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From '*Indisch*' and 'Art Deco' to '*Jengki*': Re-thinking 'colonial' architecture of the Dutch East Indies in a globalising world

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Abstract

With attention for non-European/non-Western architecture and town planning on the rise, buildings and town plans in former European colonies that attest of European presence are increasingly of interest: indeed, buildings and town plans that often share formal and technical characteristics with buildings and town plans in Europe while simultaneously applying/introducing different, locally inspired features.

The ambiguous natures of buildings and town plans in former European colonies are as confusing as it is intriguing. What generated their design and what do we actually see? What is the significance of these buildings and town plans, and how is this assessed and by whom?

To discuss just three of the many issues involved when dealing with 'so-called' non-European/non-Western architecture (stylistic characteristics, denomination, significance) I will present the Dutch East Indies as a case study. By means of this case study, my paper will demonstrate some of the challenges inherent in a globalising world when analysing, interpreting and assessing buildings and town plans that emerged from and were implemented within a colonial context.

My paper will begin with an overview of the kaleidoscope of buildings and town plans in the Dutch East Indies. Next it will present designers and their (possible) sources of inspiration within the colony and beyond: stylistically, technically, and culturally, etc. The final section of the paper will discuss the accuracy and relevance of stylistic denominations in view of three, generally recognised and applied architecture styles in Indonesia: *Indisch*, Art Deco, and *Jengki*.



Indisch: Polytechnic in Bandung (1920)



Art Deco: Hotel Savoy Homann in Bandung (1939)



Jengki: House in Jakarta (c.1950)

Website for the 2016 Conference: http://www.asia-europe.uni-heidelberg.de/en/global_regionalism