



Typotecture on the Old Shop Building: An Evidence from Central Surabaya, Indonesia

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Abstract. Architecture has had a lot of typographic exploration and experimentation. Typography is influenced by architectural styles and movements. The realms of typography and architecture share many design values. Letters have a combination of functional values and aesthetic values. The letterforms found in urban environments can be interpreted beyond their literal meaning. The purpose of this study is to describe the anatomical structure and typographical design style of ancient buildings in the form of shops in Surabaya. As a trading city, Surabaya has a city center that has shops from ancient architecture scattered in the Old City of Surabaya from Tunjungan street to Semut Station as a relic of the colonial era. Each name in these shops has its uniqueness. Basically, readability and simplicity take precedence. The letters are bold and stand out among the sturdy colonial buildings. The forms of these letters can lead to local heritage, so it can be said that the letters from the typography side can say about the city itself.

Keywords: Typography · Architecture · Ancient building

1 Introduction

Surabaya is the largest city in eastern Indonesia and has developed into one of the second-largest metropolitan cities in Indonesia after Jakarta. Administratively, the city of Surabaya is located as the capital of the province of East Java. In terms of facilities and infrastructure, the rapid development of the City of Surabaya occurred, among others, high-rise buildings and shopping centers in the central business district [1]. The acceleration of infrastructure development impacts the existence of ancient and historic buildings in the city of Surabaya.

Since 2016 the Surabaya City Government has designated 273 historic buildings as protected cultural heritage buildings, and the number will increase yearly. Of all the cultural heritage buildings in Surabaya, not all of them are owned by the Surabaya City Government. The private sector holds more of the old buildings. Not all ancient buildings are officially registered as cultural heritage. Still, their existence needs to be preserved because they have a role in the history of architecture and the city's development.

In the early 1920s, the city of Surabaya, apart from Javanese or Bumiputra people, also consisted of Europeans (Dutch, Armenian, Belgian, German, French, British, Italian,

Hungarian, and others Chinese, Arab, and Easterners) [2]. The North Surabaya area in the colonial era was a busy trading center, especially the Kembang Jepun, Ampel, and Jembatan Merah areas. Various ethnic groups, such as Arabs, Chinese, Europeans, and Javanese, settled and mingled in the area. In addition to the ancient buildings still standing proudly, there are also historical artifacts attached to these ancient buildings, namely the typography attached to the building. Whether in signage, house number, or ancient advertisement [3]. One of the ancient buildings that are evidence of trade is a shop. Some ancient building shops still have typography installed with a role and visuals that attract attention to be studied more deeply.

The city is full of messages, and the city's past can be revealed through the letters that exist in the city. The letter forms found in urban environments can be interpreted beyond their literal meaning. Through the forms of these letters can lead to local heritage, so it can be said that the letters from the typography side can say about the city itself. The signs built in the environment are not only used as a direction finder but also as a narrative tool to convey the history of the environment [4]. Typography in architecture, names, and buildings are interconnected and cannot be separated. The shape of the letters used adds to the character of the building [5]. Typography was also influenced by architectural styles and movements. Typography can be integrated into different forms of signage and environmental typography. In this case, typography has a dialogue with the world of spatial planning by making it in various ways [6].

Letters are the smallest part of the structure of written language and are the basic elements for building a word or sentence. A series of letters in a word or sentence can not only give a meaning that refers to an object or idea but also can voice an image or visual impression. Letters have a combination of functional values and aesthetic values. Knowledge of letters can be studied in an art discipline called Typography in English called Typography. Typography in English comes from Greek: (typos), which means form or form, and (graphe), which means writing. So the literal meaning of typography is the form of writing seen from the meaning of the verb meaning "writing formation," or it can be said as "letter creation." Typography is all disciplines related to letters, stating that typography is knowledge of the form and role of letters that requires artistic discipline [7]; [8].

The diversity of responses plays an important role in typography and architecture. Architecture has had a lot of typographic exploration and experimentation. Typography is influenced by architectural styles and movements. The realms of typography and architecture share many design values. It is driven by the user, the experience, the significance of the visual elements, and the typography's legibility. Typography can be integrated into other forms with various functions, such as signage and environmental typography, by engaging them in dialogue with the world of spatial planning, creating and printing them in various ways. The occurrence of diversity 'Typotecture' [short for Typography + Architecture] is when the font is located in a form built to produce an identity framework for the type of architectural building that is the host of the typography [6].

Based on the problems' background, this study's objectives are to describe the anatomical structure and to know typographical design style of the architecture of an ancient building in the form of a shop in Surabaya.

2 Methods

Qualitative research methods are used to describe Architectural Typographyancient shop buildings in Surabaya that have been obtained, then collected, grouped, compiled, explained, and analyzed, and then drawn conclusions. Descriptively, this study explains and develops understanding and an understanding of the architectural typography of ancient shop buildings. This study focuses on the architectural typography of the ancient building shop as the object of research. It then interprets the architectural typography by linking it with the theoretical studies that have been stated previously. Data collection techniques were used in the form of documentation studies to obtain the data needed in the study. The main data sources of this research are documents [9], in the form of architectural typography photosan ancient building in the form of a shop in Surabaya. The photos were obtained from search results in Surabaya. Secondary data is obtained from searching archives of old photos or documents from the ancient building to validating the data on the authenticity of the writing on the building. As a supporting material to strengthen primary data sources in the form of colonial architectural documents in Surabaya, it is necessary to do a literature study. Literature research is done by reading books and other secondary sources related to the topic of the problem. In addition, the literature study is also to complete data that cannot be found in primary sources.

Data analysis in qualitative research is systematically compiling data obtained from data collection techniques (observation and documentation), then studying and concluding so that they are easy to understand. Data analysis was carried out continuously from the beginning of data collection to the writing of research reports—data analysis through data reduction, data presentation, and verification [10].

3 Results and Discussion

Tunjungan was originally the Petondjoengan area, one of Surabaya's urban artifacts. Tunjungan street has been built by the Dutch since the early 20th century. Tunjungan street keeps the story of the city's development, with colonial buildings that still survive and are well maintained. The impression of the Dutch East Indies was very thick along the way. According to Rossi, historical natural wealth is a characteristic of urban artifacts. Its distinctive character with unpleasant life moments based on experience makes it an inseparable part of the city. Rossi explained that urban artifacts are the main elements because their existence has contributed to the morphological and cultural evolution of the city. The principles of urban artifacts, among others, are always related to places, events, and forms of the city,

The old city (Indisch city 1870–1900) and the new city (Kota Gementé 1905–1940) were connected by a corridor built to grow and develop as a shopping area known as a shopping street with shopping arcades through its character and uniqueness. It was later known as the forerunner of one of the icons of Surabaya city, Tunjungan. The shopping street is a row of stand-alone shops along the roadside, varying sizes from small, medium, and large. Located side by side, making it easier for shoppers to shop for various needs in a row of shops. These shops sell various community needs, from restaurants, convenience

stores, and clothing stores, to vehicles/cars. The physical development of the Tunjungan road has become a commodity strength. Shops were the elites of the trading city as a bourgeois group that strongly influenced the government at that time. The shop building, which is privately owned, is also free to be renovated by the owner. It is what makes the old face of Tunjungan begin to diminish with the presence of new buildings. However, some old buildings with letters/store names are still attached to become a heritage tourist attraction in Surabaya.

In terms of tourism, Surabaya is a city full of history and has several heritage tourism objects that can be visited and related to the past. One of the most popular is Tunjungan street, located in the center of Surabaya. Tunjungan street is the heart of the city and an icon of Surabaya. Now, Tunjungan street has also become one of the heritage-based tourist destinations in Surabaya because there are various historical buildings. Then, Surabaya Mayor Eri Cahyadi set Tunjungan Romansa as a tourist destination on November 21, 2021. Every night at Tunjungan street, there will be art, culture, and SME performances. According to him, the 12 heritage tourism objects designated as cultural heritage on Tunjungan street also have great potential to support economic growth in Surabaya. Especially with the Tunjungan Romana. The heritage building itself has its charm, so Tunjungan street is often used as an object of photography. Tunjungan Romansa is also busy because there are many MSMEs, coffee shops, and art performances. Along Tunjungan Street, there are old shop buildings that are still attached. Typography of shop names includes:

3.1 Hok Kwan Store

Hok Kwan shop is one of the shops with a fairly old building in the central Surabaya area. This shop is located at Jalan Station Kota no 62, East Java, 60160, Surabaya. This little white building dates back to the 1960s, and the shop now sells a variety of ironworks (Fig. 1).

The classification of letters in words “TOKO HOK KWAN” includes a sans serif classification or without hooks. This shop uses the normal bold family; all letters are capital letters or uppercase. Each letter installed in the store has a firm, clear, universal, and measurable order. The style of letter design displayed with these properties can be ascertained that it uses the Swiss design style. The Swiss design style, also known as The International Typographic Style, is a movement that emerged in Switzerland during the 1940s–1960s. It began during the industrial revolution in Europe in the 18th century. Coupled with the Swiss typographic style known as the International Typographic Style, which developed in the 19th century during the 2nd world war, many designers



Fig. 1. Hok Kwan Store. (Source: Aditya and Parstywi)

increasingly believe that design and typography are jobs that can provide solutions to social problems. The Hok Kwan shop, with the letters it uses, which is a Swiss design style, conveys a message of objectivity to its consumers effectively and efficiently.

3.2 New Style Shop

Toko Gaya Baru is a shophouse that has not been inhabited for a long time and is one of the buildings that adorn the legendary Tunjungan street. Tunjungan street has become an elite European shopping area, so the New Style Shop and the surrounding shops are a relic of the colonial era. The New Style Store was a complete clothing store at that time (Fig. 2).

Classification of letters in words “NEW STYLE,” including the classification of sans serif or without hooks. This shop uses a normal regular family; all letters are capital letters or uppercase. Considering that the architecture of the building is of Dutch heritage, it can be analyzed if the typographical style in “GAYANE NEW TUNJUNGAN” is an Indies graphic design style that developed during the colonial period of the Dutch East Indies and experienced the peak of its artistic development in the 1930s. The Indies Graphic Design style developed by Dutch graphic designers is a blend of Modern design styles that developed in Europe in the early 20th century with traditional art, especially wayang, which is a product of the superior culture of the Javanese people [11]. Indies style (a term for all cultural products at the end of Dutch East Indies colonialism in the early 20th century) is applied to graphic design designs with the power of contour lines forming very flexible, neat, and artistic objects. Tunjungan’s New Style Store with Indies style is a shop that provides an expressive style that the target audience or consumers easily understand.

Throughout history, architecture has played a key role in the expression and communication of a culture or society’s ideas, beliefs, and values. The building functions as a text, as a composition of markers, symbols, and allegories of religious, philosophical, historical, and political knowledge structures [12]. Likewise, in a city, architecture is a reflection of society and cannot be separated from the existence of historical buildings that become the identity of a city.



Fig. 2. New Style Shop (Source: oudsoerabajahunter)

3.3 All Want's Shop

At first, this shop's name was LALWANI, but the letter L was missing. The LALWANI shop is located on Tunjungan street no 30. The owner of the shop is Lalwani, an Indian woman. LALWANI shop is a classy textile shop that sells Indian and Middle Eastern knick-knacks. The price is quite high because the goods sold are imported. Items sold by-products for men and women include Korden, cloth, Sari, and Sisha. The shop is small but very well known among important Europeans and the bourgeoisie residing in Surabaya. The Lalwani shop also provides taxedo sewing services that serve orders with the latest styles and are done by expert tailors owned by this shop during the colonial era. Since its inception around the 1930s and 1990s, this shop has not shown any activity like in its heyday and has been abandoned by its residents. Based on the Decree of the Mayor of Surabaya Number 188.45/004/402.1.04/1998 concerning the Determination of Cultural Conservation Objects in the Municipality Area of the Second Level Regional Head of Surabaya, this white-painted building is designated as a cultural heritage building with serial number 100 (Fig. 3).

In the shop above, the letter classification in words "Al Wani Shop" includes a sans serif classification or without hooks with a different typeface. Sans serif is an informal font. There is no hook in the stroke. Sans serif breaks the tradition that existed in Europe at that time. Sans serif was invented by William Caslon IV in 1816.

The writings of Toko and Al Wani use the Bauhaus style. The Bauhaus style appeared around 1919 to 1933 in Germany. First led by Walter Gropius and Ludwig Mies Van Der Rohe. Walter Gropius pioneered the international style and introduced the art of Modern Utopia architecture based on the idealism of a simple form or simplicity. The Bauhaus style developed a philosophical theory called utilitarianism. They believe that text or design emphasizes the principle of usefulness.

The Bauhaus style visually uses geometric shapes, letters, or bold strokes, harmony, and a modern impression with its simplicity. Bauhaus combines art and craft successfully to establish its name as a modern design style. The letter A is a modification of the triangle shape. The ends are blunt, and the sides are the same length. Likewise, the letters P and B are modifications of the circle shape by minimizing ornamental ornaments and using many straight or square lines [13].



Fig. 3. Al Wani Shop (Source: oudsoerabajahunter)

3.4 Tjantik Store

Toko Tjantik is a shop that has a classic feel and was established in the 1960s with its address at Tunjungan street no. 54, City of Surabaya. This Tjantik shop used to be a famous shoe shop in the 60s, according to local residents who know the side behind the beauty of this shop. The meaning of “Tjantik” refers to the production of this shop’s shoes with the best quality leather and beautiful designs. The shoes sold there are mostly women’s shoes. The shop, which operated around the 1960s, was the only one that was complete at that time. The spelling used for the shop name is still the old spelling (Fig. 4).

The letters in words “Tjantik” are included in the classification of script letters or are similar to cursive handwriting. From the visuals it displays, the script typeface seems natural, beautiful, and elegant. One of the striking features of script fonts is that they resemble handwriting or hand-lettering. One type of script is Half Uncial Scripts, the original form of lowercase letters that appeared almost simultaneously with Uncial Scripts around the 4th century. Half-Uncial Scripts are half the height of Uncial Scripts.

This type of typography writing, “Tjantik” is a casual script font. Script fonts are fonts that mimic handwriting. The typography in this white shop is a casual script type whose font features a less formal and more active hand. Casual script strokes can vary in width but often appear to be made by a wet brush rather than the tip of a pen. They appeared in the early twentieth century and with the advent of photocomposition in the early 1950s. The design style used in this typography adheres to the Victorian style, where the typography always connects. In this typography, the Victorian design style seems simpler because of the combination with other styles adapted to that era, namely the Art Deco style, Post Modern Style, Early Modern style, and Swiss style. The Victorian style used in the typography of the shop “Tjantik” has the aim that the shop produces luxury, beautiful and classy goods. As proof, in the Tjantik era, the shop still sold shoes for the upper middle class with the best quality leather, and the typography “Tjantik” was very good at communicating visually to its consumers that the goods being sold had the same characteristics as the typographic design style (Fig. 5).

Tjantik shop, located on Tunjungan street, sells shoes, especially women’s shoes. The script letters used have the impression of beauty, meaning that the shop sells goods intended for women to make it look more beautiful and elegant. The red visuals reinforce Tjantik’s character that the products sold add confidence to beautiful, passionate, cheerful, and brave women. But this shoe shop did not survive long after its glory and eventually went bankrupt, and the building fell into disrepair within a few years. Now, this Tjantik shop has become a hits cafe with a modern classic-style theme, and its current name is Padma Toko Kopi Surabaya or Padma Kopi Tjantik.



Fig. 4. Typography at Tjantik Store (Source: Aditya and Parstywi)



Fig. 5. Tjantik Store (Source: oudsoerabajahunter)

4 Conclusion

Written language is an important part of any urban environment, as architecture alone usually cannot communicate important information, such as messages of public or commercial importance, to the city. Typotecture (architectural letters) is applying environmental-scale typographic design. Through exploring the city of Kota Lama, Surabaya, which relates to architectural forms in social history, it is realized that there is a relationship between place and history, which shows new ways of reading and interpreting a city. Through the forms of these letters can lead to local heritage, so it can be said that the letters from the typography side can say about the city itself.

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