

CULTURAL STRATEGY: LOCAL GLOBAL IDENTITY IN FURNITURE DESIGN BY ALVIN TJITROWIRJO

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Abstract

The use of furniture and patterns of sitting on a chair are influenced by the western lifestyle, which was initially adopted by Indonesian aristocrats and has been followed by the general public until now. Furniture shapes and designs have been adjusted or adapted to the environmental conditions and habits (behavior and activities) of people in the archipelago. The local community has interpreted the process of adaptation so that the meaning of cultural values possibly and indirectly shifts. Alvin Tjitrowirjo, an Indonesian product designer, has successfully repositioned and changed the paradigm of local furniture products so that they can compete in the global market. Based on the explanation above, this research investigates how Alvin interprets his thoughts and creative processes in a culture that continuously changes. Moreover, this study aims to examine cultural symptoms and design methods to design furniture. Therefore, art and design products in Indonesia become diverse. To answer this problem, this research employs history, cultural study and design approaches as well as qualitative methods (observation and literature). In this case, Alvin negotiates cultural appropriation so that local products can compete in the global market. This study has revealed that works of art and design that combine local and modern elements (glocalization) can investigate the process of creation and transform a new identity.

Keywords: *furniture, design, modernity, identity, local-global*

Introduction

European people introduced furniture to the people of Indonesia in the 16th and 17th centuries. The use of recent furniture is influenced by the western lifestyle, which was initially adopted by high classes or aristocrats in Indonesia. The history of western civilization states that Europeans have known how to sit on a chair since the eras of ancient Egypt, Greece, and ancient Rome. In contrast, in eastern nations, especially Indonesia, people initially did not sit on a chair but sat by crossing their legs on the floor. Such a sitting pattern is known as *lesehan* sitting.

This cultural sitting pattern has changed since the Europeans came to Indonesia, and this practice continues until now. However, this European influence is not simply followed by Indonesians because they adjusted or adapted to their environmental conditions and habits. The adjustment and adaptation processes have been interpreted by the local community so that the meaning of cultural values possibly and indirectly shift.

Traditional culture and modernity are no longer understood separately, but they are defined as a culture that coexists in our daily lives. When traditional culture and modernity are mixed, they produce a hybrid culture. A similar condition also occurs when furniture initially entered Indonesia in the 16th century. Europeans influenced the cultural sitting patterns in Indonesia and furniture design styles, such as Queen Anne, Chippendale, Regency, Heppelwhite, and Sheraton styles. In a colonized area, every aspect in this area was always connected to its colonizers. The emergence of styles in the west, such as Art Nouveau and Art Deco styles, would also influence styles in Indonesia. Moreover, all of these western styles influence the furniture design styles in Indonesia. These styles are mixed and adapted to local culture, behavior, environment, and climate, which are certainly related to natural resources.

In the past, Dutch architects and designers combined and adapted many designs by using local materials and creating furniture based on the ergonomic values of Indonesian society that were different from those of European society. Moreover, some furniture was made based on the habit patterns of Indonesians who preferred *lesehan* sitting; for example, the *amben* (bed) or *bale* chair (wooden sofa), which were widely used by the Regents. *Amben* uses a wide enough holder so that people can still sit on a chair by lifting their legs. Moreover, the material used as a sitting holder has also been adapted. Meanwhile, *bale* does not use a foam cushion holder like a sofa but uses rattan, which is functionally cooler and more suitable for the tropical climate of the archipelago.

Alvin Tjitrowirjo, an Indonesian product designer, emphasizes the concept of local tradition in a modern design. He earned his bachelor's degree from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology and his Master's degree in product design from IED European Design Labs

in Madrid, Spain. Moreover, his mission is to conserve and preserve the traditional heritage as a local wealth by using local materials and designs. Indonesia is rich in natural resources and craftsmanship, which have not been optimally processed. As a result, domestic and foreign markets do not demand these products. The local potential of Indonesia has actually been demanded by foreign designers to create local-based products in Indonesia with international labels. Consequently, local craftsmen are more often regarded as laborers, not designers, who receive orders from foreign designers.

Such a condition triggers Alvin to optimize local potential by empowering local communities (craftsmen), using local materials, exploring traditional heritage techniques, and presenting the product with a modern design. The products of Alvin refer to the work of Indonesian youth and are inseparable from natural resources and the roles of Indonesian craftsmen. Moreover, his products have been successfully recognized at the international level and competed in Asia and European markets.

Research Formulation and Updates

Based on the aforementioned explanation, this research aims to:

1. Investigate how Alvin Tjitrowirjo, as a designer, interprets his thinking concept and creative processes in a culture that continuously changes;
2. Examine how his cultural products can survive and position themselves in the global market;
3. Explore the methods and strategies of Alvin Tjitrowirjo.

The results of this investigation can be used as a model for local designers and craftsmen. Furniture products of local craftsmen still cannot compete with modern furniture products in the global and domestic markets. Moreover, Indonesians still prefer modern furniture products imported from other countries to local products. Therefore, Alvin repositions and changes the paradigm of local furniture products so that they can compete in the global market.

This study is considered urgent and novel because to date, there is no study on furniture that has applied a design and history approach and investigated its correlation with cultural identity. Several previous studies have investigated furniture through economic industry and its construction. For example, a study by Putra et al. (2019), entitled "Identification of Production and Marketing of Young Craftsmen's Furniture in the Furniture Industry", scrutinizes how the furniture industry should consider the aspects of consumer needs, styles, and product functions in the production process. The production and consumption processes are further emphasized in this current article. Another study by Seftianingsih (2017) entitled "The Introduction of Various Types of Furniture with a Combination of

Materials and Construction" explains the types of furniture based on their function, types of material used, and construction techniques. Meanwhile, a study by Limantara (2017) entitled "The Design of Furniture Sets as Learning, Leisure, and Storage Facilities for Children Aged 3-5 Years in Residential Homes" describes the design concept implemented in early childhood furniture in residence.

Meanwhile, a study by Kusmadi (2014) entitled "Carved Wooden Furniture as a Manifestation of the Preservation of Local Nuances" examines the localization of furniture. This study employed the preservation or conservation approach of a local cultural object, and the research object is carved furniture. None of these previous studies has examined the products of domestic designers, especially Alvin, and employed the approach of design creation method associated with cultural identity.

Therefore, this current study aims to explore the contributions of Alvin, a furniture designer and a cultural reator, who has raised local wealth and presented it in a modern form. Therefore, he can reposition cultural products in the global market. The findings of this study will enrich sociocultural science and a design method of furniture design. Such findings are beneficial for academicians, in particular, and furniture craftsmen, in general.

Research Methods

The research employed qualitative observation research methods. The data were collected by observing the research object directly, interviewing sources, and collecting documents (both data and literature). The collected data were then analyzed using cultural study, history, and design approaches.

This research began with collecting data on general furniture and specific research objects, namely the furniture products of Alvin. The general furniture data were employed using a history approach by collecting historical data as a background and basis to think contextually in the analysis stage. The historical furniture data were obtained from the literature. These data contain the development of furniture in Indonesia and the influence of western culture and previous cultures on the furniture designs and seating behavior patterns of Indonesians. Meanwhile, the field data, which is the object of this study, were obtained through direct observation in the design work exhibition and website of Alvin. To analyze the reference, the theoretical thinking concept of cultural studies and design methods was obtained from several libraries.

The next step was sorting the data and grouping them according to research needs. After sorting and grouping the data, they were selected for analysis. The data were analyzed by

reviewing and dissecting the selected data using theories as tools. The analysis tools were adjusted to the keywords of this research.

The next stage was creating hypotheses, and the final stage was concluding by providing assumptions based on the investigated data. This research also extracted the interpretations of the research subjects and generated theories based on empirical data. A research process and social reality are products of social construction that occur in society.

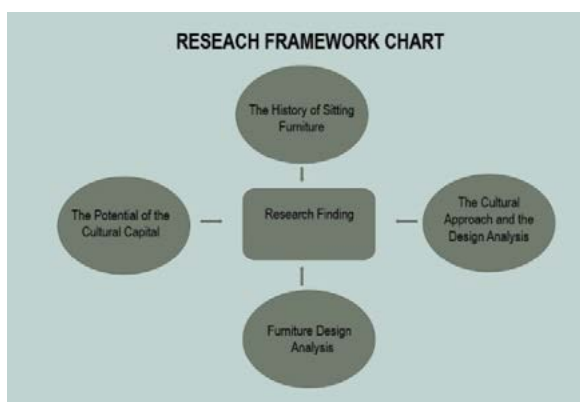


Chart 1. Research Framework Chart
(Source: Researcher)

Discussion

Alvin Tjitrowiryo and His Products

Alvin Tjitrowiryo is a product designer who graduated from the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University and IED European Design Labs. He is the founder of Alvin T Studio, a furniture company in Jakarta, which is engaged in architecture, interior designs, and furniture designs. This company has progressed quite rapidly and reached an international market. His experience as a designer who works with designer Marcel Wanders has proven his existence in facing global competition. It is no wonder that his company has received many national and international awards in less than ten years. His design work has been exhibited at numerous international exhibitions, including Asian Star in Singapore, Asian talent in Bangkok, Ambience Messe in Frankfurt, and Salone del Mobile in Milan.

Moreover, his design products have a character that combines local cultural heritage and Indonesian artisanal approach with contemporary sensibilities. In other words, Alvin indirectly takes part in preserving and utilizing the cultural wealth in Indonesia. Alvin highly respects tradition. He creates products that prove the growth of character (identity) in an increasingly homogeneous world.

To create a character as the identity of his design products, Alvin has a vision and mission, namely "to be the first choice, popular, and different Asian products". Therefore, his design work has special standards: creating uncommon designs, building a space that displays stories and memories (historical narrative), creating creative and productive designs, representing the design users, creating an art installation to encourage new ideas on typical Indonesian design, and creating a product emphasizing on intuitive-based functions.

Alvin sets his design target market as the upper-middle class in Indonesia and abroad. His products, especially furniture, are made in *limited editions* and *by order*, and he often calls such products as the *bespoke design (custom)*. Moreover, local trusted craftsmen make his products. He uses materials widely, which are available in Indonesia and have very good quality, such as rattan, teak, and *sungkai*.

Modernism in Shapes: An Achievement of the Global Market

The interior (spatial) and furniture works of Alvin are made in shapes emerging from sensitivity to design. This means that his insight and sensitivity to this shape are built from western concepts and design thinking methods. His works and thoughts are inseparable from and affected by his background, environment where he grew up (as his habitus), and education. Moreover, he can master sensitivity to the needs and tastes of the global market because he certainly lives in that environment.

Friedman (1999) defines globalization as universal and global aspects, but this globalization will also form a homogeneous or single aspect, which is related to ideological, political, social, cultural, environmental, and economic aspects. As a result, global society will be interdependent. This statement briefly denotes that the global community means the world community. Globalization is also related to the global market's tastes.

This definition is related to Alvin's work because he targets the global market; thus, the consumers of his works and products are not only domestic consumers but also foreign consumers. For this reason, Alvin will certainly manage to promote his works so that international consumers can accept them. Alvin's work shapes and approaches can be analyzed. In general, his interior works lead to the local traditional themes, but careful observation will show that these themes are filled by his products or furniture works. His furniture works are made with a local concept for the global market. The term "global market" will certainly lead to "modern" forms. Before analyzing the visual forms of Alvin's work, we should initially understand the definition or categories of modernism.

Appadurai (2000) argues that the definition of modernity is quite difficult to define because it refers to a duality that states the existence (actualization) and application of modernity. Moreover, Appadurai (2000) explains that modernity is influenced by electronic mediation and mass migrations that mark the recent world as a new force that can encourage and force the power of imagination. Modernity is also influenced by human beings who move and mobilize not only within national boundaries but also transnational borders (Appadurai, 2000). The opening of these boundaries will certainly affect the actions, thoughts, and cultures that exist from social, economic, health, and political aspects. The aforementioned phenomenon is also performed by Alvin when he continued his education in other countries, namely at the Royal Melbourne Institute of Technology (RMIT) University and IED European Design Labs. His knowledge and experience from western education and companies are applied in his works, specifically furniture.

Moreover, his knowledge and experience will affect his work. European countries are considered the origin of science, even though this statement is still debatable. However, when western countries occupied and colonized almost all parts of the world during the colonial era, people perceived that everything from western countries was civilized and should be followed, including knowledge. Such a perception influences almost the entire world and bases global thoughts that western ideas refer to modernity.

Alvin's furniture shows modern shapes, which are designed based on his insights from his foreign education. The aesthetic principles of western designs are shown in how he processes and composes visual elements. The composed lines are repetitive in *Malya lounge* and *Kearra lounge* and are made in dimensions that use *golden section* proportions or a ratio of 3/4: 1/3. *The shape outline* in this series also looks dynamic, gentle, and feminine with contrasting colors. Meanwhile, the Inge sofa series shows a modern minimalist design influenced by the international design *style* derived from the Bauhaus design.



Picture 1. Malya, Kearra, dan Inge are the furniture which represent modernity form.

Source: Alvin T Studio, www.alvin-t.com

These three designs use the design thinking method. Alvin's designs are inspired by ideation or research-based formulation, identification of problems, and natural forms or daily objects. These inspirations are applied to the overall shapes of the furniture, including the composition. This design thinking method creates the visual aesthetics of Alvin's works, which emphasize modernity. He also considers the "form-follow-function" concept in his design as shown by his works that are pretty much influenced by modern designs of western furniture in the 50s, such as the work of designers Verner Pantone, Arne Jacobsen, Eero Saarinen, and Harry Bertoia. Meanwhile, his furniture design is strongly influenced by the furniture in the 80s, such as Phillippe Starck and Zaha Hadid, an architect and modern-futuristic designer.



Picture 2. Furniture design by Verner Pantone 1957 (left) and Harry Bertoia 1950 (right).
Source: Greenberg (1995)



Picture 3. Furniture design by Arne Jacobsen 1957.
Source: Greenberg (1995)

The ideas and typical forms of furniture in the 50s are inspired by natural forms and shell structures. Meanwhile, streamlined aerodynamic forms are inspired by the shape of the atomic nucleus after World War II. The character of Phillippe Starck's work with the TED concept (Technology, Entertainment, and Design) is also presented in Alvin's furniture, which has unique shapes.

Eero Saarinen (1956)



Tulip Chair

Executive Side Chair

Womb Chair

Picture 4. Furniture design by Eero Saarinen 1956.

Source: Greenberg (1995)

Phillipe Starck (1980an)



Picture 5. Furniture design by Phillipe Starck 1980.

Source: Greenberg (1995)

What Alvin does to his design works aims to reach a wider market, namely the global market. For this reason, his strategy to reach the international market is to make a “universal” design acceptable to all consumers, including international consumers. The shapes of Alvin’s furniture designs have met the demands of the global market. However, the next question is, besides being accepted in the global market, what Alvin should do to enable his products to compete in the global market. Such a question triggers Alvin to process the design into “beyond” and more toward the contemporary modern style. This is a modern concept that is current, brings novelty, and combines other elements, such as tradition. Such a concept is between local and global orientation (Supangkat, 1998).

The previous chapter explains that from the past (before the colonial era), the culture of our society does not use furniture, especially chairs. The tradition of local people states that people sit on the floor using a pedestal. It is clear that sitting on a chair was culturally influenced by the colonial. Therefore, it is very necessary to know that Indonesia did not have chair design styles. The chair design styles, currently called the local styles, are actually derived from European chair designs, were introduced in the colonial period, and have

been adapted locally. At that time, the classification of these styles adhered to the style of the 18th century, such as Neo-Classical, American Federal, Regency, Directoire, and Art Deco. Therefore, if Alvin brings localization to his work of furniture, it does not mean that his furniture is completely a local product (traditional Indonesia).

Therefore, a basic understanding is initially required when we use the terms modernity and tradition because the essence of these terms is difficult to interpret. Modernity and tradition are a duality of existence that is not easily expressed by certain limitations. In other words, the two terms are inseparable because they are intertwined. To understand an approach whether it is traditional or modern, a serious examination should be conducted to reconstruct the original style called tradition. This step is necessary because in a cultural process, "originality" never exists.



Picture 6. Zaha Hadid design influence in Linger Bench by Alvin T.

Source: (left) www.alvin-t.com; (right) www.pinterest.com

The process of cultural fusion in globalization has occurred for centuries. All forms of influence from the "outside" are combined with the "original" culture and will certainly enrich the local culture. This combination is also a form of dynamism of culture and creates a new culture without eliminating the traces of the original culture. Such a process occurs not only in the local culture but also in other cultures. The culture influences each other so a reasonable cultural exchange occurs. Appadurai (2000) states that modernity is a duality whose existence and application are still contemporarily interpreted using modern or traditional ways. Appadurai (2000) adds that modernity and tradition are not a dichotomy that can be limited because traditional art, although it is marginalized, is a part of contemporary reality. In this case, modernity is not merely a visual form but a thought.

The discourse of modernity and tradition becomes difficult to define. However, it can be said that Alvin's works of furniture are entirely modern work. This conclusion is formulated based on Alvin's ideas and thoughts created from Western thoughts and commonly referred to as modern thoughts. The ideas are applied to achieve a broader and universal (global) market.

Glocalization, from a Local Identity in Global Contexts

The term global localization is frequently called glocalization. Before defining the term glocalization, it should be initially comprehended. Globalization is a phenomenon or condition when one culture affects another culture as a result of movement across borders (Appadurai, 2000). Globalization has influenced all cultural aspects, such as the economy, technology, communication, politics, society, and religion. Moreover, globalization can trigger a cultural transformation in physical forms (tangible forms) or thoughts.

Globalization is frequently considered dangerous and threatens local culture because it homogenizes western cultures. This idea has begun to shift and has been criticized since 1995. Kjelgaard & Askegaard (2006) explain that many countries absorb and receive western influence in one direction but also adapt, negotiate, and appropriate meanings of western cultural products. These actions make creativity emerge by adding another element associated with local culture and removing other elements that disagree with local culture and lifestyle (Murgiyanto, 2016). This statement also shows that cultural boundaries are very hard and flexible, and it becomes increasingly difficult to differentiate truly authentic local cultures from foreign cultures.

However, how one culture is influenced by another culture and how the process works can still be discussed. In reality, the interpenetration or mutual influence between global and local does not always occur in a commensurate or symmetrical boundary because one aspect will always be dominant. In Alvin's design, modernity (a proof of western influence) is reflected not only in the visual shapes of his works but also in his thoughts, design methods, and implementation. Localities are then juxtaposed so that his works have a strong identity and characteristics, are exhibited, and could compete in the global market.

The aforementioned explanation shows that global and local capacities are never equal. The practice of exchanging or combining eastern with western cultural art and designs could raise problems, such as an interesting debate of ideas or discourses. This debate can critically discuss multiculturalism in a broader context based on more detailed observation and in-depth consideration. Currently, Indonesians borrow the structures prevailing at the global level because western culture still dominates. However, we should creatively utilize this culture by choosing and determining the meaningful contents of Indonesia, not only concerning economic benefits.

Alvin's work of furniture should be scrutinized to reveal whether his work agrees with his goals or ideas, contains the nationality ideology as his identity, or shows unique characteristics with local identities that distinguish his works from competitors' works in the global market.

Hall (1997) states that identity affirms the difference between one nation and other nations although this identity is composed of multiple identities that will never remain and settle.



Picture 7. Satool Natural Bench (left), Mingle Bench (middle) and Inge Sofa (right), all of the furniture uses woven techniques and the characteristics of using rattan, but the visual shape still is modern. The furniture also uses synthetic material.

Source: Alvin T Studio, www.alvin-t.com

The identity competition is an interesting topic to discuss because it is a project that refers to the creation of self-identity narratives and continuously connects the past, present, and future. These flexible cultural boundaries complicate humans to determine what identity they should present. Moreover, the cultural theory postulates that identity consists of fragments of other identities. However, in daily life, identity is continuously elaborated in a narrative sense of self-meaning.

Alvin's work of furniture narrates "local" identity as conceptual and technical forms, namely woven techniques and the characteristics of using rattan. These forms have been inherited from Austronesian culture for generations. However, not all of Alvin's works explore rattan material because many of his works only borrow the visual form and technique of rattan weaving, not the actual rattan material. Therefore, his work of furniture should be criticized again to reveal whether the locality in his works aims to show the national identity or just to gain economic benefits.

Cultural Appropriation as a Strategy in Furniture Work of Alvin Tjitrowirjo

The previous section questions whether locality in Alvin's work aims to elevate national identity or preserve local culture or whether it is a strategy of "borrowing local culture" to compete in the global market. Moreover, the previous chapter questions whether Alvin's visions and missions as the underlying concepts have been appropriately implemented in his works of furniture. All of these questions should be examined more carefully.

The previous sub-chapters have explained that Alvin generally applies modern shapes in his furniture designs. Moreover, he employs modern design methods and methodologies, which are influenced by his experience and knowledge when studying abroad. Then rattan, as a local material, is not fully used in his work. Some of his furniture designs use “natural” rattan as the basic material, but some others use synthetic rattan made of PVC-like material. Natural rattan and synthetic rattan are used to make furniture using a local technique, namely woven. Some modern techniques, such as bending and plate frame construction, are also applied to support the strength of the construction.

In the process of creating the furniture, Alvin involves local craftsmen to empower local communities. However, this position should also be explored to reveal to what extent this empowerment is carried out and whether this empowerment has brought positive impacts to the local craftsmen. The term local community empowerment has a deep meaning because it denotes that the craftsmen are not just local artisan laborers but are a part of an empowered community. Moreover, the term is considered to correctly apply if the whole members of the local community, not an individual, receive positive economic impacts.

An occurring phenomenon should be observed from two points of view to decide whether something is good or bad, not to understand what is going on. This study analyzes the forms of Alvin’s furniture and what he has done. The sub-chapter has discussed that Alvin shows the idea of localization in his furniture designs although, in general, his work constitutes modern furniture. The localization presented by Alvin is an identity built to create a self-narrative so that his works of furniture are easily recognizable and different from others’ works in the global market¹

If Alvin only takes “shapes” as the approach and strategy to survive, he cannot introduce this product to the international market. Therefore, he should make various attempts, including participating in international competitions and exhibitions to introduce local concepts in his works. This strategy borrows localization elements as a national identity so that his works are easily recognized and distinct from his competitors’ works.

The techniques from eastern culture, in this case Indonesia, include weaving, using rattan material, and using ornaments or Indonesian philosophy as design ideation. These techniques are considered a culture of a third country with exotic values in the global market. This consideration has occurred since the colonial era. All products of eastern culture appeal to westerners. Eastern exoticism also has high “selling values”, and this has occurred since the “Exposition Universelle-Paris” event in 1889. At this international event, the colonized areas (third world) have an exotic appeal and should be owned.

¹ The term competition is deliberately used to assert that designers compete in the international market.

This impression still occurs today, stating that what comes from the East has an exotic appeal and should be owned. In contrast, some say that what comes from the west has the best quality and is more civilized. This is the view of post-colonial nations in the east that have been stunned by western thoughts. Therefore, combining two viewpoints is a strategic form to be accepted in the world market. Alvin's thoughts, concepts, and principles of design apply western sciences, which are considered more civilized, modern, and quality. However, these elements are not enough to attract international consumers and compete with the world's products that have the same value and quality. Alvin should apply his typical strategies to show and have a distinctive identity, namely by offering an exotic touch.

Using localization elements in his design works is a very strategic solution. It implies that what Alvin has done is not purely for preserving local culture, but also for exhibiting his work to the international market and gaining economic benefits. He consciously performs these steps, as presented by his strategies for borrowing localization elements in his works. Such a condition arises the question of how many local elements are applied by Alvin in his works, such as the ideation concepts, materials, forms, and technical construction. Rogers (2006) in the *Communication Theory Journal* states that what Alvin does refers to a form of appropriation which means that symbols, artifacts, genres, rituals, or cultural technologies are applied by a member of another culture to gain his interests and economic benefits. To date, using a particular culture by outsiders is considered a form of appreciation. However, in certain conditions, it is undeniable that this borrowing potentially causes appropriation problems.

What Alvin does is a phenomenon or condition triggered by political spaces at the global level. Therefore, the meaning of cultural symbols that he applies or borrows has changed, and the cultural values have shifted. The practices of cultural values no longer contain sacredness because they are only used for profane attractions. Such a condition has occurred since the colonial era when the products of eastern culture are exhibited in the world's event of "Exposition Universelle-Paris 1889".

This condition also implies that humans compete to achieve certain interests or political benefits. The meaning of culture depends on who redefines it. Cultural symbols and meanings become objects generated by a negotiation process that involves several contestants with different interests. When political conditions change, the meanings of space and cultural identity are forcedly and simultaneously defined.

Strong competitions from various institutions force individuals to become objects of different interests. Some parties will create a small group because they do not agree with political power. Moreover, they will participate in the game and compete. Meanwhile, the

spaces and meanings of cultural identity are defined by the dominant party; in this case the global community (west). The clash between the dominant and subordinate groups makes cultural identity have different constructions and reproductions. These differences are based on individual interests. Cultural symbols are also used as a reason for affirming a group that constitutes a part of the social system and has conflicting values. Alvin positions himself in the middle of these groups through negotiations. Therefore, he could compete in the global market whose consumers comprise dominant and subordinate groups.

The emergence of cultural changes is also caused by contestation in the political space and cultural meanings. Culture is frequently defined as a symbol. The meanings of symbols also change due to power changes. Culture is inseparable from the space where it is made, built, maintained, and preserved. Different interests of power could redefine cultural products so that the new definition agrees with the development of modern lifestyles that are directly preceded by changes in political space designs.

Conclusion

Historically, Europeans came to Indonesia while bringing their sitting furniture; this condition certainly influenced the sitting behavior or manners of Indonesians. During the Hindu-Buddhist era, people did not use sitting furniture because they sat on the floor. Indonesian aristocrats and native officials who work for the colonial to represent their social status initially adopted the culture of sitting in a chair. The new culture of sitting also symbolizes equal positions between the king and the colonizers. The culture of sitting on a chair has been adapted materially and ergonomically and adjusts the anthropometric forms of the local community. The chair is made of local materials grown in Indonesia, such as bamboo, rattan, and tropical woods. The adjustment and adaptation processes have been interpreted by the local community so that the meaning of cultural values possibly and indirectly shift.

This influence is not one-way, which means that in the past, Indonesians did not passively receive the influence of behavior brought by the colonizers but actively responded to this influence. Moreover, the results of adaptation in Indonesia were also applied by the colonizers in their countries. It implies that cultural exchanges occur. This cultural exchange not only occurs in Europe and Indonesia but also in China, Persia (Middle East), Africa, etc. Such a situation leads to the global culture as a result of cross-border movements. In the past, cross-border cultural movements were caused not only by colonialism but also by trade before the colonization era.

Global situations will result in identity problems, doubtful authenticity, superiority, and diversity. On the other hand, cultural boundaries are clear and flexible, and it is increasingly difficult to differentiate between truly authentic local culture and foreign culture. To solve the identity problem, Alvin Tjitrowirjo, an Indonesian product designer, brings up the "local" identity combined with modern designs in his furniture. Alvin's works show that the concept of design aesthetics is currently oriented not only at the regional or national levels but also the global levels. Alvin has also redefined and repositioned himself to be widely accepted at the national and global levels. Alvin's educational background also influences him to shape or construct his thoughts. In other words, his aesthetic orientation refers to western aesthetics (global orientation). His approach refers to local elements, which constitute strategies to compete in the global market because this is his main goal.

Alvin understands very well the strategies to enable his works to survive and position in the global market. He employs the strategy of "borrowing" local elements because he understands that the localization of "eastern" culture still has an exotic meaning for the global community. This "borrowing" is also a separate strategy to show and have a distinctive identity (diversity) by creating a self-narrative. Therefore, his works of furniture are easily recognized, become "different" from other global competitors, and offer an exotic local touch. It implies that what Alvin has done is not purely for preserving local culture, but also for exhibiting his work to the international market and gaining economic benefits. He consciously performs these steps, as presented by his strategies for borrowing localization elements in his works.

Alvin's works refer to cultural appropriation caused by the political space in the global market. Therefore, the meaning of cultural symbols that he applies or borrows has changed, and the cultural values have shifted. In another word, local culture can be a commodity that contributes to the tourism industry, namely the ability to facilitate global market participation.

This study shows that in culture, the space and meaning of cultural identity will always be redefined. The competition between the dominant and subordinate groups makes cultural identity continuously experience different constructions and reproductions, which accommodate each group's interests. Cultural symbols are also used as a reason for affirming a group that constitutes a part of the social system and has conflicting values. Alvin positions himself among these groups through negotiations so that he could compete in the global market whose consumers comprise dominant and subordinate groups. This major finding of this study shows that artworks and designs that combine local and modern elements (glocalization) can reveal the process of creation and transformation of a new identity.

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