



Colonial Legacies in Indonesia's Urbanization and Urban Housing: Past, Present, and Future

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Abstract

Since the 1980s, Indonesia has experienced rapid urbanization, and it has become one of the countries with the exponential growth of urban population. Densified urban population is worsening environmental issues such as particulate air pollution, water pollution, and waste disposal. Environmental injustice of poverty and the extreme polarization of rich and poor are increasing in Indonesia's urban societies. Ecological crisis due to climate change in the Anthropocene is closely associated with the nature and culture binary that disconnects human-world relationships. As Indonesia had been colonized by the Dutch for 350 years and occupied by Imperial Japan during World War II, the built environment has become the embodiment of colonial legacies that bequeaths the dichotomy of nature and culture through urban spaces and housings. By engaging with my lived experiences in Jakarta – the capital of Indonesia – and the historical references of Indonesia's development of the built environment and urban housing, I will discuss the nature and culture binary as the colonial legacies in Indonesia's built environment. I argue that the formation of colonial whiteness grounded on the nature and culture binary has evolved to transmit and preserve colonial legacies by a new medium of industrial capitalism. The emergence of gated communities, luxury housings and skyscrapers, and the maintenance of room layouts from the colonial period are the specific features of the corporeal manifestations of everlasting colonialism in Indonesia's built environment. In response to Indonesia's urbanization in the Anthropocene, I suggest Timothy J. Gorringer's theology of grace to call for the need for a contextualized theology of grace for Indonesia that could transform and reimagine the built environment in light of the immanence and transcendence of God.

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Introduction

Indonesia, a tropical archipelago in the Ring of Fire, is home to *pulau seribu* – a thousand islands. The fecundity and biodiversity of the lands provide vibrant and flourishing lives to both human and nonhuman dwellers. The tragedy of this heart of Earth's beauty in the Anthropocene

is the reality of environmental degradation and injustice due to pollution, high population density, and severe polarization between rich and poor. Indonesia is sinking into the ocean due to a progressive sea level rise that is associated with climate change. It is a matter of time for Indonesia to encounter the loss of *pulau seribu* one island after another, and possibly, the whole archipelago. How did Indonesia come this far? The contemporary ecological and environmental phenomenon is deeply connected to the nature and culture binary and Indonesia's built environment manifests the polarized dualism of nature and culture.

The rapid urbanization from 1980 to 2010 elevated Indonesia as one of the Southeast Asian countries to experience the exponential growth of urban population; the addition of three million new population is expected to expand Indonesia's urban growth by 2035.¹ Urban growth and densified urban population have contributed to Indonesia's air crisis, putting Indonesia as the fifth country in the world with a high mortality rate from particulate air pollution.² Focusing on the development of urbanization and urban housing in Indonesia, I will open up the conversation of the colonial legacies embedded in Indonesia's built environment in light of my lived experience in Jakarta.³ The second section will discuss the historical analysis of Indonesia's urbanization from the Dutch colonial era to the postcolonial era. The last section will analyze how Indonesia's urban areas have developed according to colonial whiteness and industrial capitalism by engaging George Lipsitz's "white spatial imaginary." Additionally, I will suggest Timothy J. Gorringer's theology of grace as a significant theology in response to Indonesia's urbanization in the Anthropocene.

Discussion

Section 1 – Personal Lived Experience in Jakarta, Indonesia

Indonesia has always been my second home, where I felt belonged, but concurrently alienated. Growing up in a foreign land as a Korean was a unique and privileged experience for

¹ Fadjar Hari Mardiansjah et al, "New Patterns of Urbanization in Indonesia: Emergence of Non-Statutory Towns and New Extended Urban Regions," *Environment and Urbanization ASIA* 12, no.1 (2021): 11, 14, <https://aqli.epic.uchicago.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Indonesia-Report.pdf>.

² Michael Greenstone and Qing Fan, "Indonesia's Worsening Air Quality and its Impact on Life Expectancy," *The Air Quality Life Index* (March 2019): 7.

³ Indonesia is relocating the capital from Jakarta to the island of Borneo by 2024. See also Gavin W. Jones, "Southeast Asian Urbanization and the Growth of Mega-Urban Regions," *Journal of Population Research* 19, no. 2 (September 2002): 119–36, <https://doi.org/10.1007/BF03031973>.

me to understand the world from a multicultural perspective. From the age of four until twenty, I had spent sixteen years of my life in Indonesia which is approximately five thousand kilometers away from my birthplace, Seoul, Korea. At the time I was growing up in Indonesia, I was very immature and too naïve to realize what it meant to be nurtured and raised as a third-culture kid. Still, I was fully aware that living in Indonesia was different from living in South Korea.

I vividly remember the two faces of Jakarta. One side where I belonged was glittering and prosperous with tall buildings, gigantic and complex shopping malls, and luxury apartments strictly guarded with walls and gates. The other side of the city was slums where the poor lived on the mountains of trash. The socioeconomic polarization between rich and poor was so extreme that the city of glitz and glam was incongruent with filthy and deteriorated slums. The glorious side of the city was indifferent to the wretched side of the city. Secured by the high walls and gates, my exclusive life in the city succeeded in distracting me to be aware of the lives in slums.

Moving from house to house, my family moved four times while living in Jakarta. The first two houses were single-story houses. After experiencing robbery, we moved to apartments for security and safety issues. Even though we moved several times, there was one thing that never changed: there was always a room specially designated to housemaids in every house. In our household, there were two housemaids – I called them *kakak*, which means older sister in Indonesian, probably in their late teens. Once or twice a year, they went back to their home in the rural area, *kampung*, for holidays, but they worked for our family most of the time in a year. They had their room and a bathroom at the corner of the house, semi-detached from the kitchen. Unless they were cleaning, they had limited spaces within the household for their personal use. For the housemaids, the segmentation of the working area and the personal area was clear.

Looking back to my memories living in Jakarta, I realize that having housemaids was an extraordinary privilege; they were regarded as an essential workforce for every household. Housemaids did all the housekeeping, prepared meals, made my bed, washed my clothes, cleaned my room, and even gave me baths; they were always prepared in service whenever I needed them, and I always knew where to find them. This is indeed not my proud experience, but rather a guilty one that rises in reminiscence of Indonesia. Naivety from the youth could be an excuse for my ignorance of how the Indonesian society cultivated a norm for the middle and

upper class to hire domestic workers. From the postcolonial perspective, I discover colonial legacies still prevalent in Indonesian societies' socioeconomic dynamics in the form of normalized employment of housemaids. What I find far more problematic beyond the social and cultural norm of generalizing housemaid employment is Indonesia's built environment that accommodates the solidified and structured colonial legacies in cities and urban housings for the middle and upper class.

What do the spaces embedded with colonial legacies do to the dwellers, and how do they influence human interaction? From my lived experience in the households where they contained and reflected Indonesia's long history of Dutch colonization, I am terrified by the ways the segmentation and dualism of nature and culture influenced my understanding of the built environment and urban housing. As Indonesia's history of urban development exemplifies the acute distinction between nature and the built environment grounded on nature and culture binary, the spaces I grew up in taught me to think of nature as the organic entity outside the city, distant from where I belong. These spaces taught me to differentiate myself from nature and different socioeconomic classes. I have learned how a living space can turn into a working space and how the built environment teaches and bequeaths colonial legacies of control and domination depending on socioeconomic status. While examining the influence of spaces and the built environment in shaping my understanding of urban environment and housing, it is critical to take account of Indonesia's history of urban development in order to bring awareness of dismantling colonial legacies embedded in the built environment.

Section 2 - Historical development of Indonesia's urbanization and urban housing from the Dutch colonial era to the postcolonial era

Colonial Era

How did the high-rise luxury apartment become the most popular form of urban housing, and how did rooms for housemaids become the standardized structure for urban housing in Indonesian cities? The history of Indonesia's urban development starts with the Dutch colonization. It took a substantial time for Indonesia to finally become an independent country on August 17, 1945, after experiencing 350 years of Dutch Colonization and Japanese

rule during World War II.⁴ Prior to the arrival of Dutch colonists in the 17th century, the Portuguese, British, and other European colonists landed in Indonesia; the Dutch eventually won the "Spice War." So, how did the Dutch colonists coexist with the indigenous Indonesian population, and how did the indigenous population regard the colonists? The Dutch colonists' general impression of the islanders is well represented by the Dutch soldier Van der Bosch's note:

The intellectual development of the average Javanese does not reach beyond that of our children from twelve to fourteen years, while in general knowledge he is left far behind by them... to give such people institutions suitable for a fully grown society is just as absurd to give children the rights of adults and to expect that they will put them to good use...Only a patriarchal government suits the Javanese. The government must take care of them and must not allow them to do things for themselves, because of their limited capabilities. This, of course, must be done with fatherly consideration...⁵

Along with colonists' sense of superiority over the natives, Indonesian housing in towns and cities was transformed over the colonial period. Peter J.M. Nas distinguishes the development of Indonesia's housing and urbanization into four stages: 1) early Indonesian towns, 2) Indische towns, 3) colonial towns or cities, and 4) modern towns or cities.⁶ The Dutch colonial government led the second and third stages of urban development by applying Dutch urban planning and building.⁷ Ismet Belgawan Harun argues that Indonesia's built environment is grounded on the dualism of the formal and informal urban areas.⁸ In the formal type of area, urban planning structured the built environment, whereas the informal type was identified as "organic in nature and mostly unplanned."⁹ Putting this dualism in a different context, informal types represented nature with no human designing and building, and contrastingly, formal types required human designing and building. Simply, the dualism embedded in Indonesia's urbanism and urban housing evolved from nature and culture binary into the dualism of nature and the built environment.

⁴ Tim Hannigan, *A Brief History of Indonesia – Sultans, Spices, and Tsunamis: The Incredible Story of Southeast Asia's Largest Nation*, (Tokyo; Rutland; Vermont; Singapore: Tuttle Publishing, 2015), 276.

⁵ Hannigan, *A Brief History of Indonesia – Sultans, Spices, and Tsunamis*, 135.

⁶ Ismet Belgawan Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," In *South Asian Houses: Embracing Urban Context*, ed., Seo Ryeong Ju et al., (Irvine, CA: Seoul Selection, 2017), 35

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Belgawan Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 34.

⁹ Ibid.

According to Harun, establishing the Indische towns built in "the fusion of the Dutch and local cultures" was the beginning of Indonesia's dualism of nature and the built environment in towns and cities.¹⁰ Nevertheless, the segregation of the Dutch colonists and the natives in the built environment was evident during this period.¹¹ Following the Indische period in the late 1800s, the Dutch planning and building regulations arrived at the formal urban areas.¹² There was an active endorsement targeting the Dutch to migrate to Indonesia during this period that led to increasing the Dutch population in Indonesia. At the same time, the growth of the Dutch middle class fueled the development of the "Colonial Town."¹³ The other side of the formal built environment where the native population dwelled, developed as *kampung* – distant from the concept of the village but "a section within the boundaries controlled by a nobleman."¹⁴ The colonial town and *kampung* were evident manifestations of dualism.

The development of the "Modern Town" is the critical period in Indonesia's history of urbanization that remains in the present built environment. During this time, a Dutch architect, Thomas Karsten, played a critical role in establishing the Modern Town by actively introducing and applying European urban planning.¹⁵ When Karsten arrived in Indonesia in 1914, an ethical policy that reinforced "a more sensitive and accommodating approach towards the indigenous people" was uprising, eventually influencing Karsten's town planning.¹⁶ Karsten's urban planning focused on creating "the coherent oneness" by including *kampungs* as "integral parts of the city."¹⁷ His vision of the built environment as "an organic unity and a living organism" expressed in merging the colonial town and *kampung*.¹⁸ Indeed, Karsten's urban planning advocated the urbanization of *kampungs*, improving the sanitation, housing conditions, and facilities according to the interest of the *kampung* dwellers.¹⁹

¹⁰ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 35.

¹¹ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 36.

¹² Ibid.

¹³ Ibid., 36-37.

¹⁴ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 37; Rafael Martinez and Irna Nurlina Masron, "Jakarta: A city of cities," *Cities* 106 (2020): 3.

¹⁵ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 37.

¹⁶ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 37.

¹⁷ James L. Cobban, "16. Exporting Planning: The Work of Thomas Karsten in Colonial Indonesia," *The Asian City: Processes of Development*, ed., Ashok.K. Dutt et al, (Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands, 1994), 253.

¹⁸ Ibid., 253.

¹⁹ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 37.

Did Karsten succeed in creating the built environment of one organic unity? He could argue that at least he tried to create one cohesive built environment aesthetically. However, his original vision of the city still preserved the dualism of nature and the built environment. Karsten envisioned the integration of the formal and informal urban areas by expanding the size of *kampung* so that the indigenous population had “their own playgrounds and recreation areas (lacking up to then) as well as their school and meeting places in their midst rather than in the center of the city outside the *kampungs*.” The colonial town and *kampung* were physically and aesthetically united, yet maintained segregation.²⁰

In order to understand the contemporary issues of Indonesia's urbanization and urban housing, it is critical to recognize that Karsten's vision of urban planning stressed the necessity of control and hierarchy. Having noticed the extensive problems stemming from the free growth of the city, Karsten's urban planning avoided free or natural growth.²¹ As a result, his urban planning highly demanded control to prevent the city from expanding as it found its way and promoted orderly expansion. How did the native Indonesians perceive Karsten's urban planning? The stringent building regulation eventually did not reflect the needs and interests of the indigenous population.

Civic building regulations, however, forbade people from building according to their traditional beliefs and interfered with the practice of neighborhood cooperation in house building. Hence the people regarded building regulations as an intrusion into their traditional way of life.²²

Another significant concept is the hierarchy between wholeness and particularity. The hierarchy was implemented to benefit the whole community rather than individuals. While Karsten's approach recognized the importance of reflecting the needs of the indigenous population, the advocacy of hierarchy by importing European urbanism in his approach to urban planning erased the traditional character of *kampung*. Since Karsten's urban planning was highly influenced by German and Dutch urban planning, districting and zoning according to income and occupation as well as land banking – purchasing of the land to control the natural expansion of the cities – were incorporated in his urbanism.²³ With the economic condition

²⁰ Cobban, “16. Exporting Planning: The Work of Thomas Karsten in Colonial Indonesia,” 253.

²¹ Cobban, “16. Exporting Planning: The Work of Thomas Karsten in Colonial Indonesia,” 251.

²² Ibid., 259.

²³ Ibid., 255-258.

merged with the social hierarchy according to which the indigenous population at the bottom, the Dutch colonists on top, and the Chinese immigrants in the middle, Karsten's urban planning segmented the urban housing once more by economic class.²⁴ The preexisting division among race and ethnic groups in urban planning was further complicatedly segmented by socioeconomic status.

Postcolonial Era: The New World Period and Beyond

The Dutch colonists retreated from Indonesia on March 8, 1942, but it was not a celebratory event for the Indonesians; the Dutch surrendered to the Japanese occupation.²⁵ It was not until August 17, 1945, that Indonesia declared its independence as the Republic of Indonesia. The first president of the Republic of Indonesia, Sukarno, promoted shifting Indonesia's economic structure to a market economy to prevent nationwide bankruptcy. The economic hardship continued under the Suharto regime until Indonesia reached the period of "the New Order," which transformed the Indonesian economic structure and system into an open market economy.²⁶ The change of economy attracted the housing development businesses and ultimately led to the expansion of urban areas and the growth of urban housing.²⁷ The growth of the middle class also contributed to the expansion of the housing market.

One important Indonesia's socioeconomic dynamic after the Dutch colonization and the Japanese occupation is the influence of the ethnic Chinese population in Indonesian society. Even though the ethnic Chinese population is still a subpopulation, the majority accumulated their wealth in the New Order period, and some from the Dutch colonial period when they "collaborated with the Dutch colonial rulers and thus their quarters have always been close to the European settlements in Old Jakarta."²⁸ The division and conflict between the native Indonesians and the ethnic Chinese existed for a significant amount of time, leading to the rise of riots against the ethnic Chinese in 1998 – "Chinese quarters were destroyed, shops looted and burned and people attacked."²⁹ Alongside the conflict between the two ethnicities, the open

²⁴ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 47.

²⁵ Steven Drakeley, *The History of Indonesia* (Westport, Connecticut; London: Greenwood Press, 2005), 68.

²⁶ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 38.

²⁷ *Ibid.*, 39.

²⁸ Leisch, "Gated communities in Indonesia," 342.

²⁹ *Ibid.*

market economy eventually brought rapid urbanization and urban housing development in Indonesia. However, the tragedy was foreseeable from the fact that the driving force of the urban development in Indonesia was heavily oriented toward market interests; the urban development has become subjugated to the capitalist market.³⁰

Contemporary cities in Indonesia are formed with skyscrapers, and the buildings are growing taller and taller; it is easy to find high stories of apartments in urban Indonesia. As Indonesia has been continuously experiencing heavy traffic due to a high urban population and poor transportation infrastructure, the apartment has been considered a possible solution for the urban housing crisis as of 2010.³¹ The introduction of high-rise apartments in the late 1970s was originally intended to provide housing for the low-income population.³² Since the New Order period, the economic growth increased the middle-class population in the urban areas; as more population moved to the cities, the demand for luxurious apartments increased.³³ The proliferation of luxury housing, including luxury apartments, in the urban areas, created "gated communities," where exclusivity is promoted by prestige and security.³⁴ Gated communities explicitly indicate the residential areas "surrounded by walls and have a single, guarded entrance gate," but it implicitly signifies the tensions:

...between exclusionary aspirations rooted in fear and protection of privilege and the values of civic responsibility; between the trend toward privatization of public service and the ideals of the public good and general welfare; and between the need for personal and community control of the environment and the dangers of making outsider of fellow citizens.³⁵

According to Herald Leisch, gated communities in Indonesia prioritize security, followed by prestigious lifestyles primarily grounded on exclusivity.³⁶ As the demands for apartments increase in Indonesian cities, luxury apartments as gated communities are expected to be much more prominent in Indonesian urban housing.

³⁰ Leisch, "Gated communities in Indonesia," 41.

³¹ Myeong Jin Park et al, "Housing Behavior in High-rise Apartment Adapting to the New Forms of Housing in Jakarta," *Journal of the Korean Housing Association* 31, no.4 (August 2020): 2.

³² Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 50.

³³ *Ibid.*, 55.

³⁴ Harun, "Organized-Formal Urban Housing in Indonesia: Its Historical Development and Typologies," 55; Herald Leisch, "Gated communities in Indonesia," *Cities* 19, no.5 (2002): 348.

³⁵ Edward J. Blakely and Mary Gail Snyder, *Fortress America: Gated Communities in the United States* (Washington, D.C.; Cambridge, Massachusetts: The Brookings Institution, 1997), 3.

³⁶ Leisch, "Gated communities in Indonesia," 350.

Section 3 - From here to where? Understanding Indonesia's built environment in light of George Lipsitz's White Spatial Imaginary

The Indonesian built environment embodies and contains the resentful history of exploitation from the Dutch colonization, Japanese occupation, and capitalist free market, all intertwined together. The history began with the segregation between the Dutch colonists and the indigenous population manifested in the dualism of formal (built environment) and informal (nature) urban areas. It is significant to note that this dualism in the built environment during the colonial era parallels the Western European understanding of nature and culture binary, as in Francis Bacon's understanding of nature as something to be "subdued by submission". This well represents of how the colonist's mind operated in relation to the indigenous population, transmitted intergenerationally.³⁷ The mentality behind nature and culture binary implies the superiority of man, specifically the European Caucasian male colonist, over inferior nature that "burdens" white men with responsibilities to dominate and cultivate what they perceive as nature. The dualism of nature and culture grounded on Western colonial mentality by no means faded away as urbanization developed throughout history. However, it evolved into the dualism of nature and the built environment in towns and cities; the dualism was solidified as the standardized norm of Indonesia's urban environment and urban housing.

As the history of urban development confirms, the accumulated socioeconomic influence in designing and building provided a foundation for the capitalist market economy to develop the housing industries in Indonesia. Once the capitalist market economy was stabilized in the Indonesian society, the polarization of nature and the built environment aggravated. The segmentation of city and *kampung* has internalized within the cities by the segmentation of gated communities and urban slums. The exclusivity of gated communities in Indonesia is the "totally protected zones (TPZ)" where the prestigious facilities are included within the residential area.³⁸ *Lippo Karawaci* is one of the gated communities in Jakarta where the community is basically formed around the golf course at the center.³⁹ The colonial legacies in the built environment have internally penetrated the interior structure and room layouts in gated communities. The standardization of allocating a specific space for housemaids as well as the

³⁷ Francis Bacon, *Novum Organum*, ed., Joseph Devey (New York: P.F. Collier, 1905), 11.

³⁸ Leisch, "Gated communities in Indonesia," 344.

³⁹ *Ibid.*

differentiated bathroom facilities in urban housing reflect the accumulated urban development grounded on nature and culture binary. Contrasting to gated communities, urban slums in Jakarta as of 2019 exist in 118 out of 267 subdistricts in conditions of poor housing and sanitary facilities.⁴⁰ Lack of water and electricity infrastructures in slums also challenge residents' access to clean water and prevention from extreme heat. On the one side of the city, excessive wealth cultivates the culture of exclusivity and supremacy, and the other side of the city strives for day-to-day survival.

Indonesia's fast-growing urbanization and the projected expansion of urban areas raise serious inquiries about Indonesia's urban planning in regard to embedded issues of colonial legacies, socioeconomic and environmental issues in the built environment. Is it truly possible for the built environment to embody colonial legacies? George Lipsitz's concept of "white spatial imaginary" helps to discover Indonesia's built environment as the projection of the white spatial imaginary from the Dutch colonization that was transmitted and evolved in the form of urban planning. While Lipsitz's claim that "race is produced by space that it takes places for racism to take place" focuses on the context of the United States, his argument about the correlation of race and place is also relevant to Indonesia's built environment.⁴¹ The demonic aspect of the white spatial imaginary, as Lipsitz explores in the context of racism in the US, created segmentation, and it is propelled by "the idea that Black people have shown themselves unfit for freedom by failing to take advantage of the opportunities afforded by civil rights laws."⁴² What is horrifying about white spatial imaginary is its adhesive and adaptive capability in place-making. If the built environment in the US "contain[s] deeply embedded racial assumptions and imperatives," white spatial imaginary in Indonesia's urban area contains the colonial mindset of nature and culture binary and classicism based on socioeconomic status.⁴³

Lipsitz also addresses the significance of financial factors in the white spatial imaginary since it "originates mainly in appeals to the financial interest of whites rather than to simple fears of otherness..."⁴⁴ Indonesia's expansion of gated communities in the form of luxury high-rise apartments reflects how urban housing is determined by the market demand that is

⁴⁰ News Desk (The Jakarta Post), "Slums remain a fact of life in Jakarta, ministry finds," The Jakarta Post, May 28, 2019, <https://www.thejakartapost.com/news/2019/05/28/half-of-jakarta-is-slum-ministry-says.html>.

⁴¹ George Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place* (Philadelphia: Temple University Press, 2011), 5.

⁴² Lipsitz, *How Racism Takes Place*, 15.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 13.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 37.

predominantly driven by wealthy ethnic Chinese and other alien resident populations.⁴⁵ While Indonesia provides hospitality to diverse race and ethnic populations, the dominant subgroup in the Indonesian urban communities is the ethnic Chinese population. There are also large numbers of foreign workers and immigrants in Indonesia; the majority other than China are from Japan, South Korea, Singapore, India, Bangladesh, and Malaysia.⁴⁶ Focusing on the Korean subpopulation in Indonesia, South Korea's Ministry of Foreign affairs located approximately thirty thousand Korean citizens residing in Indonesia in 2017.⁴⁷ As more Korean firms and industries entered Indonesia, the Korean communities grew in the main urban areas. Indeed, Jakarta is where most of the Korean population reside and enjoy a luxurious life, living in gated communities with housemaids in their households. Regardless of the Japanese colonization in Korea, Koreans living in Indonesia's built environment adapt to the spaces designed and built on colonial legacies.

Indonesia's history of exploitation originated from the European colonists' extraction of natural resources, and then, Japanese militaries continued to exploit Indonesia's natural resources to produce war supplies during WWII. In the postcolonial era, industrial capitalism has inherited a justification for carrying on exploitation. From the exploitation by Korean industries in Indonesia, the transmission of colonialism in the Global South channeling through industrial capitalism no longer originates merely from the Global North, but also from countries like South Korea; the participation in exploitation is motivated by the open market economy.

The built environment as a transmitter of colonial legacies continues to prevail and helps in cultivating the binary worldview of understanding human-world relationships to maintain exploitation. It is a tragic reality to discover that Indonesia's built environment actively rejects the interrelations between humans and nature by placing nature "somewhere out there outside the city." The disconnection from nature due to nature and culture binary justifies the prioritization of excessive accumulation of wealth and exclusive life in building and designing

⁴⁵ Leisch, "Gated communities in Indonesia," 342.

⁴⁶ Martinez et al, "Jakarta: A city of cities," 7; Gideon Baffoe and Shilpi Roy. "Colonial legacies and contemporary urban planning practices in Dhaka, Bangladesh." *Planning Perspectives* 35, no.5: 1-24. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02665433.2022.2041468>; Malini Ranganathan, "Rule by Difference: Empire, Liberalism, and the Legacies of Urban 'Improvement,'" *Environment and Planning A: Economy and Space* 50, no. 7 (October 22, 2018): 1386–1406, <https://doi.org/10.1177/0308518X18781851>; Belinda Yuen. "Centenary Paper: Urban Planning in Southeast Asia: Perspective from Singapore." *The Town Planning Review* 82, no. 2 (2011): 145–67. <http://www.jstor.org/stable/27975989>.

⁴⁷ South Korea's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "2017 Demographic of Overseas Korean," accessed May 20, 2021, 17, http://overseas.mofa.go.kr/us-boston-ko/brd/m_4631/down.do?brd_id=12678&seq=1190254&data_tp=A&file_seq=1.

cities regardless of the environmental degradation that follows. The history of human exploitation when the native Indonesians were considered closer to nature, meaning uncultivated and inferior in the eyes of the European colonists, has remained in designing and building urban housing. Under the rule of industrial capitalism, the power of exploitation thrives and is not limited to a particular ethnic group but transcends race and ethnicity. Wealth has become the driving force controlling Indonesia's urban development; the polarization of rich and poor is heading towards an extreme end, and the environmental degradation is out of control.

Then, how could the embodiment of colonial legacy be dismantled in Indonesia's built environment and urban housing? What would be the way for Indonesia's urban development to overcome the nature and culture binary, or is it even possible to be liberated from nature and culture binary? From the Christian theological perspective, Timothy J. Gorringer's theology of grace suggests breaking the continuation of heredity of the colonial legacies embodied in the built environment. Gorringer defines grace in relation to the built environment as "the free, creative, self-gifting of God which transforms the creature, but which thereby transforms the creature's creation."⁴⁸ In order to understand Gorringer's theology of grace, it is significant to note that grace is "the quality of relationships – relationships marked by mercy, love, forgiveness and so forth."⁴⁹ The relationship that lacks the characteristics of relationships in grace, or is the opposite of grace, is understood as sin, characterized as "arrogant, egocentric, unforgiving behavior."⁵⁰ Referring to Christopher Alexander, Gorringer stresses how grace and sin build and design the built environment according to the quality of the relationship each manifests; sin as brokenness creates brokenness.⁵¹ As the understanding of grace denotes God's gift of liberation and transformation, grace "enabl[es] new patterns of living together which break down boundaries and go beyond moralism" in the built environment.⁵² The theology of grace is inseparable from justice, and Gorringer underlines the significance of retrieving the meaning and

⁴⁸ Timothy J. Gorringer, *The Common Good and the Global Emergency* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 45.

⁴⁹ Gorringer, *The Common Good and the Global Emergency*, 43.

⁵⁰ *Ibid.*, 43-44.

⁵¹ *Ibid.*, 66.

⁵² *Ibid.*, 287.

value of the common good that seeks the flourishing of not only a particular community but the entire Earth community.⁵³

In light of Gorringer's theology of grace, Indonesia's urban environment can be seen as a place where the relationship characterized as sin prevails over grace; industrial capitalism is always working behind the scenes. God's grace in the built environment evokes justice in the grace that manifests in mercy, love, and forgiveness. As the white spatial imaginary operates in creating the spaces of control and dominance, God's grace that transforms the creature and the creature's creation is where the hope of dismantling the embodiment of colonial legacies can be found. After all, the primary role of the dualism of nature and culture deeply rooted in the colonial mind is the disconnection of relationships that obscures and deceives the reality of the interconnected world. The colonists' white spatial imaginary cunningly took advantage of the brokenness in cultivating and nurturing brokenness by configuring the nature and culture binary into the designing and building of the built environment. As the theology of grace "first emerges as Israel's response to the gift of freedom and the gift of good land," it is time for Christians in Indonesia to respond to God's grace that gifted freedom and land in order to transform the embodied colonial legacies in spaces that slyly manipulates to inherit the colonial mind.⁵⁴ As the expansion of urban areas is projected until 2035, Indonesia needs a contextualized theology of grace that discovers the immanence and transcendence of God in the built environment, as well as the provision of transforming creativity from grace in reimagining the built environment.

Conclusion

When we say we live in a postcolonial era, does it simply signify that we are liberated from colonialism? Does it mean the end of colonialism? From Indonesia's urban development and contemporary urban housing, it is undeniable that colonialism still exists in Indonesia's built environment; the colonial legacies actively transmit the colonial mind and colonial worldview. The built environment is functioning as a medium of transmission and a shelter for nourishing colonialism. As the vicious circle of brokenness begets brokenness from brokenness, the

⁵³ Ibid., 48-29.

⁵⁴ Gorringer, *The Common Good and the Global Emergency*, 287; Robin Gill, "Gorringer, Tim J. The Common Good and the Global Emergency: God and the Built Environment . Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. Xi+309 Pp. \$90.00 (Cloth).," *The Journal of Religion* 92, no. 3 (July 2012): 434-36, <https://doi.org/10.1086/667549>.

severance of the circle of brokenness is crucial to gain a genuine liberation from the colonial operation that separates and disconnects relationships.⁵⁵ Ecological crisis and climate change are also relevant to the broken relationships because nature and culture binary has legitimized the exploitation of nature and humans. The issues of ecological crises, the built environment, and exploitation are all interrelated because they share the same root – the selfish arrogance and greed that fueled the savage work of colonialism. The land I call my home where I received the grace of hospitality is incrementally sinking into the ocean due climate change and the incessant exploitation grounded in colonialism. Even though I call both Korea and Indonesia home, the very first home in the universe is the blue planet Earth where all lives of creation are interconnected. The ecological crisis and environmental injustice in Indonesia is not only a domestic issue for Indonesia to resolve, but it is indeed what the whole Earth community must be aware of and actively cooperate in solidarity for the flourishing of our home planet Earth.

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⁵⁵ Ibid.

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