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Komunitas Ruangrupa Sebagai Ruang Sosial Budaya Alternatif Perkotaan

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Kata Kunci	Abstrak
Ruangrupa Ruang Sosial Produksi Ruang Lefebvre Budaya Alternatif	Perkotaan sebagai lingkungan yang kompleks menghadapi persaingan ruang akibat praktik-praktik spasial yang berbeda. Kekuasaan dan pengaruh tertentu di dalam ruang perkotaan berkontribusi pada pengcilan ruang umum yang dapat diakses oleh masyarakat. Tujuan penulisan artikel ini adalah untuk mengeksplorasi upaya masyarakat untuk memperjuangkan ruang sosial dalam konteks pemahaman Lefebvre tentang kota sebagai hasil produksi abstrak kapitalisme. Metode penelitian kualitatif dengan studi fenomenologi diterapkan sebagai metode dalam penelitian ini. Penelitian ini menemukan jawaban atas pertanyaan tentang sejauh mana kesadaran masyarakat dengan pentingnya ruang dalam kehidupan kota. “Ruangrupa” membangun ruang sosial melalui praktik seni yang melibatkan masyarakat sebagai alternatif untuk merespons dominasi ruang komersial di kota. Melalui diskursus tentang kota, kebudayaan, dan pendidikan, “Ruangrupa” membangun antitesis terhadap ruang komersial dan mendorong masyarakat untuk terlibat dalam kegiatan sehari-hari di ruang perkotaan sebagai suatu kebaruan dalam penelitian ini.
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Ruangrupa Community as an Alternative Urban Cultural Social Space

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Keywords	Abstract
Ruangrupa Social Space Space Production Lefebvre Alternative Culture	Urban environments, as complex settings, face competition for space due to various spatial practices. Certain powers and influences within urban spaces contribute to the shrinking of public spaces that accessed by the community. The purpose of this article is to explore the community's efforts to fight for social space within the context of Lefebvre's understanding of the city as the product of abstract capitalism. Qualitative research method with phenomenology study as a method is used in this research. This study answers on how aware the community is of the importance of space in urban life. "Ruangrupa" builds social space through art practices involving the community as an alternative to respond to the dominance of commercial space in the city. Through discourses on the city, culture, and education, "Ruangrupa" builds an antithesis to commercial space and encourages the community to engage in daily activities in urban space as a novelty in this research.
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Introduction

After Indonesia joined the free competition market, urban development has significantly accelerated. This can be seen from the development of modern shopping centers (supermalls), office buildings, apartments, and luxury housing (real estate), as well as the placement of outdoor advertisements in various corners of the city as a product of urban capitalism. This is caused by the spatial practice activities of urban development which are oriented towards market interests and the product of development policies applied to the private sector. The consequence of this is the management of Jakarta's urban spatial planning which leads to a private-public characteristic, causing interventions in urban space (Trevor, 2008).

In the context of development growth in Jakarta, it is evident that there is a clear dominance of rapid commercial space growth through the development of supermalls spread across various areas of Jakarta in nearly the same period. The growth of shopping centers in Jakarta can be grouped into four distinct and significant phases in transforming the city of Jakarta into a city with the largest number of modern shopping centers in the world. The first phase was marked by the absence of shopping center development activities, the second phase from 1945-1965 only had one shopping center in central Jakarta, the third phase from 1966-1998 gave birth to 41 new shopping centers dominated by modern shopping centers in various regions with 29 buildings, and the fourth phase from 1999 until now is the peak of Jakarta's depiction as a city with high consumerism levels, with the emergence of 63 new modern shopping centers and 34.29% dominated by trade centers, indicating the ease of access to shopping centers as a daily urban lifestyle (Suryadjaja, 2012).

The development of commercial space in Jakarta was accelerated by using urban space as a means of developing capital turnover. The development of abstract spaces unconsciously produced has influenced and shaped urban communities into a consumerist society, characterized by urban tourism lifestyle concepts such as parks and green areas, galleries, events, exhibitions, music concerts, and waterfront-based environmental concepts. As a result, modern shopping centers in Jakarta and other major cities in Indonesia are packaged as tourist destinations and are a choice for spending leisure time on weekends. The development of Jakarta over the past two decades, especially in the period from 1997-2017, has aimed to improve the economic sector because of the monetary crisis in 1997-1998, post-reform in 2001-2004, recovery programs in 2004-2007, sustainable development programs in 2007-2012, and the era of smart city programs in 2013-2017. All these government policies are market-oriented and aim to strengthen the dominance of commercial space carried out by the state through legitimate permits to influence changes in urban space in Jakarta.

For most urban societies, the city is viewed as an absolute space, while urban planners focus on the formation of abstract space. Lefebvre emphasizes that urban development depends on the interests of capitalists, making the city a non-neutral spatial entity. Therefore, public awareness of social space, as proposed by Lefebvre, is needed to reclaim the "right to the city" through occupation actions involving urban communities in utilizing space inclusively to produce their own social space. The dominance of commercial space in urban areas creates contradictions and leads to the disappearance of shared spaces in urban space, which are mostly controlled by private property. This has implications for the loss of awareness as a civil society capable of discussing the creation of shared communal spaces that are difficult for urban communities to access (Setiawan, 2017).

The development of the city as a complex space has forced people to accept abstract space created by capitalism, namely commercial space, in their daily social relations in the city. As a result of the dominance of urban space formation, social values in the city become lost and replaced by commercial values. This phenomenon continues because of significant changes in urban spatial planning, which are unconsciously under the hegemony of capitalism, causing individuals in society to become alienated and increasingly unfamiliar with the urban space they occupy. Lefebvre realized that diversity in social relationships and work structures have weakened individual power through a system that creates alienation. In his explanation, Lefebvre defined that individuals cannot determine their experiences, so

in practice, each life as an object of the market economy, which has blurred social values among individuals in their social practices.

Sociology, as a multidisciplinary field, continues to evolve and expand its attention to various aspects, including the aspect of space, which has given birth to the subfield of spatial sociology. In the analysis of spatial sociology, various theoretical perspectives such as Marxism, Feminism, Postcolonialism, and Geography have become approaches used in analyzing spatial phenomena. The history of the development of spatial sociology can be traced through the works of earlier social thinkers such as Karl Marx, who analyzed the activities of capital accumulation in *Das Kapital*, implicitly placing space as the context of social-economic activities. Then, Emile Durkheim's analysis of solidarity and social facts touched on space as part of the shared living space occupied by society. Urry (2004) states that Durkheim argued that this shared living space places individuals in the same position when interacting with each other.

In addition, Georg Simmel in his work entitled "The Sociology of Space" discusses his interest in the phenomenon of the modern economic society's progress in their everyday social life, which has separated leisure space from other social interaction activities in different spaces. Simmel shows the importance of space interpretation in carrying out various spatial activities that occur in daily life. In the study of spatial sociology, space can be part of a shared living space or separate social activities in different spaces. The analysis of space in sociology discusses various phenomena of the progress of modern economic society in social life and how space influences social interaction. In the study of spatial sociology, there are also new thoughts and concepts such as the right to the city, the importance of accessibility and mobility, and environmental issues that are becoming more and more attention. Contextually, the study of spatial sociology in the development of social science knowledge has been around for a long time and has become an integral part of analyzing social phenomena that occur in space. The development of spatial sociology continues to evolve with the times and becomes increasingly important in responding to various social challenges and issues faced by society today (Jary, 1997).

After Simmel's time, attention to space decreased for a while, but around the 1970s-1980s, the development of spatial sociology resurfaced with thinkers who made space a factor of analysis, such as Foucault in his work titled "Of Other Space" in 1984. Foucault offered the concept that space can be divided into three types: Utopia, Dystopia, and Heterotopia. His concept was widely used in lecture notes for the French Architecture Research Institute in 1967 with the original title "Des Espace Autres" which was then translated into English in 1984. Spatial studies then developed with the emergence of new ideas about diverse space analysis. Geographer Doreen Massey appeared with a Marxist-feminist approach in her work titled "Space, Place, and Gender" published in 1994. Through gender spatial approach analysis, Massey explained that the existence of space cannot be separated from social construction activities. She showed that political domination is inseparable from spatial construction in everyday life as a discourse of the Capitalist domination arena in invading space, thus placing capitalist domination as the patriarchal role that dominates weaker parties.

In the view of Harvey (2012), he attempts to analyze the spatial-temporal existence within capitalist society living in urban areas. Harvey's analysis is influenced by his reading of the idea of the "Right to the City" expressed by Lefebvre, as discussed in his book *Rebel Cities*, published in 2012. In addition, Anthony Giddens with his theory on space and time in the dynamics of globalization also drew Harvey's attention (Urry, 2004). Currently, in the contemporary era, Neil Smith is the focus of discussions on the existence of space, and his work entitled *Uneven Development: Nature, Capital & Production of Space* is still considered relevant three decades after the book was published. Harvey, Smith's mentor who continues the Marxist tradition, believes that the ideas in Smith's book are still relevant and important to understand.

In this writing, the analysis is focused on the phenomenon of urban space and cultural sociology, with a perspective from Henri Lefebvre on the production of space as a

production strategy. As a neo-Marxist philosopher from France, Lefebvre presents his view on the concept of space as “social space.” This concept discusses the existence of “absolute space” and “abstract space” elements in determining humans as social creatures in urban space (Lefebvre et al., 1991). Through his work *The Production of Space*, published in 1991, Lefebvre proposed his ideas on social systems and knowledge, in which space exists and develops in the dynamics of human life. Space cannot be separated from social relations in creating social systems, and conversely, space is also created by humans to determine various activities related to social practices and cultural activities that are continuous and determined by the spaces created by humans. This idea is elaborated by the triadic concept of space production, namely “Spatial Practice, Representations of Space, and Space of Representations” which play a role in the creation of space.

In Lefebvre’s view, space does not emerge spontaneously, but is produced through the discourse of agents in the form of habitus that influences the construction of space. Before being formed and constructed by interacting agents, space is essentially an entity that does not have any influence on ideas (Lefebvre et al., 1991). Schmid explains that the combination of urbanization and globalization is a new achievement on a geographical scale involving the configuration of space and time. Lefebvre emphasizes that the production of space requires an interconnected context of space and time. City dwellers tend to be alienated in the space produced by capitalism, which removes their control over their creative activities in social production (Lefebvre et al., 1991). A city dominated by capitalist interests does not provide space for urban dwellers to develop and actualize themselves. Therefore, it is important to create social space in urban areas as an effort to develop society.

Cities with bustling activities are filled with high social mobility from everyone living there. This social mobility is usually related to economic activities that tend to neglect the communal needs of society to develop. As a result of dominant capitalist activities, the daily lives of urban dwellers are difficult to rehabilitate because economic interests become the top priority. There is a need to separate society from the influence of capitalism so that communal needs can be fulfilled, and social mobility can be well-regulated. Capitalist space products have a significant influence on the social mobility that occurs in large cities, which is usually centered on the job and service sectors. However, the concentration of areas in big cities is not evenly distributed due to the uneven distribution of economic concentration. Jakarta, as a developing city-state connected to the international scale, also experiences spatial inequality due to social mobility activities that prioritize individual interests over communal needs. All of this turns big cities into parts of capitalist domination that hinder the growth and progress of global society (van Ham et al., 2010).

In developing countries, there is uneven growth in spatial development that opens up job opportunities related to mobility (van Ham et al., 2010) in cities, which leads to the increasing density of urban space and creates sustained social imbalances. The high interest of migrant workers in these cities exacerbates the imbalance between available job opportunities and limited resources. To raise public awareness of the existence of space, in-depth research is needed to examine the social realities of urban communities daily. These realities become apparent when each individual in society becomes increasingly focused on rigid work exchange and division, leading to individuals becoming more locked into their personal affairs and experiencing alienation from their self-awareness (Lefebvre, 2003).

Method

This research uses qualitative methods to uncover the phenomenon arising from the intersection between actors and space in creating a reciprocal circuit that mutually influences each other. Textual analysis and field research are carried out to examine the dynamics of the role of contemporary art cultural organizations in creating a social space, according to Lefebvre’s theoretical idea of the production of social space through cultural practices as an effort to advocate for the meaning of art’s existence in space.

Results and Discussion

Urban Space and Capital Accumulation

The city, an aspatial realm that accommodates its inhabitants, tends to become a consumptive object through industrialization and commercialization that permeates various aspects of urban life. This phenomenon of urban development is a characteristic of the developmental model in developing countries, where social and geographic concentration is a part of surplus production. Developing cities under capitalism tend to emphasize the mobility of surplus production, which is in line with the principle of capitalism that is oriented toward the sustained accumulation of profit (Harvey, 2012). The result of the combination of the two can be understood through the movement of the logistic growth curve that includes money, output, and population, which have been embedded in the history of capital accumulation that always correlates with the growth of capitalism (Harvey, 2012). Thus, a development that is interdependent between the development of capitalism and the city is established as a spatial practice. The definition that links the development of capitalism and the city can be seen from the basic argument that the principle of capitalism, which is the perpetual need for the activity of accumulating unlimited profit, which drives them to be continually creative in overcoming any conditions they face. The way capitalism works is by organizing spatial realms in such a way that they can generate profit, which is then maximized in the effort to absorb capital accumulation (Harvey, 2012).

Urban development tends to prioritize the interests of capital accumulation, resulting in the commodification of space. The efforts of capitalism are to manipulate urban space, consisting of land, into a commodity with added value in the market. The emergence of neoliberal ideology has opened the way for investors to participate in transforming the face of urban areas to meet the needs of new exclusions regulated by land and property regulations. The effort to create independent space in the social reality of urban areas, as a form of placing social equality in the space intended by Lefebvre, that space (social) is a product (social) that has opened the view that the existence of space as an entity cannot be separated from the existence of humans as citizens placed as important actors in urban space. Exchange activities within it are dominated by the interests of capital, resulting in the narrowing of space that requires resistance actions by citizens to reclaim the right to space.

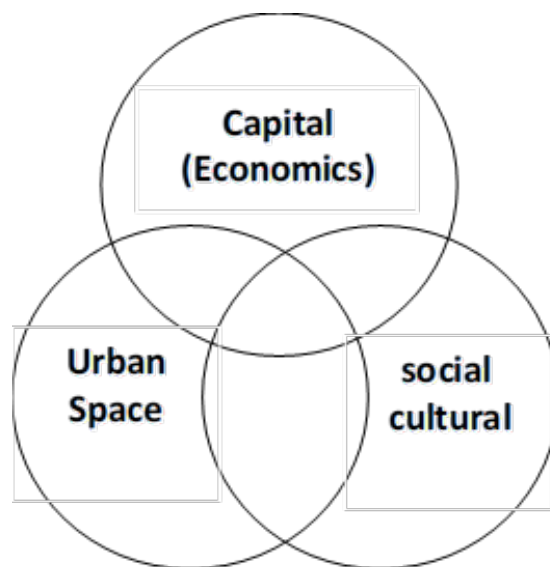
In this article, the effort to see the creation of social space by citizens independently - creating space as a social practice in and of itself without being dictated by policies oriented towards capitalism's interests - uses Henri Lefebvre's theory of space production as an analytical tool to examine the phenomenon of social space dynamics that occur in urban space. Lefebvre's focus on urban space is a radical imagination deliberately offered as an effort to stimulate citizen responses to their own city's conditions to react to reclaim their right to the city. Like most Marxist thinkers, Lefebvre sees that space has been occupied by capitalism in creating abstract spaces that further erode communal spaces that should be enjoyed by citizens in their entirety. With the emergence of the discourse of social space in urban areas, in the social reality that occurs, spatial and social space has been dominated by the power of capitalist dominance with all its planning. Urban public spaces are designed in such a way as to align with market needs, while on the other hand, ignoring the communal rights of space that are free from the interference of the accumulation interests of the capitalist base towards space.

Instead of creating spaces for actualization such as green open spaces, city squares, infrastructure, and public spaces that are privately owned, such as modern shopping centers (malls), which are infused with capitalist interests by bureaucracy, are built based on the orientation of commercialization that utilizes space to have more value, so their existence does not represent the existence of social space built voluntarily by the citizens who support it. Several views were given on Lefebvre's theory of space production by Stuart Elden in scientific research published in a journal titled "There is a Politics of Space Because Space is Political, Henri Lefebvre and Production of Space," Elden explained that Lefebvre's thinking is

an effort in the construction or what is meant by the production of space which is a fusion of conceptual domains with simultaneous material activities (Crampton & Elden, 2007).

Meanwhile, Lefebvre's perspective is explained by Robertus Robet that space is established from concrete material conditions. These material conditions are then symbolized into concepts and orders about space (Wuthnow et al., 2010). There is a concept proposed by Lefebvre in the production of social space known as the triadic concept of space production, which includes spatial practice, representation of space, and representational space. In the idea of space production proposed by Lefebvre, there is a process of spatial practice or perceived space. In this stage, the subject chooses to perform activities in either space, where the subject, in this case, the citizens can simultaneously produce to determine the space as a place for their activities independently. Along with Lefebvre, Harvey uses the idea of the influence of spatial practice elements in analyzing the urban revolution. At this point, to tackle the actual roots of any man-made spatial development, Lefebvre followed his own dialectical understanding of how societies shape their surroundings by identifying the physical spatial practice and the mental conception of space as two dialectical poles. Lefebvre recognized integrating all three perspectives: the physical, the mental and the subjective realms of producing spatial reality. In this paper, we use three dimensions for instance : capital as economics, urban space, and social culture. We provide in one figure as an explanation how Ruang Rupa connecting and contesting with capital and urban space. Ruang Rupa from this dimension can be put as a representative of social cultural field.

Figure 1 The Urban Production Analysis According to Lefebvre



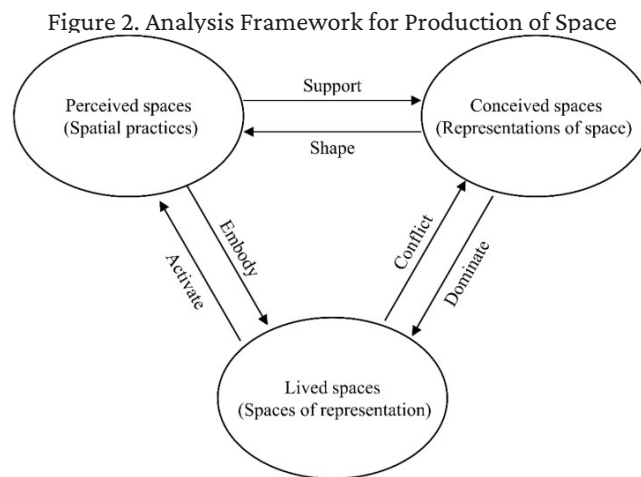
Source: Analysis of researcher (2023)

Representation versus Space Inequality

Harvey explains that cities have emerged through social and geographical concentration of surplus production (Harvey, 2012). The uneven development of urban space presents citizens with the hegemony of the market and the domination of abstract space produced by capitalism that stifles urban spatial activities, forcing citizens to immerse themselves in the swirl of the abstract spatial dimension of the city. In this regard, the need for leisure time for citizens is necessary to develop their potential - in this case, to provide space for contemplation of involvement in producing their own space in carrying out their activities (Gulson & Symes, 2007; Noboru et al., 2021).

The representation of space is an abstract realm that emerges at the discourse level (Lefebvre: 1991). Social issues that arise in various forms of urban phenomena give rise to social problems in society. Discourse and production about space only allow spatial issues to be practiced verbally and through language representation and sign systems. Lefebvre explains that the representation of space in this context functions as an organizer of various relationships that connect specific spaces with various discourses outside of the space itself (Lefebvre et al., 1991). The third dimension of space production defined by Lefebvre is the reversal of space representation, which is the symbolic dimension of space known as spaces of representation. Space does not refer to the space itself, but to something beyond it (Goonewardena et al., 2008). In the dimension of space production, the representation stage of space refers to the signification process that is related to material symbols so that space is constructed based on the human experience of the physical, emotional, and conceptual context that is symbolized into the product of representational space. The existence of individual factors in the collective experience of space influences humans in spatial practice aspects, so space is characterized as a cultural activity carried out in daily life in urban space. The differences in symbolic and collective fantasies of space, the conflicts in dominant practices, and the results of forms of violations carried out by individuals or collectives are forms of space representation (Urry, 2004).

Lefebvre's spatial triad cannot be readily and directly applied to Ruang Rupa's movement without critical evaluation and necessary adaptation. At least three distinctive conditions require special attention when Lefebvre's spatial triad is applied to the case of Ruang Rupa's movement. First, the production of space in Ruang Rupa's has been strongly manipulated by the capitalist-state with a political system significantly different from its Western counterparts. State policies and strategies to produce space are defined and implemented in a top-down fashion, with little local or public participation. Meanwhile, Jakarta's local governments are peculiar entities with a dual identity of regulator and player suffering from an obvious conflict of interests. Second, even though the Jakarta's planned and command economy has experienced marketization and globalization, there exists incredible ambivalence toward the often-separated spheres of state and market or state and capital in the growth and transformation of Jakarta cities. The imperative of capital accumulation is considered fundamental to understanding the production of space in the Western world. In Jakarta, the bureaucratic state may have its own values, principles, and political and social considerations other than economic or financial rationality. This means that the perceived and conceived space in the Ruang Rupa's may have its own logic. Finally, the production of space in the context of Western liberal democracies is usually conditioned by free mobility of capital, labor, and technology, which may sometimes be hampered, disrupted, or blocked by state intervention. In the case of Ruang Rupa's, the flow of capital, population and technology is shaped by preferential policies, special licensing, and institutional innovation guidance. Population mobility has been controlled and distorted by invisible but effective institutional blockages known as entrepreneurship subsidies, tax relief, housing subsidies, and the household registration system.



Source: primary analysis (2023)

The rapid development of urban cultural phenomena, along with the growth of cities, has created turbulence in the spatial urban landscape in Jakarta. One of the developments that cannot be separated from the dynamic entity of urban culture is the stretching of the fluid characteristics of contemporary art, which has started to penetrate the dynamics of urban life. Contemporary art is a response that arises from the urge to actualize freedom of expression, including expressing criticism and ideas on issues that arise in the context experienced by the actors. Freedom is the most important characteristic of contemporary art, and through the freedom obtained by its practitioners, contemporary art becomes an alternative means that can accommodate all forms of needs in interpreting subjective perspectives to the wider public. Contemporary art emerges as an alternative space used to place interaction between urban communities through artistic practices, as a form of cultural spirit to raise awareness of the need for creating space as a form of social spatial discourse.

The Rising of Critical Awareness

The consciousness factor in the emergence of space relates to the increasing lack of access to spaces that can accommodate forms of opinion, advice, and criticism for the common interests of urban communities. The unconscious dominance of commercial spaces hegemonizes urban communities in their daily activities within the city. Meanwhile, collectively, “Ruangrupa” seeks to build spaces for discussion, exchange of ideas, and self-actualization in the form of artistic activities that can be accessed by all people from all walks of life in Jakarta. The need for alternative spaces for expression is related to the emergence of contemplation on the needs of urban spaces. The decreasing awareness of urban communities towards cultural needs encourages “Ruang Rupa” to bring artistic practices closer to the public by conducting art activities that reflect the reality of urban life. Jakarta, as a context filled with urban phenomena, drives “Ruangrupa” to raise issues related to the daily problems of urban life in the dynamics of urban communities, thereby prompting the creation of spaces for creative work and critical discourse against the city. The placement of urban phenomena in “Ruangrupa’s” artistic works is inseparable from the condition of urban spaces, which are intertwined with the culture of urban communities. Thus, in creating spaces for cultural practices, “Ruangrupa” aims to create a social discourse through alternative spaces for contemporary artistic activities that are open to all urban communities to participate in, through programs held routinely throughout the year.

Visual art is a branch of art that prioritizes the expression of ideas in the form of concepts, ideas, and criticisms conveyed in the artwork. Artworks are often exhibited to the public, stimulating the visual senses of the viewers in interpreting them. Visual art has developed into various forms, and the development of contemporary art often combines auditory and tactile elements to stimulate thoughts that arise from the audience who are observing the

artwork. The presentation of artwork in the development of contemporary art is flexible, resulting in artwork that is related to the social context surrounding it as a driving factor in the creation of artwork. The exhibition of visual art in a special exhibition or public space contains elements of the relationship between the artwork and the context of the issues raised so that art is based on content, concepts, and technical skill levels that lead to artistic levels, also containing aesthetic elements. Creativity plays a role in stimulating awareness through the content contained in an artwork as a form of relational aesthetics concept realization in the interaction between the artist and the viewer as an active participant.

“Ruangrupa” was founded by its founders to create space for self-actualization. The efforts were made by young artists in 2000 by building a network among themselves, which the founders realized that in the context of that time, the New Order government regime limited the artists in developing themselves in artistic activities. After the end of the New Order regime, the wave of art for artists entered a new phase and encouraged the emergence of contemporary art with free and plural characteristics and an open style. Looking at the context of the past few years after the 1998 reformation, it was a turning point for all aspects of social life, whereas, during the New Order government regime, all aspects were restricted and tended to be repressive. This condition has led to various responses in the form of large-scale demonstration movements carried out by all layers of society, including workers and students.

AD, who is one of the founders of “Ruangrupa,” explained that during the tumultuous period of 1998, various demonstrations were carried out by students and other layers of society, but artists had their way of responding to the situation. The evaluation of protest movements, free podiums, was seen as “activist romanticism” still being done by young people and even still serves as a role model today. Unlike the steps taken by young artists, they used imaginative ideas that were expressed in artistic practices, where the delivery of criticism remained conveyed through works of art that contained critical content. The methods used by visual artists are diverse, and various media are used in their artwork, such as painting, murals, posters, stencils, wheat paste, and others as propaganda products presented in public spaces in the form of public art.

Visual art is a platform that “Ruangrupa” actively uses to build awareness of the need for space in urban areas as a form of negotiation by urban communities toward the condition of Jakarta’s city space. As a cultural organization that operates in contemporary visual art practice, “Ruangrupa” has a significant influence on artistic activities that discuss urban space issues. Thus, in creating new spaces, “Ruangrupa” connects public involvement through a visual art approach to building awareness of the need for space for the wider community. Its existence, which has reached seventeen years since its establishment, has been discussed in various activities that explore phenomena themes that occur in urban spaces, such as urban phenomena, public spaces, housing settlements, social contexts, government propaganda, and transportation as a form of opening discourse on spatial phenomena on space. This shows that art is a way to depict the surrounding life that artists perceive as a subjective view of social phenomena in urban space. The expression conveyed through cultural practices carried out by “Ruangrupa” is an effort to open space for activities in creating visual artworks as a cultural dialectic against the contemporary urban context.

The awareness of urban space, as carried out in the efforts of “Ruangrupa”, supports the production of the wider community by positioning visual arts as a reflection closely related to urban everyday life. Activities such as events, work projects, and collaborations involving various parties are simultaneous activities that are intended to occupy space, as part of the spatial practice of “Ruangrupa”. The use of constructed spaces is utilized as cultural activities in the organization of artistic practices by “Ruangrupa”, which makes space inseparable from the discourse of cultural practices carried out by urban communities. The realization of “Ruangrupa” in urban space provides space for the aspirations of artists, who are part of the urban community, to be presented to the public. The direct involvement of the wider community is present in various programs run by “Ruangrupa”, such as the research and development division of the art lab, which actively opens discussions on the practice of visual arts that stem from discussions of urban issues by integrating visual

arts with other interdisciplinary fields. The series of activities include collaboration stages, residencies, workshops, and the implementation of art projects carried out by individual artists or groups.

The practice of visual art in its dynamic process results in artwork in material form as well as knowledge products. In the art ecosystem, these two aspects are interrelated and serve as the main factors in the determination of contemporary visual art practices that have relational aesthetics characteristics. The produced artwork has aesthetic value and artistic quality created by the artist to be shared with the audience. Meanwhile, in delivering the artwork, there is knowledge shared as a representation of the artist's perspective in seeing a social phenomenon as a focus of attention that is raised into the theme of the artwork.

Visual art has an artistic side that represents the physical characteristic of the existence of an artwork as a form of display of an artist's technical expertise, while knowledge production is essentially the abstract side that is conveyed in a hidden way and shared through the interpretation of the artists' works. Knowledge production understands what is contained by the artist as a personal subjective perspective, which is then shared widely with the audience. Often, in the presentation of an artwork, the intended message is conveyed through semantic views and leads to a skeptical side of the audience reassessing the meaning conveyed in an artwork that contains a message from the artist's perspective. In a gallery, the placement of the theme is embedded in an exhibition with descriptions of the artwork. On the other hand, in the form of public art, visual art directly touches the vision in the form of murals, graffiti, stencils, wheat paste, and other forms of visual art that display a more vulgar side of the artwork.

The artistic activity produced in space generates an idea that is influenced by the social context background faced from the personal perspective of an artist. Therefore, an artist who can express their concerns in the form of criticism uses the medium of visual arts to create artwork. The awakening of collective consciousness is triggered by the emergence of representations that are close to the phenomena perceived by the audience by the artist who creates the visual art. In the process, the artist determines the theme in producing the artwork within a certain time frame so that a work of art can represent the problems that exist in the reality of urban conditions that are filled with issues, just as the theme is raised in a work of art. The discourse of using artwork in producing social space is a representation of the space dimension depicted based on the social problems that exist in the theme raised in the artwork when it was created, so there is a connection between the physical concrete space and the discourse of the theme raised in the creation of artwork. The existence of artwork becomes an information medium about what is happening in the context of the discussion of the theme raised by the audience as a product of knowledge.

The Alternative Space and Toward Space of Representation

As a cultural organization, "Ruangrupa" significantly opens alternative spaces in urban areas with various activity programs and art events held throughout the year as an effort to build social cohesion in urban communities, which is done as a form of contestation against the domination of commercial spaces in urban areas. The knowledge products produced by "Ruangrupa" include programs run in the form of workshops held regularly during events, the development of the "Jurnal Carbon" writing, support for literary activities of artists through "jarakpandang.net", as well as involvement in the Jakarta Biennale to create the book "Sharing Knowledge about Indonesian Visual Arts" which is intended as a learning material for visual arts and many other writings through the program activities that accompany, support, fill, or even become part of the artwork as a form of continuity in the effort to develop visual arts.

In the general sense, "Ruangrupa" is an organization that facilitates artistic activities carried out by members of the community through various events. However, upon closer inspection, "Ruangrupa" is seen as a 'knowledge space' that shares interpretations through widely shared expressions to the public. As a contemporary art organization that initiates the distribution of knowledge, "Ruangrupa" spreads the knowledge produced through

the transformation of knowledge processes in art practice, which are carried out through workshops, art festivals, exhibitions, and other forms of distribution of knowledge for educational discourse for audiences who are part of urban society (Afdhal & Hidayat, 2019). This serves as an educational approach through art used by the art community, especially “Ruangrupa,” to bring art closer to the public, where art is often seen as distant and limited in accessibility to the public. As a public education medium, “Ruangrupa” seeks to open access for public participation in various artistic practices as a means of urban citizens actively engaging in the discourse of social space in urban areas. As a public educational space, “Ruangrupa” provides spatial awareness to the public, making them more aware of social, cultural, political, economic, and environmental phenomena that occur around them in the urban space, using an art practice approach.

Figure 3 The Art and Cultural Exhibition as Public Awareness



Source : Researcher Documentation (2019)

In its critique of the current school education model, “Ruangrupa” develops art education through ongoing activities for children in the “RURU_Kids” program, which emphasizes freedom as the main aspect applied to students to develop their abilities. Various stimulating activities are designed to make learning about art fun through play. In addition, “Ruangrupa” also empowers university students through participation in Jakarta 32°C, which includes discussion forums for art activists at the university level, as well as the Institut Ruangrupa program, an international program involving 20 arts organizations from Africa, Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East in exchanging knowledge and experiences. Educational models applied through artistic practice are done to support development in expression, making art a powerful medium of public education that can provide a more fluid and universal approach accessible to various layers of society.

Conclusion

The formation of space by citizens arises from the emergence of the body’s awareness of space as an entity owned by individuals regarding their rights to space, in this case, the city, to form their own social space. The social space produced through the corridors of art practices makes the city space a contested arena that presents alternative spaces showcasing works of art because of artistic practices, in contrast to the commercial spaces dominated by capitalist products. The development of urban alternative spaces is increasingly on the rise as awareness of the monotony of urban space and the boredom experienced by city dwellers in their daily lives becomes more apparent. The problems arise from the inequality caused by the presence of capitalist product spaces. The influence of capitalist product spaces on the mobility of social movements in space and time has led to a crisis in social space for the realization of citizens’ activities. “Ruangrupa” emerges as another choice for citizens to see, respond to, and act upon their city through artistic activities carried out by “Ruangrupa”. The artistic practice activities carried out by “Ruangrupa” are a form of discourse on the

social space of the citizens, within which there are processes of spatial practice stages, space representation, and representational space as intended by Lefebvre as the production of space carried out in creating social space by making the urban phenomena perspective a focus in creating works of art.

“Ruangrupa” strives to encourage the creation of spaces that can accommodate art practice activities that are open to the wider community to become more involved in their daily social practices through artistic activities. Efforts to build an art network are carried out with other art institutions and partners, as well as audiences gathered within the art ecosystem as a form of expanding the space to share initiatives on the discourse of art that liberates its practitioners in expressing themselves in the form of works of art. The creation of social space is used as an arena for contemporary art activities that contain critical sensibility and are characterized by a critical approach to the social and cultural phenomena of urban conditions. In artistic practices, education is carried out as a form of public engagement to encourage citizens to contemplate the condition of urban space in the dynamics of daily social practices. In this regard, “Ruangrupa” plays a vital role in the effort to negotiate the independent formation of spaces by city dwellers within the context of contemporary art practices.

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