's presence is fading. Some believe that globalization indistinctly attacks our culture so that western culture, which is the compass of worldwide globalization, can be infused through various aspects, such as architecture, indirectly and effectively (Fang, 2020). To retain the local culture and identity, in this case, in a resort in Bali, the design of the building has to reflect the locality based on the contextual environment.

The term "identity" consists of a wide range of factors involved; every tradition in these factors contains a value that can describe and reflect the sense of Bali-ness as a whole. Two

components are derived from “identity,” the inhabitants’ consciousness, and the region’s image. The consciousness is considered a continuing dynamic process that relates to the region’s image with collective meaning (Escobar, 2001; Paasi, 2003). Therefore, the vernacular as cultural identity is the one that is suitable to be reinvigorated. One of the types of combining globalization and local culture is revitalizing the Traditions. Vernacular identity serves as a symbol reflected in a part of the design of the resort, which can be considered means of establishing and maintaining shared stories, memories, and values (Zimmermann-Steinhart, 2005). Symbols must be found through vernacular metaphors, as there is a strong correlation between architectural identity and the design approach based on vernacular metaphors. The vernacular metaphors always bring forward the understanding, the experience, thinking, and designing in terms of another based on the spatial thinking related to the site area (Ayiran, Nezih, 2012).

Many researchers have studied these aspects, and their descriptions are presented in Table 1.

**Table 1.** Documentation related to vernacular

No	Title	Description
1	Vernacular Architecture at 50: Towards the Study of Buildings in Context (Cherry & Green, 2019).	The traditional building of vernacular architecture has reached its 50th year, and this writing examines buildings that have changed to respond to new thinking according to the times.
2	Saw Marks in Vernacular Buildings and Their Wider Significance (James, 2012).	Vernacular buildings based on studies of trestle sawing to pit sawing in Herefordshire occurred in and around 1540. The size and quality of the wood signify the building in the mid-sixteenth century.
3	Crossing Boundaries: Revisiting the Thresholds of Vernacular Architecture (Maudlin, 2013).	This paper proposes a broad understanding of vernacular architecture as an inclusive social study that does not have to be limited by time and place boundaries. This vernacular architecture has been understood and reinterpreted since the 18th century
4	The Interpretation of Vernacular Architecture (Lawrence, 2013).	This article interprets aesthetic/formal interpretations, typology approaches, evolutionary theory, social-geographic type diffusionism, physical explanations, social explanations, and socio-cultural factors.
5	The Unfulfilled Wider Implications of Vernacular Architecture Studies (Mercer, 2013).	This article generates regional and national information on house types in the Vale of York by clarifying the construction method analyzed using a space.
6	The Pre-Industrial Lowestoft Fish Office: Reading Socio-Political Events Through a Vernacular Building (Bristow, 2020).	This article discusses the industrial buildings, which are the national heritage of England. The building represents a local response to socio-political, regional economic events, both national and international, in the middle to late seventeenth centuries. Method assessment is historical and landscape-based.
7	Contemporary Vernaculars; Informal housing processes and vernacular theory (Kellett, 2011).	This paper argues that it is imperative to keep up with the development process, particularly the large-scale “popular construction” for settlements throughout the developing world. Settlements are often assumed to be the opposite of vernacular environments. When examined, this has similarities to vernacular. The research method uses longitudinal data from ethnographic studies of informal settlers in Latin America
8	Managing the Threats to Vernacular Quality of ‘Loses’ in Java, Indonesia (Saraswati, 2011).	This research uses a physical survey of the tobacco barn, photographic recordings, and interviews of the barn maker or caretaker. This paper demonstrates the need to address the threat to vernacular quality as an Indonesian vernacular settlement to maintain traditional tobacco.
9	Understanding Vernacular: <i>Vastu</i>	This paper examines ancient Indian architectural theory, <i>Vastu</i>

No	Title	Description
	Shastra and Carl Jung's theories of Psychology (Karani, 2014).	Shastra, with Carl Jung's theory, which has similarities. Both of these approaches offer new insights into vernacular practice. The spiritual archetype of Astrology, Yoga, and Mandala is associated with Carl Jung's Indian spiritual architecture, 'Vastu'.
10	The Sea around "Alor Kecil" Vernacular Society: A critical threshold for ecological and cultural survival (Indrawati, 2016).	This paper discusses the changing globalization of the ocean's meaning for this community from various periods. It describes the setting of vernacular life in coastal habitats from the perspective of three local actors. These local actors help find narratives of their lives in coastal habitats.
11	Place identity in the eclectic style interiors of vernacular courtyard shop-houses in Heritage City, George Town, Malaysia (Zwain & Bahauddin, 2019).	This study discusses the interior of the vernacular shop houses' architectural components. It focuses on a modern shophouse with a typical Penang vernacular courtyard. Qualitative research methods, data obtained through observation.
12	Aiming Towards the Sky: The Vernacular "skyscrapers" of the South-West Balkans (Ivkovska, 2019).	By comparing architectural designs, building materials, and forms, this paper understands vernacular architecture in Kosovo, Macedonia, and Greece. This study looks for the similarities between urban and rural dwellings at the end of the XVIII century with the vertical distribution of buildings (Ottoman Rumelia).

Based on Table 1, the research with the title “Reinvigorate Identity Vernacular Bali Through Metaphor Concept & Construction Technology in Bali’s Resort Hotel Design”, can fill in the gaps in the research. This research’s novelty is specifically in Bali as a tourist city with a cultural identity.

Through this research, the symbols are found throughout the resort’s construction and design which emulate the cultural identity of Bali. The aim is to find the correlations between the cultural identity and the resort design through a case study using vernacular metaphors to bridge modernism and regionalism in architecture. This research aims to find how globalization and cultural identity can work with complementarity, thus obtaining a correlation between cultural identity and resort design through case studies using vernacular metaphors as architectural bridges of modernism and regionalism.

### Theoretical Approach

Bali’s identity and resort design concept provides architectural ideas to determine which identity represents “Bali” or contextual place within the resort design. The concept has a psychological implication consisting of hierarchy, structure, and a combination of visual and textual experience (Oxman, 2003); therefore, vernacular metaphor is one of the effective ways to communicate in simple and subtle terms by associating the object with another object. Vernacular metaphor is also the key to the design trade and enjoyment of the built environment. The “vernacular metaphor” reads the social, cultural, and rightness of the proposed context as well (Fez-Barrington, 2012). As an architect, extensive design knowledge, technical skills, and aesthetic taste are needed to construct the built environment (Trisno et al., 2019).

The ideas have to represent the identity of the built environment and Bali-ness and serve as a design value of the resort itself. The form, function, and meaning of characteristics being in place, work harmoniously creating a *genius loci* (Lianto et al., 2021). Construction and technology are needed to transform architectural ideas into reality. Depending on the compactness of the architectural concepts, contemporary construction and technology have to follow the design intent for the vernacular metaphor objects to provide reification, orientation, and clarification with regards to the cultural identity (Lianto et al., 2020). Aside from using vernacular metaphor as the base, the usage of local material as the identity while reflecting globalization are keys to respect the contextual environment and local wisdom to create a balanced built environment (Lianto et al., 2019). Advance

construction and technologies help architecture projects to become a reality, not only the building material that increases creativity and functionality but also the symbolic products that can be influenced by that advancement (Allahmoradi, 2018).

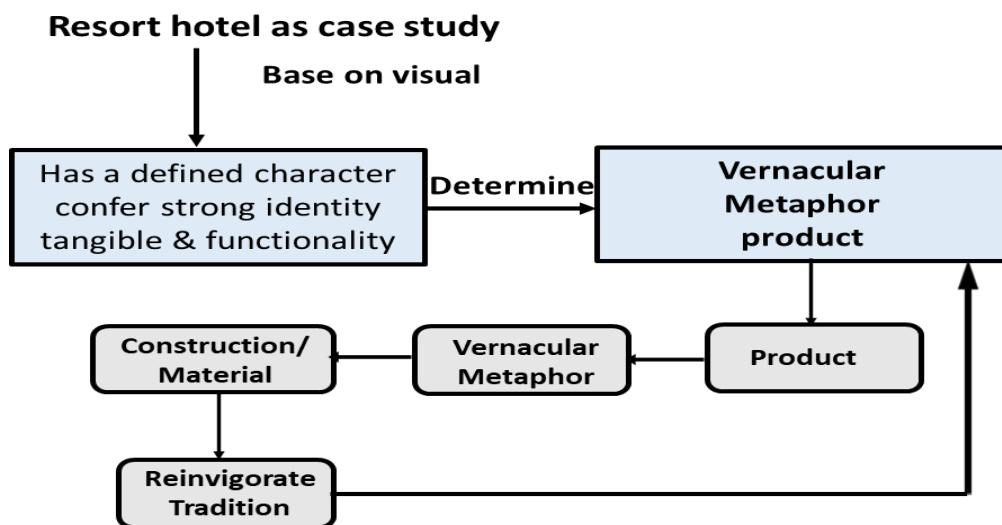
Metaphor in architecture has a figurative definition or expression of form, the intention of expressing the form of this building to be interpreted by observers (Jencks, 1977; Trisno & Lianto, 2019). Metaphor patterns produce parallel relationships with form abstractions rather than literal ones (Synder & Catanese, 1979). Metaphors in architecture to understand something as if something were different, people who use metaphorical works to understand an object or topic (Antoniades, 1992).

Determining the vernacular metaphor product in a case study is a nuisance without knowing the place's culture. Visual sense plays a prominent role in determining the object (the "product") that might be considered as a vernacular metaphor from another object. Analysis of the physical part of the building is necessary to be conducted (Trisno & Lianto, 2020). The appearance of the architectural forms is connected to the user's interpretation or the observer as mental representation is constructed in mind because of familiarity (Trisno et al., 2019).

Vernacular metaphor is also an intellectual process. The vernacular metaphor product should have these categories; (a) has a defined character; (b) confer strong identity in the building; (c) the function of the product (have to be tangible, as it is related to construction); and (d) concerned with functional, structural evaluations and sensory (Casakin, 2019). Once the suspected metaphor product was found within the area, the product is linked to Bali's culture and identity or contextual location. The construction and technology are analyzed through the shape, scale, scenarios, and hierarchies (Fez-Barrington, 2012), which profoundly impact the surrounding area. It has to be adapted within the perimeter (Trisno & Lianto, 2020). Therefore, whether the existence of the vernacular metaphor product can be determined either as a way of reinvigorating tradition or just a structural art display.

## Research Methodology

Based on the description of the theoretical study, a summary is made in the form of a diagram to analyze the case study arranged in Figure 1.



**Fig. 1:** Indicator Analysis for Case Study

Based on the description of the above theories, the research method was prepared to find which part of the lobby area in respective resorts brings out the cultural identity of Bali by the vernacular metaphor concept. The resorts have understood these three links that result in residential planning that provides optimal benefits for residents. There are some restrictions to the selection of

case study, such as; (a) It is considered as a beach resort hotel; (b) located in Nusa Dua, Bali; and (c) The opening of the resort hotel has to be within the last 20 years. The area analyzed is the lobby area, as the area is the first impression received by the users (Kirima, Makopondo, & Mutungi, 2017).

The data is through field studies and literature studies, but due to the Covid-19 pandemic, data collection is carried out through literature studies and websites.

## **Findings and the Discussion**

The hotels chosen are resort hotels that take the concept of vernacular metaphors such as; St Regis, Her Majesty, Sofitel, Inaya Putri, and Apura. In analyzing the five cases in this study, attention to research indicators, namely; 1) Product; 2) Vernacular Metaphor; 3) Construction/Material; 4) Reinvigorate Tradition (following Figure 1).

### **St. Regis (2008)**

A clean and white tone full of ethnic decoration was found throughout the lobby. Related structure, the vernacular metaphor product can be found in the ornament used for the column. A simple head-body-foot was represented as roof-column-foundation in the column following Tri Angga Concept for the building's structure. "The Foot" was covered by natural stone. "The body" was surrounded by timber, which both of the materials were found locally. Visually the column looks like the vernacular metaphor concept, but they did not serve as a column & foundation (Table 2).

### **Mulia (2012)**

A majestic entrance at Mulia Resort with a star look-a-like ceiling has its way to express the locality. Based on the observation, the glass roof's shape, complete with steel structure, was the vernacular metaphor of Bali's *Sanggah*. The family temple, which is located at a traditional Balinese house, served as an ancestor temple. The boxy glass roofs at Mulia's lobby represent the boxy roof at *Sanggah* (Table 2).

### **Sofitel (2013)**

The vocal point of the lobby is the column structure in the middle of the building. Looking at the structure and researched the column inspired by a banyan tree. The tree trunk was built using steel and covered with timber to emphasize the tree trunk's vernacular metaphor. Based on Balinese culture, the banyan tree has its spiritual meaning. It reflects the culture of Hinduism, as the root of the tree served as the symbol of *Weda*, the holy book of Hindu, and the trunk represents unity with God (Table 2).

### **Inaya Putri (2015)**

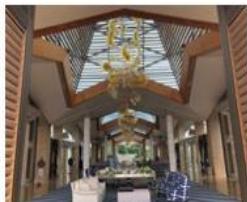
The whole mass of the lobby has *Lumbung/Jineng* Bali in mind as a vernacular metaphor. The roof shapes represent the shape of *jineng*'s roof with advanced materials used such as glass, metal roofing, and steel structure. Balinese used *Lumbung* to store agricultural products and considered one of the essential buildings in Balinese traditional houses (Table 2).

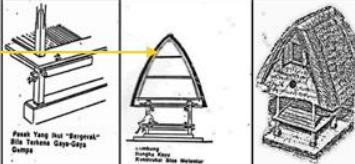
### **Apurva (2019)**

Just before entering the lobby premises, the physical mass of the roof shaped like a terraced planter box full of landscape and greeneries is noticeable. The roof was constructed using concrete to make a terraced planter box. That object is related to Ubud's sacred *Tegalalang* rice field as a vernacular metaphor. The landform is unique and famous for its innovative irrigation system (*Subak*), titled UNESCO's World Cultural Heritage (Table 2).

Based on the description above, Table 2 summarizes the results of the analysis of the five case studies along with indicators accompanied by illustrated images for easy juxtaposition.

**Table 2.** The summarizes of the analysis of the five case studies and indicators

Case study [Resort Hotel]	Indicator			
	Product	Vernacular Metaphor	Construction/ Material	Reinvigorate Tradition
St. Regis (2008)	Column	Column at Bali traditional house	Concrete with timber and stone cladding	Yes
				St. Regis Lobby & Bali Traditional House source: (left, middle) <a href="https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/dpsxr-the-st-regis-bali-resort/">https://www.marriott.com/hotels/travel/dpsxr-the-st-regis-bali-resort/</a> accessed on 02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020; (right) <a href="https://www.wawasan-edukasi.web.id/2019/06/rumah-adat-bali.html">https://www.wawasan-edukasi.web.id/2019/06/rumah-adat-bali.html</a> accessed on 02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020
Mulia (2012)	Roof Structure	Sanggah Kemulan	Glass with steel structure	Yes
				 Lobby Mulia & Sanggah Kemulan source: (Left, middle) <a href="https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g297698-d3633245-i32115717-Mulia_Resort-Nusa_Dua_Nusa_Dua_Peninsula_Bali.html">https://www.tripadvisor.com/LocationPhotoDirectLink-g297698-d3633245-i32115717-Mulia_Resort-Nusa_Dua_Nusa_Dua_Peninsula_Bali.html</a> accessed on 02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020; (Right) <a href="https://www.arsitag.com/article/mengenal-keunikan-arsitektur-bali">https://www.arsitag.com/article/mengenal-keunikan-arsitektur-bali</a> accessed on 02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020
Sofitel (2013)	Column structure	Banyan tree	The tree trunk was made using steel that was bent and covered with timber	Yes
				Sofitel Lobby & Banyan Tree source: (Left, Middle) <a href="https://www.watg.com/project/sofitel-bali-nusa-dua-bali-indonesia/">https://www.watg.com/project/sofitel-bali-nusa-dua-bali-indonesia/</a> accessed on 02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020; (Right) <a href="https://www.kintamani.id/4-jenis-pohon-karamat-dan-mistik-di-bali-yang-dipercaya-sebagai-rumah-makhluk-halus-008382.html">https://www.kintamani.id/4-jenis-pohon-karamat-dan-mistik-di-bali-yang-dipercaya-sebagai-rumah-makhluk-halus-008382.html</a> accessed on 02 <sup>nd</sup> March 2020

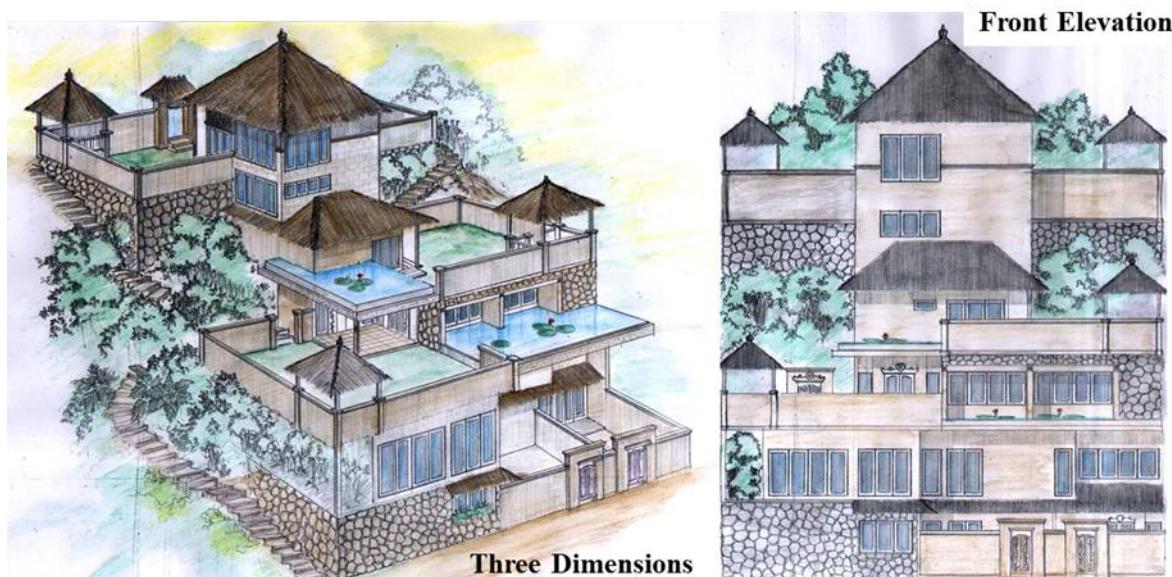
Case study [Resort Hotel]	Indicator			
	Product	Vernacular Metaphor	Construction/ Material	Reinvigorate Tradition
Inaya Putri (2015)	Roof Structure	Lumbung/jineng	Combination of glass, roofing, and steel structure	Yes
				<p style="text-align: center;">Inaya Putri Lobby &amp; Lumbung source: (Left, Middle) <a href="http://www.urbane.co.id/project/inaya-putri-bali/">http://www.urbane.co.id/project/inaya-putri-bali/</a> accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> March 2020; (Right) <a href="https://wimerta.wordpress.com/2015/08/14/glebeg-dalam-masyarakat-bali/">https://wimerta.wordpress.com/2015/08/14/glebeg-dalam-masyarakat-bali/</a> accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> March 2020</p>
Apurva (2019)	Roof Structure	Terraced Rice Field	Case in situ concrete with planter box	Yes
				<p style="text-align: center;">Apurva Lobby &amp; Tegalalang Rice Field source: (Left) <a href="https://www.cnnindonesia.com/gaya-hidup/20190902155946-269-426849/perwujudan-kemegahan-subak-di-tepi-nusa-dua">https://www.cnnindonesia.com/gaya-hidup/20190902155946-269-426849/perwujudan-kemegahan-subak-di-tepi-nusa-dua</a> accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> March 2020; (Right) <a href="https://www.kintamani.id/wisata-ala-pedesaan-terasering-sawah-tegalalang-ubud-00511.html">https://www.kintamani.id/wisata-ala-pedesaan-terasering-sawah-tegalalang-ubud-00511.html</a> accessed on 02<sup>nd</sup> March 2020</p>

If a common thread is drawn from the analysis of Table 2, then one example of Balinese cultural local identity is *Subak* (rice field irrigation system) (Fig. 2). This *Subak* is globalization with a metaphorical concept; the metaphorical concept is expected to correlate local cultural identity and the metaphorical design of a resort hotel in *Ubud* (Fig. 3). The *Subak* metaphor is a bridge to modern architecture with a local cultural identity.



**Fig. 2:** Subak the traditional system of irrigating rice fields

Source: Elaborated from <https://www.mongabay.co.id/2020/08/02/subak-warisan-budaya-ribuan-tahun-dan-tantangan-pelestarian-ke-depan/> accessed on 25<sup>th</sup> June 2021



**Fig. 3:** Resort hotel with the metaphor vernacular of *Subak* as a bridge of modernism and regionalism architecture

This resort hotel uses a terraced concrete structure like rice fields. Waterproofing technology in swimming pools is an embodiment of the *Subak* metaphor. The use of traditional roofing materials from natural materials, namely reeds and tree fibres, to be fire-resistant is new material.

## Conclusions

Using the concept of vernacular metaphors is the easiest way to represent a culture. By imitating or reviving an object regardless of the challenges at hand. Not only architecturally but also structurally. It can express its identity by substituting new materials without losing its cultural essence. The metaphor concept of vernacular transfers and bridges something to something (object to object) and has consequences on the whole product to be justified by the user and depends on the acceptance of the design. By admiring the object visually, the mind develops and processes a visual representation of the similarity form, which leads to cultural identity, as long as the user is aware of the place's cultural identity. Aside from that, the users have to understand the culture before realizing that the vernacular metaphor product represents something related to the culture or identity of Bali. The vernacular metaphor concept can be considered as a communicative figurative that is self-explanatory. That means identity by the form or by using advanced material.

Based on the case studies, all of the resorts in Bali have done their due diligence to express and emphasize the Balinese culture in their lobbies, mainly through structural forms. Most symbolic objects are for visual comfort but designers reinvigorating tradition, allowing them to simultaneously express two truths: the past (culture) and the future (technology). Therefore, using a vernacular metaphor concept with the support of advanced construction and materials is one way to reinvigorate the tradition of Bali in resort design.

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