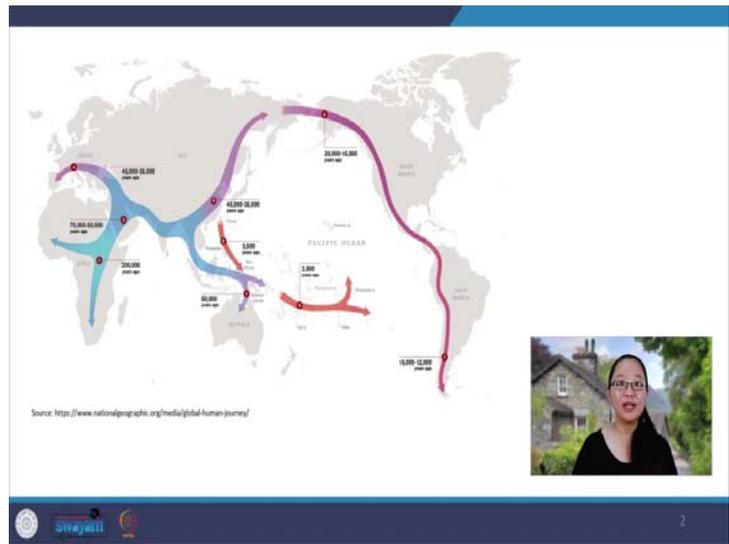


International Studies in Vernacular Architecture
Professor Yenny Gunawan,
Associate Professor
Center for Adaptation and Resilience Environmental Design Studies
Universitas Katolik Parahyangan Bandung, West Java, Indonesia
Lecture: 13
Acculturation in Architecture

Hello, welcome to International Studies on Vernacular Architecture Course. In this lecture we are going to talk about Acculturation in Architecture.

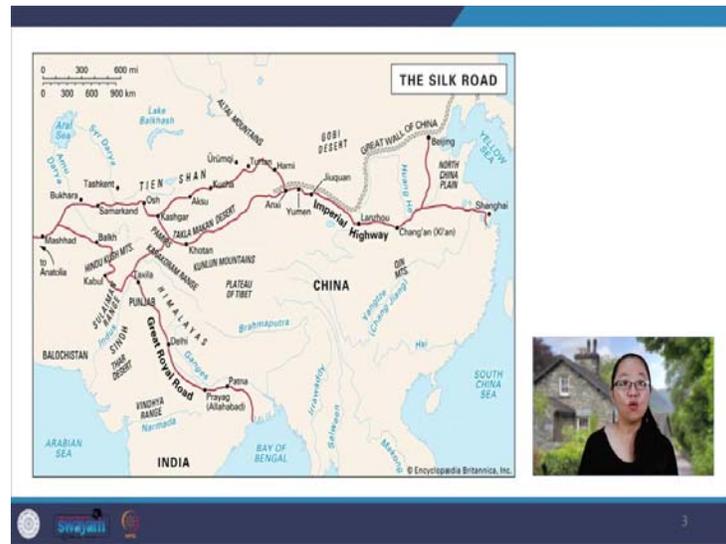
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Acculturation occurs when people from different cultures meet each other. Throughout human history encounters between people of different cultures already happen. As can be seen on the map. People move across continents since 200,000 years ago, from Africa to Middle East, Australia, Europe, Asia and America.

They travelled across the ocean and land for various reasons. One of the first reason to travel was to find a better place to live. Many migrate from one place to another place a richer, faraway land with different culture to live a better life. The other reason were to conquer or to spread religions or beliefs or to trade or in search of adventure or fun.

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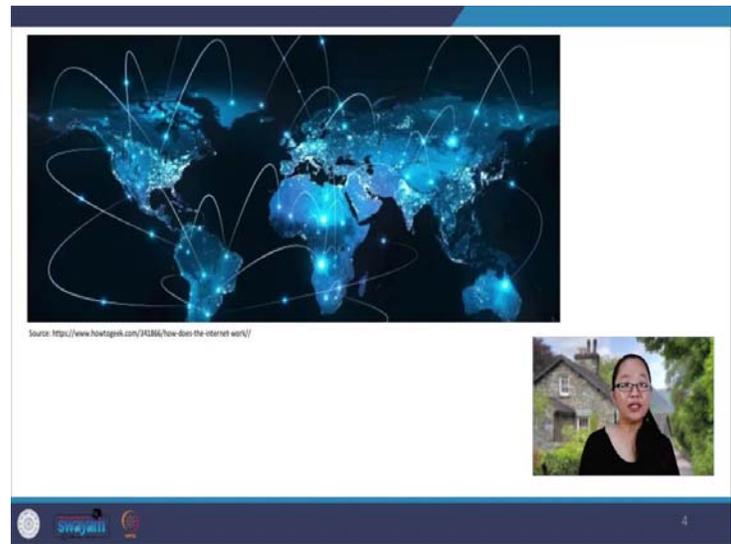
One of the most apparent evidence of these past encounters was the ancient trade road known as the Silk Road. The road that linked the Western world with the Middle East and Asia was not a single road, but a network of multiple roads that gradually emerged over the centuries, connecting various settlements and cultures.

As shown in the Knowledge Here channel, the story of Silk Road began when Han emperor, Emperor Wu sent an envoy to the west to find some alliance in 130 BC. The emperor called Zhang Jian witness for the first time a new variety of culture, and was particularly interested by the Da Yuan people, to be specific by the horses of the Da Yuan.

Emperor Wu then decided to purchase these horses to guard the border and fight with the North. With the success of evading threats from the North, Emperor Wu then decided to take a further step, triggering the opening of Silk Road spanning roughly 4000 miles reaching east to the west. And as explained in Encyclopedia of Britannica, through a network of trade road carrying goods and ideas, two great civilizations at that time, Rome and China is connected.

So, Silk went westward and gold and silver when east. Christianity and from Europe and Buddhism from India also spread via the Silk Road. Until today, people still travel from one place to another for leisure, adventure, trade, business and even for study abroad.

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The invention of Internet open another level of cultural encounters, exchange of information, knowledge and technique between different cultures happen faster and more frequently. These various activities make people have diverse background mean, they see, listen and experience new things from one another.

As times goes by, the more they spend time with each other, they borrow, adapt and modify their way of life. This process has led to changes in the original patterns of life and cultures of the people concern as well as the formation of new societies. The meeting of cultures and the resulting changes are what collectively has come to be known as acculturation.

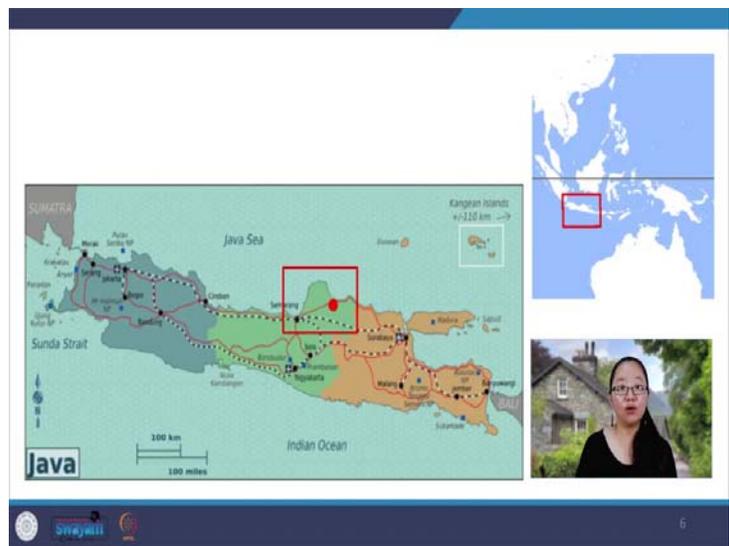
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So, acculturation is a process, it does not happen overnight. It is a process of cultural modification of a group of people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture. But each culture still able to retain unique cultural markers, either language, food and or custom. Acculturation for a longer period of time leads to assimilation.

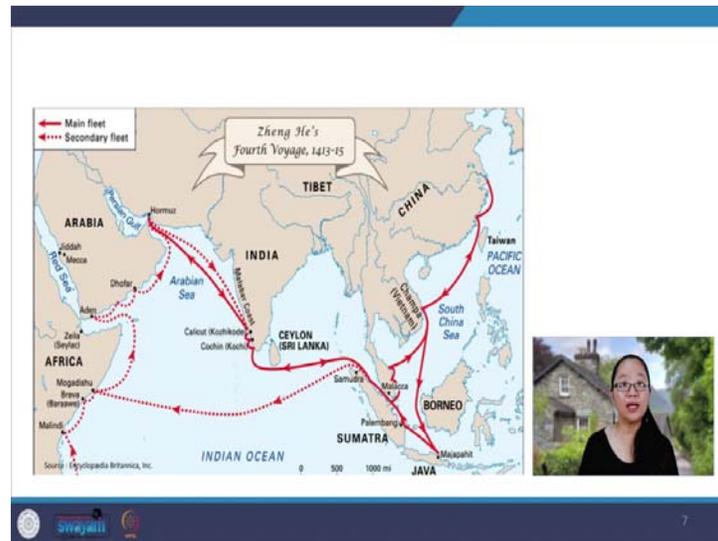
Assimilation is when one completely gives up own culture and follows the new one. The fruit bowl and the fruit juice is a metaphor, the fruit bowl for acculturation and the fruit juice for assimilate, in the fruit bowl we can still see and taste each fruit. But in the fruit juice all the fruit blends and form a new taste. So, assimilation is also known as the melting pot.

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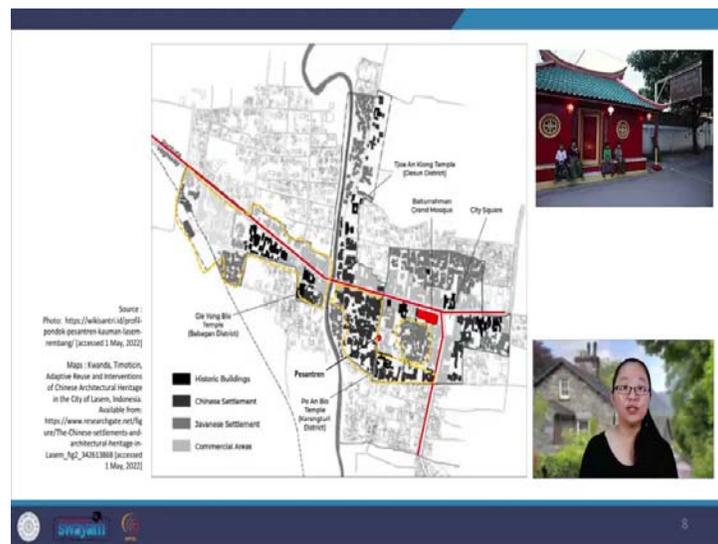
Now, we are going to see example of cultural acculturation represented in its architecture. In one of the coastal city in North Java called Lasem. This example is a research that I have done in 2008 together with Yogi Fattu Rahim. Lasem is an old coastal town with a long history. Like most coastal city, Lasem community were the first to receive the influence of new ideologies and knowledge that came from various parts of the world.

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Lasem originally had a Hindu Javanese Majapahit communities. And at the end of 16th century, it is said that the transition and cultural shift from Hinduism to Islam happened because a member of Admiral Cheng Ho from China called Binangun sailed to Southeast Asia during the Ming Dynasty. He and his troop stayed in Lasem to spread the religion of Islam.

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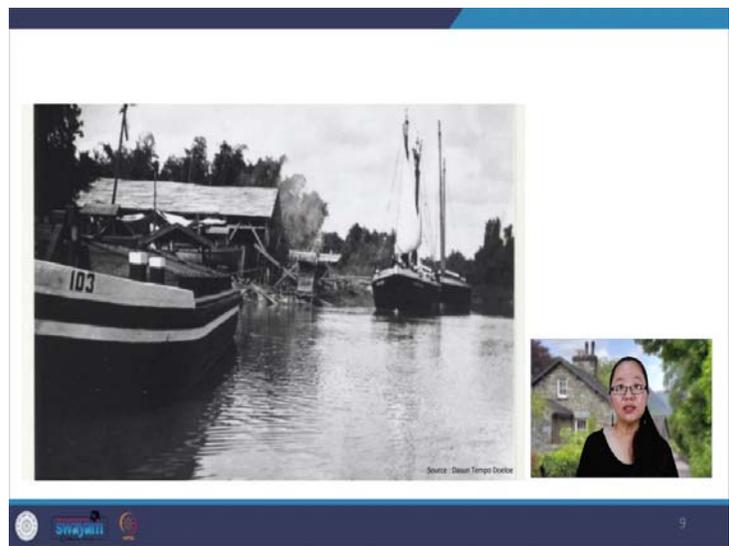


With the establishment of Al Jami Baiturrahman Mosque at Lasem intersection. Lasem later develop into one of the leading Pesantren networks in the archipelago. Traces of Pesantren can still be seen in several places. One of them is located in the border area between Karangturi district known as the Chinese settlement in Lasem.

And Kauman district which is located behind the mosque near the square. On the other hand, the Dutch built a fort in the East adjacent to a Japanese region's palace, and the Dutch settlement flourished. Around mid-19th century Chinese refugees from Maui a new settler from China crowded into new settlements of Gedong Mulyo and Babagan district in Lasem.

The government of regent palace and Dutch military headquarters were then transferred to Rembang, almost at the same time as sugar factory was founded. This makes the economic area of Lasem abandoned, while the government area is isolated from the city. Consequently, Lasem society is free from hierarchy. And because of that, they have more freedom of architecture compared to people in the mountains.

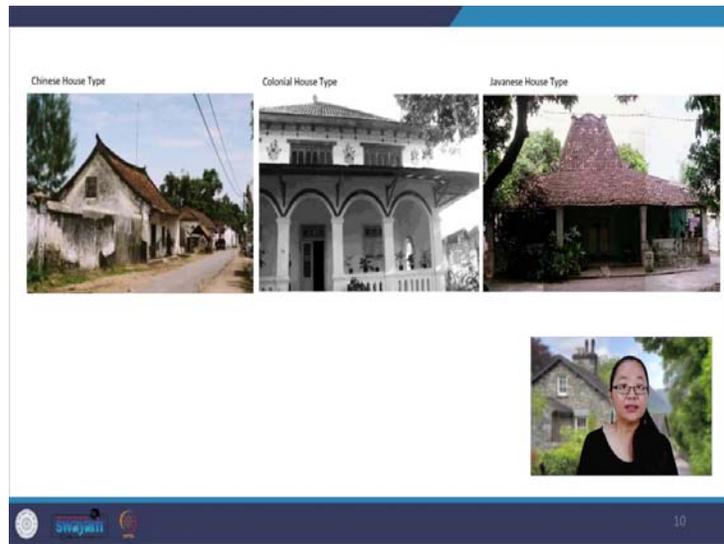
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Denis Lombard, author of the well researched *Nusa Jawa Silang Budaya* stated, we can imagine how Lasem as coastal city flourished into a heterogeneous society consisting of fishermen, sailors, transporters, traders, but the craftsman and even adventurers from many parts of the world.

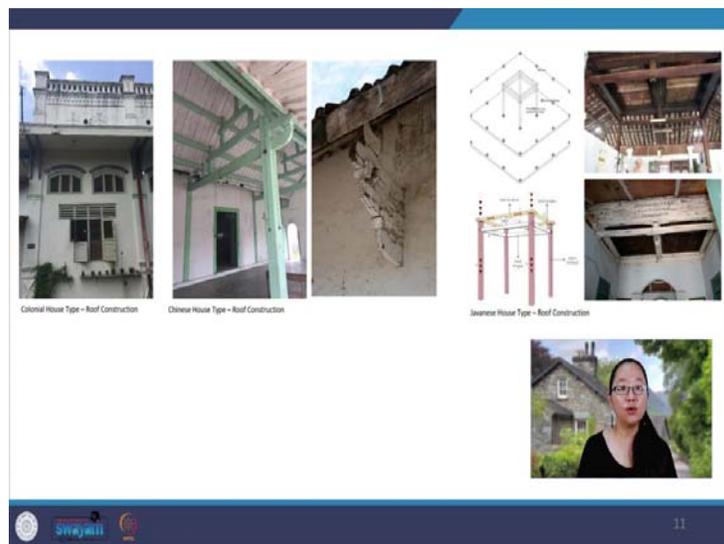
A major change happened in 1854 when Dutch government as colony published a rule that sharpen the concept of foreigner, the Javanese people was labelled as indigenous, and professional traders from foreign lands such as Arab, India or China were labelled as real foreigners.

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This is the beginning of architectural segregation known by the Lasem people today as the Javanese colonial and Chinese house type. As we can see in the pictures, the difference is apparent just by looking at the roof shape. But according to Christian Norberg-Schulz a Norwegian, architect, author, educator and architectural theories, the relationship between the House and the landscape is not only established by the overall form and shape of the roof, but it is also visualized by the use of materials and type of construction.

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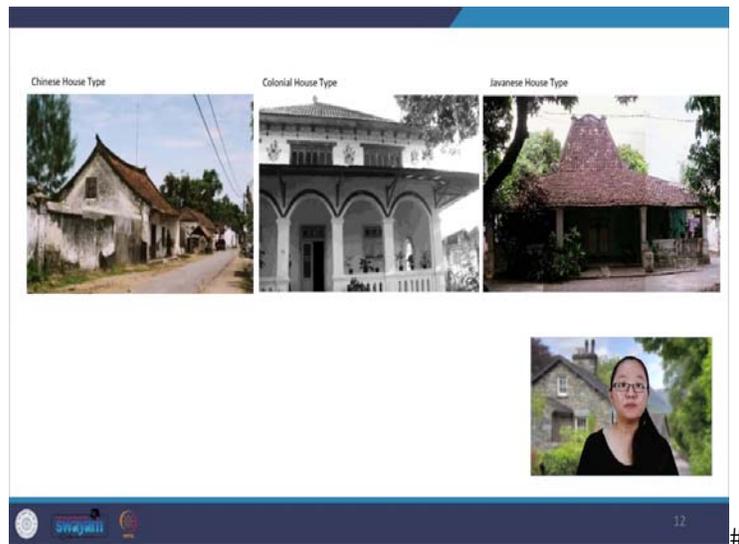


So, if we look closer, we can still see the same materials use brick and wood, but different construction techniques supporting the roof, brick walls, brick bearing walls, in colonial

houses and wooden constructions in Chinese and Javanese houses. The wood construction commonly used in Chinese houses in Lasem is the Tai Liang and chuandou construction.

The Tai Liang construction is from the vernacular residential structure of northern China and chuandou is used widely in the Sun dynasties in 12th century. In the Javanese house type in Lasem they use soko guru, a rectangular wood construction with four main column by bound by exposed beam at the top, the system holds the main role of construction above.

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Despite these differences, further observation show similarities in the three types are the similarities due to cultural acculturation? If so, what is the blending life and how or in what aspects is acculturation reflected in vernacular architecture. Then why the three different house type is still exist? Let us try to understand this architecture through a deeper look at how they use the space.

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Chinese House Type

Javanese House Type

Javanese House Type

Colonial House Type

Chinese House Plan, Mainland China

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Javanese House Plan, KotaGede Central Java

Chinese House Plan

Javanese House Plan

Colonial House Plan

15

Chinese House Plan, Mainland China

Chinese House Plan

Javanese House Plan

Colonial House Plan

16

If we compare the typical floor plans of Javanese, Chinese and colonial house in Lasem, we will find a very basic similarities. A linear circulation in the middle of the building, a front terrace, a back terrace and an enclosed space function as sleeping room in the middle. This spatial organization and circulation of houses of in Lasem is different from the spatial organisation in the vernacular houses whether it is in China, middle Java or in the Netherlands.

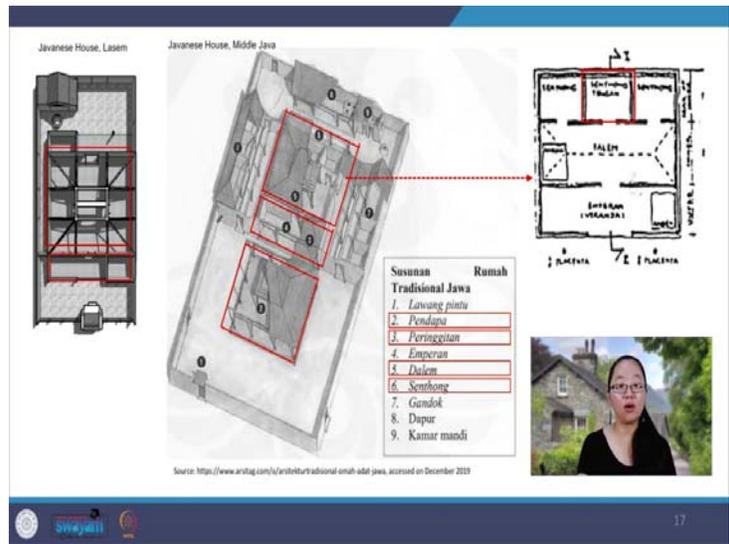
The private space for sleeping in houses in middle of Java is at the back. While in Mainland China, the private space surrounds the courtyard. In the Javanese vernacular house there is a sacred space for rice goddess, known as Senthong Tengah. The circulation stops at some Senthong Tengah but in the three house types of blossom Lasem, Senthong Tengah disappears.

Most likely this is due to differences in the livelihood. The livelihood of community in the mountains are farmers, while the livelihood of Lasem community are fishermen and traders. So, Senthong Tengah as a place for activities to honor rice goddess, Dewi Sri and a place to store rice no longer needed. Sacred Space only occurs in Chinese House types in Lasem in the form of ancestral avatar in the middle of the house.

This placement is different from Chinese architecture in mainland China. In China, the ancestral avatar is placed in the back of the house, whereas in Javanese house type and colonial house type there is no sacred space. This shows an adaptation that may be influenced by the principle of spatial formation which depart from soko guru from Javanese vernacular architecture and Yen from Chinese vernacular houses.

The principle of forming space based on this Yen is similar to that of Japanese house that starts from the middle, where the soko guru construction is erected and then expand to front, back, left and right.

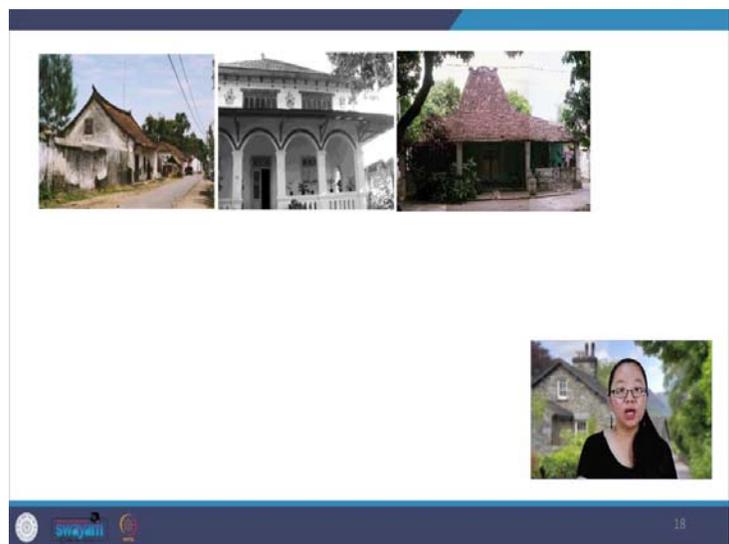
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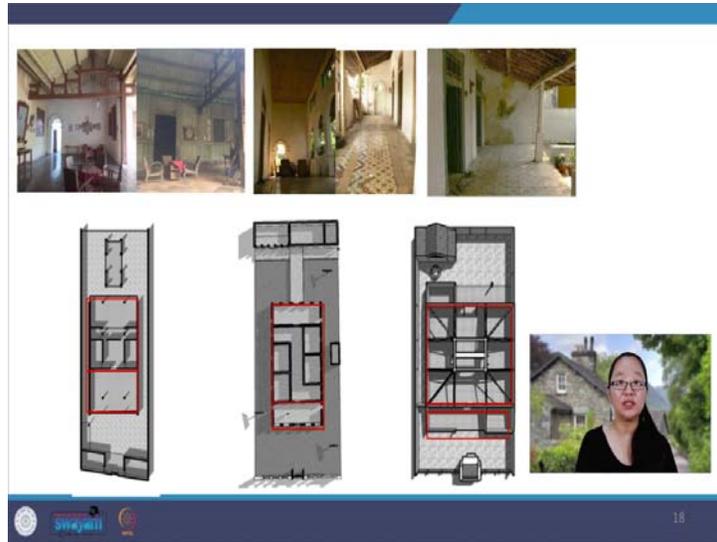


The second thing that is interesting to note is the concept of house in Lasem which is adopted from both Javanese and Chinese ideologies. According to Professor Tjahjono for Javanese people the basic unit of a house is referred to as Omah which means the physical form of the house and its spiritual dimension. Omah is thought of as a place where one can relax one's mind.

The ideal house for Javanese people concepts consists of minimum two main building, if possible, includes three building. The buildings are an Omah or also called Dalem. A pavilion or Pandopo are also called a pendapa and the third is the connecting building called Peringgitan. Senthong is located inside Omah or dalem.

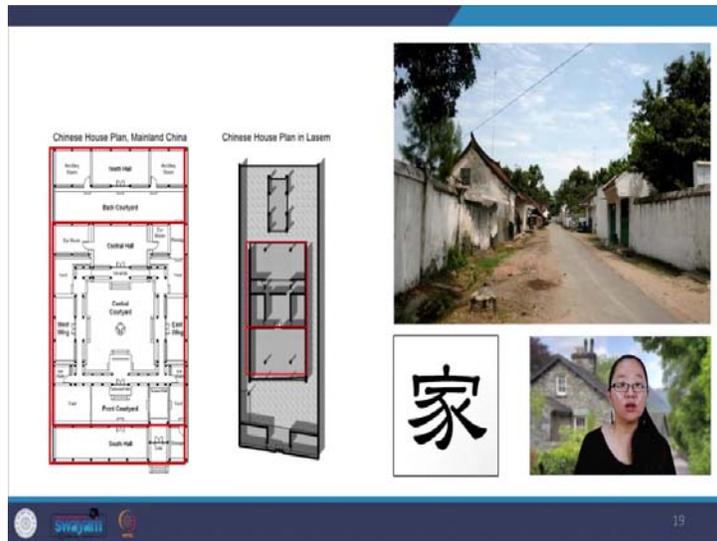
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In the three house type in Lasem there is an Omah and an adapted form of Peringgitan. But no Pandopo it is said to be an adaptation of Peringgitan because Lasem people call it verandah, terrace and overhang. The function of Peringgitan in Lasem is to accommodate the activities of visiting guest.

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The concept of house in Lasem also influenced by the Chinese people. The house is more than just construction work, but it is a symbol of family unity and status, as well as a place of refuge. The writing of house Ja has a double meaning, namely home and family. The house is structured as a family unit, not individuals.

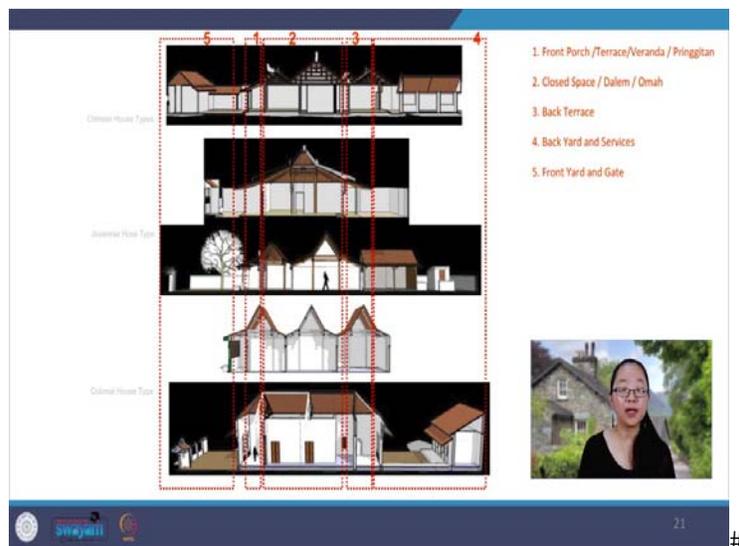
So, Chinese vernacular buildings are more oriented inward, clearly visible in the courtyard type. On the outside it looks more closed consisting on live fences and gates. Here, there are there is a clear boundary between public outside and family inside.

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The relationship between the community and the family is only at the opening in the form of a gate. In Lasem many houses use gates and fences. This creates a very distinctive environmental character. The boundaries between public and private space are clearly defined in several districts in the Lasem.

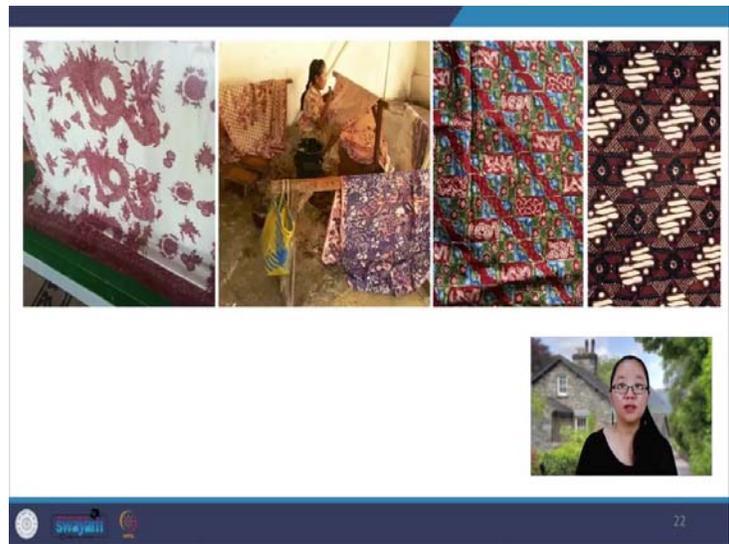
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In the section, a pattern of the same arrangement of space is, is apparent consisting of five parts one front porch, two closed space, three back terrace, four the service area and backyard and five the front yard and gate. As you can see in the section, building, the building mass is varied sometimes the house consists of one building mass, but because of the roofs sometimes the house look like it consists of up to three buildings.

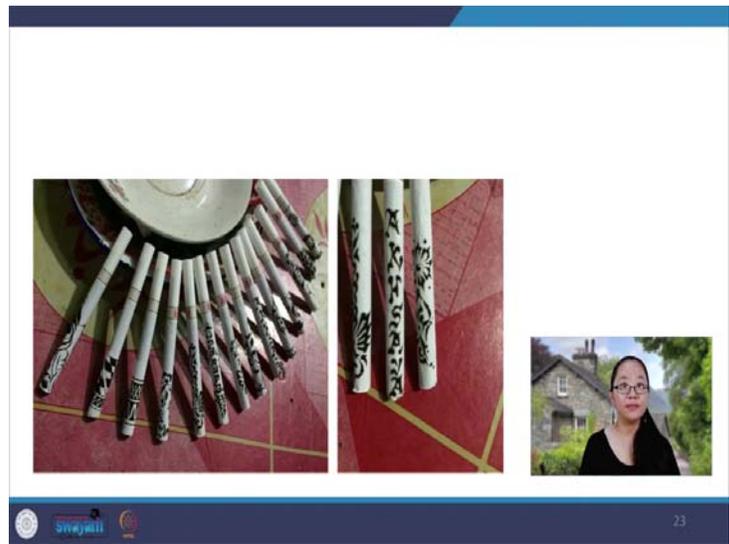
The colonial house type, and one Javanese house type only has one roof, while in the Chinese and another Javanese house type there are three roofs maybe it is because they do not have the knowledge to make a wide span structure or maybe the house is expanded, added because of new needs. They stack structural models toward the short side, towards the back and front.

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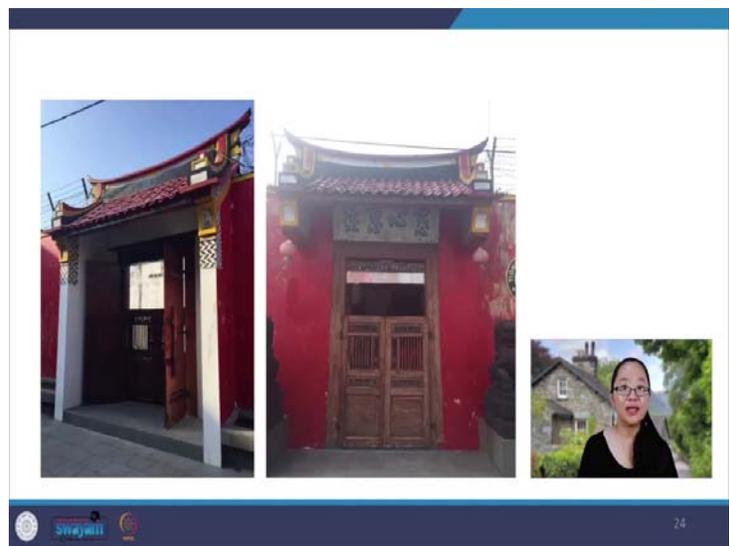
The back terrace surfaces and backyard also used for producing batik. Lasem batik is famous for its motif, also showing a cultural acculturation. As you can see in the picture dragon ornament is clearly derived from Chinese culture. It is distinct red, the red color can only produce using water from Lasem. Their batik is more colorful than those from the inland batik, which are darker. The colors depict the heterogenous society of Lasem.

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The batik practice has become Lasem daily lives. While the ladies are the ones doing batik, the young men gather together decorate their cigarettes with batik ornaments using coffee. They named the activities Kopi Lelet.

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In 2018, when I visited Lasem 10 years later, Lasem has become a local tourist destination because of its unique architectural features. However, the one that is brought up is the Chinese architectural features. The pictures shows a very famous homestay called Rumah Merah, or red house, which is a Chinese House tagged with the same spatial arrangement and circulations mentioned before in Lasem.

His neighbor also a Chinese House type has turned the house into batik shop. So, Lasem continue to evolve in according to changes in the situations and contexts.

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It can be seen from the explanation dissimilarities in spatial organisation circulation, placement of buildings and gates in Lasem vernacular architecture are a mixture of the concepts of house and the blending of people's activities in their daily lives. We can conclude that the cultural assimilation occurred in Lasem bring forth a similar pattern of activity of the people. This gradually began to affect its architecture.

Meanwhile, the differences that appear visually in the roof shape and construction of the three house type in Lasem are a representation of the social status depicting their ethnic identities influenced by the Dutch political regulations, which divides the identity of indigenous the Javanese and foreigner Chinese, Arabic, India.

In analyzing cultural acculturation, it is important to note that we do not try to find origins or see who was influenced by home like finding out eggs or chicken spurs, but rather to understand vernacular architecture as a result of cultural encounters process. So, we have come to the end of this lecture.

Throughout the lecture we have discussed what is acculturation how contact between groups and the resulting dissemination of information and technique influence cultural change, how socio political change can affect acculturation and the example have shown us has also shown the importance of understanding history and context for understanding cultural acculturation in vernacular architecture.

To conclude the lecture here are some terms related to cultural acculturation, acculturation when a culture maintain traits, but adopt some aspects of another culture the fruit bowl. Assimilation when one or more than one culture experiences and entire culture loss and form a new culture the fruit juice. Multiculturalism, when one believes in valuing diverse and distinct plurality of culture and when one believes tolerance of differences, this related to acculturation, the fruit bowl.

Cultural appropriation when a culture takes part of marginalized culture and uses it for their own benefit. Hopefully the explanation of the term and the example in Lasem provide you a clearer idea of how, why and what cultural acculturation can be represented in its vernacular architecture. Here are some reference of the lectures that you might be interested to look further. Thank you. See you in the next lecture. #