

THE INDIS STYLE: THE TRANSFORMATION AND HYBRIDIZATION OF BUILDING CULTURE IN COLONIAL JAVA INDONESIA

Djoko Soekiman & Bambang Purwanto

Department of History, Faculty of Humanities, Universitas Gadjah Mada

ABSTRACT

This historical study is focused on Indis style houses and buildings in Java during colonial period. The study discusses the reception and adaptation of Dutch and other cultures together with the local cultures in the transformation and hybridization of Indonesian architectural design production and reproduction. The study concludes that Indis style is a proof for the western inability to avoid the social and cultural influence of the locals, representations of new hybrid identities who want to show themselves as closer to the west and distance from the indigenous, representation of new identity among those who found a new definite motherland since others consider themselves alien, symbol of modernity for those who were looking for a new social status and justify their existence, and a representation of the history of colonialism itself.

Keywords: Indis style, hybridization, colonial Java

ABSTRAK

Kajian sejarah ini difokuskan pada rumah dan bangunan bergaya Indis di Jawa pada masa kolonial. Tulisan ini mendiskusikan tentang resepsi dan adaptasi budaya Belanda dan budaya lainnya bersama-sama budaya tempatan dalam transformasi dan hibridisasi pada proses produksi dan reproduksi desain arsitektur Indonesia. Kajian ini menyimpulkan bahwa gaya Indis merupakan bukti dari ketidakmampuan Barat untuk menghindari dari pengaruh sosial dan kebudayaan tempatan, representasi dari identitas hibrid baru yang ingin menunjukkan dirinya lebih dekat kepada Barat namun berjarak dari penduduk asli, representasi dari identitas baru bagi mereka yang menemukan ibu pertiwi yang baru ketika kelompok lain menganggap mereka sebagai orang asing, simbol modernitas bagi mereka yang sedang mencari status sosial baru serta untuk menjustifikasi keberadaannya, dan sekaligus representasi dari sejarah kolonialisme itu sendiri.

Kata kunci: gaya indis, hibridisasi, kolonial Jawa

INTRODUCTION

If we took a stroll around Indonesian cities such as Jakarta, Bandung, Semarang, Surabaya, Malang and Medan to name some of them, we would witness the city planning and architecture of a bygone day, punctuated by several old buildings remnants of the colonial era what local people in Java called “*loji londo*” - Dutch house (Susanti, 2000). A similar sight can also be witnessed in areas once known as centers of colonial plantations and private estates, or *particuliere landerijen*, the areas where European lived in. From the few surviving buildings, one can surmise that all of these were a form of western, especially Dutch responses to Indonesian cultures. Some of the facades of the buildings depict different images and identities that are incompatible with local culture characteristics, but at the same time, a person familiar with European particularly Dutch culture would also notice that some of the cultural facets are unknown to genuine Dutch buildings (Berlage, 1931; Nijs, 1961; Wuisman, 2007: 31; Nas, 1986: 6-9; Passchier, 2007: 98-107). The reception, adaptation and transformation of Dutch culture into an Indonesian context have resulted in a new hybrid culture, known more widely as the *Indische*, *Indisch*, *Indies* or *Indis* culture which have spread widely especially amongst urban community in the colonial times (Soekiman, 2000; Cote & Westerbeek (ed.), 2004; Milone, 1967).

Although theoretically the spread and development of culture are boundary-less and hard to trace, but from the remaining remnants, it is possible to assume that the reception, adaptation, and transformation of Dutch culture into *Indische* occur mostly in urban areas. This can be explained through the fact that ever since they first landed, the Dutch presence in Indonesia has been exclusively urban. The city is the main habitat of the Dutch, during their days as traders as well as colonial masters and capitalists pouring in huge investments into the economic activity of the area. They started with houses inside the fortress and then expanded into different settlements outside but still inside the

city wall.

It was not until later period, more Dutch and other western compatriots move outside the wall into a more remote rural-like settings. The presence of Dutch in the rural areas; as government employees, soldiers and planters did not fundamentally change the characters of local culture because the Dutch never created a real Dutch community. When Dutch people started owning houses and estates in the rural-like plantations, almost all of them also became members of a western community located in the nearby towns; many of these towns and small cities were built specifically for purposes associated with the plantation. On the other hand, in urban areas with long Dutch presence, the reception of Dutch culture is obviously more remarkable and it often took architectural forms that sought to impress and to express authority, such as using the “empire style as its official trademark” (Kusno, 2007: 135).

Even so, the picture above does not describe the whole reality of the historical process because there were certain periods when the process of reception and adaptation of town planning and architecture had actually gone into the hinterland or did not occur in the cities. Although the Dutch remains the main protagonists in all of the process, what happened was a Dutch adaptation of their local environment by taking in local building knowledge, especially the Javanese since Java was the place where Dutch concentrated their activities. The adaptation process was not only confined to the cities, but it had also infected other areas that are usually categorized under the heading of the interior or the rural areas. At the time, the cities were the main living quarters of the Dutch in Java, but even then, many Dutchmen and other Europeans started to build houses and resting places in the interior, near rural based local communities. Socio-culturally speaking, there even occurred an intensive interaction between the local and Dutch people, whether as a group or as individuals.

This article discusses the reception

and adaptation of Dutch and other cultures together with the local cultures in the transformation and hybridization of Indonesian architectural design production and reproduction. Although the effects of Dutch culture have been widespread in many of the cultural aspects of a number of urban areas in Indonesia, this study will focus on the *Indische* style houses and buildings in colonial Java, the centre of Dutch activities in the Indonesian archipelago during colonial times. It assumes that a house or building is a cultural representation of authority, power in the colonial context (Locher, 1985: 86). So, what happened in colonial Indonesia? Is the Indis style architecture also a reproduction of colonial power by people who supported the Indis culture? To what extent is the formation of Indis style architecture shaped by reception and adaptation which produced hybrid culture as well as social identification in colonial Indonesia?

The word *Indische* comes from the word *Nederlandsch Indie* or Netherlands Indies, a Dutch foreign territorial occupation which geographically covers a large part of the Nusantara archipelago of present Indonesia, and it was also known as the *Nederlandsch Oost Indie*. Quoting Pauline Dublin Milone, the “Indische” means “Indies like”, mixture elements of local, European, Chinese and other elements of communities lived in this former Dutch controlled area (Milone, 1967: 408). This term is used to differentiate it from the *Nederlandsch West Indie*, another Dutch’s colonial territory, which included the areas of Suriname and Curacao (Soekiman, 2000: 9). In social and cultural context, to some extent, it is closely connected with the terms Eurasia and *Mestizo*, who are “persons of mixed Asian and European ancestry and for the culture that grew up in Dutch settlements in Asia from the meeting of the two” with “a culture made up of many influences, extending beyond the Dutch and Indonesian (Taylor, 1983: xix). In this paper, however, the term Indis is defined broader than *Mestizo*, it is a multiracial culture and society included *Merstizo* within the Dutch

colonial space from seventeenth century to late colonial period of first half twentieth century.

Terminologically speaking, the reception will include the inclusion of Dutch cultures into the lifestyle of people in the colony without distinguishing them as locals or newcomers. Adaptation means the conscious and unconscious effort of the Dutch community in taking the local characteristics such as climate that suited their needs. The Dutch reception and adaptation of Javanese cultures have resulted in the production of a new style of hybrid socio-cultural life in the colonial society through continuous changing processes (Widodo, 2007:17), a style aptly named the *Indische* in Indonesian colonial context. For the purpose of Indonesian historiography, however, this paper prefers to use “Indis”, an Indonesian language interpretation over the concept of “Indische” since Indis colonial culture refers to the history of Indonesian cultural heritages in Indonesian perspective (Soekiman, 2000: 9-10; Purwanto, 2004: v-ix). This study aims to show how the earlier constructed houses and buildings owned by Dutch authority together with the elite of multiracial settlers have already pioneered Indis architectural styles before the arrival of the professional Dutch architects, particularly in the early twentieth century. The paper also will describe how and why the communities from seventeenth century up to nineteenth century before the arrival of more Dutch women to the Archipelago have already produced a series of Indis houses as a result of their cultural transformation and hybridization.

Refers to frame of thought developed by Susan Legene and Henk Schulte Nordholt on their study about colonial and post-colonial Indonesian heritage, it assumes that the Indis style suggests a space of encounter, performances, and exhibition (Legene & Nordholt, 2015: 1). It is the place where multiracial people, cultures, objects, and emotion interact with each other in vernacular relationship producing thus new cross-cultural domain and infrastructures. In Frances Gouda ex-

pression, Dutch colonialism in Indonesia “resulted from an eclectic fusion...filled with subliminal tension of a wide range of European mentalities and unique local condition” (Gouda, 1995: 9). Furthermore, Frances Gouda also mentions that Dutch colonialism “yielded a culture that encompassed much more than a monolithic ideology intent on disguising or vindicating European modes of domination; instead, Dutch colonial culture in the Indonesian archipelago was also ‘expressive’ and ‘constitutive’ of colonial relationships themselves” (Gouda, 1995: 9). As a system and process, the Indis style brings equilibrium into the society as people look for ways to adapt and to live in a convenient life. Meanwhile, Abidin Kusno argues that architecture is also a “noun”, and in the post-colonial Indonesia the dialogue with the past “has resulted ...in the reproduction of colonialism itself “ (Kusno, 2000: 212).

In relation to academic debate conceptually, there is slightly different ideas among scholars about what is Indis style architecture and its periodization despite their agreement about Indis communities and their culture, who created the architectural style. Johannes Widodo is among those who argue that Indis style architecture did not start until early nineteenth century, when a new style of architecture adapted and accommodated to the local conditions was flourishing (Widodo, 2007: 20), despite the fact that the Indis culture as a result of mixed marriage and multiracial society had emerged earlier. Prior to nineteenth century, houses, offices, warehouses and other buildings with flat facade without a veranda, thick brick and not enough ventilation were constructed based on technology, material and architectural style taken directly from Europe. This early modern period architectural style lacks local adaptation and reception, which produced an uncomfortable place to stay and incompatible to the local climate despite some improvements and adjustments in the later period (Widodo, 2007:19). He also argues that this is not until the time when security is

no longer a priority for the communities after the strengthening colonial government and the desperate need for living comfortably in the second decade of nineteenth century, climatic adaptation and cultural reception buildings were constructed to fulfil the need of culturally hybrid Indis communities. The style survived until late Dutch colonial period, when it came to maturity as part of modern architecture (Widodo, 2007: 20-22).

Abidin Kusno, however, tries to distinguish between what is called the “Indis empire style architecture” and “Indis style architecture” of nineteenth and twentieth century during the colonial time. The first style refers to western neo-classical architecture introduced to the colony in the early nineteenth century in representing colonial state with its Greco-Roman architectural order and monumental appearances (Kusno, 2007: 134). It is European-centrism architectural vision on the tropical colony. The empire style architecture as a part of *Indische* culture was fading away since the introduction of ethical policy and the coming of new generation of European architects to the colony in the early twentieth century. According to Abidin Kusno who summarizes the spirit of the architects at the time, the empire style was considered “not only representing the whole ancient regime saturated with feudalism and exploitative imperialism but also a stumbling block for progressive change” (Kusno, 2007: 135; Kusno, 2010: 133).

Based on the study of architectural historian, Handinoto, Abidin Kusno goes on teasing out two distinctive early twentieth century architectural movements that sought to counter empire style architecture, the *Nieuwe Bouwen* and *Indische Architectuur*. The *Indische Architectuur* group associates themselves more with the local elements in representing new modernist colonial society. Meanwhile, the *Nieuwe Bouwen* tends to distinguish themselves from the former by the way of playing with geometric and abstracted decorative forms as expressed most sophisticatedly in the Art Deco style (Kusno, 2007: 140).

Kusno conceptualizes *Indische architectuur* as a short lived syncretic localized modernist architectural style which flourishes in the 1920s and the 1930s colonial Indonesia (Kusno, 1997: 49; Kusno, 2000: 31-32). The style represents neither indigenous Indonesia nor the colonial Dutch but rather a synthesis of all participants in a new colonial society in response to the expansion of highly capitalistic economy, western education and Indonesian nationalism, particularly after the introduction of the Ethical Policy in the colony in early twentieth century.

OVERSEAS DUTCH COMMUNITY AND THE ORIGIN OF INDIS STYLE

The history of the reception and adaptation in the transformation and hybridization of Dutch culture in Indonesia can be traced way back since the beginning of the *Vereenigde Oost-Indische Compagnie* (VOC) trading activities and the resulting presence of a Dutch community in the area since the start of the seventeenth century, although other European traders such as Portuguese, Spanish, and British had settled in the area earlier (Hanna, 1988: 2). There were about five thousand ships left the Netherlands to Asia between 1602 to 1795 with about 1 million people on board (Taylor, 2006: 28). It could be easily confirmed that most of them reached Indonesian archipelago besides Japan, Taiwan, India, and Sri Lanka named some important VOC trading ports in Asia. The development of the city of Jacatra or Jayakarta what was then known as Batavia and now Jakarta, since the 17th century is a classic example of Dutch cultural reception and adaptation in Indonesia.

On 20 August 1603, the Dutch Admiral, Wijbrand van Warwijk, obtained a piece of land to build a VOC trading office in Banten from local rulers. He started to build the office and storage to help with the buying, storing and shipping of spices obtained from the VOC in Banten and other areas around it. Because of British fierce competition in Banten, VOC started to look for a strategic new place for their future main trading office and port around

the Ciliwung River in Sunda Kelapa of present Jakarta (Kanumoyoso, 2011: 15; Milone, 1966: 113). In 1610, VOC represented by her agent Jacques l'Hermite signed an agreement with the local Prince, who was competing against his uncle the Sultan of Banten, to build their first "wood and stone houses" for trading warehouse on the east bank of the river. J.P. Coen, then leading the VOC (1618-1623 & 1627-1629), moved the VOC main office to Jakarta after occupied the city in 30 May 1619 after different stages of bloody wars (Hanna, 1988: 18-19; Abeyasekere, 1987: 9-13; Taylor, 1983: 3).

The first structure raised by the Dutch was a *Pakhuizen* or storage buildings used to store merchandize items, especially spices, a trade office and then a wall as fortification for the whole quarter. The first *Pakhuis* built in Jakarta was Nasau in 1611 (Hanna, 1988: 18). The storage was then reinforced with a 3 feet wide wall so, as a function as a fort aside from other usages of storage, office and living quarters. This was then followed by the building of Mauritius, located at the mouth of the Ciliwung river. The new fort was equipped with two canons and thus provoking disputes with the Panembahan Jayakarta - Prince of Jayakarta, ruler of the area. The dispute was followed by a battle where the Dutch gained victory. It was J.P. Coen who first changed the nature of Jakarta landscape when he destroyed the previous twin centres of the city, the *kadipaten* house of local ruler and the mosque for a "new centre of authority and prestige within the Castle of Batavia" instead (Taylor, 1983: 19).

J.P. Coen erected a large fort measuring fifty meters in length, in a square fashion, near the old fort on Jakarta's ruin. The new fort was fitted with a moat and christened with the name Batavia. Prior to the battle, in a letter sent to Europe, J.P. Coen mentioned "In het casteel Jacatra", and the city "Olim Jacatra" or Old Jacatra, J.P. Coen had wanted to name the place Nieuw Hoorn, to commemorate his birthplace in the Netherlands. But the VOC board members, the

Heeren XVII, through their decision letter, had given the name Batavia to the new city, to commemorate “de Bataven”, the first people who have settled in the area now known as the Netherlands and which was believed to have been the ancestors of the Netherlandic people. The old storages were then changed into large fortresses. The new fort had four smaller fortresses in each of its four corners. They were named Panel, Diamont, Saffier and Robijn, thus giving the nickname of the new place; the Jewel City. The city was then officially named Batavia on 4 March 1621 (Abeyesekere, 1987:12).

Since then more Dutch were deployed to Jakarta, most of them were soldiers in order to fulfil the need of VOC in managing their authority and trading activities. Besides the VOC employees, the growing city also attracted private traders either from Europe or Asia who then received special permit to run their activities under VOC monopolistic system and status as settlers of free community. Despite a slow growing number due to changing policy from time to time toward the free immigrant applied by VOC elites during this earlier period, there were 340 Dutch burghers out of 7286 people living outside the city wall in 1673 (Taylor, 1983: 10). Based on British report during Thomas Stamford Raffles interregnum government, there were 552 European and 1476 who were given a status as European in Jakarta in 1811 (Taylor, 1983: 97). The total population of Jakarta outnumbered when other communities such as other European citizens, Chinese traders, and Asian Christians were also granted status as settler in the city to form a multiracial society, excluded multiracial slave who played such important role in the daily life of the elites. The scene of Jakarta in the seventeenth century is described by Jean Gelman Taylor based on some pictures as a city with “a cosmopolitan life, where Javanese, Malay, Balinese, Chinese, Indians, Japanese and Dutch live closely together, shopping, chatting, eating in public spaces and sharing the intimacy of the home” (Taylor, 2006: 25).

Those elites of multiracial society who required construction of spaces for activities and houses for living, from which Indis style architecture in Indonesia started as early as seventeenth century. The city of Jakarta as it now called was built according to the urban patterns of Netherlandic walled cities. The Dutch also treated other cities on the northern coast of Java, such as Semarang and Surabaya the same way. The city of Jakarta was initially built on the eastern shore of the Ciliwung river, but then grew southward into the interior. To prevent the frequent flooding, canals were dug. The residential houses had been built along the canals, reminiscent of the houses in the Netherlands. All the buildings had once been confined within the wall of the city. By 1650, the city of Jakarta had already established itself as a walled city with an area of around 150 hectares. The houses were built fairly tall with very refined building techniques (Soekiman, 2000: 2; Passchier, 2007: 99). In order to protect the inhabitants from the heat, thick walls were erected with bricks and natural stones. The bricks were placed on top of each other and were then scraped and smoothed to produce the type of strict linear lines in the walls of the houses. To protect the inhabitants from the ferocious humidity and the frequent floods, the houses were built with more than one floors or had the first-floor way above the ground level.

The fort cities, like Jakarta, was a typical Dutch residential city during their formative presence in Java. All the activities related to trading and daily life were centered in the fort (Haan, 1935; Milone, 1966; Milone, 1967). The residence of the officers, offices and all other things considered important or priceless, such as the archives, money and other wealth are also stored in the fort. In other words, the fort was the heartbeat where all the economic, social and political activities of the trading company and its community went on. Only when conditions outside the fort were considered safer from the many threatening conditions such as riots and so forth,

the Dutch, including officials, dared to build their homes outside the safety of the fort walls. Even so, all government activities such as ambassadorial acceptance, official ceremonies and parties were still conducted within the fort.

During the early period, there was no such interest to connect between the different cultures concerning the architecture. The earlier settlers tend to follow the architecture at home while making no attempt to adapt to the tropical climate (Jessup, 1985: 138; Widodo, 2007: 19; Passchier, 2007: 98-99). Governor General Adriaan Valckenier (1737-1741) was the last highest VOC officer to have had a residence within the walls of Jakarta. Afterwards, the subsequent governor generals built their luxurious residence and holiday houses with its exquisite and extensive gardens or what was then called a *Landhuis*, outside the walls, conforming to the 18th century Dutch architectural models (Soekiman, 2000: 3; Tjahjono, 1998: 110-113). The buildings of the period had a remarkable similarity to Dutch buildings of the time, for instance, the house of Renier de Klerk in Molenvliet West.

Aside from better security conditions, cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya and Semarang, located as they are in the downstream of rivers were also considered unhealthy as they were built on reclaimed swamp grounds liable to unhealthy vapours. The Dutch then removed their residential quarters to more interior locations, considered more healthy and good. They built their houses and its amenities to suit the local conditions by taking in local cultural elements as a need to adapt themselves to the environmental and suitable living conditions in the tropics. As a result, a new cultural element emerged with the name of the Indis and spread all over Java.

In the later times, the buildings built by the Dutch community shifted away from its loyalty to Dutch styles and started adapting to local styles, especially Javanese styles; resulting in a new style known as the Indis Style in Java. The spread and development of the Indis style became

stronger in the 18th century, especially after the development of a new community resulting from the admixture of genetic and cultural elements of the European community, especially Dutch community, with the local populace around the plantations and private estates (Cote & Westerbeek, 2004: xvi-xvii). The development of the new group was supported by the common non-married status of many Dutch officials. Despite some encouraging policies applied to bring western woman and girls to Indonesia at the early stage, there was a prohibition for VOC personnel to bring their wives into the colony, except for very senior officials. This policy had resulted in inter-marriage and concubinage with local women particularly among the soldiers and lower status officials, that produced children of mixed ancestries, producing thus a new category of people into the society (Milone, 1967: 409; Taylor, 1983: 14-15).

The Indis community grew fast as a result of the increase of Dutch bureaucrats, soldiers, businessmen, traders and other company personnel were living in the interior cities near the local populace. They made themselves a new lifestyle, composed of various mix of local and Dutch culture as part of their attunement to the environmental and socio-cultural differences of the community they resided in. In the context above, what happened was a reception of local culture into a dominant Dutch culture, instead of the other way around.

As local women became concubines, known colloquially as *Nyai*, they hold a great role as mediator to the Dutch cultural reception and adaptation to local cultures producing a new lifestyle for a certain segment of the community in Java (Locher-Scholten, 2000; Locher-Scholten, 1992: 271-276). According to Pauline Dublin Milone, the emergence of Indis culture in colonial Indonesia was based on "more positive evaluation of family life, rather than from negative factors of isolation or ostracisme" since the mixed children were given the status of European (Milone, 1967: 409). The presence of in-

fluential local women in Indis families such as Nyai Dasima of G. Francis and Nyai Ontosoroh of Pramoedya Ananta Toer novels could be used to understand how life at the Indis house was. Besides architects and western men, it could be easily assumed that these local female figures should have their important role in the transformation of Indis style building since they were entrusted by their spouses and the entire family to take care the house and their wealth (Tsuchiya, 1991: 468; Toer, 1980).

As was similar to other cultural history of other places, the development of the Indis style in the history of Indonesia during the colonial period was also marked by a range of interpretative problems. The Indis style is a hybrid and as a result much cynicism was levelled at it from many quarters. To Javanese, the Indis style was a rough style, something not quite Javanese yet, while to the pure Dutch, the style was considered low and strange. On the other hand, the development of the Indis style had a wide support, which included colonial bureaucratic elites responsible to the matters of urban planning and architecture.

One important among them was called the Reflector, who frequently wrote to an architectural journal. In August 1907, he wrote about the importance of using local building arts, especially Javanese style, in developing modern building arts suited to the conditions present in the colony (Soekiman, 2000: 234). Quoting the opinion of an elite bureaucrat working in the Department of Public Works of the Netherlands Indies, the Reflector further stated that the usage of local elements must officially be the base thought for architecture working for the government. For the Reflector, local building arts which had been considered inferior were indeed rich in elements considerable to the advancement to the modern building techniques, whether as ornaments or as a mixture of local and Dutch tradition (Soekiman, 2000: 236-237). It is different from the nature of colonialism itself which tended to be exclusive and discriminative,

the inclusion of local culture in architecture now is the main notion of Indis style building construction.

EAST MEETS WEST IN INDIS STYLE BUILDING

It was not until the late nineteenth century more western, particularly Dutch women arrived in the colony to accompany their couples that western norms were imposed. Despite a serious attempt to recreate a distinctive Dutch culture into the colony when Gustaaf Willem baron van Imhoff was taking his position as Governor General by mid-eighteenth century and a new development in late nineteenth century (Taylor, 1983: 79), the Indis style culture had already taken a prominent part within the daily life of most western families, although some individuals then denied their Indis root (Timmerije, 2007: 203; Cote & Westerbeek (ed.), 2004: 109-127; Locher-Scholten, 2000). Besides these mixed communities, the *totok* Dutch, and Chinese, the Indis culture in Java also shared by most indigenous Indonesian who already embraced Christianity at that time, such as those come from Depok, Ambon, Minahasa and local elites (Milone, 1967: 410-411).

As was mentioned above, the development of an Indis style in the building arts of Java started with the construction of luxurious residential or holiday homes or *landhuizen*, outside the walls of the city, especially along the 18th century and first medio of the 19th century (Wall, 1932). Aside from government or company personnel, plantation managements and Dutch traders, the owners of Indis style housing are mostly private land owners. Differing from the company personnel or government bureaucrats, the Dutch living in private had a high incidence of interactions with local populace.

The houses built were highly reminiscent to the houses built by rich traders in old Dutch cities such as Hilversum and Baarn, using the extensive grounds to allow for large rooms inside the house and extensive gardens outside of it (Soekiman, 2000: 137). During that period, there was

a direct involvement of European skilled labourers in the construction of both VOC as well as private owner buildings. The construction of a city hall in Jakarta by early 18th century for instance, was supervised by Dutch chief carpenter, who worked alongside the Chinese contractor (Paschier, 2007: 98). In the early phases, the Dutch elements were dominant in the buildings, but at a later stage, Javanese and other eastern building arts had become more prominently expressed in the form of ornaments and symbolic elements. To symbolize a high social status, a third of the doors was usually carved with a beautiful *a'jour relief*. The key hole or *engsel* was usually beautifully carved, similar to those present in Arab homes. The doors were also smoothly carved in the design of various intertwining ivies (Soekiman, 2000: 139; Passchier, 2007: 100). The windows were given rattan shutters, similar to rattan chairs, before finally being replaced at the mid-18th century with large, tall, glassy windows to let the light into the room when the window was closed. This glassy window shows the very high status of the owner since it is really an expensive choice (Haan, 1935: 46).

One important aspect of all the Indis style houses are the presence of the wide *stoep* or *serambi* along the front wall of the house, something missing from Dutch mansions. The emergence of *stoep* as facade seems to be a major change in the Indis style building at that time. The *stoep* not only functioned as part of the housing construction, but also as meeting places between family members and the neighborhoods. The *stoep* were usually ornamented with chairs for comfortable sittings and conversations with a cigar, tea and condiments during the afternoon or at the weekends (Soekiman, 2000: 141; Passchier, 2007: 99). At night, the room also functioned to receive guests or as sleeping quarters where the lazy chairs were placed. The middle room of the house, usually called the *voorhuis*, has also a *stoel* named the *kerkstoel*, a chair to be used when praying to God and is usually used by the lady of the house. Every Sunday,

the highly ornamented chair is taken along with a *kotak sirih* (a bettlenut case, highly ornamented), umbrellas, a bible and other church necessities to be taken to the Church by the slaves, or latter, the lady's maids (Soekiman, 2000: p.142). The quarters were usually adorned with paints, guns, swords or spears and other highly expensive items such as chinaware and vases made of exquisite porcelain.

Different from original Dutch houses that usually place the stairs in a corner of the *voorhuis*, the Indis houses usually places it at the end part of the room which is called the *zaal*. The stairs do not form a circle or a *wenteltrap*, but it is a straight type of stair that leads to the second floor, usually called the *bordestrap*, and it is adorned with a baluster. All the main balusters are placed at the front and the end of the railings. They are usually kept in a beautiful state and are given extra attention than other parts of the house. The Baluster is exquisitely chiselled and painted with expensive paints, usually golden colored paints to give it more expensive finish. Aside from that, certain parts of the windows and doors are also exquisitely carved and the rooms are also adorned in various types of ornamentation including beautiful and expensive furniture to show off the high social status of the owner of the estate.

Indis mansions usually have large roofs extending beyond the walls of the house. Some houses even use the double roof style of Javanese houses, known as the *omah brunjung*, extending the roof way below the wall. Furthermore, although the Dutch never bathe in the rivers as were usually wont of the locals, toilets, bathrooms and washing rooms are always built outside the main house. Most of the toilets, bathrooms and washrooms are built near a small river outside the lawns of the house, although in more expensive houses, those amenities are built inside the lawns and gardens. Houses that do have toilets and bathrooms within the gardens would have the waste products flown into the river through special channels built to serve the purpose. Some other houses

even had portable toilets, whose contents are usually thrown into the river by the slaves every night (Haan, 1935: p.54). Images of the exquisite mansions coming from the first decade of the 19th century shows that the *landhuizen* by that time had still bathe outside the house. In many of those mansions, the outhouse bathrooms were usually equiped with a water container in the form of a barrel and a cup or *ciduk* to function as water dispenser. Only in the mid-19th century, Indis style mansions start using inhouse toilets and bathrooms although these were still very simple compared with the types they were built in the beginning of the 20th century.

Before the abolition of slavery, Indis style houses were usually equipped with buildings or special rooms for the slaves. Some families, such as the van Riemsdijk, owned up to 200 slaves living in their luxurious and expansive estate by the *Tijgergracht* (Soekiman, 2000: 145). The slave quarters were usually multifunctional and used as storage rooms and were located at the side and separated from the main house. In most cases, the special buildings or quarters usually cannot house all the slaves, so some slaves were allowed to live in the main house. The Jurian van Beek family, for instance, had to let some of their back gardens to function as a slave quarter because they had too many slaves in their households (Haan, 1935: 54; Soekiman, 2000: 146).

Entering the end of the 19th century and at the starting of the 20th century, the Indis style grew to become more unique in conjunction with the changes occurring in the colonial society of the time. The expanding political and economic power of the colonial state since the mid-19th century has resulted in the increasing number of Dutch people coming to the colony; working as colonial employee, businessmen and private European company personnel. Differing from the previous groups, the new comers started to form a European, specifically Dutch, community in Java in the real meaning of the sense because a lot of these men brought with them their family to the colony. The Euro-

pean men did not have to depend strongly on local women anymore because of the increasing number of European women living in the colony (Locher-Scholten, 2000: 18-19). The female migration from the Netherlands between 1890 to 1920 rose considerably to reach 300% compared to 200% of male migration at the same period of time (Locher-Scholten, 2000: 123). The presence of European women who mostly lived in the city, has resulted in a major shift in the lifestyles in comparison with the other periods. In the end, a more genuine European lifestyle started to develop, alongside the mixed lifestyle which had previously dominated the colony (Locher-Scholten, 2000: 122-123).

The presence of so many genuine *totok* Dutch with their specifically European culture, however, did not erase the Indis lifestyle easily. Like many new comers and hybrid society before, the Indis lifestyle, which included the Indis residential houses, were consciously chosen by many *totok* of the colonial society. At the beginning, there was an effort by the Dutch *totok* community to wholly transfer the architectural traditions of Europe into the colony. But as it developed, the houses and offices known as the *Indo-Europeesch Bouwkunst*, *Indische Huizen* or Indis architecture, remained the dominant style of most buildings built since the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century (Kusno, 1997: 48-52). But the fastly expanding cities of Java, whether at the coast and interior, has affected the development of the Indis architectural style in conjunction with the changing lifestyles of the Indis, from a colonial town to urban metropolitan lifestyle. Although according to Pauline Dublin Milone, the Dutch who arrived in the colony in larger numbers after 1870 were in fact those who brought with them "ruralized value system" after they experienced decline "from the peak of vigorous urban life" into "a non-industrialized people" (Milone, 1966: 527).

At the start, the *landhuizen* was always built outside the city wall, nearer to

the countryside in private estates, but in more contemporary development, the mansions were also built in new territories or *nieuwe buurten*, inside the city as the city expanded on itself. Most of the new category of Indis style housing were located at main streets or grouped together in certain parts of town separated from the local communities. They are usually housing for civilian or military officers, the elite of the areas. In several places, like Malang, Surakarta, Salatiga, Bandung and Sukabumi, the Indis buildings were built within a housing estate specifically created by the estate owners or Europeans working in the agriculture estates surrounding the cities. Differing from previous neighbourhoods, the development of the cities with increasing population had denied the new Dutch community to build Indis style mansions in extensive estates as had been the case in the previous centuries. The abolition of slavery in the mid-19th century and rise of land price have also affected the size, structure and amount of rooms present in many new Indis houses. Although most European families retained a large amount of house-hands, the numbers have definitively decreased from their usual number during the time of slavery.

Differing from the previous period that allowed greater personal initiative in determining the style of the house, since the end of the 19th century and the start of the 20th century, Indis style buildings in cities such as Semarang and Malang were carefully designed within a city planning framework. Herman Thomas Karsten, who designed the city lay out of Semarang for instance, tried to combine the Dutch town planning and architectural principles within the different environment to reach a harmonious whole by using Javanese architectural styles, such as the *pendapa* the front part of the house, into the houses. The Sobokerti or Sobokartti" exhibition center designed by Karsten (1884-1945), was an early effort of his to create harmony by combining European and local styles into another category of Indis style. Aside from its intended use to showcase exquisite European style artforms,

the Sobokerti building was also designed by Karsten to be used to show shadow plays and other local arts (Kusno, 1997: 55; Kusno, 2000: 33-39; Bogaers & Ruijter, 1986: 81-82). The role of Karsten in the development of new Indis architectural style was supported by other architects who worked or visited the colony in the early twentieth century, to name some of them are Henri Maclaine Pont (1885-1971), Hendrik Petrus Berlage (1856-1934), Liem Bwan Tjie (1891-1966), G. Cosman Citroen (1881-1935), and Charles Prosper Wolff Schoemaker (1882-1949), and W. Lemei (Soekiman, 2000: 233-234; Hadinoto, 2010; Kusno, 2000; Sumalyo, 1993). The founding of first private architecture firm in Semarang in 1904 followed the introduction of architecture section in the Department of Public Work in 1814. Society for Building Sciences, and various associations later, together with those architects marked a further development of new Indis style architecture in colonial Indonesia (Tjahjono, 1998, 120-123).

The shift of Indis style buildings in Java, from a predominantly rural to urban based forms have resulted in myriad changes in the structures and symbols contained within the Indis style houses. Rising land prices and the difficulty in obtaining large, open tracts of land in the cities have resulted in limiting the size of Indis style homes and the end of large gardens and lawns. Differing from traditional Javanese and old *landhuizen* Indis houses, the smaller, newer Indis houses, situated along arterial roads of the cities, become more engrossed with its facade as it directly meets the streets (Soekiman, 2000: 196). It is not surprising that, along with the continuation of some old Indis style typologies came the long raised front porch with its "joglo" styled roofs with its *Pendapa*. Meanwhile, the newer Indis urban style homes are also fitted with different sorts of ornaments and fixtures, such as the Dorian columns to give hints of social status of house owners. Indis style buildings in the cities were not limited to homes or offices but were also used for other functions as well, such as churches

and art buildings.

The Sonobudoyo museum in Yogyakarta is another example where Javanese architecture was adapted by Thomas Karsten after his success extension and modification of Mangkunegaran palace in Surakarta between 1917 to 1920 (Sumalyo, 1993: 44). A protestant church in Rembang, Central Java, located near the resident quarter and built in 1829 for instance, had a mansard roof with walls ornamented in Javanese styles, especially the pulpits. The mixture of west and Javanese styles in the Indische style buildings can also be seen in the Societet Mataram building, in Yogyakarta, known locally as the *Gedung Jenewer* or Alcoholic Building, an entertainment centre and weekend meeting place of the Indis people living in Yogyakarta, especially those from the adjacent plantations surrounding the city (Kusno, 1997: 53). The examples above shows that despite the existing social cleavage between the genuine *totok* Dutch and the Indis mixed communities, architecturally speaking, the Indis style was accepted not only by the hybrid community, but also by the *totok* one as well in the fast expanding urban life in Indonesia in the early 20th century.

Indis style buildings developed into even more interesting forms when it undergoes reception by the local populace and other Asian communities. If during previous periods, the process was generally marked by the adaptation of the Dutch to their surrounding environment, the next one followed a pattern of adaptation and reception different from the previous one because it was not only confined to the Dutch and hybrid communities. This occurred mainly when many Dutch or mixed owners of a *landhuizen* went through bankruptcy as a result of their luxurious life style and were forced to sell their mansions to rich Chinese or Arabs. The local people, especially the government employees, aristocrats and other privileged groups who had been exposed to western education or accustomed to mingle with Dutchmen, had since the beginning of the 20th century built houses

that continued the Indis style with several added changes in conjunction with their specific taste and needs. As had been the case with the Chinese and Arabs, the western cultural reception had resulted in something more eye catching than the previous period, a period marked only by Dutch adaptation to local elements resulting in the Indis style that had spread widely in the urban localities; of large, medium and small towns and cities (Soekiman, 2000: 195-201).

As a result, the houses underwent some basic transformation intended to define the identity of the new owner. A row of small houses belonging to Dutchmen in the Leeuwengracht, Jakarta, for instance, underwent an additional supporting beam on its left-hand corner and other amenities indicating its new identity as a shop or *toko*, after it was purchased by a Chinese. The fake chimney located at the roof was not eliminated, reminding people of the old Dutch homes along the *gracht* of the city. The Chinese also built many homes that had accommodated a lot of western architectural influence; the use of Ionian columns producing a new Indis style houses as can be witnessed in many Chinese houses in Surabaya and other cities. At this moment, around 1920s-1930s, new constructed buildings in urban Java, particularly in Bandung were flourishing with art deco, which included those houses owned by the prosperous upper-middle class families who were involved in business private sectors (Kusno, 2007: 140-141). The role of Liem Bwan Tjie among the elites of colonial architect from late 1920s facilitated the need of prosperous Chinese families over new genre in Indis style buildings (Hadinoto, 2010: 103-108). The Indis style houses with strong Chinese influence owned by wealthy Chinese create a distinctive nature in the development of the style in late colonial period.

Besides Semarang in Central Java, Surakarta was one of the city that had a high proportion of western influenced indigenous houses, in comparison to other Javanese cities, such as Yogyakarta, its

sister city in the claim of Javanese cultural and political center. The house of Pan-geran Hangabehi of Surakarta, for instance, indicates major influences of European building arts on its typology. In the latter development, rich indigenous traders, including rich devout Muslim traders, had also accommodated western architectural influences on the buildings they have erected. This can be witnessed in one of the mansions built by rich indigenous traders in Ciamis during the 1920s, which had a distinctive Indis style with its Dorian column supporting the wide front porch. Houses like this adorned other Javanese cities with a large indigenous trading class. Similar to previous eras, the existence of Indis style homes have been successful in building up the image of luxury and high social status for its owners without considering their race.

CONCLUSION

The Indis style architecture as a historical phenomenon was the result of a cultural creation built from the interactions of political, social, economic and cultural factors. The Indis style can also be considered the creative result of a certain group of people rooted since the VOC period and expanding during the Netherlands Indies government colonial times as they responded to the pressing needs of environmental adaptation and the life style of tropical living. Evidence shows that the adaptation to local elements was conducted not to identify themselves with the locals but in fact to strengthen existing differences. This is because colonialism had to enforce the rulers to use ornamentations and symbols that differed from the people they have colonized as a means to show strength and power.

It is not exaggeration to say that the Indis architectural style, in its early development, should be considered as a representation of a western identity and presence that have proven itself capable of winning against local political domination without professional architect, but also on the other hand, as a proof of western inability to avoid the social and cultural influ-

ence of the locals. In the latter development, the Indis style buildings became representations of new identities from a group of people that is socially and culturally not western nor indigenous, but constantly wants to show itself as closer to the west and distance from the indigenous. At this junction, Indis architectural style is understood by the new social group as providing an alternative to show that they are equal in relation to western identity and at the same time different from the local community. But as it develops, the Indis style did not only represent hybrid communities but has become an identity marker for many other different communities and social categories, an urban identity marker that distinguished itself from rural ones, and a middle-class marker without prejudice to ethnic or racial background. The Indis style has become something common in the Indonesian urban community of the colonial times.

In the end, the Indis style was a style that was thrust into the reality of Indonesia's colonial period. Its supporting population was a community that had a mixed West and East identity, between Dutch and Javanese, between European and Asian, between traditionalism and modernity, between the village and the city and between colonialism and nationalism. The history of the Indis style is a representation of the history of colonialism itself, the history of a rapacious and discriminative people walking shyly behind its phony mask of humanity and civilization. Simultaneously, however, the Indis culture is a representation of a new identity among those who finally found a new definite motherland since others consider themselves alien as well as a symbol of modernity for those who were looking for a new social status and justify their existence through cultural transformation of a hybrid culture. To accomplish such a task, the hybrid Indis style architecture played a historic role.

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