This reading list attempts to answer the question of the role of history and memory in vernacular architecture practice, especially in the colonial context. How do history and memory interact and inform one another? How do buildings and landscapes preserve memory, both inherently and through active memorializing practices? How is history shaped by the present and do history museums disavow this presentism? What role does memory and tradition play in the diffusion of Dutch building forms to the colonies, where they encounter new materials, different climates, and indigenous or other European forms? Discussions arising from these sources and questions offer a means of critiquing restoration, memorial, and museum projects, and to acknowledge how the values of the present inform these projects, and also suggest methods for shaping new projects to respond to the needs and values of the community.

**Memory**

*Elmina Castle*

*Batavia/Jakarta*

Blight, David W. “Historians and “Memory.”” *Common-Place* 2, no.3 (2002).


**Memory in History/Tradition**

*Clothes cupboard*

*Schenck House*


**Memory in Museum/Preservation**

*Rubenshuis*

*De Klerk House*


**Diffusion – Traces of Memory**

*Amsterdam townhouse*

*Suburban Batavia Villa*

*Ideal town plan by Simon Stevin*

*Clothes cupboard*

*Vernacular Batavia Houses*


**Vernacular Architecture**


**Objects/Landscapes (sources of)**


van de Wall, V. I. *Oude hollandsche buitenplaatsen van Batavia* (Deventer: Uitgeverij W van Hoeve: 1943).


**Objects**

*Amsterdam townhouse (Sint Olofspoort 1, c. 1605)*  
This example of a upper-middle class Dutch town house offers a comparison for how the form changed as it diffused to the colonies.

*Suburban Batavia Villa (Private residence on Koningsplein Oost, Weltevreden, suburban Batavia, now part of Jakarta)*  
This example of a suburban Dutch colonial residence offers a contrast to Dutch urban colonial architecture.

*Elmina Castle (Castle of St. George of Elmina, present-day Ghana, begun 1482)*  
This fort, first built by the Portuguese for the gold, ivory, and slave trade in the 16th century, was captured by the Dutch and continued to be used for trade until the 19th century, when it passed into British hands. The history of renovations and expansions and current efforts to preserve this building offer a venue to discuss fragmentary landscapes and the persistence of memory.

*Rubenshuis (House museum, Antwerp, Belgium)*  
Restored during WWII, this historic house museum paid careful attention to accuracy in restoration, looking at old prints, paintings, and archeological evidence. While the museum purports to contain the memory of Pieter-Paul Rubens, it also is a testament to the values of its restorers, who were supported and encouraged by the occupying Nazis.

*Batavia/Jakarta, present-day Indonesia*  
Batavia was founded in 1617 by the Dutch East India Company (VOC), becoming the VOC’s trade capital. The downtown core of Jakarta is what was once Batavia, and urban renewal efforts have attempted to preserve it as a historical district. This layering of cities suggests that Jakarta’s urban core contains a memory of Dutch colonialism, and it is interesting to speculate why this memory might be useful to today’s residents.

*Ideal town plan by Simon Stevin*  
The famous Dutch mathematician developed this ideal city plan, which was exported to all the Dutch-built colonial cities, modified for terrain. All the cities are built on a grid with canals, though not all have walls, depending on how secure the location was for the Dutch. Batavia/Jakarta offers a plan closest to the ideal.

*Clothes cupboard, Virginia, 1650-1690, Collection of the Museum of Early Southern Decorative Arts (Fig. 6, Leath)*  
This cupboard is a Dutch form, and its provenance in the Chesapeake area shows that there was an active Dutch community in what was thought to be primarily English. What is most Dutch about this piece is the dovetail joining, mortise-and-tenon joints secured by diamond-shaped pins, and its turned legs. It was probably made by someone trained in Northern-European methods.

*Reinier De Klerk House, present-day Jakarta, Indonesia, c. 1760*  
This home of a former governor general of the Dutch East India Company (VOC) housed the Dutch Indies archives and then the Indonesian state archives until the latter half of the 20th century, when the archives were moved to a larger location. In the late 1990s, the house was renovated with the support of Dutch
businessmen with interests in the area, as a gift to the community, and now can be used for arts performances and weddings. The restoration won a UNESCO prize in 2000.

*Jan Martense Schenck House, Brooklyn, NY, ca. 1675, reconstructed in the Brooklyn Museum (Fig. 2, Zink)
This early Dutch-American home shows the use of H-bent construction, unique to Dutch builders, and also the exposure of ceiling beams, confirming this construction method. In the later period of Dutch-American building, the technique became a hybridized Dutch-Anglo one, but the Dutch-American houses continued to expose their beams long after it was fashionable.

*Vernacular Batavia Houses, Interior and Exterior, present-day Jakarta (55/57 Spinhuisgracht/Tiang Bendera Barat and 8 Jonkersgracht/Roa Malaka Selatan)
These two examples show the Dutch-style townhouses built in colonial Batavia after Dutch models. A clear variation from the Amsterdam townhouse is the eave side of the roof faces the street, instead of the gable. This is a vernacular form of Dutch features as in the De Klerk house, with less-ornate screens over the windows.