



## Molenvliet Canal: A Marker of Clean and Dirty Space between the European and Indigenous People at the Late Colonial in Batavia

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### ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to explore the Molenvliet canal related to “cleanliness” and “dirtiness” that are viewed through the discourse to construct the differences of civilization, race, class, and color of skin. Interpenetration and interpretation of several secondary data photo archives, movies, maps, paintings or sketches, and texts are historical facts that become an important step for the research in producing an article. Discourse analysis becomes a method used as a “reading tool” to interpret a discourse that is done with a principle and method requiring scientific accountability. This research produces a finding that the Molenvliet canal plays a role as marker for the division of two contrasting lives between “clean” life for the European society and “dirty” as part of the indigenous society. Almost of all activities of the indigenous used the canal, such as bathing, washing, fishing, and shitting; moreover, the European used bathroom in the back of the house for the place of a clean activity. The continued use and preference of the canal by native population have served to reinforce in a variety of ways the superiority, advanced knowledge of the purified and modernized European. It led to produce a discourse of undeveloped native bodies with the canal, diseases, and contamination. However, behind the discourse of cleanliness shown by the European, the canal saved the helplessness to create the boundaries of discourse. Washing laundries at the canal (*‘binatoe’*) was the fact of “integration” space between the dirtiness and the cleanliness as a form of the European domination, once having dependency on the indigenous community.

**Keywords:** Batavia, canal, clean, dirty, colonial

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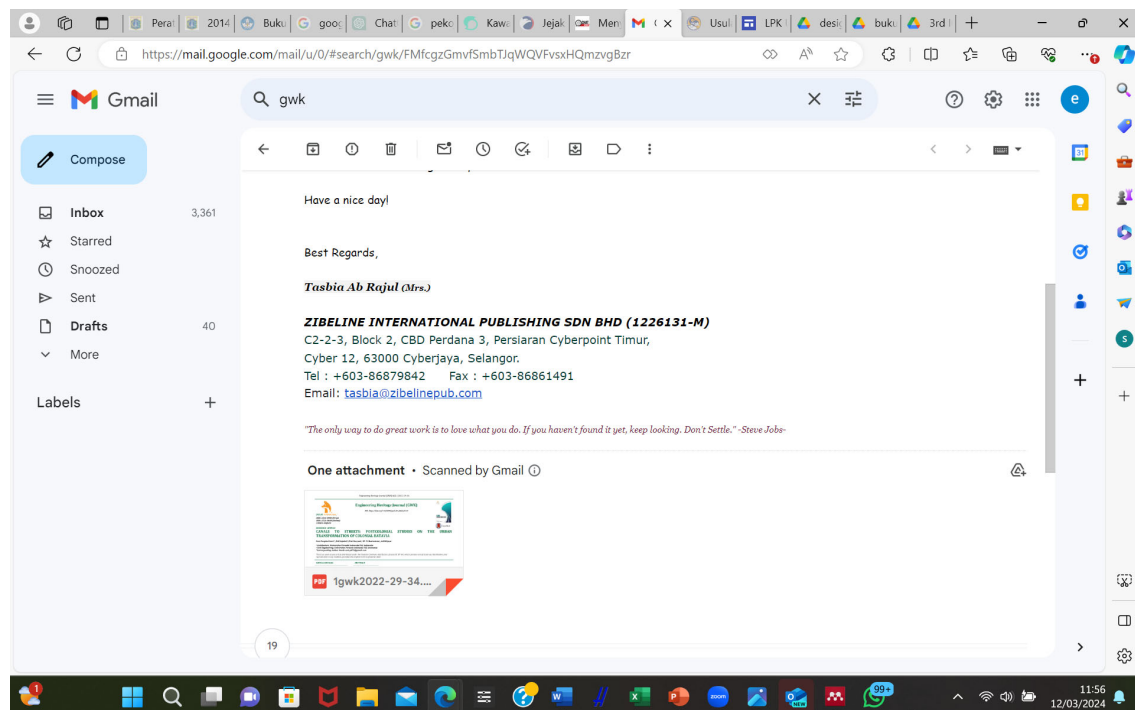
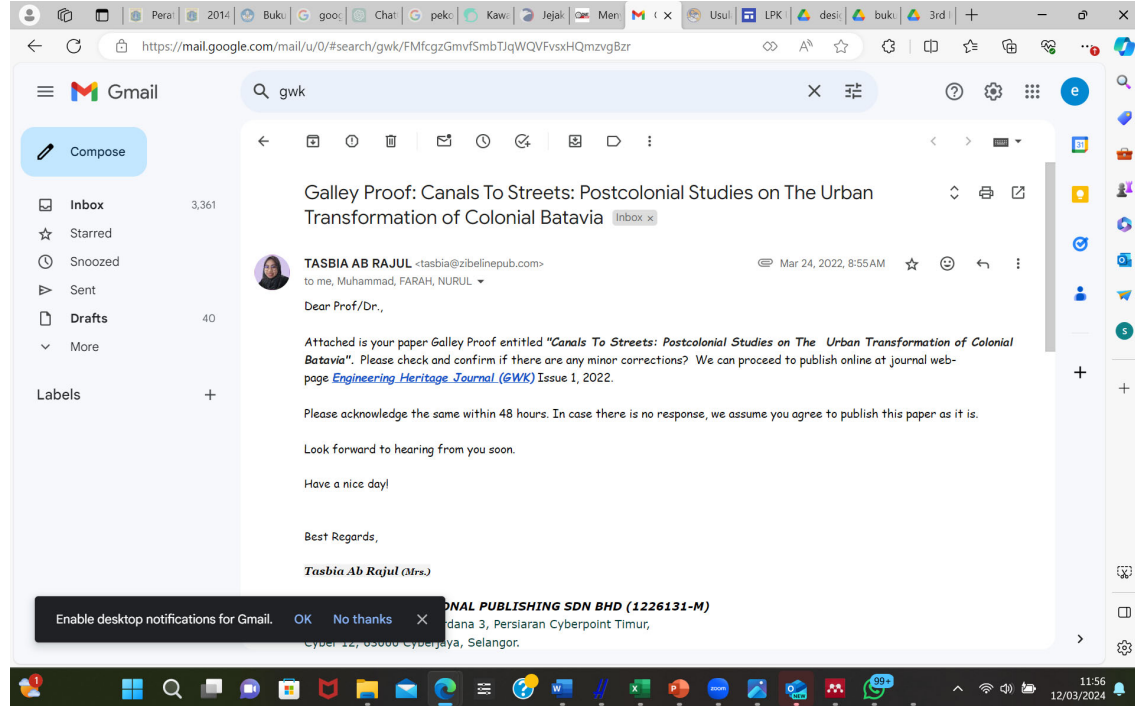
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### INTRODUCTION

McLaughlin (1971) in Dijk (2011) stated that dirtiness and cleanliness are in the eye of the beholder. The view on individual or group cleanliness and dirtiness can be different among individuals or groups depending on who and how the individual or group of people view and assess them.

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